

Case n°1: Special oven-baked products (OBP) on festive occasions

This case study considers the possibility of intervention by the Ministry of Agriculture, on the regulation concerning the “Production and marketing of baked products for festive occasions (panettone, pandoro, colomba and other rich-bread products)”.

The team is asked to develop the skeleton of a RIA, using the UK template (circulated separately), i.e. selecting and analysing options. This tasking is similar to the first meeting of a RIA task force, when the scope of the work and the future data collection and analyses are selected in agreement with colleagues before they are launched.

Background to the issue

The current situation shows the following problems:

- lack of a commonly accepted definition of oven-baked products and their production methods;
- multiple products on the market indicated as “oven-baked products”, leading to uncertainty for retailers and the market;
- lack of quality control supervision for several products;
- insufficient protection of market transparency, possibly resulting in unfair competition and acquisition of market shares, with unequal production and marketing conditions;
- lack of an informative framework to encourage awareness among consumers and producers in their market choices;
- inadequacy of the self-regulation code as a means of the consumer protection.

State of current legal provisions.

There is no specific regulation on oven-baked products, with the exception of a code of self-regulation adopted by the industry Association .This code has been developed to give standards of quality for the products, and was adopted by AIDI in 2003.

Objectives of the reform

The Minister’s office has asked the team to seek to bring about electoral promises to bring Italy in line with other European- style protections on food products:

- protection of the consumers and realization of better conditions of “transparency” for a market expanding at national and international level;
- promotion of oven-baked products made with quality ingredients;
- creation of a legal framework that offers certainty to the market operators.

Here are a few of the questions that the team should reflect on :

- Define the problem and the policy objectives
- Who would be associated to the study of the reform? Who should be consulted?
- What data should be collected, and what other investigations may be needed?
- What options should be developed, and what type of impacts should be studied for each option.

Case n°2: Safety of ski slopes in Piedmont

Background

With 1,315,000 mountain hectares, and 1,300 km of ski slopes, Piedmont is the most important Italian region for winter sports, with 74 ski-lift management companies operating in 77 mountain municipalities, and 330 ski-lift facilities.

Economic data on winter tourism to mountain regions show that 70% of tourists are skiers, while the remaining 30% does not ski.

The economic impact of these activities contributes in a significant way to the wealth of the region.

Over the same period, approximately 1,200 people were directly employed by ski-lift management companies, with 3 seasonal employees for each full time employee.

Again over the same period, ski-lift management companies provided an estimated 35 million lifts per year, with an annual average of 3,600 rescue requests.

A number of ski slopes in Piedmont are adjacent to ski slopes in French territory. France has a particularly well-developed safety culture regarding ski lift users. French ski resorts have divided ski slopes and set up one or two sectors reserved for snowboarders. Ski resorts offer the possibility to acquire daily insurance along with their ski pass. In Italy, this option is only offered by the largest and best-organised ski resorts.

Legal situation

Piedmont is currently lacking specific legislation that regulates the ski sector, including the management and design of ski slopes. Regional Law n. 79 of December 14, 1989 is the only relevant regional law, although only in indirect and partial terms, as it regulates public cableway systems devoted to the transportation of people. Other Alpine regions (such as Valle d'Aosta and Veneto) have adopted detailed, organic laws to regulate the management of ski slopes.

It should be underlined that as of now, there are no such laws at the national levels (although various proposals are being discussed), and that no EU directives compel member states to adopt legislation on this matter. The only such regulation at the international level is the International Ski Federation's "Skier's Handbook", adopted in Beirut in 1967.

Objective of the reform

Contributing positively to an increase in demand for skiing activities, and therefore an overall increase in tourism demand in the region, by improving ski slope safety. A quantitative goal is to increase ski lift use by 5% compared to actual use by the third ski season after the implementation of the programme.

Reducing the number of accidents on ski slopes, since accidents are one of the factors that can lead to a decrease in the demand for skiing activities. The average accident rate is the quantitative indicator used by the programme. The programme's goal is to reduce the average accident rate from the current 1.1 to 0.2 – the average accident rate for the Veneto region – by the second ski season after the implementation of the programme.

Consultation

A survey of opinions of stakeholders was commissioned and has delivered the following main trends:

There is a nearly unanimous consensus behind the usefulness of specific legislation on this matter. There is also an overall consensus on the contents of the legislation regarding ski resort operators' responsibilities in terms of ski slope upkeep, surveillance, and rescue and first aid efforts. There is

also a consensus opinion regarding the obligation on the part of skiers to respect appropriate codes of conduct.

With regards to the characteristics of ski slopes, most of those interviewed felt that the imposition of fixed criteria and measures, as well as a ban on intersecting ski slopes and ski lifts would need significant investments and could even lead to “the closure of up to 30% of slopes in many stations”. Making helmets compulsory for minors was also fully supported.

With regard to control over skier behaviour, the prevalent opinion stressed the need for a joint presence of ski resort staff and police. The former should have specific authorisations (released by the Mountain Community) after attending a training course.

Every resort felt it useful to set up an infirmary, which could be done at a limited cost.

Tasking

The group is asked to develop options for reform, and determine what additional data would be necessary to make a final decision.