



Inspector's manual for minimum RT accommodation quality criteria in Europe

* MINIMUM INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS *

Eurogites, the European Rural Tourism Federation

Block 1 Equipment

| No. | Standard | Proposed Details for Assessment | Reported problems |
|-----|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| 1.1 | Local style of building | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings are of the traditional regional style, integrated in the surrounding environment – matching the local architectural tradition and with appropriate use of materials and decorations. | <i>Spain: interpretation of term "traditional style"</i> |
| 1.2 | Local style decoration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decorations are in traditional style, typical of the region/country. Decorations are made from natural materials (wood, metal, wool, etc.) and adequate in rural setting. Decorations strengthen the overall image of the establishment and are coordinated with furnishings in style, material, colour. Decorations are functional, they do not represent danger to health and safety. | <i>Bulgaria: Too much plastic – artificial plants, trash bins and other low-quality equipment</i> |
| 1.3 | State of conservation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings are well-maintained with attention to paintwork, details like window frames, doors, etc. Paintwork should not be peeling, chipped or cracked. The buildings look clean, including windows. All parts of the buildings function well, e.g., doors and windows open and close without extra effort, stairs are equipped with hand rails, any repair works are finished. | <i>Bulgaria: Broken (including by tourists) stuff</i> <i>Greece: Yard or garden under construction while visitors are there.</i> |
| 1.4 | Traditional / authentic equipment | | |



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| 1.5 | Overall cleanliness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rooms are clean – there is no dust on furniture and fittings (especially surfaces above eye level and the floor under furniture), surfaces are well polished and free from stains. Windows are clean. • Rooms are tidy – no litter. • No evidence of the host personal belongings in guest rooms. • The rooms are well aired and fresh, there are no bad smells, e.g., from smoking, kitchen, etc. | <i>Bulgaria: Lack of smoking areas or ashtrays</i> |
| 1.6 | Size of bedrooms single | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 m2 (rooms / B&B) • 8 m2 (self-catering) • The layout allows for free movement around furniture. | <i>Greece:</i> <i>Some complains about room size</i> <i>Slovenia:</i> <i>Small rooms</i> <i>Spain: room size tends to be smaller in the south</i> |
| 1.7 | " double / twin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 m2 (rooms / B&B) • 12 m2 (self-catering) • The layout allows for free movement around furniture. | <i>Greece:</i> <i>Some complains about room size</i> <i>Slovenia:</i> <i>Small rooms</i> |
| 1.8 | + for every extra bed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • +3 m2 • The layout allows for free movement around furniture. | |
| 1.9 | Equipment of bedrooms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bedside table or shelf is provided for each person. • One chair per person is provided in bedroom. • Wardrobe is provided containing shelf and hanging space with hangers for guest clothes adequate to bedroom capacity. | <i>Bulgaria: Lack of night lamps</i> |

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| 1.10 | Size of beds ¹ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sgl. 90 / 190 DbL. 150 / 190 | |
| 1.11 | Quality of beds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free from creaks, should not rock or tilt. Base, legs and headboard stable, sound. Spring mattress - clean, without stains or smells, in good repair. It should not sag, or be torn, or compressed or with lumps. The mattress should be comfortable for sleeping. | <i>Spain:</i> <i>comfort of furniture and beds, size of beds / mattresses</i> |
| 1.12 | Size of common areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Floor space adequate for the number of guests, to the size and style of the establishment, and the number of rooms and location. Enough space around furniture for free movement and moving comfort. | |
| 1.13 | Lighting / windows in rooms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one opening window with clear glass for natural lighting and ventilation. The surface size of the window should be at least 1/10 of floor space to ensure adequate lighting. The lighting levels in all rooms adequate for guest comfort and safety. | |

¹ The rule of percentage deviation (*see at the end of the document*) does not apply to this criteria, it is substituted by an absolute possible variation of 10 cms .



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| 1.14 | Bathroom – minimum equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shower, WC, wash-basin, storage space, mirror. WC in separate room is recommended. • Floor space in bathroom/shower room is at least 3 sq. m. The room layout allows for easy access and use of all installations. • Shower cabin (closing and opening well) or a fixed shower with shower curtain. • The size of shower is at least 80 x 80 cm. • WC: toilet seat is lidded, clean, especially the underside surface. The unit is not stained. • Wash-basin: If toilet facility is separate from bathroom/shower room, it is recommended to provide a wash basin with running water, soap and hand towel. • Storage space: suitable and clean shelving for toiletries. Shelves at standing height in baths with showers over, and in showers. Towel rail is convenient for the basin and the bath or shower. • Mirror above the wash basin equipped with lights, the razor point within easy reach of the mirror and wash basin. • The doors can be locked with a key or bolt. • No proprietor's personal belongings in the facilities, which are designated only for guests use. • No any signs of dirt and grease build up on wall and tile surfaces, basins, bath/showers and toilets. No unpleasant odours. • Waste bin in bathroom and toilet (if separate), covered and the lid is functioning, lined with sani bags and if spare sani bags are provided. • Clean and washable bath mat. • Toilet brush and holder are clean and in working order. | <p><i>Slovenia:</i> <i>Bathrooms too small</i> <i>Not enough shelves in the bathroom;</i></p> |

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| 1.15 | 1 Bathroom per X clients | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 bathroom facility per every 2 rooms / 4 clients; en-suite recommended for B&B | <p><u>Bulgaria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> providers find the bathroom as the hardest part to accomplish in an accommodation. It is sometimes normal two or three room to share one bathroom and WC. lack of marking at the common WC doors <p><u>Spain:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> amount and size of bathrooms (small) |
| 1.16 | Running water supply | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pressure sufficient, without interruptions. Drainage works well – if the water does not stand in bath/shower/basin. | |
| 1.17 | Hot water supply | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pressure sufficient, without interruptions. Hot water is available to guests constantly – especially in mornings and evenings. | <p><u>Bulgaria:</u> Water is not always heated when checking-in</p> <p><u>Spain:</u> electric heaters – capacity not sufficient for number of guests</p> |
| 1.18 | Room heating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central heating, electrical heaters or floor heating Heating is thermostatically controlled, the thermostat is functioning. | <p><u>Bulgaria:</u> Lack of efficient heating and cooling</p> <p><u>Spain:</u> Heating, bad heating insulation</p> |
| 1.19 | Climatisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If air conditioning is provided, it should be in working order. Sufficient natural ventilation. | <p><u>Spain:</u> Air conditioning</p> |

Block 2 Surroundings

| No. | Standard | Proposed Details for Assessment | Reported problems |
|-----|--|--|---|
| 2.1 | Rural surrounding of accommodation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Situated in the countryside, in a village, or in a small town (< 5000 inhabitants in the village/town, or in very typical/traditional quarters). Evident characteristic of traditional farming, agriculture, or high nature values (Nature Park or similar. "Traditional farming" excludes predominance of industrial farming). Tourism is not the main or dominant activity or source of income in the closer area (Relation "tourist beds / inhabitants" should not exceed = 1 / 1) | <p><u>Bulgaria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bad maintenance, dirtiness <p><u>Spain:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor recreation areas, (not ready for children, seniors or handicapped people); Sometimes, state of conservation of immediate surroundings (unattractive views, ruins) <p><u>Slovenia:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too old and not enough equipment - playgrounds for children are missing. |
| 2.2 | impacts or nuisance (<i>smell, noise, visual, ...</i>) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good conservation of environment, quiet and "peaceful" setting, no noise or pollution (Smell and noise resulting from traditional farming are acceptable) | <p><u>Bulgaria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic nearby, Building construction in the vicinity |
| 2.3 | resources1: <i>nature, landscape, scenery, ...</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting and environment: attractive surroundings, views, landscaped territory, etc. | |
| 2.4 | resources2: <i>ethnographic, culture, tradition, architecture, ...</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connection with the local community and traditional culture. Minimum integration of the activity into the surrounding community, guests have possibility to get in contact with the local reality if they want. Local products and gastronomy available in the surroundings. Culture events and information (folklore, crafts, traditions, heritage available in the surroundings) | |
| 2.5 | State of Environmental conservation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good state of environmental conservation – no noticeable pollution in soil, waters and air, high biological diversity, natural landscapes. | |



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| 2.6 | Contribution to local development / local production | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperation with local community in service provision (use of local food, craft services, local guides, etc.) | |
| 2.7 | Social and cultural responsibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop tourist services respecting local cultural and social traditions | |
| 2.8 | Local stakeholder consultation | | |
| 2.9 | Environmental responsibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental protection measures implemented (e.g., waste sorting, water economy measures, energy saving bulbs, alternative energy sources, ecologically approved materials for cleaning and maintenance, energy saving home appliances, packaging of food and other supplies). Information about environment-friendly behaviour available for guests (e.g., Green behaviour codes). | <i>Bulgaria: Single use packages</i> |

Block 3 Services at the accommodation and in surroundings (<15 km)

| No. | Standard | Proposed Details for Assessment | Reported problems |
|-----|--|---|--|
| 3.1 | Cleaning service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability recommended (not necessarily done by the owner) | |
| 3.2 | Meals provided at accommodation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meal service is not required, but recommended for rooms/B&B. Food products home- grown/home-made or bought from the local suppliers (neighbouring farms). Local/regional/national recipes used. Organic food offered (certified food products). Vegetarian dishes constantly available on the menu. Special menu for children available. | <i>Spain: legal complications, formal restaurant rules apply</i> |
| 3.3 | Local Gastronomy / Eating places | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If meals are not provided on site, catering places (pubs, restaurants, etc.) offering local gastronomy are in the vicinity. | |
| 3.4 | Choice of leisure activities <u>at accommodation</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not required. Environment friendly activities encouraged. | |



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| 3.5 | <i>Idem</i> in the surroundings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A choice of environment friendly activity facilities in the surroundings, e.g., nature trails, cycling routes, boating routes, local excursions, etc. • Other attractions or “things to do” in the area (museums, castles, events, crafts, nature parks,) | <p><u>Bulgaria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bad tourist infrastructure and route/landmark signposting</i> <p><u>Spain:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Few activity and leisure facilities, few activity providers (or badly presented / offered).</i> |
| 3.6 | Access / signposting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient signposting from the main road up to the house, possible to see in the dark. • Clear name plate in good technical condition attached to the house. • Provide GPS coordinates | <p><u>Bulgaria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Not enough light, slippery paths</i> ▪ <i>Poor road condition and difficult access</i> ▪ <i>Lack of signposting for the accommodation at the site (key crossroads)</i> <p><u>Greece:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bad condition of the pathways, bad condition of the surrounding areas, the garbage and the road signs.</i> • <i>In most of really rural areas, all road signs are only in Greek.</i> <p><u>Spain:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <i>signposting faces legal limits on public roads</i> |
| 3.7 | Breakfast facilities provided | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast service (B&B) or cooking facilities (self-catering) provided. | <p><u>Greece:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Some complaints about kitchen (or kitchenette) equipment.</i> <p><u>Spain:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>facilities for self-cooking, served breakfast involves legal complication (considered as tourist service and therefore, commercial activity)</i> |

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| 3.8 | Tourist Information provided | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourist information provided on the area, facilities and services in the vicinity (leaflets, folders, maps). • Information updated and truthful (price lists, timetables, etc.). • Information provided in target market languages. | <p><u>Bulgaria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not enough information or possibilities for tourist services as tour guide, info centre, renting equipment ▪ Lack of maps, information materials are rarely existing <p><u>Greece:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some properties offer lots of local information, at others guests have to investigate themselves. ▪ In some places they are well organized and guests can participate. In some others, guests must discover by themselves. <p><u>Spain:</u> Few activity and leisure facilities, few activity providers (or badly documented / offered).</p> |
| 3.9 | Information / instructions about the house provided | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructions about in-house regulations (e.g., smoking policy, waste sorting, water and energy saving, etc.). • Instructions for use of equipment and facilities (e.g., sauna safety regulations). | <p><u>Greece:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough information in guest houses about meal availability and if breakfast is included in the price. |

Block 4 Personal attention, privacy, and ambience

| No. | Standard | Proposed Details for Assessment | Reported problems |
|-----|---|---|---|
| 4.1 | Professional / Vocational Qualification | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers can present training course certificates attended within the last 3 years (e.g., customer care, RT marketing, language courses). Service staff skilled in direct communication and on the phone. | <p><u>Bulgaria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language misunderstanding <p><u>Spain:</u> few vocational training offers that are adequate for RT conditions, little interest from providers to participate.</p> |
| 4.2 | Client receives a personal welcome | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting guests upon arrival, explaining about facilities, services available. | <p><u>Bulgaria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely, bad attitude, including tourists and locals. Conflict with other guests is possible |
| 4.3 | Personal information and introduction to local offers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers / service staff have good local knowledge – attractions in the surroundings, traditions, history, legends, etc. | |
| 4.4 | Personal attention is available during stay if required | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guests receive information how and where to find hosts if required. Hosts ready to assist with the guest needs during their stay. | <p><u>Spain:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of personal attention (especially at self-catering) Bad communication between hosts/service staff and customers |
| 4.5 | Foreign Language capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hosts/service staff speak at least one foreign language | <p><u>Bulgaria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No good understanding of guest needs and expectations |
| 4.6 | Personalized Information about accommodation and surroundings / Guestbook | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photo album, description of the history of the place in public areas, accessible to guests. A guest book in a place where guests can easily notice it. | |

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| 4.7 | Privacy of areas used by clients | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest quarters are not used by host family • No host personal belongings in guest rooms • Visual privacy (e.g., curtains, blinds, shutters) • Adequate sound insulation. • Guest bedrooms can be locked from inside and outside and the lock is in functioning order. • Guests receive a bedroom key while staying in the establishment. | <i>Bulgaria: lack of numbers and keys for every room</i> |

Block 5 Security – Safety - Trust

| No. | Standard | Proposed Details for Assessment | Reported problems |
|-----|---|--|---|
| 5.1 | Public Liability Insurance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provider can present a valid civil liability insurance | |
| 5.2 | Fire and Accident protection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provider can present a document issued by the fire authorities and confirming the compliance of the buildings with the official fire safety requirements. Fire extinguishers available Printed information on how to act in case of emergency (e.g., fire, accidents, etc.) Printed information on how to summon assistance in case of emergency – where to find the hosts, phone numbers of the first aid, fire brigade, police, etc. Provider has a first aid box with appropriate contents for giving the first aid. Comprehensive information about health services in 15 minutes reach, available on request before booking; in any case, available at the accommodation during the stay | <p><i>Bulgaria: A problem might be a lack of easy-reachable emergency package</i></p> <p><i>Spain: no such institution as “fire authorities” – define equivalent alternatives</i></p> |
| 5.3 | Complies Touristic Statutory Requirements & Registration where required | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rural tourism establishment is registered with the state authorities as/if required by the national legislation. Where not required, establishment must be member of an association, entity, or recognized labelling scheme | <i>Bulgaria: Omission of tourist fee payment to the municipality</i> |
| 5.4 | Control of adequate technical state of equipments etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All equipment and installations, accessible to guests in the establishment and its surrounding territory, are in working order and safe in use. | <i>Bulgaria: Unsecured or lack of parking place</i> |
| 5.5 | Health (<i>hygiene – health services available – etc.)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provider can present a document issued by the health authorities and confirming the compliance of the establishment with the official health and hygiene requirements. | <i>Spain: no such document issued, if health authorities would intervene they will apply hotel-level standards – define equivalents</i> |
| 5.6 | Guarantee of correct information before booking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third-party guarantee is involved (association, certification body, etc.) Updated and truthful information in printed materials and | <p><i>Austria:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Experiencing the farm” is the most critical point. Guests (families with children) often have an ideal picture of a “living farm”, often based on children’s books. Frequently the</i> |



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| | | <p>web sites (type of accommodation, services, prices, in-house policies regarding smoking, pets, clear written description how to reach the establishment by car/public transportation, booking conditions are clearly explained.</p> | <p><i>reality does not meet with these expectations. The organisation views as its task to shape realistic – however still attractive – customer expectations and train the farmers to communicate the “farming experience”</i></p> <p><u>Bulgaria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Local municipality commissions tend to be unprofessional and miss some issues when inspecting.</i> • <i>Illusionary presentation of places in internet which does not correspond to the reality.</i> <p><u>Greece:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Delayed replies to e-mail enquiries.</i> ▪ <i>Outdated information or misleading description of the holiday site (room and facilities’ description, distances, provided services).</i> <p><u>Spain:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Unclear information, prices, booking and cancellation. Difficult to assure compliance by owners, even if they sign a document.</i> <p><u>Slovenia:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Some guests have complaint that the category of the farm isn’t adequate – too high, because they experienced higher quality services on another farm which has the same category.</i> |
| 5.7 | Consumer protection (<i>complaints, defined procedure, ...</i>) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory requirements observed • Customer Satisfaction Sheet | |



Education and Culture DG

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| 5.8 | Documents of booking (<i>confirmation, standard conditions, receipt, etc.</i>) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Booking conditions must exist and be available • Written confirmation of booking, conditions, and specification of contracted service • Provider has a registry of the booking details to avoid overbookings, misunderstandings and complaints. • Providers issue a valid payment document upon request to customers. | <p><i>Bulgaria:</i> There are some examples of overbooking and service refusal, but usually neighbouring houses are arranged.</p> <p><i>Spain:</i> verbal contract is state-of-art, written confirmation usually informal through Email.</p> |
| 5.9 | Price List exposed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated price list of all available services exposed in guest areas. | <p><i>Spain:</i> discounts are frequent, price list should only state maximum values ("rack rate"), real contract can be less but never more.</p> |