

## ITUC Global Rights Index 2020



(22 June 2020) **Troubling report shows violations of workers' rights at seven-year high**

Workers' rights violations are at a seven-year high, and while Europe remains the highest performing region in terms of workers' rights, a number of unionists have faced arrests and prosecution over the last year.

The seventh edition of the ITUC Global Rights Index, which ranks 144 countries on the degree of respect for workers' rights, exposes the breakdown of the social contract. The trend of governments and employers restricting the rights of workers has been made worse by a rise in the number of countries that impede the registration of unions.

Despite Europe being the best-performing region in the Index on the whole, Kazakhstan and Turkey are ranked among the ten worst countries for working people. In four European countries – Belarus, Kazakhstan, Turkey and Ukraine – it

was found there is no guarantee of workers' rights. In 2020, workers in Turkey faced arbitrary arrests and detention, and reported extreme cases of freedom of speech being denied or constrained. Union leaders faced restriction of movement in Belarus and Kazakhstan. Our struggle together with the Ukrainian unions to prevent a worsening of the labour legislation is another example of the pressure unions face.

In several countries within the European Union social movements and strikes have been curbed by the authorities. Protests have been violently repressed and there are cases of union leaders being arbitrarily arrested (France), and prosecuted (Belgium and Netherlands).

Looking at the region as a whole:

- Workers were arrested and detained in 26% of countries in Europe;
- 38% of countries excluded workers from the right to establish or join a trade union;
- 56% of countries violated the right to collective bargaining;
- 72% of countries violated 72% the right to strike.

The socio-economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic calls for a new model for the global economy. This is an opportunity for a new commitment to workers' rights, and EPSU will continue working to ensure workers' interests are protected in the upcoming recovery plans.

### **More information**

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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. Detailed information exposing violations of workers' rights in each country is published in the ITUC Survey found at <https://survey.ituc-csi.org/?lang=es>.

Last year, EPSU and the European Trade Union Institute monitored restrictions on the right to strike in the public sector and 35 country factsheets are now available [here](#)

with a summary article [here](#).

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