



ENHANCEMENT OF THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT IN THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN

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Agreements on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAAs)





Introduction



The WTO TBT Agreement applies to:

- *Technical regulations,*
- *Standards, and*
- *Conformity assessment procedures, which are procedures used directly or indirectly to determine that relevant requirements in technical regulations or standards are fulfilled.*



WTO Members envisage the following means to facilitate the acceptance of Conformity Assessment Procedures:

- Unilateral Recognition of Results of Foreign Conformity Assessment;
- Mutual Recognition Agreements;
- Arrangements for Conformity Assessment;
- Supplier's Declaration of Conformity (SDoC);
- The use of Accreditation;
- Others.



Introduction



MRAs and ACAAs combine most of these elements.



Conceptualisation of ACAAs



Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) provide for testing performed by Notified Bodies established in third countries and for the recognition of their certifications by EU authorities.

ACAAs are a type of MRAs based on the alignment of the legislative system of the third country concerned with those of the EU.



Conceptualisation of ACAAs



MRAs and ACAAs have the objective of promoting trade in goods between the European Union and third countries by facilitating market access.

In the WTO TBT Agreement, access entails suppliers' right to an assessment of conformity under the rules of the procedure, including, when foreseen by this procedure, the possibility to have conformity assessment activities undertaken at the site of facilities and to receive the mark of the system.

Laboratories must comply with EU standards.



Conceptualisation of ACAAs



MRAs and ACAAs lay down the conditions under which the EU and the third country concerned will accept test reports, certificates and marks of conformity issued by the Conformity Assessment Bodies of the other party to the Agreement, in conformity with the legislation of the first party.



Mutual recognition agreements



MRAs are bilateral agreements, and aim to benefit industry by providing easier access to conformity assessment.

Thereby, MRAs facilitate mutually market access.

The EU has entered into MRAs with:

- USA
- Japan
- Switzerland
- Australia
- New Zealand
- Canada



Conceptualisation of ACAAs



ACAAs provide typically for two mechanisms:

- Recognition of equivalence in technical regulations, standardization and conformity assessment for industrial products subject to equivalent regulations in EU law and the national law of the partner country. Mutual recognition of products operates on the basis of the *acquis communautaire* that has been transposed by the partner country, in the same way as it would apply to products placed on the market of a Member State. No duplication in the approval procedures is required.
- Mutual acceptance of industrial products that fulfil the requirements to be lawfully placed on the market in one of the Parties



ACAAs in the EU-Lebanon Association Agreement



Article 48

Cooperation in standardisation and conformity assessment

The Parties shall cooperate in:

- a. Reducing divergences in standardisation, metrology, quality control and conformity assessment;
- b. Developing the updating of Lebanese laboratories;
- c. Negotiating MRAs as soon as the conditions for them are met; and
- d. Strengthening the Lebanese institutions



ACAAs in the EU-Lebanon Association Agreement



A Twinning Project in the field of conformity assessment is being closed successfully in these days.

Objective: The overall objective of the project is to increase the competitiveness of Lebanese products on international markets, through better conformance to national and international technical regulations and standards and to improve the level of health and safety protection of Lebanese consumers, as well as the protection of the environment.



ACAA in the EU-Lebanese Association Agreement



An ACAA the EU and Lebanon negotiate currently an ACAA.



Thank you for your attention

