

Region: “New rules for street vendors”

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“Simple rules, that are easy to interpret, fighting unauthorised activities, guarantee of fair competition between operators and consumer protection. These are the principles and objectives of the new regulations that we have adopted for our sector, and they are the result of a detailed and profitable discussion with the most representative associations, ANCI, the national association of Italian municipalities, and the Regional Council.” This is what was said by Mauro Parolini, Lombardy Region’s Councillor for Economic Development, during a speech this morning, in Milan, at the General Assembly of Street Vendors, organised by the associations FIVA Confcommercio and Apeca Milano.

PROTECTION OF STREET VENDORS – “In Lombardy the professionalism and commitment of street vendors in town markets are increasing the appeal of the province and improving the urban quality of our towns. This kind of commerce in public areas represents quality heritage, which should be protected and preserved in a clear and shared context of legality,” Parolini explained.

WHAT IS NEW FOR FESTIVALS – He added, “For this reason, we’ve organised a broad and systematic revision of the regulations, which takes account of the new challenges and changes brought about by the economic situation and by the application of the European directives, which don’t always consider the specific nature of our economic fabric; this revision also seeks to tackle open matters, in order to give councils the most suitable and flexible tools to find, once more, the right balance between respecting traditions and safeguarding the commercial activities that already exist in the area. For example, festivals, which are a religious, social, cultural and oenogastronomic resource, and which play an important role also in the tourist promotion of the province, but which, on some occasions, have

become a sort of trick to create commercial activities that do not operate in accordance with the regulations, or in order to avoid obligations that commerce on fixed premises and in the street is subject to.”

CONCESSION PERIODS – Parolini explained, “Important changes concern the redefinition of sanctions, to make them proportional to the seriousness of the violation.

“Then, on the application of the European ‘**Bolkenstein**’ directive, which was in danger of putting out of action the many street vendors that have kept our markets alive for decades, and on the implementation of the Agreement of the State-Regional Joint Conference, we have made provisions for car parks in markets and local fairs to be licensed out for a period, set by the council, of between nine and twelve years, **taking into consideration the value of the investment made by the street vendors present in a market.**”

INCENTIVES FOR STREET VENDORS – “We’ve also accepted important proposals regarding the simplification of procedures for renewing licences relating to company hire, above all, the proposal concerning incentives to modernise the vehicles used by street vendors.

“In particular, the latter is being assessed by us, together with our colleague Terzi, because, in this case, in addition to safeguarding the quality of the air and of people’s health, we need to safeguard business and work.”

THE REGION’S COMMITMENT – Parolini concluded, “Lombardy Region, and my department, in particular, is involved in protecting consumers and street vendors and this measure is being included in a wide context of measures to help the sector, such as, the gradual and shared revision of the general policy law, which we have just implemented, the clampdown on unauthorised activities, the computerisation of the business charter and of the annual statement, tools that guarantee that the vendor is authorised to operate in public areas, from the point of view of administration, taxation, social security and welfare.”

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