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Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Transport Statistics

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Geneva, 12–14 June 2018

Report of the Working Party on Transport Statistics on its sixty-ninth session

Contents

I.   Attendance

1.   The Working Party on Transport Statistics held its sixty-ninth session from 12 to 14 June 2018 in Geneva. According to the decision taken at its sixty-seventh session (ECE/TRANS/WP.6/171, para. 45) the session was chaired by Ms. O. Kastlova (Czechia).

2.   The session of the Working Party was attended by the following countries: Canada, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

3   Representatives of the European Commission were present: Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE) and Eurostat. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: Central Commission for Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR), Danube Commission (DC), International Transport Forum (ITF) and the International Union of Railways (UIC).

II.   Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/174

4.   The Working Party adopted the provisional agenda prepared by the secretariat (ECE/TRANS/WP.6/174).

III.   Workshop on Data Quality in Inland Waterway Statistics (agenda item 2)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/4

5.   The first morning of the session was dedicated to a workshop on data quality in inland waterway statistics. This was introduced by the secretary of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3), who described that Working Party's activities, including the recent ministerial conference "Connecting by Inland Navigation" in Wroclaw, Poland. The ministerial declaration adopted at the conference stressed the importance of harmonized statistics for effective decision making.

6.   The representative of the Netherlands described the methods they use for collecting inland waterway statistics, in the context of the European Commission policy on shifting road freight to rail and inland waterways. Much of their movement information now comes from the use of the Automatic Identification System (AIS) on ships rather than paper-based surveys. Examples of port traffic visualizations of origin-destination pairs were also given. The Netherlands ships around a million tonnes a day on its inland waterways, around one seventh of which is container shipping, and these are both growing as a share of total transport. These large numbers highlight the importance of inland water transport as part of the Dutch transport sector, and of course the necessity of producing accurate statistics.

7.   Poland described their own statistical production of inland waterways, including its legal basis. Their statistics still come from traditional surveys (of all enterprises with more than five employees) but they have plans to move to a system based on AIS in the future as well. Two of their principal challenges were the great deal of time spent checking the distance figures reported by freight companies, and accurately accounting for foreign vessels on their waterways (for whom their statistical laws do not apply). The Chair remarked that this was a problem shared by many countries including Czechia. This issue is somewhat mitigated in

the case of Poland as many vessels are coming from Germany and the two countries have an excellent cooperation in tracking these cases.

8.   The presentation of CCNR focused on an analysis of the hinterland regions of Austria, Germany and Switzerland and the share of their imports and exports coming from and going to Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Antwerp, together with more minor ports such as Bramerhaven. The delegate noted that in the region inland water trade was very much import oriented, whereas rail transport was more export oriented. This was due to practical reasons relating to the type of goods coming in and out (for example iron ore arriving and finished machinery and transport equipment leaving). The Netherlands commented that this analysis could be improved by separating container and bulk transport, or an even more detailed type of goods breakdown. For example, the port of Bremerhaven is well known for exporting motor vehicles.

9.   Canada presented their own inland water transport monitoring activities, which are somewhat different to European countries given that most of their inland water transport does not result in international trade, with the exception of transport on the Great Lakes. Many of their collected data come from import/export manifests from their border services agency, while AIS data and the domestic fuel consumption survey are also used as sources. The impact of a carbon tax two years ago on their modal split is not yet visible in their data but it is likely to be in the future. Finally, a continuing challenge is of obtaining accurately coded goods from freight operators, and Canada is planning on using an application of machine learning, in order to accurately assign goods to the HS or NST goods classifications.

10.   The Russian Federation presented on the history of transport corridors from the ancient world to modern times.

11.   Eurostat made a presentation of their activities around inland waterways and in particular their task force and working group activities around inland waterway passenger and accident statistics. In terms of freight transport their data collection is based around European legislation, and timeliness is generally very good. The mirroring exercise of comparing countries' respective imports and exports is an effective way of measuring data quality and this has improved over the last ten years. For passenger transport, Eurostat and its task force are still preparing relevant methodologies which will be considered for approval at the end of 2018. Their proposed variables for collection are on number of passengers, passenger-km, number of cruises and number of vessels, disaggregated by type of transport (national versus international), type of vessel (cruises versus day trips), vessel capacity and country of embarkation/disembarkation (although it is possible that not all indicators will be initially recommended for collection). On accidents, Eurostat reported that data were reported voluntarily by eight or nine member States.

12.   DC described their own activities in general and in relation to statistics production. Their main challenge is on collecting the requested vessel information, which is quite detailed, and on comparability with other organizations (Germany is a member of DC, CCNR, European Union and UNECE for example).

13.   Following these presentations, the secretariat summarized the session around three main messages:

•   The use of AIS for statistics production presents challenges in ensuring data remain representative, but also opportunities in reducing the reporting burden.

•   Counting of foreign vessels on national networks was a common problem and country practices on dealing with this could be an area of future cooperation.

•   That top-level freight statistics are useful, but splitting numbers further (either by containers versus bulk or even more detailed classifications) provided more valuable analysis and efforts should be made to facilitate this.

14.   The Working Party welcomed the idea to start the session with a workshop dedicated to a specific theme, and appreciated the contributions and discussion brought on by the presentations delivered by member States and international organizations about inland waterway statistics. After an informal survey, many participants agreed that the existing data on goods moved (in tonnes and tonne-km), together with vessel registration numbers, remained the most important inland waterway transport data for policymakers. Passenger numbers and accidents on inland waterways are useful datasets for specific policy requirements.

15.   The Working Party instructed the secretariat to report on the results of the workshop to SC.3 at its next session, and to ensure that that Working Party's statistical needs continued to be met.

16.   The Working Party considered topics for next year's workshop, and suggestions were made including intermodal transport, transport safety, traffic visualization and various topics on road transport. The Chair and Vice-Chair, in consultation with the secretariat, will consider these suggestions and propose a theme.

IV.   The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies (agenda item 3)

Documentation: Informal document ITC (2018) No. 13

17.   The Working Party took note of the results of the eightieth session of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) of interest to the Working Party, the proposals for the ITC draft strategy, and on United Nations management reform. The Working Party invited its members to provide written comments on the ITC draft strategy.

V.   Data collection, methodological development and harmonization of transport statistics (agenda item 4)

A.   Glossary for Transport Statistics

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/1

18.   The Working Party was informed about the Group of Experts' (formed by the Working Party last year) activities in updating the Glossary for Transport Statistics.

19.   The Working Party was informed about plans to produce further glossary chapters on passenger mobility and the environmental impact of transport.

20.   ITF noted that an online interactive glossary would be a useful tool and that this should be explored after publication. During discussions of the Glossary's overall purpose Eurostat mentioned that they considered it a useful statistical reference manual rather than a classification. This was echoed by Canada, who also supported the idea of an online glossary that could be updated more frequently. The Chair remarked that it would still perhaps be necessary to go through the same consultation processes for these smaller updates.

21.   The Russian Federation noted that the Glossary should cover all types of combined transport, such as trimodal and synchromodal transport. It was noted that the Glossary should generally cover only those items where transport statistics are being produced at the international level and the Russian Federation was invited to submit a proposal on this by the agreed deadline taking these principles for inclusion in the Glossary into account.

22.   UIC noted that the rail infrastructure definitions did not reflect their own statistical definitions, for example the definition of line excluded private enterprise lines that form the majority of total lines in countries such as Cuba and Mauritania. This was an issue in previous iterations and UIC was invited to submit a proposal for consideration that would maintain the consistency of data collection for all parties. DC also noted that they would provide further written comments by the deadline.

23.   The Working Party welcomed progress made so far on producing the fifth edition of the Glossary for Transport Statistics, noting that member States have until 24 August 2018 to provide additional comments, and that the Intersecretariat Working Group (composed of Eurostat, ITF and UNECE) will take these final comments into consideration when producing the final document. Further, the Working Party adopted this draft fifth edition, noting the possibility for further changes based on final member State and organization comments.

24.   The Working Party invited all member States to provide their final glossary comments in writing by 24 August 2018.

25.   Delegates noted the importance of being consulted for the translations of the Glossary, to ensure that transport statistics experts in each language ensure that correct terms are used.

B.   Classification system for transport statistics

26.   The Working Party took note of the use of the NST 2007 as a classification system for the transport of goods.

27.   Related to the previous agenda item it was suggested that parts of the Glossary could be proposed as an official United Nations statistical classification, but delegates felt that this may entail further administrative hurdles when future updates are planned and so it should not be pursued.

28.   Delegates were invited to inform the Working Party of their experiences on the use of NST 2007 at the next session. They are welcome to submit to the secretariat any questions, requests or comments concerning the classification.

C.   Common Questionnaire

29.   The Working Party took note of the availability of data collected through the Common Questionnaire for transport statistics. The outreach activities of the secretariat which have led to a noticeable improvement in data completeness and quality were welcomed by the Working Party, and the Working Party requested that this be continued.

30.   The Working Party discussed how different countries upload data into the Common Questionnaire, either inputting the data manually or through the bulk upload function. Denmark noted that using the bulk upload necessitated further confirming each data cell was correct, which takes a long time.

31.   Ireland shared this view and also noted that the table for road vehicles registered in the reporting country was one of the most time consuming. Further, the print function in the Common Questionnaire is necessary so that the member State has a record of all their data entered, however this does not always work correctly.

32.   The United Kingdom agreed with the point on the vehicle register table, and further noted that as the data for road enterprise, economic performance and employment was poorly supplied by many countries, this raises the question of whether it should be continued. This was noted by the secretariat who will consider this during future streamlining discussions in cooperation with Eurostat and ITF.

33.   The Working Party reaffirmed the importance of providing data for the Common Questionnaire, and encouraged non-reporting countries to at least provide top-level data.

D.   Road traffic accident statistics and rail traffic accidents statistics

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/7, ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/10

34.   The Working Party took note of the ongoing work in relation to road traffic accident statistics and was informed about the release of the "Road Traffic Accidents in Europe and North America" publication. The Working Party took note of developments in the European Commission on the CARE road traffic accident database, in particular developments concerning the collection of injury data based on the MAIS3+ rating, and the challenges of matching police accident data with hospital injury data. Comparable injured and seriously injured statistics across countries remains a challenge due to a lack of comparability.

35.   The CARE database has its own glossary of accident terminology which is aligned with the Glossary for Transport Statistics. The European Commission delegate also noted that they are working on combining accident coordinate data with traffic volumes and this could be presented at the next session. It was noted that this would be a possible area of cooperation between the EC and the secretariat, given the traffic data mapped by the secretariat in the E-Road census.

36.   The Working Party was informed about the dissemination of the rail accident statistics dataset, and forthcoming cross-modal analyses prepared by the secretariat. A delegate from the European Union Agency for Railways could not attend due to travel disruption, but his presentations on rail accidents and level crossing safety would be made available for delegates in the usual fashion.

37.   The Working Party was informed about the results of the level crossing safety pilot questionnaire that was disseminated by the secretariat in 2017. Additional information was provided by the Secretary of the Group of Experts of Safety at Level Crossings (WP.1/GE.1), who highlighted the importance of the data collected. It was decided to continue this as a pilot questionnaire for another year, and that the results should be disseminated.

E.   Pilot questionnaire on road traffic performance

38.   The Working Party took note of a presentation from Eurostat on road traffic performance and their efforts to improve the data completeness on vehicle-kms by providing grants for countries to collect data through odometer reading measurements at road worthiness tests.

39.   During discussions it was noted that data availability is still limited for this table, but they may improve in the coming years. It was decided that the pilot questionnaire on road traffic performance will continue for another cycle. The secretariat offered to make an assessment of data availability in time for the next session.

40.   Eurostat also gave an update on their passenger mobility indicators project, which aims to track how people move around (for example on number of trips per day and travel time per day). Data will be published once more countries (perhaps around ten) provide data.

41.   Slovenia presented their attempts at collecting passenger mobility data through the use of a mobile phone application, which would then feed into Eurostat's passenger mobility data collection. The initial results seemed promising and plausible. Future developments may make this collection feasible on an annual basis. The sampling of relevant users will also need to be considered rather than just making the application available to download.

F.   Pilot questionnaire on bus and coach statistics

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/5

42.   The Working Party received a presentation from Sweden on their statistics produced on buses and public transport in general. The use of timetable data is straightforward for public operators on a regional basis but this is not the case for interregional operators, who make up the majority of vehicle-km. The presentation also included details of their ferry operations and statistics of public transport specifically for socially vulnerable users.

43.   The Working Party was informed by the secretariat about the dissemination of the bus and coach statistics, and the importance of these data for monitoring Sustainable Development Goal 11. The comparability of these data remains a challenge due to no agreed common terms, for example on what constitutes an urban journey. The presentation also included questions as to whether data on metros, trams and light rail were also available to complete the public transport picture on an urban basis.

44.   Denmark noted that they do have urban metro transport information, but private coaches (which are significant in Denmark) are much more difficult to collate data on. ITF noted that metro and light rail information is difficult to assign between urban and non-urban uses. The Netherlands remarked that as a single public transport card can be used throughout the country, which is scanned upon boarding and alighting, data could be available in this regard in the future.

45.   The Working Party decided to make this data collection permanent pending further consultations with Eurostat on the possible exclusion of indicators of journeys offered and seat-kms offered, as recommended by the WP.6 Task Force on streamlining pilot questionnaires (ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2013/3). The Working Party also agreed to explore ways to improve comparability across countries.

G.   Intermodal transport statistics

46.   The Working Party received a presentation on intermodal transport from the Russian Federation. It decided to keep this item on the agenda.

VI.   Traffic censuses in the ECE region (agenda item 5)

A.   2015 and 2020 E-Road traffic censuses

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/3, ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/11

47.   To provide background to the agenda item, the United Kingdom presented their own activities with transport statistics visualization. This included the use of AIS for vessel locations, street-level traffic counting maps and biking and walking statistics for individual local authorities.

48.   The Working Party was informed about the 21 responses received so far for the 2015 E-Road Traffic census, the deadline for which was 30 November 2016. Member States who have submitted at least partial census results were currently Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and United Kingdom. The Working Party encouraged all member States to actively participate in this round and future rounds of the road census, in particular by providing these data in Shapefile format.

49.   The Working Party welcomed the dissemination of the interactive map of the Annual Average Daily Traffic results by the secretariat, and encouraged the secretariat to explore future applications of this tool. In particular, there seems increasing interest by member States and international organizations in combining traffic level data with geolocations of traffic accidents. The secretariat and DG MOVE will coordinate further about this and the differences between the E-Road network and TEN-T core network.

50.   The Working Party took note of the draft recommendations for the 2020 E-Road census, noting that recommendations were largely unchanged since the 2015 census. The recommendations now ask for the length of 2+1 E-Roads as a memo item in tables 1 and 2, and instead of asking for a printed paper map, now ask for the geospatial results to be provided in Shapefile format. It was noted that in previous rounds of the census, an ad hoc group of country experts provided input into the census recommendations, and that this could be considered if member States were interested.

51.   The secretariat invited member States to provide further comments on the E-road census recommendations by 30 September 2018. The Working Party endorsed the 2020 E-Road census recommendations, subject to any further changes based on comments from member States.

B.   2015 and 2020 E-Rail traffic censuses

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/8

52.   The Working Party was informed about the 10 responses so far received for the 2015 E-rail census, the deadline for which was 30 June 2017. Data were in general less readily available than for the road census, and Shapefiles were not provided by any country. The Working Party noted the efforts by the secretariat to map these results, and encouraged countries to either send data in Shapefile format if possible, or at least to provide coordinates of the start and end points of their rail segments.

53.   Canada noted that they were working with the United States of America on a common road and rail network map and will try to measure traffic on these via the use of satellites.

54.   The Working Party took note of the draft recommendations for the 2020 E-Rail census, noting that recommendations were largely unchanged since the 2015 census. The secretariat invited member States to provide further comments on the E-rail census recommendations by 30 September 2018. The Working Party endorsed the 2020 E-rail census recommendations, subject to any further changes based on comments from member States.

VII.   Development of a global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals (agenda item 6)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/6

55.   The Working Party took note of the activities of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals indicators (IAEG-SDG) to measure the Sustainable Development Goals, information on which was provided by the ECE Statistics Division. It was noted that even the most advanced countries can still only provide data for around half of the indicators as of now. A remaining point of contention is the exact nature of how data flows from national statistical offices through the custodian agencies to the United Nations Statistics Division. Delegates were also informed of the plan to include Sustainable Development Goal indicators 3.6.1 and 9.1.2 in the second ECE Data Flow Pilot Project, which aims to analyse how data produced by National Statistical Offices flow to the

Sustainable Development Goal database via custodian agencies. Official statistics produced under the purview of the Working Party can be used directly to measure progress on this indicator and including the indicator in the pilot will increase the likelihood that these data are used.

56.   Slovenia pointed out that indicator 9.1.2 is actually multiple indicators rather than one, given the breakdown of volumes by freight and passenger transport and by mode of transport. On this point, Eurostat noted that their own indicator framework, instead, used the modal share of each transport mode rather than total volumes.

57.   The Working Party stressed the importance of official statistics in measuring the transport-related Sustainable Development Goal indicators, and encouraged member States to participate in the pilot questionnaire on Data Flows for indicator 9.1.2.

58.   The Working Party welcomed the capacity-building activities undertaken in the last year by the secretariat concerning the transport-related Sustainable Development Goals, noting the improved data that has already been disseminated as a result of these activities.

59.   The secretariat presented the road safety policy tool SafeFITS which allows policymakers to model estimates on road traffic fatalities as the result of different policy interventions. The ITF noted that this was an interesting model and that it is important that users of the tool should be aware of its limitations to avoid coming to misleading conclusions.

VIII. Dissemination of transport statistics by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (agenda item 7)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/9, ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/12

60.   The Working Party took note of the work on the ECE transport statistics database and the status of the publications: Statistics for Road Traffic Accidents in Europe and North America (RAS) and "UNECE Transport Statistics for Europe and North America" and the timescales for their publication. It welcomed the secretariat's project for producing short summary papers on the data produced relevant to the transport-related Sustainable Development Goals, and noted the analyses undertaken of the breakdown of road traffic accident statistics by gender and age.

61.   The secretariat mentioned briefly its project on assessing the feasibility of producing a simpler (and separate) estimates database, combining data from the Common Questionnaire with data available at the national level, but that this did not appear to add value at this time. The secretariat further informed the Working Party about improvements to data dissemination over the last twelve months, for example on the reorganization of the website structure, and an upgraded data validation procedure for the Common Questionnaire.

IX. Statistical activities of member States of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 8)

62.   The Working Party (during various other agenda items, and separately) received presentations from Canada, Netherlands, Poland, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Sweden and United Kingdom. These all provided useful updates on country statistical practices and provoked further discussion. The presentation from Canada concerned their transportation data portal that has been produced in collaboration with Transport Canada, which brings together data concerning transport from a variety of official sources.

X. Capacity-building activities (agenda item 9)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/6

63.   The Working Party took note of the workshops on transport statistics attended in Montenegro (October 2017), Kazakhstan (November 2017), Slovenia (November 2017), Georgia (February 2018) and Greece (May 2018). It welcomed these workshops (with their varying agendas and goals) as concrete ways to improve transport statistics data quality and completeness, in addition to improving awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals.

XI. Intersecretariat Working Group on Transport Statistics (agenda item 10)

64.   The Working Party took note of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Transport Statistics activities during the past year, principally concerning the update procedure around the Glossary for Transport Statistics.

XII. Statistical activities of international organizations of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 11)

A. European Commission (DG MOVE)

65.   The representative of DG MOVE informed the Working Party about the developments in the Community transport policy and their statistical implications, including the low-emission mobility strategy, 2017–2018 mobility packages and the 2018, multimodality year, events. The presentation also outlined the expected statistical needs of DG MOVE in the future. These may include measurements for on-demand mobility, the sharing economy, autonomous driving and intelligent vehicles.

B. European Commission (Eurostat)

66.   The representative of Eurostat informed the Working Party about the activities of his organization and the main objectives of their programme of work, in addition to planned upcoming meetings.

C. International Transport Forum

67.   The representative of ITF described their workshop on transport satellite accounts (24 April 2018, Paris), which aims to better measure the contribution to the overall economy of the transport sector. He informed the Working Party about the fifth ITF Transport Statistics Meeting (25 and 26 April 2018, Paris) which covered infrastructure investment, transport safety, big data and visualization tools, and also reported on the results of the annual ITF Summit (23–25 May 2018, Leipzig, Germany), which this year had a theme of transport safety and security.

D. International Union of Railways

68.   The delegate from UIC informed the Working Party about their latest statistical work. This included a focus on their statistic collection with regards to level crossing accidents, and

their analysis showed that the number of level crossing accidents resulting from internal causes is falling much faster than those resulting from external causes.

XIII. Election of Officers (agenda item 12)

69.   In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure and established practice, the Working Party elected Mr. P. Smeets (Netherlands) as Chair and Ms. A. Obak Flander (Slovenia) as Vice-Chair for its sessions in 2019–2020.

XIV. Other business (agenda item 13)

A.   Date of next session

70.   The Working Party decided to hold its next session from 12 to 14 June 2019. The first half-day will be dedicated to a workshop on a specific item of interest to be decided based on proposals from delegates as discussed under item 2.

B.   Information on upcoming meetings on transport statistics

71.   The Working Party took note of preliminary dates and venues of meetings in 2018–2019. This list does not include meetings of the subsidiary bodies of ITC, although statistics is an agenda item for all the Working Parties of the individual transport modes.

Working Group on Maritime Statistics (Eurostat)	27 and 28 September 2018
Working Group on Passenger Mobility Statistics (Eurostat)	11 October 2018
Coordinating group for Statistics on Transport (Eurostat)	29 and 30 November 2018
UNECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC) Eightieth session	19–22 February 2019
Working group on Aviation Statistics (Eurostat)	20 and 21 March 2019
Working Group on Inland Waterways Statistics (Eurostat)	4 April 2019
Working Group on Rail Statistics (Eurostat)	6 and 7 June 2019
UNECE Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6)	12–14 June 2019
Coordinating group for Statistics on Transport (Eurostat)	28 and 29 November 2019

C.   Cycling statistics

72.   The Working Party was informed of the final draft of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme's (THE PEP) Master Plan for Cycling Promotion, in particular, its recommendation number 8 concerning statistics related to cycling and the potential to engage the Working Party in this venture. The Working Party noted that some cycling data on road traffic accidents and vehicle-km are already collected under existing instruments of the Working Party. DG MOVE noted that data for the number of bicycles is less useful for analytical purposes. The Working Party decided to keep this on the agenda for future sessions.

XV.   Summary of decisions (agenda item 14)

73.   As agreed and in line with the decision of ITC (ECE/TRANS/156, para. 6), the main decisions were summarised and agreed, as amended, at the end of the session. The Chair, in cooperation with the secretariat, prepared this report.

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