 <b>Tel: +355 4 22 69097</b> <b>+355 4 22 69325</b> <b>Fax:</b> <b>E-Mail: info@dpa.gov.al</b>	<b>Participation in interlaboratory comparisons and proficiency testing</b>	<b>Code: DA - PM - 015</b>
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## **Participation in the interlaboratory comparisons and proficiency testing**

**Implemented by: Lead assessors, assessors, testing and calibration laboratories**

**Responsible for implementation: Director of Accreditation Department**

**Checked by: Quality Manager**  
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**Approved by: General Director**  
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## 1. PURPOSE

This document describes the procedure followed by the General Directorate of Accreditation regarding the schemes of proficiency testing (PT) and interlaboratory comparisons and the participation of testing and calibration laboratories.

## 2. FIELD OF IMPLEMENTATION

This procedure is implemented in all the cases of assessments of technical competence of testing and calibration laboratories.

## 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

This procedure is implemented from all the testing and calibration laboratories, persons in charge of identification of PT and inters laboratory comparison schemes as well as with the evaluation of the results achieved from these schemes. The director of accreditation department shall be responsible for checking the implementation of this procedure.

## 4. REFERENCES

- ILAC P 9:2014 “ILAC Policy for Uncertainty in calibration”
- Policy of DPA “On participation in inter laboratory comparisons and proficiency testing DPA – PO – 007.
- EA 4/18:2010
- ISO/IEC 17043: 2010


## 5. VOCABULARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

The following definitions according to ISO/IEC 17043:2010 are used in this document

- **Proficiency testing** is the definitions of the performance of the laboratory through inter laboratory comparisons. The term “PT” shall be used which is the abbreviation of the English expression “Proficiency Testing”

- **Inter laboratory comparison** is the organization, the realization and the evaluation of the tests on the same sample or over similar samples in two or more laboratories in compliance with the predetermined conditions. The term “ILC” shall be used in this procedure, which is the abbreviation of the English expression “Inter Laboratory Comparison”


## 6. DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURE

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## 6.1 Identification of fields for inters laboratory comparisons and proficiency testing.

- 6.1.1 The inter laboratory comparison (ILC) and proficiency testing (PT) are realized with the participation of accredited laboratories for tests and/or specific calibrations as required for the relevant ILC and PT. The non accredited laboratories could also take part.
- 6.1.2 ILC for calibration of measuring instruments refer to calibration laboratories and it is implemented the guide of EA, EA-2/03:1996:“Inter laboratory Comparisons”.
- 6.1.3 From the implementation of EA policies DPA has defined its own policy DA-PO-007 which requires that laboratories which have applied for accreditation, whenever possible, should participate at least once for the main application fields in the schemes of ILC and/or PT before the accreditation will be issued.
- 6.1.4 DPA defines the appropriated fields to ensure the competence of a laboratory, by intending the participation in the PT before the assessment. DPA would organize PT for specific fields.
- 6.1.5 The accredited laboratories should take part in ILC and PT at least once during the validity period of accreditation. Such participations are applicable to each fundamental area of the accreditation field.
- 6.1.6 In cases of important cases of personnel or in the accreditation field of the lab, the period for the mandatory participation in the ILC/PT schemes, might be reduced.
- 6.1.7 DPA is fully aware of specific fields where participation in ILC/PT schemes is inappropriate. A decision is taken in these cases from the relevant Technical Committee for accreditation of laboratories.
- 6.1.8 DPA requires from the laboratories that their policy on participation to ILC/PT schemes, as a form of external control of quality, must be described in the Quality Manual of the laboratory. Yet, the laboratories must have a procedure developed in conformity with the quality manual about planning and organization, presentation, evaluation, corrective actions, maintenance of findings and registrations related to participation to these schemes.

## 6.2 The use of results in the assessment of the laboratory

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6.2.1 The valuation of the results from the participation of the laboratory in a scheme is carried out from the assessment team of DPA. The lead assessor includes in its final report, a brief evaluation of the performance of the laboratory, also attaching the results.

6.2.2 The results of participation in the ILC or PT schemes are taken into account in the proposal for issuing the accreditation. The following rules are applied for assessing the results:

- A successful participation of the laboratory is considered as positive in the final proposal for issuing the accreditation.
- In cases when the laboratory presents a low percentage of unsuccessful results compared to the total results, the assessment team evaluates the corrective actions and their effectiveness. If the interpretations and the actions of the laboratory were appropriate, the proposal for issuing accreditation is not influenced from the unsuccessful results in proficiency testing and the laboratory is requested to participate again in the relevant test until the next surveillance visit.
- Should the laboratory present unsuccessful result in the majority of proficiency testing, the final proposal for issuing accreditation shall include the reduction of the accreditation field until a successful participation in relevant tests, occurs.
- Results from the proficiency testing are not considered as sole criteria for issuing accreditation, but they are helpful to formulate an objective reasoning on the technical competence of the laboratory.

### **6.3. Ensuring quality in Inter laboratory Comparison and Proficiency Testing**

Based on the standard ISO/IEC 17043: 2010 it is recommended that the PT organizers should maintain a well documented quality system. This system must include policies and procedures for ensuring the quality in order to ensure reliability among participants and among later users of comparison results.

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Yet, the PT organizers are recommended to fulfill the requirements of quality management and also the set of technical standards in conformity with conditions of standard S SH EN ISO/IEC 17025:2005.

The standard ISO/IEC 17043: 2010 describes the criteria to be fulfilled from the PT organizers in order to be recognized as competent for ensuring several types of PT schemes. The Guide provides technical requirements also for the quality management system. These requirements are identical to those of standards ISO/IEC 17043: 2010 and S SH EN ISO/IEC 17025; 2005.

Regarding the procedures for ensuring the quality, ISO/IEC 17043: 2010, “Ensuring the Quality for PT schemes”, provides procedures for:

- Preparation of samples,
- Testing samples for homogeneity,
- Creation of reference values
- Data analysis,
- Preparation and distribution of report of findings and results,
- Measures to ensure the opinions from participants,
- Policy of confidentiality and the ethical code.

## 7. HISTORY

Date of revision	Number of revision	Prepared by	Description of changes
30.10.2006	0	Briseida Xhafa	
14.10.2009	1	Ermira Fyshku	Changes in point 4 “References”
22.12.2014	2	Ermira Fyshku	Changes in header and references according to the standard ISO/IEC 17043: 2010
20.05.2019	3	A. Mele	Changes in the point 4