



## Fairtrade Textile Standard Geographical Scope Policy

---

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Fairtrade International geographical scope for the Fairtrade Textile Standard is to determine in which countries and zones textile suppliers can be Fairtrade certified under the Textile Standard.

### **Scope**

The Fairtrade Textile Standard is applicable in all countries and regions where freedom of association is possible. This means that the standard is open for certification across all continents, including the global north and global south, where freedom of association is not absent or restricted and workers are free to form or join a trade union for the purpose of collective bargaining. Fairtrade International promotes the rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining as the foundation of ensuring workers' rights, and considers independent and democratic trade unions the best means for achieving this.

### **Indicators demonstrating absence of freedom of association**

Fairtrade International considers the following as indicators to determine where freedom of association is *de facto* not possible when reviewing if a country and region can be included in Fairtrade geographical scope under the Fairtrade Textile Standard. These are countries or zones where:

- trade unions are banned altogether or;
- there is a legislated union monopoly or;
- workers are severely restricted by law to join a national trade union and are not able to form or join a union of their choosing

Fairtrade uses the [Global Rights Index of the International Trade Union Confederation](#) (ITUC) and [Reports of International Labour Organization \(ILO\) Commissions of Inquiry](#) as primary sources for such determination.

Countries may be considered for inclusion in the scope of the Textile Standard where, despite severe restrictions of freedom of association in the country or zone, workers in a factory have been able to organize in free and independent unions and negotiate collective agreements.

### **Review**

The review of the policy follows the Standard Operating Procedure for the development of Fairtrade Standards, which determines a maximum 5 year routine review cycle and provides for more frequent reviews in case of need. The Workers' Rights Advisory Committee (WRAC), made up of experts on workers' rights, is consulted on the policy and identifying countries falling outside the scope of the Fairtrade Textile Standard.

Fairtrade International units, member organizations, or other relevant stakeholders can submit requests to amend the geographical scope by writing to [standards-pricing@fairtrade.net](mailto:standards-pricing@fairtrade.net). Standards & Pricing evaluates the requests, conducts any relevant additional research, including consultation with the Senior Advisor on Workers' Rights and Trade Union Relations and the WRAC, and makes proposals regarding any scope amendments to the Standards Committee for final decision.



<b>Countries excluded from Fairtrade Textile Standard scope</b>
Bahrain
Belarus
China
Cuba
Egypt
Iran
Iraq
Korea (DPRK)
Laos
Libya
Qatar
Saudi Arabia
Sudan
Syria
<b>Export Processing Zones* where FoA is restricted by law</b>
EPZ in Bangladesh

\*Export Processing Zones (EPZ), also known as Free Trade Zones or Special Economic Zones, are zones set up within a country by their governments to promote industrial and commercial exports. In some cases governments permit the relaxation of country labour laws within EPZs and workers' access to join or form a trade union may be restricted.