



2023 ITUC Global Rights Index

The world's worst
countries for workers
Executive Summary

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Foreword

This year marks the 10th edition of the Global Rights Index, and the 2023 results provide a sobering confirmation of its founding purpose. Across both high-income and low-income countries, as workers have felt the full force of a cost-of-living crisis, governments have cracked down on their rights to collectively negotiate wage rises and take strike action against employer and government indifference to the impacts of spiralling inflation upon working people. From **Eswatini to Myanmar, Peru to France, Iran to Korea**, workers' demands to have their labour rights upheld have been ignored and their dissent has been met with increasingly brutal responses from state forces.

As working people were forced to demand better pay by the worst cost-of-living crisis in decades, 9 out of 10 countries violated their right to strike. As they sought representative structures to put their grievances to employers, 8 out of 10 countries violated their right to collective bargaining. With nearly half of the countries surveyed violating the right to civil liberties, the foundations and pillars of democracy are under attack. The link between workers' rights being upheld and the strength of a democracy cannot be overstated. The erosion of one amounts to the degradation of the other. Our democracies are under attack.



In Cambodia, the government imprisoned trade unionists for organising strike action and violated the right to strike.

Credit: Tang Chhin Sothy / AFP

IN 2023:

87% of countries violated the right to strike. Working people in **Canada, Togo, Iran, Cambodia, Belgium,** and **Spain** faced criminal prosecution and dismissals following their decision to strike. In South Korea, Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering (DSME) filed a KRW 47 billion (US\$ 35.3 million) damage claim suit against leaders of the Korea Metal Workers' Union (KMWU), for alleged financial losses incurred due to strike action.

The right to free speech and assembly was restricted in 42% of countries, with protesting working people facing police brutality. In **France,** workers' unions have held mass demonstrations against a controversial and undemocratic decision to raise the national retirement age. Their lawful protests have been met with vicious police beatings, indiscriminate arrests and tear gas attacks by the police and security forces. Across the world in **Iran,** more than 230 teachers were arrested for taking part in 2022's national May Day demonstrations, with armed security forces storming groups and beating and arresting participants.

79% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining. Companies refused to comply with collective agreements, rejected established trade unions and, in many cases, carried out negotiations with 'yellow unions' – often set up by employers to bypass genuine talks with representative workers' unions. Workers in the **Netherlands, North Macedonia, Montenegro** and **Serbia** have seen their rights to collective bargaining severely reduced.

77% of countries excluded working people from the right to establish or join a trade union. Migrant workers, domestic workers, temporary workers, and those in the informal economy continued to be denied the right to freedom of association, as did platform workers and those in Special Economic Zones where labour laws are removed specifically to entice overseas investment. Workers in **Burundi, Haiti, India, Turkey** and the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** were excluded from union representation.

73% of countries impeded the registration of unions. Government legislation hampered, restricted or removed the rights of workers to register their representative bodies in **Belarus, Myanmar, Hong Kong, Central African Republic** and **Canada.**

Workers were arrested and detained in 69 countries in 2023. Prominent trade union leaders from **Myanmar, Hong Kong, Dominican Republic, India** and **Turkey** were arrested and detained often under spurious charges. The targeting of union representatives has long been a strategy of repressive regimes keen to deter dissent through intimidation.

In 65% of countries working people had no or restricted access to justice. Trade union leaders and workers' rights advocates in **Zimbabwe, Colombia, China** and **Kazakhstan** were often detained and prosecuted on trumped-up charges, and their trials were often beset by a disregard for due process and a lack of impartiality.

The 10 worst countries for workers in 2023 are: **Bangladesh, Belarus, Ecuador, Egypt, Eswatini, Guatemala, Myanmar, Tunisia, the Philippines** and **Turkey.**

Ecuador and **Tunisia** are new entries in 2023. In **Ecuador** mass protests calling for democracy and collective rights, organised by Indigenous peoples' organisations and trade unions, have been brutally repressed resulting in arrests, injuries and killings. In **Tunisia,** President Kais Saied has continued to tighten his hold on power, undermining workers' civil liberties and democratic institutions. Parliament was dissolved in 2021 and a new constitution adopted in 2022 without consultation with political parties or social partners.



In Ecuador, mass protests led by trade unions and Indigenous peoples' groups calling for democracy and rights were met with brutal repression.

Credit: Veronica Lombeida / AFP

Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Haiti, Liberia, Montenegro, Namibia, North Macedonia, Togo and the **United Kingdom** all saw their ratings worsen in 2023.

Three countries where ratings improved are **Australia, Chile** and **Cote d'Ivoire**.

Workers experienced violence in 44 countries, including **Bangladesh, the Philippines** and **Lebanon**. The Asia-Pacific region saw another lamentable jump in the incidence of violence against working people from 43% of countries in 2022 to 48% in 2023 and the **Middle East North Africa** region also experienced a significant rise from 42% in 2022 to 53% in 2023.

Trade unionists and workers were murdered in eight countries: **Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eswatini, Guatemala, Peru** and **Sierra Leone**.

10-YEAR TRENDS

The past 10 years have seen a consistent increase in the violation of workers' rights across the regions. The Middle East and North Africa has held its place as the worst region for working people over the past decade with an average rating of 4.25 in 2014 that has fallen further to 4.53 in 2023. In **Iran**, calls for democracy and equality have been met with violence from state police forces. In **Egypt**, workers have been arrested and detained, strike action has been suppressed, and changes to labour laws have been made without consultation with workers' representatives.

Africa's rating over those years has also taken a downward trajectory from 3.26 in 2014 to 3.84 in 2023. Recent events in **Eswatini**, which saw the brutal murder of human rights and trade union lawyer and political activist Thulani Maseko, have been chilling for workers' representatives everywhere.

In the **Asia Pacific** region workers have continued to raise their voices in demand of their rights despite a prevailing atmosphere of repression and violence toward trade union activity. Over the past 10 years, the region has seen a further drop in its overall rating from 4.05 to 4.18 with workers in **Myanmar, Cambodia** and **the Philippines** experiencing the most brutal forms of rights violations.

Workers in the **Americas** have faced a degradation of their rights and the region's rating has fallen steadily from 3.16 in 2014 to 3.52 in 2023. Across the spectrum of violations, that downward trend is most shockingly exemplified in the murders of trade unionists in **Colombia, Brazil, Peru** and **Guatemala**. Meanwhile working people in **Canada, Guatemala, Peru** and the **US** have faced union busting, being locked out of their workplaces, increasing obstacles to registering unions, and legislative attempts to prevent them from striking.

Europe has long been held as a bastion of democracy and workers' rights. However, its overall rating over the decade has diminished from 1.84 in 2014 to 2.56 in 2023. and workers in **Belarus, Kazakhstan** and **Turkey** face surveillance, imprisonment and brutality from regimes that share autocratic traits. Working people in the **Netherlands, France** and **Belgium** have also experienced a tightening of restrictions and refusal by governments and employers to negotiate with trade union representatives. In the **United Kingdom**, union busting, attempts to introduce legislation curtailing the right to strike and protest, and violations of collective bargaining agreements have become systematic and led to the country's rating dropping from three to four.

THE ONLY DATABASE OF ITS KIND

A decade ago, the Index was conceived as a means to observe and analyse the degree to which countries, and the companies that operate within them, uphold the rights of workers as outlined in international law. As a comprehensive review of workers' rights in law in 149 countries, it is the only database of its kind and now exists as an interactive website, where violations and national ratings can be viewed by country and region.

The Index has documented the move by business to embrace platform work and complex supply chains, characterised by the absence of contracts and protections, as governments court investment by tearing up workers' rights.

However, as customers, investors and shareholders demand more accountability and transparency from business on the treatment of workers within their supply chains, and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) develops a board-level remit, the Index provides 10-year data trends that support informed, considered choices.

WORKERS ON THE FRONTLINES

In 2023, in a cost-of-living crisis that has impacted workers globally, there has been an urgent need for action by workers' unions. Global shocks have played a part, with the economic aftermath of the pandemic, plus Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine and the ensuing energy crisis, squeezing household budgets. However, the burgeoning profit margins of private companies tell another tale; one in which costs have been passed onto the consumer disproportionately and created an inflationary spiral. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Central Bank (ECB) have acknowledged that rising inflation is due more to price hikes than it is to wage rises. Despite this, politicians have continued to hold wages down, have refused to honour negotiations with unions, have restricted strike action and have attempted to quash protests claiming that a wage-price spiral must be avoided.

What the 2023 Index has highlighted over the past year is a steady attack on workers who dare to demand fair pay for their labour, and this has been evident across economic and geographical regions. The line between autocracies and democracies is blurring and workers are on the frontlines as governments and business attempt to obscure it further.

Democracy is on the line when the dialogue between state and citizen breaks down. Democracy is on the line when countries flirt with autocracy to pass unpopular laws, and when governments deploy state forces to quell lawful resistance.

Without decent jobs guaranteeing just wages, social protection, safe and secure work, the assurance of equality and inclusion, and the guarantee of fundamental rights and the rule of law, our democracies are fragile. At a moment when trust in governments is broken, and populist and far-right groups are stepping into the breach to gain advantage, sow division and threaten fundamental liberties, the fabric of our societies must be reinforced.

Only a New Social Contract can rebuild trust and ensure that our democracies are fit for purpose to meet the demands of an uncertain future in which the climate crisis, the future of work, challenges to public health and geopolitical instability will continue to provide shocks.

In turbulent times, workers' unions have never been more essential.

Luc Triangle

Acting General Secretary

International Trade Union Confederation

Read the findings of the 2023
Global Rights Index at
www.globalrightsindex.org

In South Korea, working people saw the government violate their right to strike and target workers' unions through police raids and arbitrary arrests.

Credit: Chris Jung NurPhoto / via AFP



At a glance

This is the 10th edition of the ITUC Global Rights Index. It documents violations of internationally recognised labour rights by governments and employers.

The 10 worst countries for working people

Bangladesh	Guatemala
Belarus	Myanmar
NEW – Ecuador	NEW – Tunisia
Egypt	The Philippines
Eswatini	Turkey

The worst region in the world

Middle East and North Africa

Violations of workers' rights



Right to strike
87% of countries violated the right to strike.



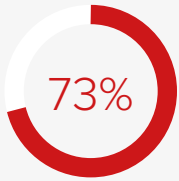
Right to collective bargaining
79% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining.



Right to establish and join a trade union
77% 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.



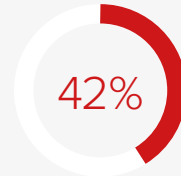
Right to trade union activities
73% of countries impeded the registration of unions.



Right to civil liberties
Workers were detained and arrested in 69 countries.



Violent attacks on workers
Workers experienced violence in 44 countries.



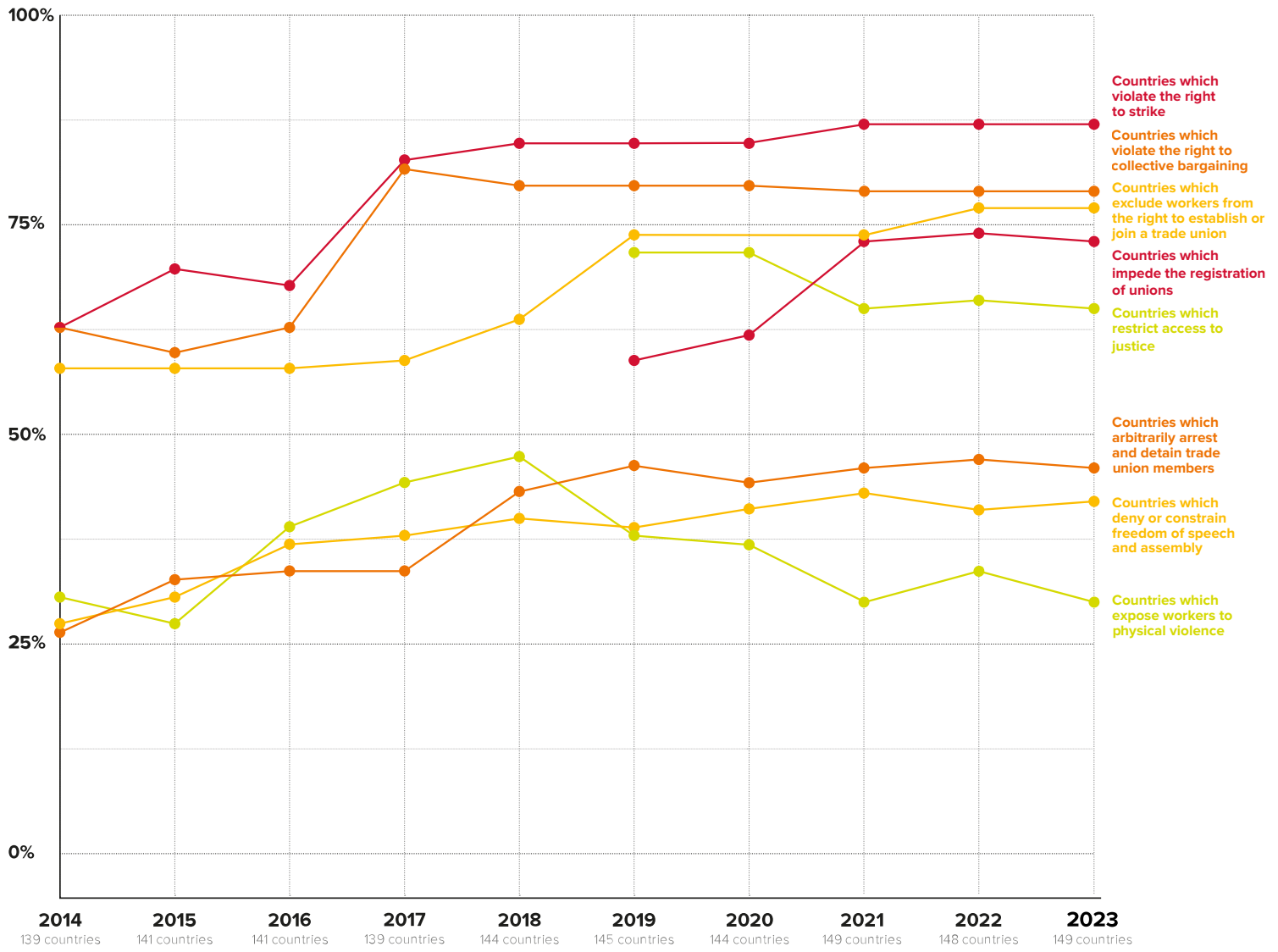
Right to free speech and assembly
42% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.



Murders
Trade unionists were murdered in 8 countries: **Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eswatini, Guatemala, Peru** and **Sierra Leone**.

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. The annual 2023 Global Rights Index with searchable data can be found at www.globalrightsindex.org. Information on violations of workers' rights in countries is published throughout the year in the ITUC Survey found at survey.ituc-csi.org.

10-year trends: Violations of workers' rights

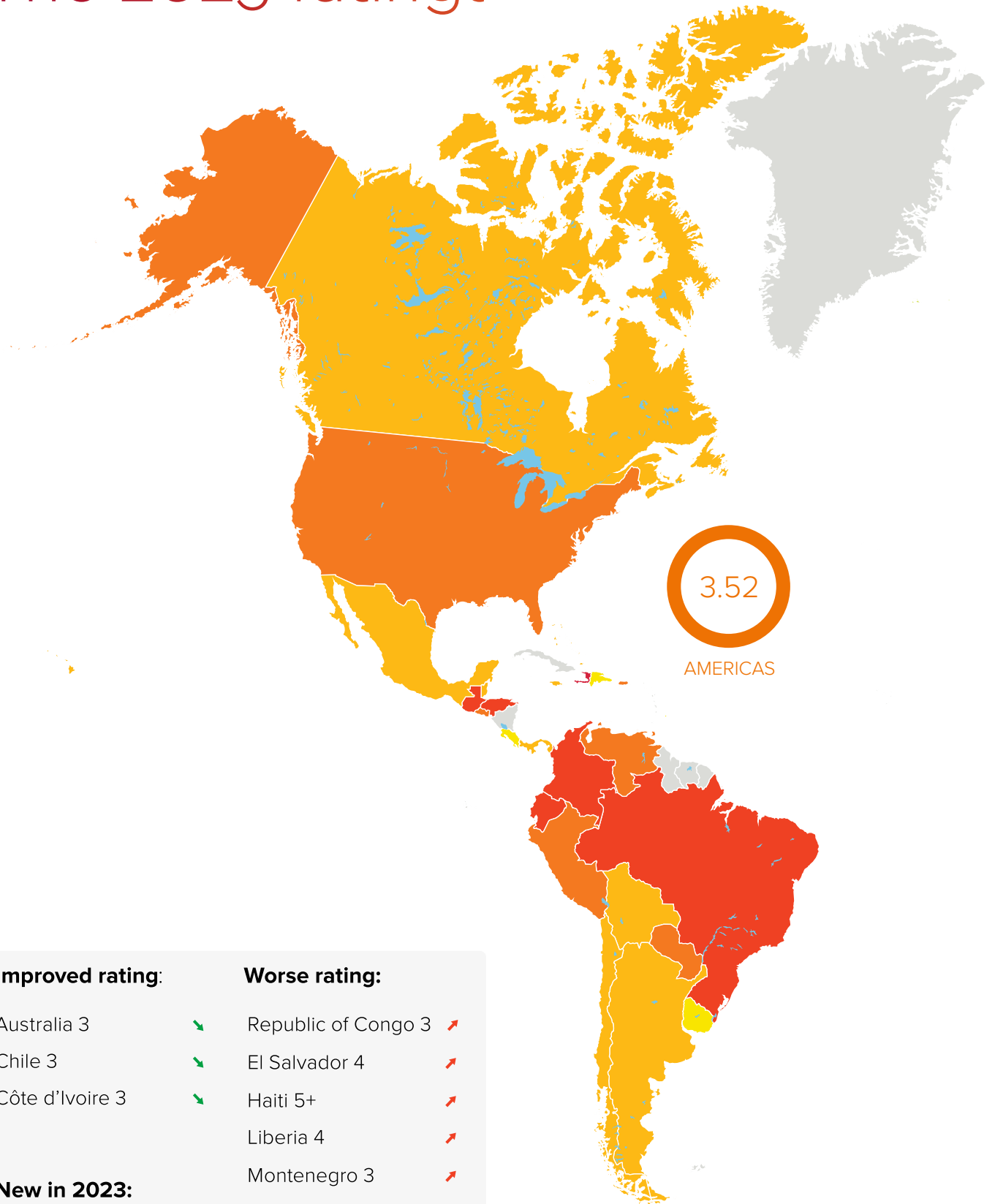


Companies violating workers' rights

- Air New Zealand, **New Zealand**
- Airports of Mauritius Ltd, **Mauritius**
- Amazon, **United States of America**
- Angola-Telecom, **Angola**
- Apple, **Australia**
- ArcelorMittal South Africa, **South Africa**
- ASD Laminat, **Turkey**
- Ash Grove cement plant, **Canada**
- Association of Banks, **Chile**
- Banco Itaú, **Colombia**
- Bank Of Africa, **Mali**
- Barutçu Tekstil, **Turkey**
- Beshay Company, **Egypt**
- Best Choice Garment Co., **Myanmar**
- Business Casablanca 2S, **Morocco**
- Caculu Cabaça, **Angola**
- Capafare Investments, **Zimbabwe**
- CEDC International Sp. z o.o., **Poland**
- China Geo Engineering Corporation, **Lesotho**
- Cirsá, **Peru**
- Companhia Siderúrgica Nacional, **Brazil**
- Crnogorski Telekom, **Montenegro**
- CWS, **Belgium**
- Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering, **Korea**
- Deliveroo, **Netherlands**
- Distributions Ltd., **Poland**
- DPD Switzerland, **Switzerland**
- Dreams, **Peru**
- Eastcrown Footwear Industries, **Cambodia**
- El Watan, **Algeria**
- ETF Tekstil, **Turkey**
- Fyffes, **Honduras**
- Fritran, **Uruguay**
- Gildan Mayan Textiles, **Honduras**
- Gold Fields, **South Africa**
- Gulf Port, **Israel**
- Hengam petrochemical, **Iran**
- HiteJinro, **Korea**
- IDS Borjomi, **Georgia**
- IKEA, **Poland**
- Ingwebu Breweries, **Zimbabwe**
- Institute of Canadian Agencies, **Canada**
- J&T Express, **The Philippines**
- KCP Sp. z o. o., **Poland**
- Kezbi LLP, **Kazakhstan**
- Korea Federation of Banks, **Korea**
- La Reyna, **Honduras**
- Los Quenuales, **Peru**
- Manipal Teaching Hospital, **Nepal**
- Mauritius Post Ltd, **Mauritius**
- Metrolinx, **Canada**
- Molex Malaysia, **Malaysia**
- NagaWorld Hotel and Casino complex, **Cambodia**
- Nexteer Automotive Poland, **Poland**
- NXP Manufacturing, **Thailand**
- Orpea, **France**
- Pasta Regina, **Egypt**
- Peruplast S.A. (AMCOR), **Peru**
- Philip Morris, **Turkey**
- Port of Adria, **Montenegro**
- Post Office, **Serbia**
- Pou Chen shoe factory, **Myanmar**
- Precious Garments, **Lesotho**
- PT Shenhua Guo Hua Lion Power, **Indonesia**
- PT Tainan Enterprises, **Indonesia**
- Qantas, **Australia**
- Royal Mail, **United Kingdom**
- Ryanair, **Spain**
- Sanef Group, **France**
- Sheraton Grand Conakry, **Guinea**
- Slam Clothing Pvt Ltd, **India**
- Starbucks, **United States of America**
- Stellantis Gliwice, **Poland**
- SYHJ Garment factory, **Cambodia**
- Tempo Team, **Netherlands**
- Therma Sp. z o. o., **Poland**
- Distributions Ltd, **Poland**
- TUI, **Netherlands**
- Tunisie Autoroutes, **Tunisia**
- Uber, **Netherlands**
- United Bus Service, **Mauritius**
- Viraj Steel Limited, **India**
- Winners, **Guatemala**
- Wolt Delivery, **Israel**
- Yamaha Motors, **India**
- Yura Corporation, **Serbia**
- Zheng Yong Swaziland, **Eswatini**

These **companies violated workers' rights, are linked to a violation of workers' rights, or failed to use their leverage to address workers' rights violations.** Companies have an obligation to respect internationally recognised human rights, including collective labour rights, and to avoid actions that undermine or impair the practice and take-up of these rights by workers. More on the violations committed against workers can be read at www.globalrightsindex.org.

The 2023 ratings



Improved rating:

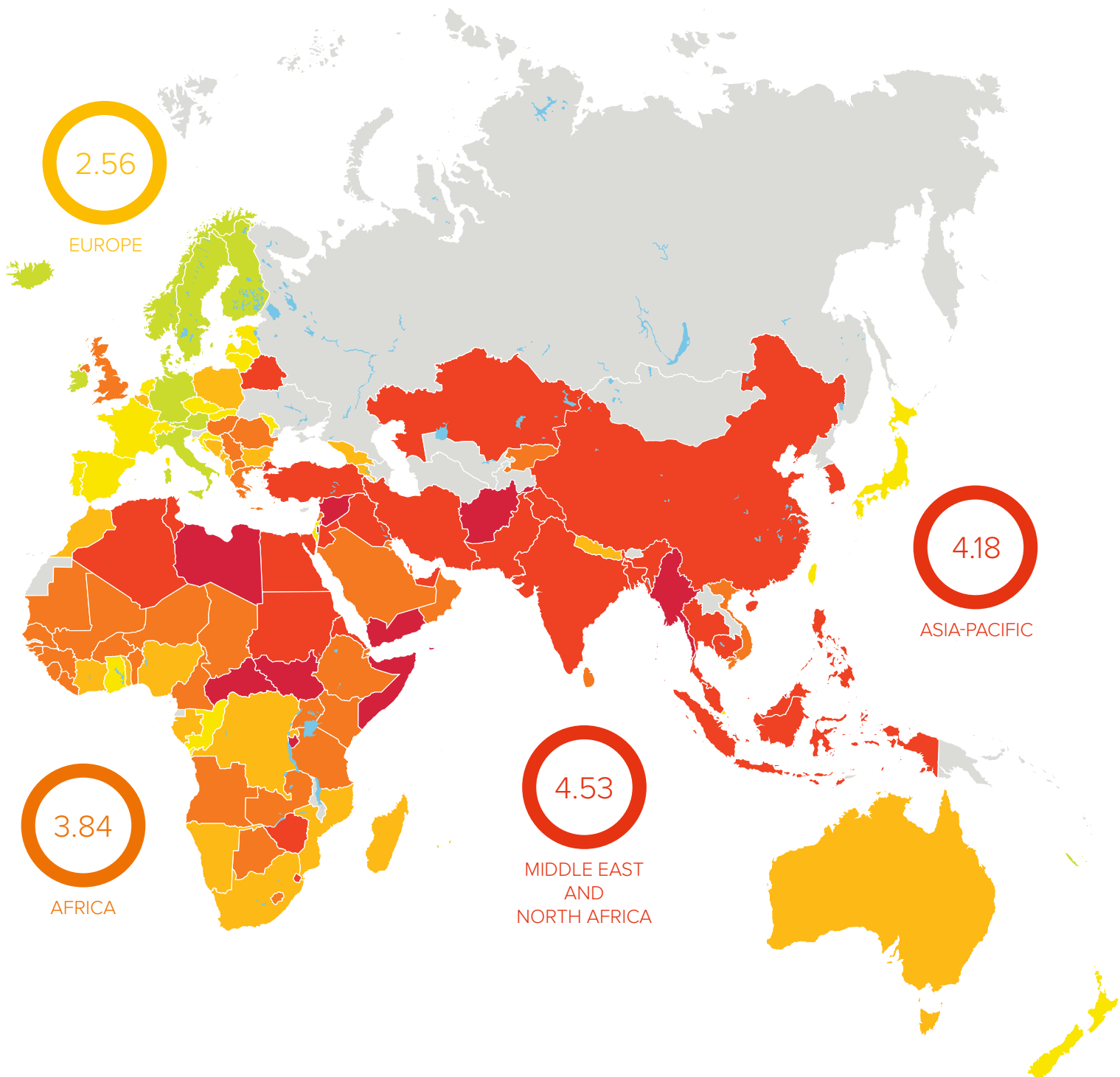
- Australia 3
- Chile 3
- Côte d'Ivoire 3

New in 2023:

- Guinea-Bissau 4

Worse rating:

- Republic of Congo 3
- El Salvador 4
- Haiti 5+
- Liberia 4
- Montenegro 3
- Namibia 3
- North Macedonia 4
- Togo 3
- United Kingdom 4



- 5+** No guarantee of rights due to the breakdown of the rule of law
- 5** No guarantee of rights
- 4** Systematic violations of rights
- 3** Regular violations of rights
- 2** Repeated violations of rights
- 1** Sporadic violations of rights
- No data

Rating 5+

No guarantee of rights due to the breakdown of the rule of law

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

Rating 5

No guarantee of rights

Algeria	•	Eswatini	•	Kuwait	•
Bahrain	•	Guatemala	•	Laos	•
Bangladesh	•	Honduras	•	Malaysia	•
Belarus	•	Hong Kong	•	Pakistan	•
Brazil	•	India	•	Philippines	•
Cambodia	•	Indonesia	•	Sudan	•
China	•	Iran	•	Thailand	•
Colombia	•	Iraq	•	Tunisia	•
Ecuador	•	Jordan	•	Turkey	•
Egypt	•	Kazakhstan	•	United Arab Emirates	•
Eritrea	•	Korea (Republic of)	•	Zimbabwe	•

Rating 4

Systematic violations of rights

Angola	•	Hungary	•	Saudi Arabia	•
Benin	•	Kenya	•	Senegal	•
Botswana	•	Kyrgyzstan	•	Serbia	•
Burkina Faso	•	Lebanon	•	Sierra Leone	•
Cameroon	•	Lesotho	•	Sri Lanka	•
Chad	•	Liberia	↗	Tanzania	•
Congo (Democratic Republic of)	•	Mali	•	Trinidad and Tobago	•
Djibouti	•	Mauritania	•	Uganda	•
El Salvador	↗	Nigeria	•	United Kingdom	↗
Ethiopia	•	North Macedonia	↗	United States of America	•
Fiji	•	Oman	•	Venezuela	•
Greece	•	Peru	•	Vietnam	•
Guinea	•	Qatar	•	Zambia	•
<i>Guinea-Bissau - NEW</i>	•	Romania	•		

Rating 3

Regular violations of rights

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

Rating 2

Repeated violations of rights

Barbados	•	Israel	•	Portugal	•
Costa Rica	•	Japan	•	Singapore	•
Croatia	•	Latvia	•	Slovakia	•
Czech Republic	•	Lithuania	•	Spain	•
Dominican Republic	•	Malawi	•	Switzerland	•
Estonia	•	Moldova	•	Taiwan	•
France	•	Netherlands	•	Uruguay	•
Ghana	•	New Zealand	•		

Rating 1

Sporadic violations of rights

Austria	•	Germany	•	Italy	•
Denmark	•	Iceland	•	Norway	•
Finland	•	Ireland	•	Sweden	•

Comparison with 2022 score:

No change or new in 2023

Worse rating

Improved rating



•

↗

▼

Countries in **bold** are the 10 worst countries for working people in 2023.

Worst Region in the World

REGION		2023	SCALE	
MENA	19 countries	4.53	(4) Systematic violations of rights to (5) No Guarantee of rights	
Asia-Pacific	23 countries	4.18	(4) Systematic violations of rights to (5) No Guarantee of rights	
Africa	43 countries	3.84	(3) Regular violations of rights to (4) Systematic violations of rights	
Americas	25 countries	3.52	(3) Regular violations of rights to (4) Systematic violations of rights	
Europe	39 countries	2.56	(2) Repeated violations of rights to (3) Regular violations of rights	

Middle East and North Africa is the worst region for working people

In 2023, the Middle East and North Africa continued to be the worst region in the world for workers' rights with an average rating of 4.53.

The conflict zones of the region: **Libya**, **Palestine**, **Syria** and **Yemen**, have seen a breakdown of the law under which no workers' rights nor their fundamental liberties can be guaranteed.

In **Tunisia**, President Kais Saied tightened his grip on power. Having dissolved the Parliament in July 2021, President Saied unilaterally adopted a new constitution in July 2022 without consultation with political parties or social partners. The past year has seen arrests and violations of collective bargaining rights, as well as repudiations of the right for international workers' unions to demonstrate solidarity with their local allies.

In the **Gulf countries**, notwithstanding progress in **Qatar**, the kafala system remained in place and in practice, migrant workers, who represented the overwhelming majority of the working population in the region, remained exposed to severe human rights abuses.

In **Algeria** and **Egypt**, independent trade unions still struggled to obtain registration from hostile authorities, which severely impeded their capacity to function effectively.



In Israel, the rights to strike, collectively bargain and form a trade union were undermined. The country is in the worst region for working people: the Middle East and North Africa.

Credit: Ahmad Gharabli / AFP

At a glance



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 justice

In 79% of countries, workers had no or restricted access to justice.



Right to trade union activities

100% of countries impeded the registration of unions.



Right to civil liberties

Workers were detained and arrested in 9 countries.



Violent attacks on workers

Workers experienced violence in 10 countries.



Right to free speech and assembly

79% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.

Asia-Pacific

The Asia-Pacific region was once again the second worst region in the world for workers' rights. The average rating for countries in Asia-Pacific was 4.18.

Former employees of NagaWorld Hotel and Casino in Cambodia hold a protest in support of four trade unionist colleagues jailed for taking strike action. The Asia-Pacific region is the second worst region in the world for workers' rights.

Credit: Isaac Lawrence / AFP

In **Hong Kong**, after the disbandment of independent trade unions and pro-democracy organisations, the authorities continued to persecute and arrest trade union leaders, while in **Korea**, unions were targeted by the government through police raids and arbitrary arrests.

Workers in **India**, **Pakistan** and **Bangladesh** were beaten by state forces, faced arbitrary arrests and restrictions on the right to form trade unions.

Arbitrary arrests and violent attacks remain a constant threat for trade unionists and workers in **Myanmar** and the **Philippines** who continued to demand their rights in the face of intense attempted repression from the authorities.

In **China**, the Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other Turkic Muslim peoples remained the targeted focus of unrelenting persecution and mass detention by the authorities who, among other brutal human rights abuses, coerced them into forced labour to supply the garment industry.

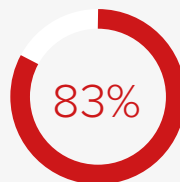


At a glance



Right to strike

87% 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 justice

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



Right to trade union activities

91% of countries impeded the registration of unions.



Right to civil liberties

Workers were detained and arrested in 18 countries.



Violent attacks on workers

Workers experienced violence in 11 countries.



Right to free speech and assembly

61% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.

Africa

The situation of workers in Africa worsened compared to last year, with an average rating of 3.84.

In the Africa region, working people in Guinea saw the military regime severely undermine their rights.

Credit: Kena Betancur / via AFP

Burundi, Central African Republic, Somalia and **South Sudan** were still plagued by internal conflicts, which further deteriorated the humanitarian situation and deprived millions of basic protections.

In **Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Mali** and **Sudan**, where military regimes have been established following coups in recent years, workers' civil liberties and freedoms, such as the right to peaceful assembly and access to justice, were severely curtailed.

In **Eswatini**, government repression against opposition, including trade unions, culminated with the killing of Thulani Maseko, a prominent human rights lawyer, while in **Zimbabwe**, the authorities relentlessly persecuted and arrested trade union leaders. Workers in **Cameroon, Guinea-Bissau** and **Mauritania** continued to struggle to exercise their collective rights in the face of significant repressions.



At a glance



Right to strike

95% of countries violated the right to strike.



Right to collective bargaining

93% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining.



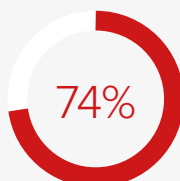
Right to establish and join a trade union

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Right to justice

In 84% 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 17 countries.



Violent attacks on workers

Workers experienced violence in 9 countries.



Right to free speech and assembly

53% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.



Murders

Workers were murdered in Eswatini and Sierra Leone.

Americas

In many countries in the Americas, including **Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala** and **Peru**, trade unionists and workers experienced violent attacks. In **Honduras**, it remained very difficult for workers to organise, as they faced intimidation and union-busting practices.

In **Ecuador**, peaceful mass protests were met with police brutality, leaving many injured or killed.

Haiti remained in acute political and institutional crisis, as the country was beset with violent civil unrest, and workers' civil liberties and freedoms were severely curtailed.

In Peru, democratic protests against the parliamentary coup were heavily repressed by the police. In many countries in the Americas, trade unionists and workers experienced violent attacks.

Credit: IndustriAll

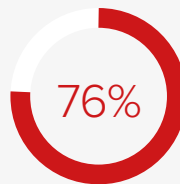


At a glance



Right to strike

92% of countries violated the right to strike.



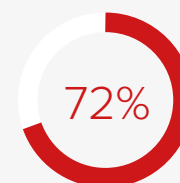
Right to collective bargaining

76% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining.



Right to establish and join a trade union

72% of countries excluded workers from the right to establish or join a trade union.



Right to justice

In 72% of countries workers had no or restricted access to justice.



Right to trade union activities

88% of countries impeded the registration of unions.



Right to civil liberties

Workers were detained and arrested in 15 countries.



Violent attacks on workers

Workers experienced violence in 8 countries.



Right to free speech and assembly

20% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.



Murders

Workers were murdered in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala and Peru.

Europe

In Europe, the average regional rating deteriorated, falling to 2.49. Collective bargaining rights were severely trampled in most countries, including the **Netherlands**, **North Macedonia**, **Montenegro** and **Serbia**, while workers in **Poland** and **Turkey** were faced with employers' union-busting practices. In the **United Kingdom**, the right to strike was under attack with the introduction of a regressive bill. In **Belarus** and **Kazakhstan**, independent trade union movements continued to be heavily suppressed.

The government in France used violence, arbitrary arrests and has even requisitioned workers to prevent them from joining the mass opposition to its pension law. In Europe, the average regional rating worsened to reach 2.49 as basic rights were violated in most countries.

Credit: Lionel Bonaventure / AFP



At a glance



Right to strike

72% 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 justice

In 31% of countries, workers had no or restricted access to justice.



Right to trade union activities

38% of countries impeded the registration of unions.



Right to civil liberties

Workers were detained and arrested in 10 countries.



Violent attacks on workers

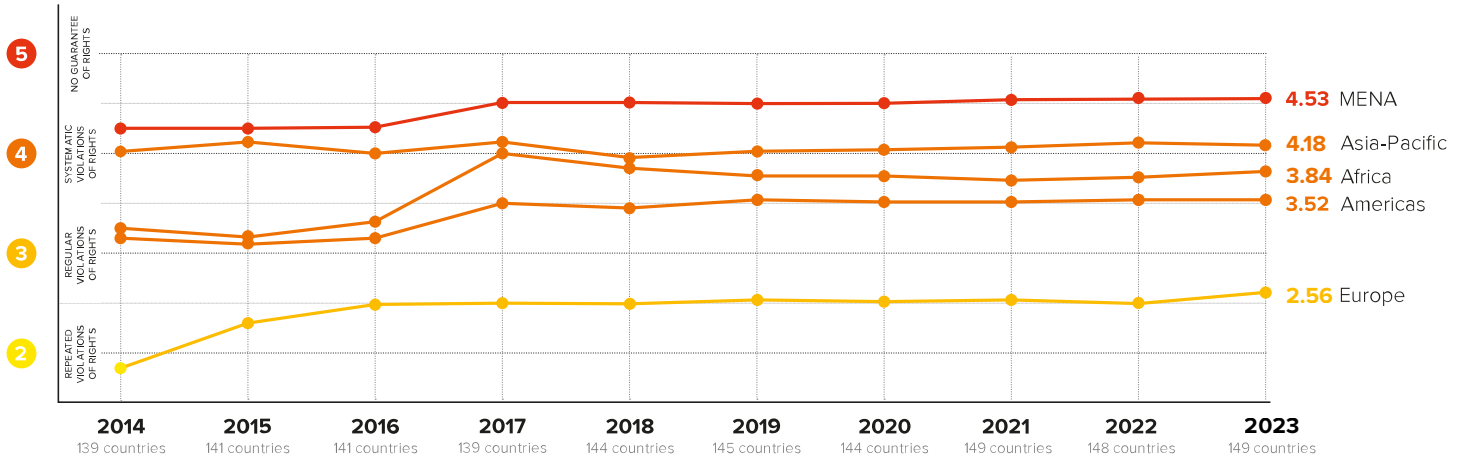
Workers experienced violence in 6 countries.



Right to free speech and assembly

13% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.

10-year trends: Regional ratings



The world's 10 worst countries for workers

Bangladesh



- Regressive laws
- Obstacles to union formation
- Police violence

Workers' rights in **Bangladesh** continued to be severely curtailed. Set up to attract foreign investment, the country's eight Export Processing Zones prohibit workers from forming a trade union or freely expressing their rights. In the garment sector, which is the country's largest industry and employs more than 4.5 million workers, attempts at forming unions were ruthlessly obstructed, while strikes were met with brutality by the country's Industrial Police force.

The authorities also frustrated the establishment of unions by imposing a draconian registration process.

Violent attacks on workers

On 4 June 2022, police in Dhaka, Bangladesh, opened fire with gunshots and tear gas, as well as using batons against protesting garment workers at Mirpur and Azampur, leaving many workers injured. Thousands of factory workers from **Chaity Garment, Intraco Fashion, Intraco Design, MBM Garment, Vision Garment, IDS Group, Kolka Garment** and **Dmox** blocked roads in Dhaka demanding higher wages to meet the rising costs of living. Their last pay increase was in 2018. The protests continued for four days, with repeats of further violent clashes. Several workers were arrested. On the third day, police again attacked the protesting garment workers as they took to the streets demanding pay rises and the release of their arrested and detained colleagues. The workers left after police baton-charged them and fired gun shots and tear gas to disperse them, but they vowed to return the next day.



Garment workers in Bangladesh demand three-month's salary that they have not been paid. As one of the 10 worst countries for working people, attempts by garment workers to form unions and strike action are ruthlessly repressed.

Credit: Mamunur Rashid / NurPhoto via AFP

Far from criticising the police attacks on protesters, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wazed called on the authorities to find those who she claimed were "instigating the workers' leaders" and made reference to shadowy "efforts to topple our government".

Union busting

In statements made in April 2022, the **Bangladesh Apparel Workers Federation** (BAWF) and the **Bangladesh Garment and Industrial Workers Federation** (BGIWF) denounced the overall anti-union climate in the garment sector. More than 50 per cent of the unions registered since the Rana Plaza incident were yellow unions, which have remained inactive over the years. The labour department has failed to register independent trade unions, while unions backed by factory owners have proliferated in the sector. In Bangladesh, factory owners largely opposed trade unions and they forced workers not to join any union. In many cases, factory owners hired external forces to threaten workers who joined a union and used the police to harass union members. When an active federation in a factory filed an application for registration, labour department officials often imposed conditions in addition to those specified by the labour laws and rejected the application.

Belarus



- Repressive criminal laws
- Targeted arrests and imprisonment of trade union leaders
- Forced dissolution of unions

In **Belarus**, since the rigged presidential elections of August 2020 and the heavy-handed repression of democratic protests, the government has consistently increased pressure on independent trade unions, arresting union leaders and members, and sentencing them to long prison terms on bogus charges.

Independent unions were forcibly dissolved at the behest of the authorities.

Democratic space has been further reduced since the 2021 introduction of legislation to penalise unauthorised demonstrations with terms of imprisonment of up to three years. As a result, the collective voice of workers has been all but silenced by the government.

Trade unions de-registered

The authorities stepped up their repression against trade unions when, on 18 July 2022, the Supreme Court decided to liquidate the **Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions** (BKDP) and its affiliates, including the **Free Trade Union of Metal Workers** (SPM), the **Free Trade Union of Belarus** (SPB), the **Belarusian Trade Union of Workers of the Radio-Electronic Industry** (REP) and the **Belarusian Independent Trade Union** (BITU).

Since April 2022, the Belarusian government has engaged in a systematic pattern of repression of the independent trade unions in the country, smearing independent unions and trade unionists as ‘extremists’ and ‘western agents’, and engaging in defamation campaigns, with a clear threat that anyone who associates with the BKDP and its affiliates risks being prosecuted.



The people of Belarus took to the streets to oppose the Lukashenko regime. Belarus is one of the worst countries for workers’ rights and in the past year saw independent trade unions dissolved and union leaders imprisoned.

Credit: Marco Fieber / via Flickr

Workers’ representatives arrested

Over the past year, the Lukashenko regime further intensified its repression of independent trade unions. In April 2022, the authorities launched a full-scale attack on all independent unions and arrested leaders and activists. More than 30 unionists were detained or had their freedom of movement restricted. On 27 December 2022, the chairman of the **Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions** (BKDP), **Aliaksandr Yarashuk**, was found guilty of “actions that grossly violate public order” and of “calling for measures aimed at harming national security”. After a show trial, he was sentenced to four years’ imprisonment. Yarashuk had been in custody since 19 April 2022 and has had no access to his family, colleagues or lawyers during his detention.

NEW – Ecuador



- Regressive laws
- Police violence against strikers

The very restrictive legal framework in **Ecuador** continued to hinder the development of strong, independent trade unions in the country, and the authorities continued to impede the registration of trade unions in both the public and private sectors.

In 2022, the government brutally cracked down on mass protests for democracy and collective rights, organised by Indigenous peoples' organisations and trade unions. Police forces violently repressed protesters, arresting, killing and injuring many.

Brutal repression and violence

During a national strike called in May 2022, five people were killed by the police forces, who used deterrence weapons in a lethal manner and arrested dozens of participants. A significant number of the 132 detainees were charged with crimes such as sabotage, terrorism or resistance. In response to the complaints of kidnapping, persecution and planning attacks against leaders of the demonstrations, the authorities resorted to media censorship and violation of the right to freedom of expression by blocking information, cutting off the internet and social networks, hacking personal email accounts and terminating mobile network service. The demonstrations had been organised by the **Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador** (Conaie), with the support of the **Unitary Front of Workers** (FUT), the **National Union of Educators** (UNE) and unions representing farmers, medical associations, retirees, public unions, teachers, students and carriers, to demand respect for collective rights. The unions, including the **Ecuadorian Confederation of Unitary Class Organizations of Workers** (Cedocut), denounced the escalation of state violence and threats.



The government of Ecuador brutally cracked down on protests for democracy and repressed the development of independent trade unions, making it one of the worst countries for working people.

Credit: Veronica Lombeida / AFP

Egypt



- Repressive laws against union formation
- Union busting and dismissals

Workers in **Egypt** remained deprived of their basic rights and freedoms at work, while many independent trade unions were still seeking re-registration after their arbitrary dissolution in 2018.

Strikes were systematically suppressed, with workers arrested and detained by police forces and strikers later dismissed by their employers.

In 2022, amendments to the Labour Law were presented to the House of Representatives, without any consultation of the independent trade union organisations.

Trade unions impeded by authorities

In 2023, the authorities refused to register independent unions established in the following sectors: garment, agriculture, glass industry, telecommunications, street vendors and taxi drivers.

Where a yellow union already existed in the workplace, unions met further difficulties, with employers claiming that under the 2017 law, only one trade union committee can be set up, thus preventing the formation of a new union. In 2023, this was the case for independent unions at the Library of Alexandria, the Post Office, several Teachers Local Units, and unions in the judiciary.



Human rights activists protest at the COP27 climate talks in Egypt. Across the country working people were deprived of their basic rights and freedoms, making it one of the worst countries for workers.

Credit: Joseph Eid / Flickr

Employers withhold funds and ignore collective bargaining agreements

Where check-off agreements were in place, requiring an employer to deduct union dues from an employees' wage and pay them to the union, employers often failed to do so and withheld union dues. This was the case at Pasta Regina, a food producer that employed over 1,500 workers in Cairo. In the garment sector, employers often did not respect the provisions of concluded collective agreements.

Eswatini



- Murder
- Police violence during strikes

Anti-union violence and state repression were prevalent in **Eswatini** as trade union leaders and human rights activists were persecuted and murdered. Police forces demonstrated excessive violence in suppressing strikes and arbitrarily arresting workers. More than 80 people are reported to have lost their lives because of the police crackdown on protests that demanded democracy and wage increases.

Two members of parliament were arrested in 2021 and are in detention without trial, and trade union leaders have been forced into exile following persistent persecution by security forces. Trade union gatherings and protest actions were banned in October 2021, despite the government receiving a court order against this. In addition, the brutal shooting and murder of **Thulani Maseko**, a human rights and trade union rights lawyer and political activist, on January 21, 2023, was widely condemned by the global community.

Union leaders targeted and forced into exile

Sticks Nkambule, the Secretary General of the **Swaziland Transport, Communication and Allied Workers Union** (SWATCAWU), faced a series of incidents intended to intimidate and harass the union leader into silence. In response to his union's call for a "job stay away" scheduled between 13-14 December 2022, he faced public censure and a police announcement that identified him as a wanted person for alleged criminal conduct. Then, in December 2022, the village he came from was raided and his family harassed. As a result, Nkambule took the decision to go into exile to protect himself and his family from further intimidation and possible violence.



Activists in Kenya protest against the murder of Thulani Maseko (inset); a human and trade union rights lawyer and political activist in Eswatini where anti-union violence made it one of the worst countries for workers.

Credit: Tony Karumba / AFP

On 2 January 2023, **Mbongwa Dlamini**, the President of the **Swaziland National Association of Teachers** (SNAT) was also forced into exile, following threats by security forces to harm him, after his union called for a strike on 8 August 2022. In October 2022, the government had suspended Dlamini's salary without justification, and had also refused a check-off system for SNAT's newly recruited members, which entails the employer deducting union dues from employees' wages and forwarding them to the union.

Guatemala



- Violence against trade unionists
- Climate of fear and impunity

In 2023, cases of threats, physical attacks and homicides continued to increase in **Guatemala**, while the government's efforts to investigate, prevent and contain anti-union violence continued to be weak and inconsistent, especially in identifying the organisers of these violent acts.

Workers still faced significant obstacles to forming and joining trade unions.

Murder of a trade unionist

On 8 August 2022, 45-year-old **Hugo Eduardo Gamero Gonzalez** was shot and killed in Puerto Barrios, Izabal, Guatemala. He was a Secretary in the **Workers Union of the Santo Tomas de Castilla National Port Company** (SINEPORC) and had been a very active member in the union's activities.

Employees threatened with reprisals for union activities

Guatemalan workers at **Winners**, a company owned by South Korean company **SA-E Group**, were dismissed in an attempt to prevent unionisation. The company shut down its operations in May 2022 and dismissed workers, who then found they had been blacklisted and were unable to find other work.

Winners' management was known to use physical and psychological violence, intimidation, and threats against union members. The local union general secretary was harassed, received death threats and was forced to move to a safe location.



Guatemala is one of the 10 worst countries in the world for working people and a prevailing atmosphere of repression, physical violence and intimidation against workers and trade unionists continued to constrain their activities in 2023.

Credit: Orlando Estrada / AFP

Impediments to union registrations

Trade unions faced significant administrative obstacles to formal recognition, updating their membership lists, and the official approval of collective bargaining agreements by the Ministry of Labour.

Myanmar



- Killings and arbitrary arrests
- Anti-union dismissals
- Severe violation of freedoms of speech and assembly

Since the military coup on 1 February 2021, the junta has banned most unions in **Myanmar**. The coup was widely resisted by the people of Myanmar, who formed a peaceful **Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM)**. The response from the junta was brutal, with mass arrests and killings of civilians. The state of emergency declared by the military junta has been repeatedly extended, currently covering 47 townships all over the country. This has allowed the junta to extend the ban on public gathering and to apply military court procedures that enable arrest without warrant, as well as the imposition of life terms in prison and death sentences on citizens for exercising their liberties, with very little chance of appeal.

Many union activists remained in detention; others have been killed or are in hiding. It has been impossible for workers to exercise freedom of association. Up to 413 trade unionists and worker activists have been arrested for taking part in CDM protests, and 101 trade union and worker activists have been killed by the military or have died as a result of the coup.

Trade union leaders arrested

On 30 December 2022, **Moe Gyi**, central committee member of the **Confederation of Trade Unions of Myanmar (CTUM)**, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment and fined 1 million kyat (US\$476) on charges under section 124 of the Penal Code. Under pressure, he resigned from the CTUM central committee.

U Pyi Paing Ko Ko, director of **Let's Help Each Other (LEHO)** and a member of **Myanmar Labour Alliance**, was arrested on 3 May 2022 and sentenced to a seven-year imprisonment under section 51C of the Anti-Terrorism Act. **Kha Kha**, a staff member of LHEO, faces an arrest warrant on multiple charges.



Protesters call for a return to democracy in Myanmar, one of the 10 worst countries for working people. Since the military coup in February 2021, hundreds of trade union activists have been detained, killed or forced into hiding.

Credit: NurPhoto via AFP

In all, arrest warrants were issued to 29 CTUM central committee members and many more regional federation leaders and labour organisation leaders. Under the Code of Criminal Procedure, amended by the junta on 14 February 2021, offences under sections 505A, 124C and 124D are non bailable and subject to arrest without a warrant.

The Philippines



- Violence against trade unionists
- Arrests of trade unionists
- Union busting

Workers and their representatives in the **Philippines** remained particularly vulnerable to red-tagging, violent attacks, abductions and arbitrary arrests. Workers across many sectors still faced significant obstacles when attempting to form trade unions.

Abductions of workers' representatives

Dyan Gumanao, the project coordinator of the **Community Empowerment Resource Network** and regional coordinator of the **Alliance of Concerned Teachers**, and **Armand Dayoha**, an instructor at the University of the Philippines Cebu and organiser for the **Alliance of Health Workers**, were abducted on 10 January 2023 at a port in Cebu, the Philippines, and were detained by state security forces in a resort before they were rescued on 16 January 2023.

Gumanao and Dayoha were forced into an SUV and blindfolded by suspected state security agents. According to the victims' accounts, while they were being detained, they underwent interrogation and questioning about their political activities.

On 15 January, Gumanao was able to send information on where they were being held and, the following day, family members and colleagues of the pair were able to rescue them.

Weeks before the incident, both had confided to their families and colleagues that they were under surveillance and had been harassed by people they believed were state agents.



In the Philippines, trade unionists faced attacks, abductions and arrests, making it one of the 10 worst countries in the world for working people.

Credit: Ten Aljibe / AFP

Arrests of workers' representatives

On 10 October 2022, **Kara Taggaoa** and **Larry Balbuena** were arrested on criminal charges of “direct assault and robbery” of a police officer during a July 2020 rally. Taggaoa was then the spokesperson of the League of Filipino Students and, at the time of her arrest, was the international affairs officer of **Kilusang Mayo Uno** (KMU). Balbuena was president of the **Pasiklab Operators and Drivers Association** (PASODA). The two union activists pleaded not guilty and were granted bail.

However, they were re-arrested when leaving the court under a fresh charge of direct assault against a police officer during the same rally in 2020. Both were then taken to the custodial facility at Camp Karingal, where they were presented with an un-served arrest warrant, issued on 7 December 2021, and their ID cards were confiscated. Although they were released on bail on 11 October 2022, their trial dates had not been scheduled at the time of writing. The charges entail long prison terms.

NEW – Tunisia



- Arrest of trade union leaders
- Violations of collective bargaining rights
- Severe violations of civil liberties and denial of the right to international trade union solidarity

In **Tunisia**, democracy was gravely undermined and workers' civil liberties were put into jeopardy as President Kais Saied further tightened his grip on power. After dissolving the Parliament in July 2021, President Saied unilaterally adopted a new constitution in July 2022, without consultation with political parties or social partners. Unions in the country, as well as the entire international workers' community, strongly denounced this power grab, and have continued to call for democracy and respect for individual and collective freedoms.

Arrests of union leaders

On 31 January 2023, the general secretary of the employees' union of the Tunisian highway company **Tunisie Autoroutes, Anis Kaabi**, was arrested in the context of a strike planned by the union on 30 and 31 January. Workers were demanding the renewal of the operating contract for the Tunis-Msaken highway, due to end in 2025, as well as salary increases that had been decided under an agreement concluded between the **Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT)** and the government in September 2022, and the delivery of uniforms that had been promised five years earlier.

Kaabi's home was searched by security forces and his family was not initially informed of his whereabouts. He was finally granted a telephone call around 11pm and was then able to contact his family and ask them to send a lawyer to the police district of El Gorjani. This arrest was a direct consequence of a complaint filed by Tunisie Autoroutes against Kaabi for "financial losses caused by the strike". The losses related of the opening of free lanes during the strike period. However, it appears that it was a management decision to open the corridors. Kaabi's arrest followed combative statements by the President of the Republic, who declared that trade unionists who threaten to close the highways "must be held to account".



Members of the judiciary protest in Tunisia after the government arbitrarily dismissed 57 judges. The country is one of the worst for working people as President Kais Saied further undermined democracy and union rights.

Credit: Yassine Gaidi / Anadolu Agency via AFP

Authorities aim to block international solidarity

In February 2023, **Esther Lynch**, General Secretary, **ETUC**, was forced out of the country for addressing a rally organised by the UGTT to protest President Kais Saied's failed policies, the wave of anti-union action by the authorities, and the continued detention of Anis Kaabi.

President Saied ordered the expulsion of Lynch over a speech his office referred to as indicative of "blatant interference" in the country's internal affairs. In March 2023, the government banned the entry of trade unionists from at least six countries who were due in Tunisia to show solidarity with the ITUC-affiliated UGTT at a weekend rally.

Turkey



- Repression of strikes
- Arrests of trade unionists
- Systematic union busting

In 2023, workers' freedoms and rights continued to be relentlessly attacked, with police cracking down on protests, and trade union leaders arbitrarily arrested. In addition, employers continued to engage in systematic union busting by methodically dismissing workers who tried to organise.

Workers detained as they protest corruption

On 26 February 2023, the Deputy General Secretary of the **Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (DISK)**, **Fahrettin Engin Erdoğan**, was among the union leaders and members detained at a protest in Istanbul.

The protest was organised by the DISK and the **Confederation of Public Employees' Trade Unions (KESK)** over reports of corruption hampering efforts to help victims of the country's recent earthquake. Members of both unions were among more than 100 people detained.

Trade unionist arrested over calls for independent investigation into state crimes

Şebnem Korur-Fincancı, President of the **Turkish Medical Association**, was imprisoned on 27 October 2022 under the Anti-Terror Law for "propagandising for a terrorist organisation" and "publicly degrading the Turkish Nation, the state of the Republic and its institutions" because of her comments in the media about the allegations that Turkey used chemical gases during its military operations in Iraq and for which she called for an independent investigation. Five members of KESK, who tried to attend the Court Hearing as observers, were arrested but later released.



Şebnem Korur Fincancı, head of the Turkish Medical Association, celebrates her release from prison. In 2023, union leaders were arbitrarily arrested and other rights attacked, making Turkey one of the 10 worst countries for working people.

Credit: Ozan Kose / AFP

Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's office has also asked that Korur-Fincancı be suspended from her duties. Removal from office would be a clear and unacceptable interference in the freedom of trade unions to organise their own activities and structures.

Korur-Fincancı is a forensic expert with decades of experience in anti-torture work. She has been persecuted for her activism on multiple occasions and was previously arrested in 2016 for supporting a freedom of the press campaign.

Most violated rights in the world

1. Increasing criminalisation of the right to strike

In 2023, strikes have been severely restricted or banned in 130 out of 149 countries. In a number of these countries, industrial actions were brutally repressed by the authorities, and workers exercising their right to strike often faced criminal prosecution and summary dismissals.

Violations of the right to strike are grouped into two categories: prosecution of union leaders for participating in strikes and cases of dismissals for taking part in strike action.



87% of countries violated the right to strike.

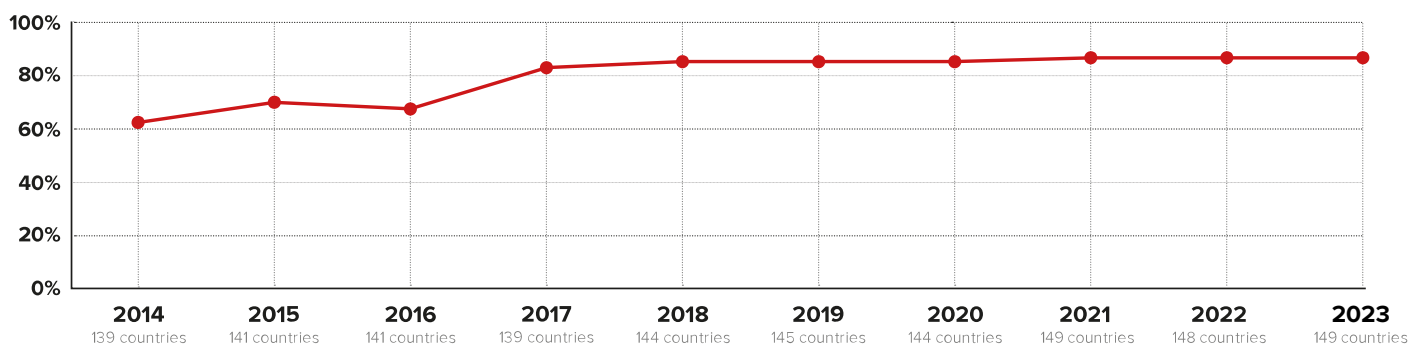
Countries violating the right to strike increased from 63% of countries in 2014 to 87% of countries in 2023.



Members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada take strike action in defence of public services. The right to strike in the country came under sustained attack from employers and the authorities.

Credit: Lars Hagberg / AFP

10-year trends: Right to strike



2. Erosion of collective bargaining

In 2023, serious restrictions to collective bargaining were recorded in 118 countries. The attacks on collective bargaining rights fall across economic and geographical regions and are symptomatic of a broken social contract between workers and their governments. As workers around the world face the brunt of spiralling inflation and stagnating wages, their right to put their concerns to their employers in good faith is imperative. Despite this, and although the right to collective bargaining is enshrined in ILO Convention 98, which stresses the importance of good faith negotiations and transparent information sharing between negotiating parties, the Index data demonstrate a fundamental dereliction of duty to this commitment by employers and governments.



79% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining.

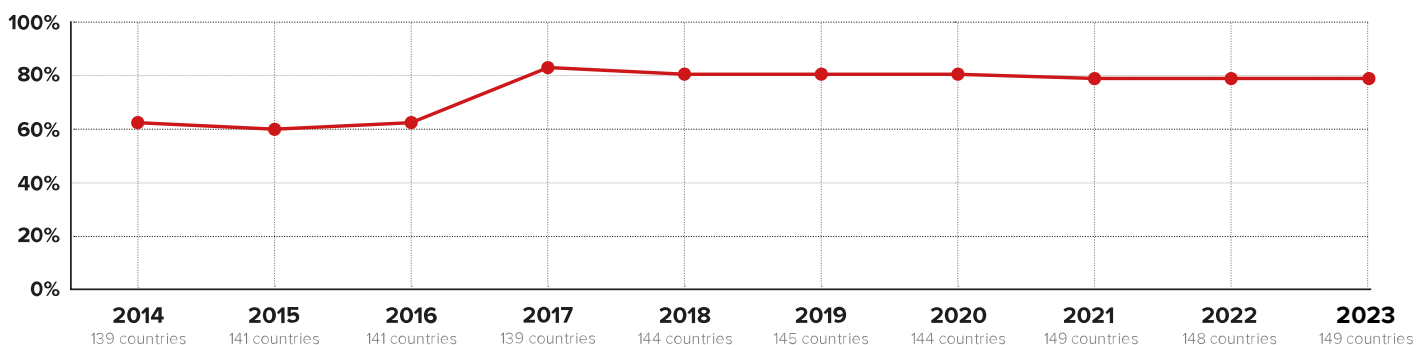
Countries violating the right to collective bargaining increased from 63% of countries in 2014 to 79% of countries in 2023.



In a case that undermined the right to collective bargaining, the management of the Sheraton Grand Conakry, Guinea, refused to engage in good faith negotiations with the workers' union after having tried to lay off workers.

Credit: IUF

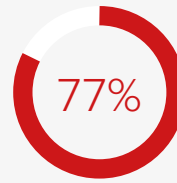
10-year trends: Right to collective bargaining



3. Blocked and excluded from labour protection

Under international labour standards, all workers without distinction have the right to freedom of association. However, in 2023, 114 out of 149 countries surveyed excluded certain categories of workers from this right, often based on their employment status.

Migrant workers, domestic workers, temporary workers, those in the informal economy, and workers in the platform economy usually fell outside of the scope of labour legislation, while certain categories of public employees were still denied the right to freedom of association. Workers were also often deprived of their right to freedom of association in the infamous Special Economic Zones, where governments lower or remove labour protections altogether specifically to attract foreign investment.



77% of countries excluded workers from the right to establish or join a trade union.

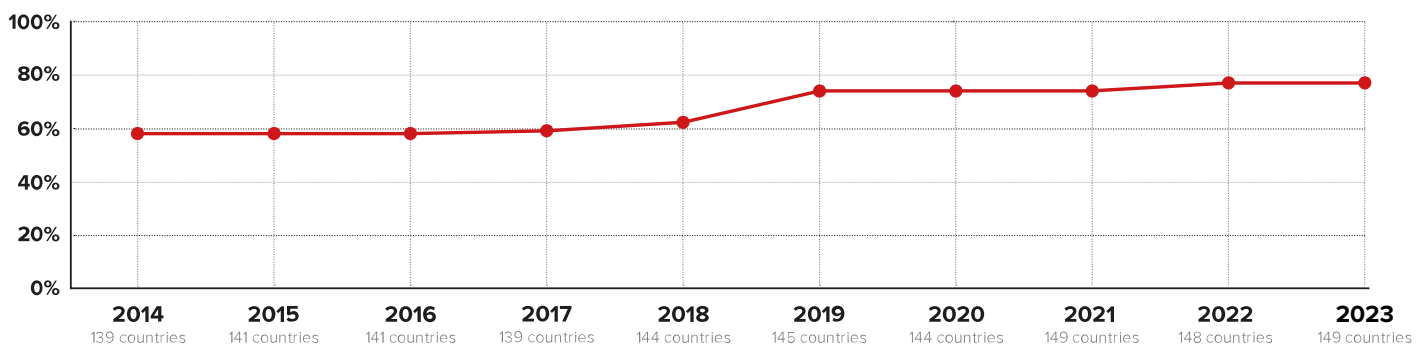
Countries which excluded workers from labour protections increased from 58% of countries in 2014 to 77% of countries in 2023.



Employers in Israel routinely used the threat of annulling the work permits of any Palestinian workers attempting to form or join a trade union.

Credit: Hazem Bader / AFP

10-year trends: Right to establish and join a trade union



4. Restrictions on access to justice

Access to justice and the due process of law are basic principles of the rule of law. In their absence, people are not able to have their voice heard, nor assert their rights. In 97 countries out of 149, workers had no or a 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 often fraught with a disregard for due process and a lack of impartiality.



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

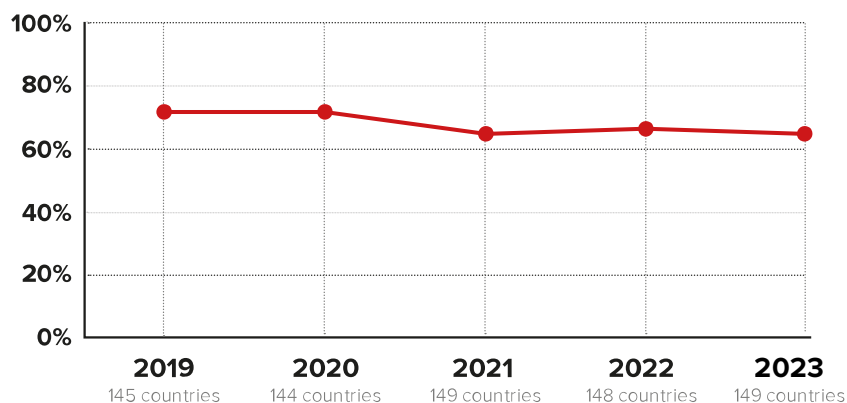
Workers were denied access to justice in 65% of countries in 2023.



Working people in Belarus were systemically denied the right to justice as the Lukashenko regime arbitrarily arrested independent trade union leaders.

Credit: IndustriAll

Five-year trends: Right to justice



5. 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 be able to function efficiently and represent their members adequately.

Between April 2022 and March 2023, authorities impeded the registration of, de-registered, or arbitrarily dissolved unions in 109 countries out of 149.



73% of countries impeded the registration of unions.

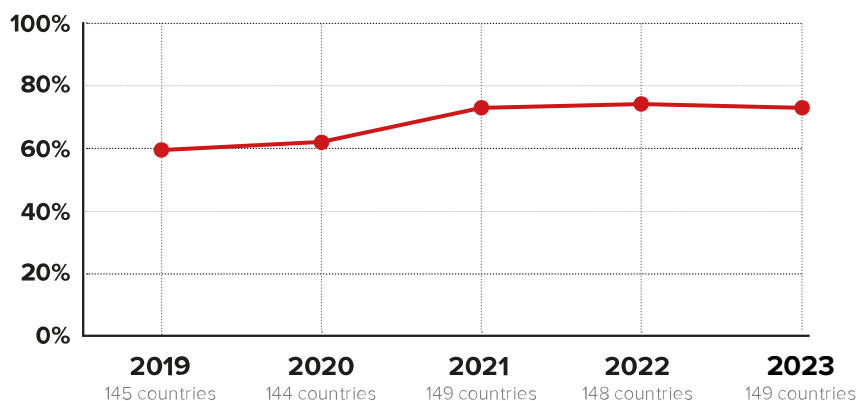
The number of countries which impeded the registration of unions increased from 59% countries in 2019 to 73% of countries in 2023.



In Hong Kong, the rights to trade union activity, civil society organising and public gatherings were ruthlessly oppressed.

Credit: Peter Parks / AFP

Five-year trends: Right to trade union activities



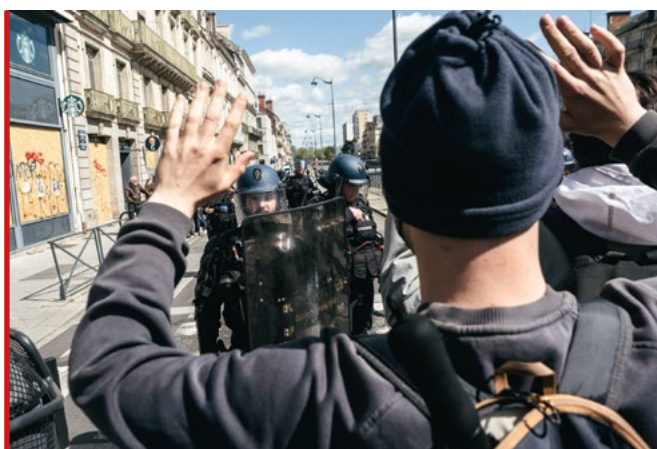
6. Attacks on free speech and assembly

Free speech forms the very life blood of healthy democracies. Without it, ideas stultify; debate suffocates; and political, economic, social and cultural progress is thwarted. In an age where social media has been weaponised to suppress the free exchange of ideas and independent media is under attack across the world, governments are also engaged in restricting the rights of workers to assemble and protest. In **France, Iran, Belarus, Burkina-Faso, Egypt** and **Zimbabwe** workers are facing severe restrictions to these rights.



42% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.

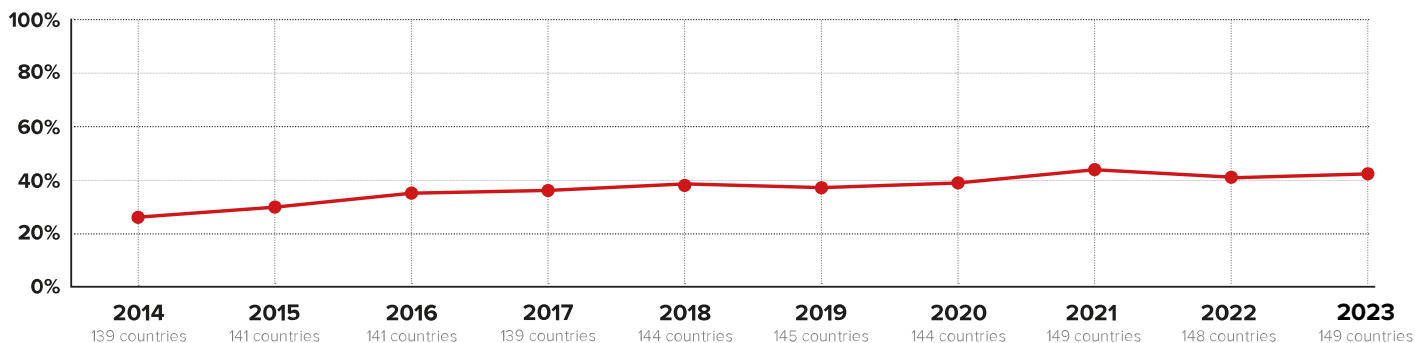
Countries which restricted free speech and assembly increased from 26% in 2014 to 42% of countries in 2023.



In France, the government violated the right to free speech and assembly as it cracked down on mass protests against its pension law.

Credit: Quentin Bonade-Vernault & Hans / AFP

10-year trends: Right to free speech and assembly



7. Arbitrary arrests, detention and imprisonment

Workers were subjected to arbitrary arrests and detentions and imprisonment in 46% of countries surveyed in 2023. As workers dared to exert their rights to strike, protest and collectivise, a significant number of governments increased pressure against them by specifically targeting and arresting prominent trade union leaders.

Such attacks on civil liberties constitute a fundamental degradation of democratic principles and are more often associated with autocratic regimes. In **Hong Kong, India, Myanmar, El Salvador, Iran, Guinea-Bissau, Zimbabwe, France** and **Turkey**, workers faced arrest and detention for expressing their fundamental rights.



Workers were detained and arrested in 69 countries.

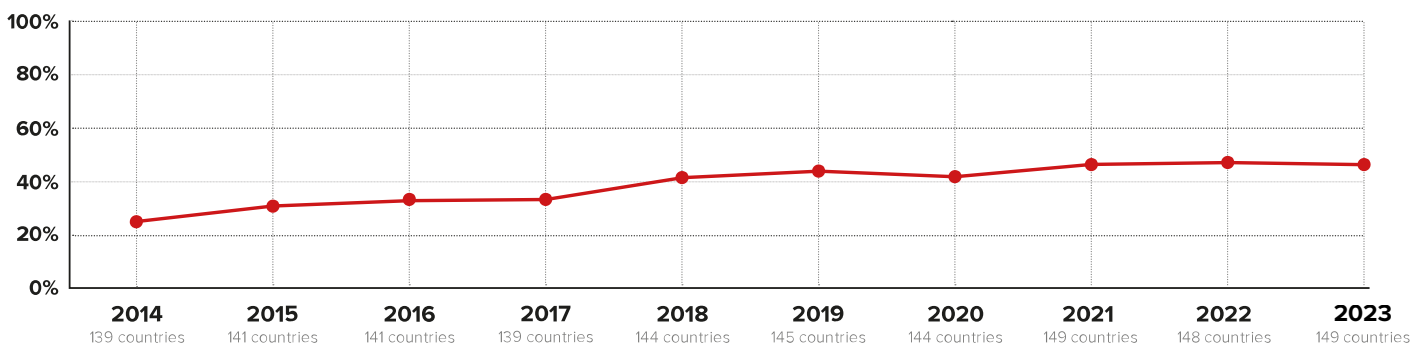
Countries arresting and detaining workers increased from 25% of countries in 2014 to 46% of countries in 2023.



Activists in Cambodia protest in support of workers at the NagaWorld Hotel and Casino, where trade unionists were jailed for taking strike action. The country was one of 69 where working people were detained and arrested, violating the right to civil liberties.

Credit: Tang Chhin Sothy / AFP

10-year trends: Right to civil liberties



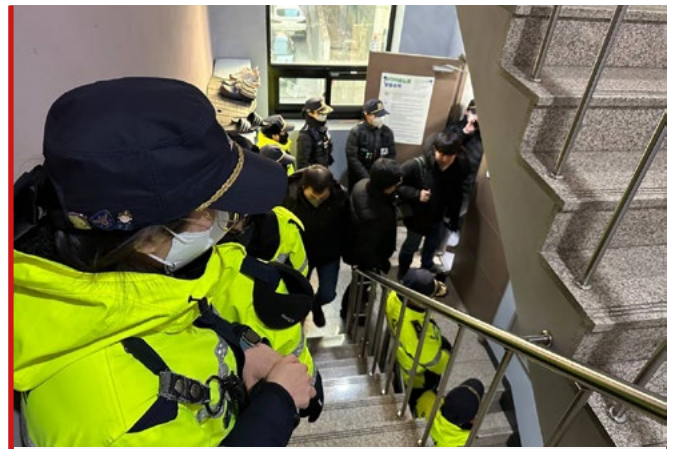
8. Violent attacks on workers

Workers were exposed to violence in 44 countries in 2023. In many countries, strikes and social protests were repressed with disproportionate force by the state armed forces and the police. Endemic violence in the Americas continued to affect workers and their representatives, while in Africa trade union leaders were the victims of targeted physical attacks and threats. In **Cambodia, India, Korea, Turkey, Eswatini** and **Bangladesh**, workers were subjected to violence and brutality.



Workers experienced violence in 44 countries.

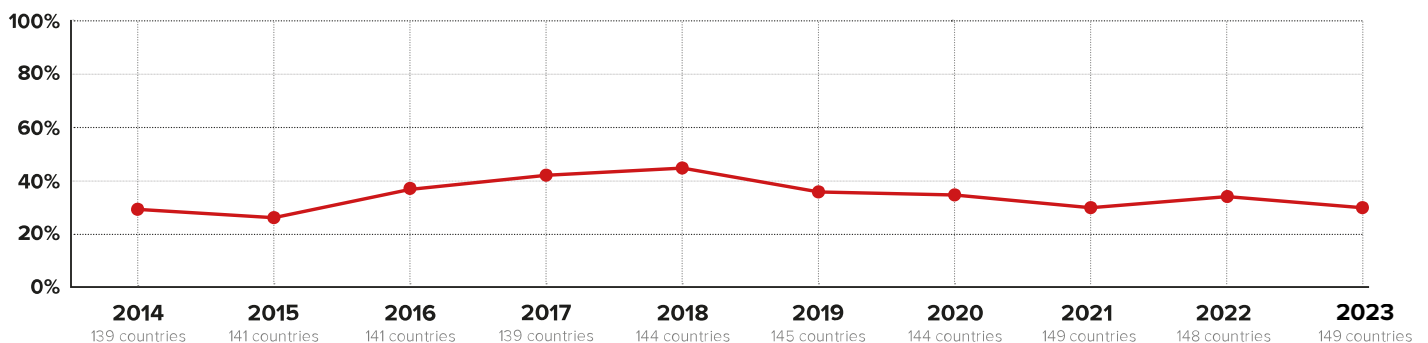
Countries that exposed workers to violent attacks increased from 29% of countries in 2014 to 30% of countries in 2023.



Security forces in South Korea raided nearly a dozen union offices in January 2023. The country was one of 44 countries where the authorities carried out violent attacks against working people.

Credit: KCTU

10-year trends: Violent attacks on workers



9. Cases of murder

Trade unionists are being murdered as they represent workers and their collective rights. Too often there is no justice for workers or their families, as government and employers continue to act with impunity. In 2023, trade unionists were murdered in eight countries: **Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eswatini, Guatemala, Peru** and **Sierra Leone**.



Colombia was the deadliest country for trade union leaders in 2023.



Working people in Colombia suffered severe violations of their rights. It was one of eight countries where trade unionists were murdered for their activism.

Credit: Sebastian Barros / NurPhoto via AFP

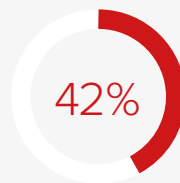
Global trends for workers in 2023

1. Democracy in crisis

The Global Rights Index has tracked the key elements of workplace democracy for 10 years, including the right to establish and join a trade union, the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike as well as the right to free speech and assembly, which symbolises a healthy democracy.

The systematic dismantling of the building blocks of freedom and democracy is taking place through sustained attacks on workers' rights and workplace democracy through restrictions on the right to strike, free speech and assembly.

In the past 10 editions, the Global Rights Index has recorded an unprecedented increase in attacks on free speech and assembly from 26% of countries in 2014 to 42% of countries in 2023.



42% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.

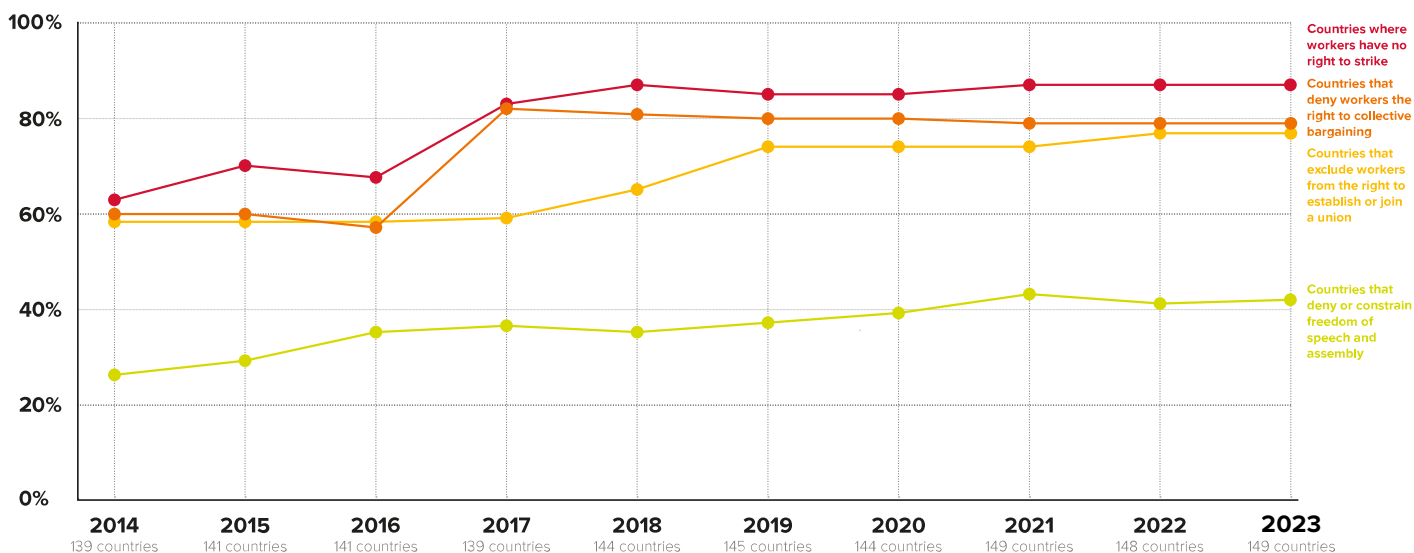
Countries where freedom of speech and assembly were denied or constrained increased from 26% of countries in 2014 to 42% of countries in 2023.



In El Salvador, the government used the excuse of combatting gang violence to suspend the basic, democratic rights of working people.

Credit: Marvin Recinos / AFP

10-year trends: The dismantling of workplace democracy



2. Silencing the age of anger



Workers are under pressure as prices spiral and wages stagnate. Private companies disproportionately inflate prices, using global shocks as a smokescreen to obscure their greed for profits. Meanwhile, employers and governments continue to hold wages down by arguing that a wage-price spiral must be avoided at all costs.

In Bangladesh, working people continued to demand their rights, despite being subjected to police brutality and worker intimidation. The country is one of several that exemplified the trend of deploying violence to silence workers.

Credit: Rehman Asad / NurPhoto via AFP

Workers on the frontlines

As workers unite in collective actions to call for higher wages and a fairer redistribution of profits, their protests are often suppressed by authorities, who resort to excessive brutality to crackdown on strikers or use illegal orders to prevent workers from gathering.

In **South Africa, Pakistan and Bangladesh**, workers' calls for fair wages were met with police violence that included rubber bullets being used against protestors. In **Brazil, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, Cambodia and Lesotho**, worker's rights to protest were curtailed by legislation or the deployment of state forces.



3. Legislative power

Law-making is an effective and powerful instrument for social transformation and the protection of labour rights. In the last year, positive legal steps were taken in some places to further advance workers' rights and social progress. However, in other countries, governments passed regressive legislation that severely undermined basic rights at work.

Repressive laws

Repressive laws have been used to codify repression of workers' rights in **Zimbabwe, India, Algeria, the United Kingdom** and **Israel**.



In January 2023, **Zimbabwe's** government published the Health Services Amendment Act and Criminal Law Amendment Bill that would stifle the rights of working people to freedom of expression and association.

The **Indian** government's new labour laws consolidate 44 labour laws into four codes. The new labour codes, which cover wage regulation, industrial relations, social security, occupational safety and health and working conditions, would deprive workers of their basic rights to go on strike, to form unions and to bargain with management.

The **United Kingdom's** government brought new primary legislation before parliament in January 2023 that would enforce the unilateral imposition of Minimum Service Levels on railway workers, ambulance workers and fire service workers, with provisions for the laws to extend to any services within the transport, healthcare, border force, education, nuclear decommissioning and storage, and fire and rescue sectors.

In January 2023, the **Algerian** government submitted amendments to the soon-to-be adopted Law 90/14. The changes will severely impact trade union rights in the country, and independent unions were not consulted by the government in their creation.

In **Israel**, lawmakers have tabled a bill aimed at preventing a union from launching a strike in solidarity with a cause that does not have direct impact on the work of its members. This would prevent unions from joining nationwide protests on various issues. The bill covers the right to strike of workers in the national electricity, water, ports, public transport and health sectors, as well as the Israel Stock Exchange and the Bank of Israel.

Legislative reform

In the last year, positive legal steps were taken to further advance workers' rights and social progress in **Sierra Leone, Canada** and **Chile**, showing the power of unions to deliver lasting changes for workers.



On 19 January 2023, the president of **Sierra Leone** signed a bill requiring public and private entities to reserve 30% of their jobs for women. The law also assures women at least 14 weeks of maternity leave, equal pay, and training opportunities.

The 30% jobs quota also applies to management roles, to stop employers merely hiring women to lower-level jobs to comply with the new law. It applies, too, to the 146-seat parliament and the civil service.

In November 2022, the **Canadian Union of Public Employees** (CUPE) and **Canada's** labour movement celebrated the repeal of Bill 28, draconian anti-worker legislation introduced by the Ontario government. The bill unilaterally imposed a collective contract on 55,000 education workers and levied hefty fines for striking, marking the first time in the country's history that the right of workers to collectively bargain and to strike was legally stripped away.

Despite the threat of heavy fines, thousands of education workers peacefully walked out on 4 November to protest the imposed collective contract and the ban on strikes.

Faced with the determination of thousands of workers and their unions, on the morning of 7 November the provincial government committed to repeal the bill and head back to the bargaining table.

In early February 2023, **Chile** adopted a law granting a "right to restorative rest" for private health workers and pharmacy workers in recognition of their tireless work throughout the pandemic.

The law, which was backed by the **National Federation of Private Health Sector Unions** (FENASSAP), will give 14 days of rest for all private sector workers who worked during the pandemic and can be used over a period of three years.

In the United Kingdom, the government used its legislative power to introduce a new, repressive law to restrict the right to strike of certain workers.

Credit: Carlos Jasso / AFP



The Global Rights Index explained

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 331 national unions in 163 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. Publication of violations in the ITUC Survey

Documented information is summarised and consolidated by ITUC staff in the form of text. This information is publicly accessible on the website of the ITUC Survey at survey.ituc-csi.org.

3. 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.

4. 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

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.

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
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

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>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</p> <p>12. Committed against trade union leaders
Violation of (11) is committed against a union leader</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>16. Committed against trade union leaders
Violations (13) to (15) are committed against a union leader</p> | <p>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</p> <p>18. Severity
Widespread and/or systematic violation regarding violations re (5)-(17)</p> <p>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</p> |
|---|--|

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).

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
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
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 1215-1219
General Survey 1994 paras. 225-234
General Survey 2012 paras. 194-196
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
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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

91. Suspension and/or declaration of illegality of strikes
by administrative authorities
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions Paras. 907-913
General Survey 2012 para. 157
92. 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
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 200 million workers in 168 countries and has 338 national affiliates.

The ITUC Global Rights Index depicts the world's worst countries for workers by rating 149 countries on a scale from 1 to 5+ on the degree of respect of workers' rights. Violations are recorded each year from April to March. Information on violations of workers' rights in countries is published throughout the year in the [ITUC Survey](#).

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