UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

Regional Bureau for Europe

UKRAINE SITUATION FLASH UPDATE #56

29 September 2023

Ukraine. UNHCR and partners respond to shelling of Odesa historical city centre and grain terminals. ©UNHCR

PEOPLE FORCED TO FLEE

5,834,400*
refugees from Ukraine recorded in Europe (as of 26 Sep)

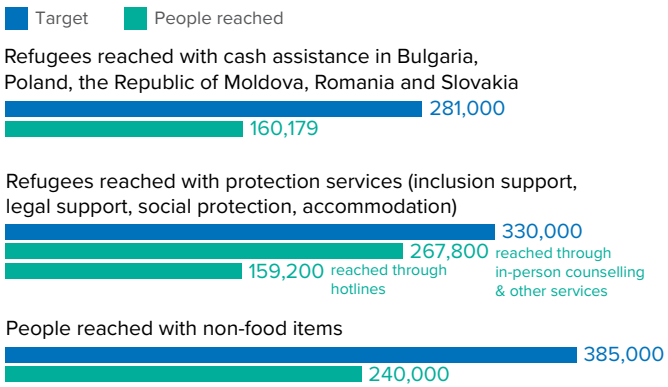
369,200
refugees from Ukraine recorded beyond Europe (as of 19 Aug)

6,203,600
refugees from Ukraine recorded globally (as of 26 Sep)

5,088,000
Estimated number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in Ukraine (as of 23 May) (Source: IOM)

More details: UNHCR Operational Data Portal Ukraine Refugee Situation

UNHCR REFUGEE RESPONSE 2023



RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

- On 28 September, the European Union extended the temporary protection (TP) from 4 March 2024 to 4 March 2025. The TP mechanism was activated on 4 March 2022 to provide immediate and collective protection for refugees fleeing from Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine.
- To find out more about the situation and the response in Ukraine and the region, see UNHCR's Ukraine Emergency website.

UNHCR published its Moldova and Ukraine 2023-2024 winterization response ahead of the second winter since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. To assist the most vulnerable to meet winter-related needs, UNHCR has prioritized 900,000 people in Ukraine and 55,000 refugees in Moldova for targeted support.

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* Europe corresponds to all Europe sub-regions as identified by Eurovoc (European Union, Thesaurus Eurovoc. Volume 2, Subject-oriented version, Publications Office, 2005), therefore including EU and non-EU countries belonging to Central and Eastern Europe, Northern Europe, Southern Europe, and Western Europe, plus Türkiye.

UKRAINE SITUATION UPDATE

- Multiple attacks reported across the country which resulted in civilian casualties.
- As of 24 September 2023, OHCHR recorded 27,449 civilian casualties in the country: 9,701 killed and 17,748 injured (with actual figures estimated to be much higher).

UNHCR RESPONSE AND TARGETS INSIDE UKRAINE 2023 (AS OF 30 AUGUST 2023)*

2.05 million people reached with assistance in 2023, out of a target of **3.6 million** people, some of whom will receive several forms of support.

990,898 people reached with protection services, out of a target of **1.9 million** people.

655,257 people supported with essential items, out of a target of **1 million** people.

441,100 people supported with cash assistance, out of a target of **800,000** people.

174,289 people received shelter/housing support, out of a target of **720,000** people.

87,780 people supported with safe access to multi-sectoral services in collective sites, out of a target of **150,000** people.

Reached figures are subject to data cleaning and retro-active corrections may occur.

UNHCR RESPONSE HIGHLIGHTS

Immediate assistance

- Life-saving humanitarian assistance to people affected by attacks is a priority for UNHCR and partners. On 8 September, UNHCR partner Proliska immediately arrived to the area hit by a missile in the city of Sumy, north-east Ukraine, where a two-storey residential building was destroyed, more than 20 houses and 8 vehicles were damaged, and a fire broke out affecting a large area. Proliska assisted 33 families with construction materials for quick repairs, including 10 emergency shelter kits (ESK), and 24 tarpaulin sheets, among others. 25 people received psychological assistance by Proliska psychologists.
- On 8 September, a missile strike on Zaporizhzhia city in southern Ukraine affected 30 apartment buildings. UNHCR's partner Proliska immediately responded with construction materials for emergency repairs (OSB, tarpaulins) as well as psychological assistance to affected people.
- On 10 September, UNHCR partner Rokada quickly responded to a drone attack on Kyiv oblast, which damaged more than 200 houses, a village council, and a school in Olshanytsya village. Rokada delivered 10 emergency shelter kits to local authorities and building materials to restore public premises and conduct light and medium repairs of private houses.

Protection

- **GBV:** During the reporting period, UNHCR established a safe shelter and an integration hub for women and girls in Khustska Hromada, Zakarpatska oblast in western Ukraine, complementing efforts of UNFPA to establish GBV-related services in the Hromada. The Integration hub will provide services including psychosocial support, child friendly spaces, legal aid, and livelihood activities. UNHCR partner NEEMIA will support the Integration hub through refurbishment, and with equipment and furniture. NEEMIA will also work to capacitate social workers, psychologists, child protection specialists and career counsellors through the hub.
- **Livelihoods:** On 14 September, UNHCR organized a job fair in Uzhhorod city (western Ukraine). It was co-organised by UNHCR partner Neemia in cooperation with local authorities and administration. More than 40 local and relocated businesses, companies and enterprises working in various spheres participated in the job fair. Collectively, they are all ready to offer more than 900 vacancies for local and internally displaced residents of Zakarpatska oblast. INGOs such as Dorcas, People in Need Slovakia, IOM and UNFPA also participated in the event as well as UNHCR partner NGOs Proliska, NEEKA and Neemia.
- **Winterization response:** Through its Winterization plan in Ukraine, UNHCR will target 900,000 war-affected and displaced people. UNHCR will distribute rapid thermal kits for insulation of homes; install heaters; support collective sites to ensure readiness for winter; distribute essential winter items; provide cash for rent and energy needs during winter, as well as deliver generators whenever needs arise.

Housing/NFIs

- **Humanitarian convoys:** On 15 September, as part of an interagency convoy to Siversk, Donetska oblast, UNHCR delivered 1,000 tarpaulins, 400 solar lamps and other non-food items (NFIs) to war-affected families.
- **Refurbishment of collective sites:** On 15 September, a newly renovated collective site opened in the city of Ivano-Frankivsk add in western Ukraine. At full capacity, the refurbished site can accommodate 450 people. There are 76 rooms available for IDPs, as well as common spaces for residents' gatherings and child-friendly spaces equipped with various leisure activities. UNHCR through partner Rokada provided NFIs to help equip the site, and the Oblast State Administration allocated funding from the Oblast budget for the overall renovation of the building.
- Find more information in the regular Ukraine country operational updates

REGIONAL UNHCR KEY FIGURES AND COUNTRY UPDATES

BLUE DOTS

35
Blue Dots Hubs are operational in:

Bulgaria	5	Moldova	10	Romania	6	Slovenia	1
Hungary	3	Poland	4	Slovakia	6		

One Blue Dot hub has been recently closed in Romania.

190,525
refugees were reached through the Blue Dot Hubs in Bulgaria, Hungary, the Republic of Moldova, Poland and Slovakia so far in 2023.

The Digital Blue Dot is a regional website that provides localized and up-to-date information about services available in Bulgaria, Hungary, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. The website provides a map of existing Blue Dot Hubs with information on accommodation, childcare, disability support, education, legal stay, livelihood, medical care, protection services, social assistance, work and other services.

REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE ACROSS EUROPE (AS OF 26 SEPTEMBER)

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
*Serbia and Kosovo (S/RES/1244 [1999]) Source: UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe

More information available on the UNHCR Ukraine operational data portal page.

COUNTRY UPDATES

BULGARIA

58,845
refugees have been recorded

UNHCR OPERATIONAL DELIVERIES 2023

84,500
refugees have received protection information or counselling through UNHCR and partners

62,500
refugees have been reached through **5** Blue Dot Hubs

8,507
refugees received cash assistance

10,348
visits to the UNHCR Bulgaria Help Page

- **Capacity-building**: On 14 September, 104 newly recruited border guards were trained by UNHCR and partner Bulgarian Helsinki Committee on access to territory and identification of vulnerable groups.
- **MHPSS:** So far in 2023, over 8,040 refugees from Ukraine were provided with mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS).
- **Social cohesion:** On 15 September, UNHCR and global non-profit organization Artolution completed a two-week Training of Trainers (ToT) with 18 artists from nine countries, including Ukraine. During the project, the artists and 30 refugee children painted a mural on a school in Sofia, unveiled in an event with the government, donors, NGOs and civil society, refugees, and local artists. The ToT aimed to enable participants to gain hands-on experience in conducting art workshops, while also integrating mental health and psychosocial support components.
- **Socioeconomic inclusion:** Since the beginning of 2023, with UNHCR partner Caritas' helped two refugees from Ukraine pass the Bulgarian language exam for doctors, 28 refugees have started Bulgarian language courses, eight refugees joined the entrepreneurship programme, and 13 refugees began new employment.

CZECH REPUBLIC

371,980
refugees have been recorded

UNHCR OPERATIONAL DELIVERIES 2023

10,619
refugees from Ukraine have received protection services as of 30 July

25,152
visits to the UNHCR Czech Republic Help Page

- **Communicating with communities**: On 18 September, UNHCR conducted a focus group discussion in Prague with 12 refugees from Ukraine and temporary protection holders to reflect on their experiences living in the Czech Republic, challenges, and possible solutions.
- **Monitoring:** On 19 – 20 September, UNHCR monitored integration projects in the cities of Buštěhrad, Kadaň, and Mladá Boleslav in the framework of the partnership agreement with the Czech Ministry of Interior for the integration of refugees on the local level.
- **Social cohesion:** On 17 September, UNHCR and partner Slovo 21 conducted a training for 15 lecturers on the '*Hello Czech Republic*' methodology, which is part of the UNHCR education project targeting the non-refugee population. The '*Hello Czech Republic*' project aims to promote tolerance and mutual respect across the education sphere, including grammar and secondary schools as well as university students. In the framework of the project implemented by UNHCR partner Slovo 21, a series of workshops will be conducted by the trained lecturers at selected schools between October - December 2023.

HUNGARY

53,375
refugees have been recorded

UNHCR OPERATIONAL DELIVERIES 2023

20,455
refugees have received protection and legal support by UNHCR and partners

16,645
refugees have been reached through **3** Blue Dot Hubs

54,195
visits to the UNHCR Hungary Help Page

- **Accommodation:** From 13 - 15 September, UNHCR continued the monitoring of the recent legislative changes affecting the state-allocated collective shelters by visiting nine shelters in six counties. UNHCR communicated its concerns and recommendations in a letter to the government and offered UNHCR's support.
- **Child protection**: On 20 September, 50 staff from the government, NGOs and various stakeholders participating in the Inter-agency Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) were trained by the Terre des Hommes Foundation, UNICEF and UNHCR on referrals of children at risk. The aim of the workshop was to discuss practical implications and field experiences related to this reporting system, with a view to seek improvements.
- **Coordination:** On 23 September, UNHCR held a workshop with 13 refugee-led and community-led organizations working with refugees to review their strategic priorities for the 2024 Refugee Response Plan, good practices, unmet needs, as well as explore practical ways of collaborating in 2024. Participants raised issues related to more sustainable funding, capacity building, enhanced information-sharing, and focusing efforts on supporting small organizations in remote areas.
- Find out more on the UNHCR Hungary data portal

POLAND

959,875
refugees have been recorded

UNHCR OPERATIONAL DELIVERIES 2023

41,800
people were provided with protection support over the telephone

54,000
people were counselled at the **4** Blue Dot Hubs and **7** Community Centres

21,730
refugees received cash assistance

230,184
visits to the UNHCR Poland Help Page

- **Access to affordable housing:** UNHCR is partnering with Habitat for Humanity and local authorities in a pilot project to provide safe and affordable accommodation for persons in need of housing, including refugees. A total of 20 apartments, part of the municipal housing stock in three municipalities in south and east Poland, are being reconstructed and rehabilitated. Once complete, these apartments are expected to contribute to addressing the housing needs in Poland by increasing access to safe and affordable housing.
- **Financial inclusion**: UNHCR and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) held a conference in the capital city Warsaw to galvanize support for the socio-economic inclusion of refugees from Ukraine. The event brought together private and public sector players who shared ideas and possible solutions particularly on financial inclusion. The IFC shared its analysis of market potential for provision of formal financial services to refugees while UNHCR shared its findings from the recently concluded Multisectoral Needs Assessment.
- **Socioeconomic inclusion:** In Lublin, UNHCR teams began publicizing the *'Making Friends Initiative'* that brings together refugees and Polish nationals to get to know each other better. In Poznan, and Krakow UNHCR attended the *Common Future Congress for Reconstruction of Ukraine* and engaged Polish entrepreneurs and government representatives in a panel discussion that sought to promote social cohesion and economic inclusion of refugees from Ukraine. Meanwhile, UNHCR mobilized refugees to attend job fairs in Warsaw on 21 September and Rzeszów on 16 - 17 September.
- Find out more on the UNHCR Poland data portal

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

118,075
refugees have been recorded

UNHCR OPERATIONAL DELIVERIES 2023

53,680
refugees received protection information or counselling through UNHCR and partners

10,134
refugees have been reached through **10** Blue Dot Hubs

79,821
refugees received cash assistance

262,871
visits to the UNHCR Moldova Help Page

- **Capacity building:** On 14 and 20 September, 40 people were trained in child protection, including staff from UNHCR partners, community centers, NGOs, police, and local authorities. On 20 September, 35 staff from NGOs were trained by UNHCR in assisting survivors of human trafficking, particularly on safe disclosure, early identification of cases and referral pathways.
- **Coordination:** From 20 - 21 September, 30 staff from local and central authorities, civil society organizations and UN agencies were trained by UNHCR and IOM on the local referral pathways to reinforce collaboration and coordination amongst partners working at the local level, enhance understanding of the referral pathways, and identify best practices.
- **GBV:** During the reporting period, 136 people participated in 15 focus group discussions (FGDs) and eight safety walks organized by UNHCR, UNFPA and UNICEF, under the framework of the GBV Sub-Working Group as part of the GBV Safety Audit. Since the beginning of the GBV Safety Audit, a total of 17 FGDs and 11 safety walks were carried out.
- **Social cohesion**: On 23 September, UNHCR took part in the 22nd Ethnocultural Festival *'Unity through Diversity'*, an event organized by the Bulgarian community in Taraclia, in south of Moldova. UNHCR's role was to connect with the local NGO, raise awareness about support availability for community initiatives, and foster trust for potential collaboration.
- **Winterization Response:** On 27 September, 19 partners of the Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) published the Moldova Winterization Plan. Through 193 winter activities across Moldova, the plan targets 72,200 refugees and affected host community members to mitigate the effects of the winter season.
- Find out more on the UNHCR Moldova portal page

ROMANIA

85,255
refugees have been recorded

UNHCR OPERATIONAL DELIVERIES 2023

70,000
refugees received protection information or counselling through UNHCR and partners

38,443
refugees received cash assistance

1,015
refugees have been provided with psychosocial support and psychological first aid

77,130
visits to the UNHCR Romania Help Page

- **Advocacy:** On 26 September, UNHCR discussed with the Minister of Justice the UNHCR non-paper on the obstacles faced by beneficiaries of temporary protection (TP) in accessing social benefits in Romania, due to the lack of residential address in the TP. UNHCR proposed solutions to solve the lack of residential address in documentations, including through amending various pieces of legislation.
- **Blue Dot hubs:** On 22 September, UNHCR discussed with UNICEF the closure of the four remaining Blue Dots in Bucharest, Galati, Husi and Sighet. UNHCR will seek to transition the Galati Blue Dot hub into a community centre. UNHCR and UNICEF will continue to engage with partners and authorities to ensure provision of critical protection services at the border crossing points and in urban areas where the Blue Dot hubs formerly operated.
- **Child protection:** On 21 and 22 September, around 20 children benefitted from activities organized by UNHCR and the NGO Terre des hommes in Bucharest as part of UNHCR's global refugee youth art contest.

- **Socioeconomic inclusion**: So far in 2023, 757 refugees from Ukraine have received career counselling and another 684 refugees were supported with information provision on livelihoods/employment at RomExpo, Bucharest. So far this year, 477 refugees have been enrolled in language courses by partners Ateliere Fara Frontiere (AFF) and HEKS/EPER, and 130 refugees received vocational training. 165 refugees have gained employment with the help of direct assistance from UNHCR and partners. From 18 - 23 September, UNHCR partner HEKS EPER enrolled around 20 refugees for vocation training courses, reaching 130 individuals since the start of the year.
- Find out more on the UNHCR Romania data portal

SLOVAKIA

109,115
refugees have been recorded

UNHCR OPERATIONAL DELIVERIES 2023

38,485	52,539	11,678	190,541
refugees received protection information or counselling through UNHCR	people been assisted at **6** Blue Dots	refugees received cash assistance	visits to the UNHCR Help Page

- **Social cohesion:** During the reporting period, some 150 refugees participated in 7 community events organized by the partner Mareena. During the previous reporting period, nearly 40 girls and boys' refugees participated each week in the newly opened Chinese martial art workshop, organized by the partner SME SPOLU. Meanwhile, over 50 refugee parents attended information sessions on general principles of public education in Slovakia and its differences with the Ukrainian system.
- **Socioeconomic inclusion:** On 20 September, the community-based organization Centrum Rodiny concluded the implementation of a project under the Grant Agreement with UNHCR. Around 20 women, refugees from Ukraine, participating in the project, showcased their handmade garments and products in a fashion show, followed by traditional Slovak and Ukrainian songs, attended by local authorities in Dubravka and members of the Slovak and Ukrainian community.
- Find out more on the UNHCR Slovakia data portal.

OTHER COUNTRIES

BELARUS

- As of 1 August, **32,435 refugees** from Ukraine have been recorded in Belarus.

ESTONIA

- As of 1 September, **50,450 refugees** from Ukraine have been recorded in Belarus.
- **Coordination:** On 13 September, UNHCR organized the Estonia Refugee Response Plan (RRP) 2024 planning briefing. The participants received an introduction to the RRP, UNHCR's role in Estonia, key priorities, findings from protection monitoring, and the RRP's schedule.
- **Field monitoring:** On 12 September, UNHCR visited the border crossing point Narva-1 between Estonia and the Russian Federation. UNHCR noted the presence of posters regarding international protection and leaflets with information from the Estonian Human Rights Centre regarding asylum claims.

GEORGIA

- As of 25 July, **27,000 refugees** from Ukraine have been recorded in Georgia.
- **Cash assistance:** The government has so far provided cash assistance to 3,500 refugee families from Ukraine. As of 26 September, around 600 Ukrainians have been provided with multi-purpose cash assistance from UNHCR.

- **Counselling**: So far in 2023, around 4,200 Ukrainians have been counselled on social, legal and protection related matters by UNHCR and its partners.
- **Healthcare:** 142 refugees from Ukraine have been provided MHPSS support and healthcare counselling/referrals by UNHCR and its partner World Vision Georgia.
- **Info-sharing sessions on education:** In preparation to the new school year 2023-2024, UNHCR in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia prepared a comprehensive brochure on frequently asked questions about general education as well as recognition procedures in Georgia. UNICEF colleagues also contributed to the development of the brochure.
- **Socio-economic inclusion**: As of September 2023, over 387 refugees from Ukraine benefitted from job counselling provided by UNHCR partners.

LATVIA

- As of 15 August, **32,470 refugees** from Ukraine have been recorded in Latvia.
- **Counselling:** In September, the Information Centre in Riga managed by UNHCR partner *I Want to Help Refugees* (GPB) responded to nearly 80 enquires received from refugees from Ukraine. Main questions related to Latvian language courses, filling out documents, social support, transportation services, and medical assistance. A total of 3,814 refugees and asylum-seekers have been assisted by GPB so far in 2023 through this Information Centre and other outreach activities in border areas and municipalities.
- **Monitoring**: In September, UNHCR and partner GPB started conducting the Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) and completed 68 interviews among refugees from Ukraine. Out of interviewed individuals, some 80 per cent are employed or have a business. Some 50 per cent live in rented accommodation and 23 per cent stay in a hotel or collective accommodation. When asked about the most urgent needs, 26 per cent of refugee respondents participating in the interviews shared that employment is their most urgent need.

LITHUANIA

- As of 15 September, **49,970 refugees** from Ukraine have been recorded in Lithuania.
- **Coordination**: On 13 September, UNHCR discussed with the asylum authorities issues related to the registration procedures for new arrivals; information about support and services; vulnerability assessment and referrals. On 21 September, UNHCR discussed with the Ministry of Social Security and Labour UNHCR's monitoring findings to address gaps, such as referrals and follow up regarding vulnerable refugees from Ukraine. Good practice examples observed in municipalities were also shared with the authorities.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

- **Counselling:** So far in 2023, **14,247 refugees** from Ukraine have been counselled in person by UNHCR and partners in urban areas, while 10,652 have been counselled in the border regions of Belgorod, Kursk, Rostov-on-Don and Voronezh. Over 44,345 refugees have been counselled via the telephone hotline by UNHCR and partners.
- **MHPSS**: So far in 2023, 18,886 refugees have received psychosocial support through partners in the Russian Federation.

COORDINATION

UKRAINE

In Ukraine, UNHCR leads three Clusters, namely Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), Protection, and Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI). The CCCM Cluster was activated in March 2022 and coordinates eleven UN and NGO partners across three hubs, with the aim of supporting 400,000 people in collective sites in 2023. The Protection Cluster consists of 136 partners, including sub-clusters (57 partners under General Protection) and operates through five coordination hubs to reach an anticipated 7 million people in 2023. The Shelter and NFI Cluster coordinates 97 active partners across five coordination hubs, targeting 3.3 million people in 2023 with NFI kits, emergency shelter and housing repairs. UNHCR also co-chairs the Protection Strategy Working Group under the Humanitarian Country Team, and the Accountability to Affected Populations Working Group. Through its leadership in these areas, UNHCR promotes the centrality of protection, as well as meaningful engagement and participation across the response.

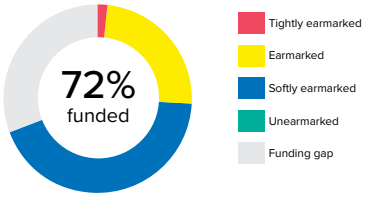
REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE

The 2023 RRP aims to ensure refugees' access to protection and assistance on a non-discriminatory basis, with a particular focus on refugees at risk of becoming vulnerable. The 2023 plan also places an emphasis on refugees' socioeconomic inclusion, in recognition of the challenges faced by refugees due to their prolonged displacement. Support is foreseen to institutions, services and facilities used both by refugees and members of host communities, which remain crucial for promoting solidarity and social cohesion between refugee and host communities. Inter-agency Refugee Coordination Forums led by UNHCR, as well as specific sectoral groups, will continue working at country level in Belarus, Bulgaria, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia to support the efforts of the concerned governments.

FINANCIAL UPDATES

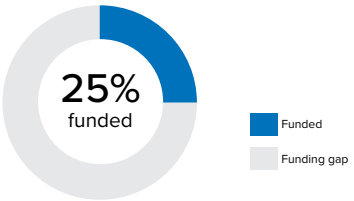
UNHCR UKRAINE SITUATION FINANCIAL UPDATE

US$ 1.1 billion
required
(as of 18 September 2023)



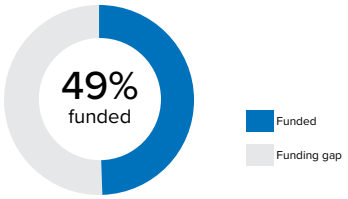
INTER-AGENCY FINANCIAL UPDATES

US$ 1.68 billion
required
(as of 28 September 2023)



Revised:
Ukraine Situation: Regional Refugee Response Plan

US$ 3.95 billion
required
(as of 28 September 2023)



Revised:
UN Flash Appeal (Ukraine)

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