



2024 ITUC GLOBAL RIGHTS INDEX

THE WORLD'S WORST
COUNTRIES FOR
WORKERS



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THE GLOBAL RIGHTS INDEX EXPLAINED

The ITUC Global Rights Index depicts the world's worst countries for workers by rating countries on a scale from 1 to 5+ on the degree of respect for workers' rights. Violations are recorded each year from April to March.

1. DOCUMENTING VIOLATIONS

The ITUC documents violations of internationally recognised collective labour rights by governments and employers. The methodology is grounded in standards of fundamental rights at work, in particular the right to freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike. Questionnaires are sent to 340 national unions in 169 countries to report violations of workers' rights by indicating relevant details. Regional meetings with human and trade union rights experts are held where the questionnaire is disseminated, explained and completed. The ITUC contacts unions directly by phone and email when it becomes aware of violations to confirm relevant facts. Legal researchers analyse national legislation and identify sections which are not adequately protecting internationally recognised collective labour rights.

2. CODING OF TEXT

The text under each country in the ITUC Survey is read against a list of 97 indicators derived from ILO Conventions and jurisprudence and represents violations of workers' rights in law and in practice. A country receives a point for each time textual information corresponds to an indicator. Each point has the value of 1. After coding the text for a country, the number of points is added up to arrive at a total score.

3. RATING COUNTRIES

Countries are rated in clusters from 1-5+ depending on their compliance with collective labour rights. There are five ratings, with 1 being the best rating and 5+ the worst rating a country could get. The level of economic development, size or location of the country is not taken into account given that fundamental rights are universal and workers in all parts of the world must have access to them. A high-rated cluster means that workers in the country have no right to their collective voice due to government failure to guarantee rights.

DESCRIPTION OF THE RATINGS



NO GUARANTEE OF RIGHTS DUE TO THE BREAKDOWN OF THE RULE OF LAW	NO GUARANTEE OF RIGHTS	SYSTEMATIC VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS	REGULAR VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS	REPEATED VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS	SPORADIC VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS
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1 SPORADIC VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

Collective labour rights are generally guaranteed. Workers can freely associate and defend their rights collectively with the government and/or companies and can improve their working conditions through collective bargaining. Violations against workers are not absent but do not occur on a regular basis.

2 REPEATED VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

Countries with a rating of 2 have slightly weaker collective labour rights than those with the rating 1. Certain rights have come under repeated attacks by governments and/or companies and have undermined the struggle for better working conditions.

3 REGULAR VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

Governments and/or companies are regularly interfering in collective labour rights or are failing to fully guarantee important aspects of these rights. There are deficiencies in laws and/or certain practices which make frequent violations possible.

4 SYSTEMATIC VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

Workers in countries with the rating 4 have reported systematic violations. The government and/or companies are engaged in serious efforts to crush the collective voice of workers, putting fundamental rights under threat.

5 NO GUARANTEE OF RIGHTS

Countries with the rating of 5 are the worst countries in the world to work in. While the legislation may spell out certain rights, workers have effectively no access to these rights and are therefore exposed to autocratic regimes and unfair labour practices.

5+ NO GUARANTEE OF RIGHTS DUE TO THE BREAKDOWN OF THE RULE OF LAW

Workers in countries with the rating 5+ have equally limited rights as countries with the rating 5. However, in countries with the rating 5+, this is linked to dysfunctional institutions as a result of internal conflict and/or military occupation. In such cases, the country is assigned the rating of 5+ by default.

FOREWORD

Now in its 11th year, the Global Rights Index offers an important status report on the worldwide struggle to defend and exercise core pillars of democracy: the fundamental rights and freedoms of working people and trade unions. As it attests, there are clear signs that governments and companies are accelerating their efforts to trample on these basic rights that underpin the very nature of democracy and the rule of law.

As millions of households struggle in a debilitating scenario of squeezed incomes and an entrenched cost-of-living crisis, policymakers and business leaders are actively restricting workers' rights to collectively demand fairer wages or to legally exercise their right to strike.

With repeated calls for fair wages and conditions going unheard and governments taking a wrecking ball to the right to strike and collective bargaining, workers' faith in democracy is crumbling.

In a year where four billion people globally will participate in elections, right-wing authoritarians are circling, singling out easy scapegoats to blame in the run-up to elections and forwarding an anti-worker agenda of their own to put into play beyond them. Democracy hangs in the balance.



Credit: Daniel Leal / AFP

Almost nine out of 10 countries worldwide violated the right to strike, while about eight in 10 countries denied workers the right to bargain collectively for better terms and conditions. In a deeply worrying development this year, 49% of countries arbitrarily arrested or detained trade union members, up from 46% in 2023, while more than four in 10 countries denied or constrained freedom of speech or assembly.

These figures and trends reinforce a global picture in which hard-won democratic rights and civil liberties are under grave and relentless attack. That is why, this year, the ITUC launched its For Democracy campaign in support of the rights and freedoms that all individuals should enjoy without fear of persecution or oppression.

In the UK, the government introduced a new law restricting the right to strike by workers in certain public services. The Trades Union Congress (TUC) has estimated 1 in 5 workers will be affected by the restrictions which misuse the ILO's definition of 'essential services' to restrict this basic right.

IN 2024:

The right to free speech and assembly was restricted in 43% of countries, up from 42% in 2023. In real terms, 65 countries out of 151 surveyed infringed this right – an increase of 29 since 2014, when the Index began. **Argentina** has witnessed mass demonstrations in response to President Javier Milei's attempts to criminalise street protests as part of harsh austerity measures, while **Zimbabwe** has introduced a law that effectively criminalises Zimbabweans' rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association.

74% of countries impeded the registration of trade unions, up from 73% in 2023. In **Egypt**, it is estimated that, since 2018 – when all independent trade unions were dissolved – the number of independent unions has decreased from 1,500 to approximately 150.

Workers were detained or arrested in 74 countries, a leap from 69 in 2023. In **Myanmar**, for example, military authorities abducted a union leader and held him incommunicado for five months before he was sentenced – without legal representation – on charges of terrorism.

The right to strike was violated in 87% of countries, unchanged from 2023. Nine union leaders in **Cambodia** were prosecuted for engaging in a peaceful strike against union busting at a casino, while mass protests against pension reforms in **France** were violently suppressed by police.

In 75% of countries, workers were denied the right to establish or join a trade union, a small improvement from 2023 when 77% of countries excluded workers from this fundamental right. However, the situation remains dire in most countries. In **Morocco**, judges could not form or join a trade union. In **Rwanda**, the security services were not allowed to organise, and in **Japan**, the law excluded firefighters, prison staff, and the coast guard from this right.

79% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining, unchanged from 2023. In **Sri Lanka**, the government removed four unions from the reconstituted tripartite National Labour Advisory Council, essentially making it easier for employers to influence labour law reforms.



Credit: Federico Parra / AFP

The rating for Venezuela dropped to 5 following a series of arbitrary arrests of trade unionists on fabricated charges. At the same time, organising and rights-related activity were also serially obstructed by authorities.

Workers had no or restricted access to justice in 65% of countries, unchanged from 2023. In one shocking example, the Supreme Court in **North Macedonia** transferred the property of the **Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia (CCM)** to the state, effectively legitimising the forceful takeover of union property.

The 10 worst countries for workers in 2024 were: **Bangladesh, Belarus, Ecuador, Egypt, Eswatini, Guatemala, Myanmar, the Philippines, Tunisia, and Türkiye.**

The **Russian Federation** and **Ukraine** were reintroduced to the Index in 2024. Following the Russian aggression against Ukraine, workers' rights in both countries continue to be restricted. Over the past two years, the Russian Federation has clamped down on basic rights and freedoms, including in occupied areas of Ukraine, while Ukraine has introduced a raft of regressive emergency laws that have restricted workers' rights.

Thirteen countries saw their ratings deteriorate in 2024: **Costa Rica, Finland, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Mexico, Nigeria, Qatar, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Switzerland, and Venezuela.**

Only two countries – **Brazil** and **Romania** – improved their ratings.

Workers in 44 countries experienced some form of violent attacks. In **Kenya**, police violently disrupted a peaceful protest in Nairobi calling for medical interns to be given postings, after extensive delays in the placement process. In **Panama**, the offices of a union which orchestrated action against a mining concession were set on fire.

Twenty-two trade unionists and workers died because of violence or were killed in six countries: **Bangladesh**, **Colombia**, **Guatemala**, **Honduras**, the **Philippines**, and the **Republic of Korea**.

MULTI-YEAR TRENDS

Since the inception of the Index in 2014, there has been an alarming and worsening trend: the deterioration of workers' rights around the world. Every region's rating is below its original score, with **Europe** betraying the worst decline.

The **Middle East** and **North Africa** region remains the worst in the world, with an average rating of 4.74, marking a significant and continuing deterioration from 4.53 in 2023 and well down from 4.25 in 2014.

Asia-Pacific has remained the second-worst region for workers' rights, with an average rating of 4.13 – a negligible improvement on 2023 but still below the 4.05 recorded in 2014. The region has seen the least significant deterioration in its rating since the Index began.

Conditions for workers and unions in **Africa** remained broadly unchanged on a regional level from 2024, with an average rating of 3.88, but this remains well below the 3.26 rating recorded at the start of the Index.

While the average rating for the **Americas** was generally unchanged at 3.56, the region remained the deadliest for workers and unionists, with 16 assassinations recorded in 2023-2024. In 2014, the region had an average rating of 3.16.

In contrast to its reputation as the global standard bearer for workers' rights, in **Europe** the average rating worsened from 2.56 to 2.73 over the year. In addition, the data reveals that over the past decade, Europe has shown the steepest decline among all regions, from 1.84 in 2014 to 2.73 in 2024. This continued descent

indicates that the European "worker-centric" social model is being actively dismantled by governments and businesses at an accelerating pace, with serious implications in the region and the risk of it triggering a global race to the bottom for workers' rights.

Since 2014, the number of countries excluding the right to establish or join a trade union and the right to collective bargaining has jumped by 33 to 113 and 120 respectively, far outstripping the 12 additional countries featured in the Index. Forty-four more countries (131 in total) violated the right to strike relative to 2014, while 39 more countries (74 countries in total) arbitrarily arrested or detained union members over that period.

THE ONLY DATABASE OF ITS KIND

In 2014, the Index was established to assess how countries and companies respect and uphold the rights of workers according to international law and multilateral agreements. As a comprehensive review of workers' rights in law in 151 countries, the Index is the only database of its kind, where violations and ratings can be viewed by country and region.

In an age where the diverse stakeholders of democracy and the global economy seek greater clarity on the actions of governments and companies in order to make informed choices at the ballot box, as investors, or consumers, the Index offers a vital overview of the treatment of workers and unions around the world.

Countries where information about workers' rights is too scarce or cannot be verified in line with our methodology were not included in this year's analysis. However, the ITUC is working towards covering all countries worldwide in the Index.

THE GLOBAL STRUGGLE FOR BASIC RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

This year's report makes for difficult reading – a clear and urgent wake-up call that the future of democracy and fundamental rights agreed by most countries at an international level are at risk. While there have been some signs of positive improvements, even in the worst regions, the general picture displays a relentless attack on civil liberties and the interests of working people.

This comes against the backdrop of a devastating cost-of-living crisis in an era of technological disruption where the world of work is changing rapidly. Conflicts around the world, involving **Haiti, Israel, Palestine, the Russian Federation, Sudan, Ukraine**, and **Yemen**, have only made this situation worse, making it all but impossible for unions to function freely to protect workers and for working families to access livelihoods, as they are forced to face the catastrophic consequences of war.

Workers are the beating heart of democracy, and their voices are crucial to assuring the health and sustainability of democratic systems. Conversely, when their rights are violated, restricted, and undermined, democracy itself is on the line.

As the world approaches a raft of elections this year, the ITUC's For Democracy campaign aims to defend and strengthen the pillars of democracy against right-

wing, vested interests focused on eroding workers' freedoms and basic human rights, either to tighten their grip on power or to increase corporate profits at the expense of ordinary working families.

This report also tells the story of the heroic and courageous actions of workers and trade unionists who often face the gravest possible dangers to improve the lives of their colleagues and defend democratic rights everywhere. Whether it occurs in the workplace, in society, or at the global level, this is our shared struggle. It is clear, as the international trade union movement strives to defend democratic values and the rights that underpin them, that our movement must continue to play an integral role in shaping a fairer and safer world for all.

Luc Triangle
General Secretary
International Trade Union Confederation

People took to the streets in Sudan to protest the coup d'état that has led to a year-long civil war and devastated the country. Sudan is rated 5+, which means there is no guarantee of rights due to the breakdown of the rule of law. The UN has referred to the situation in Sudan as "one of the worst humanitarian disasters in recent history".



AT A GLANCE

This is the 11th edition of the ITUC Global Rights Index. It documents violations of internationally recognised labour rights by governments and employers.

THE WORST REGION IN THE WORLD

Middle East and Northern Africa

THE 10 WORST COUNTRIES FOR WORKING PEOPLE

Bangladesh	Guatemala
Belarus	Myanmar
Ecuador	The Philippines
Egypt	Tunisia
Eswatini	Türkiye

Violations of workers' rights



Right to strike

87% of countries violated the right to strike.



Right to collective bargaining

79% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining.



Right to establish and join a trade union

75% of countries excluded workers from the right to establish or join a trade union.



Right to justice

In 65% of countries, workers had no or restricted access to justice.



Right to trade union activities

74% of countries impeded the registration of unions.



Right to civil liberties

Workers were detained and arrested in 74 countries.



Violent attacks on workers

Workers experienced violence in 44 countries.



Right to free speech and assembly

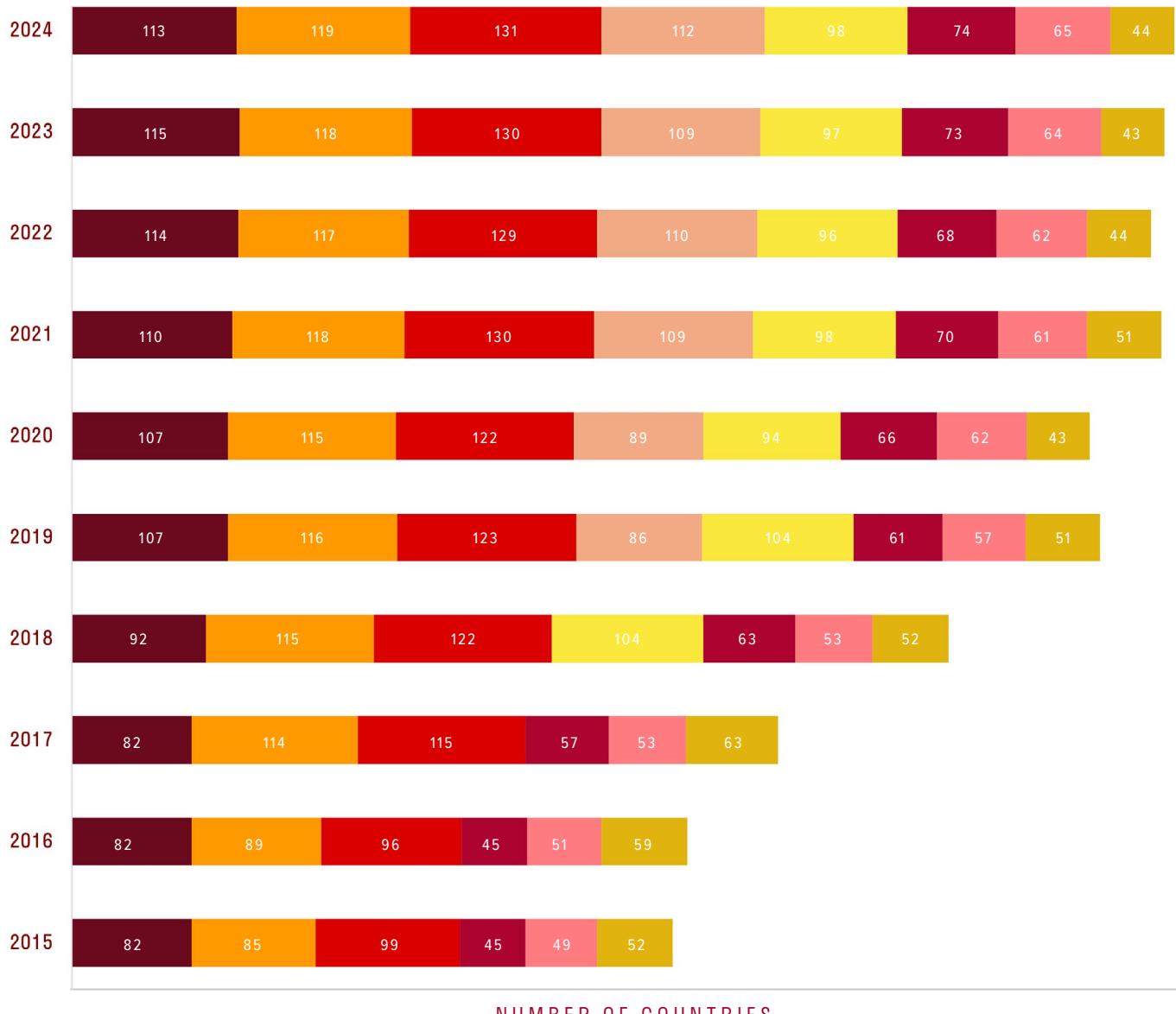
43% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.



Deaths

Trade unionists were killed in six countries: **Bangladesh, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, the Philippines, and the Republic of Korea.**

10-YEAR TRENDS: VIOLATIONS OF WORKERS' RIGHTS

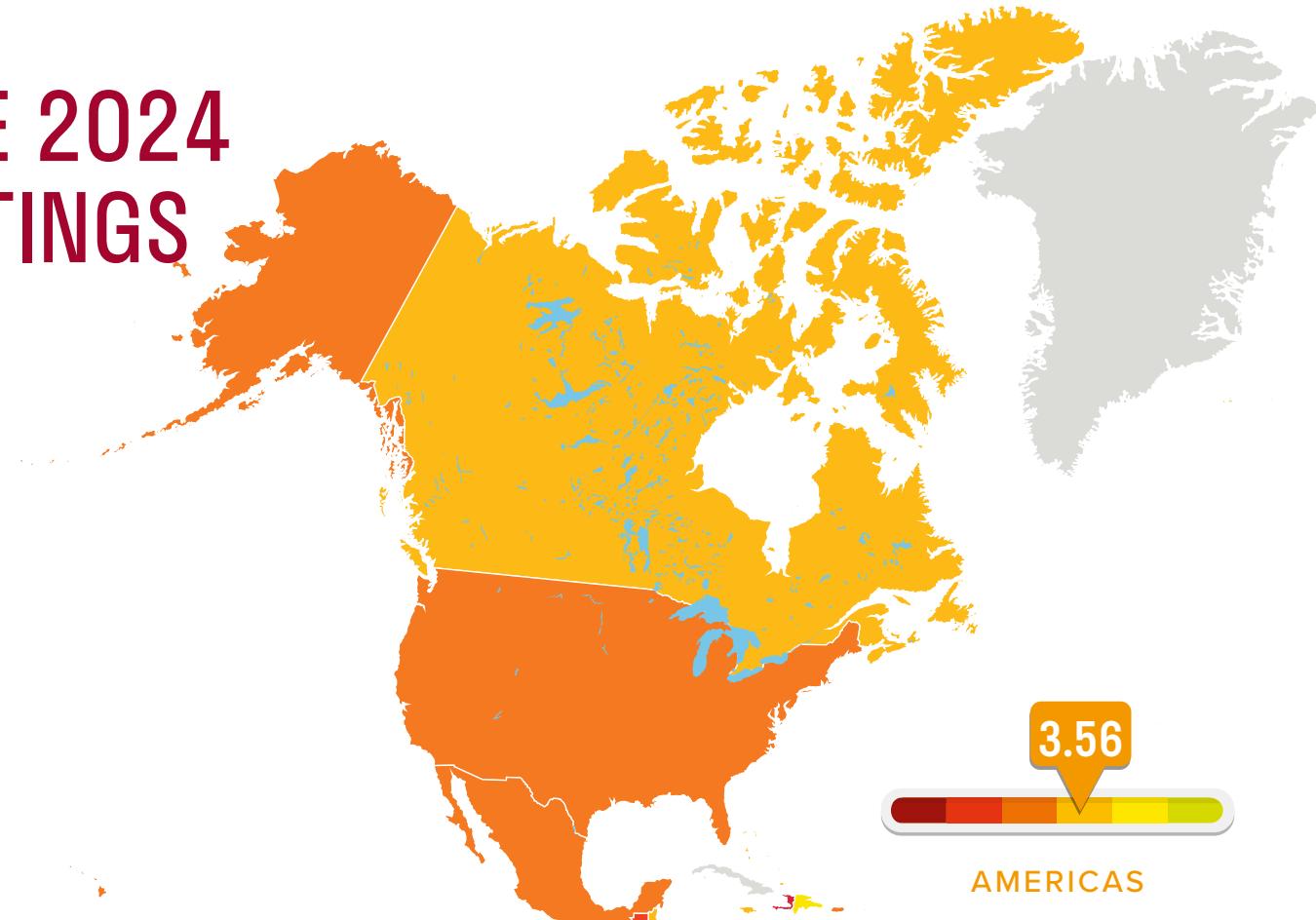


NUMBER OF COUNTRIES



This graphic shows how the state of workers' rights has deteriorated or improved across the eight indicators on a global basis. Each year, the number of countries surveyed may vary slightly.

THE 2024 RATINGS



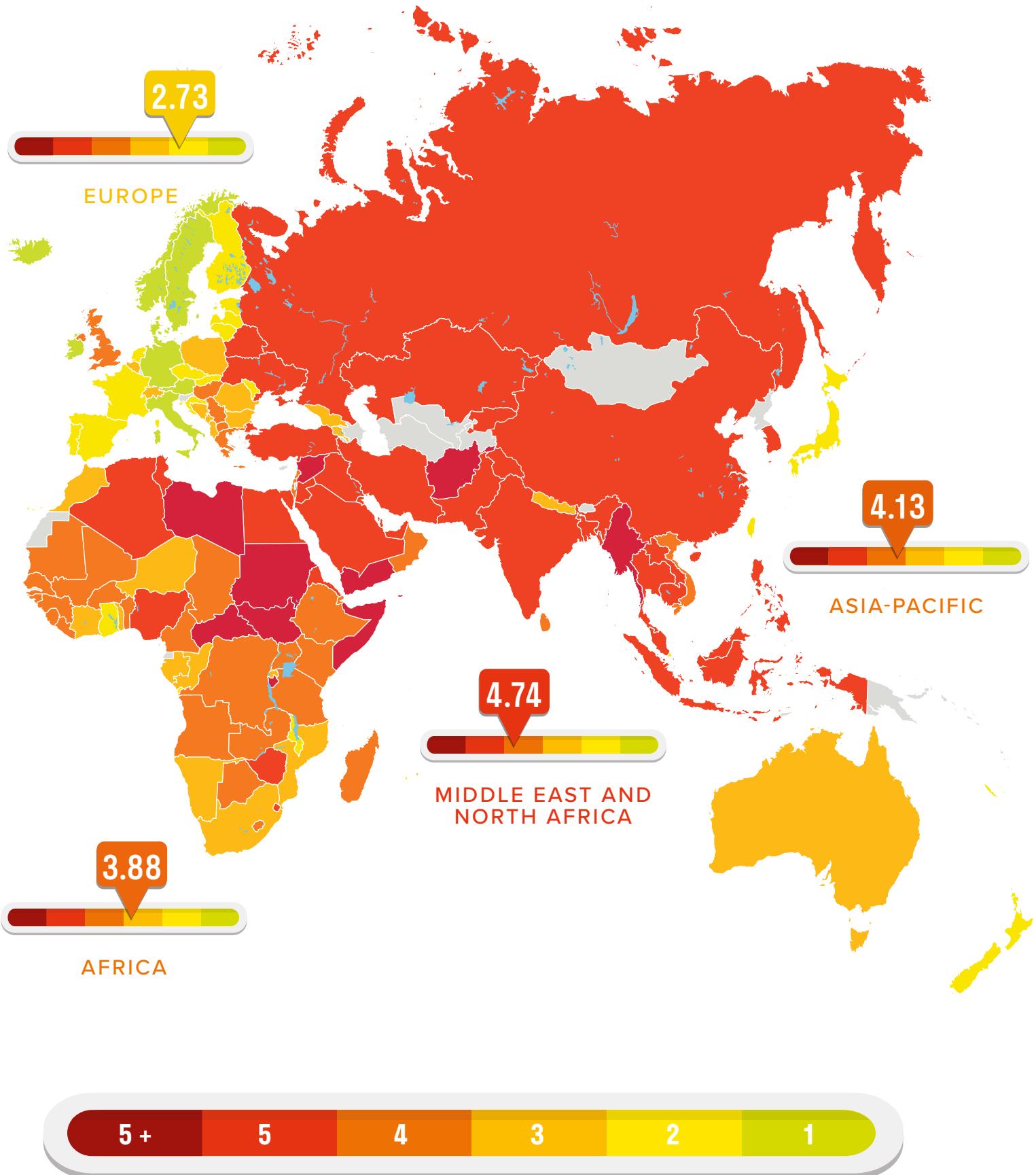
IMPROVED RATING

COUNTRY	2024	2023
Brazil	4	5
Romania	3	4

WORSE RATING

COUNTRY	2024	2023
Costa Rica	3	2
Finland	2	1
Israel	4	2
Kyrgyzstan	5	4
Madagascar	4	3
Mexico	4	3
Nigeria	5	4

COUNTRY	2024	2023
Qatar	5	4
Russian Federation	5	N/A
Saudi Arabia	5	4
Sudan	5+	5
Switzerland	3	2
Venezuela	5	4



THE 2024 RATINGS

THE 2024 COUNTRY RATINGS



Countries listed in green are improving

Countries listed in red are worsening

Rating 5+ NO GUARANTEE OF RIGHTS DUE TO THE BREAKDOWN OF THE LAW

Afghanistan	Libya	South Sudan
Burundi	Myanmar	Sudan
Central African Republic	Palestine	Syria
Haiti	Somalia	Yemen

Rating 5 NO GUARANTEE OF RIGHTS

Algeria	Hong Kong	Pakistan
Bahrain	India	Philippines
Bangladesh	Indonesia	Qatar
Belarus	Iran	Russian Federation
Cambodia	Iraq	Saudi Arabia
China	Jordan	Thailand
Colombia	Kazakhstan	Tunisia
Ecuador	Korea (Republic of)	Türkiye
Egypt	Kuwait	UAE
Eritrea	Kyrgyzstan	Ukraine
Eswatini	Laos	Venezuela
Guatemala	Malaysia	Zimbabwe
Honduras	Nigeria	

Rating 4 SYSTEMATIC VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

Angola	Congo (Democratic Republic of)	Guinea-Bissau
Benin	Djibouti	Hungary
Botswana	El Salvador	Israel
Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Kenya
Brazil	Fiji	Lebanon
Cameroon	Greece	Lesotho
Chad	Guinea	Liberia

Rating 4 SYSTEMATIC VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

Madagascar	Peru	Trinidad and Tobago
Mali	Senegal	Uganda
Mauritania	Serbia	United Kingdom
Mexico	Sierra Leone	United States of America
North Macedonia	Sri Lanka	Vietnam
Oman	Tanzania	Zambia

Rating 3 REGULAR VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

Albania	Chile	Namibia
Argentina	Congo (Republic of)	Nepal
Armenia	Costa Rica	Niger
Australia	Cote d'Ivoire	Panama
Bahamas	Gabon	Paraguay
Belgium	Georgia	Poland
Belize	Jamaica	Romania
Bolivia	Mauritius	Rwanda
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Montenegro	South Africa
Bulgaria	Morocco	Switzerland
Canada	Mozambique	Togo

Rating 2 REPEATED VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

Barbados	Ghana	New Zealand
Croatia	Japan	Portugal
Czech Republic	Latvia	Singapore
Dominican Republic	Lithuania	Slovakia
Estonia	Malawi	Spain
Finland	Moldova	Taiwan
France	Netherlands	Uruguay

Rating 1 SPORADIC VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

Austria	Iceland	Norway
Denmark	Ireland	Sweden
Germany	Italy	

Countries listed in green are improving

Countries listed in red are worsening

Country-level analysis: changed ratings

Thirteen countries saw their ratings fall in the Index in 2024, demonstrating the increased threat to democratic and workers' rights across the globe and marking a significant acceleration relative to 2023, when nine countries saw their ratings deteriorate. More chilling is the ominous trend that this annual drop echoes, as tracked by the Index since its debut: the number of countries rated 1 (Sporadic violations of rights) has halved from 16 to 8, while the number of countries ranked 5+ (No guarantee of rights due to the breakdown of the rule of law) has seen a significant increase from 8 to 12 since 2014.

Compared to 2023, however, there were glimmers of hope for workers and unions in Brazil and Romania, which saw improved ratings as governments took important action to restore basic, universal rights.

IMPROVED RATING

COUNTRY	2024	2023
Brazil	4	5
Romania	3	4

WORSE RATING

COUNTRY	2024	2023
Costa Rica	3	2
Finland	2	1
Israel	4	2
Kyrgyzstan	5	4
Madagascar	4	3
Mexico	4	3
Nigeria	5	4
Qatar	5	4
Russian Federation	5	N/A
Saudi Arabia	5	4
Sudan	5+	5
Switzerland	3	2
Venezuela	5	4

After a string of regressive and anti-democratic policies introduced by the Bolsonaro administration in **Brazil**, the President Lula-led government took a significant step towards restoring vital social dialogue between workers, employers, and policymakers. In July 2023, the government reinstated and – crucially – made permanent the Joint Tripartite Committee, which had been decommissioned by Bolsonaro. This body is responsible for occupational health and safety guidelines in sectors, including especially hazardous industries such as construction, healthcare and mining.

In **Romania**, unions scored a historic victory after a long campaign to reverse damaging elements of the 2011 Social Dialogue Act. The effects of a reformed 2022 law on collective bargaining and social dialogue filtered through last year and heralded a new chapter in industrial relations. The right to strike has been extended and collective bargaining is now obligatory in companies with more than 10 employees. In April 2023, a new collective agreement for road workers was reached.

Worrying signs as rights are trampled around the world

Despite these encouraging signs, far more countries saw declines on the Index than improvements, including those in Europe – a region often regarded as the global leader in workers' rights. Significantly, **Finland** lost its top-tier Index rating as right-wing Prime Minister Petteri Orpo's coalition proposed reforms that posed an unprecedented attack on the Nordic social model, sparking historic, union-led protests

in early 2024. These plans would limit political strikes to one day, undermine wage negotiation, and cut sickness and unemployment benefits. Meanwhile, in **Switzerland**, which fell from a rating of 2 to 3, an attempt by union leaders to secure better protection against anti-union dismissals ran aground when a tripartite mediation was suspended without explanation by the Federal Council in December 2023.

Authorities in the **Russian Federation** have intensified restrictions on civil rights and liberties, particularly when related to political dissent. Police forces often used disproportionate force and routine arrests to discourage unsanctioned protests, while the courts imposed heavy fines and prison sentences on protestors.

In September 2023, the Office of the Russian Federation Prosecutor General declared the **International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)** an “undesirable organisation”. Then, in February 2024, **IndustriALL**, was targeted. With these decisions, the two global union federations were forced to shutter operations in the country, demonstrating the way in which legislation on foreign agents and foreign influence can be successfully invoked to limit trade union activities.

Several countries in central Asia, Africa, and Latin America slipped down the Index, with workers and unions exposed to shocking levels of violence, state victimisation, and systemic injustice that undermined the ability of trade unions to function at a basic level.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, which saw its rating drop from 4 to 5, trade unionists were arbitrarily detained over several weeks in 2023. The detentions were part of a successful fear-mongering campaign led by the government and state security committee which effectively dismantled the central leadership of the **Federation of Trade Unions of Kyrgyzstan (FPKg)**, as well as that of all sectoral and regional unions. In September and October 2023, a ban on any peaceful gatherings deemed “political” was extended to Uzgen and the Chon-Alai district in the Osh region, marking a further shrinking of the space for freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association. Attacks on journalists and their arrest also occurred over the



Credit: Mihai Barbu / AFP

Romania's rating improved from 4 to 3 as the government restored basic, universal rights. The right to strike has been extended and collective bargaining is now obligatory in companies with more than 10 employees.

year, and civil society organisations and trade unions remain concerned about draft legislation that could be used to further restrict dissent in the country.

Since the presidential elections in February 2023, **Nigeria**'s trade unions and their members have faced repeated interference from state authorities resulting in its rating falling to 5. The government of Imo State attempted to substitute legitimately elected **Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC)** leaders with its own agents, unknown to the trade union movement. On 1 November 2023, a peaceful protest at the NLC Imo State offices against the non-payment of wages and the state's non-compliance with agreed minimum wages was violently disrupted. NLC **President Joe Ajaero** was arrested, blindfolded, beaten, and hospitalised.

Authorities in **Madagascar** brutally dispersed a protest by trade unions and environmental NGOs at the Mandena mining site, run by **QIT Madagascar Minerals (QMM)**, a subsidiary of **Rio Tinto**. The incident resulted in injuries to at least six people and the arrest of over 75 peaceful protesters and five trade unionists, many of whom remain in arbitrary detention. The country's rating has fallen to 4 in 2024.

Mexican workers and trade unionists were regularly exposed to employers' anti-union practices and busting, and the country's rating has dropped to 4 because of such violations. In July 2023, **Víctor Licona Cervantes, General Secretary of the Sindicato Único de Trabajadores al Servicio del Poder Ejecutivo del Estado de Hidalgo (SUTSPEEH)**, was arrested on his way to address his union's general assembly. To date, he has been denied the most basic rights, including visits from family, friends, and fellow union members.

In **Venezuela**, which dropped to 5 in its violations rating, the authorities continued to target trade unionists through arbitrary arrests and sentencing on fabricated charges, while organising and rights were further obstructed. In August 2023, in a trial devoid of any proof or testimony, a Caracas court dished out a 16-year sentence for conspiracy and association to commit a crime to **Gabriel Blanco, Director of Communications** of the Caracas branch of the national trade union centre **Alianza Sindical Independiente (ASI)**. Trade union activists and human rights defenders **Emilio Negrín, Reynaldo Cortés Gutiérrez, Alcides Bracho, Alonso Meléndez** and **Néstor Astudillo** received the same sentence. Unionists believe the move was in retaliation for wage increase demands. The six were released

in December 2023 but remain subject to measures that limit their ability to carry out their union duties. **Israel's** rating dropped from 2 to 4 in 2024, as the country launched a war against Hamas in retaliation for its horrifying 7 October attack. The ongoing military campaign has left Gaza and its population devastated and has seen the indiscriminate revocation of work permits and mass detention of Gazan workers in Israel in the wake of the 7 October attack.

ILO estimates published at the end of 2023 indicated that a minimum of 66 per cent of employment in Gaza and 24 per cent in the West Bank had been lost because of Israel's bombing campaign.

Despite being members of the ILO, **Qatar** and **Saudi Arabia** have failed to deliver to a satisfactory level on their commitments to improve the plight of migrant workers. As a result of their continuing violations against workers, both country's saw their rating fall to 5. Workers in Qatar, for example, are supposed to be able to freely move between jobs, but – according to the ILO – a third of more than a million applications to change jobs between September 2020 and October 2023 were rejected.

Switzerland's rating moved down to 3, confirming that workers in the country face regular violations of their labour rights.

Credit: Fabrice Coffrini / AFP



WORST REGION IN THE WORLD

Middle East and North Africa:	4.74
Asia-Pacific:	4.13
Africa:	3.88
Americas:	3.56
Europe:	2.73



Credit: Marwan Naamani / AFP

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Middle East and North Africa remains the worst region in the world for working people with a rating of 4.74. Qatar has thus far failed to deliver on its commitments to improve conditions for migrant workers. Although migrant workers are supposedly able to freely move between jobs, according to the ILO, a third of more than a million requests to do so were rejected between September 2020 and October 2023.

4.74

5+ 5 4 3 2 1



Right to strike

95% of countries violated the right to strike.



Right to collective bargaining

100% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining.



Right to establish and join a trade union

100% of countries excluded workers from the right to establish or join a trade union.



Right to trade union activities

100% of countries impeded the registration of unions.



Right to justice

In 84% of countries, workers had no or restricted access to justice.



Right to free speech and assembly

89% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.



Right to civil liberties

53% of countries arrested and detained workers.



Violent attacks on workers

Workers experienced violence in 42% of countries.

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) continued to rank as the world's worst region for workers' rights with an average rating of 4.74, marking a significant and alarming deterioration from 4.53 in 2023. Every single country in this region has excluded workers from the right to establish or join a trade union, violated the right to collective bargaining, and impeded the registration of unions. A total of 95% of MENA countries have violated the right to strike.

This year, the ratings of **Israel**, **Qatar**, and **Saudi Arabia** worsened.

The region was paralysed by conflict and a resulting breakdown of the rule of law. In these desperate conditions, no guarantee of fundamental labour rights was possible in **Libya**, **Palestine**, **Syria**, and **Yemen**. The impact of conflicts around the world is explored later in this report.

A region blighted by oppressive labour policies

Freedom of association and the right of workers to freely organise were routinely violated, leaving millions without the most basic labour protections, as could be seen in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the **United Arab Emirates**. Governments in **Algeria** and **Egypt** attempted to undermine the vital independence of the trade union movement through laborious registration procedures, while in Libya, authorities established a union monopoly under a government-led national confederation.

Despite much-heralded commitments to improve conditions, most Gulf countries, including Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, continued to exclude migrants – who make up the vast majority of their workforces – from labour protection, leaving them vulnerable to abuse by unscrupulous employers. In a positive move, **Oman** took steps to guarantee better working conditions and improve its framework for industrial relations, including shorter working hours, increased sick leave, maternity leave and paternity leave, better employment contract protection, and a prohibition for employers to keep their workers' passports. Strike regulation has been eased and a tripartite committee for the resolution of collective disputes established.



Credit: Jung Yeon-je / AFP

ASIA-PACIFIC

4.13



Asia-Pacific is one of the worst regions for working people, with an average rating of 4.13. May Day protests called for workers' rights to be respected in the Republic of Korea, where trade unions face systematic persecution and harassment, including through vexatious litigation.



Right to strike

91% of countries violated the right to strike.



Right to collective bargaining

83% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining.



Right to establish and join a trade union

87% of countries excluded workers from the right to establish or join a trade union.



Right to trade union activities

91% of countries impeded the registration of unions.



Right to justice

In 70% of countries, workers had no or restricted access to justice.



Right to civil liberties

78% of countries arrested and detained workers.



Right to free speech and assembly

61% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.



Violent attacks on workers

Workers experienced violence in 48% of countries.



Deaths

Deaths of workers linked to their union activities were recorded in **Bangladesh**, the **Philippines** and the **Republic of Korea**.

Asia-Pacific remained the second-worst region for workers' rights, with an average rating of 4.13 – a negligible improvement on 2023. About nine in 10 countries across the region excluded workers from the right to establish or join a trade union, violated the right to strike and impeded the registration of unions.

Prominent trade union leaders regularly faced persecution and harassment across the region. Unionists in **Cambodia**, **Iran**, and **Myanmar** were arrested and received heavy sentences on spurious charges. Authorities violently repressed strikes in **Bangladesh**, while the government of the **Republic of Korea** continued to target unions through the illegitimate use of public prosecutors and the criminalisation of union activities. Protests were systematically disrupted by police and trade union members were beaten up. Three years after the 2021

military coup, the junta in Myanmar continued to crack down on the independent trade union movement.

In **Indonesia**, unions campaigned against the infamous Omnibus Law which removes minimum wage protection for almost all Indonesian workers and exempts micro and small enterprises from the obligation to engage in collective bargaining in a country where around 97 per cent of workers are employed by micro, small or medium firms.

Afghanistan continued to be faced with a deeply entrenched humanitarian crisis, heavily impacting workers' welfare and prospects. The ILO estimates that job losses following the Taliban's return to power in August 2021 have totalled more than 900,000 in a year. Youth and women workers were most affected: women are no longer allowed to work.



Credit: Tony KARUMBA / AFP

AFRICA

The Africa region had an average rating of 3.88, with trade unions continuing to be faced with violent repression. In Nairobi, a peaceful protest by the Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union (KMPDU) was violently disrupted by police.



Right to strike

93% of countries violated the right to strike.



Right to collective bargaining

93% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining.



Right to establish and join a trade union

93% of countries excluded workers from the right to establish or join a trade union.



Right to trade union activities

79% of countries impeded the registration of unions.



Right to justice

In 81% of countries, workers had no or restricted access to justice.



Right to free speech and assembly

49% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.



Right to civil liberties

49% of countries arrested and detained workers.



Violent attacks on workers

Workers experienced violence in 37% of countries.

Conditions for workers and unions in Africa remained broadly unchanged on a regional level from 2023, with an average rating of 3.88. More than 90% of countries in the region excluded workers from the right to establish or join a trade union and violated the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike.

This year, the ratings of **Madagascar**, **Nigeria**, and **Sudan** worsened.

In economies largely reliant on the informal sector (87% of all employment in sub-Saharan Africa), workers were routinely excluded from labour protections and could not exercise their right to form and join trade unions.

There were flagrant examples of union busting in **Guinea** and Madagascar, threats of and dismissal of striking workers in **Burkina Faso** and **Cameroon**, and police attacks against striking workers in **Kenya** and **South Africa**.

In **Burundi**, civil liberties were heavily suppressed as the ruling party continued to strengthen its control over institutions and to weaken and quash political opposition. **Central African Republic**, **Somalia** and Sudan remained deeply afflicted by conflicts and humanitarian crises, which eroded access to livelihoods and working conditions.

In **South Sudan**, the human rights and humanitarian situation further deteriorated due to ongoing conflict, and public service workers have not been paid since August 2023.

Recent coups in Western African countries have also severely affected trade union activities and civil liberties. In Burkina Faso, for example, tripartite social dialogue has been frozen since the High Council for Social Dialogue (Haut Conseil du Dialogue Social) was abolished. In **Chad** and **Gabon**, strikes and protests have been suppressed by the military regimes with trade unions no longer able to operate freely.



AMERICAS

With a rating of 3.56, the Americas is the deadliest region in the world for trade unionists and almost 90% of countries surveyed violated the right to strike. However, in the USA, despite fierce resistance from the company, the staff of at least 385 Starbucks locations voted to unionise.



Right to strike

88% of countries violated the right to strike.



Right to collective bargaining

80% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining.



Right to establish and join a trade union

68% of countries excluded workers from the right to establish or join a trade union.



Right to trade union activities

88% of countries impeded the registration of unions.



Right to justice

In 76% of countries, workers had no or restricted access to justice.



Right to free speech and assembly

28% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.



Right to civil liberties

52% of countries arrested and detained workers.



Violent attacks on workers

Workers experienced violence in 44% of countries.



Deaths

Workers were killed in **Colombia, Guatemala, and Honduras**.

While the average rating for the Americas was broadly unchanged at 3.56, the region remained the deadliest for workers and unionists, with 16 killings recorded in 2023-2024. Almost 90% of countries in the region violated the right to strike and impeded the registration of trade unions.

While **Brazil**'s rating improved under the Lula administration, the ratings of **Costa Rica, Mexico, and Venezuela** worsened.

Trade unionists and workers faced death threats, attacks, and targeted assassinations in **Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Honduras**. Exploitative employers in Costa Rica, Honduras, and **Panama** engaged in union busting, especially in sectors where workers were already vulnerable to abusive working conditions. Arbitrary arrests and prosecutions of unionists, intended to muzzle the independent trade union movement, were commonplace in Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela.

In 2024, the armed gangs spreading terror and chaos in **Haiti** stepped up coordinated attacks on state institutions and gained further control of communities. Haiti's government declared a state of emergency, leaving conditions for workers in disarray.

However, in the **United States of America**, workers and trade unions scored big wins in 2023. The **United Auto Workers (UAW)** organised a coordinated strike, which led to pay increases and other concessions from Detroit automakers. Workers from at least 385 **Starbucks** locations voted to unionise despite fierce opposition from the company, leading to a process towards collective bargaining. In historic strikes against Hollywood studios, screenwriters, actors and related workers won pay raises and restrictions on the use of artificial intelligence.



Credit: Jessica Gow / TT News Agency via AFP

EUROPE

2.73

5+ 5 4 3 2 1

Europe's average rating worsened from 2.56 to 2.73 in 2024, continuing a long-term deterioration from its rating of 1.84 in 2014. Workers' rights were further eroded across the continent, including in Sweden where members of the IF Metall union were forced to take strike action for a collective bargaining agreement at Tesla's manufacturing plant.



Right to strike

73% of countries violated the right to strike.



Right to collective bargaining

54% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining.



Right to establish and join a trade union

41% of countries excluded workers from the right to establish or join a trade union.



Right to trade union activities

39% of countries impeded the registration of unions.



32%

Right to justice

In 32% of countries, workers had no or restricted access to justice.



15%

Right to free speech and assembly

15% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.



29%

Right to civil liberties

Workers were detained and arrested in 29% of countries.



9%

Violent attacks on workers

Workers experienced violent attacks in 9% of countries.

In a further sign that right-wing governments and employers are continuing to clamp down on the independent union movement, Europe's average rating worsened from 2.56 to 2.73 as working conditions deteriorated and workers' rights were further eroded. About seven in 10 countries in the region violated the internationally recognised right to strike last year.

Given the region scored 1.84 rating when the Index began, this sustained fall marks the worst deterioration since 2014 among all regions. This worrying trend indicates that Europe is in the throes of a concerted attack on workers' rights and the trade union movement, led by right-wing and populist governments and pressure from the business community. The region's decline is also impacting nations once held as global leaders in workers' rights, such as the Nordic countries.

The ratings of **Finland**, **Kyrgyzstan**, the **Russian Federation** (since its last rating in 2021) and **Switzerland** worsened, while **Romania** improved its rating.

Contributing to the general deterioration across the region were the criminalisation of strikes and the stigmatisation of strikers in **Belgium** and **France**, as

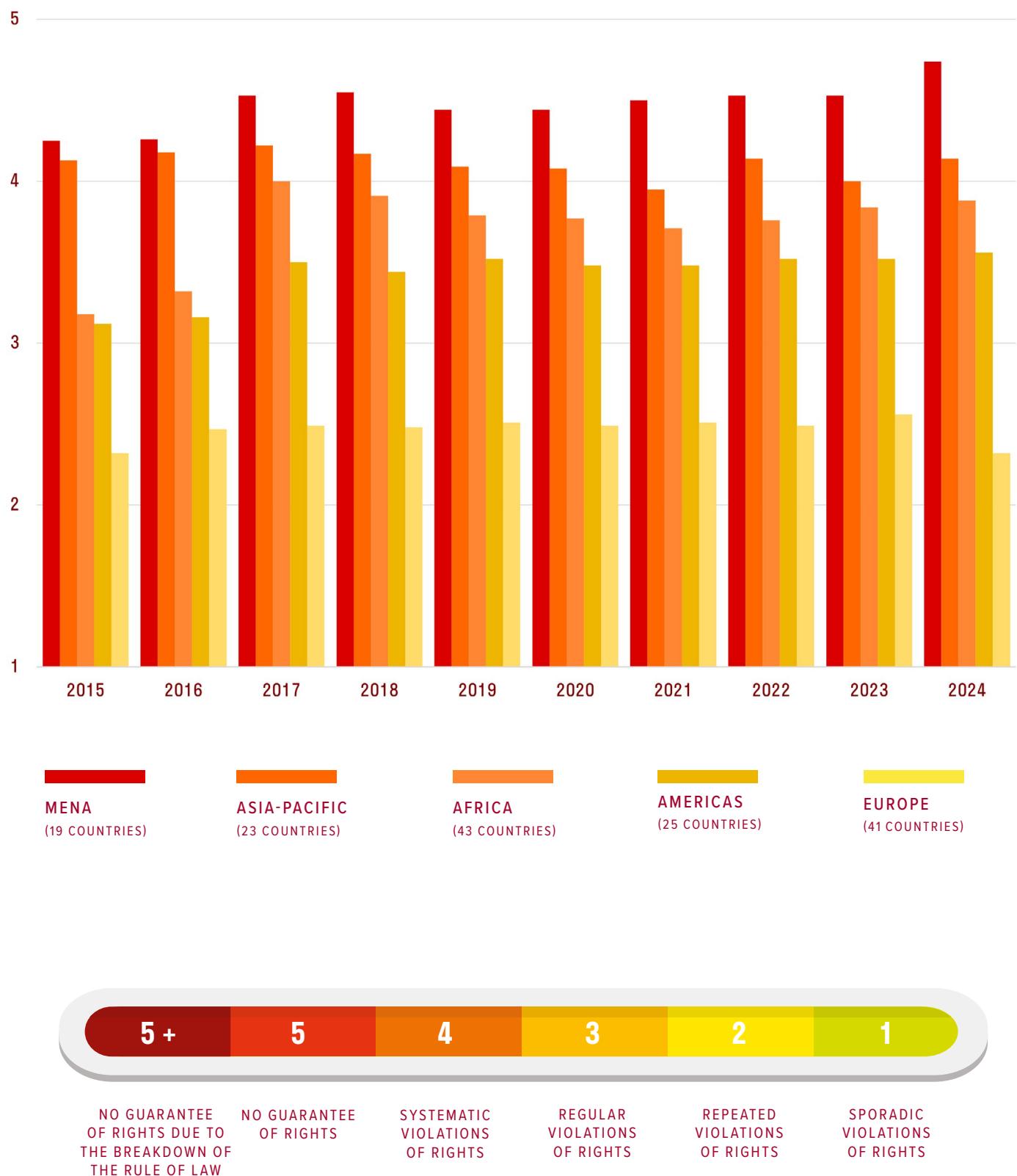
well as the use of an excessively broad definition of essential services to restrict or ban strikes in **Albania**, **Hungary**, **Moldova**, **Montenegro**, and the **United Kingdom**.

Employers in **Armenia** and **Poland** meddled in union elections, while yellow unions were created in Armenia, **Greece**, the **Netherlands**, and **North Macedonia** to thwart independent worker representation.

In **Sweden**, **Tesla** refused to engage in collective bargaining with **IF Metall**, leading to strike action in October 2023 and a historic show of solidarity from unions in Sweden and neighbouring countries aimed at protecting a core pillar of the Nordic social model.

In **Bulgaria**, the **Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Bulgaria (CITUB)** won a 25-year battle to have it guaranteed in law that criminal charges could be brought against any employer found to be violating trade union rights. Trade unions have lauded the introduction of the sanctions as providing robust protections to workers and unionists.

10-YEAR TRENDS: REGIONAL RATINGS



THE WORLD'S 10 WORST COUNTRIES FOR WORKERS



Credit: STR / NurPhoto via AFP

BANGLADESH

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- State repression
- Violence
- Anti-union policies

For years, Bangladeshi workers have faced severe state repression, including violent crackdowns on peaceful protests by the notorious Industrial Police, and intimidation aimed at preventing the formation of unions.

In 2023, several workers in the dominant garment sector, were killed by police during protests and a union leader was murdered. Strikes were met with brutality by police and attempts to form unions for the sector's 4.5m workers were obstructed by a draconian registration process which saw 50 per cent of applications rejected.

UNION LEADER MURDERED AFTER DISPUTE NEGOTIATION

Shahidul Islam, a prominent trade union leader of the **Bangladesh Garment and Industrial Workers Federation (BGIWF)**, was murdered in Gazipur on 25 April 2023 after visiting the **Prince Jacquard Sweaters** factory to address a dispute over unpaid wages. On leaving the factory, he and other union officials were brutally attacked by a gang. Islam died as result of his injuries and three colleagues were injured.

Union activity is obstructed and blocked within Bangladesh's eight Export Processing Zones. Attempts by the 4.5 million workers in these zones to peacefully demand improved working conditions are often violently obstructed by the country's Industrial Police force.

PROTESTING WORKERS KILLED BY POLICE

On 30 October 2023, garment workers from factories in Dhaka clashed with police while protesting for increases to the minimum wage after a paltry government offer. A 25-year-old maintenance machinist, **Md Rasel Hawlader**, who worked at **Design Express**, was shot and killed by police. Despite not even having participated in the protest, Hawlader was nonetheless chased and gunned down by the police after leaving work.

Strikes continued in November, forcing the closure of at least 100 factories. On 9 November, up to 25,000 garment workers clashed with police who fired live bullets and charged protesters with batons and tear gas. **Anjuara Khatun**, a 26-year-old machine operator at **Islam Garments**, was shot dead. Hundreds of garment workers involved in the strikes were badly injured.



Credit: IndustriAll

BELARUS

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Systemic repression
- Unjustified detention of activists
- Arbitrary dissolution of unions

There are currently 42 trade union leaders and members wrongfully detained or imprisoned, with others having been forced into exile.

Since April 2022, the Belarusian government further escalated repression against independent trade unions: intimidating, arresting, and detaining union leaders and members, forcibly dissolving unions, raiding offices, and confiscating properties. Currently, 42 union leaders and members have been wrongfully detained or imprisoned, and many more are deprived of their rights and freedoms. Those who are released by the authorities find themselves branded as ‘extremists’ and treated like pariahs in society.

The shocking decline of trade union rights and civil and political freedoms has prompted the International Labour Conference (ILC) to adopt a resolution on Article 33 of the ILO Constitution, the highest level of ILO supervision, to secure the government’s compliance with the recommendations of an ILO Commission of Inquiry.

MASS, SPURIOUS ARRESTS OF WORKERS

The government ruthlessly victimised opponents and employees it deemed “disloyal to the regime”. An employee of the **OJSC Belarusian Steel Works** was arrested and brought to court in Navapolatsk on charges that included “insulting the President of the Republic of Belarus”. On 5 February 2024, he was charged with “incitement of racial, national, religious or other social enmity or discord”, which carries a maximum sentence of five years.

Similar targeted arrests took place throughout 2023 and continued in 2024. In February 2024, law enforcers detained at least three employees of **Gazprom Transgaz Belarus**. They were forced to sign statements admitting their involvement in “support of protest sentiments”, possession of “protest symbols”, and reposting materials from “extremist” Telegram channels.

UNION LEADERS DETAINED IN DEPLORABLE CONDITIONS

Since 2020’s rigged presidential elections, inhumane conditions of detention have been imposed on political detainees, including trade unionists. Detainees in crowded prisons are denied basic hygiene products, changes of clothes, and bedding. They are not allowed to shower or access fresh air and lights are left on continuously day and night.

Aliaksandr Yarashuk, the **President of Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions (BKDP)**, was sentenced to four years’ imprisonment on 27 December 2022. He is currently in a “strict regime” prison in Mogilev where he is kept in a cell for 23 hours a day and allowed just one four-hour visit and one item of post per year.



Credit: CEOSL

ECUADOR

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Death threats
- Union busting and obstruction
- Draconian, unilateral policy-making

In Ecuador, workers attempting to form or join a trade union faced death threats and dismissals in a pervasive, dangerous anti-union climate.

Employers are free to interfere with impunity in trade union formation. Workers at **Energy & Palma Energopalma S.A.**, a palm oil processing plant, received death threats for attempting to create a union. A yellow union was created by the employer to thwart any attempt at genuine representation. In another case, 26 workers employed by the country's civil service were dismissed for attempting to set up a union.

On top of a restrictive legal framework for unions, authorities regularly rejected applications for union registration without justification. The National Committee on Labour and Wages, which should operate as a tripartite body, issued recommendations for law reforms and labour policies without input from trade unions.

In Ecuador, workers attempting to form or join a trade union face death threats and dismissals. The pervasive anti-union climate severely hampers the development of independent and strong trade unions in the country.

DEATH THREATS AGAINST BANANA WORKERS' REPRESENTATIVES

In October 2023, **Diana Montoya** and her colleagues, **Maricela Guzmán** and **Miriam Ternoz**, coordinators of the **Asociación Sindical de Trabajadores Bananeros Agrícolas y Campesinos (ASTAC)**, denounced the death threats they received for their work on behalf of the banana workers' union, and criticised the government for its failure to protect workers and enabling the continuing lack of effective judicial investigations to continue unchecked.

UNION BUSTING AT A PLASTICS COMPANY

Throughout 2023, **Industrial y Comercial Trilex CA**, a plastics company, persecuted and dismissed leaders and members of the **Federación Sindical Independiente de los Trabajadores del Ecuador (FESITRAE)**. The company's anti-union actions included supporting the creation of a yellow union, made up mainly of management personnel, ignoring a negotiated collective agreement, and pressuring union leaders to resign in exchange for severance pay.



EGYPT

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- State interference
- Obstruction to union registration
- Repressive policies

In Egypt, the number of independent trade unions has dropped to 150 from 1,500 in 2018 when they were dissolved by the authorities. Attempts by trade unions to be re-registered have been systematically obstructed by the authorities, leaving Egyptian workers without representation.

2024 has seen an increase in interference by the authorities in trade union affairs, including through the imposition of complex regulations on elections, membership requirements, statutes, and internal procedures. Union accounts were subjected to the vexatious scrutiny of a central accounting body with extensive powers to interfere in trade union finances.

Employers exacerbated this hostile environment, resorting to disciplinary sanctions and dismissals to punish striking workers and weaken unions.

OBSTACLES TO UNION RE-REGISTRATION

Since the dissolution of all independent unions in 2018, workers and their representatives have sought the re-registration of their unions. However, the authorities have imposed excessive and absurd registration requirements, such as the need to obtain the employer's approval and stamp. As of March 2024,

at least 14 independent trade unions still awaited official recognition and another 11 were impeded by the authorities from holding their elections, leaving workers without representation and depriving them of their right to collective bargaining. It is estimated that, since 2018, the number of independent trade unions in Egypt has decreased from 1,500 to only about 150.

STATE CRACKDOWN ON CIVIL LIBERTIES

At least 11 unionists were arbitrarily imprisoned for attempting to exercise their basic freedoms, including the right to strike. Article 194 of the Labour Law explicitly prohibited strikes in strategic or critical institutions. In practice, the authorities were seen to adopt a very broad interpretation of the definition of "essential services" and "national security" to curb collective action. Workers arrested for exercising their basic, internationally accepted rights were liable to heavy sentencing, including forced labour in prisons.



Credit: IndustriALL

ESWATINI

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Suppression of right to association and assembly
- Arbitrary persecution of union leaders

The government systematically undermined the rule of law and failed to root out corruption. Freedom of expression was severely curtailed, with the media firmly under the control of the King. The brutal suppression of the right to association and assembly is indicative of the difficult conditions facing individuals, trade unions, and civil society organisations. Union leaders and human rights activists were relentlessly persecuted.

SWATCAWU GENERAL SECRETARY ON “WANTED” LIST

After being placed on a ‘wanted’ list by the government, **Sticks Nkambule**, the **General Secretary** of the **Swaziland Transport, Communication and Allied Workers’ Union (SWATCAWU)**, is still in hiding. He was forced into exile 18 months ago, when his name was published by the police as a wanted person for alleged

criminal conduct. He now faces a baseless contempt charge, and this marks the latest move to silence him following an assassination attempt and a police raid at his house that took place in 2022.

TEACHERS’ UNION PRESIDENT FIRED FOR UNION ACTIVITY

On 29 August 2023, **Mbongwa Ernest Dlamini**, **President** of the **Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT)**, was dismissed from his teaching role by the Teaching Service Commission for alleged absenteeism due to his union activities. Since 2020, Dlamini has been subjected to an increasing span of harassment, from work transfers to suspension, a reduction in his salary, and threats to his life that culminated in a gun attack.



Credit: Johan Ordóñez / AFP

GUATEMALA

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Atmosphere of fear and intimidation
- Murder and death threats
- Union busting

May Day demonstrations took place in Guatemala where trade unions continue their work under threat of severe violence, abduction and murder.

Guatemala has long been plagued by endemic violence against workers. Engaging in the most basic of trade union activities remained a matter of life and death, and the government failed to provide protection to trade unionists or to investigate and prosecute anti-union crimes. Employers were free to engage in union-busting practices, such as summary dismissals.

MURDER OF DORIS LISSETH ALDANA CALDERON

On 4 October 2023, the 33-year-old mother of four, **Doris Lisseth Aldana Calderón**, was brutally murdered while travelling home from work in the banana producing region of Izabal, northern Guatemala. Doris was a leader of the **Sindicato de Trabajadores Bananeros de Izabal (SITRABI)**, and a member of the union's Women's Committee. She was one of two trade union representatives at her workplace, **Bandegua**, a subsidiary of the global brand **Del Monte**. Her trade union colleague was dismissed in early September.

FACTORY CLOSED TO DETER UNION ORGANISING

In March 2023, workers at **Industrial Hana**, a garment factory operating as an Export Processing Zone (EPZ) company, formally established the trade union **Sindicato de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras de la Empresa Industrial Hana (SITRIHANA)** and moved to have it registered. A week later, brands in the **Republic of Korea** that outsourced to Industrial Hana hastily withdrew their production without any justification and, because of this, the employment contracts for 235 workers were suspended. This move was seen as an attempt to avoid collective bargaining and thereby allow companies to continue to exploit workers in non-unionised factories for low-cost production.

In August 2023, the Ministry of Labour organised a mediation between SITRIHANA and Industrial Hana to discuss the non-recognition of the trade union by the company, the illegal suspension of contracts, and the non-payment of wages and other benefits. No agreement could be reached. In October 2023, Industrial Hana declared bankruptcy and refused to pay wages and other benefits, worth approximately US\$ 1.5m, owed to workers, who subsequently filed a lawsuit against the company.



Credit: Martin Keep / AFP

MYANMAR

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Arbitrary arrests and detentions
- Violent oppression of strike action
- Near-abolition of freedom of association

The situation for unions and workers has remained dire following the military takeover in 2021, with trade unionists the continuous target of arrests, abuse, and detentions. Executive members of the **Confederation of Trade Unions Myanmar (CTUM)** were targeted and an executive of the **Agricultural and Farmers Federation of Myanmar (AFFM), Moe Gyi**, was imprisoned and subjected to physical abuse.

More than 300 union members and activists have been arrested since 2021. The junta has banned nearly all unions, effectively wiping out the fundamental right of freedom of association. In response, two EU companies have announced that they will exit Myanmar.

There were reports of escalating threats and oppression against workers negotiating wage increases, including those employed in a large factory serving international brands, involving forced labour, overtime disputes, non-payment for weekend overtime, and denied leave requests.

RE-ARREST OF PROMINENT UNION LEADER

Thet Hnin Aung, general secretary of Myanmar Industry Crafts and Services Trade Union Federation (MICS-TUsF), had been arrested by the military authorities in June 2021 and sentenced

to two years' imprisonment with hard labour and a fine. He was released on 26 June 2023 only to be immediately re-arrested. He was then abducted and held incommunicado by the military for five months. In November 2023, he was sentenced, without legal representation, to seven years' imprisonment with hard labour on terrorism charges.

MILITARY BREAKS STRIKE AT GARMENT FACTORY

On 14 June 2023, five union leaders – **Ma Aung Aung, Ma Thandar Aye, Ma Ayr Thandar Htay, Ma May Thu Min, and Ma Thu Thu San** – employed at the **Hosheng (Myanmar) Garment Factory** in Yangon – were arrested by the military council after leading a protest for a pay rise of 800 kyats (US\$ 0.38) per day. The five leaders and two other protestors were dismissed from their jobs just days before their arrest as a result of calling for this wage increase. On 12 and 13 June, more than 600 workers protested the firing of their union's executive committee. On 13 June, officials and military officers told the striking workers they could negotiate with factory management and following that meeting, union leader Ma Thu Thu San was taken into custody while the four other leaders were arrested. There has been no contact with Ma Thu Thu San since her arrest and concerns for her safety are increasing.

Protestors demonstrate against the coup in Myanmar in an act of solidarity during the Australia-ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) summit in Melbourne, March 2024.



Credit: Jann Bonifacio / NurPhoto via AFP

THE PHILIPPINES

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Murder of unionists
- Obstacles to union formation
- Climate of fear, violence, and intimidation

Workers in Manila, the Philippines, demonstrated to demand decent wages and respect for workers' rights. Trade unionists in the country remain vulnerable to violent attacks, abductions and arbitrary arrests.

Workers and unions in the Philippines remained at the mercy of red tagging (being blacklisted by the government as a communist subversive and branded an extremist), violence, abductions, and arbitrary arrests. In 2023, two prominent trade unionists were murdered. The government fostered a climate of fear and persecution, silencing the collective voice of workers. Workers across many sectors still faced significant obstacles when attempting to form trade unions.

MURDER OF ALEX DOLOROSA

On 24 April 2023, the body of labour rights defender **Alex Dolorosa**, a call centre organiser with the BPO **Industry Employee Network (BIEN)**, was found in Bacolod City. He had been stabbed multiple times. While the Department of Justice instructed the National Bureau of Investigation to investigate this brutal murder, the circumstances surrounding the killing remain unclear and no arrest has been made. In his union

work, Dolorosa was part of a mass filing of complaints against forced overtime in May 2019 and had since then continued to gain support from the call-centre community for continually standing up for their rights despite the constant fear of retaliation.

MURDER OF JUDE THADDEUS FERNANDEZ

Jude Thaddeus Fernandez, a 67-year-old organiser from the **Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU)** trade union centre, was shot dead on 29 September 2023 during a police raid on the house where he was staying in Binangonan, Rizal Province. The Philippine National Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group later claimed that Fernandez had resisted the exercise of a search warrant as a justification for the shooting, even though he was unarmed. The allegation against the unionist was strongly refuted by the KMU. Fernandez is the 72nd victim of labour-related killings since July 2016.



Credit: Chedly Ben Ibrahim / NurPhoto via AFP

TUNISIA

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Risk of arrest and imprisonment
- Social media abuse
- Further erosion of basic rights

In Tunisia, the government further restricted civil liberties and harassed and persecuted trade union leaders. The authorities adopted Decree No. 54, which penalises the mere expression of dissent, protest or demand with a prison sentence of up to five years and a fine of TND 50,244 (US\$ 16,279). The decree was applied with maximum rigour by the authorities. With this penalty dangling over their heads, trade union activists daring to carry out their normal duties are at constant risk of arrest and harsh sentencing.

Meanwhile, the **Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail (UGTT)** monitored dozens of social media pages dedicated to attacking the organisation and demonising trade union work and trade unionists. On 3 May 2023, the Public Prosecution referred **Nasser Ben Amara**, the **General Secretary** of the **Syndicat de base des agents et cadres du ministère des Affaires culturelles** to prison for a post on Facebook criticising the President

of the Republic. In the ensuing court case, he was cleared of the allegations of contempt by a public officer in the performance of his or her duties.

ARREST OF TRADE UNION LEADER

Taher Mezzi, Deputy General Secretary in charge of the private sector in the **UGTT**, was arrested on 29 February 2024 in what, according to the UGTT, was “a purely political decision and a fabricated affair”. While calling for Mezzi’s release and for the case to be dropped, the UGTT considers that the arrest, which came just before a scheduled protest movement in La Kasbah, was aimed at weakening and threatening the union, and hindering the independent trade union movement overall.



Credit: Mert Can Baklumez / Middle East Images via AFP

TÜRKİYE

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Suppression of civil liberties
- Union busting
- Baseless prosecutions of unionists
- Threats of violence

For years, the freedoms and rights of Turkish workers have been relentlessly attacked. Civil liberties have been crushed and trade unions and their members have been systematically targeted, particularly through prosecution on fabricated charges.

Employers continued to engage in union busting by methodically dismissing workers who attempted to unionise. In a climate of fear and under the constant threat of retaliation, workers struggled to unite and form unions.

TRADE UNION LEADER SHOT

On 12 February 2024, as he was visiting the **Akar Tekstil** factory, **Makum Alagöz**, President of the **Leather Weaving and Textile Workers' Union (DERITEKS)**, was shot in the leg. Alagöz, who had been called in to negotiate unpaid wages and benefits, following the factory's declaration of insolvency, was attacked by Onur Akar, the brother of Akar Tekstil-owner Hayrettin Akar. While Alagöz escaped with minor injuries, the assault was a chilling reminder of a hostile anti-union climate.

May Day 2023 demonstrations in Istanbul, Türkiye, led to clashes between police and protestors, many of whom were arrested.

The workers' protests focused on the continuing cost-of-living crisis, as well as the exploitative labour practices that are endemic in Türkiye, one of the worst countries in the world for working people.

HEALTH WORKER UNION MEMBERS' TRIAL

Türkiye's **Health and Social Service Workers Union (SES)** has been on trial due to its trade union activities since May 2021. The current and former co-presidents, **Selma Atabey** and **Gonul Erden**, were arrested after a dawn raid on the union's office and the two women were charged with terrorism. The pair have since been released, because of international and national solidarity campaigns, but several other union activists remain under house arrest and criminal charges against them remain active.

Ahead of a court hearing on 2 October 2023, unions representing millions of workers shared solidarity messages on social media, demanding that the Ministry of Justice drop all the charges. At the hearing, the judge merely postponed proceedings to 20 December, prompting the union to announce it would not give up until all the unionists were freed.

MOST VIOLATED RIGHTS IN THE WORLD

The Global Rights Index tracks the key elements of workplace democracy in 151 countries, including freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, the right to strike, and the right to free speech and assembly, which together symbolise a healthy democracy.

These are the nine workers' rights that were most frequently violated over the past year in the 151 countries surveyed. The Index covered 149 countries in 2023 and 139 in 2014, when it began.

Threats to the right to strike

Strikes have been restricted or banned in 131 countries (87%), many of which are signatories to related ILO Conventions. Since the inception of the Index in 2014, the number of countries violating this internationally recognised right has rocketed by 44, far outstripping the increase in countries featured in the survey which have risen by 12.

Industrial action was brutally repressed by police and military forces across the world – for example, in **Bangladesh** – and workers and trade union members exercising their right to strike faced criminal prosecution and retaliatory dismissals, as witnessed in the palm oil sector in **Côte d'Ivoire**.

In many countries, national laws on strike actions imposed disproportionate restrictions on this fundamental right of workers, including those in **Algeria**, **Armenia**, **Costa Rica**, **Senegal**, and **Thailand**. Some

governments issued orders to unduly limit strikes in public services, such as in **Italy**. In **Cameroon**, the government responded to a nationwide strike in the education sector with intimidation and threats of disciplinary action against striking teachers.

CAMBODIA

On 25 May 2023, nine leaders of the **Labour Rights Supported Union of Khmer Employees of NagaWorld (LRSU)**, including **President Chhim Sithar**, were sentenced to two years' imprisonment on charges of "incitement to commit a felony" for engaging in a peaceful strike in opposition to union busting at **NagaWorld** casino in Phnom Penh in April 2021. The strike was organised in response to the company having sacked 1,329 workers, 1,100 of whom were LRSU union members.

FRANCE

Workers' rights and the right to strike in **France** have been under constant attack in recent years. The 2023 mass protests against pension reforms were violently suppressed by the police, and in April 2023, the French government also attempted to extend its "anti-squat" law to criminalise occupations and picketing on company premises. Following the pension protests, more than 1,000 of the **Confédération Générale du Travail's (CGT)** members face legal action over their role in the demonstrations.

On 6 September 2023, **Sébastien Menesplier**, the **General Secretary** of the mining and energy union, **Fédération nationale des mines et de l'énergie (FNME)**, and a member of the leadership of the national federation, **Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT)**, was summoned by police for "having committed or attempted to commit the offence of endangering others by deliberate violation of a regulatory obligation of safety or prudence" in connection with actions taken by energy workers to protest pension reforms.

While other trade union activists had faced similar treatment, Menesplier's summons marked the first instance of a confederal leader being interrogated by the police on public safety charges for engaging in trade union activism.

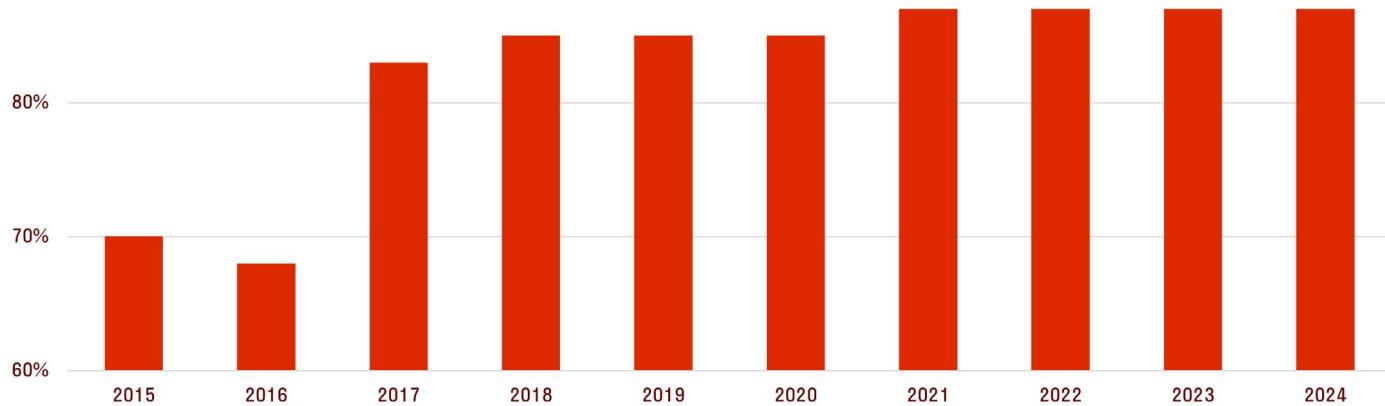


Credit: Sébastien Bozon / AFP

France was one of 131 countries that violated the right to strike by prosecuting trade union members who took part in last year's mass protests against changes to pension laws.

On 8 December 2023, **Myriam Lebkiri**, a CGT board member, was summoned to a police station on charges that amounted to "judicial harassment", according to the federation's chief Sophie Binet. Binet warned of the real harm to union activity that such actions would have.

10-YEAR TRENDS: COUNTRIES THAT VIOLATE THE RIGHT TO STRIKE



Erosion of collective bargaining

In 2024, workers' right to collective bargaining was seriously curtailed or even non-existent in 120 countries (79%) – an increase of 33 over the last decade.

Across every region, governments refused to engage with trade unions on labour and socio-economic law reforms and policies, as in **Mauritania**, and they excluded or reduced the participation of unions in national tripartite bodies, such as in **Italy**. Employers exploited weak laws and poor public oversight and enforcement to avoid collective bargaining, often using delaying tactics, refusing to enter negotiations with workers' representatives and even concluding agreements with employer-backed unions or non-representative bodies, as witnessed in European countries including **Greece** and the **Netherlands**.

Companies also used subcontracting as a strategy to avoid collective bargaining and to unilaterally impose wages and poor safety and health conditions, as seen in the mining sector in the **Democratic Republic of Congo** or in **South Africa**'s garment industry.

SRI LANKA

In an attempt to weaken trade union strength, the Sri Lankan government decided, in May 2023, to arbitrarily remove four trade unions from the reconstituted tripartite National Labour Advisory Council (NLAC), including representatives from the **Commercial and Industrial Workers Union-United Federation of Labour (CIWU-UFL)**, the **Ceylon Mercantile Industrial and General Workers' Union (CMU)**, and the **Free Trade Zones and General Services Employees Union (FTZ & GSEU)**.

Excluding union representation for workers in the NLAC allows employers to negotiate labour law reforms to their advantage more easily. Last year's move came as the government was proposing to reform laws to increase women's participation in the labour force. The



Credit: Elsa Bivick / Hans Lucas via AFP

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, companies used subcontracting as a strategy to avoid collective bargaining and having to deliver fair conditions for workers.

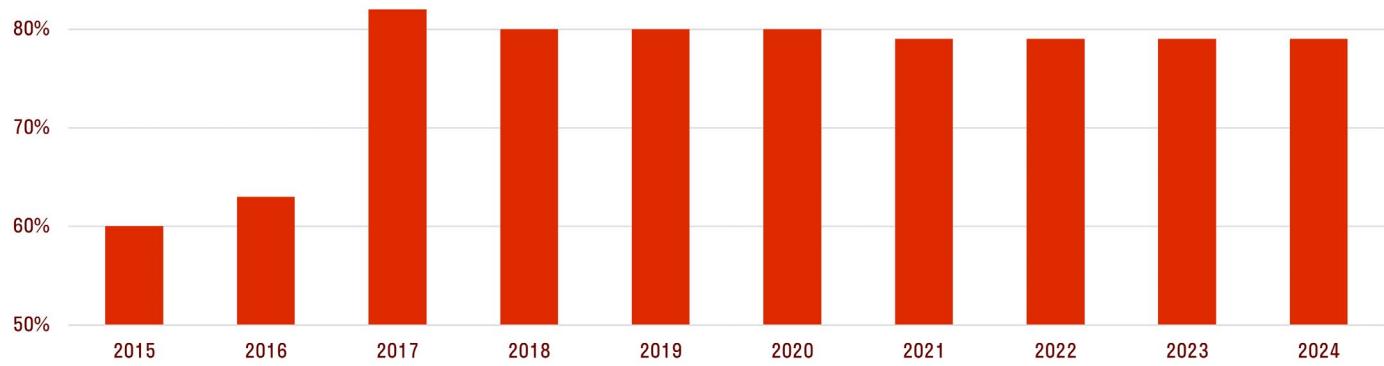
reforms were heavily criticised by unions, including by **Swasthika Arulingam, President** of the CIWU-UFL and the first woman to represent a union in the government-appointed body. Unions argued that the laws would increase job insecurity and reduce benefits while reinforcing the notion that women are responsible for unpaid domestic work.

SWEDEN

For months in 2023, **Sweden's IF Metall** union tried to engage **Tesla** in collective bargaining, while the company persistently refused and maintained its hostile anti-union stance.

On 27 October, IF Metall declared a strike. As opposition to Tesla's anti-union attitude grew, Swedish unions across industries came out in support and took solidarity action to protect the right to collective bargaining. Historically, Sweden's social democracy, in which workplace conditions were set through negotiations between workers' and employers' representatives for almost a century, has delivered a stable labour market where 90 per cent of workers are covered by collective agreements. EU Commissioner Nicolas Schmit, responsible for Employment and Social rights, said that Tesla's – and other foreign companies' – rejection of EU labour market traditions was "simply not acceptable".

10-YEAR TRENDS: COUNTRIES THAT VIOLATE THE RIGHT TO COLLECTIVELY BARGAINING



Exclusion from labour protection

Under international labour standards, all workers, without distinction, have the right to freedom of association. However, in 2024, 113 countries excluded certain categories of workers from this right, often based on their employment status.

Domestic workers, temporary workers, those in the informal economy, and workers in the platform economy usually fell outside of the scope of labour legislation.

In **Burundi**, authorities refused to register a trade union formed by workers in the informal sector, while **Pakistan's** laws did not guarantee the right to organise for agricultural workers, domestic workers, home-based workers, or workers in the informal sector.

In 30 of the countries surveyed, including **Jordan**, **Mauritania**, **Qatar**, **Thailand**, and **Saudi Arabia**, national legislation prohibited migrant workers from establishing and joining trade unions, restricted their ability to hold office in a trade union or otherwise denied them full rights to engage in union activities.

In Special Economic Zones, including those of **Bangladesh** and **Haiti**, workers were deprived of their right to freedom of association, as labour protections were either lowered or simply did not apply at all in a bid to attract foreign investment.

Certain categories of public employees continued to be denied the right to freedom of association in law. In the **Bahamas**, prison staff were excluded from legislation on the right to organise. In **Japan**, the law excluded firefighters, prison staff, and the Coast Guard from this right and limited the right to strike in electricity facilities and coal mining industries. In **Morocco**, judges could not form or join a trade union. In **Rwanda**, officers of the security services were not allowed to organise. Under **Turkish** law, senior public employees, magistrates, and prison guards were also impacted.

ILO Convention No. 98 enshrines the right of workers' organisations to adequate protection against any acts of interference by employers, but union busting continued apace as employers resorted to illegal practices to impede workers from establishing a union in the workplace and to block the ability of unions to operate freely.



Credit: Yuichi Yamazaki / AFP

In Japan, firefighters are excluded from joining a trade union, which violates the right to freedom of association.

GUINEA

On 26 June 2023, workers at the **Onomo Hotel**, a hotel resort in Conakry, **Guinea**, petitioned for an election to elect shop stewards for the **Fédération de l'Hôtellerie, Tourisme, Restauration et Branches Connexes (FHTRC)**. Hotel management immediately sought to restrict the election to only one government-backed union and scheduled an illegal election for 14 July. Although the Guinean Labour Inspectorate forced the postponement of this illegal election, hotel management refused to schedule a new one in which FHTRC could participate and proceeded to intimidate FHTRC members by holding captive audience meetings and attempting to force all employees without permanent contracts – almost 50 per cent of the workforce – to apply as subcontracted employees with a Guinean subcontracting agency.

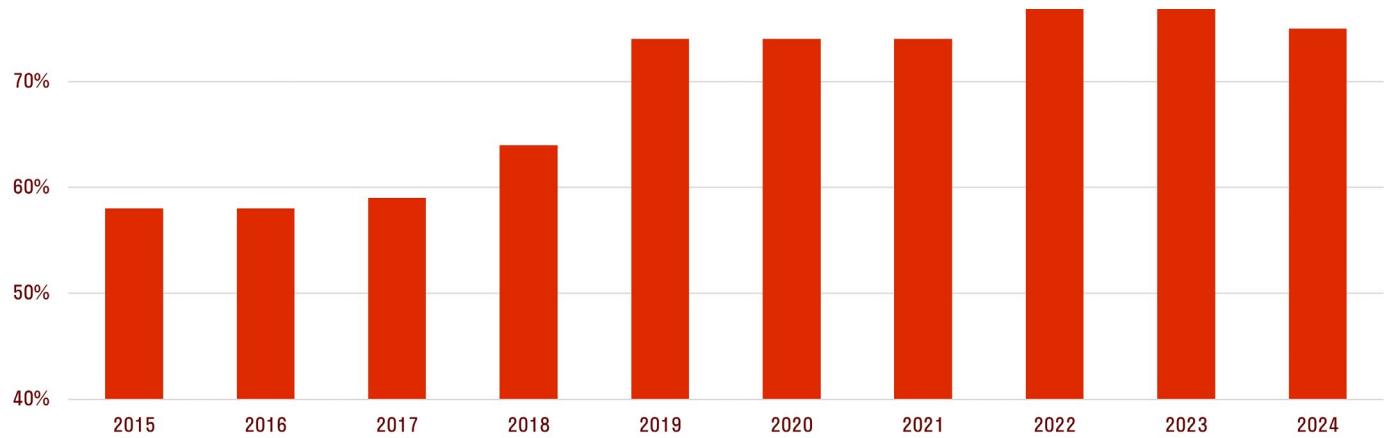
HONDURAS

In April 2023, the **Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Agroindustria y Similares (STAS)** mobilised hundreds of workers from melon plantations in southern Honduras owned by **Fyffes/Sumitomo**, a transnational company, to demand it complied with freedom of association, fair wages, provision of personal protective equipment, and other labour guarantees.

The union had reported workplace accidents due to the presence of toxic gases in the plant's packing area and the death of a person crushed by a truck at work. Union leaders had asked management to resume collective bargaining and to respect the freedom of association of the pickers.

In September 2023, the company summarily dismissed 14 workers, including STAS-affiliated personnel: the General Secretary of the local section, and three other union leaders, as well as a female laboratory worker who had denounced the contamination of the water supply at the plant.

10-YEAR TRENDS: COUNTRIES THAT EXCLUDE WORKERS FROM THE RIGHT TO ESTABLISH OR JOIN A TRADE UNION



Restrictions on access to justice

Access to justice and due process are basic principles of the rule of law. In their absence, people are unable to have their voices heard, nor assert their rights.

In 99 countries, workers had no or reduced access to justice, and the due process of law and justice was denied. Trade union leaders were often detained and prosecuted on trumped-up charges, and their trials were fraught with a disregard for due process and a lack of impartiality, as seen in **Belarus, Cambodia, Egypt, Iran, and Madagascar**.

NORTH MACEDONIA

In January 2024, the Supreme Court decided, in an arbitrary ruling, to transfer the property of the **Federation of Trade Unions of North Macedonia (CCM)** to the state. A court process had been ongoing for several years in which the CCM had successfully proved its ownership rights for the union building. The Supreme Court ruling effectively legitimised the forceful takeover of the union's property – a grave interference in trade union affairs that will cause long-lasting harm to the national union movement.

ZIMBABWE

In September 2023, **Obert Masaraure, President of the Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe (ARTUZ)**, was arrested while fulfilling routine bail conditions for another charge at the Harare Central Police Station. For years, Masaraure has faced multiple arrests on baseless grounds and has been threatened

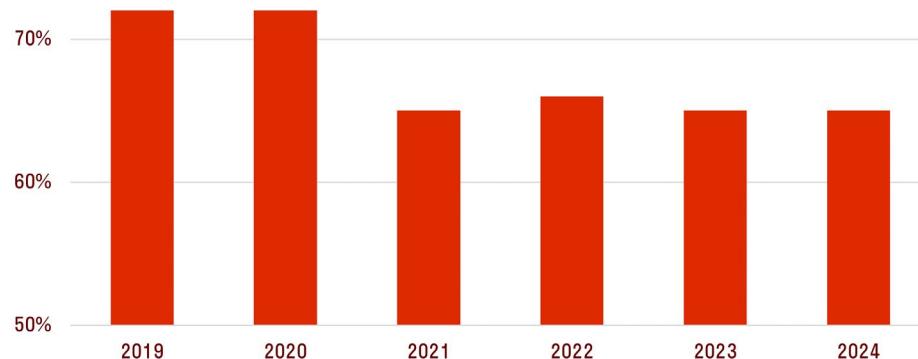


Credit: Mamyrael / AFP

Madagascar was one of 99 countries in which workers had no or reduced access to justice.

and persecuted, including during a harrowing incident in 2019 when he was abducted, tortured, and left for dead by masked and armed individuals.

The prosecution of the ARTUZ leader on fabricated charges is yet another attempt by the government to discredit Masaraure and to stifle dissent against the current regime. As further evidence of this oppressive atmosphere, the state postponed the hearing of the case, claiming that investigations were still underway.



SIX-YEAR TRENDS:
COUNTRIES THAT
RESTRICT ACCESS
TO JUSTICE

De-registration of unions

The right to official recognition through legal registration is an essential facet of the right to organise, since this is the first step that workers' organisations must take to function efficiently and represent their members effectively.

In 112 countries, workers faced significant legal obstacles to form trade unions, due to lengthy and cumbersome procedures and barriers implemented by authorities who impeded the registration of, de-registered or arbitrarily dissolved unions.

In **Belarus, Egypt, Hong Kong, and Sudan**, the independent trade union movement has already been wiped out by the authorities through arbitrary dissolution and illegal takeover. As a result, workers have been deprived of their fundamental freedom to form and join trade unions of their own choosing. In some countries, workers are left no choice as the state imposes various forms of trade union monopolies and exercises control over the apparatus and functioning of these unions, as experienced in **China, Iraq, Laos, and Vietnam**.

LIBYA

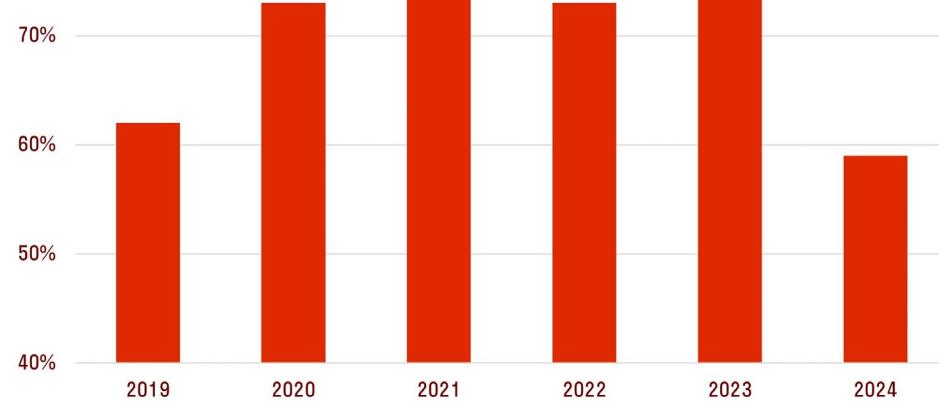
In 2023, Libyan workers' right to freely organise was further curbed as the House of Representatives adopted a law imposing unity on trade unions and specifying the responsibilities of their leaders. This marked a flagrant violation of the principles of freedom of association and non-interference. The intent was to



Credit: Radio Free Europe

Since April 2022, the Belarusian government has engaged in a systematic pattern of repression against independent trade unions in the country.

align these organisations with the government, turning them into affiliated structures and institutions. This law further created an opportunity for political control, as it gave the Presidency of the House of Representatives the authority to grant licenses to unions or indeed, dissolve them. The **General Federation of Trade Unions in Libya (GFLTU)** denounced this law as abusive, but their call was largely ignored by both authorities and employers.



SIX-YEAR TRENDS:
COUNTRIES THAT
IMPEDE THE
REGISTRATION
OF UNIONS

Attacks on free speech and assembly

The rights of workers and trade unions can only be exercised within the framework of a system that guarantees civil liberties and freedoms, which are vital to a democratic society. Freedom of assembly and freedom of opinion and expression are an essential condition for the exercise of freedom of association. Yet, in an increasing number of countries, workers and trade unions were stripped of these fundamental freedoms. In 2024, 65 countries out of 151 surveyed infringed workers' freedoms to expression and to peaceful assembly – an increase of 29 since 2014, when the Index began.

In authoritarian regimes and countries under military rule, workers' legitimate demands to have a say on the laws and policies that most affected them were stifled. The African region and MENA were most affected, including **Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Egypt, Eswatini, Gabon, Guinea, Libya, Mali, Niger, and Tunisia**.

ARGENTINA

At the end of 2023, three major union federations united to stand against the serious threat to fundamental workers' rights and civil liberties posed by President Javier Milei's move to resurrect outdated and debunked neo-liberal policies.

Since Milei's election as president on 19 November 2023, his administration has announced extreme austerity measures, including the introduction of the Bullrich protocol which aims to criminalise street protests. These measures have sparked widespread, mass protests in **Argentina**, including the first general strike since 2019.



Credit: Luis Robayo/ AFP

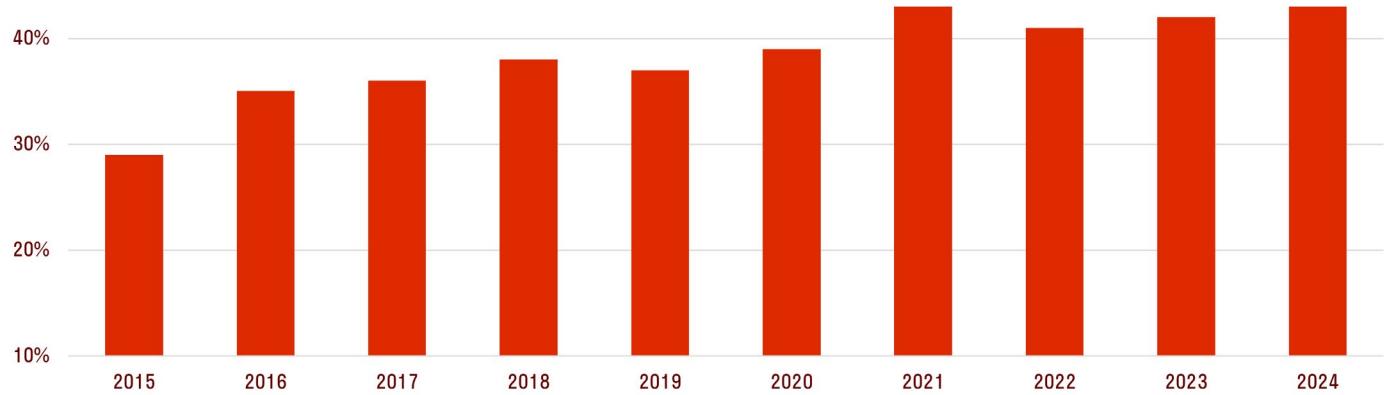
Three major union federations, the CGT, the CTA-T, and the CTA-A, united to stand against the serious threat to civil liberties, and other basic rights, posed by the government of Javier Milei in Argentina.

During demonstrations in early February, at least 285 people were injured as police fired rubber bullets and tear gas to disperse protesters. Fifty people were arrested in Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Mendoza, and Rosario, most of them members of trade unions or political organisations. The government has since been forced to row back on the proposed measures that stated any public gathering of three or more people would be deemed illegal.

ZIMBABWE

In July 2023, the Criminal Law Amendment Act, commonly referred to as the Patriotic Bill, was enacted. The amendment, a clear attack on freedom of expression, criminalises anyone, within or outside of **Zimbabwe**, who participates in meetings with the intention of promoting calls for economic sanctions against the country. Penalties range from a fine to loss of citizenship, a denial of the right to vote, and even the death penalty.

10-YEAR TRENDS: COUNTRIES THAT DENY OR CONSTRAIN FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND ASSEMBLY



Arbitrary arrests, detentions, and imprisonment

In 74 countries in 2024, workers faced heavy prison sentences for exercising their trade union freedoms, an increase from 69 countries in 2023 and up 39 since 2014, when the Index began.

Trade union leaders have been imprisoned in, for example, **Belarus, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, and Myanmar**.

In **Guinea**, Sékou Jamal Pendessa, the **General Secretary** of the union for media professionals, the **Syndicat des professionnels de la presse de Guinée (SPPG)**, was arrested and sentenced to six months in prison, three of which were suspended, and given a fine of 500,000 Guinean francs (US\$ 65).

IRAN

For years, Iranian teachers have been voicing legitimate demands for decent working conditions and the recognition of their fundamental rights and freedoms. In September 2023, the authorities cracked down on teachers and their union representatives to suppress a resurgence of the 2022 May Day rallies – the first to follow the extrajudicial killing of **Jina Mahsa Amini** in September 2022, whose death sparked protests around the world.

Currently, 44 leaders and members of the **Coordinating Council of Iranian Teachers' Trade Associations (CCITTA)** remain arbitrarily detained for their trade union activities. They have faced grave violations of their most fundamental rights, including spurious charges brought against them; the denial of judicial rights, no access to legal counsel and due process; torture to extract false confessions and force renunciation of union work; inadequate access to medical treatment; and harassment of their family members.



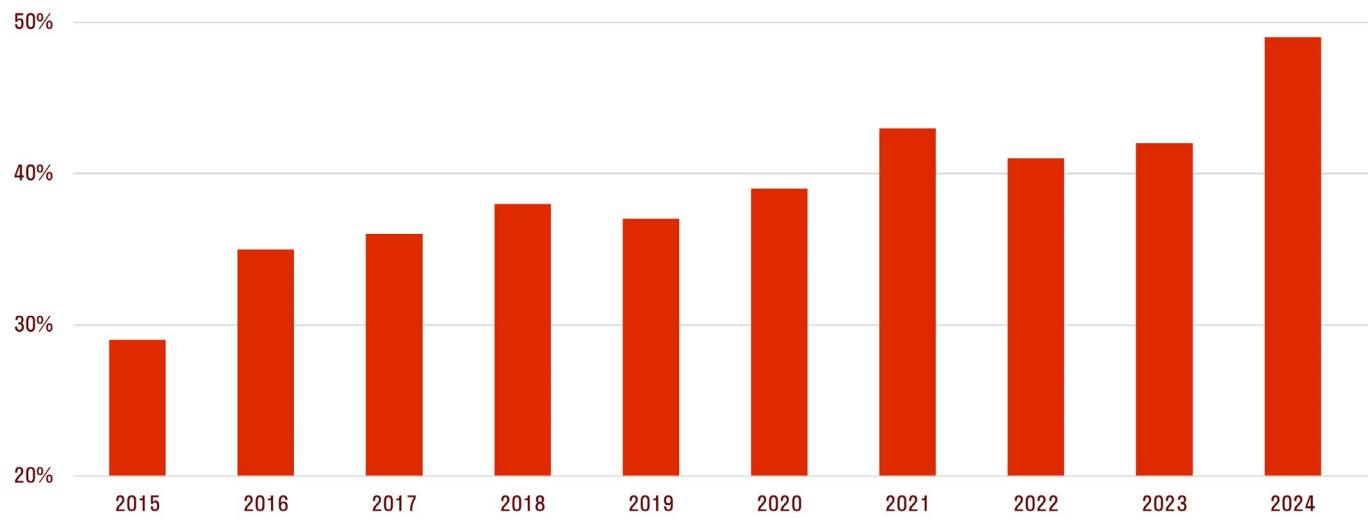
Credit: KCTU and Chris Jung / NurPhoto via AFP

The Republic of Korea was one of 151 countries that violated the right to trade union activities. Trade union official Yang Hoe-Dong died after setting himself on fire to protest the ongoing harassment of trade unionists by government authorities.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

On May Day 2023, **Yang Hoe-Dong**, a district leader of the **Korean Construction Workers Union (KCWU)**, set himself on fire to protest harassment of trade unionists by the authorities. Yang had been one of the victims of that harassment and sadly passed away as result of his injuries. He had been charged with obstruction of business, coercion, and extortion despite maintaining that he had lawfully performed his trade union duties. The false criminal charges of coercion and extortion against trade unionists stem from the anti-union policy of President Yoon Suk Yeol's government. In the construction sector, the police arrested many union officials and members undertaking normal union activities. Yang was one of the 950 union officials summoned by the police. Currently, 16 of them remain detained.

10-YEAR TRENDS: COUNTRIES THAT ARBITRARILY ARREST AND DETAIN TRADE UNION MEMBERS



Violent attacks on workers

Tragically, workers were victims of violence in 44 countries in 2024.

In **Bangladesh**, **Nigeria**, and the **Republic of Korea**, strikes and social protests were repressed with disproportionate and brutal force by state forces and the police. In **South Africa**, for example, hundreds of workers of the eThekwin municipality marched to demand unpaid wages and an explanation for their summary dismissals. They were met by police who fired rubber bullets to disperse them. In **Sri Lanka**, union members at the **Hasalaka factory**, part of the **Sumithra Group**, were physically assaulted by management, who forcibly prevented them from attending a union meeting and then forced workers on strike inside the factory to sign resignation letters. One woman was severely injured in the violence.

Endemic violence in **Colombia**, **Guatemala**, **Honduras**, and the **Philippines** continued to have a severe impact on the safety of workers and their representatives, with trade union leaders in all four countries being subject to targeted attacks and killings.

KENYA

On 29 February 2024, a peaceful protest calling for the timely posting of medical interns across hospitals by the **Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union (KMPDU)** in Nairobi was violently disrupted by police.

As he was leading the protest, KMPDU **General Secretary Davji Atallah** was hit by a teargas canister fired by police. The shot was taken at close range, and it is believed that police deliberately targeted the union leader to silence him. Atallah, who suffered an epidural hematoma and a cracked skull, was hospitalised.



Credit: Thilina Kaluthotage / Nurphoto Via AFP

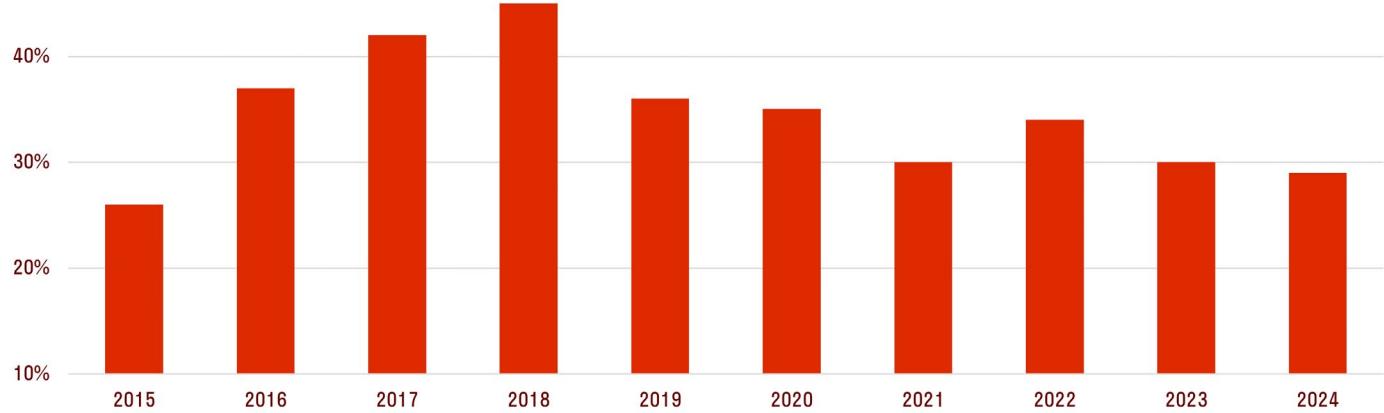
Workers faced violence when they tried to organise and demand better conditions in 44 countries, including in Sri Lanka.

PANAMA

In 2023, the construction union, **Sindicato Único Nacional de la Construcción y Similares de Panamá (SUNTRACS)**, successfully organised a protest defeating a 40-year mining concession for the transnational company **First Quantum Minerals**, which was said to have caused serious social and environmental damage in the area.

Since then, SUNTRACS and its leaders have been subjected to persecutory, repressive, and intimidating treatment by Panamanian authorities. **Saúl Méndez, General Secretary** and **Jaime Caballero, Secretary of External Relations**, were being sued by the Public Prosecutor's Office, accused of committing crimes against freedom and economic order to the detriment of Panamanian society. Caballero was arrested on 26 February 2024. On 10 March 2024, the SUNTRACS offices in the Panamá Oeste province were set on fire.

10-YEAR TRENDS: COUNTRIES THAT EXPOSE WORKERS TO PHYSICAL VIOLENCE



Deaths

As representatives and defenders of workers and their collective rights, trade unionists have become assassination targets. Far too often there is no justice for targeted workers or their families, as credible investigations too often remain uninitiated to bring perpetrators to justice. Meanwhile, the killing of prominent trade union leaders has a chilling effect on trade union activism in general and creates a hostile climate of impunity which leaves workers vulnerable to state and employer abuses.

In 2024, trade unionists died for their trade union activism in six countries: **Bangladesh, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, the Philippines, and the Republic of Korea.**

COLOMBIA

Between 2023 and 2024, 11 trade unionists were assassinated, resulting in Colombia retaining its reputation as the deadliest country in the world for trade unionists.

While many deaths of unionists remain unexplained and uninvestigated, on 14 September 2023, the government tellingly launched a process of reparation to the trade union movement as a collective victim of the armed conflict. As part of this process, assassinated trade union members and leaders will be included in the Single Registry of Victims.

Between 1971 and 2023, a staggering 3,323 trade unionists were murdered, while 7,884 received death threats.

HONDURAS

On 24 June 2023, 13 people were killed when gunmen opened fire in a billiards hall, including upon four union representatives of the **Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Empresa Gildan Activewear San Miguel (SITRAGSAM): President Xiomara Cocas**, former President **Delmer Garcia** and delegates **Lester Almendarez** and **José Rufino Ortiz. Eduard Alexander Meléndez Cocas**, Xiomara Cocas' son, was also among the victims. They all worked for the **Gildan** garment factory in San Miguel.

This attack took place during the same week in which management announced the closing of the factory. The union was in initial discussions about the closure, which would have left 2,700 workers unemployed.

GLOBAL TRENDS FOR WORKERS

The essential voices of workers silenced

Strike action is a fundamental, internationally recognised right and a vital tool for workers and their organisations to protect and defend their interests. It is often used as a last resort by workers to get their voices heard by either their employers or the government after all other means of dialogue have broken down. Yet, in many countries, regressive or overreaching laws undermine or circumvent international conventions by restricting the right to legally go on strike.

In 2024, strikes were restricted or banned in 131 countries out of the 151 surveyed, the vast majority of whom have ratified ILO Conventions which enshrine the right to strike.

For example, recent legislation in several countries betrays an increasing and deliberate misuse of the term “essential services”, and the indiscriminate application of this special exemption, condition, or qualification to the right to strike to diverse sectors that do not meet the ILO’s own definition.

The ILO is clear on this, defining “essential services” as those whose interruption would endanger the life, personal safety or health of the whole or part of the population. The current and worrying trend shows a political will to curb collective action, in defiance of international rules.

In **Algeria**, a decree published on 17 October 2023 further restricted the right to strike in a broad range of sectors and public services that do not satisfy the ILO definition of “essential services”. They include agriculture, civil protection, education, energy, finance, foreign affairs, interior, justice, religious affairs, transport, and vocational training departments.

Over 50,000 teachers and members of teacher organisations in **Nepal**, such as the **Nepal Teachers’ Association (NTA)**, the **Nepal National Teachers’ Association (NNTA)**, and **Institutional Schools’ Teachers’ Union (ISTU)**, took part in a mass protest in Kathmandu to denounce the Education Act, which prohibits teachers from organising, protesting, and demonstrating. Following the demonstration, numerous MPs demanded amendments to the Bill, in accordance with the national constitution and taking into consideration the teachers’ demands.

The Conservative government’s regressive Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill passed into law in the **United Kingdom** on 20 July 2023. Umbrella body, the **Trades Union Congress (TUC)** said the Conservatives were threatening to “take a wrecking ball” to the fundamental right to strike. The move marks a further erosion of fundamental rights and protections for workers and unions in the UK, in line with a similarly disturbing downturn across Europe.

The new law means that when workers lawfully vote to strike in border security, education, fire, health, nuclear decommissioning, and transport, they can be forced to attend work and be sacked if they do not comply. The legislation follows wider anti-union activity on the part of the Conservatives, including a ban on strike action in the prison service, actions to clamp down on protests and demonstrations, and efforts to end the prohibition of the use of agency workers during strikes.



Credit: Education International

In Tanzania, police raided a meeting of the Tanzania Teachers Union and the government blocked General Secretary Maganga Japhet's application to fulfil his duties as a union official.

Raids on trade union offices

In an unprecedented number of countries, trade unions faced raids organised by police and state forces on their offices and properties in a crude attempt to replace their leaderships with pro-government individuals.

These illegal attacks, which serve to highlight the precarious circumstances in which many unions are forced to operate, were reported in **Guinea-Bissau, Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria, Tanzania, Venezuela, and Yemen**. In **Mexico**, a raid on trade union offices was even conducted by an employer as a means of retaliation, while at least eight unions in **France** have been summarily evicted from offices by unscrupulous municipalities, despite existing legal guarantees against such attacks.

Such incidents severely impede the capacity of trade unions to operate freely, carry out their activities and defend workers' rights and interests, in blatant contravention of ILO Conventions.

On 9 February 2024, the facilities of the daily newspaper's union, **Sindicato Independiente de los Trabajadores de La Jornada (SITRAJOR)**, in **Mexico** were raided and vandalised by the newspaper's own management. All the union's files, computers, and work equipment, with information on members and personal data protected by law, as well as information of those who voted in recent social elections, were stolen. Panelled walls and partitions – even the bins –

were taken, leaving only the organisation's empty filing cabinets and bookshelves.

Representatives of SITRAJOR suspect the raid was undertaken in retaliation for a collective bargaining agreement voted for by workers, despite two separate attempts by the management to derail the voting process.

2023 marked an escalation of attacks against trade unions in **Nigeria** and in particular the **National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW)**. On 28 August 2023, police violently occupied the national headquarters of the NURTW with the sole purpose of installing its own preferred leadership.

Later in the year, the government of Abia State interfered with the local leadership of the NURTW by sending a list of its own candidates and insisting that the union recognise them as its leaders. Governments in Lagos, Oyo, Ondo, and Osun states have continued to illegally ban NURTW. The union's properties have been seized and converted to other uses.

In 2023, the headquarters of the **General Federation of Workers' Trade Unions of Yemen (GFYWTU)** was invaded by unidentified armed groups who took control of the union's assets and proclaimed themselves as its representatives with the assent of the authorities. The legitimate union leadership continues its struggle to fulfil its responsibilities remotely.

THE IMPACT OF CONFLICTS ON WORKERS' RIGHTS



Credit: Clarens Siffroy / AFP

In Haiti, rated 5+, all law and order collapsed as armed gangs spread terror and carried out coordinated attacks on state institutions. Civilians have been exposed to kidnappings, sexual and gender-based violence, unlawful killings and attempts by armed groups to recruit children.

WORKERS' FREEDOMS AND LIVELIHOODS CRUSHED AS THE NUMBER OF CONFLICTS RISES

Since the Index began in 2014, the number of countries ranked 5+ [No guarantee of rights due to the breakdown of the rule of law] has increased from 8 to 12. This sobering trend and the havoc it wreaks on the lives of workers and their families around the world demands both contemplation and action. International solidarity has played a vital role throughout history in peace-making and the maintenance of peace, and it must do so again.

Conflicts place the livelihoods, rights, and lives of workers in jeopardy and make it all but impossible for them to safely exercise their freedom to associate, to protest, and to exercise fundamental rights. Invariably, such curtailments not only have negative impacts upon the democratic values and institutions within the countries as they occur, but can remain in effect long after the conflict ends, marking a profound regression in their overall democratic capacities.

In **Yemen**, an almost nine-year conflict has left 18m people in need of humanitarian assistance and

protection services, according to the United Nations (UN). The vast majority face severe food insecurity, with almost three million women and five million children under the age of 5 in need of treatment for acute malnutrition. Under these circumstances, the rights of workers cannot be meaningfully realised as unions are forced to operate in hostile conditions.

Extrajudicial killings, attacks, abductions, and arrests carried out by different factions in **Sudan**'s civil war have targeted health workers, among others. The conflict, which began in April 2023, has seen six million people displaced within Sudan and more than 1.5m people fleeing the country.

The political crisis in **Haiti**, which has seen armed gangs running amok and triggering the collapse of law and order, has had devastating repercussions for workers and their families, the economy, and democratic institutions.

SUPPRESSION OF RIGHTS INTENSIFY IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND UKRAINE

Respect for civil liberties was in decline in the **Russian Federation** prior to the illegal invasion of **Ukraine**. Since then, Russian authorities have intensified the suppression of freedom of association. Trade union activities can also be placed under harsh scrutiny since the adoption of laws on 'foreign influence'. The laws stigmatise links between national and international trade unions and prohibit national trade unions from receiving funds from foreign sources or face being dissolved by the authorities.

The authorities have also used the war to intensify the repression of civil rights and liberties. Freedom of expression and of assembly have been severely and violently restricted across the board with laws that could potentially be used to restrict union activity. National legislation now restricts areas where a public event can take place to the extent that the organisation of demonstrations, marches, pickets has become virtually impossible.

In Ukraine, since the start of the war in 2022, the government adopted martial laws which impacted political rights and civil liberties. These limitations were agreed by all parties as being necessitated by



Credit: AFP

In response to its war in Ukraine, the Russian government has severely restricted civil rights and liberties.

the conflict. However, the martial laws have been augmented by emergency measures that were brought in without trade union consultation. They include the legalisation of zero-hours contracts, the exemption of many companies from collective bargaining agreements, the increase of statutory working hours by 50 per cent, and the facilitation of delayed salary payments and contract terminations. The emergency laws have effectively allowed employers to disregard fundamental labour rights, left workers with little choice or bargaining power, and sparked fears among trade unionists of their being retained once the conflict ends. The latter, not least because the country's recovery period could be used as a justification for their indefinite extension.

The fundamental rights of Ukrainian workers in areas occupied by Russian forces have also been repeatedly violated and workers are being coerced into signing terms with Russian employers. The authorities strongly encourage affiliation with Russian unions, which continue to establish offices in occupied areas, leaving workers little choice but to join these established structures or face reprisals under Russian-controlled regimes.



Credit: Mahmud Hams / AFP

After a deadly attack by Hamas-led Palestinian militant groups, Israel imposed a “total siege” on Gaza, depriving Palestinian workers and their families of basic needs such as water, food, fuel, medicine and medical services. The entirety of occupied Palestinian has been affected, with an estimated 24% of jobs lost in the West Bank.

ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR: LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS DESTROYED

Israel’s war on Gaza was launched in response to a deplorable Hamas attack in which 1,200 Israelis and foreign nationals were killed and 253 were taken as hostages on 7 October 2023. It has, thus far, cost more than 34,000 Palestinian lives, decimated crucial infrastructure and homes, and left Palestinian workers and their families deprived of their most basic needs. The humanitarian situation is dire, as the UN warns that northern Gaza is now in “full-blown famine”. Additionally, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates that nearly 85 per cent of Gaza’s population has been internally displaced.

In Palestine, the impact on the labour market has been catastrophic, as employment prospects and livelihoods, not only within Gaza, but also in the West Bank, are placed at high risk. ILO estimates published at the end of 2023 indicated that a minimum of 66 per cent of employment in Gaza and 24 per cent in the West Bank had been lost.

Before the war, some 190,000 Palestinians worked in Israel and illegal Israeli settlements. In the immediate aftermath of the Hamas attacks, thousands of these Gazan workers were lawfully present in Israel, with work permits to prove their status, but were unable to return home as Israel closed all border crossings. Then, on 10 October, Israel revoked all work permits previously

issued to Gaza residents, without warning or procedure, and existing permit records were removed from the Al-Munaseq app, the digital permit tool run by the Israeli military.

This mass revocation instantly turned thousands of Gazan workers into “illegal aliens”. The Israeli authorities then held thousands of them in illegal detention for several weeks where they were deprived of their basic rights, including the right to legal representation. Many later reported abuses and degrading conditions in detention. At least two Gazan workers, one with cancer and one with diabetes, died in Israeli custody, as confirmed by an Israeli military spokesperson. The majority were released in November.

On 8 November 2023, the Israeli government adopted a counter-terrorism law which introduced temporary, two-year measures to ban the “systematic and continuous consumption of publications of a terrorist organisation under circumstances that indicate identification with the terrorist organisation”. The offence carries a maximum penalty of a year’s imprisonment.

The law could be used to criminalise speech and other forms of expression not favoured by the government. Israeli police have already initiated investigations of both Palestinians and Israelis for posting certain online material, for expressing opinions deemed inciteful by the authorities, or for holding anti-war protests.

Such strictures also highlight concerns on the freedom of association of other migrant workers in Israel, the majority of whom are employed in precarious industries, such as agriculture, care, and construction. Meanwhile, the country has stated its intention to recruit an additional 100,000 foreign workers to replace the Palestinian workforce, further undermining the dignity of Palestinian workers.

While it falls within the remit of the trade union movement to call for the protection of all workers and for their fundamental rights and freedoms to be upheld, conflict enables and triggers a scale of coercion, exploitation, and violation of workers’ rights that renders these freedoms and protections all but meaningless. These rights enable workers to uphold their dignity.

A staunch commitment by all stakeholders to multilateral dialogue, a respect for international institutions and law, and an allegiance to working towards common peace and security is needed now to ensure the horrors and degradations of war are averted.

LIST OF INDICATORS

ITUC Global Rights Index List of composite indicators

The methodology is grounded in standards of fundamental rights at work, based on international human rights law, and in particular ILO Conventions Nos. 87 and 98, as well as the jurisprudence developed by the ILO supervisory mechanisms¹.

I. Civil liberties

A. Violations in law

1. Arrest, detention, imprisonment, charging and fining of trade unionists
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 119-159
General Survey 1994 paras. 31-32
General Survey 2012 paras. 59-62
2. Violation of trade unionists' basic freedoms (freedom of movement; rights of assembly and demonstration; freedom of opinion and expression)
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 190-201; 202-232; 233-268
General Survey 1994 paras. 35-39
General Survey 2012 paras. 59-62
3. Violation of trade unions' and trade unionists' right to protection of their premises and property
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 275-292
General Survey 1994 paras. 40
General Survey 2012 paras. 59-62

4. Lack of guarantee of due process of law and/or justice re violations nos. 1-3
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 160-189
General Survey 1994 paras. 29-32
General Survey 2012 paras. 60-62

B. Violations in practice

5. Killing or enforced disappearance of trade unionists
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 81-118
General Survey 1994 paras. 28-30
General Survey 2012 paras. 59-62
6. Committed against trade union leaders
Violation of (5) is committed against a union leader
7. Other types of physical violence
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 67-118; 275-298
General Survey 1994 paras. 28-30, 33; 35-39
General Survey 2012 paras. 59-62

1. Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR), Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS) and Committee on Freedom of Association (CFA). See in particular:

- The Compilation of decisions of the Committee on Freedom of Association (<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:70001:0::NO>),
- ILO General Survey 1994 on Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining, 1994 ([https://www.ilo.org/public/libdoc/ilo/P/09661/09661\(1994-81-4B\).pdf](https://www.ilo.org/public/libdoc/ilo/P/09661/09661(1994-81-4B).pdf)) and
- ILO General Survey 2012 on fundamental Conventions (https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_174846.pdf).

The list of indicators is adapted from David Kucera and Dora Sari. 2018. "New Labour Rights Indicators: Method and Trends for 2000-2015", International Labour Review (Accepted manuscript online: 9 MAR 2018).

8. Committed against trade union leaders
Violation of (7) is committed against a union leader
9. Threats, intimidation and harassment
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 67-118
General Survey 1994 paras. 28-30, 33
General Survey 2012 paras. 59-62
10. Committed against trade union leaders
Violation of (9) is committed against a union leader
11. Arrest, detention, imprisonment, charging and fining of trade unionists
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 119-159
General Survey 1994 paras. 31-32
General Survey 2012 paras 59-62
12. Committed against trade union leaders
Violation of (11) is committed against a union leader
13. Infringement of the right to freedom of expression
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 233-268
General Survey 1994 paras. 35-39
General Survey 2012 paras. 59-62
14. Infringement of the right to freedom of assembly and demonstration
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 202-232
General Survey 1994 paras. 34-39
General Survey 2012 paras. 59-62
15. Restrictions to the right to freedom of movement
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 190-201
General Survey 1994) para. 34
General Survey 2012 paras 59-62
16. Committed against trade union leaders
Violations (13) to (15) are committed against a union leader
17. Attacks against trade unions' and trade unionists' premises and property
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 275-292
General Survey 1994 paras. 40
General Survey 2012 paras. 59-62
18. Severity
Widespread and/or systematic violation regarding violations re (5)-(17)
19. Lack of guarantee of due process of law and/or justice
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 160-189
General Survey 1994 paras. 29, 31-32
General Survey 2012 paras. 59-62

II. Right to establish and join unions

A. Violations in law

20. General prohibition of the right to establish and/or join trade unions
General Survey 1994 paras. 12, 93
General Survey 2012 para. 51
21. Exclusion of specific categories of workers from the right to establish and/or join trade unions
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 315-418
General Survey 1994 paras. 45-67
22. Restrictions on the freedom of choice of union structure and composition
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 472-513; 546-560
General Survey 1994 paras. 79-90
23. Previous authorisation requirements for union registration
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 419-444; 448-471
General Survey 1994 paras. 68-70
General Survey 2012 paras. 82-87; 89-90
24. Union monopoly
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 475-501
General Survey 1994 para. 91
25. Dissolution/suspension of legally functioning trade unions
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 979-1013
General Survey 1994 paras. 180-188
General Survey 2012 para. 162
26. Provisions in law allowing for anti-union discriminatory measures (dismissal, suspension, transfer, downgrading)
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1072-1185
General Survey 1994 paras. 199-210, 213
27. Lack of effective legal guarantees against anti-union discriminatory measures
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1134-1162
General Survey 1994 paras. 214-224
General Survey 2012 paras 166-167; 173-193
28. Provisions in law allowing for interference of employers and/or public authorities
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras 1215-1219
General Survey 1994 paras. 225-234
General Survey 2012 paras. 194-196
29. Lack of effective legal guarantees against acts of interference
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras 1187-1230
General Survey 1994 paras. 189-198
General Survey 2012 para. 163
30. Right to establish and/or join federations and confederations and to affiliate with international organisations of workers
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1014-1071
General Survey 1994 paras. 189-198
General Survey 2012 para. 163
31. Lack of guarantee of due process of law
Lack of due process regarding violations (20)-(30)

B. Violations in practice

32. Serious obstacle to exercise the right to establish and/or join trade unions
The vast majority of the population is excluded from this right in practice
General Survey 1994 paras. 12, 93
General Survey 2012 para. 51
33. Exclusion of specific categories of workers from the right to establish and/or join trade unions
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 315-418
General Survey 1994 paras. 45-67
34. Restrictions on the freedom of choice of union structure and composition
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 472-513; 546-560
General Survey 1994 paras. 79-90

35. Previous authorisation requirements for union registration
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 427-444
General Survey 1994 paras. 68-70
General Survey 2012 paras. 82-87; 89-90
- authorities
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras 1215-1219
General Survey 1994 paras. 225-234
General Survey 2012 paras. 194-196
36. Union monopoly
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 475-501
General Survey 1994 para. 91
37. Dissolution/suspension of legally functioning trade union dismissal, suspension, transfer, downgrading)
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1072-1185
General Survey 1994 paras. 199-210, 213
38. Anti-union discriminatory measures (including dismissal, suspension, transfer, downgrading)
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1072-1185
General Survey 1994 paras. 199-210, 213
39. Committed against trade union leaders
Violation (38) is committed against a trade union leader
40. Lack of effective legal guarantees against anti-union discriminatory measures
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1134-1162
General Survey 1994 paras. 214-224
General Survey 2012 paras 166-167; 173-193
41. Acts of interference of employers and/or public authorities
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras 1187-1230
General Survey 1994 paras. 189-198
General Survey 2012 para. 163
42. Lack of effective legal guarantees against acts of interference of employers and/or public authorities
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras 1187-1230
General Survey 1994 paras. 189-198
General Survey 2012 para. 163
43. Infringement of the right to establish and join federations and confederations and to affiliate with international organisations of workers
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1014-1071
General Survey 1994 paras. 189-198
General Survey 2012 para. 163
44. Lack of guarantee of due process of law and/or justice
Lack of due process regarding violations (32) - (43)

III. Trade union activities

A. Violations in law

45. Infringement of the right to freely elect representatives
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 585-665
General Survey 1994 paras. 112-121
General Survey 2012 paras. 101-107
46. Infringement of the right to freely draw up constitutions and internal rules and administration
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 561-584; 666-679
General Survey 1994 paras. 108-111
General Survey 2012 paras. 100,112-114
47. Infringement of the right to freely organise and control financial administration
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 680-715
General Survey 1994 paras. 108, 124-127
General Survey 2012 paras. 108-111
48. Infringement of the right to freely organise activities and to formulate programmes
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 716-750
General Survey 1994 paras. 108-112, 124-127
General Survey 2012 paras. 100,112-114
49. Lack of guarantee of due process of law
Lack of due process regarding violations (45) - (48)

B. Violations in practice

50. Infringements of the right to freely elect representatives
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 585-665
General Survey 1994 paras. 112-121
General Survey 2012 paras. 101-107
51. Infringement of the right to freely draw up constitutions and internal rules and administration
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 561-584; 666-679
General Survey 1994 paras. 108-111
General Survey 2012 paras. 100,112-114
52. Infringement of the right to freely organise and control financial administration
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 680-715
General Survey 1994 paras. 108, 124-127
General Survey 2012 paras. 108-111
53. Infringement of the right to freely organise activities and to formulate programmes
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 716-750
General Survey 1994 paras. 108-112, 124-127
General Survey 2012 paras. 100,112-114
54. Lack of guarantee of due process of law and/or justice
Lack of due process regarding violations (50)-(53)

IV. Right to collective bargaining

A. Violations in law

55. General prohibition of the right to collective bargaining
General Survey 1994 paras. 12, 93
General Survey 2012 para. 51
56. Insufficient promotion of collective bargaining
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras 1318; 1322-1326; 1517-1567; 1569-1578
General Survey 1994 paras. 235-236, 244-247
General Survey 2012 paras. 166-167, 198-199
57. Exclusion of specific categories of workers from the right to collective bargaining
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1239-1288
General Survey 1994 paras. 261-264
General Survey 2012 paras. 168; 209
58. Exclusion/restriction of subjects covered by collective bargaining
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1289-1312
General Survey 1994 para. 250
59. Compulsory arbitration imposed on collective bargaining
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1415-1419
General Survey 1994 paras. 254-259
General Survey 2012 paras. 246-250
60. Excessive requirements and/or lack of objective, pre-established and precise criteria for the determination/recognition of trade unions entitled to collective bargaining (including infringements to the rights of minority unions)
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1342-1403
General Survey 1994 paras. 238-243
General Survey 2012 paras. 224-240

61. Acts of interference in collective bargaining (including imposing the level of bargaining, discouraging time-limits, offering better working conditions through individual agreements)
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1420-1470
General Survey 1994 paras. 244-249
General Survey 2012 paras. 198, 200, 208, 214, 222-223
62. Violation of concluded collective agreements
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1313-1321; 1327-1341
General Survey 1994 paras. 251-253
General Survey 2012 paras. 201-207
63. Infringements of the consultation with workers' organisations
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras 1318; 1322-1326; 1517-1567; 1569-1578
General Survey 1994 paras. 235-236, 244-247
General Survey 2012 paras. 166-167, 198-199
64. Lack of guarantee of due process of law
Lack of due process regarding violations (55)-(63)

B. Violations in practice

65. Serious obstacle to exercise the right to collective bargaining
The vast majority of the population is excluded from this right in practice
66. Insufficient promotion of collective bargaining
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras 1318; 1322-1326; 1517-1567; 1569-1578
General Survey 1994 paras. 235-236, 244-247
General Survey 2012 paras. 166-167, 198-199

67. Exclusion of specific categories of workers from the right to collective bargaining
 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1239-1288
 General Survey 1994 paras. 261-264
 General Survey 2012 paras. 168; 209
68. Exclusion/restriction of subjects covered by collective bargaining
 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1289-1312
 General Survey 1994 para. 250
69. Compulsory arbitration imposed on collective bargaining
 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1415-1419
 General Survey 1994 paras. 254-259
 General Survey 2012 paras. 246-250
70. Excessive requirements and/or lack of objective, pre-established and precise criteria for the determination/recognition of trade unions entitled to collective bargaining (including infringements to the rights of minority unions)
 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1342-1403
 General Survey 1994 paras. 238-243
 General Survey 2012 paras. 224-240
71. Acts of interference in collective bargaining (including imposing the level of bargaining, discouraging time-limits, offering better working conditions through individual agreements)
 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1420-1470
 General Survey 1994 paras. 244-249
 General Survey 2012 paras. 198, 200, 208, 214, 222-223
72. Violation of concluded collective agreements
 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1313-1321; 1327-1341
 General Survey 1994 paras. 251-253
 General Survey 2012 paras. 201-207
73. Absence of consultation with workers' organisations
 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras 1318; 1322-1326; 1517-1567; 1569-1578
 General Survey 1994 paras. 235-236, 244-247
 General Survey 2012 paras. 166-167, 198-199
74. Lack of guarantee of due process of law and/or justice
 Lack of due process regarding violations (65)-(73)

V. Right to strike

A. Violations in law

75. General prohibition of the right to strike
General Survey 1994 paras. 152-153, 170-171
General Survey 2012. paras. 122, 140, 144, 159
76. Exclusion of specific categories of workers from the right to strike (including overly broad definition of essential services)
General Survey 1994 paras. 154-160
General Survey 2012 para. 127
77. Exclusion/restriction based on the objective and /or type of the strike
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 758-786
General Survey 1994 paras. 165-168, 173
General Survey 2012 paras. 124-126, 142
78. Excessive prerequisites required for exercising the right to strike
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 789-814
General Survey 1994 paras. 170-172
General Survey 2012 paras. 144-148
79. Compulsory arbitration imposed on strike action
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 816-823
General Survey 1994 para. 153
General Survey 2012 paras. 153-156
80. Provisions in law allowing for the suspension and/or declaration of illegality of strikes by administrative authorities
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions Paras. 907-913
General Survey 2012 para. 157
81. Infringements of the determination of minimum services
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras 864-906
General Survey 1994 paras. 161-162
General Survey 2012 paras 136-139

82. Absence or inadequacy of compensatory guarantees for lawful restrictions on the right to strike
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 824-852
General Survey 1994 paras. 164
General Survey 2012 paras. 141
83. Interference of employers and/or authorities during the course of strike action allowed under the legislation (including back-to-work orders, hiring of workers during a strike, requisitioning orders)
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 917-926; 927-929
General Survey 1994 paras. 163; 174-175
General Survey 2012 paras. 149-152
84. Excessive sanctions for the legitimate exercise of the right to strike
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 951-976
General Survey 1994 paras. 176-178
General Survey 2012 paras. 157-160
85. Lack of guarantee of due process of law
Lack of due process regarding violations (75)-(84)

B. Violations in practice

86. Serious obstacle to exercise the right in practice
Vast majority of population is excluded from this right in practice
87. Exclusion of specific categories of workers from the right to strike (including overly broad definition of essential services)
General Survey 1994 paras. 154-160
General Survey 2012 paras. 127, 129-135

88. Exclusion/restriction based on the objective and/or type of the strike
 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 758-786
 General Survey 1994 paras. 165-168, 173
 General Survey 2012 paras. 124-126, 142
89. Excessive prerequisites required for exercising the right to strike
 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 789-814
 General Survey 1994 paras. 170-172
 General Survey 2012 paras. 144-148
90. Compulsory arbitration imposed on strike action
 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 816-823
 General Survey 1994 para. 153
 General Survey 2012 paras. 153-156
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 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions Paras. 907-913
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 General Survey 2012 paras 136-139
93. Absence or inadequacy of compensatory guarantees for lawful restrictions on the right to strike
 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 824-852
 General Survey 1994 paras. 164
 General Survey 2012 paras. 141
94. Interference of employers and/or authorities during the course of strike action (including back-to-work orders, hiring of workers during a strike, requisitioning orders)
 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 917-929
 General Survey 1994 paras. 163; 174-175
 General Survey 2012 paras. 149-152
95. Excessive sanctions for the legitimate exercise of the right to strike
 ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 951-976
 General Survey 1994 paras. 176-178
 General Survey 2012 paras. 157-160
96. Committed against trade union leaders
 Violation (95) is committed against a trade union leader
97. Lack of guarantee of due process of law and/or justice
 Lack of due process regarding violations (86)-(96)

About the ITUC

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) is a confederation of national trade union centres, each of which links trade unions in that particular country. It is the global voice of the world's working people. The ITUC represents 191 million workers in 169 countries and has 340 national affiliates.

ITUC

International Trade Union Confederation

info@ituc-csi.org

www.ituc-csi.org

Phone: +32 (0)2 224 0211

Boulevard du Jardin Botanique, 20,
1000 Brussels, Belgium

Publisher responsible in law:
Luc Triangle, General Secretary

