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**Datasheet for the decision
of 17 October 2025**

Case Number: T 0902/24 - 3.5.05

Application Number: 18821767.3

Publication Number: 3725058

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H04W36/36, H04W4/50, G06F9/50

Language of the proceedings: EN

Title of invention:
Edge computing relocation

Applicant:
Sony Group Corporation

Headword:
Edge computing relocation/SONY

Relevant legal provisions:
EPC Art. 56

Keyword:
Inventive step - (no): no credible technical effect derivable
over the whole scope claimed

Decisions cited:
T 0885/20, T 0287/23, T 1465/23, T 1580/23



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Case Number: T 0902/24 - 3.5.05

D E C I S I O N
of Technical Board of Appeal 3.5.05
of 17 October 2025

Appellant: Sony Group Corporation
(Applicant) 1-7-1 Konan
Minato-ku
Tokyo 108-0075 (JP)

Representative: Neij & Lindberg AB
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Decision under appeal: **Decision of the Examining Division of the
European Patent Office posted on 21 March 2024
refusing European patent application
No. 18821767.3 pursuant to Article 97(2) EPC.**

Composition of the Board:

Chair K. Bengi-Akyürek
Members: N. H. Uhlmann
F. Bostedt

Summary of Facts and Submissions

I. The appellant appealed against the examining division's decision to refuse the present European patent application.

The examining division held that the claim requests then on file did not comply with, *inter alia*, Article 56 EPC.

II. The decision under appeal made reference to, *inter alia*, the following prior-art document:

D1: TARIK TALEB et al.: "Follow-Me Cloud: When Cloud Services Follow Mobile Users", IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON CLOUD COMPUTING, 3 February 2016, pp. 1-14.

III. The board summoned the appellant to oral proceedings and set out its preliminary opinion.

IV. Oral proceedings before the board were held on 17 October 2025.

The appellant's final request was that the decision under appeal be set aside and that a patent be granted on the basis of a set of claims according to the **main request** (filed during the first-instance oral proceedings and labelled "New Main Request 11.30 AM 2024.03.01").

At the end of the oral proceedings, the board's decision was announced.

V. Claim 6 of the **main request** reads as follows (board's labelling):

- (a) "A method of operating a master control node (290) configured to communicate with multiple edge computing systems (261-263) in an edge computing architecture (299), comprising:
- (b) receiving, from a terminal (130), a configuration request message (7001),
- (c) the configuration request message (7001) being indicative of a predicted future connectivity status of the terminal (130),
- (d) wherein the predicted future connectivity status is indicative of at least one of an access network to become in range of the terminal and a predicted future location of the terminal (130),
- (e) based on the configuration request message (7001):
- (f) selecting an edge computing system (260-267) from a plurality of candidate edge computing systems (260-267), and
- (g) transmitting, to the terminal (130), a configuration response message (7002) indicative of the selected edge computing system (260-267)."

Reasons for the Decision

1. The present application pertains to a method for operating a "control node" in "an edge computing architecture" comprising terminals and "edge computing systems". A terminal informs the control node of a "predicted future connectivity status". Depending on this status, the control node selects an "edge computing system" and transmits an indication of the selected system to the terminal.

2. Main request - claim 6 - inventive step

2.1 Distinguishing features

2.1.1 It is common ground that document **D1** does not disclose that "a configuration request message" is received from a terminal (cf. feature (b)) and that "a configuration response message" is transmitted to a terminal (cf. feature (g)).

2.1.2 The appellant argued that D1 additionally did not disclose features (c) and (d).

2.1.3 The board agrees with the appellant in that regard, because D1 consistently teaches that only the **actual state** is considered for deciding whether another data centre shall be used (cf. page 7, left-hand column, lines 4 to 6: "*The decision to migrate a service or not is taken by observing only the actual state*" and also page 7, right-hand column, lines 15 to 18 (emphasis added): "***When a UE hands off a particular SA to another SA, the FMCC has to decide either to migrate the service using action a2 or not to migrate it using action a1***" and page 8, right-hand column, lines 25 to 38). Thus, a "***predicted future connectivity status of the terminal***" is not addressed at all in the methods of document D1.

2.2 Technical effect

2.2.1 In its statement of grounds of appeal, the appellant did not set out any technical effect associated with the distinguishing features.

2.2.2 The board considers that the distinguishing features of claim 6 do not cause any technical effect. Indeed, the "configuration response message" is merely transmitted but not really used in the method of claim 6, i.e. the information it contains is not used according to the wording of claim 6.

2.2.3 Furthermore, claim 6 does not specify how the "predicted future connectivity status" is considered when "an edge computing system" is selected. That "an edge computing system" is selected is, moreover, already disclosed in D1. In other words, no technical effect can credibly be achieved by merely selecting an *unspecified* "edge computer" based on an *unspecified* prediction of "future connectivities" and "future locations", let alone any "improvement of efficiency in preparation for connection to an edge system", as put forward by the appellant in its written reply to the board's communication under Article 15(1) RPBA. Overall, a mere exchange of messages cannot cause a technical effect either. This is even exacerbated by the lack of further details on the relevant parameters in that context.

2.2.4 During the oral proceedings before the board, the appellant referred to page 30, lines 14 to 28 of the description as filed, and argued that the latency of a connectivity change could be improved.

In that regard, the board takes the view that neither the distinguishing features nor the claimed features as a whole cause such an improvement. In particular, claim 6 does not refer to any change in connectivity. Instead, the above distinguishing features merely

relate to a typical message exchange in a simple communication request/response scheme.

2.2.5 Furthermore, according to the passage referred to by the appellant, an improvement would in fact be caused by a number of features (*inter alia* the use of discovery procedures, policy evaluations, security procedures, different access technologies, a user context that needs to be relocated and preparations of a shadow instance). No such features are however included in present claim 6. In addition, the "configuration request message" is based on a "**predicted** future connectivity status" and a "**predicted** future location". Thus, the selection of an "edge computing system" is of a speculative nature and cannot lead to a technical effect which is credibly achieved consistently over the claimed scope.

2.3 Objective technical problem

2.3.1 The appellant argued that the objective technical problem could be formulated as "*how to provide an alternative mechanism for selecting an edge computing system*".

2.3.2 The board is not convinced. As set out above, the distinguishing features in claim 6 do not cause any technical effect which is credibly achieved consistently over the claimed scope, i.e. they amount to an arbitrary, non-functional modification of the prior art (see e.g. **T 885/20**, Reasons 5.6). Hence, they cannot contribute to a solution of any technical problem for that reason alone.

2.4 It is settled jurisprudence of the Boards of Appeal that features which do not produce a technical effect and do not contribute to the solution of a technical problem cannot contribute to an inventive step (see e.g. **T 1465/23**, Catchword and Reasons 2.7 and 3.3.3, **T 1580/23**, Reasons 2.2.8 and **T 287/23**, Reasons 2.8.2).

2.5 Thus, the subject-matter of claim 6 of the sole claim request on file does not involve an inventive step (Article 56 EPC).

Order

For these reasons it is decided that:

The appeal is dismissed.

The Registrar:

The Chair:



B. Brückner

K. Bengi-Akyürek

Decision electronically authenticated