SUMMARY PROJECT FICHE

1. **BASIC INFORMATION**

1.1 Désirée Number: BG 0102.04

1.2 Title: Roads access to tourism sites

1.3 Sector: ESC

1.4 Location
Republic of Bulgaria - North-east and South-central Planning Regions

2. **OBJECTIVES**

2.1 Overall Objective(s)
Development of SMEs in underdeveloped areas

2.2 Project Purpose
Enhancing the accessibility to sites of touristic interest by road rehabilitation and re-construction

2.3 Accession Partnership and NPAA priority
The Project addresses short- and mid-term priorities identified under the economic criteria in the Accession Partnership, which include, amongst others, the following:

“The promotion of competitiveness through market-based enterprise restructuring; measures to improve the business environment and stimulate domestic and inward investments”.

2.4 Contribution to National Economic Development Plan
According to the National Economic Development Plan (NEDP) 2000-2006 the long-term national development strategy for Bulgaria has the following objectives:

- Creating conditions for stable, sustainable and balanced development of the individual regions
- Reducing regional disparities in employment and income
- Opening up Bulgaria and solving regional and local development challenges
- Tourism and SME development are priorities in the NEDP

It is stated in the National Economic Development Plan that the regional development policy will fund infrastructure projects for improving investment pull, access and living conditions:

“Actions and resources should target roads of local and regional significance, water supply and sewerage, general amelioration and other local and regional level infrastructure”
The NEDP defines that regional development plan projects will address the following actions:

- Assisting SMEs formation
- Fostering an enterprise environment...

According to the NEDP, the strategic priority of the regional development is to improve infrastructure.

The third programme of the NEDP Action Plan concentrates on tourism, and sub-programmes feature the development of unconventional tourism, rural tourism, and tourism in new regions. The programme emphasises the importance of renovating and improving the quality of the road network in Bulgaria.

The business-related infrastructure development strategy analyses the main problems of the municipal roads as being (these make up 17,817 km)

- Poor condition (the roads are worn out to a great extent and 2,700 km are unpaved¹), and
- poor technical characteristics.

These difficulties render the network inadequate to accommodate contemporary requirements for speedy, constant, comfortable and safe transport of passengers and goods. Efforts to improve the municipal contribute to an improved business-related infrastructure in the regions, and thus contribute to a fuller satisfaction of the requirements of contemporary business. Better municipal roads enable a higher level of services to the existing businesses, assisting them to become more competitive, and encourage new business development (especially SMEs). Business creation in turn increases income and employment opportunities in the regions. It contributes to reversing the depopulation trends in backward border and mountainous regions.

The development plans for the regions also consider tourism and roads as priorities.

The plan for the North-east Planning Region considers as one priority the development of sustainable tourism. At the same time, a weakness is the worn out condition of roads; therefore another priority is reconstruction, rehabilitation and modernisation of the local roads network, which serves business. The ESC Commission proposes development of business through alternative tourism by rehabilitating municipal roads infrastructure, and has specifically requested Phare funding.

In South-central Region, plans submitted to the ESC Committee envisage a complex programme for the development of tourism and tourist infrastructure. For this region, an updated development plan is not yet ready.

The project will contribute to implement regional development policy in all of the above-mentioned areas.

¹ This means that they lack any type of covering, including plain gravel.
3. DESCRIPTION

3.1 Background and Justification

The development of roads in a region (together with the other components of business-related infrastructure) is one of the major conditions for generating and maintaining a stable economic growth and therefore balanced development of regions. Roads and other elements of BRI act as prerequisites for attracting and employing local, inter-regional, national and foreign resources to the area. Where improvement of roads infrastructure has failed to become a priority, the regional economy can experience problems, especially when there are potential tourism assets that are otherwise not accessible.

This scheme focuses on improving conditions for SME development in the South-Central and North-east planning regions. In order to improve targeting and impact, beneficiaries will be localities with a potential to develop their income from tourism. Increased tourist visits are expected to benefit local tourism-oriented SMEs.

Tourism is one the fastest growing sectors of the Bulgarian economy (last year’s growth rate of visitors was approx. 13%, and for revenues 15.7%). It is also an important source of employment. The project aims at tapping the under-exploited market for special interest tourism in rural and mountainous areas, and to improve the dynamics of development there.

Municipal roads are of particular importance to the development of tourism and businesses in general, as they provide access to tourist sites and recreation facilities, connect businesses with their customers and link the municipalities to the Republican Roads Network. The better the condition of the municipal roads, the better they perform these three functions. The project strives to address the above problems by improving municipal roads in the North-east and South-central Planning Regions of Bulgaria.

These regions have been selected for their tourism potential, their poor local road networks and their impact on the national economy (for example the less developed districts around Targovishte, Razgrad and Shumen in NE offering hill and eco/rural – horse riding, hiking, hunting - as well as cultural tourism opportunities – Pliska, Preslav are famous ancient capitals, Madara has an attractive ancient site; and for example Pazardjik, Kazanlak, Smolyan and Kardjali in SC, with the Rodopa mountain range offering a wide variety of special interest tourism potential). These regions are close to the main tourist centres on the Black Sea, which means that visitors can easily access them for short trips.

The metropolitan regions around Varna and Plovdiv are explicitly excluded from benefiting from this scheme.

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2 Federal Road Network projects are of no relevance to this strategy because they are financed by ISPA.

3 There exist also territorial/regional disparities as regards the degree of completeness/coverage/ of the Bulgarian roads network (measured by its density, km/100 sq.km). The situation is worst, amongst others, in Pazardjik district (26.1 km/100km²). The nation-wide average density is 33.7 km/100km². The lack of municipal roads, or their bad condition, produces the phenomenon of Centre-periphery type of transport isolation for in many areas, especially if these are mountainous ones. The phenomenon is especially grave in winter. Among the districts with the highest incidence of transport isolation are: Kurdjaly, Smolyan , and Razgrad.
3.2 Linked Activities

The South-central Planning Region is a priority region under the Phare 2000 schemes (business incubator, vocational training and promoting the use of ISO 9000 accreditation).

The revised Accession Partnership 2000 gives directions for the pre-accession assistance under ISPA in order to contribute to the preparation of Bulgaria for accession in the area of economic and social cohesion. The transport infrastructure measures under ISPA which correspond to this project are:

“Promoting sustainable mobility, and in particular those that constitute projects of common interest based on the criteria of Decision No 1692/96/EC and those which enable the beneficiary countries to comply with the objectives of the Accession Partnerships; this includes interconnection and interoperability of national networks as well as with the trans-European networks together with access to such networks.”

CBC programmes will operate in both regions; with Romania in the NE and with Greece in the SC. In both cases, transport connections are part of the proposed priorities (particularly in the SC).

The activities envisaged under the Phare 2001 ESC scheme being proposed by the MoE regarding public tourism-related investments and culture routes directly complement this scheme. The SME consultancy scheme (Phare 2001 ESC, MoE) could become relevant to support SMEs whose development should benefit from an improved road access. The schemes being proposed by the MoLSP dealing with active labour market policies and social inclusion can benefit from and complement this project.

Feasibility studies for this tourism / SME related roads access will be completed by the end of 2002 through a contract to be tendered under the BG99.19 PPF.

3.3 Results

- Improved road connections, leading to accessibility gains, including all weather / year-round traffic
- Increase in visitor numbers
- Better business for tourism related enterprises, leading to higher revenues and employment.
- All SMEs should benefit from better access to customers, and commuters from easier travel to their places of work.
- Slowing down of out-migration of the population from these areas.
- Public Works Dept strengthened
3.4 Activities

The above results will be achieved through the following activities:

- **Rehabilitation** of selected municipal roads in the 2 planning regions to meet the appropriate standards (this implies, for example, the resurfacing of a road or putting an asphalt layer onto an existing unsurfaced road, average cost approximately 100,000 Leva / km);

- **Reconstruction** of selected municipal roads in the 2 planning regions to meet the appropriate standards (this amounts to a virtual rebuilding of the road, at a cost which has to be determined for each particular case).

- **Signposting** of business- and tourist sites from the main roads.

- **Institution Building** with MoRDPW Dept of Public Works

The means necessary include the procurement of various human, material and financial resources, which at this stage can be estimated to amount to roughly 15 meuro altogether.

4. Legal & Institutional Framework

According to the recently adopted **Roads Act** (promulgated in March 2000, *The State Gazette*, volume 26), in terms of **ownership** the roads in Bulgaria are **state-owned** and **locally-owned**. The Roads Act calls the former “republican” roads, while the latter are labelled “local” roads. Republican roads are exclusive state property. They include the **motorways** and the roads of 1st, 2nd and 3rd class/grade.

The local roads are divided into **private** and **municipal**. Municipal roads are public municipal property. Local roads, both municipal and private, are open for public use and provide transport links of local importance and connections/linkages with republican roads or streets.

The Roads Act regulates all issues related to ownership, management and finance of roads in Bulgaria. The republican road network, i.e. the roads of national importance are managed by the Roads Executive Agency, REA (within the MoRDPW), the municipal ones are managed by the mayors, whilst the private – by their owners. The construction, the re-construction and the maintenance of the republican and the municipal roads is financed by the state budget, by the municipal budgets, by grants and loans.

The Municipalities and the owners of private roads must agree/co-ordinate/ with the REA every project of theirs when the latter is envisaging building and/or connecting local road/s/ to the republican roads system. The **Minister of Regional Development and Public Works** is responsible for formulating and implementing the government policy in the field of planning and creating of the roads infrastructure. Under this competence he has the discretion to approve conceptions and medium- or long-term programmes for development of the roads network. The Executive Director of the REA is responsible for the overall day-to-day management of republican road works in the country. He has the right to co-ordinate and agree every investment project, which envisages crossing a republican road.
Construction, repairs and maintenance of republican and municipal roads are financed with funds from the State /Central Government/ Budget and from municipal budgets, with grants and loans from international financial institutions. There is an ordinance for funding class 4 municipal roads, which is about to be approved by the Council of Ministers. According to this, approximately 6-7 million Leva are made available from the state budget for municipal roads maintenance and reconstruction. A commission consisting of representatives from MoF, MoRDPW and other responsible institutions decides, according to defined criteria, on the regional allocation of these funds according to proposals submitted. Further funds for municipal roads are made available through a percentage of the taxes levied on fuels. This currently amounts to approximately 30 m Leva annually. The funding decision is made following a procedure which involves municipalities’ requests submitted on a standard itemized form, screening and prioritising by the district administrations and MoRDPW and the Council for Regional Development of the Council of Ministers. The Public Works Directorate is responsible for the coordination, implementation being the responsibility of the municipalities.

5. **Detailed Budget**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Phare</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Total Phare (=I+IB)</th>
<th>National Co-financing*</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>TA</td>
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<td>9.850</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>14.850</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
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</table>

* Phare will finance the cost of the investment component up to a maximum contribution of 9.850 meuro. The remaining co-financing will be provided by the beneficiary institution. Should the total cost of the works/supervision exceed the estimate shown in the table above, the beneficiary institution will provide the necessary additional co-financing.

6. **Implementation Arrangements**

6.1 Implementing Agency

MoRDPW  
PAO Mr V Garnizov, Deputy Minister  
Cyril and Metodius St 17-19  1202 Sofia  
Phone: +359 2 940 59 and Fax: +359 2 987 40 77

6.2 Implementation Structure

Organisation

MoRDPW  
Project Leader: Ivan Saev, Deputy Minister  
Public Works Dept  
Cyril and Metodius St 17-19  1202 Sofia  
Phone: +359 2 985 52 79 and Fax: +359 2 980 28 38
The organisation for implementing the project should follow two basic principles:

- Simplicity
- Transparency

The Department for Economic and Social Cohesion Program Implementation (DESCPI) will be responsible for the conclusion of contracts with the enterprises and for works supervision, payment authorisation and disbursement of grant aid. DESCPI will, furthermore, cover organising tenders (works and supervision), monitoring and evaluation. A Project implementation unit (PIU) is to be established in the Public Works Directorate of the MoRDPW. The PIU will have the responsibility for the practical implementation of the project. To speed up project implementation, eligible projects will be identified by late 2001 with foreign assistance under a framework contract (BG.99.19.PPF). The Public Works Directorate will, to this effect, publicise detailed information on eligibility. This information will be distributed through the local offices of the Ministry, along with application forms. Public Works will take into account the existing database of municipal road rehabilitation / re-construction applications, contact these municipalities directly and ask for additional information as necessary to comply with the selection criteria, and to submit these via the channels outlined below.

Project proposals will be prepared by the municipalities. These are to be passed on to the district administrations for verification that the information provided by the applicant on the application form is correct and that all-relevant documentation accompanies the application form. The administration will also provide confirmation that the project will support one of the priority sectors identified in the District Development Plan.

Following screening by the District Council for Regional Development (this consists of mayors and chairmen of municipal councils) and passing on to the PIU, independent experts will check the applications (under FWC, BG.99.19.PPF). Of particular relevance will be the contribution of the projects to increasing the number of tourists and/or potential for developing SMEs; the experts will make recommendations to the Selection Committee.

A committee consisting of at least representatives of the Public Works Directorate, MoE (departments in charge of tourism), MoA (SAPARD), BARDA, National Association of Bulgarian Municipalities and the EU Delegation should make the final selection of projects.

The Steering Committee makes its decisions using the information provided by the experts’ report, the information from the District Administration and other relevant sources of information. Besides working on individual stretches of roads, projects which improve a network of roads around a municipality would also be eligible, provided they remain within the overall limits and criteria set out below. Preference will be given to project proposals evidencing that they will

- contribute to an improved accessibility to new and old sites of touristic interest
- show a commitment of the municipalities in question that they will develop fully fledged, marketable and bookable tourism products (to this effect, an opinion will be sought from the Dept for National and International Tourism Policy of MoE)
- in addition to the tourism effect: improve access to existing or planned SMEs, which can convincingly demonstrate that this will help their development
• is located in an area with above average unemployment in the region (exclusion criterion)
• add value to a CBC project
• complement other funding
• be of a project size between Euros 100,000 and 750,000 (exclusion criterion)

The Selection Committee should take into account that the feasibility studies may result in higher than anticipated costs for the projects. Therefore, the budget of 15 million Euros should not be fully allocated in the first instance; a reserve of approximately 20% is recommended.

Thereafter, full technical feasibility studies will be prepared by experts contracted under BG99.19 PPF (large services contract), to be completed by the end of 2002. If projects exceed cost estimates by more than 20%, the Selection Committee will have to make a new decision on that project. Then, tendering for works can proceed in line with the Practical Guide, leaving until the end of 2004 to finish construction.

Approximately 12 staff-months of external consultancy (150,000 Euros) have been envisaged to strengthen the Public Works Directorate in project implementation skills. These can be drawn on as needed throughout the life of the project, and it is not foreseen to provide this through a long-term expert.

6.3 Non-standard Aspects: N.A.

6.4 Contracts
Assuming an average length of road of 8 km at a cost of 75,000 Euros/km, around 25 contracts would need to be awarded.
A TA contract for around 150,000 Euros is also foreseen, to assist in project implementation.

7. Implementation Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start of tendering</th>
<th>Start of project activity</th>
<th>Project Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2002</td>
<td>August 2002</td>
<td>November 2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B: Project selection to be completed by late 2001; followed by feasibility studies, the last of which should be completed by late 2002.

8. Equal Opportunity
Project implementation will guarantee that equal opportunities will be given to women and men and ethnic groups.

9. Environment
Environmental Impact reports will be undertaken as required by the Practical Guide and Bulgarian law (since these are already existing roads, this is likely to be a minor requirement).
10. **RATES OF RETURN**

Economic rates of return can only be calculated for individual projects approved under this project and will be based on estimated income effects.

11. **INVESTMENT CRITERIA**

11.1 **Catalytic effect**

The project will, as a priority accession driven action, increase the competitiveness of the Bulgarian tourism sector.

11.2 **Co-financing**

The co-financing will be given in general from the national budget. The municipalities will also take part in the co-financing, although their capacity to do so is very limited.

11.3 **Additionality**

The Programme is new and therefore EC finance will be additional to that allocated to the Programme through the Bulgarian national budget and municipal funds. It is also additional to GTZ tourism support activities, the MoE and MoL tourism-related projects under Phare 2001 ESC, and CBC actions.

11.4 **Project Readiness and Size**

The time-schedule requires that the MoRDPW acts quickly to start the selection process of the roads to benefit from this scheme. Technical assistance will be provided to help with project selection, through a new framework contract under BG.99.19.PPF. This should be complete by the end of 2001. For producing the required feasibility studies for all the roads having been selected, further TA – mainly local - is scheduled to start by November 2001; through the BG.99.19 PPF large services contract.

11.5 **Sustainability**

The project will be operated through the newly established Project Implementation Unit with the involvement of regional partnership in the process. Sustainability will depend upon the future capacity of the Bulgarian Government to finance such Programmes without external aid donor support. It is considered unlikely that such a capacity will exist prior to 2006. The maintenance of the roads should, in due course, be undertaken from municipal funds, but this will depend on increasing income of the municipalities. Such increased income could come through development effects of the roads, leading to an enhanced taxation base.

11.6 **Compliance with State-aids Provisions**

The project is in accord with Article 92(3)(a) of the Treaty of Rome with respect to regional aid in an Objective 1 Member State.
11.7 **Contribution to National Development Plan**

The Project will support the relevant sub-programmes of the NEDP (business related infrastructure, tourism development, balanced regional development).

12. **CONDITIONALITY AND SEQUENCING**

12.1 **Conditionality**

The project cannot commence until the EU Delegation is satisfied with the capacity of both the Implementing Agency and the Beneficiary (which are different departments within the MRDPW). The Implementing Agency (Department for Economic and Social Cohesion Programme Implementation) and the Beneficiary (Public Works Department) will have to demonstrate to the Commission that adequate staffing and other resources have been made available to the relevant PIUs for the project to begin.

The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works with the Ministry of Economy specifying their powers to establish selection criteria and their role in the decision-making process is a prerequisite.

12.2 **Sequencing**

Project selection should be complete by the end of 2001 (with help through an FWC under BG.99.19.PPF), to be followed by full feasibility studies, the last of which should be finalised by the end of 2002 (under a large services contract also funded through BG.99.19.PPF). Tendering for works can start once the first feasibility studies are ready, i.e. in the spring/summer of 2002. The last works contracts should be awarded during the spring of 2003, to ensure completion by end 2004 (taking into account seasonal factors affecting roads works).

**Annexes**

1. Logical Framework Matrix in Standard Format
2. Detailed Implementation Chart
3. Contracting and Disbursement Schedule by Quarter for Full Duration of Programme (including disbursement period)
## Annex 1 Phare Log Frame

### Logframe Planning Matrix for Project “Improving access to sites of touristic interest and SMEs”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall objective</th>
<th>Objectively verifiable indicators</th>
<th>Sources of Verification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development of SMEs in underdeveloped areas</td>
<td>10% increase in tourist guest nights in benefiting municipalities</td>
<td>Data produced by the respective regional offices of NSI, the National Statistics Institute, and information from the tourism councils</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Project Purpose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enhancing the accessibility to sites of touristic interest by road rehabilitation and road reconstruction</th>
<th>Objectively verifiable indicators</th>
<th>Sources of Verification</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                                                                                                    | 15% increase of traffic flows of vehicles/passengers/freight through the municipal roads supported through the programme | Data produced by the National Roads & Bridges Central laboratory | • Approval of Bulgaria’s project “Development of the Bulgarian Tourism Product by Renovation of Cultural Heritage Sites and Upgrading Associated Publicly Owned Infrastructure”, proposed for Phare 2001 ESC support  
• Continued stable political situation in the Balkans |
### Results
- **Improved road connections**, leading to accessibility gains, including all weather/year-round traffic
- Increase in visitor numbers
- Better business for tourism related enterprises, leading to higher revenues and employment.
- All SMEs should benefit from better access to customers, and commuters from easier travel to their places of work.
- Slowing down of out-migration of the population from these areas.
- Public Works Dept strengthened

### Objectively Verifiable Indicators
- **Time saved** /core result indicator, CRI/ measured by – Reduction in journey time, and Accessibility gains /CRI/ measured by ESS=Equivalent Straight Line Speed
- **Traffic flows** /core impact indicator, CII/ measured by increase in %, and Employment created and safeguarded /CII/ measured by Number and % of total jobs, Environmental impact /CII/, measured by increase or decrease of pollution in %
- **Roads infrastructure** /core output indicator, COI/ measured by Km and Degree of network completion/
- **Bookable tourism products**
- **Population figures**

### Sources of Verification
- Data produced by the respective regional office of NSI, the National Statistics Institute;
- Data produced by the respective regional office of National Roads Agency
- Data produced by the National Roads & Bridges Central laboratory
- Project and monitoring reports

### Assumptions
- further progress of Bulgaria and the 2 planning regions on the road to a functioning market economy
- keen interest of all regional stakeholders in the implementation of the project
- follow-on private investments
- effective technical assistance

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ESS stands for Equivalent straight-line speed, and it measures the ease of access from one point to another, regardless of the distance between these points. It is computed by dividing the straight-line distance between the two points by the rapidest possible trip duration between them.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Rehabilitation** of selected municipal roads in the 2 planning regions to meet the appropriate standards (this implies, for example, the resurfacing of a road or putting an asphalt layer onto an existing un-surfaced road, average cost approximately 100,000 Leva / km); | **Procurement of the relevant:**  
  - Feasibility studies / for the concrete projects to be included in the Scheme  
  - Design / related to the concrete projects eligible for the Scheme  
  - Construction works  
  - Monitoring & works supervision throughout the implementation phase of the Scheme  
  - Technical assistance | • Administrative capacity of the MRDPW assigned to manage the Programme;  
  • Timely completion of work on republican roads projects in progress /if any/ in the 2 regions |
| **Reconstruction** of selected municipal roads in the 2 planning regions to meet the appropriate standards (this amounts to a virtual rebuilding of the road, at a cost which has to be determined for each particular case). |                                           |                                                                            |
| **Signposting** of business- and tourist sites from the main roads. |                                           |                                                                            |
| Institution building with Public Works Dept |                                           |                                                                            |

**Preconditions**

- Full preparedness of each project applying for the Programme
### Annex 2  Implementation Chart – BRI / Small Roads Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>2001</th>
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- PIU operational: X
- PSC operational: X
- Call for proposals: X
- Project selection: X
- Feasibility studies: X
- IB / technical assistance: X
- Works tendering: X
- Contract awards: X
- Construction works: X
- Monitoring and: X
- Mid term evaluation: X
- Final evaluation: X
### Annex 3

**Contracting and Disbursement Schedule by Quarter**

#### Project Title: Improving Access to Sites of Touristic Interest and SMEs

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<th>Contracting</th>
<th>Cumulative contracting schedule by quarter in M€ (provisional)</th>
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<th>Disbursement</th>
<th>Cumulative disbursement schedule by quarter in M€ (provisional)</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
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