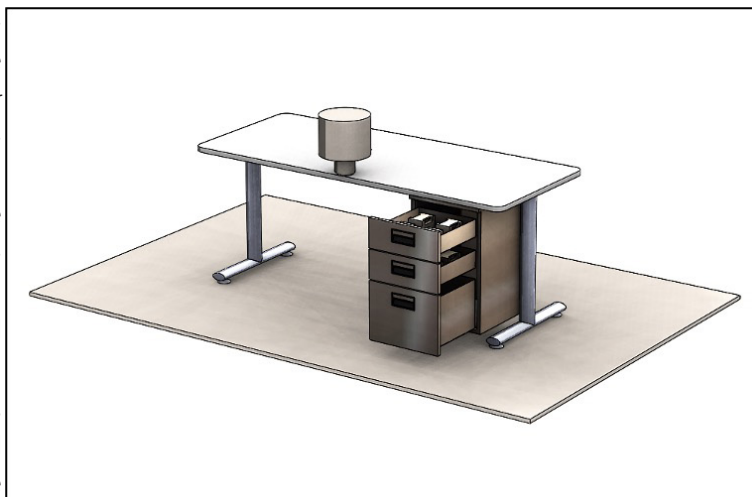


# Work safety of furniture - How Catas assesses their compliance with the Italian law (DLgs 81)

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The Italian legislative reference as regards safety in workplaces is the Legislative Decree 81 which, since 2008, has replaced another previous and well-known decree (626). Decree 81, which title is “Testo unico” on health and safety at work has effectively absorbed and ordered all the previous regulations and essentially represents a collection of articles, paragraphs and annexes, in which the legislator specifies the rules for the prevention and protection of health in every work environment. The environments considered also include offices and, in particular, Legislative Decree 81 considers chairs and desks for video display terminals that must guarantee the safety of the worker during their use.



The following table reports the requirements indicated in Annex XXXIV of the decree which illustrates the general safety principles established by the legislator.

## Worktops

*The worktop must have a surface with a low reflection index, be stable, of sufficient size to allow a flexible arrangement of the screen, keyboard, documents and accessory material.*

*The height of the fixed or adjustable worktop must be approximately between 70 and 80 cm. The space available must allow the housing and movement of the lower limbs, as well as the entry of the seat and armrests if present.*

*The depth of the worktop must be such as to ensure adequate visual distance from the screen.*

*The document holder must be stable and adjustable and must be placed in such a way as to minimize head and eye movements.*

## Work seat

*The work seat must be stable and allow the user freedom of movement, as well as a comfortable position. The seat must have an adjustable height independently of the backrest and seat dimensions suitable for the anthropometric characteristics of the user.*

*The backrest must provide adequate support to the user’s back-lumbar region. Therefore it must be suitable for the anthropometric characteristics of the user and must have adjustable height and inclination. As part of these adjustments, the user must be able to fix the backrest in the selected position.*

*The backrest and seat must have rounded edges. The materials must have a level of permeability that does not compromise user comfort and can be cleaned.*

*The seat must be equipped with a swivel mechanism to facilitate position changes and must be able to be moved easily according to the user’s needs.*

Table 1. Extract from Annex XXXIV of Legislative Decree 81

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As previously said and as evident from the table above, Legislative Decree 81 provides the general principles without defining in detail the specific methods and criteria for verifying the safety of the products considered.

For many years, Catas has established that the natural tool to be used for these purposes was logically represented by the technical standards of the sector and has therefore defined its own specific internal procedure, the PG44, which promptly refers to them (see tables below).

D.Lgs 81 indication	Reference standard and requirements (Catas PG44)	Test method (Catas PG44)
“Surface with a low reflection index”	UNI 11191:2006 Office furniture - VDT tables and desks - Specular reflection requirement	UNI EN 13722:2004 Furniture. Assessment of the surface gloss
“The worktop must be large enough to allow for an arrangement... etc. The depth of the worktop must be such as to ensure adequate visual distance from the screen. “	UNI EN 527-1 Office furniture. Work tables and desks. Dimensions	UNI EN 527-1
“The worktop must be stable”	UNI EN 527-2 Office furniture. Work tables. Safety, strength and durability requirements	UNI EN 527-2 UNI EN 1730

**Table 2. List of UNI standards established by Catas for assessing the conformity of worktops (desks)**

D.Lgs 81 indication	Reference standard and requirements (Catas PG44)	Test method (Catas PG44)
“The workseat must be stable”	UNI EN 1335-2:2018 Office furniture. Office work chair. Sa- fety requirements	UNI EN 1022-2018 Furniture. Seating. Determination of stability.  UNI EN 1728:2012 Furniture. Seating. Test methods for the determi- nation of strength and durability
“... allow the user free movement, as well as a comfortable position. Etc.”	UNI EN 1335-1:2020 Office furniture. Office work chair. Di- mensions. Determination of dimensions	ISO 24496:2017

**Table 3. List of UNI standards established by Catas for assessing the conformity of work seats (chairs)**

At the conclusion of the procedure established by the procedure mentioned above, if the tested product complies with the standard requirements, Catas therefore issues a specific certificate of compliance with Legislative Decree 81 referring to its internal procedure and the technical standards applied.

It is worth to remember, in any case, that the technical standards are subject to continuous revisions and therefore also the certificates of compliance with Legislative Decree 81 should be re-checked and possibly periodically updated.

In this regard, we underline that the reflectance measurement is no longer required for the surfaces of the worktops and therefore there are no longer any limits to their color which can therefore be both very dark and very light. On the other hand, the limits for specular reflection (gloss) are still valid.

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