

# EA STRATEGY 2025

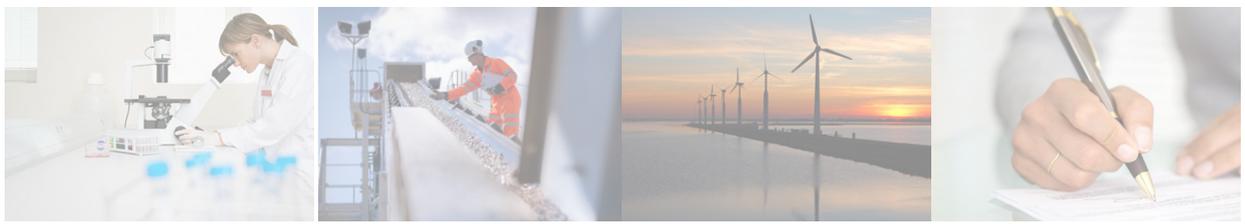


*From Good to Great*



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# 1 - Executive summary

The European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) is an association of national accreditation bodies in Europe that are officially recognised by their national governments to assess and accredit — against international standards—organisations that carry out conformity assessment services such as certification, verification, inspection, testing and calibration.

Consumers, businesses, regulators and other organisations all over the world want to be able to trust and have confidence in the goods and services they buy and use. As a consequence, there has been a growth in specified national and international requirements for products, processes and services.

**When applied correctly, the use of conformity assessment and accreditation can make life safer, healthier and easier for everyone and support development of communication and trade, while allowing resources to be used more efficiently.**

For more than 15 years, EA has provided a framework for the mutual recognition of accredited conformity assessment results to promote development and transfer of knowledge, improve accreditation and conformity assessment activities in Europe and together with International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and International Accreditation Forum (IAF) at a global level.

Given the current position and the need for accreditation, EA has to consider how it should develop and adapt to the changing demand, continue to ensure that it provides confidence to all stakeholders and users of accreditation and provide effective support to its members.

The strategy has a long term focus and sets out the course for the cooperation to achieve its vision and desired position.

**Our three strategic objectives that translate the strategy and set out the plan to achieve the vision are:**

- 1. Good governance to deliver consistent and sustainable results.***
- 2. Close cooperation with regulators and stakeholders to strengthen accreditation at the European and international levels.***
- 3. Continue to develop accreditation to support innovation and growth in existing and new areas.***



## 2 - Introduction

The importance of accreditation of conformity assessment bodies has substantially increased over the last decades.

The European Commission (EC) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) member states<sup>1</sup> have recognized that accreditation is essential for the correct operation of a transparent and quality-oriented market and in order to safeguard a high level of protection of public interests, such as health, safety and protection of the environment.

The importance of accreditation has further been strengthened following the implementation of the 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 (hereinafter Regulation 765/2008) which, for the first time, provides a legal framework for the provision of accreditation services across Europe. This legal framework identifies EA as an important association and defines its responsibilities and obligations.

Furthermore, conformity assessment services delivered by accredited conformity assessment bodies, under regional and global arrangements, are recognized in international trade agreements as the tool national regulators can rely on when defining common conformity assessment procedures.

**The EA Executive Committee defined this project with the mission to develop the new EA strategy for the association over the period 2017 - 2025.**

**The task given to the project group was compiled in the document “Project EA Strategy 2025 – Project Description”.**

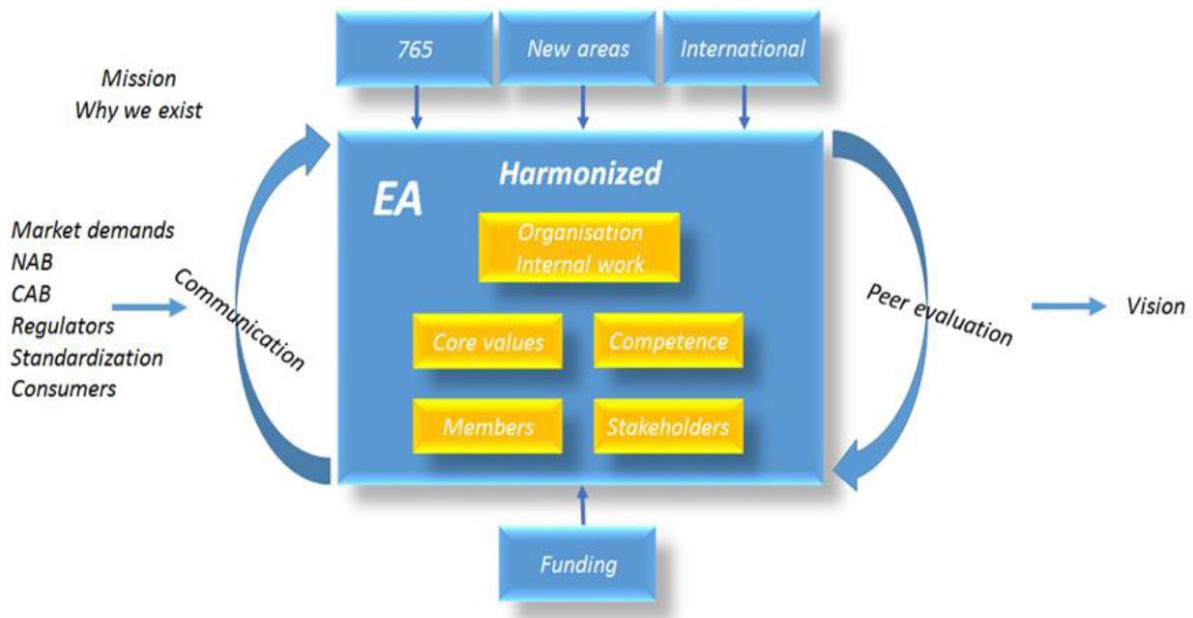
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<sup>1</sup> During the project period UK has, through a referendum, voted to leave EU. The future UK position and terms of reference are not explored in this strategy.



### 3 - Methodology

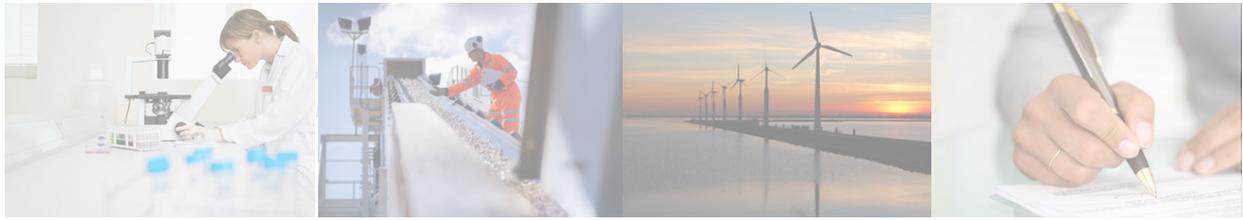
The project team, under the leadership of a project manager, started to work in October 2015 by performing a SWOT analysis of the current situation. The SWOT was then further developed during a workshop in the EA General Assembly (GA) in November 2015. The analysis of the SWOT identified ten main areas of specific importance for the development of the new strategy, that were addressed in a survey among EA members and stakeholders at the beginning of 2016.



The input from these ten main areas and the results from the survey provide the basis for formulating a current position and a desired position for 2025. These have been compiled in a consolidated document which serves as a broader version of all inputs that have been considered and analysed during the working process. That enabled the project to identify alternative and important “routing points”. In order to reach the desired position, the project identified some specific objectives, actions and milestones, an updated vision and mission and a set of core values.

**Three strategic objectives have been identified supporting the orientation towards the EA vision and 2025 desired position. A proposed implementation plan has been provided by the Executive Committee.**

The project team built the strategy from the platform given for EA in the Regulation 765/2008 and the purpose of EA given in the Articles of Association for EA (AoA). In Regulation 765/2008, articles 10, 13, 14 and Annex 1 regulate the mandate given to EA and this is further developed in recitals 22-25 and 42-45.



## 4 - Current position

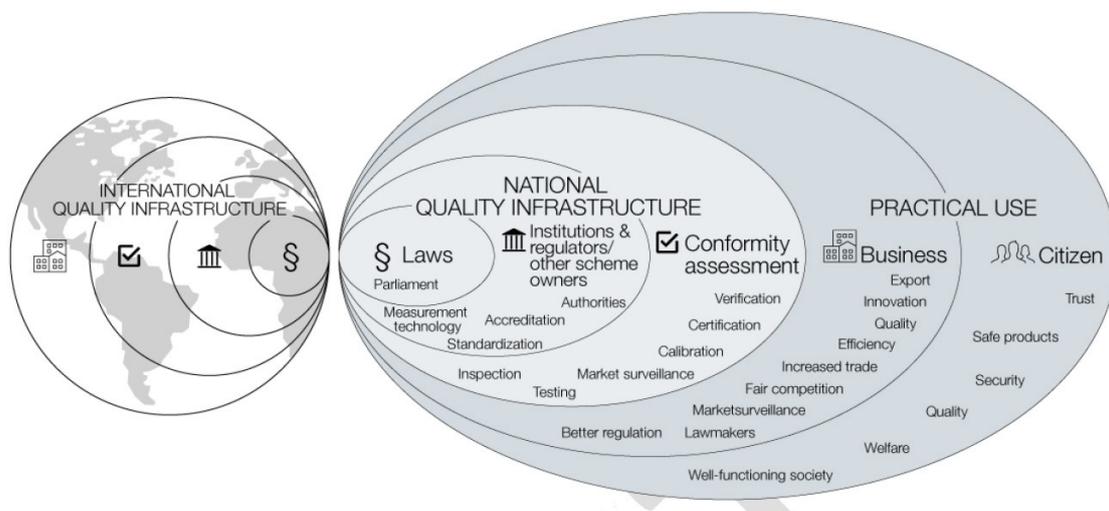
### 4.1 - The role of accreditation and the Quality Infrastructure model

Strengthening international competitiveness and creating conditions for sustainable solutions to ensure global societal challenges require pooling of resources, renewed and cross-border cooperation.

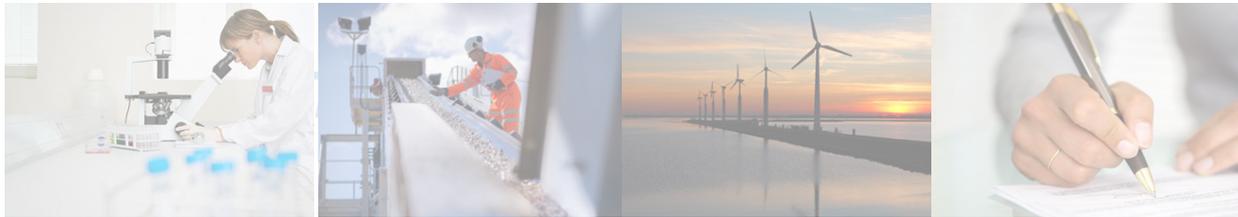
Accredited conformity assessment is a vital part of the Quality Infrastructure (QI). Conformity assessment has both a geographical and functional dimension. When used effectively, accreditation plays an important role in national, European, as well as global trade, contributing to innovation, use of technology and knowledge to protect consumers and the environment.

QI refers to the institutions, systems and methods that must be established, operated, used and trusted by the marketplace in order to ensure that products and services are safe, reliable and conform to functional and quality requirements. Besides the International Quality Infrastructure (IQI) and European Quality Infrastructure (EQI), each country has a national quality infrastructure (NQI) depending on the EQI. It comprises the national institutions that provide the framework and services to advance the quality and safety of products and services offered in local and foreign markets. The NQI is adapted to the EQI through regulations and the efforts of EA, which also has a vital role to safeguard European regulations and needs. EA supports its members to navigate in the international arena.

**The three conceptual pillars of a QI are complementary and mutually supportive: standardization, accredited conformity assessment and metrology.**



Source: Swedac



**The institutions, constituting the QI, can be divided into two main groups: the first one defines the specifications which products and services shall meet and the second represents those institutions regulating the market:**

- **Lawmakers and standards organisations**
  - Parliament and government
- **Laws and ordinances**
  - Regulatory authorities
- **Technical regulations on behalf of health, safety, environment, consumer protection etc.**
  - Different types of private specifiers of standards
- **Standards, interpretative documents and policies**
- **Requirements and specifications concerning products and services**
- **Providers**
  - Metrological institutions
  - Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs)
  - Accreditation Bodies (ABs)
  - Market surveillance authorities / Inspection authorities

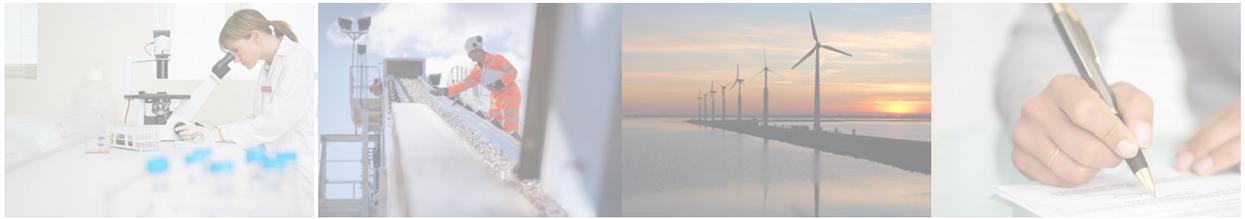
Where users of the QI are concerned, important stakeholders include e.g. manufacturing industry, services companies, welfare, municipal and state institutions, industry and trade associations, different types of standards specifiers and consumers.

When the whole QI operates as it should, the preconditions are created for trust in everyday life as well as societal benefits with more confident citizens, increased competition in the business sector and free trade of goods and services.

## **4.2 - The European market and Regulation 765/2008**

The European market for conformity assessment services has developed rapidly over the last fifteen years, and the EA Multilateral Agreement (MLA) continues to demonstrate its value and robustness. The marketplace, as well as the regulators, accept accredited conformity assessment services as a reliable and preferred tool for demonstrating conformity at the national market level, as well as at European level, thus facilitating innovation and trade.

Through the enforcement of Regulation 765/2008, accreditation is deemed to be a public authority activity. Where accreditation is not operated directly by the public authorities themselves, the Member State shall entrust its National Accreditation Body (NAB) with the operation of accreditation as a public authority activity and grant it formal recognition.



Regulation 765/2008 stipulates specific requirements on accreditation and National Accreditation Bodies (NABs). The added value is the existence of a peer-evaluation system, which has the aim to reinforce confidence in every member, and the obligation to participate in an EU association (EA) to ensure harmonization, cooperation and good performance by the designated NABs regardless of their legal status. Regulation 765/2008 stipulates that national authorities shall recognize the equivalence of accredited services delivered by NABs which have successfully undergone peer evaluation.

The counterbalance is that a public authority activity cannot be assigned without a definition of its boundaries. That was captured in a closed definition of accreditation, making it to be based on harmonized standards, which are generated by mandates given by the European Commission and the European Free Trade Association.

Nevertheless, the EC/EFTA are recognising other assessment activities that are not based on harmonized standards e.g. Eco-management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) and Good Laboratory Practices (GLP).

**The conclusion of the survey performed for this project among stakeholders and members, clearly states that Regulation 765/2008 is seen as a major benefit and its continuity is on the top of priorities. The implementation of Regulation 765/2008 has increased credibility of accreditation and enhanced its use in many sectors, which were not interested in accreditation previously.**

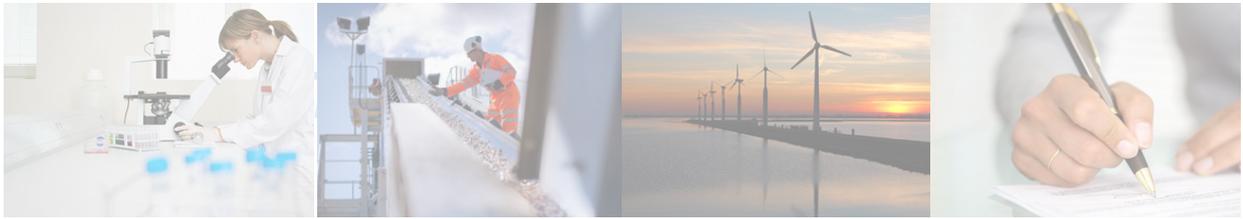
The analysis of the survey points out that the main concern with Regulation 765/2008 is the definition of accreditation, that appears to restrict accreditation to activities based on harmonized standards and limits development of new accreditation services requested by the marketplace and based on other criteria.

**The challenge for EA is to establish processes that allow for the development of accreditation in new areas to respond to market needs, while respecting the principles of Regulation 765/2008.**

## 4.3 - Cooperation with stakeholders

The analysis of the survey identified that the relationship between EA and stakeholders could be developed in a deeper way. The responses received indicate that EA could take more advantage of stakeholders know-how by involving them in the relevant discussions and forums. EA could also use them as a feedback mechanism to assess the perceived confidence in accredited results.

**As a consequence, EA could avoid the perception that accreditation is slow in adapting to market development and demand for new services. Stakeholders emphasised the need for more attention and interaction with EA and its members.**



## 4.4 - The international development

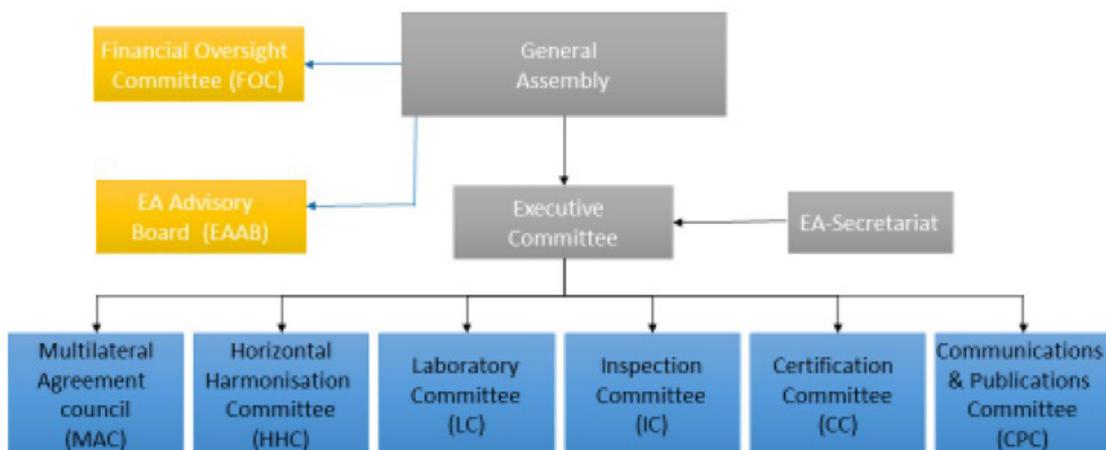
**In the global arena, EA is a recognized region of ILAC and IAF and a signatory to their respective mutual arrangements.**

The EA challenge, in the global arena, starts within EA and relates to its ability to prepare common positions and views to international issues and, if agreed to speak with one voice, to influence the work done internationally. It also relates to how EA is represented and how its views are expressed during international meetings. The analysis of the survey points out that EA members and stakeholders are of the opinion that IAF and ILAC should be one entity which serves the needs of its members – regions, accreditation bodies and “the market”.

EA has limited, formalized, cooperation with important global organisations such as the International Standards Organisation (ISO) and World Trade Association (WTO).

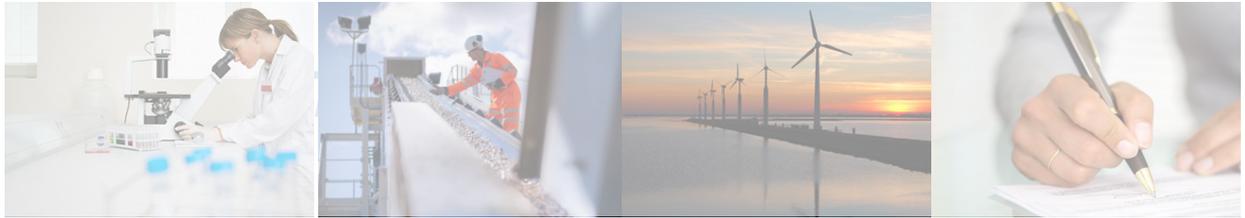
In the international arena, there is also a development regarding trade agreements between countries and regions and a steady increase in references made to accreditation and conformity assessment as the preferred tool to demonstrate that specified requirements related to a product, process, service, system, person or body have been fulfilled as agreed by the parties. This is a challenge for the regions and the global structure to establish cooperation relations with the relevant parties to facilitate implementation of the conformity assessment model agreed in trade agreements.

## 4.5 - The EA structure, role and operational approach



*EA Organisational Structure*

EA is operated and managed as an association where the decision-making body is the membership - the General Assembly. Committees / councils are operated and managed in accordance with the principles and decisions taken by the General Assembly. **Decision-making is a challenge with respect to involving the right forum and ensuring the right timing.**



The confidence that regulators and the market in general have in EA, means that EA is expected to be active in maintaining and developing the European market for conformity assessment services.

**The role of EA has developed and expanded from an association serving its members to become an institution providing mutual recognition, facilitating and supporting development of accreditation at European level.**

Cooperation between NABs is one of the pillars of EA and is recognized to have improved over the years, especially after the implementation of Regulation 765/2008. However, the current cooperation between NABs has only scratched the surface of the whole potential for further harmonisation, alignment of NABs interpretation and application of the accreditation criteria and assessment activities.

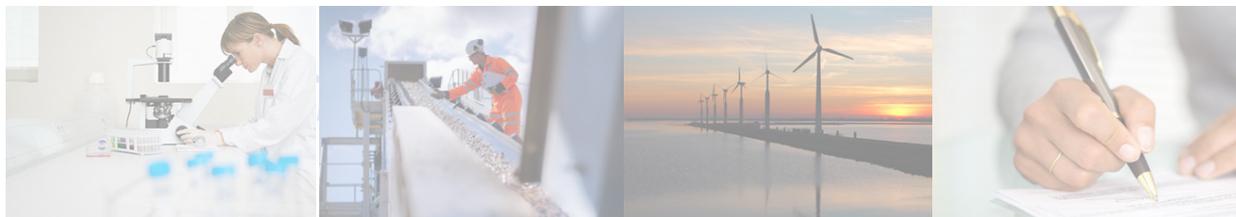
The work done by the Technical Committees and the Multilateral Agreement Council (MAC) accounts for almost all harmonization activities of EA. The analysis of the survey points out a risk for a perceived view that CABs are treated differently by different NABs, from interpretation of accreditation requirements to handling of new schemes. A concern among EA members is the difficulty to impose on members EA decisions or interpretations not stated in EA mandatory documents and the fact that there is no real common understanding of specific issues about how requirements / resolutions should be fulfilled and applied by NABs. Part of the lack of harmonization in EA could come from IAF/ILAC, since some decisions are needed to be taken at the international level and they take a lot of time.

The current Peer Evaluation system (PE) provides the tool for the European Commission, the European Free Trade Association and other stakeholders to maintain their confidence in the performance of NABs and, consequently, in accredited conformity assessment activities. It is not sufficiently used for competence sharing and benchmarking among members. The PE is for every MLA signatory and is carried out every four years. The evaluation involves an office assessment and witnessing in all accreditation fields. The complete peer evaluation activities are usually undertaken in one week.

The current process has advantages as well as disadvantages:

- It is a well-established system with a defined process for decision making
- It is challenging to administer and organize
- It is not flexible
- The size of the peer evaluation teams can be problematic for small NABs
- Expenses for the NABs occur every fourth year, instead of a lower yearly cost

EA, including its officers, Committee chairs, peer evaluators, others that are performing important work for EA and its members, is dependent on competent persons. Until now the focus has been on competence to do the actual work - the assessments. Performing assessments has always been and will be the core business for NABs but it needs to be recognised that competence to lead, direct and manage, are also skills that EA needs. Until now competence issues and more specifically, training, have been driven mainly by new or revised level 3 standards and the needs of the peer evaluation system. This part is generally functioning well, because it is clear where technical questions belong in the EA structure.



EA has established a structure for training and its management. But the structure should be strengthened in order to improve identification of training needs and development of additional training activities.

As the official guardian of European accreditation, EA has the overall strategic objective to safeguard the value and credibility of accredited conformity assessment services delivered by its members and accredited CABs, within the European market. As the body responsible for European accreditation, communication is pivotal to achieving the consistent implementation of Regulation 765/2008. Increased responsibility and trust placed in accreditation gives EA itself and its members a great responsibility to maintain a productive dialogue with the European Commission, the European Free Trade Association, national regulators and key stakeholders, to ensure that their expectations are understood. Where new schemes develop in existing and new areas, particularly where there is interest in schemes awarding certification or accreditation, their initiators should work with EA from an early stage in order to ensure that the schemes are sufficiently rigorous to meet the EA-MLA requirements.

The analysis of the survey shows clearly that EA as an association shall be more visible. It means, both inside and outside the accreditation community, supporting recognition and acceptance of the EA MLA and services / products provided under accreditation issued by the EA accreditation body members. So far, EA has decided not to go for an EA common accreditation mark as a tool to support recognition of reports and certificates covered by the EA MLA.

**The EA-communication function has developed over the years and is, at present, mainly focused on publishing news on the EA website as well as producing information material regarding accreditation and conformity assessment.**

Recently EA has started using social media. Improvements could be made with regard to enhanced focus and harmonisation, especially concerning external communication towards different stakeholders, including the European Commission and the European Free Trade Association. It is also desirable to improve EA's support to its members in their communication with national regulators.

It is evident, since EA was established, that the scope and application of accreditation have continued to grow. Individual accreditation bodies, and EA as a whole, have worked a lot to accommodate requests to develop and apply criteria for accreditation to many new areas, both within the scope of available conformity assessment body standards (new fields and schemes) and by the addition of new conformity assessment body standards or expansion of the MLA.

It is recognized that EA operates its MLA differently with regard to levels 4 and 5 compared to IAF. This allows greater flexibility: for example, inclusion in the EA MLA of certification of 'new' management system standards is more straightforward.

Within EA, much work has been undertaken to develop and refine the process for the evaluation and inclusion of conformity assessment schemes (EA-1/22 *EA Procedure and Criteria for the Evaluation of Conformity Assessment Schemes*). Procedures exist to extend the MLA (EA-1/06 *EA Multilateral Agreement Criteria for signing*). However, these processes need to be more reactive and they take time to administer and implement.



Different NABs have different appetites for developing new areas of accreditation and associated services, in accordance with Regulation 765/2008. They also operate in different economies and environments that can sometimes influence their capacity and ability to consider new activities. Regulation 765/2008 also needs to be taken into account on how it defines accreditation, and might even limit future expansion.

EA interacts well with the European Commission and the European Free Trade Association, with regard to how accreditation can support and be applied in European legislation, its responsiveness to requests and opportunities is well recognized. EA conducts general awareness-raising activities with relevant Directorate General (DGs) within the Commission but those activities are limited. The Secretariat receives a lot of information from the European Commission, that need to be examined. Resources for this work are limited and it could be the case that opportunities are missed to promote or develop the use of accreditation. The strength and the reputation of accreditation have developed as a consequence of the ability of NABs to interpret generic competence requirements across multiple and different fields. In order for accreditation to continuously be recognized as an effective tool to provide confidence to a wide range of stakeholders, it shall continue to grow and evolve. At the same time, it must be ensured that this development is effective and appropriate and that integrity and impartiality of accreditation is maintained.

**The EA finances are based on membership fees and contributions from the European Commission and the European Free Trade Association. With the income, the EA Secretariat and EA members are financed and meet the requirements laid down in the Articles of Association, Rules of Procedures and Regulation 765/2008. EA income is stable and covers the secretariat operational costs and the basic needs of EA.**

The specific activities performed by EA are stipulated in the annual Work Programs.

## 4.6 - Resourcing the EA work

The basic approach in resourcing EA activities is to rely on the membership to provide resources to committees on a voluntary basis.

The Executive Secretary is inter alia involved in the administrative work, in the coordination of the technical work, and, at the management level, in the cooperation with regulators, stakeholders and other interested parties.

The majority of the resources available for EA in handling operational, technical and strategic issues are provided voluntarily by the NABs. This resource model is challenging in relation to timing and capacity, and is one of the factors limiting EA in its ability to respond to requests from the marketplace and regulators in a timely manner, especially concerning technical issues.



## 5 - EA's Mission

To ensure **confidence in accredited conformity assessments results, through harmonized operation of accreditation activities**, in support of European and global economies.

## 6 - EA's Vision

To be a **reference in the world for accreditation**, that enables an open and global market for competitive business, and providing reassurance to consumers in a sustainable society.

## 7 - EA's Values

EA-core values are developed out of EA's mission and vision, highlighting the expected behaviours and skills on which all the work of EA is based. The core values support the implementation of the strategy and the basis of EA, enabling the membership organization to speak with one voice and to reach the desired position 2025.

### We are harmonized

- By being transparent in our rules and actions
- By being coordinated in word and deed
- By being accessible both internally and externally
- By having and promoting a common understanding of NABs promise to the market and society

### We are responsible

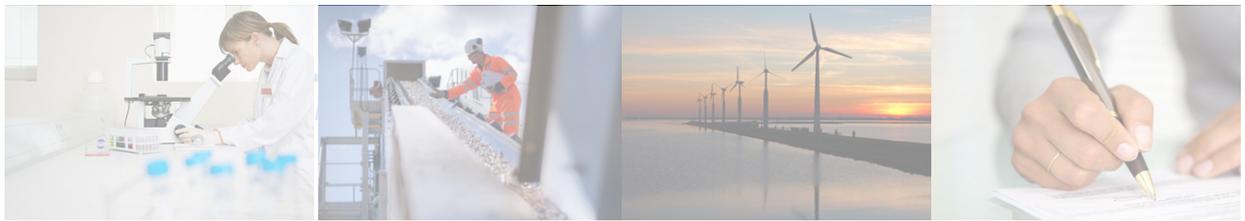
- By involving and listening to regulators, industry and other stakeholders
- By being loyal and dedicated and work for the public interest
- By being proactive
- By maintaining our integrity

### We provide confidence

- By establishing consistent deliverables
- By being open, impartial and independent
- By being non-discriminating
- By practicing what we preach
- By being democratic

### We are competent

- By being efficient and professional
- By using our resources
- By exercising leadership
- By supporting development and innovation
- By continuously improving



## 8 - Desired position 2025 and strategic objectives

### 8.1 - Resourcing the EA work

Starting from the current position and striving for achieving the vision, the project has developed a desired position for EA 2025 as a membership organization.

**EA is organized in an efficient and effective manner. The foundation of EA relies on a set of common core values and level of competence.**

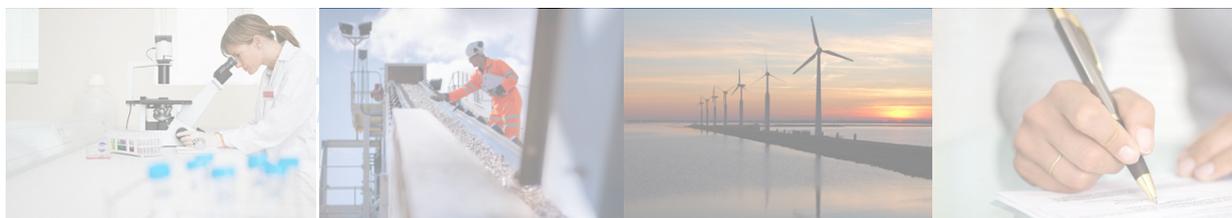
- The **EA secretariat** handles the **daily operations** of EA, including technical assistance to committees.
- The **decision-making capacity is high** and lies in relevant parts of the organization.
- There are **useful and ongoing exchanges of experience** between the members.
- **Peer evaluations** are performed and communicated to the extent that **confidence** in the marketplace is established.
- EA is financed based on a **well-balanced, stable and long term model** comprising EA members, EC, EFTA and other interested public parties, with objectivity and impartiality.
- Results from CABs are clearly identifiable, as being inside or outside the EA MLA.
- Membership fee income and financial support from the European Commission and the European Free Trade Association are well-balanced. Adequate funding to support the operations of the EA secretariat must be available.
- The **organization is harmonized** and its members speak with **one voice**.

**EA has good cooperation with stakeholders and other interested parties.**

- **Relevant partners and stakeholders** contribute to and acknowledge that they are influencing the work in EA.
- A **single global accreditation organisation** exists, aiming at developing international guidance documents and at harmonizing and coordinating the work between regions.
- EA is considered as a **good reference in accreditation** by all the parties involved.

**EA proactively works with regulators and stakeholders in order to develop accreditation in new fields where assurance of conformity assessment activities is needed.**

- **EA and its delivery are communicated and well known** by its partners and stakeholders, and potential interested partners are identified, informed and updated regularly.
- The European Commission sees **EA as the natural know-how focal point** when developing new and existing areas which comprise attestation of competence and impartiality.



## 8.2 - Strategic objectives

These strategic objectives shall be seen in close connection with the role and function that EA should undertake in relation to the development of the market for conformity assessment in Europe and globally, as well as with regard to its members and stakeholders.

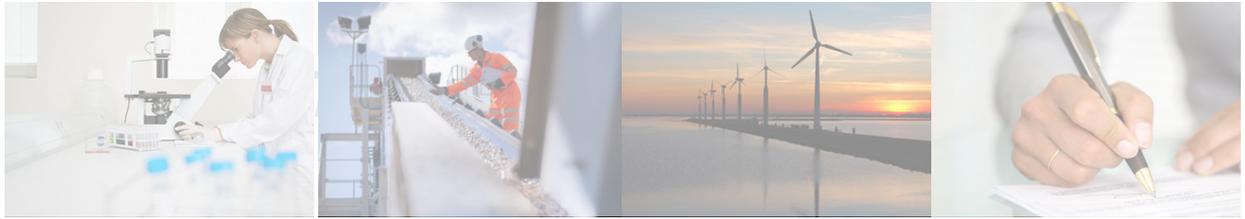
**The role of EA should be defined at the general level by three dimensions:**

- **A strategic role** in the medium/long term – development of accreditation in facilitating the market for conformity assessment services in close cooperation with European regulators, stakeholders and other interested parties;
- **An operational role** in cooperating with regulators, stakeholders and other interested parties, including its members – the national accreditation bodies – in managing accreditation in specific sectors or areas to ensure that the parties have a common understanding and approach to the accreditation criteria in order to achieve trustworthy attestations of conformity;
- **A supportive role** for its members for all issues regarding accreditation and conformity assessment.

The defined strategic objectives will imply actions linked to one or more of the roles defined for EA. It is important that the actions are developed and designed to facilitate either the strategic, operational or supportive role of EA. The three dimensions of the EA work may also have an implication for the delegation of responsibilities regarding implementation of the individual actions supporting the strategic objectives.

**Our three strategic objectives that translate the strategy and set out the plan to achieve the vision are:**

- 1. Good governance to deliver consistent and sustainable results.**
- 2. Close cooperation with regulators and stakeholders to strengthen accreditation at the European and international levels.**
- 3. Continue to develop accreditation to support innovation and growth in existing and new areas.**

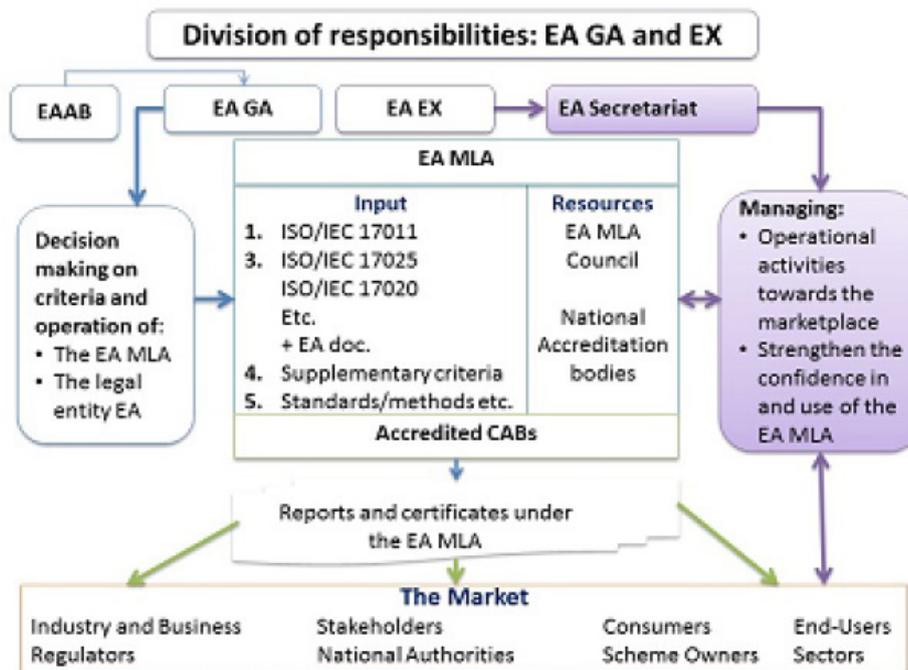


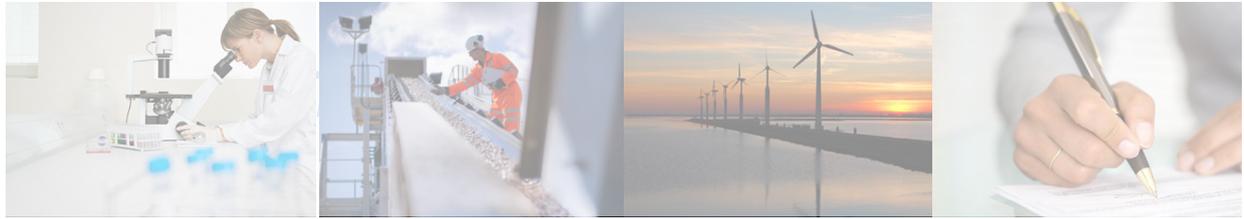
## 8.2.1 - Good governance to deliver consistent and sustainable results

This strategic objective relates to internal organisation, management and leadership of EA. It reflects the need to react promptly to external demands.

Over this strategic period, the aim is to improve harmonization and cooperation to ensure that all EA members speak with one voice, get the same conclusion both at technical and operational levels when faced with the same situation.

- Implement **EA core values** in order to reach the “One voice” objective.
- Redefine the **responsibility and composition of the Executive Committee** in order to strengthen the strategic leadership and management of EA.
- Reconsider the **committee structure and decision-making power of committees**, following transfer of responsibility for operational issues to the secretariat – in close cooperation with the committee chairs – enabling EA to handle and respond to market development and requests in an efficient and timely manner.





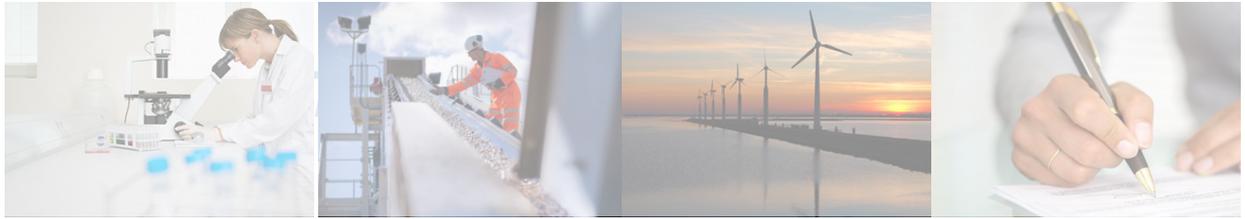
- Develop an **efficient system to enforce decisions** assuring that members know and fully understand their obligations, in particular regarding EA GA resolutions.
- **Develop the secretariat into an internal services provider** under the governance of the Executive Committee, and resource the secretariat to enable it to take the lead in managing operational issues, including coordination of technical work of EA and support of the committee chairs in managing the committees as well as managing and administering peer evaluations.



Committee, and resource the secretariat to enable it to take the lead in managing operational issues, including coordination of technical work of EA and support of the committee chairs in managing the committees as well as managing and administering peer evaluations.

Evaluate the location of the Secretariat in order for EA to achieve the desired position.

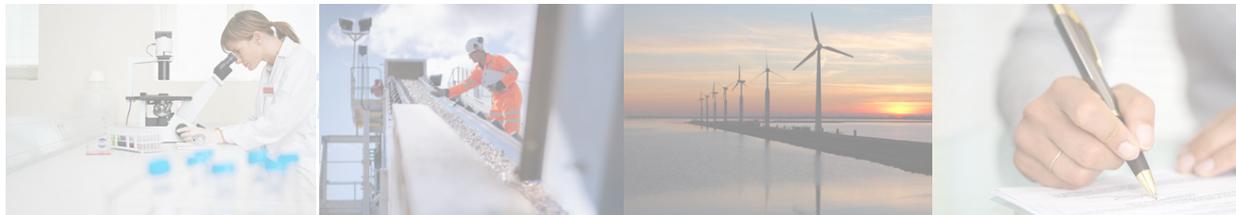
- Promote **active cooperation among members and develop efficient tools** to enhance harmonization and coordination both at the operational and technical levels to give common answers to global needs. Develop a service concept, the 'EA Academy', for training and benchmarking. Disseminate knowledge and experience between members. Use digitalization as far as possible and relevant.
- Develop the current **Peer Evaluation system** towards a highly efficient and effective approach along the following lines: scoping, sampling, witnessing, risk-based thinking, reporting, improving trust of stakeholders within the boundaries of IAF/ILAC A2, as well as beyond the current boundaries of IAF/ILAC A2. Furthermore, enhance the process of evaluation of NAB processes for developing and maintaining competence, including developing new accreditation programmes. Adapt the required decision-making process, which assures competence and openness, and reduce administrative tasks of the PE team leaders considering paid management resources within the Secretariat. Review the size and composition of the PE teams to maximize efficiency and reconsider the required competence criteria. Identify levels of non-compliance.



## 8.2.2 - Close cooperation with regulators and stakeholders to strengthen accreditation at the European and international levels

This strategic objective relates to the increased need for involving and cooperating with interested parties to accreditation and conformity assessment and their use.

- Develop the **EA stakeholder policy and procedures** to include and reflect the role accredited conformity assessment activities are playing in relation to the development of society and its quality, standards, innovation and competitiveness, including development of a transparent feedback process. Evaluate the size and composition of the EA Advisory Board.
- Provide **more transparent and in-depth information** on the results of peer evaluations, by designing an environment in which specific partners and stakeholder groups can be invited to observe the peer-evaluations, with acceptance of the evaluated NAB and according to Regulation 765/2008.
- Establish a **formal position in international standardization**, as well as enhance the present situation with EA-members representing their national standardization organisations, with respect to conformity assessment standards.
- Enhance the professional and responsive mechanism to **provide services to the European Commission, the European Free Trade Association and other relevant stakeholders**. EA and its delivery have to be communicated and well known by its partners and stakeholders. Potential interested partners are identified, informed and updated regularly.
- Develop **measures towards a more structured approach in the international arena**. Develop a mechanism to enhance EA's impact in IAF and ILAC processes for the formulation of policies, documents, decisions, processes. From EA's point of view, the international structure (ILAC/IAF) for accreditation should consist of one body covering all areas of accreditation and acting as the focal point for all issues to be solved at the global level.
- Develop a more direct mutually beneficial **cooperation with non-EA accreditation bodies** as well as other regions.
- Identify and establish formal liaison.



### 8.2.3 - Continue to develop accreditation to support innovation and growth in existing and new areas

This strategic objective relates to the promotion and development of accreditation and accreditation schemes in general, as well as other associated services in accordance with Regulation 765/2008. The basis is a well-functioning legislation that puts accreditation well in place, and accreditation standards that correspond to legislation, while enabling development both in the regulated and voluntary areas.

- Develop **information for use by EA members** towards national regulators regarding new legislation and standardisation in accreditation.
- Develop **information for internal and external uses**, regarding the accreditation system, development of new accreditation areas, use of accreditation and its advantages.
- Proactively manage actions to **promote accredited conformity assessment** and associated services in new and specific areas.
- Strengthen **cooperation with the European Commission, the European Free Trade Association and other European scheme owners**.
- Develop the organisation, processes, principles and support for the **development of new areas** to ensure quick reactions to new market developments and responses to public policy demands. Both in terms of uptake in existing areas and expansion to new areas/markets and new public policies which should be developed with input from stakeholders.
- Develop a process for the **management of existing accreditation areas and schemes**.
- Develop support and coordination for **closer cooperation between NABs** regarding existing and new areas, including training and sharing of resources.
- Develop an **EA MLA-mark**.



## 9 - Review and reporting

For implementing the strategy, the project team produced **a draft implementation plan with more detailed actions, resources and priorities** for refinement by the EA Executive Committee once the EA strategy was approved by the EA General Assembly.

The General Assembly approved the EA Strategy 2025 at its meeting held in Börs in November 2016. In May 2017, the GA approved the proposed implementation plan and mandated the Executive Committee to monitor the plan and actions entrusted to the appointed task force groups.

The EA Executive Committee will monitor and review the implementation of the strategy. On a yearly basis, the EA Executive Committee will present a written report to the EA GA on the implementation process and, if needed, proposals for review and/or amendment of the strategy.





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