

The Role of the Surabaya Metropolitan Police in Preventing Motorcycle Gang Activities

Briesa Salsabilla Alzahra^{1*}, Sadjijono²

¹briesasalsabila16@gmail.com, ²sadjijono@ubhara.ac.id

Universitas Bhayangkara Surabaya

ABSTRACT

The recent rise in motorcycle gang activity has become a serious security threat. Motorcycle gang members tend to commit criminal acts such as assault, theft, robbery, and vandalism of public facilities, thereby creating a sense of insecurity among the public. This study analyzes the strategies and measures implemented by the Surabaya Metropolitan Police to combat motorcycle gang crime. The research method employed is a qualitative study using a case study approach. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with police officials, document analysis, and a review of the literature, including legislation and scientific journals. The results indicate that the Surabaya Metropolitan Police Department implements three integrated approaches in addressing motorcycle gangs: preventive, pre-emptive and repressive, The success of these efforts is also supported by strong collaboration between the police, local government, and active community participation. This study recommends reinforcing youth development programs, increasing community participation in maintaining neighborhood security, and the need for further research on the socioeconomic factors influencing the formation of motorcycle gangs.

Keywords: *Motorcycle Gang, Public security, Prevention*

Peran dan Fungsi Kepolisian dalam Upaya Pencegahan Pelaku Geng Motor di Wilayah Surabaya (Studi Kasus Polrestabes Surabaya)

ABSTRAK

Maraknya aktivitas geng motor akhir-akhir ini menjadi ancaman keamanan yang serius. Anggota geng motor cenderung melakukan tindakan kriminal seperti penganiayaan, pencurian, perampokan, dan perusakan fasilitas umum, sehingga menimbulkan rasa tidak aman di tengah masyarakat. Penelitian ini menganalisis strategi dan langkah-langkah penanganan yang dilakukan oleh Kepolisian Resor Kota Besar Surabaya dalam menanggulangi kejahatan geng motor. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah studi kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Sumber data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan pihak kepolisian, studi dokumentasi, serta telaah literatur termasuk peraturan perundang-undangan dan jurnal ilmiah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Surabaya Metropolitan Policemenerapkan tiga pendekatan terintegrasi dalam penanganan geng motor, yaitu preventif, pre-emptiv dan represif. Keberhasilan upaya penanggulangan juga didukung oleh kolaborasi kuat antara kepolisian, pemerintah daerah, dan partisipasi aktif masyarakat. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penguatan program pembinaan remaja, peningkatan partisipasi masyarakat dalam menjaga keamanan lingkungan, serta perlunya penelitian lebih lanjut mengenai faktor-faktor sosial ekonomi yang mempengaruhi pembentukan geng motor.

Kata kunci: *Geng motor, Keamanan publik, Pencegahan*

INTRODUCTION

Social security and public order are key aspects of creating a stable social environment. Rule of law country such as Indonesia, the police play a crucial role in ensuring a sense of security for all segments of society. However, in practice, the police force still faces various challenges, particularly in addressing collective criminal phenomena such as motorcycle gang activities.¹ Motorcycle gangs have evolved into a real threat in various major cities, including Surabaya. Their presence not only causes traffic disruptions but also creates public unrest due to criminal acts such as street fights, assaults, mob violence, and even the destruction of public facilities. These activities are typically carried out at night through uncontrolled convoys that often trigger conflicts between groups and result in loss of life.²

The police's implementation of preventive measures can be seen through various initiatives, such as routine patrols, preemptive operations, the formation of special anti-motorcycle gang units, and legal education programs for students and young people. In Surabaya, the Surabaya metropolitan Police, in collaboration with the City Government and the Indonesian National Armed Forces, have conducted joint patrols and checkpoints at crime-prone locations to reduce the frequency of motorcycle gang activities.³ However, these efforts have not been fully effective, as evidenced by the continued occurrence of motorcycle gang incidents across various districts. This situation indicates that the police's preventive role still requires strengthening, both in terms of internal policies, personnel capacity, and external support from the community and educational institutions. This aligns with Sadjijono perspective, which emphasizes that police functions must be developed within the framework of "governmental functions" that are accountable for good governance.⁴

Several research has examined the efforts of the police to combat motorcycle gangs in various regions of Indonesia. Hutami, Meigawati, and Sampurna, in their study on police strategies for preventing motorcycle gang incidents in Sukabumi City, identified the approaches implemented by local police units in addressing the

¹ S. Yulis et al., "Legal Policy Model for Handling Violence Among Youth Motorcycle Gangs in Lhokseumawe City," *Journal of Law, Politic and Humanities* 5, no. 2 (2025), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.38035/jlph.v5i2.1103>.

² P. Faisal, B. Setiawibawa, R., Setiawan, and A. Uksan, "Strategies for Handling Horizontal Conflicts Among Motorcycle Gangs in Bandung," *International Journal of Education, Vocational and Social Science* 4, no. 4 (2025), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.63922/ijevss.v4i04.2263>.

³ A. Telaumbanua, M. Marlina, and M Ramadhan, "Peran Korps Brimob Police Dalam Penanggulangan Pelanggaran Hukum Oleh Geng Motor Di Mako Brimob Polda Sumatera Utara," *Journal of Education, Humaniora and Social Sciences (JEHSS)* 4, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.34007/jehss.v4i2.791>.

⁴ Sadjijono and Bagus T Santoso, *Hukum Kepolisian Di Indonesia: Studi Kekuasaan Dan Rekontruksi Fungsi Polri Dalam Fungsi Pemerintahan* (Surabaya: Laksbang Pressindo, 2017).

phenomenon of motorcycle gangs. However, that study focused more on describing the strategies implemented at the district police level, without evaluating how each function works synergistically and integrally in the field, and did not address the structural barriers that limit the effectiveness of implementation at the field level.⁵ While, Permana, in his study on the role of the Intelligence Unit in preventing potential motorcycle gang crimes in Bandung Regency, concluded that the Intelligence and Security Unit plays a significant preventive role; however, the study also revealed that prevention efforts are hampered by limited operational budgets, minimal community participation in reporting, a shortage of personnel, and poor member capabilities.⁶

There are three significant gaps in the existing literature. There has been no research that specifically examines the multifaceted role of the Surabaya City Regional Police as a mediator, educator, and law enforcement agency. Prior research has not addressed the specific challenges faced in a systematic and comprehensive manner. These gaps are significant because they limit our understanding of the Surabaya City Police's role in preventing motorcycle gang-related crimes. This study aims to analyze the role and functions of the Surabaya metropolitan Police in efforts to prevent motorcycle gang crime and assess the effectiveness of the approaches implemented, as well as identify the institutional obstacles faced by the Surabaya metropolitan Police in preventing motorcycle gang activity and evaluate the effectiveness of the cross-sector collaboration that has been established.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Role and Function of the Police

The role of the police represents the institutional expression of the existence of the Indonesian National Police within the national and civic life of the country, illustrating how the institution carries out its duties within society. Soerjono Soekanto defines a role as the dynamic aspect of a social position, meaning that a role is the enactment of rights and obligations in accordance with a person's or institution's standing within the social structure. The role encompasses its responsibilities to maintain public order, enforce the law, protect the community, and provide services to citizens, as mandated under Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police.⁷

⁵ S. Hutami, D. Meigawati, and R Sampurna, "Police Strategy in Preventing Cases of Motor Gangs in Sukabumi City," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Administrasi Publik* 14, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.26858/jiap.v14i1.48644>.

⁶ Ivonne Kartika Permana, "The Role of Intelligence Unit in Preventing Potential Motorcycle Gang Crimes (Study in Bandung Regency)," *JISIP (Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Pendidikan)* 7, no. 4 (2023), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.58258/jisip.v7i4.5817>.

⁷ Soerjono Soekanto, *Pengantar Penelitian Hukum* (Jakarta: UI Press, 1986).

The Concept of Prevention

Prevention efforts undertaken by the police to address motorcycle gangs constitute a set of strategies designed to inhibit the emergence and growth of negative activities by such groups. Motorcycle gangs are typically associated with various criminal acts, including fighting, illegal street racing, property destruction, and intimidation, all of which threaten public security and order. Prevention is therefore critical to ensuring that gang activities do not cause greater harm or endanger public safety.⁸

According to Barda Nawawi Arief, criminal prevention takes two primary forms: pre-emptive prevention and preventive prevention. Pre-emptive prevention is carried out by enhancing public legal awareness, character education, and the cultivation of moral values. Preventive prevention, by contrast, involves surveillance, routine patrols, and the creation of a conducive environment that deters crime before it can occur. Prevention is not solely the responsibility of law enforcement authorities; it also requires the active participation of all elements of society.⁹

Police led prevention encompasses active measures including community education and outreach, particularly targeting youth at risk of involvement in motorcycle gangs. By explaining the negative consequences of gang membership and the legal repercussions that may follow, the police seek to reduce young people's willingness to join such groups. Additionally, prevention includes increasing patrol presence in prone areas, utilizing surveillance technologies such as CCTV cameras, and engaging in social development activities for vulnerable youth. These measures collectively represent a long-term strategy for reducing gang-related crime.

Motorcycle Gang

Motorcycle gang is a social group comprising individuals, typically adolescents or young adults, who are united within a community sharing a particular identity, set of symbols, and lifestyle centered on motorized vehicles. Originally formed on the basis of shared hobbies and group solidarity, many such groups have evolved into entities engaged in criminal conduct. The activities of motorcycle gangs frequently cause public unrest, including illegal street racing, assault, and destruction of public property.¹⁰

⁸ Faisal, Setiawibawa, R., Setiawan, and Uksan, "Strategies for Handling Horizontal Conflicts Among Motorcycle Gangs in Bandung."

⁹ Barda Nawawi Arief, *Bunga Rampai Kebijakan Hukum Pidana* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2008).

¹⁰ H. Mudjiyanto, B., Lusianawati, "Kriminalitas Dan Pembentukan Identitas Sosial Geng Motor," *JAMBURA JURNAL ILMU KOMUNIKASI*, ahead of print, 2024, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37905/jik.v2i2.108>.

police patrols conducted in Surabaya successfully prevented several incidents, including inter-group brawls and cases of vehicle theft. Patrols were carried out in a number of high-risk areas frequently used as gathering points by motorcycle gang members. In addition to maintaining security, the patrols also aimed to deter adolescents from engaging in deviant behavior that could harm themselves or others.¹¹

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Interview

Interviews were conducted with members of Surabaya metropolitan police directly involved in handling motorcycle gang cases, as well as with members of the Surabaya community who have had experience with motorcycle gangs or have participated in prevention activities. Interviews were conducted face-to-face and recorded with the informed consent of participants. The key informant for this study was Bripda Sefrizal Arya, an investigator at the Criminal Investigation Unit of Polrestabes Surabaya, who was interviewed on 12 June 2025.¹²

Observation

Observation is a data collection method that involves directly observing objects or occurrences in the field. There are various ways to conduct observations, such as directly observing patrols and enforcement actions carried out by the Surabaya metropolitan Police against motorcycle gangs, as well as observing the activities of the public and community groups collaborating with the Surabaya metropolitan Police.

Documentation

The documentation method is a technique used to collect, record, and store relevant information or data about a particular subject. The purpose of this method is to ensure that important information is properly documented so that it can be accessed and reused in the future.¹³ Documentation can take the form of text, images, audio recordings, or other formats that allow the information to be preserved and studied or analyzed. Analysis of documents related to the Surabaya Metropolitan Police's

¹¹ A. Telaumbanua, M. Marlina, and M Ramadhan, "Peran Korps Brimob Polri Dalam Penanggulangan Pelanggaran Hukum Oleh Geng Motor Di Mako Brimob Polda Sumatera Utara," *Journal of Education, Humaniora and Social Sciences (JEHSS)*, ahead of print, 2021, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.34007/jehss.v4i2.791>.

¹² J.W. Creswell and C. N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, (4th ed) (SAGE Publications, 2018).

¹³ Glenn Bowen, "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method," *Qualitative Research Journal* 9, no. 2 (2009).

handling of motorcycle gangs, such as activity reports, police policies, and statistical data on motorcycle gangs.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Role of the Police in Preventing Motorcycle Gang Crimes

The role of the Indonesian National Police in preventing motorcycle gang crime in Surabaya is significant in ensuring community security and public order. Surabaya Metropolitan Police implements a range of preventive measures aimed at reducing both the motivation and the opportunity for motorcycle gang criminality. These efforts include the dissemination of social norms and legal values to the community, particularly among adolescents, with the objective of discouraging involvement in motorcycle gang activities.

Routine patrol constitutes one of the primary preventive functions of the police. Surabaya Metropolitan Police regularly conducts night patrols in areas identified as gang hotspots in order to project a sense of security and deter criminal activity. Alongside patrol operations, the police also organize public awareness campaigns and legal education sessions for community members and students regarding the dangers of motorcycle gangs. These activities are intended to heighten legal and social consciousness, thereby encouraging active community participation in preventing criminal conduct. Education sessions are delivered at schools and in local communities that represent high-risk environments for youth.

The police have also developed collaborative relationships with community leaders, parents, and educational institutions to guide young people away from motorcycle gang involvement. This approach is more humanistic and persuasive in nature, consistent with Police 's role as a protector, guardian, and service provider to the community. Through these partnerships, the police seek to foster conditions conducive to the positive development of youth.

The following three roles characterize Police 's preventive engagement with motorcycle gangs:

1. As Mediator

Police plays a critical role in de-escalating conflicts involving motorcycle gangs and the broader community. Acting as a communication bridge between conflicting parties, the police work to resolve disputes peacefully and without resorting to violence. This approach helps prevent the escalation of conflict into criminal acts. Metropolitan police department of Surabaya actively engages in mediation processes involving community leaders, religious figures, and the families of gang members, with the objective

of creating a conducive social environment and reducing tensions that could provoke further conflict.

2. As Educator

Police plays an important role as an educator in preventing the involvement of young people in motorcycle gangs through systematic and sustained outreach and socialization activities. This educational function aims to provide a clear understanding of the dangers and negative consequences of motorcycle gang membership for the individual, the family, and society at large. Metropolitan police department of Surabaya and regional police units regularly organize educational sessions at schools and universities as part of their community development programs. These activities involve interactive dialogue, discussions, and simulation exercises to ensure that students and university students fully understand the legal and social consequences of joining a motorcycle gang. Parents and community figures are also included in educational activities so that the guidance of young people can be carried out effectively and comprehensively. Police actively promotes cross-institutional synergy, including with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, to strengthen educational programs and monitoring of motorcycle gang activity, particularly where minors are involved. Social media and mass media are also utilized to disseminate prevention messages widely and effectively, reaching the younger demographic that represents the most vulnerable group. In addition, Police provides training for Community Development officers to equip them with effective communication skills and innovative educational methods, ensuring that prevention messages are well received.

3. As Law Enforcer

Police primary role as law enforcer involves taking firm action against gang members proven to have committed criminal acts such as mob assault, physical abuse, illegal street racing, and destruction of public facilities. Enforcement action is a crucial step in creating a deterrent effect and maintaining public order. Such enforcement is not solely repressive in nature; it also incorporates a humanistic dimension by providing guidance and rehabilitation for underage offenders to prevent recidivism, consistent with the principle of restorative justice applied by Police. Law enforcement operations are conducted in a coordinated manner, involving multiple functional units such

as the Criminal Investigation Unit (Reskrim), Mobile Brigade (Brimob), and Intelligence to ensure comprehensive and effective case handling.¹⁴

The functions of Police in addressing motorcycle gangs are grounded in Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police, which encompasses maintaining security and public order, enforcing the law, protecting the community, providing protection, and delivering public services. These functions are carried out in an integrated manner in responding to the challenges posed by motorcycle gangs. Based on field research and interviews, Police discharges three primary functions:

1. Preventive function

Preventive measures are initiatives taken by the National Police to stop criminal acts and security disturbances. These activities are carried out by the Public Order and Security (Sabhara) and intelligence units, which conduct routine surveillance in high-crime areas, monitor suspicious behavior, and detect criminal intent at an early stage. These patrols aim to reduce opportunities and space for criminals. These patrol activities aim to reduce opportunities and space for criminals, thereby minimizing potential disturbances before they escalate into more serious issues.

In addition to conducting patrols, prevention also includes monitoring locations that have the potential to become crime scenes, vehicle searches, and the collection of information that can be utilized to prevent criminal acts. The preventive role makes a significant contribution to creating a safe environment and reducing the likelihood of security and public order disturbances.

2. Pre-emptive function

The pre-emptive function is an initial step taken by the Indonesian National Police to promote and provide education aimed at preventing potential security disturbances and criminal acts. The focus of this function is on communication that encourages the public to comply with social norms and applicable laws.

3. Repressive Function

The repressive function refers to law enforcement measures taken by the Indonesian National Police following a violation. This aspect encompasses the processes of investigation, interrogation, arrest, and legal action against offenders. The purpose of this repressive function is to create a deterrent effect on offenders so they do not repeat their offenses and to maintain stability in society.

¹⁴ D Siantar, "Law Enforcement Against Motorbike Gang Actions in the Jurisdiction of the Deli Serdang Police Region," *Jurma: Jurnal Program Mahasiswa Kreatif* 9, no. 1 (2025).

Measures Taken by Surabaya Metropolitan Police in Preventing Motorcycle Gang Crime

1. Patrol

The simultaneous night patrols are a strategic measure routinely carried out by the Surabaya Metropolitan Police to prevent and address motorcycle gang activity, which commonly occurs at night. This operation involves various police divisions, such as Sabhara, Satreskrim, and Intelkam, who collaborate to inspect areas frequently targeted by motorcycle gangs. With a large number of officers present, the patrol aims to deter offenders while instilling a sense of security among residents who have long been disturbed by the presence of motorcycle gangs.

2. Community Participation

Community collaboration is a key pillar of the Surabaya Metropolitan Police Department's efforts to combat motorcycle gangs. The police encourage residents to actively participate in maintaining neighborhood safety through community-led security initiatives such as night patrols and neighborhood watch programs. This community involvement helps expand surveillance and accelerate the early detection of motorcycle gang activities. Through dialogue and outreach, the Surabaya Metropolitan Police Department builds harmonious relationships with community leaders, religious figures, and community organizations. These individuals serve as mediators and advocates in guiding young people to avoid involvement in motorcycle gangs. This approach is effective in addressing the root social issues that lead to the formation of motorcycle gangs.¹⁵

The police also facilitate the establishment of communication forums between law enforcement and the community to discuss security issues on a regular basis. These forums serve as a platform for residents to voice complaints and provide feedback regarding disturbances occurring in their neighborhoods. Consequently, the police can design more targeted prevention strategies. This collaboration is reinforced by educational and outreach programs that involve the broader community. For example, anti-violence and anti-motorcycle-gang campaigns are disseminated through local media, social media, and community activities. These programs aim to raise collective awareness and foster a shared culture of safety. In order to prevent children from being influenced by negative

¹⁵ Bripda Sefrizal Arya, "Wawancara Dengan Penyidik Satreskrim Polrestabes Surabaya Bripda Sefrizal Arya," 2025.

environments, the Surabaya Metropolitan Police are encouraging parents to play an active role in supervising and guiding their children. The police provide family guidance materials to help parents recognize the signs of their children's involvement in motorcycle gangs and learn how to prevent it.¹⁶

3. Educational Campaign

One of the Surabaya Metropolitan Police Department's preemptive efforts to prevent young people from getting involved in motorcycle gangs. Through this program, the police educate students and college students about the negative impacts of motorcycle gangs, including legal risks, the dangers of violence, and the resulting social harm. The educational material is delivered interactively by experienced community relations officers using discussion and simulation methods to help participants better understand the consequences of joining a motorcycle gang. This activity also encourages participants to actively ask questions and share experiences so that the messages conveyed are more impactful and relevant. In addition to students, this campaign also targets parents and teachers as part of the youth guidance system.

The Surabaya Metropolitan Police Department holds dialogues and training sessions for parents and educators so they can recognize the signs of a child's involvement in a motorcycle gang and provide appropriate guidance. Social media and local mass media are also utilized to widely disseminate messages about preventing motorcycle gang involvement. This campaign is designed to be easily accepted by young people and to change negative perceptions of law enforcement.

4. Law Enforcement

Law enforcement is a decisive measure taken by the Surabaya Metropolitan Police to crack down on motorcycle gang members proven to have committed criminal acts such as mob violence, assault, illegal street racing, and vandalism of public facilities. The police make arrests based on patrol findings, reports from the public, and intelligence information.¹⁷ Following the arrest, the perpetrator was prosecuted in accordance with applicable criminal justice procedures. This process includes investigation, prosecution, and trial to ensure that the perpetrator receives a proportionate punishment. This law enforcement action aims to serve as a deterrent so that the perpetrator and other motorcycle gangs do not repeat their actions.

The Surabaya Metropolitan Police also obtained evidence such as sharp weapons and motor vehicles used in criminal acts. This evidence serves as a

¹⁶ Bripda Sefrizal Arya, "Wawancara Dengan Penyidik Satreskrim Polrestabes Surabaya Bripda Sefrizal Arya." 2025

¹⁷ Arya, "Wawancara Dengan Penyidik Satreskrim Polrestabes Surabaya Bripda Sefrizal Arya."

strong foundation for legal proceedings and simultaneously reduces the tools available for criminal activity.¹⁸ The police take a different approach when dealing with juvenile offenders, prioritizing guidance and rehabilitation so that they can reintegrate into society with improved behavior. This approach is consistent with the principles of restorative justice and child protection.¹⁹ Decisive and professional law enforcement plays a vital role in upholding the rule of law and ensuring justice for victims and the general public. The Surabaya Metropolitan Police Department is committed to continuously improving the quality of law enforcement in order to create a safe and orderly environment.

Challenges Faced by the Surabaya Metropolitan Police in Preventing and Combating Motorcycle Gang Crime

The Surabaya Metropolitan Police play a crucial role in maintaining public safety and order in this complex metropolitan area. However, in carrying out their duties, they face a number of fundamental challenges. One of these is a shortage of personnel and supporting infrastructure. Based on field interviews conducted for this research with Bripda Sefrizal, issues such as a shortage of personnel, a lack of operational vehicles, and suboptimal discipline among officers present significant obstacles in enforcing traffic violations and criminal offenses in the field. These conditions result in suboptimal responses to criminal incidents, particularly in densely populated and crime-prone areas.²⁰

In addition, significant challenges have emerged in the form of cybercrime and online prostitution, which continue to grow alongside technological advancements. The Surabaya Metropolitan Police Department currently does not have a dedicated cybercrime unit, so handling digital cases requires coordination with the East Java Provincial Police. This hinders efforts to swiftly take action against perpetrators of digital crimes, such as online fraud and the distribution of illegal content. This challenge becomes even more complex when dealing with online prostitution cases, where perpetrators often use fake identities and exploit closed social media platforms that are difficult to track. It is noted that the limited digital expertise of investigators also slows down the process of uncovering online prostitution cases within the jurisdiction of the Surabaya Metropolitan Police Department.

¹⁸ *Ibid* (n.d.).

¹⁹ *Ibid*.

²⁰ Arya, "Wawancara Dengan Penyidik Satreskrim Polrestabes Surabaya Bripda Sefrizal Arya."

CONCLUSION

The research concludes that Surabaya Metropolitan Police fulfills three integrated roles in preventing motorcycle gang crime: as a mediator in de-escalating conflicts, as an educator through legal awareness programs targeting youth, and as a law enforcer through firm yet rehabilitative action against offenders. These roles are operationalized through three core functions preventive, pre-emptive, and repressive supported by four concrete measures: routine night patrols, community collaboration, educational campaigns, and law enforcement operations. The findings indicate that the effectiveness of these efforts is maximized when all three functions operate in a coordinated manner, reinforced by sustained cross sector collaboration between the police, local government, educational institutions, and the community. Future research should examine the socioeconomic determinants of motorcycle gang formation and the long term outcomes of community based prevention programs in Surabaya.

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