

ANNEX

**Classification of hotels
in Europe**

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

Adopted by the HOTREC General Assembly in Barcelona, 6 November 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.org 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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