

Sustainability and Social Responsibility Guide: Good Practices Applied to Municipalities of Portugal

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to examine and present the good strategies and practices of sustainability and social responsibility of municipalities in Portugal. The development of Tourism has gained expressiveness over time, being considered a multidimensional sector, involving many products, services, and strongly contributing to local and national growth. This strong expansion has forced companies to develop a sustainable Tourism policy, articulating natural, cultural, and economic resources in the development of Tourism activities. The purpose of this research is to present the procedures and processes that lead to sustainability and social responsibility at its best performance that contribute to the brand image of the destination. The main purpose is to create a guide with good practices and new actions that are linked to the conservation and enhancement of the territory. In addition, ensure the protection of animal life, the development of sustainable Tourism, and the creation of innovative institutions that respect the environment, people, and cultures. In a first stage the good practices that are applied will be identified to integrate these systems into their day-to-day business. The research presented contributes to the growing Knowledge on this topic, and the findings propose a straightforward guide for the public institutions in the Tourism Sector. Further research is endorsed to reinforce the sustainability and social responsibility of municipalities in Portugal and other public sectors.

Keywords: Brand image, Social responsibility, Sustainability, Policies and practices, Tourism industry

1. Introduction

The exponential growth of Tourism has had negative impacts on communities worldwide. These impacts need to be mitigated in order to preserve the sustainability of the industry itself. There is a growing need to develop a collective effort among the various Tourism companies and stakeholders. For this, it is crucial to introduce and deepen new knowledge in relation to the practice of new sustainable behaviours, through the understanding of the main barriers and respective adoption of responsible behaviours (Kasim, 2006).

The application of this exercise of responsibility, represents new benefits for the performance of Tourism activity in society. This is the true social force that is based on psychological, sociological and anthropological approaches, which should not be neglected. In this sense, in Tourism, trust is the key element for its performance, and SR (Social Responsibility) initiatives can produce financial benefits and competitive advantages in the market. This is a highly competitive market, where sustainability occupies an attractive place in business evolution and development of tourist destinations (Nicolau, 2008).

Tourism destinations are supported by the link between environment and communities. These "elements" are intrinsically linked to the construction of the various Tourism products. Therefore, the entities that create and manage these products, must act responsibly in destinations, never compromising their viability (Buhalis, 2000; Nicolau, 2008).

These entities and Tourism companies should contemplate a set of social, cultural and environmental concerns that are linked to business missions and relationships developed with the various stakeholders in this sector. These members should play an important role as recipients as well as partners who contribute to the evolution and integration of the concepts of SR and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) in the various organisational cultures. This conceptual binomial allows the enhancement and protection of local communities, this being one of the main Tourism strategies at international level (Lund-Durlacher, 2015; Lee, Ham, and Koh, 2019).

It is evidenced that these SR and CSR strategies in the Tourism industry have increased, due to the emergence of a demanding public, which is concerned about environmental and social issues that comprise two of the main dimensions of Tourism. Thus, the transparency of destination organisations, is crucial for the alignment of these two dimensions with the Tourism activity, thus fostering, for the sustainability of the various destinations (Madanaguli, Srivastava, Ferraris, and Dhir, 2021).

The documental analysis and the register of the good practices culminated in the creation of a Guide of Social Responsibility and Sustainability, where the authors present the good practices fundamental for the sustainable development of the Municipality.

It is therefore possible to verify, in the work presented below, the categorisation of the practical aspect and the research aspect in the description of the content.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Sustainable Development

One cannot talk about sustainable development without talking about Tourism as a whole. Tourism encompasses a set of areas that make it a multifaceted service, where the economic, socio-cultural and environmental aspects stand out. This involves the largest current of goods, services and people that contemplate thus, its global projection (Lickorish and Jenkins, 2011).

According to Medeiros and Morais (2013), the Tourism activity is considered an opportunity for us to express human awareness, that is, the exponential growth of the Tourism industry forces the development of a new conduct linked to the practice of sustainable Tourism exercise.

Already in the 90s, Hunter considered that sustainability in Tourism should be observed as an "adaptive paradigm" (Hunter, 1997, p. 864), which has the ability to articulate efficiently, the natural, cultural and economic resources, in the development and implementation of the tourist activity.

Following the same line of thought, Jucan and Jucan (2010), defend the importance of building a sustainable world community, which has the will to develop and adopt new strategic measures for the construction of new economic, cultural and environmental realities. For this, there is a need for cooperation and inter-help between the different local actors.

The authors Vaske and Kobrin (2001), reflect on the responsible environmental behaviour, based on the development of four actions: a) stimulation of conversations between individuals about the environmental paradigm, b) achievement and development of community efforts in relation to the cleaning of the community territory, c) application of recycling and d) saving a scarce resource such as water. The same authors, highlight the importance of the connection between the individual and the territory, that is, the creation of an emotional stimulus of identification. They believe that the development of this emotional connection may facilitate the process of preservation of the environment. For Holden (2003), it is crucial to develop the aspect of environmental awareness as a non-anthropocentric act, but rather the construction of a new environmental ethic. Tourism may be a new driver and influencer for the creation of dynamics that prioritise the primordial principles of environmental conservation. Moreover, the Tourism sector may consider this environmental concern, as an economic benefit, through the protection of the various resources that stimulate tourist flows and drastically reduce the associated costs.

Cheng and Wu (2015) also analyse environmental responsibility through the development of knowledge of issues related to the environment and its conservation. For these authors, the level of knowledge on this topic drives the individual to acquire a greater awareness of nature conservation. In addition, they believe that the greater the attachment and empathy about a given place, the greater the degree of awareness.

Murphy (1985), describes Tourism as a big "socio-cultural event" (Murphy, 1985, p. 117) which has both visitors and residents as audiences. He stresses the importance of developing a planning that assures the satisfaction of the residents in relation to the image of those who visit.

Besides, Murphy (1985), praises the creation of objectives inherent to the security of the community that do not compromise the viability of the destinations. The cooperation of local communities in the implementation of Tourism is crucial to define the satisfaction of the tourist, given the experience developed.

Thus, the author Robinson (1999), highlights the progression of the concept of sustainable development, in promoting a greater recognition of the socio-cultural structure of the world communities. The author reveals the importance of acting on the values and principles intrinsic to the identity of the different peoples. Furthermore, he argues that to achieve sustainability it is necessary to create an "equity basis" (Robinson, 1999, p. 393) among the different cultural groups, in order to meet the needs of tourists in an authentic and above all, respectful way. Fostering cultural diversity is the real challenge for the Tourism industry as well as for tourists themselves. The recognition of this diversity reflects the progression of sustainability, through the construction of a "unity in difference" (Robinson, 1999, p. 393).

Coccosis (2009) reflects on Tourism as a sector that provides answers to the needs and desires of modern society. The pluriactivity of this segment creates impacts on communities, forcing it to adapt to the different realities that sustain and preserve what is Tourism development. This author focuses on the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, which reveals the identity and history of global communities. Sustainability has a fundamental role in relation to these two conceptions, being a priority field of action. Tourism may be the progenitor of the degradation of this heritage, compromising its touristic potential. In this way, the creation of new territorial measures, already previously advocated by Choi and Sirakaya (2006), will be fundamental to diminish the socio-cultural and historical amenities. For Coccosis (2009), resources must be properly measured for the sustenance of the community and those who visit.

Hassan (2000) reflects on the economic paradigm as a creator of relationships that sustain the various local economies. These relationships are created through cooperation between the public and private sectors, NGOs (non-governmental organisations) and the various groups of citizens. For Hassan (2000) sustainability is a concept inherent to the construction of an innovative opportunity for the various global economies. This author states the importance of the interconnection of this dimension with the others that make up the sustainability model, since the competitive position of destinations is linked to innovation and differentiation of the products developed within the cultural, historical and environmental heritage. In this way, its conservation will be fundamental for economic consolidation.

Pulido, Andrades and Sánchez (2015) argue that sustainable development, should be a central theme the economic dimension. Therefore, sustainability is seen as an element that will drive the economic success of various tourist destinations. For these authors, economic sustainability will be conceived in a long-term period, becoming what we call the green economy. Considering the green economy, the authors Aydin and Emeksiz (2018) defend that the continuous support of governments and public institutions, has a pivotal role in stimulating the profitability and adaptation of the various businesses that contemplate this sector. Also highlight the importance of a cooperative and strategically planned economy, relying on intensive technical and informative support, with the help of different financial resources.

According to Aryal (2020) sustainable tourism should reflect on economic, social and environmental boundaries that allow the sustainable development.

2.2 Social Responsibility

The construction of a sustainable community requires the development of what we call social responsibility, which according to Paskova and Zelenka (2019), consists of the different dimensions of Tourism that are inherent at local, regional, national and global levels. These authors argue that application of social responsibility in the Tourism sector, has made it a holistic and broad concept, both for its geographical extent and in terms of content. Paskova and Zelenka (2019), reinforce the development of this social awareness on both the Tourism supply and Tourism demand side.

In line with these authors Su, Huang and Jue (2018), analyse the sustainability paradigm, based on social responsibility, this being developed through the collaboration of the different entities that are part of the Tourism industry. Su, Huang and Jue (2018), argue that this union may minimize the negative effects that this sector produces during its acting processes. Consecutively this new collective attitude, could eventually create new benefits for the various populations residing in the world.

The concept of CSR was given special prominence in the 1950s by the author Bowen. For this author, social responsibility is based on the obligations and duties that managers have to follow and apply in their actions. These guidelines, should coincide with the values rooted by society, never disregarding them (Bowen and Gond, 2013).

Carroll (1991), developed a pyramid presenting four components, which are the main categories that companies and their managers should pay attention to in the practice of CSR: 1) Economic responsibilities, when companies are profitable and operationally efficient; 2) Legal responsibilities, which concerns companies that comply with their obligations and are seen as exceptional followers of regulations and laws, implemented by governments; 3) Ethical responsibilities, such as companies that take a position of integrating new social conduct and moral norms always following the cultural ethics practiced in society and 4) Philanthropic responsibilities, when companies help the local community, through voluntary actions.

For Schwartz and Carroll (2007), CSR is already considered a universal and ubiquitous conception. This concept has played a crucial role in the development of the business sector, leading to greater reflection and

argumentation about the ethical paradigm. These authors also reinforce, the role of CSR in stakeholder management, being one of the most studied theories and Devinney (2009), makes a review of the concept through the development of four challenges that characterise a new approach in relation to the implementation of CSR. The first challenge, is related to the development of CSR in companies in the correct way, that is, the involvement in social activities without having competitiveness as an objective. The second challenge is related to awareness and realism regarding the application of CSR, always bearing in mind that there are positive and negative factors. The third challenge is to consider that there are no studies that prove that financial performance is influenced by the various investments in CSR actions. And finally, the fourth challenge, which is to study that the development of a CSR conduct is influenced by the behaviour of each manager, employee and investor, among others.

2.3 Responsible Tourism Demand

Considering that the tourist participates actively in the tourist service, using the resources existing in the region and interacting with the place and the destination, it seems fundamental to us to address the tourist demand and the need to make the tourist aware of the responsibility inherent to the tourist act. This concern has existed for a long time. For Webster (1975), the consumer with a socially responsible behaviour must be aware of all issues involving the sustainability paradigm (example: pollution). In addition, he should be an individual who seeks to be active in the development of society and the world, being consistent with his actions. This author adds that this type of individuals have a good financial base and have an excellent level of education.

Vinson, Scott and Lamont (1977) reflect on the segmentation of values into three distinct groups: a) Personal values, which reflect the behaviour of individuals in their daily lives; b) Concrete values, where we highlight family and religious values; and c) Beliefs and evaluative values relative to products, and conclude that these typologies of values directly affect the various actions developed by tourists and influence their position as consumers.

Following this line of reasoning, we highlight Stanford (2006) who exposes the importance of the intervention of the tourist himself in the construction of this responsibility, for the development of a new conduct supported by coherence, because the conception of responsible tourist is defined by his active action.

Weeden (2008) analyses the term responsible tourist, as an individual who holds a set of knowledge in relation to the theme under study. These individuals have a strong capacity for argumentation and awareness of the paradigm of sustainability and social responsibility. The basis of their concerns towards destinations, they report on the following themes: politics, religion, the environment and animal protection. According to Weeden (2008) responsible tourists may be a strong link to the creation of new mindsets and new behaviours in Tourism development.

However, Caruana et al. (2014), reflect on this concept with some ambiguity, in the sense that this term may be just a simple narrative, or a real object of study, which can be properly explored and analysed.

In contrast to the aforementioned authors, Diallo et al. (2015), focus on the paradigm of social responsibility in the "youth" segment. They contradict previously conducted research, which reports the profile of responsible tourist, as an individual with strong financial foundations and an advanced age. These authors believe that young people harbour a consistent body of knowledge that enables them to get involved in social activities. For this to be possible, they stress the importance of the public sector developing a communication and information tool, which has the ability to stimulate young people to create greater value in relation to Tourism practices. We can state, that we are facing a new scenario that reveals the impactful role that tourists have in the development and formation of social responsibility in Tourism.

2.4 Circular Economy in Tourism

To Rodríguez-Anton and Alonso-Almeida (2019) there is a lack of research on circular tourism and circular economy (CE) strategies - reduction, reuse, recycle, redesign, replace and rethink- should be established in the Tourism sector. According to Kirchherr, Reike and Hekkert (2017) CE is a combination of reduce, reuse and recycle activities, and the main objective is considered to be economic wealth and environmental quality. To Aryal (2020) the application of linear approach in production of goods and services can cause major problems in the environment and society. So, circular economy is a way of using and reusing resources that minimizes consumption, pollution, and environmental problems. Following this point of view, we can say that CE is the blending of the three concepts-economy, environment and society. It requires the maintenance of resources for the longest period of time, trying to reduce waste in order to obtain a more sustainable and competitive

economy. To Aryal (2020) the CE did not gain recognition in the Tourism sector as it should and is necessary to introduce the concept and apply business models that imply the reduction of the resources, the reuse of the old products, and the recycle of the products and materials. Rodríguez-Anton, and Alonso-Almeida (2019) defend that CE can be considered a solution to problems considering the environment and society and can help to convert the hospitality industry from its linear model to a circular one. To the same authors the tourism sector has the obligation to engage in delivering sustainable solutions for people, the planet, prosperity, and peace. Following Kaszás, Keller and Birkner (2022) the CE in Tourism must respect a model in which all the stakeholders (traveller, tour operator, supplier...) adopts and sustainable approach. According to the same authors the CE is a method for economic development by applying the 4R – reduce, reuse, recycle and recover- implying a general change in the production and consumption and attempt to social parity.

3. Methodology

Considering the professional experience of the authors and the literature review, this allowed the creation of a Guide of Social Responsibility and Sustainability for the sustainable development of the municipalities in Portugal. It is intended to present Portugal as a reference of innovative tourist destination, modern and worried about the social, environmental and economic questions, allowing the progression of the Tourism that is worried with the conservation of the main resources that characterize the territory.

Following this, the methodology presented, aims to intensify the theme through an exhaustive analysis of a complex of notions and fundamental principles that characterise the concepts previously stated. The authors opted for a qualitative methodology, through the collection of information reflected by a set of authors related to the theme, and consecutively a documentary analysis of the literary elements made available by the City Council. The observation and recording of the practices developed were crucial methodological components for the empirical research. The documental analysis and the register of the good practices culminated in the creation of a Guide of Social Responsibility and Sustainability for the Municipality, where the authors present the good practices fundamental for the sustainable development.

The main objective of the study was the creation of a Social Responsibility and Sustainability Guide and, for accomplishing these goals, the authors define as specific objectives (1) to proceed to a survey of the main points of interest of the city; (2) to identify the activities developed along the learning period; (3) to understand the positive and negative aspects of the touristic operation of the city; (4) To define strategies of attraction and retention of the Tourist to Portugal; (5) to identify the main strategic lines of the Council for the creation of a sustainable destination.

The purpose of this guide is the responsible and sustainable growth of Tourism in the city. Furthermore, it intends to turn this territory, into a competitive destination that calls for the adoption of plans leading to conservation practices and respect for the local community. This tool will be equally important, to support and assist the tasks developed by the Tourism Service of the city councils.

3.1 Guide Presentation

All municipalities, intend in general, (1) preserve and divulge the main potentialities of the city, through the intervention in the diverse processes that are interconnected with the tourist particularities; (2) lead the diverse activities that have for base the tourist animation, concretely fairs and festivities; (3) cooperate to promote and spread the tourist development of the city; (4) guarantee the tourist divulgation both externally and internally, cooperating with the diverse structures. All Municipalities, have as their main responsibility to develop and execute policies, having as support the interests of the local community. In addition, it is responsible for the development and respective growth in the various aspects that culminate in the construction of a social body. The Tourism growth in a city goes through the assimilation that the dynamization of this segment, contains a set of stages that must be properly considered and above all, respected.

The Guide is divided into 3 parts: (1) general characterisation of social responsibility and sustainability; (2) development and applicability of the Guide and (3) materialisation of the guide to sustainability and social responsibility for the whole community. An introduction will initially explain to all stakeholders and the local community the importance of Tourism for all municipalities and for local development, considering that Tourism has a commitment to the various stakeholders who stimulate and encourage Tourism. It is also informed that the guide has as its purpose, the responsible and sustainable growth of Tourism in the city. Besides, it intends to make this territory, a competitive destination that calls for the adoption of plans leading to conservation practices and respect for the community. After this first introductory phase, it is advisable to characterize the municipality as a tourist destination, the importance of adopting new daily habits in favour of sustainable

development in the city, heading towards a fairer and more balanced community with the objective of offering a better quality of life to its residents and visitors. The aim is for the Municipality to evolve through the enhancement and conservation of its main natural, socio-cultural and economic resources. At a later stage, to characterise the municipality as a responsible and sustainable destination. As defend by Choi and Sirakaya, (2006) the territorial measures designed by the various Municipalities, are crucial for the reduction of socio-cultural, economic and environmental amenities. These harbour the concept of ethics and responsibility, always keeping in mind, the local community and its visitors.

Based on the defined principles and the 3 areas - sociocultural sustainability, economic sustainability and environmental sustainability, we will define the actions to be developed. See Table1.

Table 1: Plan of Actions

<p>Socio-cultural Sustainability</p>	<p>Integrating stakeholders in the Tourism management strategy.</p> <p>Integrate residents in the development of Tourism activity.</p> <p>Promote conferences and lectures on the importance of hospitality in service provision.</p> <p>Develop partnerships between the private and public sectors to make Tourism more dynamic.</p>
<p>Environmental Sustainability</p>	<p>Encourage the main channels of communication in the transmission of information related to environmental awareness.</p> <p>Develop volunteer programmes for the preservation of the environment.</p> <p>Promote debates on environmental responsibility.</p> <p>Develop training actions for the adoption of new patterns of consumption and responsible production.</p>
<p>Economic Sustainability</p>	<p>Integrating non-governmental organizations (NGO) in promoting social responsibility and sustainability.</p> <p>Create new public policies in favour of a more sustainable industry.</p> <p>Supporting and encouraging small businesses.</p> <p>Qualify the Tourism offer for inclusive and sustainable economic growth.</p>
<p>Circular Economy</p>	<p>Communicate to companies the need for efficient use of resources.</p> <p>Create conditions for the use of renewable materials and resources.</p> <p>Promote the reuse, renovation, repair and recovery of as many materials as possible.</p> <p>Communicate the need to extend the useful life of materials and resources.</p>

With regard to socio-cultural sustainability, whose objective is to position sustainability as a factor of development and competitiveness, we intend to develop Integrate stakeholders in the Tourism management strategy; integrate residents in the development of Tourism activity; promote conferences and lectures on the importance of hospitality in the provision of services and develop partnerships between the private and public sector for a better dynamization of Tourism. Regarding Economic Sustainability, the objective is to promote the practice of environmental preservation, as an economic benefit, through the efficient management of existing resources in the development of Tourism activity. As actions for economic sustainability Integrate NGO in the promotion of social responsibility and sustainability, create new public policies in favour of a more sustainable industry, support and encourage small businesses and qualify the Tourism offer for inclusive and sustainable economic growth. With regard to environmental sustainability, the objective is to position sustainability as a development and competitiveness factor, encouraging the main channels of communication in the transmission of information related to environmental sensitivity, develop volunteer programmes for the preservation of the environment, promote debates on environmental responsibility and develop training actions for the adoption of new patterns of consumption and responsible production.

This harmonious synergy between the territory and the individual will facilitate and motivate the adoption of new environmental practices (Vaske and Kobrin, 2001; Cheng and Wu, 2015). Tourism assumes a position as a promoter of this process of environmental awareness, through the increase of dynamics that cultivate knowledge and issues related to this theme, fostering the territory-individual relationship.

4. Results

This guide was developed through the identification of four general principles (cooperate, conserve, promote and position) based on various authors and create the scope of the environmental, socio-cultural and economic sustainability. These were defined through the reflection of four specific objectives, which are linked to a set of actions that can turn any municipality into a real example of a sustainable destination. The objectives (based on the principles above mentioned) were intended to: (1) conserve the local identity and its values; (2) stimulate cooperation between all those involved in the practice of Tourism; (3) promote the practice of environmental preservation as an economic benefit, through the efficient management of existing resources in the development of Tourism activity and (4) position sustainability as a factor in development and competitiveness.

The content developed was described through an exhaustive analysis of a set of authors who examine the responsibility and sustainability paradigm.

The Tourism industry, as a leverage sector for the various local economies, takes on new positions in the face of the impacts caused by the current pandemic situation. New dynamics were created, to recover the Tourism activity, by strengthening the social responsibility and sustainable development.

This recovery process emerges from the adoption of new sustainable tools that should be applied throughout the value chain, from Tourism supply to Tourism demand. As an adaptive and multifaceted industry, it will efficiently articulate the natural, socio-cultural and economic resources, enhancing and conserving the various communities (Hunter, 1997; Lickorish and Jenkins, 2011).

From this perspective, Tourism has a commitment to the various stakeholders who stimulate and promote the exercise of Tourism. The application of the different media will be fundamental to disseminate and communicate this new conduct to the community. However, the Municipality has to adapt to the different age groups that characterise all the population. In this sense, they will have to acquire different types of communication tools.

We highlight the development of traditional marketing, known as word-of-mouth marketing (WOM), which is more effective in building loyal relationships with different audiences. In addition, we also highlight the importance of communication adapted to the digital era called electronic word-of-mouth marketing (eWOM) which focuses on virtual communities (Gruen, Osmonbekov, and Czaplewski, 2006). In order to promote the Guide the authors consider: (1) make the Guide available on the Municipality's official website; (2) send it via email to all stakeholders; (3) promote the Guide through the Municipality's social networks; (4) promote the Guide in local newspapers and (5) make flyers available at the Tourism Interactive Shop and send them by mail to all habitants.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The development of a responsible destination is a rigorous process that goes through the transformation of the various communities. We are facing an exercise that is translated by external and internal practices that harbour the sustainability paradigm. This new collective but also individual attitude will stimulate the creation of new benefits for the preservation of the various cultural identities that contemplate the planet earth (Paskova and Zelenka, 2019).

We evince a movement that ensures the protection of the multiple dimensions that encompass the Tourism industry, in order to achieve their primacy. However, to ensure this "community" balance, the actions of the various destination management organisations, namely the Municipalities, are crucial (Heath and Wall, 1991).

Municipalities have a leading role in promoting the principles and values that compose them, exploring responsible standards and conducts in order to become true examples of sustainable territories.

The construction of this destination image is reflected in the strategies and plans developed by the Municipality.

The elaboration of this guide was the main objective of this study, which together with the development of the specific objectives allowed its realisation. This new element is highly relevant for all municipalities, having the purpose of developing in an organised and thoughtful way a set of good practices that foster new mentalities and new conducts in the local community. However, it is believed that the application of the social responsibility and sustainability guide will foster not only the Tourism development of the city, but above all, will create a new organizational conduct that will favour the community and the values that characterize it.

This guide will help to develop a set of good practices in the Municipality and will encourage the construction of new strategic lines that will boost the sustainable growth of the city. Moreover, the community will create a new image for this territory, through a joint exercise between the various elements that compose it.

The Guide of Social Responsibility and Sustainability will stimulate the Tourism that will contribute of direct and indirect form for the rise of the local economy, for the conservation of its values and traditions and finally, will protect the green biodiversity.

By applying this Guide, we will witness a social transformation that will have as main pillars new behaviours and new ways of acting leading to the respect for the territory. This work is intended as a humble contribution to the improvement, impulse and projection of Tourism in the city. As a complement, to contribute to the construction of a new organizational conduct (homogeneous) for the municipalities of Portugal.

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