

IMPLEMENTING SME POLICY TOOLS

WHAT'S THE CONTEXT?

This seminar is co-organised by the *OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme* and the *OECD LEED Trento Centre*, within the framework of the *Enterprise Policy Performance Assessment for Eastern Partnership countries*. Organised with the support of the European Commission, this project aims to support SME policy development in the six Eastern Partnership countries participating in the *OECD Eastern Europe and South Caucasus (EESC) Initiative* (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine).

The OECD and its partner organisations (EU, EBRD and ETF) have developed a framework for co-operation which is set to provide an in-depth evaluation of the SME policy environment based on OECD best practices and the ten guiding principles of the EU Small Business Act. The *Enterprise Policy Performance Assessment* approach builds on policy dialogue and peer-review mechanisms based on independent assessments and government self-evaluation to improve the enterprise policy framework in place. The assessment is conducted using a common template comprised of a set of policy indicators developed by the OECD in consultation with partner organisations and the European Union. The results of the policy evaluation exercise will be presented in a final report of the *Enterprise Policy Performance Assessment for Eastern Partnership countries*, to be released in June 2012.

WHAT WILL BE DISCUSSED?

The seminar will focus on **Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Policy Tools and Instruments**, with a selection of themes identified as priority areas in the *Enterprise Policy Performance Assessment*. The seminar will contribute significantly to the project, as it will provide a more practical understanding of the instruments promoted by the EU Small Business Act. The findings and conclusions from the seminar will be the impetus for key contributions to the final report of the *Enterprise Policy Performance Assessment for Eastern Partnership countries*.

The seminar will address the following themes, which have been identified as key priorities for the development of SMEs in the Eastern Partnership region:

- Business co-operation and local governance
- Technology, innovation and green growth
- Access to finance

WHO WILL BE THERE?

The OECD capacity building seminar is addressed to participants committed to the topic of SME development and policy, and willing to contribute to build a highly interactive environment by sharing their experiences and learning from each other. Participants will include national policy-makers and practitioners, experts in SME development and/or SME policy, and representatives of SMEs in the region.

WHAT'S THE FORMAT?

The seminar will be structured around a mix of presentations by invited experts and OECD staff, followed by discussion and group work using case studies and concrete experiences developed by participants prior to the seminar. The working language of the seminar will be **English**, and it is essential that all participants can communicate effectively in English.

The workshop is conceived, more than a traditional and conventional "vertical capacity building" event, as a system aimed at establishing a common knowledge and experience exchange platform among the participants. New and fresh knowledge is expected to be generated through such exchanges and due to the combination of the experience and knowledge all the participants (speakers, case study presentations, attendees, etc.) will bring.

Tuesday, 25 October 2011 (venue: OECD, vicolo San Marco 1, Trento)

8.30 – 11.30

OPENING

8.30 - 9.00

Registration of participants

9.00 - 9.30

Welcome addresses

Stefano Barbieri, Director, LEED Trento Centre for Local Development, OECD

Daniel Quadbeck, Policy Analyst, Eurasia Competitiveness Programme, OECD

Volker Genetzky, Policy Officer, DG Enterprise, European Commission

9.30 - 10.00

Introduction of the seminar structure, organisation and contents

10.00 - 11.00

Presentation of participants

11.00 - 11.30

Coffee break

11.30 – 18.00

BUSINESS CO-OPERATION AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Examples of business co-operation between SMEs and other actors include the “triple helix model of innovation” (university-industry-government) and public-private partnerships (PPP). **During the start-up and growth phases, SMEs rely heavily on the local environment and business climate.** In other words, they are largely dependent upon the existence of “favourable local externalities”. Easy access to qualified services, the possibility to establish synergies with other actors at the local level, the presence of effective local government, and the activities of business service providers are crucial for their operations to succeed.

In order to generate local economic growth, **policy needs to strengthen the innovation capabilities of individuals, firms, and research and training organisations, both directly and indirectly by supporting the wider environment in which they operate.** It is therefore important to develop strategies that identify and tackle the market, government and systemic failures affecting innovation performance at a local level, particularly in the areas of research and development, human capital, SME innovation absorption capacity and knowledge spillovers.

11.30 - 12.30

Overcoming business weaknesses: business cooperation and the role of Public Private Partnerships, **Paolo Rosso**, Senior Expert Advisor to the OECD

12.30 - 14.00

Lunch break

14.00 - 14.30

Trentino Sviluppo: the SME service value chain in Trentino, **Luca Capra**, Director, Entrepreneurship and development area, Trentino Sviluppo

14.30 - 15.00

Debate

15.00 - 15.30

Entrepreneurial learning and workforce development, **Andrea-Rosalinde Hofer**, Policy Analyst, OECD LEED Trento Centre for Local Development

15.30 - 16.00

Debate

16.00 - 16.30

Coffee break

16.30 - 17.30

Country case study presentations:

Ukraine case study: **Development and support of Small and Medium enterprises in Ukraine. Deregulation issues,** **Svitlana Svyshcheva**, Deputy Head, State Committee of Ukraine for Regulatory Policy and Entrepreneurship (SCURPE)

Belarus case study: **Subcontracting as a key factor of economic efficiency,** **Dmitry Kolkin**, Head of Strategic Planning Department, Ministry of Economy

17.30 - 18.00

Conclusions of the working day

Wednesday, 26 October 2011

9.00 - 18.00

TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND GREEN GROWTH

“Green growth means fostering economic growth and development while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which our well-being relies. To do this it must catalyse investment and innovation which will underpin sustained growth and give rise to new economic opportunities.” OECD Green Growth Strategy

Innovation in goods, services, processes and practices can help accelerate economic recovery and put countries back on a path to sustainable and greener growth.

In 2007, Ministers of all OECD countries acknowledged the need for a cross-government policy to harness innovation as a major driver of productivity that can strengthen economic growth and development. Stronger innovation, combined with new international partnerships, can also help address pressing global issues such as climate change, health, food security and poverty.

Local actors (businesses, governments, and institutions) may find themselves under particular pressure in meeting the challenge of the transition to a greener economy - while **among the network of enterprises that underpin local economies there is real concern about what impact adaptation to climate change will have on the labour market: a drop in overall demand for labour, and a shift in the type of skills needed which may give rise to a "green skills gap" for companies.** To address these challenges society will need to provide opportunities for new businesses, allowing knowledge, innovation intensive activities and industries to develop and flourish at a local level.

9.00 - 9.30

Promoting SME innovation: the challenge of a territory, **Alessandra Proto**, Policy Analyst, OECD LEED Trento Centre for Local Development

9.30 - 10.00

Debate

10.00 - 10.30

Innovation and green growth, **Stefano Marani**, Environmental Analyst and Senior Expert Advisor to the OECD

10.30 - 11.00

Debate

11.00 - 11.30

Coffee break

11.30 - 12.30

Country case study presentations:

Armenia case study: **Start-up entrepreneurs support programme**, **Gegham Petrosyan**, Deputy Executive Director, SME Development National Centre (DNC)

Georgia case study: **State Program “Cheap Credit” (2008-2009)**, **Lali Gogoberidze**, Head of Economic Analysis and Policy Department, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development

12.30 - 14.00

Lunch break

14.00 - 14.30

Transfer to Bruno Kessler Foundation

14.30 - 14.50

The case of Bruno Kessler Foundation: A research partner for SMEs, **Giuliano Muzio**, Director, Area for Innovation and Relationship with the Local Environment, Bruno Kessler Foundation

14.50 - 15.10

The Trentino technology cluster for energy and the environment, “Habitech”, **Gianni Lazzari**, CEO, Habitech

15.10 - 15.30

DiGeSPo project and distributed cogeneration from a small scale concentrated solar power, **Luigi Crema**, Senior Researcher, Renewable Energies and Environmental Technologies Unit, Bruno Kessler Foundation

15.30 - 16.00

Debate

16.00 - 17.30

Study visit of the Bruno Kessler Foundation

17.30 - 18.00

Transfer to the hotel

Thursday, 27 October 2011

9.00 – 14.00

ENTERPRISE POLICY PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

The objective of the *Enterprise Policy Performance Assessment* is to support the development and implementation of effective policy measures directed at promoting a strong private enterprise sector and indirectly supporting employment generation and innovation. This will be achieved through a process which includes the benchmarking of policy performance at the country and regional level. Strong and weak points in policy elaboration and implementation are identified through a process of consultation with private sector associations, governments of the region and donors.

The initial stage of the Eastern Partnership Enterprise Policy Performance Assessment involved an assessment of seven key principles of the EU Small Business Act. To complement these results, the OECD and its partner organisations (EU, EBRD and ETF) have decided to include an assessment of the remaining three principles:

- Principle II – Ensure that honest entrepreneurs who have faced bankruptcy quickly get a second chance
- Principle VII – Help SMEs to benefit more from the opportunities offered by the Single Market
- Principle IX – Enable SMEs to turn environmental challenges into opportunities

This will ensure the provision of a comprehensive framework to support SME policy development in the six Eastern Partnership countries participating in the *OECD Eastern Europe and South Caucasus (EESC) Initiative* (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine).

9.00 - 9.30

Next steps in the Enterprise Policy Performance Assessment, Daniel Quadbeck, Policy Analyst, Eurasia Competitiveness Programme, OECD

9.30 - 11.00

Introduction of three additional SBA principles, Volker Genetzky, Policy Officer, DG Enterprise, European Commission

- Principle VII – Help SMEs to benefit more from the opportunities offered by the Single Market
- Principle IX – Enable SMEs to turn environmental challenges into opportunities

11.00 - 11.30

Coffee break

11.30 - 12.00

- Principle II – Ensure that honest entrepreneurs who have faced bankruptcy quickly get a second chance

12.00 - 12.30

Next steps and Discussion

12.30 - 14.00

Lunch break

Thursday, 27 October 2011

14.00 – 18.00

ACCESS TO FINANCE

The crisis has severely affected SMEs' ability to access financing, creating liquidity problems and under-utilised production capacity. As a result, access to capital remains one of the most significant challenges for the creation, growth, and survival of SMEs and individual entrepreneurs.

Credit guarantee schemes have proven to be an effective solution in dealing with constraints such as lack of credit collateral. However, comprehensive efforts are needed to bolster the early stages (i.e. pre-seed, seed and start-up) of SMEs, which are typically marked by negative cash flows and underdeveloped business models. This can be achieved by leveraging the personal assets and capital of entrepreneurs, or through the creation of business angel networks and venture capital markets. Successful approaches to developing early stage venture capital markets include both tax-based programmes and programmes that use the government's ability to leverage private risk capital such as co-investment. [OECD Brasilia Action Statement on SME and Entrepreneurship Financing (2006)]

14.00 - 14.30

SME and Entrepreneurship Financing; tools and measures, **Lucia Cusmano**, Senior Economist, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs and Local Development, OECD

14.30 - 15.00

Debate

15.00 - 16.00

The credit guarantee schemes experience: the case of Cooperfidi, **Claudio Grassi**, Director, Cooperfidi, Trento

EBRD experience with access to finance for SMEs, **Anita Taci**, Senior Economist, EBRD

16.00 - 16.30

Coffee break

16.30 – 17.30

Country case study presentations:

Republic of Moldova case study: **Programme for attracting remittances into the economy (PARE 1+1)**, **Iulia Iabanji**, General Director, Organisation for Small and Medium Enterprise Sector Development (ODIMM)

Azerbaijan case study: **The National Entrepreneurship Fund**, **Huseyn Pashayev**, Entrepreneurship Development Policy Department, Ministry of Economic Development

17.30 - 18.00

Conclusions of the working day

All participants are cordially invited to a Farewell Dinner from 19.30 to 21.30.

Friday, 28 October 2011

9.00 - 11.30 CONCLUSIONS OF THE SEMINAR AND GROUP PHOTO

Delegations from the Eastern Partnership countries will have the opportunity to reflect on the cases and experiences discussed during the capacity building seminar, with particular attention to their own national context and with the aim of formulating tentative policy recommendations.

Following the concluding remarks from the participants and facilitators, all participants will be invited to take a group photo.

9.00 - 10.45	Group discussion
10.45 - 11.00	Conclusions of the seminar and group photo
11.00 - 11.30	<i>Coffee break</i>

11.30 - 14.30 INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS WITH SME CO-ORDINATORS

The objective of these individual meetings is to allow SME co-ordinators from the Eastern Partnership countries to discuss initial results and progress in the Enterprise Policy Performance Assessment with representatives from the OECD and its partner organisations (EU, EBRD and ETF) on a bilateral basis (approximately 30 minutes per country). Countries will also have the opportunity to raise specific questions regarding the three additional principles in the assessment, and any additional priorities looking ahead.

12.30 - 14.00	<i>Lunch break (in parallel)</i>
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All participants are cordially invited to join a guided tour of the city of Trento.

Background

“The ‘Small Business Act’ aims to improve the overall policy approach to entrepreneurship, to irreversibly anchor the ‘Think Small First’ principle in policymaking from regulation to public service, and to promote SMEs’ growth by helping them tackle the remaining problems which hamper their development.”

“Think Small First”. A “Small Business Act” for Europe

In general terms, “enterprise policy” is a broad, complex and comprehensive theme rather difficult to grasp as a whole, since it implies considering a large number of interrelated matters such as:

- Access to finance and capital markets
- Corporate management
- Research and development, and Innovation
- Markets
- Technology
- New business development
- Standards
- Raw materials market
- Management and organisation
- Green economy
- Institutional frameworks
- Tax and fiscal policy

The vital contribution of SMEs and entrepreneurship to job creation and social cohesion is widely recognised by all governments. Entrepreneurship plays a key role in relation to economic development, including local development, and entrepreneurs are key agents of change in market economies. SMEs are a major source of economic growth and can significantly contribute to the transition to a greener and sustainable economy.

Given this, the main reasons and motivations for considering SME policy tools as the focus are:

- *Weight of small business in an international economy* - SMEs are widely recognised as being one of the most dynamic local development actors and employment and wealth creators: “the overwhelming majority (99.8%) of enterprises active within the EU-27’s non-financial business economy in 2008 were SMEs – some 20.9 million – together they accounted for two out of every three jobs (66.7%) and for 58.6% of value added within the non-financial business economy. No less than two thirds of the EU-27’s non-financial business economy workforce was active in an SME in 2008” (Eurostat 2009).
- *Both strategic approach to SME development, as well as targeted policy and specific actions are widely recognised to be needed for fostering SME development* – The awareness of that concept led to the adoption of the “Small Business Act” for Europe in 2008. The assumption supporting such an Act was that “in a globally changing landscape characterised by continuous structural changes and enhanced competitive pressures, the role of SMEs in our society has become even more important as providers of employment opportunities and key players for the wellbeing of local and regional communities”
- *Close interlinks between SME and local development* – To flourish, SMEs must rely, to a greater extent than large companies, on an external local context favourable to their development. Additionally, “national and local environments in which SMEs operate are very different and so is the nature of SMEs themselves (including crafts, micro-enterprises, family owned or social economy enterprises). Policies addressing the needs of SMEs therefore need to fully recognise this diversity and fully respect the principle of subsidiarity”.
- *Specific criticalities affect SMEs stemming from the current international economic and financial crisis* – In times of international downturn it is recognised that small businesses “are generally more vulnerable for many reasons. For one, it is more difficult for them to downsize as they are already small and individually less diversified in their economic activities. Furthermore, SMEs often have a weaker financial structure (i.e. lower capitalisation, a lower or no credit rating, they may be heavily dependent on credit), and they may have fewer financing options.”

Facilitators' Bio Notes



Stefano Marani is a senior advisor to the OECD. He graduated with a degree in Earth Sciences in 1984, and currently operates as a free lance consultant and environmental analyst. From 1985, he was engaged in local and regional sustainable development projects and programmes, both in international co-operation projects and in Italy. He has over 20 years of experience in Local and Regional Administrations and Development Agencies, including ERVET (Emilia-Romagna RDA). He has also worked as a senior expert for sustainable territorial development planning, industrial ecology, green innovation, resource management, and impact assessment.

Stefano Marani has experience working in Eastern European countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Serbia, Turkey) as well as in the Latin American region (Argentina, Brazil, Columbia, Ecuador, Peru), where he spent more than 5 years working for several NGOs as a long-term key expert in local development and resource management.

He developed specific skills in managing EC Structural Funds implementation, both in Convergence and in Competitiveness and Employment Regions, in particular in assessing programmes' capacity to stimulate green innovation while, as a Thematic Expert of the Interreg IVC Secretariat of Lille (F), he was engaged for two years (2008-2009) in assessing project proposals on waste management.

From 1996 to 2002 he worked in the private sector, as expert in innovation and energy saving of the firm NERI Srl, a leader Italian company of the public lighting sector.

His key specializations include Industrial Ecology project assessment and development, local and regional strategic development planning, resource evaluation and management, and the programming, management and evaluation of European Structural Funds and Cohesion Policies.



Paolo Rosso is a senior expert advisor to OECD. He holds a degree in engineering from the University of Trieste. Since 1990, he has been working on economic and territorial development projects, and policies and programmes for integrated economic development and SME support.

Paolo Rosso has professional experience in Italy, other European countries (Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, Russia, and Turkey), and Latin America (Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Venezuela, and Mexico).

He currently works as a consultant for international corporations, governmental and international institutions (ministries, local administrations, the European commission, governmental and development agencies in Italy and abroad).

Further collaborations include those with the IADB (Inter-American Development Bank of Washington DC), OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) and ERVET (Regional Development Agency of Emilia-Romagna Region of Bologna, Italy), where he worked in the early 1990s within the Regional Planning Unit.

Between 1994 and 1995, he was director of CHEMIO SRL, an enterprise specialising in environmental and energy services for SMEs in North East Italy. Since 1996, he has been working as an independent consultant. Paolo Rosso's main expertise lies in the following areas: Regional and local economic development projects and public investment programmes in Italy, Europe and Latin America; planning, monitoring and evaluation of European Structural Funds for Cohesion and Development Policies of the European Commission; design and implementation of services for SMEs, development of productive districts, management of projects for modernisation and innovation of development policies and public administration at regional and local level, and socio-economic analysis and urban/territorial planning.

About the Organisers

OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme

The OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme was launched in 2008 to support Eurasian economies in developing more vibrant and competitive markets – both at the national and regional level – in order to generate sustainable growth. The OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme involves the OECD, governments and the private sector in a comprehensive approach that includes regional dialogue, peer review, definition of reform priorities and assistance in implementation. The regional approach allows countries to define priorities and learn from their peers how to design and implement successful policies and institutions. The Eastern Europe and South Caucasus Initiative, launched in April 2009, is part of the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme and covers the six countries of Eastern Partnership: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine. The Initiative aims to help to create a sound business climate for investment, enhance productivity, support entrepreneurship, develop the private sector, and build knowledge-based economies to render the region more competitive and attractive to foreign investment.

OECD LEED Trento Centre

The mission of the OECD LEED Trento Centre is to build capacity for local development among national and local stakeholders in OECD member and non-member countries. The Trento Centre provides assistance in the design, implementation and assessment of local development strategies in the field of entrepreneurship, innovation, small business development, tourism, employment and skills, local governance, social inclusion and evaluation. The Trento Centre supports exchanges between member and non-member countries, between national and local organisations, and between the OECD and sub-national bodies. The Trento Centre provides capacity-building seminars, distributes pedagogical materials, undertakes country reviews and organises seminars and conferences.

Contacts

For more information on the seminar, please contact

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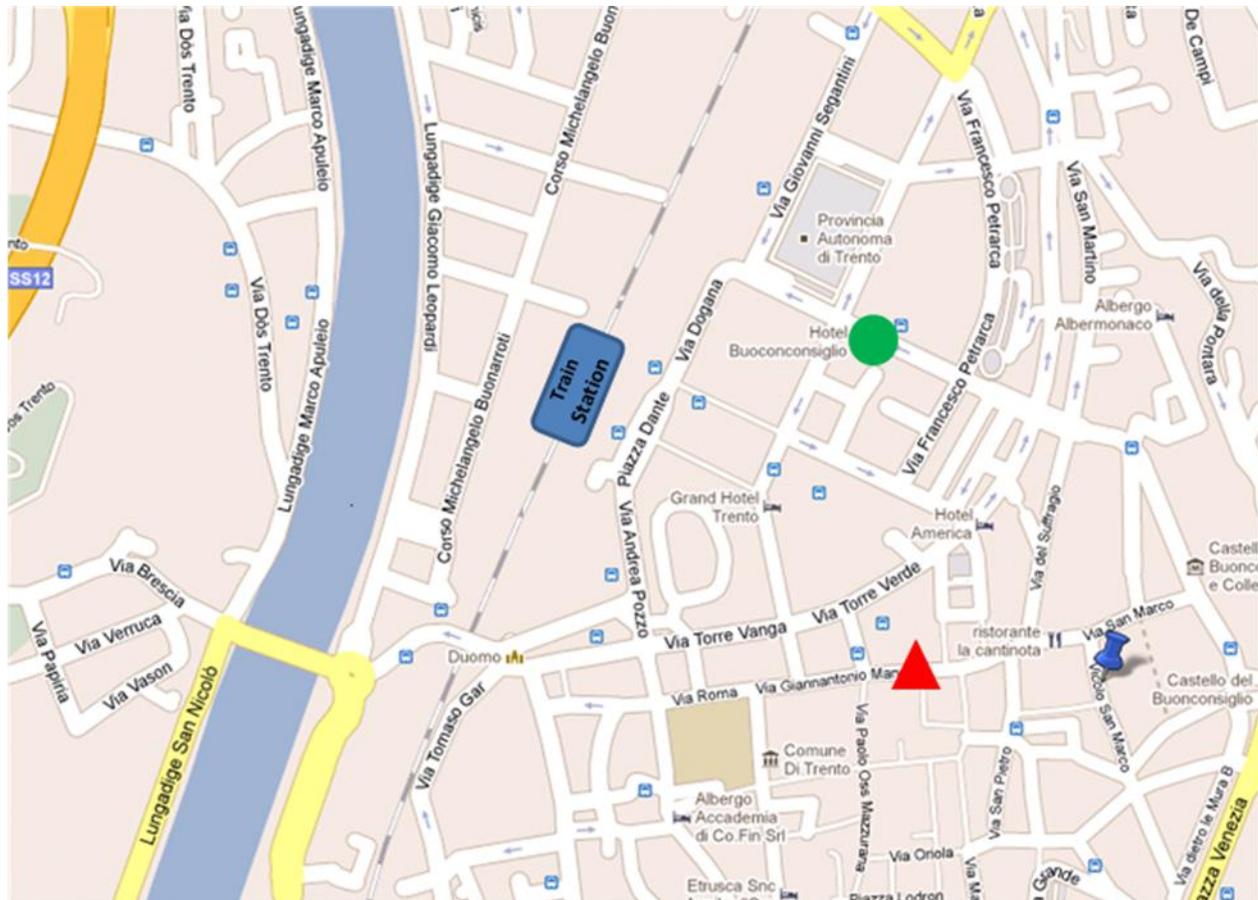
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Logistics – useful numbers and addresses

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VENUES



VENUE OF THE SEMINAR

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TAXI Service
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Pronto Soccorso (ER) in case of accidents, disease or medical emergencies dial the emergency number: 118
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Participants' list

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