UNIVERSITY OF PRIZREN "UKSHIN HOTI"

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION/BSc

RE/ACCREDITATION

REPORT OF THE EXPERT TEAM

May 2019, Pristina

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Date of site visit: 14th – 15th of May 2019

Expert Team (ET) members:

- Prof. Stephen Adam
- Prof. Dr. Magdalena Platis
- Prof. Dr. Kristiina Tõnnisson
- Prof. Dr. Peeter Normak
- Prof. Dr. Johannes Falterbaum
- Mr. Mihai Adrian Vilcea (Student Expert)

Coordinators from Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA):

- Avni Gashi, Acting Director of KAA
- Shkelzen Gerxhaliu, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Monitoring
- Arianit Krasniqi, Senior Officer for Evaluation and Accreditation

Sources of information for the Report:

- Self-Evaluation Report (SER) submitted by University of Prizen "Ukshin Hoti";
- Information obtained during the site visit;
- Meetings conducted with the management of the institution and program, quality assurance representatives and administrative, teaching staff, students, graduates, employers of graduates and external stakeholders;
- Supplementary documents requested by the ET (Appendix 1).

Criteria used for program evaluation:

- KAA Accreditation Manual

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1.2. Site visit schedule

14 May

19.45	Meeting at the Reception of the Hotel
20.00	Working dinner

15 May

07.30	Meeting at the reception of the hotel
09.00 – 10.30	Meeting with the management of the institution
10.40 – 11.50	Meeting with quality assurance representatives and administrative services
12.00 – 13.00	Meeting with the heads of study programs
13.00 – 13.50	Lunch break
13.50 – 14.50	Visiting tour of the facilities and infrastructure
14.50 – 15.40	Meeting with teaching staff
15.50 – 16.40	Meeting with students
16.50 – 17.40	Meeting with graduates
17.50 – 18.40	Meeting with employers of graduates and external stakeholders
18.45 – 19.00	Internal meeting – Expert Team and KAA
19.00 – 19.15	Closing meeting with the management of the institution

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1.3. A brief overview of the institution and program under evaluation

University of Prizren (UPZ) was established in 2009 (decision no. 01/87 of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo - https://uni-prizren.com/repository/docs/SCAN0101_178063.PDF) and started to officially operate beginning with 2010. University of Prizren inherited Higher Pedagogical School existing since1962, which got its independency from the University of Prishtina. Therefore, Higher Pedagogical School in Prizren was transformed into the Faculty of Education in Prizren under the umbrella of the University of Prishtina. Beginning with 2010/2011 academic year, Faculty of Education which until that time was under University of Prishtina got transferred to the University of Prizren. its studies being also offered in the community languages (Bosnian, Turkish).

The entire organization of the University of Prizren is based on its Statute, article 15, approved in the Parliament of the Republic of Kosovo. As well as its mission stated also in its Statute, article 5 (https://uni-prizren.com/repository/docs/Statute_of_Upz_682832.pdf). The headquarter of the University is in Prizren, UPZ being considered the second public university in Kosovo. The University is accredited since 2010. Currently, the University provides studies in Bachelor and Master cycle. The mission of this University is to provide quality education, research, and innovation in order to create leaders in the field of Technology, Economics, Law, Education, Philology, etc., who will adapt to the needs of a fast changing world.

Main strategic goals of the UPZ, as mentioned in the SER consist of the following ones:
- *Academic advancement of staff, research, and the offering of scholarships are among the priority services of the University;*
- *The improvement of teaching methods, research and services in the University by retaining and hiring new staff;*
- *Growing the teaching environment of the University with the purpose of attracting and retaining excellent students;*
- *The development and establishment of the University of Prizren in a university that offers quality education and quality studies for students with the goal of becoming the most prestigious university in Kosovo and beyond.*

The Faculty of Economics is one of the 5 faculties within the University of Prizren "Ukshin Hoti". It provides two programs of Bachelor studies: "Business Administration" and "International Management" and also, two programs of Master studies: "Business Administration" and "Accounting and Auditing". The development of these programs is closely related to the needs of the labor market and to the needs of business development.

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2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

The program evaluation consists of 7 sub headings through which the educational process content, students, research and resources are assessed, as well as quality assurance, mission and objectives.

2.1. Mission, objectives and administration

According to the SER, the mission statement of the Business Administration/BSc program is as follows:

- *to prepare students with practical managerial skills in the context of global enterprises by achieving sufficient professional skills and capacity for a productive leadership career in the economic system of free markets and private enterprises based on the spirit of competitive entrepreneurship.*
- *to provide quality education and advancing the students' practical knowledge and skills in business competition and business management, not only in the domestic market but also in the international market.*
- *to increase the level of research in the business field and for students to develop creative, innovative and communicative thinking skills in solving business and decision-making problems based on the use of extensive analytical, research and practice based literature to create leaders in the field of Economy.*

The same document – SER provides information on the level of knowledge and the labour market links:

- *the level of knowledge is guaranteed by the Curriculum of this program, which includes subjects from the field of Entrepreneurship development, then Modern Management of Business, Marketing, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Corporate Finance, Accounting, International Business etc.,*
- *The study program Bachelor of "Business Administration" is a three-year study program and includes 6 semesters with a total of 180 ECTS. This program enables students to achieve a good level of basic knowledge in the field of Business Administration, to recognize the complexity of local and international business organizations, the interrelated business-to-business interactions and local and international legislation on which they develop businesses and learn to manage difficulties faced in business administration.*
- *This study program will provide students with sufficient knowledge of contemporary business management in a competitive business environment. This program offers students practical experience and thus prepares them for immediate access to various positions, including managerial positions in different business sectors. This concept of*

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professional practice will be implemented by practical programs conceived in co-operation with local and international business entities.

As mentioned in SER, main objectives of the program are:

- *Enable students to embrace theoretical and practical knowledge of business organizations;*
- *Enable students to develop essential analytical skills to conduct research and encourage innovative ideas;*
- *Enable students to be knowledgeable and skilled to manage different businesses.*

Therefore, it is important to observe that the Business Administration program mission reveals the three dimensions of the institutional mission – education, research and community service. The institutional mission is much more complex, including also the university interest of internationally development. The program is designed as to provide a relatively proper mix of subjects to be taught to students (https://uni-prizren.com/sq/info-per-ab-(curricula)#breadcrumb). The program develops several relationships with industry, specialists from different economic sectors providing professional advice in the process of intended learning outcomes, such as – Letter of Agreement with the Edirne Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Pro Credit Bank, Raffeisen Bank in Kosovo, Kosovo Business Alliance (*partnerships were provided during the visit, for some of the abovementioned organizations*). Some formal regulations, included in the Statute are described and made publicly available, such as rules for the admission to studies, role of the Study Commission, Senate role in defining special criteria, definition of the academic success, examinations description etc. Research is integrated within the curriculum, with specific subjects like *Market Research*, but also integrated in other general subjects, such as *Basics of Marketing, Statistics* etc.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Policies, and regulations should be revised at least once every two years, as several circumstances change in a dynamic environment;

2. The research dimension of the program mission should be reflected in more clear and concrete actions, taking benefit from the industry links;

3. Partnerships and agreements with companies and institutions should state (at least some of them) their involvement in providing professional advice in defining learning outcomes, and also be renewed.

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2.2. Quality management

As SER states, quality management is generally conducted at the institutional level, where a special Office has been established, while at the faculty level, there is the *Commission of studies* which has the responsibility for quality assurance, especially in the design of curriculum and the control of its implementation. The activity in the area of quality management is based on the following documents:

- *Regulation of Committee's quality assurance*
- *Quality assurance guidelines*
- *Strategy for quality assurance.*

At the institutional level, *Quality Assurance and Enhancement Strategy of the University of Prizren "Ukshin Hoti"* is a document adopted in 2013 as a result of a TEMPUS project called "Strategic Support for the Development of Sustainable QA Structures at the Newly Public Founded University in Kosova, University of Prizren" no. 517482. This document (*provided to the expert team after the visit*) includes several qualitative and quantitative instruments to be used to assure and enhance quality:

1. Questionnaires
2. Interviews
3. Monitoring
4. Appraisal scheme
5. Self-Assessment Report

The same document also states that it is the university management responsibility to review and evaluate the principles and implementation of the strategy on regular basis, as well as to take corrective actions if necessary.

Therefore, the document called *Quality Assurance and Enhancement Strategy of the University of Prizren "Ukshin Hoti"* is the only clear evidence of the institutional interest in quality management. In addition, the academic staff participate to regularly assessment by students, after each semester activity (*a questionnaire was provided to the expert team during the visit*); the questionnaire is based on 13 issues including the content of the syllabus, the teaching methods and also, an open question asking students to provide any suggestion course or professor related. The results and not being publicly available and surveys dedicated to graduates and employers haven't been considered yet to be integrated in the quality assurance process.

Nevertheless, there is no evidence that quality evaluations provide an overview of quality issues for the overall program of Business Administration; the only pertinent piece of information is what was declared during the meeting with the employers of graduates, that they are consulted about the need of program development.

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In addition, a report of self-evaluation is prepared, periodically indicating the strengths and weaknesses of it (the previous report was elaborated in 2016: https://uni-prizren.com/repository/docs/Self_evaluation_report__2016_982339.pdf)

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Integrate a student in the quality management evaluations;

2. Create a visible website for quality management processes and upload all legislation related to QA, as well as internal quality assurance procedures, as they are going to be developed;

3. Develop and implement surveys for graduates and employers;

4. Formalize at least an annually meeting with labour market representatives and discuss the overall program, with a particular attention on learning outcomes to students;

5. Develop an academic staff evaluation based not only on students' survey, but also on self-evaluation, on superior evaluation and collegial evaluation; create template documents for these based on all three areas of activity: education (teaching), research (publications) and community service (social extra-curricular activities).

2.3. Academic staff

Tables provided in SER include names of the full-time and part-time academic staff and duration of contract, as well as number of teaching hours for each of the teaching staff member. Although it is not clear how the workload is distributed for teaching, exams, consulting, administrative activities, research, etc. for the staff involved in the Business Administration, from the teaching staff meeting during the site-visit, it was clear that most of the time is dedicated to teaching activity or preparation for that. Participants to the meeting mentioned that there is an internal rule for staff to be in school for 4 days/week, 8 hours/day, and if teaching is taking place in those days, then, they stay even longer. In addition, academic staff mentioned that they appreciate the attendance list that is made for the days in school, for which they sign. Therefore, being many hours in school, professors become more available to students, for consulting hours. In addition, academic staff do not cover, within an academic year, more than two teaching positions.

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Based on the curriculum, individual components of the program are combined to achieve the specified qualification objectives and provide adequate forms of teaching and learning, combining lectures with practical studies. In terms of occupation of teaching positions, academic staff are recruited on a national contest base, facing a high competition at the contest (5 candidates/one position – as teaching staff declared at the site visit).

According to the SER integrated tables for the academic staff (pages 60 and 61), in the Business Administration program there are involved 14 full-time and 17 part-time professors, which means that only 45% of the teaching staff are full-time; the first table contains numbering errors, as from 13, it goes straight to 15. In addition, looking to the curriculum or how it is called in SER (page 63), in the content of the educational process, some academic staff included in the 14 declared as full-time have no teaching in any of the study years: Shukri Maxhuni (Prof. Ass), and none of the 4 assistants, MSc. If the curriculum is correct, therefore, instead of being 14 full-time staff, in the program, there are only 9 professors full-time. At the same time, some professors name appear in the curriculum, but are not in the previous lists of full-time and part-time staff.

Opportunities are provided for additional professional development of teaching staff, with special assistance given to any who are facing difficulties. Young teaching staff appreciate the teaching experience that is provided, especially from the dean of the faculty, as well as the institutional support to publish scientific papers. The responsibilities of all teaching staff, especially full-time, include the engagement in the academic community, availability for consultations with students and community service. Students appreciate their learning experience, the relationship with the professors in faculty. (comments revealed during the site visit).

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Clarify the full-time versus part-time academic staff lists in connection to the curriculum (content of the educational process);

2. Extend the academic staff evaluation from only student evaluation, to other components (self-evaluation, superior, peer);

3. Create and implement a clear and transparent program to provide additional professional development to teaching staff, apart from research support, including English skills for all staff.

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2.4. Educational process content

In SER, descriptions of the modules/subjects are provided. All syllabuses for the Business Administration program are publicly available at https://uni-prizren.com/en/business-administration-AB-syllab-bach#breadcrumb. The study program design is based on qualification objectives, learning outcomes being in general described in terms of knowledge of the field of business administration, in some cases involving a critical understanding of theories and principles; subjects look for generating advanced skills to students, requiring them to solve complex problems in the area of business. Especially at the end of the program, students are working for a paper thesis after completing an internship program, which means learning about

professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in work contexts. As included in SER and in the electronically posted syllabuses, learning outcomes are clearly defined in some cases, but in others, not. The program has been re-designed in terms of changing the former *Agrobusiness* profile of the third year into *Accounting and Auditing* one, but not all subjects have been adjusted. For instance, within *Quality Management* subject taught in semester 5, as shown in the syllabus posted on the website (https://uni-prizren.com/repository/docs/5.5._Quality_Management_298968.pdf), the content is not referring to quality management at all, but to knowledge of soil, plant and climate, which mean that the agribusiness profile is hidden under the name of the *Quality Management*; in addition what reference list in mentioned in SER (page 106) is not integrated in the electronic version of the syllabus. In fact, *Quality Management* should provide insights on dimensions of quality Deming's, Juran's, Crosby's quality philosophy, principles of continuous improvement, processes and specific standards etc. General and specific competences are described neither in the syllabuses nor in SER.

The disciplines within the curriculum have analytical syllabuses which comprise the discipline's objectives, a general content, learning outcomes, in different ways defined, the distribution of classes, seminars and applicative activities, students' assessment system and minimal bibliography.

During the site visit, the students revealed the importance of having much more practice integrated not only in the format of internships, but in the teaching way of different subjects; they proved that they were aware of what they have to do and how they are supposed to be assessed during the semester and at the end of it. They agreed that some entrepreneurial training is also provided through some extracurricular activities, but they claim for much more.

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Comparison with other study programs at highly regarded institutions is not systematically developed, the management of the program being convinced that the program itself is unique, in the absence of a study on that.

Internship/professional practice has 4 ECTS, meaning 60 hours at the end of the semester 6. There is no syllabus of it, but SER reveal the importance of some new partnerships, such as Kosovo Business Alliance.

Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Change the content of the syllabus of the Quality Management discipline, according to specific theoretical and practical achievements;

2. Create a syllabus for Internship/Professional Practice, but do the right correction in the curriculum, as it should contain 60 hours, but not lecturing hours;

3. Analyse the syllabuses and use the same template for all;

4. Identify 1 − 3 study programs in other institutions (international ones) and do a comparative study (benchmarking) to verifying standards of student achievement and also see what should be changed in terms of content, flow of disciplines, learning outcomes;

5. Create a procedure for monitoring the program, including actions to be taken in to dealing with situations where standards of student achievement are inadequate;

6. Organize a Summer school for students (students proposal).

2.5. Students

According to the Statute of the university (art. 86 - https://uni-prizren.com/repository/docs/Statute_of_Upz_682832.pdf), a study program is defined by the following issues:

- *Title of study*
- *Type of study*
- *Academic degree*
- *Conditions for enrolment*
- *Objectives and outcomes*

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- *Curriculum details*
- *Competence*
- *Point value according to ECTS (course, thesis)*
- *Conditions for individual studies.*

Admission to studies is described in the same document, art. 99: national test for entering the university studies, preconditions for admission to undergraduate studies etc. Detailed conditions and enrolment criteria are determined by the Senate.

According to SER, *the selection of candidates for Bachelor study programs is done by a commission which is assigned by the Faculty Unit, based on an admission form and based on the submitted documentation and the average of the high school or another degree of the First Level. The number of admissions is based on the real possibilities of each faculty, for a normal lesson and within the standards required by MEST in accordance with the Law on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo, respective by laws and the UPZ Statute.*

Feedback to students on their performance and results of assessments is given by professors, students being satisfied by the relationship they have with the academic staff (conclusion based on students' comments during the site visit).

Nevertheless, there is no clear and formally adopted admission procedure at institutional level that the study program respects when organising students' recruitment.

Students' rights are included in the abovementioned document, art. 111:

- Right to retake an examination (3 times at maximum);
- Right to retake an examination, with a special permission from the Dean of faculty;
- Rights in case of re-enrolment.

It is not clear evidence regarding the study groups and their dimension. The information provided in SER is somehow uncorrelated: *in this academic year, there were 300 open places for regular students and 50 places for students at long distance* (SER, page 114); in the table at SER, page 115, the number of students for 2018/2019 is 698, as active students, while 14 are declared as unregistrered, concept still unclarified. At the same time, in order to assure an interactive teaching and learning process, students are divided into groups, based on the type of teaching – compulsory lectures (up to 150), elective lectures (20-70 students), exercises (up to 50).

There is no evidence on records of student completion rates to be able to analyse the evolution of the program in a quality management approach, as considering them as quality indicators. In addition, no formal internal documents could have been identified dedicated to students' transfer between higher education institutions.

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Compliance level: Substantially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Develop a set of quality indicator referring to records of student completion rates for courses and program;

2. Create a procedure to clarify the students' transfer between higher education institutions, faculties and study programs (it should be an institutional procedure);

3. Create a clear admission procedure and make it public so all candidates can have access to it (it should be an institutional procedure);

4. Make public the consultation hours for students for each professor – day, time and room where professors are available every week for students' questions.

2.6. Research

According to SER:

- *There is a research plan which will be implemented within the general research program at the University level.*

- *Research and scientific work by the academic staff are rather individual and co-authorship (up to three co-authors) and their own scientific papers are published in various international scientific journals. The University Senate has approved a list of names of international scientific journals where academic staff can publish their own scientific papers according to the criteria of a particular journal. The costs of publishing scientific papers and participating in scientific conferences abroad are covered by the University Board's decision in cases when such a request exists by the academic staff.*

- *To further develop the scientific research process, within the Faculty of Economics an initiative was taken to establish the Faculty of Economics Institute which, after passing to the Faculty Council, is expected to be further elaborated.*

According to the teaching staff comments during the site visit, it was clearly stated that the faculty/university supports up to 2 publication fees / year for every member of the academic staff. Nevertheless, there is no data-base about the journals or the papers published by the academic community of the program. According to the CVs included as appendix to SER,

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many of the professors have no recent publications for the last 3 years. Requesting some up-to-date CVs during the site-visits, examples of papers in the 2017 were provided, but nothing for 2018.

There are no research objectives for the study program formally expressed, and there is no evidence on research-based performance promotion criteria for academic staff. Standard 6.4. Based on the CVs, an interest on research results on the same topics as teaching activity can be noticed, being also observed a higher interest for conferences, sessions, symposiums, seminars, than for articles in journals; in many cases, difficulties in the process of getting visas have made the publication process slower.

There is no evidence on policies for ownership of intellectual property and students are not yet involved in research activities.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Create a research plan for the study program – clear research objectives, research themes and resources;

2. Motivate academic staff to increase research production by considering research results as promotion criterion;

3. Realize a benchmarking study to find out what other universities invest in regarding the research in the business administration area;

4. Ownership of intellectual property must be regulated internally; submit a proposal to the rectorate level;

5. Integrate performant students in research activities.

2.7. Infrastructure and resources

According to SER:

- *The Faculty of Economics possesses a suitable environment, sufficient human resources and technological equipment for the development of a quality teaching process.*

- *The Faculty of Economics has 11 halls including the Amphitheatre divided into 3 floors with an area of about 3500 m2. The facility is also equipped with elevators to meet the needs of people with special needs or other people.*
- *The facility also has a specific hall for Professors and a Library. The library has 70 seats, 10 computers and possesses 1,159 contemporary books in both Albanian and foreign languages.*

Resources available for the program, are not clearly stated, being described for the faculty level. There are 2 libraries available for the students, one providing general study materials for the university students and one dedicated to Faculty of Economics students. During the site visit, poor study conditions in the general library could be noticed – very cold room, not sufficient lightening; on the contrary, better conditions provided to students were observed in the small library with books and publications in the economics and business field. Either a donation of books, or a small acquisition produced in the latest profile for both of the libraries. With the occasion of the site visit, a new lab was visited, but the computers were not functional at the time. This issue remains open, as it was mentioned that there was only a matter of time to make the lab really functional.

There is no financial plan at the level of the study program that can demonstrate the sustainability of the study program for the next minimum three years. The budget description for the following 3 years included in the institutional part of the SER does reveal neither interest nor knowledge in a proper budget planning.

The higher education institution did not demonstrate with adequate documents (property deeds, lease contracts, inventories, invoices) that for the study program, resources are available and formally recognized.

Compliance level: Partially compliant

ET recommendations:

1. Increase resources for digital library;
2. Improve the library conditions;
3. Develop the computer-based clasrooms

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3. OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE ET

The report is not evidence-based, therefore, a lot of information had to be looked for by the expert team to provide evidence for standards. The website of the university has incorporated some information in English, but not enough to cover all the areas. In many cases, the report reproduces by default sentences from the KAA guidelines and no particular comment describing the real state is included. Later on, when documents were additionally asked for, they were not provided in English.

The site visit was not very efficient, as translation had to be ensured and that was really time-consuming. During the first part of the site visit, the dialog was mainly managed by the only person working in the Quality Management Office, and sometimes he translated to have more time to find answers for the ET questions.

Main recommendations:

1. Contribute to the elaboration of institutional procedures, as some of the missing ones have to be adopted at the university level;
2. Develop a fundraising based relationship with private companies, so they might financially support through sponsorships some activities;
3. Create a motivational strategy for the young generation of professors;
4. Integrate students in all the changes that are proposed for program or faculty development, including the research activity;
5. Create a training strategy for staff to learn English;
6. Develop quality assurance procedures and monitor the progress;
7. Create research teams in faculty, to work together for clear research topics generated from the program mission;
8. Follow the specific recommendations provided for each of the standard groups.

In conclusion, the Expert Team considers that the study program *Business Administration* offered by *UNIVERSITY OF PRIZREN "UKSHIN HOTI"* is *Substantially compliant* with the standards included in the *KAA Accreditation manual* and, therefore, recommends *to accredit* the study program for a duration of *3 years* with a number of *150* students to be enrolled in the program.

Expert Team

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Chair

Peeter Normak

(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

Stephen Adam

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Member

Magdalena Platis

(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

Kristiina Tõnnisson

(Signature)	(Print Name)	(Date)

Member

Johannes Falterbaum

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Member

Adrian Mihai Vilcea

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