

LIBERAL
INTERNATIONAL

2022



Gender Equality Report



LIBERAL
INTERNATIONAL
WIPP INDEX
WOMEN IN POLITICAL PARTIES

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LETTER FROM THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE CHAIR



First all of I want to extend my gratitude to all those in the member parties who have answered the questionnaire. It might take a bit of time, but we hope that the survey will help you to keep track on progress made around women's inclusion. Only by having the facts, you can present robust results and be more efficient as parties. And certainly, the most important part of this survey is that you in the member parties see how you score compared to the environment in which you are working.

Liberal international and our Human Rights Committee embarked on this endeavour to solidly promote women's participation as we knew that it is a key for member parties to be successful: a political party that represents all parts of the society is also more likely to win support and elections.

Even considering that it is not easy to compare the results from one year to another, this survey shows however worrying trends, which force us to ask ourselves frank questions.

Among those parties having answered the questionnaire, we find that the average of female representation in parliaments is lower than the average according to the Inter Parliamentary Union. Even though we know that among the countries with the highest score of female representation there are many not so democratic countries, the trend is worrying.

I would expect that parties with high female representation are those that participate in the WIPPI, and therefore the reality can be even grimmer than what we see in the report.

We must therefore seriously ask ourselves - what is happening in the liberal family as regards equality?

I do not believe that the member parties have started to take female representation less seriously. The survey shows that more training has been done for female politicians than in previous years. And we have the shining role model of our president Hakima EL Haite, inspiring so many. However, let me say that many were surprised at the past LI Congress when I was the only female candidate for Bureau Vice President.

If the trend of female representation is downward, this can be due to external factors. Do we protect female politicians well enough against violence, online or offline? Even in most equal societies the attacks online against female politicians have led to regressions.

LI has been engaged with the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women to highlight the unacceptable prevalence of such unacceptable behaviour. But without the support the political party, it is seldom possible for a woman to continue if she is harassed, even if the forces are external. I would encourage all concerned to use tools available to seek to have the necessary protection for female politicians, for instance those provided by the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

Another external factor is of course the fact that in the increasingly authoritarian political atmosphere, the anti-gender discourse, has strengthened, as I wrote last year. This discourse is both a weapon to diminish democracy and often a result of that. In this context we can but think all the women of Afghanistan being deprived of their basic rights, including the right to education and employment.

Overall, this year's survey demands that we have a deep discussion about questions related to female representation: are we serious, are we tackling the obstacles in the best possible way? Do we as parties give the female candidates the best support and protection in an environment that can be hostile? And in which ways can we improve the work with the WIPPI? I hope we can join forces in this regard.

And last but not least, I wish to extend my sincerest thanks to our Human Rights Officer Irene Wang and her colleagues in the Secretariat for the great work they are doing both with this survey and in all other areas related to the service of member parties.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Astrid Thors'.

Astrid Thors

Chair of the Liberal International Human Rights Committee

I. INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE WOMEN IN POLITICAL PARTIES INDEX (WIPPI)?

Liberal International (LI) continues the mission of advocating for women in politics. In 2019, LI launched its Women in Political Parties Index (WIPPI). Since then, LI has accompanied this initiative with trainings like Stronger Together in Amman, Jordan, engagement and advocacy at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, and digital self-defense training at the 75th annual Congress in Sofia.

This tool helps LI member parties to measure the level of diversity and inclusivity within their party. With the help of the Inclusivity Handbook, parties have a chance to boost the inclusivity and diversity within their party structures through dedicated training sessions.

In providing these results, Liberal International's objective is to assist our member parties in promoting greater participation of women in politics, which research shows benefits political parties, countries, and governments.



WHY IS INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSITY IN POLITICAL PARTIES IMPORTANT?

The meaningful inclusion of marginalised groups and women in political parties marks a departure from traditional, patriarchal power norms that underpin leadership styles and power hierarchies within organisational structures. It strengthens the legitimacy of representative democratic governments.

Quotas, reserved seats for female candidates, women's wings, and diversity boards within political parties' structures will only be meaningful if they allow women within party ranks to wield power and influence. How can we change society – as well as political cultures and organisations – so that diverse leadership becomes the norm rather than the exception?

While gender equality and diversity in politics holds symbolic importance, it also plays a critical role in developing a political culture and reality that is more consistent with liberal values and human rights obligations. Research indicates that gender has a distinct influence on policy priorities; where there is a deficit of female representation in political parties, there is a deficit in democratic policy representation. There is compelling evidence that when more women are elected to office, there is a corollary increase in policy making that emphasises quality of life and reflects the priorities of families, women, and ethnic and racial minorities.



II. METHODOLOGY

The main goal of the WIPPI is to provide an evaluation tool for liberal political parties across the globe to evaluate gender-based political party inclusivity. This Index can be used to benchmark the current state of the party and to assess existing challenges and galvanise change in internal party structures and policies to make the political party in question an inclusive place for members representing all groups within a society.

The Index uses a self-assessment survey that evaluates the state of inclusiveness in a political party. The survey covers a range of topics that are important for the work of every political party: parliamentary representation and parliamentary activities, intraparty decision-making mechanisms, codes of conduct for party members or officials, and intraparty training activities.

This report presents the results of the 2022 Women in Political Parties survey. Since electoral systems differ across the globe and can influence the way parties enter parliament and work within it, it accounts for those differences in electoral systems and in levels of parliamentary representation.

The third annual LI WIPPI was open to LI member parties between February and April 2022. For each party, three different party representatives have filled in the survey individually to ensure accuracy in reporting.

Results of individual parties are kept strictly confidential. They are therefore presented at a generalised level and according to geographic grouping and electoral system. Responses came from parties in Asia, Africa, Europe, and MENA region.

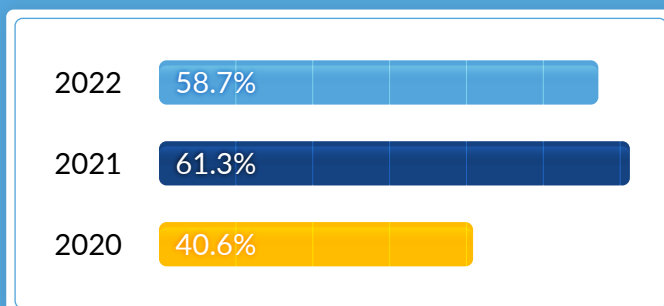
The Index survey is structured according to parliamentary electoral system with questions adjusted accordingly. The survey covers proportional, majoritarian, mixed, and no parliamentary representation (regardless of electoral system). All four electoral categories are represented among the responding parties in the 2022 WIPPI.

See Annex I for the methodology of the WIPPI survey.

III. RESULTS OF THE 2022 WOMEN IN POLITICAL PARTIES INDEX

This section presents the findings of the 2022 WIPPI. Parties this year scored an average WIPPI score of 58.7%, compared to 61.3% in 2021 and 40.6% in 2020.

This year, the response rate for WIPPI was 30.7%, and the data collection included responses from parties in the Middle East for the first time. With many new parties submitting to the WIPPI for and missing data from parties who had submitted responses last year but failed to do so this year, changes in reported scores cannot be interpreted as definitive evidence of a trend.



More detailed results are presented by category: Parliamentary Representation, Parliamentary Activities, Codes of Conduct, and Education.

A. Parliamentary Representation

This section scrutinises female participation within the party's parliamentary representation: what proportion of party Members of Parliament (MPs) are women, and how many of these women have seats on important parliamentary bodies.

Parties without parliamentary representation answer for how many of their candidates in the most recent election were female.

The average score for parliamentary representation this year is 41.9% (46.3% in 2021, 37.2% in 2020).

Percentage of female MPs

The percentage of female MPs in a country is an often-used statistic to show the (lack of) political representation of women. According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), five countries now have gender parity or a greater share of women in parliament, up from three in 2020: Mexico and Nicaragua joined Cuba, Rwanda, and the United Arab Emirates¹.

For LI member parties participating in this survey collection, there is a wide range of female parliamentary representation. The party with the highest share of female MPs had 71% women in their parliamentary group, while the party with the lowest representation had no female MPs.

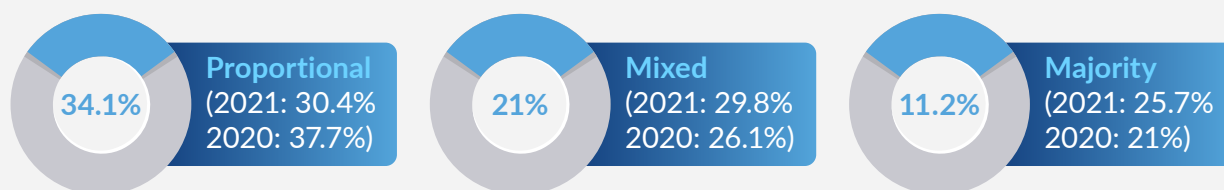
The average percentage of female MPs for the responding parties of the WIPP 2022 was 25.2%. This is lower than the global average for female MPs in parliaments, which the IPU estimated in 2021 to be 26.1%.²

The Inter Parliamentary Union 2021 Women in Parliament report indicates the average percentage of women in parliament is 21.1% in Asia (2020: 20.7%); 30.4% in Europe (2020: 26.2%), 29.2% in Sub-Saharan Africa (2020: 26.2%); and 18.6% in the MENA region (2020: 22.4%).

¹ file:///C:/Users/IreneWang/Downloads/2021-women%20in%20parliament_EN-LR_0.pdf

² <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reports/2022-03/women-in-parliament-in-2021>

Results differ among parliamentary systems:



The highest average number of female MPs by parliamentary election system was found among the parties operating in proportional electoral systems. Most of these parties are active in European countries.

The lowest average result was found among parties operating in countries with majoritarian systems. Most of these parties are active in Africa and Asia.

These trends are consistent with the suggestion that electoral systems have a significant impact on female representation. Gallagher (2021) explains the low performance of female candidates in majority electoral systems:

"The reason why [proportional representation] facilitates the election of women to parliament is to be found primarily in the multi-member constituencies necessitated by [proportional representation]. Under a single-member constituency [majority] system, the candidate selectors might be reluctant to pick a woman as the party's sole candidate, using the excuse, genuine or otherwise, that they believe some voters will be less likely to vote for a woman instead of a man. But when several candidates are to be chosen, it not only is possible but also positively advantageous for a ticket to include both men and women, for an all-male list of five or more candidates is likely to alienate some voters." (399)

Responding parties reported an average of 31.8% of seats on parliamentary bodies such as boards, caucuses, and groups were allocated to female MPs (33.4% in 2021).

Division of allocations for female MPs between "hard" and "soft" topics:

- 13.6% "Hard topics": internal affairs and police, military and secret service, public finance, and economics
- 27.2% "Soft topics": education, culture, social protection and care, family planning
- 59% Equal division between "hard" and "soft" topics.

Parties operating in proportional systems most frequently reported an equal division and were mostly located in Europe, while parties operating in majority systems most often reported assignments to soft topics.

Responding parties without parliamentary representation were instead asked how many per cent of their parliamentary candidates were female in the most recent election. They reported a low average of 20.3%. This does not give data on whether these female candidates were selected for winnable seats or were placed high on the party's list. The parties without parliamentary representation operate in Africa, Asia, and Europe.

B. Parliamentary Activities

This section investigates how many of a party's laws and/or motions and amendments were presented by female MPs. It excludes responding parties without parliamentary representation, since they do not perform such parliamentary activities.

The average
score was **38.9%**
(40.4% in 2021, 42.7% in 2020)



This was the category where parties reported it most difficult to answer the questions correctly due to lack of records. Most parliaments do not record data of how many motions and amendments are presented by a party's MPs during each year and whether they were presented by male or female MPs.

This year, this also remained the section where individual respondents from the same party differed most in their replies. Even though all parties replied, the inconsistencies between the individual respondents are significant enough to make the results meaningless.

While many political parties do keep records of female representation and activity within the party bodies, similar data is not recorded for parliamentary activities.



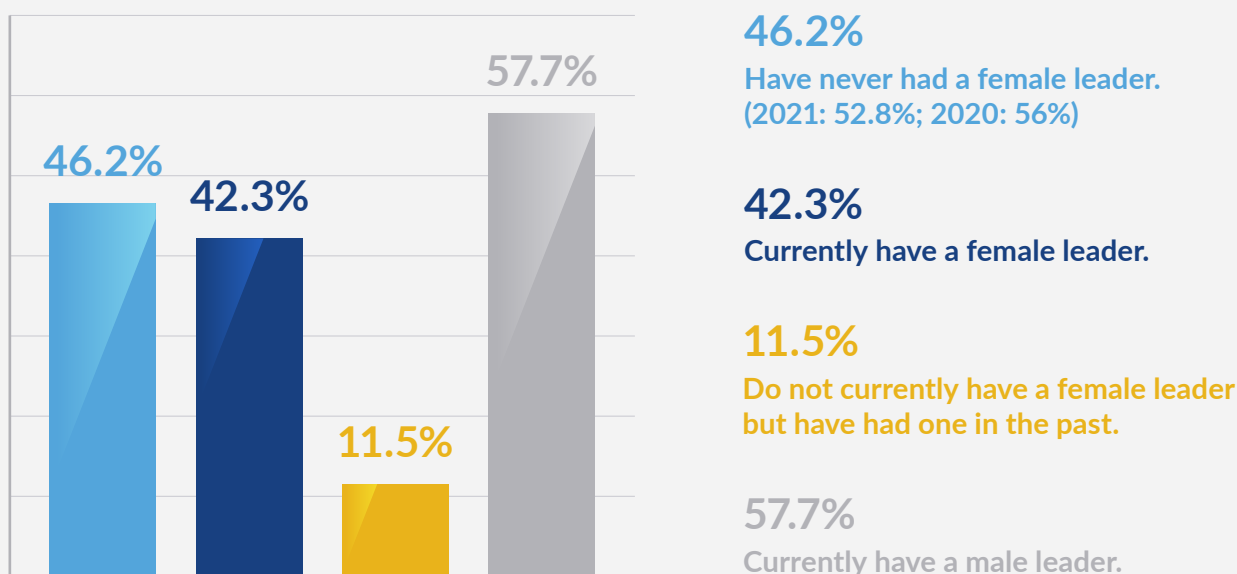
C. Intraparty Mechanisms

Respondents were asked how the party leadership is elected, whether mechanisms such as quotas are used for the party management, and whether the party has a women's wing and scored an average 43.8% (2021: 46.5%; 2020: 46.4%).

Female Leadership

Female party leadership can also indicate the relevance and inclusion of women in a political party. Female party leadership demonstrates that women possess key qualities that are essential for successful leadership in politics and is a catalyst for broader acceptance and empowerment of female politicians in leadership positions.

46.2% of responding parties have at some point in their party's history had a female leader. The percentage of responding parties that currently have a female leader has grown to 42.3% this year compared to 33.3% last year.



56.3% of responding parties in proportional systems and 66.7% of parties in mixed representation systems reported having a history of female leadership. 33.3% of responding parties operating under majority electoral systems reported the same.

72% of parties reported having a women's wing, less than when last surveyed. Of those parties with women's wings:

- 57.9% reported their women's wings were "not so influential." They are consulted on party decisions only sometimes and their influence is effective.
- 26.3% reported having "very influential" women's wings. They are consulted on most party decisions and exert strong informal and/or formal influence.
- 15.8% reported their women's wing had no influence at all.

D. Codes of Conduct

Another major step in enforcing different non-discrimination strategies is the implementation of a formal code of conduct within the party's guiding documents.

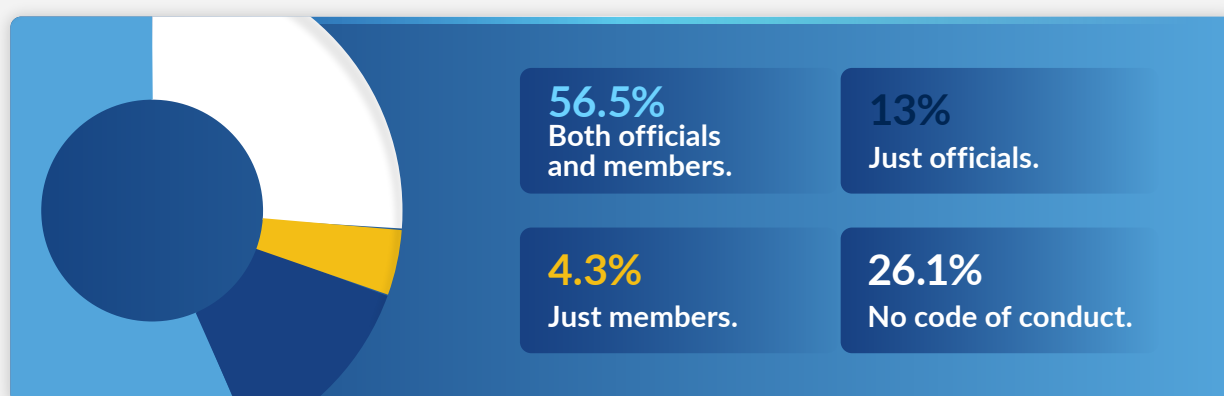
Codes of conduct can explicitly prohibit sexist behaviour and speech, outline how party officials and/or members should behave at party events, protect women from attacks and unequal candidate nomination procedures during elections, and specify how instances of discriminatory behaviour are to be handled within party. They are a key policy tool to enshrine women's belonging in the political culture and mitigate potential climates of gendered intimidation and exclusion in politics.

This was the sub-category where the responding parties of the WIPPI had the highest general results, with an average of 55.6% (2021: 58.9%; 2020: 58.1%).

Respondents were asked whether their party has a code of conduct, how it is enforced, and whether this code of conduct includes non-discrimination clauses.

Respondents also answered whether the party has an ethical code of conduct for behaviour at party events and if it applies to party officials, party members, or both. Furthermore, respondents disclosed whether there were mechanisms to report cases of gender-based harassment and/or discrimination and the number of recorded cases in the last three years.

84.6% (2021: 60%) of the responding parties have an ethical code of conduct that applies to their officials and most often also to their members:



Where parties reported following a code of conduct, 68.4% of those codes included a non-discrimination clause pertaining to some or all members of gender, sexual, ethnic, racial, religion, or other minorities and vulnerable groups.

Enforcement

An ethical code of conduct needs enforcement to have a meaningful impact.

96.4% of responding parties have a party body that deals with party member transgressions, such as inappropriate behaviour of its members in public (for example a disciplinary committee, ethical board, etc). Of those parties, 64.3% indicated that if there was a case of gender-based harassment and/or discrimination, this case could be reported to this body.

While most parties have developed a code of conduct, there are less avenues to report and discipline perpetrators of gender-based harassment and/or discrimination.

E. Education

Parties scored a collective 57% for internal education and capacity-building (2021: 48.1%; 2020: 54.5%). This figure should be considered in the current geopolitical and global health contexts that may have impacted organised gatherings and trainings.



There is a strong tradition of capacity-building in many liberal parties, and many LI members regularly run sophisticated training programmes for their membership and candidates. 59.3% of respondents said they provide capacity-building training exclusively for women, such as women's leadership programmes or female-only candidate training.

Most of the parties that provide training exclusively for women operate in proportional systems.

IV. HANDBOOK OF BEST PRACTICE ON GENDER BASED POLITICAL PARTY INCLUSIVITY

Beyond the Numbers: Building Inclusive Political Parties for Success is the handbook on gender-based inclusivity launched in November 2019 at the 203rd Executive Committee meeting of LI in Fès, Morocco.

The handbook presents best practices gathered from the experience of the LI membership across a series of expert forums, where the participants gathered to discuss many of the issues raised in this report. It also draws heavily on academic sources to recommend tools and methods which have proven to effectively increase female political participation in different contexts.

LI presents this report and the handbook to assist its membership in assessing, evaluating, and increasing gender-based inclusivity among our membership. We recommend readers of this report to also refer to the handbook which is available on the LI website to find recommendations for future action.



Annex

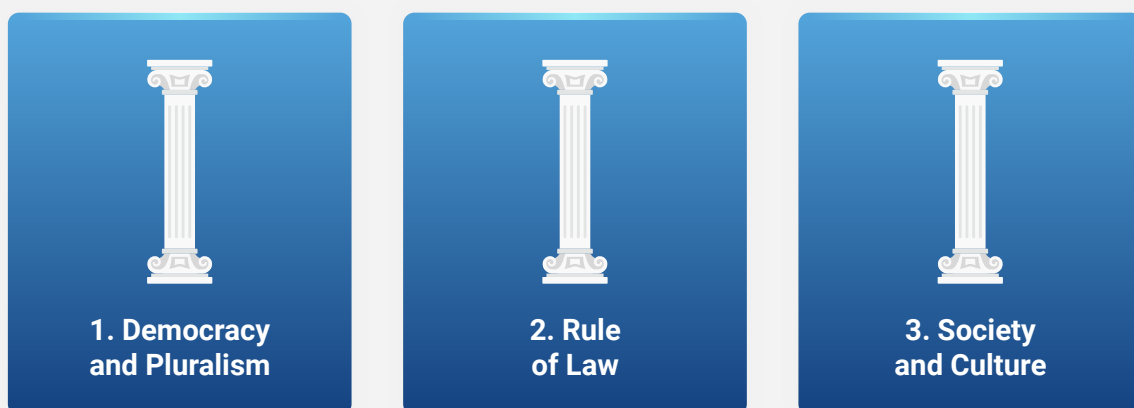
How is the WIPPI calculated?

A higher score in the self-assessment survey indicates a higher level of inclusiveness for a political party. To achieve an accurate result, the survey is designed to be completed by several members from a single party to eliminate bias in the responses.

Since parties operate under different social, economic, and political circumstances, since these differ across geographic contexts, it is necessary to incorporate benchmark controls for this variability. Being active in an opposition political party in a country with strong democratic institutions, media freedoms, and rule of law, has different indications for political empowerment in comparison to being active in a country with a strong authoritarian leadership, fraudulent elections, captured media, and weak enforcement of the rule of law. Furthermore, there are less barriers to party inclusion in societies where women have attained a higher level of equality with men.

The LI WIPPI accounts for these variables by incorporating the Society Inclusivity Index (SII).

The SII is a composite index that includes three different pillars:



The first pillar covers the level of democracy and media freedom within a society, based on four well-known indicators: the Freedom in the World Index (Freedom House), the V Dem version 8 Index (V Dem Institute), the Press Freedom Index (Reporters Without Borders), and the Freedom of the Press Index (Freedom House).

The second pillar covers the rule of law within a society based on the Corruption Perception Index (Transparency International), the Rule of Law and World Governance Indicators (World Bank), and the Judicial Independence, Global Competitiveness Report (World Economic Forum).

The third pillar evaluates the role women play in society, its economic situation, and the prevailing attitudes towards women and other disenfranchised groups. It is based on the Gender Inequality Index (Human Development Index, UNDP), the Group Grievances/Fragile State Index (Fund for Peace), GDP per capita in USD PPP (World Bank), and data from the Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum).



The final weighted WIPPI score is obtained by multiplying the party's self-assessment inclusiveness score by the inverse value of their country's Society Inclusivity Index.

The unit number of the fraction of the SII score of the country at hand ($1/\text{SSI Score}$) is multiplied by the self-assessment survey results, which gives the number of additional points. This number is added to the survey results and constitutes the final WIPPI score.

The WIPPI score therefore considers internal party mechanisms but also the wider environment in which a party operates, enabling a reasonable comparison of political parties from different countries. For example, if a party in Pakistan has fewer women among its ranks and leadership than a party in Sweden, this may not mean that the Pakistani party is less inclusive.

The WIPPI provides much more than just an assessment of the current state of gender-based inclusivity in a political party. It can also assist a party in identifying its strongest and weakest starting points which in turn allows it to strategically address its areas needing greatest improvement.

Sub-indices of the results

The final score in the Index can be divided into several subcategories which enables LI to create a set of tailor-made recommendations for each party as the Index develops.

These sub-indices are:

- 1) Parliamentary representation – comparing inclusiveness in the parliamentary representation with other national parties.
- 2) Parliamentary activities – evaluating the inclusiveness in party parliamentary activities.
- 3) Intraparty mechanisms – evaluating internal intraparty dynamics and inclusiveness in decision making mechanisms such as the party board.
- 4) Codes of conduct – evaluating whether existing rules and regulations support inclusiveness within the party and how these codes of conduct are implemented in practice.
- 5) Education – evaluating the education strategy, resources, and inclusiveness in human resources capacity building within the party.

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