



Polish Hotel Classification System Against The System Of Hotelstars

Union

Mgr. Dorota Lorenc^{!*}

University of Economics in Katowice

*E-mail: do.rota@yahoo.pl

Abstract: Hotel classification system is the easiest but also the most difficult way to show the standard of each hotel facility. According to the fact that most countries all over the world have their own systems with their own requirements to rate the hotels, potential guests may be confused choosing the same standards –in their opinion – in different countries and facing surprising realities. Hoteliers who want to invite and cooperate with international guests not only once have to do much more than the national law demands to meet guests' expectations and to be competitive. Poland also has its own national hotel classification system which has been compared to the system created by Hotelstars Union which is binding in most countries in Europe. This comparison gave the picture of the situation in Poland and the situation in most European countries, shew the similarities but what is more important shew the differences. It is a good point to draw conclusions.

Keywords: Hotel classification/categorization system, Hotelstars Union, Polish hotel classification system

Introduction

The category of a hotel and its recommendation say a lot about the standard and the quality of services offered by each place. The purpose of the hotel categorization is to harmonize the standards and to confirm that a lot of different criteria have been fulfilled (Szostak D, 2009). The number of stars awarded to the hotel is a big simplification for potential client by determining his idea about the offer. Not only once this is the major reason for choosing certain place. Stars are the most popular symbol to classify the hotels all over the world, however also other indications are used like: Roman numerals, letters of the alphabet or words such as: luxury, superior, comfort, standard, budget. It should be noted that there is no one global or even pan-European system of hotels categorization which would allow for equal treatment of hotel facilities. The same standard can be describe as four-star in one country while in other it may deserve just two stars. The main goal of this article is to show the differences in polish hotel classification system and in the most common hotel categorization system in Europe created by Hotelstars Union. The aim is to notice which one is more adequate to these days and decide which one fulfills higher and higher requirements of hotel guests. The method used in the paper is comparison of both systems followed by the analysis of the situation in particular areas of requirements.

Hotelstars Union

In order to harmonize the classification rules in European hospitality industry there was created an organization called Hotelstars Union. The main goal of the organization is to ensure universality, integrity and transparency of the criteria corresponding to a hotel standards. This initiative works under the patronage of HOTREC and brings together national associations of hotels, restaurants and cafes from 16 countries of the old continent, making it the most widespread system for determining standards of hotels in Europe. Every country which belongs to the Confederation of National Organizations of Hotels, Restaurants, Cafes in the European Union and the European Economic Area can join the Hotelstars Union and together with the existing members work to improve the quality and to define the common principles of provided services. The countries that currently are the parts of Hotelstars Union are: Sweden, Netherlands, Germany, Czech Republic, Austria, Switzerland, Hungary, Belgium, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, Denmark, Greece, Malta, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia (hotelstars.eu).

Hotelstars Union has created the hotel classification which is based on 270 criteria. The fulfillment of selected of them is mandatory for proper classification and each subsequent asset provides additional points when determining the standard. This is also reflected in the other direction - if the hotel does not meet some criteria, but scores points in other - this lack does not mean the exclusion from further procedure and at the same time grading the place to a lower category. The system gives 5 categories for hotel facilities from one to five stars. The criteria are divided into the following areas: general information about the hotel, reception and services, rooms, gastronomy, event facilities, leisure, quality and online activity. Each group can be awarded a certain number of points, which when added give the whole picture of the category to which the hotel facility can be classified by determining the minimum points for each class. The maximum points to get is 940. To get placed in the one-star category the object must score 90 points, for two-star category the minimum is 170 points, 260 points meets the standard of three stars, 400 for four stars and 600 points is the standard of five stars. What is more, there was created a sub-category of "Superior" structures, which combined with the number of stars shows the fact that the hotel exceeded the minimum necessary points to be classified in certain category, and hence, the services provided exceeds basic standard for a given grade. Another division introduced by this system is the separation complex with dining facilities from those that offer only breakfasts by calling it a garni hotels. The highest category for this group is the four-star. Hotelstars Union requirements are updated every five years, so they are not obsolete, and their verification is carried out in accordance with the changing world and the requirements of the guests. The current rules came into the force on 1 January 2015 and will be valid until the end of 2020.

Polish hotel classification system

Poland, unfortunately, is not yet in the ranks of Hotelstars Union, however the Chamber of Commerce of the Polish Hotels has made a huge step towards the development of Polish hotel industry due to joining HOTREC 1 January 2015 (Hotelier, 2014). This gives the possibility of large-scale cooperation with associations of hotels from other countries in Europe by taking over from them positive role models and increasing the competitiveness of Polish hotel business. In Poland the rules for determining hotel standards which are currently in force are contained in the Act of 29 August 1997 on tourism services and issued on the basis of the Regulation of the Minister of Economy and Labour of 19 August 2004 on hotel facilities and other facilities where hotel services are provided with later changes. Due to these acts the

system is a national compulsory hotel classification system. That Regulation sets out requirements for the various types and categories of hotel facilities, for their equipment and range of services, including catering services. It also shows the minimum requirements to equip other facilities that provide accommodation services.. Lays down detailed rules and procedures for successful completion of hotel facilities to the various types and categories. There is also contained a way of documenting compliance by hotel facilities building requirements, fire protection and sanitation, the mode of control over compliance with these requirements and the manner of keeping records of hotel facilities and other facilities in which hotel services are provided. It sets out the minimum requirements for equipment to adapt hotel facilities for disabled guests. Categorization demands contained in this document can be divided into groups: external components of arrangement, installations and technical devices, basic elements of the functions, services and the utility of the object, living accommodation, offer of basic and supplementary services, others. This system as well as Hotelstars Union gives 5 categories for hotel facilities from one to five stars. It says about the minimum criteria which have to be fulfilled to classify place to certain category with the rule that all given requirement have to be implemented.

Systems comparison

Requirements areas for categorization of Hotelstars Union and of Polish system are as follows:

Table 1 – Requirements areas in both hotels classification systems

Hotelstars Union classification system	Polish classification system
General Hotel Info	External components of arrangement
Reception and Services	Instalations and technical devices
Rooms	Basic elements of the functions, services and the utility of the object
Gastronomy	Living accommodation
Event Facilities (MICE)	Offer of basic and supplementary services
Leisure	Others
Quality and Online Activities	

At first glance it is visible that the Hotelstars Union classification system defines more accurately the areas in which places the requirements. It divides the hotel into specific departments and gives similar demands for each group of services. The polish system treats the problem more generally, without specifying the relevant department of hotel. It is focused

more on the technical and functional aspects. To understand the differences better, based on the Hotelstars Union criteria 2015-2020 and on polish valid acts both systems have been compared below.

Table 2 – Comparison of general hotel information

Hotelstars Union classification system			Polish classification system	
I. General Hotel Info				
Cleanliness / Hygiene	1	Cleanliness and perfect hygiene are prerequisites are basic conditions in all categories.		
Preservation condition	2	All mechanisms and equipment are functional and in faultless condition.		
General impression	3	The general impression of the hotel is sufficient for simple/medium/elevated/high/highest requirements		
Staff	4	All services must be provided by competent and identifiable staff	All services must be provided by identifiable staff with the same uniforms for each department	52
Car park	5	Parking directly at the hotel	Parking space at the time of arrival and departure of guests	8
	6	Parking possibilities for busses		
	7	Garage	Safe parking, secure garage, guarded parking space or service of departure / arrival the vehicle to / from a secure car park	8
	8	Charging station for electrical vehicles (e.g. cars, bicycles)		
Others	9	Min. 50% of the rooms with balcony or terrace		
	10	Elevator -For hotels with more than three floors (incl. ground floor)	Passenger lifts or escalators A separate cargo elevator	18 19
Facilities for disabled persons	11	Barrier-free Wheelchair or assistance	Barrier-free Wheelchair	
	12	Barrier-free Electronic wheelchair		
	13	Barrier-free Blind or visually impaired		
	14	Barrier-free Deaf or hearing impaired		
	15	Completely barrier-free		
			Hotel is a separate building or separate part of the building functional unit, or group of buildings together with accompanying infrastructure	1
			Top cover over the main entrance, the location of the entry in the cavity or providing automatically opened/rotary door	3
			The top cover of the driveway to the facility	4
			Separate entrance and a separate guest luggage road	5
			A separate supply route	6
			Access roads and routes are paved, the greenery and area lighting are maintained in a proper way, the "staff only" part is separated from parts available for guests	7
			Heating throughout the facility or in part	12

			without air conditioning	
			Lighting adapted to the nature of premises	14
			Double-sided power supply or emergency generator	20

General hotel information which can be found in polish regulations concern on technical determinants of the building where the hotel is located. There is shown the necessity to roof the entrance to the facility, to harden the driveway and to separate paths for staff, supplies and luggage from those areas for guests. Both systems point to the proper maintenance of the outer part of the buildings with this difference that on the side of Hotelstars Union appears a focus on a cleanliness and hygiene. Staff in accordance with polish regulations should be visible and uniformly dressed, while the European system also emphasizes the appropriate competencies of people who work in hospitality business. Requirements for elevator are included in both systems, as well as for the parking facilities, but these are bigger in system of Hotelstars Union, which additionally notices charging station option for electrical vehicles. The European system also puts higher demands to adapt the buildings to the diverse needs of people with different disabilities while polish one shows the requirements just for wheelchairs.

Table 3 – Comparison of Reception and Services requirements

II. Reception and Services			
16	Visually, separated area or desk securing privacy (appropriate table or secretary is acceptable)	Direct entrance to the reception hall protected against an excessive outdoor air inflow	2
17	Separate, independent reception station or desk securing privacy		
18	Lounge suite at the reception		
19	Lobby with seats and beverage service		
20	Reception hall with several seats and beverage service	Multifunctional reception hall of a certain size	21
21	Reception service, available for phone calls (from inside and outside the hotel) 24 hours	Reception open 24 hours	32 a
22	Reception open 14 hours, available for phone calls (from inside and outside the hotel) 24 hours		
23	Reception open 16 hours, available for phone calls (from inside and outside the hotel) 24 hours and staffed 24 hours		
24	Reception opened and staffed 24 hours, available for phone calls (from inside and outside the hotel) 24 hours		
25	Express check-out		
26	Bilingual staff		
27	Multilingual staff		

	28	Photocopy/scan service		
	29	Valet parking service		
	30	Doorman (separate personnel)		
	31	Concierge (separate personnel)		
	32	Page boys (separate personnel)		
	33	Luggage service on demand		
	34	Luggage service	Luggage service 24 hours	37
	35	Secure left-luggage service for arriving or departing guests	Secure left-luggage service for arriving or departing guests	38
Cleaning of rooms / change of laundry	36	Daily room cleaning	Daily room cleaning or on demand	51
	37	Daily change of towels on demand	Daily change of towels or on demand	50
	38	Change of bed linen at least once a week		
	39	Change of bed linen at least twice a week		
	40	Daily change of bed linen on demand	Daily change of bed linen or on demand	50
Laundry and ironing service	41	Chemical cleaning/dry-cleaning (delivery before 9a.m., return within 24 hours)	Washing, ironing and laundry service	49
	42	Chemical cleaning/dry-cleaning (delivery before 9 a.m., return within 9 hours)		
	43	Ironing service (return within 1 hour)		
	44	Laundry and ironing service (return as agreed)		
	45	Laundry and ironing service (delivery before 9a.m., return on the same day – weekend excluded)		
	46	Laundry and ironing service (delivery before 9a.m., return within 9 hours)		
Payment	47	Payment via card	Payment via card	40
Miscellaneous	48	Support for in-house IT		
	49	Umbrella at the reception/in the room		
	50	Up-to-date magazines		
	51	Daily newspapers (print or digital)	Daily newspaper - selling or sharing	41
	52	Sewing service		
	53	Shoe polishing service		
	54	Shuttle or limousine service		
	55	Offer of sanitary products (e.g. toothbrush, toothpaste, shaving kit)		
	56	Personalized greeting for each guest with flowers or a present in the room (not only a welcome message on the TV-screen)		
	57	Accompanying the guest to the room at the arrival		
	58	Turndown service in the evening as an additional room check		

			<p>The hygienic and sanitary facilities at public area with at least:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) a sink with countertop or shelf 2) The mirror above each sink, with top or side lighting 3) The liquid soap dispenser 4) a container for paper and waste 5) The hand dryer or disposable towels 6) wall hangers, also in the cabins toilet 7) WC (in the facilities category *** - ***** separate for men and women) 8) urinal in the men's toilet when toilet separate for men and women 	22
			<p>First aid in an emergency, possibility to use the medicine cabinet and recall medical assistance; trained reception staff in first aid</p>	43

Requirements for the Reception and Services issued by Hotelstars Union are much more detailed than the requirements specified in this area in polish system of hotels categorization. Similar features which can be found are the multifunctionality of reception, room service in the hotel, porter service and luggage storage. Moreover both systems say about the option to card payment and access to daily newspapers. The classification system adopted by most European Union countries notices additionally elements such as privacy preserved at the reception counter, the lobby with seating places and the ability to purchase drinks. The working hours of reception are specified not only as 24 hours, but also 14 or 16 hours. Extra points are given for express check-out, bilingual or even multilingual staff, service of doorman, concierge and page boys.

The demands for cleaning rooms look similar in both systems. There are standards of daily room cleaning, changing the towels and linen. The only difference is that the European system additionally gives the possibility to change the linen once and twice a week while polish one says just about daily changing or on demand.

Polish system says about the necessity to have washing, ironing and laundry service in hotel. Hotelstars Union goes further and says also about the necessity to have a dry cleaning service in the hotel, and specifies the time of returning the clothes to the guest up to 24 or 9 hours after collecting them. What is more, if guest ask for ironing service, the clothes should be return in 9 hours or in the same day.

In addition Hotelstars Union also lists IT support, umbrella for guests available at the reception, sewing service, shoes polishing, passenger transfer services and the availability to get the sanitary products as for example toothbrush. It draws attention to personalized guest welcoming in the room, accompanying him in the way to the room after checking in, and

turndown service in the evening – all these aspects are not even noticed by polish categorization system. Polish system whereas shows the necessity of sanitary facilities in public areas detailing what should be in each of them. The important requirement which comes from polish system is the one saying that staff must give the first aid if necessary and call emergency. That means that the appropriate preparation for the employees must be guaranteed and the first aid kit has to be available in the reception.

Table 4 – Rooms requirements comparison

		III Rooms		
General Room Info	59	Size of rooms (incl. bathroom) $\geq 14\text{m}^2$	Size of single rooms (excl. bathroom) 14/12/10/9/8 m ²	23
	60	Size of rooms (incl. bathroom) $\geq 18\text{m}^2$	Size of double rooms (excl. bathroom) 18/16/14/12/10 m ²	23
	61	Size of rooms (incl. bathroom) $\geq 22\text{m}^2$	Size of triple rooms (excl. bathroom) .../.../16/15/14 m ²	23
	62	Size of rooms (incl. bathroom) $\geq 30\text{m}^2$	Size of rooms for four (excl. Bathroom) .../.../.../18/16 m ²	23
	63	Number of suites	Apartment-unit with at least: living room of at least 25 m ² bedroom with a bathroom, an entrance part with an additional toilet	24
	64	Min.50% of the rooms is non-smoking		
Sleeping comfort	65	Bed system with a modern and well-kept mattress of at least 13cm		
	66	Bed system consisting of an elastic system in combination with a modern and well-kept mattress with an overall height of at least 18cm		
	67	Bed system consisting of an elastic system in combination with a modern and well-kept mattress with an overall height of at least 22cm		
	68	Ergonomically adjustable bed system		
	69	Single beds with a min.size of 0.80m x 1.90m and double beds with a min. size of 1.60m x 1.90m		
	70	Single beds with a min.size of 0.90m x 1.90m and double beds with a min.size of 1.80m x 1.90m		
	71	Single beds with a min.size of 0.90m x 2.00m and double beds with a min.size of 1.80m x 2.00m	Single beds with a min.size of 0.90m x 2.00m and double beds with a min.size of 1.40m x 2.00m	26
	72	Single beds with a min.size of 1.00m x 2.00m and double beds with a min.size of 2.00m x 2.00m		
	73	10% of the beds with a min. length of 2.10m		
	74	Additional crib		
	75	Hygienic covers for mattresses ("encasings")		
	76	New acquisition of mattresses max. 3 years ago (The certificate has to be added to the application.)		

	77	Annual laundry or thorough cleaning of mattresses (The certificate has to be added to the application.)		
	78	Allergy friendly sleeping alternative available on demand (The certificate has to be added to the application.)		
	79	Modern and well-kept blanket		
	80	Additional blanket on demand		
	81	Modern and well-kept pillow		
	82	Hygienic covers for pillows ("encasings")		
	83	Annual laundry of pillows or new acquisition max. 1 year ago (cleaning) (A proof has to be added to the application.)		
	3	Additional usable, non-decorative pillow on demand		
	85	Two usable, non-decorative pillows per person		
	86	Choice of pillows		
	87	Possibility to darken the room (e.g. curtain)	Possibility to darken the room (e.g. curtain)	28
	88	Possibility to completely darken the room (e.g. shutter or blackout curtain)		
	89	Sheer curtain/screen/blinds or equivalent	Light transmissive curtains, blinds or shutters	28
	90	Washable bedside carpet	Carpet throughout room, carpet or rug at all beds	28
	91	Wake-up service or device	Wake-up service	35
Room equipment	92	Adequate wardrobe or clothes niche	Wall or standing hanger for the outer clothing	26
	93	Linen shelves		
	94	Adequate number of hangers	At least three hangers per person	26
	95	Adequate number of hangers of different types		
	96	Wardrobe or clothing hooks	Wardrobe or wardrobe recess	26
	97	Possibility to hang up a suit bag (outside the wardrobe)		
	98	1 chair	1 chair	26
	99	1 seating accommodation, at least one chair per bed	Chair or other seating accommodation	26
	100	1 comfortable seating accommodation (upholstered chair/couch) with side table/tray	At least 2 armchairs or sofa	26
	101	1 additional comfortable upholstered chair or loveseat in double rooms or suites		
	102	Table/desk or desk top	Desk or table	26
	103	Table, desk or desk top with a free min. working space of 0.5m ² and an adequate appropriate lighting		
	104	Bedside table/tray	Bedside table or shelf at any place to sleep	26
	105	Accessible power socket in the room	Access to at least one free power socket	27
	106	Additional accessible power socket next to the table/desk or desktop	Direct and easy access to at least one power socket next to place of work (table or desk)	27
	107	Accessible power socket next to the bed		
	108	Central light switch for the room light		
109	Bedside light switch for the room light			

	110	Bedside light switch for the complete room light		
	111	Night light		
	112	Adequate room lighting	General lighting	27
			Table or desk lamp for a work area	27
	113	Reading light next to the bed	Bedside lamp at every place to sleep that allows reading in a lying position	27
	114	Dressing mirror	Mirror	26
	115	Adequate place or rack to put the luggage/suitcase	Place or rack to put the luggage/suitcase	26
	116	Waste paper basket	Waste bin, difficult to get fired in the rooms without the bathrooms	28
			Ashtray in room where smoking is allowed	28
Safe-keeping	117	Safekeeping facilities (e.g. at the reception)	Safekeeping facilities	38
	118	Central safe (e.g. at the reception)	Safe in the room	28
	119	Safe in the room		
	120	Safe with integrated power socket in the room		
Noise control / air conditioning	121	Adequate noise protection (windows)		
	122	Sound-absorbing doors or double doors		
	123	Rooms with centrally adjustable air conditioning	In rooms air conditioning or other equipment and systems to ensure air exchange and maintaining summer temperatures below 24 ° C, and in winter above 20 ° C and humidity of 45-60%	10
	124	Rooms with individually adjustable air conditioning		
	125	Air conditioning in public guest areas (restaurant, lobby, entrance hall, breakfast room)	In public area air conditioning or other equipment and systems to ensure air exchange and maintaining summer temperatures below 24 ° C, and in winter above 20 ° C and humidity of 45-60%	9
	126	Harmonious room atmosphere in public areas (light, smell, music, color, etc.)	Mechanical ventilation ensures the exchange of air and removes odors in the whole building	9
Entertainment electronics	127	Radio broadcast device	Installation that allows to receive radio and television programs	17 28
	128	Audio or multimedia player		
	129	Fixed electronic media in the bathroom		
	130	TV with remote control		
	131	TV in a size appropriate for the room with a remote control and a channel list		
	132	Modern TV in a size appropriate for the room with a remote control, a channel list and a programme		
	133	Additional modern TV in suites in a size appropriate for the room		
	134	National and international channels available		
	135	Pay-TV, movie channels or videogames with the possibility of "Adult lock"		
	136	International power adapter plug on demand		

	137	Charging station (for multiple electronic devices) and/or different adapters on demand		
Telecommunications	138	Publicly available telephone for guests	Phone and fax services available for guests at the reception	15
	139	(Mobile) telephone on demand in the room along with at least bilingual instruction manual		
	140	Telephone in the room along with a multilingual instruction manual	Telephone in the room, telephone in the bathroom	28 30
	141	Internet access in the public areas (e.g. broadband, WIFI)	Internet access in residential units or on separate positions	16
	142	Internet access in the room (e.g. broadband, WIFI)		
	143	Internet device with printing option in public area		
	144	Internet device in the room on demand		
145	Internet device in the room			
Miscellaneous	146	Hotel information (The hotel information has to be added to the application)	Hotel information about guest safety (also in English) and services of a hotel	28
	147	Bilingual service manual A-Z (The service manual A-Z has to be added to the application.)		
	148	Multilingual service manual A-Z (The service manual A-Z has to be added to the application.)		
	149	Regional information material available in public area		
	150	Daily newspaper in the room (printed or digital)		
	151	Guest magazine in the room		
	152	Writing utensils and note pad	Hotel stationery	28
	153	Correspondence folder		
	154	Trouser press		
	155	Laundry bag	Laundry bag	28
	156	Iron and ironing board on demand or ironing room		
	157	Iron and ironing board in the room		
	158	Sewing kit on demand	Set to clean the cloths, footwear and a sewing kit	28
	159	Sewing kit in the room		
	160	Shoehorn in the room		
	161	Shoe polishing kit on demand		
	162	Shoe polishing kit in the room		
	163	Shoe polishing machine in the hotel		
164	Door viewer			
165	Additional locking mechanism at the room's door			
General Bathroom Info	166	Bathroom/Sanitary facilities $\geq 5m^2$		
	167	Bathroom/Sanitary facilities $\geq 7,5m^2$		
	168	100% of the rooms with shower/WC or bathtub/WC	WC	29 32
	169	100% of the rooms with shower/WC or bathtub/WC and there of 50% of the rooms with bath tub and separate shower cubicle	Bathtub with shower or shower cabin	29 32

	170	30% of the rooms with toilet separately	Percentage of rooms with full sanitary facilities, in newly constructed buildings - 100% with the sanitary facilities	31
	171	Shower with curtain	Bathtub or shower curtain or screen	30
	172	Shower with screen		
	173	Washbasin	Washbasin with a table top or shelf, top or side lighting	29 32
	174	Twin washbasin in double rooms and suites		
	175	Washable bathmat		
	176	Adequate lighting at the washbasin		
	177	Permanent or removable anti-slip appliance in shower and bathtub	Rug at the bathtub or shower cabin	30
	178	Safety handles	Safety handles at the bathtub and shower cabin	30
	179	Mirror	Mirror with the top or side lighting	30 32
	180	Accessible power socket near the mirror	Power socket with a cover	30
	181	Vanity mirror		
	182	Flexible vanity mirror		
	183	Lighted vanity mirror		
	184	Towel rails or towel hooks	Towel rails or towel hooks, wall hangers	30
	185	Heating option in the bathroom		
	186	Heated towel rail		
	187	Shelf		
	188	Large shelf		
	189	Toothbrush tumbler		
	190	Soap or body wash at the wash basin	Soap dish	30
	191	Body wash or shower gel at the shower/bath tub	Toilet soap or a liquid toilet soap dispenser	30 32
	192	Shampoo		
	193	Personal care products in bottles		
	194	Additional cosmetic products (e.g. bath essence, shower cap, nail file, Q-tips, cotton wool pads, body lotion)	Sales or providing personal care and cosmetic products	42
	195	Facial tissues		
	196	Toilet paper in reserve	Toilet paper handle	30
	197	1 hand towel per person	Towel	30
	198	1 bath towel per person	Bath towel	30
	199	Bathrobe on demand	Bathrobe	30
	200	Bathrobe		
	201	Slippers on demand		
	202	Slippers		
	203	Hairdryer on demand	Hairdryer	30
	204	Hairdryer		
	205	Stool in the bathroom on demand		
	206	Bathroom scales	Bathroom scales	30
	207	Waste bin	Waste bin difficult to get fired	30 32
			Mechanical ventilation exhaust in hygienic and sanitary areas	11
			Sanitary: cold and hot water round the clock	13

			Hygienic bag	30
			Glass or disposable cup	30

Both systems say about the minimal rooms' measurements, with the difference that the polish system precises size of the rooms intended for a particular number of people, while the Hotelstars Union system treats higher measurements as an extra advantage. Polish system says that there should be an extra suite in the hotel with specified furnishings and equipment, while the European system gives points for the number of such suites. The regulations apply also to the beds in the rooms. Polish law only indicates the minimum size of single and double beds while most countries in Europe also notice the features such as the ability to combine and separate beds, or the mattresses thickness. Hotelstars Union system gives few sizes of the beds and the bigger beds hotel has the higher scores it gets. There are also categories such as having baby cots, hygienic covers for mattresses, mattress cleaning proofs, the possibility of receiving special linen for those who suffer from allergy. Additionally scored is a blanket in the room, the quality and purity of pillows proven by relevant documents, pillowcases. The presence or the ability to obtain additional pillows, choice of pillows - polish system did not mention even these issues. Both systems note the carpet presence in the room and shading curtains, the European system says also about the possibility to completely darken the room. When it comes to rooms' equipment, there are similar elements for example in the presence of the closet, hangers – Hotelstars system says additionally about the different types of hangers, and the extra hanger for purse. There is also contained the requirement of chairs and other seating accommodation, and the European system also says about the seat at the table, the requirement of table, plus a table or desk and bedside cabinets. There is a demand of a power socket in the room, and at the place of work, in addition for Hotelstars Union it should be also close to the bed. The case of lighting is developed in the European system, where there is a requirement of a central light switch for the room light, bedside light switch for the room light, night light, reading light close to the bed. Polish system says about the general lighting, lamp in the workplace and reading lamp by the bed. Similar requirements appear in the issue of mirrors in the rooms, though Hotelstars Union speaks of the mirror for dressing up, and polish system just general of the mirror, shelf or luggage rack and trash bin in the room - but in accordance with polish regulations bin should be placed in rooms where there are no bathrooms, and should be difficult to get fired.

Next issue is safe keeping in two systems, they say about such services at the reception or in-room safe. European system gives noise protection requirements through a window or door absorbing noise - polish system does not say a word about it. Centrally controlled air conditioning, individually controlled air conditioning, air conditioning in public areas are the requirements of Hotelstars Union system, polish one says about air conditioning system or another system which keeps a certain temperature and humidity both in the rooms and public areas. Polish system requires only installation that can receive radio and TV programs, while the European system mentions here a lot of facilities from radio, audio player, by installing electronics in the bathroom, the requirement TV with remote control, determining the size of televisions, a list of available channels, and ending on possibilities for additional pay-per-view television. Also imposes the need for a charging station or international power adapter plug. The European and polish systems put demands on the telecommunications - converging points of the overall access to a telephone, telephone in the room - in the case of polish law also appears requirement of vanity phone in the bathroom and Internet access both in the room and in public areas. In polish system these are the obligatory requirements, while the system of Hotelstars Union gives extra points for the possession of Internet device in the room, or wi-fi in the room or public area. Both systems talk about the need to have a hotel guidebooks with the necessary health and safety information in Poland, also written in English language

Hotelstars Union also scores a bilingual and multilingual information about services, materials about the region available in public area, daily newspapers in the room, or magazines for guests. Both systems draw attention to the hotel own stationery. Systems also refer to the supply of laundry bags, kits for cleaning clothes, shoes, and sewing kits. The European system also provides trousers press, iron and ironing board whether in room or on request and a machine for polishing shoes. As part of the additional requirements there is also a door viewer and the additional door locking mechanism.

The bathroom case looks quite similar in both systems, toilet, the bath or shower in the room –Hotelstars Union gives points for each of them, washbasin - HU speaks of single and double, safety handles, mirror, power socket, towel rails, soap dish, soap dispenser. Moreover, cosmetics should be available - polish system refers also to the possibility of purchasing them, towels, bathrobe, hair dryer, weight and wastebasket. The European system mentions also the following additional unnoticed by the polish law elements: the size of the bathroom facilities, washable bathmat, and adequate light over the sink, makeup mirror – moveable and highlighted. Scores are also given for the possibility of heating the bathroom and towel rails. There is a requirement of shelves, toothbrush holder, hygiene products in separate bottles,

tissues. Points may also be obtained for the shoes availability whether on-demand or in standard. Polish system notes also the need for ventilation in the bathroom, the availability of hot and cold water 24 hours, and additionally equipped hygienic bags and glass / disposable cups.

Table 5 – Comparison of Gastronomy requirements

IV. Gastronomy			
Beverages	208	Beverage offer in the hotel	
	209	Beverage offer in the room	Bottled water corresponding to the number of people in the room. Glass in the room corresponding to the number of people
	210	16 hours beverages via room service	24 hours hot beverages/maxibar with hot drinks/selling hot drinks in the Reception/tea and coffee set in the room
	211	24 hours beverages via room service	24 hours hot beverages
	212	Maxibar on each floor	
	213	Fridge in the room	Minibar or fridge in the room
	214	Minibar (with drinks and snacks)	
	215	Coffee machine or water boiler for tea/coffee together with accessories in the room	
Bar	216	Bar (open at least 6 days per week)	Aperitif bar or a coffee bar
	217	Bar (open at least 7 days per week)	
Breakfast	218	Breakfast room	Breakfast service
	219	Extended breakfast	
	220	Breakfast buffet or equivalent breakfast menu card	
	221	Breakfast buffet with service or equivalent breakfast menu card	
	222	Breakfast menu card via room service	
Food	223	Food offer in the hotel	
	224	14 hours food offer via room service	18 hours food offer via room service
	225	24 hours food offer via room service	
	226	Restaurant open 5 days per week	Restaurant
	227	Restaurant open 6 days per week	
	228	Restaurant open 7 days per week	
	229	Dietary-kitchen	
	230	Regional kitchen	

Comparing the requirements for catering and gastronomy it should be noted that the converging elements of the systems are the offer of hot beverages and the presence of mini-bars or refrigerators in the rooms. The European system also divides the occurrence of

beverages generally in the hotel of their occurrence in the room, talking about 16 or 24 hour room service providing hot drinks. Also lists the maxi bars on each floor and a coffee machines or water heaters in each room, along with coffee and tea sets to prepare by guest. Polish system also raises the possibility of these facilities in the room or in the reception, and in addition speaks of bottled water in the room corresponding to the number of people living inside. Both systems notice the need of bar in the hotel, breakfast service but Hotelstars Union gives separate points for the breakfast room, extended breakfast buffet or menu card with buffet service, or even breakfast served by room service. The European system divides the room service for working 14 hours and 24 hours while the polish one talks about 18 hours. Restaurants are divided on these working 5, 6 and 7 days a week, while the polish system simply says about the occurrence of the restaurant. The European system also gives points for the possibility to order the diet or regional food.

Table 6 – Event Facilities requirements comparison

V. Event Facilities (MICE)				
Banquet options	231	Banquet options for at least 50 people		
	232	Banquet options for at least 100 people		
	233	Banquet options for at least 250 people		
Conference rooms	234	Conference room(s) of at least 36 m ² to 100 m ² , ceiling height of at least 2.50 m	Multifunction rooms suited to character of the building - conference, club, training rooms, etc.	45
	235	Conference room(s) larger than 100 m ² , ceiling height of at least 2.75m		
	236	Conference room(s) larger than 250 m ² , ceiling height of at least 3.50 m		
	237	Group work rooms/break rooms		
	238	Business center (separate office and available staff)		
	239	Conference service (separate department, separate staff)		
	240	Conference office/typing pool		
Equipment/ technology of conference rooms	241	Sufficient power sockets adapted to the number of seats		
	242	Daylight in the conference room and possibility to darken the room		
	243	Individually adjustable air conditioning of the conference rooms	Air conditioning is or other devices and systems to ensure air exchange and maintaining summer temperatures below 24 ° C, and in winter above 20 ° C and humidity of 45-60%	9

Case of banquets is not regulated by the polish system at all while Hotelstars Union system mentions the possibility of preparing banquets for 50, 100, 250 people. The conference rooms are only listed as necessary in the polish requirements of categorization while in European

system shows their exact size, height, additional facilities for group work, additional office for meetings with the staff service. The requirement of air conditioning is similar in both systems. Hotelstars Union additionally talks about the power sockets and access to daylight rooms with the possibility to darken them.

Table 7 – Comparison of Leisure facilities requirements

		VI. Leisure		
Sport	244	Adequate own recreation facilities onsite (indoor or outdoor)(e.g. tennis court, beach, golf course)		
	245	Rental of sports equipment (e.g. skis, boats, bicycles)		
	246	Gym with at least 4 different exercise machines (e.g. ergometer, dumb bell, machine for weight training, treadmill, rowing machine, Stairmaster)		
Spa / Wellness	247	Massages (e.g. full body massage, lymph drainage, Shiatsu, foot reflexology)	Wellness facilities: swimming pool, sauna, gym, solarium, massages and other recreational services- At least two types of services	46
	248	Separate relaxation room		
	249	Whirlpool or equivalent		
	250	Sauna (with a minimum size of 6 seats)		
	251	Beauty farm with at least 4 different kinds of treatment (e. facial, manicure, pedicure, peeling and stress relaxation massage are offered)		
	252	Spa with at least 4 different kinds of treatment (e. g.bath, Kneipp, hydrotherapy, moor, hammam and steam bath are offered)		
	253	Private spa cabin		
	254	Swimming pool (outdoor)or swimming pond		
Children	255	Swimming pool (indoor)		
	256	In-house child care (for children younger than 3 years) for at least 3 hours on weekdays by skilled staff		
	257	In-house child care (for children older than 3years) for at least 3 hours on weekdays by skilled staff		
	258	Children's area (playroom/playground)		
Others	259	Lounge for hotel guests (in addition to breakfast room or restaurant)	Club room with TV	47
	260	Reading and writing room (separate location)	The ability to watch television in public area	48
	261	Library (separate location)		
	262	Host/animation programme		

In polish system of hotels categorization the requirement for leisure is to have at least two types of services, e.g.: swimming pool, sauna, gym, solarium, massage or other. The European system introduced in this area the whole range of requirements such as: possibility to rent sports equipment, gym with at least 4 different machines, massages, a separate relaxing room, sauna, beauty farm with at least 4 different treatments, private spa room, outdoor and inside pool. Hotelstars Union also focuses on childcare specifying their age, day of week and time in which care is possible to be taken by qualified personnel. Notes the need for a playroom for children. The polish system talks about clubroom with TV and the possibility of watching TV in a public place while the European one lists separate lounge, reading and writing room, library and program of animators.

Table 8 – Quality and Online Activities comparison

VII. Quality and Online Activities				
Quality Systems	263	Systematic complaint management system		
	264	Systematic analysis of guest reviews		
	265	Quality controls by mystery guesting (Proof thereof has to be added to the application)		
	266	Quality management system according EHQ or equivalent		
Online Activities	267	Website with updated information and realistic pictures together with the location of the hotel		
	268	Website with direct booking option and guest reviews		
	269	Active invitation of departing/checked-out guests to write a review on a portal or on the website		
Others	270	Eco-label		

Polish categorization system does not say a word about the quality and online activities. It does not require continuous analyzes of guest reviews, complaint management or procedures of secret guests. There is also no demand of the website and its proper content, the possibility of making a reservation there, encouraging visitors to leave comments. Polish system does not focus on the ecology while the European one shows all these cases as important and gives points for each of them.

Conclusion

In some aspects the requirements of both hotels classification systems are similar. However, in the vast majority the Hotelstars Union demands are more specific than in polish system, they are divided into subcategories, so that every detail can be reflected in the scoring. The European classification system for hotels is much more detailed and accurate than polish one. Draws attention and punctuate a lot of comfort criteria, which are precisely defined and thus checked and observed. This means that the level of service in hotels with more stars is really high. Other important thing is system updating. Polish criteria have not been changed since long time, nobody cares about guests' real needs which are evaluating, while Hotelstars Union inspectors draw attention to guests' reviews and verify the system every 5 years. Hospitality is a sector in which the details play a great importance, and every self-respecting hotel should attach great importance to details, as they constitute the uniqueness of place and services. The categorization system which notices and appreciates these details is the response from one side to the needs of hoteliers and from the other side to the needs of clients. Hoteliers through appropriate classification may indicate the effort which they put in the development and provision of services for potential guests, taking care of their convenience and satisfaction, providing diversity. Clients often expect something more than just a uniformed staff and the appropriate size of the room. The categorization system of Hotelstars Union is therefore a real response to real needs, while polish categorization system is not commensurate with the modern times. Too vague, rigid criteria do not allow too much to differentiate hotels offer which could give the expression of granted standard. To develop the hospitality industry in Poland and therefore the attractiveness of tourist offer, hotel classification system should be properly checked, confronted with real guests' needs and should be changed. Membership in the Hotelstars Union or just taking a pattern from their criteria may be the good beginning of great step towards the right way.

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