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Human Medicines Division

Acceptability of IU as abbreviation for International Units in the strength of human medicinal products

COUNTRY	ABBREVIATION	COMMENTS
AT	I.E	Not accepted. The abbreviation I.E. must be used.
BE	UI or IE or IU	The following abbreviations are accepted: UI (French) IE (Dutch and German) IU
BG	IU	Accepted
CY	IU	Accepted
CZ	IU	Accepted
DE	I.E.	Not accepted. The abbreviation I.E. must be used.
DK	IU or IE	IU is accepted for multilingual packs; however the abbreviation IE must be used on Danish packs.
EE	RÜ	Not accepted. The abbreviation RÜ must be used.
EL	IU	Accepted
ES	UI (or IU*)	*IU would only be acceptable in exceptional cases following an appropriate justification (e.g. orphan medicinal products, certain multilingual packages). In the cases when it is accepted, it would be required to include an explanation in the PIL that "IU" means "UI" (<i>unidades internacionales</i>), since patients may have seen that acronym before and should know it is the same. Additionally, if feasible, when stating the active substance on the outer package "IU" should be included in brackets following the translation for international units in Spanish, i.e. <i>XX unidades internacionales (IU)</i> .
FI	IU	Accepted
FR	UI (or IU*)	*IU would only be acceptable in exceptional cases following an appropriate justification (e.g. orphan medicinal products, certain multilingual packages). In the cases when it is accepted, it would be required to include an explanation in the PIL that "IU" means "UI" (<i>unités internationales</i>), since patients may have seen that acronym before and should know it is the same. Additionally, if feasible, when stating the active substance on the outer package "IU" should be included in brackets following the translation for international units in French, i.e. <i>XX unités internationales (IU)</i> .

¹ **Rev. 2 Changes since publication:** IS details updated.



COUNTRY	ABBREVIATION	COMMENTS
HR	IU	Accepted
HU	NE	Not accepted. At national level Hungary consequently translates IU into the official Hungarian translation, i.e. NE (<i>nemzetközi egység</i>).
IE	IU	Accepted
IS	a.e. or IU	a.e. must be used on Icelandic packs. IU is accepted for multilingual packs provided it is explained in the package leaflet (e.g. by adding IU in brackets after a.e.).
IT	UI	Not accepted. The abbreviation UI must be used.
LT	TV	Not accepted. The abbreviation TV (<i>tarptautinis vienetas</i>) must be used.
LV	SV	Not accepted. The abbreviation SV (<i>starptautiskās vienības</i>) must be used. In case of Baltic multilingual packs there are several examples where "IU" for three countries has national translation (respectively for LV, LT and EE).
MT	IU	Accepted
NL	I.E.	Not accepted. The abbreviation I.E. must be used.
NO	IU or IE	IU is accepted for multilingual packs; however the abbreviation IE must be used on Norwegian packs.
PL	IU or j.m.	IU is acceptable but not recommended. The abbreviation j.m. is highly recommended.
PT	UI	IU should not be used in Portuguese. It could be confusing, since it is usually translated to UI (<i>Unidades internacionais</i>). There is not any medicinal product in the PT database with the abbreviation IU.
RO	UI	Not accepted. The abbreviation UI (<i>Unitati international</i>) must be used.
SE	IU or IE	IU is accepted for multilingual packs; however the abbreviation IE must be used on Swedish packs.
SI	i.e.	Not accepted. The abbreviation i.e. must be used.
SK	IU	Accepted
UK (Northern Ireland)	IU	IU is acceptable but a consistent approach is needed (i.e. some medicines are IU and some are just U, and this causes confusion and dosing errors).