

IAEVG CONFERENCE – JYVÄSKYLÄ

Presentation

Career-related learning of non-European
full-time master's graduates from Germany, Italy, and the UK

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OVERVIEW

- A. Introduction
- B. Research question
- C. Theoretical background
- D. Methods
- E. Findings
- F. Discussion



A. INTRODUCTION

Increased quantitative research on effects between ISM and labour market outcomes:

- focus on outcomes *after* graduation

(e.g. Netz 2021; Netz & Cordua 2021; Sadeghi et al. 2023; SVR 2017; UUKI 2019; Van Mol et al. 2020)

Qualitative careers literature:

- focus on single host countries
- mechanisms behind career development patterns limited

(e.g. Nunes & Arthur 2013; Pham 2021; Valls-Figuera et al. 2023)

Influences of contextual conditions & career-related learning focus on:

- a certain aspect (e.g. diverse classroom, group work, internships)
- a single host country

(e.g. Healey 2017; Spencer-Oatey & Dauber 2017; SVR 2016)



B. RESEARCH QUESTION

How is career-related learning of non-European full-time master's students facilitated and/or constrained by different HE-systems?



C. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Career-related learning comprises...

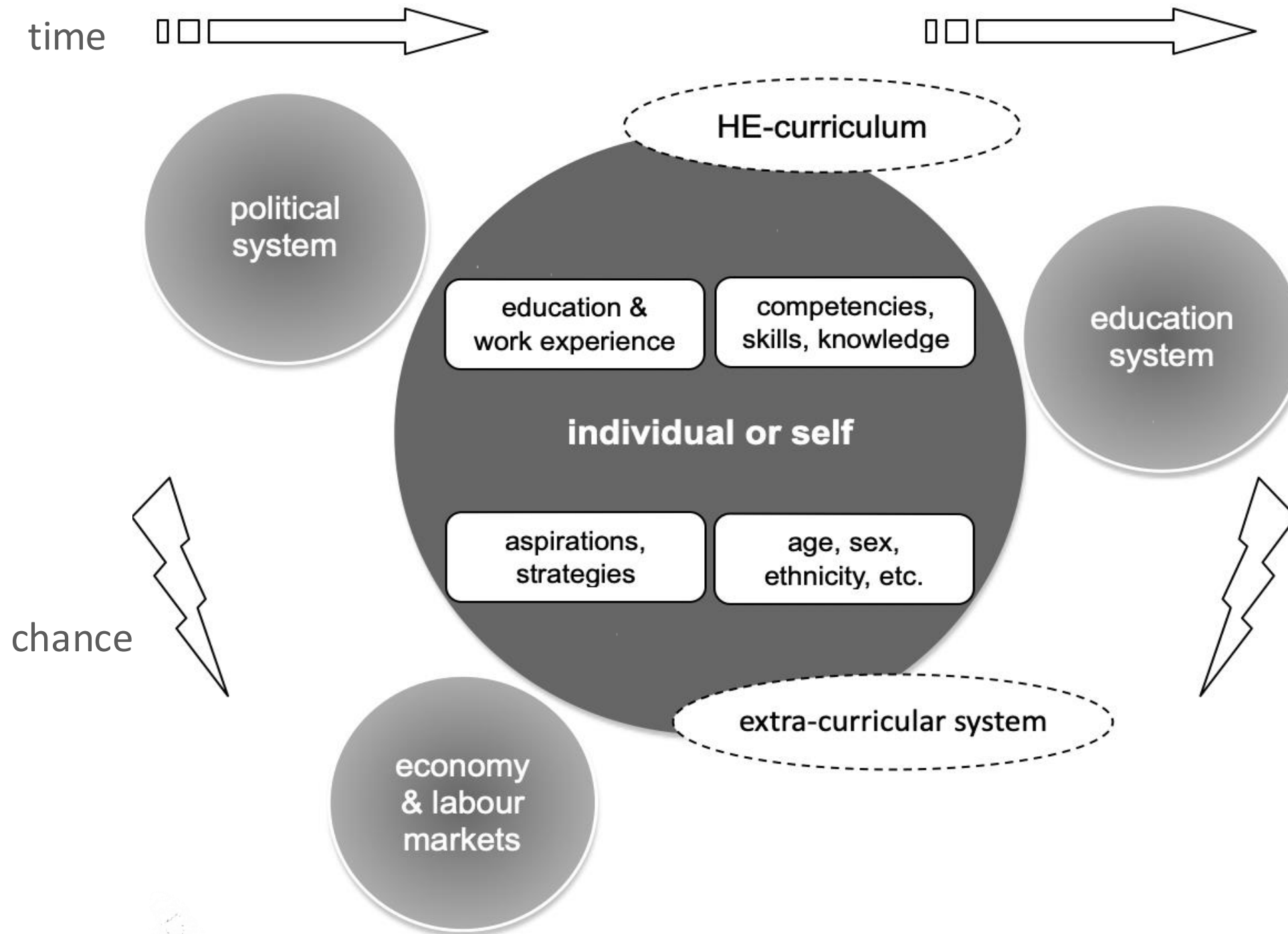
- subject-related knowledge and skills
- generic skills
- career management skills
- career development learning

...gained through work and life experience during the students' master-cycle (Pool & Sewell 2007)



C. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Systems theory framework of career development (Patton & McMahon 2014)



D. METHODOLOGY

Research strategy comparative, thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006)

Qualitative research

based on 28 in-depth, audio recorded, online interviews (40-80min.)

Selection of host/home countries & HEIs

- with different HE-systems and societal conditions
- 4 research HEIs from Germany/Italy/UK

Recruitment of interviewees

invitation: via faculty rep., careers, alumni, student associations

registration: Qualtrics

ethical approval: ERB Tilburg University



D. METHODOLOGY

Interview characteristics

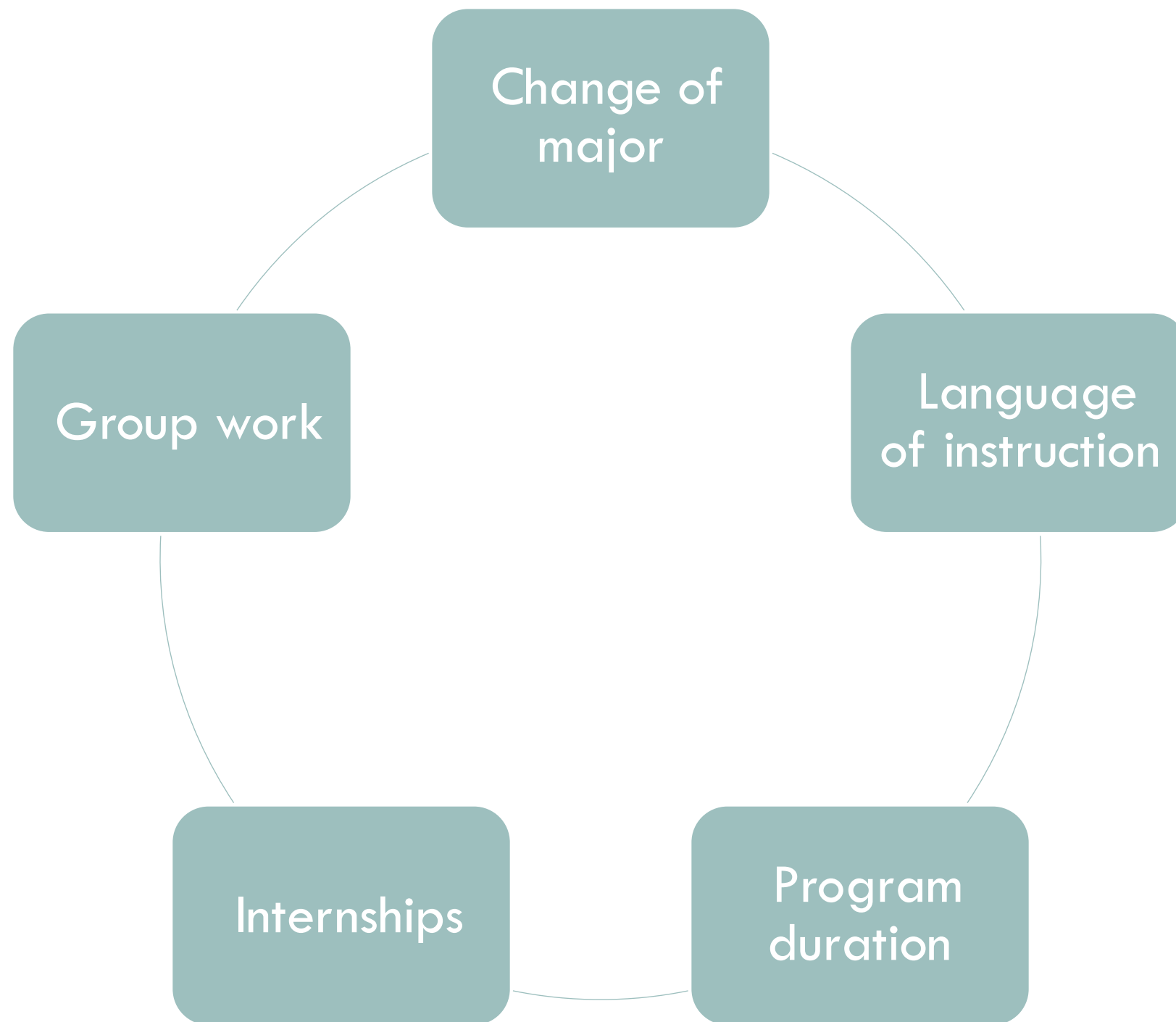
- data collection period: 04.2021 - 01.2022
- interviewees: master's graduates
- years of graduation: 2017 - 2021
- subject areas: STEM, Economics & Business
- origin of graduates: Iran, China, India
- sex: 17 male/11 female
- age range: 21-35

Transcription, Coding, Data Analysis

- transcription: Otter.ai
- coding and analysis: ATLAS.ti



E. FINDINGS – IDENTIFIED THEMES



E. REGULATIONS & CHANGE OF MAJOR

	GE	IT	UK
level of change	low	high	high
directions of change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ engineering => engineering (limitations in change) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ law => business ■ arts & linguistics => arts & business ■ engineering => engineering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ engineering => business ■ business => science ■ engineering => engineering
knowledge development	deepening of knowledge & skills	broadening & complementing skills & knowledge	broadening & complementing skills & knowledge
factor: admission regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ study contents (match) ■ strong competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ specialised programmes ■ low-med. competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ high programme diversification ■ low-med. competition

E. NARRATIVES & REFLECTIONS

Change of major (Business Marketing => Data Analytics)

Graduate 5U/Chinese:

"After I completed my undergrad, I moved back to Hong Kong, and I pursued my dream profession in market research. But I wanted to progress as a more technical data analyst. So that is why I decided to come to the UK to pursue another degree which is an MSc in Digital Data Analytics. ...there would be programming skills, I learned 'Python' and 'R' in my coursework. And that is something that is highly recognized in my industry, so it's definitely a requirement for me to continue advancing my career."



E. LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

	GE	IT	UK
Languages of instruction	German (2x) Ger./Eng. (3x) English (4x)	English (8x) Italian (1 x)	English (9x)
skills development	German A2/B2 => B2/C1 English B2 => C1	English B1/B2 => C1 Italian A1/A2 => B1	English B2 => C1
contextual situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work-based L2 learning course flexibility (contents/time) preparedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HE-culture strong communication orientation (oral exams/presentations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> native language environment strong local accents fast-paced HE-culture

E. NARRATIVES & REFLECTIONS

Language of instruction (German, German/English programs)

Graduate 10G/Chinese:

“Within the first year... the biggest challenge is still the language... for my study it is... 50% in German, 50% in English. So for the German 'Klausur' it is still tough for me. But the good thing for me is, I am engineering major. ...you visit the lecture, try to understand what the professor said and then... also you're talking to the other students. We have a lot of labs and also project seminars. So, you always need to interact with local people... I improved the most... during my internships. ...that is a pure German environment.”



E. INTERNSHIPS

	GE	IT	UK
level of practice	high	medium	low
types of internship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mandatory & optional internships (off-campus in Germany) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> optional internships (off-campus/Italy) optional internships abroad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> optional internships (off-campus/UK)
career-related learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> German working culture & language career management & local LM-knowledge subject-related skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> career management & LM-knowledge (local & international) subject-related skills early change of int. career orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> career management & UK LM knowledge (local) subject-related skills
contextual situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> welcoming visa leg. high LM demand flex. study duration dual education syst. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> welcoming visa leg. poor LM demand flex. study duration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strict visa legislation wide gap to UK-LM short study duration

E. NARRATIVES & REFLECTIONS

Internships (mandatory/optional)

Graduate 10G/Chinese:

“...in Germany... we are more emphasizing practical experience, we have here the mandatory internships, which is not applicable in China. ...at the beginning it's hard, because I don't have any industry knowledge, which is most important for the company... but I got some recommendation from one of my friends I met in the university... then I got the interview... and it went well. ...the practical experiences are super plus point for me, which helped me a lot to know how to interact at the corporate level. I think it's a very big plus for me, when I was applying for the job.”



E. PROGRAM DURATION

	GE	IT	UK
duration of programs	flexible 2 years +	flexible 2 years +	fixed 1 year
skills development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ self-organisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ self-motivation ■ local LM knowledge & career management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ international networking & career management ■ self-organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ managing and prioritising of high workloads ■ working to deadlines
contextual situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ allows German LM experience ■ adaptation to own pace of learning & skills development ■ facilitates study drop-out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ fosters career orientation towards international LM & study exchange programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ allows fast study progression & graduation ■ limited practical and LM experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ limited career management skills after graduation



F. NARRATIVES & REFLECTIONS

Program duration (faced-paced programs UK)

Graduate 3UK/Indian:

“They were going at a very fast pace. It was very difficult for me to align myself to that pace. My way of understanding things is, you read something, you study something and then you give it a little bit of an idea about the practical application of it. So there... I faced few challenges in grabbing everything what was being delivered.”



E. FINDINGS – GROUP WORK

	GE	IT	UK
learning influence	medium	high	high
career-related learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> familiarisation with German working culture understanding of different ways of dealing with projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> more openness in communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> listening & understanding of other views confidence in presenting own ideas in context of multi-cultural and -national groups or teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leadership managing groupwork understanding of cultural differences and working culture transparent & effective communication diplomatic awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conflict solving academic writing
contextual situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> learning outcomes strongly associated with off-campus work experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> high level of multinational classes, including Italians lab projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> industrial lecturers & examiners real projects on campus with companies multinational classes

E. NARRATIVES & REFLECTIONS

Group work (UK MBA group work experience)

Graduate 12U/Iranian:

“We had a very diverse class. ...they (students) were coming from a business background... everyone was trying to prove their level of authority and take responsibility of the project... we had a lot of clashes in the first projects... people were not used to the way the other one is working or... that I was coming from that country... for example, ...in Middle East people could be a little bit sticking in, more harsh and blunt than what is accepted in the UK... So, you get used to... prioritizing working through... diverse teams and... the accepted ways of working in the UK was the biggest challenge that I faced.”



F. DISCUSSION => Career Management & Support

Germany

- **plan & implement** / career guidance services tailored towards the aspects of implementation (during studies)

Italy

- **diversified** / comprehensive institutional careers support & focus on study exchange, networking opportunities, internships abroad, international research projects & PhD careers

UK

- **working identity** / career guidance & curricular support tailored towards career management, professional identity, international focus & academic careers



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