

VALENCES OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN SPORTS, TOURISM AND RECREATION FIELD (EXAMPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA)

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Abstract: *This article addresses the issue of non-formal education and learning specific to the profile of sports, tourism and recreation, presents an analytical framework of non-formal education policy documents specific to the field in different EU and CIS countries compared to those in the Republic of Moldova. The structural and organizational framework of non-formal education in the field of sports, tourism and recreation is proposed to meet the requirements of society and to create premises for the reconceptualization of system, normative acts and educational policy documents.*

Key Words: *Extracurricular Activities, Non-Formal Education, Sports, Tourism And Recreation Non-Formal Learning, Forms Of Non-Formal Education, Specific Skills Of Non-Formal Education.*

INTRODUCTION

Non-formal (extracurricular) education, being a dimension of society, is largely influenced by the processes that take place in society: political, economic, demographic, valoric and educational, which also become determinants of the development of this sector, including non-formal education. At the same time, there is the inverse influence of non-formal education on the development of the educational system of society [3, page 11].

According to the provisions of Education Code of the Republic of Moldova “Extracurricular education is carried out outside the school program and activity through activities complementary to the educational process carried out in educational

institutions and aims to develop the cognitive, emotional and action potential of children and youth and to respond to their free time interests and loptions" [2].

Non-formal education is defined as any program of personal or social education, designed to improve certain skills outside the formal curriculum, or to carry out certain educational activities organized outside the compulsory education system, respectively proposed by various educational institutions [3, page 6]. It aims, among other things, to broaden the horizon of population's knowledge, to create optimal conditions for the personal and/or professional perfection of the individual, or his/her initiation in a new field of knowledge, to contribute to the recreation and relaxation of the person, as well as to spend free time in an organized and enjoyable way, to provide an adequate framework for skills training and talents display, etc. [6].

At the same time, the Directorate for Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe highlights the importance of non-formal education, which aims to change and complement the knowledge acquired by the individual in traditional schooling, given the multicultural composition of society, labor market requirements, specific countries in transition, the need to develop useful life skills to meet social challenges in a broader context.

The ever-changing society, determined by the exponential growth of information and its accelerated wear, by the extraordinary advances of science and technology, by the dynamism of social life, by the democratization of learning, by the increase of level of aspiration towards culture and education, by more pleasant usage of free time, also generates new demands on education, and the person, in his/her turn, must be continuously as a recipient of educational action [3, page 10].

Physical Education and Sports, as an activity, is "a fundamental right of everybody", its exercise having multiple effects on health and personality development [1]. In the Republic of Moldova, the field of physical education and sports is declared one of the priority areas in organizing the educational process, thus contributing to strengthening the health of society.

The physical education of the young generation is one of the basic elements of the educational system and contributes to the preparation of a capable, healthy and strong youth to be integrated into society, to adapt and readjust to its continuous changes [7].

Non-formal physical education activities are important through the objectives to be met, through the way they are carried out and through the emphasis on the formative value of the training content. This type of educational activity represents an applicative formative space that allows the transfer and applicability of competences - knowledge and skills, values and attitudes acquired through formal education. By participating in physical education activities carried out in a non-formal setting, they will accumulate a set of social experiences necessary and useful for each child, young person or adult. Practitioners will have the ability to know and recognize the stable values of society, patterns of behavior and, based on them, to integrate into its norms/requirements, to develop the volitional structures of the personality through will exercises in conditions of competitiveness, to manifest the spirit of fair play in interpersonal relationships, in institutions and bodies of civil society. They must be able to identify and develop their own attitudes and values associated with a healthy life [7].

A non-formal education institution offers, within the limits of its competences and according to the needs and requests of young people, services of counseling, training/information, communication, recreation and others.

The purpose of study is to analyze the current situation of non-formal/extracurricular education in sports, tourism and recreation, which in fact must meet the needs of society and the foundations of theoretical, methodological and managerial approaches, reconceptualization and updating, opening to development of this education system.

The following ***research methods*** were proposed for the study: SWOT analysis of the current situation in the Republic of Moldova at the level of extracurricular education and learning for sports, tourism and recreation; analysis of extracurricular education policies in the European Union (EU) countries and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) specific to the field; elaboration of the functional and organizational model of the sport, tourism and recreation field on profiles and stages/training groups; finding the ways that will ensure the efficient operation of the proposed model.

Analytical Framework: National Context.

In the Republic of Moldova are identified public institutions that offer education services specific to the profile of sports, tourism and recreation, which have the following functions:

- General education institutions, with the functions of:
 - sports sections aimed at preparation for a sports event;
 - sports sections aimed at general and special physical preparation;
 - cultural-educational activities with sports themes, organized through extracurricular activities.
- Centers for children and youth carry out specific sports activities with the function of:
 - promoting sport among children and young people;
 - introductory and in-depth sports preparation on sporting events;
 - organization of mass sports competitions.
- Sports schools, through groups of beginners, advanced, sports proficiency and superior sports proficiency, contribute to:
 - formation of multilaterally and harmoniously developed personalities;
 - preparation of reserves for national teams in various sports;
 - education of high performance athletes, including those with special needs.
- Profile federations, sports clubs and NGOs promote the values of physical culture and sport in general, with a focus on sporting events. Their basic functions are the following:
 - promotion of physical culture and sports through the sports test;
 - assistance and organization of sporting contests, festivals and competitions;
 - promotion of sports and cultural values on the international arena;
 - professional training and guidance.

Thus, we notice that in the Republic of Moldova the system of extracurricular education specific to the field of sports, tourism and recreation retains its form of organization inherited from the former Soviet Union, which over the years has proven to be inefficient. At the same time, we can mention that due attention is not paid to the development of this direction of education, being moved to secondary plane in the national strategy for the development of education. There have been attempts to reconfigure and adapt field-specific extracurricular education to the current conditions

and needs of society, but they have not been completed and have been counterbalanced due to the imperfection of the legislative framework.

Table 1. SWOT Analysis of Situation in Non-Formal Education and Learning Specific to Field of Sports, Tourism and Recreation in the Republic of Moldova.

Strengths (S)	Weaknesses (W)	Opportunities (O)	Threats (T)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existence of national and regional programs to promote a healthy lifestyle through movement; • increased interest of practicing sports activities in public and private institutions by children and youth; • involvement through national and regional programs for promotion of healthy living and education through movement of structures/institutions capable of coordinating the activities of physical education and sports (MER [Ministry of Education and Research], LPA [Local Public Administration], profile federations, children's and youth centers); • existence of various educational offers (subjects and sporting events); • organization of sports contests/competitions at the level of districtual and republican institutions; • existence of study/activity plans elaborated at the decision of institutions providing extracurricular education; • existence of extracurricular educational partnerships with the relevant federations and NGOs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insufficient promotion by mass media: healthy lifestyle through movement, motivation to practice sports through the results obtained by athletes at national and international level, etc.; • insufficiency of state-level programs to promote sports among children, youth and adults; • lack of culture and low motivation in society regarding daily motoric activities; • insufficient or misdirected funding; • insufficient funds from the private sector, directed towards sports for everybody; • confused institutional affiliation of the extracurricular education structures specific to the profile of sports, tourism and recreation; • fewer and fewer sports buildings in terms of number and operating standards; • lack of a short, medium and long term strategy in the field of physical education and sports for everybody; • existence of a decreasing number of well-trained teachers professionally dedicated to the promotion of sport for everybody; • lack of concrete normative acts regarding the organization and development of the educational process; • lack of curricular documents for extracurricular education; • use of outdated teaching methodologies; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promotion of healthy lifestyle through mass media; • promotion of sports for everybody, depending on the geographical specificity of the area; • development of partnerships between central government bodies and other ministries, which will facilitate the adoption of laws for the benefit of sports for everybody; • significant decrease in expences for health, resulting from the adoption of an active lifestyle; • attraction of investments through partnerships with companies, public and private sectors, etc., in activities to support the promotion of sports for everybody; • development of short, medium and long term strategies in the field of physical education and for everybody; • restructurisation and defining of the institutional affiliation of the system of organizing mass and performance sports; • elaboration of normative acts regarding the organization and development of the educational process; • informing of the teachers about career growth opportunities through the training of professional skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing technical-material base does not allow the maximum capitalization of the current educational offer; • lack of specific equipment/inventory; • sedentary lifestyle, lack of education for movement, inadequate nutrition; • continuous demographic deficit, emigration of young people with potential for practising sports; • low interest of specialists to get involved in the development of sports in the country; • low interest in innovation; • precarious education in the field of public health; • political instability at national and international level; • insufficient awareness of the economic arguments to maintain an active lifestyle; • adoption of laws that poorly cover the issue of sports, including sports for everybody.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• low motivation of teachers regarding the training of professional skills.		
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Analytical Framework: International Context.

Analyzing the documents of non-formal (extracurricular) education policies in the field of sports, tourism and recreation in the European Union, we note that in most of them, non-formal education is decentralized, and the most widespread activities of non-formal education refer to arts, music education, sports activities, science and entrepreneurship, youth labour.

Non-formal education is recognized and regulated as an important element of adult learning rather than part of children's education, however, in recent years have been published a number of papers, presentations at various conferences, debates aimed at recognizing visions of extracurricular activities as part of the holistic development of children for the needs of society in the 21st century.

Sports activities are considered key points for strengthening society and social inclusion, which is common in non-formal education in virtually all European countries. Motoric education, sports in particular, is a key factor in the education of the younger generation and is based entirely on partnerships with local communities and civil society or other actors, offering flexibility in content and organization to meet the needs of those involved.

The analysis of the educational policy documents of the extracurricular activities specific to the field of sports, tourism and recreation in the post-Soviet countries [5, 6], highlights a totally different approach. Extracurricular activities for sports are part of the national strategy and are regulated by state-level laws, are organized based on requirements, rules and standards of sports for everybody. Thus, we can mention that non-formal education is centralized and seen as part of the child's education as much as formal education does, extracurricular activities specific to sports are guaranteed and provided by the state depending on the interests and needs of children where the quality of activities is ensured by preparation programs, monitored centrally.

Study on Extracurricular Activities in Field of Sports, Tourism and Recreation in the Republic of Moldova.

In order to determine the current situation of non-formal/extracurricular education and training specific to the field of sports, tourism and recreation in the Republic of Moldova, a sociological survey was conducted among specialists in the field. The survey was attended by 137 respondents who answered 12 questions, which in our opinion best reflect the situation in this regard. Following the analysis of the answers, we highlight some answers that, in fact, substantiate the topicality of the given research.

- To the question "What is the level of non-formal/extracurricular education in the profile of sports, tourism and recreation in the Republic of Moldova?", 16% of respondents think it is unsatisfactory, 23% good, and 61% consider it to be of average level.
- Regarding the question "Does the system of non-formal/extracurricular activities in the field of sports, tourism and recreation meet the needs of young people in the Republic of Moldova?", 73% of survey participants consider that *to a small extent*, 12% believe that it satisfies the needs to a large extent and 15% of the specialists consider that on average or have other opinions.
- Another topic of the questionnaire comes to highlight the structural and organizational framework of non-formal/extracurricular activities in the country. The answers were distributed as follows: 11% of the respondents answered that it is timely, 29% thought that some adjustments are needed, but most of the respondents (47%) consider that the whole system needs to be reconceptualized, 13% had other opinions.

We also highlight some answers of the interviewed specialists, which are of interest both for them and for the given study. Most of the respondents are of the opinion that in order to improve the educational process, it is necessary to: elaborate the curricular documents, continuously train the specialized staff, diversify the forms of organizing the educational activities, etc.

Structural and Organizational Framework of Non-Formal Education in Field of Sports, Tourism and Recreation.

With the development of educational policy documents, at the level of general and extracurricular education, an innovative approach to the system of extracurricular

activities specific to Sport, Tourism and Recreation is proposed by developing the Framework of Education and Extracurricular Education.

Non-formal/extracurricular education and training in sports, tourism and recreation should be done in groups according to the age characteristics of the subjects at the level of training groups, but to institutions offering non-formal sports education should be assigned appropriate groups and levels of training. A systemic and continuous approach is proposed in the table below.

Table 2. Activity of Training Groups Depending on Institutions

Educational Institutions	Training/Education Groups				
	<i>Adaptation / Orientation</i>	<i>Preparation and Recreation</i>	<i>Beginners</i>	<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Sports Proficiency</i>
General education institutions	+	+			
Children's and youth centers	+	+	+		
Sports schools	+	+	+	+	+
Higher education institutions		+			+
Clubs, Sports federations (NGOs)	+		+	+	+

Adaptation and orientation groups - aim to educate children early to an active and dynamic life, they will be organized in general education institutions, centers for children and youth, sports schools.

Preparation and recreation groups have as basic objectives the strengthening of health, the harmonious and multilateral physical development, the acquisition of the technical-tactical bases of a sporting test, the formation of moral and volitional qualities, the motivation to practice independent motoric activities. These groups will be formed in general education institutions, centers for children and youth, sports schools and at the same time in higher education institutions for practicing physical education outside the basic schedule.

Beginner groups - the purpose of this group is to ensure the specific preparation for a sporting test based on primary selection, the systematic practice and specific preparation of the sports practiced, the acquisition of technical and tactical bases, will work in

centers for children and youth, sports schools and can be functional at the level of clubs, NGOs.

Advanced groups - active based on intermediate selection, aimed at increasing specific training and sports results, adapting to competitive efforts and achieving performance. Groups will be formed only in sports schools and sports clubs.

Sports proficiency groups - aim to select the optimal number of athletes, who have stable results in the sporting test, present reserve athletes to the national teams. The groups will work in sports schools, higher education institutions, sports clubs.

Starting from the concept and specificity of the characteristics of extracurricular education, from the content and methodological options for carrying out this process specific to the field of sports, tourism and recreation, we deduce the structure of profiles and corresponding extracurricular institutions providing extracurricular education (Figure 1).

Recreational sports profile - sports for all, which includes content areas on sporting events, activities are carried out for recreational purposes, based on health strengthening groups;

Applicable sports profile - practicing forms of sports-applied exercises in order to increase the level of functional capabilities of the human body, motoric coordination, ensuring effective adaptation to various everyday factors.

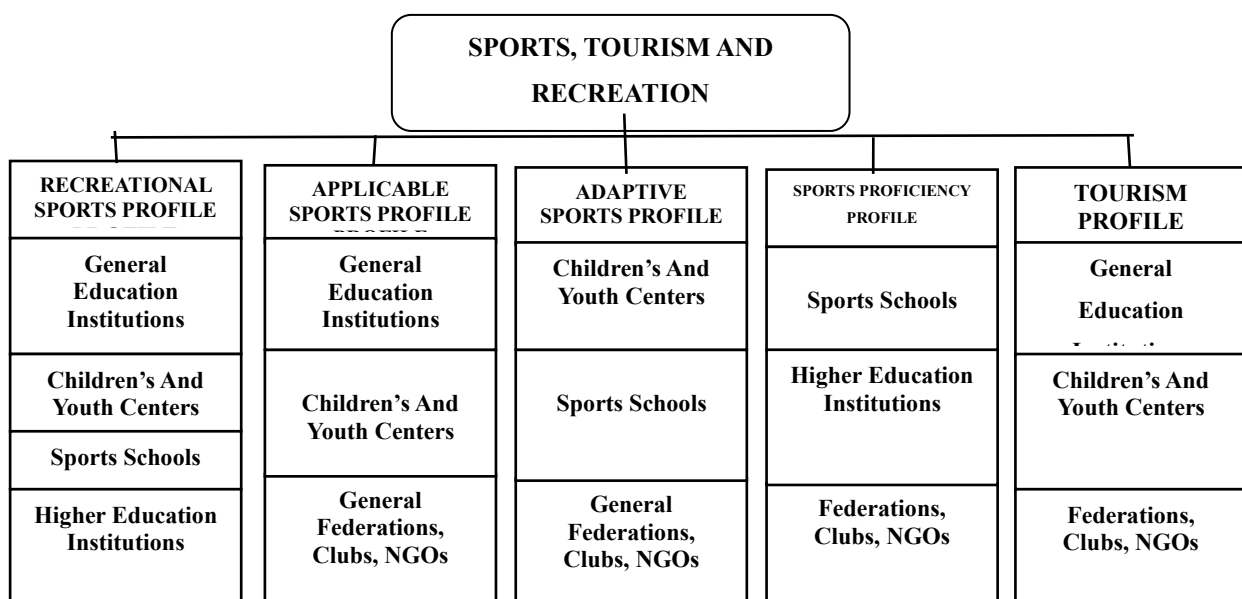


Figure 1. Profiles and Relevant Educational Institutions

Adaptive sports profile – includes sports for people with locomotoric/hearing/visual impairments and recovery and remaking activities.

Tourism – includes all forms of application exercises to overcome deficient situations/obstacles for the purpose of exploration/research.

Sports proficiency/sports training profile – aims to achieve the highest possible level of sports preparation (technical-tactical, physical and intellectual preparation) specific to the sporting test to obtain the highest possible results in competitive activity of different levels.

An essential component of the organization and provision of the continuing education process is the Framework Plan (a mandatory regulatory document), which should provide participants with training and development opportunities in an integrated system.

The Framework Plan developed for non-formal (extracurricular) education, Sports, Tourism and Recreation must be perceived as a state document (unique and mandatory for all institutions providing sports activities), including levels and stages, educational offers in order to differentiate the preparation course depending on the specific interests, needs and skills of the subjects, the number of hours for different levels of training to ensure that students from all institutions have the same degree/level of preparation, thus giving all participants equal opportunities for development, promotion and social integration.

Depending on the educational institutions, which provide services of extracurricular activities specific to the field, we present the corresponding Framework Plan in the tables below (Table 3, 4, 5, 6).

Table 3. Administration of Specific Activities in Field of Sports, Tourism and Recreation in General Educational Institutions

<i>Nr. Crt.</i>	<i>Training Level</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Modules</i>	<i>No. of Hours Per Week</i>	<i>No. of Activities Per Week</i>
1.	Primary Cycle (adaptation and orientation groups)	I – IV	<i>Dynamic games</i>	2	2
			<i>Adaptation and orientation in a sports event</i>	4	
2.	Gymnasium Cycle (preparation and recreation groups)	V – IX	<i>Extension of the discipline according to the long-term plan</i>	4	2 – 3
			<i>Preparation for a sports test</i>		
			<i>Education for health</i>		

3.	High School Cycle (preparation and recreation groups)	X – XII	Education for health	4	3 – 4
			Preparation for a sports test	6	

Table 4. Administration of Activities Specific to Field of Sports, Tourism and Recreation in Centers for Children and Youth

Nr. Crt.	Profile	Training Groups	Age	Training Year	Number of Children in Groups ¹	Number of Hours Per Week	No. of Activities Per Week
1.	Recreational sports Applicable Sports Adaptive Sports Tourism	Beginners (according to adaptation and orientation groups)	from 5 years	1 < ²	15	2 – 4	2 – 3
2.		Basic (according to beginner groups)	age allowed for training in a sports event ³	1	15	6 – 8	3 – 4
3.				2			
4.				3			
4.	Independent (according to preparation and recreation groups)	after the Basic stage up to 21 years	1 <	12	9 – 12	3 – 5	

Table 5. Management of Multiannual Preparation Programs Design in Sports Schools/Clubs/Federations Specific to Field of Sports, Tourism and Recreation

Nr. Crt.	Training Groups	Training Years ⁴	Number of Hours Per Week	Number of Trainings Per Week
1.	Adaptation and Orientation	- ⁵	4	2 – 3
2.	Beginners	1, 2, 3	6 – 9	3 – 4
3.	Advanced	1,2,3,4,5	10 – 18	4 – 5 5 – 6 6 – 8
4.	Sports Proficiency	1,2 < ⁶	16 – 24	10 – 12
5.	Superior Sports Proficiency	1 <	27 <	12 <
6.	Preparation and recreation ⁷	-	6	2 – 3

¹ The maximum composition of the group will be determined according to the available conditions and the specifics of the sporting event;

² From one year of training and more until reaching the age allowed to prepare for a sporting event;

³ According to the age of enrollment in beginner groups, standards of sports theory and practice.

⁴ The teachers together with the managers of the institution will design multi-annual training programs for obtaining the performances depending on the specifics of the test;

⁵ In the orientation and adaptation groups, children from 5 years old up to the age of enrollment in groups of beginners will be enrolled according to the specifics of the sporting test;

⁶ Sports proficiency groups will carry out training programs from 2 years and more;

⁷ Athletes up to the age of 21 can participate in preparation and recreation groups.

Table 6. Administration of Activities Specific to Field of Sports, Tourism And Recreation in Higher Education Institutions

Nr. Crt.	Training Level	Study Year	Moduls	No. of Hours Per Week	No. of Activities Per Week
1.	Preparation And Recreation Groups	I - II	<i>Education for health</i>	2	1-2
			<i>Preparation and recreation through a sports test</i>	4	2
2.	Sports Preparation Groups	I - IV	<i>Preparation in a sports test</i>	6 – 9	3-4

Based on the specific functions of non-formal/extracurricular education and learning (to fill in gaps, to complement formal educational activities, to extend formal education, to position formal education) the priority role of activities is given to study purposes, expressed in terms of competences, which also become criteria for the selection and organization of content, the choice of training and evaluation strategies.

Within the procedural documents, the system of competences approached in non-formal/extracurricular education and training specific to the profile of sports, tourism and recreation, a logical construction will be distinguished on profiles and stages of training [4,5]:

- A. *Key/transversal competences* - are formed and developed progressively and gradually on training levels. (Key competences are an essential curricular category, being defined at a high level of abstraction and generalization, transversality and transdisciplinarity can be highlighted as important features of key competences, as they cross different spheres of social life as well as disciplinary boundaries);
- B. *General competences in the field of sports, tourism and recreation* - are deduced from the key competences for lifelong learning, from the specifics of the respective field and with a high degree of generality and complexity. They are defined and formed throughout the period of non-formal education;
- C. *Profiles specific to the profiles (recreational, applied, adaptive, sports training, tourism)* - are detached from the system of competences in the fields of non-formal education (extracurricular) and reflect/integrate the knowledge, skills and attitudes of students specific to that profile;
- D. *Specific competences of the profile training stages* - are designed based on the specific taxonomy of competences, but also in relation to the specific

competences of the profile and represent integrated systems of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, which are formed in the study of profile disciplines at the level of the respective training stage;

- E. *Units of competence on the components of training* - are constituents of competences and facilitate the formation of specific competences, but also of general ones by fields, representing stages/cornerstones in their acquisition/construction. Due to their degree of concreteness, they are suggestive in selecting the contents and types of activities specific to education.

In order to streamline and update the extracurricular activities specific to the field of sports, tourism and recreation in the Republic of Moldova, central level interventions are needed, such as: adjusting the national normative-legal framework, which would regulate the organization and optimal functioning of the extracurricular education system; in relation to modern requirements and international practices, elaboration of the national long-term and medium-term strategy for the development of the field of sports, tourism and recreation; correlation of acts/unique and correct interpretation of acts that provide for the functionality of extracurricular institutions and the organization of the education process.

CONCLUSIONS

- Non-formal education, as well as formal education, presents an extremely important form of education for the development of the human being, having the same formative rigors, but which is differentiated by a more flexible and customized to the needs of participants.
- Through informal pre-education and activities specific to the profile of sports tourism and recreation, participants will be offered training valences such as discovering and retaining various options for spending and organizing free time, interests, skills and talents, but also ways to practice and develop skills and abilities needed in everyday life.
- Following the analysis and comparison of policies in other countries in the field of non-formal education specific to the field of sports, a great diversity of approaches to this educational system is identified. This diversity is generated by

several internal and external factors, by the particularities of the evolution of non-formal-sports education in each country, by the status of non-formal-sports education, by its management and financing.

- In all countries there are the same forms of organizing non-formal/extracurricular education and training specific to the field, but unlike the Republic of Moldova, they are managed by a normative and methodological framework: concepts, programs, strategies, etc. developed from the perspective of lifelong learning.
- Education and non-formal education specific to the field of Sports, Tourism and Recreation in the Republic of Moldova is a dimension of education, which is insufficiently regulated at all levels, therefore, the structural and organizational framework presented in this study will ensure the efficiency and continuity of extracurricular education in the domain and will point out general guidelines for the reconceptualization of normative acts and educational policy documents.

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