

PROPOSAL

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Work Programme of the Accreditation Body of Montenegro for 2026

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**WORK PROGRAMME
OF THE ACCREDITATION BODY OF MONTENEGRO
FOR 2026**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The field of accreditation in Montenegro is regulated by the Law on Accreditation (“Official Gazette of Montenegro”, Nos. 54/09 and 43/2015), thereby ensuring full alignment of the legislative framework with the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 relating to accreditation.

Regulation (EC) No 765/2008, which sets out the requirements for accreditation, established in 2008 a single legal framework for accreditation in Europe, enabling a consistent and harmonised approach across all European Union Member States. The Regulation requires compliance with international accreditation standards, operationalised through the standard MEST EN ISO/IEC 17011:2018, *Conformity assessment – Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies*, which thereby forms an integral part of the European legislative framework.

The Decision on the Establishment of the Accreditation Body of Montenegro (“Official Gazette of Montenegro”, Nos. 21/07, 13/2025, 35/2025 and 117/2025), adopted as a by-law pursuant to the Law on Accreditation, precisely defines the scope of activities, structure, organisation and mode of operation of the Accreditation Body of Montenegro (hereinafter: ATCG).

By this Decision, the Government of Montenegro established ATCG as the national accreditation body, performing accreditation activities in accordance with the principles of independence, impartiality and objectivity. Its responsibilities and tasks are clearly separated from those of other state authorities, thereby ensuring institutional autonomy and impartial decision-making.

As a non-profit organisation, ATCG holds no ownership rights and has no financial or managerial interests in conformity assessment bodies, thus further preventing conflicts of interest and guaranteeing transparency in its operations.

Accreditation is an attestation that accredited conformity assessment bodies (CABs) providing testing, calibration, inspection, certification, validation and verification services are impartial and technically competent to carry out conformity assessment activities defined within their scope of accreditation. It constitutes the basis for confidence in their results, upon which important decisions are often made.

On the one hand, accreditation supports the economy and is, in many respects, a prerequisite for access to international markets. On the other hand, it contributes to consumer protection and the safeguarding of public interest in areas such as health protection, environmental protection, information security and similar fields.

In certain areas of conformity assessment, accreditation may be mandatory under legislation, as is the case with regulations governing environmental monitoring, legal metrology, food safety and quality, and related matters. In addition, accreditation is applied in non-regulated areas, as it fosters trust between suppliers and their clients. In this way, accreditation plays a key role in confirming the competence and reliability of organisations, regardless of whether it is legally mandated or voluntary.

The scope of accreditation is continuously expanding, particularly in areas such as information technology, cybersecurity, digitalisation, data protection, robotics, telecommunications and electronic identification, as well as in the sectors of healthcare, transport, environmental protection and energy efficiency.

The established mission of ATCG – *“To establish, maintain, continuously develop and promote a modern and transparent accreditation system in Montenegro, in accordance with best European and international practice”* – is consistently reflected in its work. The vision of the national accreditation body is directed towards ensuring the recognition and acceptance of the national accreditation system at regional and international levels. This is achieved through professional and competent work, active membership in European and international accreditation organisations, implementation of relevant multilateral agreements and the strengthening of institutional reputation.

Interested parties jointly contribute to the development of the national accreditation system, thereby affirming accreditation as the most reliable evidence of the competence of conformity assessment bodies. This ensures confidence in the results of testing, calibration, inspection and certification, contributing to enhanced quality and safety across various sectors.

The accreditation symbol issued by the Accreditation Body of Montenegro represents a guarantee of trust, credibility and international comparability. This status was further confirmed by the signing of the Multilateral Agreement with the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA MLA) on 6 December 2023, in the fields of testing, calibration, medical testing, inspection and product certification.

This significant step unequivocally confirms ATCG’s pro-European orientation and its commitment to meeting European standards. At the same time, it represents an important contribution to the closing of Chapter 1 – Free Movement of Goods – further strengthening Montenegro’s integration into the European economic area.

The sustainability of a stable and continuous implementation of a credible accreditation system in Montenegro rests on key prerequisites, including financial stability, recruitment and continuous training of personnel in line with system needs, and the provision of stable and adequate working conditions.

ATCG carries out accreditation in all areas where there is interest and need, ensuring efficiency, international comparability and a high quality of services. Accreditation processes are conducted in accordance with the highest standards, with a continuous commitment to transparency and professionalism, thereby ensuring the satisfaction of all interested parties.

In the interest of transparency, the general acts governing ATCG’s operations, annual work programmes, annual work reports, the Register of Accredited Bodies with their scopes of accreditation, and other relevant information are publicly available on the website www.akreditacija.me.

Under the Law on the Budget for 2026, funds have been allocated from the Budget of Montenegro to support ATCG's regular operations in 2026, as well as the implementation of its planned activities during the year.

The Work Programme of the Accreditation Body of Montenegro for 2026 sets out and describes the activities that ATCG plans to implement during the 2026 financial year.

2. ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN 2026

2.1 Work Programme of ATCG for 2026 and Work Report for 2025

In accordance with the Decision on the Establishment of the Accreditation Body of Montenegro and the Law on Accreditation, the Management Board of the Accreditation Body of Montenegro shall review and adopt the Work Programme of the Accreditation Body of Montenegro for 2026 in January 2026.

The Management Board shall also review and adopt the Work Report of the Accreditation Body of Montenegro for 2025, including the financial statements, during the first quarter of 2026.

Following their adoption, the Work Programme and the Work Report shall be submitted to the competent Ministry of Economic Development, which will forward them for further consideration and adoption by the Government of Montenegro. Upon obtaining the approval of the Government of Montenegro, the Work Programme for 2026 and the Work Report for 2025 shall be published on the official website of the Accreditation Body of Montenegro.

2.2 Maintenance and Development of the ATCG Management System

The ATCG Work Programme is aligned with the approved financial resources and shall be implemented in accordance with the ATCG management system documentation, which comprises six internal rules, thirteen procedures and ten instructions. It is also aligned with the requirements of the international standard for accreditation bodies MEST EN ISO/IEC 17011:2018, as well as with the guidelines and recommendations of the key European and international accreditation organisations: the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) and the Global Accreditation Cooperation (GLOBAC), established through the merger of the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF).

The ATCG Work Programme includes the following activities:

- Work Programme and reporting on performance
- Maintenance and development of the ATCG management system
- Accreditation of conformity assessment bodies
- Fulfilment of obligations arising from ATCG membership in European and international accreditation organisations

- Activities aimed at maintaining signatory status to the EA MLA Agreement
- Maintenance of the EA MLA Agreement
- Attainment of full membership in an international accreditation organisation
- Strengthening the administrative and technical capacities of ATCG
- Cooperation with interested parties
- Cooperation with state administration authorities, institutions, organisations and associations
- Bilateral cooperation with national accreditation bodies of other countries
- Participation in the planning and implementation of technical assistance projects

Through this approach, ATCG ensures the consistent application of international standards, enhances the quality of accreditation processes and strengthens its role in both the national and international context.

With regard to new normative documents issued by European and international organisations (EA/GLOBAC), ATCG will continuously update document ZPR.01.27 – *List of Documents Containing Requirements to be Fulfilled by Applicants for Accreditation and Accredited CABs* during 2026.

Taking into account potential amendments to ATCG documentation and, consequently, to its operational procedures, at least one internal audit of the entire quality management system and at least one management review shall be conducted during 2026. These activities will confirm that ATCG performs its tasks in accordance with the requirements of MEST EN ISO/IEC 17011:2018 and the established rules and procedures. The internal audit shall include verification of the implementation of amended ATCG documents and assessment of the compliance of the ATCG management system with the requirements of MEST EN ISO/IEC 17011:2018 and other binding documents of the European and international accreditation organisations EA and GLOBAC.

At the end of 2025, the national accreditation system comprised a total of 42 conformity assessment bodies (CABs) with active accreditation status, as well as one body under voluntary suspension (inspection body). Of the total number of bodies with active accreditation status, 28 were testing laboratories, 2 calibration laboratories, 2 medical laboratories, 5 inspection bodies, 3 product certification bodies and 2 management system certification bodies.

Based on the level of interest expressed by clients to date and discussions held with them, the Accreditation Body of Montenegro estimates that at least four (4) new conformity assessment bodies will be accredited during 2026.

In accordance with the Plan of Regular Surveillance Activities and Reassessments of Accredited Bodies, and in line with the individual assessment programmes for each body, the following activities shall be carried out in 2026:

- **24 regular assessments** of accredited testing laboratories
- **1 regular assessment** of a calibration laboratory

- **2 regular assessments** of medical laboratories, in accordance with the granted scope of accreditation
- **4 regular assessments** of inspection bodies, in accordance with the granted scope of accreditation
- **3 regular assessments** of product certification bodies
- **2 regular assessments** of management system certification bodies
- **4 reassessments** in accordance with accreditation rules, prior to the expiry of the granted accreditation certificates, for the purpose of renewal, i.e. extension of the validity of accreditation certificates for a period of four years

This activity plan enables continuous monitoring and assurance of the compliance of accredited bodies with applicable standards and regulations.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of ATCG that temporarily prevent the conduct of regular surveillance visits and the application of documents in the prescribed manner, ATCG shall take appropriate measures to ensure the continuity of assessment activities. In such situations, for activities foreseen to be carried out on-site, ATCG shall apply alternative assessment techniques, within a reasonable scope, enabling the determination of the competence of conformity assessment bodies (CABs) and compliance with accreditation criteria.

The Accreditation Body shall, within its full resource capacity, review and accept all requests for extension of the scope of accreditation within the granted fields.

In 2026, the Accreditation Body of Montenegro (ATCG) will place particular emphasis on expanding the network of accredited bodies in the field of medical testing. This activity is based on Article 217 of the Law on Health Care (“Official Gazette of Montenegro”, Nos. 91/2025 and 121/2025), which stipulates that where a healthcare institution possesses laboratory capacities, the issuance of a certificate must be preceded by accreditation of the laboratory by the Accreditation Body of Montenegro, in accordance with the relevant law and applicable international standards.

The objective of these activities is the accreditation of the Clinical Centre as the reference and leading healthcare institution, thereby confirming a high level of expertise, reliability of laboratory results and compliance with international quality standards. The achievement of this objective will represent a significant contribution to the improvement of the healthcare system, as well as to strengthening the confidence of patients and healthcare professionals in healthcare services.

2.3 Fulfilment of Obligations Arising from ATCG Membership in European and International Accreditation Organisations

ATCG is a full member of the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) and an associate member of the international accreditation organisation Global Accreditation Cooperation

Incorporated (GLOBAC). During 2026, ATCG will continue to actively participate in the work of these organisations.

In accordance with the obligations arising from its full membership in EA, ATCG will in 2026:

- contribute to the work of EA by participating in the development of EA documents and guidelines through the submission of comments on draft documents and voting for their final adoption;
- exchange information with EA by responding to inquiries concerning the work of ATCG and the accreditation system in Montenegro;
- participate in initiatives and activities aimed at the further development of EA and the harmonisation of accreditation in Europe;
- ensure that ATCG representatives regularly participate in the work of and attend official meetings of EA governing and technical bodies, namely: the General Assembly (EA GA), the Multilateral Agreement Council (EA MAC), the Laboratory Committee (EA LC), the Inspection Committee (EA IC), the Certification Committee (EA CC), the Horizontal Harmonisation Committee (EA HHC) and the Communications Network (CN);
- pay the annual EA membership fee for 2026 in a timely manner and in accordance with the established deadlines.

In accordance with the obligations arising from its associate membership in Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated (GLOBAC), ATCG will in 2026:

- contribute to the work of the organisation by participating in the development of its documents and guidelines (currently without voting rights);
- participate in initiatives and activities aimed at the further development of this international organisation and the harmonisation of accreditation at the global level;
- ensure that ATCG representatives participate in the work of and attend official meetings of the governing and technical bodies of this international organisation, in line with possibilities and priorities;
- pay the annual membership fee to Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated for 2026 in a timely manner and in accordance with the established deadlines.

2.4 Attainment of Full Membership in an International Accreditation Organisation

As indicated in Section 2.3 of this document, ATCG currently holds the status of associate member of the international accreditation organisation Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated (GLOBAC).

This single international accreditation organisation was formally established in the second half of 2025, following a multi-year project to merge the two previously existing international accreditation organisations: the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). The official date for the commencement of its operations has been set as 1 January 2026.

In order for a national accreditation body to attain full membership status in the newly established international accreditation organisation, a key prerequisite is that the accreditation body first obtains signatory status to the MRA (Multilateral Recognition Arrangement), which provides for the global recognition of accreditation.

For national accreditation bodies from Europe that are members of the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA), the MRA is directly correlated with the EA MLA (Multilateral Agreement), which governs the mutual recognition of accreditation within the European Union under the auspices of EA.

Immediately upon completion of the ongoing EA Peer Evaluation (follow-up) process and confirmation of ATCG's status as a signatory to the EA MLA Agreement (expected to be finalised in May 2026), ATCG will initiate activities aimed at attaining signatory status to the MRA (within a scope equivalent to the granted EA MLA scope) and full membership in Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated.

2.5 ATCG Activities Aimed at Maintaining Signatory Status to the EA MLA Agreement

As a signatory to the EA MLA Agreement in the accreditation schemes for testing laboratories (EN ISO/IEC 17025), including medical laboratories (EN ISO 15189), calibration laboratories (EN ISO/IEC 17025), inspection bodies (EN ISO/IEC 17020) and product certification bodies (EN ISO/IEC 17065), ATCG has formal confirmation that both ATCG and the national accreditation system operate at the same level as the accreditation systems of other EU Member States.

In this way, ATCG promotes the role and importance of accreditation within Montenegro's quality infrastructure and contributes to the free movement of goods and services, as well as to consumer safety and protection.

The obligation of international cooperation, i.e. compliance with the requirements for EA membership, arises from Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 on accreditation and market surveillance. ATCG is subject to continuous oversight by EA, which conducts periodic evaluations of its operations.

Following the recent re-evaluation by peer evaluators, and for the purpose of monitoring the effectiveness of corrective actions implemented in response to non-conformities identified during the visit, the EA Multilateral Agreement Council (EA MAC) has scheduled a follow-up visit for March 2026.

The additional evaluation will cover two accreditation schemes:

- inspection (inspection bodies accredited in accordance with EN ISO/IEC 17020);
- product certification (product certification bodies accredited in accordance with EN ISO/IEC 17065).

The additional evaluation will be carried out in accordance with procedure EA-2/02 M: 2025 and the document *EA Policy and Procedures for the Multilateral Agreement (Annex 9)*.

It is expected that, following the evaluation, the EA Multilateral Agreement Council (EA MAC) will adopt a decision confirming the continued signatory status of ATCG to the EA MLA Agreement and determine the date of the next re-evaluation of ATCG.

2.6 Strengthening the Administrative and Technical Capacities of ATCG

Given that the work and operations of ATCG largely depend on the expertise, competence and motivation of its permanent staff, further professional training and development will continue in 2026. It is expected that all employees will participate in appropriate training programmes during 2026, with a minimum duration of ten working days per employee.

At present, the Accreditation Body of Montenegro employs thirteen staff members under employment contracts, who perform complex organisational and professional tasks in accordance with the Rulebook on the Internal Organisation and Systematisation of Posts.

During 2026, the recruitment of an adviser in the Department for Accreditation of Certification Bodies is planned, bearing in mind that the focus of this Department will be directed towards activities aimed at ensuring that the management systems certification scheme (MEST EN ISO 17021-1) is included within the scope of the EA MLA Agreement in the forthcoming period.

Furthermore, in accordance with the recommendations of the State Audit Institution, ATCG plans to establish an internal accounting unit in order to ensure timely and accurate bookkeeping within its own organisational capacities, as well as full responsibility for the accuracy of financial records. It is envisaged that the newly employed staff member, holding a degree in economics, will simultaneously perform the duties of a public procurement officer.

In addition to permanent and newly recruited staff, ATCG will, during 2026, plan, organise and implement training activities intended for external ATCG personnel, i.e. ATCG assessors and candidates for these positions, as well as members of ATCG governing, professional and advisory bodies.

Training activities planned for 2026 include:

- at least three multi-day specialised training sessions per specific accreditation scheme, intended for permanent staff, members of ATCG professional bodies, assessors and assessor candidates;
- at least five general training sessions covering topics directly or indirectly related to accreditation and/or conformity assessment, intended for permanent staff and members of ATCG governing and professional bodies;
- at least five internal specialised training sessions aimed at strengthening the competence and harmonising the work of ATCG assessors;
- at least five internal specialised training sessions intended for assessor candidates;
- at least one study visit by ATCG representatives to another national accreditation body for the purpose of benchmarking and exchange of experience.

During 2026, subject to needs and available resources, ATCG representatives will attend conferences, seminars and professional events related to or addressing topics in accreditation and conformity assessment, organised by state administration authorities, professional

associations, quality infrastructure institutions and other institutions/organisations in Montenegro or abroad.

An increase in the number of lead assessors is planned in the following schemes: product certification bodies (one), inspection bodies (one) and laboratories (one). An increase is also planned in the number of technical experts in the field of construction products (one), as well as technical assessors in the fields of food (one) and organic production and protection of designation of origin and geographical indications (one).

Considering that the effectiveness and efficiency of the assessment of conformity assessment bodies for accreditation purposes and for monitoring the competence of accredited organisations largely depend on the competence of the assessment team, i.e. the assessors themselves, it is necessary to continue the professional development and training of registered ATCG assessors and technical experts, as well as to conduct training for the appointment of new candidates to these roles.

In cooperation with the Commission for the Selection and Monitoring of Assessors, training programmes will be defined for all accreditation schemes; exchanges of experience and joint training of lead assessors with assessors from accreditation bodies in the region will be organised; employees will, in line with their respective fields of work, participate in all EA governing and technical working bodies and attend EA-organised training sessions for the purpose of exchanging experience with staff from other accreditation bodies and enhancing professional knowledge. ATCG also plans to host colleagues from other national accreditation bodies of EU Member States and the region.

2.7 Commissioning of the ATCG Information System

During 2025, in cooperation with an externally engaged software company, the framework of the future ATCG information system was established and its pilot model was prepared.

During the first quarter of 2026, ATCG will continue activities related to the review and further improvement of the pilot model, after which the IT system is expected to be put into operational use.

The primary purpose of the ATCG IT system is effective document management (DMS) and the enhancement of the effectiveness and efficiency of ATCG work processes, including the accreditation process of conformity assessment bodies.

2.8 Cooperation with Interested Parties

In order to ensure transparency of its operations and the prompt availability of all relevant information, ATCG will continue in 2026 to regularly update its website with information on its activities and on accredited bodies, with the aim of providing timely updates on all matters related to accreditation.

During 2026, activities will be undertaken to improve the content of the ATCG web portal. Particular attention will be devoted to enhancing the English-language section of the website to facilitate easier access to up-to-date information and publicly available documentation,

especially for international users. ATCG also plans to strengthen its presence on social media (e.g. LinkedIn) to ensure broader dissemination of information about its work and activities to the general public and relevant stakeholders.

Where there are clear and justified market indications or a formal initiative from interested parties for the development of new accreditation services, the Department for Development and International Cooperation, subject to prior approval by ATCG senior management and in accordance with the established procedure for the development of accreditation schemes, will actively participate during 2026 in the development of new accreditation services or the extension of existing schemes to new areas of conformity assessment. Examples of potentially relevant accreditation schemes in Montenegro include personnel certification (MEST EN ISO/IEC 17024) and validation and verification (in accordance with MEST EN ISO/IEC 17029 and MEST EN ISO 14065).

Furthermore, the Accreditation Department will continue to ensure timely responses to inquiries from natural and legal persons, both from Montenegro and abroad, concerning accreditation matters, as well as to process and decide upon requests for access to information in accordance with applicable legal obligations.

In the third quarter of 2026, ATCG will organise a one-day workshop aimed at collecting information on stakeholder satisfaction, as well as their future needs and expectations regarding accreditation. In addition, during 2026 ATCG will continue to encourage accredited organisations and other interested parties to participate in the anonymous survey permanently available on the ATCG web portal.

Information on stakeholder satisfaction and needs obtained from the above sources will be analysed by senior management and will serve as guidance for further improvements.

For the purpose of promoting accreditation—its role, importance and benefits for organisations—and encouraging entry into the accreditation process, ATCG will continue in 2026 to establish direct contacts with representatives of organisations that are potential candidates for accreditation (at least eight).

In order to raise awareness of accreditation and its role and importance among stakeholders, ATCG will organise at least three round tables in 2026 addressing general and/or specific accreditation topics. Thematic areas may include, for example, accreditation of greenhouse gas emissions verifiers, accreditation of medical laboratories, and accreditation of certification bodies in the fields of prefabricated construction products and production and distribution infrastructure. A promotional event marking World Accreditation Day will also be organised to further raise awareness of the importance of accreditation across various sectors. In addition, a panel discussion on the topic *Challenges in Accreditation* is planned, with the participation of representatives of other national accreditation bodies.

ATCG will continue to maintain the e-Register of accredited bodies, as well as suspended and withdrawn accreditations, ensure timely responses to inquiries from natural and legal persons in the field of accreditation, and fulfil its obligations under the Law on Free Access to Information.

2.9 Cooperation of ATCG with State Administration Authorities and Other Institutions, Organisations and Associations

In 2026, the Accreditation Body will continue its proactive approach towards state administration authorities and line ministries in relation to the adoption of regulations in Montenegro that require accreditation. The objective is to define the relevant accreditation scheme, clarify the role of ATCG prior to the entry into force of such regulations, and avoid ambiguities in their subsequent implementation.

ATCG has its representatives in the Working Group for Negotiations under Chapter 1 – Free Movement of Goods and, through its representative, informs the European Commission on progress achieved in the field of accreditation. During 2026, ATCG will continue to participate in cooperation activities with the competent state administration authorities concerning Montenegro’s EU accession process in matters related to accreditation and conformity assessment. This primarily includes participation in the planning and implementation of the Programme of Accession of Montenegro to the European Union (PPCG), regular preparation of information required for the annual contributions to the European Commission’s Progress Report on Montenegro, preparation of materials and participation in meetings of the Subcommittee on Trade, Industry, Customs and Taxation, as well as participation in the work of the Working Group for Chapter 1 – Free Movement of Goods.

During 2026, ATCG will initiate topics aimed at ensuring the active involvement of its governing, professional and advisory bodies in order to facilitate the necessary support in the adoption of required regulations aligned with EU legislation and in identifying regulated areas of accreditation.

As in previous years, new accreditation schemes and new areas of ATCG activities will be developed in close cooperation with state administration authorities during the process of drafting national legislation, with a view to recognising accreditation as a means of building trust with EU partners and as a key factor for access to EU Member State markets.

The objective of this cooperation is to ensure that the principles established by the Law on Technical Requirements for Products and Conformity Assessment of Products—being the framework law for transposing EU New Approach Directives—are applied in other areas where the State prescribes mandatory conformity assessment.

Close and strong cooperation between regulatory authorities and the Accreditation Body of Montenegro is essential to facilitate and ensure that the services provided by ATCG and its accredited CABs meet the needs and expectations of regulatory authorities in Montenegro.

Since accreditation is also implemented on the basis of by-laws adopted pursuant to the Law on Technical Requirements for Products and Conformity Assessment and other sectoral laws governing various fields, it is expected that the adoption of new secondary legislation will contribute to an increase in the number of accredited conformity assessment bodies.

Based on initiatives from interested parties for the development of new accreditation services, and where clear and justified market needs exist, ATCG will, in accordance with the established procedure for the development of accreditation schemes, initiate in 2026 the process of developing new accreditation schemes or extending existing schemes to new areas

of conformity assessment. Examples of potentially relevant new schemes in Montenegro include personnel certification (in accordance with ISO/IEC 17024) and validation and verification of environmental reports (in accordance with ISO/IEC 17029 and ISO 14065).

In 2026, ATCG will continue to maintain and develop cooperation with quality infrastructure institutions, such as the Bureau of Metrology and the Institute for Standardisation, as well as with the Chamber of Commerce of Montenegro. Cooperation will focus on joint participation in and organisation of professional events aimed at promoting accreditation and clarifying its role in the conformity assessment of products and processes, as well as in the implementation of technical regulations binding on manufacturers.

In 2026, the Accreditation Body of Montenegro will devote particular attention to strengthening the systematic promotion of accreditation through a series of activities, including the participation of its staff in conferences and professional events organised by professional associations, chambers and accreditation bodies from the region.

Special emphasis will be placed on the continuous promotion of the importance and purpose of accreditation among professional chambers, commissions and regulatory bodies, with the aim of further raising awareness of its role in ensuring quality and compliance across various industries and sectors.

Representatives of ATCG will actively participate in the work of the Coordination Committee of the Chamber of Commerce of Montenegro, in the implementation of the Programme Line for the Introduction of International Standards within the Ministry of Economic Development, and in the Commission for the Accreditation of Healthcare Institutions

2.10 Bilateral Cooperation with National Accreditation Bodies of Other Countries

During 2026, the Accreditation Body of Montenegro will intensify cooperation with other national accreditation bodies, particularly those from the region. This cooperation will include the exchange of information and experience, exchange of assessors, and the organisation of joint meetings, training sessions and other forms of professional cooperation.

It is expected that during 2026 ATCG, in cooperation with the Management Board of ATCG, will establish similar cooperation with additional national accreditation bodies for mutual benefit and sign at least three new bilateral agreements on business and technical cooperation with other national accreditation bodies.

2.11 Participation in the Planning and Implementation of Technical Assistance Projects

During 2026, ATCG will seek to ensure its participation in technical assistance projects aimed at the further development of its institutional capacities and the strengthening of the accreditation system in Montenegro.

In the first half of 2026, the commencement of activities under the regional GIZ project entitled “*Single Market Academy: Building Expertise in Accreditation*” is expected. The project is intended to support the further development of national accreditation bodies and the harmonisation of national accreditation systems in the Western Balkans region. As one of the

project participants, ATCG will provide its full contribution to defining the common framework and to the planning and implementation of project activities.

During 2026, in line with its development needs, ATCG will review the availability of and initiate, plan and implement other forms of technical assistance projects, such as bilateral technical cooperation projects, TAIEX projects or other projects of a similar nature and purpose.

3. MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORK PROGRAMME

According to the general principles governing the operation of national accreditation bodies, set out in Article 4(9) of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008, “each Member State shall ensure that its national accreditation body has the appropriate financial and human resources for the proper performance of its tasks, including the fulfilment of special tasks such as activities in European and international accreditation cooperation and activities required to support public policy.”

In order to fulfil this principle, the Accreditation Body must ensure:

- **Financial stability**, enabling it to perform its tasks without interruption and invest in necessary resources;
- **Continuous staff training in line with needs**, ensuring the development of employee competences and readiness to respond to new challenges and standards in accreditation;
- **Stable and adequate working conditions**, creating an environment that enables productive work, prevents staff overload and supports professional commitment.

In addition to the previously defined steps towards achieving these objectives, it is important to monitor progress by establishing clear **results to be achieved by the end of 2026**. These results may be monitored on a quarterly, semi-annual or annual basis, depending on the nature of the objectives. Furthermore, in order to measure the effectiveness of undertaken activities, **indicators and sources of verification** must be defined to enable precise monitoring of performance.

Accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies

- Indicators: Number of conducted initial accreditation procedures (4), number of conducted regular surveillance visits (36) and reassessments (4), i.e. a total of 44 assessments are planned in the current year.
- Sources of verification: Register of accredited conformity assessment bodies and the annual work reports of ATCG.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of ATCG, as a result of which ATCG would be temporarily prevented from the consistent implementation and application of documents, and in particular from carrying out regular surveillance visits in the prescribed manner, ATCG will, during that period, undertake alternative measures for the implementation of activities foreseen within the assessment phase. This includes the use of other appropriate

assessment techniques, which enable the evaluation of the competence of conformity assessment bodies (CABs) and verification of the fulfilment of all accreditation criteria. These techniques will be applied to a reasonable extent, in order to ensure the continuity of the accreditation process and to preserve the validity and integrity of the accreditation system.

Activities of ATCG Aimed at Maintaining the Status of the EA MLA Agreement (Re-evaluation)

- Indicators: Maintain the status of signatory to the EA MLA Agreement in the following fields: testing laboratories (EN ISO/IEC 17025), including medical laboratories (EN ISO 15189), calibration laboratories (EN ISO/IEC 17025), inspection bodies (EN ISO/IEC 17020) and product certification bodies (EN ISO/IEC 17065).
- Sources of verification: EA reports on the retention of ATCG status in the accreditation fields covered by the relevant Agreement.

Maintenance of Full Membership Status of ATCG in EA and GLOBAC

- Indicators: Full membership status of ATCG in EA and GLOBAC.
- Sources of verification: EA and GLOBAC reports on members and their membership status.

Signing of the Multilateral Agreement with the Global Accreditation Cooperation (GLOBAC)

- Indicators: Signatory status with the Global Accreditation Cooperation (GLOBAC).
- Sources of verification: Signed multilateral agreements with GLOBAC (in the fields in which the Agreement has been signed with EA).

Strengthening the Competence of Personnel Engaged in Accreditation Activities within ATCG

- Indicators: The number of working days allocated to the training of employees and externally engaged personnel in ATCG under the 2026 Training Plan is a minimum of 10 working days per employee. An increase is planned in the number of lead assessors in the scheme for product certification bodies (1), inspection bodies (1) and laboratories (1); in the number of technical experts in the field of construction products (1); in the number of technical assessors in the field of testing of construction products (1); technical assessors for the field of food (1); and for the field of organic production and protection of designation of origin and geographical indication (1).
- Sources of verification: ATCG annual work reports, reports on conducted employee training, training certificates, and the list of ATCG assessors and experts.

Strengthening the Competence of Employees and Members of ATCG Governing, Advisory and Professional Bodies

- Indicators: Number of workshops, seminars and training sessions intended for members of working bodies;
- at least 3 multi-day specialised training sessions per specific accreditation scheme, intended for permanent staff, members of ATCG professional bodies, as well as assessors and candidates for these positions;
- at least 5 general-type training sessions on specific topics that directly or indirectly relate to accreditation and/or conformity assessment, intended for permanent staff and members of ATCG governing and professional bodies;
- at least 5 internal specialised training sessions intended to strengthen the competence and harmonise the work of ATCG assessors;
- at least 5 internal specialised training sessions intended for assessor candidates;
- at least 1 study visit by ATCG representatives to another national accreditation body for the purpose of comparing work and exchanging experience.
- Sources of verification: ATCG annual work reports, reports from workshops, seminars and training sessions intended for members of working bodies, etc.

Conducting Internal Audit and Management Review

- Indicators: Conduct internal audits and management reviews during the current year.
- Sources of verification: Minutes from the conducted internal audits and management reviews.

Promotion of Accreditation in Organisations that Are CABs or that Have CABs within Their Organisation to Demonstrate Their Competence through Accreditation

- Indicators: Number of conducted accreditation promotion activities – minimum 8 in potential CABs.
- Sources of verification: Minutes from conducted promotional activities verified by the attending representative of the CAB.

Strengthening the Administrative and Technical Capacities of ATCG

- **Indicators:** Establishment of employment of an adviser in the Accreditation Service – Department for Accreditation of Certification Bodies; employment of an accountant who would simultaneously perform the duties of public procurement officer; installation and implementation of software.

- **Sources of verification:** Employment contracts of newly engaged staff; software implementation.

Promotion of Accreditation

- **Indicators:** Organisation of round tables on general and/or specific accreditation topics (3); promotional events on the importance of accreditation on the occasion of World Accreditation Day; panel discussion on challenges in accreditation with colleagues from the region.
- **Sources of verification:** ATCG annual work report.

Strengthening International Cooperation in the Field of Accreditation

- **Indicators:** Number and type of activities of European and international accreditation organisations in which ATCG representatives participated (14); number of documents of European and international accreditation organisations in whose development and adoption ATCG participated.
- **Sources of verification:** ATCG annual work reports; reports from participation in meetings of governing and professional bodies of European/international accreditation organisations.

Establishing Bilateral Cooperation of ATCG with National Accreditation Bodies of Other Countries, Particularly Those from the Region

- **Indicators:** Number and subject of bilateral cooperation agreements between ATCG and other national accreditation bodies (3); number and type of implemented joint activities.
- **Sources of verification:** ATCG annual work reports; signed bilateral cooperation agreements with national accreditation bodies of other countries; reports on implemented joint activities and achieved results, etc.

Strengthening the Use of Accreditation in the Creation and Implementation of Public Policies

- **Indicators:** Number and type of joint activities of line ministries and ATCG in the preparation of national legislation.
- **Sources of verification:** Records of participation of ATCG representatives in working groups for the preparation of national legislation; records of ATCG comments on draft laws and by-laws; list of national legislation referring to accreditation, etc.

Monitoring and evaluation of ATCG's work in accordance with this Programme shall be carried out by the ATCG Management Board on a quarterly, semi-annual or annual basis, depending on the type of objective, with the determination and specification of indicators and sources of verification by which the level of effectiveness of the undertaken activities may be measured. ATCG is obliged to submit to the Management Board, in June and at the end of December of the current year, written evidence on the level of fulfilment of the objectives set out in the Work Programme.

Podgorica, 15 January 2026