

Photo: Bård Løken – Visitnorway.com

# **NORWAY'S TOURIST BAROMETER**

## **Winter Season 2020**

### **Forecast for domestic and inbound holiday and leisure traffic in Norway**

Margrethe Helgebostad



Photo: CH Visitnorway

## Innovation Norway's forecasts are clear – optimism continues into 2020

### So says an expert panel composed of Norwegian tourism companies and foreign parties marketing Norway

- The expert panel is optimistic at the start of this year's winter season. In the survey, they were asked to assess this year's winter season in comparison to the 2019 winter season. With the persistently low exchange rate, optimism is high.
- What **reduces the optimism is the late Easter**, often causing skiing resorts to have fewer visitors. It is also dependent on good snow conditions. If they are good, there are often last-minute bookings to come to Norway.
- Only 13% expect a decline compared to last year's winter season. Half believe that traffic will be similar, and 39% anticipate this winter being better than last. We can see that the last two winter seasons were good, and over the past ten years, Norway has had a fantastic development in the number of visitors during this season.
- The growth has come from large ski markets, but also from earlier smaller volume markets, primarily coming to Norway to experience the Northern Lights. Northern Lights tourism was built from the ground up, and over the past 15 years has become an important source of income. In 2019, 32% of all winter tourists came to experience the Northern Lights and Northern Norway, as shown in the Tourism Survey for Innovation Norway.

**Despite good growth in the number of visitors to Northern Norway, skiing tourism continues to drive the largest visitor numbers. But this is dependant on good snow conditions, and it is often the Danes who travel here for this.**

- Northern Lights Tourism has given the Norwegian winter a bigger boost by attracting visitors from other markets and target groups than the traditional skiing visitors.

#### Ski Tourism

- Traditional skiing tourists are mainly from Denmark and Sweden. They travel to Norway in their own cars and stay in rented lodges. Danes come with their extended families. You also find Germans and Brits among this group.

#### Northern Lights Tourism

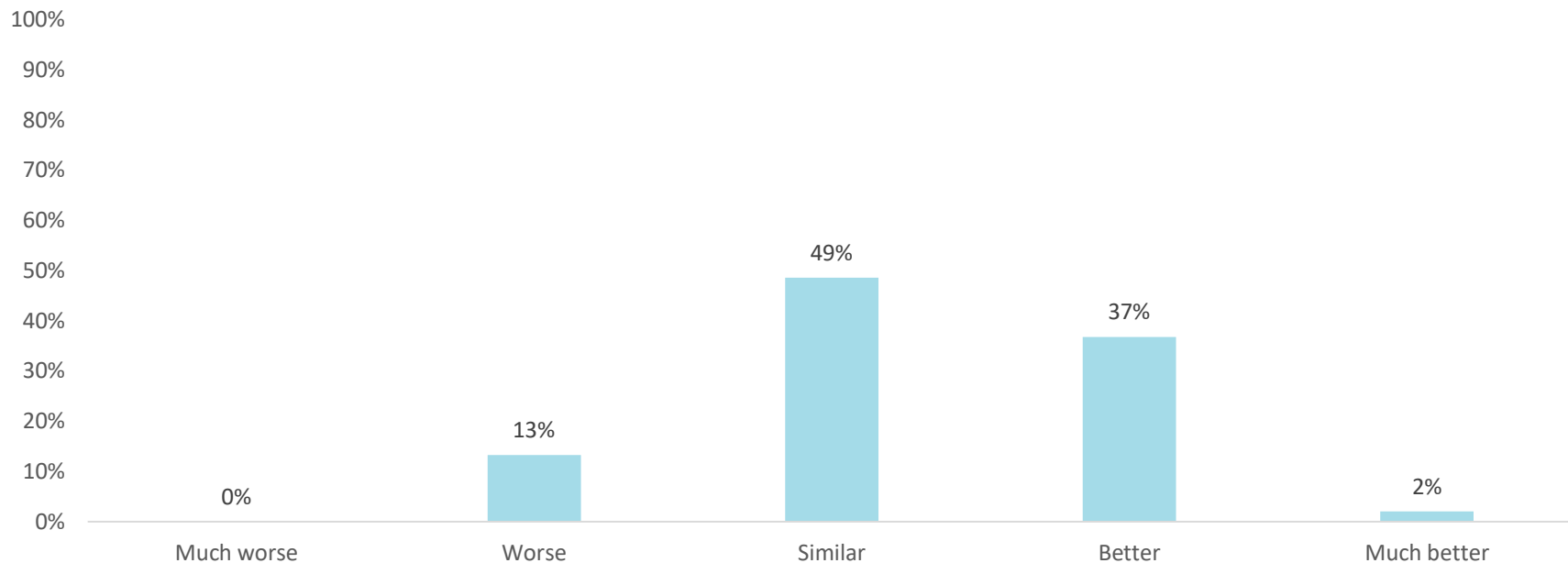
- Those coming to experience the Northern Lights are primarily Germans, Brits, Southern Europeans, Americans and Asians. As expected, they travel by plane and stay in hotels. They are older than ski tourists, and travel as a couple. Many spend several nights of their stay on the coastal Express Route (Hurtigruten).



Photo: Tove Kockum

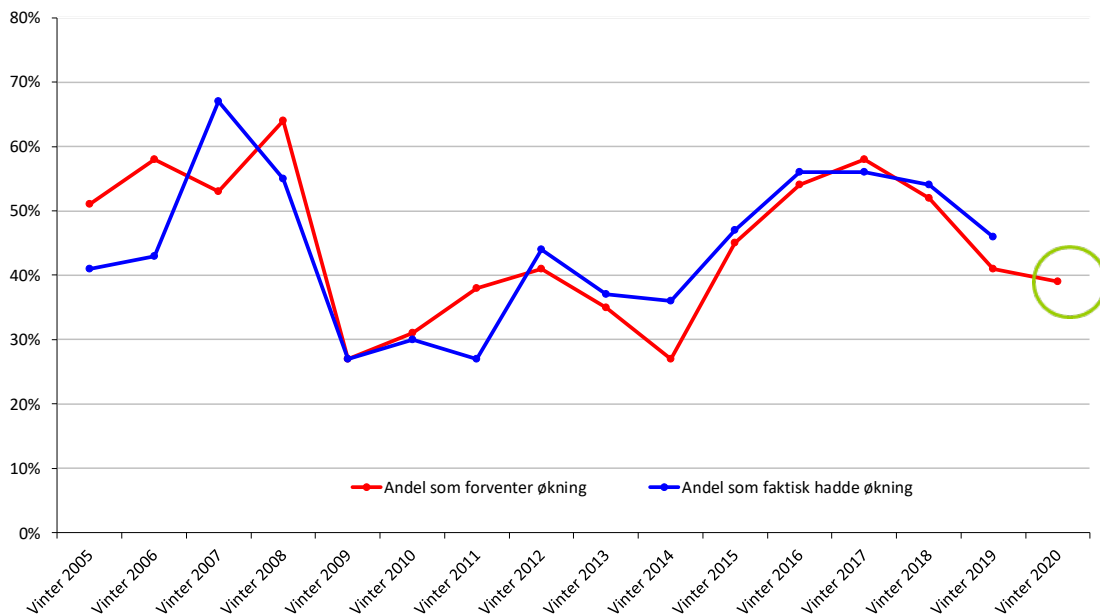
## 39% anticipate that the 2020 winter season will be better than last year

Half expect the same volume, while 39% believe that this year's winter will be better. Only 13% expect a decline. There is optimism after two good winter seasons in a row.

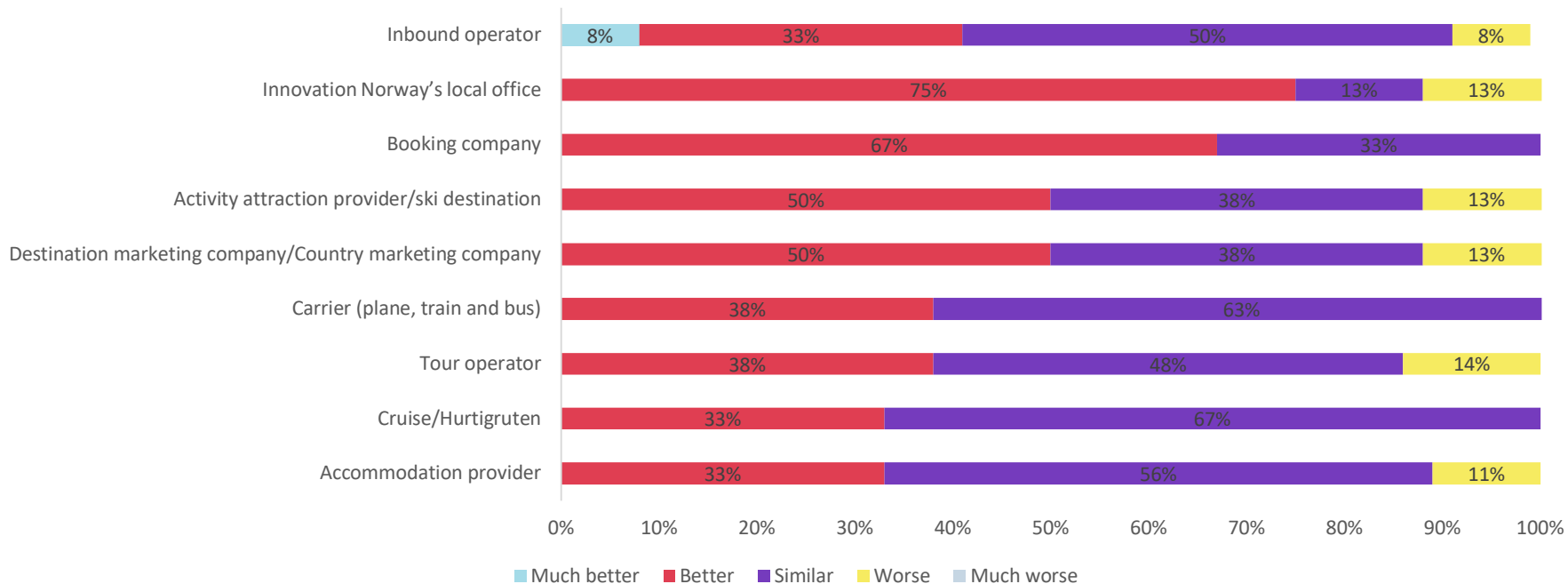


## 39% of the expert panel expect continued growth in the 2020 winter season

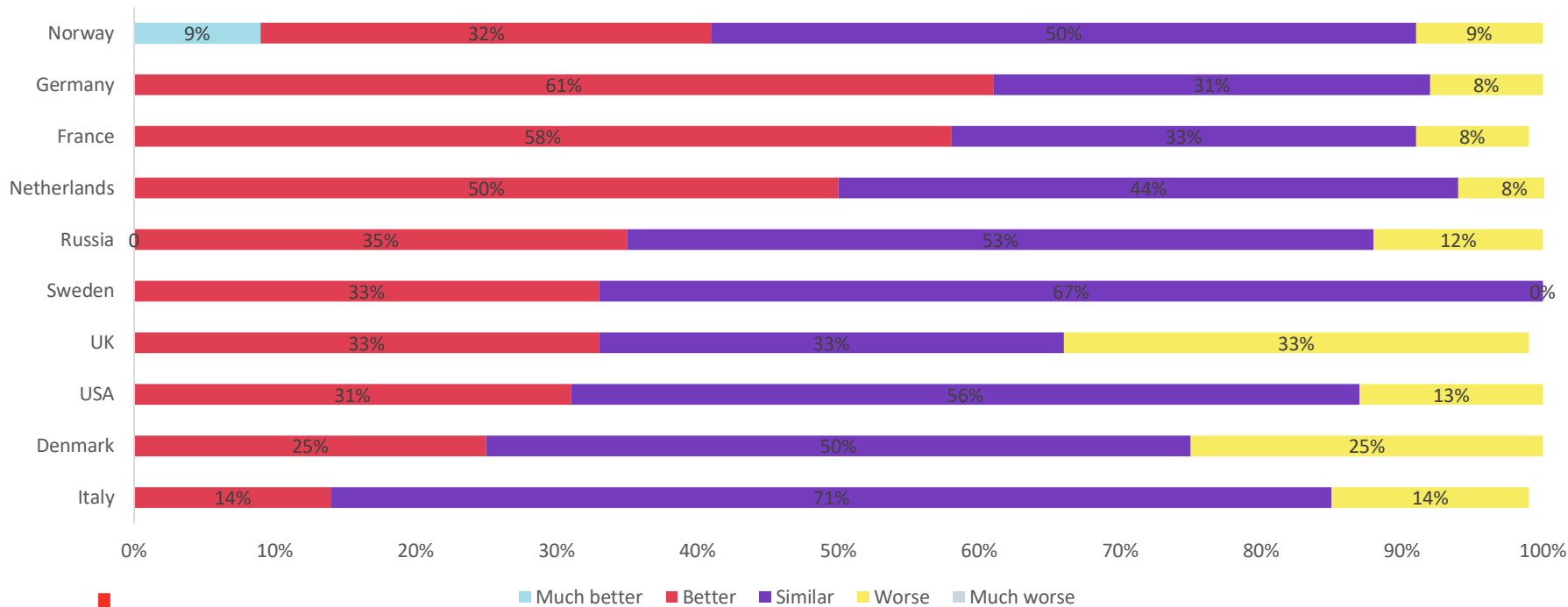
Question:  
What are your expectations for traffic growth to Norway this winter season, compared with last winter?



# Expectation per sector

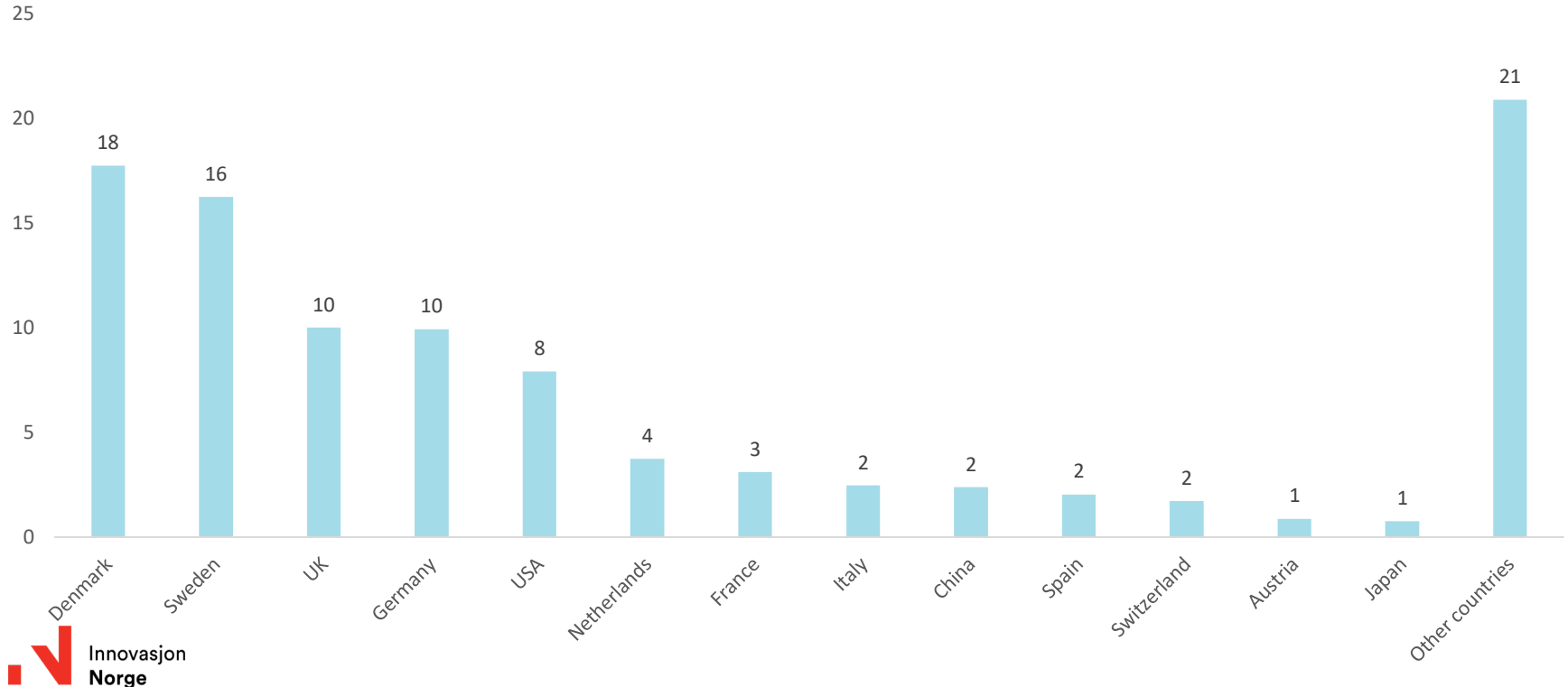


# Expectation per market

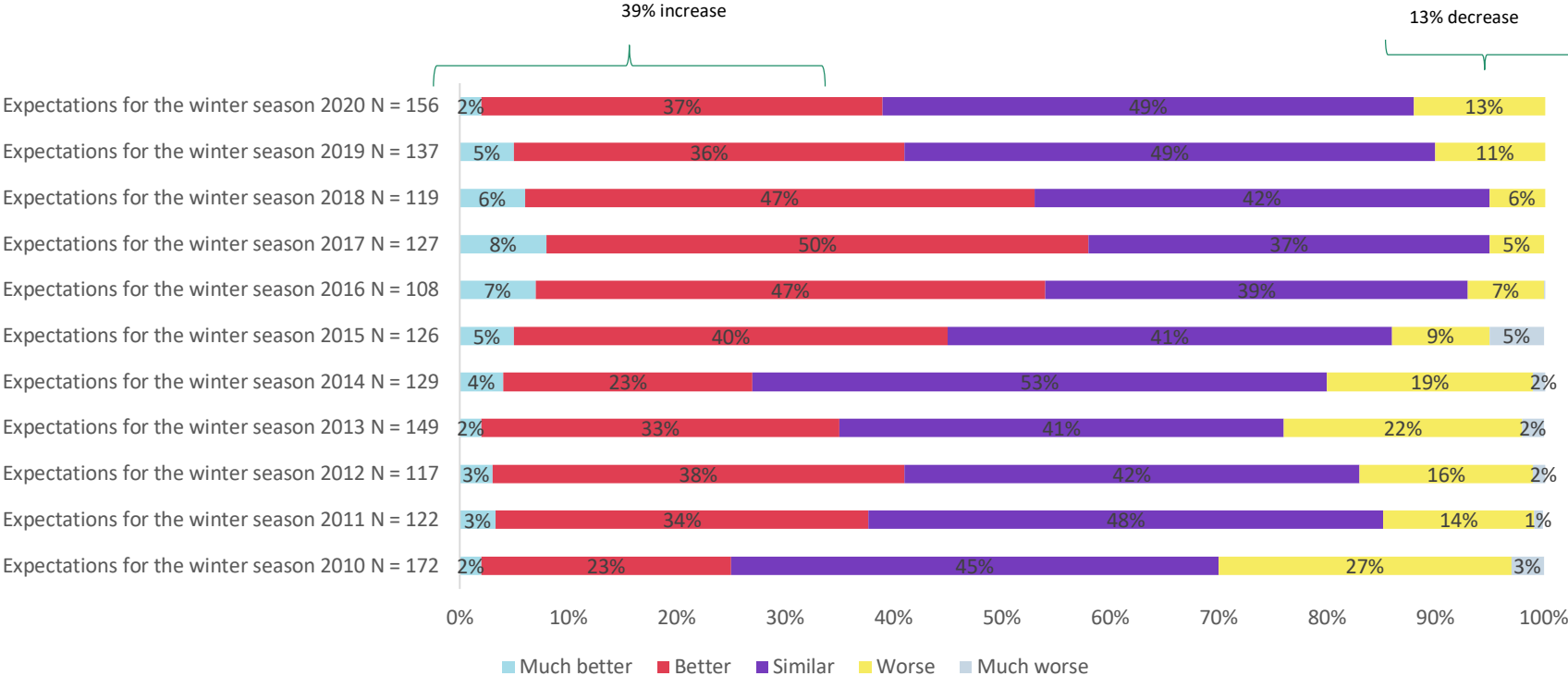


# Composition of foreign visitor overnight stays, winter 2019

Denmark and Sweden continue to be the largest markets for winter tourism. At the same time, it is worth pointing out the large proportion of British, German and American guest stays



# Expectations over time





## Background and methodology

- An electronic questionnaire was sent out which could be accessed between 7 November and 18 December 2019.
- 161 participated in the survey.
- The purpose of the Tourist Barometer is to provide an overview of the expected growth in traffic, broken down into markets and sectors.
- Participants in the survey have been involved in Innovation Norway's campaigns and activities over the past 12 months, with the exception of the Norwegian inbound operators.
- The expert panel is made up of representatives from the tourism industry at home and abroad. These represent tour operators, inbound operators, accommodation providers, carriers, cruises, activity and attraction enterprises, local tourist offices, regional destination marketing companies, and Innovation Norway's marketing managers in the respective markets.
- The survey is conducted twice a year, before the summer and winter seasons.
- This is the 34th time the Norwegian Tourist Barometer has been carried out.



Tusen takk!  
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