



## Activity of municipal/city police from the point of view of the citizens of selected city

### Činnosť obecnej/mestskej polície z pohľadu obyvateľov vybraného mesta

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#### Abstract:

*The city police is a law and order unit that ensures public order in a given city. The documents contain an elaboration of issues in the field of security specifically informs about the basic rights and obligations of the city police. The main goal then consists of an analysis of the opinions of the city of Košice on the activities of the city police. The practical part of the publication was compiled by using the scientific method of the survey in which the basic attitudes of the inhabitants towards the feeling of safety in their hometown but above all evaluate the performance of the city police. At the end of the published contribution the individual opinions and attitudes of the inhabitants on the given problem are summarized and analyzed, basic solutions, measures resulting from the opinions of the respondents asked on the security situations which can contribute to increase security, the sense of security of the residents and the subsequent minimization of risks.*

**Keywords:** police, city police, activity, security, residents.

#### Abstrakt:

*Mestská polícia je poriadkový útvar, ktorý zabezpečuje verejný poriadok v danej obci. Príspevok obsahuje vypracovanie problematiky z oblasti bezpečnosti, konkrétne oboznamuje o základných právach a povinnostiach obecnej polície. Hlavný cieľ následne pozostáva z analýzy názorov obyvateľov mesta Košice, na činnosť mestskej polície. Vedeckou metódou prieskumu bola zostavená praktická časť publikácie, v ktorej boli spracované základné postoje obyvateľov na pocit bezpečia v ich rodnom meste, no predovšetkým na zhodnotenie výkonu činnosti zboru mestskej polície. V závere publikovaného príspevku sú zhrnuté a analyzované jednotlivé názory a postoje respondentov na danú problematiku a navrhnuté základné riešenia a opatrenia vyplývajúce z*



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*názorov opýtaných na bezpečnostnú situáciu, ktoré môžu prispieť k zvýšeniu bezpečnosti, pocitu bezpečia obyvateľov a následnému minimalizovaniu rizík.*

**Kľúčové slová:** *polícia, mestská polícia, činnosť, bezpečnosť, obyvatelia.*

## Introduction

Protection of the safety of life, health, property occupies the leading places in the ranking of societal values. It is a part of our lives, entire nations, states, governments, organizations, legal entities and individuals are trying to preserve it.

The primary part of the contribution is devoted to the characteristic and classifications of the activity of the city police with a focus on the individual authorizations defined in the law and on the rights and obligations resulting from the performance of the activity which were part of the sub goal of the publication.

In the next phase the methodology is summarized and the scientific part of the contribution which was compiled on the assembled of a questionnaire survey method which analyzed the opinions of residents on the overall activity of the city police and the feeling of protection. The final ratings were included in graphs showing the resulting survey values.

The final part was at the same time the main goal through it was found out what attitude the residents have and how they understand the activity of the city police. The processed results showed how people receive the work and position of the police and at the same time they helped to draw up basic proposals for improving the activity of city police and increasing the safety of residents.

## 1. Municipal police

The municipality is one of the basic components of the police administration which can in its own interest establish orderly article - municipal/city police. It is a unit dealing with law, environmental protection and other functions based on the decision of the mayor or mayor of the municipality and an advisory body that has the authority to start at the same time terminate the activity of the municipal police. [1]

On the basis of a valid writing contract and the approval of municipal police. During performing their activity each member is required to present a valid power of attorney to verify territorial scope.

The head of the city/municipal police is the so-called chief who is replaced in his absence by a representative or an authorized member of the corps. His competences include for example the preparation of activities, training and exercises for other corp members, cooperate with the police, rescue or other units. He ensures the necessary information of the municipal authorities during extraordinary events and with final performance of the police. He is responsible for the entire operation of his department and also for the condition and use of the provide technical resources. [2]

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Primary tasks of the city police corps:

- ensures the protection of the protected interest against possible destruction and robbery while cooperating with other armed bodies that use technical security systems,
- takes care of maintaining order, cleanliness and hygiene in the streets other public spaces and publicly accessible places,
- protects the residents of the selected city from danger and ensures the preservation of order, peace and security,
- notifies the municipality of a violation of the ban on consumption of alcoholic beverages and other addictive substances by a person under the age of 15 or a youth under the age of 18,
- follows the instructions from municipal authorities,
- it is activity tries to prevent the occurrence of illegal proceedings. Cooperates with judiciary in case of letter shipments,
- justifies and investigates acts committed against public order, security also deals with acts resulting from violations of road traffic rules and issues warnings or block fines depending on the severity.

In accordance with the processing of personal data the municipal police might use video and audio technical means in the exercise of their rights and duties the amount of which is approved by the municipal authorities at the same time they approve the funds and overall arrangement and hierarchy of work depending on the amount of duty.

A member of the police force is integrity and has a contractual working relationship with the given municipality. At the beginning of his activity he has to take a vow and be in proper mental a physical condition.

### ***1.1. Rights and obligations of members of the municipal police***

In his work member commits to:

- for the protection of protected interest and public orders they are careful not to cause himself or another person greater danger or unreasonable interference with rights,
- performing their work properly according to the regulations of the mayor of the municipality or chief and at the same time they are obligated to immediately report any deviations from normal conditions,
- to preserve and protect basic human rights and freedoms not only of citizens but also of their own and not to use the powers of a public official,
- to protect the same of the crime from the deterioration of traces, the intrusion of people without permissions and report the resulting criminal offense to the prosecutor or the police force.

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A member of the municipal police is entitled to the tasks:

- detain a person caught in the act of committing or immediately after committing a criminal offense and immediately hand him over to the nearest police department if it is a wanted person bring the person to the municipality. Police department for the purpose of giving an explanation and take action according to special regulations,
- to make sure that the person who is detained or paraded is not armed orders not have any other thing with him that could endanger life or health, confiscate an item, hand over the confiscated item or give the weapon to the nearest police department together with the arrested or brought person,
- to call on a person to desist from an action that violates public order or from illegal action and to impose a fine for the offense committed,
- to bring a person to the proceedings who has been summoned by the court on the basis of a permit which has to contain basic identification data about the summoned person, the reason for the summon and other necessary data,
- if the matter cannot be delayed and there is a threat of a dangerous situation the officer has the right to enter the relevant residential or non-residential space together with a person who is not involved in case in order to be able to prepare an objective record after this intervention; if necessary he can take care of securing this space,
- to demand proof of identity from a person who is being searched or during the execution of an unauthorized act if the person is unable to prove himself it is possible to bring him to the relevant department in order to identify this person,
- to stop a means of transport if there is an obvious suspicion of a violation of the law or traffic safety if it is a vehicle that is being searched he is authorized to check it and if impose a penalty if necessary in case of extraordinary events in road transport he has the obligation to maintain order and rule the traffic,
- they are allowed to ask for an explanation from a person whose testimony can help clarify and explain a specific act the officer has the right to apply the coercion of the device if the person refuses to participate in the interrogation at the same time he has to explain to the person all his rights, for example the right not to testify so that the given statement could not cause criminal prosecution for himself or acquaintances or if the person is obliged by law not to testify,
- is capable of taking the item that is wanted or is related to the committed crime or misdemeanour after performing all the necessary actions he has to return the given item and at the final stage it is his duty to issue a proper file about all these facts with all the details and informations about the item and his owner. [3]

## 2. Characteristics of the city police in Košice



*Fig. 1 Coat of arms of the city police in Košice [4].*

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The city police in Košice was created write the first idea and proposal for the establishment of the police department on 24.09.1991, at the tenth session of the city council which was by the then mayor of the city Ján Kopnický. Part of this meeting was the setting of three goals:

- make a proposal to members of the commission for the protection of public order,
- determine the competences and conditions for the chiefs to take office,
- draw up the basic statues of city police of Košice.

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According to the city districts, the city of Košice is divided into the following stations[6]:

<b>Station MSP</b>	<b>Boroughs</b>
Station MSP Juh	Juh, Barca, Šebastovce
Station MSP KVP	KVP, Myslava, Pereš, Luník IX
Station MSP Nad Jazerom	Nad Jazerom, Krásna nad Hornádom, Vyšné Opátske
Station MSP Sever	Sever, Kavečany, Džungľa
Station MSP Stred	Staré mesto
Station MSP Šaca	Šaca, Poľov, Lorinčík
Station MSP Ťahanovce	Ťahanovce - sídlisko, Ťahanovce - obec
Station MSP Východ	Sídlisko Dargovských hrdinov, Košická Nová Ves
Station MSP Západ	Západ

### **3. Research and processing of observations**

The research part of the contribution consists in processing the opinions of the citizens of Košice. Since the main goal points to the view of citizens the basic of the survey is formed by the questionnaire method through which it is possible to easily evaluate and interpret the knowledge and results obtained.

The priority of the survey was to establish and point out how the citizens of Košice perceive the security situation in the city taking into account the activity of the city police but also the risks with which Košice and citizens have the biggest problem.

It is also important for the city police to know the citizens attitudes about whether they feel safety in their city a how they perceive the activity of city police to know how to better protect their interest so that they are able react in time and correctly in the event and their methods are appropriate in the given situation.

The questionnaire was processed on the website <https://www.surveymonkey.com/sk> which was suitable for citizens due to easy and clear handling during filing out. The website was also able to create the necessary graphs with a clear arrangement of answers and numerical expression in percentages.

#### **3.1. Interpretation and evaluation of questions**

The research was distributed via the internet and social networks to a total of eighty respondents whose answers were anonymous and contained a total of 17 questions. The questions were aimed at the citizens of Košice and their attitude towards the various activities carried out by the officers such as the relation to the environment the main problems of the city security, equipment and contacting the patrols but also the citizens own experiences with city police.

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The wording and evaluations of individual questions was as follows:

1. **Age** - the research was completed by citizens aged 18-60,
2. **Gender** - of the total number of participants 52,8% of women and 47,2% men filled out the questionnaire
3. **Do you feel safe in Košice?** - the answers to this question consisted of four parts and citizens could choose from opinions "yes, no, I don't know" and other (specificity). The largest part of the result 76,5% corresponded to the answer "yes".

Some people gave their own answers, which include the reasons and the causes why the person not feel safe in his residence. These mainly concerned risky place where maladaptive and potentially dangerous people move who are more active in the evening and at night, especially near the main stations and city parks.

4. **In your opinion does the city of Košice have a sufficient number of members of the city police?** - the answers to this question were, on one hand, indeterminate as many people marked " don't know how to assess it" but after evaluating the other answers a smaller part of the citizens inclined to the opinion that the city of Košice has enough members of city police. The opinion " probably no" was marked by 9,8% of citizens and " not at all" by 3,9% of citizens which was the least marked answer.
5. **Do you think that the activity of the city police in Košice is sufficient in the area of traffic and parking?** - during the processing of this part was found that many people do not even notice the city policemen and their activity as such. At the same time, it can be said that a significant percentage of people are satisfied with the work of patrols in this area 11,8% of citizens indicated the answers "no".

Among their reasons were the claims that the city police should check and pay more attention to vehicles whether they park in prohibited areas that the city has a big problem with parking as there are few parking spaces, also there is an adequate amount of parking space in residential locations it is necessary to ensure the removal of cars that we classify as wreck to tow away cars without valid mission and technical control. At the same time the citizens were of the opinion that the members of the corps could have more powers. These citizens suggested measures could make parking patrols more efficient and create more parking spaces.

6. **Why are the homeless a problem for the public?** - the answers to this question were compared of several options through which various aspects were listed that are related to and caused by homeless people because they endanger their surroundings or make the life of other citizens uncomfortable. For this question, it was possible to mark more answers and determine more precisely how people of Košice perceive existence with them and what are their negative aspects of their presence. Among the most chosen answers were- they have a problem with alcohol among people and make noise. Citizens had the opportunity to write their own attitude in which they stated

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for example: that endangering other people is not a big problem but due to the frequent consumption of alcohol this aspect is classified as a risk just like begging and fraud. Among the most serious and unpleasant act that was mentioned was exposure with which one citizen had personal experience.

7. **How do you think the problems with homeless could be solved?** - this question was aimed at finding out the subjective attitude of the citizens, in which everyone could write how they would deal with this problem. A few citizens had a skeptical or upraised opinion expressing that they could no longer be helped or they did not know the solution. The majority of the citizens were inclined to believe that it is necessary to establish a housing support system and create more shelters, container cities, homes, detention centers, dormitories using old buildings and spaces and consider the possibility of accepting a limited amount of alcohol in the breath of people who do not belong to the problem groups. Other findings include the possibility of introducing re-socialising stays involving then city activities for example through community activities, community service work which they could earn money for the aforementioned accommodation, food in case of problematic and maladaptive individuals the compulsory work. Based on merit to provide some with a welfare package and assistance that could lead a better life and socialization.

Among the most interesting anonymous opinions were:

- “I really like the system of the charity house on Bosáhová with such tokens: I could buy them token for around 0.50€ and give them to homeless. For one token, they had either food or shower + dressing + overnight stay. Well as far as I know, it does not work anymore. “
- There should be a law that they have to respect so that they are not allowed to sleep in public spaces and incite people. There are many asylums and hostels for the homeless, if they were forced by legislation to at least earn money for the hostels and have to sleep there, the unemployment would decrease, since more people would work in asylums and Slovakia could be less polluted, since there is a lot of pollution in nature and also homeless themselves cause harm to the public.

Respondents also appealed to members of the city police to check public spaces and buildings such as stations more often although not everyone can be helped these proposals could reduce the number of homeless people roaming around the city.

8. **Do you think that there are many offenses in Košice that are dealt with by the city police?** - the result of this question was the finding that the highest percentile of people 39,2% think that it is, but a relatively large part of citizens do not know and do not have an opinion about these facts.
9. **Do you have any personal experience with city police?** - this question included five answers consisting of different example situation that people usually find themselves when contacting city police and "other ( own answer) citizens could choose several alternative from them depending on the situation. From the results we found out many citizens had no experience with city police, up to 52,9% of citizens and 25,5% received a fine . The

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situations mentioned by people include for example: the placement of a technical device to prevent car from leaving in several cases, the delivery of reserved mail by officers, but to going to unauthorized places.

Among the more amusing incidents was the situation in which citizen received a " slipper " but after the arrival of the patrol it was not possible to remove it due to the frost in the lock, or the incident of young people who were freed by members of city police after being locked in public cemetery.

- 10. How often do you see city policemen moving around the city?** - this question was made up of four options, which characterized whether and how often in a month the citizens of Košice meet or miss patrols of the city police? The option " more than 2 times a month " received the most answers, up to 51,0%, while only 3,9% of survey participants marked option " never ".
- 11. In your opinion, are city police officers sufficiently equipped with coercion means ( tear gas, baton, handcuffs, service dog)?** - this part of the survey consisted of the possibility to answer in your own way. It was clear from the result that more than 90% of the citizens are satisfied write the coercive means write which the officers are equipped. At the same time it was pointed out that regular and more frequent guiding off a service dog during errands and trips could make the work of patrols more efficient and contribute to lighter degree of seriousness in their respectability.
- 12. If you notice that someone is polluting the environment of Košice, will you contact the police?** - the possibility to answer this question consisted of three parts. Since the protection of the environment falls under the competence of the city police, the majority of participants 52,9% chosen this correct option 25,5% of citizens will contact state police. Up to 21,6% of survey participants had a disinterested in different or other approach to their residence and surrounding who ticked the third opinion " I would not contact the city or state police. "
- 13. Do you think that environmental protection in Košice is sufficient?** - the rate of citizens to this issue was clear because more than half of the survey participants 52,9% do not think that the environment of Košice is sufficiently protected. The third option " I can't assess it " which was marked by 33,3% of people, testifies to the fact that many people still do not notice and do not value their surroundings and nature.
- 14. How would you contact the city police?** - the solution to this issue was clear in that more than 90% of the citizens would choose telephone contact, while only a few percent of Košice citizens would contact the city police personally.

This part of the survey also included a control part, which consisted of the question of whether the citizens know the telephone number through which citizens can call the city police. We asked about this outside of the questionnaire and with the help of the answers we found that the older generation of citizens in most cases did not know this number but they knew the contact for the state police. The middle or younger generation was more familiar with this number.

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- 15. Regarding safety and maintaining order in the city, what do you think Košice has the biggest problem with?** - in this section of the survey, we tried to find out what is the subjective view of the people of Košice on the overall security in the city and what or who causes the biggest inconveniences they have to face in their residence a considerable number of citizens share the opinion that the biggest is the Roma and Roma communities living in Košice, whose inappropriate behavior in cities and disgusts the life of others, pollutes the city, begs, travel illegally on public transport and the smell spreads from then. This category also includes areas such as the Lunik IX housing estate and the location near Small station.

The following belief of citizens is the fact that Košice is a city with a generally high crime rate, which represents a significant problem because of vandalism, maladaptive citizens, high number of homeless and antisocial people. At the same time the citizens take the position that there are few patrols in the city they arrive late or in some cases their inactivity is surprising. Other believe that young and underage people often have a problem with alcohol and drinking it in public is a daily problem. People had a negative opinion about the cleanliness of the environment, due to the large amount of garbage that lies outside the bins because there are few of them and these that are available are overcrowded. It applies to that lots of discarded chewing gum and cigarettes on sidewalks and in parks.

Also mentioned were dog owners who do not clean up after their dogs which they walk even in the city center and smokers who smoke at bus stops and prohibited places.

Some opinions related to the large number of sprayed buildings, dilapidated historical buildings the speed of cars in the cities and difficulties with parking.

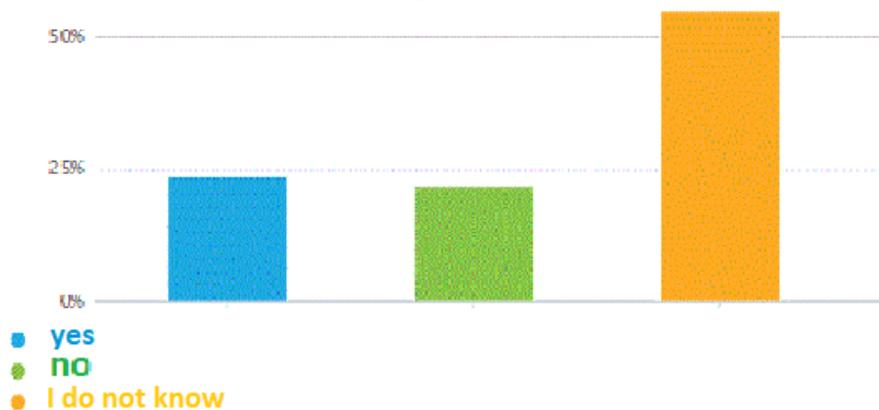
- 16. Do you think it is necessary to improve the activity of city police officers?** - it is difficult to imagine what the members have to go through while performing their work for that reason it is difficult to evaluate their activity. Therefore 54,9% of citizens could not come up with ways to improve their activity. The fact that it is necessary to improve the activity was stated by 23,5% of the citizens, who were also asked to state the reason.

Their proposals included increasing the number of officers and patrols in the city, to check up public places more often during the day but also at night, to be more consistent, honest, considerate, it is necessary to provide them with better training and more training focused on medical assistance it would be more appropriate if they had more competences in the area of law and order.

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Tab. 1 Do you think it is necessary to improve the activity of city police officers?



**17. How would you overall evaluate the city police in Košice?** - the goal of the last question was to find out and understand what peoples general opinion of the city police. One part of the citizens were satisfied with the police and claimed that they fulfill their obligations, help do what they can and have no reservations towards them. According to others their activity is not completely sufficient they should perform their work more efficiently and honestly and " not drive around in cars all day". Also they should more deal with protection of citizens, give more fines for drugs and alcohol, take preventive measures against thieves and less deal with parking fines. Part of the people's attitudes was also a reminder that officers should act only within competence and be objective when performing their work.

On the basic of the conducted research in which 80 citizens took part it is possible to conclude that peoples statements were made on the basic of their own opinions and experiences.

The first phase of the questionnaire was devoted to the overall feeling of safety in Košice, from which it was found that according to the citizens this side of the issue is more stable and they feel safe in their residence. On the other hand there are several specific places accessible to public that should be more closely monitored and protected.

The next part was related to the specific activity of the city police in the field of parking and traffic, which resulted in a greater degree of positive responses to the work of the patrols, but also the opinions of citizens who do not notice their activity. Citizens also answered questions regarding the homeless, who make up a relatively large number of Košice residents although they do not appear in such large numbers in the city compared to the capital city, they make the lives of the citizens unpleasant to a great extent by their behaviour, primarily due to excessive drinking of alcohol.

The end of the questionnaire was focused on the environmental, which is not sufficiently protected, it should be more maintained and possible violations of it pollution could be punished more severely. At the same time the final questions were

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focused on the general problems that plague the people of Košice, which include the Roma minority, the homeless and the pollution of the city.

The last question pointed out how citizens evaluate and what is their opinion about the work of the city police force. Their attitudes were diverse, positive and understanding but also negative and critical. Although many people do not pay attention to their surroundings and the work of the members of city police, from an overall point of view, the citizens concluded that the members of the corps are doing everything in their power.

### ***3.2 Proposed measures***

According to the attitudes of the citizens, possible measures were proposed that coved increase the level of protection, safety and reduce the amount of crime in the Košice. These includes measures relating in particular to:

- the city police - expand the number of officers, the overall training and subsequently improve the financial evaluation, increase the number of patrols moving around the city, more often carry out inspections of public spaces,
- homeless - some steps were published directly in the questionnaire. Among the most important are adjustment of housing capacities and conditions, mandatory community service, harsher punishments for problem individuals and system of social support for selected and problem-free people,
- the traffic - monitor parking lots and prohibitions in the city more often, increase the values of block fines, remove and check unused cars and wrecks more often,
- the environment - carry out more inspections in parks, nature and landfills, fine pollution more often and increase the value of fines,
- overall security and a protection - increase attention in protecting citizens from maladaptive citizens, Roma minorities, problem with youth and people under the influence of alcohol,

Every citizen must realize that the city police provides a large range of tasks, which also include public mass events of various categories. In addition the force does not only fulfill the obligations arising from the law but also is subject to the regulations of the mayor and council.

It is difficult to please everyone whether the city authorities or the citizens themselves and at the same time fulfill their obligations related to the protection, order, safety of citizens and property, ensuring compliance with generally standards as well as implementing preventive activities and cooperate with other forces station a the police force.

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### Conclusion

The published article was aimed at finding out and evaluating the opinion of the citizens of Košice on the work of police officers which resulted in the main goal of the work.

From an overall perspective, it was defined that example for a few shortcomings, citizens are generally satisfied with officers work and they feel safe in their city.

The introductory part of the contribution was focused on the characteristic of the city police in Košice and basic tasks, rights and obligations of officers of city police.

The practical part consisted of the questionnaire survey method evaluated by graphical and verbal expression of the results, the subsequent summary of the survey and last but not least the proposed measures.

Activity of municipal/city police from the point of view of the citizens of selected city is a topic through which it was found that every citizen of Košice understands the concept of security in a slightly different style. This might be influenced by the overall history of our territory which we taught at our school, political situation but also by family or society. It is important to remember that the city police force is the nearest authority which can help citizens in any situation.

The contribution of the contribution lies in the explanation of the competences and content of the work of city police but above all in clarifying and finding out the opinions of the citizens on the activity of police officers. These attitudes can serve as an aid and idea to increase the effectiveness of officers work but for the knowledge a greater understanding of the relationship between city police and citizens.

It is necessary to point out that we must not forget that everyone must look at themselves first and then judge others because no-one is infallible and we can all improve.

A big thank you goes out to all members for their effort, courage, patience and work which they do every day of the year and also for their courage because of which they have to rise their health many times in the line of duty to protect ours.

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