



Valsts aģentūra „Latvijas Nacionālais akreditācijas birojs”

Strategy of the State Agency *Latvian National Accreditation Bureau* 2023-2029

According to Cabinet Regulation of 27 February 2018 No 111 "Regulation of State Agency *Latvian National Accreditation Bureau*", the *Latvian National Accreditation Bureau* (hereinafter - the Agency) is a direct administrative institution under the supervision of the Minister of Economy.

The purpose of the Agency's existence is:

to provide quality and reliable accreditation services for conformity assessment bodies

to ensure compliance with the requirements related to accreditation in the field of conformity assessment

to participate in the development of accreditation policy and its implementation

In accordance with the Law on Conformity Assessment, Regulation (EC) No. 765/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 setting out the requirements for accreditation and market surveillance relating to the marketing of products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No. 339/93 (Regulation 765/2008), as well as Cabinet Regulation No. 754 of 19 December 2023 "Rules for Assessment, Accreditation and Supervision of Conformity Assessment Bodies",

the Agency exercises the functions and tasks of a national accreditation body.

In accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 398 of 3 September 2002 "Requirements for the Quality of Laboratory Work and Inspection of Laboratories",

the Agency acts as the national good laboratory practice monitoring body in Latvia.

The Agency's Strategy has been developed in accordance with Cabinet Instruction No. 1 of 1 February 2022 "Procedure for Developing and Updating an Institution's Strategy and Evaluating Its Implementation" (hereinafter - Cabinet Instruction No. 1), which stipulates the scope of the content, publication and communication of the strategy for direct administration institutions, as well as the procedure for its development, updating and evaluation.

The Agency's Operations Strategy 2023-2029 is a medium-term policy planning document as a capacity development and management tool.

The period of the Agency's Strategy is aligned with the period of the Operations Strategy of the Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia (hereinafter - the Ministry of Economics), and the alignment between the Ministry of Economics and the Agency's Operations Strategy is ensured on the basis of key performance indicators and taking into account the results and continuity of the Agency's Operations Strategy 2020-2022.

Information on the progress in the implementation of the Agency's Operations Strategy 2023-2029 will be provided annually through the Agency's Public Report. The implementation of the Agency's Operations Strategy 2023-2029 will be assessed in 2029, with the results reported in the Agency's 2030 Public Report.

The Agency's operations strategies and public reports are published on the Agency's official website, and current information can be found on the Agency's social networks:

 www.latak.gov.lv

 <https://www.facebook.com/latvijasnacionalaisakreditacijasbirojs>

 <https://twitter.com/latak.gov.lv>

The Agency's Operations Strategy 2023-2029 aims to define the Agency's:

- Mission, vision and values, which are, inter alia, derived from the shared values of public administration;
- target groups, their interests and needs;
- main strategic political objectives;
- priorities on which the Agency's resources will be focused;
- objectives derived from the priorities which will ensure the development of the priorities concerned;
- results to be achieved or changes that will characterise the achievement of the objectives;
- key performance indicators that demonstrate the progress of the Agency's activities and describe the most important results to be achieved by the Agency;
- the Agency's available resources and their planned use, as well as an analysis of operational capacity and risks.

During the planning period, the Agency intends to organise its work considering the amount of available funding and the rational use of financial resources in accordance with the Agency's operational objectives.

In line with the priorities set out in the Operations Strategy, the Agency shall draw up an annual Work Plan setting out concrete measures to achieve the objectives set out in the Strategy.



PURPOSE OF ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is part of the overall system, which includes conformity assessment and market surveillance, established to assess and ensure compliance with applicable requirements.

The value of accreditation of conformity assessment bodies is technically competent, objective and internationally recognised evidence of the competence and capability of conformity assessment bodies to carry out conformity assessment activities.

Conformity assessment bodies shall carry out conformity assessment activities, including calibration, validation, verification, testing, certification and inspection, in both regulated and non-regulated areas, with a view to protecting the public interest.



ACCREDITATION

CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT

Evaluates whether a conformity assessment body (product, process, service, system, person or institution) conforms to specified requirements.

Attests that a conformity assessment body meets the specified requirements to carry out specific conformity assessment activities.

Assesses and ensures compliance with applicable requirements, considering public health, safety, environmental protection and other aspects of public interest protection.

MARKET SURVEILLANCE

Implements actions and measures to ensure compliance with the requirements laid down and to avoid endangering the public interest.

PURPOSE OF ACCREDITATION

To obtain assurance that a conformity assessment body is competent to carry out specific conformity assessment activities and thereby meet the requirements set out in

National, European and International Standards.

Requirements set out in the binding instruments of international accreditation organisations.

Regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia and the European Union.



MISSION, VISION AND VALUES OF THE AGENCY

To ensure the achievement of the accreditation objective, the Agency's activities are implemented in accordance with the identified mission, vision and values.

MISSION

To ensure a uniform, reliable and safe conformity assessment system for the public in the country,

which is recognized in the European Union and international markets

and promotes the exportability, competitiveness, productivity growth and inclusion of entrepreneurs in global value chains.

VISION

The Agency is a highly professional, reliable and modern public administration institution at both national and international level.

VALUES

Professionalism

A skilled, knowledgeable and experienced workforce, with a willingness to continuously learn new knowledge and the ability to manage and apply the knowledge and techniques acquired.

Impartiality and neutrality

Exercise of functions is carried out independently, substantively, equitably and fairly, subject to the management of a policy of non-influence and dissociation from any influence.

Excellence

Orientation towards continuous improvement of operations and management, mutual integration, and identification and implementation of best practices and innovations.

Trust

Mutual trust and respect at all levels, ensuring transparency in business processes and management activities.

Leadership

Continuous focus on results, efficiency and performance excellence.

Interoperability

Supportive collaboration in both internal and external business processes.

Loyalty

All decisions and actions are taken in the national and public interest.



Effectiveness of the Implementation of Accreditation



Delegation of functions

If the implementation of regulatory enactments is to be delegated to conformity assessment bodies.



Protection of public interest

To promote public confidence in goods and services.



Demonstrated competence

Where necessary, to certify conformity assessment bodies' compliance with international standards and regulations.



International recognition

To ensure mutual recognition of the results issued by conformity assessment bodies.



Economic Benefits



Exportability

Internationally recognised conformity assessment enables companies to adapt more successfully to the demands of the international business environment.



Competitiveness

By demonstrating internationally recognised conformity assessment results, businesses are able to integrate into global value chains and gain credibility with customers in international markets.



Productivity

By complying with international standards, companies ensure better quality management and control of business processes, products, and services, leading to higher customer satisfaction and business profitability.



Innovation

Sustainable and innovative business development is promoted through a process of continuous improvement in line with international standards.

STAKEHOLDERS, THEIR INTERESTS AND NEEDS

Stakeholders in the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies come from the public and non-governmental sectors, at national, European Union and international level.

Policy makers

Market surveillance
bodies

Conformity
assessment bodies

Latvian National
Accreditation Council

International
accreditation organisations

European Union institutions

National accreditation
bodies of other countries

Non-governmental
organisations

Standards
organisations

Consumers

Businesses

Universities

Stakeholders' main interests and needs:

- Assessment, accreditation and monitoring of conformity assessment bodies in the fields of inspection, management system certification, certification of persons, testing and calibration, medical laboratory testing, product certification, environmental verification, organisation, validation and verification of skills tests;
- Compliance with the requirements set out in the regulatory enactments of the Republic of Latvia and the European Union, national, European and international standards, as well as mutual recognition agreements with international accreditation organisations (European Cooperation for Accreditation, International Accreditation Forum, International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation) and the binding documents issued on their basis in the activities of the Agency and accredited conformity assessment bodies;
- Compliance with the requirements of non-influence, impartiality and confidentiality, as well as the requirements of the conflict of interest prevention and anti-corruption policy in the activities of the Agency;
- Exercise of highly professional functions and customer service;
- National and international credibility of the activities and results of accredited conformity assessment bodies;
- Ensuring that accreditation requirements are equally rigorous at national and international level;

- Evaluation of information (data, facts and evidence) provided by stakeholders on identified violations in the activities of accredited bodies, including areas of concern, through risk-based monitoring and competency assessment of accredited conformity assessment bodies;
- Participation in the development and harmonisation of national and European Union level legislation, policy planning documents and international accreditation organisation documents related to the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies;
- Cooperation and the performance of the functions set out in the regulatory enactments within the specified timeframe, scope and quality;
- International recognition of accreditation, promoting the exportability and competitiveness of businesses;
- Participation in meetings of international accreditation organisations as well as regional cooperation formats, expressing national interests and needs and ensuring the necessary exchange of experience;
- Participation in qualification training and qualifications organised by international accreditation organisations;
- Professional implementation of peer reviews of full members of international accreditation organisations;
- Implementation of cross-border accreditation procedures within the defined scope, timeframe and quality;
- Availability of information on decisions taken by the Agency and identified areas of concern, including regulatory gaps;
- Availability of information on the Agency's performance and priorities;
- Understanding of accreditation-related processes.





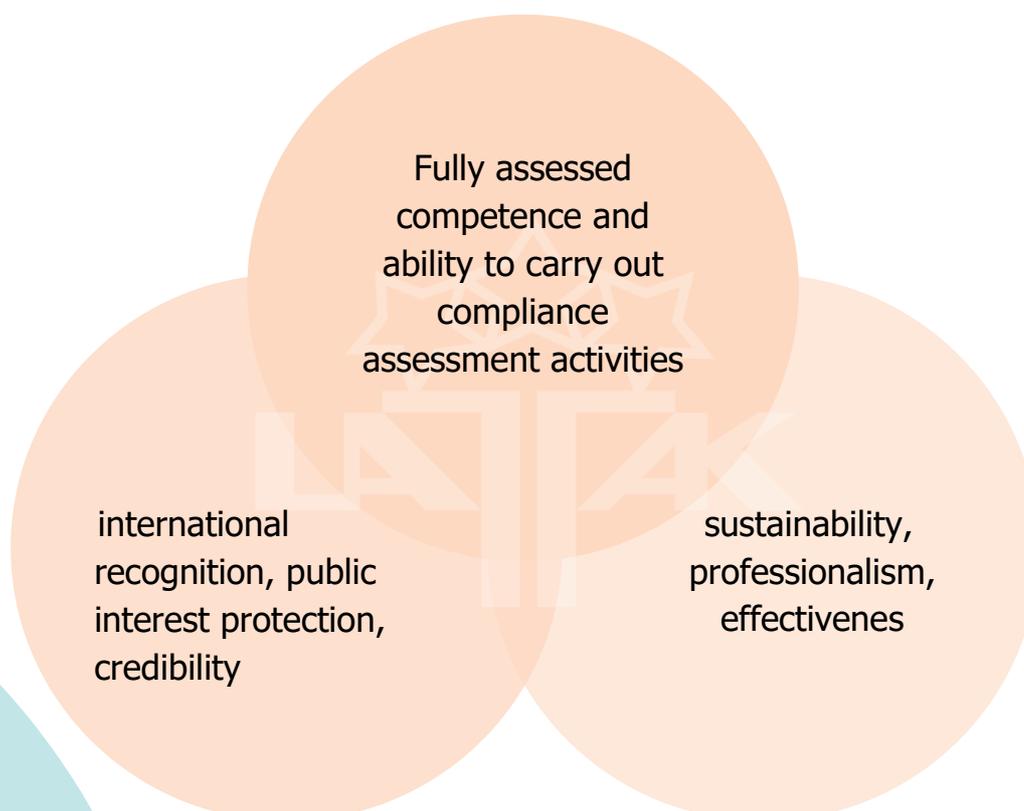
MAIN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE, PRIORITIES AND DELIVERABLES

Considering the nature of accreditation, as well as the Agency's functions and tasks, including the interests of stakeholders, as defined by the regulatory enactments, the Agency's main strategic objective is:

- To implement accreditation procedures that promote national and international confidence in accreditation and the activities of accredited conformity assessment bodies, thereby enhancing the competitiveness and exportability of business.

In the light of the Agency's main strategic objective, the Agency sets the following priorities on which it will focus its resources:

- To have full confidence in the competence and capability of a conformity assessment body to carry out conformity assessment activities in the field applied for and accredited;
- To manage and develop the Agency's business processes in a way that ensures international recognition of accreditation and the full protection and credibility of the public interest;
- To ensure the sustainability of the Agency's activities, high professionalism, and efficiency in customer service.

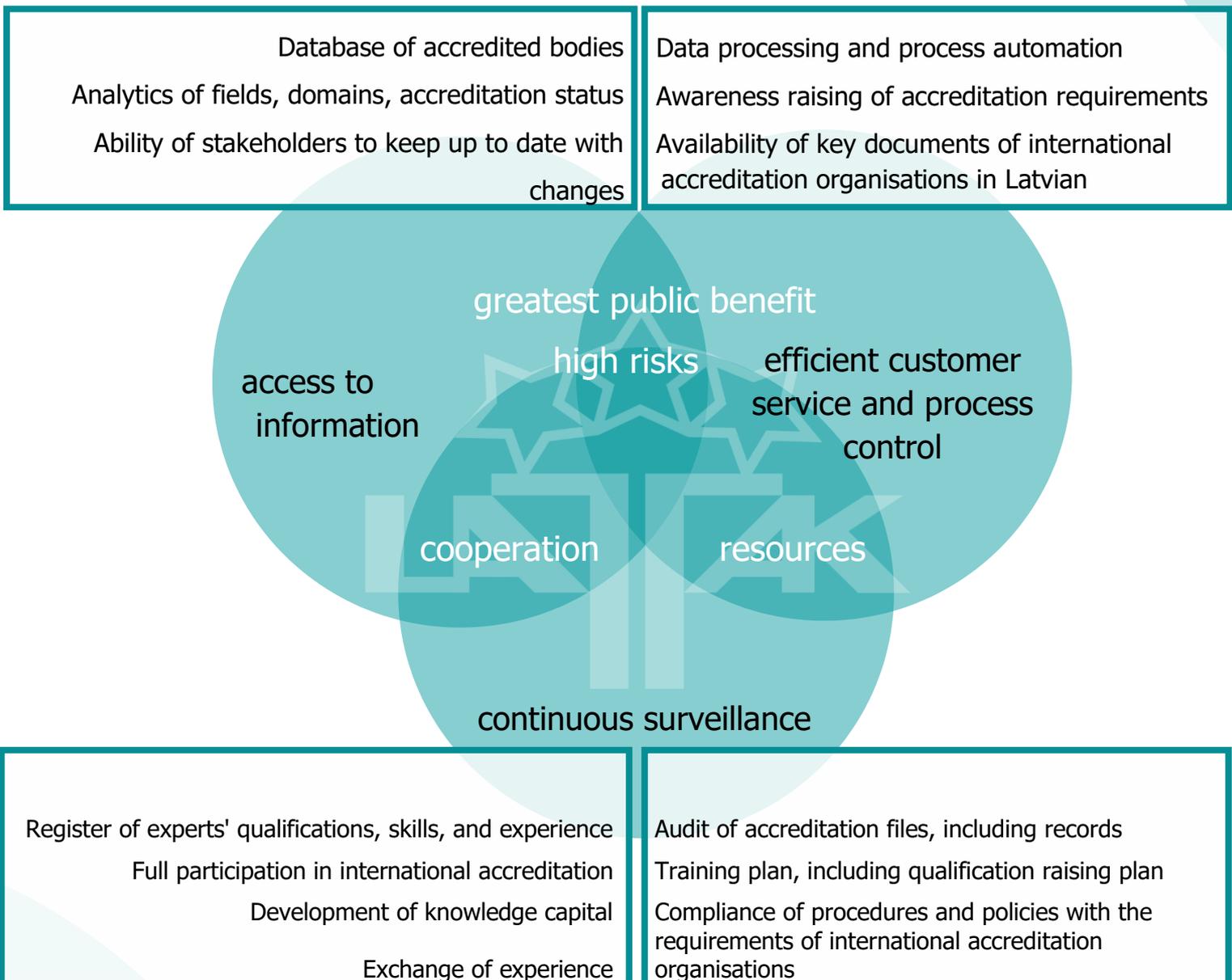


THE AGENCY'S MAIN PRIORITIES

In order to implement the development of the priorities, the Agency sets the following main objectives:

- To introduce an integrated, systematic and logical management of uncertainties (risks) into the overall management system of the Agency, focusing on the Agency's vision, mission and priorities, improving the Agency's operational performance while ensuring open interaction with stakeholders;
- To streamline the execution of accreditation procedures by focusing on areas and conformity assessment bodies whose activities pose the highest risks to public safety, health, including environmental and consumer protection, fully putting into practice a meaningful risk-based monitoring process that would allow for a deeper focus on problem areas, while reducing the resources consumed in accreditation monitoring in areas where risks remain low;
- To continuously assess and maintain the availability of resources for accreditation and monitoring, as well as for the development of new areas;
- To further develop cooperation with market surveillance authorities through rapid exchange of information as well as joint non-routine surveillance procedures;
- To ensure continuous auditing of accreditation files of conformity assessment bodies, ensuring completeness and traceability of information for full accreditation procedures, competence of the assessment team and compliance with deadlines;
- To ensure the continuous development, updating and compliance of Accreditation Procedures and Policies with the requirements of international accreditation organisations;
- To improve the efficient execution and control of the Agency's customer-oriented business processes through the development and implementation of modern data processing tools and automation;
- To ensure public availability of up-to-date information and the ability of stakeholders to promptly keep abreast of changes in information regarding accredited conformity assessment bodies, fields, domains and changes in accreditation status;
- To introduce a platform to promote understanding of the general requirements of accreditation;
- To provide translations of the most relevant documents adopted by international accreditation bodies in the field of conformity assessment into Latvian, inform clients about them and publish them on the Agency's official website;
- To ensure participation of the Agency's staff in meetings of international accreditation organisations as well as regional cooperation formats, expressing national interests and needs and ensuring the necessary exchange of experience;

- To ensure continuous monitoring of the competences and qualifications of the evaluation team;
- To maintain a sustainable system of cooperation and incentives to attract, retain and motivate a skilled workforce, including external experts;
- To introduce a platform for the development of professional knowledge capital and exchange of experience among lead assessors and experts, for continuous competency development and skills upgrading;
- To implement training for the development of the necessary competences and skills, taking into account the results of the quality assessment related to the implementation of the accreditation procedures as well as the performance of the employee, including the expert.



THE AGENCY'S MAIN OBJECTIVES

Changes to be achieved by the Agency, as measured by the achievement of objectives

The Agency is able to effectively manage the impact of risks (uncertainties) on the achievement of its objectives by continuously improving operational performance and creating and protecting the value of accreditation.

A process of assessment, accreditation and surveillance based on data, facts, evidence and risks is implemented.

The Agency has a sufficient number of highly qualified senior managers and experts to ensure the effective performance of its functions and tasks.

The activities related to the assessment, accreditation and monitoring process are implemented within the set deadlines without undue delays.

A cooperation and incentive system is in place to effectively attract, retain and motivate new and existing staff as well as external experts.

A needs-driven and effective process for further training and the development of competences and skills is in place, with outsourcing where necessary.

The Agency ensures effective management of accreditation files of conformity assessment bodies by continuously verifying the availability of information for full accreditation procedures, the competence of the assessment team and compliance with deadlines.

Modern data processing and automation tools are in place to ensure efficient execution of business processes.

Full participation in international accreditation organisations is ensured through meetings and exchanges, peer review activities, training and qualification raising.

The Agency's accreditation procedures and policies are based on the requirements set by international accreditation organisations, without additional administrative and bureaucratic burdens.

The Agency obtains a comprehensive quality assessment from its clients, the assessment team, and the accreditation committee.



The Agency's performance indicators demonstrating the Agency's progress and results

100% of the audited conformity assessment accreditation cases have been prepared by the Lead Assessor and a full risk-based assessment, accreditation and surveillance process has been implemented with the assessment team.

Deadlines have been met for 90% of the assessment, accreditation and surveillance processes implemented, including 100% of all the Agency's planned surveillance activities have been carried out within the calendar year.

Information (data, facts and evidence) provided by stakeholders on identified irregularities in the activities of accredited conformity assessment bodies has been assessed 100% within the framework of a planned or non-routine surveillance process.

100% of the monitoring of the qualification of lead assessors and experts has been carried out within the set deadlines.

The Agency has ensured 100% participation in meetings, exchanges, peer review activities, training and qualification raising organised by international accreditation organisations.

The Agency has 100% compliance with the implementation of the requirements of the international accreditation organisations within the set deadlines.

100%

a full risk-based assessment, accreditation and surveillance process

information on institutional irregularities fully assessed

full participation in international accreditation organisations

100% deadlines met

in the monitoring of the qualifications of lead assessors and experts

in the implementation of annual surveillance

in the implementation of the requirements of international accreditation organisations

90% deadlines met

in the implementation of assessment, accreditation and surveillance processes



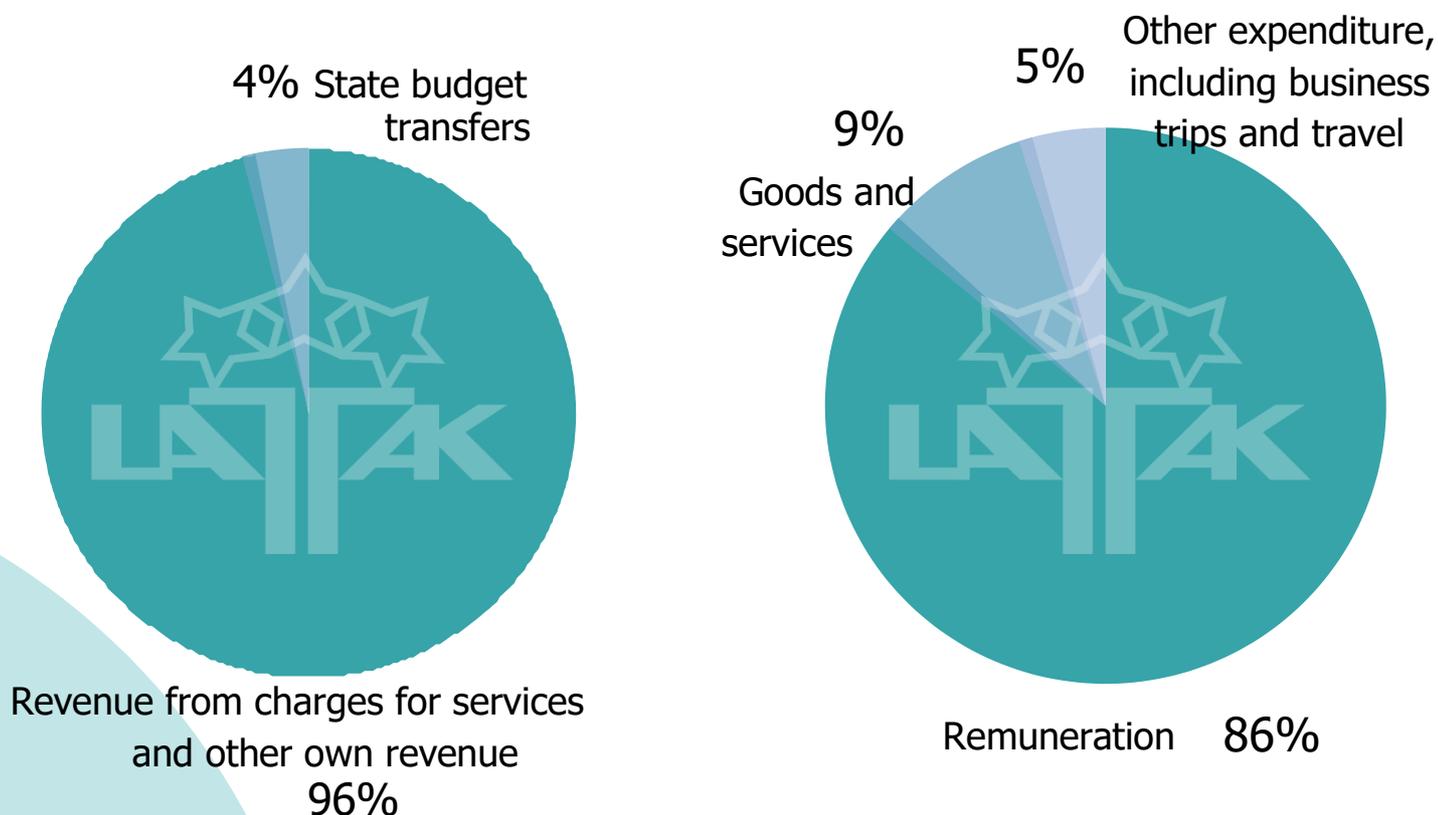
AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND USE THEREOF

The budget structure of the Agency is determined by the functions of the National Accreditation Body as set out in the Law on Conformity Assessment, Regulation (EC) No. 765/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 setting out the requirements for accreditation and market surveillance relating to the marketing of products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No. 339/93 (Regulation 765/2008), as well as Cabinet Regulation No. 754 of 19 December 2023 "Rules for Assessment, Accreditation and Supervision of Conformity Assessment Bodies National accreditation bodies".

According to Article 14(3) of the Law on Conformity Assessment, the accreditation system is financed from the state budget funds and revenues from provided paid services. The fees for the Agency's services are set out in Cabinet Regulation No. 114 of 27 February 2018 "Price List for Fee-based Services of the State Agency *Latvian National Accreditation Bureau*".

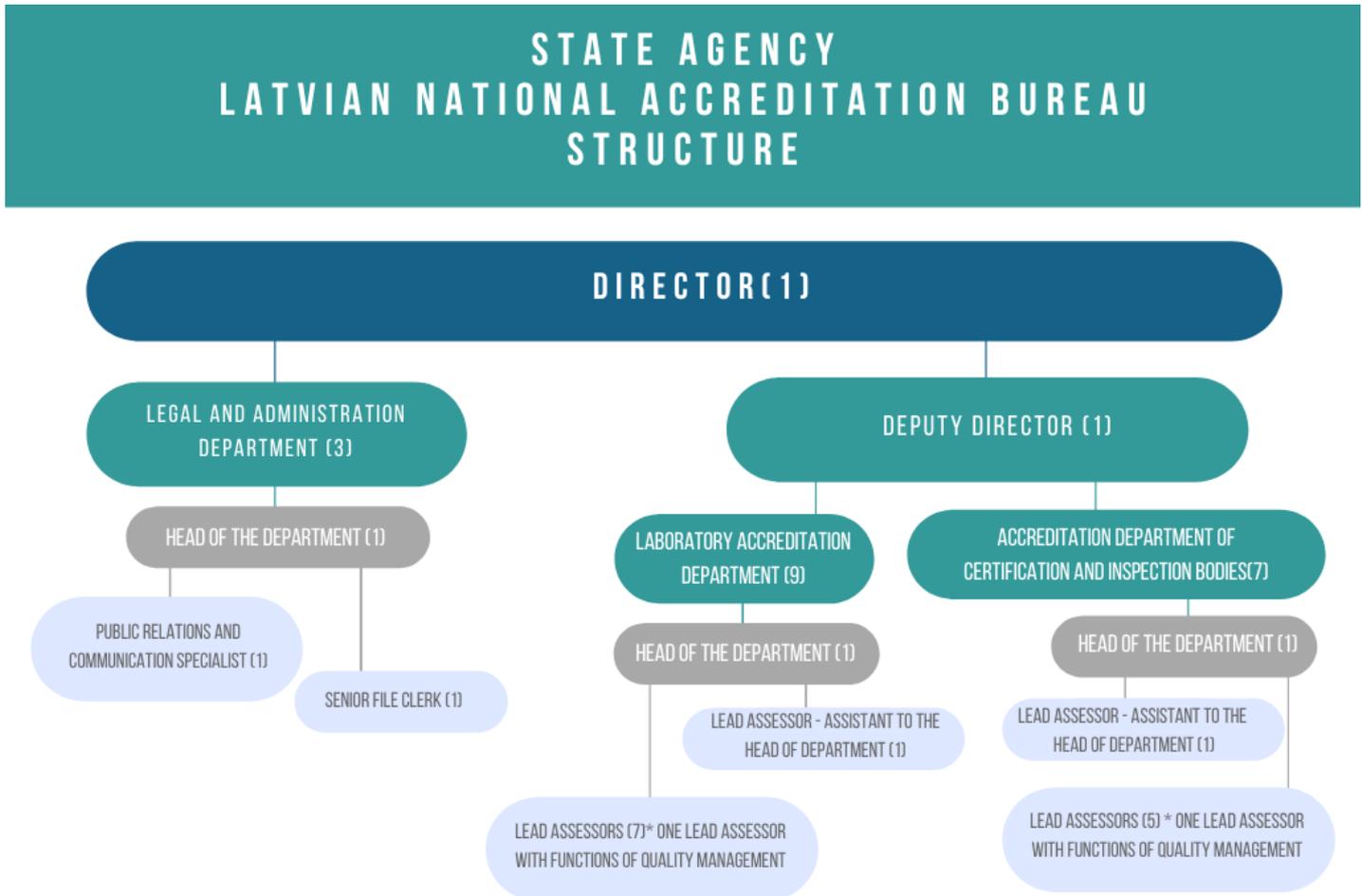
The Agency's revenues are mainly generated by accreditation services and surveillance services of accredited conformity assessment bodies, annual fees for maintenance of accreditation status, as well as transfer from the Ministry of Economics, which is used in accordance with Paragraphs 5, 6, and 7 of Article 14(1) of the Law on Conformity Assessment.

REVENUE BREAKDOWN EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN



Attracting a professional and highly competent workforce and the necessary training to acquire and maintain qualifications, as well as providing a high quality and professional service, places a significant additional burden on both the efficient use of resources and the workload of staff.

The Agency has 21 established posts.



The Agency provides full member representation and maintain a management and quality infrastructure that meets the requirements of the international accreditation organisations: European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA), International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC).



The Agency currently maintains accreditation for 309 conformity assessment bodies.

The Laboratory Accreditation Department maintains accreditation for 188 laboratories providing testing (127), calibration (17) and medical laboratory examination (44) services. Meanwhile, the Accreditation Department of Certification and Inspection Bodies maintains accreditation for 121 conformity assessment bodies for inspection (65), certification of persons (25), certification of products (21), certification of management systems (7) and service providers of verification of greenhouse gas (GHG) reports and tonne-kilometre reports (3).

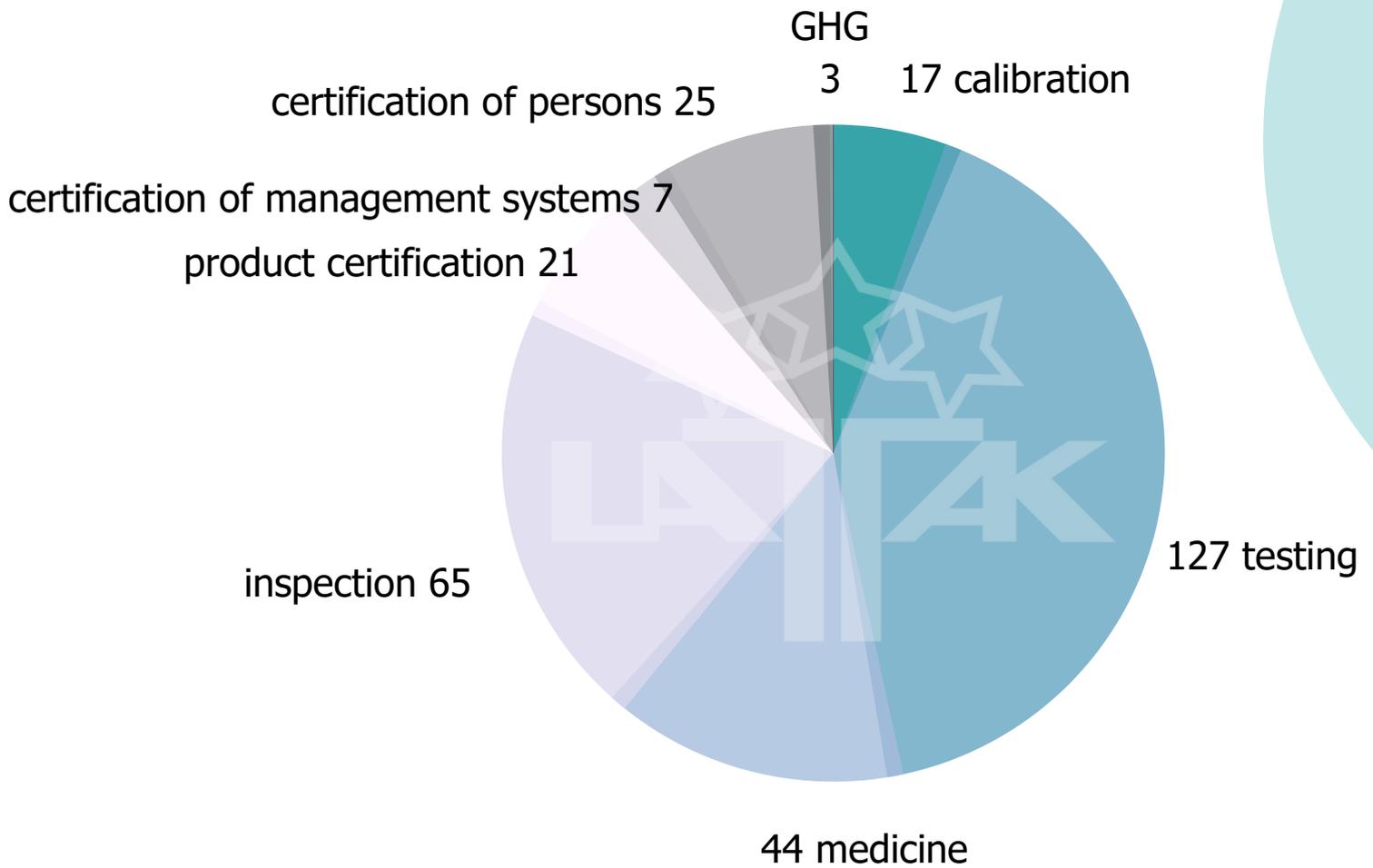
In total, the Agency provides internationally recognised accreditation services assessing the conformity assessment bodies' compliance with the requirements listed below:

- Standard LVS EN ISO/IEC 17025:2017 "General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories";
- Standard LVS EN ISO 15189:2013 "Medical laboratories. Requirements for quality and competence";
- Standard EN ISO/IEC 17065:2015 "Conformity assessment. Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services";
- Standard EN ISO/IEC 17024:2013 "Conformity assessment. General requirements for bodies certifying persons";
- Standard LVS EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2019 "Conformity assessment. Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems. Part 1: Requirements.";
- Standard EN ISO/IEC 17020:2013 "Conformity assessment. Requirements for different types of inspection bodies";
- Standard EN ISO 14065:2016 "Greenhouse gases. Requirements for greenhouse gas validation and verification bodies for use in accreditation or other forms of recognition";
- Regulation (EC) No. 1221/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS).

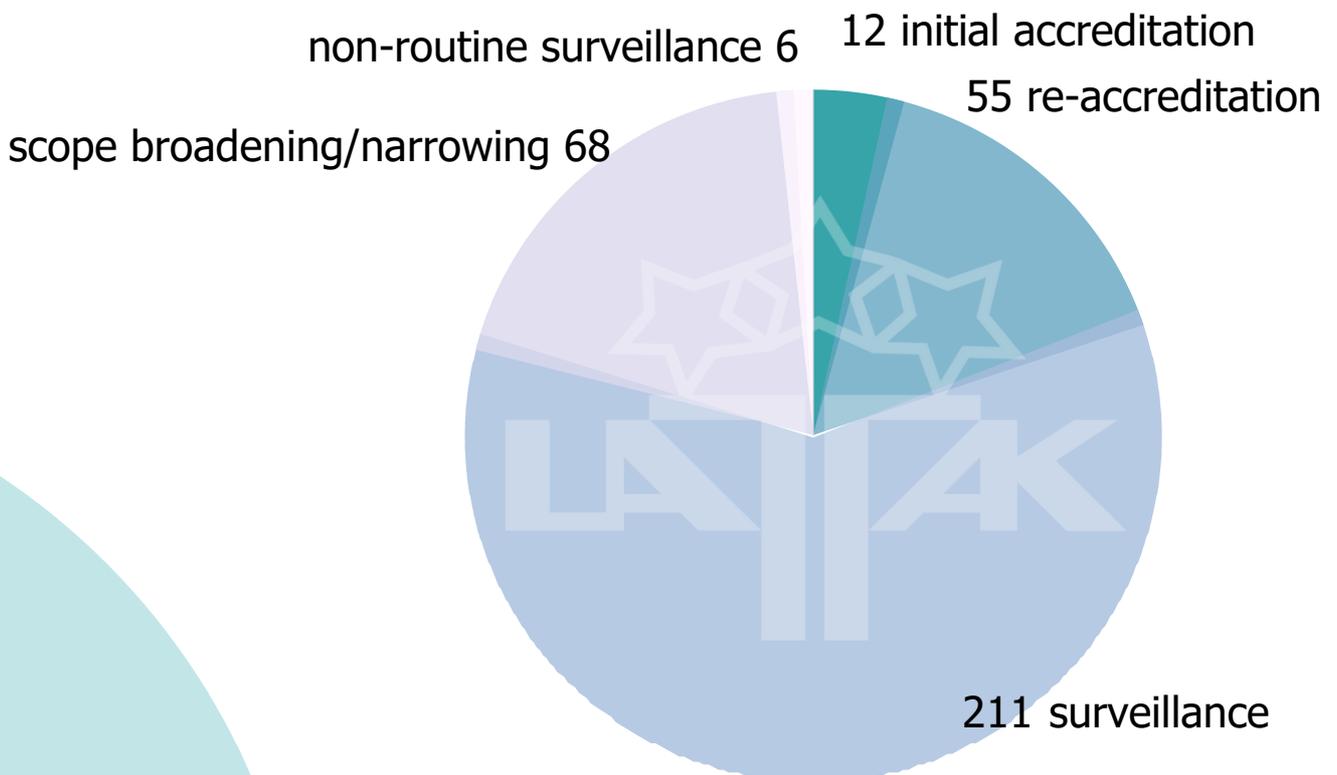
The Agency carries out an average of 350-360

The largest number of procedures is related to the implementation of surveillance and scope broadening/narrowing procedures, as well as re-accreditation procedures, which represent around 95% of the total number of procedures implemented.

NUMBER OF ACCREDITED CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT BODIES, THEIR FIELD OF ACTIVITY (31.12.2021)



NUMBER OF PROCEDURES IMPLEMENTED BY THE AGENCY (31.12.2021)





OPERATIONAL CAPACITY AND RISK ANALYSIS

Bellow are the Agency's strategic risks, the occurrence of which may significantly affect the achievement of the Strategy's objectives and full functioning of the Agency.

Risks related to the performance of conformity assessment

- Inadequate compliance assessment
- Misleading the Agency

Risks of termination of international recognition of the Agency

- Non-compliance of Standard EN ISO/IEC 17011:2017 "Conformity assessment. Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies"

Reputational risk

- Negative external rhetoric
- Undermining public confidence
- Dishonest conduct of employees, including experts

Risks of changes in legislation

- Measures to be implemented in legislation without sufficient funding and a reasonable timeframe
- Significant impact on operational efficiency
- Significant impact on customer satisfaction and proper assessment of compliance

Risk of insufficient resources

- Decrease in number of employees, inability to attract new professional workforce
- Shortage of skilled employees
- Employee turnover
- Delegation of new tasks and functions without adequate funding

Non-influence risks

- Political instability in the country
- Crisis of societal processes

The Agency implements comprehensive risk management, including corruption risk, management, monitoring, control and governance measures to ensure that the basic performance requirements of the internal control and quality system are met.



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