



2025 ITUC GLOBAL RIGHTS INDEX

THE WORLD'S WORST
COUNTRIES FOR
WORKERS

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FOREWORD

This is the 12th edition of the ITUC Global Rights Index, the only comprehensive, worldwide annual study of the violation of workers' rights – freedoms that form the basis of the democratic rule of law and fair working conditions for all.

This year's Index reveals a stark and worsening global crisis for workers and unions. In 2025, average country ratings deteriorated in three out of five global regions, with Europe and the Americas recording their worst scores since the Index's inception in 2014. Alarmingly, only seven out of 151 countries surveyed received the top-tier rating. The data shows a sharp escalation in violations of fundamental rights, including access to justice, the right to free speech and assembly, and the right to collective bargaining.

In this increasingly hostile environment, a growing number of state authorities are adopting legislation that criminalises civil society organisations – and, potentially, trade unions – as “foreign agents”, further delegitimising their role. Violations of the right to strike and the right to register a trade union remain at record levels, underscoring the intensifying crackdown on workers' fundamental freedoms.

We are witnessing a coup against democracy: a concerted, sustained assault by state authorities and the corporate underminers of democracy on the rights and welfare of workers. Increasingly, this attack is orchestrated by far-right demagogues backed by billionaires who are determined to reshape the world in their own interests at the expense of ordinary working people.



Credit: Galo Paguay / AFP

Trade unions and workers' organisations continue to mobilise for labour rights in Ecuador under the shadow of a long history of repression.

The 2025 Index is an urgent call to action to resist this coup against democracy before irreparable damage is done. The ITUC's For Democracy That Delivers campaign aims to unite workers and unions in defence of our rights and in pursuit of a fairer future for all. As the world's largest democratic force, the union movement embodies the collective power of working people everywhere. Together, we can build a sustainable world where all workers are free to exercise their basic rights and freedoms.

In 2025:

Workers had no or reduced access to justice in 72% of countries, a sharp increase from 65% in 2024 – marking the highest level recorded in the Index. In the **Philippines**, charges remain pending against activists who provided humanitarian aid to displaced Indigenous communities in 2018. Meanwhile, two French unionists remain unlawfully detained under harsh conditions in **Iran**, following their arrest in 2022 on spurious national security charges.

Attacks on the rights to free speech and assembly were reported in 45% of countries – a record high for the Index and an increase from 43% in 2024.

In **Benin**, workers were arrested during May Day celebrations, highlighting the growing repression of public expression. In the **Russian Federation**, draconian “Covid” restrictions on public events remain in place, giving authorities the power to prohibit union gatherings under the guise of health measures.

The right to strike was violated in 87% of countries – unchanged from the Index high of 131 countries in 2024. In **Cameroon**, a seasonal worker was killed by police during a demonstration by SOSUCAM sugar workers for better pay and safer conditions. In **Iraq**, police attacked and injured striking oil workers during a protest about their status.

The right to the legal registration of unions was impeded in 74% of countries, unchanged from 2024 and the worst level since the Index began. About 600 traffic services workers in **Kenya** were denied the right to form a union due to the misclassification of their roles and restrictions on union membership. In **Pakistan**, a court declared 62 unions unlawful, infringing the rights of millions of public sector workers.

The right to collective bargaining was restricted in 80% of countries (121), up from 79% in 2024. In **France**, nearly four in every 10 collective agreements were imposed unilaterally by employers, without union representation. In **Sweden**, Elon Musk’s Tesla bypassed negotiations entirely, replacing striking workers with strike-breakers or ‘scabs’, rather than engaging in collective bargaining.

Authorities in 71 countries (47%) arrested and/or imprisoned workers, a marginal improvement on the record high of 74 countries in 2024 but almost



Credit: Kemal Aslan / AFP

Turkish police detain a protester during a May Day rally in Istanbul on 1 May 2024, as demonstrators attempt to march to the banned Taksim Square. Dozens were arrested across the city amid a heavy crackdown on International Workers’ Day. Türkiye remains among the 10 worst countries for workers.

twice the rate recorded in 2014. A union president in **Cambodia** was convicted for speaking out online against the arrest of a casino worker. Activists in **Hong Kong**, including two union leaders, were convicted for taking part in a democratic council election process.

Workers in three out of every four countries were denied the right to freedom of association and to organise, unchanged from 2024. In **Malaysia**, global packaging firm Amcor unfairly dismissed a union secretary as part of its “union-busting” campaign. Jeff Bezos’s Amazon responded to the creation of its first unionised workforce in **Canada** by closing its Quebec warehouses, resulting in 2,000 job losses.

Workers suffered violence in 26% of countries, down from 29% in 2024. Armed bandits attacked the home of a union leader in **Haiti**, forcing him to flee with his family. Thugs violently forced five unionists out of a May Day event at a lithium mine in **Zimbabwe**.

Trade unionists paid the ultimate price for their activism in **Cameroon, Colombia, Guatemala, Peru, and South Africa** – killed for defending workers’ rights.

The 10 worst countries for workers in 2025 were: **Bangladesh, Belarus, Ecuador, Egypt, Eswatini, Myanmar, Nigeria, the Philippines, Tunisia, and Türkiye.**

The ratings of seven countries worsened: **Argentina, Costa Rica, Georgia, Italy, Mauritania, Niger, and Panama**. Three countries improved their ratings: **Australia, Mexico, and Oman**.

Three regions deteriorate

Conditions for workers at the regional level remain under considerable pressure, with the ratings for three out of the five global regions deteriorating. **Europe** and the **Americas** registered their worst scores to date in the Index.

The **Middle East** and **North Africa** remains the worst region for workers' rights, scoring an average country rating of 4.68, slightly better than the weakest on record of 4.74 in 2024. The rights to collective bargaining, to form or join a union, and to register a union were violated in every MENA country.

The **Asia-Pacific** region improved marginally for the third consecutive year, with an average rating of 4.08, compared to 4.13 in 2024. However, the incidence of violence against workers almost doubled and workers in more countries faced a crackdown on free speech and assembly.

Africa recorded its second worst reading on record, deteriorating to 3.95 from 3.88 in 2024. The rights to strike, collective bargaining, and to form or join a union were impeded in more than 90% of countries. **Nigeria** entered the top 10 worst countries for the first time.

The average country rating in the **Americas** hit its weakest since the Index began, worsening to 3.68 from 3.56 in 2024. The registration of unions was curtailed in 92% of countries, and workers were detained by authorities in six out of 10 countries.

Although **Europe** remains, on average, the least repressive region for workers, there has been a steady deterioration over the last four years. The average rating dropped to 2.78, its worst since the Index began and compared to 2.73 in 2024. Workers in 52% of countries were denied or restricted access to justice, a leap from 32% in 2024.

A vital tool in the fight for freedoms

The ITUC Global Rights Index launched in 2014 to measure the pulse of workers' rights around the world, according to international law and multilateral agreements.

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

Starting with scores for 131 countries, the Index now analyses how 151 countries – and the companies that operate in them – respect labour rights and freedoms. It is the only index that offers a comprehensive, global reading of violations and ratings for individual countries and regions. As such, it offers the clearest available picture of the working conditions of ordinary people and the unions that defend their rights in a world shaped by the vested interests of governments, corporations, and the super wealthy.

The extensive research underpinning the Index draws on a broad base of direct reporting from affiliates, revealing emerging labour trends across the world.

Three trends stood out in this year's Index:

- The increasing authoritarianism in policymaking.
- The abuse of “foreign influence” laws to repress the independent labour movement.
- The inspiring global pushback by unions to reclaim workers' rights.

I encourage you to explore the “Global trends for workers” section in this report for a deeper understanding of these three important developments.

A coup on democracy

The findings of this year's ITUC Global Rights Index present further proof that our democratic freedoms are under attack by an ever-smaller number of people in control of an increasingly disproportionate slice of the pie. Today, a tiny fraction of the global population – less than 1% – controls nearly half of the world's wealth.

This concentration of economic power allows a small group of billionaires to exert outsized influence over global decision-making, including on labour rights and protections, which directly affect the lives of the workers who sustain the global economy.

This coup on democracy is often orchestrated by far-right politicians and their unelected billionaire backers. Whether it's Donald Trump and Elon Musk in the US or Javier Milei and Eduardo Eurnekian in Argentina, we see the same playbook of unfairness and authoritarianism in action around the world.

One of the most powerful tools we have to resist the erosion of democracy and deepening of inequality is our collective power – through the organisation of workers into independent unions. The global trade union movement is the largest democratic social force

in the world. It exists to defend democratic freedoms, improve the lives of workers, and safeguard their interests in the world of work. Joining a union offers protection against exploitation and creates a united front against the well-connected global elite – those intent on reshaping the world to their benefit while forcing workers to bear the cost.

The stronger and more expansive the union movement, the greater our chance of turning the tide – towards a democracy that delivers a fairer, more sustainable future for all.

Luc Triangle
General Secretary
International Trade Union Confederation

Protesters from the CGIL FILCAMS union demonstrated in Turin against restrictions on strike rights. Italy's rating dropped from 1 in 2024 to 2 in 2025, reflecting a decline in protections for working people.



GLOBAL TRENDS FOR WORKERS



Credit: Juan Mabromata / AFP

In Argentina, people have taken to the streets repeatedly to oppose the policies of right-wing President Javier Milei, which have plunged workers and vulnerable populations into deeper hardship.

Authoritarian governments and the crackdown on workers' rights

The rise of the far-right in the corridors of power has swiftly unleashed a wave of repressive and regressive measures designed to silence and weaken the independent union movement.

This assault on the basic rights and freedoms of workers erodes our democratic institutions and paves the way for increasingly authoritarian systems, where the interests of ordinary working people are sacrificed to benefit the wealthy and powerful. Typically, billionaires and corporations support politicians

engaged in this coup against democracy, seeking to shape public policy for their own gain at the expense of workers' rights and welfare.

Argentina offers one of the clearest illustrations of the decline in civil liberties and the concerted attack on trade unions and workers under radical right-wing governments. Since assuming office in December 2023, President Javier Milei has sought to amend 366 laws to deregulate working conditions and wages, dismantle union protections, and privatise public companies.

Throughout 2024, several labour laws were passed without consultation with unions and in disregard of widespread public mobilisation against the reforms. The so-called Omnibus Law declares a state of public emergency in administrative, economic, financial, and energy matters, granting the president one-year powers to reform or introduce legislation without congressional approval.

Milei's anti-union reforms further undermine the rights and interests of workers by extending the probationary employment period from three to six months – and up to one year for the smallest enterprises. Sanctions against employers who fail to properly register workers have been eliminated. In addition, a new severance fund will replace the existing seniority-based compensation system, significantly reducing the cost of dismissals for employers.

Under President Milei's administration, civil liberties have also come under attack. The 2023 *Bullrich Protocol* – an anti-protest measure – authorises security forces to crack down on demonstrations involving roadblocks. Protest organisers face severe penalties, including prison sentences of up to six years.

Extreme policies and the far-right playbook

In Europe, the far-right coalition government led by Petteri Orpo in **Finland** offers further evidence of the strategic playbook being deployed globally to weaken unions and suppress workers' rights. Despite widespread opposition, including several general strikes led by unions, the Orpo administration has pursued a repressive and draconian legislative agenda.

In May 2024, the Finnish parliament approved laws that significantly curtail the right to strike. Political strikes are now limited to a maximum of 24 hours. The right to secondary solidarity action has also been strictly limited. For the purposes of strike restrictions, the maritime and public transport sectors have been reclassified as essential services.

Trade unions face fines of up to €150,000 for organising strikes later deemed illegal, a fivefold increase from the previous maximum. Individual workers may also be fined €200 – payable directly to their employer – for

participating in an “illegal” strike. Notably, there are no proposed increases in fines for employers who violate collective agreements. Under Orpo's leadership, Finland's long-established tripartite cooperation has been reduced to a mere formality, leaving unions with little to no say over labour reforms.

In the **United States**, the Donald Trump administration has taken a wrecking ball to the collective labour rights of workers and brought anti-union billionaires into the heart of policymaking.

Shortly after taking office, President Trump announced that any collective bargaining agreements reached with federal workers within 30 days of his inauguration would not be approved. His administration also moved to strip union protections from 47,000 Transportation Security Administration employees, including the right to collective bargaining.

At the Department of Health and Human Services, approximately 80,000 workers were offered severance payments if they agreed to resign by mid-March 2025. Meanwhile, the Department of Education announced plans to eliminate 1,300 staff – nearly half its workforce.

In January 2025, Trump dismissed the general counsel of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and one of its three board members. This action eliminated the board's quorum, effectively paralysing the agency responsible for upholding workers' rights to organise and bargain collectively and for addressing unfair labour practices. A federal judge ordered the reinstatement of the dismissed board member at the end of March.

Elsewhere in Europe, the far-right government of Giorgia Meloni in **Italy** has proposed criminalising protests and strikes involving road or railways blocks, with penalties ranging from six months to two years in prison. A draft bill would also permit police to wear surveillance devices during public order operations.

In **Belgium**, a new law criminalises “malicious attacks on state authority” during protests, despite strong objections from the Federal Institute for Human Rights. The newly formed coalition government, led by the right-wing, neoliberal N-VA, is now pushing for a judicial ban on public demonstrations.

Expanding “foreign agent” laws: a threat to democratic rights

Authorities in an increasing number of countries are misusing legislative powers to stigmatise, weaken, and restrict the resources of the independent labour movement, civil society organisations, and the media. This tactic is being deployed by authoritarian regimes to silence dissent and press freedoms.

New laws targeting so-called “foreign influence” impose strict controls on non-governmental organisations classified as receiving “foreign funds” and engaging in “political activities”. The definitions of these terms are often deliberately broad and vague, tailored to silence those defending rights and freedoms in repressive states.

This deeply concerning trend has taken root in countries such as **Algeria, Belarus, India, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, the Philippines and Uganda**, and there are signs that more governments are adopting “foreign influence” laws to persecute workers and suppress fundamental freedoms such as freedom of assembly and freedom of expression. It is important to note that the right to strike is an essential component of these fundamental freedoms.

These laws are often introduced under the false pretence of safeguarding national security, and typically without any consultation with trade unions. They expand state surveillance powers of scrutiny and hinder unions from receiving support from international trade union bodies and human rights organisations. Beyond restricting resources, such measures suppress political dissent and promote the damaging narrative that the labour movement is unpatriotic or acting under foreign influence. Such a narrative discredits the image of unionists and emboldens repressive state authorities and exploitative employers.

Foreign influence laws target dissent

In May 2024, **Georgia** adopted a “transparency of foreign influence” law, without consultation with trade unions. Under the law, non-commercial legal entities

– including unions – must register as an “organisation pursuing the interests of a foreign power” if more than 20% of their annual income originates from such a source, including international trade unions. Organisations listed on the national register are required to submit annual financial declarations and are subject to monitoring and audits by an undefined “person authorised by the Ministry of Justice”. Failure to comply with these obligations can result in fines ranging from GEL 5,000 to 25,000, (approximately US\$ 1,850 to US\$ 9,250).

In March 2024, **Hong Kong** introduced the National Security Ordinance (NSO), claiming it would “plug major national security loopholes”. The legislation further restricts civic space and union activity by introducing broad offences related to treason, insurrection, incitement, sedition, and external interference endangering national security.

A newly created offence – “collusion with external forces” – criminalises collaboration between local trade unionists and international unions or human rights organisations. Other provisions target an overly broad definition of “unlawful disclosure” of state secrets and espionage, with prison sentences ranging from seven years to 10 years where “external forces” are found to be involved. These offences cover the “access, procurement, sharing and releasing” of virtually any information that unions may use for policy advocacy or campaigning.

Unions are now prohibited from working with or sharing information with international supervisory bodies. Penalties extend to 20 years in prison. Unionists can face up to 14 years’ imprisonment if found guilty of “acts to bring about interference endangering national security”.

The NSO also has extra-territorial application. In June 2024, former Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU) Chief Executive Christopher Mung and six other self-exiled activists were designated as “absconders” under the NSO, following arrest warrants issued in July 2023. Mung was charged in relation to a



Credit: Adrian Dennis / AFP

Hong Kong activist in exile, 19-year-old Chloe Cheung joins other campaigners to mark the first anniversary of the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Ordinance Article 23. This expands on the Beijing-imposed national security law, which criminalises secession, subversion, terrorism, and collusion with foreign forces.

speech he delivered at an international union meeting. His passport was cancelled, and others have been barred from assisting him.

The **Russian Federation's** “non-commercial organisations” law requires civil society organisations (including unions) receiving foreign funding to register as “foreign agents”. This designation may require them to undergo annual audits, both scheduled and unscheduled inspections, and imposes restrictions on campaigning and public events. Non-compliance can result in fines of up to RUB 500,000 (approximately US\$ 5,500).

The 2022 “control of activities of persons under foreign influence” law defines foreign influence broadly, including financial or other support from international and foreign organisations. Violation of this law may result in the dissolution of the organisation. Notably, while employers’ organisations are excluded from the scope of these laws, trade unions are not.

Unions pushing back

As this report shows, the role of independent trade unions in holding the powerful to account, defending democratic freedoms, and protecting the interests of working people is more vital than ever.

Despite mounting evidence of a concerted and sustained attack on workers' rights and interests, trade unions across the globe are successfully fighting back. In the face of repression, they have leveraged collective power to win better working conditions, reclaim civil liberties, and resist state and corporate impunity.

Multinational companies are frequently at the centre of this struggle, having built reputations for anti-union practices and disregard for workers' rights and welfare, especially in their non-domestic operations. Violations range from poor working conditions to union busting. Holding these large corporations to account remains difficult due to loopholes and gaps in international regulation and enforcement.

A big win for DHL employees

In a landmark victory for workers' rights in **Côte d'Ivoire**, DHL employees elected union representation for the first time in May 2024. The breakthrough marked a

hard-fought victory for Syndicat National des Agents des Postes et Télécommunication (SYNAPOSTEL), an affiliate of the UNI global union, and followed years of persistent organising efforts at both regional and global levels.

Ten representatives were elected to represent a workforce of more than 100. The election was made possible, in part, by Germany's 2023 due diligence law, which obliges large employers to respect human rights and environmental standards throughout their supply chains.

Earlier efforts to organise elections in 2016 had failed, prompting SYNAPOSTEL to seek mediation through the country's labour inspectorate, with UNI support. A turning point came in 2019 with the establishment of the DHL Alliance, a union network representing DHL workers in Africa supported by UNI's German affiliate, ver.di. That same year, DHL, UNI and the International Transport Federation (ITF) signed an OECD protocol committing to continuous, constructive dialogue on labour issues. The National Union of Workers of DHL-Côte d'Ivoire (SYNAT DHL CI) was formally established in 2022.

In a landmark victory, workers at DHL in Cote d'Ivoire elected union representatives for the first time in an inspiring example of unions pushing back around the world.

Credit: UNI Global



Canada's new "anti-scab" law

In June 2024, lawmakers in **Canada** unanimously passed a much-needed "anti-scab" law following extensive consultations with trade unions. Under the new legislation, employers are prohibited from hiring workers to replace unionised employees during strikes, unless there is a risk to public health and safety or employer property. In such cases, employers and unions must agree, within 15 days of the notice to bargain, what activities should continue during strike action. If agreement cannot be reached, the Canada Industrial Relations Board will intervene and make a determination.

The new legislation marks significant progress in a country where laws and regulations still restrict workers and their representatives in organising and participating in strikes.

Support for migrant workers in Mauritius

Migrant workers rank among the most exploited and persecuted labour groups. They often struggle to join or form unions due to state oppression, receive poor compensation, and face victimisation by employers.

In **Mauritius**, the Confederation of Mauritian Trade Unions (CTSP) has been fighting for the protection of migrant workers who are often trapped in debt bondage and suffer intimidation at the hands of their employers. Mainly employed in manufacturing, including the textile and garment industries, migrants make the journey to Mauritius from countries such as **Bangladesh, China, India, Madagascar, Nepal**, and **Sri Lanka**.

To support them, the CTSP offers free union membership for all contractual, migrant, and vulnerable workers, and ensures that migrants have access to information and support in their native language. The union combats the unfair deportation of workers through the Migrant Resource Centre (MRC), with the support of international trade unions, including IndustriALL.

Mine workers force change in Ghana

After conditions for over 1,000 workers became precarious, the Ghana Mine Workers Union (GMWU) and other organisations successfully campaigned for the Ghanaian authorities to cancel the foreign-owned licence for Bogoso-Prestea gold mine.

Workers had not been paid since January 2024, their pensions and other benefits were in arrears, and the mine's owner, UK-based Future Global Resources (FGR), had failed to meet its most basic obligations to its employees. FGR had acquired 90% of the mine in 2020 on the condition it would invest in and develop the site. Instead, it let conditions at the mine deteriorate.

The GMWU petitioned the Ghanaian parliament, which owns 10 per cent of the mine, citing FGR's lack of financial capacity to inject the needed capital into the site. The Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources terminated the mining licence on 18 September 2024.

AT A GLANCE

This is the 12th edition of the ITUC Global Rights Index. It documents violations of internationally recognised labour rights by governments and employers.

THE WORST REGION IN THE WORLD

Middle East and North Africa

THE 10 WORST COUNTRIES FOR WORKING PEOPLE

Bangladesh

Belarus

Ecuador

Egypt

Eswatini

Myanmar

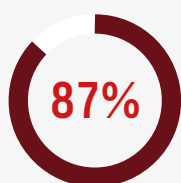
Nigeria (NEW)

The Philippines

Tunisia

Türkiye

Violations of workers' rights



Right to strike

87% of countries violated the right to strike.



Right to collective bargaining

80% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining.



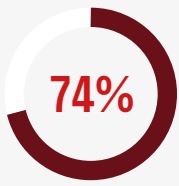
Right to establish and join a trade union

75% 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
(registration)**

74% of countries impeded the registration of unions.



**Right to free speech
and assembly**

45% of countries restricted free speech and assembly.



Violent attacks on workers

Workers experienced violence in 40 countries.



Right to civil liberties

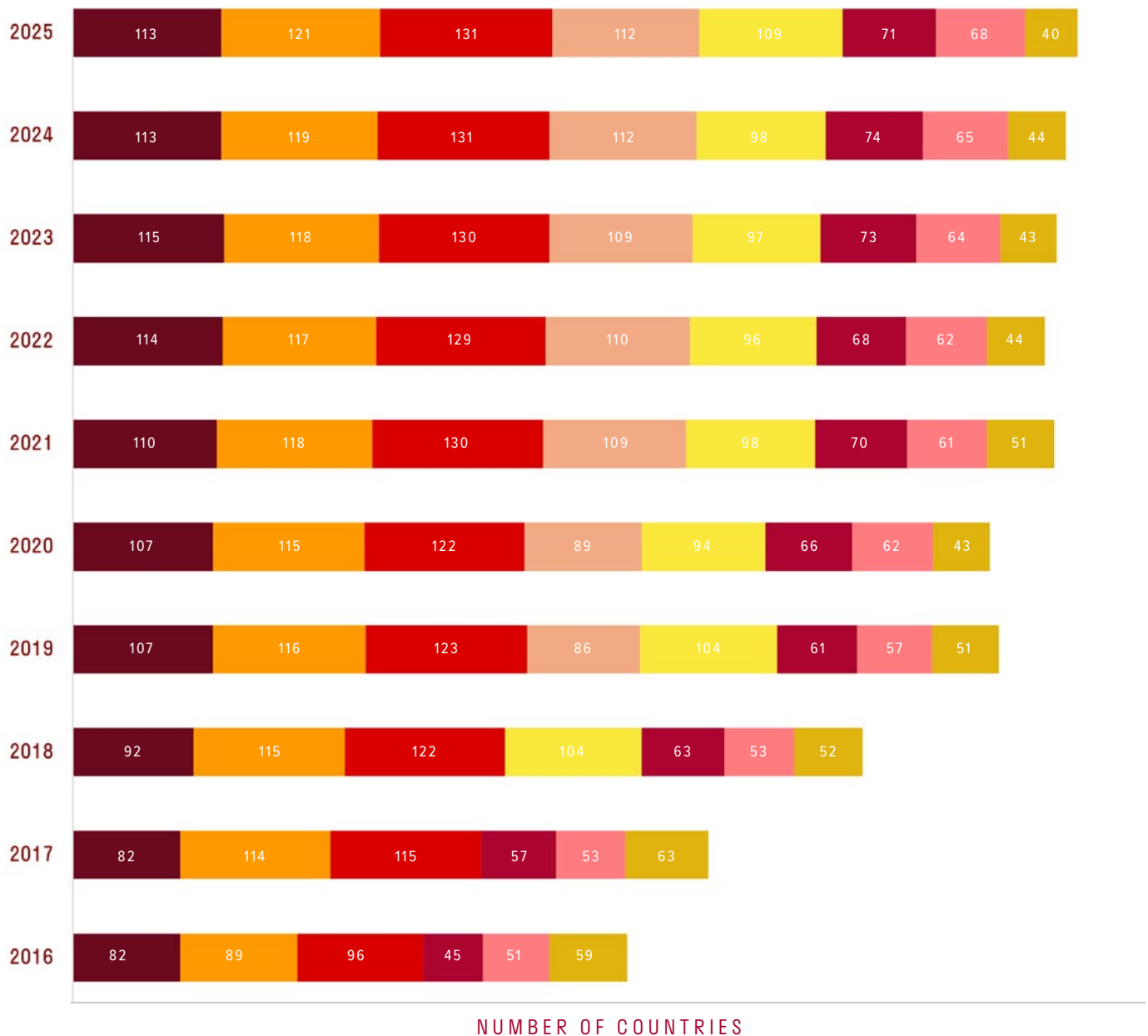
Workers were detained and arrested in 71 countries.



Deaths

Trade unionists were killed in five countries: **Cameroon, Colombia, Guatemala, Peru, and South Africa.**

10-YEAR TRENDS: VIOLATIONS OF WORKERS' RIGHTS



COUNTRIES WHICH
EXCLUDE WORKERS
FROM THE RIGHT TO
ESTABLISH OR JOIN A
TRADE UNION

COUNTRIES WHICH
VIOLATE THE RIGHT
TO COLLECTIVE
BARGAINING

COUNTRIES WHICH
VIOLATE THE RIGHT
TO STRIKE

COUNTRIES WHICH
IMPEDE THE
REGISTRATION OF
UNIONS

COUNTRIES WHICH
RESTRICT ACCESS
TO JUSTICE

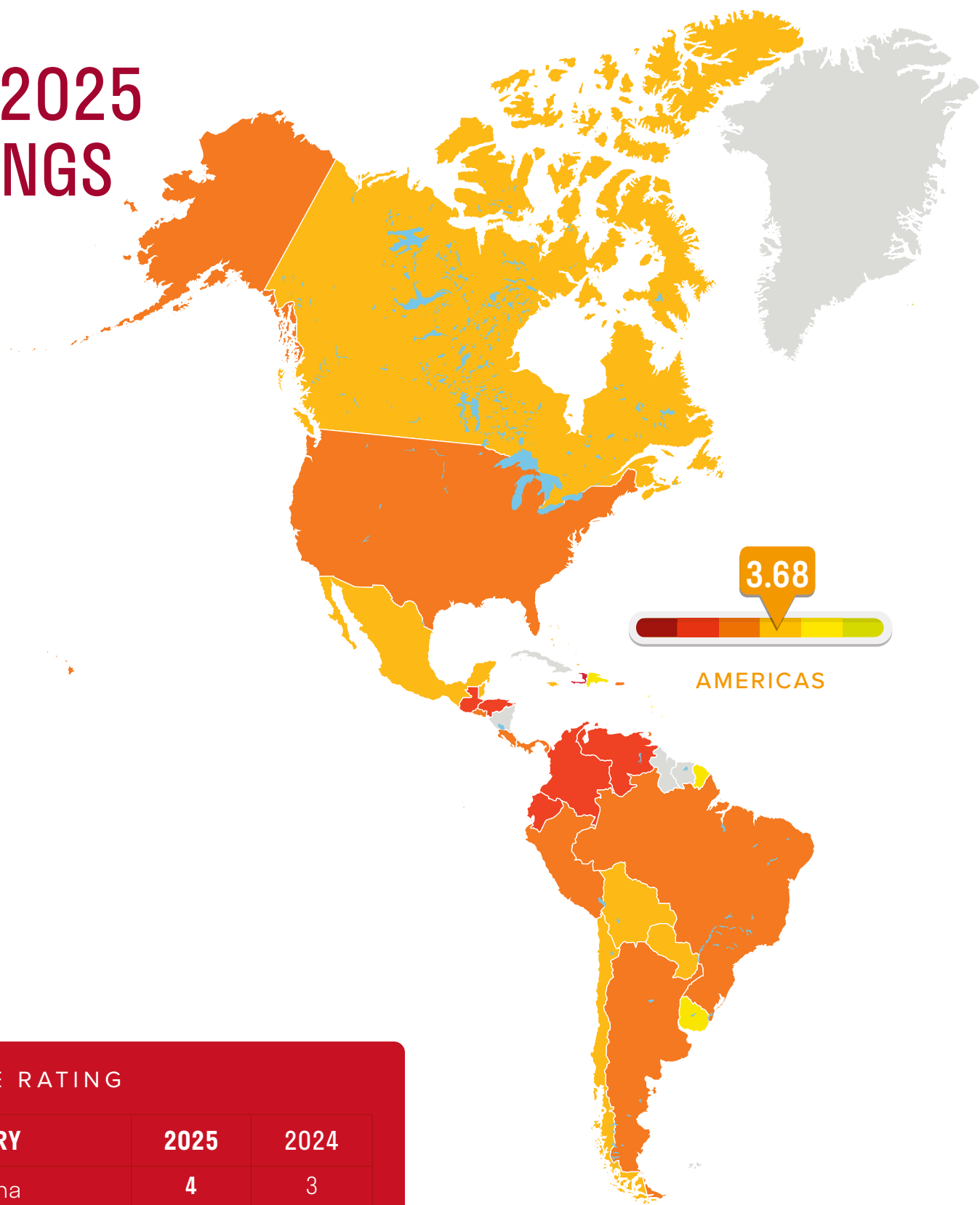
COUNTRIES WHICH
ARBITRARILY ARREST
AND DETAIN TRADE
UNION MEMBERS

COUNTRIES WHICH
DENY OR CONSTRAIN
FREEDOM OF SPEECH
AND ASSEMBLY

COUNTRIES WHICH
EXPOSE WORKERS
TO PHYSICAL
VIOLENCE

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

THE 2025 RATINGS

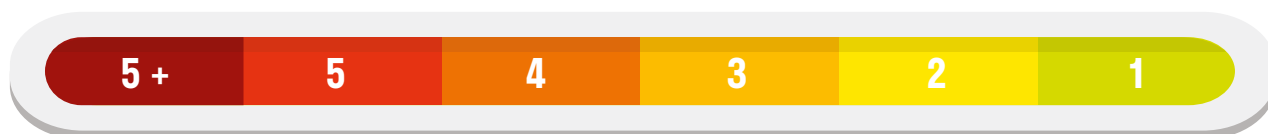
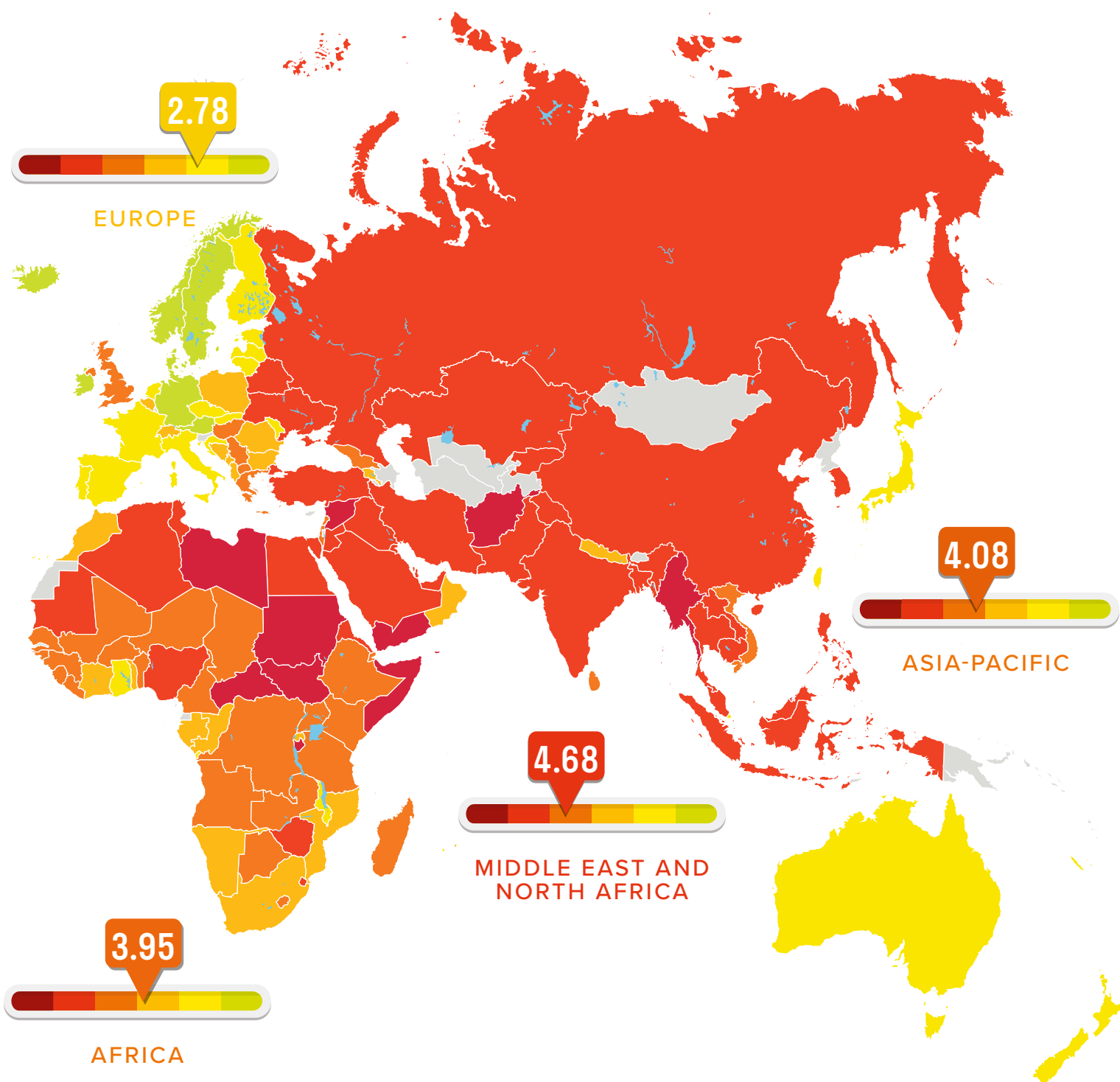


WORSE RATING

COUNTRY	2025	2024
Argentina	4	3
Costa Rica	4	3
Georgia	4	3
Italy	2	1
Mauritania	5	4
Niger	4	3
Panama	4	3

IMPROVED RATING

COUNTRY	2025	2024
Australia	2	3
Mexico	3	4
Oman	3	4



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

NO GUARANTEE
OF RIGHTS

SYSTEMATIC
VIOLATIONS
OF RIGHTS

REGULAR
VIOLATIONS
OF RIGHTS

REPEATED
VIOLATIONS
OF RIGHTS

SPORADIC
VIOLATIONS
OF RIGHTS

NO DATA

THE 2025 COUNTRY RATINGS



Countries listed in green are improving

Countries listed in red are worsening

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

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

Rating 5 NO GUARANTEE OF RIGHTS

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

Rating 4 SYSTEMATIC VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

Angola	Cameroon	Ethiopia
Argentina	Chad	Fiji
Benin	Congo (Democratic Republic of)	Georgia
Botswana	Costa Rica	Greece
Brazil	Djibouti	Guinea
Burkina Faso	El Salvador	Guinea-Bissau

Rating 4 SYSTEMATIC VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

Hungary	Niger	Tanzania
Israel	North Macedonia	Trinidad and Tobago
Kenya	Panama	Uganda
Lebanon	Peru	United Kingdom
Lesotho	Senegal	United States of America
Liberia	Serbia	Vietnam
Madagascar	Sierra Leone	Zambia
Mali	Sri Lanka	

Rating 3 REGULAR VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

Albania	Congo (Republic of)	Nepal
Armenia	Côte d'Ivoire	Oman
Bahamas	Gabon	Paraguay
Belgium	Jamaica	Poland
Belize	Mauritius	Romania
Bolivia	Mexico	Rwanda
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Montenegro	South Africa
Bulgaria	Morocco	Switzerland
Canada	Mozambique	Togo
Chile	Namibia	

Rating 2 REPEATED VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

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

Rating 1 SPORADIC VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS

Austria	Iceland	Sweden
Denmark	Ireland	
Germany	Norway	

Workers’ rights under siege: more countries deteriorate than improve in 2025 Index

In 2025, the ratings of seven countries deteriorated, while only three showed improvement – underscoring the persistent and troubling trend captured in the annual Index. This long-standing imbalance between worsening and improving country ratings offers compelling evidence of the increasingly antagonistic environments endured by workers and trade unionists around the world.

More than one in three (51) countries in the Index are now rated 5 – indicating no guarantee of rights – or 5+, where rights cannot be guaranteed due to the breakdown of law. This marks an increase of one country from the previous year and a sharp rise from 32 countries (23%) in 2014, when the Index was launched. Only seven European countries – out of 151 countries worldwide – retained the top-tier rating of 1, signifying sporadic violations of rights, down from 18 (of 139) in 2014. This dire trend underscores the severity of the sustained assault by governments and corporations on fundamental labour rights and freedoms over the past decade.

IMPROVED RATING		
COUNTRY	2025	2024
Australia	2	3
Mexico	3	4
Oman	3	4

WORSE RATING		
COUNTRY	2025	2024
Argentina	4	3
Costa Rica	4	3
Georgia	4	3
Italy	2	1
Mauritania	5	4
Niger	4	3
Panama	4	3

Positive reforms boost three countries

Progressive reforms to labour laws and systems in **Australia, Mexico, and Oman** contributed to their improved ratings in the Index. These reforms centred on improving access to justice for workers and promoting more effective tripartite dialogue between governments, workers’ representatives, and employers.

Australia has strengthened its protection of union rights in recent years through reforms to industrial relations laws and regulations, developed in consultation with trade unions. As a result, its rating improved to 2 in 2025 from 3 in 2024.

While non-compliance with collective agreements persists, workers have better access to legal recourse. The Fair Work Commission can review dispute resolution provisions, and the limit for small claims for the recovery of wages due under collective agreements was raised five-fold to AU\$ 100,000 (US\$ 62,900). The penalties for non-payment or underpayment of negotiated wages have increased and employers can now be held criminally liable for failure to pay.

Australian law requires ballots prior to strikes and limits industrial action to matters related to bargaining. However, recent reforms have facilitated more timely voting processes and extended the right to hold ballots – and take strike action – in authorised multi-

employer bargaining contexts. In the construction sector, picketing restrictions were lifted, provisions concerning unlawful industrial action were repealed, and the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC), which held excessive powers to monitor unions, was abolished.



Credit: ACTU

In recent years, Australia has significantly reformed its industrial relations laws and regulations, in consultation with trade unions, strengthening the protection of trade union rights. Australia's rating improved from 3 in 2024 to 2 in 2025, reflecting this progress.

Mexico improved its rating to 3 from 4 in the 2025 Index, following significant reforms to its labour justice system. These included the establishment of federal and local conciliation centres and labour tribunals, and the closure of the conciliation and arbitration boards. The National Conciliation and Productivity Committee (CNCP) was also created as an advisory body composed of representatives from employers, labour, and academia, with the aim of strengthening conciliation processes, union registration, representation, and collective bargaining.

The transition has substantially improved access to the labour justice system. New, independent labour courts have resolved over 30,000 cases, many related to the right to organise and collective bargaining. While concerns remain over the influence of “employer-friendly” unions and the recognition of independent unions in collective bargaining processes, the reforms have provided important momentum for the independent union movement.

Oman has undertaken reforms aimed at strengthening dialogue on labour issues and improving dispute resolution mechanisms, resulting in an improved rating from 4 to 3. In 2023, a Joint Dialogue Committee was established to draft and amend labour laws and policies. The committee includes representatives from the government, employers’ organisations, and the General Federation of Oman Workers (GFW).

In 2024, the committee addressed key issues including the ratification of ILO Conventions, working time arrangements, access to banking facilities for employers and workers, and training initiatives. Efforts are underway to establish additional social dialogue committees throughout the country. Two tripartite committees were created to review collective demands and to resolve collective labour disputes. The GFW reported an increase in collective bargaining agreements in 2024, indicating progress in structured dialogue between workers, employers, and the state.

A global war on labour rights

State repression of the right to strike and systematic efforts to undermine union activities – often through regressive legislation – emerged as a common pattern among countries whose ratings deteriorated in 2024.

Since the 2023 presidential elections in **Argentina**, the far-right administration of Javier Milei has intensified its crackdown on civil liberties and trade union rights. As a result, Argentina's rating fell from 3 to 4 in the 2025 Index.

In 2024, several regressive laws were enacted without union consultation and in defiance of widespread public opposition. These measures rolled back fundamental labour protections, dismantled elements of the social security system, and increased employer flexibility – including reducing severance pay, effectively allowing employers to dismiss workers at little or no cost. The right to strike and peaceful assembly have been criminalised, with organisers facing severe penalties, including prison sentences of up to six years. A new “essential services” law imposes sweeping restrictions on strike action across a broad range of sectors, including aviation.

The Central de los Trabajadores de la Argentina-Autónoma (CTA-A) and the Confederación General del Trabajo de la República Argentina (CGT) reported widespread police brutality and mass arrests during public demonstrations in 2024. At least 1,155 protesters were injured due to the disproportionate use of force, with at least 33 suffering rubber bullet wounds to the head and face. At least 73 demonstrators were prosecuted.

Working conditions in **Costa Rica** have continued to deteriorate, as union rights were increasingly restricted by regressive laws and infringed by employers. The country's rating was downgraded from 3 to 4 in the 2025 Index – the second consecutive year of decline.

In the public sector, strikes have been prohibited in key areas, including rail and sea transport, loading and unloading services for perishable goods, pharmacies, medical appointments and care, and fuel distribution. In the private sector, forming a union has become virtually impossible, as the authorities retain broad discretion over registration procedures.

Workers marched in Panama City to protest proposed pension reforms, including potential privatisation and an increase in the retirement age. Panama's rating worsened from 3 in 2024 to 4 in 2025, reflecting an overall decline in workers' rights.

Credit: Martin Bernetti / AFP



Legal barriers prevent migrant workers from holding leadership positions in trade unions, severely limiting union formation in sectors where migrants are concentrated. As migrant workers account for approximately 95% of Costa Rica's agricultural and construction industries, this exclusion leaves vast numbers of workers vulnerable to exploitation without representation.

Amid ongoing social unrest and the police suppression of protests, the Georgian parliament introduced three controversial laws in 2024, without prior consultation with unions. Collectively, the legislation severely undermines civil liberties and trade union rights. As a result, **Georgia** was downgraded to a rating of 4 in the 2025 Index.

A law introduced in December weakens labour rights and job security in the public sector. It introduces one-year temporary contracts and mandatory performance evaluations every six months for civil servants. A single unsatisfactory evaluation can result in a 20% salary reduction, while a second can lead to dismissal. These measures create conditions that may enable anti-union discrimination and facilitate union busting.

Additionally, new legislation that came into effect on 30 December imposed sweeping restrictions on freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, including heavy fines for protest materials and police powers to detain individuals preventively for up to 48 hours.

The Law on Transparency of Foreign Influence requires any organisation receiving more than 20% of its funding from foreign sources to register as "bearing the interests of a foreign power". Widely criticised as an attempt to stifle dissent, the law poses a serious threat to civil society organisations and the independent media.

In a clear indication that workers' freedoms in Europe are increasingly under threat from the rise of the far right, **Italy** lost its top-tier rating in 2025. The far-right government led by Giorgia Meloni has continued to unduly restrict the right to strike and interfere with trade union activities.

In November 2024, the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL) and the Unione Italiana del Lavoro (UIL) called a general strike in protest of the budget law. Four days before the strike action, the





Credit: Juan Mabromata / AFP

Trade unionists and civil society organisations gathered at Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires to protest President Javier Milei's government. A dummy of Milei held a banner reading "Without peace, bread, house, nor work". Argentina's rating fell from 3 in 2024 to 4 in 2025.

Strike Guarantee Commission curtailed the strike's duration, citing a potential "risk of serious prejudice to the fundamental rights of public transportation users". The Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport urged unions to comply; however, CGIL and UIL reaffirmed their intention to proceed. In response, the government issued an injunction covering all public and private workers in the passenger transport sector, limiting their "authorised" participation in the strike to four hours instead of eight.

The government also interfered with union participation in tripartite social dialogue. When renewing the membership of the National Council for Economics and Labour (CNEL) for the 2023-2028 term, the authorities applied unlawful criteria to measure representativity, resulting in the reduction of UIL representatives from three to two.

Mauritania's rating fell to 5 in the 2025 Index, indicating that there are no guarantees of rights for workers and trade unions. The government has overseen the violent repression of peaceful demonstrations and the

systematic arrest of unionists. In May 2024, a peaceful protest by doctors was dispersed by state forces. In November 2024, a leader from the national education union was physically assaulted by a police officer during a protest.

Authorities have resorted to intimidation and anti-union practices, particularly targeting the Confédération Libre des Travailleurs de Mauritanie (CLTM).

Legislation in Mauritania continues to severely restrict workers' rights to form and join unions and to collectively bargain for improved working conditions. The national collective agreement, signed in 1974, has never been revised. Civil liberties remain heavily restricted: all public gatherings must receive approval from the authorities.

In **Niger**, the military junta intensified its crackdown on political opposition, while also targeting the trade union movement. As a result, the country's rating fell to 4 in the 2025 Index.

The military authorities severely undermined workers' right to independent, genuine representation. In 2024, the junta published a list of so-called "representative" unions eligible to receive government subsidies – a move that violates the Labour Code and threatens the autonomy of the trade union movement.

Attacks on the trade union movement in **Panama** intensified over the past year, as the Sindicato Único Nacional de Trabajadores de la Industria de la Construcción y Similares de Panamá (SUNTRACS) and its leadership came under state persecution. Panama's rating dropped to 4 in the 2025 Index.

In February 2025, thousands of construction workers affiliated with SUNTRACS staged a one-hour national protest. The government responded with a violent police crackdown, detaining 514 workers – including mothers at breastfeeding stage. At the time of writing, 83 workers face charges. President José Raúl Mulino denounced SUNTRACS and its leadership, contributing to a climate of fear and stigmatisation. In a further act of retaliation against its activism, the union's bank accounts were closed and its assets frozen.

WORST REGION IN THE WORLD

Middle East and North Africa:	4.68
Asia-Pacific:	4.08
Africa:	3.95
Americas:	3.68
Europe:	2.78

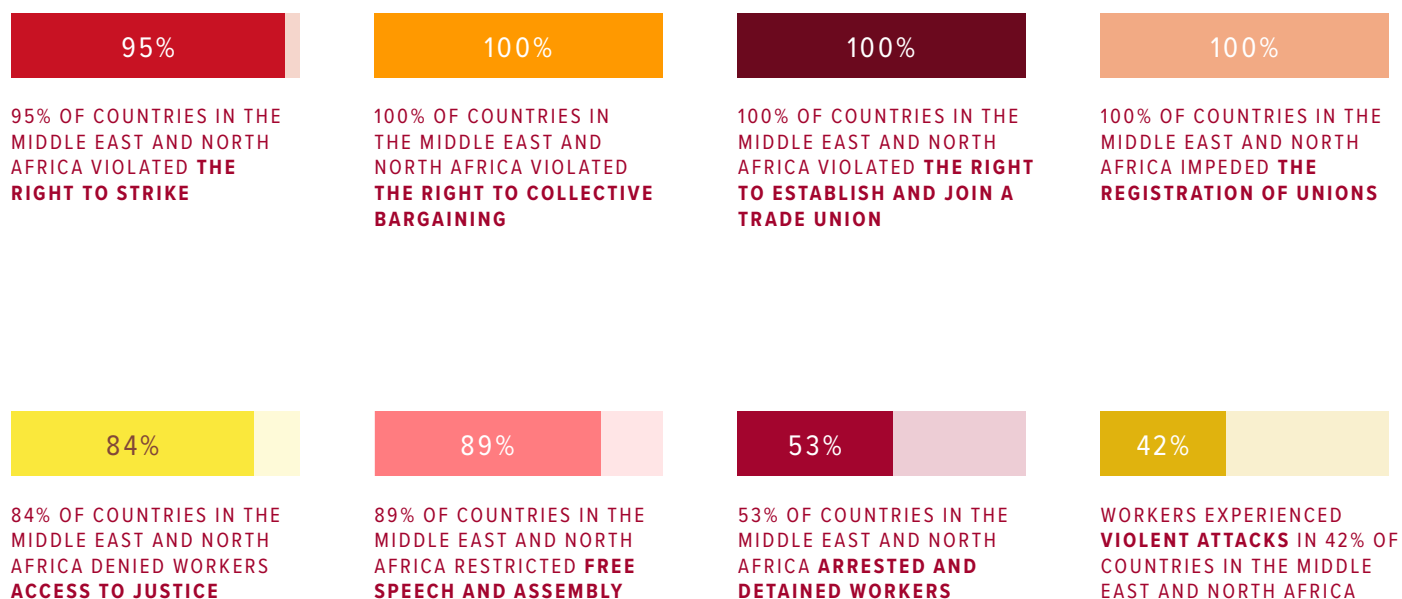


MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Trade unions called a general strike in Israel to oppose the government's anti-worker policies. Basic rights – such as the rights to strike and collective bargaining – are undermined in the country located in the worst region for working people: the Middle East and North Africa.

4.68

5+ 5 4 3 2 1



Despite a marginal improvement from its worst rating on record, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) retained its title as the world's worst region for workers' rights in 2025. Countries scored an average rating of 4.68, compared to 4.74 in 2024. This indicates that most workers are subject to the systematic violation, or no guarantee, of basic labour rights.

All MENA countries continued to violate key labour rights, including the rights to collective bargaining, to establish and join a trade union, and to register independent unions. Nearly all countries imposed severe restrictions on the right to strike. However, **Oman** offered a glimmer of progress, improving its rating from 4 to 3 in 2025, due to a series of progressive labour reforms aimed at strengthening social dialogue and dispute resolution.

Conflict and political instability have left workers in **Syria** and **Yemen** without access to even the most basic rights. In Yemen, the collapse of state institutions has directly impacted the freedom of trade union activity, while in Syria, some efforts have begun to organise workers and reclaim their rights following the fall of the repressive regime of Bashar al-Assad.

War has also affected the stability of the labour market in **Israel** and **Palestine**, where thousands of workers – particularly Palestinian workers – have lost their jobs, with more than 200,000 working people denied their wages.

Repressive regimes threaten trade unions

Beyond those extreme conditions, highly restrictive legal frameworks posed the greatest threat to workers' rights in the MENA region. In **Egypt**, complex, arbitrary procedures were used to obstruct the registration of unions. In **Libya**, a government-led union monopoly continued to suppress the development of an independent union movement. Workers in **Qatar**, **Saudi Arabia**, and the **United Arab Emirates** faced outright bans or severe restrictions on freedom of association and the right to organise – particularly affecting migrant workers, who make up a significant proportion of the labour force in these countries.

Morocco

The Confédération Démocratique du Travail (CDT) and the Union Marocaine du Travail (UMT) are leading opposition to a draft law on strike action that the government pushed through in late December 2024 without any prior consultation with trade unions. Since January 2025, both organisations have led a nationwide campaign against the bill, describing it as an assault on trade union freedoms. Although the unions appealed to the Constitutional Court to contest the legislation, the court's response aligned with the law.

The proposed legislation narrows the definition of strike action to labour-specific demands, excluding protests related to the cost of living or broader government policies. It imposes penalties on unions for non-compliance, brings the judiciary into labour disputes, and violates the right to strike by forcing people to work during industrial action.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has taken some steps to modernise aspects of its labour governance framework. Since 2019, labour courts have been operational and have begun delivering rulings. Social insurance now covers approximately three-quarters of the working population, including migrant workers. National-level structures have been established within the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development to address issues related to domestic work, occupational safety and health (OSH), and the integration of women into the labour market. However, it remains unclear how these reforms have translated into real improvements at the workplace level. Crucially, there has been no progress on the fundamental rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining.

Concerns have also intensified following the signing of bilateral agreements with **Somalia** to facilitate the recruitment of Somali labour in preparation for the 2034 FIFA World Cup. Despite explicit recommendations from the ILO to include worker protections aligned with international labour standards, the agreements were signed without any such safeguards.

Trade unions in the construction sector, unions from migrant worker origin countries, and human rights organisations have raised concerns over the occupational safety and health measures in place to protect workers involved in stadium building and related infrastructure projects in Saudi Arabia for the upcoming FIFA tournament.



Credit: Peter Parks / AFP

4.08

ASIA-PACIFIC

5+ 5 4 3 2 1

In a mass trial under the National Security Law, 14 pro-democracy defenders in Hong Kong – including trade unionists – received prison sentences for organising elections to select candidates for the Legislative Council. Asia-Pacific remains the second worst region in the world for working people.

91%

91% OF COUNTRIES IN ASIA-PACIFIC VIOLATED **THE RIGHT TO STRIKE**

83%

83% OF COUNTRIES IN ASIA-PACIFIC VIOLATED **THE RIGHT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

87%

87% OF COUNTRIES IN ASIA-PACIFIC VIOLATED **THE RIGHT TO ESTABLISH AND JOIN A TRADE UNION**

91%

91% OF COUNTRIES IN ASIA-PACIFIC IMPEDED **THE REGISTRATION OF UNIONS**

70%

70% OF COUNTRIES IN ASIA-PACIFIC DENIED WORKERS **ACCESS TO JUSTICE**

70%

70% OF COUNTRIES IN ASIA-PACIFIC RESTRICTED **FREE SPEECH AND ASSEMBLY**

70%

70% OF COUNTRIES IN ASIA-PACIFIC **ARRESTED AND DETAINED WORKERS**

26%

WORKERS EXPERIENCED **VIOLENT ATTACKS** IN 26% OF COUNTRIES IN ASIA-PACIFIC

Asia-Pacific marked its third year of slow improvement from its worst rating on record in 2022. However, it remains the second most treacherous region for workers' rights. Countries achieved an average rating of 4.08 in 2025, compared to 4.13 in the previous year, indicating that workers remain routinely exposed to the systematic violation of their rights.

Nine out of 10 countries violated the right to strike and impeded the registration of unions. Almost half reported violence against workers, an alarming doubling in the prevalence of such attacks compared to the previous year. More countries – seven in every 10 – clamped down on free speech and assembly.

Australia's rating improved to 2 from 3, buoyed by positive changes to its industrial relations framework.

The Taliban's crackdown on human rights has had a devastating impact on lives and working conditions in **Afghanistan**, particularly for women and girls. According to the UN, almost half the population – about 23 million people – will require humanitarian assistance to survive in 2025.

Regionwide hostility against workers

Workers across the region continue to face alarming levels of abuse and oppression. Trade union leaders in **Cambodia** and **Hong Kong** faced harassment and persecution, while others were unjustly imprisoned in **Iran** and **Myanmar**. Authorities in **Bangladesh** violently suppressed strikes, while **Malaysia**, **Nepal**, and **Thailand** engaged in a range of union-busting activities. In both **India** and **Pakistan**, governments and employers persistently bypassed meaningful tripartite social dialogue and consultations with unions. Restrictions on freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly are widespread in Iran, with the interrogation, arrest, detention and sentencing of labour, cultural rights activists, human rights defenders and journalists.

Cambodia

On 4 December 2024, the Phnom Penh Municipal Court upheld the conviction of Morm Rithy, President of Cambodian Tourism and Services Workers' Federation (CTSWF), on charges of incitement, as well as "discrediting a judicial decision". The charges stemmed from comments Rithy made during a live Facebook broadcast, in which he criticised the arrest of a casino worker. He was convicted in absentia and sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment and fined KHR 2 million (US\$ 500).

Trade unions defeat harmful labour reform

In 2024, trade unions in **Indonesia** celebrated a landmark Constitutional Court ruling that partially overturned the controversial Job Creation Law, commonly known as the Omnibus Law, which had undermined workers' rights and weakened labour protections. The legal challenge was filed by ITUC-affiliated unions, Konfederasi Serikat Pekerja Indonesia (KSPI) and Konfederasi Serikat Buruh Seluruh Indonesia (KSBSI).

Together with the Konfederasi Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia (KSPSI) – also an ITUC affiliate – and thousands of workers, the unions had campaigned for years to demand changes to the law. The court declared the law "conditionally unconstitutional" and ordered the government to draft new employment legislation.

As a result of the ruling, temporary contracts are now limited to five years and workers' severance payments must be prioritised over creditor claims in the event of company bankruptcy. The court also mandated that companies establish structured wage scales reflecting the experience and qualifications of employees. In addition, regional wage councils are now responsible for setting minimum wage standards based on living costs and broader economic conditions.



Credit: Hassan Ali Elmi / AFP

3.95

AFRICA



In Somalia, people took to the streets to protest against violence and terrorism. In the Africa region, Somalia is one of five countries rated 5+: No guarantee of rights due to the breakdown of the rule of law.

93%

93% OF COUNTRIES IN AFRICA VIOLATED **THE RIGHT TO STRIKE**

93%

93% OF COUNTRIES IN AFRICA VIOLATED **THE RIGHT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

93%

93% OF COUNTRIES IN AFRICA VIOLATED **THE RIGHT TO ESTABLISH AND JOIN A TRADE UNION**

79%

79% OF COUNTRIES IN AFRICA IMPEDED **THE REGISTRATION OF UNIONS**

81%

81% OF COUNTRIES IN AFRICA DENIED WORKERS **ACCESS TO JUSTICE**

51%

51% OF COUNTRIES IN AFRICA RESTRICTED **FREE SPEECH AND ASSEMBLY**

40%

40% OF COUNTRIES IN AFRICA **ARRESTED AND DETAINED WORKERS**

28%

WORKERS EXPERIENCED **VIOLENT ATTACKS** IN 28% OF COUNTRIES IN AFRICA



WORKERS WERE KILLED IN **CAMEROON AND SOUTH AFRICA**

The average country rating for Africa weakened slightly – the fourth consecutive annual deterioration. Countries averaged 3.95 in 2025, worsening from 3.88 in 2024 and marking the second-worst reading for the region since the Index began. These figures suggest that workers across the region endure systematic violations of their rights.

Most workers, employed in the informal sector, have no labour protection. The rights to strike, to collective bargaining, and to establish or join a trade union are violated in 93% of countries. While fewer countries reported violence against workers, union activists were killed in Cameroon and South Africa.

Mauritania fell to a rating of 5 from 4, while Niger was relegated to 4 from 3, as unions faced increased state repression.

Systematic violations

Strikes and protests were met with violent suppression in **Cameroon, Kenya, Mauritania**, and **South Africa**. Employers sabotaged union activity in **Botswana, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia**, and **Senegal**. In **Nigeria**, a new entry to the 10 worst countries in the world for working people, **Eswatini**, and **Zimbabwe**, trade unionists faced repression for their activities, while authorities in Eswatini, **Guinea-Bissau** and Zimbabwe banned protests and assembly.

Military juntas in West Africa including **Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon** and **Mali** – prevented unions from operating freely. Conflicts in **South Sudan** and **Sudan** have left millions in desperate need of aid and severely threatened the livelihoods of workers. Meanwhile, escalating violence in eastern **Democratic Republic of Congo**, particularly in and around Goma, has caused immense suffering among civilians and workers. Hospitals are overwhelmed, food supplies are critically low, and at least 700,000 people are estimated to have been internally displaced by the conflict.

Liberia

In August 2024, 1,660 contract workers at the Firestone Liberia rubber plantation voted overwhelmingly to join the Firestone Agricultural Workers' Union of Liberia (FAWUL), aiming to address concerns about exploitative working conditions. Despite this vote, Firestone Liberia refused to recognise the contract workers as employees, insisting they negotiate with labour contractors rather than the company itself. After government-mediated negotiations failed, FAWUL, supported by its parent union, the National Timber, Wood, Construction & Allied Workers' Union of Liberia (NTWCAWU), called for a strike involving 6,000 workers, beginning on 30 January 2025.

Zimbabwe

In November 2024, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) notified Harare police of its intention to hold a one-day seminar to raise awareness about the ILO Declaration on Social Justice and Fair Globalization. On the day of the event, police delivered a letter banning the event and ordered participants to vacate the venue. The letter cited non-compliance with the Maintenance of Peace and Order Act – a controversial law frequently used by authorities to restrict workers' right to peaceful assembly.

Earlier in the year, police also blocked ZCTU's May Day procession, citing unspecified security concerns. Roadblocks were erected around the Gwanzura Stadium in Harare, and similar restrictions were enforced in Bulawayo, where the procession was abruptly halted despite prior authorisation.



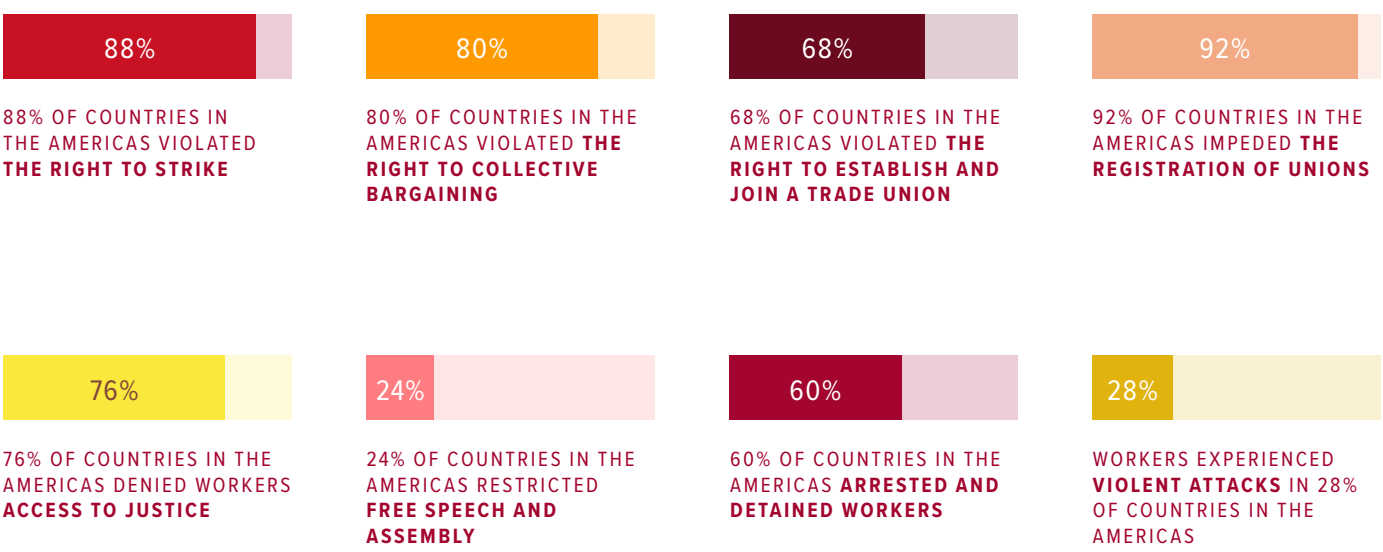
Credit: Artur Widad / AFP

3.68

AMERICAS



In Canada, Amazon abruptly closed five warehouses where thousands of workers had successfully unionised and were negotiating with the company. Four in five countries in the Americas violated the right to collectively bargain, as the region's rating worsened.



 WORKERS WERE KILLED IN **COLOMBIA, GUATEMALA, AND PERU**

Conditions for workers across the Americas deteriorated to their worst since the Index began. The average rating worsened to 3.68 from 3.56 in 2024 – the largest annual drop since 2017. This figure signifies a regional environment where workers face systematic or regular violations of their rights. The Americas remains the deadliest region for workers: five unionists were killed in **Colombia**, **Guatemala**, and **Peru**.

More countries in the Americas are obstructing fundamental labour rights. In 2025, 92% of countries in the region restricted the registration of trade unions, while workers were arrested or detained in six out of every 10 countries. In addition, 88% of countries violated the right to strike.

Worst regional rating on record

Argentina, **Costa Rica**, and **Panama** saw their ratings fall from 3 to 4 amid intensifying crackdowns on workers' rights and trade unions. **Mexico**, by contrast, saw its rating climb to 3 from 4, following positive reforms to its labour justice system.

Strikes and protests were heavily repressed in both **Argentina** and **Brazil**, while companies operating in sectors known for their abusive work conditions engaged in widespread union-busting practices in **El Salvador**, **Costa Rica**, **Honduras**, and **Panama**.

A culture of intimidation continues to threaten workers and trade union activists across much of the region, where death threats and physical attacks remain commonplace. In **Colombia**, for example, Jhon Jarry Vargas Sarabia – the young father of three and a member of the Unión Sindical Obrera (USO) for oil workers – was shot dead in Tibú.

Peru

On 17 August 2024, Arturo Cárdenas, Secretary General of the Sindicato de Trabajadores en Construcción Civil de Lima y Balnearios (STCCLB), and Américo Román Camilo Gonzales Palomino, founder of the Sindicato de Trabajadores de Construcción Civil del Cono Sur and the Sindicato de Trabajadores de Construcción Civil “Hubert Lanssiers Dirix”, were assassinated.

Cárdenas and Palomino became the latest victims in a tragic pattern of violence, joining a list of 24 leaders from the Federación de Trabajadores en Construcción Civil del Perú (FTCCP) to have been murdered since 2011. Both had received death threats due to their trade union activities. The construction sector in Peru remains one of the few in which sectoral bargaining is in place, making union leadership positions especially vulnerable to intimidation and violence.

United States

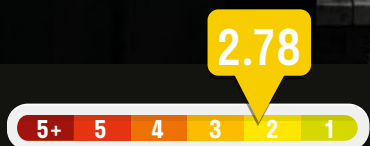
In a swathe of measures aimed at restricting workers' rights and union activity, President Donald Trump signed executive orders that would reclassify up to 50,000 federal workers, stripping them of job protections and making it easier to dismiss them.

The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) filed a lawsuit challenging the move, denouncing it as an unprecedented attack on the rights to organise and bargain collectively.



Credit: Philippe Lopez / AFP

EUROPE



French lawyers took strike action to oppose reforms to the juvenile justice system. France is among several European countries that violated the right to strike, contributing to a staggering decline in the region's average rating since 2014.



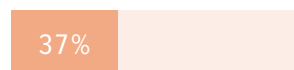
73% OF COUNTRIES IN EUROPE VIOLATED **THE RIGHT TO STRIKE**



56% OF COUNTRIES IN EUROPE VIOLATED **THE RIGHT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**



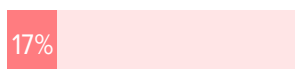
41% OF COUNTRIES IN EUROPE VIOLATED **THE RIGHT TO ESTABLISH AND JOIN A TRADE UNION**



37% OF COUNTRIES IN EUROPE IMPEDED **THE REGISTRATION OF UNIONS**



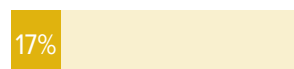
54% OF COUNTRIES IN EUROPE DENIED WORKERS **ACCESS TO JUSTICE**



17% OF COUNTRIES IN EUROPE RESTRICTED **FREE SPEECH AND ASSEMBLY**



32% OF COUNTRIES IN EUROPE **ARRESTED AND DETAINED WORKERS**



WORKERS EXPERIENCED **VIOLENT ATTACKS** IN 17% OF COUNTRIES IN EUROPE

Conditions in Europe deteriorated for the third consecutive year, reaching their worst level since the Index began – an alarming indication that the erosion of labour rights across the continent is accelerating. The average country rating declined to 2.78, down from 2.73 in 2024. This score reflects the regular violation of rights across the region.

Nearly three-quarters of European countries violated the right to strike, and almost a third of them arrested or detained workers. More than half denied or restricted access to justice – a sharp increase from 32% in 2024.

Georgia's rating deteriorated to 4 from 3, and **Italy's** rating worsened from 1 to 2 due to draconian actions by their governments designed to undermine labour and protest rights.

Worst conditions since Index began

Authorities in **Belgium, Finland and France** continued their crackdowns on striking workers, while governments in **Albania, Hungary, Moldova, Montenegro** and the **United Kingdom** abused legal powers by excessively broadening the definition of “essential services” to restrict the right to strike. In **Greece, Hungary, Serbia, Switzerland, and Türkiye**, companies actively undermined union activity to the detriment of employees. This anti-worker climate also saw the emergence of employer-dominated “yellow unions” in **Armenia, Greece, the Netherlands, Moldova, and North Macedonia**.

The rise of far-right political parties and movements across Europe has heightened the risk of further erosion in the rights of workers and unions.

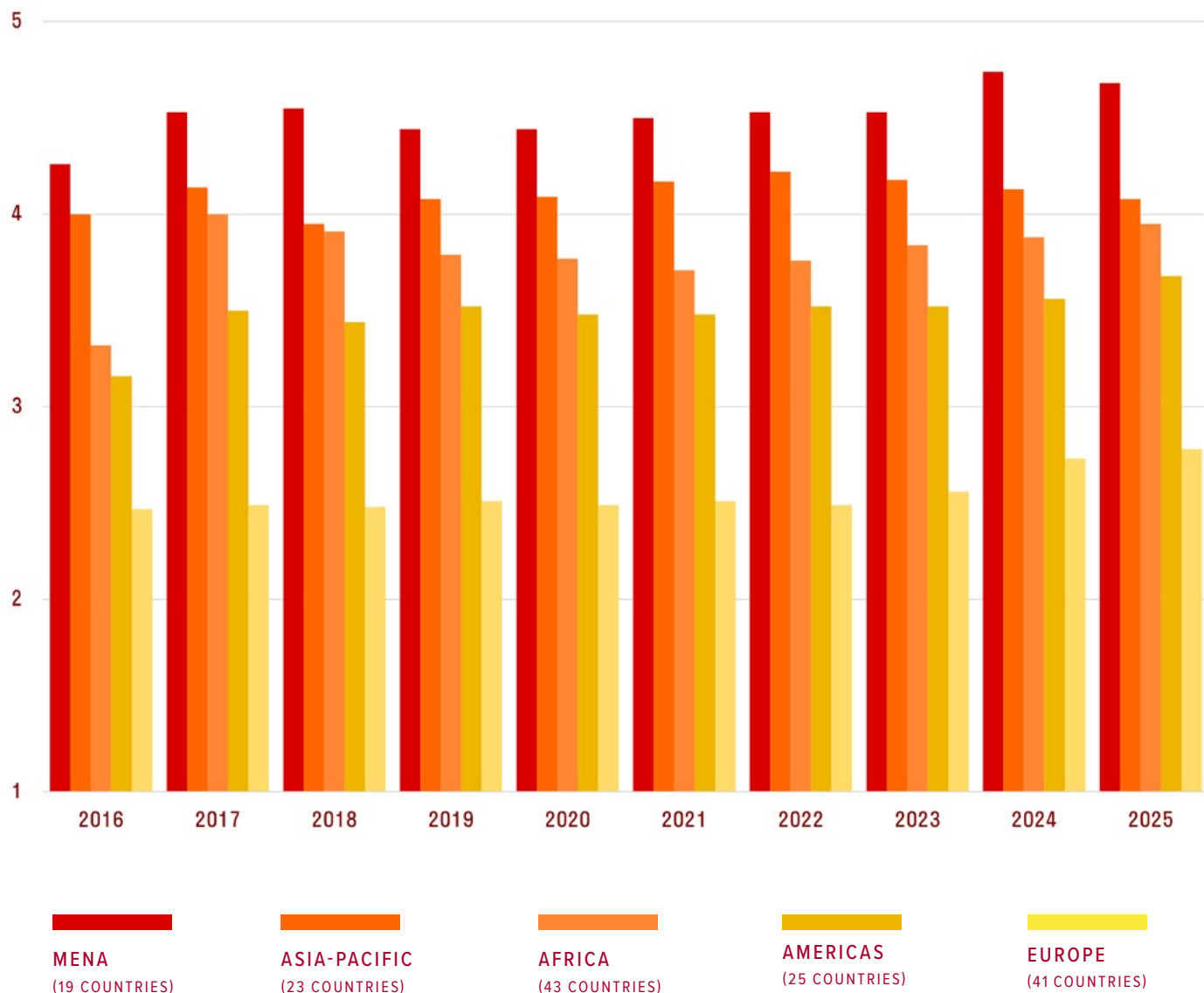
Russian Federation

Trade unionists in the Russian Federation continued to face intimidation and harassment. Tactics included the slashing of car tyres and spreading false accusations – such as links to extremist organisations – to discredit trade union members in the public sphere. At JSC Blagoveshchensk Valve Plant, the chairman of the local chapter of the Interregional Trade Union “Workers’ Association” (MPRA), was physically assaulted by the shop manager. Despite documented injuries and appeals to the police and prosecutor’s office, authorities refused to investigate the incident and failed to notify the victim of their decision.

Serbia

In Serbia, the legal deadline for filing a labour law complaint in court was shortened from 90 to 60 days. In addition, the Law on Court Fees imposes disproportionately high costs for lawsuits, judgments, appeals, and extraordinary remedies. Combined with elevated legal fees, these barriers have made court protection effectively inaccessible for many workers.

10-YEAR TRENDS: REGIONAL RATINGS



THE WORLD'S 10 WORST COUNTRIES FOR WORKERS

Each year, the ITUC Global Rights Index rates countries depending on their compliance with collective, internationally recognised labour rights and records violations by governments and employers. These are the 10 worst countries for working people.



BANGLADESH

Credit: Maruf Rahman / NurPhoto / AFP

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- State repression of strikes
- Union activity stamped out in garment sector
- Unionists detained; protesters killed

Despite facing police violence, severe barriers to union formation and registration, and the harsh repression of union activity, Bangladesh's garment workers continue to fight for their fundamental labour rights in one of the world's 10 worst countries for working people.

Bangladeshi workers have long suffered under a system of oppression, violence, and impunity.

Bangladesh is responsible for about eight percent of the global garment market, supplying popular brands such as Zara and H&M. Workers in the garment sector endure the constant violation of their basic rights. With employer threats, violence, mass dismissals, and restrictive membership and registration rules, it is virtually impossible for garment workers to form or join unions.

Strikes stamped out

In February 2025, more than 800 workers in the beverage industry went on strike to protest the unfair dismissal of 10 union members. Striking workers at

three Transcom Beverages bottling plants in Dhaka, Gazipur, and Chittagong demanded the reinstatement of the workers and better job security. Transcom Beverages, the exclusive PepsiCo franchisee for Bangladesh, responded by calling in the police, who charged protesters with batons. Police deployed provocateurs to set fire to tyres near the Dhaka factory, providing a pretext for the crackdown. Twenty-three workers were arrested and charged in Dhaka.

In July 2024, more than 200 people were killed when mass student protests against a controversial job quota policy were violently repressed by the military in at least 47 of Bangladesh's 64 districts.



Credit: Salidarnast e.V

BELARUS

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Unionists branded as “terrorists”
- Arbitrary detention of activists
- Persecution of independent unions

Exiled Belarusian unionists gather to mark May 1 in Bremen, Germany. Belarus remains among the 10 worst countries for workers’ rights, with all independent trade unions dismantled and their leaders subjected to relentless persecution.

Despite sustained international pressure, Belarusian state authorities have continued the relentless and systematic persecution of workers and independent unions for decades.

Since the violent suppression of Belarus’s largest anti-government protests in 2020, authorities have intensified their assault on the labour movement: imprisoning union leaders and members on bogus charges, dissolving independent unions, including the Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions (BKDP) and its affiliates, and launching a propaganda campaign to denounce unions as “extremist” and “terrorist” organisations.

The ongoing imprisonment of leaders from the independent trade union centre BKDP reflects the sustained repression of organised labour under Belarus’s authoritarian regime. As of writing, 29 union leaders and activists remain behind bars, including BKDP President, ITUC Vice-President, and ILO Governing Body member Aliaksandr Yarashuk, who has been in detention since April 2022.

On 4 November 2023, his imprisonment conditions were abruptly changed from ordinary to strict, and he was transferred from the general regime colony in Shklov to Prison No. 4 in Mogilev. This move resulted in significantly harsher conditions. Under the strict regime, inmates are permitted to spend only one basic unit per month on food and necessities, receive one supervised visit per year (limited to four hours), one parcel or small package annually, and take a single one-hour walk each day.

While national law allows the imposition of a stricter prison regime as a sanction for ‘malicious’ violations of prison rules, this measure is routinely used to punish trade union leaders and labour activists.

Failing health behind bars

Vatslau Areshka, another veteran trade unionist and activist with the Belarusian Radio and Electronics Industry Workers’ Union (REP), who recently turned 70, is serving eight years in a high-security prison. The Belarusian authorities have designated the REP Union, along with other independent trade unions, as “extremist” entities.

Areshka was initially incarcerated in Shklov. In December 2023, he was transferred to penitentiary IK-22 – known as “Wolf Holes” – near Ivantsevichi.

He suffers from multiple serious health conditions, including retinal detachment, cataracts, and glaucoma, and frequently requires medical attention from prison doctors. In recent months, fellow inmates have had to assist him in writing letters to his family due to his deteriorating eyesight. He is permitted to make phone calls only once every few weeks.

As repression intensifies, many unionists have been forced into exile. Authorities have opened criminal cases against those abroad, including BKDP Acting President Maksim Pazniakou, who faces charges of “facilitating extremist activities” in connection with his trade union work.



ECUADOR

Credit: Galo Paguay / AFP

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Death threats and dismissals
- Only 1% of workers can access collective bargaining
- Laws target unions and right to protest

Trade unions and workers' organisations mark the anniversary of the 1922 Guayaquil massacre in which protesting workers were killed by the military under government orders. Ecuador is ranked among of the 10 worst countries for workers.

Since joining the top 10 worst countries in 2023, conditions in Ecuador have remained treacherous for unions and workers.

Only 1% of workers have access to collective bargaining largely due to intimidation and restrictive legislation requiring excessively high minimum membership thresholds. As a result, union formation is effectively impossible in more than 90% of companies. Workers who attempt to organise routinely face threats, dismissals, and in some cases, death threats. In July 2024, a proposed bill to reform the Labour Code for the Ethical Management and Transparency of Associations and Workers' Unions sought to legalise acts of interference in the independence of unions.

Attacks on freedom to protest

Trade unions have expressed serious concerns about an executive decree that authorises the armed forces to suppress organised crime, a deliberately vague term that has been used to target public mobilisation and protests.

In November 2024, the Frente Unitario de Trabajadores (FUT), Ecuador's principal trade union coalition, staged a peaceful demonstration in Quito to protest the government's response to an ongoing economic crisis and to demand an end to union persecution. More than 1,500 police officers were deployed to block access to Santo Domingo Square, a traditional gathering site for demonstrations. Protesters were arbitrarily detained, and the President of Ecuador publicly dismissed the protest as having been "financed by third parties".



EGYPT

Credit: CTUWS

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- State impedes union registration
- Arbitrary detention of activists
- Striking workers treated as criminals

Workers at T&C Garments take part in an open-ended strike demanding a minimum wage. In Egypt – ranked among the 10 worst countries in the world for working people – trade unions continue to protest despite severe restrictions on the right to strike, freedom of assembly, and freedom of expression.

Workers in Egypt are deprived of many of their basic rights due to the hardline repression of the independent union movement. The right to strike and freedoms of expression and assembly are severely restricted.

In 2025, 14 unions remained unable to operate, despite meeting legal requirements, following the arbitrary dissolution of all independent unions in 2018. The authorities impose absurd (re)registration requirements on unions, while the minimum membership threshold remains excessively high.

Arbitrary detention and charges

In 2024-2025, at least four unionists were arbitrarily detained on charges of “affiliation to a terrorist organisation” – a repressive trend observed in an increasing number of countries around the world, and one in which employers are often complicit.

For example, several companies have filed complaints leading to criminal charges against workers who participated in strikes. In October 2024, nine workers, including four women, whose names are withheld for their own protection, were dismissed from a weaving factory and arrested for taking part in a strike demanding the minimum wage.



ESWATINI

Credit: TUCOSWA

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Severe restrictions on unions
- Victimisation of union leaders
- Crackdown on public gatherings

In Eswatini, ranked among the 10 worst countries in the world for workers, trade unionists face a hostile climate marked by repression and impunity. As civil liberties continue to deteriorate, authorities routinely ban union gatherings, political parties remain outlawed, and freedoms of expression and assembly are tightly controlled.

The state of human rights and civil liberties continues to deteriorate in Eswatini. The royal authorities ban political parties, while unions, in their vital role as democratic institutions, are persecuted.

Basic freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly are severely restricted. Under the 2017 Public Order Act, any gathering of more than 50 people is subject to burdensome notice requirements. Authorities frequently use the law to ban union gatherings and petition delivery processions, including those organised by the Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA).

Unionists targeted

Sticks Nkambule, the General Secretary of the Swaziland Transport, Communication and Allied Workers Union (SWATCAWU), remains in exile after fleeing following an attempt on his life in December 2022. He cannot return home because he is wanted for alleged criminal conduct.

The Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT) faced years of struggle for official recognition. The Eswatini Teaching Service Commission (TSC) continues to deny the union's registration and harass its members. In 2022, SNAT President Mbongwa Dlamini's salary was suspended without justification and, despite a court ruling in his favour, the TSC has continued to withhold his wages. During that same court hearing, the authorities attempted to arrest him.



Credit: AFP

MYANMAR

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Persecution of union leaders
- Forced labour and mass arrests
- Effective ban on unions

Police stand guard on a street in Yangon on 1 February 2025, marking four years since the military coup. Myanmar remains one of the world's worst countries for working people, with trade unionists tortured, sentenced to imprisonment, forced into exile, and even killed by the ruling junta.

Four years after a military coup, workers and unions endure repression and harsh working conditions. Amid an atmosphere of escalating threats and oppression, there have been credible reports of forced labour. In total, 151 trade unionists have been arrested. Two are serving life sentences, one has died in custody, and one has been executed. The junta has effectively banned most independent trade unions.

The Confederation of Trade Unions Myanmar (CTUM) has been a primary target of the junta. Many of its members have endured imprisonment, violence, and torture. CTUM leaders remain subject to arrest warrants, and their passports and citizenships have been revoked.

Persecution of Thet Hnin Aung

Thet Hnin Aung, General Secretary of the Myanmar Industry Crafts and Services Trade Union Federation (MICS-TUsF), was arrested by the military in 2021. He was initially sentenced to two years of hard labour but was re-arrested upon his release in 2023. Following his abduction, he was held incommunicado, tortured, and denied access to legal counsel for five months before receiving a seven-year sentence of hard labour on terrorism charges.

In December 2024, he was beaten and confined to a “dog cell” as punishment for disclosing the conditions of his detention during a visit by the International Committee of the Red Cross.



Credit: NLC

NIGERIA - NEW

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Nigeria joins top 10 worst countries
- Raids on unions, spurious detentions
- Suppression of right to strike

Workers in Nigeria face rising repression, with the country newly listed among the 10 worst for workers' rights in the Global Rights Index 2025. On 3 June 2024, the government declared a planned general strike by the NLC illegal, amid escalating harassment and suppression of union activity.

Nigeria has been listed among the world's 10 worst countries for workers for the first time since the Index began in 2014. Workers and trade unionists faced a sharp rise in intimidation and repression, including the harassment of activists, the violation of collective bargaining rights, and the violent suppression of peaceful protests. In June 2024, the government declared a general strike planned by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) to be illegal.

On 9 September 2024, Joe Ajaero, the NLC President, was prevented from boarding a flight to attend the annual conference of the UK's Trades Union Congress (TUC). He was detained and held incommunicado until close to midnight. In August, Ajaero had been summoned for questioning by security forces on suspicion of terrorism financing, cybercrime, subversion, criminal conspiracy, and treasonable felony. No criminal charges were brought against him.

State persecution of NLC

In August 2024, heavily armed security forces raided the NLC headquarters in Abuja's business district. Officers arrested the union's security officer, broke into the second-floor offices, and ransacked the bookshop. Authorities claimed to be searching for seditious materials allegedly linked to a popular mobilisation campaign against bad governance. The campaign had not been organised by the NLC.



Credit: Ted Aljibe / AFP

THE PHILIPPINES

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- “Red-tagging” of union activists
- Police persecution
- State crackdown on workers

Workers and unions in the Philippines exist in a daily struggle to exercise even the most basic rights in a venomous environment of endemic harassment, violence, and death.

The government has long deployed “red-tagging” as a tactic against union leaders and members, falsely accusing them of supporting or participating in the communist insurgency, led by the New People’s Army (NPA). This duplicitous strategy puts workers and activists at direct risk, while deterring others from joining or forming unions. Despite international calls to end “red-tagging”, the government has shown little political will to protect union leaders or promote a climate conducive to the healthy functioning of unions.

Arrest of union leaders

On 27 October 2024, police detained two Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) union leaders in Southern Tagalog. Gavino Panganiban, KMU regional campaign director, was charged with murder and attempted murder, and Maritess David, an Organized Labor Associations in Line Industries and Agriculture (OLALIA-KMU) organiser, was accused of firearms violations. Both had been active in relief operations for workers affected by Typhoon Trami. Their arrests were part of a crackdown on workers, unionists, and activists fighting for decent wages, job security, and the right to organise.



Credit: Hasna / AFP

TUNISIA

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Freedom of expression and assembly denied
- Unionists face arrest and prosecution
- State interference in collective bargaining

Tunisian feminist and trade union activists rally outside the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT) headquarters in Tunis on National Women's Day, 13 August 2024, demanding the release of women detained for criticising President Kais Saied. Since Saied's sweeping power grab in 2021, a number of his critics — including women — have been arrested.

Civil liberties remain under continuous threat in Tunisia. Freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly are severely curtailed, and unionists frequently face arrest and prosecution.

Legislation enables the authorities to interfere with or reject agreements that have been legally concluded by workers' and employers' organisations. The National Council for Social Dialogue has been ineffective in establishing genuine and meaningful interaction between the government and its social partners. In July 2024, the Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail (UGTT) denounced the government's unilateral move to amend labour laws without union consultation.

Freedom of expression under attack

In recent months, Tunisia has witnessed a concerning trend in which trade unionists have faced judicial action for activities related to their work or the expression

of opinion. Authorities have increasingly used legal provisions — most notably Decree No. 54, which criminalises the dissemination of information considered false or harmful to public order — to prosecute individuals for social media posts or public expressions of dissent. This decree has been criticised for its broad scope and potential to suppress freedom of expression.

Additionally, there have been instances where union representatives were detained on allegations such as obstructing work or leading protests. While some were released shortly after, these actions signal a shrinking civic space and growing restrictions on trade union freedoms and the right to peaceful protest. The pattern reflects a broader environment in which labour rights defenders may face legal risks simply for exercising their roles or voicing concerns. Such is the prevailing climate of intimidation in Tunisia that the names of the unionists involved in these cases have been withheld for their protection.



TÜRKİYE

Credit: Kemal Aslan /AFP

WORKING PEOPLE FACE:

- Mass dismissals and union busting
- Collective bargaining restricted
- Union activist arrests

On 1 May 2024, Turkish police detained over 200 protesters attempting to march towards Istanbul's Taksim Square during a May Day rally, following a government ban on gatherings at the site. Türkiye remains among the 10 worst countries for workers.

Turkish authorities and employers continue to suppress union rights and persecute activists.

Employers engage in systematic union-busting practices by dismissing workers who attempt to unionise. Following municipal elections in March 2024, 6,750 members of the Türkiye Hak İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu (HAK-IS) were dismissed and more than 30,000 members were forced to resign from the union.

Collective bargaining rights are severely hampered. In 2024, DİSK/Dev Sağlık-İş, which organises healthcare workers, was barred from representing its 10,000 members in collective bargaining after the authorities erased the names of members from the health ministry's official records. This reduced the union's official representation to 0.99%, just below the one per cent threshold required for collective bargaining. Among the names removed was that of Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu (DİSK) General President Arzu Çerkezoğlu.

Arbitrary arrest of unionists

Remzi Çalışkan, Vice-President of DİSK and President of the General Services Union, DİSK Çukurova Regional Representative Kemal Göksoy, and former Diyarbakır Regional Representative Serdar Ekingen were arrested in November 2024 on charges dating back 15 years. Çalışkan was released a month later, while Göksoy and Ekingen remain in detention.

On 7 October 2024, İsmet Arslan, a Kamu Emekçileri Sendikaları Konfederasyonu (KESK) collective bargaining expert and a member of the DİSK/Sosyal-İş Union, was arrested and imprisoned. Two other KESK/ Eğitim Sen members were also detained. Arslan, who is undergoing cancer treatment, along with fellow unionists Yusuf Eminoğlu and Gıyasettin Yiğit, was released in March 2025; however, their trial remains ongoing.

May Day demonstrations in Istanbul were, once again, disrupted by the police. About 215 people were arrested and many injured after state authorities fired tear gas and rubber bullets. On 2 May 2024, a further 29 people were arrested.

MOST VIOLATED RIGHTS IN THE WORLD

The 2025 Global Rights Index tracks the key elements of a healthy workplace democracy in 151 countries, including freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, the right to strike, and the right to free speech and assembly.

These are the nine workers' rights that were most frequently violated over the past year.

Threats to the right to strike

The right to strike enables workers to collectively stop working to advocate for their rights, for example, better pay and safer conditions.

Violations of workers' right to strike remained at the highest level globally since the Index began in 2014. In 2025, strikes were restricted or banned in 131 countries (87%), unchanged from 2024 and up from 63% in 2014. This oppressive reality persists despite 158 of 187 ILO member states having ratified ILO Convention 87, which enshrines the freedom of association and the right to organise – the basis for the right to strike.

Police and military forces brutally repressed strike actions in several countries. In **Brazil**, a strike organised by bank workers and unions against outsourcing and bad faith bargaining was dispersed by police units using tasers and tear gas. In **Morocco**, police used water cannons and batons to attack education sector unions protesting fixed-term contracts and demanding improvements to schools.

Workers exercising their right to strike faced retaliatory dismissals. In **Armenia**, eight workers at the Zangezur

mine were fired as a warning to others. In **Iran**, four employees of the National Iranian Steel Company in Ahvaz were dismissed during a year-long industrial action for fair wages.

Arrests and the prosecution of striking workers were frequent. In **India**, over 900 workers were detained after organising a march against their employer, an electronics company. In **Belgium**, several Confédération des syndicats chrétiens (CSC-ACV) unionists were arrested during a strike against the privatisation of a supermarket chain. In **Switzerland**, two Unia unionists were fined for allegedly “trespassing and coercion” during a 2022 strike on a construction site.

In many countries, laws imposed draconian restrictions on strike actions, including **Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Burundi, Costa Rica, Egypt, Finland, Nepal, Rwanda, Senegal, Tunisia**, and **Zimbabwe**. Several governments issued orders to unduly limit strikes in public services, for example, in **Italy**, or to declare strikes illegal in municipal public services, as in **Brazil** and the **Democratic Republic of Congo**. In **France**, public sector employers imposed minimum service

requirements, despite a law requiring the conclusion of a collective agreement. In **Japan**, public sector workers found guilty of “inciting strike action” faced heavy fines up to JPY 1 million (US\$ 6,700) for state civil servants, JPY 100,000 (US\$ 670) for local civil servants, or three years in prison.

Cameroon

On 26 January 2025, violent clashes erupted between police and sugarcane workers in Nkoteng and Mbandjock during a strike against low wages, unsafe work conditions, and union suppression at Société Sucrière du Cameroun (SOSUCAM), Cameroon’s largest sugar plant. At least 100 accidents were recorded in the 2022-2023 growing season, according to the Seasonal Workers Union of the Sugarcane Sector. In violation of the law, the company failed to provide protective gear for temporary workers representing 90% of its 8,000-strong workforce. After a week of peaceful protest, the company called in police who fired tear gas and water cannons. When workers resisted, police shot and killed a seasonal worker. In the unrest that ensued, at least 11 were injured and around 20 people were arrested.

Iraq

On 2 June 2024, Iraqi security forces violently attacked contract oil workers peacefully protesting for permanent positions at the South Refineries Company. The striking workers, supported by the General Federation of Oil,

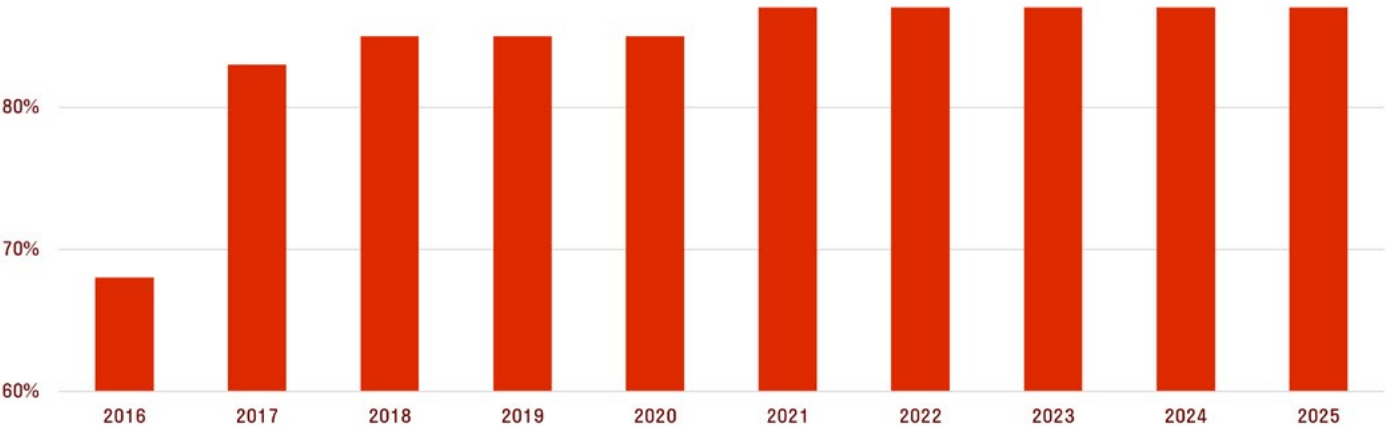


Credit: Channel 4 Iraq

Throughout the year, workers across multiple countries faced arrest and prosecution for exercising their right to strike. In Iraq, security forces violently dispersed striking oil workers outside southern refineries in Basra, using force to suppress protests over poor working conditions and unfulfilled wage commitments.

Gas and Petrochemical Unions in Iraq (GFOGPUI), the General Union of Oil Workers, and the General Union of Energy in Iraq, were confronted by police with rubber bullets and electric batons, which left several workers seriously injured. Earlier in the week-long protest, police forces had made several arrests. The protesters had been employed under 315 contracts for several years without fair resolution of their employment status. They were supposed to receive permanent contracts, but management had failed to deliver.

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



Erosion of collective bargaining

The right to collective bargaining enables workers to negotiate with their employer via a representative trade union.

The global picture for workers' fundamental right to collective bargaining deteriorated slightly in 2025. This right was curtailed or non-existent in 121 countries (80%), up from 79% in 2024 and far above the 63% reported in 2014. These figures underline the disregard many countries have for international agreements protecting workers' rights. A total of 160 of 187 ILO member states have ratified ILO Convention 98, which protects workers from anti-union discrimination and interference.

In countries such as **Bahrain, Canada, Guatemala, the Netherlands, Peru, and the Republic of Korea**, employers took advantage of weak laws and inadequate oversight to evade collective bargaining through delay tactics, refusal to negotiate, and concluding agreements with employer-backed unions or non-representative bodies. In **Greece**, Teleperformance, a customer service company, refused to enter into bargaining, despite strikes against long-stagnant wages, short-term contracts, and surveillance.

Employers routinely refused to apply or violated collective bargaining agreements, for example, in **Moldova, Panama, and the Philippines**. In **Nepal**, casino workers fought for eight months for their employer to apply a 2023 agreement. In **Kenya**, after a strike was brutally repressed in 2024, the Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists, and Dentists Union (KMPDU) struggled to force the government to respect an agreement to improve working conditions.

International supervisory bodies insist on consultation with unions before the adoption of any labour-related legislation. However, many governments refused to do so, as in **Mauritania**, and excluded or limited the role of unions in national tripartite bodies, such as in **Italy**. In **India**, 10 unions were excluded from consultations on occupational safety and health for beedi and cigar workers.



Credit: Ted Aljibe / AFP

In the Philippines, workers are demanding fair wages as employers continue to ignore or violate collective bargaining agreements. Amid rising living costs, many struggle to afford basic necessities while their rights are routinely disregarded.

France

In France, collective bargaining in small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), which are defined as companies with up to 20 workers, has been under siege since regressive 2017 reforms, which reinforced employer powers to impose working conditions and bypass collective representation. In the absence of workers' representatives (i.e., for the vast majority of SMEs), employers can draft collective agreements and put them to a vote among workers without access to union advice. According to 2024 statistics, 40.2% of company collective agreements were adopted through this kind of "employer referendum". This loophole affects 172,000 SMEs employing 4.5 million workers.

Canada

In 2024, the government invoked Section 107 of the Canada Labour Code in four labour disputes related to thousands of union members, including aircraft mechanics, rail workers, port workers and postal workers. Section 107 gives the Minister of Labour the power to intervene in disputes and to instruct the Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) to act, such as invoking binding arbitration. The federal government’s interventions served to prolong labour disputes and erode trust in the bargaining process.

Germany

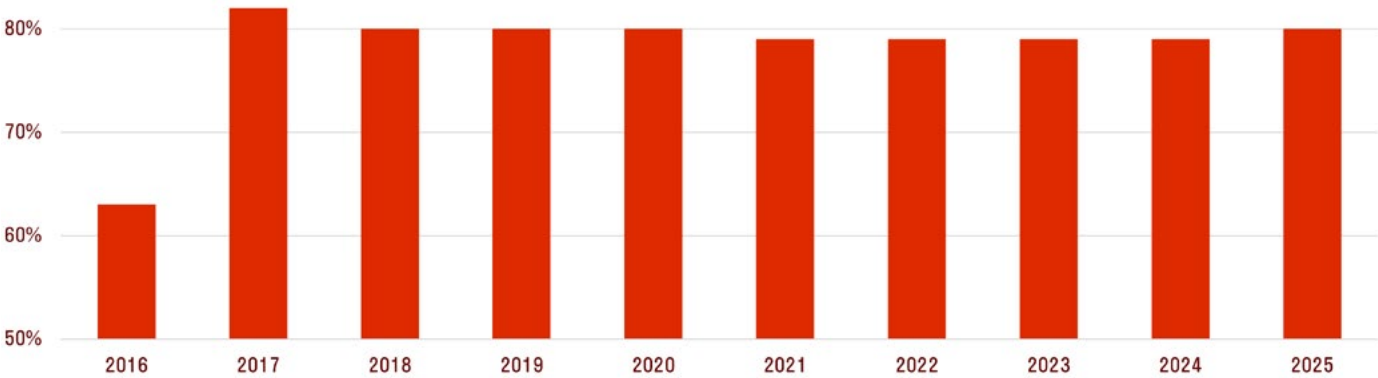
For several years now, workers’ representatives at Tesla’s plant in Grünheide, near Berlin, have faced strong opposition from management to collective bargaining and a consistent disregard for Germany’s co-determination model. In October 2024, Tesla summarily dismissed a works council member affiliated with IG Metall. The sectoral union has initiated legal proceedings against Tesla for systematically obstructing collective bargaining.

Tesla continues to maintain a hostile, anti-union stance in its European operations, in breach of national labour laws and international standards.

Sweden

In Sweden, Tesla still refuses to enter into collective bargaining with IF Metall and violates Swedish law by flying in replacement staff (scabs) from other Tesla garages in Europe to substitute for striking workers. The company also illegally fired a worker for participating in the strike. Workers’ mobilisation in Sweden remains ongoing.

10-YEAR TRENDS: COUNTRIES WHICH VIOLATE THE RIGHT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING



Blocked and excluded from labour protection

The right to freedom of association enables workers to join and form independent trade unions to protect their interests without coercion.

Under international labour agreements, ratified by 158 of 187 ILO members, all workers have the right to freedom of association and to organise. However, the global data portrays a very different – and disturbing – picture. In 2025, 113 out of 151 countries (75%) excluded workers from this right, unchanged from 2024 and far above the 58% recorded in 2014.

Categories of workers

Labour laws often fail to protect domestic and temporary workers, as well as those in the informal and platform economies, such as in **Burundi** and **Pakistan**. In some 30 of the countries surveyed, including **Jordan**, **Mauritania**, **Qatar**, **Saudi Arabia**, and **Thailand**, migrant workers are barred from forming and joining unions, banned from union leadership positions, or denied the right to engage in union activities. In Special Economic Zones, for example, in **Bangladesh** and **Haiti**, workers do not have the right to freedom of association.

Certain categories of public employees remain banned from the right to organise, such as judges in **Morocco**; security officers in **Rwanda**; firefighters, prison staff, and coast guards in **Japan**; prison officers in the **Bahamas**; and senior public employees, magistrates, and prison guards in **Türkiye**.

Union busting

Union busting, when employers interfere with union activities and disrupt or prevent the formation or expansion of unions, has become a widespread strategy that leaves millions of workers worse off. This practice contravenes ILO Convention 98, signed by 160 of 187 ILO member states, which enshrines the right of workers' organisations to adequate protection against interference by employers in their establishment,



Credit: Yuichi Yamazaki / AFP

In Japan, the law excludes several work categories, including firefighters, from the right to establish and join trade unions.

functioning, or administration. Here are just a few examples:

- **El Salvador:** Five workers at a brewery company were dismissed for forming a union.
- **Guinea:** 20 hotel workers were fired after establishing a union.
- **Hungary:** Several journalists were dismissed days after forming a union.
- **Lesotho:** An automotive company halted union dues to the union.
- **Poland:** A rail freight company targeted union members for dismissal.
- **Senegal:** A cement company has refused to organise union elections for the past 20 years.
- **Switzerland:** A supermarket chain attempted to dissuade workers from joining a union.
- **Thailand:** An automotive company suspended three union leaders and transferred 38 members immediately after they formed a union.

Malaysia

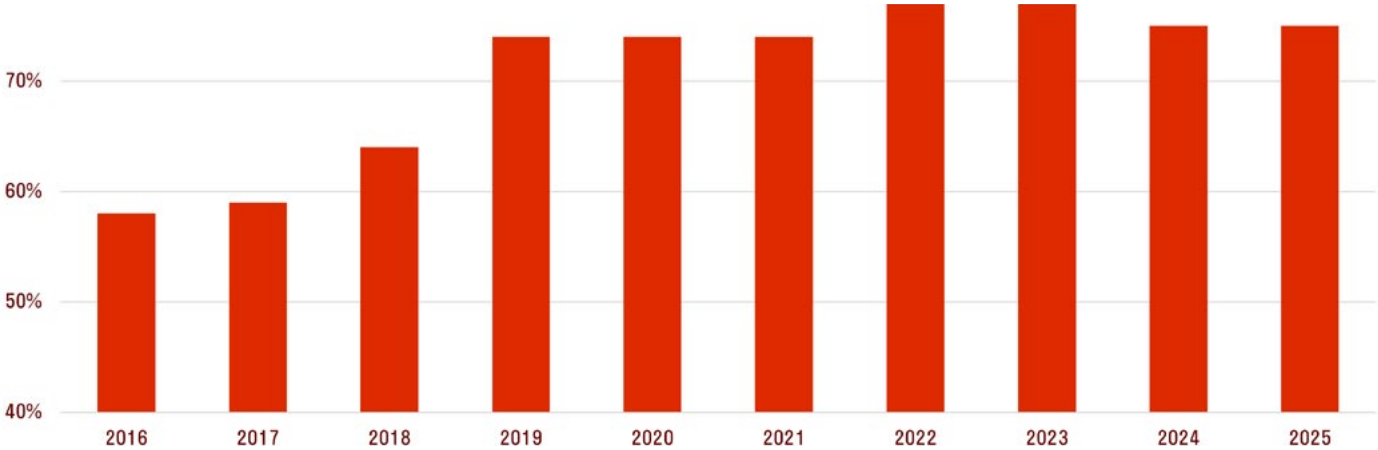
Amcor, a global packaging company that supplies multinationals such as Coca-Cola, Nestlé, and Unilever, continued to engage in union busting. In 2024, the company unfairly fired Siti Sanijah Binti Musa, Secretary of the BEMIS Asia Pacific Workers Union. The termination followed other unfair disciplinary measures against her, including a unilateral and unjustified 50 per cent wage cut for 19 days.

Amcor has engaged in a long anti-union campaign to stop workers from organising. During a secret ballot in April 2024, the company sent workers home early, preventing many from voting, particularly migrant workers.

Canada

Dozens of Amazon warehouse workers in Laval, Quebec, unionised in May 2024. After six months of negotiations for a first collective agreement and faced with an imminent arbitration process, billionaire Jeff Bezos’s company announced the closure of its five warehouses in Quebec, leaving around 2,000 workers without jobs. Amazon, notorious for its aggressive union-busting tactics, justified the closures as a cost-saving measure. Quebec had been home to Amazon’s only unionised workforce in Canada.

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



Restrictions on access to justice

The right to access to justice gives workers the ability to seek and receive fair remedy through the legal system when their rights have been violated.

Access to justice and the due process of law is a fundamental pillar of any free, democratic society. Yet there is growing and alarming evidence that this right is under intensified attack around the world. In 2025, workers in 109 (72%) out of 151 countries had no or a reduced access to justice. This marks a significant deterioration from 65% in 2024 and matches the highest level recorded since the Index began.

Union leaders were routinely detained and prosecuted on trumped-up charges, with trials characterised by a blatant disregard for due process and impartiality. This was notably the case in **Belarus, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Myanmar, and Venezuela.**

Workers seeking redress for rights violations were systematically obstructed by the declining accessibility and affordability of justice systems, overly complex procedures, extensive delays, limited compensation, and weak enforcement. While all regions were affected, Europe witnessed a sharp increase in these obstructive tactics in 2025. In **France**, excessively lengthy court waiting lists and limits on compensation for unfair dismissal significantly curtailed workers' access to justice.

The Philippines

Several years after their release on bail, several unionists in the Philippines face charges related to their union duties. This practice of maintaining charges against unionists - with the threat of re-arrest - is designed to intimidate and muzzle unions. France Castro, a union leader in the education sector, and



Credit: Andrej Isakovic / AFP

In Serbia, workers face new barriers to justice. The deadline to challenge labour law violations has been reduced from 90 to 60 days, while high court and attorney fees make legal protection inaccessible for many.

17 human rights defenders (collectively known as the “Talaingod 18”) were arrested in November 2018 when they provided aid to displaced Lumad Indigenous communities. The government has yet to drop the charges against them.

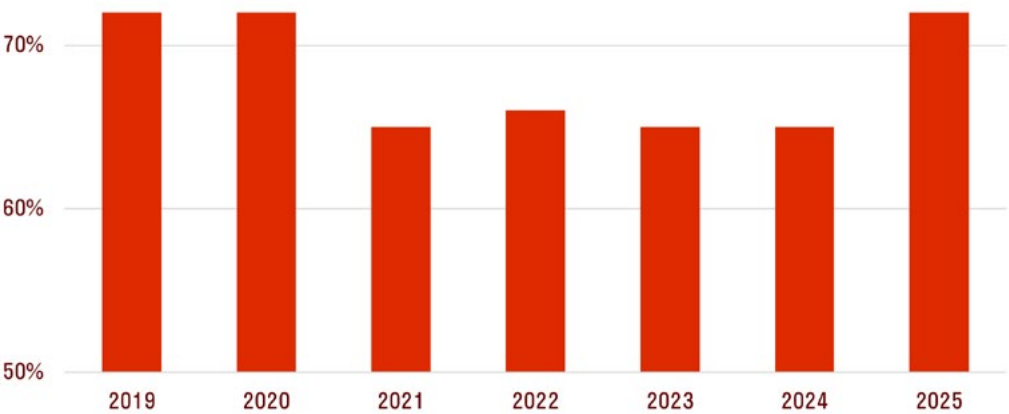
Similarly, in 2019, Anne Krueger, the international officer at Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), and peasant leader Danny Tabura were detained on fabricated charges of the illegal possession of firearms and released on bail. Their cases remain active.

Iran

Since their arrest in May 2022, Cécile Kohler and Jacques Paris, two French unionists with Force Ouvrière, remain unlawfully detained in Tehran. They are accused of “association and collusion with the aim of undermining the security of the country”, a charge which carries a prison sentence of two to five years imprisonment.

Both are held in the high-security quarter for political prisoners, awaiting trial. They are confined in small, constantly lit cells without windows, which are randomly shared with other inmates. Outdoor access is limited to three 30-minute breaks per week, often arbitrarily cancelled. Only four consular visits have been permitted since their detention. Both are subjected to ill-treatment and psychological torture, and forbidden from speaking to other detainees.

SEVEN-YEAR TRENDS: COUNTRIES WHICH RESTRICT **ACCESS TO JUSTICE**



De-registration of unions

A trade union’s right to official recognition by the authorities and companies through legal registration is an essential facet of the right to organise.

The right to organise is enshrined in ILO Convention No. 87, signed by 158 of 187 ILO member states. However, the extent of violations against the right to register a union has remained at the worst level since the Index began, unchanged from 2024’s report. In 2025, workers in 112 (74%) out of 151 countries faced significant obstacles in forming and registering trade unions, due to lengthy and arbitrary procedures, and practical barriers placed by the authorities.

In **Ethiopia**, the National Teachers’ Association (NTA) has been repeatedly refused registration, while the Ethiopian Teachers’ Association (ETA) is barred from joining the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU), due to the exclusion of workers involved in education and training from general labour provisions. In **Chad**, the authorities suspended a newly formed teachers’ union to allegedly “guarantee a peaceful educational environment and prevent any form of disorder that could affect pupils and the Chadian education system”. In **Mozambique**, the government refused to register the Sindicato Nacional dos Trabalhadores da Função Pública (SINAFP), while in **Pakistan**, a Balochistan court declared 62 unions unlawful, leaving millions of public sector workers without collective representation.

In **Belarus, Egypt, Hong Kong, Sudan, and Yemen**, workers cannot form or join unions as the independent



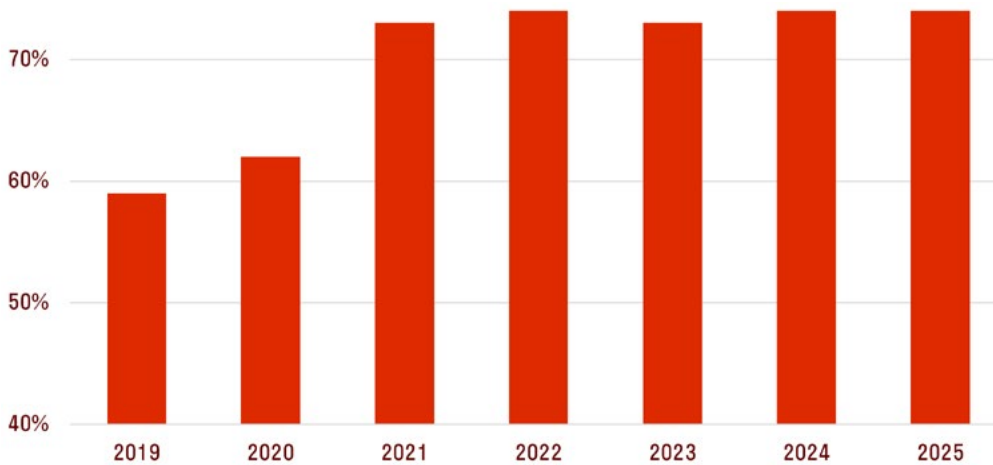
Credit: Kabir Dhanji / AFP

In Kenya, workers are denied the right to join a trade union as the state manipulates their employment status, in violation of international labour standards.

union movement was wiped out by authorities some years ago. Elsewhere, workers are forced to join state-imposed unions, as in **China, Iraq, Laos, Libya,** and **Vietnam**.

Kenya

For over 18 months, around 600 air traffic services workers have attempted to form a union under the umbrella of the Transport Workers Union of Kenya (TAWU). However, the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) has blocked their efforts by misclassifying the workers as “managers”. This misclassification denies workers the right to join a union, as Kenya’s labour law excludes managers from union membership, in violation of international labour standards and agreements. TAWU is fighting this case in court, aiming to restore the workers’ rights.



SEVEN-YEAR
TRENDS: COUNTRIES
WHICH IMPEDED
THE REGISTRATION
OF UNIONS

Attacks on free speech and assembly

Free speech, freedom of expression, and the right to assembly are fundamental civil liberties that are vital for a healthy trade union movement.

The number of countries where workers are denied the basic freedoms of free speech and assembly has hit a record high for the Index. In 2025, 68 (45%) of 151 countries infringed workers’ rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, up from 43% in 2024 and compared to 26% in 2014, when the Index began.

These rights are most clearly extinguished in authoritarian regimes and countries under military rule, such as **Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Egypt, Gabon, Guinea, Libya, Mali, Niger, and Tunisia**. Student protests were violently repressed in **Bangladesh** and **Kenya**, while workers’ protests were banned in **Bahrain, Eswatini, Guinea-Bissau, Hong Kong, and Türkiye**.

Benin

Seventy-four workers were arrested during 2024’s May Day celebrations. While some were quickly released, 42 remained in detention. In a similar incident on 27 April 2024, several union leaders at a peaceful march were detained by the police and later released.



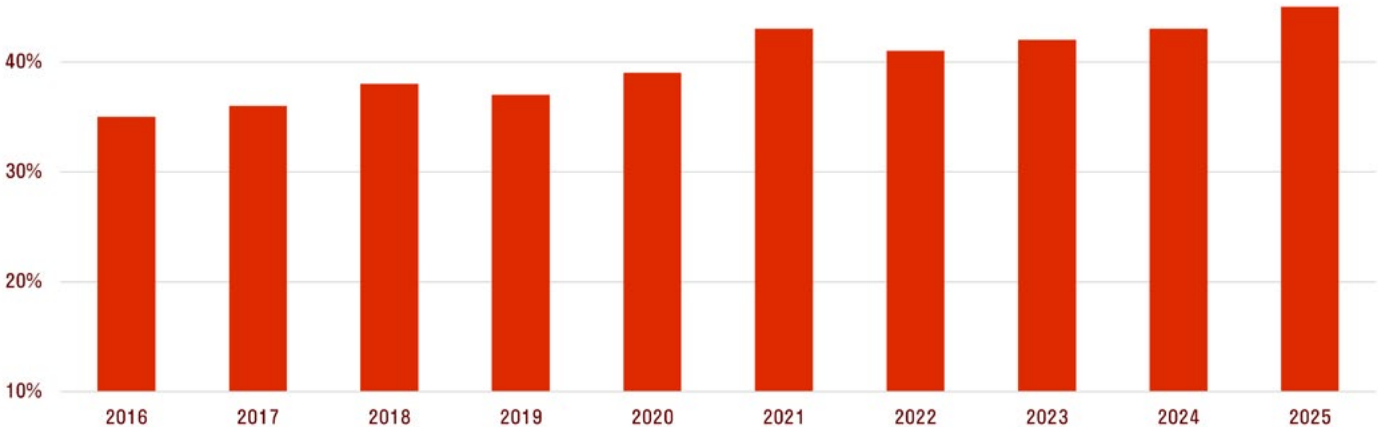
Credit: Abadjaye Justin Sodogandji / AFP

Workers in Benin are facing growing repression. In 2024, trade union leaders were arrested for peacefully defending workers’ rights and speaking out against the rising cost of living.

Russian Federation

So-called “Covid restrictions” continue to apply to public events, allowing authorities to prohibit or severely limit any street actions indefinitely. Amendments introduced in 2020 made rallies and marches of more than 500 people extremely difficult to organise due to stringent conditions on financing and increased government interference in donor contributions. A combination of legislative and administrative barriers has severely restricted unions’ ability to organise events and campaigns.

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



Arbitrary arrests, detentions, and imprisonment

Unionists endure an alarming level of persecution across the world. In 71 (47%) of 151 countries in 2025, workers faced detention and prison sentences for exercising their union freedoms. While this was a slight improvement on the record high of 49% reported in 2024, it remains almost double the level recorded in 2014, when the Index began.

In **Mali**, two unionists in the prison service were abducted for three days for criticising the military junta. In **Venezuela**, a union member in the education sector was detained by police without justification, while another has been in pre-trial detention for more than two years.

France

In France, more than 1,000 union leaders and members of the Confédération générale du travail (CGT) were facing criminal charges and disciplinary measures for their roles in mass protests against pension reforms. Some unionists were repeatedly summoned by police for questionable reasons. It was reported that Laurent Indrusiak, General Secretary of the CGT local union in Allier, was summoned 33 times in the past two years. In April 2024, Indrusiak and two other union leaders, Caroline Beradan and Elena Blond, were fined for “obstructing traffic on a public highway”. They had taken part in a ‘snail’ operation in 2023, where participants deliberately slow down traffic or workflows to create disruption and draw attention to their cause, without resorting to a full blockade or strike.



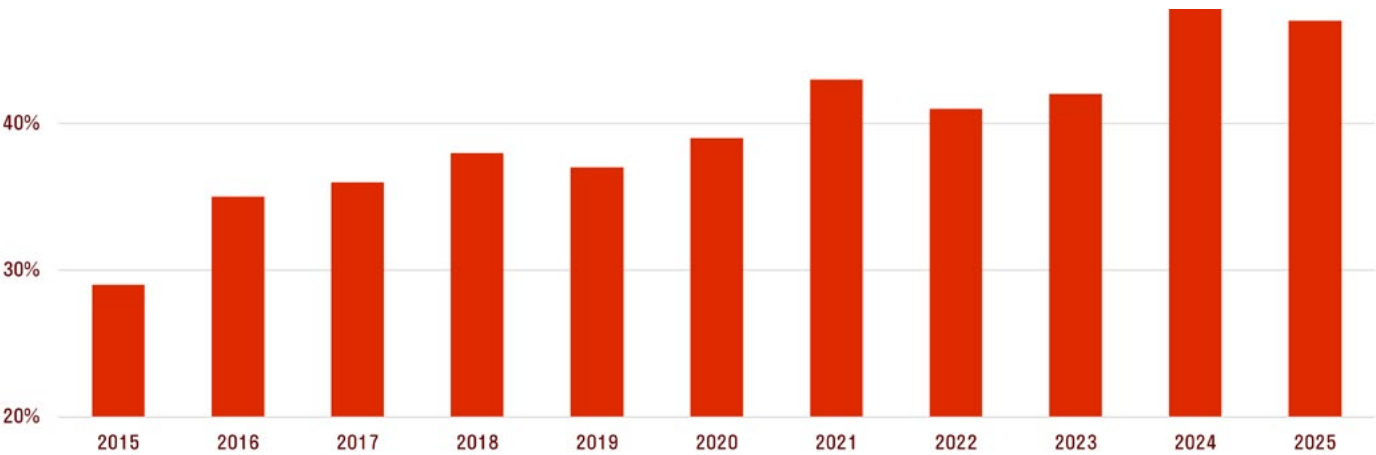
Credit: Sofiene Hamdaoui / AFP

The state of civil liberties in Tunisia remains deeply concerning. Fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, are severely restricted, and trade unionists frequently face arrest and criminal prosecution.

Hong Kong

In 2020, 47 pro-democracy defenders, including Carol Ng, Chair of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU), and Winnie Yu, President of the Hospital Authority Employees Alliance (HAEA), were arrested for conspiracy to subversion for taking part in a preliminary vote to select candidates for council elections. In 2024, 14 individuals, including Yu, were convicted. The union leader received a six-year-and-nine-month sentence. Ng was sentenced to four years and five months. The 2021 National Security Law has been used to inhibit the rights of working people and unions: 292 have been arrested, with 195 prosecuted and 71 convicted.

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



Violent attacks on workers

Workers and unionists were the victims of violence in 40 countries (26%) in 2025, a slight improvement from 29% in 2024. Where violence occurs, unionists are unable to operate freely, placing the rights and welfare of workers at grave risk.

Police conducted raids on union leaders’ homes in **Türkiye** and on trade union offices in **Nigeria** and in **Tunisia**. In **France**, several union offices – Confédération française démocratique du travail (CFDT) in Rennes and Confédération générale du travail (CGT) in Gennevilliers, Puy-de-Dôme, and Occitanie – were vandalised by far-right extremists. A CGT unionist in Morbihan was attacked by his employer while supporting a colleague during a disciplinary procedure. French union officials have also been targeted with anonymous death threats.

Haiti

In Haiti, almost all union leaders and representatives have been forced to abandon their homes to escape armed gangs in Port-au-Prince. The General Secretary of the Confederation des Travailleurs et Travailleuses des Secteurs Public et Privé (CTSP) and his family were attacked and his home invaded by armed bandits. He managed to flee to safety. The CTSP’s headquarters has since been occupied by armed gangs.



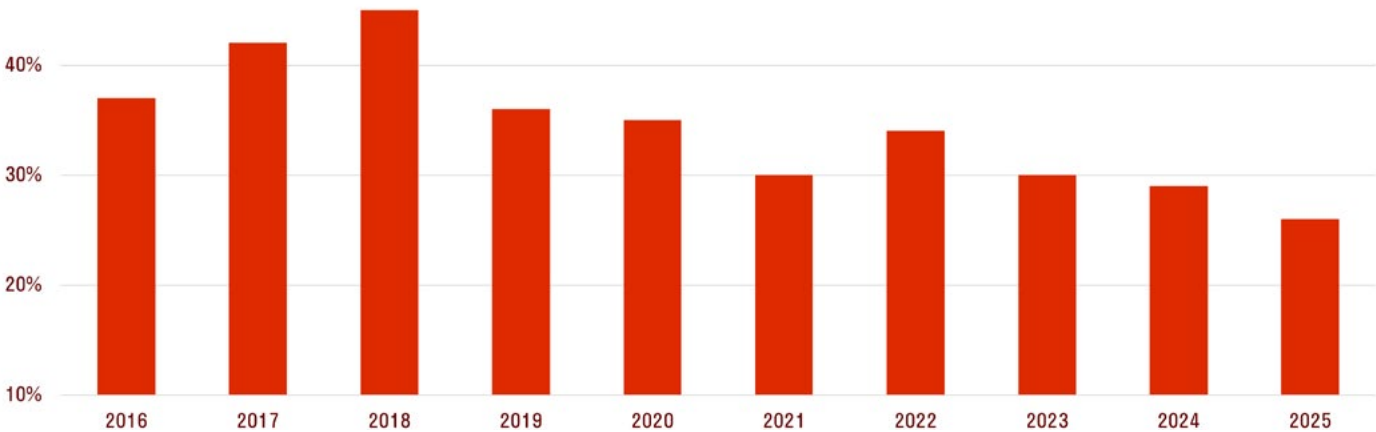
Credit: Clarens Siffroy / AFP

In Haiti, gang violence is devastating lives across the country. Trade unions have also been targeted, with armed groups seizing union headquarters and forcing union leaders to flee for safety.

Zimbabwe

On 1 May 2024, five members of the Zimbabwe Diamond and Allied Minerals Workers Union (ZDAMWU) were violently forced out of a May Day event at Bikita Minerals, Zimbabwe’s largest lithium mine. Over 20 thugs threatened the unionists at gunpoint and destroyed their tent. One union member was abducted and dragged to a car where she was forced to endure a humiliating body search.

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



Deaths

Trade unionists face threats to their lives for the brave and vital work they do in protecting the interests of workers and defending democratic freedoms. Where killings of union activists take place, there is often no justice for victims or their families. The deaths of union leaders have a chilling effect on activism, leaving workers defenceless against state and employer abuse.

In 2025, trade unionists and workers died for their cause in five countries: **Cameroon, Colombia, Guatemala, Peru, and South Africa.**

Guatemala

Ronaldo Geovany Gómez Godoy, a member of the National Union of Health Workers of Guatemala (SNTSG), was killed on 23 September 2024 by hired assassins.

On 5 September, teacher René Sucup Morán, a union leader of Sindicato de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores de

la Educación de Guatemala (STEG), was murdered by a hitman. The union had documented a series of attacks and intimidation against STEG leaders since May 2024, when it organised a nationwide campaign to demand meaningful collective bargaining negotiations.

On 15 June 2024, Anastacio Tzib Caal, a leader in the network of textile maquila unions in Guatemala, was gunned down. At the time of writing, no arrests had been made.

South Africa

In May 2024, a strike at a multinational automotive air conditioning and cooling systems manufacturer in KwaZulu-Natal was violently dispersed by security guards, who opened fire on workers. One, Njabulo Mpulo, was killed and more than 10 others were hospitalised with severe injuries.

A deadly reality: in Guatemala, trade unionists often pay with their lives for their commitment to defend workers' rights – while authorities remain unresponsive, despite repeated calls to act.



THE GLOBAL RIGHTS INDEX EXPLAINED

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

1. DOCUMENTING VIOLATIONS

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

2. CODING OF TEXT

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

3. RATING COUNTRIES

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

DESCRIPTION OF THE RATINGS



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

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

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

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

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

II. Right to establish and join unions

A. Violations in law

- 20. General prohibition of the right to establish and/or join trade unions
General Survey 1994 paras. 12, 93
General Survey 2012 para. 51
- 21. Exclusion of specific categories of workers from the right to establish and/or join trade unions
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 315-418
General Survey 1994 paras. 45-67
- 22. Restrictions on the freedom of choice of union structure and composition
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 472-513; 546-560
General Survey 1994 paras. 79-90
- 23. Previous authorisation requirements for union registration
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 419-444; 448-471
General Survey 1994 paras. 68-70
General Survey 2012 paras. 82-87; 89-90
- 24. Union monopoly
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 475-501
General Survey 1994 para. 91
- 25. Dissolution/suspension of legally functioning trade unions
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 979-1013
General Survey 1994 paras. 180-188
General Survey 2012 para. 162
- 26. Provisions in law allowing for anti-union discriminatory measures (dismissal, suspension, transfer, downgrading)
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1072-1185
General Survey 1994 paras. 199-210, 213
- 27. Lack of effective legal guarantees against anti-union discriminatory measures
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1134-1162
General Survey 1994 paras. 214-224
General Survey 2012 paras 166-167; 173-193

- 28. Provisions in law allowing for interference of employers and/or public authorities
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras 1215-1219
General Survey 1994 paras. 225-234
General Survey 2012 paras. 194-196
- 29. Lack of effective legal guarantees against acts of interference
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras 1187-1230
General Survey 1994 paras. 189-198
General Survey 2012 para. 163
- 30. Right to establish and/or join federations and confederations and to affiliate with international organisations of workers
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1014-1071
General Survey 1994 paras. 189-198
General Survey 2012 para. 163
- 31. Lack of guarantee of due process of law
Lack of due process regarding violations (20)-(30)

B. Violations in practice

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

35. Previous authorisation requirements for union registration
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 427-444
General Survey 1994 paras. 68-70
General Survey 2012 paras. 82-87; 89-90
36. Union monopoly
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 475-501
General Survey 1994 para. 91
37. Dissolution/suspension of legally functioning trade union dismissal, suspension, transfer, downgrading)
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1072-1185
General Survey 1994 paras. 199-210, 213
38. Anti-union discriminatory measures (including dismissal, suspension, transfer, downgrading)
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1072-1185
General Survey 1994 paras. 199-210, 213
39. Committed against trade union leaders
Violation (38) is committed against a trade union leader
40. Lack of effective legal guarantees against anti-union discriminatory measures
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 1134-1162
General Survey 1994 paras. 214-224
General Survey 2012 paras 166-167; 173-193
41. Acts of interference of employers and/or public authorities
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras 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
General Survey 1994 paras. 170-172
General Survey 2012 paras. 144-148
90. Compulsory arbitration imposed on strike action
ILO Compilation of CFA decisions paras. 816-823
General Survey 1994 para. 153
General Survey 2012 paras. 153-156
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 170 countries and has 341 national affiliates.

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