

Fair trade has been expanding in the western world over the last forty years as an answer to the growing awareness that the benefits deriving from commercial exchanges and the expansion of international trade were not equally distributed amongst the countries and the different levels of population.

Fair trade is essentially voluntary, private sector phenomenon, except for occasional financial support from governments and international organizations. The gradual spreading of fair trade, the expansion of the geographic areas covered, the increase of quantity and types of traded goods and the proliferation of actors, gradually showed the need for sectoral rules.

Starting from these considerations, the aim of this paper is to examine the reality of fair trade, with specific reference to the issues and the perspectives relating to the improvement of the applicable legal framework.

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