

The `xr` package^{*}

David Carlisle[†]

2024-12-22

This file is maintained by the L^AT_EX Project team.
Bug reports can be opened (category `tools`) at
<https://latex-project.org/bugs.html>.

This package implements a system for eXternal References. Version 6.00 merges the `xr` package and the `xr-hyper` package. `xr-hyper` was developed to support the extended label syntax of the `hyperref` package and to enable active links to the external documents. In the L^AT_EX release 2023-06-01 the label syntax of `hyperref` and the L^AT_EX kernel have been synchronized and there is no longer a need for two packages. The package `xr-hyper` will be deprecated.

The previous version before the merge can be accessed with

```
\usepackage{xr}[=v5]
```

or with a rollback date between 2023-07-04 and 2024-04-09

```
\usepackage{xr}[=2024-04-09]
```

1 Usage

```
\externaldocument[<prefix>][<nocite>]{<document>}[<url>]
```

If one document needs to refer to sections of another, say `aaa.tex`, then this package may be loaded in the main file, and the command

```
\externaldocument{aaa}
```

given in the preamble.

Then you may use `\ref` and `\pageref` (or `\nameref` if the package `nameref` has been loaded to refer to anything which has been given a `\label` in either `aaa.tex` or the main document. It is also possible to refer to properties stored with `\RecordProperties`. You may declare any number of such external documents.

If any of the external documents, or the main document, use the same `\label` then an error will occur as the label will be multiply defined. To overcome this problem `\externaldocument` has an optional argument *<prefix>*. If you declare `\externaldocument[A-]{aaa}`, then all references from `aaa` are prefixed by `A-`. So for instance, if a section of `aaa` had `\label{intro}`, then this could be referenced with `\ref{A-intro}`. The prefix need not be `A-`, it can be any string chosen to ensure that

^{*}This file has version number v6.00, last revised 2024-12-22.

[†]The Author of Versions 1–4 was Jean-Pierre Drucbert

all the labels imported from external files are unique. Note however that the prefix is expanded and so should not contain commands that are not safe in this context.

As first suggested in Enrico Gregorio’s `xcite` package, the current version also allows `\cite` to reference `\bibitem` in the external document. For compatibility with `xcite`, `\externalcitedocument` is made available as an alias for `\externaldocument`

Many packages have variant citation commands (`natbib`, `biblatex`,...) and the external document may or may not have used `hyperref`. Because of these differences the citation linking may not always work, it can be disabled by specifying `[nocite]` after the `\prefix`:

```
\externaldocument[] [nocite]{aaa}
```

Problems with citing references from an external document are more likely if the documents are using different citation packages. So if possible, it is best to ensure that the documents use compatible packages so that the citation data works without error when imported from the external document.

The ‘document’ referred to by the main argument `\document` is the file `document.aux` which must be somewhere on TeX’s input path. Some packages (eg `hyperref`) really need to know the location of the final document rather than the aux file. By default this is assumed to be `document.pdf`. A package may redefine the command `\XR@ext` to change this default extension. However sometimes the final document may be in a position unrelated to the aux file, or the browser may not be able to find files at an arbitrary point in TeX’s input path, so the final optional argument `\url` allows a full URL to the final document to be specified.

```
\externaldocument{aaa}[https://example.com/this/path/to/aaa.pdf]
```

The package stores the url of the external document in the label data. It can e.g. be retrieved with the `refcount` package

```
\usepackage{refcount,xr}
\externaldocument{aaa}
...
\getrefbykeydefault{intro}{url}{??} %prints aaa.pdf or ??
```

`xr` supports also the properties introduced in L^AT_EX 2023-11-01. Here the url of the external document is stored in the `xr-url` property.

```
\usepackage{xr}
\externaldocument{aaa} %aaa contains \RecordProperties{intro}{page}
...
\RefProperty{intro}{page} %gives page number
\RefProperty{intro}{xr-url} %gives aaa.pdf
```

2 The macros

1 `\package`

Check for the optional argument.

```
2 \def\externaldocument{\@testopt\XR@cite{}}
3 \let\externalcitedocument\externaldocument
4 \def\XR@cite[#1]{\@testopt{\XR@[#1]}{}}
```

```
5 \def\XR@[#1][#2]#3{\@testopt{\XR@{#1}{#2}{#3}}{#3.\XR@ext}}
```

2.1 helper definitions

To test the second optional argument

```
6 \def\XR@nocite{nocite}
```

Needed in the processing

```
7 \long\def\@gobblefour #1#2#3#4{}
8 \long\def\@firstoffour #1#2#3#4{#1}
9 \long\def\@secondoffour #1#2#3#4{#2}
10 \long\def\@thirdoffour #1#2#3#4{#3}
11 \long\def\@fourthoffour #1#2#3#4{#4}
```

The url is added as fifth argument. The command used here is `\XR@addURL`. The command is more complicated as needed as it tries to handle also older documents with `\newlabel`'s with two arguments.

```
12 \def\XR@addURL#1{\XR@dURL#1{}{}{}{}}
13 \def\XR@dURL#1#2#3#4#5\{%
14   \unexpanded{{#1}{#2}{#3}{#4}}{\XR@URL}%
15 }
```

2.2 Variables

Default file extension:

```
16 \providecommand\XR@ext{pdf}
```

Save the optional prefix. Start processing the first aux file. Olivier Michel pointed out that if the aux file was not on texinputs you could not always go `\externaldocument/some/path/to/file` specifically that worked if file.aux was a 'simple' document with one aux file, but if `\include` had been used, the 'sub' aux files would not be found by xr in the remote directory. This version calls `\filename@parse` to get the directory name of the remote directory, which is then explicitly prepended to the names of any included aux files.

```
17 \def\XR@@#1#2#3[#4]{\%
18   \makeatletter
19   \def\XR@prefix{#1}%
20   \def\XR@nocite{#2}%
21   \ifx\XR@nocite\XR@nocite
22     \let\XR@bibcite\adjust
23   \else
24     \let\XR@bibcite\bibcite
25   \fi
26   \def\XR@URL{#4}%
27   \set@curr@file{#3}%
28   \filename@parse\@curr@file
29   \XR@next\@curr@file.aux\relax\}}
```

Process the next aux file in the list and remove it from the head of the list of files to process.

```
30 \def\XR@next#1\relax#2\{%
31   \edef\XR@list{#2}%
32   \XR@loop{#1}}
```

Check whether the list of aux files is empty.

```

33 \def\XR@aux{%
34   \ifx\XR@list\@empty\else\expandafter\XR@explist\fi}
    Expand the list of aux files, and call \XR@next to process the first one.
35 \def\XR@explist{\expandafter\XR@next\XR@list\}

```

If the aux file exists, loop through line by line, looking for \newlabel and \@input. Otherwise process the next file in the list.

```

36 \def\XR@loop#1{\openin\@inputcheck{#1}\relax
37   \ifeof\@inputcheck
38     \PackageWarning{xr}{^^JNo file #1^^JLABELS NOT IMPORTED.^^J}%
39     \expandafter\XR@aux
40   \else
41     \PackageInfo{xr}{IMPORTING LABELS FROM #1}%
42     \expandafter\XR@read\fi}

```

Read the next line of the aux file.

```

43 \def\XR@read{%
44   \read\@inputcheck to\XR@line

```

The ... make sure that \XR@test always has sufficient arguments.

```

45   \expandafter\XR@test\XR@line...\XR@}

```

Look at the first token of the line. If it is \newlabel, define \r@{label}, ensure that it has five label data argument and add the url as the last one. If it is \@input, add the filename to the list of files to process. If it is \bibcite, call a \bibcite. If it is \new@label@record add the url and then call it. Otherwise ignore. Go around the loop if not at end of file. Finally process the next file in the list.

2018 update: make sure the arguments are handled outside the \ifx test,

```

46 \long\def\XR@test#1#2#3#4\XR@{%
47   \let\XR@tempa\@gobblefour
48   \ifx#1\newlabel
49     \let\XR@tempa\@firstoffour
50   \else\ifx#1\XR@bibcite
51     \let\XR@tempa\@secondoffour
52   \else\ifx#1\@input
53     \let\XR@tempa\@thirdoffour
54   \else\ifx#1\new@label@record
55     \let\XR@tempa\@fourthoffour
56   \fi\fi\fi\fi
57   \XR@tempa
58   {%
59     \expandafter\protected@xdef\csname r@\XR@prefix#2\endcsname{\XR@addURL{#3}}%
60   }%
61   {\expandafter\bibcite\expandafter{\XR@prefix#2}{#3}}%
62   {\edef\XR@list{\XR@list\filename@area#2\relax}}%
63   {%
64     \edef\next{\noexpand\new@label@record{\XR@prefix#2}{\unexpanded{#3}{xr-url}{\XR@URL}}}%
65     \next
66   }
67   \ifeof\@inputcheck\expandafter\XR@aux
68   \else\expandafter\XR@read\fi}
69 </package>

```