



Common aspects of Safety and
Security in European Rural Tourism

INSPECTION MANUAL

YOUR RURAL TOURISM BUSINESS - RUN IT SMART



Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	4
1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO SAFETY & SECURITY	5
1.1. LICENSES, PERMITS AND CONSENTS TO RUN THE SERVICE	5
1.1.1. General Requirements for Buildings.....	5
1.1.2. Fire Safety.....	7
1.1.3. Water Supply and Sewage Systems.....	8
1.1.4. Water Quality.....	9
1.1.5. Waste and Garbage Collection.....	10
1.1.6. Gas and Ventilation.....	11
1.1.7. Licences To Run A Tourism Service	13
1.1.8. Road Signs.....	14
1.1.9. TV and Copyright Licensing	16
1.1.10. Sauna Licence	18
1.1.11. Pool Licence.....	19
1.1.12. Alcohol Licence.....	20
1.1.13. Entertainment Licence.....	21
2. BUSINESS & TAXES	22
2.1. LEGAL FORMS OF BUSINESS.....	22
2.2. TAX REGULATIONS.....	24
3. INSURANCE	26
4. STATISTICS	27
5. MARKETING AND PUBLICITY	28
5.1. UNFAIR TRADING PRACTICES	28
5.2. COMPLAINT SHEETS.....	29
5.3. DIRECT MARKETING.....	30
5.4. HOLIDAY PACKAGES.....	31
5.5. SIGNPOSTING	32
6. EMPLOYING STAFF	33
6.1. WORKING HOURS.....	34
6.2. MINIMUM WAGE	36
6.3. DISCRIMINATION.....	37
6.4. TIME OFF FOR PARENTS	38
6.5. SAFETY AT WORK.....	39
6.6. SOCIAL SECURITY.....	40
7. HELPING GUESTS	41
7.1. BOOKING.....	41
7.2. REGISTRATION AND DATA PROTECTION	43
7.3. PRICING AND CHARGING.....	44
7.4. CANCELLATIONS AND NO-SHOWS.....	45
7.5. ACCEPTING GUESTS (NON-DISCRIMINATION, CHILDREN)	46
7.6. CLIENT BEHAVIOUR RULES AND CONTRACTS	47
7.7. GUESTS WITH DISABILITIES	48
7.8. LUGGAGE AND BELONGINGS.....	49
7.9. CHILDCARE.....	50
8. ACCOMMODATION SAFETY & SECURITY	51
8.1. GENERAL ACCOMMODATION REQUIREMENTS.....	51
8.2. FIRE SAFETY	52
8.2.1. Fire Safety for Buildings.....	52
8.2.2. Fire Safety for Heating Systems and Fireplaces.....	54

8.2.3.	<i>Fire Safety of Furniture and Furnishings</i>	55
8.2.4.	<i>Fire Safety and the Use of Facilities (smoking, etc)</i>	56
8.3.	WATER AND SEWAGE SYSTEMS	57
8.4.	ELECTRICAL POWER	58
8.4.1.	<i>Safety of Electrical Installations</i>	58
8.4.2.	<i>Safety of Electrical Equipment</i>	59
8.5.	GAS AND VENTILATION	61
8.6.	PROTECTION AGAINST NOISE	62
8.7.	CLIENT SAFETY AT A RT FACILITY	63
8.7.1.	<i>Housekeeping Procedures</i>	63
8.7.2.	<i>Allergens</i>	64
8.7.3.	<i>Pets</i>	66
8.7.4.	<i>First Aid Requirements</i>	67
8.7.5.	<i>Slippery Floors</i>	68
8.7.6.	<i>Stairs</i>	69
8.7.7.	<i>Lighting at the Door</i>	70
8.7.8.	<i>Low Doors</i>	71
9.	INDOOR ACTIVITIES SAFETY & SECURITY	72
9.1.	SAUNAS AND POOLS	72
9.2.	SPA	73
9.3.	FITNESS ROOMS	74
9.4.	OTHER AREAS FOR TOURISTS	75
10.	OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES SAFETY & SECURITY	76
10.1.	WATER SPORTS, BOATING, WATER BICYCLES, WATER SCOOTERS	76
10.2.	HORSEBACK RIDING	77
10.3.	NATURE TRAILS	78
10.4.	BICYCLES	79
10.5.	SWIMMING	80
11.	FOOD AND DRINK SAFETY & SECURITY	81
11.1.	LEGISLATIVE AND GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	81
11.2.	FOOD HANDLING MONITORING AND HYGIENE PREPARING FOOD	82
11.3.	PRODUCING AND SELLING FOOD PRODUCTS	84

Introduction

This manual covers safety and security aspects in rural tourism accommodation establishments. It has been written, based on experiences of rural tourism organisations in Europe and is aimed at rural tourism business owners willing to consider all aspects for protection of their clients, property and business against accidents and to comply with legal requirements. Production of this manual has been funded under the project SAFETUR (2012-1-LV1-LEO05-03389), with support from the EC Leonardo da Vinci Lifelong Learning Program. The manual is also helpful to rural tourism organisations and tourism students.

The content in each chapter is structured in Generic information, Criteria and Country specific information. Some chapters give additional information, like, links to relevant web sites, list of preventive measures. The generic information presents the general situation and common aspects in Europe. The Criteria represent self-check for rural tourism businesses and they go along with another output of the above project – a web based safety and security self-check tool. Country specific information describes the practices in 6 countries (Latvia, UK, Spain, Norway, Lithuania, Bulgaria) to highlight different aspects and approaches as well as demonstrate the levels of attention to particular safety and security aspects. Specific Inspection Manual for Safety and Security in Rural tourism adopted for each of 6 countries see in separate links (in each country language).

The following rural tourism organisations contributed their experience and expertise in production of this manual:

- ✓ Norwegian Rural tourism and local food HANEN <http://www.hanen.no/>
- ✓ Bulgarian association for alternative tourism BAAT www.baatbg.org
- ✓ European Rural Tourism Organisation EuroGites www.eurogites.org
- ✓ PRODEC Consultores www.raar.es
- ✓ Countryside Tourism Association of Lithuania <http://www.atostogaskaime.lt>
- ✓ Farm Stay UK Limited <http://www.farmstay.co.uk/>
- ✓ Latvian Country Tourism Association "Lauku ceļotājs" www.celotajs.lv

All project outputs are available from the project web site:

http://www.celotajs.lv/cont/prof/proj/SAFETUR/project_results_en.html

1. General Requirements Related to Safety & Security

1.1. Licenses, Permits and Consents to Run the Service

All licenses and consents required from national, regional or local authorities to run the service vary considerably depending on the way a service is offered:

- Small accommodation, Bed & Breakfast (B&B) and self-catering holiday homes are often not considered as business activities. This avoids many requirements related to the consideration as a 'public service' of a full business.
- Otherwise, full business rules and legislation for 'public services' apply.

1.1.1. General Requirements for Buildings

Generic Information

Individual self-catering units and private rooms up to a capacity of 3-5 bedrooms are frequently not considered as a business of 'public use'. In this case, only standard building and safety rules for private homes apply, although specific additional requirements may also apply if the business offers meals or regarding fire protection. This is sometimes a difficult matter that is resolved very differently across Europe. For more information, check your country or regional legislation.



Guesthouses with a higher capacity or a complex of several self-catering units under the same management are usually regarded as buildings of 'public use' and therefore need all the respective licenses and consents. Permits apply regarding new-construction building commissioning. Regulations are required in case of converting or extending premises, planning and building permissions, as well as compliance with building regulations.

Criteria

- ⇒ *You are aware of general national, regional and local building requirements concerning the type and size of your business*
- ⇒ *You comply with general national, regional and local building requirements concerning the type and size of your business*

Country Specific Information

General technical regulations and certification/approval for buildings from authorities have to be complied with in the following areas.

For accommodation-specific criteria in this field, see further below 'Accommodation Safety and Security'.

- **Bulgaria:** According to the building regulations. The buildings of accommodation businesses are treated as buildings for public use and there are regulations for their easy access – mainly for the accessibility from people with disabilities. There must be one or more WC, easily accessible from the reception and common rooms.
- **Latvia:** There is not any official licence to run RT, but specific and more binding building rules apply for public buildings. Buildings more than 150 m² area used for tourists or if more than

50 % of the building is used for public tourist needs. Until those limits activate, the rules are those used for private buildings. Further information at:

http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=178746&version_date=01.06.2009

- Lithuania: Rural tourism accommodation services can be run in buildings that are meant for residential purposes. The same general requirements as for private living houses apply. If the building is not a private living house, other purpose such as recreational or rural tourism purpose should be stated in its planning documentation. According to the tourism law, rural tourism services can be provided in a rural area or small town with total population up to 3000 people.
- Norway: Every building has to apply for a building permit. This is easier to get in the case of businesses, although there are no differences between personal and business rules. If the building is on the first floor, then there are no special security requirements. However, it starts from two storeys and up to 300 m² in each floor, then it belongs to *Brannklasser*, i.e. 1-4 *klasser*, which means *levels*. The 4th level is for oil platforms, whereas there are not many requirements for the first floor. Check the official website for further information on building rules and how to build a house properly (*Direktorat for Byggkvalitet*):
<http://byggereglar.dibk.no/dxp/content/tekniskekrav/11/3/>.
- Spain: Special permits are required to run businesses in rural areas, where farming is usually the only allowed activity. These permits depend on the municipality and they are based on the public benefits that the business may produce in the area. For example, job creation, among others. This is known as Declaration of Public Usefulness. If the activity is non-business or holiday rental, it is considered as a permanent or temporary residence. However, new buildings in rural areas for residential use (which are not farm-related) are not allowed any more, although older buildings can be restored.
- UK: Planning permission and building regulations apply if you are considering starting a business offering serviced (Bed & Breakfast) or self-catering accommodation, or if you plan to convert, extend or make structural alterations to an existing property or construct a new building. Contact the planning department of your local authority for advice on planning permission.

1.1.2. Fire Safety

Generic Information

There are technical regulations on electrical installations and equipment, heating systems and fireplaces, furniture and furnishings, use of materials, construction methods, sizes and dimensions, etc. General fire safety is usually checked by fire authorities.



Criteria

- ⇒ *You are aware of fire safety requirements concerning the type and size of your business*
- ⇒ *You comply with fire safety requirements concerning the type and size of your business*

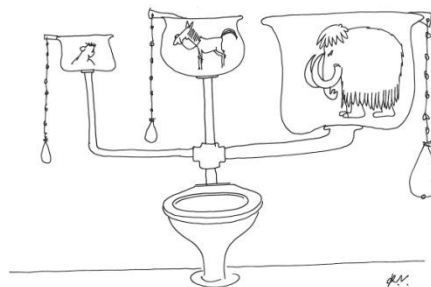
Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: The fire authorities check fire safety with check lists that assess the safety conditions in the building. Most of the required furniture must be inflammable.
- Latvia: Regulations by the Cabinet of Ministers govern fire safety: <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=84587>. Ministries, local governments, companies and organisations can issue mandatory requirements as to fire safety with respect to their own territories and subordinate institutions. There are now both voluntary and mandatory standards in Latvia.
- Lithuania: Fire safety requirements for private living houses as well as public buildings apply.
- Norway: The same rules as in levels 1-4 apply for fire safety requirements (see point 1.1.1.). According to the particular rules in each community, fireplaces, ovens and chimneys should be installed by certified specialists.
- Spain: Fire safety requirements as for any residential building as well as other specific requirements are established by the tourism legislation.
- UK: Fire safety legislation applies to the 'responsible person' in virtually all workplaces including hotels, guesthouses and similar premises. A 'suitable and sufficient' fire risk assessment must be carried out, and where there are five or more employees, the assessment should be recorded. There should be one person responsible for the fire risk assessment and ensuring fire protection and prevention measures are observed and maintained. An emergency plan should be drawn up. It should be displayed in the form of a Fire Action Notice in guest rooms and adjacent to the fire alarm call points in the staff and common areas.

1.1.3. Water Supply and Sewage Systems

Generic Information

There are technical building regulations on water supply and sewage installations and systems. In urban areas with public supply, this is usually not specific but may be a requirement in rural settings. Rural tourism quality inspections check if the systems function properly and that there are not any bad smells or other inconveniences for guests.



Criteria

- ⇒ *You are aware of water supply and sewage requirements concerning the type and size of your business*
- ⇒ *Water supply and sewage systems comply with water supply and sewage requirements concerning the type and size of your business*
- ⇒ *Water supply and sewage systems are maintained in good condition*

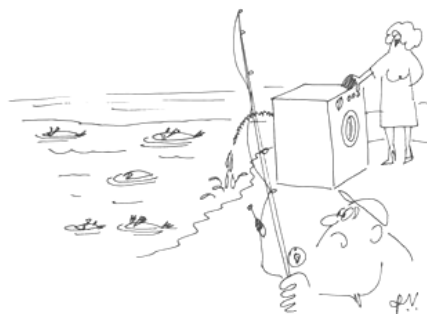
Country specific Information

- Bulgaria: If there are not any public sewage installations in rural settings, every accommodation has to build its own, depending on the size of the building and its capacity. If there is no water supply, the accommodation cannot be legally registered.
- Latvia: Building regulations cover water supply and sewage systems. State of maintenance and functionality of sewage systems in rural tourism are controlled by quality schemes.
- Lithuania: Water and sewage regulations apply from Hygiene Norm for Accommodation service providers HN:118 . For more information visit http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=392158&p_query=&p_tr2
- Norway: Sewage water system regulations are set in building rules.
- Spain: Water and sewage in residential settings are not necessarily regulated by law. However, tourism legislation requires full proof of waste water treatment, as well as drinkable water availability. There are two ways for accrediting:
 - A generic municipality document which certifies that the building is habitable. Every new building automatically gets this certificate if it is legal.
 - In old buildings, receipts of water supply, waste water disposal and electricity bills. If there is not any public water supply, a formally approved chlorification unit must be installed and water must be tested periodically (depending on region – from monthly to every half year). The Technical condition of the sewage system is included in the building and/or tourism registration process. Nowadays, there must be at least a three-chamber cleaning system.
- UK: If the water supplies for your accommodation come from a private supply, the Private Water Supplies Regulations 2009 Act apply to you. If a business is within a family home, water and sewage charges are covered under council charges. If the business is larger, commercial costs will be applied.

1.1.4. Water Quality

Generic Information

Some technical regulations and inspection checks exist regarding the source and quality of water, which may be tested in a laboratory analysis. It may be required that water source has been checked by inspections from food and hygiene authorities. In some countries it is required that water quality is proven through laboratory analysis and results displayed accessible to guests.



Criteria

- ⇒ You can provide a valid certification from food and hygiene authorities, if relevant
- ⇒ Water laboratory certificate, if required

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Verification is required from the Agency for Food Safety. The accommodation can use alternative sources of water that are suitable for household use.
- Latvia: Water quality rules apply as set in food and hygiene regulations. If water comes from public water supply systems, monitoring is required once every two years (<http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=75442>). In this case, no auditor monitoring for water quality is required. If this is not certified or approved by authorities, guests have to be provided with separate drinkable water.
- Lithuania: Drinkable water has to be tested in a laboratory annually.
- Norway: Accommodation businesses have to use public water. If private water resources are used, water quality has to be tested in the laboratory. EU Hygiene Norms for water quality apply.
- Spain: See 1.1.3.
- UK: Verification is required from a recognised agency. Local authorities must take and analyse samples of private water supplies from groundwater sources.

1.1.5. Waste and Garbage Collection

Generic Information

This is usually required in rural settings, where no such public collection service exists.

Criteria

⇒ *You use services of a relevant waste and garbage company*



Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: If there is no public collection, the accommodation needs to declare in the local authority how the waste and garbage that will be collected. Since the beginning of 2013, every business has to organize its separate collection. There is a regulation that requires that every business must have a contract for separate collection, although this is not working nowadays.
- Latvia: All accommodation providers have to reach agreements with waste and recycling companies to have waste and garbage collected. In some Latvian rural areas it is possible to sort the garbage on campsites or hotels.
- Lithuania: All accommodation providers have to reach agreements with waste and recycling companies to have waste and garbage collected.
- Norway: Each household has to reach an agreement to have waste and garbage collected. If you have a cottage, this counts as one half of the household agreement, campsite with permanent cottages, i.e. camping houses, count as one quarter of the household. The campsite owner can also rent a container by KBM. For more information, visit <http://bir.no/birbedrift/Sider/Bransjerelaterteloesninger.aspx> by cbm.
<http://bir.no/birbedrift/Sider/Bransjerelaterteloesninger.aspx>
- Spain: As before, in urban areas, waste collection is a public service and can be accredited by receipts. However, in rural settings, a disposal must be arranged and accredited by the owner at least to the next public collection point.
- UK: If a business is within a family home, waste and garbage charges are covered under council charges. If the business is larger, commercial costs are applied.

1.1.6. Gas and Ventilation

Generic Information

This is covered by building regulations, or included in the installation certificate that is required for the gas supply, etc.



Criteria

- ⇒ You are aware of gas and ventilation requirements
- ⇒ You comply with gas and ventilation requirements

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: The number of accommodations in rural areas with gas system is not large, although there are some regulations. The gas system has to be checked and certified by the authorities every year.
- Latvia: Gas requirements are regulated by the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 23, 20 January 1999, known as Regulations on the delivery and use of gas, specifying the relationship between Supplier and Consumer when gas is delivered and used. Gas delivery systems and equipment in public buildings are designed in accordance with the relevant rules and norms, including those that are covered in the Latvian Construction Norm LBN 211-98, Multi-story and multi-flat residential buildings.
 - Ventilation: It is regulated by the Building Rule LBM 231-03, Heating and ventilation of residential and public buildings (Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 534, 23 September 2003). These define general safety requirements for ventilation and air conditioning systems and equipment in kitchens and sanitary facilities of residential buildings. The ventilation pipes of kitchens and sanitary facilities in residential buildings can be attached to the overall ventilation system, but with a separate channel for each one. Natural ventilation must be ensured in rooms, this is, the windows that can be opened, windows with ventilation frames or special opening in outer walls. The design of rooms in which natural ventilation is impossible is discouraged.
- Lithuania: n/a
- Norway: n/a
- Spain: A certified installer must accredit that the system is right. No electricity or gas supply is legal without this certificate.
- UK: Operators of accommodation premises are responsible for ensuring that gas appliances and flues in the premises are safely maintained and checked. All safety checks must be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer. Electrical equipment safety regulations require that all electrical equipment supplied 'in the course of business' is safe. There is no specific requirement for annual maintenance, but to ensure electrical equipment remains safe, you are strongly advised to have it checked and serviced regularly by a registered electrician. The general product safety regulations apply if you provide self-catering accommodation. The essential requirements are to ensure that you supply only safe products to your guests, and to ensure that a product remains safe throughout its period of use.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Use appropriate smoke removal and ventilation systems.
- ✓ Control the temperature, the humidity and the ventilation of your workplace.
- ✓ Keep the equipment in good condition.
- ✓ Use PPE.
- ✓ Wear appropriate clothes for each task.
- ✓ Install appropriate alarms such as carbon monoxide detectors

1.1.7. Licences To Run A Tourism Service

Generic Information

In some European countries, running a tourism accommodation is only possible as a licensed business. EU legislation does not provide for regulations on rural tourism. Licences to run a rural tourism business are regulated by national legislations.



Criteria

⇒ *You have the necessary licences / permits to run a rural tourism business*

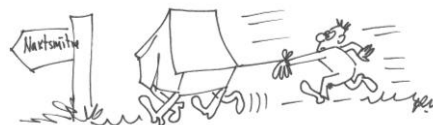
Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Self-catering accommodation and guest houses (with up to 10 rooms) must be registered as a business or entity with ability to conduct business. Only private rooms (up to 5 rooms) in the house or apartment of the host, who lives in the building, are not considered as business and the host only pays a tax.
- Latvia: There are no specific requirements to run a RT accommodation.
- Lithuania: To provide a rural tourism service you have to be registered by the national tourism authority. The accommodation service provider declaration has to be submitted to the tourism authority. The rural tourism service provider can have up to 20 units with a total capacity up to 50 people.
- Norway: Your business must be registered as a company, e.g. a farm. As private activities allow a very small amount of activities, up to €1200 per year is exempt from paying tax, everything above has a 28% tax apply. No licences needed. For more information on the real costs of running a cottage, visit <http://www.dn.no/privatokonomi/article2472212.ece>.
- Spain: Services must be registered by the tourism authorities. There are two ways:
 - For full businesses, a complete set of documents must be provided, including plans, certificates, property register, etc.
 - For rental or non-business business, a simplified self-declaration is sufficient.
- UK: Planning permission and building regulations apply if you are considering starting a business offering serviced (B&B) or self-catering accommodation, or if you plan to convert, extend or make structural alterations to an existing property or construct a new building. Contact the planning department of your local authority for advice on planning permission.

1.1.8. Road Signs

Generic Information

Regulations regarding road signs and their location differ between countries. Usually there is a standard regulation on signposting to specify rules and requirements on:



- Location, e.g. the main road, at the driveway, etc.
- Type, e.g. advertisement, illuminated or not, directional signs, signs at the entrance, etc.
- Conditions, e.g. authorities to give consent, local planning authorities, traffic authorities, etc. of signposts for tourism facilities.

Criteria

- ⇒ *Signposting according to legal minimum or general rules is installed.*
- ⇒ *GPS coordinates available*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Signposting of directional signs for accommodation:
 - *Outside of the settlement or the deviation:*
 - a) *Highways: at a distance of 1000 to 2000 m;*
 - b) *Other paths: at a distance of 200 to 300 m;*
 - *In villages: at a distance of 100 to 150 m before the accommodation or the deviation to it, and at the deviation itself.*
 - *The direction and the distance from the accommodation are indicated on the bottom half of the road signs or on an additional sign.*
These signs have exactly the same shape and colour and have to be approved by the local traffic authorities.

Other signs have to be approved by the local municipality authorities. There is a tax for signposting, depending on the type and size of the sign.
- Latvia: There are rules for road signs approved by the Cabinet of Ministers, particularly by the responsible body Latvijas Valsts ceļi (LVC) Tehniskā komisija). The Latvian road sign standards are LVS 77 and ceļa apzīmējumu LVS 85. The involved institutions are: CSDD, Satiksmes ministrija and Ekonomikas ministrija.
- Lithuania: Road signs have to be approved by the authority who manages the road. It can be the local municipality for local roads or the regional road authority for regional or national roads.
- Norway: For rural tourism, special road signs have to be approved by the authorities. Prices are different for HANEN members and non-members. For more information, visit: http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dokumentarkiv/Regjeringen-Bondevik-II/lmd/Nyheter-og-pressemeldinger/2005/nytt_vegskilt_for_gardsmat_og_bygdeturis.html?id=258867
- Spain: There are no road signs formally approved. However, there are official standardized signs, although these are not part of the formally approved road signs. This usually causes trouble, as tourism requires installing them and then the road authorities take them away because they are not official.

- UK: If you display any outdoor signs and/or advertisements you may need to apply to the planning authority for consent to display the proposed sign. The need for consent from the planning authority depends on whether the signs are fully, partially or non-illuminated and where they are situated. You will also need to ensure that any signs displayed are not misleading, as this could constitute a breach of unfair trading and misleading marketing legislation. The highways department of your local authority can advise on white on brown tourism signs.

1.1.9. TV and Copyright Licensing

Generic Information

If music / record playing equipment is available at the guest house, the owner must reach an agreement with the copyright agencies, responsible for public music broadcast. There are two main European institutions: one that represents the music authors and another which represents drama artists. Contracts are different in each organisation.



Criteria

⇒ *If you provide for playing music / records or retransmission of music in public space, you have a contract or agreement with relevant organisations in your country.*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: In Bulgaria there are two organisations:
 - Prophon, which includes performing artists and phonogram producers. For more information, visit <http://www.prophon.org/>.
 - Music Author, including composers, writers and publishers. For further information, check <http://www.musicautor.org>.
 - Every accommodation must have a contract with both organisations.
- Latvia: If music may be played in the accommodation by any mean, e.g. TV, radio, PC, etc., then the owner is obliged to make a contract with two binding organisations. Each one requires a separate contract:
 - Copyright and Communication Consulting Agency/Latvian Authors Association (AKKA/LAA): <http://www.akka-laa.lv/>.
 - Association of Latvian Performing Artists and Producers: <http://www.laipa.org/>.

No specific rules are set for rural tourism accommodations.
- Lithuania: In Lithuania there are two binding organisations. Each one requires a separate contract:
 - LATGA-A is a collective copyright management association: www.latga.lt.
 - AGATA - Lithuanian Neighbouring Rights Association is collecting society acting on behalf of performers and phonogram producers.
- Norway: For larger accommodation businesses the rules are described here: <http://www.tono.no/Hotell%2C+Overnatting+og+Restaurant.564.cms>. Cottage owners pay a fee for TV cables, which includes the permission of public use. <https://parabol.canaldigital.no/Om-Canal-Digital-Norge/Bedrift/>
- Spain: Businesses must register in the Society of Authors (SGAE) and pay annual fees, but at least in rural tourism this is frequently neither complied with nor controlled.
- UK: If you offer short-stay accommodation of any kind to overnight visitors and have installed television sets in it, you need a 'Hotel and Mobile Units Television License' (hotel license). If you play any copyright music in public or on your premises or if it's performed live, you may need a PRS (Performing Rights Society) for music license. If you play recorded music

in public on your premises, which includes radio and TV, you may need a PPL license. If you offer a DVD film library, you need a DVD Concierge license. If you operate an in-room entertainment system, you will need a Hotel Vision license.

Case study

The European rural tourism organisation „Eurogites” made a summary of requirements and fees for music playback in several countries in Europe. [See table attached.](#)

1.1.10. Sauna Licence

Generic Information

Technical regulations exist as part of building regulations in countries where saunas are popular, either if they were built as a separate building or as part of a house or apartment. Hygiene regulations apply as well. In some countries a public sauna license is required.

Criteria

⇒ *You have the required licence or permit if applicable.*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There are permits for saunas regulated by the National Health law.
- Latvia: There are separate rules and hygiene norms that apply for public use saunas, including rural tourism accommodations which provide this service. However, there are also rules for small-size saunas, i.e. for 10 people and less, which are common in rural tourism. For further information, visit <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=13858>.
- Lithuania: Sauna and pools have to be certified if services are provided, not only for clients who have booked accommodation. If these services are provided only for in-house clients, a hygiene pass is required.
- Norway: No specific rules apply.
- Spain: n/a.
- UK: There are not any specific regulations on sauna safety, but you must manage these so that they comply with the health and safety legislation.

1.1.11. Pool Licence

Generic Information

In some countries pools are regulated by health and safety rules, even in the case of individual pools at self-catering units. There are not any particular regulations in other countries. The criteria are usually the classification as *public* or *private* facilities.

Criteria

⇒ *You have the required licence or permit if applies*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Safety and security regulations. There should be a responsible person who can swim and give first aid. A lifeguard is required if the swimming pool is big and for public use (not only for the guests).
- Latvia: There are rules and hygiene norms applying for public use pools (<http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=13858>), including rural tourism accommodation, which provides it. There are preferential rules for small-size pools (5 cbm³ and less), which is normally the case in rural tourism.
- Lithuania: Sauna and pools have to be certified if services are provided not only for clients who have book accommodation. If these services are provided only for in-house clients, a hygiene pass is required.
- Norway: There are hygiene norms that apply for pools. Pools are not usual in rural settings.
- Spain: When considered as a business, pools must fulfil some requirements for public pools. These are usually restrictive, especially for smaller accommodation services. If the pool is considered as a non-business, this varies depending on the interpretation of sanitary authorities. Some institutions consider pools as part of a private home and exempt, whereas others argue that they are part of a public service and therefore subject to these rules.
- UK: There are no specific regulations on swimming pool or gym safety, but you must manage these activities so they comply with health and safety legislation. Your main responsibility as a pool or gym operator, in relation to the safety of your guests or clients, is to be found in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

1.1.12. Alcohol Licence

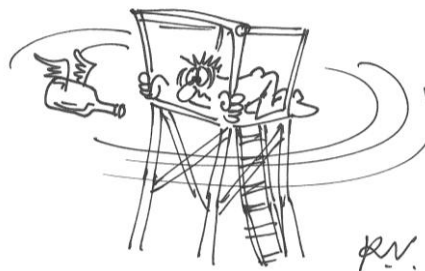
Generic Information

A licence is compulsory to sell alcoholic beverages. Requirements differ between countries in Europe. Special facilities or franchise may exist for homemade spirits.

[See table attached.](#)

Criteria

⇒ *You have the required licence or permit if applies*



Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Need of permit – more than 10 litres of alcohol and more than 90 litres of wine.
- Latvia: It is legal to sell and produce alcohol according to the Alcohol Law (<http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=88009>). Preferences apply to small-scale producers since 2011 as lobbied by the Latvian Rural Tourism Association. A merchant who produces wine, fermented beverages or other alcoholic beverages by himself or herself from the products obtained in the gardens or bee-gardens owned by or in the possession of him or her or from the plants growing wild (not using spirit or other produced alcoholic beverages), has the right to receive a licence on preferential conditions for an approved warehouse keeper activity, as well as the right to receive relief for the registration of excise duty security, ensuring that:
 - The total amount of produced wine or fermented beverages does not exceed 15 000 litres per calendar year;
 - The amount of absolute alcohol in other produced alcoholic beverages does not exceed 100 litres per calendar year.
 - If the above merchant produces wine or fermented beverages the total amount of which does not exceed 1000 litres per calendar year, he or she shall be exempted from the obligation of submission of excise duty security.
- Lithuania: A licence by official institutions is required to buy and sell alcohol. Making and storing homemade spirits is illegal.
- Norway: Homemade spirits are illegal. Tourism businesses need a taxable licence from the local municipality authorities to sell alcohol to the guests. No separate licence for selling just alcohol exists, since it includes food service.
- Spain: no limitation
- UK: If you wish to sell alcoholic drinks you will need a license. There are two types of license: premises licenses and personal licenses. More information can be found under The Licensing Act 2003.

1.1.13. Entertainment Licence

Generic Information

Licences and permits are required mostly from local authorities if you organise public events, e.g. sports games, dancing, concerts, movie evenings, etc. Formalities may differ depending on the size and type of event and on the number of participants. Some rules regulate the noise level and other eventual disturbances to local residents.

Criteria

⇒ *You have all required consents and licenses to organise a single or regular public events.*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: The local authorities have to give a permit for public events if there are more people than the capacity of the accommodation. If the event is for the guests, there are regulations only for the noise level.
- Latvia: Requirements and know-how in organisation of public events are summarised in the document developed by the Latvian Rural Tourism Association, based on their experience when organizing the Slitere National Park Travellers Day in rural tourism settings. This document is called *How to Organise Public Events* (2010) and you can find it by clicking on the following link:
http://www.celotajs.lv/cont/prof/proj/PolProp/Dokumenti/SCD_vadlinijas.pdf

Rules on organizing public events are regulated by law. For further information, visit <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=111963>.
- Lithuania: n/a.
- Norway: You have to apply to police and to inform the municipality authorities for a special permit to organise public events, including the police, the music licence, etc.
- Spain: Permits are not relevant for rural accommodation services as long as activities are limited to hosted clients. If they are offered to the general public, permits must be obtained depending on the type of activity. In any case, it is necessary to apply to the municipality authorities.
- UK: Temporary Event Notices (TEN) is a license to hold one off licensable activities in unlicensed premises. You are limited to five per year if you do not hold a personal license and 50 if you do.

2. Business & Taxes

2.1. Legal Forms of Business

Generic Information

To run a rural tourism business you should register as a tax payer. There are many legal forms of businesses in the European countries. The most frequent are: part of personal income, income from administration of property, a limited company, sole trader, a natural person registered as entrepreneur, etc. Rural tourism can also be a facility or unit in a larger venture like joint stock company, NGO, etc.

Criteria

- ⇒ *You have defined your legal form of business*
- ⇒ *You are aware of your obligations and rights*
- ⇒ *Your property is registered as RT accommodation*



Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: The legal forms of business in rural tourism are as part of private income of private person (only for guest rooms), sole trader, limited company, joint stock company, NGO.
- Latvia: There are not any rules on legal forms to run rural tourism businesses, no matter these are run by a private person, a farm, LTD, NGO, or joint stock companies. All legal forms and preferences are described in the training material developed by Lauku Ceļotājs *How to start RT business*. Visit the following web page for more information: <http://macies.celotajs.lv/mod/page/view.php?id=40>.
- Lithuania: The legal forms of businesses are:
 - Self-employment license.
 - Private activity licence.
 - Legal body.
- Norway: Self-employment, including farms, or stock company.
- Spain: This depends on the region, but usually only a full business activity is accepted. In fact, there are mostly two cases:
 - Rental of rooms or complete units without any other service, not even breakfast. In this case, the activity consists on the administration of the property and it is not considered as a business unless there are full-time staff dedicated to it
 - Full business in all other cases, especially as soon as services different from simple accommodation are provided. This can then be individual person or a company
- UK: You must establish your income tax position, and whether you are claiming all the expenses and capital allowances you are entitled to. There are different tax and legal implications depending on whether you operate your business as a sole trader, a limited company or a partnership. Tax and VAT are very large and complex areas of legislation that are constantly being revised and amended. For this reason we suggest that you contact your accountant or financial advisor to discuss all related issues.

Case study

The European Rural Tourism Federation made a summary of the four biggest EU countries: Germany, Austria, France and UK: *Regulation of small-size rural accommodation in reference countries*, regarding the takses, allowed services, size, etc. [See table attached.](#)

2.2. Tax Regulations

Generic Information

Rural tourism services may pay taxes in different ways, depending on the type of working:

- If run as non-business, income is added to personal work income, or considered as income from administration of property. In this case, usually no VAT is charged, or it is included in a franchise system
- If run as business, income is declared separately from employee work, and full rules for deduction of expenses as costs apply like to any other business. As well, VAT applies and differs by countries. Some national tax legislations apply reduced VAT rates to rural tourism businesses, usually on accommodation services (5-12 %).

In some countries, rural tourism businesses are entitled to different tax privileges or reductions and they may be coordinated with tax reductions for agricultural activities.

Criteria

⇒ *You are aware of all taxes you have to pay*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: 9% for accommodation.
- Latvia: There are generally no tax reductions for rural tourism. It is possible not to register as a VAT payer, if the turnover is less than 30 000 LVL (~50 000 €) a year. Reduced VAT is for accommodation is 12 %, whereas it is 21 % for any other services. If the provider is registered as a farm, it is possible to reduce 2800 € or 2000 LVL of the income tax as long as there are not more than five bedrooms and 18 bed places and the owner does not apply the same amount of reduction for the agricultural production income.
- Lithuania: When having self-employment license, income tax is paid up front and each municipality sets different fees every year. In addition, flat rates of social security and health care tax.

Private activity licence income tax is 5 % from the income cost. Furthermore social security and health care tax on top. However, you can pay 5 % income tax from 70 % of total income and you do not have to prove your expenditures. Social security and health care tax on top.

- Norway: No VAT applies if the income is up to 5000 € per year. VAT is 8 % on accommodation (overnighting), 15 % on food, 25 % on the rest of activities, including serving food indoors.
- Spain:
 - Non-business: These are included in the personal income tax declaration as part of income from administration of property (rental). No VAT applies if the business rented to other individuals, but it is 21 % if rented to a commercial company.
 - Business: VAT 10 %.
- UK: Business rates generally apply to bed and breakfast establishments unless the business does not intend to offer short-stay accommodation to more than six people simultaneously AND the owner occupies part of the property as their only or main home AND the letting of rooms is subsidiary to the use of the rest of the house as the owner's home. Business rates apply to a self-catering establishment unless it offers short-term lets for fewer than 140 days over the period of a year. It is only the part of the property used for business purposes that is

subject to business rates. Your local authority will calculate the business rates for your property based on its 'ratable value'.

Case study

The European Rural Tourism Organisation Eurogites made a summary in 2005 of business forms and taxes in rural tourism in Europe. [See table attached.](#)

See also chapter for social security, staff.

3. Insurance

Generic Information

There are different insurance policies in European countries for rural tourism services. Usually civil responsibility insurance for real estate property is compulsory, whereas other insurances are optional. In some cases rural tourism professional associations make contracts with insurance companies to offer better conditions. This may include the property, civil liability, third party health and life and property insurance, among others. Insurance also depends on the type of business.

Social security insurance - see social security, staff.

Criteria

⇒ *You are aware of what insurance you need according to law, have proof of this insurance, plus additional optional coverage*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: An insurance policy for accommodations is not obligatory in Bulgaria. There are some guest insurance packages that include mainly insurance for the health safety of the guest, e.g. medical assistance.
- Latvia: It is not compulsory, but advisable. There are not specific rules for tourism businesses.
- Lithuania: Not required.
- Norway: HANEN made a cooperation agreement with the insurance company <https://www.gjensidige.no/>. This company is the most active insuring the farm activities and rural lifestyle in Norway. It pays 100 000 NOK general + 50 000 NOK for particular safety activities. Particular amount of money to HANEN a year for being advertised by HANEN different activities – like stickers, programmes of GA, seminars etc. All members of HANEN get 10% reduction of the insurance policies. In each insurance contract should be mentioned that the real estate is used for tourism business, as well as different activities offered by the owner (f.e. boat rental).
- Spain: not formally required but strongly encouraged; several specific solutions for rural accommodations are available on the market.
- UK: If you are the owner of serviced (B&B) or self-catering accommodation with control over your premises, the Occupier's Liability Acts 1957 and 1984 apply to you. The person who controls the premises (the 'occupier') is liable for the physical safety of everyone who comes onto the premises. Under the Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969, employers must have insurance to cover their liability for any harm suffered by an employee at work. Public liability insurance is not compulsory but is strongly recommended for accommodation providers.

4. Statistics

Generic Information

Data for statistics are collected by official bodies, organisations, tourism associations and by rural tourism businesses for their private use. Rural tourism businesses register bookings and customer information, in compliance with the existing data protection regulations, and supply data on request to authorities, tourism associations, tourist boards and other bodies using data for market analysis, further development planning and marketing needs.

Criteria

⇒ You are aware of obligations, and up-to-date with them

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Every tourism business has to register in the National Tourism Register. Accommodations have to inform the local authorities about their bookings and customer information every month. If the guests are from abroad, they need to be registered in the police office.
- Latvia: Yearly statistics have to be submitted according the State Statistical Bureau Questionnaires. Also the Rural Tourism Association gathers statistics according to needs and interests every year. Check tourism statistics in the following link: <http://www.csb.gov.lv/dokumenti/turisma-statistika-28563.html>.
- Lithuania: The annual statistic form TUR 01 must be submitted before the 20th October.
- Norway: Some national statistics are required for accommodations with more than 10 beds or which are formed by more than four cottages. However, HANEN does not ask for statistics from the members.
- Spain: The Spanish Statistics Office INE elaborates monthly statistics based on a sample, hence not all services have to provide data. Questionnaires are complex, e.g. the number of clients from a large list of countries has to be provided day by day, so much data are inexact or unreliable.
- UK: All serviced and self-catering accommodation premises must keep a record of all guests over the age of 16. The record should indicate full name and nationality. You must keep each guest's details for at least 12 months. If you hold any personal information on guests or any other individuals, including employees (other than on odd scraps of paper), the Data Protection Act 1998 applies.

5. Marketing and Publicity

5.1. Unfair Trading Practices

Generic Information

EU Unfair Commercial Practices Directive provides for protection of consumer rights, although each country has its own legislation on this directive. Basically, rural tourism establishments, like any other service offered to a consumer, has to deliver what was promised in any advertising and marketing form. It includes some aspects like false or misleading statements about the quality, amenities, location and services, outdated information or displaying quality marks without relevant authorisation, among others.



Criteria

- ⇒ *You know your product thoroughly to provide precise and truthful information*
- ⇒ *You are in position to deliver what you have promised in advertising and marketing*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: The Commission for Consumer Protection has to be alerted in order to start the verification procedure.
- Latvia: Marketing and publicity are controlled by the corresponding consumer right authority in Latvia. There is also a law on consumer rights: <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=23309>.
- Lithuania: Marketing and publicity are controlled by the corresponding consumer right authority in Lithuania. An investigation may be carried out after reporting unfair trade practices.
- Norway: In accordance to the EU directive.
- Spain: Consumer rights are generally protected. Non-business activities are sometimes a problem because they are excluded from the legal obligations and controls that apply to full businesses. This is a less favourable situation for consumers. Voluntary control systems are sometimes implemented.
- UK: Businesses must not undertake unfair trading practices, as regulated in the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations (CPR). The CPR determine whether certain advertising and marketing practices are misleading, aggressive or lack due diligence. In addition to this general duty, there are 31 business practices that are banned outright, such as displaying a quality mark without authorization. The Business Protection Regulations impose further restrictions on how companies compare their products to rival products from rival companies.

5.2. Complaint Sheets

Generic Information

For full business services, it is compulsory in all EU countries to have complaint sheets available for customers. This may not apply in the case of a service being considered non-business, especially holiday rentals or private rooms.

Criteria

- ⇒ *You are aware of obligations*
- ⇒ *All forms available if necessary*



Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Every accommodation must have feedback and complaint sheets that are easily visible at the reception or somewhere in the common areas, like the dining room, the lobby, etc.
- Latvia: Complaints can be sent to the Consumer Protection Rights Agency (<http://www.ptac.gov.lv/page/104>) if the customer is a private person. However, accommodation owners cannot keep them on site.
- Lithuania: n/a.
- Norway: All of the information can be found in the Consumer Protection Rights Agency web page: <http://www.forbrukerradet.no/>.
- Spain: It is obligatory for full businesses and recommended for holiday rental.
- UK: If a guest is unhappy with any aspect of their stay it is advisable to raise the issue with their host directly so that it can be dealt with immediately and rectified at once. If the issue is not resolved to the guest's satisfaction then guests should contact Farm Stay if it is the marketing body for the property, or the appropriate assessing body for the property such as Quality in Tourism for VisitEngland, the National Tourism Agency or AA Hotel Services.

5.3. Direct Marketing

Generic Information

EC directive on Privacy and Electronic communications protects individuals against receiving unwanted marketing information. National regulations may cover practices like direct marketing phone calls, faxes, e-mails and other forms of direct marketing. National legislations are in force to protect personal data in customer databases, mailing lists, etc.



Criteria

- ⇒ You are aware of data protection legislation
- ⇒ You are aware of national regulations regarding direct marketing practices

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: According to EU legislation. In all e-mails with advertising there should be a sentence with an explanation that this is e-mail with commercial content, and an easily visible explanation of how you can unsubscribe from the list. There is a law for the e-commerce (<http://www.lex.bg/bg/laws/ldoc/2135530547>). Every entity that doesn't want to receive e-mails with commercial content can be registered in the Commission for Consumer Protection. The register is online and it is forbidden to send e-mails to anybody in the register. It is forbidden to send e-mails with commercial content without the permission of the recipient.
- Latvia: The national Personal Data Protection law in force is in accordance to EU legislation: <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=4042>
- Lithuania: Personal data can be used only if the person agrees for his personal information to be used in direct marketing. It is regulated by personal data protection law: <http://www.infolex.lt/ta/51494:str14>
- Norway: There is an agency to register in order not to get direct marketing, i.e. phone calls and emails: <https://w2.brreg.no/reservasjon/>.
- Spain: There is a strict regulation of commercial databases that include the data of individuals or consumers. However, a simple e-mail address is not considered as personal data. Each citizen has the right to request removal from such mailing lists, although this does not apply for B2B marketing.
- UK: If you make direct marketing calls to individuals, or send direct marketing faxes to individuals or businesses, you are required to comply with direct marketing legislation. As a business, you are not allowed to make direct marketing calls to individuals who have declined to receive such calls or who have registered with the Telephone Preference Service (TPS). If you send e-mail and/or text/picture/video marketing messages to advertise your business, or use cookies on your website the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 apply. The Consumer Protection (Distance Selling) Regulations 2000 (as amended) apply to goods and services sold over the internet, by phone or by mail order. However, they do not apply to contracts to provide accommodation, transport, catering or leisure services.

5.4. Holiday Packages

Generic Information

The Package Travel Directive protects European consumers booking pre-arranged package holidays. If a rural tourism business offers packaged services lasting at least 24 hours and including transport, accommodation or other significant visitor services (two of the mentioned), the Package Travel Directive and/or the derived national legislation applies. In many countries, offering such a package is only allowed if you are a registered travel agency, i.e. if an individual RT service does packaging, this may be illegal and risk of heavy fines.

Criteria

⇒ *You are aware of all the responsibilities you have if packages are allowed*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Only registered tour operators can prepare package offers.
- Latvia: According to tourism law (<http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=50026>): Package tourism service: a combination of tourism services prepared previously or upon request of a consumer and relates to:
 - A time period that is longer than 24 hours and includes at least two of the following tourism services: transport, accommodation or a tourism service other than transport or accommodation auxiliary service and which covers proportionally the largest part of the combination of the tourism services.
 - A time period that is less than 24 hours and includes accommodation and at least one of the following tourism services: transport or a tourism service other than transport or accommodation auxiliary service and which covers proportionally the largest part of the combination of the tourism services.

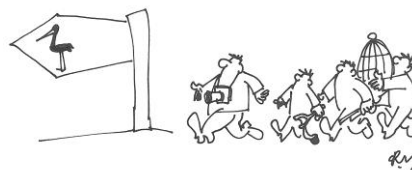
Specific regulations by the Cabinet of Ministers apply for package tourism: <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=152070>.

- Lithuania: Packages combining accommodation, transport, etc. can only be made and provided to the consumer by a registered tour operator. RT provider according to Lithuanian Tourism law provides accommodation services with the possibility to combine it with catering service or active recreation.
- Norway: According to EU directive on the complex package.
- Spain: Packaging is an exclusive right of registered travel agencies, individual providers cannot 'pack' their different services into one package that is sold as a complete price. In practice, this is not much controlled, especially when dealing with closely related services, e.g. pick-up service from railway, etc.
- UK: If you offer a package of services that lasts at least 24 hours and includes at least two out of three of transport, accommodation and other significant visitor services, then you are probably subject to the Package Holiday Regulations. The Package Holiday Regulations include provisions relating to the marketing, booking and delivery of the package. The Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 (amended in 1995) affect many accommodation providers.

5.5. Signposting

Generic Information

Directional signposts, name plates of establishment on buildings, entrance and parking place marking are usually some of the requirements within rural tourism quality schemes. Use of organisation's logo, certain sizes, materials, or colour schemes may be also required.



Criteria

⇒ *You have your tourism establishment signposted.*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Certain size, colour and material for the categorization sign. Other regulations for the sign with the name of the accommodation and other signs.
- Latvia: Latvian Rural Tourism Association *Lauku ceļotājs* designed a road direction sign, which can be put on the private entrance roads, and if municipality does not object also on the 2nd level roads that are managed by municipalities. Visit the following site for more information: http://www.celotajs.lv/cont/prof/market/sign_lv.html.

There are some rules for advertising boards or signs along the roads (<http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=110209>), but the direction sign (like LC one) usually does not require the confirmation of the municipality or rode agency.

- Lithuania: Directional signposts on roads can only indicate direction and distance but cannot have the name of the accommodation on it. They have to be approved by road authority who manages the road.
- Norway: It is illegal to put any sign on the main roads and there are rules, but they don't practice them. On the municipality roads one can put a smaller sign without any confirmation, if it is not too large.
- Spain: Tourism legislation establishes obligatory signs on the service, and indicators for public access. However these latter are not approved by road authorities, and they can cause problems when installed, especially outside urban centers.
- UK: If you display any outdoor signs and/or advertisements you may need to apply to the planning authority for consent to display the proposed sign. The need for consent from the planning authority depends on whether the signs are fully, partially or non-illuminated and where they are situated. You will also need to ensure that any signs displayed are not misleading, as this could constitute a breach of unfair trading and misleading marketing legislation. The highways department of your local authority can advise on white on brown tourism signs.

6. Employing Staff

Generic Information

Rural tourism businesses using paid labour have to comply with national labour legislation in their country. Different aspects have to be considered although the key point is that working relations have to be specified in a written contract signed by both parties: the employer and the employee.

Criteria

⇒ *You have written contracts if you employ paid staff*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There are no specific regulations for rural tourism. Employees have to sign labour contract with their employer according to the Bulgarian legislation.
- Latvia: Employees have to be hired according to the Latvian legislation. There are no regulations specifically for rural tourism.
- Lithuania: No staff employment is allowed when working under self-employment licence. Under all other legal forms an employment agreement has to be signed and all employment regulations apply according to the employment law.
- Norway: No difference to any other business.
- Spain: Non-business activities can still employ staff for cleaning, etc. under the concept of 'domestic staff'. If run as business, even self-employed, staff can be employed without any limitation, except of course compliance with labor legislation, but the entrepreneur must register as employer with the Social Security and tax authorities.
- UK: Employment laws apply.

6.1. Working hours

Generic Information

National legislations set regulations regarding working hours a week or a day, lunch or other breaks, paid leave in certain periods of time, rest periods, records to register working hours and other practices in case paid labour is used.

Criteria

⇒ *You are aware and updated regarding national labour legislation if you employ paid staff*



Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: 8 h/day – 40 h/working week; 20 days paid leave.
- Latvia: Rights on working hours and overtimes are set in the rules (<http://www.lm.gov.lv/text/432>), no difference of other businesses.
- Lithuania: 8 hours per day; 40 hours a week
- Norway: No difference as in Europe.
- Spain: Set by sectorial conventions between employers and trade unions; It varies from region to region, but usually pretty flexible for the tourism sector.
- UK: The Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended) apply to all accommodation providers that have people working for them. You must take reasonable steps to ensure that workers do not work more than an average of 48 hours a week (excluding lunch breaks). Workers are entitled to 5.6 weeks' paid leave a year and rest periods of a specified length in each working day and in each seven day period. You need to keep sufficient records to show that you are complying with the regulations.

Preventive measures:

- ✓ In order to reach high points, use a ladder or scaffolding and do not stretch if it is not needed.
- ✓ Keep your body centred on the ladder.
- ✓ Do not turn your body or do any other hazardous movement when lifting objects.
- ✓ Keep your tools and materials in your work area.
- ✓ Choose ergonomic tools to keep your wrists straight and that prevent from muscle contractions. The movements of the tools and the machinery must be compatible with those of your arms and hands.
- ✓ Try not to stand in the same position or do the same movement or effort for a long time.
- ✓ The machinery must be in good condition. The machinery size shall be suitable for the employees.

- ✓ It is advisable to use both hands and arms symmetrically when doing a task.
- ✓ Do not bend your neck or back 30 degrees for over two hours a day.
- ✓ Do not raise your head or your arms and do not squat for over two hours a day.
- ✓ Do not keep your arms and legs extended for a long time.
- ✓ Change your position trying not to press always the same part of your body. If this is not possible, take a break from time to time.
- ✓ If you need to work kneeling, use kneepads and take a rest standing from time to time.
- ✓ If you need to work standing, the work area height will depend on the type of task. Take your elbow height as a reference.
- ✓ Use a footrest to rest your feet alternatively. Your footwear should be as comfortable as possible.
- ✓ Take a break and sit down when possible.
- ✓ If you need to work sitting, keep your trunk straight facing your working area and as near as possible to it.
- ✓ Make sure there is enough space between your working table and your body so that you can change the position of your legs and arms.

6.2. Minimum Wage

Generic Information

National regulations set rules regarding minimum wage in the country and conditions: the amount of minimum wage, what kind of workers are entitled to the minimum wage, what are exceptions, on what conditions minimum wage applies (e.g., sickness leave and holidays), etc.

Criteria

⇒ *You are aware and updated regarding national legislation on minimum wage*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: 310 leva minimum wage, sickness leave – the first 3 days are paid from the employer and the rest from the National Insurance Institute.
- Latvia: minimal wage is 200 LVL (350 €) per month, but the owner can also employ staff for hours or days. Rules: <https://www.vestnesis.lv/index.php?menu=doc&id=222275>
- Lithuania: 1000 Lt per month before the tax.
- Norway: For seasonal work up to 3 month 105 NOK/hour. After that – entrepreneur going into the tariff of the work he needs to hire.
- Spain: 21.51 €/day or 645.30 €/month plus social security (28 %); additional complements can apply depending on the sector convention.
- UK: There are three rates of national minimum wage (as of April 2014): main (adult) rate (for workers aged 21 and over) is £6.31 per hour; development rate for 18-20 year old workers is £5.03 per hour; development rate for 16-17 year old workers is £3.72 per hour. This is updated regularly in each annual government Budget.

6.3. Discrimination

Generic Information

In some European countries legislation and its implementation covering discrimination issues is very elaborated while in other countries discrimination issues are not really being discussed in rural tourism. In general, discrimination issues address aspects like disability, gender, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and age.

Criteria

- ⇒ *You are aware of legal requirements regarding discrimination if you have paid staff*
- ⇒ *You comply with best practices of non-discrimination if you have paid staff*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Discrimination law applies to all service providers. (Law on Protection against Discrimination) In the accommodation types: hotel, motel, vacation or touristic village - depending on the number of rooms, one or more of the rooms must be adapted for disabled people. (Tourism law)
- Latvia: n/a.
- Lithuania: n/a.
- Norway: Discrimination is unlawful.
- Spain: In the case of a business, public right of admission applies but there are some limits, hence the owner can refuse admission due to objective reasons like bad behavior, dirty or unhygienic appearance, etc. Other reasons, especially gender, religion, ethnic, etc. are not admitted. The case is legally different where no full business is run, as in this case it is considered admission to a private home.
- UK: Discrimination laws apply to all service providers. It is unlawful to discriminate directly against anyone.

6.4. Time Off For Parents

Generic Information

Legislation for Time off for Parents apply in rural tourism the same as in any other business. It covers family-friendly working, flexible working, maternity and paternity rights such as maternity and paternity leave and pay, etc.

Criteria

- ⇒ *You are aware of legal requirements regarding maternity/paternity rights if you have paid staff*
- ⇒ *You comply with best practices requirements regarding maternity/paternity rights if you have paid staff*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: 2 years for maternity.
- Latvia: No difference from other businesses.
- Lithuania: Time off for parents legislation apply in rural tourism the same as in any other business.
- Norway: No difference from other businesses.
- Spain: Nothing special, like in all other businesses.
- UK: All employers are required to comply with legislation related to family-friendly working. Employees' rights in this area include maternity and paternity rights, adoption leave, flexible working and parental leave.

6.5. Safety At Work

Generic Information

Many of the items in the present Safety & Security list are at the same time part of usual 'Safety at Workplace' regulations. Workplace safety legislation is supposed to protect employees against accidents at work and prevent professional diseases. Workplace safety regulations have a common EU-wide legal base that is developed at national level. They cover the quality and suitability of working environment, facilities for employees, maintenance and cleanliness of workplace, technical condition of equipment, electrical installations, etc.

Criteria

- ⇒ *You are aware of all existing regulations*
- ⇒ *You comply with all existing regulations*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: No specific regulations for rural tourism. The regulations for work safety are described in the Law for safety and security at work <http://lex.bg/laws/ldoc/2134178305>
- Latvia: There are no specific regulations for rural tourism, so general work safety rules apply (<http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=3474>).
- Lithuania: The same rules as for all business apply. A link to all work and safety regulations: http://www.vdi.lt/TA/TA_kategorijos.aspx
- Norway: There are no differences from other business (<http://www.lovdato.no/all/nl-20050617-062.html>).
- Spain: We have our own, very specific handbook on this matter, which will be re-edited in 2013 including some additional content from this SAFETUR handbook.
- UK: The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 place general duties and responsibilities on all employers at work. Employers must carry out a 'suitable and sufficient' assessment of health and safety risks to employees and others arising from work activities. If you have five or more employees, you must keep a record of any significant findings of the assessment and your health and safety arrangements. Employers, the self-employed and those in control of work premises must report certain work related accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences. Employers must provide first aid equipment and facilities appropriate to the circumstances in the workplace.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Take into account each employee's features when distributing tasks.
- ✓ Measure spaces, surfaces and tools in order to control and adapt them to positions and work areas. Use auxiliary devices if needed in order not to do unnecessary turns and bends.
- ✓ Keep your work area clean and tidy so that you can access easily to the equipment and materials.
- ✓ Keep your wrists at the same height of your forearms when sitting. Do not twist your arms, forearms and trunk and keep your back and neck straight. Sit down facing your work area.
- ✓ Change your position during your working day. For instance, you can work sitting or standing.
- ✓ Do diverse tasks. Use different parts of your body so that your task is not so monotonous.

6.6. Social Security

Generic Information

Social security is covered by national legislation regarding social taxes, social guarantees of employees.

Criteria

⇒ *You have formal contracts signed with your employees, are registered as employer at your national Social Security system, and are up-to-date in payments*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: In case of self-employment the tax is depending on the amount of money that is declared as income (8% per health tax, 17,8% per pension tax, 3,5% per sickness and maternity tax); employment income – social tax paid by the employee is around 12,9% and by the employer - around 17,8%, but it depends on the type of the labour contract.
- Latvia: There are different possibilities for social tax payment according to the registration form of the business. Information can be found in the training material *How to start rural tourism business*: <http://macies.celotajs.lv/mod/page/view.php?id=48>.
- Lithuania: Social security tax has to be paid in addition to the income tax depending on the legal form. If self-employed, a flat rate per month has to be paid. Private activity licence has to pay 28.5 % social tax from 50 % of the revenue. Employment income 9 % social tax paid by employee and 30.98 % by employer.
- Norway: No difference (<http://www.lovdato.no/all/nl-20050617-062.html>).
- Spain: For self-employed, obligatory minimum about 250 €/month. For employees, a total of about 32.5 % of total salary cost: 28 % paid by the employer, 4.5 % by the employee.
- UK: Income Tax and National Insurance are deducted at source by the employer when paying wages. Both levels increase with levels of pay. National Insurance contributions are accumulated to cover unemployment benefit and national pensions. Employers make a further contribution of approximately 13% to cover National Insurance.

7. Helping Guests

7.1. Booking

Generic Information

Rural tourism businesses should set procedures for booking:

- Answering enquiries.
- Taking bookings.
- Recording arrangements such as prices and amounts due, services, dates, number of people.
- Confirmation in written form or stating all booking details.
- Payment, including deposit, cash payment, bank transactions, payment with credit card and advance payment.
- Cancellations, including return or non-return of customer payment.



Booking terms and conditions should be clearly explained to customers before booking.

EU e-commerce directive: this new directive, not yet implemented in national legislation, establishes a couple of new formal requirements. The most important are:

- The need to have general purchase conditions (booking)
- The confirmation with all booking details, including price, dates or services included, just to name a few. These must be available in a 'storable' format, such as an email, a file or even a SMS. A simple spoken confirmation by telephone is no longer valid.

Criteria

- ⇒ *You have set and communicated booking procedures.*
- ⇒ *You have set and exposed booking terms and conditions.*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Every accommodation must have terms and conditions for bookings and cancellations but there are no set regulations or common booking conditions.
- Latvia: There are no set rules for common booking conditions, confirmations, cancellations, etc. However, LC has set up the booking conditions for the organization (http://www.celotajs.lv/en/app/info/booking_conditions?pageType=normal), although each provider has also set different conditions. Very often they have not taken into consideration the consequences of customer rights, especially when booking on-line.
- Lithuania: each RT business has its own booking conditions regarding confirmation, deposits and cancellations.
- Norway: Since there are no set rules, every RT business makes own conditions.

- Spain: There is a normal regulation for contracting services but also specific rules set by the Tourism Law and the regulations based on it. RAAR proposes a set of General Booking Conditions that regulate most of the standard aspects, although individual different conditions can be established by each service provider. In the case of holiday rentals, the legal situation is unclear because, on one side, tourism legislation is applied but, on the other side, only a rental agreement based on the Spanish Rental Law can be established according to law.
- UK: Once you have accepted a booking from a guest, you normally have to honour the booking. All accommodation providers should abide by good practice with regard to booking procedures. Booking Conditions must be made available at the time of booking and with the confirmation. Farm Stay UK has a standard set of terms available to Members to adapt.

7.2. Registration and Data Protection

Generic Information

Customer registration is usually required by immigration services. The procedures differ between countries regarding required data and their submission to authorities. While customer data shall be taken at booking, including name, e-mail address, credit card number, passport number, nationality, etc., it is essential to respect data protection laws in force.

Criteria

⇒ *You are aware of the requirements of Immigration services*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Every foreign tourist must be registered within 24 hours in the local police office. For every tourist that stays for a night the owner of the accommodation must have address card with personal information. The address cards must be kept at safe place.
- Latvia: There are rules to register every foreign tourist in all the accommodations in Latvia (<http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=155472>). Completed questionnaires should be kept in a safe place by the accommodation owner.
- Lithuania: Still not in action.
- Norway: Tourists are not registered.
- Spain: The personal data of every client, even a group of ten people that books accommodation for one weekend, must theoretically be registered in the nearest police station within 12 hours upon arrival. Although there are some telematic solutions available, in practice usually only one or two people from a bigger group register. This requirement also applies to holiday rental non-businesses.
- UK: All serviced and self-catering accommodation premises must keep a record of all guests over the age of 16. The record should indicate full name and nationality. You must keep each guest's details for at least 12 months. If you hold any personal information on guests or any other individuals, including employees (other than on odd scraps of paper), the Data Protection Act 1998 applies.

7.3. Pricing and Charging

Generic Information

The accommodation provider is responsible for stating prices in printed and web advertising, e-mails and in any written or oral form. Price information should include all the services in order to avoid hidden costs. It is advisable to display the prices on the premises. In some countries it is a criminal offence to give guests misleading price information.

Criteria

⇒ *You have stated correct and updated prices in all printed, web or other advertising.*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Price list should be displayed on the receptions desk, in every room of the accommodation, on the web site. There are no set rules for pricing. Only about the visibility of the prices.
- Latvia: Prices should be publicly displayed.
- Lithuania: Prices set out in public marketing cannot be changed.
- Norway: Prices should be public, but there are no set rules.
- Spain: Prices are free and can be changed at any moment. If they are published, they are part of the offer itself unless it is clearly stated that they are *approximate* or that the customer should 'confirm prices before booking', etc. However, once agreed in a booking, they cannot be modified.
- UK: It is a criminal offence for accommodation providers, among others, to give guests misleading information on the prices charged for accommodation and any related facilities, services or goods. It is an offence not to do everything reasonably possible to correct a price indication that has subsequently become misleading if it is reasonable to assume that customers will still be relying on the original price information. Prices must include VAT if you are VAT registered. The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (CPR) require you to be open and honest in your pricing and not mislead or leave out information that could affect the purchasing decision of your customers.

7.4. Cancellations and No-Shows

Generic Information

Cancellation policies and procedures should be clearly stated in case a reservation is cancelled by a customer or by the host. Cancellation rules should be communicated at the time of booking before confirmation and payment. Often a deposit is required to secure the booking or compensate for a now-show. Self-catering establishments usually charge larger deposits than service accommodations though it may depend on the length of the booked holidays or the season, e.g. Christmas or Easter holidays. In case a host makes a cancellation, s/he is obliged to find accommodation of the same or higher standard or otherwise return the payment in part or full, depending on the previously set and communicated cancellation policies.

Criteria

- ⇒ *You have set your cancellation policies.*
- ⇒ *Your cancellation rules are communicated to guests before booking.*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Every accommodation has its rules for cancellations and no-shows. There are no set rules.
- Latvia: There are not any common regulation for cancelation, therefore every provider sets their own rules. However, the problem is that providers usually do not inform customers in writing when providing the invoice. The organization Lauku Celotajs has elaborated a set of cancelation rules: http://www.celotajs.lv/en/app/info/booking_conditions?pageType=normal, although each individual owner is free to set his own ones.
- Lithuania: It depends on providers individually.
- Norway: There are not any common rules therefore everybody is responsible for their own conditions.
- Spain: It depends on the agreement between the provider and the customer. This usually defined in the booking conditions.
- UK: All accommodation providers are strongly recommended to have a cancellation policy, in order to avoid any problems with cancellations, curtailments and no-shows. If a guest cancels a booking or checks out early, they are in breach of the booking contract they have with you. If you have to cancel a booking that you have already accepted, you are in breach of contract.

7.5. Accepting Guests (Non-Discrimination, Children)

Generic Information

Safety issues to be addressed include the ability to pick and choose guests. For example, to refuse customers because of inadequate behaviour, being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, being unwilling or unable to pay or being a nuisance to other guests, etc. Some establishments set in-house rules stating customer responsibilities, behaviour codes or instructions of use of the facilities. For the property safety and as prevention of potential damage, some may have no-kids or no-pets policy, and even some would avoid both parties. Generally, this is not covered by any legislation or regulations. However, if guests are turned away, the reason must be substantiated other than simply suspicion.

Criteria

⇒ *You have set and exposed in-house rules for guests to prevent offence of discrimination.*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Not covered by the legislation. It is decision of the accommodation owner whether he will greet guest with pets, youth companies, etc.
- Latvia: According to the Latvian Centre for Human Rights discrimination is not allowed in Latvia.
- Lithuania: n/a.
- Norway: According to the customer protection rights, discrimination is not legal, but common sense may be beard in mind when choosing the customers.
- Spain: Discrimination is subject to public legislation in the case of businesses, otherwise subject to the provider's individual decision and criteria, as they are considered to run their private home.
- UK: Your rights with regard to accepting guests depend on whether you are classed as a 'hotel' or a 'private hotel'. A hotel can refuse guests who appear unable or willing to pay or who are not in a fit state to be received. A private hotel is free to pick and choose its guests even when rooms are available, provided that in exercising this right there is no discrimination as per the terms of the law.

7.6. Client Behaviour Rules and Contracts

Generic Information

In risky zones, like saunas, pools, hot-tubs, children's playgrounds or rural tourism businesses, ask customers to sign under in-house rules or terms of use of particular facilities or equipment. Clients take up responsibility for adequate behaviour and correct use of the facilities for the sake of their safety, health and life. The accommodation business owner is usually responsible for the technical condition of the facilities. In specific cases like group services, parties and other, a contract is signed between the customer and the service provider or the accommodation owner, who must fix problems related to services, dates, times, number of guests, payment conditions, cancellations, damages, etc.



Criteria

⇒ *You have exposed technical instructions for use of equipment.*

Country Specific Information

- **Bulgaria:** Most of the providers rely on posting some information plates with instructions how to use the facilities and the clients take up the responsibility. There is no practice to sign a contract with the guest for safety and security cases. Often the accommodation has Terms and conditions and when a tourist books a room in written way he is alerted that if confirm his reservation he will agree with the Terms and conditions. In case of holiday rental the practice is the same.
- **Latvia:** The provider has to set up rules or advices, which is recommended but often not complied with. Usually customers must be given some warnings in pools, saunas and hot-tubs in order not to have any health or safety problem.
- **Lithuania:** It is advisable to fill the contract on every booking, but not all providers do. Some accommodations themselves set the client behaviour rules.
- **Norway:** It is recommended to sign contracts, but owners very seldom do. Owners often put up rules for risky zones such as hot-tubs, saunas, etc. More important tour operators like Nova-sol provide common leaflets ([attachment](#)) to cottage owners for customers and a safety book for owners about how to protect risk zones. These texts should be put out for the costumers. Here you have an example of a boat contract: http://www.novasol.no/site/nov/company/owner/PDF/no/batkontrakt_2009.pdf; and about a checklist of cleaning: [https://secure.novasol.com/web/pictures.nsf/EBE1AF75D8095775C125700B003C3840/\\$file/sjekklisterengjoering.pdf](https://secure.novasol.com/web/pictures.nsf/EBE1AF75D8095775C125700B003C3840/$file/sjekklisterengjoering.pdf).
- **Spain:** Rules can be set up by each provider, within a Generic Information framework set by the Tourism Law and other regulations. These are not usually applied, as they are considered as a lack of good faith between the owner and the customers. The same applies to security deposits in case of damage.
- **UK:** The rules on use tend to be driven by the requirements of the insurance company underwriting the premises. Clear signage on "do's and don'ts" are standard, minimum age supervision for children, etc all need to made aware to the guest or visitor before using the facilities concerned.

7.7. Guests with Disabilities

Generic Information

In some countries, some rules regulate the physical accessibility of premises to all customers, including those with reduced mobility or other disabilities. Though guests should not be discriminated because of any disability, in rural areas it is often impossible to ensure all the necessary amenities and facilities for disabled people. In addition, regulations and situation differs a lot between countries.

Criteria

⇒ *You are able to provide adequate information about your facilities regarding suitability for guests with disabilities.*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There must be at least one room accessible for guests with disabilities with all the comfort services. Common areas also must be accessible.
- Latvia: According to the Building Regulation for Public Buildings, only these must be accessible to disabled. In the case of smaller establishments, the owner decides.
- Lithuania: According to the building regulation public buildings has to be disabled accessible.
- Norway: Rural tourism places are hardly adapted for disabled people, which is a problem in this country. Only bigger places must provide accessibility services.
- Spain: All businesses are obliged to be fully adapted for guests with disabilities according to law. However, this is not possible and small establishments' owners usually turn a blind eye. These regulations do not apply to non-commercial activities.
- UK: If you provide any sort of accommodation, service or self-catering, the Equality Act 2010 applies to you (this act replaces the Disability Discrimination Act 1995). The Act protects anyone who is disabled, is thought to be disabled or is associated with someone who is disabled. The Act gives these people rights of access to goods, facilities and services, including tourist accommodation, and ensures that they are treated no less favorably than other customers. You are also required to make reasonable adjustments to the way you deliver your services and to the physical features of your premises to make it easier for disabled guests to use them.

7.8. Luggage and Belongings

Generic Information

Providers of service accommodation are responsible for the safekeeping of guest luggage. This can be ensured by providing storage rooms, safe deposits, lockable guest rooms, controlling access to rural tourism establishment by third person or informing customers about the required precautions. In the case of self-catering, more responsibility stays with guests.

Criteria

⇒ *You provide guests with keys of their rooms.*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Safe deposits are not obligatory only for one-star accommodation.
- Latvia: Owners must assure the safety of the tourist belongings by providing a key, a lock, etc. for the rooms, houses or gates. Also they must inform guests of the local situation, but they do not have to keep the legal responsibilities for guests' belongings.
- Lithuania: n/a.
- Norway: n/a.
- Spain: n/a.
- UK: If you run service accommodation, you are required by law to take responsibility for the safekeeping of all reasonable items of luggage brought by guests. Hotel owners have the legal right to retain guests' property until their bill is settled.

7.9. Childcare

Generic Information

Accommodation facility providers are responsible for ensuring a safe environment for children, which includes playgrounds, farm environment, premises, water or food safety, just to name a few. Therefore guests must be informed by putting up warning signs and by displaying instructions where relevant.

Criteria

- ⇒ *You are aware of the areas of potential danger for children in your facilities and have taken precautions to prevent accidents.*
- ⇒ *You instruct guests about children safety (verbal instruction or warning signs where appropriate).*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Only warning signs and instructions plates are used in rural tourism accommodation.
- Latvia: The owner should inform guests of the unsafe places for children.
- Lithuania: n/a.
- Norway: n/a.
- Spain: There are some legal requirements for businesses, but there is not any rule for private rentals.
- UK: determined by property insurance requirements and UK Health and Safety laws.

8. Accommodation Safety & Security

8.1. General Accommodation Requirements

Generic Information

Rural tourism establishments have to comply with a minimum of legal requirements, as said before. This section discusses Safety & Security aspects covered by rural tourism quality schemes. The requirements are driven by the guest and host convenience and by common sense.

If an accommodation is registered within a voluntary certification scheme, it should be updated. Such rural tourism quality, branding, certification and other schemes usually include specific requirements related with safety and security that may specify, complement, or add to existing legal requirements.

Criteria

- ⇒ *Labels are updated*
- ⇒ *Your establishment complies with a minimum of legal requirements*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There are some certificates, including the Green Lodge certificate, the Pan Parks certificate, the Authentic Bulgaria certificate or the Green Flower certificate MOEW.
- Latvia: Joining the classification of the state owned, or national associations of rural tourism, hotels or camping sites, is free-will. Certificates are issued to a certain period, normally less than three years. There are different brands for marketing needs: Green certificate, Latvian Heritage, Butterflies Quality Grading, etc.
- Lithuania: No National certification for rural tourism. Only the private classification requirements of Countryside tourism association. All accommodations who are members of LCTA have to be classified from 1 to 5 Storks. In the classification requirements no special regulations for Safety and Security. It has to comply with national safety and security.
- Norway: n/a. On-line booking systems or tour operators can be classified, but there is no national system in Norway. There are branding certificates for local food or historic hotels. It is free-will to join them for marketing purposes.
- Spain: Requirements are set in legal registration rules. Classification is not yet compulsory but under way during 2013-2014 and similar criteria and parameters for the whole country. Proprietary schemes exist in some regions, e.g. olives in Andalusia, ears in Catalonia, etc. but these are likely to disappear once the national scheme is in force.
- UK: Accommodation assessments schemes are operated by companies such as VisitEngland and AA Hotel Services. In addition “green” schemes exist such as the Green Tourism Business Scheme which can also help policy and marketing.

8.2. Fire Safety

8.2.1. Fire Safety for Buildings

Generic Information

Fire safety is a part of building regulations. For accommodations, requirements include fire extinguishers, alarm systems, instructions in case of fire emergency, phone numbers of rescue services displayed, etc.

Criteria

- ⇒ *You have a certificate from fire authorities, if relevant.*
- ⇒ *You have the required fire-safety equipment.*



Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Every accommodation has to put fire-safety instructions and an evacuation plan in every room with phone numbers for rescue services. Also there are regulations for the windows and doors. There must be a fire extinguisher in a very visible place that is reachable by the guests or people from the accommodation team. For family hotels – 1 extinguisher for every 25 meters of the corridor. There must be lit signs for all the exits in the accommodation and a plan of the building with rooms and exits location.
- Latvia: Fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, phone numbers and instructions are required by the quality system. Windows and appropriate doors and locking system are essential as well.
- Lithuania: Central fire alarm systems, fire extinguishers that must be checked every year, evacuation schemes and exits marked, emergency numbers have to be displayed.
- Norway: Fire safety is ruled by the building regulations. Owners have to install smoke detectors in accommodation buildings.
- Spain: There are not special rules. For businesses, the legal requirements apply like for hotels or apartments.
- UK: Fire safety legislation applies to the 'responsible person' in virtually all workplaces including hotels, guest houses and similar premises. A 'suitable and sufficient' fire risk assessment must be carried out, and where there are five or more employees, the assessment should be recorded. There should be one person responsible for the fire risk assessment and ensuring fire protection and prevention measures are observed and maintained. An emergency plan should be drawn up. It should be displayed in the form of a Fire Action Notice in guest rooms and adjacent to the fire alarm call points in the staff and common areas.

Preventive measures:

- ✓ Store fuels and other inflammable objects far enough away from the combustion fireplace.
- ✓ Do not burn stubble.
- ✓ Be extremely careful when storing home heating oil (HHO) so that it does not spill. Be aware of any oily smells, since this may indicate a leak.

- ✓ Keep your working area free of boxes, containers, paper and waste.
- ✓ Store inflammable products in an airy and safe place.
- ✓ Make sure there are not fuel spills before switching on any fuel machinery.
- ✓ Use only the fuel recommended by the manufacturer.
- ✓ Discard damaged electric appliances.
- ✓ Pay attention to markers. Check exits and where the alarm switch and the fire extinguisher are located.
- ✓ Keep fire extinguishers in the best condition. Have been inspected regularly and check that they are appropriate for each class of fire.
- ✓ Fire extinguishers must be accessible and near areas with a greater risk of fire.
- ✓ In the event of a fire, keep calm. Do not shout, run or push anybody in order not to spread panic.
- ✓ In the event of a larger fire, call the fire service and do not try to extinguish it on your own.
- ✓ If there is much smoke, crawl along the floor where the air is cleaner.
- ✓ Do not run if your clothes catch on fire, otherwise they will burn more quickly. Stop, drop and roll instead.

8.2.2. Fire Safety for Heating Systems and Fireplaces

Generic Information

This is normally a part of building regulations. For accommodations additionally it may be required to display instructions of use of heating systems and fireplaces.

Criteria

- ⇒ *Your heating systems comply with regulations and are properly maintained*
- ⇒ *If guests have access to heating installations, adequate written instructions are provided*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Instructions for use are required
- Latvia: not specific requirements for the owners, but owners often give much attention to the fireplaces and sauna heating systems. Very often not allowed to be used by tourists.
- Lithuania: accommodation providers normally do not allow clients to operate heating systems or clearly display instructions how to use it.
- Norway: n/a
- Spain: no specific rules for fireplaces, which pose a certain risk for providers and clients but on the other side, would be yet another complication if established.
- UK: determined by property insurance requirements. Boilers and gas appliances should be checked on a regular basis by the owners.

Preventive measures:

- ✓ Install chimneys with doors and do not place inflammable objects two metres around the chimney.
- ✓ Choose the best place for portable barbecue grills. Use fixed grills when possible.
- ✓ Carbon monoxide alarms are often recommended to detect faulty chimneys and are now inexpensive to purchase (€25, £20)

8.2.3. Fire Safety of Furniture and Furnishings

Generic Information

It is a responsibility of the accommodation provider to choose materials that are not easily flammable or are fire resistant.

Criteria

⇒ *You have used adequate building materials to ensure fire safety*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There must be bins from non-flammable material only in the rooms and common rooms. No special rules for other furniture and furnishings.
- Latvia: n/a
- Lithuania: n/a
- Norway: common sense
- Spain: no special rules
- UK: Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988. If you provide self-catering accommodation that contains upholstered furniture the legislation applies to you. All furniture (new and second hand) in your self-catering accommodation that is covered by the regulations must comply with certain safety tests.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Keep bio fuel appliances in good condition and always have them cleaned by professionals. Use proper tools to handle bio fuel appliances and a metal bucket in order to remove ashes safely.

8.2.4. Fire Safety and the Use of Facilities (smoking, etc)

Generic Information

In-house rules regarding smoking should be clearly exposed. Smoking sites should be designated and ash-trays provided.

Criteria

- ⇒ *Smoking sites are designated*
- ⇒ *Ash-trays are provided*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: It is forbidden to smoke in public places. Most of the providers put non-smoking signs in the rooms also.
- Latvia: Smoking is usually set in specifically designated places in rural accommodation, or not allowed at all, which is highlighted by no-smoking signs in the accommodation. In public buildings incl. bigger guesthouses, smoking is not allowed.
- Lithuania: n/a
- Norway: up to each provider, policy is provided in the house
- Spain: smoking is not allowed in any public areas of businesses, but can be allowed in the private (hotel/rural house) rooms. No regulation for holiday rental and non-business.
- UK: Smoking is banned in enclosed public spaces and places of work, with some exceptions. There is a legal duty for you to display no-smoking signs in a prominent position at each entrance to smoke free premises. There is a legal duty on any person who owns or manages smoke-free premises to ensure that guests, visitors and staff do not smoke on the premises.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Do not smoke or produce sparks near inflammable products or machinery that works with fuel.
- ✓ Clean immediately any fuel or chemical spill. Do not smoke meanwhile.

8.3. Water and Sewage Systems

Generic Information

In addition to building regulation requirements, it is checked that water supply and sewage systems in accommodations are adequate to accommodation capacity (number of guests, especially in case of group events).



Criteria

⇒ *Water supply and sewage system capacity adequate to guest accommodation capacity*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Maximum 6 guests can share 1 shower and WC facility.
- Latvia: it is a minimum requirement to provide 1 shower and WC facility with sufficient water supply for shared use by not more than 8 guests.
- Lithuania: minimum requirement 1 shower and WC facility for 10 people.
- Norway: n/a as there are no qualification systems, but is provided with the enough capacity for the amounts of guests.
- Spain: see above – has to be accredited during the legal registration. No further specifications are needed because the legal requirements are already very strict.
- UK: The Private Water Supplies Regulations 2009 came into force on the 1st January 2010 and will apply to all private water supplies intended for human consumption. This means they apply to water for domestic purposes (e.g. drinking, cooking, food preparation and washing) and water used for food production purposes. These supplies include water from a well, borehole or spring, which is supplied from someone other than a Water Undertaker or Licensed water supplier, or;

The Private Water Supplies Regulations 2009 can be found on the OPSI web site:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2009/uksi_20093101_en_1

VisitEngland and other assessment organisations outline minimum criteria for persons per bathroom / WC per level of Star Rating awarded.

8.4. Electrical Power

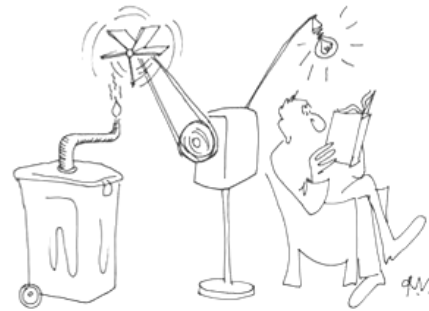
8.4.1. Safety of Electrical Installations

Generic Information

In addition to building regulation requirements, rural tourism quality inspections check electric installations like wiring, sockets, etc.

Criteria

⇒ *Electrical installations comply with building regulations and in good maintenance condition*



Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There is no specific regulation. The wiring and electric installations are based on the regulations for buildings. Not specific regulation for rural tourism accommodation.
- Latvia: the quality of the electric installation, wires, contacts, equipment etc. has to be checked by the quality inspector.
- Lithuania: wiring resistance measurements has to be done.
- Norway: n/a
- Spain: electricity supply is only connected if the installation in the building is certified as safe and correct by an authorized installer. No further checks are made after that.
- UK: There is no specific requirement for the regular routine testing of system, nevertheless, you do have a duty of maintenance under the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.

8.4.2. Safety of Electrical Equipment

Generic Information

Rural tourism quality inspections check if electrical equipment and appliances are in working order and good technical condition.

Criteria

⇒ *Electrical equipment in working order and good technical condition.*



Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: n/a
- Latvia: the quality of the electrical equipment has to be checked, often the instructions of use are provided by the owner.
- Lithuania: n/a
- Norway: n/a
- Spain: normal up-to-date technical rules apply
- UK: The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994 require, among other things, that all electrical equipment supplied 'in the course of business' is safe. This applies equally to new and second hand equipment.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Inspect cords, plugs and sockets before doing your task and discard damaged equipment. For instance, if the insulation system is broken.
- ✓ Do not leave loose cords on walking surfaces.
- ✓ If you notice something unusual, disconnect the appliance immediately. For instance, if it generates a smell or if you receive a small electric shock.
- ✓ If the appliance does not work properly, unplug it from the power source, mark the appliance as out of order and write down the problem in order to solve it later.
- ✓ Do not use sprays or liquids to clean plugged electric appliances. Use damp clothes instead to clean appliances like heaters, televisions or lamps. Unplugging them is not necessary.
- ✓ Do not use a wet mop over connections.
- ✓ Keep power cords away from heat, water, oil and any place that may damage the insulation.
- ✓ Always use tools with CE marking.
- ✓ Use proper standard plugs.
- ✓ If you have clients abroad, you should have standard UK, US and Schuko DIN adapters in order to plug electric appliances safely.

- ✓ Do not handle or repair electrical panel on your own. The insurance policy may not cover possible damages if they were not caused by a professional electrician.
- ✓ Do not handle electric appliances with wet hands or feet.
- ✓ Make sure that the appliances are unplugged before cleaning.
- ✓ Do not pull the cord but the plug in order to disconnect electric appliances.
- ✓ Do not remove electric protection systems or grounding on your own.
- ✓ Prevent electrical overloads.
- ✓ Do not use multiple sockets and do not connect cords.

8.5. Gas and Ventilation

Generic Information

In addition to building regulation requirements, rural tourism quality inspections check if adequate ventilation is ensured (e.g., opening windows, ventilators, air conditioning).

Criteria

⇒ *Gas and ventilation equipment in working order and good technical condition.*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There is yearly quality check from inspectors for the gas installation. In every accommodation has to be ventilation in bathrooms and WC. There are no specific regulations for air-conditions in the rooms.
- Latvia: The quality inspectors check, if it is sufficient ventilation. If there is no bad smells, and windows can be opened.
- Lithuania: n/a
- Norway: n/a
- Spain: technical legal requirements, they must be accredited by authorized technician before gas supply is possible. Revision required every ? years.
- UK: Operators of accommodation premises have a responsibility for ensuring that gas appliances and flues in the premises are safely maintained and checked. All safety checks must be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Have every gas system inspected regularly. Check that there is not any point under pressure and do not cover the grilles.
- ✓ Store gas cylinders in an airy place and away from heat.
- ✓ Use an appropriate cart in order to carry gas cylinders. Turn the base to move them.
- ✓ If you think there is a gas leak, do not turn on switches, lighters or matches. Close the gas taps and air the area.

8.6. Protection Against Noise

Generic Information

Rural tourism quality schemes require adequate sound insulation in guest rooms to prevent disturbances. Wall and insulation materials are covered by building regulations.

Criteria

⇒ *Wall and insulation materials comply with building regulations.*



Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: n/a
- Latvia: it is important is to check the noise level between the guesthouse rooms. As well as if the accommodation is near the big roads, airports, railways, farms etc. – this should be informed for the customer knowledge in the marketing materials/texts.
- Lithuania: required by hygiene norm to do the noise level measurement
- Norway: n/a
- Spain: no special rules; regional RT regulations normally establish a minimum distance from major roads
- UK: Properties built with planning consent will have noise pollution taken into consideration, however the owner should consider outside influences such as roads. Owners should regularly sleep in all of their rooms / cottages to ensure that unexpected noise from pumps or boilers are identified and dealt with.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Choose the appropriate equipment taking into account the noise level it produces.
- ✓ Keep the equipment in good condition.
- ✓ Control noise sources.
- ✓ Reduce noise exposure.
- ✓ Go to the doctor regularly to check your auditory system.
- ✓ Use PPE: ear plugs, helmet, etc.
- ✓ Always use equipment with CE marking.

8.7. Client Safety at a RT Facility

Client safety in rural tourism accommodations includes a number of aspects:

8.7.1. Housekeeping Procedures

Generic Information

Cleaning procedures should ensure at least minimum level of hygiene. Cleaning procedures in facilities like saunas, kitchens are subject to inspections from food and hygiene authorities. Overall cleanliness levels are checked by rural tourism quality inspections.

Criteria

⇒ *Rooms are clean and tidy*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There are regulations for the size, equipment of common rooms and mainly for kitchens. After having a license the quality is checked by quality inspectors – mainly after signal for problem from a guest or other visitor.
- Latvia: Cleanliness is checked by the quality inspectors.
- Lithuania: Hygiene norm HN:118
- Norway: Nova sol provides with the cleaning checklist - checklist of cleaning [https://secure.novasol.com/web/pictures.nsf/EBE1AF75D8095775C125700B003C3840/\\$file/sjekklisterengjoering.pdf](https://secure.novasol.com/web/pictures.nsf/EBE1AF75D8095775C125700B003C3840/$file/sjekklisterengjoering.pdf)
- Spain: no specific rules
- UK: Local authorities are responsible for enforcing food hygiene laws and authorised enforcement officers have the right to enter and inspect food premises (registered or not) at any reasonable time without having to make an appointment – they will usually come without notice.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Check the security labels and always follow the instructions for storage and handling, hazard and risk prevention and use of PPE.
- ✓ Store chemicals in an airy and safe place.
- ✓ Reduce toxic chemical use when possible.
- ✓ Keep containers tightly closed and store them away from heat and direct sun.
- ✓ Do not transfer chemicals to other containers.
- ✓ Do not mix chemicals.
- ✓ Wash your hands after using chemicals.
- ✓ In the event of a chemical spill on some part of your body, introduce it in a container with cold water and never place it under a water stream.
- ✓ In the event of a chemical ingestion, drink as much water as possible.
- ✓ Keep your local Poison Control Centre telephone number on hand.

8.7.2. Allergens

Generic Information

Though this is not really controlled by regulations and quality schemes, rural tourism providers must be aware of a number of allergenic factors and take precautions (food, home pets, dust, pollen, mould)

Criteria

⇒ *You are aware of allergenic factors and have taken precautions to reduce the risks*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: N/A
- Latvia: For the Green certificate accommodation is checked the allergens, materials etc. But for all others there are warnings by the inspectors to avoid it as far as possible.
- Lithuania: n/a
- Norway: There are problems with pets, where guests can suffer from allergies because previous guests have had their pets with them. Many owners do not allow pets.
- Spain: no specific rules
- UK: Under the Food Safety Act 1990 and the General Food Law Regulations 178/2002 you are responsible for ensuring that the food that customers eat is safe and the quality is what they expect. This means you should understand exactly what food can cause problems.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Use clean and individual clothes.
- ✓ Wash your hands using soap, warm water and a nail brush. Rinse and dry your hands thoroughly. It is advisable to keep your nails short and clean and to use paper towels when drying them.
- ✓ Use disposable gloves and a cap or a hairnet in order to prevent hair from contaminating the food.
- ✓ Do not smoke, eat or chew gum.
- ✓ Always wash your hands:
 - Before doing your task and after taking a break.
 - After handling food.
 - After coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- ✓ Always cover wounds.
- ✓ If you suffer from a condition that may involve hygiene risks, inform the manager.
- ✓ Prevent cross-contamination.
- ✓ Do not store food between 10 °C and 60 °C.

- ✓ Use clean tools to prepare and serve food. Wash them thoroughly with diluted detergent and warm water to prevent any food from getting stuck on the tools.
- ✓ Always cook the food over 70 °C.
- ✓ Use potable water to cook, prepare ice cubes, clean, etc.
- ✓ Make sure that the cooling temperature is below 4 °C and that the freezing temperature is below -18 °C.
- ✓ Store food tidily and away from external factors. Do not place it on the floor or in contact with walls.
- ✓ Defrost food in the cooling chamber.
- ✓ Dispose waste in containers made of waterproof easy-to-clean materials and with an automatic hermetic shut-off.
- ✓ Clean and disinfect floorings, tools, waste containers, work areas, etc. on a daily basis.
- ✓ Use appropriate containers and closed vehicles to carry food.
- ✓ Use clean vehicles with flat insulated or cooling surfaces to carry the food that may be stored at low temperatures.

8.7.3. Pets

Generic Information

Home pets should be kept away from guest areas mainly because of allergenic factor or possible aggressive behaviour. The same is true regarding guest pets. Some hosts practice no-pets policy for this reason. It is required that policy regarding guest pets is clearly stated in information prior to booking.



Criteria

⇒ *You have set and exposed in-house policies regarding pets*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: The number of accommodations in Bulgaria that have the practice of welcoming pets is not large. Some accommodations prepare separate constructions like big cages for pets.
- Latvia: LC has sign/pictogram, which shows that owner does not accept pets. But problem is that the customer does not always inform the owners about the pets.
- Lithuania: RT providers state their policy regarding pets
- Norway: see 8.7.2., and important is to inform the guests about the rules of pets.
- Spain: policy to be set up by the service provider
- UK: Policy to be set up by the service provider. Even if you do not allow guests to bring their pets to your premises, you must allow people who need to use assistance dogs (such as visually impaired people) to be accompanied by their dogs.

8.7.4. First Aid Requirements

Generic Information

Rural tourism quality schemes require that first aid kit accessible to guests, phone numbers of emergency services.

Criteria

- ⇒ *First aid kit accessible to guests*
- ⇒ *Emergency phone numbers exposed*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There must be first-aid-kit in the accommodation on well visible and reachable place in the common rooms.
- Latvia: advisable to have a first aid kit in each accommodation.
- Lithuania: compulsory to have
- Norway: n/a
- Spain: compulsory first-aid kit that has to be complete and with updated content
- UK: Employers must provide first-aid equipment and facilities appropriate to the circumstances in the workplace. The minimum would be a suitably stocked first-aid box and a person appointed to take charge of first-aid arrangements. You have no responsibility for administering first aid to guests or public, although you should be familiar with local medical facilities.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Keep your local Poison Control Centre telephone number on hand.

8.7.5. Slippery Floors

Generic Information

Care should be taken choosing floor materials. Where floors may be slippery, warning signs should be put up.

Criteria

⇒ *You have put up warning signs for slippery floor surfaces*



Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: If the floors are slippery the providers put signs by, it is not part of some regulations.
- Latvia: signs should be put also for outdoor terraces, and trails around the house (often from wood)
- Lithuania: n/a
- Norway: common sense.
- Spain: n/a
- UK: Common sense. Identify problem areas and prevent accidents happening. Effective solutions can be found to reduce risk.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Pay special attention to uneven and damaged floors and to blockages. Do not walk backwards.
- ✓ Recoat or replace walking surfaces with anti-slip flooring.
- ✓ Mark and try not to go up steps, overall if they are not very high.
- ✓ Adjust your stride to a pace that is suitable for the walking surface and the tasks you are doing.
- ✓ Do not carry bulky objects that block your field of vision.
- ✓ Attach carpets to the floor and do not fold the corners in order to prevent slips.
- ✓ Clean and dry immediately any spill, e.g. oil, water, waste, etc. Mark clearly wet areas. It is a good idea to attach railings in the area where the dishes are washed in order to prevent slips.
- ✓ Do not leave tools and equipment on walking surfaces.
- ✓ Use anti-slip fitting footwear.
- ✓ Dispose waste in appropriate containers.
- ✓ Do not leave cords, ropes, hoses, etc. on walking surfaces.
- ✓ Remove obstacles from the floor.
- ✓ Always use installed light sources that provide sufficient light for your tasks. If the area is not properly lit, install auxiliary sources and solve the problem as soon as possible.

8.7.6. Stairs

Generic Information

Stairs should meet the building standards regarding steepness, width and height of steps. Steps should have a handrail. Technical condition of stairs is checked in rural tourism quality schemes.

Criteria

⇒ *Stairs comply with building standards*



Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There are no specific regulations, general building regulations are applied.
- Latvia: ok as above
- Lithuania: n/a
- Norway: ok
- Spain: n/a but some criteria are indirectly included in general building legislation
- UK: Stairs must adhere to national planning legislation.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Use well-fitting footwear.
- ✓ Do not climb up a ladder if you suffer from vertigo or if you are under any treatment that may affect equilibrium.
- ✓ Do not run or jump on stairs. Adjust your stride and always grasp the handrail.
- ✓ Keep the stairs clean, dry and remove obstacles.

8.7.7. Lighting at the Door

Generic Information

Required by rural tourism quality schemes. Door lighting is required to find the entrance in the dark and to avoid accidents because of tripping and falling.

Criteria

⇒ *Door lighting installed and in working order*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There must be good lightening in front of the door of the accommodation.
- Latvia: OK
- Lithuania: lighting level in the rooms has to be measured
- Norway: ok
- Spain: n/a
- UK: Common sense.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Always use installed light sources that provide sufficient light for your tasks. If the area is not properly lit, install auxiliary sources and solve the problem as soon as possible.
- ✓ Use sufficient light if you work at night.
- ✓ Inspect the lightning. Clean and replace damaged lights.
- ✓ Adjust the screen brightness and contrast.
- ✓ Control reflections, contrasts and dazzles.

8.7.8. Low Doors

Generic Information

Door height is specified in building regulations while low doors are usually a problem in historic buildings. Warning signs shall be used.

Criteria

- ⇒ *Door height comply with building regulations*
- ⇒ *Warning signs used where door is low*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There must be warning signs if the door is lower.
- Latvia: OK, but are exceptions for traditional buildings, but usually signs are missing.
- Lithuania: n/a
- Norway: ok
- Spain: n/a in general, but may apply in some regions. Minimum room height is frequently established, but can be exempt in case of traditional buildings etc.
- UK: common sense, but low doors and ceilings beams are common in historic premises.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Corridors must be at least one metre wide and 2.5 metres high.
- ✓ Mark low corridors in old buildings and install an alarm device that warns before crashing.

9. Indoor Activities Safety & Security

Indoor activity facilities are located in the guest house premises (main building or outbuildings), and the owner is responsible for safety.

9.1. Saunas and Pools

Generic Information

Instructions and in-house rules regarding the use of equipment shall be exposed and signed by customers before use. Inspections from food and hygiene authorities.

Criteria

⇒ *Sauna and pool approved by relevant inspections, if applies*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There is some regulation but in most of the cases the contract is missing. Hygiene regulations for pools and saunas. The inspections are made by inspectors from hygiene and food authorities.
- Latvia: It is advised of the quality rules - the in-house norms for using sauna and pools. And also according to the hygiene norms for saunas and pools (depending of the size of the business and saunas/pools)
- Lithuania: separate hygiene norm for saunas and pools apply if the guest from outside use it (who do not stay on the premises)
- Norway: n/a
- Spain: n/a for saunas, pools see above
- UK: There are no specific regulations on swimming pools or gym safety, but you must manage these activities so they comply with health and safety legislation.

9.2. Spa

Generic Information

A certificate confirming relevant medical education of the servicing staff should be exposed in premises. Inspections from food and hygiene authorities.

Criteria

- ⇒ *Staff certificates exposed*
- ⇒ *SPA facilities approved by relevant inspection, if applies*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: The staff needs medical certificate.
- Latvia: there are 2 different SPA offers – medical, where requires the official certificate, and rural/traditional (herbal teas, honey masks, traditional sauna procedures), which is named as special offer and do not require the certificate or registration. In rural tourism can be offered both. SPA medical are checked by hygiene inspectors.
- Lithuania: SPA therapist has to have special qualification and medical education. Link to regulation: <http://tar.tic.lt/Default.aspx?id=2&item=results&aktoid=1A2C32C7-92E3-46A3-8DB2-339C216E5EB8>
- Norway: not many who provides spa, and particularly not rural tourism
- Spain: n/a
- UK: There are no specific regulations on swimming pools or gym safety, but you must manage these activities so they comply with health and safety legislation.

9.3. Fitness Rooms

Generic Information

Quality schemes check if the equipment is in working order and good technical condition.

Criteria

⇒ *Equipment in good working order and well maintained*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Technician/ responsible person that checks all the equipment for sport activities
- Latvia: OK
- Lithuania: separate hygiene norm if provided for the outside guests
- Norway: ok
- Spain: -
- UK: There are no specific regulations on swimming pools or gym safety, but you must manage these activities so they comply with health and safety legislation.

9.4. Other Areas for Tourists

Generic Information

Playrooms for kids, common lounges for clients, terrace etc. must be in the good condition and according to building rules (f.e. 90cm high fences of the terrace or trails), must be in a good shape and in safe working condition.

Criteria

⇒ *Areas or territories you offer for tourists are build according to the rules and well maintained*



Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: According to the building rules. Instruction signs need to be put, but often they are missing.
- Latvia: all the territories the owner mention in his marketing texts for tourists must be checked regularly, specially places like playgrounds (swings etc.) and should be safe.
- Lithuania: all areas used by tourist at the rural accommodation have to be in good order inspected and maintained regularly.
- Norway: outdoor play area, terraces must be in the good condition and according to building rules (f.e. 90cm high fences of the terrace or trails), must be in a good shape and in safe working condition (swings, trampoline, playgrounds etc.), then the risk is on tourists.
- Spain: no specific rules.
- UK: specific issues may be covered by the property insurance requirements or building regulations, but fundamentally common sense and courtesy on behalf of the owner and visitor applies.

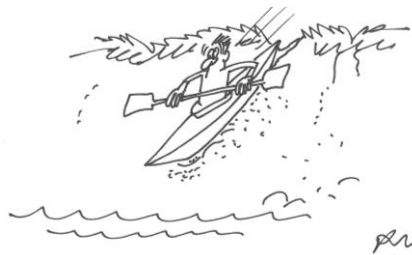
10. Outdoor Activities Safety & Security

Here only those services are discussed which are offered/provided by the owners of the tourism business in their facilities. For outdoor sports activities and use of equipment guests should sign a contract or safety instruction. Some activities may be offered only in the presence of a qualified and certified instructor. If services are outsourced – bought from a neighbouring establishment and packaged in a product with single price, the Package Travel Directive and its regulations apply.

10.1. Water Sports, Boating, Water Bicycles, Water Scooters

Generic Information

Rural tourism quality schemes may include safety criteria. In some countries special schemes to certify outdoor activities exist. Technical condition of equipment, availability of safety gear (life vests, helmets, first aid kits, etc.) is checked. In some countries qualifications / certification of instructors/guides is checked. Safety instructions are presented to customers and signed. In some cases contracts between service providers and customers are fixed setting responsibilities and duties of both parties.



Criteria

- ⇒ *All equipment in working order and well maintained*
- ⇒ *You have all required licences*
- ⇒ *Safety instructions provided for guests*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: There are rules for outdoor activities and have to be made only with professional guide/ instructors.
- Latvia: information on safety aspects in macies.celotajs.lv (active holidays), the owner or renter of any boat must inform clients of security requirements. It is recommended that a document on the safe use of the vessel be prepared, and ask the client to read the document and sign affirmation that he has done so before the client goes out on the water.
- Lithuania: n/a
- Norway: have rules and advices on outdoor activities within the internet <http://hakkspettboka.no/>; if the owner provide the boat or finishing – there are safety book for tourists how to behave in the sea in Norway: <http://www.sjofartsdir.no/PageFiles/12474/Fisketurisme%20Engelsk%20PDF%20uten%20passmerker.pdf>, including how to equip the boat.
- Spain: no water sports related with accommodation, as there are no relevant lakes or rivers for it. In case of independent professional sports installations, they have their specific legal regulations.
- UK: all activities in this category would need to apply with the relevant insurance scheme requirements and those of the national health and safety legislation.

10.2. Horseback Riding

Generic Information

In some countries there are no specific safety and security rules regarding the horseback riding offer for tourists. In other countries outdoor activity schemes may apply. Where no specific rules are set, rural tourism quality schemes may check basic requirements like technical and visual condition of facilities and equipment, performance of instructors, availability and exposure of safety instructions, etc.

Criteria

- ⇒ *All equipment in working order and well maintained*
- ⇒ *You have all required licences*
- ⇒ *Safety instructions provided for guests*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: No specific regulations
- Latvia: There are safety requirements which must be strictly observed at any event or activity which involves horses: <http://www.zirgi.lv/eng/essential.html>
- Lithuania: n/a
- Norway: <http://hakkspettboka.no/> and separate articles – on advise how to equip the horses for tourists <http://www.hest.no/artikkel.html?news.nid=2704#.UgUb2Zlqy1Y> . If you have more then 10 horses – there are low <http://www.lovdato.no/ltavd1/filer/sf-20050602-0505.html> and you have to register.
- Spain: where offered, it is always run as professional riding stable and therefore, subject to tourism legislation on active tourism. This includes obligatory insurance, equipment rules, and a certified professional monitor (analog valid for any other organized sports).
- UK: all activities in this category would need to apply with the relevant insurance scheme requirements and those of the national health and safety legislation.

10.3. Nature Trails

Generic Information

Safety requirements may be set by quality schemes and include requirements like technical condition of trail (walking surface, bridges, steps, etc.), information (directions, warnings if relevant, information about objects in a trail, etc., behaviour codes, etc.).

Criteria

⇒ *Infrastructure in working order and well maintained*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: n/a
- Latvia: no common regulations, there are advices for building, maintenance, environmental protection and human safety given by Lauku Celotajs:
(http://www.celotajs.lv/cont/wrth/greenadvice/greenadvice_hiking_en.html?lang=en)
If the structures offered by owner, should be checked and maintained.
- Lithuania: n/a
- Norway: <http://hakkespettboka.no/>. Gjensidige insurance company now is working on common European system on grading system of trails (easy, medium, difficult), including all the info.
- Spain: n/a, trails are public rights of way without guarantee of maintenance as a rule. In restricted nature areas (nature parks etc) access is only allowed with a guided tour, in this case the tour guide or his company are liable.
- UK: In the UK there is an extensive network of public paths, however walking across private land is prohibited. Walks on private land should be maintained by the owner or clear indication that the walker is doing so at their own risk.

10.4. Bicycles

Generic Information

Outdoor activity schemes may apply or safety criteria in rural tourism quality schemes. Requirements depend on the services offered. If guest house owners provide some bicycles for short rides in the local vicinity, no specific requirements usually apply. If cycling routes are offered and bicycles are rented, the service may be subject to checks under outdoor quality schemes. Key safety requirements refer to technical condition of equipment and accessories, route information, extra services, if provided (e.g., luggage transfers, urgent repairs), skills of instructors/guides, safety instructions and contracts with customers.



Criteria

- ⇒ *All equipment in working order and well maintained*
- ⇒ *Safety instructions provided for guests*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: No specific requirements
- Latvia: There is a Road Traffic law in Latvia which determines safety criteria <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=45467> Latvia's traffic laws say that one must be 12 years old before one can ride a bike without the presence of an adult, and no one can ride a bike when he or she is drunk. If the owner is renting out bikes, they should be in good order, equipped and service available.
- Lithuania: n/a
- Norway: <http://hakkespettboka.no/>
- Spain: for organized bicycle trips, see analog to above "horse riding". The simple fact to have bicycles available for use of clients is not considered "active tourism", in this case normal obligations apply to provide the bikes in good functioning order.
- UK: all activities in this category would need to apply with the relevant insurance scheme requirements and those of the national health and safety legislation.

10.5. Swimming

Generic Information

If guest house owners provide outdoor swimming facilities in their private territory and waters, key safety and security issues may be: cleanliness of water (any proof of that), swimming conditions (e.g., steepness of the riverbed, pond or lake, depth of water, strong currents, shifting sand, etc.), information and warning signs for guests, life saving equipment, instructions to guests and signature for responsibilities.



Criteria

- ⇒ *Infrastructure in working order and well maintained*
- ⇒ *Safety instructions provided for guests*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Safety and security regulations. Information and warning signs and someone from the team of the quest house that can swim and give 1st aid. A lifeguard and medical support are required if the swimming pool is big or for public use (not only for the guests).
- Latvia: If an individual owner establishes a public swimming area, there are certain rules defined in Cabinet of Ministers Regulations which must be followed for safety and hygiene <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=66885>.
- Lithuania: if the accommodation is by natural water (lake and river) a laboratory water test has to be done twice a year. If not, it has to be clearly stated that swimming is restricted
- Norway: Each Kommuna provides tests for public swimming places. If it is on private territory – owner is responsible to inform.
- Spain: natural lakes are almost non-existent in Spain, artificial lakes for drinking water supply vary very much in their level, especially during summer months, and are not used for bathing very often. Regarding pools, see above
- UK: The law about swimming outdoors is unclear in England and Wales.

Here are some useful facts:

- It's legal to swim in any 'navigable' waters, which means waters that are open to boats. If you swim in them, then wear a brightly coloured hat and look out for boats.
- If you walk across private land, you will be trespassing, so always find ways into and out of the water by public paths.
- The land owners either side of the river officially own half the riverbed. They do not own the water.
- The Environment Agency, Department of Health and local councils are beginning to recognise the health benefits of allowing greater access to inland water, and the tourist income that can come from it.

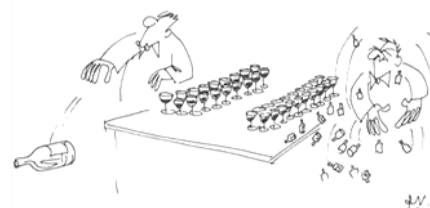
11. Food and Drink Safety & Security

In most countries there are strict regulations regarding food preparation, storage and selling. Rural tourism services that operate as full businesses are treated the same way as catering / restaurant businesses. When they operate below this legal threshold (ie. as non-business activity), provision of food and drink may be possible with strict limitations.

11.1. Legislative and General Requirements

Generic Information

Each country has a national legislation on food and hygiene, including in rural tourism properties. A frequent situation is that providing food without a specific restaurant licence is allowed only in private home accommodation (B&B), and only to clients overnighiting there.



Criteria

⇒ *You have registered your business with the Food & Hygiene authorities, if relevant*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Guesthouses can provide home-made food to their guests that are overnighiting there. They are controlled by food and hygiene authorities but don't need license.
- Latvia: If you provide any food – you have to be registered Food & Hygiene authority. But for Rural tourism establishments there are special guidelines approved by the Food & Hygiene <http://macies.celotajs.lv/course/view.php?id=24>, which defines the norms and explain the definitions should be used by the owners.
- Lithuania: if catering provided it has to register as a food processing establishment.
- Norway: n/a
- Spain: a Food Manipulating Certificate ("Carnet de Manipulador de Alimentos") must be obtained if any kind of food incl. breakfast is offered to clients. Home-made meals are not frequent but can be provided without an extra license to hosted clients in most regions; some however in this case require special industrial kitchen equipment and sanitary conditions
- UK: If you provide food to guests you must comply with the provisions of food safety and hygiene legislation. Registration with the local authority is required for accommodation businesses that serve or supply food or drink of any description, including bed and breakfasts.

11.2. Food Handling Monitoring and Hygiene Preparing Food

Generic Information

A food handling qualification is usually required even if a service is not full business. In businesses, monitoring is checked by inspections verifying traceability of food products (register), storage and handling conditions (adequate temperatures, storage space, etc.) – this may be frequently difficult to comply with for RT services.



Criteria

⇒ *You have approval / permit from Food & Hygiene inspections, if relevant*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: If the accommodation is a family hotel it needs to register its restaurant, but if it's guesthouse or guestrooms there is no need to register and can prepare food only for its registered guests. Hygiene and food inspectors regulate the conditions in kitchens and dining rooms.
- Latvia: For Rural tourism establishments there are special guidelines approved by the Food & Hygiene <http://macies.celotajs.lv/course/view.php?id=24> , which defines the norms and explain the definitions that should be used by the owners.
- Lithuania: Guides to good practice for Hygiene in RT
- Norway: have specific easier norms for small scale meat, cheese etc. food producers. But not for small RT establishments.
- Spain: see above – no further specific rules are in place for RT. Generic Information regulation as for hotel kitchens may apply but if really implemented, are usually unviable (> policy of “blind eye”).
- UK: If you provide food to guests you must comply with the provisions of food safety and hygiene legislation. The word ‘food’ is defined to include drink. You should not provide food that is unsafe (i.e. harmful to health) or unfit for human consumption. You must implement a food safety management system to ensure that the food you provide is safe to eat. These procedures must be based on the HACCP principles. You must not keep foods at a temperature that might make them unsafe to eat. There are specific temperatures that different hot or chilled foods must be kept at. Registration with the local authority is required for accommodation businesses that serve or supply food or drink of any description, including bed and breakfasts.

Preventive measures

- ✓ Use clean and individual clothes.
- ✓ Wash your hands using soap, warm water and a nail brush. Rinse and dry your hands thoroughly. It is advisable to keep your nails short and clean and to use paper towels when drying them.
- ✓ Use disposable gloves and a cap or a hairnet in order to prevent hair from contaminating the food.

- ✓ Do not smoke, eat or chew gum.
- ✓ Always wash your hands:
 - Before doing your task and after taking a break.
 - After handling food.
 - After coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- ✓ Always cover wounds.
- ✓ If you suffer from a condition that may involve hygiene risks, inform the manager.
- ✓ Prevent cross-contamination.
- ✓ Do not store food between 10 °C and 60 °C.
- ✓ Use clean tools to prepare and serve food. Wash them thoroughly with diluted detergent and warm water to prevent any food from getting stuck on the tools.
- ✓ Always cook the food over 70 °C.
- ✓ Use potable water to cook, prepare ice cubes, clean, etc.
- ✓ Make sure that the cooling temperature is below 4 °C and that the freezing temperature is below -18 °C.
- ✓ Store food tidily and away from external factors. Do not place it on the floor or in contact with walls.
- ✓ Defrost food in the cooling chamber.
- ✓ Dispose waste in containers made of waterproof easy-to-clean materials and with an automatic hermetic shut-off.
- ✓ Clean and disinfect floorings, tools, waste containers, work areas, etc. on a daily basis.
- ✓ Use appropriate containers and closed vehicles to carry food.
- ✓ Use clean vehicles with flat insulated or cooling surfaces to carry the food that may be stored at low temperatures.

11.3. Producing and Selling Food Products

Generic Information

If rural tourism establishments sell food produce, regulations apply regarding home-made products (own production or from neighbouring farms) and wild products (e.g., herb teas, berries, mushrooms gathered in nature areas). Home-made alcohol is subject to special licensing.



Criteria

⇒ *You have all required licences/permits to produce/sell food*

Country Specific Information

- Bulgaria: Home-made alcohol needs special license for sell. Other food produce at home is only for private use, not for sale.
- Latvia: Home made product (mājražotāji) rules:
http://www.pvd.gov.lv/lat/augi_izvlne/iedzvotjiem_un_uzmjiem/informcija_uzmjiem/prtikas_uzraudzba/partikas_produktu_razosana_maj has been approved.

Home-made beverages can be offered as part of production tasting / excursion. They can be sold if the owner has a licence. Legislation amendment in 2011 makes a distinction between home production and industrial production depending on production volume (litres of absolute alcohol).

- The Alcoholic Beverages Law <http://www.likumi.lv/doc.php?id=88009>
 - The Association of Vine-growers and Wine-makers <http://www.vindaris.lv/>
- Lithuania: only if registered at Food veterinary authority
- Norway: Producer / seller has to register in Food & Hygiene agency, no alcohol sales are possible.
- Spain: no clear picture – home made food can be included in meals, but must not be offered for commercial sale.
- UK: If you sell food to you must comply with the provisions of food safety and hygiene legislation.



~ Safety never takes a holiday ~