



PL SM 7.15-2015

**POLICY ON PARTICIPATION OF ACCREDITED
LABORATORIES IN PROFICIENCY TESTING**

Developed by	Department for Accreditation No2
Responsible for updating	Department for Accreditation No2
Approved	Order dated 17.04.2015
Entered into force	from 17.04.2015
Issue	03
Amendment	1 from 10.11.2015 2 from 26.08.2019 (order No50 dated 15.07.2019)
Copy	CONTROL
Instead of	

This document defines the policy of the Republican Unitary Enterprise “Belarusian State Centre for Accreditation” (hereinafter - BSCA) in relation to maintaining confidence in the results of calibrations, tests, measurements carried out by accredited laboratories.

The present policy is developed in accordance with the requirements of ILAC P9:06/2014 *Policy for Participation in Proficiency Testing Activities* and EA-4/18:2010 *Guidance on the level and frequency of proficiency testing participation*.

1. General provisions

1.1 The policy applies to laboratories applying for accreditation and accredited laboratories (hereinafter - laboratories). Monitoring of the implementation of this policy is carried out by the BSCA during laboratory assessments.

1.2 Participation in proficiency testing programmes (PTP) and interlaboratory comparisons (ILC) is an important and actual instrument for realization of the requirements of GOST ISO/IEC 17025 (ISO/IEC 17025:2017, IDT) and STB ISO 15189 (ISO 15189:2012, IDT), with regard to implement conditions for recognition of reports of accredited testing/calibration laboratories.

1.3 In accordance with ILAC Policy P9:06/2014 successful participation in PTP/ILC is one of the tools by which a laboratory can provide evidence of its competence during assessment by BSCA.

2. Participation in proficiency testing

2.1 When performing assessments of laboratories BSCA controls planning and participation of laboratories in PTP within accreditation cycle so that to cover accreditation scope divided by subdisciplines in accordance with EA-4/18:2010.

2.2 BSCA determines minimal number of participation in PTP for laboratories in the following way:

- for initial accreditation and extending accreditation a laboratory shall present evidence of satisfactory participation in at least one PTP for each subdiscipline in the scope of accreditation. For application purposes BSCA can only consider PTPs which took place not longer than 2 years before application for accreditation is submitted.

- laboratory shall prepare a plan for participation in PTP in accordance with accreditation scope for the current accreditation cycle and evidences of its implementation. The plan for participation in PTP which is submitted to BSCA should be composed so that during accreditation cycle the laboratory participates in PTPs for all subdisciplines of the accreditation scope. This means that for each subdiscipline of the accreditation scope the laboratory shall participate in PTPs at least once during accreditation cycle.

The plan shall be reviewed and updated as necessary upon changes in personnel of the laboratory, used methods, equipment, conditions and other factors bearing on the competence of laboratory.

The laboratory shall explain and justify if it fails to participate in PTPs for any subdisciplines of the accreditation scope.

3. The recognition of PTP/ILC results

3.1 BSCA recognizes the results of PTPs which were organized by:

3.1.1 Providers accredited for compliance with GOST ISO/IEC 17043 (ISO/IEC 17043:2010, IDT) by BSCA or accreditation bodies which are signatories ILAC MRA or other regional agreement recognized by ILAC;

3.1.2 National metrological institutes within regional metrological organizations;

3.1.3 Regional and national reference laboratories;

3.1.4 Other competent providers which perform their activity in accordance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17043, have accredited laboratories, positive results of participation in PTP at the regional/international level, experience of PTP organization at the national/international level;

3.2 BSCA publishes on its official website information (links) on PT providers and their PT programmes.

3.3 There are certain fields where participation in the PTP can be irrational or technically impossible, for example, there are no relevant PTP proposed by the organizers of clause 3.1 (the laboratory have to provide documentary evidence of the impossibility of participating in the PTP). In this case, technical competence can be demonstrated by successful participation in an LC between two or more laboratories.

When assessing the competence of a laboratory, BSCA can accept the results of laboratory participation in interlaboratory comparisons after analyzing the report on interlaboratory comparisons for compliance with the requirements of GOST ISO/IEC 17043-2013 (ISO/IEC 17043:2010, IDT).

3.4 BSCA also considers the results of other activities presented by laboratories, the implementation of which can confirm their technical competence, if there is no possibility of participation in the PTP and ILC (the laboratory have to provide documentary evidence of the impossibility of participating in the PTP and ILC). Such activities may include: internal quality control, laboratory validation/verification of methods, comparison of results obtained by various methods, use of objects with known characteristics when testing, analysis of “blank” samples and other forms of qualification assessment.

4. Using of results of PT programmes

4.1 An accredited laboratory submits to BSCA a report on participation on PTP at least once in 18 months in accordance with the template placed on BSCA website www.bsca.by. BSCA can further request documentation providing evidence of participation in certain programme.

4.2 When preparing for the on-site assessment, the BSCA takes into account that the successful participation of the laboratory in a specific PTP may provide evidence of competence for a specific task, but may not reflect stable competence, in

the same way, obtaining unsatisfactory or questionable results when participating in the PTP may reflect an accidental deviation from satisfactory level of competence.

4.3 The results of the participation of laboratories in the PTP conducted in accordance with clause 3.1 of this policy are used by the BSCA for:

- a) determining the volume of the assessment plan, identifying a representative method for inclusion in the assessment plan;
- b) confirmation of calibration and measurement capabilities¹ of calibration laboratories;
- c) making decisions on accreditation, incl. actions with systematic unsatisfactory results of participation in the PTP.

4.4 If the laboratory obtained unsatisfactory results from participation in the PTP/ILC, then it should analyze and establish the reasons for the unsatisfactory results, develop (if necessary) corrective actions. The effectiveness of corrective actions must be confirmed by repeated participation in the next rounds of PTP for this subdiscipline in the shortest possible time.

4.5 The participation of laboratories in PTP/ILC does not replace internal quality control in laboratories, but complement it in terms of implementing quality control procedures.

¹ *When delivering the results, the laboratory should not declare the value of the uncertainty better than the calibration and measuring capabilities specified in the field of accreditation or in the database of key comparisons (KCDB).*