

**Project “Practise based training tool for safety and security in
European rural tourism”**

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Handbook

**“Your rural tourism business –
run it smart”**



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Safety and Security handbook

Contents

Contents.....	2
1 General requirements related to S&S	4
1.1 Licenses, permits and consents to run the service	4
1.1.1 General requirements for buildings	4
1.1.2 Fire safety	5
1.1.3 Water supply and sewage systems	5
1.1.4 Water quality	5
1.1.5 Waste and garbage collection	6
1.1.6 Gas and ventilation.....	7
1.1.7 Licences to run the tourism service	8
1.1.8 Road signs	9
1.1.9 TV and copyright licensing.....	10
1.1.10 Sauna licence.....	11
1.1.11 Pool licence	11
1.1.12 Alcohol licence	12
1.1.13 Entertainment licence	12
2 Business & Taxes.....	13
2.1 Legal forms of business	13
2.2 Tax regulations	14
3 Insurance	15
4 Statistics.....	16
5 Marketing and publicity.....	17
5.1 Unfair trading practices	17
5.2 Complaint sheets	18
5.3 Direct marketing.....	19
5.4 Holiday packages.....	20
5.5 Signposting	21
6 Employed staff.....	22
6.1 Working hours.....	23
6.2 Minimum wage.....	23
6.3 Discrimination	24
6.4 Time off for parents.....	25
6.5 Safety at workplace.....	26
6.6 Social security.....	27
7 Clients	28
7.1 Booking.....	28
7.2 Registration and data protection	29
7.3 Pricing and charging	30
7.4 Cancellations and no-shows	31
7.5 Accepting guests (non-discrimination, children)	32
7.6 Client behaviour rules and contracts	33
7.7 Guests with disabilities.....	33

7.8	Luggage and belongings.....	34
7.9	Childcare.....	35
8	Accommodation Safety & Security.....	36
8.1	General accommodation requirements	36
8.2	Fire safety	37
8.2.1	Fire safety for buildings	37
8.2.2	Fire safety for heating systems and fireplaces	38
8.2.3	Fire safety of furniture and furnishings.....	39
8.2.4	Fire safety and the use of facilities (smoking, etc).....	40
8.3	Water and sewage systems	41
8.4	Electrical power.....	42
8.4.1	Safety of electrical installations.....	42
8.4.2	Safety of electrical equipment.....	43
8.5	Gas and ventilation	44
8.6	Protection against noise.....	45
8.7	Client safety at RT facility.....	46
8.7.1	Housekeeping procedures.....	46
8.7.2	Allergens	47
8.7.3	Pets	48
8.7.4	First aid requirements.....	49
8.7.5	Slippery floors.....	50
8.7.6	Stairs	51
8.7.7	Lighting at the door.....	52
8.7.8	Low doors.....	53
9	Indoor Activities S&S	54
9.1	Saunas and pools	54
9.2	Spa	55
9.3	Fitness rooms	56
9.4	Other areas for tourists	57
10	Outdoor Activities S&S	58
10.1	Water sports boating, water bicycles, water scooters... ..	58
10.2	Horseback riding	59
10.3	Nature trails	60
10.4	Bicycles.....	61
10.5	Swimming	62
11	Food and Drink S&S.....	63
11.1	Legislative and general requirements.....	63
11.2	Food handling monitoring and hygiene preparing food.....	63
11.3	Producing and selling food products	64

1 General requirements related to S&S

1.1 Licenses, permits and consents to run the service

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

- Small accommodation (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 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 solved very differently across Europe. For more information, check your country or regional legislation.

Guest houses with 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 buildings.

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*

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*

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 in good maintenance condition*

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*

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*

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. Operators of accommodation premises are responsible for ensuring that gas appliances and flues in the premises are safely maintained and checked. 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.

Criteria

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

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.

1.1.7 Licences to run the 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*

1.1.8 Road signs

Generic information

Regulations regarding road signs 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*

1.1.9 TV and copyright licensing

Generic information

If a 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.*

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 applies*

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*

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.

Criteria

- You have the required licence or permit if applies*

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 event.*

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, 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*

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*

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*

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*

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*

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*

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

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*

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.*

6 Employed 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*

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*

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*

6.3 Discrimination

Generic information

In some European countries legislation and its implementation covering discrimination issues is well 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*

6.4 Time off for parents

Generic information

Time off for parents legislation 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*

6.5 Safety at workplace

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*

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

7 Clients

7.1 Booking

Generic information

Rural tourism businesses should set procedures for booking:

- Answering inquiries.
- 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.*

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 en force.

Criteria

- You are aware of the requirements of Immigration services*

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.*

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 no-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.

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.

Criteria

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

7.5 Accepting guests (non-discrimination, children)

Generic information

Safety issues to be addressed include the ability to pick and choose guests. For instance, to refuse customers because of inadequate behaviour, under influence of drugs and/or alcohol, unwilling or unable to pay, 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.*

7.6 Client behaviour rules and contracts

Generic information

In risky zones, like saunas, pools, Jacuzzi, children 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.*

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.*

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.*

7.9 Childcare

Generic information

Accommodation facility providers are responsible for ensuring a safe environment for children, which includes playgrounds, farm environment, premises, waters 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).*

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 S&S 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 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*

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. Windows and appropriate doors and locking system are essential as well.

Criteria

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

Preventive measures:

- Store fuels and other inflammable objects far enough 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 greater 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*

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.

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 inflammable or are fire resistant.

Criteria

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

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*

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*

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*

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.*

Preventive measures

- Inspect cords, plugs and sockets 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.
- 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.*

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.*

Preventive measures

- Choose the appropriate equipment taking into account the noise level it produces.
- Control noise sources.
- Reduce noise exposure.

8.7 Client safety at 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*

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*

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*

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*

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*

Preventive measures

- Pay special attention to uneven and damaged floors and to blockages.
- Recoat or replace walking surfaces with anti-slip flooring.
- 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.
- Do not leave cords, ropes, hoses, etc. on walking surfaces.
- Remove obstacles from the floor.
- Always use installed light sources that provide sufficient light.

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*

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 time of the day and to avoid accidents because of tripping and falling.

Criteria

- Door lighting installed and in working order*

8.7.8 Low doors

Generic information

Door height is specified in building regulations while low doors is 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*

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 S&S

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*

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*

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*

9.4 Other areas for tourists

Generic information

Play rooms 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*

10 Outdoor Activities S&S

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 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*

10.2 Horseback riding

Generic information

In some countries there are no specific safety and security rules regarding 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*

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*

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 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*

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*

11 Food and Drink S&S

In most countries there are strict regulations regarding food preparation, storage and selling. Rural tourism services that operate as full business, 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 specific restaurant licence is allowed only in private home accommodation (B&B), and only to clients also overnighting there.

Criteria

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

11.2 Food handling monitoring and hygiene preparing food

Generic information

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*

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.
- 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*