



**European Committee  
of the Regions**

# Achievements in 2022

Summary of the  
Annual Impact Report of the  
European Committee of the Regions

**March 2023**

## Foreword

This Annual Impact Report provides a summary of the work and achievements of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) in 2022. It looks at the results obtained against the background of the targets set for last year, assessing the outcome of our Committee's consultative and political work, under the newly elected President Vasco Alves Cordeiro.

Thanks to the hard work of its Members and staff, in 2022 the European Committee of the Regions adopted nine resolutions and 54 opinions. The push for concrete impact was directed by our political leadership and priorities: bringing Europe closer to people, by ensuring a strong territorial dimension to the Conference on the Future of Europe; managing fundamental societal transformations, by addressing the climate and energy crises and their social impact at local and regional levels; and defending cohesion and the fundamental value it brings to our Union.

The year was dominated by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The Committee supported the people of Ukraine and the Ukrainian local authorities. Our response included the launch of the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine and its dec-

laration to the International Expert Conference on the Recovery, Reconstruction and Modernisation of Ukraine in Berlin later on in October. The CoR also supports the Info-hub, the summer camps for Ukrainian children and the regular exchanges between local and regional politicians.

Our impact was clearly visible during the 20<sup>th</sup> edition the EU Week of Regions and Cities, that gathered over 20 000 participants, confirming itself as the EU's largest event dedicated to cohesion. The impetus given to the new #CohesionAlliance in 2022 looks beyond cohesion as merely a funding channel, and sees it as a fundamental objective of the EU. The inclusion of territorial impact assessments in relevant EU policies and the involvement of the CoR in shaping the Rural Pact governance are further proof that local and regional leaders have made their voice heard through our Committee.

The objective of helping our local communities building up resilience and harnessing innovation also remained at the heart of the Committee's political work in 2022. Local and regional authorities played a vital role in overcoming the COVID pandemic - and still today have to deal with its direct consequences. Among our successes, we

promoted the idea of stress tests on serious cross-border health threats. We ensured a local and regional angle within the Digital Services Act and the Digital Market Act, upholding the principle of digital cohesion.

Equally important was the direct work on European democracy which started in Marseille with the 9th EU Summit of Regions and Cities in March. The Marseille Manifesto prepared the ground for the positive results for sub-national Government in the conclusions of the European Conference on the Future of Europe (COFE). The work of the Delegation of regional and local delegates, led by the CoR, made it possible to include in the COFE recommendations a strong call to enhance the CoR's role in the EU institutional architecture. Finally, towards the end of the year, we took part in EU efforts to addressing the climate and energy crisis through the United Nations' Climate Conference COP27.

Our achievements in 2022 will inspire us this year, recognising the challenge that going for impact is a process that requires continuous efforts and consistency.

**Petr Blížkovský,**  
Secretary-General

## Introduction

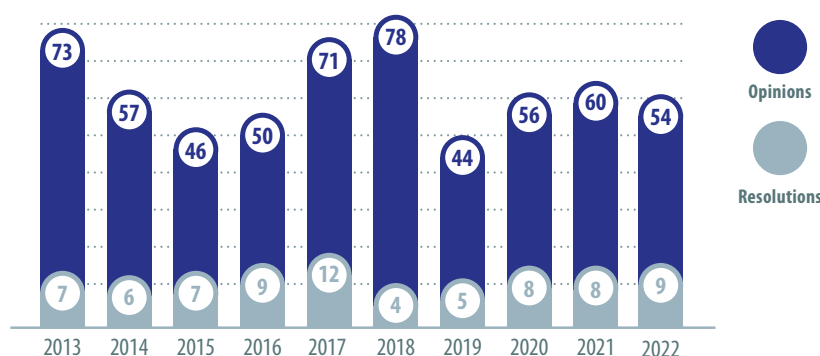
This document provides a summary of the Annual Impact Report of the European Committee of the Regions' (CoR) on its work and main achievements in 2022. The CoR is a consultative body to the EU institutions composed of 329 members, who are elected politicians in regions, cities, villages and municipalities of the 27 Member States of the EU, and give voice and visibility to the more than one million locally elected politicians. The CoR's impact on the EU decision-making process can be assessed through its influence on:

- preparatory or final legal texts adopted by the EU institutions;
- the visibility of local and regional aspects in the EU agenda;
- changes in the EU's working methods to the benefit of local and regional communities;

- EU legislation improving the daily life of citizens;
- EU actions promoted or initiated by the CoR.

The EU Treaties stipulate that the CoR advises the EU institutions on affairs that matter to regions and cities. In general, the CoR does so through opinions, which

refer to legislative proposals made by the European Commission (referrals), or own-initiative opinions, which invite the EU institutions to take action. Moreover, CoR positions can be highlighted through Resolutions. In 2022, the CoR adopted 63 such documents and the table shows figures by category and their development since 2013.



## Supporting Ukrainian people and Local and Regional Authorities



See more:

### Launch of the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine in June and Berlin Declaration in October

#### Why it matters?

Because it enables a wider involvement of Local and regions authorities (LRAs) in this process. Thanks to this action, a consultative place is now firmly reserved for the CoR led Alliance in the European Commission's Ukraine Reconstruction Platform.



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#### How will it be followed up?

In 2023 the CoR will continue to support a bottom-up approach to Ukraine reconstruction via its statutory meetings, its contacts with the the embassies of individual Member States, cooperation with the European Commission and the European Parliament and via its participation on the Platform.

### 15 summer camps for 1000 Ukrainian children organised by cities, municipalities and regions across the European Union on the CoR's initiative

#### Why it matters?

Because it shows local communities' concrete solidarity with Ukrainian people and in particular with the new generations deeply affected by the war.



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#### How will it be followed up?

The CoR will continue to coordinate this project with its members, associations and Ukrainian partners in order to extend the summer camps initiative throughout 2023.

### Marseille Summit adopted the Declaration of the EU's Regions and Cities on Solidarity with Ukraine

#### Why it matters?

The European Committee of the Regions was the first EU institution to adopt a formal Declaration supporting Ukrainian people and local authorities. Thanks to this early engagement, Ukrainian locally elected politicians, such as the Mayor of Kyiv, attended the Marseille Summit remotely paving the way for further cooperation.



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#### How it will be followed up

Via its members and their meetings and inter-institutional contacts, the CoR will continue sending political messages in support of Ukraine's European integration and territorial integrity, with a focus on reforms and decentralisation. The CoR will also grant a pre-observer status and enlarge the Young Elected Politicians programme to support the capacity-building of Ukrainian local and regional authorities.

## The future of cohesion policy: a new campaign for social, territorial and economic cohesion

**The Council asked the European Commission (EC) to include territorial impact assessments (regional proofing) in relevant EU policies**

### Why it matters?

The impact of EU decisions on local communities can be very diversified. The CoR therefore demanded to assess it ahead of any new common choice.



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### How it will be followed up

The CoR will reinforce its cooperation with the European Commission to assess the territorial impact of EU policies involving local leaders within its Territorial Impact Assessment procedure.

**The EC followed CoR's suggestions to extend the 100% EU co-financing rate for 2014-2020 cohesion policy funding under the CARE programme to the accounting year 2021-2022**

### Why it matters?

Because governments, regions and cities need to quickly mobilise EU funding to welcome and integrate refugees and might lack resources to co-fund interventions.



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### How it will be followed up

The CoR will take stock of how the flexible rules introduced to cope with the effects of the Russian aggression against Ukraine increased the effectiveness of refugee support in the short and mid term.

**Rural Proofing is part of the EC's internal guidelines for impact assessment of new legislative proposals**

### Why it matters?

The CoR can ensure that the diversified impact of EU decision on rural areas is properly taken into account in the elaboration of new proposals.



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### How it will be followed up

The CoR will keep cooperating with the EP – as well other relevant partners – to jointly assess new proposals' impacts on rural areas, mobilising its members and building on its experience.

**The CoR is now part of the EC working group shaping the Rural Pact governance**

### Why it matters?

Since 2016, the CoR has been advocating for an EU Rural Agenda. The Rural Pact is an important step ahead to bring together public authorities and stakeholders, assess the needs of rural communities and coordinate relevant EU programmes.



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### How it will be followed up

With their participation in relevant high-level groups and their legislative work, CoR members will contribute to strengthening the Rural Pact concept in order to make the most of all available EU investments and policies for rural areas.





See more:

### **The EP's report on Resilience and Recovery Fund implementation takes on board the CoR's call to better involve local and regional authorities**

#### **Why it matters?**

Local and regional authorities were not properly involved in the preparation of national Resilience and Recovery plans. This raises risks for the instrument's effectiveness. Thanks to the CoR work, the EP and the EC increased the pressure on national governments to actively engage local and regional authorities in the governance and implementation of national recovery and resilience plans.



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#### **How it will be followed up**

The CoR will keep monitoring the impact of the RRF on the ground, with specific focus on ensuring that it does "no harm to cohesion" and is instead efficiently coordinated with the European Structural and Investment Funds and other EU investment tools.

### **The 20<sup>th</sup> edition of the EU Regions Week involved 20 000 participants overall, confirming it as the largest event dedicated to cohesion themes across the EU. It provided an impactful platform to launch the new Cohesion Alliance to mobilise partners and stakeholders for the future of the policy**

#### **Why it matters?**

The CoR and the EC brought together local, national and EU decision makers to discuss the social and economic crisis triggered by the pandemic and the war in Ukraine, and to take stock of how cohesion policy has improved, over the last decade, the EU's preparedness to crises, as well as how it helped regions and cities cope with emergencies thanks to ad hoc measures.



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#### **How it will be followed up**

The CoR, in particular with its work as promoter of the Cohesion Alliance, will keep gathering evidence and insights on the role of cohesion policy and elaborate proposals for its future development.

### **The CoR's "Automotive Regions Alliance" is legally involved in the Regulation on zero emission cars. The EC must consult the CoR when identifying financial needs to guarantee a just transition**

#### **Why it matters?**

The transition towards a zero-emission road transport has a profound impact on regions with a strong automotive and supply industry sector. This social and economic impact must be addressed with adequate support measures in order to deliver a successful transition leaving no one behind.



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#### **How it will be followed up**

The mandatory consultation allows the CoR to intensify its work to identify the specific needs of regions in transition and contribute to shaping adequate EU policies to address them.

## Building resilient and innovative local communities

### Implementation of Recovery and Resilience Facility

The CoR proposal of having stress tests on serious cross-border health threats has been included in the EP report.

#### Why it matters?

The active engagement of local and regional authorities in the preparation of the national recovery and resilience plans has often been lacking and raises risks for the instrument's implementation and effectiveness.



#### How it will be followed up

The European Committee of the Regions will continue to add a local and regional dimension in the interinstitutional debates and procedures related to the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

### Digital Services Act and the Digital Market Act

Around 30 points of the Digital Services Act and the Digital Markets Act opinions were taken up in reports by the EP.

#### Why it matters?

Because the CoR has had a strong impact on interinstitutional debates on these legislative acts. Thanks to its work the concerns of local and regional authorities were included in the final legislative texts, ensuring the measures envisaged counteract territorial and social disparities and ensure digital cohesion.



#### How it will be followed up

The CoR will monitor the implementation of the legislative acts from a regional and local perspective and will assess their territorial impact.

### Industrial policy and Craft Geographical Indications

A number of CoR recommendations were taken into account in the European Commission's proposal regarding Protecting Industrial and Craft Geographical Indications (ICGI) in the European Union.

#### Why it matters?

In European regions there is a need for a system of ICGI's providing the same level of security for producers and certainty for consumers as the existing agricultural geographical indications.



#### How it will be followed up

The CoR will strive for an equal assessment and recognition system of industrial and craft geographical indications as for the agricultural and foodstuff one.



See more:

## European Missions' implementation and launching the Partnerships for Regional Innovation (PRI)

PRIs were included in the European Commission's Communication on a New Innovation Agenda for Europe and the central importance of regional innovation ecosystems and PRIs were stressed by the Council conclusions on 1 December 2022.

### Why it matters?

The support of the CoR is instrumental to ensuring that EU Missions can happen on the ground and regional and local stakeholders are key to their success.



### How it will be followed up

The CoR keeps on advocating for the strong territorial perspective and important role of regional authorities in the implementation of the European Missions. It continues its cooperation in the work on PRIs allowing innovation-driven territorial transformation on the ground.

## Contribution of regions and cities to the New European Bauhaus (NEB)

More than 20 references are made to the local and regional level in the European Parliament report and the European Commission's communication on the New European Bauhaus.

### Why it matters?

From the very beginning, the CoR was involved in the design and implementation of the NEB to promote the local and regional contribution to it in a timely manner. The EC counts on the cooperation of the CoR to raise awareness and promote debate in their constituencies.



### How it will be followed up

In 2022 the CoR started its cooperation with the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) Culture and Creativity KIC. Moreover, Cities and climate adaption will be further matched with NEB.

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## A new chapter for EU Democracy

**1500 regional and local representatives attended the CoR's 9th European Summit of Regions and Cities in Marseille. The Marseille Summit's Manifesto paved the way to COFE conclusions on increasing LRAs' role at EU level.**

### Why it matters?

The success of the Marseille Summit represented a key moment for regional and local politicians across the EU to join forces around common political objectives. Its Manifesto included a strong call to enhance the role of Local and Regional Authorities in the EU decision making process and paved the way to a common stance of the 30 regional and local delegates to COFE.



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### How it will be followed up

The innovative methodology and governance put in place for the Marseille Summit allowed a fully inclusive and transparent organisation. Bringing together large numbers of local and regional representatives strengthens the CoR message and will be key especially in the context of the 2024 European elections.

**Following the CoR's lead, COFE conclusions demand to "reform the CoR giving it an enhanced role in the institutional architecture, if matters with a territorial impact are concerned".**

### Why it matters?

Because the CoR managed to include the territorial dimension in the reflection process and in its conclusions. This unprecedented achievement put the spotlight on the need for the EU to rethink its institutional architecture to better represent, also via the CoR, the views of regional and local elected representatives.



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### How it will be followed up

The COFE follow-up strategy is based on 3 pillars: 1) secure the implementation of the COFE recommendations both within the current Treaties and by identifying the treaty changes necessary for implementing them; 2) developing interinstitutional cooperation; 3) reinforcing alliances and partnerships as well as related outreach activities to boost citizen participation on EU matters.

**The 2022 CoR's EU Annual Report on the State of Regions and Cities brought attention to key challenges facing local and regional authorities, raising the political and media profile of the CoR**

### Why it matters?

The 2022 edition brought together evidence and findings from over 100 studies on the economic, social and financial situation of EU's local communities. This was seen as a valuable source of information for CoR members and had a significant impact in the media across the EU.



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### How it will be followed up

The 2023 Annual Report will be presented during the next edition of the European Week of Regions and Cities in October. The report will provide unique facts and figures as well as stories from regions and cities on how local and regional authorities are at the forefront in tackling the key challenges faced by Europe, such as the impact of the Russian war against Ukraine or the climate crisis.





See more:

**The Regional Barometer accompanying the Annual Report gathered the views of a large number of regional and local politicians on key EU topics.**

#### Why it matters?

The Regional Barometer carried out on behalf of the CoR is a unique exercise at EU level. It gathers the views of regional and local elected representatives in all 27 Member States on key EU topics directly affecting our local communities. The opinion poll complements the finding of the Annual Report.

#### The State of Regions and Cities in the European Union

11 October 2022



#### How it will be followed up

In 2023, a new edition of the Regional Barometer will be carried out. The methodology and process will be similar to the 2022 exercise.

**CoR launched the co-creation process for a “EU Charter on Youth and Democracy” to enhance youth democratic participation in particular at local and regional level.**

#### Why it matters?

Because it represents one of the key CoR actions in following up on the European Year of Youth (EYY) and on the COFE conclusions on the democratic participation of young people in social, political and civic life.

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#### How it will be followed up

The CoR will continue its work to consolidate youth participation in democracy at EU, national, regional and local level. This will be done by fully exploiting the young people-oriented actions in the framework of the European Year of Skills 2023 and by preparing awareness-raising actions focussing on youth in view of the European elections in 2024.

## Addressing the climate and energy crises and their social impact on local communities

### Trees for Life initiative resulted in 300 000 trees pledged by LRAs across the EU

#### Why it matters?

Because by mobilising members, YEPs and local councilors, the CoR showed that Local and Regional Authorities' commitment to tackling the climate crisis goes beyond mere statements. This CoR led action became one of the highest contributors to the 3 billion additional trees initiative launched by the European Commission.



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#### How it will be followed up

The CoR will continue to promote its Trees for Life campaign with the aim of triggering more trees pledges and increase awareness-raising of EU action on climate. Furthermore, through the Green Deal Funding Alert, it will offer a channel to directly inform local and regional authorities on funding opportunities within the EU.

### Launch of the Green Deal Handbook on Adaptation, a practical tool developed in house that triggered other EU institutions interest

#### Why it matters?

Because this interactive tool assists local and regional authorities in implementing green deal policies and accessing financial and technical assistance. Its launch reinforces the work of the Green Deal Going Local working group to establish itself as a strong and relevant actor and representative of local and regional authorities in the green transition.



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#### How it will be followed up

The working group will, under a new Chair, take stock of the Green Deal Going Local campaign, its activities, its achievements and potential channels for further improvements.

### CoR Delegation influenced the EP Resolution and the Council conclusions on COP27

#### Why it matters?

Because the CoR played a significant role in boosting subnational climate diplomacy ahead of COP27. This resulted in the EP calling for a much stronger role for LRAs and in the Council highlighting the importance of regional initiatives, therefore impacting the whole UNFCCC process.



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#### How it will be followed up

The CoR will further develop its involvement and contribution to the UNFCCC process on the road to COP28, including closer cooperation with the Spanish Presidency of the Council. It will continue its efforts on supporting local and regional authorities in dealing with the energy crisis and representing their views and best practices at EU level.



See more:

**CoR mentioned in the COP15 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) decision as a key partner to support the implementation of its Plan of Action.**

### Why it matters?

The Plan of Action acknowledges the European Committee of the Regions as a key partner in ensuring an increased engagement of subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in supporting the successful implementation of national biodiversity strategies within the global biodiversity framework. The plan was one of the main demands of the CoR, as it identifies, enhances and disseminates policy tools, guidelines, financial mechanisms and programs that facilitate subnational and local action on biodiversity.



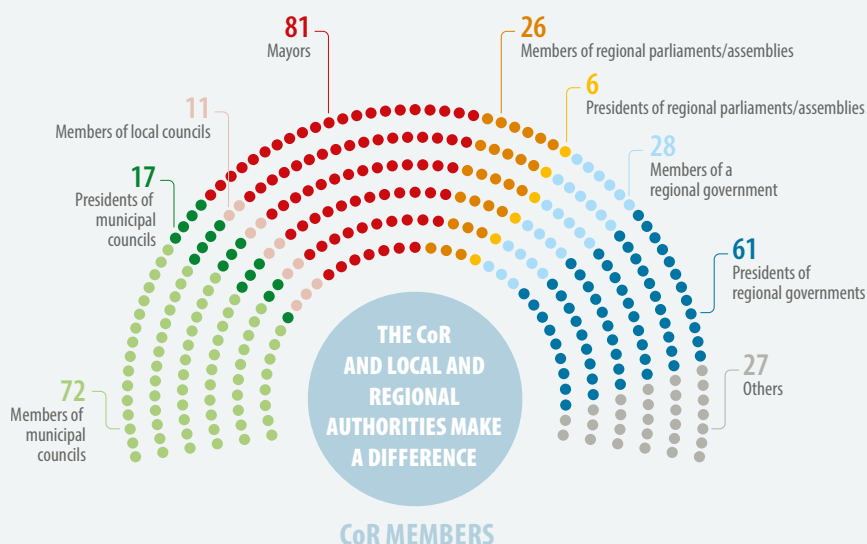
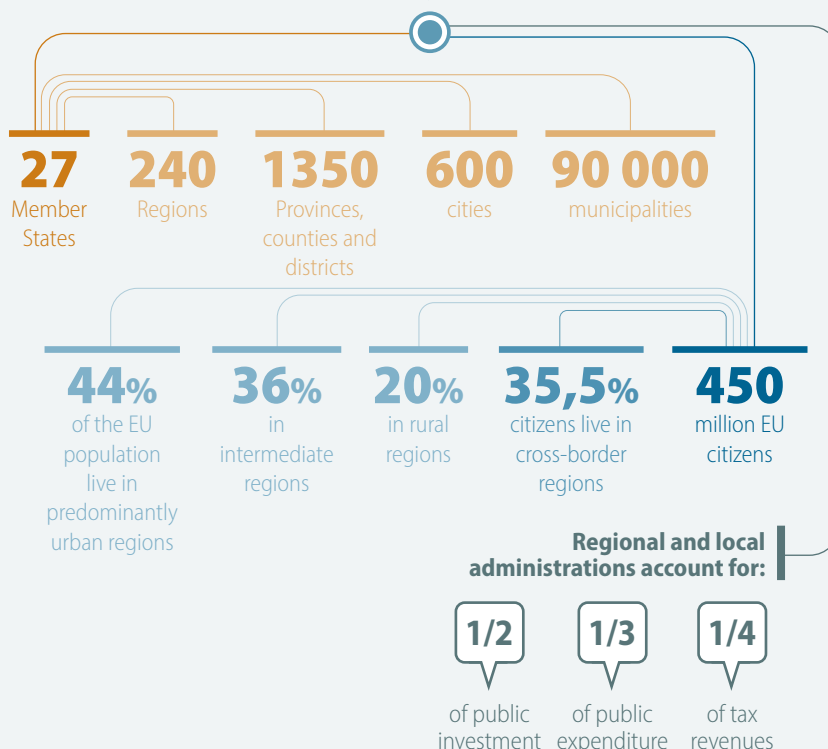
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### How it will be followed up

The CoR will continue to play a leading role in pushing for more ambitious biodiversity targets while calling for a formal recognition of subnational governments in protecting ecosystems and restoring natural habitats.

## Facts & Figures

### The regions and cities of the European Union



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## European Committee of the Regions



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Created in 1994, after the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty, the European Committee of the Regions is the EU's assembly of 329 regional and local representatives from all 27 Member States, representing over 447 million Europeans.

Its main objectives are to involve regional and local authorities and the communities they represent in the EU's decision-making process and to inform them about EU policies. The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council have to consult the Committee in policy areas affecting regions and cities. It can appeal to the Court of Justice of the European Union as a means of upholding EU law where there are breaches to the subsidiarity principle or failures to respect regional or local authorities.

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