



HOTELSTARS.EU

FAQs

2020 – 2025



Explanations on how to apply the Criteria of the Austrian Classification System

Section title	Running number	Criterion	Question	Reply
General Monitoring				
	1		Who runs the classification system of Hotelstars Union?	<p>The Federal State Committee carries out its based on the classification guidelines, the details provided by the hotel owner and the inspection. The members of the committee are appointed by a committee made up of experts. The Chair is elected by the committee members. The Federal State Committee requires a quorum of three members with voting rights in order to take decisions, which are passed with a majority of the votes cast.</p> <p><i>Exception Vienna:</i> <i>In Vienna, hotels are classified by the expert committee responsible for classifying Viennese hotels belonging to the Vienna Tourism Association. This committee is made up of representatives from the hotel sector, travel agencies, the Austrian Car, Motorcycle and Touring Club [ÖAMTC], the Car, Motorcycle and Bicycle Association of Austria [ARBÖ], the Chamber of Labour and trades unions. The Tourism Director of Vienna, a representative of the trade authority and the managing director of the Austrian Hotel Association all have an advisory vote and are entitled to attend meetings and participate in visits to hotels. When the committee sits is determined by the Vienna State Parliament and the district council elections. Its Chair is appointed by the Vienna Tourism Committee.</i></p>
	2		Is the Classification System of Hotelstars Union based on self-assessment carried out by hoteliers?	HOTREC 21 principles: Regular on-site inspections.
	3		Can hotels abroad also be classified according to the Hotel Classification System?	No, a hotel can only be classified by its national classification body.
	4		Who checks the information provided by the hotels?	HOTREC 21 principles: Regular on-site inspections.
	5		How is each country's classification body organised?	Experts from the hotel sector, hoteliers, and representatives of tourism associations (see also Question 1).
	6		How is it possible to ensure that the hotelier does not 'cheat' when filling out the survey form?	HOTREC 21 principles: Regular on-site inspections.
	7		What happens if the hotelier is not satisfied with his classification?	HOTREC 21 principles: Every classification system must allow for an appeal by the hotel.
	8		What happens to disputes that cannot be solved easily?	The senior committee has the final word.

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	9		What procedure should be adopted in case of an establishment that promises to fulfil a criterion it has hitherto not fulfilled?	Under certain conditions, the body may grant an exception for a reasonable agreed timeframe.
	10		How many rooms should a classification body ask to see?	The number or percentage of rooms to be checked has not been stipulated. The classification board should in any case select several rooms for inspection on a random basis and not leave this task solely up to the hotel.
	11		Guest reviews	Guest reviews shall be considered before inspection.
	12		Is it possible for hotels to apply for dispensing?	In principle, each establishment must meet the minimum criteria for its category. The decision to dispense minimum criteria is entirely at the board's discretion.
	13	12	Are there exceptions when it comes to exercising discretion?	Criterion 12: Exceptions may be accepted depending on national building regulations.
	14		Do any special rules apply to listed buildings?	There may be deviations for listed buildings. Any deviation must however be justified in the listed building conditions themselves.
	15		What is the maximum number of categories by which a hotel may be upgraded or downgraded during an inspection?	Classification result corresponds to the fulfilled criteria.
	16		Who monitors the examiners?	A regional committee scrutinizes the decision taken by the federal state committee. The regional committee visits the hotel and draws up a report for the senior classification committee. The senior classification committee delivers its decision within seven months. The senior classification committee keeps minutes detailing the reasons for the decision taken. The decision is communicated to the appellant and the competent professional group in the Austrian Hotel Association. The costs of the regional committees are borne by the hotel.
	17		How are complaints lodged by guests dealt with?	HOTREC 21 principles: Customer complaints should be dealt within a systematic manner.
	18		For how long does the classification remain valid?	The rating has a limited validity of between three and six years and the classification procedure must be regularly repeated. The Superior classification is coupled to the validity period of the Basic stars. For 5*Superior it is valid for three years.
	19		What must be taken into account when awarding points?	Points will only be awarded when a criterion has been fulfilled entirely for every room or as specified in the respective criteria.
	20		Do certificates still have to be added to the application?	No. But documentation has to be provided on demand.

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Categories/ special forms				
	21		Is there an exception if the hotel follows a specific concept?	Yes, but the hotel concept and the exceptional criteria (within reasonable extent) need to be communicated to the guest.
	22		How many star categories are there?	HOTREC 21 principles: The number of obtainable stars is 1-5. Each star category encompasses a Superior level.
	23		What does 'Superior' signify?	Within a star category, the notion "Superior" refers to the hotels that have clearly scored more points than they require for their star rating, but fell short of some of the mandatory criteria of the next highest category.
	24		How can the hotelier provide documentary evidence of having attained the 'Superior' classification?	The designation 'Superior' may be used in the hotel's marketing communication.
	25		Can bed-and-breakfast hotels (Hotel Garni) also receive the 'Superior' addendum?	No. They lack additional services.
	26		Can a bed-and-breakfast hotel (Hotel Garni) also receive five stars?	Within the Hotelstars Union, hotels with breakfast only are labelled Hotel Garni and can receive a maximum of four stars.
	27	202-208	Why are the point limitations for bed-and-breakfast (Hotel Garni) hotels set lower than for full-blown hotels?	The fact that bed-and-breakfast hotels do not have restaurants means that several areas in which 'full-blown' hotels can score points are not applicable.
System				
	28		Who can participate in the Hotel Classification System?	Membership is granted by the Hotelstars Union. National rules may also be applicable.
	29		How often are the criteria of the Hotelstars Union revised?	HOTREC 21 principles: Classification criteria should be regularly adjusted to market requirements. The system is revised on a regular basis (maximum six years). The current criteria catalogue is valid until 2025.
	30		Why does the Hotel Classification System have mandatory as well as voluntary criteria?	Mandatory criteria per category guarantee the standard level. Voluntary points allow hotels to choose from various services suitable to their marketing segment, e.g. SPA, conference, etc.
	31		Is a hotel being a member of the Austrian Professional Hotel Association obligated to be classified by it?	No, classification takes place on a completely voluntary basis.
	32		Does a classified hotel have to observe a term of notice if it no longer wishes to participate in the Hotel Classification System?	No.
	33		What are the costs faced by a company wishing to participate in the Hotel Classification System?	In principle, classification in the 1-4* segment is free of charge whereas for Superior and in the 5* segment administration fees apply. Detailed information can be requested at the respective

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				Professional Group. In case of mystery guesting, the service provider's prices apply.
	34		Does subsequent classification cost less?	No. Here, the same prices apply as at 33.
I. General Hotel Info/				
	35		Why does the Hotel Classification System provide no fire safety guidelines?	This is regulated by national laws and is therefore not part of the Hotelstars Union Classification System.
	36		Why have no explicit environmental criteria been included in the Hotelstars Union Classification System's criteria?	There are no explicit environmental criteria in the system, but respective environmental labels are recognized by Hotelstars Union.
	37		How are hotel outbuildings classified?	Different classifications are possible if they are clearly defined and communicated separately to the customer. Common areas must correspond to the higher category.
Staff	38	4	What does competent and identifiable staff mean?	The hotel's staff should be experienced and/or qualified and easily recognized by the guests (e.g. badge).
	39	5	Bilingual staff	National language + foreign language (English).
Car Park	40	6	What does 'parking directly at the hotel' refer to?	This criterion refers to uncovered parking spaces within proximity of the hotel reserved for guests. The number of parking spaces should correspond to the size and location of the hotel. If there are parking costs involved, it must be possible to charge them to the room invoice.
	41	9-10	What is accepted to charge the electrical vehicle?	A declared charging station at which the accumulator of electrically powered vehicles such as cars and/or bicycles can be recharged. A simple plug is not acceptable.
Others	42	11	Do balconies and terraces also have to be accessible from guestrooms? Do balconies and/or terraces need to have a minimum size?	Yes, since they are intended for individual use. The guests should be able to sit down on the balcony or terrace.
	43	12	When is an elevator an absolute requirement?	This depends on the number of stars and floors. There may be national deviations. The customer needs to be informed (hotel concept needs to be communicated to the guest.).
Facilities for disabled persons	44	13-16	What are the criteria on accessibility based on?	In addition to the provisions in the building regulations of the federal states, the state laws (e.g. building laws, lift laws and garage laws) and OIB Guideline 4 "Safety of use and accessibility" as well as ÖNORMEN B 1600ff "Planning principles for barrier-

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				<p>free construction" also contain specific requirements for barrier-free construction. The Federal Disability Equality Act in turn obliges the private sector to implement accessibility through the prohibition of discrimination.</p> <p>The basis for the assessment in the classification procedure is proof of an assessment of the business by an expert.</p>
II. Reception and Services				
	45	17	Can the reception desk at a hotel also be integrated into the bar/counter area of the restaurant or the dining area?	The requirement asks for the provision of an optically separated area. In principle, this does not exclude an integration of the counter/bar area into the restaurant. Discretion during the check-in/-out should be granted at any time.
	46	19	What should the seating area at the reception look like?	The seating arrangement in the reception must be in accordance with the type of establishment and the size of the hotel.
	47	19-21	Is the only difference between the lounge suite and a 'lobby with seats and beverage service' the beverage service?	No, differences also exist in the quality of the furnishings, which in the case of a 'lobby with seats' should comply with the respective category.
	48	24	How can staff be reached within those 8 hours during which the reception is not opened?	Hotel staff on duty must be available at the hotel for 24h (need to do check-in and -out).
	49	26-17	What is the definition of a Self-Check-in and Self-Check-out facility / service?	Self-Check-in and Self-Check-out facility / service means a guest's speedy arrival / departure with no need to see the reception - as the key can be picked up e.g. via check-in devices and the costs of the stay (room and additional purchases) are charged for instance to the guest's credit card.
	50	28	What is a 'valet parking' service?	The car keys can be handed over to a valet at the hotel entrance, who brings the car back to the hotel entrance when the guest is leaving.
	51	29-31	Is it possible for the concierge, the page boy and the doorman to be one and the same person?	No, this is expressly excluded. Points are only awarded for this service if separate personnel are deployed.
	52	30	Can the concierge also be deployed in the general reception area?	Yes, but the concierge service must be clearly visible to the guest.
	53	34	Is a separate, closed room necessary or can luggage also be stored behind reception?	There does not have to be a separate, closed room but luggage must be secured and/or stored under constant surveillance. This may also take place behind the reception provided the luggage is not being left unattended at any time. The guest should receive a receipt per stored item.

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	54	43	Cashless Payment	Cashless payment is also a classic bank transfer.
Miscellaneous	55	53	Does the taxi stand in front of the hotel or the taxi reservation service available through reception comply with the criterion 'Shuttle service' or 'Limousine service'?	Yes, if the bill can be charged to the room and explicit reference to this service is included in the guest directory.
	56	54	Offer of sanitary products (toothbrushes, toothpaste, single-use razor etc.)	They may be provided through reception.
III. Rooms				
General Room Info	57	58-61	Why is there no longer any differentiation regarding size for single and double rooms?	In the past, this criterion was often circumvented by 'redefining room use'. Despite of the room size all criteria regarding room furnishing should be fulfilled.
	58	58-61	Why are no indications provided regarding the minimum size of hotel rooms per star rating?	The size of rooms always implies structural changes and thus cannot be harmonised at European level as a minimum criterion. However, a strong incentive to build larger rooms, particularly in the case of new constructions, is provided by awarding a clearly larger number of points for larger hotel rooms. In addition, evaluation of actual data has revealed that a minimum room size is not particularly useful for the purpose of properly distinguishing between categories.
	59	58-61	Is the surface area of balconies or terraces included in the calculation of room sizes?	No.
	60	58-61	Does a room with three or more beds need to have a minimum size?	There are no stipulations regarding the size of rooms with three or more beds.
Sleeping Comfort	61	66	What functions should an ergonomically adjustable bed system comprise?	Recommendation: 1. Adjustable support of body zones, especially in the area of the lordosis. 2. Body zone relief, especially in the shoulder and pelvis area to increase the comfort of sideways sleeping.
	62	67-69, 175-176	High Quality linen	Recommendation: Bed Linen: 145 gr. / sqm Towels:

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				<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Gr/sqm</th> <th>Size hand towel</th> <th>Size Bath Towel</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Basic(1-2*)</td> <td>400 gr/sqm</td> <td>50x70cm</td> <td>70x140cm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mittel(3-4*)</td> <td>450 gr/sqm</td> <td>50x70cm</td> <td>70x140cm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lux(5*)</td> <td>>500 gr/sqm</td> <td>50x70cm</td> <td>100x150cm</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Gr/sqm	Size hand towel	Size Bath Towel	Basic(1-2*)	400 gr/sqm	50x70cm	70x140cm	Mittel(3-4*)	450 gr/sqm	50x70cm	70x140cm	Lux(5*)	>500 gr/sqm	50x70cm	100x150cm
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	63	74	Allergy-friendly sleeping alternative available on demand	A certificate has to be provided showing that pillows, blankets and bed linen are allergy-friendly. Allergy-friendly should not be confused with allergy-free.																
	64	75	Modern and well-kept blanket	Recommendation: They should measure at least 220 cm, be impeccable from a hygienic point of view and suited to the season.																
	65	79	Annual pillow cleaning and / or renewal of pillows	Verified via certificate or invoice. If the hotel has washing machines available, in which the pillows are regularly washed at 60 or 90 degrees and documented, this criterion will be considered fulfilled.																
	66	80	Additional usable, non-decorative pillow on demand	Cushions are not suitable for this purpose.																
	67	85	What function has to be fulfilled?	The purpose of a sheer curtain/screen/blinds or equivalent is to protect guests from unsolicited looks through the windows at daylight.																
Room equipment	68	89	What are 'linen shelves'?	Linen shelves are shelves in the wardrobe on which items of clothing can be stored.																
	69	91	Adequate number of hangers of different types	Different types of hangers are represented for instance by trouser hangers, skirt hangers, shirt hangers, belt clips and jacket hangers.																
	70	94	How is the number of seats calculated?	According to the capacity of each room (normal occupancy), this means that there must be two seats in a double room. See annex 1.																
	71	106	Night light	An automatic, dimmed light designated to ensure visibility along the room floor's and thus the guest's safety. If desired, the light can be operated manually.																
	72	110	Adequate place or luggage rack to put the luggage/suitcase in	Recommendation: For 3-5*: Foldable luggage rack of adequate size to place an open luggage (e.g. 100x60 cm).																
Safekeeping	73	113	Where can a 'central safe' be located?	This means that the safe may be located in the back office, at the reception or other designated place within the hotel.																

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	74	113	Must a 'central safe' be available exclusively for guests or can the hotelier's safe be used for this purpose?	A 'central safe' can be used by the hotelier and the guests as well.
	75	113	Is it necessary to hand out a receipt to the guest when storing valuables in the 'central safe'?	No, however it is strongly recommended.
Noise control / air conditioning	76	116	When should points for 'adequate noise protection for windows' be awarded?	The 8 points associated with this criterion should be awarded if all the rooms have been equipped with adequate windows and noise protection measures have been taken, such as double glazing, special national codes, etc.
	77	117	What characterises 'sound-absorbing doors or double doors'?	A door is regarded 'sound-absorbing', if it is equipped with a rubber lip that is pressed down when the door is closed. Double doors are also sufficient.
	78	119	Rooms with individually adjustable air-conditioning	AC should be able to both heat and cool the room.
	79	121	How is a 'harmonious atmosphere in the public area' measured and compared?	This is an explicitly subjective criterion which involves all the senses, e.g. light, smell, music, colour, etc.
Entertainment electronics	80	123	What are examples of fixed electronic media in the bathroom?	Fixed electronic, water protected devices such as a TV, a radio, a tablet, or loudspeaker connected to another electronic device, etc.
	81	124-125	What characterises a modern TV?	Recommendation: A flat screen or LCD/LED TV with HD resolution.
	82	126	International TV channels available.	Examples for international TV channels: BBC, CNN, Euronews etc.
	83	129	Are there any stipulations regarding the number of devices that should be provided?	No, there are no stipulations in this respect. However, during checking in, the guest must be explicitly informed of the possibility of using the in-house devices (e.g. mobile telephones). This service must also be included in the guest directory.
	84	129-130	What is such a device?	Examples: Mobile phones, smartphones, phables, tablets etc.
	85	129-130	What must the device be able to do?	The device must be equipped with an internal and external telephone function.
	86	135-136	What is the difference between the '-guest directory' for 1* and 2* and a 'guest directory' for 3*, 4* and 5*?	At 1* and 2* level it must at least be possible to find out about breakfast times, the opening times of hotel facilities and check-out times by consulting the hotel information, whereas the guest directory for 3*, 4* and 5* is much more comprehensive and must contain all the services and facilities provided by the hotel. In addition, the hotel information must contain emergency numbers, the hotel manager's contact information and information about doctors and pharmacies.

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Miscellaneous	87	135-136	Can services not mentioned in the guest directory be evaluated?	No, services not mentioned in the guest directory cannot be evaluated, because they are apparently not available to the guest and therefore do not improve his level of comfort. The guest directory can be requested during the classification procedure and can be compared with the hotel's details and the hotelier can then be advised, if any adjustments have to be carried out. The information needed prior to arrival should be communicated for instance on the website.
	88	137	Regional information material available	Recommendation: For 4* and 5* hotels, regional information material should also be placed in the rooms. Electronic information is also accepted.
	89	145	In view of fire safety regulations, is it permitted to place an 'additional locking mechanism at the room door'?	In principle, there are no restrictions regarding this point.
General Bathroom Info	90	146-147	Do sanitary facilities need to have a minimum size?	No. However, a strong incentive to build larger sanitary facilities, especially in new constructions, is provided by 5 or 10 points that may be awarded to sanitary facilities measuring ≥ 5 sqm or ≥ 7.5 sqm.
	91	154	Must each double room and suites have a twin-washbasin in order to obtain the points?	Yes, 100% of the double rooms and suites are required to have twin-washbasins.
	92	156	Adequate lighting for washbasins	Recommendation: At least 200 Lux.
	93	159	Mirror	The mirror must - according to the category - be available in appropriate size.
	94	161	Must the vanity mirror be permanently installed?	No, however, it must be present in the room.
	95	167	When is the criterion "Large shelf" considered fulfilled?	There must be enough room per person to place a large toiletry bag or vanity case.
	96	177	Bath robe on demand	Recommendation: Provision of different sizes on demand
	97	178	Bath robe	Recommendation: Provision of different sizes on demand
	98	179-180	Slippers on demand/slippers	Recommendation: Provision of different sizes on demand
	99	182	Must the hair-dryer be permanently installed?	No, however it must be present in the room.

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	100	183	Stool in bathroom on demand	The stool should be delivered to the room. This service has to be clearly noted in the guest directory.
IV. Gastronomy				
Beverages	101	187	What is meant by 'beverage offer in the room'?	An unchilled bottle of water in the room suffices. It is irrelevant whether or not the guest is charged for the beverage. If the tap water is of high quality, glasses and a carafe are accepted.
	102	189, 190	What should a minibar and a maxibar contain?	A minibar and a maxibar should contain a selection of beverages as well as a range of snacks.
Bar	103	195-196	What conditions have to be fulfilled in order to accept the criterion serviced bar or lounge area?	A serviced bar or lounge area must be run separately from the restaurant (i.e. not the service counter in the restaurant) and must have its own beverage menu card. It is recommended to have the bar opened on hotel opening days.
	104	195-196	Can the bar be regarded as a hotel bar, if it is located inside the hotel's own casino?	Since casino admittance is subject to restrictions (protection of minors), a bar located inside a casino may not be classified as a hotel bar. Under the current Gambling Act, gambling houses may only be operated under licence (Federal State's gambling monopoly).
Food	105	203	When are these points awarded?	The points are awarded when the food offer includes a significant proportion of regional/national specialities and the products employed for the most part derive from the region.
	106	204	What is the scope of this service?	The menu should include an offer of hot dishes as a mandatory requirement.
	107	206-208	Must the restaurant be run by the hotel or can it be run by a third party?	The restaurant can be run by a third party as long as the hotel refers to the restaurant service in the guest directory and the restaurant bill can be settled through the hotel. The restaurant should be perceived by the guest as a part of the hotel. The restaurant has to be within the premises or wall to wall, preferably with indoor passage.
	108	206-208	Restaurant	Recommendation: For resort hotels, one seat per hotel guest shall be guaranteed.
V. Event Facilities (MICE)				
Conference rooms	109	213	Can a restaurant also be used as a conference room?	No, even a restaurant that has the equipment of a conference room will not be recognized as a conference room.

Section title	Running number	Criterion	Question	Reply
	110	213	Do the technical facilities of a conference room have to be maintained by the hotel at its own expense or can the area be outsourced so that these facilities are only made available if required?	This area can be outsourced. However, if it is part of the hotel's service offer, it must be explicitly referred to.
	111	213	How many power sockets must be at least available in the conference rooms?	All conference rooms in the hotel to be evaluated must comply with footnote 41, which provides for a number of accessible mains sockets appropriate to the capacity of the room. The number of sockets must be sufficient to meet the today's technical progress.
	112	216	Business Center	Must be included in the guest directory.
VI. Leisure				
Sport	113	219	Rental of sports equipment (e.g. skis, boats, bicycles)	A reference to collaboration with a sports equipment rental is sufficient.
Spa/Wellness	114	221-229	Can the beauty or wellness area of a hotel, which is connected to the hotel by means of a passageway, be included in the classification?	Yes, the hotel must refer to this service in the guest directory and allow the bill to be settled through the hotel.
	115	221, 225	Can beauty farms, massage practices etc. offered inside the hotel be regarded as part of the hotel?	Yes, the hotel must refer to this service in its guest directory and allow the bill to be settled through the hotel. There must be a strict spacial connection.
	116	222	Separate relaxing room	Recommendation: Adequate number of canvas chairs to hotel size, water and fruits should be available.
	117	223	What is considered equivalent to a whirlpool?	Equivalent to a whirlpool are for instance indoor or outdoor pools that do not meet the minimum size required under criteria 228 and 229.
	118	227	Private Spa Cabin	A private spa cabin is a room or an area in which spa facilities are offered and which can be booked for the exclusive use of a single person, couple or family only within a certain timeframe.
	119	221-229	Does the Hotel Classification System lay down any rules for setting prices e.g. for WLAN services, drink services or use of the wellness area?	No, the Hotel Classification System completely respects entrepreneurial freedom regarding the hotel's pricing policy.
	120	234	Central sanitary facilities for hotel guests	Accessible toilets / restrooms for hotel guests in the public area.
VII. Quality and Online Activities				
Quality Systems	121	237	When is this criterion fulfilled?	Dealing systematically with guest complaints includes the structured receipt and evaluation of complaints and a measured

Section title	Running number	Criterion	Question	Reply
				response. Software for recording and processing feedback is available for example. A folder for complaints also suffices, provided it is not merely filed away without being processed.
	122	239	When is this criterion fulfilled?	A TrustYou report should be evaluated regularly, but at least once during a classification period. In the case of a reclassification into the superior category, the classification commission is free to request a TY Re-port or a Mystery Guesting (test). If the establishment does not (yet) have a TY profile or if there are less than 100 evaluations in total in the last 24 months, it is obliged to undergo a Mystery Guesting (Test) by an independent, professional and accredited company on the initiative and for the account of the hotelier upon request by the professional group. For the accreditation process, the underlying regulations must be observed. Mystery Guestings (Test) in the form of covert self-checks by hotel chains or hotel cooperations are to be considered equivalent, if they meet the standard of an accredited test (proper documentation, plausible assessment, etc.). MG should cover all areas of the hotel and its surroundings, also including the website, communication, etc. MG should be performed anonymously and include a written report.
	123	245	Mobile responsive website or mobile application	A mobile responsive website or mobile application displays the relevant content and functionality on mobile devices.

Annex 1

	1 stars	2 stars	3 stars	4 stars	5 stars
Single room	1 seating accommodation	1 seating accommodation	1 seating accommodation	1 seating accommodation 1 comfortable seat	1 seating accommodation 1 comfortable seat
Double room	1 seating accommodation	1 seating accommodation	2 seating accommodations OR 1 seating accommodation 1 comfortable seat	1 seating accommodation 1 comfortable seat	1 seating accommodation 2 comfortable seats

Annex 2

Classification of hotels in Europe

21 HOTREC principles for the setting-up and/or review of national/regional hotel classification systems in Europe 2009

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1. Classification systems must ensure that **accurate information** is provided to the guests;
2. Classification systems should display their criteria (summary and full list) online to the guests via **www.hotelstars.eu** at least in English and their national language;
3. Information about the star category of each individual hotel as well as the classification system on which this rating is based should be made **transparent** for the consumer;
4. Compliance with **legal requirements** is a prerequisite to classification;
5. Classification systems must ensure **cleanliness and proper maintenance** of the establishments in all star categories;
6. Classification systems should encourage the use of **quality management tools**;
7. **Tour operators and travel agents**, as well as **hotel booking and review sites** are invited to use the official classification. If they use their own rating scheme alongside, they should specify so;
8. Classification systems should ensure that **accurate and up-to-date data on the rating of establishments are provided** to tour operators, travel agents, hotel booking and review sites;
9. The **number of stars** obtainable shall be one to five;
10. Stars must be granted/confirmed only after a **control**;
11. This control must take place **regularly**;
12. This control must take place **on site**;
13. **Complaints by customers** relating to classification should be dealt with in a systematic manner;

14. **Explanation** for classification decisions have to be made available to the hotel concerned;
15. Every classification system must allow for an **appeal by the hotel** concerned against the result of the classification;
16. Classification systems should have some **range of flexibility** in the application of their criteria;
17. Classification criteria should be regularly adjusted to **market requirements**. A systematic **inventory process** of the criteria should take place regularly;
18. Whenever **research on consumer expectations** in relation to classification is carried out in one country, it is desirable that the results are made available to all HOTREC member associations;
19. When classification systems are set up/reviewed, **equipment and service criteria should be emphasised** in order to facilitate European and international harmonisation efforts;
20. When classification systems and criteria are set up/reviewed, **cooperation with other countries** is encouraged in order to facilitate European and international harmonisation efforts;
21. Classification systems should always involve the hospitality industry. In the countries, where the classification system is regulated and/or operated by public authorities, it is essential that the public authorities work in **close partnership** with the private sector.

* * *

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