

# 【欧州】【Common】

Common: The EU's domestic tourism market in corona times and the impact of the pandemic on the tourism sector with the example of the Balearic Islands in Spain

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### 【概要:Summary】

The COVID-19 pandemic has an unprecedented negative impact on the travel and tourism industry at local, regional, national and global level. The lockdowns and travel restrictions in many countries have created a huge challenge for the tourism industry, which is highly dependent on the free movement of people. Also in the EU, the closure of international and Schengen borders, the total or partial suspension of flights and the introduction of quarantine or self-isolation measures brought tourist activities to a global standstill.

In May 2020, the European Commission presented guidelines and general principles for the safe and gradual restoration of passenger transportation within the EU and tourism. At least for the internal EU borders, the travel restrictions were gradually lifted and most tourism destinations in Europe reopened under special hygienic precautions in late June 2020.

While the tourism industry had already suffered severe economic damages during the lockdown in April and May 2020, the summer vacation time started cautiously optimistic, with increasing numbers of tourists travelling to the EU's summer holiday destinations. However, there was a general shift in the choice of the holiday destinations

visible, with a more pronounced preference for holiday destinations in the respective home country rather than travels abroad to another EU Member State.

However, while the summer season started with a positive development and increased numbers of tourists in the EU's holiday destinations, the renewed rise of COVID-19 infections in some of the holiday destinations like Spain and France led to a reintroduction of travel warnings, the obligation of taking a PCR test at re-entry and quarantine in some EU Member States.

Taking the Balearic Islands in Spain as an example, the report demonstrates the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on a local economy, which is focused and strongly reliant on the tourism industry. Regarding the Balearic Islands and the entire tourism sector in the EU, their development will highly depend on the further dynamics in the COVID-19 pandemic. The EU tourism sector's development in the winter season 2020/2021 and the entire 2021 will be highly dependent on the possible containment of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, as long as no vaccination or cure is found. Considering the current situation, it will take the tourism sector probably a longer time to recover from the negative impacts of the pandemic.



## 【記事: Article】

1. The EU's important tourist destinations

Europe is one of the major global tourist destinations, with four EU Member States, including France, Spain, Italy and Germany being among the world's top ten destinations for holidaymakers. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Europe accounted for half of the annual international tourist arrivals in 2018, with 51%, and a total of 710 million arrivals. Southern and Mediterranean Europe is leading in tourism, with Croatia, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain showing continuous increases in earnings form tourism. Every year, about 267 million Europeans, 62% of the population, make at least one private leisure trip.

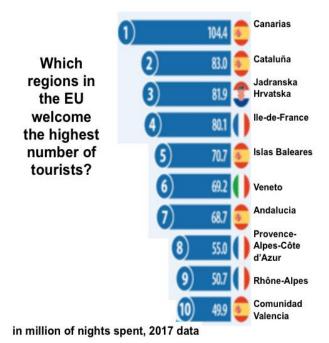


Figure 1: EU regions with the highest number of tourist nights spent in 2017, in million of nights Source: ec. europa. eu/eurostat:

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Furthermore, 78% of Europeans spend their holidays in their home country or another EU country. The summer season is a crucial time for the tourism sector and during an average summer season (June-August) residents of the EU Member States make 385 million tourism trips and spend €190

billion on their holidays.

According to Eurostat, in the EU-28, in 2018, the share of resident tourists, travelling in their own country was 53.3%, while non-residents from other EU countries accounted for 34,8%, followed by non-residents from outside the EU (11.9%). In 2018, the EU's tourism sector directly contributed 3.9% to the EU's GDP and it accounted for 5.1% of the EU's total labour force with about 13 million employees related to tourism.

The EU's three out of the five most frequented touristic regions, which welcome the highest number of tourists, are situated in Spain. Furthermore, Spain was the most common tourism destination in the EU for non-residents (people travelling outside their own country), with 301 million nights spent in Spanish tourist accommodation establishments, or 22.6 % of the EU-27. The three Spanish regions of Canarias (Canary Islands), Islas Baleares (Balearic Islands) and Cataluña (Catalonia) are the main centres of tourism in Spain. In pre-pandemic times, most non-resident tourists in the EU came from other EU Member States. German residents accounted for 18.4 % of the total non-resident nights in EU tourist accommodation, followed by British (11.4 %) and Dutch (6.0 %) tourists. For 10 out of the 27 Member States - excluding the German domestic market - the greatest number of tourists came from Germany.

In the popular southern holiday destinations of Greece, Cyprus, Portugal and Spain, non-residents were more likely (than residents) to visit coastal areas. In 2017, almost 9 out of every 10 (87.8 %) nights spent by non-residents in Spain were in coastal areas, whereas the corresponding share for residents was 58.5 %. By contrast, residents of the three largest EU Member States, Germany, France and Italy were more inclined than non-residents to spend time in domestic coastal areas.



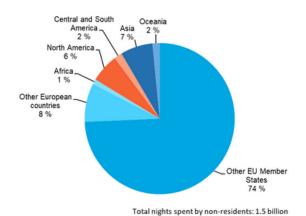


Figure 2: Nights spent by non-residents in tourist accommodation establishments by world region of residence of the guest, in the EU-28, in 2018 (in % of all nights spent by non-residents)

Source:Eurostat: <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statist">https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statist</a>
<a href="mailto:ics-explained/index.php?title=Tourism\_statistics\_-an">ics-explained/index.php?title=Tourism\_statistics\_-an</a>
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In 2019 compared with 2018, Europeans spent 3.3% more nights in tourist accommodation inside their own country. Besides this trend of preferring domestic destinations, in the post-COVID-19 pandemic related lockdown, the tendency to stay in the home country for vacation is considered to have become stronger.

# The European Commission's communication on resumption of tourism activities and guidelines for recovering the tourism sector

The EU's tourism sector has been seriously affected by the lockdown and the restrictions on movement and travel imposed in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak. In 93% of European destinations, complete or partial closure of borders and the complete or partial suspension of flights were introduced, which lasted at least until May 2020.

On 13 May 2020, the European Commission presented a package of guidelines and recommendations, including the measures to allow the transport and the tourism sectors to recover after the COVID-19 pandemic related lockdown. With this package, the

Commission intended to re-establish the free movement of people within and between EU Member States across borders, while introducing all the safety and precautionary measures needed to stabilize a low rate of new COVID-19 infections. The blanket restrictions to free movement were replaced by more targeted measures. The Commission proposed a phased and coordinated approach for restoring transport services across the EU while protecting the health of transport workers and passengers. Restoring the freedom of movement and lifting internal border controls was also a perquisite to restore tourism in the EU. Therefore, the package also aims to help the EU tourism sector to recover from the pandemic.

The Commission's guidelines present general principles for the safe and gradual restoration of passenger transport by air, rail, road and waterways. The guidelines include a series of recommendations, such as the need to limit contact between passengers and transport workers and between passengers themselves, reducing, where feasible, the density of passengers. The Commission guidelines also set out a common framework providing criteria to safely and gradually restore tourism activities and developing health protocols for hotels and other forms of accommodation in order to protect the health of both guests and employees. The "Communication from the Commission EU Guidance for the progressive resumption of tourism services and for health protocols in hospitality COVID-19" (2020/C 169/01,establishments -C/2020/3251), gives guidance based on the advice of the European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (ECDC) for gradually restoring the tourism and transport in EU Member States. Regarding the Criteria for restoring tourism activities, the Guidelines also address how to protect the health of workers and guests, including the precondition that a sufficient health system capacity needs to be in place for local people and tourists, especially important for tourism regions, which may not necessarily be close to healthcare



infrastructures. Furthermore, testing capacity, contact tracing and coordination and communication mechanisms need to be in place to ensure large-scale testing for detecting cases and monitor the spread of the virus combined with contact tracing and isolation measures to slow down transmission. The aim is to promptly identify and manage contacts of COVID-19 cases. It is essential that coordination and communication between the authorities and operators active in the tourism sector are in place as well as between local and national/regional governments in Member States in order to reduce the further spread of the SARS-CoV-19 virus.

One of the major preconditions and principles for the safe and gradual restoration of tourism activities is that COVID-19 cases are declined to low levels and that the spread of the disease has significantly decreased and stabilised for a sustained period of time. This was the case in most EU Member States by the end of June 2020. Therefore, the restart of tourism and holiday trips within and between Member States was possible. Furthermore, on 30 June 2020, the European Council adopted a recommendation on the gradual lifting of the temporary restrictions on non-essential travel into the EU to a group of 15 third countries, including Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea, among others.

# 3. General trends in tourism in the EU in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown since June 2020

More than half of the EU's businesses in the tourism sector are located in the Member States Italy, Spain and France, which were also those European Members States hit worst by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, on 3 June 2020, Italy became the first to unilaterally reopen its borders and lift travel restrictions. France followed with a stepwise easing of travel restrictions on 11 May 2020. The Spanish government lifted gradually its border controls on 21 June 2020. The return to a so-called "new normality" under the continuing

COVID-19 pandemic includes vigilance on new clusters of COVID-19 cases and continued sanitary measures like wearing masks in public.

After the lifting of travel restrictions, Europeans started to plan their summer holidays. In Europe, as of 15 June 2020, domestic and intraregional travel resumed after a gradual reopening of internal borders across the EU. From the end of June to the end of July 2020, the EU's tourism sector showed encouraging signs of recovery, with the number of bookings overtaking the cancellations. In pre-pandemic times, German residents were those going most abroad for their holidays. However, due to the pandemic's impact, about 60% of German residents considered to staying at home rather than travelling abroad. A similar proportion of the Spanish residents planned to stay in their home country. The Italians and French were slightly more adventurous, but also there more than half of them have no travel plans whatsoever. In all four countries, only between 8% (for Spain) and 15% (for Germany) of residents planned to travel abroad. The trend of preferring to spend more nights in domestic destinations, which had already become visible in pre-pandemic years, has become more pronounced after the reopening of internal borders in the EU.

The promotion of domestic tourism has been undertaken in all regions and due to the COVID-19 pandemic impact, a wide range of measures have been implemented to stimulate domestic tourism, mostly related to safety and hygiene protocols in all regions, along with travel vouchers, tourism products and the use of technology to detect COVID-19 cases.

Several EU Member States introduced special measures to support domestic travel and holidays. The Greek government allocated EUR 30 million to subsidize holidays for citizens through the social tourism programme "Tourism for All", addressed to low-income Greeks. Italy approved a holiday bonus ("Bonus Vacanze") for families under certain conditions that would allow them to travel within



the country and reactivate demand in Italian tourism industry. The Romanian government has decided to maintain the Tourist Pass holiday initiative (holiday vouchers for public employees similar with the meal tickets, with which employees can buy tourist services in Romania, i.e. accommodation, meals and transport and the validity of vouchers granted between March 2019 - December 2019 has been extended by law until 31 May 2021. The main negative point with this trend towards spending the holidays at domestic destinations is that the destination choice for the increased group of new domestic travellers becomes much slimmer than what they would be accustomed to when planning for an international trip. This reduction in choice leads to high influxes of domestic visitors arriving at the same destinations. This could lead to overcrowding occurring at a time, when social distancing is important to avoid new infection cases. This situation occurred in the UK in locations such as Cornwall, but also in Germany at the North Sea and Baltic Sea holiday destinations. In Germany, several beaches had to be blocked because the distance rule could not have been adhered to anymore. In this respect, the resurgence of tourism has created both, positive and negative impacts on the communities in the domestic holiday destinations and resorts.

However, the further outlook is still highly uncertain as new increase of COVID-19 infections occurred during the month of August 2020, in particular in the EU Member States Belgium, Croatia, France, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Romania and Spain at different scales.

# The impact of increasing numbers of COVID-19 infection cases and new travel restrictions in certain EU Member States

Between mid-June and mid-July 2020, the EU's tourism sector showed some encouraging signs of recovery and a restart of touristic activities. However, the outlook is still highly uncertain and concerning due to the emergence of new COVID-19

infection clusters in particular in some holiday destinations around the Mediterranean Sea.

According to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), its 14-day notification rate of new COVID-19 cases showed a rise in the notification rate per 100,000 inhabitants in the weeks 31-32, 32-33 and 33-34. According to the reported infections in July and August 2020 in the EU, there are several new clusters of affected regions. In week 34, important holiday destinations like Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, and Spain had significantly more COVID-19 cases than in the weeks before. According to the ECDC, Spain registered 132.2 cases per 100,000 inhabitants in the weeks 32-33 and thereby overtook Luxembourg at the top of the list. Spain was the only country with a figure exceeding 100, followed by Luxembourg (98.6), Romania (88.5) and Belgium (60.8). Accordingly, European governments issued new travel warnings for Spain.

In the weeks 33-34, the situation has again worsened in Spain with 205.5 cases per 100,000 inhabitants. Although people are not forbidden to travel to high-risk areas in other EU Member States with increasing COVID-19 infection numbers, such as Spain, they are discouraged to spend their vacation there by the re-introduction of travel warnings and an obligation to do a PCR test at the time of re-entry to their home country. For example, the German government issued travel warnings for travels to Spain, with the exemption of the Canary Islands, as well as for areas in Croatia, France (Île-de-France with Paris and the Region Provence-Alpes-Côte-d' Azur) and to the Belgic regions of Antwerp and Brussels, among others.

Therefore, the necessary first precondition for restoring the tourism activities as mentioned in the Commission communication C/2020/3251, e.g. the epidemiological evidence that the spread of the disease has significantly decreased and stabilised for a sustained period of time, is not given anymore in some EU Member States or regions.



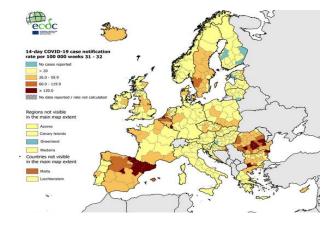


Chart 1: 14-day COVID-19 case notification rate per  $100\ 000$ , weeks 31-32

Source: <a href="https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/cases-2019-ncov-eueea">https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/cases-2019-ncov-eueea</a>

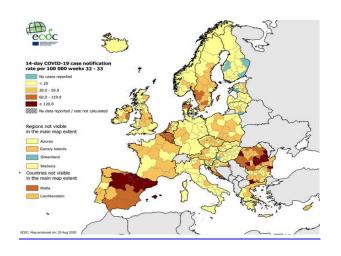


Chart 2: 14-day COVID-19 case notification rate per  $100\ 000$ . weeks 32-33

Source: https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/cases-2019-ncov-eueea

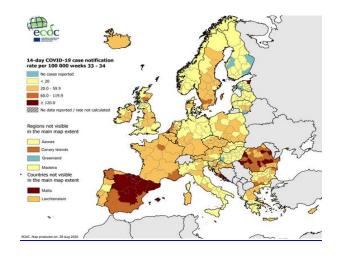


Chart 3: 14-day COVID-19 case notification rate per

#### 100 000, weeks 33-34

Source: https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/cases-2019-ncov-eueea

Considering this worsening of the spread of COVID-19 infections and the subsequent new travel warnings, tourism in Europe is in danger to collapse in some major European touristic destinations.

Moreover, the introduction of travel warnings is in the individual discretion of a Member State and this leads to a patchwork of national decisions on touristic travels. Due to this new uncertainty and the obvious increase in the number of COVID-19 infections in some major holiday destinations around the Mediterranean Sea many tourists cancelled again their holiday trips to these regions with the result that many hotels and tourist accommodation establishments had to close again, due to the lack of number of tourists.

# 5. The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on tourism: The example of the Balearic Islands

At European level, revenue losses due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic have reached 85% for hotels and restaurants, 85% for tour operators and travel agencies, 85% for long-distance rail and 90% for cruises and airlines.

In many of the holiday destinations around the Mediterranean Sea, touristic activities in the summer months are the main source of income and earnings have to cover for costs during the rest of the year. The crisis has hit SMEs the hardest. They suffer a lack of liquidity and face uncertainty, struggling for survival with a limited access to funding and maintaining their employees. The majority of employees in the tourism sector face an acute liquidity crisis and unemployment.

One example of a region especially vulnerable to the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the tourism sector is the Balearic Islands in Spain. The Balearic Islands is a region located on the western Mediterranean Sea, and is one of the main tourism regions in Europe. The main island is Mallorca with



a population of 1.107.220 inhabitants is the most visited island with more than 10 million tourists each year. Tourism is the main structural economic activity for growth and financial development on the islands since the 1950s. The Balearic Islands are central to the Spanish tourism economy, being the second-largest Spanish tourism region in terms of international visitors with 15 million international tourists annually in 2016, and the largest in terms of tourist accommodation.

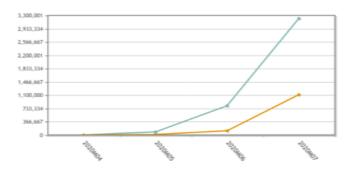
Being the main industry and the main engine of economic growth in the Balearic Islands, tourism activities account for more than 44.2% of regional GDP in the Balearic Islands and generate more than 30.8% of total direct employment on the islands. In addition, it should be noted that tourism has an indirect impact on other types of sectors like services, agriculture, construction, etc.. altogether representing more than 85% of the Balearic GDP and 75% of Mallorca's GDP, respectively. The biggest group of tourists by origin to the island of Mallorca are tourists from Germany. They have a share of about 23% of the total tourism, closely followed by tourists from the UK, with a share of 22%.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Spanish government had decided in June 2020, to set up a series of safe tourist corridors, although the state of alarm continued, which had been declared on 14 March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the specific case of the air travel relationship between Germany and the Balearic Islands, visitors were allowed to travel to Mallorca on especially permitted flight corridors as of 15 June 2020. For the rest of the guests from the European Schengen area, the passenger flow started from 21 June 2020. Considering the touristic development for Spain as a whole, the country received 204, 926 international tourists in June 2020, 97.7% less than in the same month of 2019. In June 2020, France was the main country of residence of tourists in Spain, with 64,895 guests, accounting for 31.7% of the total for June 2020 and a decrease of 93.2% in comparison to

June last year. Germany and Netherlands were the following countries of residence of guests visiting Spain in June 2020. 33,740 German guests (97.4% less in the annual rate) came to Spain and 12,321 tourists from the Netherlands (96.9% less in the annual rate). In July 2020, 4.3 million travellers stayed in some hotel establishments in Spain, with a total of 11.5 million overnight stays. These figures represent 35.7% and 26.6%, respectively, of the figures estimated a year ago. The number of guests from Germany was almost 80% lower than the year before, and the number of guests from the UK was more than 90% lower than in 2019.

Regarding the situation on the Balearic Islands and Mallorca, the Spanish statistics office (INE) recorded around 355,000 guests in hotels on Mallorca and the other Balearic Islands in July 2020. This represented a decrease of 80.4% compared to the same month last year. Although less than half of the usual number of hotels was open, the occupancy rate fell from 88% to just under 40%.

The following graphs 1-3 show that regarding the hotel occupancy in Spain, the number of guests with residence in Spain is high in case of Spain as a whole country, whereas in case of the Baleares and the main island Mallorca, the majority of guests comes from abroad. The graphs show that after the opening of the Schengen borders the influx from non-Spanish guests from abroad significantly increased in June and July 2020. Mainly the tourists with residence abroad but also guests with residence in Spain started to travel to the Baleares Islands and Mallorca in particular, although at a much lower level than in the past years.

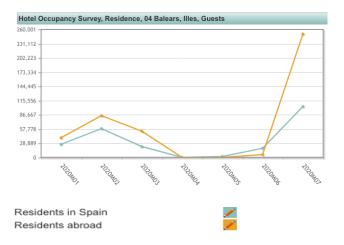




Residents in Spain Residents abroad

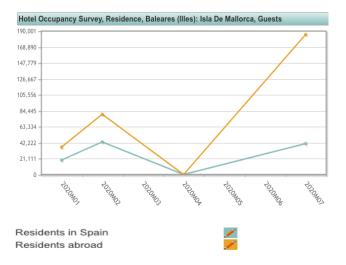
Graph 1: Hotel occupancy survey Spain, in no. of guests, April-July 2020

Source: INE website: www.ine.es



Graph 2: Hotel occupancy survey Islas Baleares, in no. of guests, in Jan-July 2020

Source: INE website: www.ine.es



Graph 3: Hotel occupancy survey Mallorca Island, in no. of guests, in Jan-July 2020

Source: INE website: www.ine.es

However, due to the currently unavailable statistical data for the month of August 2020, the graphs cannot show the impact of the most recent new rise of COVID-19 infections, yet. The increases of infections in Catalonia and the northeast of Spain led to new travel warnings and a sudden collapse in the number of travellers also to the Balearic Islands, mainly from the UK and Germany. On 14

August 2020, Germany added Spain to its list of high-risk coronavirus areas, only excluding the Canary Islands, and declared one day later, that travellers from Spain would need to do a PCR test upon arrival in Germany within 72 hours to avoid a 14-day quarantine. The travel warning for Spain and the Balearic Islands led to the immediate cancellation of all package tours by major tour operators like Tui and DER, among others. They cancelled all package tours up to 4 September and 31 August 2020, respectively. Therefore, although the data is not available yet, it can be expected that the number of tourists on the Balearic Islands coming from abroad show a significant decrease in the month of August 2020.

As a result, the new travel warnings and quarantine rule as well as the PCR Test requirements upon re-entry have led to an immediate end of the revival of tourism activities in the Baleares Islands. It consequently led to the closure of many hotels in the Balearic Islands, long before the end of the summer season, due to a lack of guests.

The pandemic has drastically shown the Balearic Island economy's weakness, as it is highly reliant on travel and tourism. This concentration on the tourism sector makes the islands' economy vulnerable to any negative impact on this sector. Considering the continuous presence of the COVID-19 pandemic, this direct and indirect dependence on the development in the tourism sector might lead to considerations how to change this strong dependence and to divert the Islands' main economic focus from tourism to some other service oriented industries in the mid to long term.

#### 6. Conclusion and outlook

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic related lockdowns, the EU tourism industry is confronted with strong disruptions of international, intra-EU and domestic travels. The European Commission's guidelines of May 2020 represent general principles for the safe and gradual restoration of passenger transportation. The Commission set out a common



framework for providing the criteria for a safe and gradual restoration of tourism activities and the development of health protocols for hotels and other forms of accommodation in order to protect the health of both, guests and employees. These criteria are based on the epidemiological evidence that the number of COVID-19 infections is under control at a low level.

However, the recent surge in the number of infections in particular in some of the major touristic centres in Europe around Mediterranean Sea has led to a sudden end of the recovery of the tourism sector. As long as the COVID-19 cases continue to rise in important touristic regions like the Balearic Islands and as long as travel warnings with the obligation of PCR tests at the re-entry in the home country persist, the EU's tourism sector cannot recover. Therefore, it can be assumed that the important summer season is lost for the tourism sector in many destinations in Spain and in the Balearic Islands in particular and many hotels will not re-open anymore before spring next year.

On 25 August 2020, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres released a "COVID-19 and Transforming Tourism" Policy Brief on the impact of the pandemic on tourism. According to the report, in 2019, tourism generated 7% of global trade and employed one in every ten people globally. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related lockdown measures, as many as 100 million direct tourism jobs are at risk, and the massive drop in export revenues from tourism could reduce global GDP by as much as 2.8%.

The survival of many players in the tourism sector is dependent on the containment of the pandemic. As long as there is no vaccination or cure found to bring the COVID-19 pandemic under control, the outlook for the entire tourism sector remains bleak, in the EU, but also worldwide.

This uncertainty potentially puts also at danger a return to pre-crisis levels of touristic activities in Europe well beyond 2021. As the European Commissioner for Internal Market Thierry Breton

predicted, the tourism sector was the first sector to be hit by the pandemic and it will probably be the slowest to recover.

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