

ACCREDIA and the meaning of ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is the formal recognition, by an authoritative body acting as a *super partes* guarantor, of the **competence, independence, and impartiality** of certification, inspection, and verification bodies, as well as testing and calibration laboratories. These bodies and laboratories verify products, services, management systems, and professional profiles, certifying their compliance with standards through certification, inspection, testing, and calibration activities. Accreditation ensures their fitness to assess the conformity of goods and services with both voluntary and mandatory regulatory requirements.

Established to meet the growing demand for quality and safety, accreditation **fosters market trust** among institutions, businesses, and consumers. It facilitates the free movement of goods and services verified by accredited bodies and laboratories. By guaranteeing the competence, independence, and impartiality of these organizations, accreditation **adds value and reliability** to certifications, inspections, tests, and calibrations, providing a high degree of assurance regarding the quality and safety of products and services. Furthermore, accreditation promotes the development of the entire economic and social system and bolsters business competitiveness in international markets. It is an activity of **social importance**, conducted in the public interest to safeguard fundamental values such as consumer health and environmental protection.

Globally, accreditation is performed based on the international standard **ISO/IEC 17011**.

EC Regulation 765/2008, introduced on January 1, 2010, to govern accreditation and conformity assessment within the European Union, requires each Member State to appoint a **Sole National Accreditation Body**. This regulation grants these bodies a formal legal status, recognizing their activity as an **exercise of public authority**. As a *super partes* authority and independent third party, the Sole Accreditation Body in each state ensures that accredited bodies and laboratories comply with standards and that the conformity assessments they issue are reliable, thereby performing a service of public interest.

ACCREDIA, a recognized association born from the merger of SINAL and SINCERT with contributions from SIT (INRIM, ENEA, and ISS), is the Sole National Accreditation Body designated by the Italian government on December 22, 2009, in compliance with EC Regulation 765/2008. Consequently, ACCREDIA is the only organization authorized by the Italian State to attest, at a national level, the competence, independence, and impartiality of bodies and laboratories that verify the conformity of goods and services.

ACCREDIA is a non-profit organization operating under the supervision of the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy. Its activities are organized into three departments: **Certification and Inspection, Testing Laboratories**, and **Calibration Laboratories**. The body maintains constant and rigorous surveillance over accredited entities to guarantee the reliability of their services. Accreditation thus ensures that test reports, inspection reports, and certifications (system, product, and personnel) bearing the ACCREDIA mark are issued in compliance with the most stringent international conformity assessment requirements.

ACCREDIA is a member of the EA (European co-operation for Accreditation), IAF (International Accreditation Forum), and ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation) networks. It is a signatory to **Multilateral Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs)** aimed at promoting the international free movement of goods and services.