

4.3.8. Trade unionists

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Most public accounts focus on social leaders rather than *sindicalistas* (trade unionists), so union-specific figures remain unclear and may be underreported.

The International Trade Union Conference produces a Global Rights Index on the situation of trade unionists, and remarked that, in 2023, Colombia was described as the 'world's deadliest country for trade unionists', reporting that Colombia was one of eight countries in the world where trade unionists are murdered, reporting 22 cases in 2021, and 13 cases in 2022.757 Between 2023 and 2024, at least 11 were assassinated.758 They faced death threats, attacks, and targeted assassinations.759

Often killings remain unresolved and un-investigated; however, the government launched a process of reparation to the trade union movement in September 2023, recognising it as a 'collective victim' of the conflict, and including assassinated trade union members in the Single Registry of Victims (Registro Único de Víctimas, RUV).760 In October 2025, ACLED provided data to EUAA recording 411 events of civilian targeting by armed groups against 'labor groups' between August 2022 and October 2025.761 Justice For Colombia reported the killing of at least 8 trade unionists affiliated to teachers unions between January 2024 and March 2025.762

Examples from media sources where trade unionists were killed in 2025 include: the leader of a workers' association killed in Norte del Cauca by armed men who entered his home;763 the killing of a teacher's union member in Cauca who was assassinated in front of her child;764 and the leader of a regional workers' committee who was killed by a *sicario* on a motorcycle.765

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  Justice for Colombia, Colombia again deadliest country for trade unionists in 2023: ITUC, 4 July 2023, url

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  ITUC, Global Rights Index 2024, June 2024, url, p. 57

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  ITUC, Global Rights Index 2024, June 2024, url, p. 57

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ITUC, Global Rights Index 2024, June 2024, url, p. 57

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 Unpublished information provided to EUAA.

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  Justice for Colombia, March 2025 Update, March 2025, url

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  El Tiempo, Asesinan a otro líder sindical en el norte del Cauca: esto es lo que se sabe, 11 April 2025, url

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  Justice for Colombia, March 2025 Update, March 2025, url

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  Eje21, Un sicario asesina a tiros a un líder sindical en la ciudad colombiana de Valledupar, 30 April 2025, url

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