

# Measuring femicide in Finland

## Femicide

Femicide can be understood as the extreme end of a continuum of violence against women that happens in all European Union Member States <sup>(1)</sup>. There is no standard agreed definition of femicide among EU Member States or around the world. The lack of a uniform definition hampers the measurement of femicide, which becomes invisible among general homicide data <sup>(2)</sup>. The general concept of femicide refers to the killing of a woman or girl because of her gender. The United Nations Vienna Declaration on Femicide <sup>(3)</sup> was the first to identify different types of femicide, including:

- murder of women as a result of intimate partner violence;
- torture and misogynistic slaying of women;
- killing of women and girls in the name of honour;
- targeted killing of women and girls in the context of armed conflict;
- dowry-related killing of women;
- killing of women and girls because of their sexual orientation and gender identity;
- killing of aboriginal and indigenous women and girls because of their gender;
- female infanticide and gender-based sex selection foeticide;
- genital mutilation-related deaths;
- accusations of witchcraft;
- other types of femicide connected with gangs, organised crime, drug dealers, human trafficking and the proliferation of small arms.

## About the study

Data collection systems vary widely across EU Member States, as they draw on various sources. To improve the collection of administrative data on femicide, EIGE has been working to establish indicators that can harmonise data collection processes across Member States' jurisdictions.

EIGE has collected information from a wide variety of stakeholders through a questionnaire sent to official data providers and an online survey filled in by national experts. The ultimate goal is to identify a classification system of femicide with mutually agreed variables that can be used by all EU Member States.

## Femicide in Finland

There is no definition of femicide in the Finnish Criminal Code. However, this type of offence falls under other provisions of Finnish criminal law. The relevant sections for identifying femicide cases are, inter alia, Sections 1–3 of Chapter 21 and Sections 5–6 of Chapter 21 in connection with Sections 8–9 <sup>(4)</sup>.

### Chapter 21: Section 1 – Manslaughter

(1) A person who kills another shall be sentenced for manslaughter to imprisonment.

### Chapter 21: Section 2 – Murder

(1) If the manslaughter is (1) premeditated, (2) committed in a particularly brutal or cruel manner, (3) committed by causing serious danger to the public, or (4) committed by killing a public official on duty maintaining public order or public security, or because of an official action, and the offence is aggravated also when assessed as a whole, the offender shall be sentenced for murder to life imprisonment.

### Chapter 21: Section 3 – Killing

(1) If the manslaughter, in view of the exceptional circumstances of the offence, the motives of the offender or other related circumstances, when assessed as a whole, is to be deemed committed under mitigating circumstances, the offender shall be sentenced for killing to imprisonment for at least 4 and at most 10 years.

### Chapter 21: Sections 5 and 6 – Assault or aggravated assault, in connection with Sections 8 and 9 – Negligent homicide or aggravated negligent homicide

A person who employs physical violence on another or, without such violence, damages the health of another, causes pain to another or renders another unconscious or in a comparable condition, shall be sentenced for an assault crime to a fine or to imprisonment for at most 10 years.

A person who through negligence causes the death of another shall be sentenced for negligent homicide to a fine or to imprisonment for at most 6 years.

## Methodology for data collection

To address the lack of comparable data on violence against women, EIGE developed 13 indicators with uniform definitions of the multiple forms of intimate partner violence, femicide and rape <sup>(5)</sup>. A detailed report regarding the methodology for the collection, reporting and validation of data, along with detailed metadata per country, has been published <sup>(6)</sup>. The data presented in this factsheet refers to indicator 9 on intimate partner violence: 'Women victims of intimate femicide (aged 18 and over) committed by a male intimate partner (aged 18 and over), as a share of the women victims of homicide aged 18 and over'. The data can be accessed through EIGE's Gender Statistics Database ([https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/browse/genvio/genvio\\_int](https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/browse/genvio/genvio_int)).

<sup>(1)</sup> This factsheet includes data collected before the United Kingdom left the EU, so the reference to EU Member States includes the United Kingdom.

<sup>(2)</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2017), *Glossary of definitions of rape, femicide and intimate partner violence*, EIGE, Vilnius.

<sup>(3)</sup> UN Economic and Social Council (2012), *Vienna Declaration on Femicide*, UN, New York ([https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ\\_Sessions/CCPCJ\\_22/E-CN15-2013-NGO1/E-CN15-2013-NGO1\\_E.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ_Sessions/CCPCJ_22/E-CN15-2013-NGO1/E-CN15-2013-NGO1_E.pdf)).

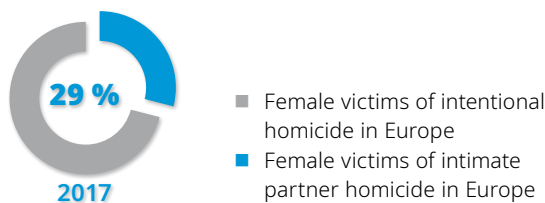
<sup>(4)</sup> For more information, see indicator 9 of the Gender Statistics Database ([https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/genvio\\_int\\_adm\\_ipv\\_\\_ipv\\_indic\\_9/metadata](https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/genvio_int_adm_ipv__ipv_indic_9/metadata)) and the Finnish Criminal Code (<https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1889/en18890039.pdf>).

<sup>(5)</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2017), *Terminology and Indicators for Data Collection: Rape, femicide and intimate partner violence*, EIGE, Vilnius.

<sup>(6)</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2020), *Intimate Partner Violence: Data collection methodology*, EIGE, Vilnius.

### Intimate partner femicide in Europe

From a statistical perspective, and based on the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) highlights that intentional homicide of female victims perpetrated by intimate partners or family members is the most prevalent form of femicide <sup>(7)</sup>. UNODC estimates that, in Europe <sup>(8)</sup>, about 29 % of female victims of homicide <sup>(9)</sup> are killed intentionally by an intimate partner.



### Intimate partner femicide in Finland

From a statistical perspective, the working definition that the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) uses for femicide is 'killing of a woman by an intimate partner and the death of a woman as a consequence of a practice that is harmful to women. Intimate partner is understood as a former or current spouse or partner, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim'. In Finland, femicides would be covered by the sections of the Criminal Code identified above. According to data from the Finnish Homicide Monitor, in 2017 there were 23 female <sup>(10)</sup> victims of homicide <sup>(11)</sup>, of whom 61 % were victims of intimate partner femicide ( $n = 14$ ) <sup>(12)</sup>.



## Female victims of homicide and intimate partner femicide in Finland

The administrative data used in Figure 1 is collected by the Finnish Homicide Monitor. EIGE has gathered data on homicide and intimate partner femicide for 2014 to 2018.

Figure 1 includes data regarding female victims of homicide and intimate partner femicide. The numbers of both types of crime decreased by over 50 % between 2014 and 2015, but since then an increasing trend in both has been observed.

### Type of relationship between the victim and the perpetrator

The Finnish Homicide Monitor collects data on the type of relationship between the victim and the perpetrator according to the following classifications: (i) partner, (ii) ex-partner, (iii) family member or relative, (iv) stranger and (v) acquaintance.

Figure 1: Female victims of homicide and intimate partner femicide in Finland



Source: EIGE's Gender Statistics Database.

<sup>(7)</sup> UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2019), *Global Study on Homicide – Gender-related killing of women and girls*, UNODC, Vienna.

<sup>(8)</sup> Data from UNODC includes European jurisdictions other than the EU Member States. There is no estimation of the percentage of female victims of homicide who were victims of intimate partner femicide limited to EU Member States.

<sup>(9)</sup> The term 'homicide' is used when reporting UNODC data given that it is the term used in the original source (p. 17). The gender-related motivation is not recorded, because of the lack of a standardised definition. However, it is clear from the report that this data quantifies a significant share of all gender-related killings of women and girls.

<sup>(10)</sup> The term 'female' is used instead of 'woman', as it is not always possible to disaggregate data by the victim's age, meaning that the victim could be either a woman or a girl aged under 18 years.

<sup>(11)</sup> The term 'homicide' is used given that the gender-related motivation for the intentional homicides is not recorded, and therefore it is not possible to classify all the killings as femicides.

<sup>(12)</sup> Data is available at: [https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/genvio\\_int\\_adm\\_ipv\\_ipv\\_indic\\_9/metadata](https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/genvio_int_adm_ipv_ipv_indic_9/metadata)

## Collecting administrative data on femicide



**What is administrative data?** Administrative data is collected for recording, organising and monitoring purposes<sup>(13)</sup>. Administrative data on femicide can be obtained from different institutions, namely those that are involved in criminal investigations, prosecutions, the punishment of perpetrators and victim support – that is, institutions in the **police and justice sectors**. Administrative data might include information about the prevalence and types of femicide, the characteristics of the victim, the perpetrator and their relationship, the characteristics of and motive for the crime, and data about the criminal process.

In order to help policymakers design effective policies to combat femicide, it is necessary to understand the nature and prevalence of the issue. The collection of comparable administrative data on femicide across Member States is key to gaining this understanding<sup>(14)</sup>. It is particularly important that the motive for the killing is established by the police or judiciary and that this is then translated into standardised statistical data. The ICCS is a standardised tool for obtaining comparable

administrative data. However, it lacks a gender-related motive variable. This means that the concept of femicide cannot be properly operationalised, which prevents the collection of data that fully captures the phenomenon. The collection of data on femicide would make the issue more visible, which would strengthen the political will to eradicate it. Administrative data on femicide also enables countries to monitor trends over time and evaluate the effectiveness of measures.

## What administrative data on femicide is available in Finland?

| Definition of femicide and availability of data      |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Definition of femicide used for statistical purposes | No                 |
| Collection of data on femicide                       | Yes, official data |

Two institutions collect and analyse data on femicide in Finland: Official Statistics of Finland<sup>(15)</sup> and the Finnish Homicide Monitor (University of Helsinki)<sup>(16)</sup>. Where data on femicide in this

factsheet is drawn from these institutions, this is indicated by <sup>(a)</sup> and <sup>(b)</sup>, respectively. There may be other institutions or researchers who collect and analyse data on femicide in Finland.

|   | Institution <sup>(a)</sup><br>Official Statistics of Finland  | Institution <sup>(b)</sup><br>Finnish Homicide Monitor (University of Helsinki)            |
|---|---|--|
| Type of data collection                               | Official  | Official   |
| Sources of data                                       | Police crime investigations   | Police crime investigations  |
| Parameters for establishing the killing as a femicide | If the victim and the perpetrator are cohabiting, a married couple or a former married or cohabiting couple, or if they have a common child | Victim–perpetrator relationship, motive and other relevant variables prior to the femicide |
| Regularity of data collection                         | Annual  | Continuous   |
| Availability of data to the public                    | Data publicly available   | Data not publicly available  |

In line with EIGE's data collection, official administrative data on the total number of female victims of homicide and intimate partner femicide is displayed for 2014 to 2019<sup>(a)</sup>. However, the

University of Helsinki has been collecting data on femicide since 2002<sup>(b)</sup>. The official data that is available shows that, in 2019, there were 22 female victims of homicide in Finland<sup>(a)</sup>.

<sup>(13)</sup> UN Women (2020), *A synthesis of evidence on the collection and use of administrative data on violence against women*, UN Women, New York.

<sup>(14)</sup> It is important to note that data and statistics should be produced, developed and disseminated in compliance with the principles in the *European Statistics Code of Practice*: Eurostat (2018), *European Statistics Code of Practice*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/4031688/8971242/KS-02-18-142-EN-N.pdf/e7f85f07-91db-4312-8118-f729c75878c7?t=1528447068000>).

<sup>(15)</sup> [https://www.stat.fi/til/rpk/2018/15/rpk\\_2018\\_15\\_2019-06-06\\_tie\\_001\\_en.html](https://www.stat.fi/til/rpk/2018/15/rpk_2018_15_2019-06-06_tie_001_en.html) and [https://pxnet2.stat.fi/PXWeb/pxweb/en/StatFin/StatFin\\_\\_oik\\_\\_optula/stat-fin\\_optula\\_pxt\\_001.px/](https://pxnet2.stat.fi/PXWeb/pxweb/en/StatFin/StatFin__oik__optula/stat-fin_optula_pxt_001.px/)

<sup>(16)</sup> <https://www.helsinki.fi/en/institute-of-criminology-and-legal-policy/research/research-projects/finnish-homicide-monitor>

● Official data available    ● Non-official data available    ○ No data available

| Data availability                    | 2014 (a) (b) | 2015 (a) (b) | 2016 (a) (b) | 2017 (a) (b) | 2018 (a) (b) | 2019 (a) (b) |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Female victims of homicide           | ●            | ●            | ●            | ●            | ●            | ●            |
| Victims of intimate partner femicide | ●            | ●            | ●            | ●            | ●            | ●            |

Official sources collect and analyse data on intimate partner femicide, but not on other types of femicide. The Finnish Homicide Monitor (University of Helsinki) is part of the European Homicide Monitor (EHM), which began in 2009 and ran for 3 years until 2011, as a pilot project implemented in the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden and financed by the EU. The architecture of the EHM is

based on three main principles: (i) a general homicide monitor of all types of victims and incidents; (ii) disaggregating overall homicide patterns and trends – this helps to specify which subtypes of homicide account for possible general patterns, such as national differentials and even cross-national trends; and (iii) recruiting new countries to the EHM and adopting the coding system.

| Types of femicide                 |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Intimate partner femicide (a) (b) | ● |
| Family-related femicide           | ○ |
| Child femicide                    | ○ |
| Prostitution-related femicide     | ○ |
| Robbery-related femicide          | ○ |
| Other types of femicide           | ○ |

| Characteristics of the victim and the perpetrator                                 | Victim | Perpetrator |
|---|--------|-------------|
| Age (a) (b)   | ●      | ●           |
| Sex (a) (b)   | ●      | ●           |
| Gender identity   | ○      | ○           |
| Sexual orientation  | ○      | ○           |
| Nationality (b)   | ○      | ○           |
| Education (b)   | ○      | ○           |
| Occupation (b)  | ○      | ○           |
| Applied for protection order (a) (b)  | ●      | n/a         |
| Active protection order (a) (b)   | n/a    | ●           |
| Socioeconomic profile   | ○      | ○           |
| Recidivist status (a)   | n/a    | ●           |
| Alcohol/drug abuse  | ○      | ○           |
| Victim–perpetrator relationship (a) (b)   | ●      | ●           |
| Other (b)<br>Use of services (shelter), previous complains, feeling of fear, etc. | ●      | ○           |

| Motive for femicide  | Contextual variables                                    |
|--|---|
| Context of sexual violence                                       | Variables that indicate gender-related motivation (b) ● |
| Prior intimate partner violence (b)                              | <b>Investigating femicide</b>                           |
| Prior harassment and/or stalking by the perpetrator              | Protocol for investigating femicide cases ○             |
| Prior genital mutilation   | <b>Analysing femicide</b>                               |
| Prior complaints or requests for protection measures (b)         | Homicide reviews / domestic homicide reviews ○          |
| Recent separation (b)  | Analysis of court cases (b) ●                           |
| 'Shame or dishonour' brought on the family (b)                   | Administrative data from police (a) (b) ●               |
| Dowry-related problems   | Administrative data on cause of death (b) ●             |
| Refusal to enter into an arranged marriage                       | Media information ○                                     |
| Political role / feminism / activism of the woman who was killed | Other ○   |
| Context of prostitution / pornography                            |   |
| Human trafficking context  |   |
| Targeted killing of a woman in an armed conflict                 |   |
| Sexual orientation and gender identity                           |   |
| Disfigurement of the body  |   |
| Other (b)  |   |
| Revenge, mental illness, jealousy, honour-related                |   |

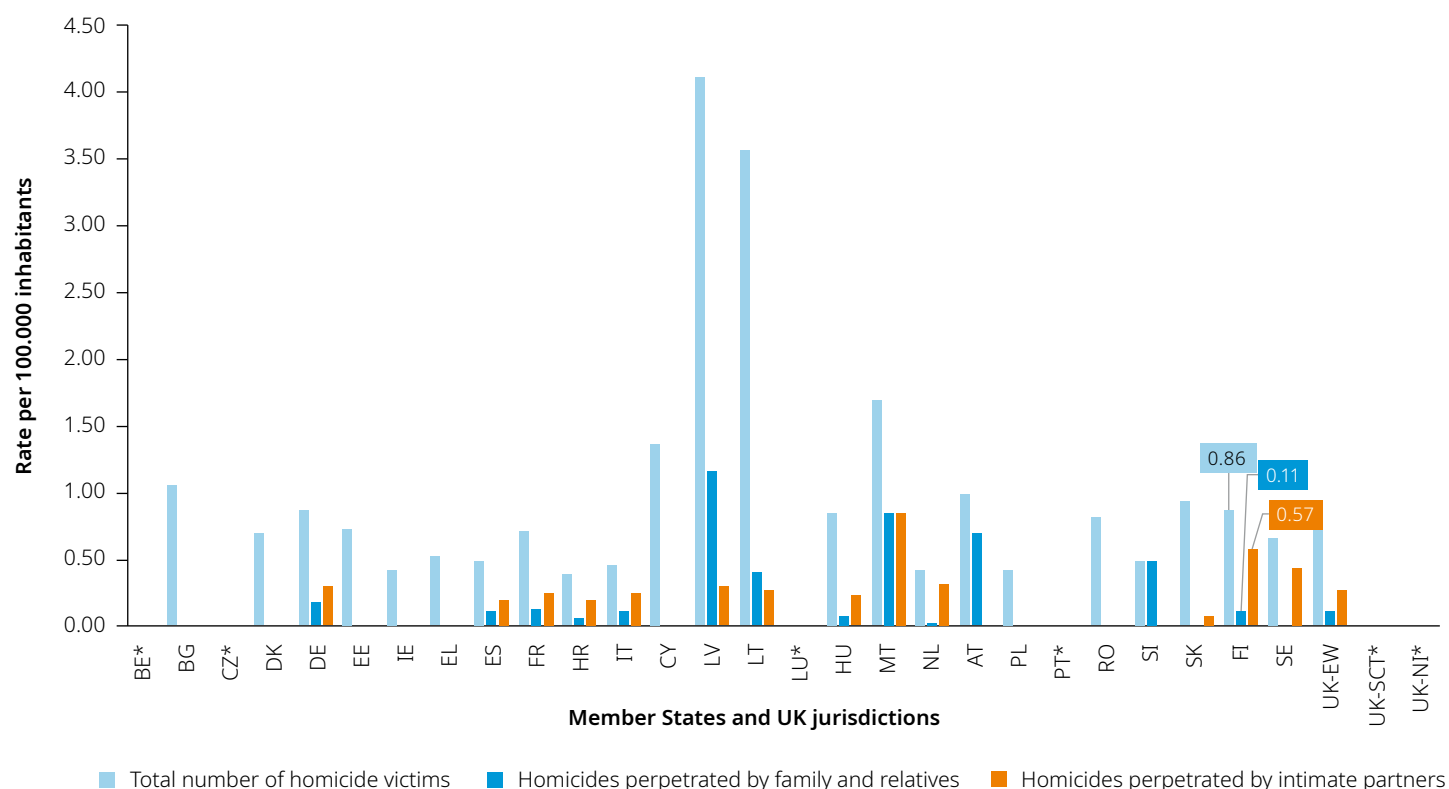
NB: n/a, not applicable.

## Female homicide in the EU Member States and the United Kingdom (Eurostat)

At the EU level, based on the ICCS, Eurostat compiles data on intentional female homicides, focusing on intimate partner and family-related homicides, disaggregated by age, gender and relationship with the perpetrator. The data from Eurostat presented in Figure 2 reveals that, in 2018, the rate of female victims of homicide in Finland was 0.86 per 100 000 inhabitants, the ninth highest rate among the 24 Member States for

which information is available and the United Kingdom. Finland has the fourth lowest rate (0.11) of female victims of homicide perpetrated by family and relatives, together with Spain (out of 14 jurisdictions), and the second highest rate (0.57) of female victims of intentional homicide perpetrated by intimate partners (out of 15 jurisdictions).

Figure 2: Rate of female victims of intentional homicide in EU Member States and the United Kingdom (2018)



(\*) No data available.

NB: UK-EW, England and Wales, United Kingdom; UK-NI, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom; UK-SCT, Scotland, United Kingdom.

Source: Eurostat.

### Data information

Eurostat regularly publishes figures on crime and criminal justice. Intentional homicides are recorded by the police in each of the Member States and the United Kingdom. It is not possible to collect information about the gender-related motivation for homicide, the sex of the perpetrator or the age of the perpetrator using this database. Therefore, it is not possible to provide precise data on femicide.

Figures for 2008 onwards are based on the joint Eurostat-UNODC data collection. In this database, homicide is classified by the ICCS.

Data is available on Eurostat’s website (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>).

## Key findings

- Finland does not have a legal definition of femicide. However, the perpetrator is liable for manslaughter, murder or killing.
- There are two main institutions that collect and analyse data for the identification of femicide. Data is available for intimate partner femicide family-related and other types of homicide.
- EIGE has gathered data on homicide and intimate partner femicide for 2014 to 2018; however, data is available in Finland for 2002 onwards. Available data includes information about the characteristics of the victim and the perpetrator, and about the motive.
- The Finnish Homicide Monitor, maintained by the Institute of Criminology and Legal Policy at the University of Helsinki, has emerged as a best practice example, showing that obtaining high-quality data is possible even without changes in legislation.
- Part of the success of this system is the use of a standard electronic form for collecting data and making data submission mandatory for all investigating police officers.
- The Finnish Homicide Monitor is considered the most accurate and in-depth source of femicide data in Finland. It has a victim-based architecture, and contains 90 variables, including relationship, motives, signals... that are examined during preliminary-closed investigations. Data collected by Official Statistics of Finland has been considered a good example in data collection, since the victim is used as the counting unit; a full mapping of the Criminal Code to the ICCS has already taken place and the characteristics of victims and perpetrators (sex and age) are aligned with EIGE's requirements.

## Recommendations

The collection of accurate and comparable data on femicide by the police and justice sectors across Member States helps to increase knowledge and improve responses to prevent femicide<sup>(17)</sup>. It is therefore important to:

- develop a femicide definition for statistical data collection, in order to reflect the specific circumstances relating to the killing of women;
- implement a process of continuous data collection;
- establish comprehensive data collection, adding variables that are important for detecting key aspects of femicide, such as those describing the context and the circumstances of the killing, the gender-related motivation, and the victim and perpetrator characteristics, in order to systematise and harmonise the collection of data for statistical use;
- cross-reference the variables of the victim and those of the perpetrator, and analyse them using an intersectional approach;
- ensure that the gender dimension of homicide data is made visible.

This factsheet is based on information from EIGE's study 'Advancing administrative data collection on intimate partner violence and gender-related killings of women' (2021) and has been prepared by the Alternative and Response Women's Association (UMAR). For more information, visit <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/femicide>.

<sup>(17)</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2018), *Recommendations to improve data collection on intimate partner violence by the police and justice sector – Finland*, EIGE, Vilnius; European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2017), *Recommendations for the EU to improve data collection on violence against women*, EIGE, Vilnius; European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2021), *EIGE's indicators on intimate partner violence, rape and femicide: Recommendations to improve data quality, availability and comparability*, EIGE, Vilnius.

### European Institute for Gender Equality

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is the EU knowledge centre on gender equality. EIGE supports policymakers and all relevant institutions in their efforts to make equality between women and men a reality for all Europeans by providing them with specific expertise and comparable and reliable data on gender equality in Europe.

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