

FACTSHEET

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# ON THE FRONT LINE

Violence against  
human rights  
defenders in Brazil

2023 and 2024



Terra de Direitos  
Justiça Global

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# PRESENTATION OF

**A**t a time when Brazil is presenting itself as a leader in climate debates by hosting the 2025 United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 30, the second edition of the study *Na Linha de Frente* (On the Front Line), conducted by the organizations Justiça Global and Terra de Direitos, points to a contradiction: the country remains a dangerous place for human rights and environmental defenders.

Between 2023 and 2024, 486 cases of violence against human rights defenders were documented – 80.9% targeted land and environmental defenders. In practice, it is the defenders who are fighting to preserve the environment and combat the intensification of the climate crisis who are most at risk.

Based on data collection and news analysis, the new edition reveals a reduction in the number of cases compared to the previous period (2019-2022). Still, it shows that violence persists and reinvents itself, with more than 55 murders and new forms of violence and attacks.

This research is a wake-up call and a call to action. We hope its data and analysis strengthen the fight against violence and the protection of those who defend human rights and the planet's future.

# VIOLENCE IN NUMBERS

## Total data for the period analyzed

Between 2023 and 2024, **486 cases** of violence against human rights defenders were documented, across **318 incidents\***.

**298** cases per year  
**188** cases per year



2023

2024

grand total

**486**

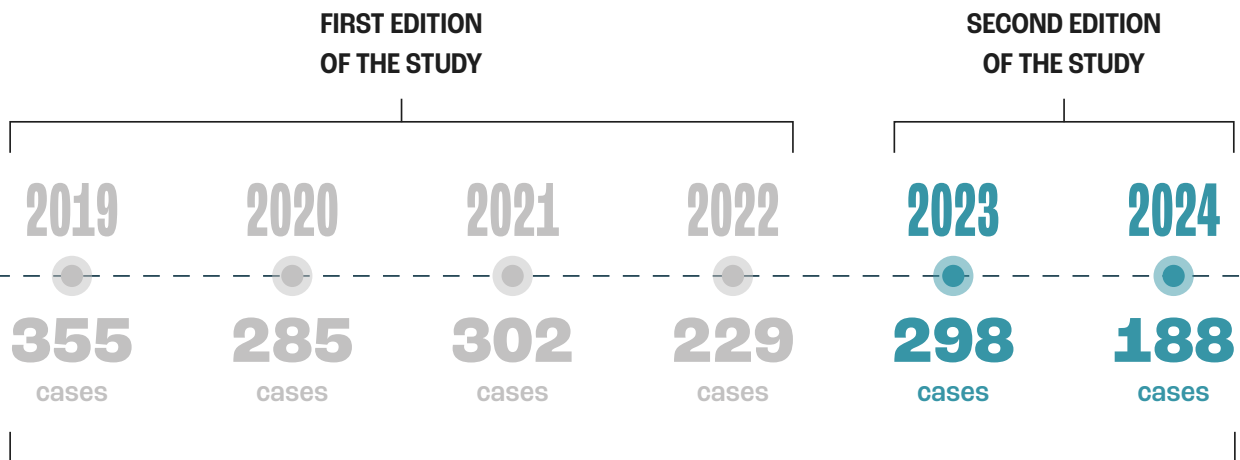


On average,  
**two people are murdered every month**  
for defending human rights in Brazil.



\* Each incident represents an occurrence (for example, an attack) that may result in more than one case/victim of violence.

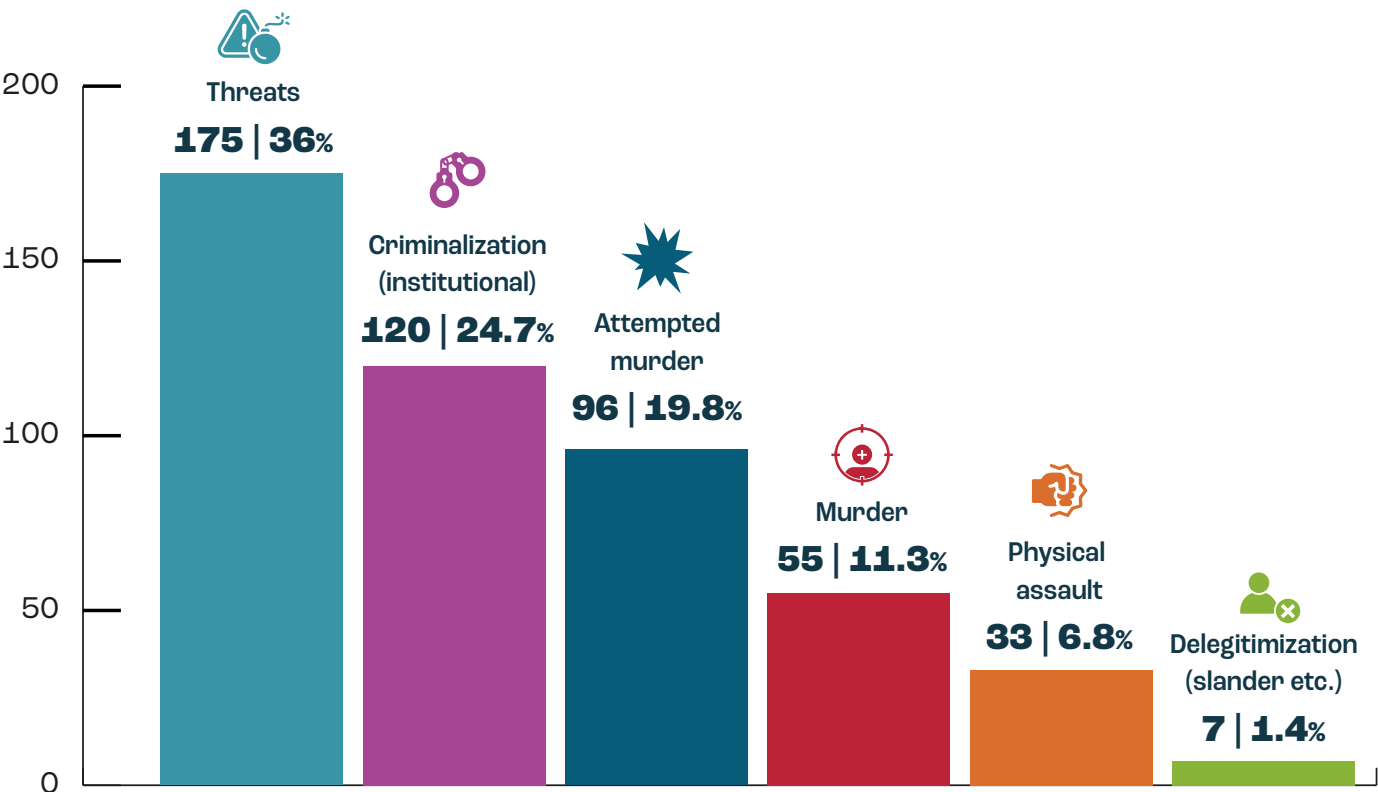
# Historical data



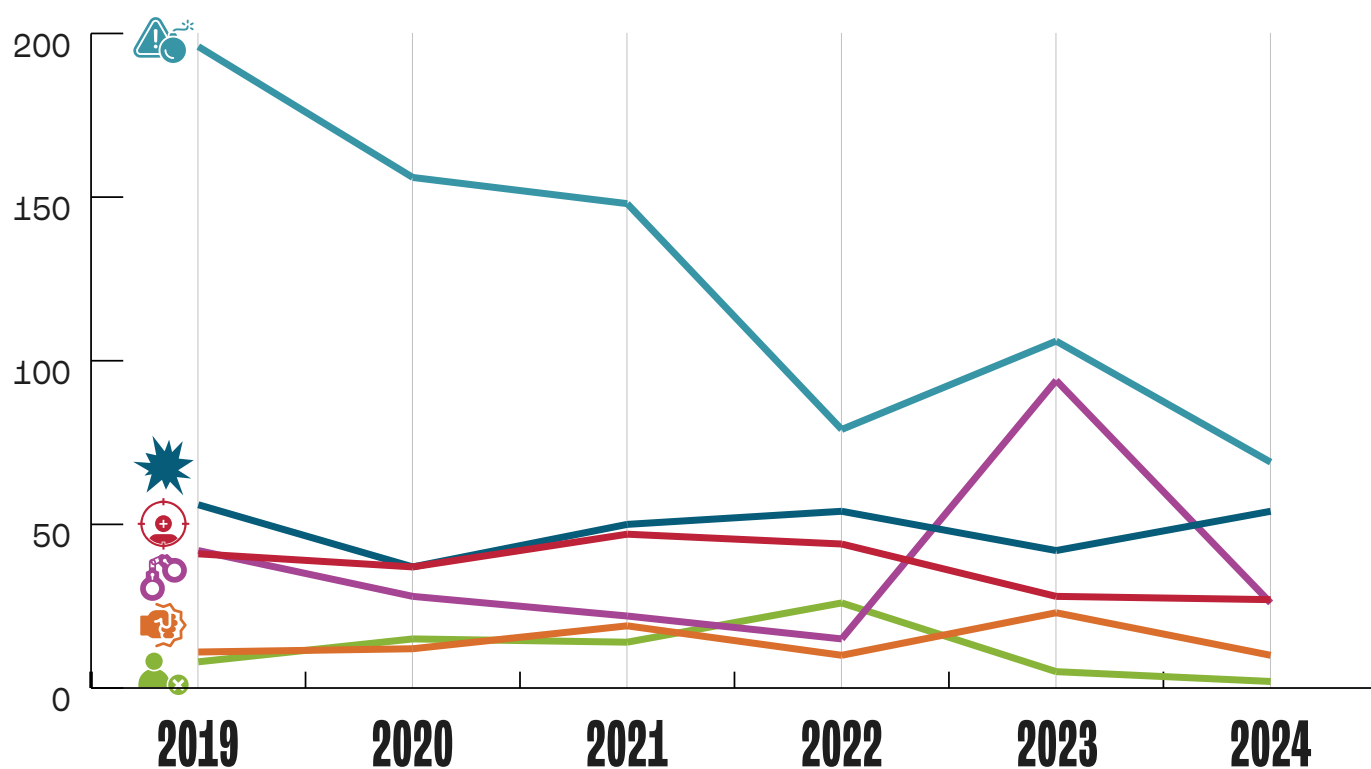
Over six years, **1,657 human rights defenders** have suffered acts of violence in the country

## VIOLATIONS BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE AND YEAR

### Types of violence recorded between 2023 and 2024



## Evolution of violence against human rights defenders, by type of violence



Physical assault



Murders



Criminalization



Threats



Attempted murder



Delegitimization



**Threats** remain the most frequent type of violence, but the annual average dropped by 40% compared to the first edition.

**Criminalization**, which previously ranked 4th among the most common types of violence, has moved up to 2nd place, rising from an average of 26.75 cases to 60 cases per year;

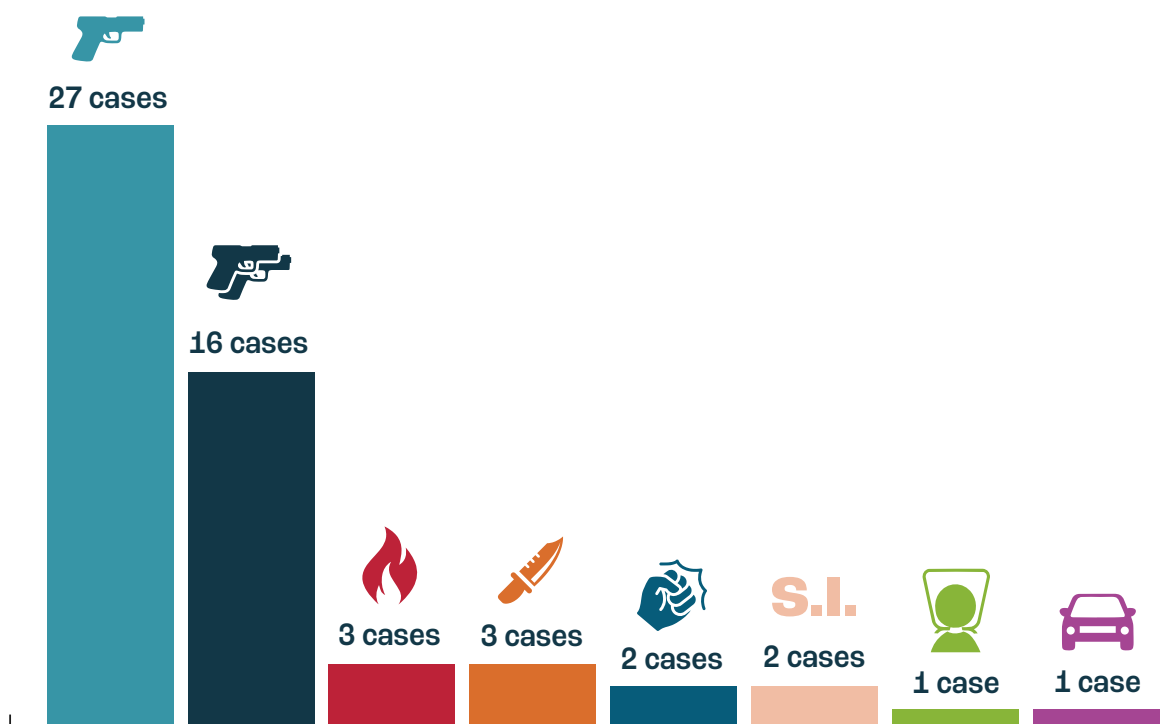




## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MURDERS



## Method used for murder



Asphyxiation



Beating



Multiple gunshots



Shooting



Set someone on fire



Stabbing



No information

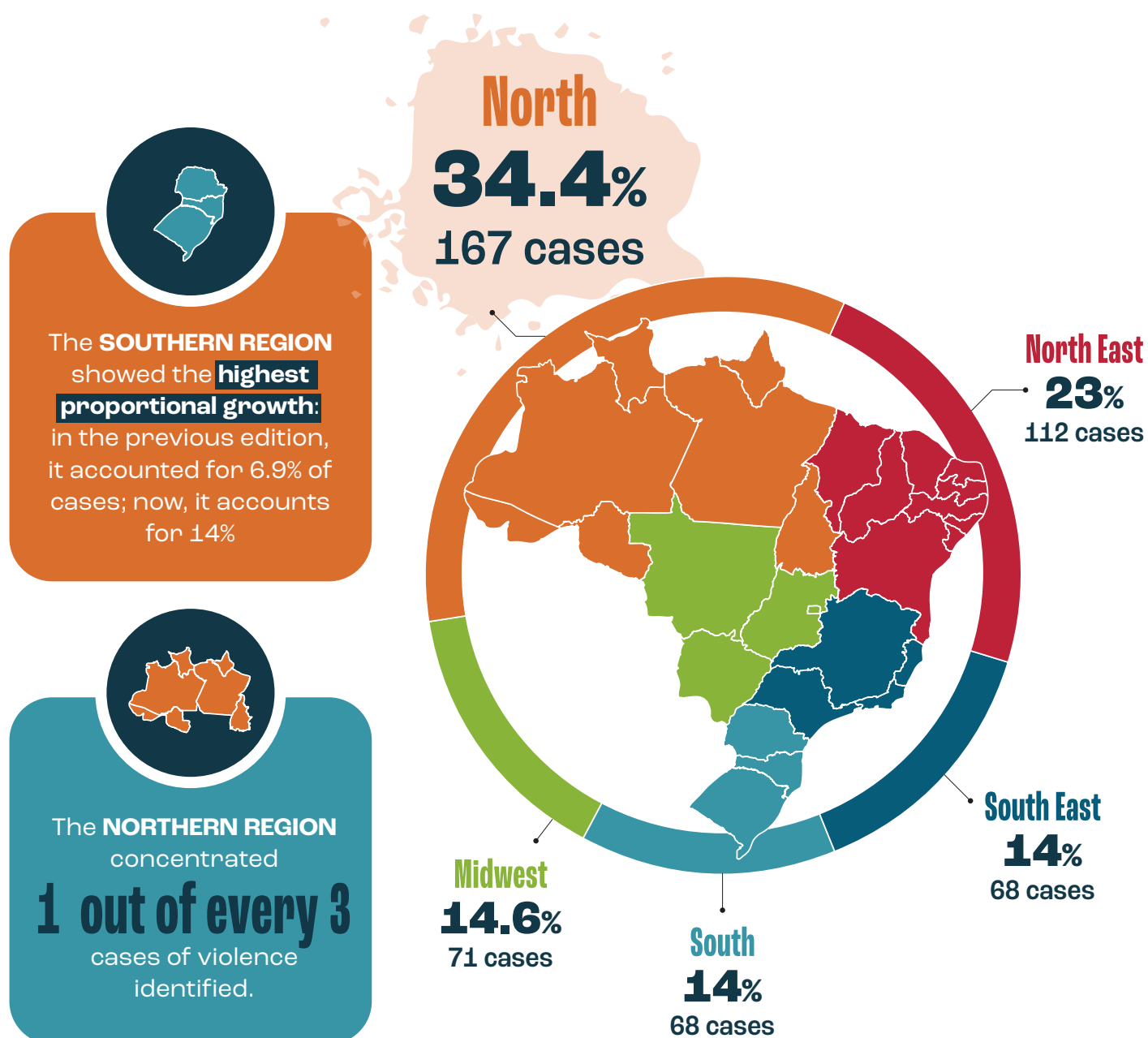


Vehicular Homicide

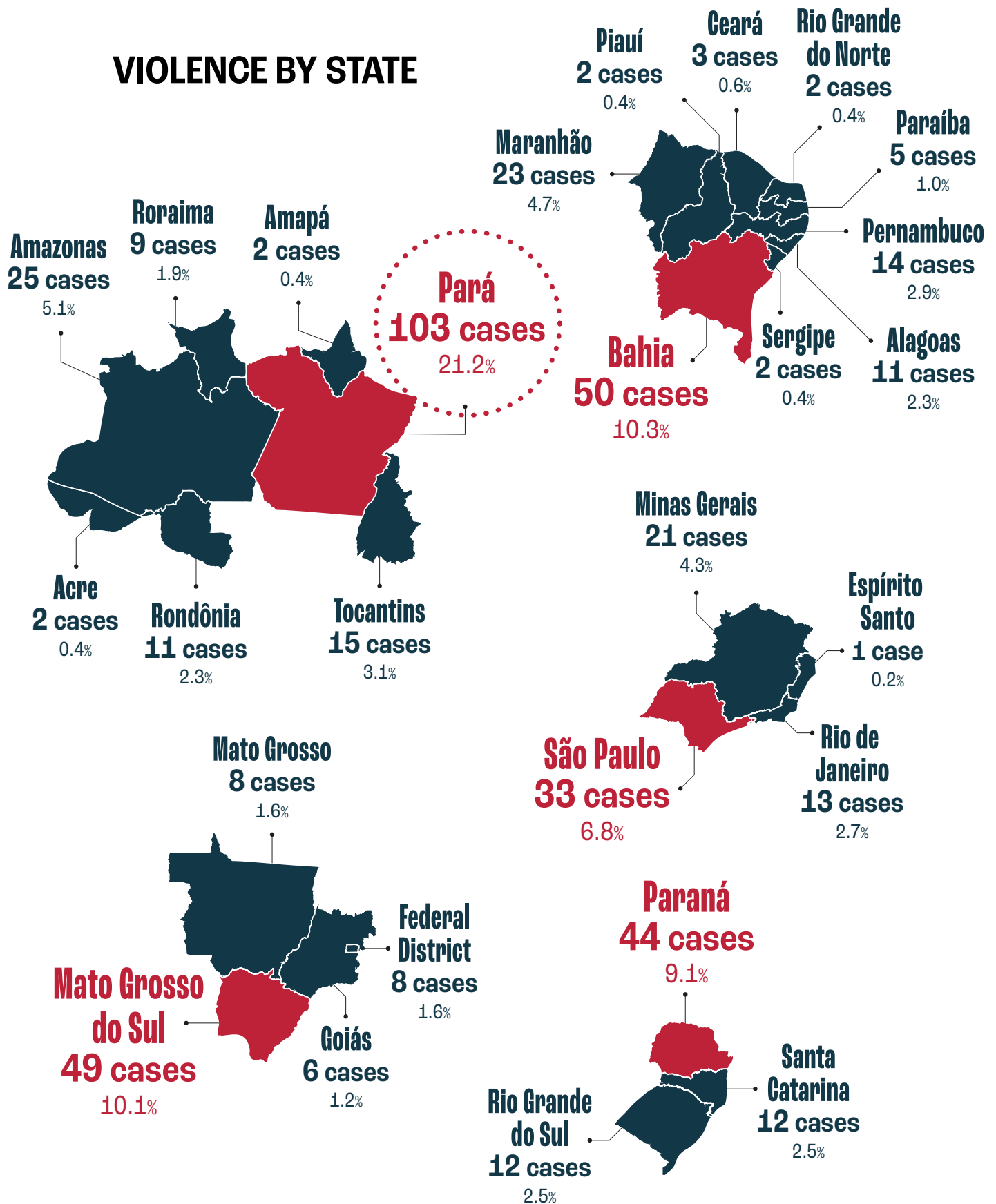
## Profile of murdered victims

- **78,2%** were men;
- **87,3%** were land and environmental defenders;
- **36,4%** were Black;
- **34,5%** were Indigenous people;

## VIOLENCE BY REGION



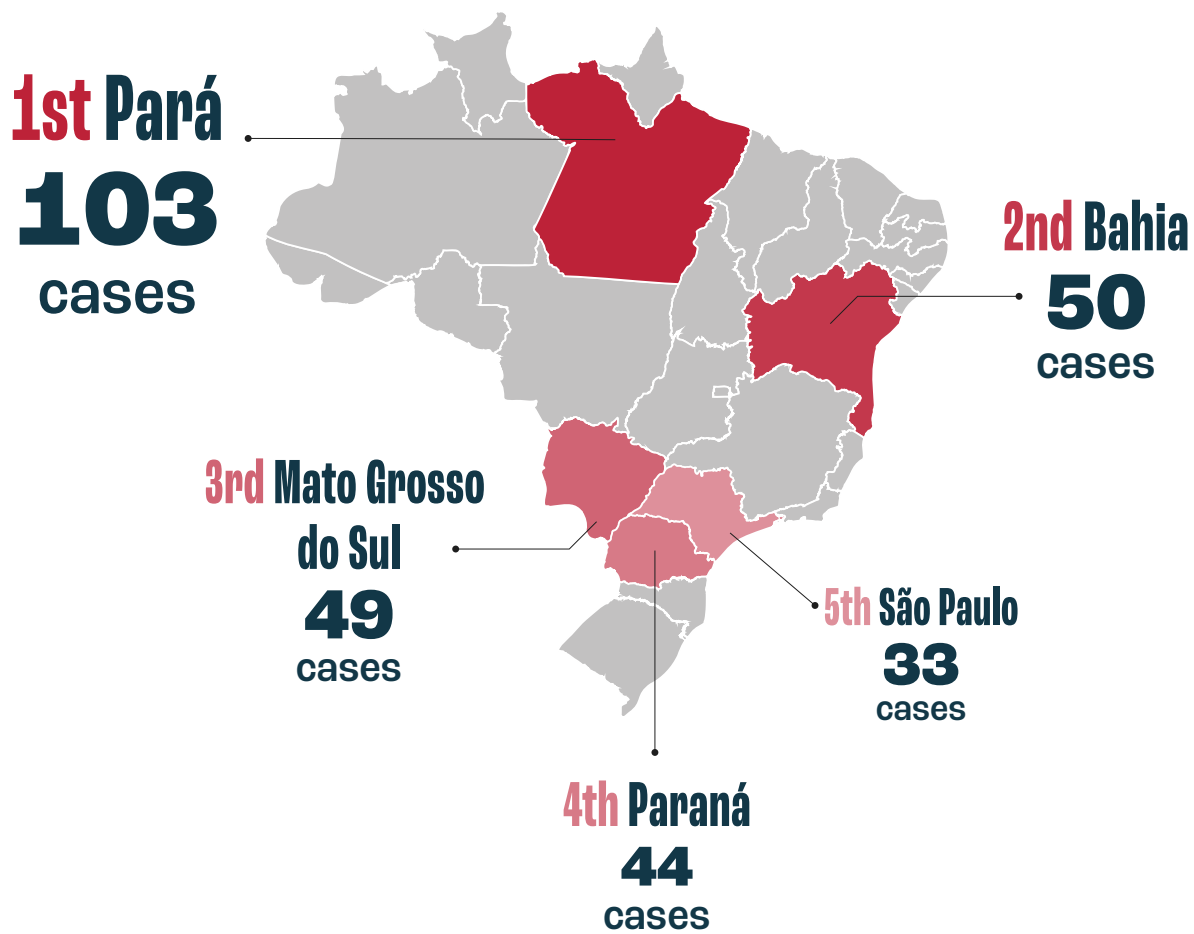
## VIOLENCE BY STATE





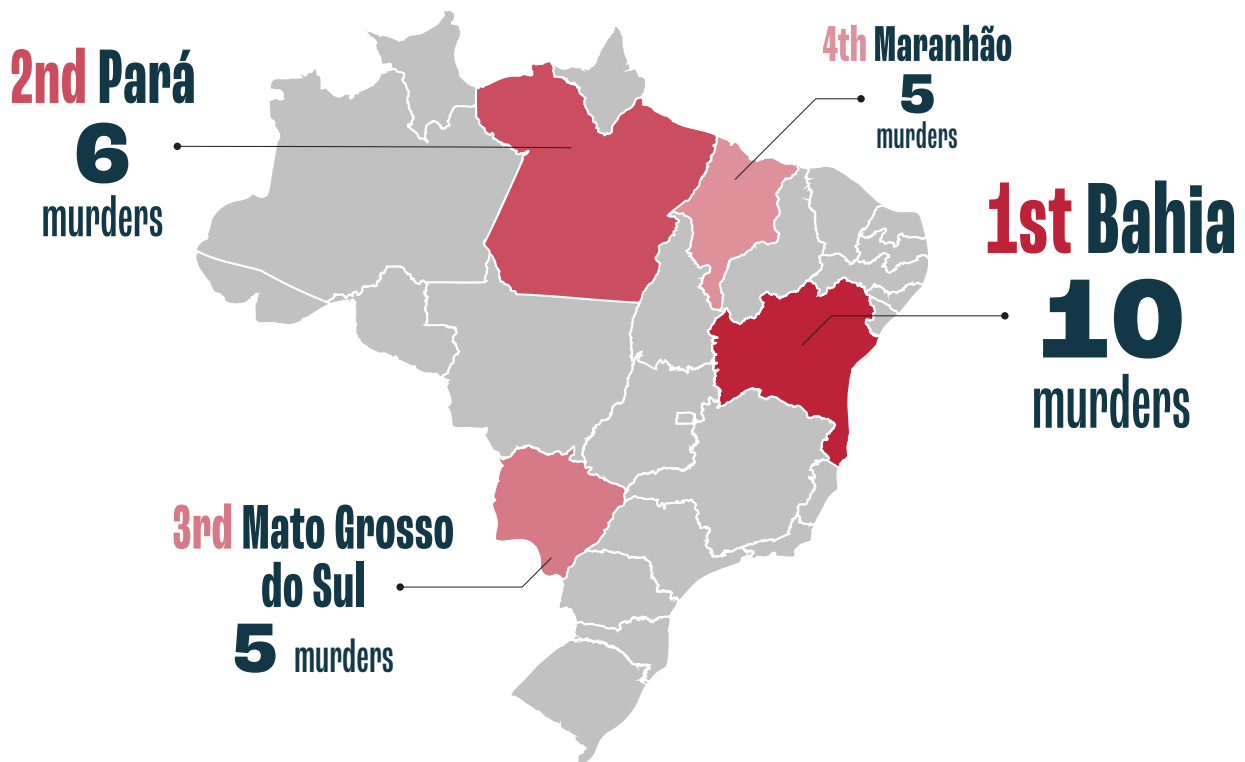
## Ranking of the most violent states for human rights defenders

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## Ranking of the states with the highest number of murders

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## In Pará, the host state of COP 30, 94% of the violence targeted land and environmental defenders

- **All** of Brazil's federal units registered incidents of violence;
- The state of **Pará** accounted for 1 out of every 5 cases of violence identified;
- **40%** of the cases of violence occurred in the states of the **Legal Amazon**;
- In the Southern region, **Paraná** showed significant growth, rising from an average of 6.8 cases per year (first edition) to 22 cases per year.
- Of the 44 cases identified in Paraná over two years, 31 (70%) involved violence against **Avá-Guarani Indigenous people**.

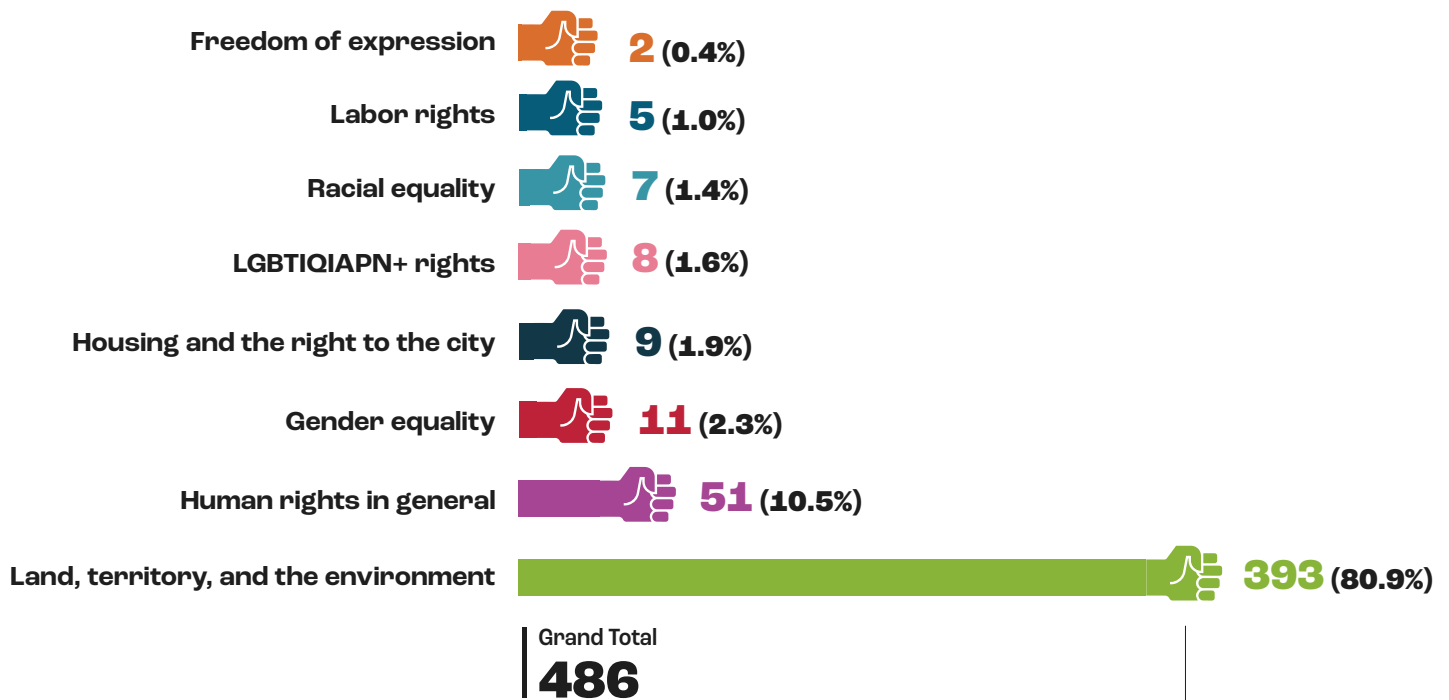


**53.9% of the cases**  
occurred within the  
victims' territory of  
reference or home;

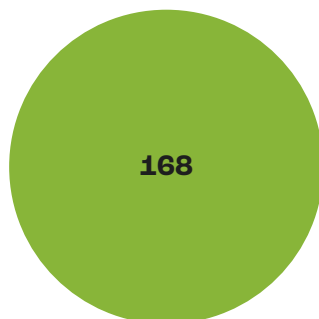


**67% of cases**  
occurred in  
rural areas.

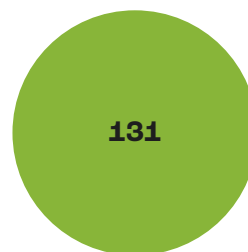
# Areas of struggle of human rights defenders subjected to violence



## Defenders of land, territory, and the environment, victims of some kind of violence



Indigenous



landless peasants and  
rural workers



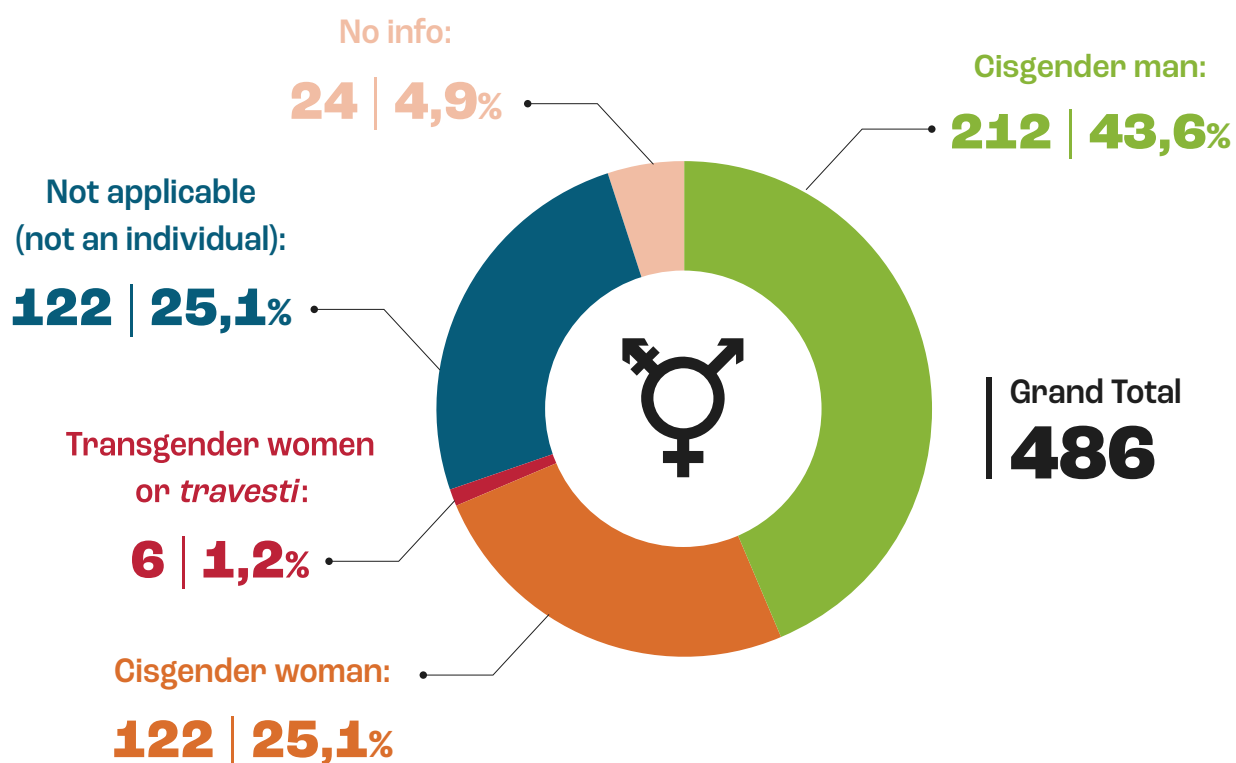
quilombolas



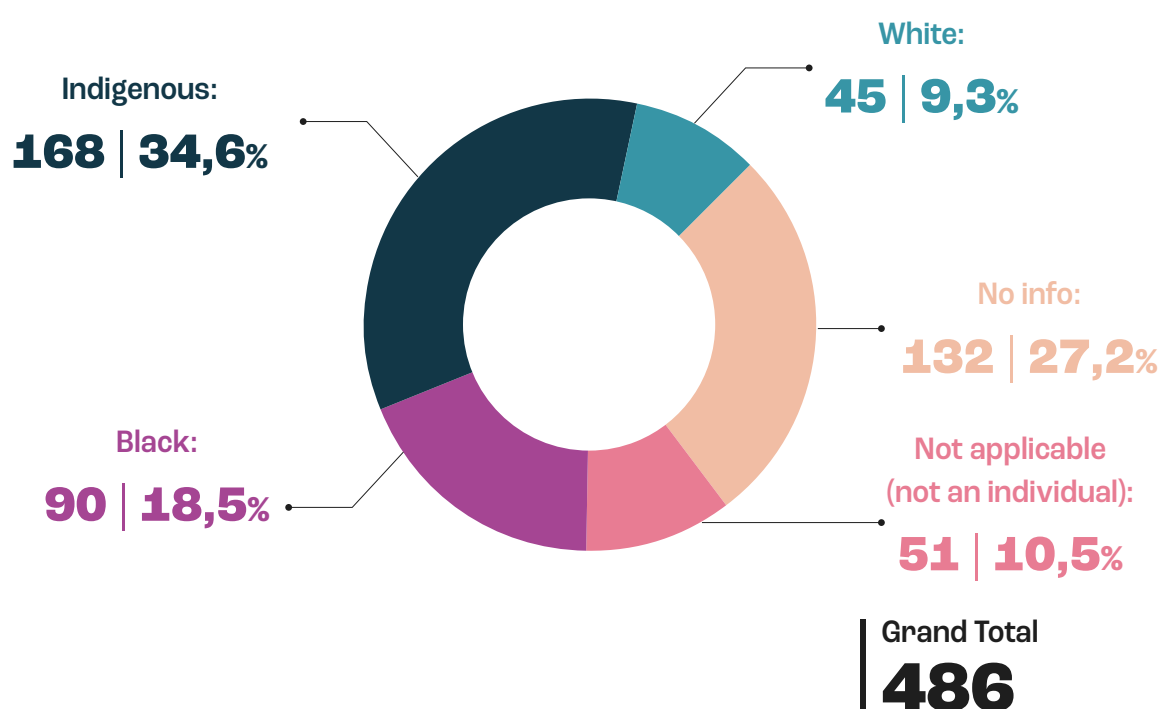
traditional peoples  
and communities

Between 2023 and 2024, **80.9% of the defenders** targeted by violence were engaged in defending land and territories, protect the environment, and tackle the climate crisis.

## Gender identity of the victims



## Race/ethnicity of the victims

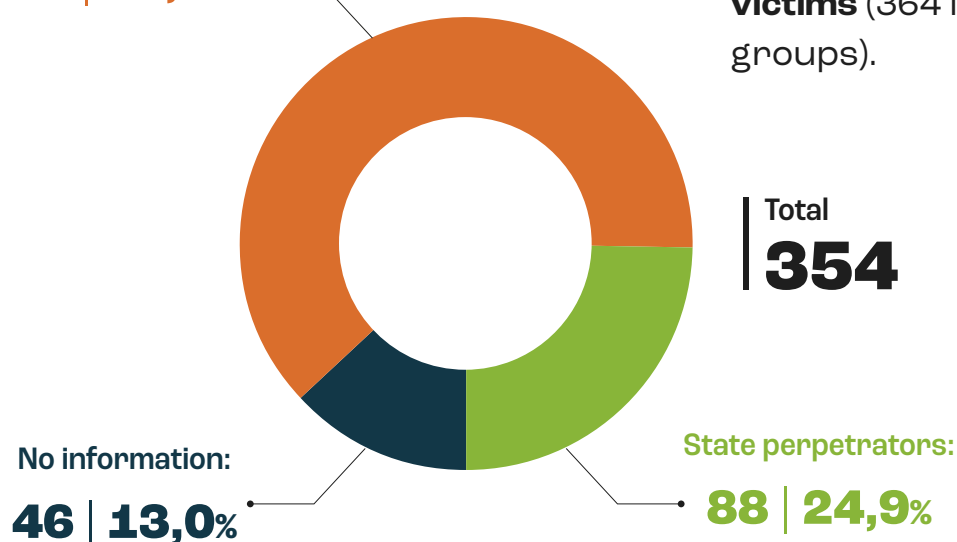


## Perpetrator of the violation

Non-state perpetrators:

**220 | 62,1%**

**354 perpetrators** were identified as responsible for **318 incidents of violence, which resulted in 486 victims** (364 individuals and 122 groups).



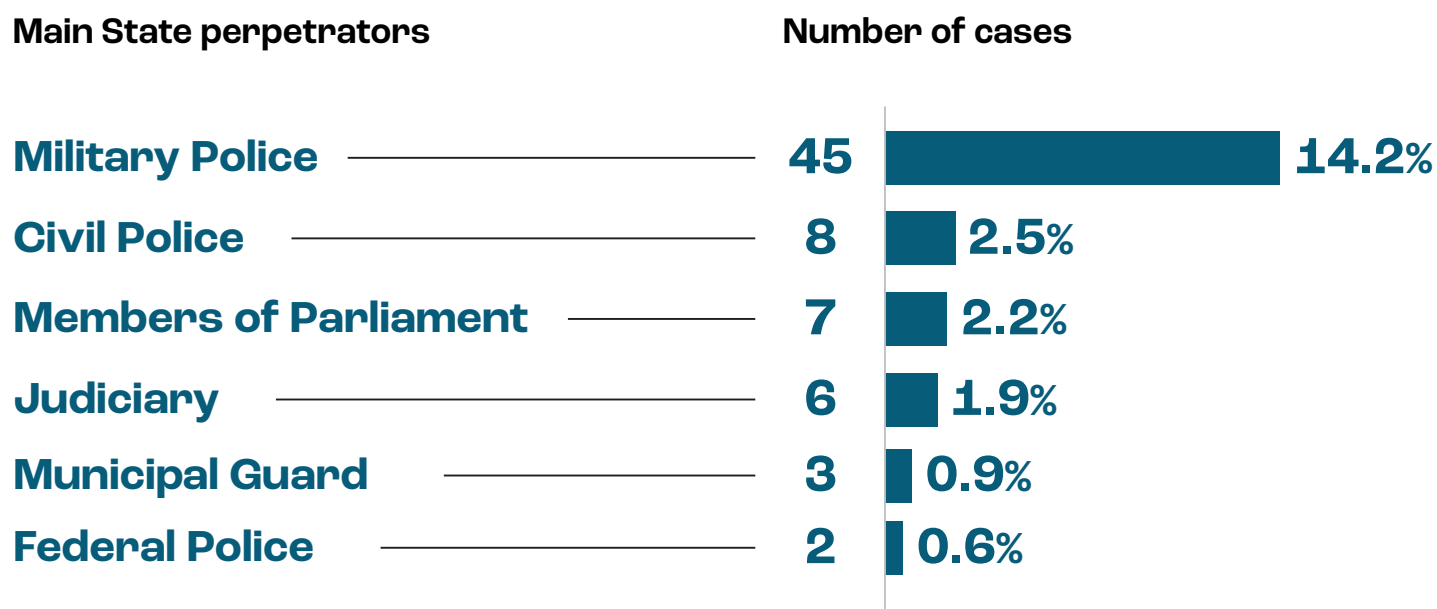
## Main Non-state perpetrators responsible for violence

Main Non-state perpetrators

Number of cases

Hired gunmen (jagunços/pistoleiros)	42	13.2%
Landowners	35	11%
Corporations	18	5.7%
Private security	14	4.4%
Organized crime	12	3.8%

## Main State perpetrators responsible for the violence



### Police Enforcement and the Municipal Guard

participated in 18%  
of the registered cases of violence against  
human rights defenders



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# ABOUT THE STUDY

**J**ustiça Global and Terra de Direitos are leading organizations in the protection of human rights defenders in Brazil, with more than 20 years of experience. Together, they participated in the creation of the Brazilian Committee of Human Rights Defenders (CBDDH) in 2004 and contributed to the development of the National Program for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (PPDDH).

Periodically, they publish the study *Na Linha de Frente – Violência contra Defensoras e Defensores de Direitos Humanos no Brasil* (On the Front Line – Violence against Human Rights Defenders in Brazil), which presents the situation faced by people who defend rights related to land, the environment, housing, education, health, and the fight against racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, among other violations, always with recommendations to strengthen protection mechanisms by the State and civil society.

Check out  
the full  
survey on  
the website:



[terradedireitos.org.br](http://terradedireitos.org.br) • [global.org.br](http://global.org.br)

