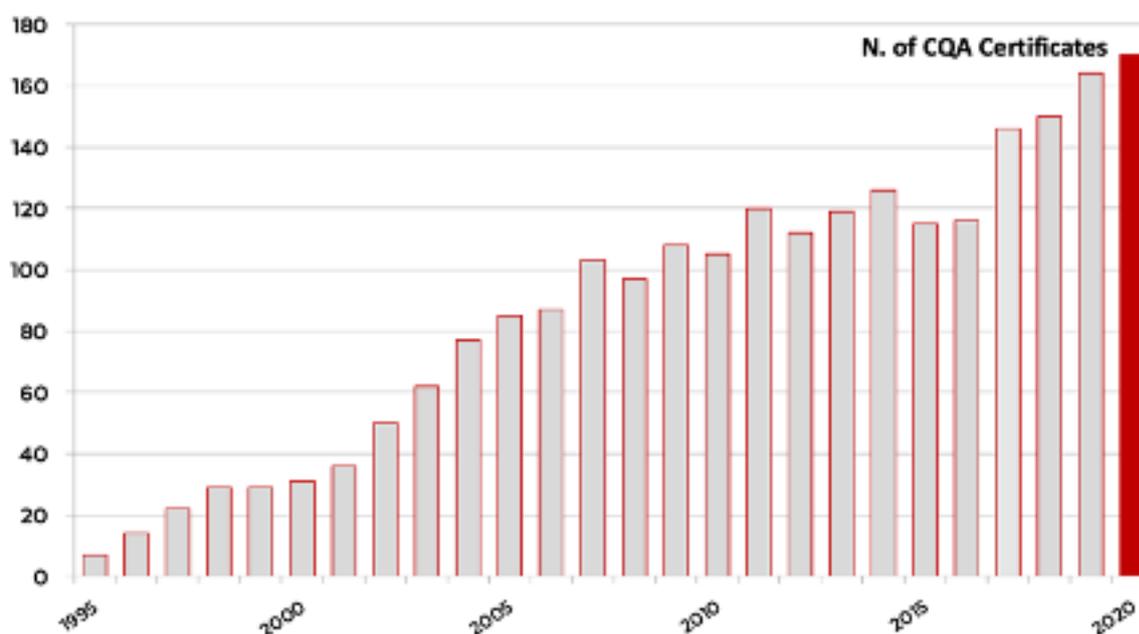


The market requires for the confirmation of the declared performance and quality of the product. Companies acquire them to stand out and grow in their reliability. These are product certifications. The positive trend in the number of certifications in Italy was recorded by ACCREDIA, the Italian accreditation body, which released the 2020 data during a recent conference held at the beginning of this year. Our privileged observatory as a certification body also confirms a positive increase in the number of product certifications for 2020.

Trend of certified productions by CATAS



Product certification represents an added value for companies: it is certainly an important tool for checking and monitoring production processes, but it is also an immediate tool for communication and marketing, it can add visibility to the product and a competitive advantage over competitors who lack it.

But not only that. Even the Public Administration and the large distribution and sales chains (GDO) make more and more use of it as effective tools for qualification and selection of suppliers.

For over 25 years, CATAS has been issuing product certifications as a third-party conformity assessment body, based on specific procedures and protocols developed to evaluate and check over time, the compliance of different products such as, for example, low formaldehyde emission panels, coating systems (for domestic furniture and for exterior wood), glulam beams.

Our task is to assess that the products comply with the requirements indicated in the Certification Rules: they always come out of technical standards, international (ISO), European (EN), national (UNI, for Italy) or set by legislation, such as the CARB and EPA regulations issued by US government agencies.

Throughout the certification validity period, our inspectors carry out all the evaluation activities, from the first audit, to the subsequent surveillance that represents a sort of “maintenance” of the certification, to ensure its validity over time.

It is precisely in the “challenging” periods, like the past year, that focusing on and investing in **certified quality** can become a winning card. It was not a coincidence, in fact, that two new certification schemes were created in 2020, in response to market demands.

The *impact attenuating playgrounds surfacing* and the *furniture coatings for health facilities and medical studies* are the new types of products that can be submitted to the evaluation of the Catas inspectors and, at the end of the process, “grant” the CQA brand - CATAS Quality Award.

In both these new fields, two companies have already reached the goal of the CQA brand.



CQA - Impact attenuating playground surfacing

NEW

It is the product certification scheme that attests to the constancy of the **production of playground surfacing** in relation to the performance characteristics evaluated according to EN 1177 and defines the procedures for the production control.

The product shall comply with the impact attenuation requirements according with the European reference standards. During the annual audit carried out at the production site, the CATAS inspectors verify the management of the production and of the supplies of raw materials; they also sample the surfaces on which, in the laboratory, the impact attenuation is measured.

Catas issued the first certificate for Poligomma srl. Its certified playground surfacing PLAYGOMMA is used for the safety in playgrounds.

CQA - Health Facilities Furniture Coatings

NEW

It is the product certification issued for **coating materials and coating systems for healthcare furniture and medical practices**. The technical rules are based on the Italian standard UNI 11780 published in 2020 that specifies the requirements and the test methods for the design of furniture for hospitals and medical practices.

The certification process provides for an annual audit in which the CATAS inspectors, in addition to verifying the management of the production, sample the product that, once applied, is submitted to performance tests.

In addition, if the product has also declared antibacterial properties, compliance with ISO 22196 “ *Measurement of antibacterial activity on plastics and other non-porous surfaces*” shall be tested in lab. *Guardian Medical Serie 3010H* of the Italian company Stardust Powder Coatings srl has been awarded the CQA - HFFC certification as first coating system. The antibacterial activity was tested to assess the complying with the characteristics declared.





CATAS “Italian Origin Furniture” certification

HIGHLIGHTS

It is among the most recent Catas product certification schemes and it is the one that has seen the greatest development and growth in just 2 years. **Office furniture, kitchen furniture and upholstered furniture** are the different industrial sectors in which the first group of certified companies operate. The certification allows them to declare not only the Italian origin of their products, but also their quality and technical performances, tested in the lab. The certification is based on some fundamental pillars:

- A national standard, UNI 11674, which defines both process and product requirements, making the “Italian” origin and quality of furniture products objective and verifiable.
- A rigorous and complete set of procedures and requirements, which includes at the same time, at the plant, the check of the location of the core production processes and, in the lab, the testing of the technical performance of the finished product.
- A “made in Italy” mark that is now enriched with the image and values of competence and experience, history and specialization that are its own and distinctive of CATAS, recognized internationally.

For companies that rely on our Institute to certify the Italian origin of their products, the “made in Italy” mark will be in fact granted **by Catas**.

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