

MLA REPORT 2024



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FOREWORD



The European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA) Multilateral Agreement (MLA) has once again demonstrated its significance as a cornerstone for the advancement of accreditation across Europe.

As of the end of 2024, the MLA has seen 44 EA Member signatories, reinforcing the collective commitment to maintaining high standards and fostering mutual recognition in the realm of accreditation. Notably, Armenia's National Accreditation Body (ARMNAB), having applied for MLA signatory status in December 2023, underwent pre-evaluation in 2024, with a final decision expected in early 2025.

While the number of signatories remains largely stable across most scopes, there has been a slight increase in key areas, such as validation and verification, proficiency testing provision, and reference material production. This growth reflects the continued importance of these sectors within the MLA framework.

In 2024, EA also welcomed 14 new peer evaluators, reflecting the ongoing enhancement of evaluator resources despite the usual turnover associated with new evaluator training. Efforts to maintain a steady and qualified pool of evaluators reinforce the integrity of the peer evaluation process, which remains the key factor in the MLA's success.

A particularly historic moment for the MLA in 2024 was the celebration of the 50th meeting of the Multilateral Agreement Committee (MAC). This milestone offered a moment of reflection on the progress made since the MLA's inception, recognizing the invaluable contributions of the MAC members in shaping the framework and ensuring the continued credibility of accredited services.

Looking forward, the MLA remains a crucial pillar in supporting both the economic framework of Europe and the authorities, as well as end-users who depend on accredited services for trust and quality assurance.

The accomplishments of 2024 are a direct result of the MLA's resilience and the unwavering commitment of everyone involved in the MLA process—namely, members of the MAC and its Management Group, peer evaluation teams and trainers, and especially the MAC Secretariat, to whom I am deeply grateful for their efforts in preserving the MLA as a lasting framework that ensures reliable equivalence and mutual acceptance of certificates and reports issued by accredited conformity assessment bodies, both within Europe and internationally.

Maria Papatzikou (ESYD)
Chair of the EA Multilateral Agreement Council

1 - INTRODUCTION

This report provides information on the signatories to the EA MLA, as well as an overview of the key activities completed in 2024 to further develop the coverage of the MLA and to strengthen the operation of the peer evaluation system, including management of evaluators.

The main objective of peer evaluation activities is to evaluate the ongoing compliance of national accreditation bodies (NABs) with Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 and the internationally-agreed requirements, as well as to ensure that regulators, stakeholders and the business community can have confidence in the certificates and reports issued by accredited conformity assessment bodies (CABs) under the EA MLA.

According to article 14 of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 Setting out the requirements for accreditation, EA has been recognised by the European Commission (EC) as the European Accreditation Infrastructure and to operate the peer evaluation system of national accreditation bodies.

Initially signed by the parties on 1 April 2009, *the General Guidelines for Cooperation between the European co-operation for Accreditation and the European Commission, the European Free Trade Association and the Competent National Authorities* aim to widen and strengthen the co-operation in order to reflect the developments in policy and legislation. It shall also strengthen the position of accreditation, national accreditation bodies in EU and EFTA Member States and EA with the view to prepare a successful implementation of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008.

On 30 August 2022, the fourth Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) was signed with the European Commission for the period 2023-2026. A similar agreement was signed with EFTA on 16 November 2022.

Following article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008, a national authority shall recognise the equivalence of services delivered by a national accreditation body from the European Economic Area (EEA) which has successfully undergone peer evaluation by EA. Accordingly, a national authority in the EEA shall accept the reports and certificates issued by a conformity assessment body accredited by the national accreditation bodies from the EEA that are EA MLA signatories.

Maintaining a sound and reliable evaluation system also requires that EA supports the further improvement of EA's pool of evaluators through both newcomer and refresher training sessions.

2 - THE EA MLA

The EA MLA is an agreement signed between national accreditation bodies – Members of EA, which are successfully peer evaluated – to recognise and accept the equivalence of the accreditation systems and the reliability of the conformity assessment results.

EA MLA signatories apply the international standards for accreditation of conformity assessment bodies in a harmonised way, and the services delivered by those national accreditation bodies are equivalent. All of those EA Members who are signatories of the EA MLA aim to establish mutual confidence in the respective accreditation systems and in their accredited attestations of conformity.

Therefore, the marketplace can have confidence in the activities of the EA MLA signatories and their accredited conformity assessment bodies. The EA MLA provides the European market with a network of conformity assessment bodies that are competent within their scope of accreditation to issue reliable and credible statements of conformity for products and services, thereby reducing costs and adding value to business and consumers. This contributes to the freedom of trade by eliminating technical barriers.

Map of MLA signatories in December 2024



3 - SCOPE OF THE MLA

The EA MLA covers the following activities and standards:

Accreditation of	Scope/Activity (Level 2)	Standards (Level 3)
Laboratories	Testing and Medical Examinations	EN ISO/IEC 17025
	Calibration	EN ISO 15189
		EN ISO/IEC 17025
Certification Bodies	Certification of Products	EN ISO/IEC 17065
	Certification of Persons	EN ISO/IEC 17024
	Certification of Management Systems	EN ISO/IEC 17021-1
Validation and Verification Bodies	Validation and Verification	EN ISO/IEC 17029
		EN ISO 14065
Inspection Bodies	Inspection	EN ISO/IEC 17020
Proficiency Testing Providers (PTP)	Proficiency Testing Provision	EN ISO/IEC 17043
Reference Material Producers (RMP)	Reference Material Production	EN ISO 17034
Biobanks	Biobanking	EN ISO 20387

In 2024, EA Members delivered about 35,080 accreditations under the scopes for which they have signed the EA MLA, representing a 1% decrease compared to 2023. This slight reduction is primarily due to an 11% decrease in the number of accreditations for management systems certification, as well as a nearly 11% overall decrease in accreditations for testing, medical examinations, PTP, and persons certification. Validation and Verification is the scope with the largest increase in accreditations, showing a 32% rise.

Numbers of accreditation certificates issued under the EA MLA

Type of accreditation	2022	2023	2024
Calibration	3,374	3,437	3,601
Testing	18,962	16,621	16,341
Medical Examinations	3,903	3,928	3,762
Products Certification	2,113	2,103	2,115
Management Systems Certification	1,553	1,438	1,275
Persons Certification	842	859	848
Validation & Verification	144	188	248
Inspection	6,396	6,543	6,568
Proficiency Testing Provision (PTP)	244	248	238
Reference Material Production (RMP)	74	74	84
TOTAL	37,605	35,439	35,080

4 - SIGNATORIES OF THE MLA

National accreditation bodies are accepted under the EA MLA only after stringent evaluation of their operations and activities.

The evaluation is conducted by a peer evaluation team entrusted with the task to determine national accreditation bodies' compliance with the requirements laid down in:

- Regulation (EC) No 765/2008;
- EN ISO/IEC 17011, the internationally-accepted standard for accreditation bodies;
- the relevant standard for conformity assessment bodies including any additional requirements, e.g. those set out by the European Commission in relevant sector-based legislations, or in conformity assessment schemes established in the non-regulated sector, as well as those covered in relevant EA and IAF/ILAC documents.

A list of the EA MLA signatories and scopes is annexed to this report. For the latest information, please visit the [EA website](#).

Out of 48 EA Members, 44 have signed the MLA.

The individual EA Multilateral Agreement Signatories are listed by MLA scope in [EA-INF/03: Signatories to the EA Multilateral Agreements](#).

The number of member signatories for each scope of the EA Multilateral Agreement remains stable compared to those registered in 2023, with a slight increase in the number of signatories for validation and verification, proficiency testing provision, and reference material production.

Number of member signatories to the MLA by scope

Type of accreditation	2022	2023	2024
Calibration	41	41	41
Testing	42	42	42
Medical Examinations	38	39	39
Inspection	43	43	43
Management Systems Certification	36	35	35
Products Certification	37	38	38
Persons Certification	33	32	32
Validation and Verification	25	25	27
Proficiency Testing Provision	20	21	22
Reference Material Production	12	13	14

5 - OPERATION OF THE MLA COUNCIL

The EA MLA Council is responsible for the effective and impartial management and monitoring of the peer evaluation process. It is the decision-making body for acceptance of national accreditation bodies' entering into the Multilateral Agreement (MLA) of EA.

MLA Council (MAC)

The MAC is composed of one representative from each Member of EA, one observer from the EA Advisory Board and one observer from the European Commission. All EA MLA signatories have the voting right within the MAC on peer evaluations and the EA MLA signatory status.

Maria Papatzikou from ESYD (Greece) has been chairing the MAC since 2021.

Karine Vincent from COFRAC (France) vice-chaired the MAC since 2019. In 2024, the MAC Vice Chair stepped down and, after the elections held in September, was succeeded by Mr. Sergio Guzzi from ACCREDIA (Italy).

The MAC held its 50th meeting on 24-25 April 2024 in Sofia, Bulgaria, and its 51st meeting on 23 October 2024 in Brussels, Belgium.

MAC Management Group (MG)

The MAC MG is composed of 12 members from different NABs who were elected by the MAC members. The task of the Management Group (MG) is to achieve a more effective management and harmonisation of the peer evaluations and operation of the MAC.

Secretariat

The Secretariat is responsible for the daily management of the peer evaluations, including peer evaluators, and the organisation of MAC and MAC MG meetings.



Daniela Ionescu is the MAC Secretary and the Manager of the Peer Evaluation System.



Ankica Barišić is the Manager of Peer Evaluations and Evaluators.

5 - OPERATION OF THE MLA COUNCIL

Decisions made by the MAC in 2024

ACCREDIA, the National Accreditation Body (NAB) of Italy, remained an EA MLA signatory in the fields of calibration (EN ISO/IEC 17025), testing (EN ISO/IEC 17025) including medical examinations (EN ISO 15189), inspection (EN ISO/IEC 17020), proficiency testing provision (EN ISO/IEC 17043), certification of management systems (EN ISO/IEC 17021-1), certification of products (EN ISO/IEC 17065), certification of persons (EN ISO/IEC 17024), validation and verification (EN ISO 14065 and EN ISO/IEC 17029) and reference material production (EN ISO 17034).

CYS-CYSAB, the NAB of Cyprus, remained an EA MLA signatory in the fields of calibration, testing including medical examinations, inspection and certification of products. CYS-CYSAB, the Cypriot NAB, remained an EA MLA signatory in the fields of certification of products and inspection.

EGAC, the NAB of Egypt, became an EA MLA signatory in the fields of validation and verification (EN ISO/IEC 17029).

Furthermore, EGAC remained an EA MLA signatory in the field of proficiency testing provision.

IPAC, the NAB of Portugal, remained an EA MLA signatory in the fields of calibration, testing, including medical examinations, inspection, certification of management systems, certification of products, certification of persons, and validation and verification.

NAAU, the NAB of Ukraine, became an EA MLA signatory in the field of validation and verification. Furthermore, NAAU remained an EA MLA signatory in the fields of calibration, testing including medical examinations, inspection, certification of management systems, certification of products and certification of persons.

NAH, the NAB of Hungary, remained an EA MLA signatory in the fields of medical examinations, proficiency testing provision, and certification of persons and products.

OLAS, the NAB of Luxembourg, remained an EA MLA signatory in the fields of calibration, testing including medical examinations, inspection, certification of management systems and certification of products.

PCA, the NAB of Poland, remained an EA MLA signatory in the fields of calibration, testing including medical examinations, inspection, certification of management systems, certification of products, certification of persons, validation and verification, proficiency testing provision and reference material production.



EA Multilateral Council Meeting - April 2024 - Sofia (Bulgaria)

5 - OPERATION OF THE MLA COUNCIL

SAS, the NAB of Switzerland, was recognised as a new EA MLA signatory in the fields of proficiency testing provision and reference material production.

Furthermore, SAS remained an EA MLA signatory in the fields of calibration, testing, including medical examinations, inspection, certification of management systems, certification of products, certification of persons.

TURKAK, the NAB of Türkiye, remained an EA MLA signatory in the fields of calibration, testing including medical examinations, inspection, certification of management systems, certification of products, certification of persons, validation and verification, proficiency testing provision and reference material production.



EA Multilateral Council Meeting - October 2024 - Brussels (Belgium)

6 - PEER EVALUATION PROCESS AND ACTIVITIES

The reliability of the MLA is maintained through a robust peer evaluation process, whose main objectives are to evaluate the ongoing compliance of EA NABs to the internationally-agreed requirements, and to ensure that regulators, stakeholders and the business community can have confidence in those certificates and reports issued by conformity assessment bodies accredited by EA Members having signed the EA MLA.

1 - PEER EVALUATION PROCESS

The peer evaluation process is carried out in accordance with [EA-2/02 M:2022 EA Procedure for the evaluation of a National Accreditation Body](#).

The national accreditation body applies for the MLA signatory status, specifying the scope for which it applies.

The Secretariat reviews the application documents and appoints a peer evaluation team composed of a Team Leader, a Deputy Team Leader, Team Members, and Trainees.

This peer evaluation team performs the document review. Where applicable, a pre-evaluation is conducted. Then, the team carries out the on-site evaluation, which combines evaluation of the management system at the NAB's office and observation of assessments carried out by the NAB. At the end of the evaluation, the team drafts the evaluation report. Findings are agreed upon with the NAB at a closing meeting.

A task force group appointed by the MAC Management Group makes a careful study of the evaluation report in order to provide the MAC with a recommendation on the result of the peer evaluation. The MAC makes the final decision, which is reflected in relevant EA publications and on the website.

The European Commission attends MAC meetings, and NABs under evaluation are encouraged to invite national authorities to observe the EA peer evaluation.

2 - PEER EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

For 2024, the MAC had scheduled 16 peer evaluations as follows:

- 10 re-evaluations: ATCG (Montenegro), COFRAC (France), DANAK (Denmark), FINAS (Finland), ISAC (Iceland), NA (Norway), PCA (Poland), SWEDAC (Sweden), TURKAK (Türkiye), UKAS (United Kingdom);
- 1 anticipated re-evaluation: LATAK (Latvia);
- 1 re-evaluation with extension for Validation and Verification: EGAC (Egypt);
- 1 second stage dedicated to testing: IPAC (Portugal);
- 1 progress report dedicated to persons certification: NAH (Hungary);
- 1 document review: ARMNAB (Armenia);
- 1 pre-evaluation: ARMNAB.

Furthermore, two witnesses in the fields of reference material production and validation and verification were carried out in advance of the peer evaluation of AA (Austria) scheduled for 2025.

6 - PEER EVALUATION PROCESS AND ACTIVITIES

EA peer evaluation activities

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2014
Total numbers of evaluations performed ¹	7	25	13	14	16
Total numbers of reports discussed ²	31 ¹	13	15	17	11
Total man-days for evaluation	335	1,764	1,070	940	1,241
Extraordinary evaluations	0	2	0	2	0
Suspension	0	1	0	0	0

¹ 31 reports, out of which 18 related to transition to EN ISO/IEC 17011:2017.

The total number of evaluations performed in 2024 increased slightly, which also increased the number of man-days. This is due to the extra evaluations conducted: an anticipated re-evaluation, a new application that underwent documentation review and pre-evaluation, and a second-stage peer evaluation.

The evaluation teams reported a total of 133 non-conformities for those peer evaluations carried out in 2024.



7 - EA PEER EVALUATORS

EA peer evaluators are highly qualified and experienced national accreditation body staff members who attend training programs on a frequent and regular basis. Peer evaluators' performance is regularly reviewed by the Secretariat. They can be mandated for peer evaluation at the ILAC or IAF levels.

1 - MANAGEMENT OF EVALUATORS

The EA MAC is responsible for the management of peer evaluation resources by organising evaluator training sessions and harmonisation events, ensuring that enough peer evaluators with the skills necessary to cover the full scope of the MLA are available.

The management of peer evaluators is carried out in accordance with [EA-2/02 M:2022 EA Procedure for the Evaluation of a National Accreditation Body, Annex 1: Process and procedures for selection, qualification and monitoring of evaluators and the appointment and composition of the evaluation team.](#)

The initial selection and qualification (authorisation) of evaluators are carried out by the Secretariat, which may give priority to specific candidate evaluators to fulfil the needs of the peer evaluation system and to ensure a balanced contribution of all MLA signatories. Newcomer training sessions for new Team Members (TMs) are designed to ensure that the evaluators meet the competence criteria and to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of the peer evaluation processes and requirements.

Moreover, the Secretariat monitors the performance of evaluators on an ongoing basis by managing the feedback collected from the evaluated NAB and evaluated by the Team Leader (TL) and TMs, the evaluation of TMs by the TL, and the feedback from the TMs on the TL. At least once every three years, the performance of the evaluators is re-evaluated based on this monitoring, updated curriculum vitae, and participation in refresher training sessions. The authorisation of an evaluator is re-confirmed by the Secretariat.

In order to improve the performance and harmonisation of evaluators' work, the MAC and Secretariat regularly organise refresher training sessions and exchange of experiences between evaluators, inform them about new requirements, changes in the peer evaluation procedures and areas for improvement, and take necessary action based on the feedback received on the evaluators' performance.

2 - NUMBER OF EVALUATORS

By the end of December 2024, a total of 191 evaluators (including trainees) were authorised to perform peer evaluations on behalf of EA, i.e., acknowledged for having all technical competences to perform peer evaluations under specific accreditation scopes.

In 2024, 36 evaluators have been re-approved for three years (6 Team Leaders, 5 Deputy Team Leaders, and 25 Team Members).

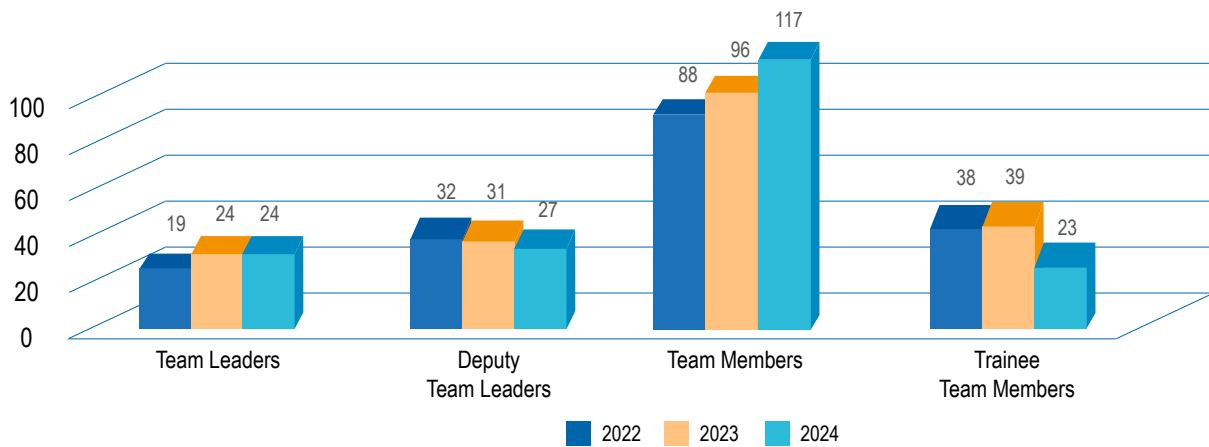
Number of evaluators per qualification

By the end of December 2024, the 191 authorised evaluators are broken down as follows:

- 24 Team leaders (TLs)
- 27 Deputy Team Leaders (DTLs)
- 117 Team Members (TMs)
- 23 Trainee Team Members (Trainee TMs)

7 - EA PEER EVALUATORS

Number of evaluators per qualification from 2022 to 2024

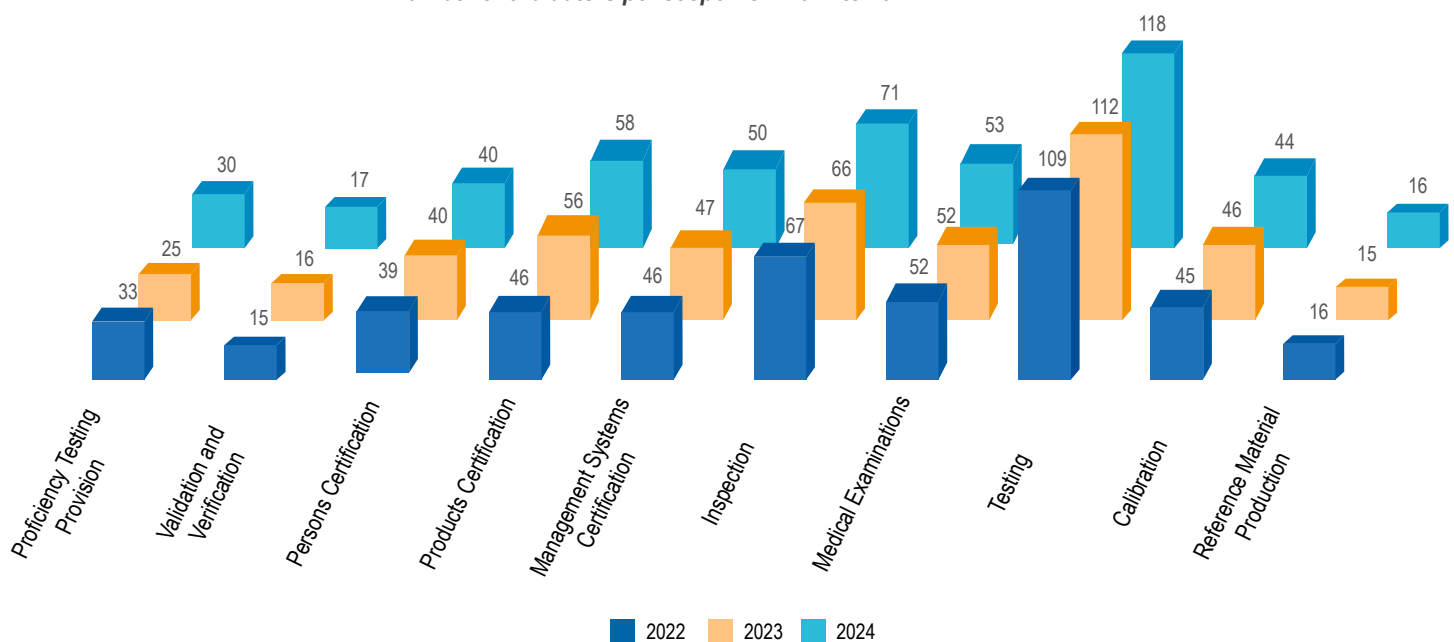


The total number of evaluators remained stable in 2024, even though 13 evaluators ended their participation for various reasons (leaving the NABs, retirement, or withdrawal of evaluator status at the request of NABs). In 2024, the number of Team Members increased by 22 % based on the upgrade of 18 Trainees who participated in peer evaluations in 2024, and including the new evaluators who were approved directly as Team Members at the end of the Newcomer Training held in 2024. The total number of Deputy Team Leaders decreased slightly in 2024.

Number of evaluators per scope

In the table below, the number of evaluators includes all approved evaluator statuses for the Trainee TMs, TMs, DTLs, and TLs competent for each scope, knowing that one evaluator is competent for one or several scopes.

Number of evaluators per scope from 2022 to 2024



The number of evaluators for each scope of the EA MLA, except for persons certification and calibration, has increased compared to the last two years. For person certification, the number of evaluators remained the same, while it decreased slightly for calibration.

7 - EA PEER EVALUATORS

Number of evaluators per NAB

The newcomer training session held in 2024 has allowed to authorise of new evaluators, several of whom belong to those 11 NABs, which increased their total number of evaluators. In 2024, 8 NABs increased their total number of evaluators, whereas 9 NABs decreased their total number of evaluators.

Considering both the total number of evaluators (including trainees) and the number of MLA signatories for each scope, the highest ratios of evaluators by the end of 2024 are observed for testing (2.81), inspection (1.65), and products certification (1.53). The most critical ratio of evaluators is noticed for validation and verification (0.63).

3 - TRAINING OF PEER EVALUATORS

In 2024, 4 trainings were specifically organised for EA evaluators, i.e. 1 newcomer training session as well as 3 refresher trainings dedicated to Team Members. Three of them were organised on-site to alternate with the remote sessions held in 2022 and 2023.

Newcomer training session

The issue of evaluator resources is a constant priority on the MAC agenda in order to assure a sufficient number of evaluators and the appropriate level of competence for the sustainable maintenance of the EA MLA system.

The 2024 newcomer training session, which gathered 19 participants from 16 NABs at the EA Secretariat's office in Paris, France, has permitted EA to gain 14 new peer evaluators, out of which 8 could be assigned directly as Team Members and 6 were assigned first as Trainee Team Members.

The next newcomer training session will take place in December 2026.

Refresher training sessions

In accordance with EA-2/02, the peer evaluators shall normally attend a refresher training 3 years after the newcomer training or after their first two evaluations as a Team Member, whichever is soonest; thereafter, Team Leaders and Team Members are expected as a minimum to attend a refresher training every 5 years. Since the evaluators are mainly authorised for more than one scope, the Secretariat invites them to attend the refresher training sessions planned in all their authorised scopes.

50 out of the total pool of 191 peer evaluators participated in the refresher training sessions in 2024.

The first refresher training session held on 5 and 6 June 2024 in Brussels, Belgium, was dedicated to calibration, reference material producers, and biobanking to prepare for the launch of the EA MLA for biobanking. 11 Team Members from 9 NABs took part in the training programme.

The second session gathered 13 Team Members from 10 NABs on 20 and 21 November 2024 in Brussels, Belgium, and focused on management system certification, persons certification, and validation and verification.

The third refresher training session was held remotely on 27 and 28 November 2024; it was specially targeted at Team Members authorised in the scopes of testing, medical examinations, and proficiency testing providers. 26 participants from 15 NABs took part in the training programme.

8 - IMPROVEMENT OF THE MLA AND PEER EVALUATION PROCESS

1 - IMPROVING THE PEER EVALUATION PROCESS

The peer evaluation process is under ongoing review by the MAC, peer evaluators, and EA internal auditors. MAC

MAC project on reengineering the peer evaluation system

Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 reinforces the role of EA and its peer evaluation system in both voluntary and regulated sectors. EA shall support and harmonise the implementation of stringent accreditation rules to achieve consistency throughout Europe, as well as greater transparency to and acceptability by all interested parties, including national authorities. The peer evaluation process is also further strengthened to accommodate the specific needs of regulatory fields to raise the reassurance of regulators and stakeholders that national accreditation bodies' technical competence is thoroughly assessed.

The MAC has completed the project for reengineering the peer evaluation system, one of the key actions of the EA Strategy 2025, with the finalisation of the last two documents related to the competence of evaluators and the mechanism for feedback on any lessons learned during the peer evaluations.

Consequently, the MAC decided in its meeting in October 2023 to revise EA-2/02 regarding the prerequisite criteria for evaluators' competences to allow the possibility for more NABs staff who have the proper knowledge and skills but are not assessors to become EA evaluators. A TFG was established, and following the approval in the MAC meeting of October 2024, the draft document was submitted to the members for comments at the end of the year. The revised EA-2/02 is expected to be approved in 2025.

2 - DEVELOPMENT OF THE MLA

EA MLA signatory status for EN ISO/IEC 17029

Following the launching of the EA MLA on EN ISO/IEC 17029:2019 *Conformity assessment - General principles and requirements for validation and verification bodies* in October 2022 - replacing EN ISO 14065:2013 *General principles and requirements for bodies validating and verifying environmental information* as main MLA signatory level (so-called level 3 standard) - for all signatories, their MLA signatory status in the field of validation and verification has been updated to EN ISO/IEC 17029 by the transition deadline set on 1 June 2024.

Further to those 20 NABs having updated their status by the end of December 2023 — i.e. AA (Austria), ACCREDIA (Italy), BAS (Bulgaria), BELAC (Belgium), CAI (Czech Republic), COFRAC (France), DAkkS (Germany), EAK (Estonia), ENAC (Spain), ESYD (Greece), FINAS (Finland), LATAK (Latvia), NAH (Hungary), PCA (Poland), RENAR (Romania), RvA (The Netherlands), SA (Slovenia), SNAS (Slovakia), SWEDAC (Sweden) and TURKAK (Türkiye) —, 5 NABs have indeed updated their EA MLA signatory status in the field of validation and verification in 2024: DANAK (Denmark), HAA (Croatia), IPAC (Portugal), NA (Norway) and UKAS (United Kingdom).

Extension of the EA MLA to biobanking

Further to the decision made by the General Assembly in November 2022 to expand the EA MLA for biobanking as a level 2 conformity assessment activity using EN ISO 20387:2018 *Biotechnology — Biobanking — General Requirements for Biobanking* as a new level 3 normative document, the MAC had to define the prerequisites for the launch of the MLA on biobanking.

In April 2023, the MAC endorsed the procedure for launching the EA MLA for accreditation of biobanking according to EN ISO 20387.

8 - IMPROVEMENT OF THE MLA AND PEER EVALUATION PROCESS

Finally, acting upon recommendation from the Executive Board and based on the proposal made by the MAC in April, the General Assembly resolved in May 2023 that the peer evaluations in the field of biobanking against EN ISO 20387:2018 shall be performed according to the above-mentioned MAC procedure, and that the MLA shall come into effect provided that at least two members have been successfully peer evaluated. Besides, it was resolved that EA applies to ILAC to extend the scope of EA as a recognized region for the scope “Biobanking - ISO 20387”. This EA Resolution 2023 (53) 14 will come into effect on the date that the standard EN ISO 20387 is confirmed to be harmonised.

The peer evaluation activities in this field could not begin in 2024 and were postponed until the EN ISO 20387 standard is harmonised and cited in the Official Journal of the European Union.

3 - INCREASED VISIBILITY OF THE MLA

According to *EA Strategy 2025*, EA has been establishing an MLA mark to identify EA MLA signatories and their accredited CABs. After EA Members selected their preferred option for the MLA mark design at the General Assembly in November 2019, the previous Executive Committee was mandated to proceed with the formal registration of the MLA mark as a collective mark of the European Union (EU) in a first stage, and then to extend registration to non-EU countries at the international level based on the Madrid Agreement.

The formal registration as a collective mark of the EU was completed in June 2022.

The process for registering the EU mark as an international mark is nearing completion for those EA MLA signatories which are not EU Members: further to EA's formal application to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the EA MLA mark has been successfully registered dated 12 April 2023 as an international collective mark with the WIPO. The mark is now examined by the national offices of the 17 countries concerned; notifications may be issued until 18 months after notification of the registration of the EA MLA mark in each country. This means that the full process is expected to be completed by summer 2025.

The application of the EA MLA mark should remain voluntary for NABs signatories of the EA MLA, which will be entitled to use the MLA mark in combination with their logo. Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) accredited by an MLA-signatory NAB will have the right to use the MLA mark in combination with the NAB accreditation symbol. The basic principle is that the mark can only be used in a country where it has been properly registered. It means that the mark will be registered (at least) in all the countries of the MLA signatories.

4 - MANAGEMENT OF TRANSITIONS OF STANDARDS AND IAF/ILAC DOCUMENTS

The MAC has strengthened its process for ensuring continuing compliance with the MLAs transitions.

The transition periods of the following documents having come to end in 2024, the MAC carried out surveys on each transition to monitor EA Members' compliance with the requirements during 2024:

- IAF MD 25:2023 *Criteria for Evaluation of Conformity Assessment Schemes*
- IAF MD 7:2023 *IAF Mandatory Document for the Harmonization of Sanctions and Dealing with Fraudulent Behaviour*
- IAF MD 6:2023 *IAF Mandatory Document for the Application of ISO 14065:2020*

The feedback received from each survey indicated that all members completed the transitions within the agreed-upon timeframe.

9 - COOPERATION WITH IAF/ILAC: PEER EVALUATION OF EA

EA is a regional cooperation body recognised by IAF and ILAC: the EA MLA is recognised by both organisations and covered by their respective arrangements. In concrete terms, a test report or certificate accredited by an EA MLA signatory is recognised by the signatories to the IAF (International Accreditation Forum) and ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation) multilateral agreements. The EA MLA acts as a world-wide passport to trade.

1 - EXTENSION OF EA'S MLA SIGNATORY STATUS

On 15 February 2024, EA has been recognised for the following sub-scopes under the IAF MLA on product certification (ISO/IEC 17065) as follows:

- BRC Global Standard - Food Safety
 - Level 4 – Food Safety, Part III & IV
 - Level 5 – Food Safety, Part II
- BRC Global Standard - Agents and Brokers
 - Level 4 – Agents and Brokers, Part III & IV
 - Level 5 – Agents and Brokers, Part II
- BRC Global Standard - Packaging Materials
 - Level 4 – Packaging Materials, Part III & IV
 - Level 5 – Packaging Materials, Part II
- BRC Global Standard - Storage and Distribution
 - Level 4 – Storage and Distribution, Part III & IV
 - Level 5 – Storage and Distribution, Part II
- BRC Global Standard - Gluten Free Certification Program
 - Level 4 – Gluten Free Certification Program, Part III & IV
 - Level 5 – Gluten Free Certification Program, Part II
- BRC Global Standard - Consumer Products Personal Care Household
 - Level 4 – Consumer Products Personal Care Household, Part III & IV
 - Level 5 – Consumer Products Personal Care Household, Part II
- BRC Global Standard - Consumer Products General Merchandise
 - Level 4 – Consumer Products General Merchandise, Part III & IV
 - Level 5 – Consumer Products General Merchandise, Part II
- Global G.A.P. Produce Handling Assurance (PHA)
 - Level 4 – Global G.A.P. PHA General Regulations
 - Level 5 – Global G.A.P. PHA CPCCs

On 15 February 2024, EA has been recognised for the following sub-scopes under the IAF MLA on management system certification (ISO/IEC 17021-1):

- IAQG (International Aerospace Quality Group):
 - Level 4 – IAQG 9104-1
 - Level 5 – IAQG 9100, IAQG 9110, IAQG 9120.

9 - COOPERATION WITH IAF/ILAC: PEER EVALUATION OF EA

2 - FULL RE-EVALUATION OF EA BY IAF/ILAC

The re-evaluation of EA by IAF/ILAC started in early September 2022 with the evaluation of the EA Secretariat, continued with the evaluation of the scopes of medical examinations, inspection, persons certification as well as validation and verification in 3 NABs, and terminated with the evaluation of the MAC decision-making process at the MAC meeting held in October 2022 in Turin, Italy.

Further to the confirmation by the ILAC Arrangement Council (AC) in December 2023 of EA's continuation as a recognised regional cooperation body of ILAC (see Section V. hereafter), the IAF MLA Committee (MLAC) has confirmed in April 2024 the continuation of EA as a recognised regional accreditation group of IAF, i.e. the continuation of recognition of the EA MLA to the IAF MLA for the accreditation of management system certification bodies (QMS, EMS, FSMS, ISMS, EnMS, MDMS, OH&SMS, FAMI-QS, FSSC 22000) using ISO/IEC 17021-1, product certification bodies (including Global G.A.P. IFA General Regulations) using ISO/IEC 17065, person certification bodies (including IPC) using ISO/IEC 17024, and validation and verification bodies using ISO 14065:2013.

Besides, IAF has updated EA's recognition status for the field of validation and verification to ISO/IEC 17029 on 19 March 2024.

The next re-evaluation of EA is scheduled to begin no later than July 2026.

Besides, EA has responded positively to the IAF/ILAC request and provided one Team Leader, who is also a Team Member competent in the field of Testing (ACCREDIA, Italy), to support the evaluation of Arab Accreditation Cooperation (ARAC), which started in September 2024.



ANNEX - MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT SIGNATORIES (8 OCTOBER 2024)

	CALIBRATION LABORATO- RIES	TESTING LABORATO- RIES	MEDICAL LABORATO- RIES	INSPECTION BODIES	CERTIFICA- TION BODIES - PRODUCTS	CERTIFICATION BODIES - MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	CERTIFICATION BODIES - PERSONS	VALIDATION & VERIFICATION BODIES	PROFICIENCY TESTING PROVIDERS	REFERENCE MATERIAL PRODUCERS
ALBANIA - DPA		√		√		√	√			
ALGERIA - ALGERAC	√	√		√						
AUSTRIA - AA	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		
BELGIUM - BELAC	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA - BATA	√	√	√	√	√					
BULGARIA – BAS	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		
CROATIA - HAA	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		
CYPRUS – CYS	√	√	√	√	√					
CZECH REPUBLIC - CAI	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
DENMARK - DANAK	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
EGYPT - EGAC									√	
ESTONIA - EAK	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		
FINLAND - FINAS	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
FRANCE – COFRAC	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
GEORGIA - GAC	√	√	√	√	√		√		√	
GERMANY - DAkkS	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
GREECE - ESYD	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
HUNGARY – NAH	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
ICELAND - ISAC				√						
IRELAND - INAB	√	√	√	√	√	√	√			√
ISRAEL - ISRAC	√	√	√	√						
ITALY - ACCREDIA	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
LATVIA - LATAK	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		
LITHUANIA - LA	√	√	√	√	√	√	√			
LUXEMBURG - OLAS	√	√	√	√	√	√				
MALTA – NAB-MALTA	√	√		√						
MONTENEGRO - ATCG	√	√	√	√	√					
NORWAY - NA	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
POLAND - PCA	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
PORTUGAL - IPAC	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		
REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA - MOLDAC	√	√	√	√	√	√				
REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACE- DONIA - IARNM	√	√	√	√	√	√				

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	CALIBRATION LABORATO- RIES	TESTING LABORATO- RIES	MEDICAL LABORATO- RIES	INSPECTION BODIES	CERTIFICA- TION BODIES - PRODUCTS	CERTIFICATION BODIES - MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	CERTIFICATION BODIES - PERSONS	VALIDATION & VERIFICATION BODIES	PROFICIENCY TESTING PROVIDERS	REFERENCE MATERIAL PRODUCERS
ROMANIA - RENAR	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
SERBIA - ATS	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	
SLOVAKIA - SNAS	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
SLOVENIA - SA	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		
SPAIN - ENAC	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
SWEDEN – SWEDAC	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
SWITZERLAND - SAS	√	√	√	√	√	√	√			
NETHERLANDS - RvA	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
TUNISIA - TUNAC	√	√	√	√	√	√				
TURKEY – TURKAK	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
UKRAINE – NAAU	√	√	√	√	√	√	√			
UNITED KINGDOM - UKAS	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

 Signatory in 2024

MLA REPORT 2024



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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT US:

European co-operation for Accreditation
75 avenue Parmentier F-75 544 Paris Cedex 11
Tel: +33 1 40 21 24 62 - Fax: +33 1 40 21 24 00

www.european-accreditation.org - secretariat@european-accreditation.org



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