


# How to prepare a joint programme?

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# Joint degrees

«Much ado about nothing» ?

or

«Taming of the shrew» ?

# Joint degrees

- Like this? (Soria Moria)



- Or like this?

# Joint degrees are demanding

– maybe it is better not to know?



# A picture of Europe

In a report to the EU Commission in 2007 about international master students, these elements were highlighted:

- Europe's status as a "center of excellence" with regard to academic score is low
- The international students that come in the main go to three countries, England, France and Germany
- USA is still considered the leading actor with regard to innovation, dynamic development and competitiveness
- Asian students put USA in front of Europe in all important fields concerning academic and professional careers.
- Europe is seen as traditional, outdated and with a lack of capacity for innovation and tolerance
- The cultural and linguistic diversity is seen as a negative challenge
- The higher education sector of Europe is seen as unclear and not very unified



# Trends

Students in developing economies are increasingly able to invest in a foreign education and high quality education outside their own countries. Quality and good reputation (ranking?) are important factors behind their choices.

USA's position is somewhat diminishing, EU is the biggest actor (38%), and stable, but 3 countries account for 2/3 of these.

There is an increasing number of quality institutions in the developing countries, but not enough to meet the demand.

and there is an increasing competition from countries like Russia (3,7%), Japan (3,6%), China (1,7%) and Korea (1,4)

The number of students in the world is expected to double by 2025 (262 million), more than half of these in China and India.

Approximately 2% of the world's population is mobile each year, i.e. 3,7 million now, 7 million in 2020.

# Trends

Student exchange still has high priority in strategies for internationalisation.

Internationalisation at home to provide some internationalisation competence to non mobile students

Development and growth of online education, f i MOOCs

A tendency towards more competition oriented and commercial attitudes

New types of alliances in education and research

# Trends

More comprehensive internationalisation strategies, both on national and institutional level, that goes beyond pure mobility

Development of international mobility within structured quality frameworks, both for students and staff.

Formulation of promotion campaigns and immigration policy for higher education.

Tendency towards more a wider range of cooperation forms (joint degrees, international strategic partnerships, interdisciplinary programs, doctoral schools)



# The Bologna process

- Promotion of the European dimension in higher education (Berlin 2003)
- ...
- They note that initiatives have been taken by Higher Education Institutions in various European countries to pool their academic resources and cultural traditions **in order to promote the development of integrated study programmes and joint degrees at first, second and third level.**
- Moreover, they stress the necessity of ensuring **a substantial period of study abroad in joint degree programmes** as well as proper provision for linguistic diversity and language learning, so that students may achieve their full potential for European identity, citizenship and employability.
- Ministers agree to engage at the national level **to remove legal obstacles to the establishment and recognition of such degrees** and to actively support the development and adequate quality assurance of integrated curricula leading to joint degrees.
- Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area
- Ministers agree that the attractiveness and openness of the European higher education should be reinforced. **They confirm their readiness to further develop scholarship programmes for students from third countries.**

# Lisbon strategy

- The Union has today set itself a ***new strategic goal*** for the next decade: *to become the most competitive and dynamic **knowledge-based economy** in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.*

# Lisbon strategy

- Achieving this goal requires an **overall strategy** aimed at:
  - - preparing the transition to a knowledge-based economy and society by better policies for the information society and R&D, as well as by stepping up the process of structural reform for competitiveness and innovation and by completing the internal market;
  - - modernising the European social model, investing in people and combating social exclusion;
  - - sustaining the healthy economic outlook and favourable growth prospects by applying an appropriate macro-economic policy mix.



# The Lisbon recognition convention (1997)



- Convention on the recognition of qualifications in higher education in Europe
- (Council of Europe and UNESCO)



# Erasmus Mundus

- Initiated and supported by EU
- 2004 – 2012
  - (continues in Erasmus+ - 2014->)
- Levels: Master, and 2009-13: Ph.d.
- Target groups: international students from 3.countries (and from 2009 also European), but not “own” students
- A program is developed and run by a consortium of at least three institutions (and three countries)
- Support for running the program, primarily through generous stipends
- No priorities with regard to subject areas

# Applications for Erasmus Mundus II



Total number applications								
	MC	Supported	%	JD	Supported	%	Sum	
<b>2009</b>	170	50	29	129	13	10,08	299	
<b>2010</b>	165	29	18	137	11	8,029	302	
<b>2011</b>	184	30	16	139	10	7,194	323	
<b>2012</b>	177	30	17	133	9	6,767	310	
<b>Total</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>7,993</b>	<b>924</b>	
		Applications in all:				1234		
		Supported:				182		
		In %:				<b>14,75</b>		

# Joint degree - Erasmus Mundus JMD



- The successful completion of the joint Master programme **must lead to the award of either a joint degree (i.e. one single diploma issued on behalf of at least two higher education institutions from different Programme Countries and fully recognised in these countries) or multiple degrees (i.e. at least two diplomas issued by two higher education institutions from different Programme Countries and fully recognised in these countries).**

# Joint degree (Lisbon-convention)



- Two or more institutions jointly develop and share responsibility for a study program, leading to a joint degree.
- The degree may be documented in three different ways:
  - One joint diploma, signed by all cooperating institutions
  - One joint diploma, in addition to national diplomas
  - One or more national diplomas



# Double degree/ Dual degree

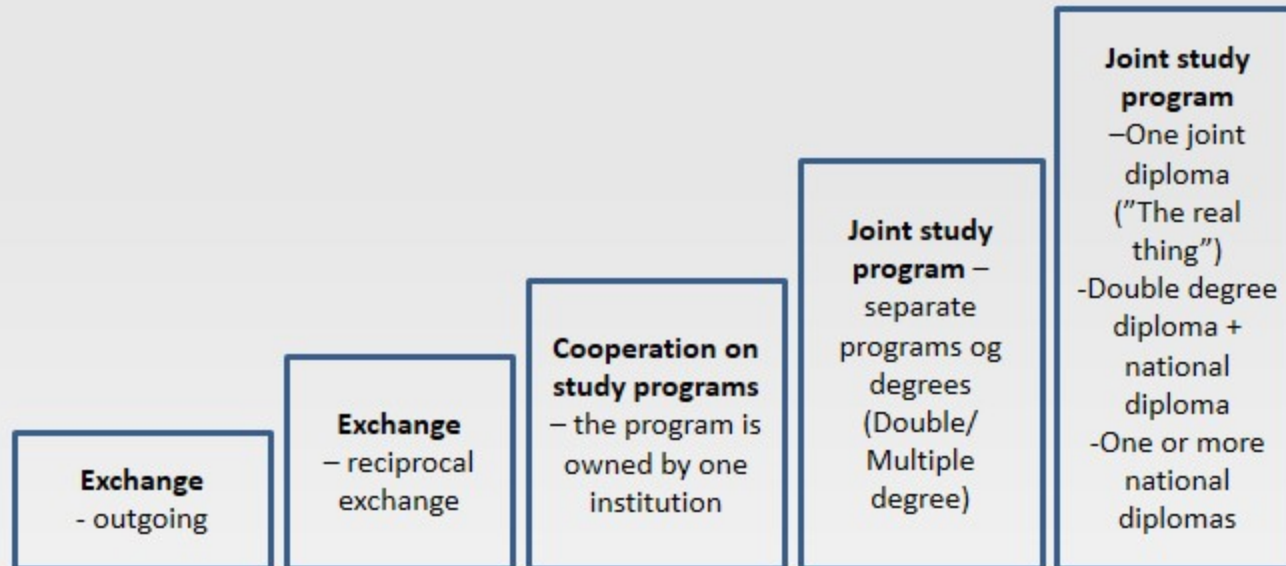


- Def 1:
  - Two institutions that offer study programs within the same discipline cooperate on reciprocal recognition of parts of each other's parallel study programs. The mobility should have a certain defined level.
  - This way the students can receive two separate degrees (with little or no extra time spent)
  
- Def. 2:

(Erasmus Mundus) The Diploma is signed by the institutions where the students has actively studied («Multiple degree» if this includes more than two institutions)

# Joint study program

- Two or more institutions may develop jointly a study program without making a joint degree. A variety of forms may occur, mainly based on regulations of accreditation and recognition.



Degree of integration and commitment in the cooperation

# Joint program/joint degree

- The joint degree is awarded for one program and it has the same name in all the cooperation institutions. However, the name of the qualification/degree may differ, in accordance with regulations about names of degrees in each country.
- Thus the essence is: **One joint program**, but the documentation (diplomas) may vary.
- The cooperation is based on (quite extensive and detailed) agreements
- Should include an exchange period of a certain degree.



# Advantages with joint degrees:

- Complementarity
  - For students:
    - Extended options for choice
    - Cultural experience
    - International network
  - For institutions –
    - Options for interdisciplinarity
    - Options for specialization
    - Establishment of a critical mass of students

# Advantages with joint degrees:

- Quality
  - For students – access to high level competence in more areas
  - For institutions/academic staff:
    - » Stronger commitment
    - » Research cooperation
    - » Educational cooperation
  - Attention/Credibility
  - «Eat cherries with the bigger ones»?

# Challenges of joint degrees

- For students:
  - More complicated structure
  - Demand of mobility =
  - «Transaction costs», f i reduced study progression
  - Tuition fees
- For institutions:
  - Different legal frameworks
  - Different institutional regulations and traditions
  - Different academic calendars
  - Different pedagogical traditions/systems
    - » => some degree of adaptation
  - Finances:
    - Increased costs compared to traditional programs
    - Who benefits from credit point production, who contributes what?

# Challenges of joint degrees

- The drive for joint degrees is more often than not the result of a «political» pressure – academic staff is normally not that concerned about the formalities of cooperation
  - Legal aspects:
    - Formally allowed in all European countries, but several «problematic» underlying criteria:
      - » Finland
      - » France
      - » Spain



# Challenges of joint degrees



- Institutional elements:
  - - Number of credits taken at the institution
  - - Admission/evaluation/examinations/
  - - Visa
  - - Language, culture etc
  - - Practical elements: Information, housing, subsistence etc

# Summing up:

- Official documents leave little doubts about the positive sides regarding joint degrees
- Joint degrees are part of the strategies of many institutions
- General positive evaluation of the development so far
- High ambitions with regard to degree cooperation, and fairly strong demands with regard to the cooperation, but lack of will to allocate sufficient resources=>Difficult to ensure sustainability
- Lack of or insufficient preparations give more problems than needed

# Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree



- WHAT ARE THE AIMS OF AN ERASMUS MUNDUS JOINT MASTER DEGREE?
- Erasmus Mundus aJoint Master Degrees (EMJMD) aim to:
- **foster excellence**, quality improvements, innovation, excellence and internationalisation in higher education institutions (HEI);
- increase the quality and **the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)** and supporting the EU's external action in the higher education field, by offering full degree scholarships to the best Master students worldwide;
- improve the level of competences and skills of Master graduates, and in particular **the relevance of the Joint Masters for the labour market**, through an increased involvement of employers.
- In this regard, EMJMDs are expected to **contribute to the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and of the Education and Training strategic framework 2020 (ET2020)**, including the corresponding benchmarks established in those policies. EMJMDs will continue and **strengthen the successful experience initiated with the Erasmus Mundus Master Courses (EMMCs)** in raising the attractiveness of the EHEA worldwide and demonstrating the excellence and high level of integration of the joint study programmes delivered by European HEIs.



# Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree



- WHAT IS AN ERASMUS MUNDUS JOINT MASTER DEGREE?
- An Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree (EMJMD) is a high-level integrated international study programme of 60, 90 or 120 ECTS credits, delivered by an international consortium of HEIs from different countries ... **Their specificity lies in their high integration/"jointness" and the excellent academic content and methodology they offer. ...**
- All participating HEIs established in a Programme Country must be Master degree-awarding institutions and the corresponding Master certificate - covering the entire study programme of the EMJMD - must be **fully recognised by the competent national authorities in the countries where these HEIs are established.**
- The successful completion of the joint Master programme **must lead to the award of either a joint degree (i.e. one single diploma issued on behalf of at least two higher education institutions from different Programme Countries and fully recognised in these countries) or multiple degrees (i.e. at least two diplomas issued by two higher education institutions from different Programme Countries and fully recognised in these countries).**
- If national legislation allows, **joint degrees are encouraged, as they represent a full integration of the learning and teaching process.**



- Developing a joint degree

- And in the beginning ...



# Joint degrees

## DO demand a lot of work

- *To develop a joint study program leading to a joint degree, is a long and demanding process, which takes*
- *-Extra effort*
- *-Extra costs and*
- *-Institutional commitment*
- *-Involvement from many actors on several levels of the organization*
  
- *This decision should therefor be considered very closely, and an overview of the process be made before it starts.*

# EUA: 10 Golden Rules



# EUA: 10 Golden Rules

- **1. Know why you are setting up the programme**

# Motivation to start the process



- -Staff and student development or “order from above”?
- -Options for financial support?
- -A wish to do “something” together with colleagues from other institutions?
- -Desire to enhance the national and/or international status of your institution?

# Motivation vs realism

- If you plan to apply for support under some support scheme:
- Which demands are presented in the program?
- Are the goals of the program also your goals, or at least consistent with your own?
- Do you, department or institution, have enough resources, (academic and administrative staff, financial resources) to carry the project through?
- Are you familiar with the legal and institutional framework for a joint degree?
- Can the partners legally start up such a program, or which kind of process is needed to do so?
- Can the goals of the cooperation be reached in other ways (activities with a lower threshold)

# EUA: 10 Golden Rules

- **2. Choose your partners carefully**



# How to choose your partner(s)?

- A joint degree demands a lot from the partners, both with regard to finances and motivation. There may be a need to “bend the rules” to reach the goal.
- => one should know well and trust one’s partners
- (..and one should know and trust one’s own institution!?)
  
- Potential partners should have “some history” of cooperation on other levels, f i teacher/staff exchange, research cooperation, other activities, preferably within the same subject area.
  
- “Mutual trust and confidence” – partnership may have a long history, but is the partner the right one in all aspects of cooperation (administration, flexibility, “commitment” etc?)
  
- How many partners is reasonable in a joint degree cooperation? (“More cooks means more mess”)

# EUA: 10 Golden Rules

- **3. Develop well-defined programme goals and student learning outcomes with your network partners**

# Developing a joint program I

- - The content and structure is the responsibility of the consortium. EM does not present any demands with regard to the structure, apart from very fundamental element, f i level (Master), minimum mobility etc.
- -What is the “Added value” ? (There should be one)
- -Where is the innovation?
  - - In the subject content
  - - In the pedagogy, structure etc
- - The composition of the consortium.
  - - Which partners? How many?
  - - Complementarity – the partners should complement each other
- -Include “social partners”/working life? (In EM: Definitely)



# Developing a joint program II



- Employability
- Relevance
- Systems/routines for quality assurance
- Common routines and criteria for admission, evaluation, grading etc
- Tuition fees?
- Student perspective
- Long term sustainability – potential for student recruitment
- Practical elements:
  - Visa
  - Housing
- To develop a program, and if necessary write a good application, takes a long time.



# Developing a joint program III

- See to it that all partners participate actively in defining the goals of the program, learning outcomes and anticipated results
  - - common ownership
  - - and shared responsibility
- - Curriculum development
- - Organization, incl. logistics and quality control
- Accreditation (institutionally and nationally) in all partner institutions

# EUA: 10 Golden Rules

- **4. Make sure that all the institutions (and not just academic colleagues) fully support the goals and objectives of the programme**

- **Be certain that the program has solid support from all institutions – this is absolutely essential for the sustainability of the program**
- Minimum level of support: formal letter of approval from the highest level of the institution (rector)
- But there should also be active support at faculty/department level and in the administration
- The supporting documents should preferably describe concretely the contributions with regard to administrative, personell and any other resources (or at least a strongly declared intention)

# EUA: 10 Golden Rules

- **5. Ensure that sufficient academic and administrative staff resources are involved in the programme**



# Institutional support

- Joint degree programs are resource demanding, a strong support at the highest level of all partners is therefore needed.
- - Are there enough academic staff to handle this program in addition to the other programs?
- - Can the department handle a situation of illness, staff moving away etc?
- - Do you have, or are you willing to allocate sufficient administrative resources?
- - The administration, at all levels must be included in the process at the earliest time possible.
- - Institutional support should materialize itself in
  - - money
  - - administrative support

# EUA: 10 Golden Rules

- **6. Ensure that a sustainable funding strategy for the programme is in place**

# Resources and long term fundament

- Which resources are needed to develop and run the program?
  - - at own institution
  - - at partner institution(s)
  - - Academic staff
  - - Administrative staff
  - - Money
- How many students are needed to run the program in a responsible manner?
- Which sources of financing are available?

# EUA: 10 Golden Rules

- **7. Take care that information about the programme is easily accessible to students**



# EUA: 10 Golden Rules

- **8. Organise and plan sufficient meetings in advance**

- To develop a joint degree program takes time. It is therefore important to plan a sufficient number of meetings between the partners to develop and evaluate both the parts and the totality of the program.
- Be sure to agree on all critical elements, such as Learning Outcomes, grading, admission requirements etc. But also “trivial” elements connected to these processes, and not least: Pay attention to the design and contents of the Diploma and Diploma Supplements.
- Include and involve the administration in the meetings right from the start, to ensure that all relevant matters are considered at the earliest possible stage of the process.

# EUA: 10 Golden Rules

- **9. Develop language policy and encourage local language learning**

# EUA: 10 Golden Rules

- **10. Decide who is responsible for what**



- **Writing an application**

# Writing an application is a process

For a good application for a joint degree you need:

- Good knowledge of political processes and the contents of these, that are relevant for the call (for EM JMD; Lisbon strategy, Bologna process etc) and of the institutional strategies of the partners
- Good knowledge of the goals of the particular program in question
- An established and well developed cooperation at a high level within the academic field in question
- To argue why the cooperation may provide a qualitatively better product than what each partner could do on its own.
- A strong commitment at the highest level in all institutions
- A well thought out and argued for plan regarding the academic and administrative matters for the running of the programme, including the underlying agreements
- To pay attention to the details in accordance with the call text
- A good, and as long as possible, PROCESS

# An established and well developed level of cooperation

- Running a joint programme is challenging, both on academic administrative and financial levels =>

You should know and trust your partners =>

- Integrated curriculum
- Common rules for admission and examination
- Recognition of modules from the other partners
- Mobility scheme – students **MUST** move about
- Joint diploma (s)
- Language and culture

# Show the quality...

Will the cooperation contribute towards making Europe a more attractive study area? Enhance the quality of your institution? Enhance the quality of the academic area within the partners? Provide a better opportunity for students?

One should be able to argue that

- 1. The cooperating institutions keep an excellent academic level
- 2. That each of the partners contribute a specific competence that enhances the total quality of the programme.
  - This may be argued for through CVs, curricula, and any references to similar programmes
- What is a European dimension?
- The success rate of Erasmus Mundus has been 15%



# Strong commitment

- Both the application process and not least the actual running of the programme demands a lot of resources, both academic and administrative, and for the most part the finances are scarce.
- -Which options are there for generating income for the project?
- The highest level at the institution should therefore show active support, otherwise the programme might be squeezed among other tasks and projects of the faculty or department.

# A well considered...

- It is the consortium as such that regulates student admissions and general handling of students, but it is for each of the partner institutions to handle the actual teaching/tutoring and all the practical details, including housing. In EM the consortia consist of 3-> institutions, but the minimum mobility only involves two institutions. It is important to present the options in a clear way and that they are consistent.

# Attention to details...

- Calls for proposals and application forms can be very detailed, with references both to general processes and specific demands of the call. It is easy to overlook some of these elements if the process has to be speeded up.



# A good and as long as possible, process



- What is the expected success rate?:
- The most important element is obviously the content as such, but it must also be presented in the best way possible => pay attention to the structure and language of the application itself. If the application language is English, can a native speaker read and correct it? After a period in the application «bubble» one may become blind with regard to poor descriptions, can one or more colleagues read and comment?

Writing an Erasmus Mundus application takes a lot of time whatever, to just hand in an application and «see what happens» is certainly a waste of time.



# What to do if the application is not successful?

- 1. Study the comments and start working on a new and improved application.
- 2. Consider if a cooperation outside this particular structure is possible or even desirable.
- 3. Drop further plans of a joint programme for the moment.
- But if maximum effort is put into it, there will be positive outcomes, even if the application is not successful

# «There is no such thing as a free lunch»



- support for development or running of the program is meant to support you in doing something you want to do anyway. Do not expect to be fully financed, a substantial own contribution must be expected.

# Remember!

- Read closely all documents of the call, including any background documents
- Check relevant web pages and documents for guidance, «good practice» etc (there is a lot of information)

# Experience and lessons learnt from the first generation of EMMC (report 2012)

- Striking elements:
  1. The EMMCs have, in all cases, improved the international dimension of the involved institutions. In particular, new networks were created within Europe and with non-European universities, and links were tightened to include scholars for teaching and research activities.
  2. Awareness of the added value of multicultural encounters within primarily national academic contexts has been increased.
  3. Multidisciplinary curricula have multiplied under the influence of EMMCs.
  4. Ways to identify and make the best of excellence have been developed



# Experience and lessons learnt from the first generation of EMMC (report 2012)



- Striking elements:
- 5. Services to students have been improved, owing to the highly demanding criteria imposed by EM
- 6. Many institutions have learned to involve students more, in order to develop a sense of belonging and partnership
- 7. In many cases, the relations with the non-academic environment have become more structured

# Experience and lessons learnt from the first generation of EMMC (report 2012)



- Problematic elements:
  1. The sustainability of the courses after the end of the EM financial intervention is not assured.
  2. A number of administrative difficulties connected with the mobility scheme are not yet settled. Non-EU students are faced with problems to obtain visas, which eats up much of their and the institutions' time. If anything, these problems have grown in recent years.
  3. Several reports mention the time consuming administrative burden as an issue.
  4. Many courses faced a problem to recruit European students and non-EU students without a scholarship. The problem is less glaring for the most successful and attractive courses and has tended to become less important in recent years.

# Experience and lessons learnt from the first generation of EMMC (report 2012)

- Problematic elements:
- 5. In some cases, joint and multiple degrees are still insufficiently known and therefore not well recognised, in particular by potential employers, but also even by some higher education institutions.
- 6. The names of degree titles are not always understandable for all users. An agreed translation between the titles would be a welcome initiative.
- 7. EM scholarship notifications should be sent to the candidates at an earlier stage.....



# Experience and lessons learnt from the first generation of EMMC (report 2012)



Support received:

1. The projects are very satisfied with the professionalism of the EACEA and the support received at all stages of the process, in particular during the implementation stage.
2. The national contact points are in general praised for their useful help, principally during the preparatory stage, before the application.
3. Most commonly, the reports deplore the small or inexistent support of the Member States' embassies or consulates.



# Experience and lessons learnt from the first generation of EMMC (report 2012)

## Lessons learnt:

1. The actors and their hierarchy have learnt that transnational academic collaboration is possible. Flexibility and positive compromise have been introduced in often previously rigid learning and administrative structures.
2. European universities have acquired a less parochial or local approach to degrees, and have learnt to negotiate with their authorities, in most cases successfully, in order to develop a more tolerant administrative stance.
3. The actors have gained a sense of academic liberty. The transnational collaboration has revealed an unimagined creative space, which has revived their disciplinary approach.

# Experience and lessons learnt from the first generation of EMMC (report 2012)



- **Further recommendations:**

- 1. The promotion of the programme should be enhanced towards socio economic actors. The feeling is that many economic sectors are still completely ignorant of the advantages of this European programme of excellence. The degree issue ought to be central in this campaign, together with insistence on the acquired language skills and intercultural competences.
- 2. Negotiations with the Member States should be reinforced in order to obtain the acceptance of non-EU students with a single visa valid throughout the EU, or at any rate the Schengen space.
- 3. The EU Delegations could be involved to provide more active support of the process.
- 4. The Commission should reinforce its efforts and influence at EU level in view of facilitation and accelerating the accreditation of European Master Courses and degrees (joint or multiple)

# Sources of information and guidance



- Experiences of the partner institutions
- EUA
- «Joiman» [joiman.eu](http://joiman.eu)
- Interuv. [Interuv.eu](http://Interuv.eu)
- JDAZ (se: [nuffic.nl](http://nuffic.nl))
- EMAP <http://emap-project.webnode.cz/>
- «Nordic Ad hoc-group»
- Etc.



But remember





**Thank you for your attention!**

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