

NEW HOTEL RATING SYSTEM

1. Why a new rating system?

Under the 1986 standards, stars were awarded without a time limit and therefore without any regular inspections, and they began to lose their relevance for customers.

The reform of the hotel rating system is the result of the law of 22 July 2009 on the development and modernisation of tourism services, initiated by Hervé NOVELLI, Secretary of State for Trade, Crafts, Small and Medium Enterprises, Tourism, Services and Consumer Affairs.

This reform focuses on two main areas: new rating standards and the procedure for obtaining new stars.

2. What has changed?

✓ **The criteria**

The new reference system proposes more than 240 inspection points spread over three key areas:

- **Facilities:** more spacious areas, and greater multimedia and service facilities
- **Customer services:** foreign languages spoken, quality of service at reservation, reception, additional services, etc.
- **Accessibility and sustainable development:** disabled access, environmental practices, etc.

✓ **The range**

There are now five categories: 1*, 2*, 3*, 4* et 5*, marking the disappearance of the less than positive "0 star" category and the creation of the "5 star" category, which has particular meaning for foreign customers.

The hotel's compliance with its desired category is checked by an inspection agency accredited by COFRAC (Comité Français d'Accréditation = French Accreditation Committee). The inspection agencies are selected with a guarantee of independence, transparency and competence.

For establishments with 1 to 3 stars, the visit is "announced" by the auditor. For 4 and 5 star establishments, the announced visit is supplemented by a "mystery visit".

Classification is now voluntary, and stars are awarded for five years. At the end of this period, the hotel must request a new inspection visit if it wishes to retain its classification.

The evolving nature of the new reference system (to be reviewed at least once every five years) will make it easier for the hotel accommodation industry to keep up with demand and adapt to new market developments gradually.

3. Commitments per category

In all categories, the new rating standards guarantee a professional reception in a clean and well-maintained establishment, which offers facilities that are suitable for families. Hotels offer complete and accurate information on the services they provide, and rooms with the minimum expected level of comfort and facilities.

In all categories, the handling and follow-up of complaints received by the establishments are guaranteed, and staff receive awareness training in welcoming disabled customers and in sustainable development.

Economy hotels 1*

Establishments in this category offer minimum basic facilities, essentially adapted to receiving French customers looking for a good price.

Reception is manned at least 8 hours a day.

In terms of facilities, the floor area of the reception lobby and the lounges is at least 20m². The minimum size of a double room is 9m² (excluding bathroom). Bathrooms can be private or shared.

Mid-Range Hotels 2*

The level of comfort and facilities offered is higher than in the 1* category. Reception is manned at least 10 hours per day by staff speaking at least one official European language in addition to French.

In terms of facilities, the floor area of the reception lobby and the lounges is at least 30m². The minimum size of a double room is 9m² excluding bathroom.

Mid-Range Hotels 3*

The level of comfort and facilities offered is higher and adapted to an international clientele. Reception is manned at least 10 hours per day by staff speaking at least one official European language in addition to French.

In terms of facilities, the floor area of the reception lobby and the lounges is at least 30m². The minimum size of a double room is 13.5m² including bathroom.

In addition, the range of services offered to customers is greater (Internet access in public areas, drinks service, etc.) and the living areas are more spacious, at least 50m², providing a lounge area in particular.

Top-of-the-Range Hotels 4*

The 4* category provides customers with a special reception and attention.

The size of the public areas is at least 70m², and the size of a double room is at least 16m² including bathroom. Rooms are equipped with all necessary comforts (Internet, access to international channels, desk, etc.) and are all air conditioned.

For hotels with more than 30 rooms, reception is manned 24/7 (12/7 if less than 30 rooms) and staff speak at least one official European language in addition to French.

Luxury Hotels 5*

The 5* category offers customers a special reception and attention, adapted to an international and high-paying clientele.

In terms of layout, the living areas are larger (at least 90m²) and the rooms are more spacious, providing at least 24m² including bathroom in a double room.

Rooms are equipped with all the necessary comforts (air conditioning, Internet, access to international television channels, desk, etc.) and offer a service in line with top international standards, while still giving expression to personalisation and creativity of layout and decoration.

The new rating system will also make it easier for historic establishments, which by their nature are subject to considerable layout constraints, to find their place.

For hotels with more than 30 rooms, reception is manned 24/7 (12/7 if less than 30 rooms) and staff speak at least two foreign languages including English.

5* hotels offer their customers assistance and personal service (24/7 room service, assistance with unpacking, valet parking, uniformed service, safe available in the rooms and at reception, bathrobe in the rooms, etc.), and the possibility of dining at the hotel.

In addition, 5* establishments must offer a certain number of optional services to its customers: swimming-pool, relaxation massage service, tennis, hairdressing, spa, fitness instructor, etc.

4. How do I identify a hotel rated under the new standards?

Hotels rated under the 2008 standards can be recognised by the sign they display.



Hotels have until 21 July 2012 to request new stars, the expiry date for stars awarded under the old 1986 standard.

5. About ATOUT FRANCE:

France's new tourism development agency was set up in May 2009 on the initiative of Hervé NOVELLI, who wanted France to have a single operator working to implement public policies on matters of tourism. ATOUT FRANCE works in partnership with the State and the regional authorities as well as tourism professionals and major sectors of the French economy. Almost 1,300 members, representatives of the French tourism industry, rely on the expertise of ATOUT FRANCE and participate in campaigns organised in France and on international markets.

Articles 7 and 10 of the law of 22 July 2009 entrust ATOUT FRANCE with the following tasks:

- Designing the rating reference systems
- Updating the rating reference systems
- Promoting the new rating system to professionals in the industry and to the general public
- Publishing the list of rated establishments after notification of the rating order and receipt by Atout France of this order and the complete file from the departmental prefecture.