# Supplementary matter

H3AGWAS : A portable workflow for Genome Wide Association Studies

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## Contents



## <span id="page-0-0"></span>1 Overview

This supplementary note contains two substantive sections: The first give a comparison between H3AGWAS workflow and a competing tool, especially with respect to computational performance.

The second gives example runs of a number of the different workflows that we provide.

## <span id="page-1-0"></span>2 Computational comparison between the BIGwas and H3AGWAS workflow

### <span id="page-1-1"></span>2.1 Introduction

This section documents a computational comparison of the BIGwas and H3AGWAS workflow workflows in response to the findings of Kässens  $et \ al.$  that BIGwas is significantly faster than H3AGWAS workflow for QC for medium and larger files. For example, Kässens *et al.* found that data set with 5k individuals and 50k SNPs takes 8 minutes (BIGwas) versus 15 minutes (H3AGWAS workflow), and a data set with 20,554 individuals and 700k SNPs takes 135m (BIGwas) versus 537m (H3AGWAS workflow) and for even larger data sets that they could not reasonably complete execution of H3AGWAS workflow. (It must be emphasised that comparing workflows requires comparing multiple factors and in our view this is not the most important factor, but Kässens et al have made very serious negative findings, which we believe needs to be addressed. We do not agree with their findings)

### <span id="page-1-2"></span>2.2 Data sets used

The following data sets were used:

- The example data set that comes with BIGwas this is a set based on 1000 Genomes data with 2504 individuals and 50k SNPs.
- The AWI-Gen unqc-ed data 11062 individuals and 2.267 million SNPs.
- A simulated data set (sim1 22142 individuals and 2.267 million SNPs.

One difference between the two workflows is that H3AGWAS workflow expects that all the genotype data is in one PLINK file, while BIGwas allows multiple files to be input which are then merged, which exposes further parallelism. To make the comparison fair we compare the H3AGWAS workflow times with two separate runs of the BIGwas workflow:

- The BIGwas example data set is provided as two separate PLINK data sets one the "cases" and one the "controls", each with approximately 2500 individuals. We compare the H3AGWAS workflow with the merged data setas input with the BIGwas on both the merged data and on the original split files.
- For the AWI-Gen data, we split into roughly two halves and artificially declare the two halves as cases and controls. We compare the H3AGWAS workflow on the original AWI-Gen data with BIGwas on the original data and on the split data. For the  $\sin 1$  data set a similar comparison was made.

### <span id="page-1-3"></span>2.3 Computational setup

We used Nextflow 21.04.1 and used Singularity with the images provided by the two tools. In both cases, both the Nextflow repos and the Singularity images were already downloaded and installed. We performed the experiments on a single machine (no scheduler) and using SLURM on a cluster.

#### <span id="page-1-4"></span>2.3.1 Single machine execution

We used a machine with a dual Xeon Silver 4214 CPUs running at 2.20GHz (24 physical cores, 48 hyper-threaded cores) and 128GB of RAM, and all data inputs and outputs were stored on a Seagate ST2000NM0008 2TB SATA Hard Drive. The machine was otherwise unloaded.

We ran both of these on the default settings – presumably both developers chose appropriate default settings so that is fair enough. However, H3AGWAS workflow has performance parameters that the user can set if they have more powerful computers. The [max\\_plink\\_cores](max_plink_cores) parameter is

Data set	H3AGWAS workflow		<b>BIGwas</b>				
			Split		Merged		
	Elapse <sub>d</sub> (s)	CPU h	Elapsed (s)	CPU h	Elapsed $\left($ S	CPU h	
Example	34	0.05	480	(0.1)	496	0.2	
AWI-Gen	1383	2.1	2576	0.8	3700	1.2	
$\operatorname{sim}1$	7278	12.3	29938	8.3	30240	8.4	

Table 1: Comparison between H3AGWAS workflow and BIGwas workflow using QC script and 3 different data sets using single machine execution

by default set to 4 – this limits any PLINK process to use 4 cores (and makes 4 cores available and so hence counts to CPU hours whether used or not). If we run the Nextflow with the [--max\\_plink\\_cores=12](--max_plink_cores=12), the elapsed time for the AWI-Gen data set drops from 1383s to 750s at the cost of accounted CPU hours going to 4.2 CPU hours. This is a trade-off the user must consider. No doubt there are similar changes that could be made to the BIGwas workflow.

Note the difference in the AWI-Gen and  $\sin t$  data set for the H3AGWAS workflow is a factor of 5.2. In principle we would expect the overall computational cost to scale quadratically with number of SNPs as the single biggest computational costs are steps which are quadratic. However as these components take longer there is less task parallelism as a proportion of the overall cost. The BIGwas workflow also scales super-quadratically but by a greater factor (our superficial observation is that the bulk of this extra cost is as at similar points in the computation).

#### <span id="page-2-0"></span>2.3.2 Cluster execution

We tested on our production University Research Cluster: SLURM 20.11.8, CentOS7.9, Singularity 3.6.3 (default Singularity OSG release). The cluster is heterogeneous so we set Nextflow clusterOptions to execute only on 20 nodes with dual core Intel Xeon Silver 4114 CPUs running at 2.2GHz (20 physical, 40 hyper-threaded cores per node – note that these machines are slower than the one we tested above). Since this is a production cluster we were unable to test while the cluster otherwise completely idle but we could test late on weekend with only a few other jobs running so we do not think that this affected the results (we manually inspected that the jobs ran on machines not being used by other jobs).

Singularity issues: We were unable to run BIGwas on the cluster in its default Singularity setting. Like many production HPC systems, the cluster follows recommendations to not allow Singularity with setuid enabled (<https://sylabs.io/guides/latest/user-guide/security.html>). The disadvantage of this is that standard Singularity SIF images cannot be directly executed but must be copied (unsquashed) to a temporary disk for each separate Nextflow process<sup>[1](#page-2-1)</sup>. The BIGwas image is 11GB in size in SIF (compressed) format and the computational cost of unsquashing, especially when multiple processes are doing this in parallel made running the workflow impractical. The same Singularity issue applies to H3AGWAS workflow, of course. However, the H3AGWAS workflow container design approach is to have several, specialised containers rather than one monolithic container. For example, the workhorse <py3plink> container is  $\approx$ 450MB in size – so although there is a significant penalty for running H3AGWAS workflow on the cluster using Singularity compared to running the natively installed software, it is not an outrageous penalty. In order to perform the testing below, we were able to enable setuid for (this requires root privileges), but this is not something we are allowed to leave for extended periods. In many environments setuid is enabled in Singularity installations (as it was in our testing on the single machine), so many users will not face this problem. But we suspect that other Singularity users in production HPC environment will run into the same problem as us. (We also tested Singularity 3.8 and 3.9 and it had the same problem).

<span id="page-2-1"></span><sup>1</sup>And to be clear if a Nextflow process is executed 10 times in parallel then each instantiation of the process requires this.

Data set	H3AGWAS workflow		<b>BIGwas</b>				
			Split		Merged		
	Elapse <sub>d</sub> (s)	CPU h	Elapsed (s)	CPU h	Elapsed (s)	CPU h	
Example	189	$\stackrel{<}{_{\sim}}0.1$	967	0.4	899	0.2	
AWI-Gen	2025	3.8	3712	$1.2\,$	3647	1.1	
$\operatorname{sim}1$	8346	16.2	33728	8.4	31028	8.6	

Table 2: Comparison between H3AGWAS workflow and BIGwas workflow using the QC script and three different data sets using the Cluster and SLURM

## <span id="page-3-0"></span>2.4 Comparison between association workflow of BIGwas and H3AGWAS workflow

#### <span id="page-3-1"></span>2.4.1 Data sets used and methodology

We used output of OC produced by the BIGwas workflow to run association of H3AGWAS workflow and BIGwas. For both workflow we ran PLINK as the underlying association testing tool defaults of workflows where used. We ran each test using an Intel Xeon Silver 4114 dual core processor (40 hyper-threaded cores on 20 physical cores) with 128GB of RAM

#### <span id="page-3-2"></span>2.5 Run, troubleshooting and duration

Table [3](#page-3-5) shows the comparison. For the small test Data set, duration is lower for BIGwas than H3AGWAS workflow, but for bigger sample size and SNP number, H3AGWAS workflow performed better.

In using BIGwas, we observed missing data causes error on workflow when used with binary phenotype.

<span id="page-3-5"></span>

Table 3: Comparison between H3AGWAS workflow and BIGwas workflow using Association script and 3 different data sets

#### <span id="page-3-3"></span>2.6 Conclusion

As we have indicated, performance is not the primary measure of a workflow because ultimately the costs depend on the underlying software used and the workflow designer can neither take too much credit nor blame for this. However, it is important to demonstrate the workflow can expose appropriate parallelism, which we believe has been demonstrated. Certainly we do not believe that the experimental evidence supports the claim that the BIGwas workflow is faster than H3AGWAS workflow.

## <span id="page-3-4"></span>3 Description and test of different scripts of H3AGWAS workflow : CPUs, Time

This section shows additional testing of H3AGWAS workflow on our SLURM cluster as shown. Again since the cluster is a production cluster we were only able to run it on a lightly loaded cluster not on a cluster that was idle. The purpose of this testing is to give indicative real-world costs. For the tests done, the workflow execution is shown graphically as a directed acyclic graph and the computational cost of the individual components is shown (of course, many of the individual components can be done in parallel).

## <span id="page-4-0"></span>3.1 Quality Control of genetics data

- Objectives : apply a quality control on genetics data.
- Input : workflow take as input PLINK file from genomics data, phenotype, sex phenotype.
- $\bullet~$  Individual filter :
	- Apply sex control with X chromosome and sex phenotype.
	- heterozygosity control using Hardy–Weinberg equilibrium.
	- missingness
	- relatedness
- SNPs filter :
	- minor allele frequency
	- heterozygosity
	- duplicated markers
	- missingness
- Output :
	- report in pdf is produce in PDF describing each steps with different filters
	- PLINK file after quality control with frequencies distribution, hardy Weinberg equilibrium... see example [1](#page-5-0)
	- intermediate files produce by workflow.
- Test: QC workflow has been apply for 12,000 individuals with genotype using h3array positions (2.4 millions positions) using the cluster and SLURM – see the statistics in table [4.](#page-7-0)

An overview of the execution can be found in Figure [2](#page-6-0) and the detailed computational results in Table [4.](#page-7-0)



1 SNP missingnes

Fig

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2 QC PHASE 0

ach level of missingness specified on the x axis, the corre-<br>ion of SNPs which have missingness less than this. [File is

<span id="page-5-0"></span>Figure 1: Example of four first pages of quality control report generated by pipeline

<span id="page-6-0"></span>

<span id="page-7-0"></span>

Table 4: Statistics resume of the QC workflow: process – Nextflow process name; Tot. hours – total hours used by NF process;  $\%$  times – percentage of times used by process compared to other process ; % cpu number used (Mean) – mean % cpu number used by the process; Max mem (MB) is maximum of memory (resident set size) used by one process; NF processes – number of Nextflow process used for the steps

## <span id="page-8-0"></span>3.2 Association

#### • input :

- phenotype file and one or more phenotype, covariates
- genetics data in plink file and in option dosage : bgen (regenie, SAIGE, fastGWA and BOLT-LMM), VCF (SAIGE) and impute2 (BOLT-LMM)
- output :
	- each summary statistics of each software and phenotype used and pdf report contains for each combination [3](#page-10-0)
	- report with Manhattan, qq plot and best result
	- relatedness comptued for each software

## <span id="page-8-1"></span>3.3 Fine-mapping

- Objective: apply a fine-mapping on significant regions of summary statistics result
- Input data : summary statistics, causal variant number and genetics data in PLINK format
- identify region to apply fine-mapping on full summary statistics using PLINK clump to identify lead SNPs.
- Steps
	- for each region apply different algorithms to find the number of independent SNPs, putative causal variant and credible interval with different software for fine-mapping : COJO (step-wise model selection procedure to select independently associated), FINEMAP (stochastic and conditional algorithm), Caviarbf and PAINTOR software with possibility to use eQTL information.
- Output [4:](#page-11-0)
	- intermediate file produce in workflow and by each software
	- file contains all result merge
	- figures plot as locus zoom with has been had probability of each software of finemapping.
- Test : Fine-mapping has been done on summary statistics obtained with cholesterol output of association testing done with GEMMA with AWI-Gen data set. We obtained 40 windows with  $p < 5 \times 10^{-8}$ : for each region different software was used fine-mapping

Figure [5](#page-12-0) gives an overview of the execution and Table [5](#page-9-0) shows the detailed computational costs.

<span id="page-9-0"></span>

Process	Tot hours	$%$ times	$\overline{\%}$ cpu	Max	NF
			num-	mem	pro-
			ber	(MB)	cesses
			used		
			(Mean)		
clump_data	0.20	2.19	61.60	3900.00	1
ComputedCaviarBF	0.50	5.79	86.80	16.50	40
ComputedCojo	0.50	5.54	76.41	11.10	40
ComputedFineMapCond	0.50	6.72	81.09	11.20	40
ComputedFineMapSSS	0.40	5.53	164.14	8.20	40
ComputedLd	0.90	11.41	113.56	38.40	40
ComputedPaintor	0.40	5.29	85.59	76.40	40
extract_sigpos	0.00	0.12	131.90		1
<b>ExtractPositionGWAS</b>	1.90	22.84	95.63	3800.00	40
GetGenesInfo	0.10	1.23	42.60	2000.00	1
<b>GWASCatDl</b>	0.00	0.25	77.30	445.20	1
MergeResult	0.70	8.12	93.01	439.10	40
SubPLINK	$2.00\,$	25.00	78.50	826.50	40

Table 5: Statistics resumé of fine-mapping workflow running on cluster, using cholesterol phenotype. Process - it is Nextflow process name; Tot. hours – total hours used by NF process;  $\%$  times – percentage of times used by process compared to other process ; % cpu number used (Mean) mean % cpu number used by the process; Max mem (MB) is maximum of memory used by one process; NF processes - number of Nextflow process used for the steps



<span id="page-10-0"></span>Figure 3: Example of four first pages of association report generated by pipeline with 10 best solutions, qq plot and manhantan plot



<span id="page-11-0"></span>Figure 4: Example of report generated by fine-mapping pipeline contained page 1)locus-zoom with lead snps defined using stepwise model selection procedure (gcta), credible position from fine-mapping softwares, post-probability of fine-mapping software, information relative to GWAS catalog, genes. Pages 2 : legends. Pages 3 : GWAS catalog information's.



<span id="page-12-0"></span>Figure 5: flowchart of Fine-mapping workflow

### <span id="page-13-0"></span>3.4 Heritability

- Objectives : compute heritability and/or co-heritability using genetics diversity and phenotype or/and summary statistics
- Input : genetics data and phenotype or/and summary statistics.
- Steps :
	- format and prepared files
	- build matrix of relatedness or/and genetic relationships matrix for GCTA, GEMMA
	- computed heritability using GEMMA and LDSC using summary statistics and GCTA, GEMMA and BOLT-LMM using genetics and phenotype.
- Test: using 4 phenotypes of lipid, genotype and summary statistics obtained using association testing result, we ran heritability and co-heritability using the cluster.
- Output : pipeline gave all intermediate file from each software but also a barplot with each heritability (see Figure [6\)](#page-14-0)

An overview is shown in Figure [7](#page-15-0) and the detailed computational cost is shown in Table [6.](#page-13-1)

<span id="page-13-1"></span>

Table 6: Statistics resume of heritability workflow running with cluster, using 4 phenotypes and 10,000 individuals and corresponding summary statistics. Process – Nextflow process name; Tot. hours – total hours used by NF process;  $\%$  times – percentage of times used by process compared to other process;  $\%$  cpu number used (Mean) – mean  $\%$  cpu number used by the process; Max mem (MB) is maximum of memory (RSS) used by any process; NF processes – number of Nextflow processes used for the steps.



<span id="page-14-0"></span>Figure 6: example of output of heritability workflow

<span id="page-15-0"></span>

Figure 7: flow<br>chart of heritability workflow Figure 7: flowchart of heritability workflow

## <span id="page-16-0"></span>3.5 Simulations workflow

Three workflows of simulation exist

#### <span id="page-16-1"></span>3.5.1 Description of each workflow



Table 7: Description : input - Input of different pipeline, genotype - if pipeline produce also a independent genotype complementary of phenotype simulation; simulation - how pipeline simulated phenotype; output - what output give pipeline; Post-simulation computation - Analyse or modification done after simulations

### <span id="page-16-2"></span>3.5.2 Simulation using 1000Genome, GWAS catalog and GCTA

- Objectives : building phenotype using genetics data
- Input : by default, workflow uses (1) genetics data from 1000 Genomes Project (2) result of lead SNPs from GWAS catalog (3) list of phenotype choice in GWAS catalog to build phenotypes.
- Steps
	- Downloads GWAS catalog.
	- Extracts and format GWAS catalog file with extraction of positions and effect using list of SNPs.
- Downloads genomics data of positions extracted from GWAS catalog and array.
- Extracts independent positions from position of GWAS catalog using "–clump" of PLINK and genetic data download.
- $-$  Uses Genomics data and z values extracted from GWAS catalog using independent positions to build phenotype using GCTA.
- Output :
	- ∗ genotype in plink format of positions from array defined in input.
	- ∗ Quantitative and qualitative phenotype with position and genotype used to build phenotype corresponding and information relative to GWAS catalog and used to build phenotype.
- Test : build phenotypes using data of 1000 Genomes project, GWAS catalog and *diabetes* as phenotype.

See Table [8](#page-17-2) for the detailed computational costs and Figure [8](#page-18-0) for an overview of the different steps.

<span id="page-17-2"></span>

Table 8: Summary result for simulation individual using GWAS catalog for phenotype and 1000 genome project as genotype data. Process - it is Nextflow process name; Tot. hours – total hours used by NF process; % times – percentage of times used by process compared to other process ; % cpu number used (Mean) - mean % cpu number used by the process; Max mem (MB) is maximum of memory used by one process; NF processes - number of Nextflow process used for the steps

### <span id="page-17-0"></span>3.6 Format data

## <span id="page-17-1"></span>3.6.1 Convert PLINK format to VCF

- Objective : converts data to VCF for imputation
- Input PLINK file, reference genome of FASTA file and reference for positions, chromosome, and rs name.



<span id="page-18-0"></span>Figure 8: flowchart of simulation workflow

- Steps
	- extract rsid and information of each positions from the reference file and reference sequence.
	- splits file by chromosome (optional)
	- converts PLINK to VCF.
	- cleans and rename position name.
	- fix allele using BCFtools
- Output : VCF file and VCF file by chromosome.
- Test : convert data after QC of 10,796 individuals using workflow in VCF format

See Figure [9](#page-20-0) for an overview of the process and Table [9](#page-19-1) for the detailed computational costs.

<span id="page-19-1"></span>

Process	Tot hours	$%$ times	$%$ cpu	Max	NF
			num-	mem	pro-
			ber	(MB)	cesses
			used		
			(Mean)		
checkfixref	0.40	7.73	98.80	11.00	1
check VCF	0.40	8.12	97.40	173.40	1
convertInVcfChro	3.00	62.03	155.99	1100.00	22
convertrsname	0.00	0.43	86.50	211.60	1
CounChro	0.10	1.29	3.50	2.60	
deletedmultianddel	0.00	0.63	93.30	687.60	
extractpositionfasta	0.00	0.19	50.90	1.50	1
extractrsname	0.70	13.46	98.60	505.60	1
mergevcf	0.20	3.86	319.00	16.00	1
refallele	0.10	2.26	13.80	165.60	

Table 9: Summary of the result of the workflow to format PLINK to VCF prepare data for imputation. Process – Nextflow process name; Tot. hours – total hours used by NF process; % times – percentage of times used by process compared to other process; % cpu number used (Mean) – mean % cpu number used by the process; Max mem (MB) is maximum of memory used by one process (resident set size); NF processes – number of Nextflow processes used for the steps

#### <span id="page-19-0"></span>3.6.2 Convert VCF to PLINK or other format

- Objective : convert output from imputation in PLINK or other format to run association testing.
- Input : list of VCF, genetic map.
- Steps
	- Computed various statistics as frequency and imputation score
	- Filter VCF by score and frequency
	- Transform file to PLINK.
	- check for rs duplicate and correct.
	- merge all files PLINK by chromosome.



<span id="page-20-0"></span>Figure 9: Flowchart of workflow to convert PLINK format to VCF to prepare data for imputation

- Output: PLINK file and report presenting distribution of quality and frequencies 10 and plink files converted.
- Test : used output of imputed data ( $\approx 30$  millions SNPs and 12,000 individuals)



Figure 10: Output of pipeline format vcf in plink, with distribution of quality and frequency (figures with general distribution and table distribution by frequency)

<span id="page-21-0"></span>An overview is shown in Figure 11 and the detailed computational costs are shown in Table 10.



<span id="page-22-0"></span>Figure 11: flowchart of workflow to convert VCF file from imputation into PLINK format

<span id="page-23-1"></span>

Table 10: Summary of result of workflow to format VCF after imputation in PLINK format using data after imputation obtained in QC. Process – Nextflow process name; Tot. hours – total hours used by NF process; % times – percentage of times used by process compared to other process ; % cpu number used (Mean) – mean  $%$  cpu number used by the process; Max mem (MB) is maximum of memory used by one process; NF processes – number of Nextflow processes used for the steps.

#### <span id="page-23-0"></span>3.6.3 Multi-trait analyse using MTAG

- Objective : Analyse multi trait using summary statistics
- Input : result of summary statistics from various phenotype
- Steps
	- format each files to prepared input for MTAG software
	- Run MTAG with all summary statistics
	- Run MTAG seletected 2 by 2 each summary statistics.
- Output : result of mtag sofware (summary statistics), and report in PDF as association pipeline
- Test : used output summary statistics (14 millions SNPs) for 4 SNPs

An overview is shown in Figure [12](#page-24-0) and the detailed computational costs in Table [11.](#page-25-0)



<span id="page-24-0"></span>Figure 12: flowchart of workflow to convert VCF file from imputation in PLINK format

<span id="page-25-0"></span>

Process	Tot hours	% times	$%$ cpu	Max	NF
			num-	mem	pro-
			ber	(MB)	cesses
			used		
			(Mean)		
doFormatFilePlk	0.70	13.13	71.35	6400.00	4
doMTAG	1.20	22.82	98.70	34600.00	1
doMTAG2by2	3.00	59.39	100.35	18600.00	6
doReport	0.00	0.02	45.10	20.50	1
RenameMtag	0.00	0.88	17.70	9.30	1
showMtag	0.20	3.76	91.75	6900.00	4

Table 11: Summary of result of workflow doing a multi trait analysis using MTAG: Process – Nextflow process name; Tot. hours – total hours used by NF process; % times – percentage of times used by process compared to other process; % cpu number used (Mean) – mean % cpu number used by the process; Max mem (MB) is maximum of memory used by one process; NF processes – number of Nextflow processes used for the steps.

## <span id="page-26-0"></span>4 Detail of experimentation in the main paper

These tables give detail of the experimentation described in the main paper.



<span id="page-26-1"></span>Table 12: Cost of associationon cluster, using 4 phenotypes and 10,700 individuals. The elapsed time for the entire workflow was 12h 36min, with a high degree of parallelisation. Process is the Nextflow process name; Tot hours – total CPU hours used by instances of this NF process;  $\%$  times – % of time used by process compared to other process; % cpu number used (Mean) – mean % cpu number used by instances of the process — a measure of achievable parallelism for instances of that process; Max mem (MB) is the maximum resident set size used by one process; NF processes – number of Nextflow process used for the steps, and a measure of parallelism at very coarse level.

Process	Tot hours	$%$ times	$\overline{\%}$ cpu	Max	NF
			number used	mem	pro-
			(Mean)	(MB)	cesses
GetRsFile	1.1	1.2	99.5	9	
ChangeFormatFile	29.9	30.7	65.2	4100	3
doGWAMA	18.0	18.5	67.4	10400	1
doMetal	2.9	3.0	99.6	3500	1
doMetaSoft	12.3	12.7	103.1	7700	1
doMRMEGA	15.8	16.2	68.1	8100	1
doPlinkMeta	8.9	9.2	99.8	2000	1
showGWAMA	1.4	$1.5\,$	100.2	5800	1
showMetal	1.8	1.8	97.7	3800	1
showMetasoft	1.9	1.9	100.1	7500	1
showMRMEGA	1.6	$1.6\,$	100.2	6200	1
showPlink	1.2	$1.3\,$	100.0	4800	1
doReport	0.6	0.6	46.1	24	

Table 13: Cost of running meta-analysis workflow using Wits cluster, using 3 summary statistics and 14 millions of positions by summary statistics. Column labels as in Table [12](#page-26-1)