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***Violent incidents rose during the coronavirus as the pandemic heightened prejudice and threw up new barriers to justice, the human rights ombudsman said.***

Reuters (15.09.2020) - <https://bit.ly/3hSFCwN> - At least 63 members of Colombia's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community were killed in the first eight months of this year, the Andean country's human rights ombudsman said on Tuesday, while other acts of violence also increased.

Among those killed were 17 transgender women, 12 gay men, six lesbian women and one transgender man, as well as others whose sexual orientation and gender identity could not be specified, although they belonged to the LGBT and intersex community, the organization said.

Intersex refers to people who have reproductive or sexual anatomy that does not conform to typical definitions of male or female.

The ombudsman, an independent organization that promotes human rights in Colombia, did not immediately include comparative figures from the same period in 2019 as collection of the information started this year.

From January to August, the organization reported 388 cases of violence against LGBT and intersex people, mostly in the form of physical and psychological aggressions, up from 309 cases in the whole of last year.

"During the pandemic prejudice and discrimination have been exacerbated while obstacles to accessing justice in the receiving of complaints increased," the ombudsman said in a statement.

The organization, which also cited 36 cases of aggression by police officers, called on the government to develop a concrete action plan to stop violence due to prejudice and fight institutional discrimination that affects this community in all areas and spaces.

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