

GOVERNMENT REPOSITIONING IN ADDRESSING THE LEGAL VACUUM OF GLOBAL CITY PROJECT IN THE SPECIAL REGION OF JAKARTA AFTER THE CHANGE OF REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

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Abstract

Global City project in the Special Region of Jakarta aims to position Jakarta as a central hub of global economic governance and connectivity, particularly through the service, technology, and innovation sectors. Jakarta is increasingly demonstrating its potential as a global city in Southeast Asia due to its strong economy, rapid infrastructure development, and implementation of the smart city concept. However, major challenges arise during leadership transitions. Many innovative projects are halted or redirected due to the absence of legal provisions requiring subsequent regional heads to continue previously initiated programs. This reflects a legal vacuum, especially due to the lack of long-term policy transition norms at the regional level. As a result, global city development policies are overly dependent on the political vision and mission of incumbent leaders. This research employs a normative and empirical juridical approach by analyzing relevant laws and regulations. The findings show that several major projects—such as Jakarta Smart City, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), and urban village revitalization—have been delayed or altered due to the absence of binding rules ensuring continuity after a change in leadership. To address this issue, a repositioning of the government's role is necessary. The central government must act as a guarantor of project continuity through national policies and strong legal frameworks. At the regional level, local regulations (Perda) must include clauses mandating policy continuity, cross-term reporting obligations, and stronger regulations concerning legacy projects within the framework of the Regional Government Law. These measures are essential to ensure the sustainable implementation of Jakarta's global city vision, undisturbed by the five-year political cycle.

Keywords: Legal Vacuum, Government Repositioning, Global City, Jakarta Special Region, Regional Leadership

INTRODUCTION

Global City project is increasingly becoming an important direction in strategic metropolitan development, given its significant role in the context of globalization and urbanization. A global city, as explained by Sassen, is a city that functions as a regulatory and connective hub of the world economy, particularly through interactions in the service, technology, and innovation industries. (Taylor et al., 2014) Within this framework, such cities are required not only to meet local needs but also to adapt to and contribute to broader global networks (Sassen, 2016).

Developing countries, including cities in the Global South, the challenge of achieving global city status is often constrained by limited resources. Emphasize the importance of cooperation among cities and research institutions to build the local capacity required to meet global standards. By recognizing that only through strengthening infrastructure and public services can these cities position themselves within global networks. (Jabareen, 2023)

Emissions and environmental sustainability challenges are also critical factors in discussions of global cities. In this scenario, it is essential for global cities not only to facilitate economic growth but also to commit to sustainable practices aligned with global development goals. Climate change and social inequality often act as barriers to realizing this vision, and appropriate mitigation measures along with policy support can help reduce these disparities (Houghton, 2011).

Special Capital Region of Jakarta is increasingly demonstrating its position as a prospective global city in Southeast Asia, particularly due to its strong economic activities, continuously developing infrastructure, and the implementation of the smart city concept. Jakarta's special administrative status plays a crucial role in shaping both national and regional economic directions. Jakarta has also begun to gain recognition as a global business hub due to its significant contribution to supply chains in Southeast Asia. This has positioned Jakarta as a key player in regional economic integration and regional cooperation forums (Dewi, 2023).

Jakarta's involvement in global supply chains indicates that the city's role is not only vital for Indonesia but also for the Southeast Asian economy as a whole. However, Jakarta faces major challenges, particularly in environmental issues. Social problems such as poverty, inadequate transportation systems, and sanitation issues persist (Augustine Adibroto et al., 2020). Urbanization has further intensified these challenges, as Jakarta's population is now estimated to exceed 10 million people (Idroes et al., 2023). The combination of urban challenges and Jakarta's global ambitions necessitates the government to seek innovative approaches to urban governance and sustainability. One such approach is the adoption of the smart city framework to enhance public services and urban management (Evita & Mukhaer, 2022). In this regard, public participation through digital technology has become an essential component of Jakarta's efforts to realize a sustainable city aligned with the concept of Society 5.0.

The sustainability challenges of innovative projects are often exacerbated by legal vacuums following leadership transitions, which represent periods without official leadership capable of ensuring policy continuity and the implementation of previously designed projects. This legal uncertainty can create obstacles to the execution and sustainability of various initiatives, including development and community empowerment projects that rely heavily on regulatory support and resource allocation (Lesmana & Sulandjari, 2023). In the environmental context, for instance, sustainability-focused projects such as community-based environmental conservation initiatives are particularly vulnerable to fundamental policy changes following the election of new regional leaders.

The linkage between global city projects and political continuity has become an increasing concern in the development of major cities. Changes in regional leadership often result in stagnation or shifts in the direction of previously planned projects. Political processes such as regional head elections (Pilkada) may generate uncertainty that threatens the continuity of innovative programs and development initiatives requiring long-term commitment from elected leaders.

Community-based projects implemented in rural contexts often depend on governmental legitimacy for their success. When new leadership fails to acknowledge or support existing project legacies, many of these initiatives may be discontinued or become unsustainable. Participatory decision-making in this context is crucial to ensure that projects remain relevant and receive necessary support from new stakeholders, including communities and local governments (Pratomo et al., 2022).

Projects related to urban development, such as the establishment of smart cities, are highly dependent on long-term visions and policies rather than temporary agendas. For example, the success of urban programs facilitating infrastructure development requires consistency at the level of political management (Deru et al., 2023). Studies indicate that when new regional leaders replace their predecessors, priority shifts often occur, directly affecting budget allocations and program

implementation (Sartika & Adrison, 2021). This situation can generate uncertainty that affects not only the projects themselves but also public trust in existing leadership.

Furthermore, changing leadership dynamics can directly influence management strategies within projects, including human resource management, which plays a critical role in determining project operational sustainability (Sartika, 2024). When regional leadership changes, existing visions and missions often need to be adjusted to align with new leadership paradigms and styles, potentially resulting in uncertainty and changes in resource allocation that impact project sustainability. In this context, it is essential to develop robust support systems to ensure that projects continue to operate effectively despite leadership changes, including strengthening regulatory frameworks and enhancing inter-agency collaboration within government institutions to respond to emerging challenges (Lesmana & Sulandjari, 2023).

The development of Jakarta as a global city has become part of both national and regional strategic agendas in response to urbanization, digital transformation, and global urban competitiveness. However, in practice, major projects supporting these ambitions frequently experience uncertainty in direction and sustainability following leadership transitions. Shifts in policy orientation, weak binding legal foundations, and the absence of transitional regulatory frameworks between political regimes create legal vacuums that result in stagnation or even the cancellation of strategic initiatives. This situation reflects the suboptimal role of government, both at the central and regional levels, in establishing legal and governance frameworks that ensure long-term development continuity. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the forms of legal vacuums that arise and examine how the repositioning of government roles can serve as a solution to ensure the legal and policy sustainability of global city projects in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta. Based on this discussion, this paper addresses two main issues: (1) What forms of legal vacuums occur in the continuation of global city projects in Jakarta? and (2) How should the role of government be repositioned to ensure legal certainty and policy sustainability in such development initiatives?

RESEARCH METHOD

Studies on the development of a “global city” in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta, this research employs a normative–empirical juridical approach. This study addresses various aspects, including legislation related to urban development, political decisions influencing resource allocation, and the historical evolution of urban transformation projects in Jakarta.

Legislative approach is essential for analyzing regional regulations, policy documents such as the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD) and the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN), as well as presidential instructions related to infrastructure development. For instance, political decisions affecting urban spatial utilization are governed by existing statutory regulations (Priyanta & Zulkarnain, 2024). Negotiation within this legal framework is particularly important given the dependence of global city projects on sustainable and environmentally friendly policies (Cugurullo, 2018).

This analysis, primary data will be obtained from relevant laws and regulations, policy documents, and presidential instructions. Secondary sources, such as academic journals and scholarly articles—including studies on urbanization in Jakarta (Putri et al., 2025). Will provide insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by these projects. Tertiary sources, including legal dictionaries, encyclopedias, and news reports, will also be used to enhance understanding of the legal and political contexts shaping these policies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Legal Uncertainty and Policy Gaps in Jakarta’s Global City Development

Discontinuity of major projects initiated by regional heads is often caused by the absence of binding legal regulations obligating successive leaders to continue such projects. This situation creates uncertainty regarding project sustainability, as local leadership does not always bear a legal obligation to proceed with initiatives launched by their predecessors.

Effective and participatory leadership has a significant impact on project success. For instance, Dargan and (Dargan & Shucksmith, 2008) observe that innovation in rural development is frequently influenced by inconsistent local leadership and the lack of mechanisms supporting project continuity. Moreover, the role of local leaders in building strong relationships with communities is essential in fostering support for long-term projects (Hermawati, 2019).

Conversely, concerns also arise regarding the potential for clientelism in project implementation, wherein the personal interests of local actors—including business figures and politicians—may obstruct sustainable projects (Cejudo-García et al., 2022). In this context, project

success and sustainability largely depend on the existence of laws and regulations capable of binding regional leaders, as well as their commitment to continuing previously initiated programs (Aritonang, 2024).

Studies indicate that the LEADER program, which aims to promote rural development, functions as a collaborative platform enabling various local actors to participate in development projects (Opria et al., 2021). However, without strong legal guarantees ensuring project continuity, such initiatives risk discontinuation following leadership changes. Limited public participation—where local leadership tends to exclude citizens from decision-making processes—also undermines the sustainability of major projects (Marquardt et al., 2012).

Absence of long-term policy transition norms at the regional government level poses serious challenges to the sustainability and effectiveness of development initiatives. This condition is further compounded by the lack of legal foundations facilitating smooth transitions between regional leaderships and policy regimes. Although decentralization grants broad autonomy to local governments, weak regulations and the absence of clear norms frequently hinder the implementation of sustainable policies.

One key factor in infrastructure development is the existence of continuous strategic planning. Research by Kumalasari et al. (2023) shows that although civil servants support project implementation in line with strategic plans, concerns remain regarding adequate long-term funding for infrastructure maintenance. This underscores the necessity of transition norms to ensure that infrastructure investments are not merely short-term, but sustainable and well-planned.

In addition, effective project management is highly dependent on structured policies. (Russell et al., 2016) note that construction project management in rural areas is often constrained by limited resources and insufficient expertise in addressing project-specific risks. This highlights the importance of transition policies that provide strong fiscal and managerial guidelines to support the sustainability of public projects.

The formation of regional regulations requires harmonization between higher-level legislation and local policies, as outlined. (Jayuska & Marzuki, 2021). In the absence of clear and harmonized norms, conflicts of interest and implementation difficulties are likely to arise, undermining programs intended to benefit the public.

The role of regional secretariats in policy coordination and formulation is also crucial. (Abadi et al., 2023). However, without strong legal support for transition norms, policy implementation may be hindered, rendering regional legal products ineffective. The absence of such norms often results in projects initiated by one regional head being discontinued by successors, leading to wasted public investment and public dissatisfaction with service delivery.

According (Idris Patarai, 2021), public policies at the regional level—intended to reflect local needs may become distorted in practice if there are no robust norms governing policy transitions. From a legal perspective, it is essential to establish clear foundations in the formulation of regional regulations to promote transparency and accountability in local executive functions. Therefore, a systematic legal and policy approach is required to ensure appropriate decision-making in development planning and project continuity. Such an approach must be embedded within a clear legal framework and supported by public participation in regional policymaking processes. (Fartini, 2022). Through collaboration between regional governments and communities, effective transition norms can be developed to ensure sustainability, protect public investment, and maximize societal benefits. Dependence on unsustainable political visions and missions often results in a lack of legal continuity in global urban governance policies. This is largely driven by the dominance of political considerations in decision-making processes, which frequently prioritize short-term interests over long-term strategic planning.

A major issue lies in frequent changes in regional leadership, which weaken policy consistency. Newly appointed regional heads tend to reassess policies based on their own political agendas, often discontinuing existing initiatives. (Lesmana & Sulandjari, 2023). Collaborative policies involving community participation in planning processes are likewise at risk if they are not supported by comprehensive legal agreements. In this context, sustainability reporting has emerged as an important instrument for ensuring transparency and accountability in regional governance. Studies emphasize the importance of implementing sustainability reports in the public sector to enhance accountability and budgetary efficiency in public project implementation (Anggraeni et al., 2024). However, in the absence of strong legal norms, such reports often remain administrative documents that are not fully integrated into everyday governance practices, thereby undermining efforts to establish sustainable policies.

Furthermore, the relationship between central and regional governments in policy regulation often gives rise to conflicts. (Oktavianti et al., 2024) Centralized policies may overlook local characteristics and needs, creating a disconnect between political visions and on-the-ground realities.

In this regard, sound regional governance plays a vital role in accommodating community aspirations while maintaining national interests.

Legal discontinuity is further exacerbated by political dynasties that frequently dominate regional elections. Political dynasties may generate polarization and stagnation in policy innovation, as leaders affiliated with entrenched power networks may prioritize short-term agendas over inclusive and comprehensive sustainability-oriented policies (Rusydia et al., 2023).

On the other hand, effective urban governance program design must incorporate multiple perspectives, including environmental and social considerations. The integration of environmental factors into urban planning and development systems should be prioritized to mitigate the negative impacts of short-term policies driven by unsustainable political visions (Abisono, 2024).

A Case Study of Jakarta's Global City Project Following a Change in Gubernatorial Leadership

Context of global city development, Jakarta faces significant challenges arising from frequent leadership changes, which often result in delays or shifts in focus in major projects. Several key initiatives, such as Jakarta Smart City, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), and urban kampung revitalization, serve as concrete examples of how political uncertainty affects development continuity and investment sustainability.

Jakarta Smart City (JSC) project aims to create digital infrastructure that facilitates more effective urban governance through technology. However, following the election of a new governor, changes in policy agendas have led to reduced attention to the implementation of this project. Studies indicate that although JSC had established a strong foundation, the absence of policy continuity has caused many smart city-related initiatives to stall or be discontinued, resulting in the loss of investments already made in digital infrastructure development (Montesano et al., 2024).

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) project is designed to integrate land use with public transportation systems. Leadership transitions frequently result in shifts in the direction of TOD projects in Jakarta, as newly elected regional heads may redirect focus toward other initiatives deemed more urgent or more closely aligned with their political visions. This creates uncertainty for developers and investors who have committed to TOD development, potentially undermining project sustainability and hindering the advancement of sustainable transportation infrastructure. Nevertheless, it should be noted that analyses of the impact of TOD projects on travel behavior remain varied and require further research to gain a deeper understanding of the changes involved (Liu et al., 2021).

Urban kampung revitalization projects, which aim to improve infrastructure and environmental conditions in densely populated urban areas, are also adversely affected by leadership changes. Many revitalization initiatives rely heavily on continuous support from regional leaders for budget allocation and implementation. Research shows that gubernatorial transitions often lead to shifts in program priorities, resulting in the postponement or cancellation of previously planned projects. (Rizqita Oktorini & Lita Sari Barus, 2022). The impacts of such uncertainty include reduced investment interest from both private sector actors and local communities in revitalization efforts that are otherwise intended to support the sustainability of Jakarta's social and physical development.

The uncertainty generated by dependence on political visions and leadership changes has a direct impact on sustainable development in Jakarta. Discontinued or fragmented projects not only cause social and environmental losses but also erode investor confidence. The absence of strong legal and political guarantees may lead to a decline in investment flows, which are crucial for supporting sustainable urban development policies (Rashid et al., 2020). Without a legal framework governing the continuity of these key projects, Jakarta risks losing momentum in its efforts to become a global city and to improve the quality of life of its residents.

Role of the Central Government in Ensuring the Continuity of Urban Development Projects and Policies in Jakarta

Central government plays a crucial role in ensuring the continuity of development projects and urban governance policies in Jakarta, particularly through binding national legal and policy frameworks. Such continuity is essential to support Jakarta's efforts to position itself as a global city. Through clear and enforceable policies and regulations, the central government can promote sustainable development in autonomous regions such as the Special Capital Region of Jakarta.

1. National Policies and Legal Frameworks

As a republic with a decentralized system of governance, Indonesia demonstrates a division of authority between the central and regional governments. Although regional governments possess autonomy in implementing development projects, they remain dependent on guidance and legal support from the central government. The authority of the central government to regulate

development funding and formulate national policies is therefore critical in setting priorities and supporting sustainable projects at the regional level. (Maharani & Murni Sari, 2021).

For example, in the formulation of the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN), the central government bears responsibility for ensuring that proposed programs can be effectively implemented at the regional level, including those in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta that focus on meeting public needs and environmental preservation (Umar et al., 2023)(Surya Wira et al., 2024).

2. Support for Strategic Projects and Innovation

Urban area management and infrastructure development in Jakarta such as the Jakarta Smart City initiative, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), and urban kampung revitalization are strongly influenced by central government policies that support innovation. Without clear legal backing from the central government, these large-scale projects may be disrupted by changes in the political vision of newly elected regional leaders. Therefore, regulations that establish guidelines and standards for each project can provide legal certainty and ensure project sustainability (Ima Kumalasari et al., 2023).

3. The Role of Coordination between Central and Regional Governments

Coordination between the central and regional governments is a key element in ensuring the continuity of development policies. While decentralization grants regions the autonomy to innovate, all initiatives must remain aligned with national policies (Ima Kumalasari et al., 2023). The central government must be capable of evaluating and supporting programs deemed strategic and capable of generating broad societal benefits. For instance, TOD-based infrastructure development aimed at addressing transportation challenges in Jakarta should be reinforced through central regulations and budgetary support (Defitri, 2018).

4. Challenges in the Implementation of Decentralization Policies

Challenges persist in the implementation of decentralization, including capacity disparities between central and regional governments and coordination issues among local governments, which may hinder efforts to achieve sustainable development (Taylor et al., 2014). In the absence of a clear legal framework governing central–regional relations, regional governments may struggle to formulate coherent and sustainable programs. Consequently, policy consistency and sustained support from the central government are vital to the success of regional development projects.

In the context of governance in Jakarta, it is essential to establish a legal framework that supports the continuity of projects and policies as part of the effort to develop Jakarta as a global city. Several key elements of this framework include:

1. Mandatory Regional Regulations (Perda) with Continuity Clauses

One of the initial steps proposed is the enactment of a Regional Regulation (Perda) requiring all major projects in Jakarta to include continuity clauses. This regulation should contain clear provisions on the management of ongoing strategic projects and is expected to serve as a legal guarantee that projects initiated by previous administrations will continue despite leadership changes. Such regulation may include:

2. Requirements for periodic reporting on the status of ongoing projects.

Obligations for newly elected regional heads to submit continuation plans at the beginning of their term, ensuring that vital projects are not discontinued without clear justification (Law Study Program. Faculty of Law, Social and Political Sciences University of Education Muhammadiyah Sorong Jl. KH. Ahmad Dahlan No.1 Mariyat Beach, Aimas Sorong Regency, Southwest Papua 98418 et al., 2023).

3. Cross-Term Policy Reporting Obligations

it is essential to establish an obligation for each regional government to prepare periodic reports on policies and projects implemented during a single term of office. Such reporting would not only serve as a transparency mechanism but also provide a basis for projects under evaluation to be continued or adjusted to meet community needs. With these reports in place, leadership transitions can be managed with reduced uncertainty, allowing policy updates to be conducted in a more structured and planned manner (Listyowati et al., 2023).

4. Strengthening Regulations on Legacy Projects in the Regional Government Law

Legacy projects—defined as projects that have demonstrated positive impacts on society and the environment—should receive special attention within the Regional Government Law. Strengthening regulations at both national and local levels may include: Legal protection for such projects to ensure continued support and funding from both central and regional governments. Structured evaluation processes within medium-term development plans that are

integrated with national and regional strategies. (Sepriadi et al., 2021). Stipulations requiring all registered legacy projects to be prioritized in regional budgeting, regardless of shifts in the policy orientation of newly elected administrations.

Comparative Analysis of Global City Legal and Policy Frameworks: Jakarta, Singapore, South Korea, and Germany

In developing policies that support the realization of a global city, Jakarta can learn from the experiences and policy frameworks of developed countries such as Singapore, South Korea, and Germany. This comparison focuses on legal frameworks, environmental policies, and sustainable development strategies, particularly with regard to legal support for strategic projects.

Legal and Policy Framework in Singapore

Singapore is well known for its strict regulatory approach to urban development and environmental management. For example, the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) is mandated to plan and develop the city's future with a strong emphasis on sustainability and affordability. Singapore's regulatory framework provides robust support for environmental initiatives, such as the Carbon Tax, which incentivizes companies to reduce emissions. Through a strong legal framework, projects such as the Smart Nation Initiative aim to mainstream digital technologies and develop a metropolitan area integrated with intelligent transportation systems (Kachur, 2021).

South Korea: Emphasis on Smart Cities and Technology

South Korea, particularly Seoul, has also adopted a highly innovative approach to urban design. The Songdo Smart City project, for instance, was developed by integrating information and communication technologies across the city's infrastructure. Under national policy, the South Korean government supports the development of legal frameworks that align urban development initiatives with sustainability goals and digital transformation (Lieng et al., 2018; Yatulloh et al., 2024). Moreover, strong legal frameworks support project continuity in budgeting and implementation, ensuring that leadership changes do not disrupt long-term policy objectives.

Germany: Strong Environmental Policies and Sustainable Infrastructure

Germany represents a leading example of environmentally oriented development practices. The Environmental Protection Act (Umweltschutzgesetz) and related policies, such as the Energiewende, form the foundation for the country's transition toward renewable energy. In this context, sustainable projects are promoted through central government policies that ensure continuity in the planning and implementation of energy management initiatives. Germany also implements ecolabeling policies to promote product durability and provide consumers with sustainability-related information (Giffinger & Gudrun, 2010).

The Special Capital Region of Jakarta, with its more decentralized governance structure, faces challenges in implementing similar policy frameworks. Legal uncertainty arising from leadership transitions often results in stagnation of planned projects, leading to the neglect of initiatives critical to sustainability and the withdrawal of investment that could otherwise accelerate the transition toward a smarter and more sustainable city. By adopting strong legal frameworks such as those outlined above, Jakarta can improve planning processes that frequently stall and lose momentum during leadership changes (Essien, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Legal vacuums constitute a major obstacle to ensuring the continuity of global city projects in Jakarta, particularly during leadership transitions that introduce new policy orientations. The absence of norms governing the continuation of strategic programs across governmental periods renders large-scale projects such as integrated transportation development, public service digitalization, and sustainable urban governance vulnerable to discontinuation or redirection. This condition reflects the weak binding force of law over long-term visions that should transcend electoral political cycles. Without a strong and binding legal foundation, the sustainability of global city projects will remain uncertain, hindering investment, undermining policy legitimacy, and threatening the consistency of urban development toward global city status.

Repositioning of government roles in global city development must be grounded in the principles of sustainable governance law, ensuring that strategic policies are not disrupted solely by electoral political dynamics. Both central and regional governments need to establish legal frameworks capable of guaranteeing cross-period policy continuity through binding regulations and clearly defined

policy transition mechanisms. Under such an approach, development no longer depends on individual regional leaders but proceeds under a legal system that ensures consistency, accountability, and long-term sustainability. This constitutes a key prerequisite for the comprehensive and continuous realization of major projects such as Jakarta's global city initiative within a democratic rule-of-law framework.

Need to establish legal norms at both the national and regional levels that explicitly regulate policy continuity across governmental periods. The central government can promote the formulation of regulations requiring the integration of strategic regional programs into binding medium- and long-term development plans that apply across successive administrations. At the regional level, regional regulations (Perda) or executive regulations should be designed with continuity clauses and periodic evaluation mechanisms to prevent unilateral alterations to ongoing projects. Harmonization between central and regional norms is crucial for creating a legal system capable of safeguarding development consistency from short-term political intervention.

Strengthening accountability and monitoring mechanisms for long-term, cross-administration programs is also essential to maintaining consistency in public policy implementation, particularly for strategic initiatives such as global city development. The government should establish dedicated institutions or units responsible for continuous oversight, the formulation of measurable performance indicators, and transparent reporting of achievements to both the public and legislative bodies on a periodic basis. Additionally, the development of digital reporting systems that enable transparent tracking of program progress—despite leadership transitions—is necessary. Through strong accountability and systematic monitoring, the continuity of long-term projects can be protected from potential political and bureaucratic disruptions.

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