4.1.5. Extortion

4.1.5. Extortion[479]

Extortion has risen significantly in recent years.480 There were 11 078 cases of extortion reported to police in 2023,481 13 869 reported cases of extortion in 2024,482 and 8 844 cases as of 30 September 2025.483 The Ministry of Defence similarly reported a rise in cases since 2020, noting that there have been 8 805 cases reported between January and September 2025: 484

Imported image pandoc_image_11.jpeg

Figure 12: Extortion cases 2015-2025485

Extortion has continued to increase in the past few years as armed and criminal groups use it as a means of income and control over the local population, often in competition with one another for dominance over territory.486 Extortion is both a criminal tactic (to control areas rich in resources such as coca, minerals, etc.,487 and secure commodities[488] and illicit economy transportation corridors), and a tool for social and territorial governance by armed groups, especially in rural areas; in cities, is often linked to organised crime.489 It has increasingly become a key source of revenue for illegal armed groups.490 It has proliferated due to outsourcing by larger criminal and armed groups to local gangs,491 loss of income from cocaine revenue, and due to it being less risky than other illegal activities such as drug trafficking.492 Extortion, together with kidnapping, and other tactics, can be used by armed and criminal groups to enforce governance over local populations.493

The most affected areas are those where there is little state presence, high poverty, and significant natural resources, especially in the Andean region: Antioquia, Chocó, Caldas, Quindío, Risaralda, Cundinamarca, Tolima, Valle del Cauca, Cauca, Nariño; in the Caribbean coast: Atlántico, Bolívar; at the Venezuelan border: Norte de Santander; and the urban centres: Bogotá, Medellín, Cali, Buenaventura, Quibdó, Cartagena, Barranquilla, and Cúcuta.494

- 480

  Conflict analyst, Interview with EUAA, 14 October 2025; US, CRS, Colombia: Background and U.S. Relations, 30 May 2025, url, p. 7

- 481

Colombia, PNC, Crime statistics: Extorsión (2023), n.d., url

- 482

  Colombia, PNC, Crime statistics: Extorsión (2024), n.d., url

- 483

  Colombia, PNC, Crime statistics: Extorsión (1 January-30 September 2025), n.d., url

- 484

  Colombia, Seguimiento a indicadores y resultados operacionales (16 October 2025), September 2025, url

- 485

  Colombia, Seguimiento a indicadores y resultados operacionales (16 October 2025), September 2025, url

- 486

  Pares, Radiografía de la extorsión: el principal desafío de la seguridad ciudadana, March 2024, url, p. 7; France, OFPRA, Rapport de mission en République de Colombie, 28 November 2024, url, p. 61; US, CRS, Colombia: Background and U.S. Relations, 30 May 2025, url, p. 7

- 487

  France, OFPRA, Rapport de mission en République de Colombie, 28 November 2024, url, p. 63

- 489

  France, OFPRA, Rapport de mission en République de Colombie, 28 November 2024, url, p. 63

- 490

  Netherlands (The), Algemeen Ambtsbericht Colombia, June 2024, url, pp. 92-94; Conflict analyst, Interview with EUAA, 14 October 2025

- 491

  France, OFPRA, Rapport de mission en République de Colombie, 28 November 2024, url, p. 61

- 492

  Netherlands (The), Algemeen Ambtsbericht Colombia, June 2024, url, pp. 92-94

- 493

ACLED, Data on political violence and demonstrations in Colombia, October 2025. Unpublished information provided to EUAA.

- 494

  France, OFPRA, Rapport de mission en République de Colombie, 28 November 2024, url, p. 62

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu