


Accreditation

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Accreditation is an attestation carried out by the national accreditation body on the competence and capability of the conformity assessment body to perform specific conformity assessment activities.

Hence accreditation verifies only specific, particular activities (e.g. that a laboratory is able to conduct testing in accordance with specific testing methods or that a certification body is competent to certify a specific product according to certain standards). The particular accredited activity scope is defined in the annex to accreditation certificate of each conformity assessment body. The other activities conducted by the conformity assessment body are not verified by accreditation.

The term "flexible scope" is applied to testing laboratories. It means that it is competent to apply testing methods itself in the particular defined testing area.

What is accreditation? 



Accreditation is an attestation carried out by the national accreditation body on the competence and capability of the conformity assessment body to perform specific conformity assessment activities.

For example:

inspection - an examination of the product design stages, product, process or service and determination of its conformity with specific or general requirements, based upon a professional judgement;

calibration - operation that, under specified conditions, establishes a relation between the quantity values indicated by measuring devices or measuring systems, the values of the material measure or reference material and the values reproduced from the corresponding measurement standard is established under specific conditions;

certification - an action of an independent third party confirming that the relevant product, process, service or person conforms to the requirements laid down in a law or regulation, or a standard;

testing - determination of one or several characteristics of the conformity assessment object in accordance with the procedure;

conformity assessment body - an body, which carries out a conformity assessment, including calibration, testing, certification and inspection.

Non-regulated sphere - a sphere, which is not subject to compulsory conformity assessment of products, processes or services laid down in laws and regulations;

Regulated sphere - a sphere, which is subject to mandatory conformity assessment of products, processes or services laid down in laws and regulations.

 [EA Brochure about Accreditation](#) 

Conformity assessment - a process during which it is assessed whether the requirements related to the product, process, service, system, person or body (hereinafter - conformity assessment object) are fulfilled.

Testing, calibration, examination, inspection, certification, validation and verification, reference material production and proficiency testing, delivered by accredited bodies (CABs), are collectively known as conformity assessment activities. Acting as authoritative and impartial entities, National Accreditation Bodies (NABs) evaluate competence of laboratories, inspection and certification bodies. NABs guarantee credibility of conformity assessment and reliability of certificates and reports. Conformity assessment services delivered under accreditation confirm that products and services comply with established requirements – standards and other relevant specifications. The conformity assessment system is structured in order to give assurance to the public and boost business competitiveness. In Europe, the conformity assessment system has been improved by the European Commission so as to increase confidence of regulators, businesses and consumers, and to guarantee free movement within the market of goods and services, offering a high level of health protection and safety for consumers and the environment. All groups of society are involved in ensuring confidence in the products and services put on the market: governments, businesses, clients and end-users.

Accreditation is an ongoing process that guarantees the competence of accredited bodies performing conformity assessment services such as:

CERTIFICATION OF PRODUCTS, PROCESSES AND SERVICES

- toys, lifts, electrical devices, personal protection equipment, building products, biofuels, organic food and quality marks, recycled products, e-signature

CERTIFICATION OF MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

- for quality, environment, occupational health and safety, energy, food, information security, information technology, sustainable development

LABORATORY TESTS

- chemical, biological, physical, fire, mechanical, water, air, food, electrical and electronic, software, DNA, fingerprints, anti-doping, animal health

MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

- microbiology, histology, oncology, haematology, genetics, immunobiology, bacteriology, virology, endocrinology, reproductive biology

CERTIFICATION OF PERSONS

- auditors, welders, verifiers, inspectors, experts, consultants, professionals in IT, healthcare, training and education

CALIBRATIONS

- speed control meters, weighing machines, spectrometers, chronometers, radiation monitor devices, gas flow meters, electric counters

INSPECTIONS

- products, services, processes, designs, installations, buildings, roads, railways, trucks and cars

VALIDATIONS AND VERIFICATIONS

- of greenhouse gas emissions, such as water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, ozone, chlorofluorocarbons

PROFICIENCY TESTING PROVIDERS

- Environment, health, food, forensic, sampling, energy, safety

REFERENCE MATERIAL PRODUCERS

- Environment, food, oil, water

Advantages of accreditation



The importance of accreditation increases with each year not only in Europe, but in Latvia as well. Accreditation helps to reduce technical trade barriers and increases trust of consumers, public administration and enterprises in quality and safety of products and services. The conformity assessment bodies operating both in private sector and in public sector may request accreditation as verification of competency of their activities.

Accreditation is the top level instrument in the whole hierarchy of quality provision, to ensure and verify conformity of products and the provided services to requirements of safety, health and environment protection.

As accreditation is also internationally recognized, it increasingly more widely used in trade of goods and services and in mutual recognition, as well as serves as the instrument of competence verification of a conformity assessment body for state administration bodies, if they choose to delegate certain conformity assessment activities (testing, calibration, inspection, and certification).

Products certified by an accredited certification body or tested in an accredited laboratory gain greater trust from consumers, buyers and market players.

International recognition



Accreditation is conducted in accordance with international standards of series ISO 17000, ISO 15000 and EN 45000. Competency of national accreditation bodies of separate states is ensured by mutual assessments. Based on conformity of such assessment results, LATAK has concluded the Multilateral Agreement (MLA) with European Co-operation for Accreditation EA. Mutual recognitions among accreditation bodies increase international recognition of accreditation results and prevent the need to request accreditation in several states. By participation in mutual activities LATAK ensures accreditation and recognition of verifications issued by accredited conformity assessment bodies in other states.

The accredited conformity assessment bodies may use the accreditation mark in their certificates or reports. The accreditation mark shall consist of the accreditation logo, the number of the standard, and the number of the body. More detailed information regarding use of the accreditation mark is available in the LATAK document [LATAK - D.011-13/08.2021](#)

as well as in Cabinet Regulations No. 673.

An accredited body may refer to accreditation granted by LATAK, which in turn is a signatory of the Multilateral Agreement of the European Co-operation for Accreditation EA.



[Accreditation procedures](#)

Accreditation process and application

Accreditation process includes the assessment of competence of conformity assessment bodies on the basis of documented evidences, evaluation of the conformity assessment body (CAB) on site and witnessing of conformity assessment activity.

Steps of the accreditation process:

- application;
- review of submitted documents and the first visit of the CAB, signing of agreement;
- assessment (management system, performed practical activities, participation of LATAK assessors in the evaluation of practical activities/witnessing);
- assessment report, evaluation of corrective activities of the CAB;
- decision on accreditation, certificate of accreditation, definition of accredited scope;
- periodical monitoring (in average once per year);
- re-accreditation (5 years cycle).

Accreditation process is described in the LATAK document [D.008](#)

Application

A legal person willing to acquire accreditation, shall submit an official [application](#) to the LATAK. Application forms individually for each type of CAB are available on LATAK webpage, in the Services section. In the application the CAB shall indicate the desirable scope of accreditation, in particular defining the testing methods, product and system standards or other standard technical documents. It is necessary to fill in other requested documents together with the application and submit quality manual and respective procedures.

The first visit of CAB shall be organised after the receipt of all necessary documents in the LATAK office.