



ევროკავშირი
საქართველოსთვის

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ACCREDITATION SUPPORTING REGULATION AND BUSINESS





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**GAC for quality
in Georgia**

GAC - THE GEORGIAN ACCREDITATION CENTER

A recognized role for supporting Government and business

The Unified National Body of Accreditation - Accreditation Center (GAC) is the sole national accreditation body of the Georgia established by the government to perform accreditation activity of conformity assessment bodies, such as testing, medical and calibration laboratories and certification and inspection bodies.

Accreditation of conformity assessment bodies is performed in the voluntary areas as well as in the regulated areas.

GAC was founded in November, 2005 and operates as a Legal Entity of Public Law under the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia.

The institutional commitment of GAC is to attest that accredited bodies offering testing, examination, calibration, certification and inspection, have the technical competence and impartiality to check the conformity of products and services with the relevant national and international standards.

In 2021, there were 262 accredited conformity assessment bodies, divided into 119 testing laboratories, 5 medical laboratories, 3 calibration laboratories, 7 persons certification bodies, 5 product certification bodies and 123 inspection bodies.

GAC structure consists of the:

- ❖ Accreditation Committee
- ❖ General Director
- ❖ Deputy General Director/Quality Manager
- ❖ Division for Accreditation
- ❖ Administration Service

**European Union
alignment**



ulenn
opa

liament

Parlament na hEorpa

Bienvenue au
Parlement européen

benvenuti al
Parlamento europeo

Leipni lūdzan
Eiropas Pa

Sveiki atv
Eiropo

TOWARDS APPROXIMATION WITH EU

A national accreditation system in line with the EU requirements

GAC performs its activities in accordance with relevant legislation, international standards and EA, IAF and ILAC requirements.

The main normative act is the "Law of Georgia - Code on Safety and Free Movement of Goods" adopted in 2012, which incorporated requirements of the European Regulation (EC) 765/2008.

Since 2008, the Regulation establishes the 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



**International
recognition**

ACCREDITATION BODIES' NETWORK

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

GAC is a B category Member of EA (European co-operation for Accreditation), signatory of EA BLA (Bilateral Agreement), an Associate Member of ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation) and signatory of the memorandum of Membership (MoM).

EA (European co-operation for Accreditation) at European level, and ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation) 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

GAC as a B category member of the EA is recognized in the following areas:

- ❖ ISO/IEC 17025 - Calibration
- ❖ ISO/IEC 17025 - Testing
- ❖ ISO 15189 - Medical laboratories
- ❖ ISO/IEC 17020 - Inspection bodies
- ❖ ISO/IEC 17065 - Product certification
- ❖ ISO/IEC 17024 - Persons certification

What is accreditation



ACCREDITATION

A service for the trust and safety

Accreditation provides the attestation that accredited bodies offering testing, medical, 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.

Acting as authoritative and impartial entities, National Accreditation Bodies evaluate competence of laboratories and bodies performing conformity assessment activities and guarantee the credibility and reliability of their certificates and reports.

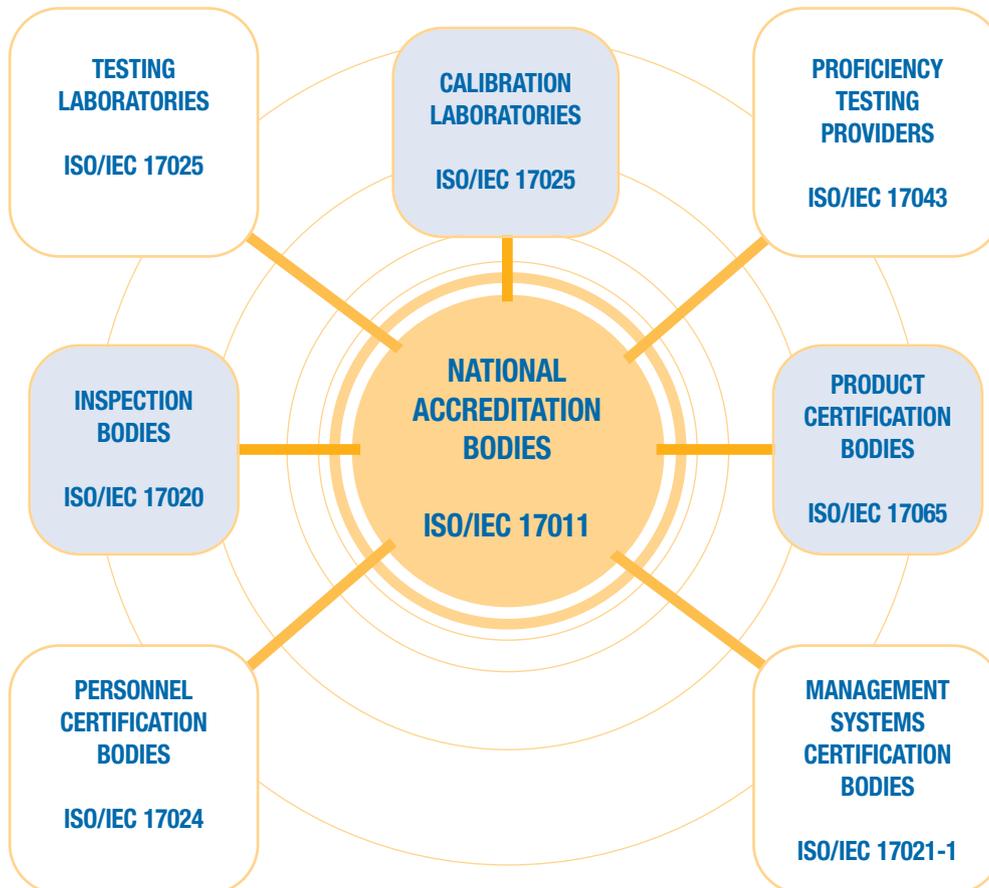
Likewise in Europe, accreditation is performed in Georgia by national accreditation body - GAC, that is established by government as required by Regulation (EC) 765/2008.

In the regulated/mandatory area, the legislation requires accreditation for those bodies that qualify certain categories of products and services (e.g. products 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.

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.

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.



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



**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.

A photograph of two workers, a woman and a man, wearing high-visibility orange safety jackets and hard hats (white for the woman, blue for the man). They are looking at a tablet computer held by the man. The background shows an industrial or construction site with metal structures and a cloudy sky. An orange rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text 'How does accreditation process work?'.

**How does
accreditation
process work?**

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 4 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.

**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 enforcement of the 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

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.

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.

**What
the different
accredited
services?**



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 and a medical 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's competence 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 Unified National Body of Accreditation - Georgian Accreditation Center - GAC

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Email: gac@gac.gov.ge

