

IAS 21

The Effects of Changes in Foreign Exchange Rates

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This extract has been prepared by IASC Foundation staff and has not been approved by the IASB. For the requirements reference must be made to International Financial Reporting Standards.

An entity may carry on foreign activities in two ways. It may have transactions in foreign currencies or it may have foreign operations. In addition, an entity may present its financial statements in a foreign currency. The objective of this Standard is to prescribe how to include foreign currency transactions and foreign operations in the financial statements of an entity and how to translate financial statements into a presentation currency. The principal issues are which exchange rate(s) to use and how to report the effects of changes in exchange rates in the financial statements.

This Standard does not apply to hedge accounting for foreign currency items, including the hedging of a net investment in a foreign operation. IAS 39 applies to hedge accounting.

This Standard does not apply to the presentation in a statement of cash flows of the cash flows arising from transactions in a foreign currency, or to the translation of cash flows of a foreign operation (see IAS 7 *Statement of Cash Flows*).

Functional currency

Functional currency is the currency of the primary economic environment in which the entity operates. The primary economic environment in which an entity operates is normally the one in which it primarily generates and expends cash.

An entity considers the following factors in determining its functional currency:

- (a) the currency:
 - (i) that mainly influences sales prices for goods and services (this will often be the currency in which sales prices for its goods and services are denominated and settled); and
 - (ii) of the country whose competitive forces and regulations mainly determine the sales prices of its goods and services.
- (b) the currency that mainly influences labour, material and other costs of providing goods or services (this will often be the currency in which such costs are denominated and settled).



Reporting foreign currency transactions in the functional currency

Foreign currency is a currency other than the functional currency of the entity. *Spot exchange rate* is the exchange rate for immediate delivery.

Exchange difference is the difference resulting from translating a given number of units of one currency into another currency at different exchange rates.

Net investment in a foreign operation is the amount of the reporting entity's interest in the net assets of that operation.

A foreign currency transaction shall be recorded, on initial recognition in the functional currency, by applying to the foreign currency amount the spot exchange rate between the functional currency and the foreign currency at the date of the transaction.

At the end of each reporting period:

- (a) foreign currency monetary items shall be translated using the closing rate;
- (b) non-monetary items that are measured in terms of historical cost in a foreign currency shall be translated using the exchange rate at the date of the transaction; and
- (c) non-monetary items that are measured at fair value in a foreign currency shall be translated using the exchange rates at the date when the fair value was determined.

Exchange differences arising on the settlement of monetary items or on translating monetary items at rates different from those at which they were translated on initial recognition during the period or in previous financial statements shall be recognised in profit or loss in the period in which they arise.

However, exchange differences arising on a monetary item that forms part of a reporting entity's net investment in a foreign operation shall be recognised in profit or loss in the separate financial statements of the reporting entity or the individual financial statements of the foreign operation, as appropriate. In the financial statements that include the foreign operation and the reporting entity (eg consolidated financial statements when the foreign operation is a subsidiary), such exchange differences shall be recognised initially in other comprehensive income and reclassified from equity to profit or loss on disposal of the net investment.

Furthermore, when a gain or loss on a non-monetary item is recognised in other comprehensive income, any exchange component of that gain or loss shall be recognised in other comprehensive income. Conversely, when a gain or loss on a non-monetary item is recognised in profit or loss, any exchange component of that gain or loss shall be recognised in profit or loss.

Translation to the presentation currency/Translation of a foreign operation

The Standard permits an entity to present its financial statements in any currency (or currencies). For this purpose, an entity could be a stand-alone entity, a parent preparing consolidated financial statements or a parent, an investor or a venturer preparing separate financial statements in accordance with IAS 27 *Consolidated and Separate Financial Statements*. If the presentation currency differs from the entity's functional currency, it translates its results and financial position into the presentation currency. For example, when a group contains individual entities with different functional currencies, the results and financial position of each entity are expressed in a common currency so that consolidated financial statements may be presented.

An entity is required to translate its results and financial position from its functional currency into a presentation currency (or currencies) using the method required for translating a foreign operation for inclusion in the reporting entity's financial statements.

The results and financial position of an entity whose functional currency is not the currency of a hyperinflationary economy shall be translated into a different presentation currency using the following procedures:

- (a) assets and liabilities for each statement of financial position presented (ie including comparatives) shall be translated at the closing rate at the date of that statement of financial position;
- (b) income and expenses for each statement of comprehensive income or separate income statement presented (ie including comparatives) shall be translated at exchange rates at the dates of the transactions; and
- (c) all resulting exchange differences shall be recognised in other comprehensive income.

Any goodwill arising on the acquisition of a foreign operation and any fair value adjustments to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities arising on the acquisition of that foreign operation shall be treated as assets and liabilities of the foreign operation. *Foreign operation* is an entity that is a subsidiary, associate, joint venture or branch of a reporting entity, the activities of which are based or conducted in a country or currency other than those of the reporting entity.

On the disposal of a foreign operation, the cumulative amount of the exchange differences relating to that foreign operation, recognised in other comprehensive income and accumulated in the separate component of equity, shall be reclassified from equity to profit or loss (as a reclassification adjustment) when the gain or loss on disposal is recognised (see IAS 1 *Presentation of Financial Statements* (as revised in 2007)).

On the partial disposal of a subsidiary that includes a foreign operation, the entity shall re-attribute the proportionate share of the cumulative amount of the exchange differences recognised in other comprehensive income to the non-controlling interests in that foreign operation. In any other partial disposal of a foreign operation the entity shall reclassify to profit or loss only the proportionate share of the cumulative amount of the exchange differences recognised in other comprehensive income.

When there is a change in an entity's functional currency, the entity shall apply the translation procedures applicable to the new functional currency prospectively from the date of the change.

If the functional currency is the currency of a hyperinflationary economy, the entity's financial statements are restated in accordance with IAS 29 *Financial Reporting in Hyperinflationary Economies*.

The results and financial position of an entity whose functional currency is the currency of a hyperinflationary economy shall be translated into a different presentation currency using the following procedures:

- (a) all amounts (ie assets, liabilities, equity items, income and expenses, including comparatives) shall be translated at the closing rate at the date of the most recent statement of financial position, except that
- (b) when amounts are translated into the currency of a non-hyperinflationary economy, comparative amounts shall be those that were presented as current year amounts in the relevant prior year financial statements (ie not adjusted for subsequent changes in the price level or subsequent changes in exchange rates).