



**ACCREDITATION:
SUPPORTING REGULATION,
ENHANCING TRADE**

AzAK





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AZAK, THE AZERBAIJAN ACCREDITATION CENTRE

A recognized role for supporting Government and business

AZAK is the sole national accreditation body of the Republic of Azerbaijan recognized by the State to perform accreditation activity in Azerbaijan of conformity assessment bodies, such as testing and calibration laboratories and certification and inspection bodies.

Acting as an independent and self-financing entity, AZAK has the institutional commitment to attest that accredited bodies offering testing, calibration, certification and inspection services have the technical competence and impartiality to check the conformity of products and services with the relevant national and international standards.

Accreditation activities are performed by two departments: Laboratory accreditation Department and Certification and Inspection bodies accreditation Department.

In 2017, there were 285 accredited conformity assessment bodies, divided into 200 testing laboratories, 38 calibration laboratories, 16 inspection bodies and 31 certification bodies, among which 11 for certification of persons, 10 for products and services and 10 for quality management systems.

AZAK accredits conformity assessment bodies in the voluntary area as well as in the regulated area.

The Azerbaijan Accreditation Centre is an Associate Member of EA (European co-operation for Accreditation) and an Associate Member of ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation).



**What is
accreditation?**

ACCREDITATION

A service for the Community

Accreditation provides the attestation that accredited bodies offering testing, calibration, certification and inspection services have the technical competence and impartiality to check the conformity of products and services with the relevant national and international standards.

In Azerbaijan, the “Law on accreditation in the field of conformity assessment” dated 30th of May 2014 is currently under revision to be in line with the European Regulation (EC) 765/2008 on setting out the requirements for accreditation relating to the marketing of products.

In Europe, indeed, accreditation is performed by national accreditation bodies (NABs) appointed by governments as required by Regulation (EC) 765/2008.

- ❖ In the regulated area, the law requires accreditation for those bodies that qualify certain categories of products and services (e.g. products with the CE marking such as toys, lifts, food products with protected or guaranteed origin, etc.) which can be put onto the market only after undergoing conformity assessment against the applicable standards. This is notification.
- ❖ In the voluntary area, where there is no specific legislation, companies seek accreditation to provide the market with an impartial attestation of their competence in guaranteeing products' and services' quality, safety, security, etc..



**IN AZERBAIJAN, ACCREDITATION IS REGULATED
BY THE LAW 30TH MAY 2014**

**THE LAW IS CURRENTLY UNDER REVISION TO BE IN
LINE WITH THE EUROPEAN REGULATION (EC) 765/2008**

**ACCREDITATION SUPPORTS BOTH REGULATED
AND VOLUNTARY AREAS**

**ACCREDITATION FACILITATES TRADE AND BENEFITS
THE MARKET AND SOCIETY**

A national accreditation system in line with the EU requirements

Accreditation in Azerbaijan is regulated by the “Law on accreditation in the field of conformity assessment” dated 30th of May 2014, establishing the legal and organizational basis for the accreditation of bodies operating the conformity assessment activities of testing, calibration, certification, inspection within the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The national Law is currently under revision to be in line with the European Regulation (EC) 765/2008 on setting out the requirements for accreditation relating to the marketing of products.

Since 2008, Regulation (EC) 765/2008 establishes the first legal framework for accreditation in Europe.

It gives a harmonized, rigorous approach to accreditation – so that ultimately one accreditation certificate or report will be enough to demonstrate the technical competence of an accredited body.

The main principles of accreditation in the Regulation – which complement ISO/IEC 17011 and the other international standards for conformity assessment bodies – are:

- ❖ one accreditation body per Member State
- ❖ accreditation is operated as a public authority activity
- ❖ no competition between national accreditation bodies, and between them and conformity assessment bodies
- ❖ not-for-profit activity
- ❖ stakeholder representation

A male scientist with dark hair, wearing a white lab coat, safety goggles, and white gloves, is focused on his work in a laboratory. He is using a blue pipette to transfer liquid into a small vial. In the foreground, there is a rack of test tubes with blue caps, a red rack of vials with blue caps, and a glass flask on a cork stand. The background shows a blurred laboratory setting with blue walls and equipment.

**What is
conformity
assessment?**

CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT

Enhancing confidence in the market

Testing, calibration, inspection and certification services, 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.

The conformity assessment system is constantly improved at international level 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.

Better regulation is based on a competent, impartial and effective system where governments, businesses and consumers have a role in maintaining confidence.

REGULATORS

rely on

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION BODIES

which verify the competence of



*which offer conformity assessment services
to standards/regulatory requirements/scheme criteria*



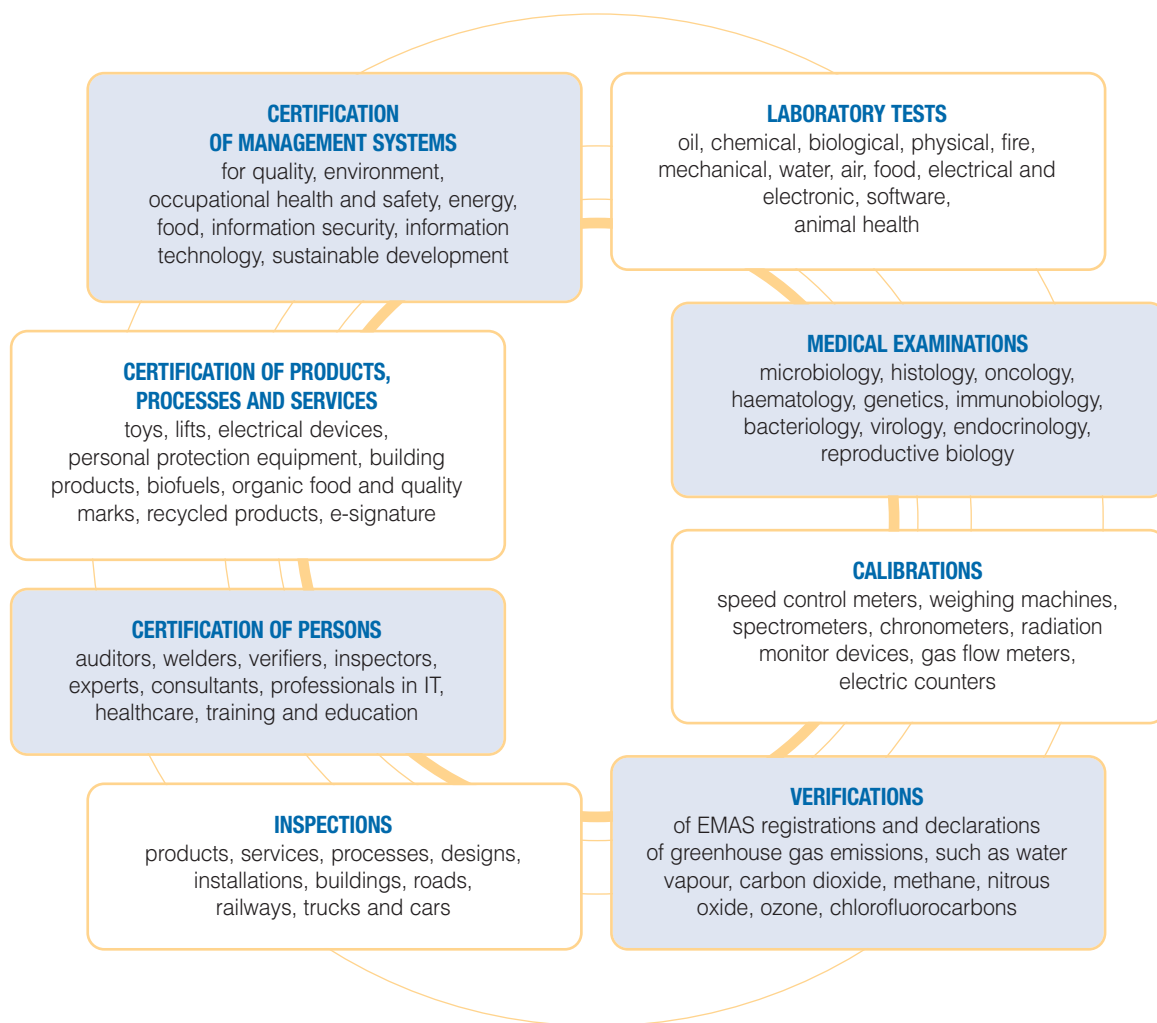
for the benefit of



on the market of



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



**How is
competence
assured?**



ASSURANCE OF COMPETENCE

Providing confidence in reports and certificates results

Accreditation is based on demonstrating compliance with specified requirements for competence, independence and impartiality.

COMPETENCE

The experience and technical skills of the staff in the accredited or applicant body are verified by qualified assessors with relevant expertise and specialised knowledge.

INDEPENDENCE

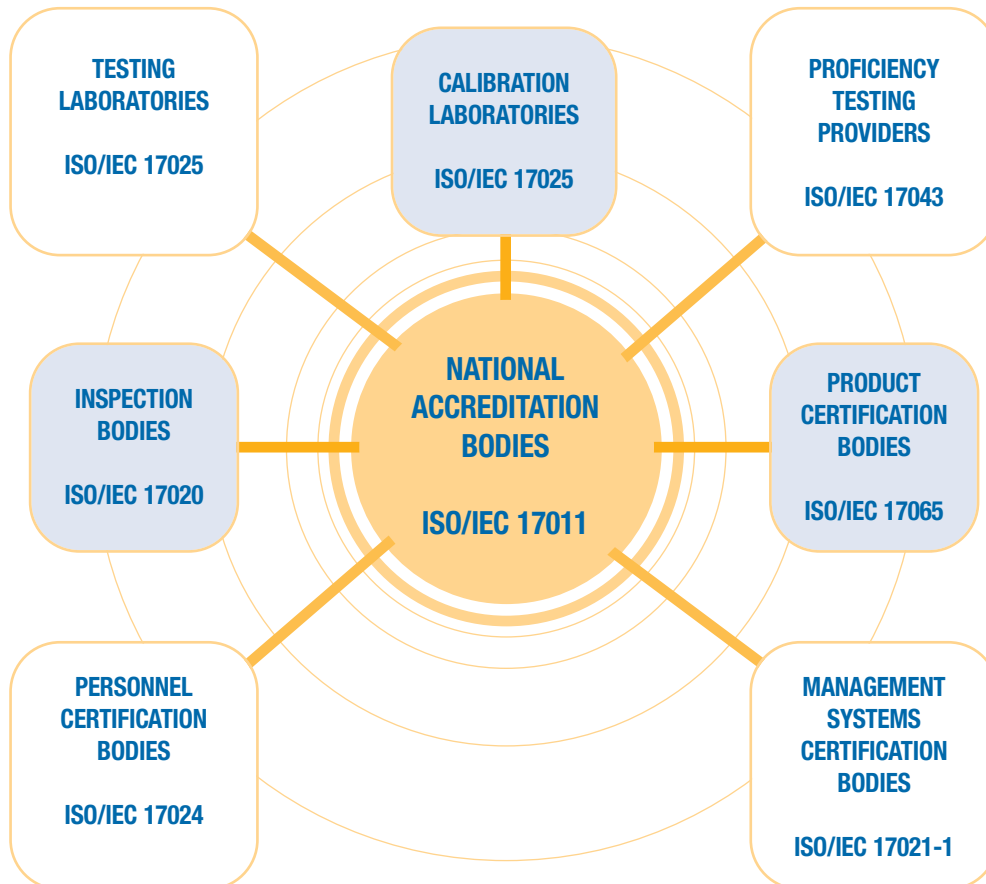
Accredited bodies that grant certification shall show independence from the organisation to which their services are provided.

IMPARTIALITY

Accredited bodies shall show absence or proper management of conflicts of interest with the client to whom they provide services.

Accreditation

Accreditation is the formal recognition of the technical and organisational competence of a conformity assessment body to carry out specific services in accordance with the standards (ISO, IEC, etc.) or technical regulations as described in its scope of accreditation.



The reliability of reports (of test and inspection) and certificates (of calibration and conformity, etc.) is the result of a rigorous and effective process of evaluation of competencies according to international requirements.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

National accreditation bodies' assessors conduct a thorough evaluation of the applicant's practices, staff and management system, thus verifying compliance with standards. Applicant bodies having successfully passed assessment are accredited. They can use the accreditation mark for the accepted scopes.

ACCREDITATION CYCLE COVERS 2 TO 5 YEARS

National accreditation bodies carry out regular surveillance assessments to ensure that accredited bodies maintain high standards of technical expertise. They can impose sanctions when accredited bodies are not fulfilling all obligations and requirements, and then accreditation scopes can be reduced, suspended or even withdrawn.

EXTENSION OF SCOPES

During the cycle or at renewal, accreditation scopes can be extended to other services, in response to new needs of accredited bodies' customers. Specific assessments are carried out, for instance to be able to perform tests according to a new legislation.

RENEWAL OF ACCREDITATION

At the end of the cycle, accreditation can be renewed after a complete assessment for a new cycle.

A young man with short, dark, curly hair and a light beard is smiling warmly at the camera. He is wearing a blue and white vertically striped button-down shirt over a grey V-neck t-shirt, and a tan canvas apron. He is holding a bunch of fresh green leafy vegetables in front of him. The background is a brightly lit grocery store produce section with various vegetables on shelves, including onions and carrots. The lighting is warm and focused on the man.

**What benefits
for the public
and private
sectors?**

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BENEFITS

Advantages for regulators and governments become benefits for consumers and businesses

Developed on the market to facilitate the movement of goods and services where demand for quality and safety is growing, accreditation offers a harmonised, transparent and repeatable approach which:

- ❖ enables innovation
- ❖ reduces the need for governments to employ their own resources
- ❖ builds consumers' and businesses' confidence
- ❖ helps fulfil legal requirements at reasonable costs

For regulators and governments

Testing, inspection, calibration and certification can be used for better control and regulation.

The services provided by accredited bodies, either used directly by regulators and governments or as a tool reference in rules and regulations, demonstrate effectiveness in:

- ❖ supporting implementation of the national legislation, providing a “stamp of approval” to confirm compliance with standards and widely accepted requirements
- ❖ qualifying suppliers of goods and services, especially on the procurement market
- ❖ enhancing trade and economic growth, providing governments with reliable data
- ❖ reducing bureaucracy by eliminating a number of administrative obligations
- ❖ limiting costs and resources, by reducing the need for regulators to employ their specialized assessment personnel and by avoiding duplication of audits
- ❖ simplifying the procurement process by ensuring confidence as a decision-making tool

Visit www.publicsectorassurance.org to access case studies and independent research that demonstrate to illustrate how accredited conformity assessment is used around the world by central government, local government and regulators to deliver positive benefit.

For consumers

Creating trust

Increasingly consumers rely on independent evidence, rather than simply believing in suppliers' advertisements. Consumers' confidence on the market is enhanced when they know that the products and services they choose are regularly evaluated and checked by an independent and competent third party.

Protecting, in the public interest

At the other end of the supply chain, consumers' interest is protected by national accreditation bodies acting as "checkers of checkers".

For businesses

Boosting efficiency

Accurate calibration, measurement and testing, performed in accordance with best practice, help limit errors and product failure, improve control of production costs and contribute to an innovative environment. When they obtain certification of their management system, products or services by an accredited body, companies enhance their performance by using a recognised tool for decision-making, risk management and supplier selection. Thus, they enjoy a competitive advantage in terms of reputation and credibility, both on the B2B and consumer markets.



Reducing controls

Accredited certification conveys presumption of conformity with official standards and regulations. This means that businesses do not need to provide additional evidence, and their activities are simplified subsequent to reduction or elimination of controls.

Supporting export

The international recognition of conformity assessment reports covered by accreditation boosts business expansion on foreign markets without the need to carry out additional verifications.

Visit www.business-benefits.org to access case studies and independent research that illustrate how accredited conformity assessment is used around the world by business companies to deliver positive benefit.

THE ADDED VALUE OF ACCREDITATION

Accredited conformity assessment activities

Accredited tests, inspections, calibrations and certifications result on a third party, independent and competent evaluation, providing objective results to support sound decisions in regulation, public procurement or delivery of products and services onto the market.

Accredited bodies performing such services assure that they meet all required standards, as well as regulatory requirements and sector criteria, in terms of:

- ❖ technical competence, professionalism and integrity
- ❖ risk management
- ❖ adequate human and equipment resources
- ❖ mechanism for measuring improvement of product and service quality
- ❖ complaint and appeal system
- ❖ capacity to compete on an international scale

When referring to accreditation, it is important to recognise or specify the appropriate requirements for the services or bodies providing them, according to the type of guarantees required.

When selecting an accredited body, it is essential to identify the scope of activities for which the accredited body is granted accreditation; this is detailed on the accreditation certificate.

TEST AND CALIBRATION

Accredited tests and calibrations guarantee accurate and reliable results for a defined set of tests, and ensure that calibrations are carried out in a reliable, competent, consistent and impartial manner and to the correct degree of accuracy.

Accreditation of a testing laboratory means:

- ❖ validity and appropriateness of test methods
- ❖ suitability and maintenance of test equipment
- ❖ proper sampling, handling and transportation of test items
- ❖ quality control and assurance of test data

Accreditation of a calibration laboratory means:

- ❖ metrological traceability of calibration results
- ❖ traceability of operations and recordings
- ❖ measurements are performed according to validated procedures
- ❖ reliability of standards and measurement instruments

Accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025 also means that the laboratory meets the management system principles of ISO 9001.

PROFICIENCY TESTING PROVIDERS (PTP)

Accredited proficiency testing (PT) provides reliable opportunity to undertake comparisons of laboratories' competence and to have an independent appraisal of laboratories' data compared to reference values (or other performance criteria) or to the performance of similar laboratories.

INSPECTION

Accreditation provides assurance of competence of inspectors, relevance of methods for conducting inspections and impartiality of results.

Inspection can be used, in the voluntary and regulated areas, for the assessment of the conformity of a product, project, service, process or installation with relevant requirements based on professional judgement.

CERTIFICATION OF PERSONS

The accreditation of the bodies certifying persons is either voluntary or compulsory; it may be a statutory requirement for certain professional categories (i.e. non-destructive testing, welding, property, diagnostic surveys, etc.).

The accredited certificate for persons refers to the qualification of the person that the body has evaluated as competent to certify, with the correct reference to the normative document which the person conforms to.

MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CERTIFICATION

Management system (MS) certification guarantees that production processes of a product or service are under control and carried out in a systematic way, and that performance is constantly improved and aims to meet clients' requirements.

Accredited MS certifications ensure impartiality in the assessment; auditors are knowledgeable about the activity to be certified and have the relevant expertise.

An organisation is certified only in conformity with the management system standard mentioned on the certificate covering the specified scope, which consists of the certification application field and the detailed processes verified and certified by the competent body. Organisation sites covered by certification are also listed on the management system certificate.

CERTIFICATION OF PRODUCTS, PROCESSES OR SERVICES

A product (i.e. a low energy bulb), a service (i.e. passenger transport) or a process (i.e. organic farming, traceability of timber origins) can be subject to certification.

Product certification aims to the statement by the producer that the product (or process or service) conforms to the relevant requirements. It is not the task of the certification body to declare the conformity of the product, but to attest the trueness of the conformity to the applicable requirements claimed by the producer.

Accredited product certification gives evidence of the independence between the certification body and the manufacturer, and provides presumption of conformity with the applicable legal requirements.

The accredited certificate for the product shall bear the detailed reference to the technical standard or technical specifications which the product is certified in conformity with.

THE ACCREDITATION BODIES' NETWORK

EA - European co-operation for Accreditation, IAF and ILAC

EA (European co-operation for Accreditation) at European level, and ILAC (International Organization for Accreditation Bodies of calibration and testing laboratories and of inspection bodies) and IAF (International Accreditation Forum), at global level, represent the national accreditation bodies from the main economies in the world.



www.european-accreditation.org



www.iaf.nu



www.ilac.org

National accreditation bodies in EU and EFTA countries are members of EA, the European umbrella of accreditation bodies which ensures the acceptance of accredited certificates and reports on the European and global markets.

The activities performed by European accreditation bodies are recognised both within the EU and worldwide through their signatory status to the EA Multilateral Agreement (EA MLA).

National accreditation bodies are granted the MLA signatory status only after a stringent peer evaluation, of their operations to check their compliance with the internationally agreed standard for accreditation bodies, ISO/IEC 17011, and the specific requirements of Regulation (EC) 765/2008.



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