

# ***10 Years in European Union – Infrastructure Development on the Example on Krakow City***

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## ***Abstract***

*The 1st May 2014 it has been 10 years of Polish participation in the European Union. This past decade has brought significant development in Poland. It is because of grants from EU. Poland has gained in European integration both globally and regionally at the local government level. A good example of this is the region – Małopolska – literally called Little Poland with its main city – Krakow.*

*During these 10 years there had been circa 200 projects worth about 550 million €. European funds affect the development of almost every aspect of life. For instance in terms of road investment, public transport, municipal management as well as non-investment projects, so-called soft investments in the form of education, social assistance and social integration, culture and tourism.*

**Keywords:** *infrastructure development, Krakow in European Union, public infrastructure.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Ten years ago, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004 Poland with other nine countries: Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta became members of European Union. The past decade has brought significant development in Poland. This changes occur in the form of infrastructure and non-investment projects, so called soft investments. This improvement has been seen on the example on the second largest city in Poland – Krakow. Last ten years was a very good period for Krakow city. Krakow has never developed so quickly in its history before. This effect would not be so spectacular without financial support from European Union grants. One of the report<sup>1</sup> says that the most visible effects of Polish membership in the European Union are investments financed from EU

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<sup>1</sup> 10 years of Polish presence in the EU – the benefits and costs. For whom EU money? About the use of EU subsidies by the Małopolska entrepreneurs and local governments *see* <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:LDy5mE3sJLgJ:jakaunia.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Prezentacja-04.10.2013-Krak%25C3%25B3w-.pptx+&cd=10&hl=pl&ct=clnk&gl=pl&client=firefox-a> [cit. 2014-07-28].

funds. Virtually every municipality has modernized some way, built a sewage system and sewage treatment plant, renovated community center or school because of EU subsidies.

There are many aspects of life we can be proud of because of participation in European Union. Of course there are disadvantages, as everywhere, but we cannot deny the visible effects, which have positive impact on life in Krakow. It is better for life to live in well-organized three-dimensional and social sphere.

The most visible result is that Krakow is considered as the city with the best municipal management in Poland. This is owed of EU funds too. These grants were parts of projects in the form of financial support according to wastewater treatment plant or network plumbing. Moreover these effects are seen now in new modern rolling stock, modernization, new tram and road infrastructure. Other examples equal important are social integration and social assistance for unemployed, people with disabilities or families that need social support.

All projects are described on special website<sup>2</sup>, where everybody who are interested in EU funds in Krakow or Lesser Poland can acquire needed information. Moreover there are further plans for next planned years, so it proves and provides continuously development.

## **2. 10TH ANNIVERSARY IN KRAKOW**

From the beginning of 2014 were held a lot of meetings, debates and exhibitions devoted to Polish association in the European Union. Many information appeared in the local press, radio, television and the Internet. Krakow's authority and residents had a lot to say in this topic. Everything was done to increase the awareness about the benefits derived from Polish membership and the nearest region.

Round, 10th anniversary of Polish accession to the European Union was a good opportunity to reflect on. Especially when it comes to what Lesser Poland District gained from European funds<sup>3</sup>. Moreover this topic is very up to date and provokes many discussions, particularly in the political sphere and those taking place at Krakow's universities. The themes are the Polish integration and achievements in the past decade, as well as a future plans for the 2014-2024<sup>4</sup> years. Beside casual discussions there was picnic on the Main Square in Krakow. The Krakow City organized it in May, 1st under the title '10 Polish years in the

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<sup>2</sup> European Funds for Malopolska (Lesser Poland), available at: <http://www.fundusze.malopolska.pl/Strony/default.aspx> [cit. 2014-07-28].

<sup>3</sup> 10 years in the European Union: what has changed in the Lesser Poland? Available at: <http://www.ra.diokrakow.pl/www/index.nsf/ID/JGAA-9JPBB4> [cit. 2014-07-28].

<sup>4</sup> About ten years of Polish membership in the European Union at the Jagiellonian University. Available at: <http://rodm-krakow.pl/o-dziesiecioleciu-latach-czlonkostwa-polski-w-unii-eur-opejskiej-na-uniwerysytacie-jagiellonskim/> [cit. 2014-07-28].

European Union'.<sup>5</sup> Very popular was special exhibition<sup>6</sup> that showed all the biggest and the most important achievements supported by funds from EU.

### **3. KRAKOW'S PLACE IN POLAND AND THE CLOSEST REGION**

Poland is situated on the central Europe and borders with Russian Federation, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Germany. Total area of land is 312 685 km<sup>2</sup> and this making Poland the 9th largest country in Europe. Poland has a population of 35,8 million people. The majority of them live in urban areas (61% people). The official language is Polish. Because of tourist industry the knowledge of English is common. The official currency is the Polish zloty (PLN). Poland is not in Euro Zone which actually makes this country relatively not expensive compared to the West countries of Europe.<sup>7</sup>

#### **3.1. Krakow – general characteristics**

To understand the Krakow's role in Poland and closest region, there is a need to depict main characteristics of the most important levels of life in this city. Because as it was mentioned at the beginning, almost every aspect of life in Krakow was supported by European Union funds.

Krakow is the second biggest city in Poland with 750 000 inhabitants nowadays. Just after the capital –Warsaw – which is the biggest Polish city with 1,7 million people now. Krakow as one of the oldest Polish city situated just on the Vistula River has been one of the leading centers of Polish academic, cultural and artistic place. What is more, it is one of Poland's most important economic hubs. These elements create that city is a very important center in Poland.

Krakow is located on the Southern part of Poland. The city is situated in a valley at the foot of the Carpathian Mountains, about 219 m above sea level. Krakow has good location, because of the Jurassic Rock Upland to the North and the Tatra Mountains to the South. Rich nature reserves due to ecological value places make this area full of plant and animal wildlife in the middle of diversified landscape. Also many endemic species can be found here.

From the tourist side, Krakow is the major tourist spot of Poland. This one thousand year old city is Poland former capital, former seat of Polish kings. The entire medieval land of whole Krakow Old Town which is a UNESCO treasure has been preserved. The city is famous because of the Wawel Royal Hill with the castle

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<sup>5</sup> Picnic '10 Polish years in the European Union' in Krakow, available at: <http://www.10latwue.pl/atracje/piknik-10-lat-polski-w-unii-europejskiej-w-krakowie/> [cit. 2014-07-28].

<sup>6</sup> Krakow 10 years in the European Union (see the exhibition), available at: [http://krakow.pl/aktualnosci/103481,26,komunikat,10\\_lat\\_krakowa\\_w\\_unii\\_europejskiej\\_\\_zobacz\\_wystawe\\_.html](http://krakow.pl/aktualnosci/103481,26,komunikat,10_lat_krakowa_w_unii_europejskiej__zobacz_wystawe_.html) [cit. 2014-07-28].

<sup>7</sup> Poland and its tourist attractions, available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xXH TjwhDIQ&feature=youtu.be> [cit. 2014-07-25].

and Cathedral. Both excellent examples of renaissance architecture. Other key sights are located in the Market Square. The largest medieval square in Europe. It is surrounded by historic town houses.<sup>8</sup>

There is no doubt that Krakow is a major educational place. Twelve institutions of higher education offer multiple courses in the city.<sup>9</sup> For a special attention deserve two universities. Humanities and technical one. Jagiellonian University – the humanities university and AGH University of Science and Technology – the technical university are the biggest and one of the leading researches centers in Poland.

Krakow is unofficial cultural capital of Poland and was named the official European Capital of Culture for the year 2000<sup>10</sup> by the European Union. Kraków's 28 museums are separated into the national and municipal museums. The city also has a number of art collections and public art galleries. It is worth to mention about the Rynek Underground Museum,<sup>11</sup> situated under the Main Square. It is very modern museum where visitors can see more than one thousand years of history through its real streets and artefacts. Just next to museums there are many cultural indoor and outdoor events. It is obvious that these are film festivals, theaters and music one.

### **3.2. *Malopolska – ‘Little Poland’***

‘Little Poland’ is literally name of Polish world ‘Małopolska’. ‘Małopolska’ means the historic region with the biggest city on this area – capital – Krakow (picture 1). Other proper names are Lesser Poland District in English or Polonia Minor in Latin. According to a Polish custom, whenever a new village was formed next to an older one, the name of the new entity was presented with an adjective little (or lesser). While the old village was described as grater. It means, that this new name was born to distinguish old province, the cradle of the Polish state, the older Greater Poland, from the younger sister situated on the South.

Lesser Poland with Krakow as its capital acquired new possibilities to improve infrastructure, create new ways for investments and new investors, encourage tourists to visit interesting and unique venues from UNESCO list for instance. On the area of Lesser Poland there are five UNESCO objects:<sup>12</sup> Historic Centre of Krakow; Wieliczka and Bochnia Royal Salt Mine; Auschwitz Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp; Kalwaria Zebrzydowska the Mannerist Architecture and Park Landscape Complex and Pilgrimage Park; Wooden Churches of Southern Lesser Poland. Possession of these pearls of World

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<sup>8</sup> Poland and its tourist attractions, available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xXHTjwhDIQ&feature=youtu.be> [cit. 2014-07-25].

<sup>9</sup> Information about Krakow, available at: <http://www.meta-online.com/pl/informacje/informacje-o-krakowie/> [cit. 2014-08-23].

<sup>10</sup> European cities of culture for the year 2000. A wealth of urban cultures for celebrating the turn of the century *see* <http://www.krakow2000.pl/acceraport.pdf> [cit. 2014-08-23].

<sup>11</sup> Rynek Underground Museum, available at: <http://www.mhk.pl/branches/rynek-underground> [cit. 2014-07-28].

<sup>12</sup> World Heritage List, available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/> [cit. 2014-07-27].

Heritage undertakes to care for it, promoting these objects and maintenance of appropriate level of this heritage.



**Picture 1.** Lesser Poland District – Małopolska – Little Poland – Polonia Minor  
Source: [www.visitmalopolska.pl](http://www.visitmalopolska.pl)

Małopolska region has a very important and wide extended transportation network. It contains roads, airports and railroads with local, national and international statuses. According the roads, through Lesser Poland cross several European roads with numbers:<sup>13</sup> E40 (from West to East across whole Europe), E77 (from North to South to border with Slovakia in Chyżne), and others e.g. E30, E371, E372, E462, E75. With respect to airports, Lesser Poland has it two. One of it is situated next to Krakow i.e. John Paul II International Airport Kraków – Balice. This is the second biggest airport in Poland after this situated in Polish capital. The second one in Małopolska region is Katowice International Airport next to Katowice city. Except mentioned possibilities of travelling, there are

<sup>13</sup> Lesser Poland. Transport Roads *see* [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesser\\_Poland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesser_Poland) [cit. 2014-07-26].

railways with European connections too. These transportation also has gained opportunity from diversified grants and visible forms and more comfortable conditions are seen now or can be seen soon.

Krakow with its both historic and administrative regions called 'Małopolska' had gained the new opportunities due to the dynamic development with respect to EU funds. It is natural order of life that adjacent region with main city attract more opportunities and new paths of development. And the next success is, that this development can be named as sustainable.

#### **4. INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT**

There are many examples of development in aspect of public infrastructure in Krakow. The best known, the most important and visible facilities can be divided into two groups. First one is municipal management and the second one is public transport. Inhabitants of Krakow city can be proud of improvement specifically seen in the form of municipal management.

During last ten years Krakow has received 2,311 billion PLN (about 550 million €). Simultaneously it has to be maintained, that there is one basic condition to receive any grant from EU. It is own contribution. That is why the local government in Krakow had to pay more than 2 billion PLN (c.476 million €). According to statement of Krakow's president Jacek Majchrowski, he claims that taking into account financial possibilities of own contribution, local authorities have used EU assistance in one hundred percents.<sup>14</sup>

##### **4.1. *Municipal management***

Environmental protection is a serious problem nowadays. That is why this issue is considered to be proper treated by authorities in urban management.

Sphere that is referred to municipal management in Krakow is the best functioning in this field in Poland. It has been achieved because of European Union grants. Under this assistance it was possible construction of wastewater treatment plant in Płaszów. From these funds benefits also heating network for its modernization. Other very important examples are network plumbing modernization or municipal landfill Barycz.

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<sup>14</sup> KLEJBUK-GOŹDZIALSKA, BEATA: 10 years in EU, in *Dwutygodnik Miejski Kraków*, No. 8. (2014), 11.



**Picture 2.** Lamusownia – modern waste facility.<sup>15</sup>

For a special attention deserves Lamusownia (picture 2). This is the name of modern waste facility. It is special place in Krakow, where its residents can for free, and small business can for low fee get rid of almost all of segregated waste. This waste usage stores bulky waste such as furniture, computers or televisions, unusual wastes such as paints, glues, batteries, etc. It is that place, in which for each type of waste are separate containers. Important thing is, that the waste is collected until the container is full. People can bring here the waste from Monday to Saturday during all year. Generally it can be concluded that this is investment in a better life in a clean Krakow. Just a little bit of awareness and good willingness are enough to drive waste to proper place – Lamusownia, rather than through the soil and water to our stomachs, or by stoves and chimneys into our lungs. This steps enhance the chance that going on a trip or picnic, we avoid the countryside of illegal dumps.<sup>16</sup>

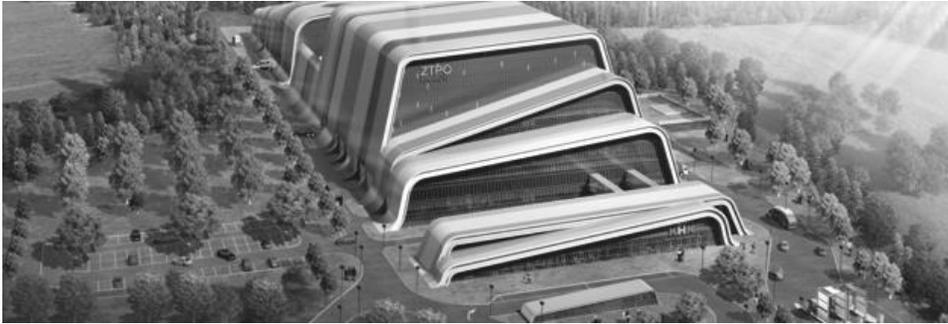
Another great project that European Union money has improved in municipal management in Krakow is eco incineration plant (picture 3). This object is under construction now from 2008 and will be opened in 2015. That investment will complement the system of public utilities in the city and at the same time will be a source of energy for the city. The Programme of Municipal Waste Management in Krakow is implemented under the Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment. Priority is waste management and protection of the earth's surface. This is measure 2.1.: Complex projects related to municipal waste management with particular emphasis on hazardous waste.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Source: <http://www.lamusownia.krakow.pl/> [cit. 2014-07-28].

<sup>16</sup> Lamusowania – main page, available at: <http://lamusownia.krakow.pl/> [cit. 2014-07-28].

<sup>17</sup> Eco incineration plant – main page available at: <http://www.spalarnia.krakow.pl/> [cit. 2014-07-28].



**Picture 3.** Eco incineration plant<sup>18</sup>

The project aims are to build the missing installation system for processing municipal waste, i.e. the Department of Waste Thermal Treatment. This plant will constitute one of the most important elements of the waste management system and will be an integral part of it.

#### **4.2. Public transport**

Krakow with students living here during academic year is almost one million city. It can be seen during those studying months. Public transport with diverse shifting possibilities from one place to another is a very important task. People choose their place for living there, where are provided good proximity of communication facilities and velocity of mobility for their destination.

Support from EU grants can be seen in modern rolling stock and new tram roads and other roads investments. With respect to modern rolling stock, these are for example low-floor, ecological trams and new busses. That vehicles are designed specifically for disabled people. What is more and very convenient, these objects have air conditioning system and monitoring one. Providing safety for travelers is very up to date task for local authorities.

In Krakow there are two new tram routes: one line leads to Small Plaszow and the second one to Ruczaj. These areas was poorly connected with the rest of the city. Now not only there are new tram lines, but also all surrounded infrastructure, that involving new pavements on road, for passers and routs for cyclists. Everything is designed in a modern and fashionable way.

Such big city needs also vast road network and diverse ways of possibilities to avoid traffic jams or unnecessarily driving up in busy location such as big junctions or roundabouts. As a alternate road in Krakow, it Southern part is bypass. It is part of highway number A4 that passing from East to West of Poland. Moreover this construction allows for removal of heavy transport from the centre. Another important road and bridge construction is roundabout called Victims of Katyn. It is three-storeys roundabout which improve communications in the Northern part of Krakow. Next good example of improving traffic problem is flyover above the Nowohucka street. Those who drive just straight ahead do not have to cross through big crossroad, they just can go above it during a few seconds.

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<sup>18</sup> Source: <http://www.spalarnia.krakow.pl/> [cit. 2014-07-28].

For those people, who prefer going by foot or riding their bicycle there is also modern and interesting new way. This footbridge is destined only for pedestrians and cyclists and connects two Krakow's districts above the Vistula River. During night, this bridge is easy to see owing to colorful lights between Kazimierz District and Podgórze one.

People, who travel by plane from John Paul II International Airport, have some inconveniences now. The second busiest airport in Poland is located near Krakow, in the village named Balice, has its extension now. The airport was opened for civil aviation in 1964 and was renamed in honour of Pope John Paul II in 1995. The airport has two passenger terminals, for international and domestic flights, as well as a cargo terminal. Now there are construction works and this investment will be finished in 2015. The investment is estimated at 600 million PLN (c. 142 million €) with 200 million PLN (c. 47,6 million €) coming from EU fund.<sup>19</sup>

To sum up the public transport issue, it has to be noticed that there were also other investments. It were fast agglomeration rail or railway and bus station modernization, etc. All those examples of infrastructure facilities are strongly needed. It is important that second biggest city in Poland has an extensive communication network. All mentioned projects were supported by EU funds.

## 5. SOFT INVESTMENTS

Soft skills are personality traits. These skills consist of communication, assertiveness, creativity, resistance to stress, leadership competencies, the ability to cooperate with others and work independently and time management skills. Soft skills we learn at home, we acquire it also in the process of learning and future professional career.<sup>20</sup>

One can think of soft skills, whether are crucial for employers. It is now desirable the same as university degree or professional experience in the labour market nowadays. Soft skills are also the point of view of today's style of living and working with people. It seems to be very important these days. It allows to conclude whether the candidate is suitable for the proposed position, not only as to its substance, but also whether employee will fit into the image of a company, or find a group of other employees, or whether employee will be able to attract new customers.

Soft skills are useful not only at work but also in every other of life. It helps us to function in society, due to development of our image, make new friends, pursue its objectives or even organizing time, which we have less and less nowadays. Without no doubt it is worth to pay attention to develop and improve these skills.

In this article the concept of soft investment refers to social programs, which

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<sup>19</sup> John Paul II International Airport, Krakow, Poland. *See* <http://www.airport-technology.com/projects/john-paul-international-airport-krakow-poland/> [cit. 2014-07-28].

<sup>20</sup> Miękkie i twarde kompetencje – o co w tym chodzi? *See* <http://gadzetomania.pl/2010/11/09/miekkie-i-twarde-kompetencje-o-co-w-tym-chodzi> [cit. 2014-08-10].

are funded by the European Union. These programs can be considered as an investments. It is connected with improving people qualifications and promoting social initiatives for the future. And that future will provide positive results for sure.

### **5.1. Culture**

Krakow has a lot to say in the sphere of cultural events. It is here, where films festival, theater and music one take place every year. Krakow is one of the most important city in Poland in cultural sphere. That is why the EU funds reached many important occurrence here.

Film Music Festival is an annual event, which two editions in 2009 and 2011 were financed from European funds. The Opera Rara is a year-round cycle opera based on ambitious productions from the stages of the most famous opera houses in Italy, France, Britain and Germany. Next example are series of Krakow Nights: Museum Krakow Night, Sacral Krakow Night or Poetic Krakow Night and many others. These nights were supported by the EU from 2009 to 2012 editions.

For those who want to spend their time close to culture in museum, can visit modern just established new museums i.e. Museum of Modern Art or Rynek Underground Museum of medieval Krakow. A few museums were modernized. These are e.g. Museum of the Home Army, multimedia and interactive place with the knowledge full of Polish history of World War II. Other objects are theaters with one of the most important one is People's Theatre in Nowa Huta.<sup>21</sup>

These mentioned objects are prominent, because they represent Polish culture that is intertwined with the Polish history and regional folklore.

### **5.2. Social assistance**

EU funds supported projects in the field of social integration, improving employability and increasing professional activity unemployed people.

For example, the project '*Different paths, one goal*' is directed to unemployed and offers them the opportunity to participate in various training courses, internships, assistance guidance counselors or one-time grants for establishing their own business.

Within the framework of social integration have been implemented standards in the field of social work specialist counseling for people with disabilities and their families. That help was offered for families experiencing violence.

Interesting project was the '*StreetWork*' which aim was to improve the social integration of young people aged 15-25, by improving their functioning in school and family. Within the project there were workshops on addiction prevention, healthy lifestyle and the ability to function in a group. Street workers were organized leisure activities such as '*Days of work*', '*Graffiti workshop*', football tournaments and film screenings such as '*Summer Cinema*'.

Because of these social assistance projects many people in Krakow had

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<sup>21</sup> DŁUGOSZ, ANNA: 10 years in EU for Krakow, in *Dwutygodnik Miejski Kraków*, No. 9. (2014), 4-6.

opportunity to stand face to face with national and international culture in museums, theaters, operas and films festivals. For many of them funds gave them chance for better life because of work assistance. For poor families or families with proper functioning disorders it was very important, hope of better tomorrow.

### **5.3. Education**

Krakow as a part of projects from European funds tries to provide children and youngsters needs at every stage of education.

The *'I'll be back'* project is a program that helps return to work after a break related to childbirth. It is dedicated to young mothers (or fathers), that have problem with re-employment after maternity or paternity leave. This support is very important now, because first of all it helps young parents to provide them work and then material support for young families.

In primary and secondary schools have been implemented projects based on innovative syllabuses, especially of mathematics and natural sciences. This step should conduct to equal educational opportunities. Moreover appeared learning individualization of extra lessons in English or research groups in mathematics and natural sciences. All to meet different children's needs in schools. The projects also supported talented students in the form of scholarships.

From EU funds have also been renovated school buildings and classrooms. It included new educational equipment and new facilities.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

During Polish participation in European Union from 2004 till this 2014 year it should be seen positive development in infrastructure and soft investments described in this article. Krakow's authorities acquired actively money for local investments. Well known and seen are mostly transportation and road investment projects. But there are many social projects in form of soft investments that focus on individual needs Krakow's inhabitants.

Krakow's president Jacek Majchrowski said<sup>22</sup> that the passing decade of Polish membership in European Union opened up an opportunity for development, and Krakow's authorities full exploited that opportunity. In Krakow, we are witnessed the changes which would have never occurred in such rapid pace. Without EU funds there would not be numerous of project created at that time in Krakow.

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<sup>22</sup> 10 Polish years in the European Union – an open letter of Krakow's President, available at: <http://krk.fm/10-lat-polski-w-unii-europejskiej-list-prezydenta-krakowa> [cit. 2014-07-28].

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