



World Tourism Organization



## THE JOINT WTO & IH&RA STUDY ON HOTEL CLASSIFICATION

## **CONTENTS**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
I. INTRODUCTION	4
1. Objectives	6
2. Previous work	6
3. Methodology	8
II. STATUS REPORT ON CLASSIFICATION	11
1. Compilation of replies from private sector to IH&RA questionnaire.	11
2. Compilation of replies from public sector to WTO questionnaire.	32
III. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS	58
IV. CURRENT TRENDS IN HOTEL CLASSIFICATION	63
V. CONCLUSIONS	79
VI. ANNEX	
Questionnaire on the Classification of Accommodation Establishments (hotel & similar establishments)	
ANNEXE (French)	
Questionnaire sur le Classement des établissements d'hébergement (hôtels et établissements parahôteliers)	
ANEXO (Spanish)	
Cuestionario sobre la Clasificación de los Establecimientos de Alojamiento (hoteles y establecimientos similares)	

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *Survey rationale*

With the dramatic development of domestic and international travel in the past fifty years, the question of how hotel ratings compare across the world is periodically raised by various public and private-sector interests. As a result hotel classification has appeared on the agenda of the World Tourism Organisation for a considerable number of years. Most recently, the topic was included in the WTO 2000-2001 Work Programme.

The International Hotel & Restaurant Association (IH&RA) proposed that before any new work was undertaken, the first stage of any project should be to draw up a status report on the various schemes existing throughout the world. WTO then appointed IH&RA its designated expert to undertake this status report. In this first stage, IH&RA limited its role to surveying the private sector and specifically to preparing:

- a status report (ie inventory) of existing hotel classification schemes
- a comparative analysis of these schemes (qualitative and quantitative elements)

At the same time, WTO surveyed public sector involvement in hotel classification via its Member National Tourism Administrations.

### *Scope and findings of survey*

After reviewing previous work by other bodies (IUOTO, ISO, CEN, HOTREC), the present study collates the results of these two surveys and provides a comparative analysis of their findings, 31 countries for the private sector and 89 for the public sector.

Overall, of the countries surveyed, 83 have an official *hotel* classification scheme, while only 23 countries have an official classification scheme covering hotels, apartment hotels, motels and inns.

Where the public sector is concerned, 20 countries indicate that classification is used to control or monitor accommodation tariffs and 13 that it is used as the basis for the application of government taxes such as VAT (Value-Added Tax). The private sector report no link between classification and the social obligations imposed on employers.

The two bodies most involved in devising and drafting the hotel classification scheme are officials of National Tourism Administrations (NTA) with other government officials (in 49 countries) and the national hotel association, rarely alone and generally when consulted by government authorities (in 48 countries). In addition, 40 countries indicate that the system is based on that of another (usually neighbouring) country.

Classification is mandatory for all establishments in 46 countries. In 55 it is needed to obtain a licence to operate whereas in 32 others, establishments can operate without being classified.

### *Other forms of classification*

Alongside the grading schemes surveyed above, the report reviews other forms of classification. Major Tour Operators often rate hotels according to their own criteria while schemes used in electronic distribution channels (eg. CRS, GDS) are typically devised

for the benefit of the travel professionals (and travel agents in particular). These are often based on guides such as the US Official Hotel Guide originally only available in print and now also electronically. Although the star rating system is the one most in use throughout the world, other symbols are also used (diamonds, crowns etc.), sometimes even in combination. Irrespective of the symbol used, all systems break accommodation down into three or four major bands (usually luxury, superior, mid-market, budget/economy). Major hotel companies prefer to use branding as a means of positioning their product on the market and typically place the customer and his/her profile, needs and desires at the heart of their marketing strategies.

Within the hotel industry itself the debate continues as to whether formal classification is necessary or not - as instanced by HORESTA the Danish Hotel Association and the Israel Hotel Association, offering case-studies respectively for and against. Be this as it may, there are currently moves afoot in a number of world regions – Scandinavia, South East Asia, Middle East and even Europe – for some form of harmonised regional system.

#### *Conclusions - Consumers*

While all approaches to classification claim to be for their benefit, consumers or their representative bodies are in fact rarely consulted in the process of establishing a system. The report concludes that systems set up by the private sector are far more responsive to consumer demand, rapidly recognising new forms of accommodation such as time-share and resorts, whereas standards and criteria laid down by the public sector tend to be infrequently checked and rarely updated to meet changes in consumer taste – or in destination market.

More generally, many surveys show that consumer choice is governed first and foremost by considerations of price and destination, rather than on the basis of complex classification systems of which consumers have either little knowledge or little understanding.

#### *Conclusions – Public and Private sector responsibilities*

In conclusion, it is important to separate out the respective responsibilities of the public and private sectors in the area of hotel classification. As recent events such as SARS, Mad Cow and Legionnaire's disease have shown, public authorities must obviously ensure minimum standards of safety and hygiene in accommodation establishments. Private sector bodies, being commercially driven, must meet the consumer's demand for better and more transparent information on both products and destinations. This implies the consistent use of recognised and harmonised terminology.

Given the interest expressed in the survey, it would seem advisable to provide states wishing to set up a national or regional classification scheme with the necessary tools to do so. It is therefore important to devise the appropriate methodology taking into account cultural differences between states as they relate to services and facilities, markets and purpose of travel.

To be sustainable, tourism must be able to consolidate its diversity, not seek uniformity. Failing this, any attempt at regional and even global harmonisation of what can only be voluntary systems would, under the guise of clarification, merely end up creating more confusion.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### ***Background***

Historically, hotel classification systems were developed to ensure safe and reliable lodging and food for travellers at a time when very few such trustworthy establishments existed. With the unprecedented growth of international tourism in the past fifty years, during which hospitality has reached the status of a mature industry, the focus has moved from consumer protection (generally guaranteed by national regulations and legislation) to consumer information. Today, standardization and competitive marketing of hotel services to foreign customers and tourist professionals have emerged as driving forces for instituting a local or national hotel classification system.

With so many people now travelling, both within their own country and often far beyond, the idea has arisen of devising one single scheme which could be applied to hotel accommodation throughout the world for the benefit of both consumers (tourists) and travel professionals (tour operators and travel agents, in particular). Whether this is in fact desirable – and indeed feasible – remains a subject of considerable discussion.

As a result, the issue of hotel classification is one that has appeared on the agenda of the World Tourism Organisation for a considerable number of years.

Most recently, a comparative study of hotel classification systems (the formal determination of hotel ratings or categories) was included in the WTO General Programme of Work for the 2000-2001 biennium, as a specific project (Activity 12: National Tourism Legislations) under Part B (Documentation) of the Section 7.

The WTO Quality Support Committee at its 4<sup>th</sup> meeting (Madrid, 12-13 April 2000) recognized that "in the present changing regulatory framework for tourism, the decentralization of government competence for the sector and the appearance of diverse voluntary quality standards applied to accommodation establishments, hotel classification systems:

- (a) are challenged by part of industry as unduly interfering with the marketplace and free competition, especially where such systems are established and controlled by government;
- (b) continue to play the role of consumer guidance as traditional category indicators;
- (c) however, confuse customers because of the lack of international harmonization and accountability;
- (d) are requested by a number of developing countries as a regulatory measure, especially for small business, and in order to achieve compatibility with tourist-sending countries."

In consideration of the above, the Committee requested the Secretariat to carry out a comparative study of existing hotel classification schemes world-wide with a view to:

- (a) identifying the common characteristics prevailing in such classifications;
- (b) establishing minimum international classification criteria as reference values and guidelines which could be used by interested parties in rating hotels and similar accommodation establishments;
- (c) defining recommended procedures and rules for classification;
- (d) preparing the WTO position on classification outlining the various types classification available (voluntary, corporate, industry-controlled, government-controlled, etc.) and the prevention of its use as a barrier to free competition and trade in hotel services."

Also, the same Committee strongly recommended that this activity be closely coordinated with representatives of the operational sector, to begin with WTO's Affiliate Member, the International Hotel & Restaurant Association (IH&RA).

The recommendation of this Committee was subsequently endorsed by the WTO Executive Council at its 63<sup>rd</sup> and 64<sup>th</sup> session (Madrid, 28-30 November 2000).

Based on this recommendation, the Secretary-General of WTO formally consulted the International Hotel & Restaurant Association (IH&RA). After an exchange of letters and various meetings between representatives of both organizations, IH&RA proposed that before any new work was undertaken, the first stage of any project should be to review the various schemes existing throughout the world tapping the experience and expertise of the national hotel associations across the globe. WTO then appointed IH&RA its designated expert on this aspect of the project. IH&RA officially advised the Secretary-General early in January 2001 that it was prepared to cooperate with WTO initially in two areas, viz.:

- to prepare a status report on existing hotel classification schemes
- to carry out a comparative analysis and interpretation of such schemes and their functions.

It was understood that in the light of the conclusions of the study, which could give rise to recommendations, both organizations would examine the possibility of undertaking a follow-up to this activity as already outlined in the recommendations of the WTO Quality Support Committee (see above).

## 1. Objectives

This joint WTO/IH&RA study is expected to produce the following results considered to be of interest to governments, industry professionals and consumers:

- (a) to achieve transparency regarding existing hotel classification schemes and policies, on the basis of comprehensive research and international comparisons; and,
- (b) to bring into focus the implications of the present situation in order to guide governments and industry in any further action they may wish to undertake in this area.

## 2. Previous work

### *IUOTO - Hotel Trade Charter*

In 1952, a *Hotel Trade Charter* was drawn up by the International Union of Official Travel Organizations (IUOTO) – the predecessor to the World Tourism Organisation. This marked the beginning of expressions of interest in the issue of hotel classification, taken up at IUOTO as of 1969. In 1971 it was decided that any overall system, to be successful, should be evolved at the regional level, in close consultation with hotel industry professionals.

### *World Tourism Organization (WTO)*

When the World Tourism Organization was created in 1975 it formally took over the functions previously covered by IUOTO. As a result, between 1976 and 1982, all WTO Regional Commissions came to adopt standardized hotel classification systems on a regional basis, using the model established by IUOTO.

In 1985, the WTO General Assembly adopted a resolution to include the issue of hotel classification in its Work Programme for the period 1986-1987 as part of its standard-setting activity. Two surveys of Member States were carried out in 1985-1987. They form the basis of the Report on *“Interregional Harmonization of Hotel Classification Criteria on the Basis of the Classification Standards adopted by the Regional Commissions”* (PG(VI)/B.5.2) presented to the Executive Council in Fez, Morocco, in November 1988. The surveys showed that out of the 74 respondents to the questionnaire, 54 (i.e. 73 per cent) had national hotel standards consistent – either fully or partially – with WTO-recommended classification standards. In the remaining 20 Member States, national standards were either not consistent with WTO standards – or there was no classification system in place.

### *European Union - HOTREC*

In the spring of 1982 the then European Economic Community (EEC) proposed a common EEC grading of Hotels. This gave rise to discussions between the Confederation of Hotels, Restaurants & Cafés in the European Community (HOTREC) and the Commission Services on whether or not grading was the most satisfactory way of providing the consumer with relevant information on which to base his/her choice of accommodation. HOTREC favoured providing more efficient consumer information and

proposed a standardised EEC hotel information system based on graphical symbols without grading. These discussions ultimately led to the adoption of Council Recommendation of 31 December 1986 on *Standardized Information in Existing Hotels (86/665/EEC)* stating that Member States should encourage the use by their national tourist bodies or other competent bodies, in collaboration with bodies representing hoteliers, of the set of standard graphical symbols designed to cover hotel facilities. The Recommendation also invited the Commission “to make an analysis, in cooperation with Member States, of their tourist bodies and/or representatives of their hotel industries, of existing hotel-grading systems and to examine the practical usefulness and the desirability of producing a Community-wide grading system for hotels”.

In response to this invitation, HOTREC produced its study in 1988 on *“Proposed Uniform Hotel Information System for Hotels in Member States of the European Economic Community” (Doc.88.31)*. This document reviewed and compared existing grading systems within the EEC, analysed the problems inherent in grading as well as those specific to the EEC and reviewed consumer information needs and booking patterns. In view of the practical difficulty of setting up a worthwhile and workable European hotel grading system, it concluded that consumer information needs would be far better met by a standardised information system.

#### *Signs, Symbols & Terminology – WTO, CEN & ISO*

The question of graphical symbols and standardized terminology was then taken up by a number of different bodies. The World Tourism Organization reported in 1989 on *The Standardization of Tourist Signs and Symbols (PG(VI)B.5.1* in relation to tourist attractions, services and facilities, without however any particular reference to hotel facilities. Work was also undertaken on public information symbols in the early 1990s by the Comité Européen de Normalisation (CEN – the European Standardisation Committee bringing together the national standards bodies of Europe) in conjunction with the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). Some of these symbols specifically covered hotel and restaurant services.

By the late 1990s, European efforts were focused on the harmonisation of description criteria for tourist services. In 1996, CEN set up a Working Group within its Technical Committee (TC 329) in charge of Tourist Services to study the advisability of setting up an international standard on hotel classification. This was in response to a request formally made to ISO for an international standard by AIT/FIA, the international trade association representing automobile clubs (Alliance Internationale du Tourisme & International Automobile Federation). Members of the CEN TC had reservations regarding a standard but agreed on the need to clarify terminology. Immediately both HOTREC and IH&RA officially made known their strongly opposition to the idea of an international standard for the classification of hotels on the grounds that “creating a single grading system that transcends national boundaries would be an impossible and undesirable task.” At the same time, both organisations supported the idea of improving consumer information.

Then in 1997, ISO set up a Working Group specifically on “Accommodation Facilities”. While agreeing to let CEN continue to lead the work on the harmonisation of “terminology and description criteria”, it was proposed to extend the group’s area of investigation to cover the quality of accommodation services. This led to a formal proposal to use ISO

9000 as the basis for an international hotel classification standard. This was once again vigorously opposed by IH&RA and HOTREC on the grounds that ISO 9000 only assures that predetermined standards are consistently provided but gives no indication of the level of that standard. In addition, ISO 9000 does not address consumer expectations on service delivery.

A series of meetings of the ISO WG followed in 1997-1998, where IH&RA consistently voiced its opposition to the proposals under discussion and where no consensus could be reached between participants. Noting this irreconcilable division the ISO Technical Management Board decided to disband the WG and refer the work on a terminology standard back to CEN in February 1999. The CEN work in this area was completed with the publication in January 2001 of the European Standard on *Tourism Services – Hotels and other types of tourism accommodation – Terminology* (prEN ISO 18513).

#### *Latest developments at the EU level*

In May 2003 the European Parliament Committee on Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism (RETT) requested the EU Directorate-General Research to carry out a study on hotel classification in the European Union. The stated purpose was to review existing classification schemes in Member States. At the time of writing, it is not yet known how the European Parliament intends to pursue this matter. The final report is to be presented to a forthcoming meeting of RETT.

### **3. Methodology**

The Study was mainly based on desk research. Background documents include:

- ? National laws and regulations on hotel classification. (These are available at the WTO Documentation Centre.)
- ? The results of studies and reports prepared by other sources. (Reference is made to the HOTREC surveys on *Classification of Lodging Establishments in Countries Represented within HOTREC* of 1988, 1996, 2001)
- ? The results of periodic surveys on classification of lodging establishments conducted by IH&RA among its member National Hotel & Restaurant Associations. (This survey was conducted in 1995, 1997, and 2000.)

#### *Twin survey methodology*

After a series of consultations and internal meetings, including a debate at the IH&RA National Association Chief Executives Council (NACE) in Amsterdam in April 2001, IH&RA and WTO agreed that the most efficient way of covering the hotel classification issue would be to devise two parallel questionnaires, one intended for the National Tourism Administrations (NTAs) i.e. the public sector, the other for National Hotel Associations, i.e. the private sector. These two sectors may both be involved either separately or jointly in establishing and running a country's hotel classification scheme, so it was essential to be able to track the form this involvement took as well as the overlap, where it occurred.

In April 2002, these two questionnaires (see annex) were devised by WTO with input from IH&RA. WTO then circulated the public sector questionnaire to all its Members while IH&RA circulated the private sector questionnaire to its National Association members as well as to non-Member associations. Hasteners were sent out in the following months and additional information sought from respondents where this was considered necessary or particularly interesting, especially regarding new or evolving schemes.

At the same time the WTO undertook the same process at its end. Given the difficulty in obtaining replies from some key Member States or Associations, compilation was deferred in order to achieve as broad a coverage as possible. This was undertaken by IH&RA in 2002-2003, with preliminary results of both questionnaires consolidated by late 2002 and a first draft report submitted to WTO in April 2003. Late replies continued to be received after this date up to January 2004 have been incorporated into the final analysis.

The following chapter gives the consolidated replies to the IH&RA questionnaire followed by those of the WTO questionnaire and finally a comparative analysis of findings of both surveys. Given below is the explanatory note to the IH&RA questionnaire sent to National Hotel Associations, as well as the slightly different note accompanying the WTO questionnaire sent to National Tourism Administrations.

### **Explanatory note to IH&RA questionnaire**

**Purpose:** The findings of this survey will contribute to the "joint IH&RA and WTO study on hotel classification" which follows on the recommendation of the WTO Quality Support Committee, the WTO work programme for 2002-2003 and the *Memorandum of Understanding* between the International Hotel & Restaurant Association (IH&RA) and the WTO Secretariat.<sup>1</sup>

**Object:** The scope of the survey is limited to hotels and similar establishments<sup>2</sup> (e.g., apartment hotels, motels, inns, etc.<sup>3</sup>) irrespective of their location (urban, rural, coastal, etc.). Other types of accommodation facilities, irrespective of their denotation and regional interpretation (e.g., holiday centres, holiday homes, youth hostels, holiday camps, camping and caravanning sites, time-share, etc.), are excluded from the survey.

**Definitions:** For the purpose of the survey, the term "classification of accommodation establishments" denotes a system, duly published, in which accommodation establishments of the same type (e.g., hotels, motels, inns, etc.) have been conventionally broken down into classes, categories or grades according to their common physical and service characteristics and established at government, industry or other private levels.

---

<sup>1</sup>WTO and IH&RA have agreed to undertake jointly a study on hotel classification to include a status report on existing hotel classification schemes and a comparative analysis and interpretation of such schemes and their functions.

<sup>2</sup> Such establishments provide services entered as number 63110.0 in the Central Product Classification (CPS) and coincide with "tourism characteristic activities" in the Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework.

<sup>3</sup> These terms are subject to debate and regional interpretation. At the European level, standardized terminology has been adopted to this effect by CEN (European Committee for Standardisation).

**Scope of replies:** In view of their national situation and the availability of information, NACE respondents may provide information on classification (governmental, non- governmental or both, if both systems co-exist or are complementary)

**Documents:** The respondent's efforts to provide simple and unequivocal answers, whether affirmative (yes, underline), non-affirmative (no) or factual (specify) is much appreciated. As a principle, you are not requested to attach additional supporting documents, unless you feel that such existing documents (if possible, in English or French) need to be sent to IH&RA to further clarify your replies.

It would greatly assist us if you could use the opportunity of the survey to attach to the completed questionnaires the latest relevant regulatory instruments and/or indicate their country website from which such instruments could be viewed and/or downloaded. This will facilitate clearer investigation of classification criteria.

### **Explanatory Note to WTO Questionnaire**

Purpose, Object and Definition were identical to those given for the IH&RA questionnaire.

**Scope of replies:** In view of their national situation and the availability of information, NTA respondents may provide information on government classification (covered by Part A of the survey) or non-governmental classification (Part B), or both systems (should such systems co-exist or are complementary), as well as on announced classification (Part C).

**Documents :** The respondents' efforts to provide simple and unequivocal answers, whether affirmative (yes, underline), non-affirmative (no) or factual (specify) will be appreciated. As a principle, they are not requested to attach additional supporting documents, unless the respondents feel that such existing documents (if possible, in English, French, Russian or Spanish) need to be sent to the WTO Secretariat to further clarify their replies.

With respect to national legislation and regulations governing accommodation classification, which are normally requested and received by the WTO Documentation Centre on a regular basis, respondents are kindly requested to check on this situation and, when appropriate, use the opportunity of the survey to attach to their completed questionnaires the latest relevant regulatory instruments and/or indicate their country website from which such instruments could be viewed and/or downloaded. This will allow the researchers to better investigate the classification criteria.

## II. STATUS REPORT ON CLASSIFICATION

### 1. Compilation of replies from the private sector to IH&RA.

Questionnaire on the classification of accommodation establishments (hotels & similar establishments), completed by national hotel associations (NACE).

The questionnaire was circulated to 68 national associations in 61 countries. The following is the analysis of the 32 replies received.

#### Participating National Associations

Country	Association	Respondent
<i>Austria</i>	Austrian Professional Hotel Association	<b>Gregor Herzog</b> Chief Executive Officer
<i>Canada</i>	Hotel Association of Canada	<b>Anthony P. Pollard</b> President
<i>Caribbean</i>	Caribbean Hotel Association	<b>John Bell</b> Director General & CEO
<i>Chile</i>	Asociación Gremial de Empresarios Hoteleros de Chile	<b>Gustavo Abel Ernst</b> Manager
<i>Colombia</i>	Colombian Hotel Association	<b>Manuel Bermudez</b> General Manager
<i>Czech Republic</i>	Czech National Federation of Hotels and Restaurants	<b>Dr. Vladimir Stetina</b> General Secretary
<i>Denmark</i>	Danish Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Association	<b>Torben Kaas</b> Head of the Classification Dept.
<i>Egypt</i>	Egyptian Hotel Association	<b>Baghat Badawy</b> Director of Marketing, Promotion & Training
<i>Estonia</i>	Estonian Hotel and Restaurant Association	<b>Donald Visnapuu</b> Managing Director
<i>Finland</i>	Finnish Hotel and Restaurant Association	<b>Pekka Ropponen</b> Consultative Manager
<i>France</i>	Union des Métiers et des Industries de l'Hôtellerie	
<i>Georgia</i>	National Hotel Association of Georgia	<b>George Mtvaradze</b> General Manager
<i>Germany</i>	Hotelverband Deutschland German Hotel and Restaurant Association	<b>Markus Luthe</b> Deputy Chief Executive
<i>Greece</i>	Hellenic Chamber of Hotels	<b>Agni Christidou</b> Manager
<i>Hungary</i>	Hotel Association of Hungary	<b>Gabor Lombosi</b> General Secretary
<i>Iceland</i>	Icelandic Travel Industry Association	<b>Erna Hauksdottir</b> Director
<i>Iraq</i>	Hotel and Restaurant Association in Iraq	<b>Dleir Ismail</b> Chairman
<i>Israel</i>	Israel Hotel Association	<b>Abraham Rosental</b> Director General
<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan Hotel Association	<b>Fakhri Twal</b> Director

Country	Association	Respondent
<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait Hotel Owners Association	<b>Mohamed A. Najja</b> General Secretary
<i>Lebanon</i>	Syndicate of Hoteliers of Lebanon	<b>Melhem Hage</b>
<i>Malaysia</i>	Malaysian Association of Hotels	<b>Sophia Maxwell</b> Administration Manager
<i>Netherlands</i>	Koninklijk Horeca Nederland	<b>Hans van der Kooij</b> <b>Sectormanager Hotels</b>
<i>Norway</i>	Norwegian Hospitality Association	<b>Bjorn Arnesen</b> Senior Manager
<i>Romania</i>	Romanian Hotel Industry Federation	<b>Mihai Rajnita</b> Chief Executive Officer
<i>Slovak Republic</i>	Slovak Association of Hotels and Restaurants	<b>Zora Dundekova</b>
<i>Sultanate of Oman</i>	Ministry of Commerce and Industry Directorate General for Tourism	<b>Dr. Heba A. Aziz</b> Advisor-Research and Development <b>Ali Al Sudairi</b> Statistical Analyst
<i>Sweden</i>	Swedish Hotel and Restaurant Association	<b>Rikard Bergsten</b> Head of Classification Dep.
<i>Switzerland</i>	Swiss Hotel Association	<b>Annette Siegwart</b> Classification
<i>Turkey</i>	Turob-Turkish Hotel Association	<b>Kasim Zoto</b> Board Member
<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	Dubai Government Department of Tourism & Commerce Marketing	<b>Majid Sager Abdulla Al Merri</b> Executive, Hotel classification
<i>United Kingdom</i>	British Hospitality Association	<b>Martin Couchman</b> Deputy Chief Executive
<i>United States of America*</i>	American Hotel & Lodging Association	<b>Tia Gordon</b> Director of Communication
<b>Total</b>		<b>32 countries</b>

\* There is no official hotel classification system, hence no replies to the questionnaire

1. Is an official classification system in place in your country ?
2. If yes, at what level?

Country	Yes	No	Level
Austria	X		National; responsibility of the Austrian Professional Hotel Association
Canada	X		Provincial; each province has different regulation
Caribbean			Varies from country to country
Chile	X		National; Tourism Board
Colombia		X	
Czech Republic	X		National; under tourism law in cooperation with Czech National Federation of Hotels and Restaurants
Denmark	X		National; cooperation between hotel association and Tourist Board/ Ministry for Trade and Industry
Egypt	X		Government
Estonia	X		Government
Finland		X	
France	X		National
Georgia	X		Government
Germany	X		National; voluntary system operated by DEHOGA
Greece	X		National
Hungary	X		Government
Iceland	X		National; it is open to every hotel and guesthouse, but voluntary
Iraq	X		Government
Israel		X	
Jordan	X		
Kuwait	X		Government; in coordination with Kuwait Hotel Owners Association
Lebanon	X		Government
Malaysia	X		Government, Ministry of Culture Arts & Tourism of Malaysia
Netherlands	X		International, with Belgium and Luxembourg
Norway		X	
Romania	X		Government; Ministry of Tourism
Slovak Republic	X		Government

Country	Yes	No	Level
Sultanate of Oman	X		Government; Ministry of Commerce and Industry/ Directorate General of Tourism
Sweden	X		National, voluntary system operated by SHR for the first year (2004)
Switzerland	X		National; the classification system of the Swiss Hotel Association is under private law
Turkey	X		Government
United Arab Emirates	X		Government
United Kingdom	X		Regional; 4 systems: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
United States		X	

### 3. Application to facilities.

#### a.) Current classification in force applies to:

Country	Hotels	Apartment hotels	Motels	Inns	Others
Austria	X	X	X	X	
Canada	X	X	X	X	B+B's, 'campagnards'
Chile	X	X	X	X	
Czech Republic	X		X		
Denmark	X				
Egypt	X				floating hotels
Estonia	X				
France	X				tourism residences
Georgia	X	X	X	X	all kinds of hotels with 10 and more rooms
Germany	X	X	X	X	
Greece	X	X	X		
Hungary	X		X	X	health and spa hotels
Iceland	X	X	X	X	
Iraq	X	X	X	X	restaurants
Jordan	X	X	X	X	
Kuwait	X				
Lebanon					
Malaysia	X	X	X	X	
Netherlands	X	X	X		
Romania	X	X	X	X	
Slovak Republic	X	X	X	X	
Sultanate of Oman	X	X	X	X	questhouses
Sweden	X				
Switzerland	X	X	X	X	
Turkey	X	X	X		historic buildings
United Arab Emirates	X	X			questhouses
United Kingdom	X		X	X	

Country	All or specific types	Last date	Graphical symbol
Austria			
Canada			
Chile	optional	August 1987	stars
Czech Republic		1998	stars
Denmark			stars
Egypt			
Estonia		2001	stars
France		1986	stars
Georgia			
Germany	all	1999	stars
Greece	all types of hotels	1987 (2002)	letters (stars)
Hungary	all	24 June 1998	stars
Iceland			
Iraq			
Jordan			
Kuwait		1994	
Lebanon			
Malaysia	all		stars for hotels, apartment hotels & motels, Orchid for Inns
Netherlands	all	1 January 1999	stars
Romania	specific types	1999	stars
Slovak Republic	specific types	October 2001	stars
Sultanate of Oman	all		stars
Sweden	Specific types		stars
Switzerland	members of SHA	2000	stars for hotels, motels special symbol for apt. hotels, inns
Turkey	all	06 July 2000	stars
United Arab Emirates			
United Kingdom	all	1997	stars

**b.) Additional comments:**

Country	Comments
Czech Republic	Basic classification is in force for all types of facilities classification of CNFHR as ticked above.
Germany	Private guest houses and Bed & Breakfast accommodation (non-commercial) are classified according to a different system run by the German Tourist Association (DTV).
Greece	In March a new classification system has been legislated, but it has not been applied yet. The relevant decree provides that all the hotels must be classified according to the new system by the end of September 2003.
United Kingdom	Some group hotels are permitted entry into the scheme guidebooks without having a star rating.

#### 4. Basis for establishing classification.

1. State Constitution
2. Tourism law
3. NTA competence
4. Agreement between government bodies concerned
5. Recommendation in a government-adopted tourism development plan
6. Prerogative/declared objective of a national hotel association
7. Decision (ad hoc) of a national hotel association
8. Agreement between independent hotels
9. Government recommendation
10. Recommendation in a tourism development plan implemented by industry

Country	Basis for establishing classification										Types of establishments concerned	
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.		
Austria						X	X					
Canada	X			X						X		varies in provinces
Chile		X								X		all
Czech Republic		X				X						all
Denmark	agreement between national hotel association and government bodies											
Egypt		X										
Estonia		X										
France				X								
Georgia		X										
Germany							X					
Greece		X	X									all hotels
Hungary			X		X							all
Iceland				X						X	X	
Iraq		X			X	X	X	X			X	
Jordan		X									X	
Kuwait				X						X		
Lebanon						X	X	X	X	X	X	
Malaysia	X	X		X						X		
Netherlands		X		X								
Romania		X	X	X	X							all accommodation & F&B
Slovak Republic	X		X							X		all hotels
Sultanate of Oman		X								X		
Sweden					X		X					
Switzerland						X						
Turkey	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	all hotels
United Arab Emirates	X	X			X					X		
United Kingdom			X							X		

## 5. Rationale and use of classification.

Classification is justified by:

Country	Consumer concerns	Marketing (industry's wish to better communicate its offer)	Need to have a tool to monitor sector development
Austria	X	X	X
Canada	X	X	
Chile	X	X	
Czech Republic	X		
Denmark	X	X	X
Egypt			
Estonia	X	X	
France	X	X (hotel chains)	
Georgia	X		X
Germany	X	X	
Greece	X	X	X
Hungary	X	X	
Iceland	X	X	
Iraq	X	X	
Jordan	X	X	X
Kuwait		X	X
Lebanon	X	X	X
Malaysia	X	X	X
Netherlands	X	X	
Romania	X	X	X
Slovak Republic		X	X
Sultanate of Oman			
Sweden	X	X	
Switzerland	X	X	X
Turkey	X	X	X
United Arab Emirates	X	X	X
United Kingdom	X	X	

Country	Is it used to promote quality?	Is it used to promote investments?	Does it seek compatibility with existing classification systems in other countries?	Other rationale and use
Austria	yes	yes	yes	
Canada	yes	yes	yes, to a certain degree (Mobil and CAA/AAA)	
Chile	yes	no	yes	
Czech Republic	yes	no	yes, Austria	
Denmark	yes	no	no	raise the quality of the hotel sector
Egypt	yes		yes	control and monitor accommodation tariffs within established classes
Estonia	yes		yes	
France	no	no	no	
Georgia	yes	no	yes	
Germany	yes	yes	no	

Country	Is it used to promote quality?	Is it used to promote investments?	Does it seek compatibility with existing classification systems in other countries?	Other rationale and use
Greece	yes	yes	yes	control and monitor accommodation tariffs within established classes
Hungary	yes		yes, Germany, Austria, Switzerland	
Iceland	yes		yes	
Iraq	yes	yes	no	differentiate government taxes; monitor accom. tariffs within establishments
Jordan	yes	yes	yes	
Kuwait	yes			
Lebanon			yes	differentiate government taxes; control and monitor accommodation tariffs within established classes
Malaysia	yes	no	yes	
Netherlands	yes	yes	yes	
Romania	yes	yes	yes	
Slovak Republic	yes	yes	yes	differentiate government taxes
Sultanate of Oman	yes		yes	control accommodation tariffs within established classes
Sweden				
Switzerland	yes	yes	yes	
Turkey	yes	yes	yes	
United Arab Emirates	yes	yes	no	differentiate government taxes
United Kingdom	yes		no	

**6. Classification authority/body deciding each classification. (Classification authorities such as National Tourism Ministry/Hotel Association, etc. The following (hotels, apartment hotels etc.) may each be classified by a different authority)**

Country	Hotels	Apartment hotels	Motels	Inns	Others	Classification authority
Austria	X	X	X	X		Austrian Professional Hotel Association
Canada	X	X	X	X	X	
Chile	X	X	X	X	X	National Tourism Board
Czech Republic	X		X			Single body in cooperation with CNFHR
Denmark	X					Classification Board (3 rep. from Danish Tourist Board and 3 rep. from the national hotel association)
Egypt	X				X	Ministry of Tourism
Estonia	X					Ministry of Economy
France	X					DGCCRF
Georgia	X	X	X	X	X	Single body for all types of establishments
Germany	X	X	X	X		DEHOGA in cooperation with regional tourism associations
Greece	X	X	X			Tourism Directorates of the 13 regional authorities; in the new system the competent body will be the Greek National Tourism Organization
Hungary	X		X	X	X	Local authority/municipality
Iceland	X	X	X	X		Icelandic Tourist Board
Iraq	X	X	X	X		Tourism Board
Jordan						
Kuwait	X					Government authority in coordination with hotel association
Lebanon						
Malaysia	X	X	X	X		Ministry of Culture, Arts & Tourism of Malaysia
Netherlands	X	X	X			One single authority which inspects the star-system; this is obligatory to be able to use the name 'hotel'
Romania	X	X	X	X		Ministry of Tourism with Industry Representatives
Slovak Republic	X					Each establishment
Sultanate of Oman	X	X				Directorate General of Tourism

Country	Hotels	Apartment hotels	Motels	Inns	Others	Classification authority
Sweden	X					Swedish Hotel & Restaurant Association
Switzerland	X	X	X	X		5 regional and 1 national commission, all bodies of the SHA
Turkey						
United Arab Emirates	X	X			X	Department of Tourism & Commerce Marketing
United Kingdom	X		X	X		England: AA/RAC Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland: national tourism org.s

**7. Bodies involved in devising and drafting classification.**

**Was the classification system in question prepared by:**

- a. NTA/NTO and other government officials
- b. An expert designated/recommended by WTO/OMT
- c. In consultation with an international hotel and/or restaurant association
- d. In consultation with national hotel association
- e. A private national/international consultant
- f. Collaboration between hotel industry and NTA/ Government/NTO experts
- g. On the basis of another country's classification system
- h. By revising the previous system
- i. In consultation with Consumers' Association

Country	Bodies involved									Others
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	
Austria				X	X	X		X		Extensive market research project on tourist expectations and needs is the basis for the current system. The research project was government funded and carried out by the Vienna University of Economics.
Canada				X	X	X	X	X		
Chile	X			X		X				
Czech Republic						X				
Denmark				X		X				
Egypt	X			X			X	X		
Estonia	X			X		X	X			
France			X							
Georgia		X								
Germany				X		X				Consumers' Association demanded a national classification scheme. Market introduction in 1996, relaunched in 1999.
Greece	X			X				X		There has been research into the classification systems existing in Europe.
Hungary	X			X			X			

Iceland	X		X				
Iraq		X	X				
Jordan	X			X			
Kuwait			X				
Lebanon					X	X	
Malaysia	X		X	X	X		
Netherlands	X						
Romania	X		X	X	X	X	
Slovak Republic	X		X	X		X	X
Sultanate of Oman				X	X		Directorate General of Tourism in consultation with other ministries concerned
Sweden			X		X		Based on HORESTA (Denmark's) system
Switzerland		X	X	X		X	X
Turkey			X	X		X	
United Arab Emirates				X	X		
United Kingdom	X		X	X		X	

## 8. Applicability of classification.

a.)

Country	Is classification mandatory?	Can establishments operate without being classified?	Can classification be mandatory in certain areas, e. g. as a condition for membership of a hotel association?	Is it necessary to obtain license/permission /registration to operate?
Austria	no	yes	no	yes
Canada		varies from province to province		
Chile	no	yes	no	no
Czech Republic	yes	no	no	no
Denmark	yes, hotels	yes	yes	no
Egypt	yes	yes, but will not be classified as a tourist establishment	yes	yes
Estonia	no	yes	no	yes
France	no	yes	no	no
Georgia	yes	no	no	yes
Germany	no	yes	no	no
Greece	yes	no		yes
Hungary	yes	no	no	yes
Iceland	no	yes	no	no
Iraq				
Jordan	yes	no	no	yes
Kuwait		yes		
Lebanon	yes	no		no

Country	Is classification mandatory?	Can establishments operate without being classified?	Can classification be mandatory in certain areas, e. g. as a condition for membership of a hotel association?	Is it necessary to obtain license/permission /registration to operate?
		no according to the new Tourism Act 2002 which was implemented for mandatory classification, before		
Malaysia	yes	yes	no	yes
Netherlands	yes	yes	no	yes
Romania	yes	no	no	no
Slovak Republic	yes	no	no	no
Sultanate of Oman		no		yes
Sweden	no	yes	no	
Switzerland	yes, for SHA members	yes, non-members of SHA	no	yes
Turkey	yes	no	yes	yes
United Arab Emirates	yes	no	no	yes
United Kingdom	no, except in Northern Ireland	yes, except in Northern Ireland	yes, e.g. in order to obtain advertisement space in Tourist Board publications	no

b.)

Country	Of establishments (by type of establishments) %	Of room capacity (by type of establishments) %	Can all establishments apply to be classified?
Austria	70	75	yes
Canada	90	95	yes
Chile	20	35	yes
Czech Republic	100	100	yes, space of rooms according to law act 173/98 Sb
Denmark	70	90	no, only national hotel association's members
Egypt			yes
Estonia	25 of hotels	50 of hotel rooms	only certified hotels can be classified
France			no
Georgia	65	50	yes
Germany	15	30	yes, more than 8 beds
Greece	100	100	yes

Country	Of establishments (by type of establishments) %	Of room capacity (by type of establishments) %	Can all establishments apply to be classified?
Hungary	100	100	yes
Iceland	Most of the largest hotels in the country and most of the hotels in Reykjavik are classified but there are very many small guesthouses and few are classified.		yes
Iraq			
Jordan			yes
Kuwait	80	80	yes
Lebanon			no
Malaysia			yes, if they have appropriate infra-structure as a tourist accommodation premise and valid business licence
Netherlands	100	100	yes
Romania	963 hotels, motels, inns and similar	~ 120.000 rooms, of which 45% seasonal	yes, all minimum criteria recommended by WTO are applied
Slovak Republic	100	100	yes
Sultanate of Oman	30		yes
Sweden	35 % of the members	40 % of the members	No, establishments have to be members of SHR
Switzerland	45	80	no, establishments have to be members of the SHA
Turkey	55	75	no
United Arab Emirates	100	100	yes
United Kingdom	30-40	60	yes

## 9. Verification of compliance with classification system.

### a.) Is verification performed by:

Country	Central government inspectors	Local government inspectors	Hotel industry (second party) inspectors	Independent (third party) inspectors	Other parties
Austria			X	X	
Canada				X	
Chile					
Czech Republic			X		
Denmark			X		
Egypt	X	X			
Estonia					Classification Commission, (Ministry of Economy)

Country	Central government inspectors	Local government inspectors	Hotel industry (second party) inspectors	Independent (third party) inspectors	Other parties
France					
Georgia	X	X			
Germany			X		NTA and RTA
Greece	X	X		X	
Hungary	X	X			consumer protection organisations, municipality
Iceland	X				
Iraq					
Jordan			X		JHA inspectors
Kuwait		X			
Lebanon	X			X	
Malaysia	X	X	X	X	Third party inspectors are Authorities for fire department & health
Netherlands	X				
Romania	X	X	X		
Slovak Republic	X		X		
Sultanate of Oman	X				
Sweden			X		
Switzerland			X		
Turkey	X		X		
United Arab Emirates		X			
United Kingdom				X	

**b.) Mode of verification:**

Country	Announced visits at fixed date	Mystery checks	Other methods
Austria	X		frequent questionnaires to be answered by the hoteliers
Canada	yes, except for 5*	yes, except for 5*	
Chile	X		one time visit upon application
Czech Republic	X		
Denmark	X	X	
Egypt	X		
Estonia	X		
France		X	
Georgia		X	
Germany	X		
Greece	X		non-announced visits of the competent public authorities
Hungary	X		
Iceland	X		
Iraq			
Jordan		X	
Kuwait	X		
Lebanon	X		
Malaysia	X	X	
Netherlands	X		
Romania	X	X	

Country	Announced visits at fixed date	Mystery checks	Other methods
Slovak Republic			
Sultanate of Oman			DGT inspectors random surprise visits
Sweden	X		
Switzerland	X		
Turkey	X	X	
United Arab Emirates	X	X	
United Kingdom		X	

**c-d.)**

Country	Cost of verification borne by:		Periodicity of verification
	The verifying authority	The hotel company concerned	
Austria	X		
Canada		X	every year
Chile	X		once upon registration
Czech Republic		X	every two years
Denmark		X	every year
Egypt	X		
Estonia	X (State)		every two years
France			occasionally
Georgia		X	every year
Germany		X	every three years
Greece	X	X	can occur at any time
Hungary	X		occasionally
Iceland		X	every year
Iraq			
Jordan	X		every year
Kuwait		X	every three years
Lebanon			
Malaysia	X		every two years
Netherlands	X		every two years
Romania	X	X	every three years
Slovak Republic		X	occasionally
Sultanate of Oman	X		every year and when necessary
Sweden		X	Every year
Switzerland	X		every five years
Turkey	X		occasionally
United Arab Emirates	X	X	every year or when asked by the establishment for classification
United Kingdom		X	every year

**10. How frequently is the classification system updated?**

**11. Who finances the system?**

**12. What are the main criteria referred to for classification?**

Country	How frequently is classification system updated?	Who finances the system?	What are the main criteria referred to for classification?
Austria	every year	membership establishments of the Austrian Professional Hotel Association	hard- and software
Canada	every year	the hotels	numerous
Chile	quarterly, regarding registered and classified establishments	National Tourism Administration	availability of services, e.g. restaurant facilities, meeting rooms, recreational, parking
Czech Republic	every two years	respective facilities	law act 137/98 Sb and classification of CNFHR
Denmark	every three years	the classified hotels	all services and facilities that can be measured
Estonia	every five years	government	
France		hotel concerned	number of rooms, surfaces, service
Georgia	every year	hotel company	Georgian National Standard; 12 December 1996
Germany	after 4-5 years the criteria are checked and updated to market needs	hotels (classification fees)	237 objective criteria, mainly hardware; minimum criteria by category and assessment points to be reached
Greece	every five years hotels have to update certain supporting documents	government and hoteliers	compulsory technical specifications and functional standards which can be compulsory or optional
Hungary	every five years	government	the level of comfort provided
Iceland	every year	the participant hotels	objective
Iraq			
Jordan		Jordan Hotel Association	the JHA hotel classification system
Kuwait	when it is needed	Kuwait Hotel Owners Association	
Lebanon		government	location, building, indoor units, personnel

Country	How frequently is classification system updated?	Who finances the system?	What are the main criteria referred to for classification?
Malaysia	every 3 years	Ministry of Culture, Arts & Tourism Malaysia	Qualitative & aesthetic requirements of Common areas (lobby, reception, bar, restaurant, banquet halls, recreation), Services (F&B, Front desk), Safety Standards & hygiene, Staff and rooms
Netherlands	every three years	all enterprises in the hotel, restaurant and catering industry	hardware, very little attention to service-related aspects
Romania	almost every 3 years	Ministry of Tourism and taxes paid by operators	minimum recommended by WTO
Slovak Republic	irregularly	government	qualified personnel, quality and number of services
Sultanate of Oman	every year and when necessary	Directorate-General for Tourism	location, outlets, building, indoor units
Sweden	Just initiated so only minor adjustments regularly	Initial one time cost covered by Swedish Tourist Delegation (Government). On-going costs covered by the hotels through a yearly fee based on number of rooms.	Hotel standard and service functions
Switzerland	information: every year standards of class.: every five years	Swiss Hotel Association	quality of infrastructure and services
Turkey	every year	government	standard of rooms and other social activities of the hotel
United Arab Emirates	every year or when changes are announced at a hotel	government	services, health standards, infrastructure
United Kingdom	every year	fees paid by participating hotels	England: facility based Scotland, Wales: quality based

- 13. Is there any link between the classification scheme and:  
Social obligations of the employer (i.e. rating as a criterion to determine social charges);  
Other burdens on the employer (i.e. rating as a criterion to determine other charges/taxes imposed on the employer).**
- 14. Are you satisfied with the existing system in your country?**
- 15. Plans to introduce new classification or revise current classification?**

Country	Obligations relating to employer	Are you satisfied with the existing system in your country?	Plans to introduce new classification or revise current classification?
Austria	none	yes, they have just modernised the system	
Canada		yes, but there is always room for improvement	there is an ongoing revision
Chile	not considered	no, the actual system does not evaluate quality of service; infrastructure nor minimum requirements; it should be also mandatory and incentivated as a marketing tool; classification and verification should be periodical	yes, the local hotel association and national tourism administration are working on a plan to review the current classification system to include above mentioned aspects
Czech Republic	none	not in all respects	within two or three years
Denmark	the hotels must comply with all relevant laws (tax, working conditions, licence, etc.)	yes, it is easily understood as all criteria are measurable; grading meets the expectations of the customers, and the independent classification board ensures the credibility of the scheme	they are currently revising the classification as they do at least every three years
Estonia	none	yes, in general, only periodicity of verification should be every five years	government system includes a lot of bureaucracy, so it is more effective to be managed by NTA, maybe in cooperation with NTO
Finland		yes, as far as there is no official hotel classification system in Finland	
France	none	yes	
Georgia	needs to be improved	lack of information in both parties	plan for new classification based on international experience and laws
Germany	none	yes, it is their own marketing system with the possibility of changing aspects immediately	existing system will be revised regularly in 2003
Greece		the old system had to be modernised; the new one has not yet come into force, so cannot be evaluated	
Hungary	to provide minimal services plus additional services	yes	there is a need to renew it every five years
Iceland	none	yes, quite satisfied, but many hotels find it too expensive; would like to add subjective criteria in the future	no, not yet; we have only had this system, which is the Danish one, for a few years

Country	Obligations relating to employer	Are you satisfied with the existing system in your country?	Plans to introduce new classification or revise current classification?
Iraq			
Jordan	out of 16% social security fees, the owner pays 11,6%		
Kuwait	none	might need update	revise current classification
Lebanon	CNSS, transportation, education	yes, it has just been revised and the new one is quite modern	
Malaysia	no	Exist plans for the system to be managed by the national hotel association but not for certain yet	Yes, to differentiate criteria for service apartments
Netherlands	officially no, but there are examples of real estate taxes being based on the star rating of the hotel concerned	they are in the process of evaluating the system; they have conducted a survey among their members and 44% want to maintain the present system, 28% prefer a voluntary system and 18% want no classification at all	
Norway			they are working on hotel classification and now they have conducted a survey among the consumers and tour operators
Romania		could be better, but state regulations, control and certification is still necessary till privatisation is ready and operators will be more checked by market consumers than by official bodies	within one month, but the only change refers to F&B sector
Slovak Republic		yes	not in near future
Sultanate of Oman	none	yes, the system is currently satisfactory; there is a tourism law which will amend and improve further the classification	the tourism law will add and revise certain points
Sweden	no	yes, and there is an intention to build a Nordic System with Sweden and Denmark as a base	Studying to classify apartment hotels and conference facilities
Switzerland	none	yes	the current classification will be revised during the next three years and enter in force in 2005
Turkey	none	no, the changes in the industry are very fast and the classification system is not very effective actually	involve more the hotel association instead of central government

Country	Obligations relating to employer	Are you satisfied with the existing system in your country?	Plans to introduce new classification or revise current classification?
United Arab Emirates	hotel must respect local traditions, social values and Muslim religion; facilities must be given to employees	yes, but intend to develop and improve the system in 2003	always trying to keep up with the development of the industry
United Kingdom	none	no, three schemes is too many	the governments in England, Scotland and Wales are moving towards accepting the need for a combined system

#### Additional comments

Country	Additional comments
Canada	Each province has different rules, regulations, laws; classification is not mandatory in many provinces. According to the Canadian Constitution, property and civil regulation is a provincial matter, so there are 4 different classification systems in Canada.
Caribbean	Many countries such as Barbados, St. Lucia, Bahamas and Jamaica had plans to establish a system, but none of them had implemented it. 'Les départements d'outre mer Français' are part of France and therefore subject to French legislation. Cancun, Cozumel and the Riviera Maya are subject to Mexico's star system. CHA's official position has always been to oppose the setting up of national classification programs, on the grounds that with different criteria, they would totally confuse an already turbulent marketplace. It is conceivable that a case could be made for a Caribbean regional program, but it would require an awesome amount of preliminary discussion and could meet difficulties in implementation. More to the point would be a common approach to hotel licensing, with proper criteria in place for space requirements, fire safety and health standards, etc.
Colombia	Due to the last government tourism reform law in 1996, there is not an official hotel or similar establishment classification in Colombia at this moment.
Czech Republic	The system is basically established on the law /act 137/98 Sb./ Czech National Federation of Hotels and Restaurants (CNFHR) built it up to the quality of services and equipment.
France	Besides of government classification, 'Hotelcert' has a private additional rating system.
Hungary	International chains (e.g. ACCOR Group) do not like the valid categorisation system.
Netherlands	In The Netherlands the name 'hotel' is protected by law. Accommodations need to have at least one star to be able to call themselves hotel. The scheme is updated whenever one of the participants (i.e. Belgium, Luxembourg and Holland) asks for modification. The national automobile association ANWB operates its own system. This system is a voluntary system, paid for by the individual hotels. Around 60% of all establishments with at least one star in the official classification participate. If one is willing to pay the fee, it will be 'ANWB preferred supplier' and will receive a label on or near the front entrance.

Romania	<p>Operators should submit a written request (a complete file). For new developments, a pre-project visa must be obtained from Ministry of Tourism. Generally speaking, all criteria are applying of those minimum recommended by WTO. Compliance with minimum requirements of norms and consequently with health, sanitary-veterinary, work safety, fire safety bodies certificates. It applies to: buildings, room size, safety &amp; security criteria, staff certificates proving graduation of hospitality schools (front desk, restaurant waiters, cooks, chefs) and a certificate for hotel director /General Manager, issued by Ministry of Tourism/.</p> <p>Restaurants are part of the classification scheme, rated by stars by Ministry of Tourism.</p> <p>The only and very recent private classification guide appeared on the market – House – and it created rumours among Ministry of Tourism officials. The Romanian Hotel Industry Federation's position is that as long as it is a free market, government can rate hotels much more objectively than inspectors, who can be convinced'.</p>
Switzerland	<p>The classification system of the Swiss Hotel Association is the only classification system in Switzerland. It was adopted by SHA in 1979 and has been revised every 5 years.</p>
United Kingdom	<p>The classification system is not very clear, some hotel groups award themselves star ratings.</p>

## 2. Compilation of replies from public sector to WTO.

Questionnaire on the classification of accommodation establishments (hotels & similar establishments). Completed by responsible officers of National Tourism Administrations (NTAs) in collaboration with their national hotel association(s).

145 questionnaires were sent out. The following is the analysis of the 89 replies received.

### Participating Countries

Country	Respondent	Address
Algeria	<i>Said Rebach</i> Vice-Director	Ministry of Tourism R. N.-36 El-Biar, Alger
Andorra	<i>Monica Bonell Tuset</i> Tourism Technician	Ministry of Presidency and Tourism, Department of Tourism Carrer Prat de la Creu 62-64, Andorra la Vella
Argentina	<i>German Luis Perez</i> Executive Coordinator	Secretariat of Tourism Suipacha 1111, piso 20 (1368), Buenos Aires
Armenia	<i>Aram Torosyan</i> Senior Expert	Ministry of Trade and Economic Development, Tourism Development Department 5 Mher Mkrtchian str., 375010, Yerevan
Azerbaijan	<i>Bakhtiyar Gylyndzhov</i> Senior Official	
Belgium	<i>Mouling Alfons</i> General Assistant	Flemish Tourism Grasmarkt 61, 1000, Brussel
Benin	<i>Paul C. Akoha</i> Director of Tourism & Hotellerie	Ministry of Culture, Industry and Tourism
Bolivia	<i>Tec. Monica V. Vargas O.</i> Responsible for Tourism Services	Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment Av. Mariscal Santa Cruz, Edificio Palacio de las Comunicaciones, Piso 16, La Paz
Bosnia and Herzegovina	<i>Dunja Pejic</i> Senior Advisor	Ministry of Trade and Tourism Vuka Karadzica 4, 78000 Banjaluka
Botswana	<i>Kenneth Bentinck</i> for/ Director	Department of Tourism Private Bag 0047, Gaborone
Brazil	<i>Nelson Faria Lins d'Albuquerque Junior</i> Chief of Tourism Product Quality Department	Ministry of Sports and Tourism, Brazilian Institute of Tourism SCN – Quadra 2, Bloco G, Sala 204, 70712-907 Brasilia/DF
Burundi	<i>Nsabimana</i> Grading Service of Tourism Establishments	BP 902, Bujumbura
Cambodia*	<i>Om Sornsun</i> Under Secretary of State	Ministry of Tourism

Chad	<i>Akia Abouna</i> Minister of Tourism Development	Ministry of Tourism Development
Chile	<i>Humberto Rivas Ortega</i> Chief of Planification Department	Av. Providencia 1550, Santiago
China	<i>Zhou Zhang</i> Deputy Director of Hotel Division	China National Tourism Administration 9A, Jianguomennei Ave., 100740 Beijing
Costa Rica	<i>Lic. Martin Quesada Rivera</i> Chief of Tourism Services and Enterprises Department	
Croatia	<i>Zdenko Micic</i> Deputy Minister	Ministry of Tourism Ul. grada Vukovara, 78, Zagreb
Cuba	<i>Maria Elena Lopez Reyes</i> Director of Quality Department	Ministry of Tourism Calle 19 No 710 esq. Paseo Vedado, La Habana
Cyprus	<i>Kyriakos Kyriakou</i> Tourist Officer	Cyprus Tourism Organisation P. O. Box 24535, 1390 Nicosia
Czech Republic	<i>Petr Houska</i> Deputy Director	Old Town Square 6, 110 15 Prague 1
Ecuador	<i>Monica Jaramillo Luque</i> Chief of National Tourism Resources	Ministry of Tourism
Eritrea	<i>Tseggai Mogos</i> D/G/T Service	Ministry of Tourism
Ethiopia	<i>Matewos G/Mariam</i> Head of Standardization & Licensing Department	Tourism Commission P. O. Box 2183, Addis Ababa
France	<i>Michel Veneau</i> Assistant Chief of Tourism Industries & Professions Department	Direction of Tourism 2, rue Linois, 75015 Paris
Gambia	<i>Jimmo Jawneh</i> For: Director General	Gambia Tourism Authority Kololi, P. O. Box 4085, Bakau, K. M. C.
Georgia	<i>Maya Margvelashvili</i> Deputy Chairman	State Department of Tourism and Resorts of Georgia 80, Chavchavadze Str., 380062, Tbilisi
Germany	<i>Markus Luthe,</i> Deputy Chief Executive	DEHOGA and IHA 10873 Berlin, Germany
Ghana	<i>Adeline Boateng</i> Quality Assurance Manager	Ghana Tourist Board P. O. Box 3106, Accra
Greece	<i>Evangelia Papadopoulou</i> International Relations Department	Ministry of Development, General Secretariat of Tourism 2, Amerikis street, 10564 Athens
Guatemala	<i>Hugo Armando Ruiz Garcia</i> Chief of Registration & Supervision of Tourism Enterprises Department	Guatemala Tourist Commission 7a. Ave. 1-17, zona 4, Guatemala, C.A.
Guinea Equatorial	<i>Gabino-Muemba Molonguavina</i> General Director of Tourism	Ministry of Information, Tourism & Culture, General Secretariat of Tourism Malabo

Haiti	<i>Marie-Jo Bredy</i> Planification Director <i>Georges Belin</i> Investments Director <i>Jn-Claude Rolles</i> Consultant	
Hungary	<i>Gabor Lombosi</i> Secretary-General	Hotel Association of Hungary P. O. Box 233, H-1444, Budapest
India*	<i>J. Dash</i> Joint Director-General	Tourism India C-1 Hutments Dalhousie Road, 110011 New Delhi
Indonesia	<i>I Gede Ardika</i> Minister of Culture and Tourism	Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat 17-19, 10110 Jakarta
Iran	<i>Fereidoun Nateghi Elahi</i> Technical Advisor to the Deputy Minister and Chairman of Iran Touring and Tourism ITTO	Ministry of Culture & Islamic Guidance, Iran Touring & Tourism Organisation Hajj and Pilgrimage Bldg. Azadi Ave, P. O. Box 14155-1555, Tehran
Italy	<i>Mauro Di Pietro</i>	Ministry of Productive Activities General Tourism Board Via della Ferratella, 51, 00184 Rome
Ivory Coast	Director of Tourism	B. P. V. 184
Jamaica	<i>Carrole A.M. Guntley-Brady</i> Director-General	Ministry of Tourism and Sport Jamaica Tourism Center 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor, 64 Knutsford Boulevard, Kingston 5
Jordan	<i>Nader Dahabi</i> Minister of Transport	Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities P.O. Box 224, Amman 11118
Kazakhstan	<i>Shaikenova Rashida</i> Executive Director	Kazakhstan Association of Hotels and Restaurants 98 Zheltoksan str, office 509, 480091
Kenya	<i>Clement Mwatsama</i> Director of Tourism	Ministry of Tourism and Information P. O. Box 54666, Nairobi
Lebanon	<i>Mohammed Zantout</i> Inspector at Ministry of Tourism	Ministry of Tourism Rue de la Banque Centrale, Beyrouth
Macau	<i>Maria Isabel da Costa Alves</i> Head of Licensing Division	Macau Government Tourist Office Largo do Senado, 9 Edf. Ritz
Madagascar	<i>Rasolofoniaina Haga</i> Director of Tourist Development Department	Ministry of Tourism Rue Fernand Kassanga , B.P. 610 Tsimbazaza, Antananarivo 101
Madeira	<i>Bruno Camacho Pereira</i> Regional Director	Regional Secretariat of Tourism and Culture, Regional Tourism Board Avenida Anniaga, 18, 9004-519 Funchal
Malawi	Isabel T. Chakhumbira Senior Tourism Officer	Ministry of Tourism P. O. Box 402, Blantyre

Malaysia	<i>Dato' Tengku A laudin Tengku Abdul Majid</i> Secretary General	Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism 36 Floor, Menara Dato' Onn, Putra World Trade Centre, 45, Jalan Tun Ismail, 50694 Kuala Lumpur
Maldives*	Ahmed Solih <i>Assistant Director, Trade Standards</i>	Ministry of Tourism <a href="mailto:info@visitmaldives.com">info@visitmaldives.com</a>
Mali	<i>Alion. I. Mâiga</i>	BP 191 Omatho, Bamuko
Malta	<i>Albert Callus</i> WTO Deputy Permanent Representative	Ministry of Tourism Auberge d'Italy, Merchants Street, Valletta CMR 01
Mauritius	<i>C. . . I. Mijoo</i> For Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Tourism Level 12, Air Mauritius Centre, John Kennedy Street, Port Louis
Mexico	<i>Eduardo Barroso Alarcon</i> Secretary of Tourism Operation Department	Secretariat of Tourism Presidente Masarik 172, 7 piso, Colonia Chapultepec Morales, Delegacion Mique Hidalgo C.P. 11587 Mexico, D.F.
Moldova	<i>Kalmyk Serdzhui</i> Consultant	National Tourism Agency Office 901-A, 180, Stefan cel Mare Blvd, MD-2004 Chisinau
Monaco*	<i>Dario dell'Antonia</i> Délégué Général au Tourisme	Direction du Tourisme et des Congrès , 2 <sup>a</sup> boulevard des Moulins, MC 98030 Monaco CEDEX
Mongolia	<i>L. Enkhnasan</i>	Ministry of Infrastructure, Government Building – 2 , United Nations Street 5/2 Ulaanbaatar-210646
Montenegro	<i>Predrag Nenezic</i> Minister of Tourism	Ministry of Tourism Trg Vektre b.b., 81000 Pongorica
Morocco	<i>M. El Ouardighi Abderrahmade</i> Chief of Tourism Establishments Department	Ministry of Tourism, Board of Tourist Activities and Enterprises 22, Avenue d'Alger Hassane Rabat
Mozambique	<i>António José Filipe Saia</i> National Director	PO Box 614, Maputo, Fax 307677
Netherlands	<i>A.K. Vis</i> Project Manager Benelux-Hotel Classification	Bedrijfschap Horeca en Catering Bar. de Coubertinln. 6, 2719 EL Zoetermeer, Postbus 121, 2700 AC Zoetermeer
Niger	<i>Madougai Ousmane</i> Regulation Service	Ministry of Tourism and Arts B. P. 480/12130, Niamey
Nigeria	Embassy of Nigeria Madrid	Embassy of Nigeria Madrid
Pakistan	<i>Khalid Hussain Warraich</i> Deputy Controller	Department of Tourist Services B6 Markaz F-7, Islamabad
Paraguay	<i>Aurelio Rojas</i> Chief of Operations Department	Operations Department Palma 468 – Asuncion

Peru	<i>Miguel Antonio Zamora S.</i> National Director of Tourism	Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Integration & International Commercial Negotiation, Department of Tourism Calle Uno Oeste, 50 Urb. Corpac, San Isidro, Lima 27
Philippines	<i>Atty. Ma. Victoria V. Jasmin</i> Director of the Office of Tourism Standards	Department of Tourism, Office of Tourism Standards RM. 204, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor DOT Bldg. T, M. Kalaw St., Ermita, 1000 Manila
Poland	Mrs. Malgorzata Mika-Bryska Director of Department of Tourism	Ministry of Economy, Department of Tourism Pl. Trzech Krzyzy 3/5, 00-507 Warsaw
Portugal	Jose Sancho Silva General Director	General Tourism Board Av. Antonio Augusto de Aguiar, 86, 1069-021 Lisboa
Puerto Rico	Jose M. Tirado Economic Research Specialist	Puerto Rico Tourism Company, Department of Business Intelligence, Division of Research & Development P. O. Box 902390, Old San Juan Station, San Juan
Russia	<i>N. Shenguelia</i> Chief of Tourism Department	Ministry of Economic Development and Trade office of Tourism
San Marino	<i>Gloria Licini, Dominique Morolli</i>	Promotion and Programming Sector Contrada Omagnano, 20, San Marino
Sao Tome et Principe		hotel and Tourism Board Caixa Postal 40, St. Tome
Seychelles	<i>Sinha Levkovic</i> Assistant Director of Inspectors Quality Assurance Unit	Inspectors Quality Assurance Unit P. O. Box 92, Victoria, Mahe
Sierra Leone	<i>Joseph O. Mansaray</i> Planning & Development Manager	National Tourist Board of Sierra Leone Room 100, Cape Sierra Hotel, P. O. Box 1435, Freetown
Slovak Republic	<i>Eliska Romanova</i> Senior Officer	Ministry of Economy, Department of International Cooperation in Tourism Mierova 19, 827 15 Bratislava
Slovenia	<i>Ana Bozicnk</i> Senior Counselor	Ministry of Economy Trubarjeva 11, 2000 Maribor
South Africa	<i>Dr. Joseph Raputsoe</i>	Department of Environmen and Tourism Private Bag x447, 0001 Pretoria
Spain	<i>António Nieto Magro</i> Sudirector General de Cooperación y Coordinación Turística	José Lázaro Galdiano 6 28036 Madrid
Sri Lanka	<i>Director/Trade Standards (Hotels and Guest-houses)</i>	Sri Lanka Tourist Board , No 80, Galle Road, Colombo 03
Switzerland	<i>Andrea Kammer</i> Hotel Classification Service	Swiss Society of Hoteliers Monbijoustrasse 130, CH-3001 Bern
Tanzania	<i>Salama A. Kibogoyo</i> Principal Tourism Officer	Ministry of Natural Resources P. O. Box 9352, Dar-Es-Salaam

Togo	<i>Anate S. Bagnah</i> Director of Tourism Professions	Ministry of Tourism B.P. 1289, Lome
Tunisia		Ministère du Tourisme et de l'Artisanat, Office National du Tourisme
Turkey	<i>Turkay Can</i> Manager	The Union of Turkish Municipalities Guesthouse Selanik Cad. 57, Kizilay/Ankara
Ukraine	<i>Ludmila A. Mechterskih</i> Chief of Accommodation Establishment Classification Sector	Accommodation Establishment Classification Sector 36, Yaroslaviv Val, 01034 Kyiv,
Vietnam	<i>Vu Quoe Tri</i> Deputy Director of Hotel Department	Vietnam National Administration of Tourism 80-Quan Su Street, Hanoi
Yugoslavia	<i>Aleksandar Susa</i> Advisor	National Tourism Organisation of Serbia Dobrinsjka 11, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia, FR
Zambia	<i>Micheal Lengalenga</i> Principal Standards Inspector	Ministry of Tourism Environment and Natural Resources P. O. Box 30575, Lusaka

<b>Cambodia*</b>	Letter of 17 July 2002, advising that they are preparing the replies.
<b>Germany*</b>	There is no government classification, hence no replies to questions in part A.
<b>India*</b>	Survey returned void.
<b>Maldives*</b>	E-mail of 10 July 2002. They do not have a Hotel Classification System in the Maldives.
<b>Monaco*</b>	They only sent the legislation and have not replied to the survey.
<b>Nigeria</b>	Verbal note of 12 June 2002: "the questionnaire has been transmitted to the appropriate Nigerian Authorities for their necessary action".
<b>Tunisia</b>	Sent the classification system of hotels "Normes 2000" but did not reply to the survey.

**Part A : Government classification**

**1. Application to facilities**

**(a) Current classification in force applies to:**

Country	Hotels	Apartment hotels	Motels	Inns	Others
Algeria	X	X	X	X	Holiday villages, pensions, chalets
Andorra	X	X		X	Pensions, chalets and bungalows
Argentina	X	X	X	X	
Armenia	X	X	X	X	
Azerbaijan	X		X	X	
Belgium – Flemish	X	X	X	X	
Benin	X		X		
Bolivia	X	X		X	Complimentary hospitality, resort
Bosnia and Herzegovina	X	X	X		
Brazil	X				
Burundi	X		X	X	
Chile	X	X	X	X	
China	X				
Costa Rica	X	X			
Croatia	X	X	X		Holliday villages, tourist apartments, guesthouses, pensions
Cuba	X	X	X		Tourist villas
Cyprus	X	X	X		Tourist villages, traditional houses, guesthouses, tourist apartments and furnished apartments which are regarded as perishing classes of accommodation
Czech Republic	X		X	X	
Ecuador	X	X	X	X	Floating hotels, pensions,
Equatorial Guinea	X	X		X	
Ethiopia	X	X	X		Pensions, questhouses
France	X	X			
Ghana	X	X	X	X	Resorts
Greece	X	X	X		
Guatemala	X	X	X	X	
Hungary	X				Bed & breakfast, apartment house, tourist hotel
Indonesia	X	X	X	X	
Iran					
Italy	X	X	X	X	
Ivory Coast	X		X	X	
Jordan	X	X	X		Hotel suites, hostels
Kazakhstan	X				
Kenya	X	X	X	X	
Lebanon	X	X	X	X	Chalets
Macau	X	X			

Country	Hotels	Apartment hotels	Motels	Inns	Others
Madagascar	X		X		Ecolodges
Madeira	X	X		X	Rural tourism
Malawi	X		X	X	Lodges
Malaysia	X		X	X	
Mali	X	X	X	X	
Malta	X	X			Self-catering
Monaco	X				
Moldova	X	X	X		Villas, bungalows, pensions, holiday villages, tourist ships
Mongolia	X				Traditional ger camp (ger- traditional house)
Montenegro	X	X	X		Resort hotel complexes
Morocco	X	X	X	X	Holiday villages, pensions, restaurants
Mozambique	X	X	X	X	
Netherlands	X	X	X	X	
Nigeria	X				
Pakistan	X	X	X	X	Guesthouses
Paraguay					
Peru	X	X		X	Ecolodges, pensions, resorts
Philippines	X	X	X	X	Pensions, homestays
Poland	X		X		Pensions, guesthouses, bivouac grounds
Portugal	X		X	X	Apartment hotels, pensions, holiday villages, guesthouses
Puerto Rico	X	X		X	Puerto Rico Inn
Sao Tome et Principe	X	X	X	X	
San Marino	X	X	X		
Seychelles	X				
Slovak Republic	X		X		Boarding houses
Slovenia	X	X	X	X	Camps, marines, apartments
South Africa	X		X	X	
Spain	X	X	X	X	
Sri Lanka	X				Guesthouses
Tanzania	X	X	X		Lodges, villas, cottages, restaurants
Togo	X		X	X	
Tunisia	X				
Turkey	X		X		Holiday villages
Ukraine	X		X		
Vietnam	X				
Yugoslavia	X	X	X	X	Pensions
Zambia	X		X	X	Lodges

Country	All or specific types	Last date	Graphical symbol
Algeria	all	1999	stars
Andorra			
Argentina			stars
Armenia			
Azerbaijan			
Belgium - Flemish	all	1984	stars
Benin			
Bolivia	all		stars
Bosnia and Herzegovina			
Brazil	all		stars
Burundi	specific types	1978	stars
Chile		1992	
China		1988	stars
Costa Rica		26 February 1997	stars
Croatia	all	10 May 2002	stars
Cuba	all	2002	stars
Cyprus	all	1969	stars, letters
Czech Republic	all hotels	2002	stars
Ecuador			
Ethiopia	specific types		stars
France	all	14 February 1986	
Ghana	all	1979	stars
Greece			
Guatemala			
Guinea Equatorial	all		
Hungary	all	24 June 1998	stars
Italy	all	1983	stars
Ivory Coast			
Jordan	all hotels,apartment hotels & motels	hotels 1 January 1994	stars, ABC
Kazakhstan			
Lebanon	all	2000	stars
Macau			
Madagascar	all	19 April 2001	stars
Madeira			
Malawi			
Malaysia	all	1995 / 2001	
Mali			
Malta			stars; 'standard', 'comfort', 'superior' (self-catering)
Moldova	all	2002	stars
Montenegro	all		stars
Monaco	hotels		stars 1-4L
Mongolia	all hotels	1998	stars
	all tourist ger camps	2000	1.2 grade
Morocco	all	25 November 1986	stars
Netherlands	all	1999	stars
Nigeria	all	1978	stars
Pakistan	all	1977	
Paraguay			

Country	All or specific types	Last date	Graphical symbol
Peru	all	13 July 2001	stars
Philippines	all		none
Poland	all	13 June 2001	stars
Portugal	all	1997	stars
Puerto Rico	specific, hotels		N/A
Sao Tome et Principe			
San Marino		18 March 1993	
Seychelles			
Slovak Republic	all	1 November 2001	stars
Slovenia	all	23 May 1997	stars
South Africa			
Spain			
Sri Lanka	hotels		stars
Tanzania			
Togo	all	1989	stars
Turkey	all		stars
Tunisia		2000	stars
Ukraine			
Vietnam	all	27 April 2001	stars
Yugoslavia	all		stars
Zambia			

**b) additional comments, if any :**

Country	Comments
Jordan	Established at Central government level, Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities.
Mongolia	Both standards expected to be revised by end 2002. The draft of motel, guest house standards is in process.
Spain	Classifications made by Regional Governments
Tunisia	The system "Normes 2000" includes 3, a start system which is compulsory plus a Quality Label and Specialisation, which are both voluntary.

**2. Basis for central/local government authority and role in establishing classification.**

1. State Constitution
2. Tourism law
3. NTA competence
4. Agreement between government bodies concerned
5. Recommendation in a government-adopted tourism development plan

Country	Bodies involved					Others
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	
Algeria		X	X			
Andorra		X		X	X	Agreement between each group's representatives and Hotel Union of Andorra and Chamber of Commerce of Andorra representatives.
Argentina		X	X			
Armenia		X				
Azerbaijan			X	X		
Belgium - Flemish		X				
Benin			X		X	
Bolivia			X			
Bosnia and Herzegovina		X				
Brazil		X	X		X	
Burundi		X				
Chile		X				
China				X		
Costa Rica		X				
Croatia		X				
Cuba		X	X			
Cyprus		X	X			
Czech Republic		X			X	
Ecuador		X				
Ethiopia						
France		X				
Ghana		X			X	
Greece		X	X			
Guatemala		X				
Guinea Equatorial		X				
Hungary			X			
Indonesia	X	X	X	X	X	
Italy		X				
Ivory Coast		X	X			
Jordan		X	X			
Kazakhstan		X			X	
Kenya		X			X	
Lebanon		X	X		X	
Macau		X	X	X	X	
Madagascar		X				
Madeira	X	X	X	X	X	
Malawi		X			X	
Malaysia		X				
Mali		X	X		X	

Malta		X			
Moldova				X	
Mongolia		X	X		X Government guideline
Montenegro		X			X
Morocco		X			
Mozambique			X		X
Netherlands					Treaty with Belgium and Luxemburg
Nigeria			X		
Pakistan		X			
Paraguay					
Peru	X	X	X	X	
Philippines		X			
Poland		X	X		
Portugal		X	X		
Puerto Rico		X			X
Sao Tome et Principe	X	X	X		
San Marino		X	X		X
Seychelles					X
Slovak Republic			X		
Slovenia		X		X	Catering law
South Africa		X			X
Spain		X			
Sri Lanka		X			
Tanzania		X			X
Togo		X			X
Turkey		X			
Ukraine		X		X	X
Vietnam		X	X		
Yugoslavia		X			X
Zambia	X	X	X		

## 6. Rationale and use of government classification.

Country	Is classification justified by consumer concerns?	Does it seek compatibility with the existence of classification systems in other countries?	Is it used to control accommodation tariffs within established classes?	Is it used as the basis for applying different taxes (e.g. VAT)?
Algeria	yes	yes	no	no
Andorra	yes	yes	no	no
Argentina	yes	yes	yes	no
Armenia	yes	yes	no	no
Azerbaijan	yes	yes	yes	yes
Belgium – Flemish	yes	no	no	no
Benin	no	yes	yes	no
Bolivia	yes	yes	no	no
Bosnia and Herzegovina	yes	no	no	no
Brazil	yes	yes	no	no
Burundi	yes	yes		
Chile	yes		no	no

Country	Is classification justified by consumer concerns?	Does it seek compatibility with the existence of classification systems in other countries?	Is it used to control accommodation tariffs within established classes?	Is it used as the basis for applying different taxes (e.g. VAT)?
China	yes	yes	no	no
Costa Rica	yes	yes	no	no
Croatia	no	yes	no	no
Cuba	yes	yes	yes	no
Cyprus	yes	no	no	no
Czech Republic		yes	no	no
Ecuador	no	yes	no	yes
Ethiopia	no	yes	no	no
France	yes	no	no	yes
Ghana	yes	yes	no	no
Greece	yes		yes	
Guatemala		yes	yes	yes
Hungary	yes	yes	no	no
Indonesia	yes	yes	no	no
Italy	yes	yes	?	?
Ivory Coast	yes	yes		
Jordan	yes	yes	no	yes
Kazakhstan	yes	yes	yes	no
Kenya	yes	yes	no	no
Lebanon	yes	yes	yes	yes
Macau	yes	yes	no	no
Madagascar	yes	yes	no	yes
Madeira	yes	no	no	yes
Malawi	yes	yes	yes	no
Malaysia	yes	yes	no	no
Mali	yes	yes	yes	no
Malta	yes	yes	yes	
Moldova	yes	yes	no	no
Mongolia*	no	no	no	no
Montenegro	yes	yes	no	yes
Morocco	yes	yes	yes	yes
Mozambique	no	no	yes	
Netherlands	yes	yes	no	no
Nigeria	yes	yes	yes	yes
Pakistan	yes	yes	yes	no
Paraguay				
Peru	yes	yes	no	no
Philippines	no	yes	no	no
Poland	yes	yes	no	no
Portugal	yes	yes	no	no
Puerto Rico	no	yes	no	yes
Sao Tome et Principe	yes	yes	yes	yes
San Marino	no	yes	yes	no
Seychelles	yes	yes	no	yes
Slovak Republic	yes	yes	yes	no
Slovenia	no	yes	no	no
South Africa	yes	yes	no	no
Spain	yes	yes	no	no

Country	Is classification justified by consumer concerns?	Does it seek compatibility with the existence of classification systems in other countries?	Is it used to control accommodation tariffs within established classes?	Is it used as the basis for applying different taxes (e.g. VAT)?
Sri Lanka	yes	yes	no	no
Tanzania	no	yes	yes	no
Togo	yes	yes	yes	no
Turkey	yes	yes	no	no
Ukraine	yes	yes	no	yes
Vietnam	yes	yes	no	no
Yugoslavia	yes	yes	no	no
Zambia	yes	yes	no	no

a) other rationale and use:

Mongolia: It is used to update hotel and ger camp service quality.

#### 4. Classification authority/body deciding each classification.

Country	Hotels	Apartment hotels	Motels	Inns	Others	Classification authority
Algeria	X	X	X	X	X	National Tourism Administration
Andorra	X	X		X		Tourism Department
Argentina	X	X	X	X		Local Government
Armenia	X	X	X		X	
Azerbaijan	X		X	X		Central Executive Body
Belgium - Flemish	X	X	X	X		Toerisme Vlaanderen
Benin	X	X	X	X		National Tourism Administration
Bolivia	X	X	X	X		National Tourism Administration, motels: local government
Bosnia and Herzegovina						
Brazil	X					Embratur, National Consulting and Regional Committees
Burundi	X		X	X		Ministry of Environment and Tourism
Chile	X	X	X			National Tourism Service
China	X					National Technology & Supervision Administration
Costa Rica	X	X			X	Tourism Institute of Costa Rica
Croatia	X	X	X		X	Ministry of Tourism
Cuba	X	X	X		X	Ministry of Tourism
Cyprus	X	X	X		X	Hotels Committee and Board of Directors of Cyprus Tourism Organisation
Czech Republic	X		X	X		National Hotel and Restaurant Association
Ecuador						
Ethiopia	X	X	X		X	
France	X	X				Local prefecture

Country	Hotels	Apartment hotels	Motels	Inns	Others	Classification authority
Ghana	X	X	X	X	X	National Tourism Administration
Greece	X	X	X		X	National Tourism Administration
Guatemala						
Hungary	X				X	National Tourism Administration
Italy	X	X	X	X		Provincial Government
Ivory Coast	X		X	X		Classifying Committee
Jordan	X	X	X	X	X	Ministry of Tourism, Jordan Hotel Association
Kazakhstan						
Kenya	X	X	X	X		Hotels and Restaurants Authority, Ministry of Tourism and Information
Lebanon	X	X	X	X	X	Ministry of Tourism
Macau	X	X				Macau Government Tourist Office
Madagascar	X		X		X	Ministry of Tourism
Madeira	X	X		X	X	Tourism Chamber, Regional Tourism Board, Regional Secretariat of Social Subjects, Civil Protection
Malawi	X		X	X	X	Government conjunction with the Tourism and Hotel Boards
Malaysia	X		X	X		Panel set up under the Ministry of Culture, Arts & Tourism, consisting of ministry officials and members from non-governmental organizations (hotel association, tour operator association and other relevant government agencies)
Mali	X	X	X	X		National Classification Committee
Malta	X	X			X	Malta Tourism Authority
Moldova	X	X	X		X	National Tourism Agency
Monaco	X					Ministre de l'Etat et Commission Hôtelière
Mongolia	X				X	Hotel and ger camp classification committee
Montenegro	X	X	X			Ministry of Tourism
Morocco	X	X	X	X	X	National Tourism Administration
Netherlands	X	X	X	X	x	Bedrijfschap Horeca & Catering
Nigeria	X					National Tourism Administration
Pakistan	X	X	X	X	X	Department of Tourist Services
Paraguay						
Peru	X	X		X	X	National Tourism Board
Philippines	X	X	X	X	X	Department of Tourism
Poland	X		X		X	16 representatives of the government at regional level
Portugal	X		X	X	X	Central Administration, General Board of Tourism
Puerto Rico						
Sao Tome et Principe	X	X	X	X		National Tourism Office
San Marino	X	X	X			Committee of Hotel Classification

Seychelles	X									Ministry of Tourism and Transport
Slovak Republic	X			X			X			Ministry of Economy
Slovenia	X	X		X			X		X	Classification Council
South Africa	X			X			X			
Spain	X	X		X			X		X	Regional government authority
Sri Lanka	X									
Tanzania	X	X		X					X	National Hotel Board
Togo	X			X			X			National Committee of Licensing & Classification
Turkey	X			X						A commission consisting of two inspectors from NTO and a representative from NTA
Ukraine	X			X						State Standardization Entity Gosstandart, National Tourism Administration of Ukraine
Vietnam	X									Vietnam National Association of Tourism
Yugoslavia	X	X		X			X		X	Commission of Ministry of Trade, Tourism & Services
Zambia	X			X			X			Hotel Board of Zambia

**5. Methods and bodies involved in devising and drafting classification.**  
**Was the classification system in question prepared by:**

1. An expert NTA/NTO official(s)
2. A team of NTA/NTO and other government officials
3. A private national consultant
4. A private international consultant
5. An expert designated/recommended by WTO/OMT
6. On the basis of another country's classification system
7. By revising the previous system
8. In consultation with National Hotel Association(s)
9. In consultation with Consumers' Association

Country	Bodies involved									Others
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	
Algeria	X	X					X	X		
Andorra				X		X		X		
Argentina	X	X				X		X		
Armenia	X									
Azerbaijan	X	X				X				
Belgium - Flemish	X	X	X			X	X	X		
Benin	X	X				X				
Bolivia	X	X		X		X	X	X		
Bosnia and Herzegovina		X					X			
Brazil	X						X	X		
Burundi	X					X				
Chile	X					X	X	X		
China		X				X	X			
Costa Rica	X			X		X	X	X		

									Ministry of Tourism prepared the regulation consulting national hotel association and foreign consultant
Croatia				X					
Cuba		X					X	X	
Cyprus		X		X			X	X	
Czech Republic	X		X				X	X	
Ecuador						X		X	
Ethiopia	X	X			X		X		
France	X	X					X	X	X
									Classification is in line with Hotel Classification Standards for Africa
Ghana	X				X		X		
Greece		X					X	X	
Guatemala						X		X	
Hungary						X	X	X	
Indonesia	X	X	X				X	X	X
Ivory Coast		X					X	X	
Jordan		X					X	X	
Kazakhstan						X	X		
Kenya	X	X				X	X	X	X
Lebanon		X	X				X	X	X
Macau	X	X					X	X	
Madagascar	X					X	X	X	
Madeira	X	X					X	X	
									Study tours were undertaken in Zimbabwe and Zambia system before amending the classification
Malawi		X					X		
Malaysia		X						X	X
Mali	X	X					X	X	X
Malta		X		X		X	X	X	X
Moldova	X		X		X	X			
									Ministry of Infrastructure; Mongolian Tourism Board; Ministry of Health and Welfare; Ministry of Nature; other government controlling authorities; Mongolian Tourism Association; Mongolian Hotel Association, Standards Authority
Mongolia	X	X	X	X		X*	X*	X	
									*USA, Germany, UK, Switzerland, Spain, Croatia, Austria & international hotel companies; tour operator organizations
Montenegro	X	X		X		X*	X		
Morocco		X		X			X	X	
Mozambique		X				X	X	X	
Netherlands		X	X				X	X	X
Nigeria	X	X					X	X	
									Rules have been frames by the Federal Government of Pakistan
Pakistan									
Paraguay									
Peru	X						X	X	

Philippines	X			X		X	
Poland	X	X		X	X	X	X
Portugal	X	X				X	X
Puerto Rico			X				
Sao Tome et Principe				X	X		
San Marino		X	X		X		
Seychelles		X			X		X
Slovak Republic	X	X	X		X	X	X
Slovenia	X	X	X		X	X	X
South Africa	X					X	X
Spain		X				X	X
Sri Lanka		X				X	X
Tanzania	X	X	X		X	X	X
Togo		X					X
Turkey		X			X	X	X
Ukraine					X	X	X
Vietnam	X				X	X	
Yugoslavia		X	X		X	X	X
Zambia	X		X			X	X

Elaborated by the State Secretariat of Tourism in collaboration with the General Board of Tourism

Chamber of Economy

Notes: Mongolia 6\* Based on Russian standard  
7\* Existing standards expected to be revised by end 2002

## 6. Applicability of classification.

Country	Is it mandatory for all establishments?	Is it necessary to obtain license/permission/registration to operate?	Can establishments operate without being classified?
Algeria	yes	yes	no
Andorra	yes	yes	
Argentina	yes	yes	no
Armenia			yes
Azerbaijan	yes	yes	no
Belgium – Flemish	yes	yes	no
Benin	yes	yes	no
Bolivia	yes	yes	no
Bosnia and Herzegovina	yes	yes	no
Brazil	no	yes	yes
Burundi	no	yes	yes
Chile	no		yes
China	no	no	yes
Costa Rica	no	yes	yes
Croatia	yes	yes	no
Cuba	yes	yes	yes
Cyprus	yes	yes	no
Czech Republic	yes	no	no
Ecuador	yes	yes	no
Ethiopia	yes	yes	
France	no	yes	yes

Country	Is it mandatory for all establishments?	Is it necessary to obtain license/permission/registration to operate?	Can establishments operate without being classified?
Ghana	yes	yes	yes
Greece	yes	yes	no
Guatemala	yes	yes	yes
Hungary	yes	yes	no
Indonesia	yes	yes	no
Italy	yes		no
Ivory Coast	yes	yes	no
Jordan	yes	yes	no
Kazakhstan	no	no	yes
Kenya	yes	no	yes
Lebanon	yes	yes	
Macau	yes	yes	no
Madagascar	yes	yes	yes
Madeira	yes	yes	no
Malawi	no	yes	yes
Malaysia	yes	yes	
Mali	no	yes	yes
Malta	yes	yes	no
Moldova	yes	yes	no
Mongolia	yes	yes	yes
Montenegro	yes	yes	no
Morocco	no	yes	yes
Mozambique	yes	yes	no
Netherlands	yes	no	yes
Nigeria	no	yes	yes
Pakistan	yes	yes	yes
Paraguay			
Peru	no	yes	yes
Philippines	no	yes	yes
Poland	no	no	yes
Portugal	yes	yes	no
Puerto Rico	no	yes	yes
Sao Tome et Principe	yes	yes	no
San Marino	yes	yes	no
Seychelles	no	no	yes
Slovak Republic	yes	yes	no
Slovenia	yes	yes	no
South Africa	no	yes	yes
Spain	yes	yes	no
Sri Lanka	no	yes	yes
Tanzania	yes	yes	no
Togo	yes	yes	no
Turkey	yes	yes	yes
Ukraine	no	no	yes
Vietnam	yes	yes	no
Yugoslavia	yes	yes	yes
Zambia	yes	yes	yes

## 7. Verification of compliance with classification system.

### a.) Is verification performed by:

<i>Country</i>	Central government inspectors	Local government inspectors	Hotel industry (second party) inspectors	Independent (third party) inspectors	Other parties
Algeria	X	X			
Andorra	X		X	X	
Argentina		X			
Armenia		X			
Azerbaijan	X	X			
Belgium - Flemish	X				
Benin	X				
Bolivia	X				
Bosnia and Herzegovina	X				
Brazil	X	X	X	X	
Burundi	X				
Chile					
China	X	X	X	X	
Costa Rica	X				
Croatia	X				
Cuba	X		X	X	
Cyprus					Cyprus Tourism Organisation
Czech Republic	X		X		
Ecuador	X				
Ethiopia	X				
France		X			
Ghana	X				
Greece	X	X			
Guatemala	X				
Hungary	X	X			
Indonesia	X	X	X	X	
Italy		X			
Ivory Coast	X				
Jordan	X	X	X		
Kenya	X		X	X	Hotel and Restaurant Association Board
Lebanon	X				
Macau		X			
Madagascar	X	X	X		
Madeira		X			

Country	Central government inspectors	Local government inspectors	Hotel industry (second party) inspectors	Independent (third party) inspectors	Other parties
					A grading/classification committee, appointed by the Board will be responsible
Malawi	X				
Malaysia	X	X	X	X	
Mali	X				
Malta	X				
Moldova	X	X			
Mongolia	X	X			
Montenegro	X	X			
Morocco	X	X	X		
Mozambique	X	X			
Netherlands			X	X	
Nigeria	X	X			
Pakistan	X				
Paraguay					
Peru	X	X			
Philippines	X				
Poland	X			X	
Portugal	X	X			
					Many hotel chains have their own inspection personnel
Puerto Rico	X				
Sao Tome et Principe					
San Marino	X				
Seychelles		X			
Slovak Republic		X			
Slovenia	X	X			
South Africa			X		
Spain		X			
Sri Lanka	X				
Tanzania	X				
Togo	X				
Turkey	X		X		
Ukraine					
Vietnam	X	X			
Yugoslavia	X				
Zambia	X		X		

**b.) Mode of verification:**

Country	Announced visits at fixed date	Mystery checks	Other methods
Algeria	X		
Andorra		X	
Argentina			Local government's decision
Armenia	X		
Azerbaijan	X		
Belgium - Flemish	X	X	
Benin	X		
Bolivia			Unannounced visits by identified inspectors
Bosnia and Herzegovina		X	
Brazil	X		
Burundi		X	
Chile	X		
China	X		
Costa Rica			Unannounced visits by identified inspectors
Croatia	X		
Cuba	X		Unannounced visits
Cyprus			Announced and unannounced visits by inspectors at regular time intervals
Czech Republic		X	Accommodation establishments must fill in the classification questionnaire
Ecuador			Unannounced visits by identified inspectors
Ethiopia	X	X	
France	X	X	
Ghana	X	X	
Greece		X	
Guatemala		X	
Indonesia	X	X	
Italy	X		
Ivory Coast	X	X	
Jordan			
Kenya		X	
Lebanon		X	Unannounced visits
Macau		X	
Madagascar		X	
Madeira	X	X	
Malawi	X		A questionnaire will be distributed to operators and after being completed, it will be sent to the grading committee for verification and inspectors will inspect the establishment
Malaysia			Based on public complaints, public requests and requests from hotels
Mali	X		
Malta			Unannounced visits by identified inspectors

Country	Announced visits at fixed date	Mystery checks	Other methods
Moldova		X	
Mongolia	X		Between June and August
Montenegro	X		
Morocco	X		
Mozambique	X		
Netherlands	X	X	
Nigeria		X	
Pakistan	X		
Paraguay			
Peru			Unannounced visits by identified inspectors
Philippines		X	
Poland	X		
Portugal	X	X	
Puerto Rico	X	X	Comment cards
Sao Tome et Principe			
San Marino	X		
Seychelles	X	X	
Slovak Republic		X	
Slovenia		X	Proposed self-estimation level is verified by classification commission with pre-announced visits before establishments acquire fixed classification symbol
South Africa	X		
Spain		X	
Sri Lanka	X	X	
Tanzania			
Togo		X	
Turkey	X		
Ukraine	X		
Vietnam	X		
Yugoslavia	X		
Zambia		X	

c-d.)

Country	Cost of verification borne by:		Periodicity of verification
	The verifying authority	The hotel company concerned	
Algeria	X		Depends on NTA's decision
Andorra	X		Every year
Argentina	X		Every year
Armenia			Every two years
Azerbaijan			Every year
Belgium - Flemish	X		Every three years
Benin			
Bolivia	X		Every year or when necessary
Bosnia and Herzegovina		X	Every three years
Brazil		X	Every year
Burundi			Every year
Chile	X		Not established, only in case of changes detected
China			Every year
Costa Rica	X		Every year
Croatia		X	Every two years
Cuba	X		Every three years
Cyprus	X		Every two years, routine inspections every two months
Czech Republic		X	Every two years
Ecuador			Every year
Ethiopia	X		Every year
France			Occasionally
Ghana	X	X	Every year
Greece	X		Every year
Guatemala	X		Every month
Indonesia	X	X	Every three years
Italy	X		When characteristics change
Ivory Coast	X		Every year
Jordan	X		Irregularly, at least once a year
Kenya	X		Every two years
Lebanon	X		Not at particular date
Macau			Once or twice a year
Madagascar	X	X	
Madeira	X	X	When necessary
Malawi	X		Every two years
Malaysia	X		Every three years
Mali	X		Every year
Malta	X		When necessary
Moldova	X		Every year
Mongolia			Depends on hotel company request
Montenegro		X	Every three years

Morocco	X		Every two years
Mozambique		X	
Netherlands	X		Every two years
Nigeria	X		Every three years
Pakistan	X		Every year
Paraguay			
Peru	X		Every year
Philippines	X		Every year
Poland		X	Every two years
Portugal	X	X	Every year
Puerto Rico	X	X	Twice a year
Sao Tome et Principe			
San Marino	X		Every five years
Seychelles	X	X	Every year
Slovak Republic	X		Every year
Slovenia		X	Every three years
South Africa		X	Every year
Spain	X		
Sri Lanka			Every year
Tanzania	X	X	Every two years
Togo	X		Every year
Turkey	X		When necessary
Ukraine		X	Every year
Vietnam	X	X	Every two years
Yugoslavia		X	Every five years
Zambia	X		Every year

#### 8. Plans to introduce new classification or revise current classification.

<i>Country</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Algeria	Classification is at central administration level and local level.
Andorra	
Argentina	The National Tourism & Sport Secretariat has set up a co-operation agreement to develop the 'Tourism Quality System' with representative private-sector entities. Its objectives include stimulating national legislation for tourism establishments and facilitating national and/or international technical assistance from countries which implemented similar systems in terms of categorisation criteria and quality systems.
Azerbaijan	A new classification preparation is underway and few changes are being introduced in the existing normative legislative base
Benin	Project in process
Bolivia	There is a compulsory development of the 'National Recategorisation Program' every five years, obliged by the tourism establishment's regulation.
Brazil	The revision and actualization of classification criteria is defined by National Technical Consultancy
Burundi	Current classification is under revision
Chile	The presentation of a study is in process, which helps to elaborate the technical basis and standards for a new classification system, according to the actual market expectations.
China	It is being revised

Costa Rica	Classification is used to define the level of quality and competition within regional markets. They are interested in reforming the actual hotel classification system, implementing ISO 9001-2000 norms for detailed grading of guest-related service's quality as well as quality documentation developed by the enterprise.
Cuba	The Cuban Norm, which includes classification requirements was revised in 2001. Revisions are planned every five years or when necessary.
Cyprus	Under consideration. Municipality taxes are levied according to classification.
Czech Republic	In the end of 2002
Ecuador	Technical regulation has been elaborated under the assistance of a national consultant and taking other countries' (e.g. Spain, USA, etc.) classification & categorisation system as a reference. This regulation is adequate to the actual situation in Ecuador.
Ethiopia	Government level of classification is much preferred to promote quality service in the tourist facilities industry. Although, classification is a new phenomena, intensive explanation of the use of classification and related ideas must be detailed. There is a plan to revise current classification on the basis of WTO criteria (standards for Africa) introducing new names like 'five star delux' in the classification system.
Ghana	Classification is in line with 'Hotel Classification Standards for Africa. Revise current criteria.
Greece	Introduction of new classification on the basis of star system
Guatemala	There is a need for a non-governmental support of classification procedure to make it competitive at international level.
Jordan	A new revision of the current classification will be introduced within the next 5 years
Kenya	East African Regional Classification Document is being prepared as an improvement of the Current Kenyan Criteria
Lebanon	The new classification system is very recent and in process of application
Malawi	Has already drafted or amended classification system to conform international standards
Malta	New classification system was introduced recently
Moldova	The classification in question is a new one and will be implemented till the end of 2002
Mongolia	Revise current classification
Montenegro	Establishment of new classification in harmony with international procedures is in progress
Peru	
Philippines	Department of Tourism is planning to adopt the star classification for hotels
Poland	Is revising its provisions connected with hotel facilities classification
Puerto Rico	Next year a new classification system will be introduced with new standards of classification and evaluation for all properties
Sao Tome et Principe	
San Marino	Revise in project
Slovenia	Ongoing project of renewing classification system for all types of establishments
Ukraine	A new classification preparation is underway and few changes are being introduced in the existing normative legislative base

### III. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

#### Sources of information

**WTO** surveyed the public sector, specifically the role of governments in hotel classification in the various countries. The survey has been completed by National Tourism Administrations (NTAs) in collaboration with their national hotel association(s).

**IH&RA** surveyed the private sector specifically to prepare:

- ? a status report (i.e inventory) of existing hotel classification schemes.
- ? a comparative analysis of these schemes (price, qualitative and quantitative elements)

The survey was completed by National Hotel and Restaurant Associations.

The findings of the two reports were collected from a total of:

**32** countries, surveyed by the private sector

**89** countries, surveyed by the public sector

**13** countries replied to both IH&RA and WTO questionnaire

**By crossing: 108 countries surveyed**

#### Official Classification Systems in the various Countries covering hotels, apartment hotels, motels and Inns)

Number of countries having an official hotel classification system in their country

Public Sector:..... 70 countries

Private Sector:..... 26 countries

**Total (by crossing)..... 83 countries**

Number of countries having a classification system applying to Apartment hotels

Public Sector:..... 43 countries

Private Sector:..... 17 countries

**Total (by crossing)..... 51 countries**

Number of countries having a classification system applying to Motels

Public Sector:..... 49 countries

Private Sector:..... 19 countries

**Total (by crossing)..... 56 countries**

Number of countries having a classification system applying to Inns

Public Sector:..... 38 countries

Private Sector:..... 15 countries

**Total (by crossing)..... 46 countries**

Number of countries having an official classification system for all 4 categories  
Public Sector:..... 16 countries  
Private Sector:..... 13 countries  
**Total (by crossing)..... 24 countries**

Number of countries having an official classification system for 3 categories  
Public Sector:..... 25 countries  
Private Sector:..... 4 countries  
**Total (by crossing)..... 25 countries**

Number of countries having an official classification system for 2 categories  
Public Sector:..... 8 countries  
Private Sector:..... 2 countries  
**Total (by crossing)..... 9 countries**

Number of countries having an official classification system for 1 category  
Public Sector:..... 6 countries  
Private Sector:..... 6 countries  
**Total (by crossing)..... 11 countries**

*N.B in this case the category is always hotels*

**Note :**

Where a classification system exists the graphical symbol most widely used is the star. Systems are mostly set up by the government, a region or the Tourism Board of the country and the establishments are only consulted. Afterwards they are adopted into the Tourism Law, the State Constitution or regional constitutions.

**20** countries state that there is a relation between Classification and Room Rates

**13** countries states that there is a relation between Classification and Taxation

According to the private sector a majority of countries report no link between classification and the social obligations of the employers

**Which bodies are involved in devising and drafting classification or by whom have the classification system in question been prepared**

An expert NTA/NTO official(s)

Public Sector:..... 33 countries  
Private Sector:..... 5 countries  
**Total (by crossing)..... 36 countries**

A team of NTA/NTO and other government officials  
Public Sector: ..... 43 countries  
Private Sector: ..... 14 countries  
**Total (by crossing)..... 49 countries**

A private national consultant  
Public Sector: ..... 12 countries  
Private Sector: ..... 6 countries  
**Total (by crossing)..... 14 countries**

A private international consultant  
Public Sector: ..... 12 countries  
Private Sector: ..... 7 countries  
**Total (by crossing)..... 16 countries**

An expert designated/recommended by WTO/OMT  
Public Sector: ..... 4 countries  
Private Sector: ..... 5 countries  
**Total (by crossing)..... 7 countries**

On the basis of another country's classification system  
Public Sector: ..... 36 countries  
Private Sector: ..... 8 countries  
**Total (by crossing)..... 41 countries**

By revising the previous system  
Public Sector: ..... 48 countries  
Private Sector: ..... 5 countries  
**Total (by crossing)..... 49 countries**

In consultation with National Hotel Association(s)  
Public Sector: ..... 47 countries  
Private Sector: ..... 4 countries  
**Total (by crossing)..... 48 countries**

In consultation with Consumer Association  
Public Sector: ..... 13 countries  
Private Sector: ..... 9 countries  
**Total (by crossing)..... 17 countries**

### **Applicability of classification in the countries**

In **46** countries it is mandatory for all establishments to have a classification to operate.  
In **55** countries it is necessary to obtain a licence / permission / registration to operate  
In **32** countries establishments can operate without being classified  
*N.B. According to the private sector only two countries oblige establishments to become members of a national association to obtain a licence to operate.*

### **Methods of verification**

In general verification of establishments is undertaken between every one to five years and in some countries more irregularly.

### **Plans to revise existing system or introduce new one**

Cf question 15 (private sector) and question 8 (public sector)

*Questions appearing only in the private sector questionnaire*

#### **Q.11. Who finances the system?**

**11** countries: individual establishments

**3** countries: national hotel associations

**9** countries: government

**1** country: shared between national association & government

#### **Q.12. What are the main criteria?**

As this was an open question, replies vary considerably listing a range of objective (quantitative) and subjective (qualitative) criteria.

#### **Q.14 Satisfaction with existing system**

Of the respondents who replied to this question:

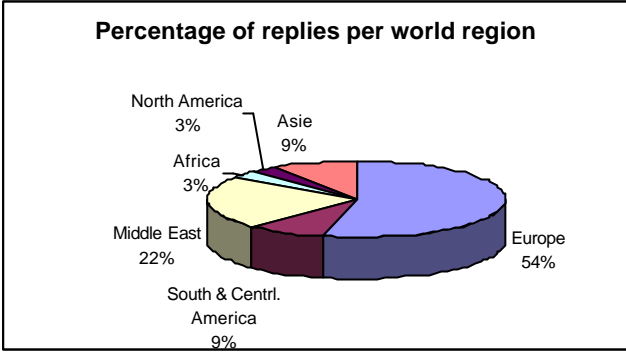
**16** countries are satisfied with the existing system in their country

**4** countries are not satisfied with the existing system in their country

**5** countries would like improvements to the existing system

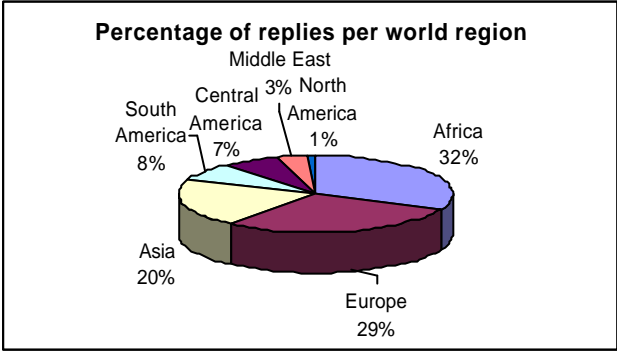
**Highlights**

**IH&RA survey results (private sector)**



Survey was sent to 68 national associations in 61 countries  
32 replies received:52 %

**WTO survey results (public sector):**



Survey was sent out to 145 countries  
89 replies received:61 %

## IV. CURRENT TRENDS IN HOTEL CLASSIFICATION

### New Information Technologies

Electronic distribution in the form of Central Reservation Systems (CRS) was initially developed in the 1960's by the major airlines as a way of managing their inventory and controlling the rising number of flights and fares. Originally only used by airline reservation staff, in the 1970's CRS were gradually made available to travel agents to facilitate the reservation process and give access to inventory data. As the systems developed, user demand and high capital costs prompted the owners of these systems to expand their product offering from solely airline seat to include hotel accommodation, car hire, cruises and almost every other travel product. This gave rise to today's one-stop-travel-shops, i.e. the Global Distributions Systems (GDS). Four main companies dominate the sector – Amadeus, Galileo, Worldspan and Sabre – with a number of smaller GDSs active regionally. Most GDSs subsequently developed their own CRS With data structures more closely adapted to their particular product (e.g. hotels), linking them electronically to the GDS to gain access to the powerful travel agent market and paying a transaction fee to the GDS owners for each booking processed.

The limited space available on the display screens in CRSs and GDSs strongly influenced the choice of criteria and abbreviations in which a hotel could be described for selling purposes. From the perspective of the travel agent, these systems using a text-based interface are far from ideal as hotel sales and marketing tools, as they can provide only very sparse information.

Since the emergence in 1994 of the Web as an additional and competing electronic distribution channel there has been a rising number of consumer-oriented websites offering a much wider range of information, as well as booking facilities, some of them effectively bypassing both the travel agent and the GDS to create a direct link to the consumer. Once again, the question of categorising hotels for the benefit of consumers or travel professionals (specifically the travel agent) has come to the fore.<sup>4</sup>

This prompted one of the major third-party marketing and reservation providers, Utell, a Pegasus Solutions Company, to introduce its own hotel classification system.

Phoenix (June 4, 2001) – Utell today introduced *Utell selections*, an innovative approach that categorizes its portfolio of 6,400 hotels to assist travel agents in finding the perfect hotel for clients. *Utell selections* classifies Utell properties into well-defined categories, and is based where possible on the American global industry publication Official Hotel Guide (OHG).

*Utell selections* provides global consistency in segmenting hotels, since some ranking systems, such as the "star system," vary from country to country. *Utell selections* enables hotels to match customers' expectations with the experience, and uses a universally accepted travel publication, OHG, as the foundation for classification.

*Utell selections* segments hotels into three core categories and four niche categories. All hotels are classified in one of the core categories: **luxury**, **superior** and **value**. Hotels can be further identified as one of four niche categories – **style**, **resort**, **apartment** or **airport**, dependent upon the defined category criteria.

---

<sup>4</sup> Cf "An Overview of Hotel Electronic Distribution", Peter O'Connor, PhD, Paper presented to IH&RA Chains Council, Dec 2003)

The three core categories are defined as:

- ? **luxury** selection. Properties in leisure and business locations that provide the ultimate hotel experience for guests who demand the highest standards. Corresponds to the OHG system as Superior Deluxe, Deluxe, and Moderate Deluxe.
- ? **superior** selection. Hotels and resorts that offer excellent quality rooms and facilities for both business and leisure. Classified by OHG as Superior First Class, First Class, and Limited Service First Class.
- ? **value** selection. Hotels that create a comfortable atmosphere providing excellent value for money. Includes the OHG Moderate First Class, Superior Tourist Class, Tourist Class and Moderate Tourist Class.

The four niche categories are defined as:

- ? **style** selection. Boutique and historic hotels each with distinctive décor and design characteristics.
- ? **resort** selection. Includes properties that have recreational activities in the hotel or adjacent to the hotel.
- ? **apartment** selection. Caters to travelers who need extended stays and amenities that include a kitchenette.
- ? **airport** selection. Must be within seven miles of an airport and many offer transportation to and from the airport.

Based on extensive research carried out over nine months with travel agents and hotels, Utell realized the need to better segment its growing number of independent and chain hotels into a consistent classification system. Hotels wanted to be promoted in easy-to-understand groups in a manner similar to how their customers view them, instinctively. "The 'star system,' for instance, is not consistent around the world – a five-star hotel in Spain and a five-star hotel in Indonesia are not comparable, leading to inconsistency in service levels and expectations," said Michael Prager, operations managing director, Utell.

The *Utell selections* classification system will be introduced on June 4, 2001, and is profiled on all of Utell's distribution channels, including international voice representation, Utell's proprietary Web site <http://www.utell.com/>, and the four major global distribution systems (GDSs). Utell's voice reservation agents who handle calls from over 40 countries have also been trained to describe hotels and help customers identify the hotel that best meets their needs based on *Utell selections*.<sup>5</sup>

It is obvious from this example that the prime motivation is to simplify the travel agent's task in matching supply and demand in order to "help increase reservations and revenue". This classification system is based on an American trade publication which itself does not refer to the star system, which is only one of the various systems in use in the USA where neither the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AH&LA) nor the federal government is involved in hotel classification. This is generally left to automobile or petrochemical-related interests.

---

<sup>5</sup> Utell Press Release, 4 June 2001

### **Hotel Industry – the role of branding**

The major international hotel chains focus far more on defining and positioning their brands than on hotel classification *per se* (eg. star or other ratings) as granted by national hotel associations or other bodies. According to the country, properties managed by these chains will be classified according to the local or national scheme operating in the country in which the properties are located if this is mandatory or considered beneficial.

However, rather than focusing exclusively on the quantitative and qualitative criteria displayed by individual properties, for brands, the customer is the key focus. Brands are generally defined in terms of price tier (eg. Luxury, Upper scale, Mid-market, Economy/Budget) with specific target customers in view – individual business travellers, individual leisure travellers, Meetings, Incentive, Conference & Event (MICE) travel, group leisure travel etc. Branding also takes into account the location and the type of market in which the property is located – urban, suburban, airport, leisure destinations, gateway cities and major metropolitan areas.

An interesting example of this is given by Marriott International's brand reference chart. Each brand is defined in terms of price position, types of markets, brand essence, brand positioning, target customers and customer value proposition (also listing hotel benefits and features). Marriott Hotels, for instance are targeted principally at Upper-Upscale Frequent Business Travellers. A detailed customer profile is then used as the basis for defining and positioning the brand in relation to the company's other brands, and in relation to competition. The following gives some (but not all) of the features listed – and illustrates how customer-centric this approach is. (Note that Hotel benefits and Features, ie qualitative and quantitative criteria, are used specifically to support the Customer Value Proposition.)

Marriott International – Marriott Hotels Brand :  
**Upper-Upscale Frequent Business Travellers**

*Target customer:*

- ? "Grounded Achievers": travellers focused on productivity and accomplishment, looking for predictable/consistent hotel experiences and genuine caring service

*Price Tier:*

- ? Quality

*Brand positioning:*

- ? "For grounded achievers who value dependable familiarity"

*Brand essence*

- ? "Confidence for people going places"

*Customer Value Proposition*

- ? "Helps you achieve your business objectives"
- ? "Helps you Relax and recharge for the next day" etc

*Hotel Benefits and Features:*

- ? Well-lit desks with large workspace, task lighting, ergonomic seating and easy access to electrical and data ports
- ? One in-hotel contact for all needs
- ? Express check-out
- ? Complimentary in-room coffee/tea

Focusing on the customer's lifestyle and needs, the idea is to enhance the customer's overall experience and gratify his sense of identity.

### Travel industry – Tour Operators

The hotel classification systems devised and run by national hotel associations and/or government authorities are not necessarily used by travel professionals, particularly when they are dealing with clients from outside the market where the accommodation is provided. It is well known that the major Tour Operators assess prospective hotels according to their own criteria and then provide their own description in their promotional material.

Reproduced below are very general descriptions given by some of the major tour operators in the UK as to what their classifications mean. In this case, *First Choice* is the most specific.

#### *First Choice*

\*\* Basic, comfortable, budget ranged

\*\*\* Standard popular accommodation. These hotels normally feature a selection of public areas including a restaurant

\*\*\*\* Large, modern or well-established accommodation with a wide range of facilities

\*\*\*\*\* High standards of comfort & service

The company points out that "Accommodation of similar ratings, but in different countries, cannot always be meaningfully compared."

#### *Thomson Holidays*

Thomson T ratings are based on our annual appraisals and customers' views taken from the end-of-season Customer Satisfaction Questionnaires. Hotels and apartments are rated from "2T" for no-frills, good value accommodation to "5T" for more comfort and a wider range of facilities. To a very few of our best hotels, we award a Blue Ribbon classification. These are internationally renowned luxury hotels which offer an exceptional standard of comfort. There may be some differences between accommodation that shares the same T rating category. This is where our T-plus rating can be a useful extra guide

#### *Airtours*

Our "A" ratings are awarded by specially trained Airtours staff, based on such criteria as the public area furnishings, food & drink outlets, room & leisure facilities & service. They range from AA for simple accommodation to AAAAA offering the highest quality & level of service

#### *Thomas Cook*

Our universal ratings system is based on the views (at the time of publication) of senior managers both in the UK & overseas.

As can be seen, none of these are particularly objective, but this information at least provides some insight into how the tour operators go about rating accommodation.

### Travel Industry – Hotel Guides

#### *The Official Hotel Guide (OHG) – USA*

This Guide is widely recognised by travel agents as a comprehensive and reliable source of information on hotels around the world.

**The Official Hotel Guide** (OHG) provides comprehensive, in depth profiles of 29 000 hotels and resorts worldwide. For over 38 years, travel professionals have relied on its unique classification system and unbiased profiles to help them successfully match their clients to the right hotel. Its rich content has made it the hotel directory that travel professionals pay hundreds of dollars to subscribe to year after year.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Information provided by NorthStar Travel Media, cf. [www.northstartravelmedia.com](http://www.northstartravelmedia.com)

NorthStar, parent company of OHG, has now incorporated OHG into its Hotel & Travel Index which it claims is the industry's leading print and online hotel information source for travel professionals with 79 000 hotels online.<sup>7</sup>

**Views of main stakeholders:**

***National Tourism Administrations (NTAs) and the World Tourism Organization (WTO)***

Since 1988 WTO ceased to be engaged in harmonizing hotel classification standards region-wise and worldwide, partly due to the lack of coordinated and clear approach in favour of hotel classification by its Government Members and partly in response to the negative view on government intervention in this area by its Affiliate (private sector) Members representing the hotel industry. On an individual basis, however, both governments and private consultants have never ceased to approach the Organization and its Secretariat to ask for "WTO hotel classification", fielding sectoral support missions and technical cooperation to establish classification in respective countries and regions (at the time of preparing this report, a WTO-sponsored mission is taking place in Maldives), or at least for recommending WTO-trusted experts to do this job. The Secretariat has also taken note of such projects taking place without WTO having been consulted as an intermediary. As a result, WTO has never "freed itself" from hotel classification and over the years has sent dozens of missions and consultants to interested countries and regions to do hotel and related classification, but without defining common "WTO standards" for such missions and consultants.

It has been seen through this experience that, certainly, States are sovereign and that it is legitimate for their governments represented by NTAs to seek classification and that they need international referents and support in this effort. Their objectives appear to be similar to those sought by the private sector, first of all to ensure fair competition in the hotel industry, also to provide for "transparency at first sight" for the consumer. Trade related aspects of classification have also become important for the national hotel industry, especially in developing countries where private and government investors have made important investments and great sacrifices to upgrade their hotel facilities and now expect to be fairly remunerated for this effort while observing that differences in their favour with the attributes of the same category establishments in the tourism sending countries appear to be widening. Reference to unequivocal internationally-recognized standards can therefore help them defend their economic interests when it comes to negotiating contracts with wholesale tour operators.

From the WTO perspective, the lack of common understanding of hotel classification standards has also led to confusing quality aspects of the supply of hotel services (largely responding to the general question of HOW they are supplied) with physical and quantitative aspects of hotel establishments (required to respond to the question of WHAT) which normally intervene in classifications, while both aspects are important for competition. This converging approach can be seen, for example, in CEN (European

---

<sup>7</sup> cf [www.htihotelink.com](http://www.htihotelink.com)

Committee for Standardization) standard EN ISO 18513-2000<sup>8</sup> followed by ISO, while WTO experience, also expressed in the WTO definition of quality in tourism<sup>9</sup>, as well as national experience, such as Spanish ICTE, shows that attribution of a hotel establishment to a given category level does not imply an automatic attainment of quality criteria, although the higher the category, the higher the quality potential of the establishment.

These considerations suggest that an international agreement on the meaning and guidance on hotel classification could satisfy the various demands and constitute a service to Governments, the private sector, consumers and the international community at large.

### ***Hotel Industry – National Hotel Association involvement in classification***

Within the hotel industry, views can diverge diametrically on the need (or not) for a national classification scheme. Two classic examples are provided by the national hotel associations of Israel and Denmark, the former having abandoned classification, while the latter has adopted it after operating without classification for a number of years.

### **The Hotel Industry in Israel - 12 years without classification or grading**

(Information provided by Abraham Rosental, Director-General, Israel Hotel Association-IHA)

In April 1992, the system of grading hotels according to stars was cancelled and no other official system has taken its place.

Today, twelve years later, IHA can evaluate if the decision to cancel the grading system proved itself correct or not, if the "great damage to tourism to Israel", which many in the tourism industry predicted, came true, or if perhaps the goals of cancellation were realized.

In order to determine what happened since then, it is necessary to take into consideration the situation of hotels before the government cancelled the regulations for grading hotels, the situation today and expectations for the future.

#### ***Background***

##### ***i. Government involvement***

The rationale behind the government grading system was to give official information on the standard of hotels in the country and to control the criteria for grading according to the star system. But in reality, from the 300 or so hotels in Israel, some 60 of them did not have star grading at all. They were published under the classification as "not yet graded", "not recommended", holiday villages, camping grounds, apartment hotels, and so on. The official information concerning their level did not exist at all.

The rest of the hotels were grouped into 6 grades mainly in the 3-4 and 5 star categories. Therefore, most of the hotels were concentrated in total, into three standards of grading. For

---

<sup>8</sup> This standard of terminology applied to tourism services (hotels and other types of tourism accommodation) defines "accommodation rating: classification scheme" as "system providing an assessment of the quality standards and provision of facility and/or service of tourist accommodation (typically within five categories, often indicated by one to five symbols)"

<sup>9</sup> "The result of a process which implies the satisfaction of all the legitimate product and service needs, requirements and expectations of the consumer, at an acceptable price, in conformity with mutually accepted contractual conditions and the underlying quality determinants, such as safety and security, hygiene and cleanliness, accessibility, transparency, authenticity and harmony of the tourism activity concerned with its human and natural environment."

instance, there were about 80 hotels in the 4 star category and it was obvious to all that there were great differences among them and it was not possible to ascertain much about a specific hotel in a similar large group.

The grading of part of the hotels did not reflect the reality. There were hotels which, having received their high grade, lowered their standards during the years and it was difficult, if not downright impossible to change their grade. Additional difficulties in grading were discovered also in comparisons between city hotels and holiday hotels, new hotels and old hotels, small and large hotels and between regular hotels and apartment hotels and suite hotels.

The grading of a hotel created certain expectations from the client. A great part of the complaints received about hotels were in the style of "this is not the service of a hotel graded X stars.... Who gave the hotel the stars..."etc....

*ii. Travel agent reaction*

The situation was worsened by travel agents who published tour packages to Israel in the old and known manner of "overnight in a 4 star hotel in Jerusalem...". These travel agents did not promise a specific hotel, or certain level of services – they only promised to give the client a hotel of a certain grade and nothing more.

*iii. Hotel reaction*

When there are many hotels with the same grade, it is clear that there is a very good 4 star hotel whose rates are expensive and there is a bad 4 star hotel whose rates are cheap. In fact, there have been many cases in which travel agents ordered the cheaper hotels for their clients ... however, they stood by their promise to supply a 4 star hotel, but the ones who suffered were the clients themselves who thought that this was the level of hotels in Israel.

A situation was created whereby hotels used to sell their grading and not their diverse and various services. The grade influenced the rates and it was acceptable, of course, that a higher graded hotel would receive a higher rate. As a result of this, there was a fear that lower graded hotels would not make any special effort- because in any case they would not get anything for their efforts, while hotels of higher grades also will not try improve themselves since their grades are solid and go on forever.

*Healthy competition*

With the cancellation of the grading, the new name of the game is competition. Each hotel must establish itself from the aspect of the product, the service, publicity and marketing.

*The Name of the Game is- the Name*

That is to say, that which determines now is the name of the hotel – what does it supply, what services does it give and what is its real level. In short, does it have a good name or a bad name in the market?

Indeed, with the cancellation of grading, we have witnessed a wave of renovations by hotels. Hotels began to publicize themselves more and in particular to publicize their services and their amenities which they offer their clients.

They started to be concerned about their good name and understood that this would bring clients. This healthy competition became a regular method of operation.

Moreover, wholesalers abroad began to sell hotels and not grades. Israeli agents "were forced" to become better acquainted with hotels in the country and to know what they were selling – no longer to be satisfied with know ledge of the grade of the hotel alone.

Hotels entered into intensive competition, the power of the market did its work and stabilized the hotels in the country according to actual levels. Hotels aspire to improve themselves diligently in order to put themselves in better standing in the hotel market.

The Hotel Industry is no longer frozen and conservative.

*Other forms of classification*

In addition, readers must remember that there exists a worldwide hotel guide called OHG, which is kept by most travel agents in the world. This voluminous guide grades hotels in the world and is considered the most trustworthy among travel agents.

The large tourism wholesalers in the world (TUI, Thompson, Neckerman, etc) grade the hotels that they sell by themselves. A potential client in Germany who takes a "TUI: prospect in his hands, for instance, knows with certainty which level hotel he can expect.

We are in the era of the internet and the huge store of information available to the user. For most hotels in Israel, there are today, independent sites with a lot of information, pictures and details describing the hotels' services and amenities.

There are more than 42,000 hotel rooms in Israel, 26,000 of them about 60% belong to internationally known chains. IHA are sure that a potential tourist well appreciates the difference between a "Crowne Plaza" hotel room and a "Days Inn" hotel room and he doesn't need the grading information.<sup>10</sup>

## **Hotel Classification in Denmark**

(Information provided by HORESTA Denmark, the Danish Hotel Association)

*Background*

Prior to 1997, there was no hotel classification system in Denmark. The Danish Tourist Board had produced an official accommodation guide for the country but it had not rated the hotels listed in it. The guide included only basic information. Reading through this information, the consumer had sufficient information to guide his/her choice of hotel. There was no monitoring or assessment of facilities listed in the guide.

*Hotel Industry Reaction*

The hotel industry in Denmark was historically opposed to the introduction of an official scheme. The Danish Hotel Association – HORESTA Denmark - had a definite policy opposing "official, compulsory classification systems". The Association felt that such systems left the way open to government intervention and gave government the opportunity to impose tariff levels and to control pricing.

The industry was aware that users such as tour operators and consumers expressed a need for classification systems. However, such systems were dependent on the criteria requirements behind the grades and on the types of control and monitoring involved.

*Travel Industry Reaction*

As there was no classification system in Denmark, tour operators in general had their "own" system. All the grading was done by the individual operators themselves.

*Danish Tourist Board reaction*

Originally, the Danish Tourist Board did not plan to introduce a classification system because:

- ? Such a system was not considered necessary.
- ? The Board could not afford to implement a system.
- ? The Danish Hotel Association was opposed to official classification system and would fiercely oppose any attempt to introduce such a scheme in the country.
- ? The travel industry was at that time implementing its own schemes which it felt were more reliable and trustworthy.

---

<sup>10</sup> cf [www.israelhotels.org.il](http://www.israelhotels.org.il)

The country's accommodation sector had very high standards in both facilities and service and it was common opinion that there was no need to introduce a classification system at that time.

#### *Current situation*

HORESTA introduced the new Hotel Classification System in Denmark on 14 May 1996 and approved the classification of member hotels by the star scheme. This scheme is reserved for HORESTA members. All Danish hotels associated with HORESTA which have at least 8 rooms are classified on a scale ranging from 0-5 stars. The classification scheme is based upon objective criteria, i.e. the presence or absence or a wide range of facilities and service. The number of stars is therefore not indicative of subjective features such as atmosphere, quality of food and service, location or view.

The Danish Tourist Board welcomed this new classification scheme, firstly, because such a scheme had long been called for by both customers and tour operators; secondly, because experience from abroad showed that a star classification scheme was a tool for improving hotel standards. This was a quality improvement that was crucial if Danish hotels were to hold their own in the increasingly competitive international tourist market.

#### *Why a Star-rating?*

Everywhere in the world guests are accustomed to inquire about hotels in terms of the number of stars. Even though the criteria vary from one country to the another, a national classification nevertheless offers customers greater opportunity of finding a hotel which conforms to the standard desired, thereby avoiding the wrong choice of hotel – something which is disagreeable for both parties. The most important objective for HORESTA was to satisfy their customers' wishes as well as they can.

Moreover, experience from other countries showed that in many instances classification was a useful aid for a hotel manager is interested in improving his/her product. With the criteria and inspection report in hand it is easier to make improvements precisely where guests will gain most from them.

#### *Role of the Classification Board*

- ? Lays down the criteria according to which the classification will be undertaken
- ? Ensures that these criteria are consistently adapted to developments taking place in the world
- ? Has the initiative of discussing alterations to criteria and taking decisions about such alterations

#### *What does the classification scheme cost?*

HORESTA contributes financially to the establishment of the scheme. Running the classification scheme will subsequently be paid for by the hotels, according to the following criteria:

- ? Hotels with less than 20 rooms/ apartments
- ? Hotels with at least 20 rooms/ apartments
- ? Annual price rate
- ? Annual extra charge per room/ apartments

These charges, to be paid by quarterly installments, were instituted as of March 1997.

#### *Five categories*

A prerequisite for classification is that the hotel is deemed to have reached an overall satisfactory standard of cleanliness and maintenance.

The HORESTA classification scheme is not based on an assessment of the hotels, but is a recording of actual conditions.

If "Hotel Garni" is displayed on the sign or listed here on [www.danishhotels.dk](http://www.danishhotels.dk), it means that the hotel restaurant usually only serves breakfast. A small selection of the more than 100 criteria is shown below:



All rooms have at least a hand-basin with hot and cold running water. There is at least one bathroom and toilet per 10 rooms.



Telephone box, or suitable sound-proofing for a communal telephone. At least 20 percent of the rooms have private bath/shower and toilet.



All rooms have private bath/shower and toilet, as well as telephone, TV, radio and writing desk.



Comfortable chairs in the rooms. TV with international channels and film channel or in-house video service. Modem connection in at least 10% of the rooms. Round-the-clock reception, à la carte restaurant and bar. Mini-bar in all rooms, or round-the-clock room service with refreshments.



Luxurious interior decor. Rooms with safebox and some form of air-conditioning - with suites available. Modem connection in all rooms. Room service until 11 pm for meals. Indoor swimming pool, or fitness centre with professional staff. Large selection of toilet articles, etc.

Hotels fulfilling a number of specified requirements concerning meeting facilities can apply for the designation 'Hotel and Conference Center'. As far as holiday centers are concerned, a special set of criteria was drawn up in close collaboration with the 'Association of Holiday Centers in Denmark'. These describe both the facilities available and the activities on offer.

*What the classification does not say...*

The *aim* of the classification scheme is to provide guests with an immediate overview of the hotel's general and objectively recorded standard as regards facilities and services. It is not designed to provide a qualitative or subjective evaluation.

Certain types of information are not covered by the classification, which is why sensible marketing on the part of the hotel ought to contain such information. This can be indicated with the aid of symbols, text, photographs or a combination of all three.<sup>11</sup>

## Regional Classification Schemes

*Towards a Nordic classification scheme? Sweden opts for the Danish model*

In March 2003, after lengthy consultations with representatives of hotel chains, cities/destinations, distributors and various consumer organisations, the Swedish Hotel & Restaurant Association (SHR) took the decision to classify Swedish hotels that are members of the Association. For the time being, this is on a voluntary basis. In principle, SHR has adopted the Danish scheme, with certain adjustments to suit Swedish conditions and the requirements of certain key players on the Swedish market. It will also use the Danish website as a model, specifically in terms of data flow.

The classification process started in Stockholm and the Gothenburg area and is gradually being extended to cover Member hotels throughout the country. It is anticipated that by late 2004 all SHR members, some 1000 hotels, will be graded. To do this, SHR has recruited a staff of four people to run the scheme and carry out the inspections.

Costs will be covered by the hotels on a *no profit/no loss* basis. The government is covering the introductory cost in order to get the scheme launched, thus enabling SHR to reduce the level of financial risk involved. So far, the system is being rolled out successfully, with key players backing the project. However, some hoteliers still have strong reservations about classification. SHR believes the timing is right and that the website model will offer a distinct competitive advantage to members.

Both Norway and Finland are closely following developments in Sweden. Ultimately, the vision is to establish a Nordic classification system common to all the players in the region.

(Information provided by the Swedish Hotel & Restaurant Association)

<sup>11111</sup> cf [www.danskehoteller.dk/uk/stjerner.html](http://www.danskehoteller.dk/uk/stjerner.html)

cf Swiss Hotel Association Hotel Classification System, 14 March 2001 (document)

*Adapting the Swiss Hotel Association (SHA) system to other countries?*

In 1979 SHA introduced a hotel classification system which was the first and only private one of its kind in the world. It is based on self-assessment by the hotelier which is subsequently reviewed by one of SHA's five regional committees.

Following comprehensive overhauls in 1985, 1989 and 1994, the SHA hotel classification scheme underwent its fourth review in 2000. The new standards give hoteliers the option of applying for a maximum of three specialisation categories (e.g. Family, Historic, Golf, Congress Health Hotel) as well as an optional Seal of Quality qualification, in recognition of the fact that the quality of individual hotels has steadily increased over the years. Reviews are undertaken every five years to allow for periodic reclassification well received by SHA members, despite the substantial investment involved.

The SHA system is used in Switzerland by the Canton Ticino Tourist Office (for classifying hotels which are not SHA members) and has been adopted at the international level by Germany, Austria, various North Italian provinces, South Tyrol and Trinidad and Tobago. HOTREC is studying the system as a discussion basis for further projects at the European level.

*The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)*

Starting in 1976, the ten States Member of the ASEAN (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) have developed comprehensive programmes and plans of actions on cooperation in tourism. Among the different activities included under these programmes and plans in favour of ASEAN cooperation in tourism, the establishment of a common hotel classification scheme is under consideration.

*The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)*

ECOWAS, which groups fifteen countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo) has established a programme of cooperation in the tourism sector which focuses on three areas, namely: Promotion and marketing of tourism products; Facilitation and Harmonization of regulations applicable to tourism activities and the hotel industry.

With regard to hotel classification, at its 45<sup>th</sup> session (Lome, Togo, 5 December 1999), the Council of ECOWAS Ministers adopted regulations<sup>12</sup> on proposed standards for classification of hotels, motels and guest inns in the sub-region, taking into account those drafted and proposed by WTO for the African region in 1984. ECOWAS has however introduced in its proposed standards new elements, such as minimum ceiling standards, billing and payments rules, insurance requirements and services entrances.

A workshop on the implementation of this harmonized hotel classification system was jointly organized by ECOWAS and WTO in Dakar, Senegal, in July 2001. Participants in this workshop have recommended to ECOWAS Member States to establish their respective national classification committees, in order to take responsibility for classification of hotels and the setting up of inspection teams in each state, based on the standards as approved in 1999 by the Council of Ministers.

Participants also agreed that the ECOWAS Secretariat should take responsibility for sourcing of the funds necessary to meet the classification training and human resource development requirements for the implementation of the aforementioned regulations between 2002 and 2003.

## **Review of Graphical Symbols – Stars, diamonds and other crown jewels**

<sup>12</sup> Proposed Standards for Classification of Hotels, Motels and Guest Inns, ECW/TCIMP/AD-HOC/HOTEL/3

A variety of graphical symbols are used in the hotel and lodging industry throughout the world. In the USA, both the American Automobile Association (AAA) and the petrochemical company Mobil provide information on hotel and lodging facilities, rated according to their own system.

#### *Mobil "Star" Ratings*



A Mobil One-Star Lodging Establishment is a limited service Hotel/Motel/Inn that is considered a clean, comfortable and reliable establishment.



A Mobil Two-Star Lodging Establishment is a Hotel/Resort/Inn that is considered a clean, comfortable and reliable establishment, but also has expanded amenities, such as a full-service Restaurant on the property.



A Mobil Three-Star Lodging Establishment is a Hotel/Resort/Inn which is well-appointed, with a full-service Restaurant and expanded amenities, such as, but not limited to: fitness center, golf course, tennis courts, 24-hour room service, and optional turndown service.



A Mobil Four-Star Lodging Establishment is a Hotel/Resort/Inn which provides a luxury experience with expanded amenities in a distinctive environment. Services may include, but are not limited to: automatic turndown service, 24 hour room service, and valet parking.



A Mobil Five-Star Lodging Establishment provides consistently superlative service in an exceptionally distinctive luxury environment with expanded services. Attention to detail is evident throughout the Hotel/Resort/Inn from the bed linens to staff uniforms.

#### **Lodging Criteria and Expectations**

*\* Note: The following criteria are suggested criteria of what a guest can generally expect at each star level. They are not individually mandated nor are they limited to those items listed below. These are merely a representative sampling of the hundreds of points covered during our inspection process. Additionally, at each level the lodging establishment is required to meet or exceed the requirements of the previous star rating. For example, a Two-Star hotel meets the criteria expectations of a Two-Star hotel as well as the One-Star hotel. A Three-Star hotel meets the criteria expectations of a Three-Star hotel, a Two-Star hotel and One-Star hotel, and so forth.<sup>13</sup>*

#### *American Automobile Association (AAA) "Diamond" ratings*

##### **One Diamond**

These establishments typically appeal to the budget-minded traveller. They provide essential, no-frills accommodations. They meet the basic requirements pertaining to comfort, cleanliness and hospitality.

##### **Two Diamond**

These establishments appeal to the traveller seeking more than the basic accommodations. There are modest enhancements to the overall physical attributes, design elements and amenities of the facility typically at a moderate price.

---

<sup>13</sup> cf [www.mobiltravelguide.com](http://www.mobiltravelguide.com) ("Mobil Stars")

### **Three Diamond**

These establishments appeal to the traveller with comprehensive needs. Properties are multifaceted with a distinguished style, including marked upgrades in the quality of physical attributes, amenities and level of comfort provided.

### **Four Diamond**

These establishments are upscale in all areas. Accommodations are progressively more refined and stylish. The physical attributes reflect an obvious enhanced level of quality throughout. The fundamental hall marks at this level include an extensive array of amenities combined with a high degree of hospitality, service and attention to detail.

### **Five Diamond**

These establishments reflect the characteristics of the ultimate in luxury and sophistication. Accommodations are first class. The physical attributes are extraordinary in every manner. The fundamental hallmarks at this level are to meticulously serve and exceed all guest expectations while maintaining an impeccable standard of excellence. Many personalized services and amenities enhance an unmatched level of comfort.<sup>14</sup>

Both AAA and Mobil award ratings on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest rating - signifying the absolute ultimate in service, luxury, atmosphere and price). Both organisations conduct annual on-site physical inspections and both provide inspections, evaluations and rating free of charge to hotels.<sup>15</sup>

AAA overhauls its ratings standards about every five years and invites industry representatives to comment on them before issuing the final version; while Mobil does not disclose detailed criteria to hotels or provide them with any feedback.<sup>16</sup> AAA is currently implementing a major revision of standards for its 2005 awards to be announced in the autumn of 2004. This revision was delayed by the events of 11 September 2001.

### *Mexico favours "Stars and Diamonds"*

Cancun, Mexico – 2 September 1999 - During the XXV Tianguis in Acapulco, Mexico's Secretary of Tourism, presented the new Mexican hotel rating classification, called "Stars and Diamonds".

This system is the result of several years of extensive research, and has integrated criteria from various sources like AAA, Mobil, Michelin, Small Luxury Hotels, Relais et Châteaux, The Leading Hotels of the World and Spain's ITQ2000, among others.

"Stars and Diamonds" has been sponsored by the Mexican Hotel Association, as well as the Mexican Chain Hotels Association and approved by the Ministry of Tourism.

This classification is voluntary and will be based on a certification by an independent board. It will consider, on the one side, the quality of a hotel (basically the room), which will be rated with stars, and on the other side, the quality of its services and staff, to be rated in diamonds. This certification will be renewed every year after a site inspection.<sup>17</sup>

### *United Kingdom seeks to harmonise three systems*

---

<sup>14</sup> cf [www.aaa.biz/adsales](http://www.aaa.biz/adsales) ("Rating Info & Applications")

<sup>15</sup> Cf "Stars and Diamonds : Some Similarities and Some Differences", by Harry Nobles & Cheryl Thompson Griggs, Hotel Online Special Report, January 2003

<sup>16</sup> Cf How do Mobil and AAA ratings compare ? You decide" by Jane Engle, Los Angeles Times, 1 February 2004

<sup>17</sup> « 'Stars and Diamonds' Name of Mexico's Hotel Rating System », Hotel Online Special Report, 2 Sept. 1999

## Information provided by the British Hospitality Association – BHA

There are new, harmonised, quality standards for hotels under a unified system agreed between the two major motoring organisations - the Automobile Association (AA) and the Royal Automobile Club (RAC), and the English Tourist Board (Scotland and Wales will have slight variances with these standards). Quality standards will be signified with the award of 'Stars'. The minimum number of stars is one and the maximum is five.

There is no legal compulsion for hotels to seek quality recognition, although they are subject to local controls and licensing. Requirements for the granting of **stars**, **crowns** etc. can be found inside the cover of the AA and RAC Hotel Guides. These guides can generally be found in the Information Section of local libraries.

### **Hotel Classification (Stars)**

#### **One Star Hotels**

Hotels in this classification are likely to be small and independently owned, with a family atmosphere. Services may be provided by the owner and family on an informal basis. There may be a limited range of facilities and meals may be fairly simple. Lunch, for example, may not be served. Some bedrooms may not have en suite bath/shower rooms. Maintenance, cleanliness and comfort should, however, always be of an acceptable standard.

#### **Two Star Hotels**

In this classification hotels will typically be small to medium sized and offer more extensive facilities than at the one star level. Some business hotels come into the two star classification and guests can expect comfortable, well equipped, overnight accommodation, usually with an en-suite bath/shower room. Reception and other staff will aim for a more professional presentation than at the one star level, and offer a wider range of straightforward services, including food and drink.

#### **Three Star Hotels**

At this level, hotels are usually of a size to support higher staffing levels, and a significantly greater quality and range of facilities than at the lower star classifications. Reception and the other public rooms will be more spacious and the restaurant will normally also cater for non-residents. All bedrooms will have fully en suite bath and shower rooms and offer a good standard of comfort and equipment, such as a hair dryer, direct dial telephone, toiletries in the bathroom. Some room service can be expected, and some provision for business travellers.

#### **Four Star Hotels**

Expectations at this level include a degree of luxury as well as quality in the furnishings, decor and equipment, in every area of the hotel. Bedrooms will also usually offer more space than at the lower star levels, and well designed, co-ordinated furnishings and decor. The en-suite bathrooms will have both bath and fixed shower. There will be a high enough ratio of staff to guests to provide services like portage, 24-hour room service, laundry and dry-cleaning. The restaurant will demonstrate a serious approach to its cuisine.

#### **Five Star Hotels**

Here you should find spacious and luxurious accommodation throughout the hotel, matching the best international standards. Interior design should impress with its quality and attention to detail, comfort and elegance. Furnishings should be immaculate. Services should be formal, well supervised and flawless in attention to guests' needs, without being intrusive. The restaurant will demonstrate a high level of technical skill, producing dishes to the highest international standards. Staff will be knowledgeable, helpful, well versed in all aspects of customer care, combining efficiency with courtesy.

#### **Guest House Classification (Diamonds)**

The Diamond awards assess guest accommodation at five levels of quality, from one Diamond at the simplest, to 5 Diamonds at the luxury end of the spectrum.<sup>18</sup>

### **Terminology**

#### *WTO Thesaurus on Tourism and Leisure Activities*

Due to the considerable growth worldwide in the volume of information on tourism activity and at the same time the sizeable increase in automated documentation systems regarding this sector, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) set itself the task of creating a structured multilingual tool to facilitate indexing and bibliographical search into tourism and allied fields: *The Thesaurus on Tourism and Leisure Activities*.

This linguistic instrument was developed between 1996 and 1999 –by the means of an effective partnership between the WTO Secretariat – and the Secretariat of State for Tourism of France through its Tourism Directorate.

The Thesaurus - which was initially established as a specific documentation language to help search for information relating to tourism activities- can be also used as a guide to tourism terminology as well as for the standardization and normalization of a common indexation and retrieval language, at the international level. Its basic framework is made up of semantic fields, which include terms, definitions and relations linking the terms to each other.

The 8,185 terms thus selected are distributed over 20 fields representing tourism activity. Field 08 concerns *Accommodation* and its main related aspects, i.e. Accommodation Capacity; Holiday Accommodation; Youth Accommodation; Rural Accommodation; Hotel Trade and Other Means of Accommodation.

The first edition (French-English-Spanish) of the Thesaurus was published in 2001 and the Italian version in 2003. The Croatian and Portuguese versions of the Thesaurus should become available in 2004. The objective set for this linguistic tool during 2004-2005, is to provide updated on line editions and also expand it to other languages.

#### *WTO Tourism Legislation Database (LEXTOUR)*

As from mid-November 2003, the WTO Documentation Centre launched the Tourism Legislation Database – LEXTOUR. This database has been designed to act as a referral system facilitating -via the WTO Website ([www.world-tourism.org](http://www.world-tourism.org))-, direct access through links to external websites, databases and information servers on tourism legislative data produced and distributed by authoritative sources, such as national parliaments, central government bodies (including national tourism administrations – NTAs), professional associations, universities, etc.

---

<sup>18</sup> cf [www.bha.org](http://www.bha.org) (The foregoing information was current at the time of production and is supplied, without prejudice. The British Hospitality Association cannot be held responsible, either directly or consequentially, for any action resulting from the use of the information contained herein. )

Presently, some three hundred information systems have been identified in more than 130 countries.

A number of webservers recorded in LEXTOUR (especially those administrated by NTAs) provide references to and/or full text of legislative and regulatory instruments governing tourism accommodation and, in particular, hotels and similar establishments.

### **CEN - ISO**

After many years of work, investigation and broad industry consultation both at the European and international levels, (see earlier section on "Review of Previous Work" ) . The CEN work in this area was completed with the publication in January 2001 of the European and International Standard on *Tourism Services – Hotels and other types of tourism accommodation – Terminology (prEN ISO 18513)*.

This was released as an official ISO publication in 2003, described by ISO in the following terms:

This is a dictionary of core terms for the tourist industry, meaning that when one person uses a term, the others anywhere in the world know exactly what is being described and what they can expect.

ISO 18513 can serve as a reference for the explanations given in travel brochures or in automatic booking systems; in business-to-business communications; in definitions given in tourist statistics; for consumer advisory services, to avoid misunderstandings when tourist offers are provided; and for interpretation in legal conflicts.

\*\*\*

## V. CONCLUSIONS

### 1. Synthesis of findings

It is obvious from this study, based on a survey of both the public and private sectors, that not only is the situation complex – but that the solutions are just as complicated.

#### *Classification by other entities*

First and foremost, it should be noted that the study does not attempt to do more than refer briefly to classification standards or criteria used by consumer bodies or travel professionals e.g.:

- Consumer guides (Michelin, RAC, AA etc.)
- Global Distribution Systems (GDS) (Amadeus, Galileo, Sabre etc.)
- Computer Reservation Systems (CRS) and brokers
- GSM codification used by computers and telephone technology in cars
- Major voluntary chains and consortia
- Major hotel chains
- Major hotel franchisors
- Tour Operators
- ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation)

It would also be useful to take a look at furnished rentals, i.e. neither hotels nor resorts, which form a large share of the holiday rental market. These are often subject to the same rules and regulations as regular private rentals, rather than those applying to tourist accommodation.

In addition to all these classification standards or criteria, others are laid down by governments, professional bodies or private enterprises.

#### *Consumer-driven?*

One point is obvious – all these approaches claim to be for the benefit of the consumer. Yet consumers are very rarely consulted even though many organisations claim to be acting on their behalf. Here one fundamental difference can be noted between the public and private sectors. When such standards and criteria are laid down by governments, they tend to remain in force for years at a time, are infrequently checked and rarely updated to meet changes in fashion and consumer taste or take account of changes in destinations and markets.

In this respect, the private sector is much quicker at responding to demand, as instanced by such developments as timeshare, resorts, villas providing traditional hotel services etc. Similarly, the criteria set out in private-sector consumer guides are much more responsive to consumer and market demand. Many surveys show that consumer choice is governed first and foremost by price and destination, rather than by classification systems that are so complex that the consumer is either unaware of them or unable to decipher them.

In fact, where the public sector is concerned, government interest in having a classification system is often prompted by the need to organise the domestic market, obtain statistics and assess competition from neighbouring countries/destinations.

*Summing up*

- ? In the light of recent events such as 9/11, SARS, Mad Cow disease and Legionnaire's disease, ensuring minimum standards for safety and hygiene should obviously fall to governments. As most of the other aspects of classification are basically commercial, or market-driven, this could be a first consideration guiding the classification debate.
- ? The two notions, destination, whether country or region, and purpose of travel (business, leisure, etc) are fundamental. As noted in the report, Europe is currently considering the feasibility of an EU classification system; similar investigations are underway within ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations); in the Nordic countries and in the Middle East; while Central African states have expressed interest in some such system.

*Key considerations*

1. Private sector requirement: consumer information  
There is strong consumer demand for better and more transparent information on both the products and destinations on offer. This implies the consistent use of a given and recognised terminology. It also raises the problem of the language(s) in which the information is made available. On the positive side, the diversity of information available can also be considered an advantage.
2. Public sector responsibility: Hygiene and safety  
Government concern should focus more on ensuring hygiene and personal safety than on the commercial aspects of classification.
3. Methodology  
It would be advisable to devise a methodology providing those states wishing to set up a national or regional classification scheme with the necessary tools to do so. The point here is to provide a systematic way of taking into account the cultural differences between states in terms of service and facilities according to destinations, regions and purpose of travel. To be sustainable, tourism must be able to consolidate its diversity, not seek uniformity.

Without these intermediary stages, any international classification system would run the risk of being irrelevant and therefore inefficient, especially as it could necessarily only be voluntary. In the long run, this would end up merely creating more confusion.

\*\*\*