



Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs

Programme Guide



Internal Market,
Industry,
Entrepreneurship
and SMEs

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1. Introduction

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs is a project initiated by the EU. It aims to help new entrepreneurs acquire relevant skills for managing a small or medium-sized enterprise by spending time with an experienced entrepreneur in one of the 27 EU Member States, UK and the COSME countries: North Macedonia, Iceland, Montenegro, Turkey, Albania, Serbia, Moldova, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armenia, Ukraine and Kosovo*, as well as entrepreneurs from the outermost regions and overseas countries and territories (OCTs) . It contributes to improving their know-how and fosters cross-border transfers of knowledge and experience between entrepreneurs. Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs comes under the Small Business Act for Europe which considers this project a key contribution “to create an environment within which entrepreneurs and family businesses can thrive and entrepreneurship is rewarded”.¹

This guide is addressed to everyone interested in participating in the programme, in particular:

- new entrepreneurs (NEs) who want to go abroad and learn from experienced entrepreneurs
- experienced entrepreneurs (HEs) who -want to collaborate with new entrepreneurs
- providers of business-related services who support entrepreneurs and the development of entrepreneurship.

The guide provides information about:

- the objectives of the programme
- the structure and basic features of the programme
- the implementation of the programme – eligibility, application procedure and participation.

Application and participation in the programme are free of charge. No application or participation fees are requested.

2. Objectives

The general objective of Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs is to facilitate exchanges of experience, learning and networking for new entrepreneurs by means of working alongside an experienced entrepreneur in another participating country.

The specific objectives of the programme are:

- On-the-job-training for new entrepreneurs in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) elsewhere in a participating country to facilitate a successful start and development of their business ideas
- Exchanges of experience and information between entrepreneurs on obstacles and challenges to starting up and developing their businesses
- To enhance market access and identification of potential partners for new and established businesses in other EU countries
- Networking by building on knowledge and experience from other countries.

¹ A “Small Business Act” for Europe, COM(2008) 394 of 25 June 2008, pp.5-6.

3. Structure

3.1 Basic elements

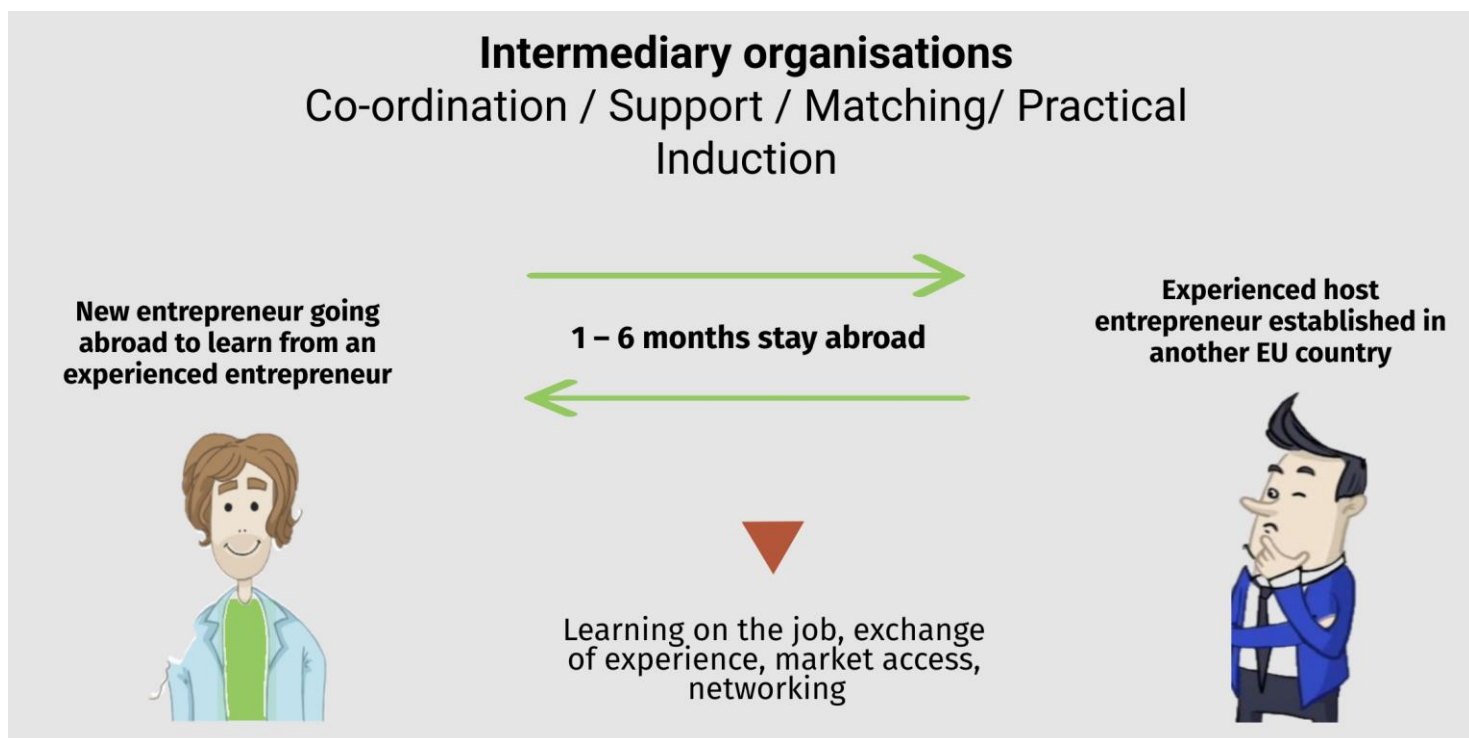
Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs provides practical and financial assistance for the new entrepreneur (NE) staying with a host entrepreneur (HE) in another participating country.

The typical activities in realising such exchanges include:

- Matching an eligible NE with an appropriate HE
- Facilitation of contacts between the NE and HE by the IOs active in different countries
- Coordination of the activities of the IOs by the Support Office (SO)
- Agreement of the parties involved (i.e. the selected NE, the HE and the IOs responsible) on the conditions for the exchange: the commitment
- Duration of the stay abroad: 1 – 6 months, with the possibility to divide the stay into slots of a minimum of 1 week spread over a maximum of 12 months.
- Assessment and evaluation of the outcomes of the exchange by the IOs responsible.

Reporting about the stays abroad and the information flow to the SO and the European Commission will be managed by the IOs.

The basic structure of the programme is illustrated in the following graph:



3.2 Four phases

The process to identify, validate, implement and evaluate the exchanges between new and host entrepreneurs comprises the four following phases:

3.2.1 Application phase

Interested NEs and HEs apply [on-line](#) and select an Intermediary Organisation (IO) (see 4.3 below). The IO responsible assesses the application and give feedback to the application about their eligibility/acceptance in the programme.

3.2.2 Matching phase

Once accepted, the NEs and HEs will have access to the online catalogue where they can view all the profiles and start a match. Alternatively, IO can facilitate contacts between the accepted entrepreneurs and propose a match between them.

3.2.3 Contracting and preparation phase

Once the match is accepted by both the NE and the HE, a commitment (activity plan) is prepared with the help of their IOs .This activity plan is an online document which includes the objectives and expectations for the exchange, the business/work/learning plan, tasks, responsibilities, , legal implications is signed all parties (NE, HE, IOs). The NE signs a financial agreement with his/her IO which stipulates the conditions of the financial assistance.

3.2.4 Implementation phase

NEs and HEs complete the stay abroad – in accordance with the objectives set in the commitment – in one or more phases and report on them. The IOs responsible monitor the value of the activity and evaluate the results.

Before travelling abroad, the NEs receive an induction training by their IO.

After the exchange is completed, the NE and the HE complete an online feedback questionnaire to give feedback on their collaboration.

Note that completing the online feedback questionnaire is compulsory. Furthermore, new entrepreneurs can only participate once in the programme.

4. Implementation

4.1 What will be supported?

Hosting a new entrepreneur will be supported by the programme, provided that all the conditions mentioned before are fulfilled namely that it is based on mutual interest, facilitated by eligible IOs, the entrepreneurs and the matching are eligible, and the necessary agreements between all parties involved have been signed. Any sector of the private economy can participate in the programme. Entrepreneurs participating in the project must come from a micro, small or medium-sized enterprise.²

The stay abroad needs to be completed within an overall time span of twelve months and should total between one month and six months. Within this time span the stay may be divided into a number of shorter time slots (minimum: one week per slot) which the NE actually spends on site at the HE's enterprise.

Activities of the NE during the stay abroad can for example be:

- shadowing and collaborating with the host entrepreneur
- market research and developing new business opportunities
- project development, innovation and R & D
- taking a fresh look at existing business operations
- understanding SME finance
- branding, sales and marketing of the HE's company
- work on concrete projects from one or more of the above-mentioned areas.

4.2 Who can participate?

➤ **New Entrepreneurs (NEs)**

NEs are defined as entrepreneurs in the early stages. This includes both nascent (i.e. "would-be") entrepreneurs, who are firmly planning to start their own business based on a viable business plan, and entrepreneurs who have recently started their own business (i.e. been in operation for not more than three years). Whether planned or already existing, the business can be in any sector. NEs should be interested in contributing to the development of the HE's business and making available their own business skills, as well as gaining useful know-how for their own business. NEs must demonstrate a sound educational and vocational background and a viable business idea. NEs should also demonstrate vision, commitment, initiative and creativity. An NE candidate for the programme should also be able and willing to raise additional funds to cover the costs of the stay that exceed the EU's grant.

² As defined at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/sme_definition/index_en.htm

➤ **Host Entrepreneurs (HEs)**

Host entrepreneurs are successful and experienced entrepreneurs (ideally owners of a micro or small enterprise) or individuals directly involved in entrepreneurship at SME board level with more than 3 years of entrepreneurial experience (not employee), applying the EU definition of micro, small or medium-sized enterprise³. HEs want to share their entrepreneurial experience and to benefit from the concrete contribution which an NE from another country will make to their business. HEs must be committed to work with the NE towards developing his/her entrepreneurial skills and know-how.

4.3 Who is facilitating the programme

4.3.1 Intermediary Organisations (IOs)

Intermediary organisations have been officially appointed to establish contacts between NEs and HEs. They are involved in promoting entrepreneurship at European, national or sub-national level. IOs are organised in European partnerships, bringing together several partners from the different participation countries. Each partnership cooperates with its counterparts. Their main task is to facilitate successful relationships between NEs and HEs and to offer match-making services (such as promotion, information, induction, validation of applications, arranging contacts, issuing contracts, logistical support, etc.). Every relationship between an NE and an HE needs two IOs - one as the contact IO for the NE and the other as the contact IO for the HE - the NE and HE must also be from different countries.

4.3.2 Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Support Office (SO)

A Support Office established at European level and cooperating closely with the Commission and the IOs ensures consistency in the work done by the IOs and enhances the pan-European dimension of the mobility scheme.

4.4 To whom should NEs and HEs apply?

NEs and HEs must submit their application [online](#). As part of the registration, the NE or HE has to choose one of the IOs active in their country of residence. Ideally, the IOs should be active in the country or region of origin of the NE or HE. The chosen IO will act as guide and contact throughout the process.

4.5 What information is required and how does it work?

The IOs are responsible for assessing the quality of the potential relationship they approve in the programme. NEs will be eligible if they have demonstrated sufficient entrepreneurial skills in the documentation they submit to their IO.

³ As defined at <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/sme-definition/>

This information, submitted via the online registration form, shall inter alia comprise a CV and give details about relevant skills, experience, education, language knowledge, current sector of activity and motivation to work abroad with an HE, which should be demonstrated by a promising business/work/learning plan linked to a concrete business project.

To be eligible as an HE, experienced and successful entrepreneurs have to demonstrate a strong track record as entrepreneur (not as employee) and prove that they are actually engaging in an activity that will give the NE the relevant learning opportunities. Moreover, an HE has to fulfil requirements of good conduct.⁴

The registrations will be stored in a database, which will allow accepted HEs and NEs to search for business partners.

4.6 What are the tasks and responsibilities of the participants

4.6.1 *New Entrepreneurs (NEs)*

The tasks and responsibilities of the NEs are to:

- present a business plan for his/her (future) enterprise and develop a work/learning project for their stay abroad, including work on real-life business tasks
- sign the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Commitment governing the working relationship between the NE, the HE and the IOs
- sign an agreement with the responsible IO specifying the tasks, responsibilities, financial conditions and legal implications of the project within the agreed timetable
- act as an “Ambassador” for the programme and contribute to establishing a network of new entrepreneurs.

NEs have to fulfil the tasks and responsibilities assigned to them in the agreement signed by all parties before the start of the stay abroad. Payment of the EU funding will depend on the NE’s delivering the business/work/learning plan and outputs as well as on final acceptance of their activity reports by the IO responsible. NEs must ensure that their working relationship with the HE and the IO is of high quality.

4.6.2 *Host Entrepreneurs (HEs)*

Together with the NE and the IOs, the HE signs the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Commitment governing the working relationship between the partners involved. The HE must ensure that the learning experience and overall working relationship with the NE and the IOs are of high quality and nourish the entrepreneurial mindset of the NE.

HEs must acknowledge that an Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs exchange is a true entrepreneurial collaboration with the NE and not merely an internship or work placement.

⁴ In particular are excluded persons with proven grave professional misconduct, judgment with the force of *res judicata* for fraud or fraudulent bankruptcy, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities’ financial interests.

4.6.3 Intermediary Organisations (IOs)

The role of the IOs is central, particularly in forging the working relationships but also in providing support, ensuring quality and evaluating results. The IOs' roles and responsibilities include in particular:

IOs are empowered by the programme to decide on the eligibility and suitability of an applicant to participate in the programme and thus whether he/she can be accepted or not.

Vis-à-vis NEs:

- acting as a source of information, guidance and assistance to interested applicants
- verifying applications in terms of
 - qualifications
 - entrepreneurial ambitions and business plan
 - language skills
- seeking specific placements for eligible NEs
- providing practical induction to NEs before their departure
- ensuring that payments are made to NEs
- acting as a local contact for incoming NEs during their stays, assisting them with practicalities, including health, insurance, housing, transport and compliance with national regulations
- requesting timely submission of a final activity report
- promoting the establishment of a network of participating entrepreneurs.

Vis-à-vis HEs:

- acting as a source of information, guidance and assistance to potential HEs, including the organisation of information events and proactive calls for participation
- verifying offers from HEs
- seeking qualified NEs meeting the specifications for the programme
- requesting timely submission of a final report
- establishing an HE networks to secure their availability to host NEs.

4.6.4 Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Support Office (SO)

The IOs' activities are coordinated by the Support Office that ensures consistency and quality during implementation of the programme. This Support Office is responsible for ensuring coordination and coherence of the activities. It helps IOs to develop high quality exchanges of entrepreneurs. Its main tasks include marketing and promotion of this initiative, guidance and support to IOs, quality control, development of training material and networking of IOs.

4.6.5 The European Commission (EC) and the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)

The European Commission bears the overall political and financial responsibility.

EASME manages the grant agreements with the European partnerships (EPs) and makes sure that the necessary funds are available. Its other roles are to raise awareness of the programme, to give guidance, to approve relationships between NEs and HEs, to ensure evaluation and follow-up and to develop and adapt the project into a continuous programme, based on the lessons learned from completed activities during the pilot phase.

Note that there is no legal right to participate in the programme. The European Commission and EASME reserve the right to exclude applicants that are not eligible or not in line with the aims of the programme.

4.7 What agreements are needed?

The contractual relationship between the NE, the HE and the IOs involved consists of two main elements:

- The Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Commitment by the four partners (the NE, the HE and the two IOs involved) setting out the principles, objectives, and responsibilities (see Annex);
- An agreement between the NE and the IO to which the NE applied (normally in the country permanent residence of the NE), under which funding can be disbursed to the NE. This agreement specifies the tasks, responsibilities, financial conditions and legal implications of the project within the agreed timetable; annexed to this agreement are the detailed business plan, the work/learning project for their stay abroad, the aims and objectives, activities, outputs, and time-schedules.

The IO to which the NE has applied is responsible for disbursing financial support to the NE according to the terms set out in the agreement. The IO to which the HE submitted his or her offer to host an NE is responsible for facilitating the relationship at the location of the stay abroad.

4.8 What help is available?

The website www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu provides all the necessary information about the programme. A web-based database linked to the website allows NEs and HEs to submit applications and offers to participate in the programme.

IOs are generally active at national or regional level, supporting NEs and HEs in finding the best matches, facilitating contacts and following the relationships before the stay abroad starts. They offer local assistance to visiting NEs (such as with accommodation, transport, insurance, etc.) during their stay with the HEs. Besides assisting IOs, the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Support Office⁵ publishes frequently asked questions from NEs and HEs on the central website and suggests solutions in the event of problems and conflicts.

⁵ See Chapter 5.0 for the address.

4.9 What financial support is provided?

The purpose of the financial support to the NEs is to contribute towards the travel (to and from the country of the stay) and subsistence costs during the stay abroad. The financial support is paid by the IO to the NE. The amount of the financial support and related details are subject to the financial agreement signed between the NE and the IO, and it is based on the monthly lump sum for the country of the exchange and the actual periods spent abroad with the host entrepreneur.

Table 1 (see page 14) indicates the recommended amounts of monthly financial assistance payable to NEs by the IO responsible for the respective country of the exchange.

Monthly financial assistance paid by IOs to NEs	
Country of stay	Maximum amount per month while staying in this
Albania	530
Armenia	610
Austria	900
Belgium	830
Bosnia-Herzegovina	560
Bulgaria	560
Croatia	720
Cyprus	780
Czech Republic	610
Denmark	1100
Estonia	670
Finland	950
France	900
Germany	830
Greece	780
Hungary	670
Iceland	900
Ireland	1000
Italy	900
Kosovo*	560
Latvia	610
Lithuania	560
Luxembourg	830
Malta	720
Moldova	530
Montenegro	560
Netherlands	830
North Macedonia	560
Poland	610
Portugal	780
Romania	560
Serbia	560
Slovakia	610
Slovenia	720
Spain	830
Sweden	950
Turkey	750
Ukraine	530
United Kingdom	1000
Outermost Regions and OCTs (entrepreneurs from/to)	1100
Entrepreneurs with disabilities (regardless of the country)	1100

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

The NEs must provide the IO paying the financial support with proof that they travelled to the host's country and the exchange has taken place (e.g. boarding passes, rent agreement, letter from the host entrepreneur).

4.10 What reports have to be produced?

The IOs are responsible for managing the flow of information requested from NEs and HEs. The following reports are required:

- an online report from the NE and HE describing the activities/work performed, the skills and knowledge acquired and what the entrepreneurs have learned for the development of his/her own business

These reports will be stored in the web-based database.

The entrepreneurs might also be asked for regular, brief reports from the IOs in order to monitor the progress of the exchange.

5. Information and contact

For practical details and participation in the programme:

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Support Office

c/o EUROCHAMBRES,

Avenue des Arts, 19 A/D B-1000 Brussels, Belgium

Tel: +32 (0)2 282 08 73 (Mon-Fri, 09:00-13:00 (CET)) - Fax: +32 (0)2 230 00 38

e-mail: support@erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu

For further aspects, the general framework and overarching financial aspects of the programme:

European Commission

Directorate General Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

Directorate H – COSME Programme

Unit H2 Enterprise Europe Network and Internationalisation of SMEs

1049 Brussels

Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)

Unit A1- COSME

B-1049 Brussels

Annex: Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Commitment

I. DETAILS ABOUT THE NEW ENTREPRENEUR

Name of the participant:
 Contact details:
 Status:
 Intermediary organisation (home country) and contact person (name, function, e-mail, tel.):

II. DETAILS ABOUT THE HOST ENTREPRENEUR

Host entrepreneur:
 Contact details:
 Nature of business (sector, size, legal status):
 Intermediary organisation (home country) and contact person (name, function, e-mail, tel.):

III. SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED STAY ABROAD⁶

Months of stay abroad :
 Planned start and end dates of the stay:
 Objectives of the stay (max. 2000 characters):
 Description of the work/learning project: (max. 2000 characters):
 Proposed plan of activities: (max. 2000 characters):
 Expected outcome: (max. 2000 characters):

IV. COMMITMENT BY THE FOUR PARTIES

By signing this document the new entrepreneur, host entrepreneur and intermediary organisations confirm that they will abide by the principles of the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Commitment attached below.

THE NEW ENTREPRENEUR UNDERTAKES TO:

Abide	by the rules and regulations of the host entrepreneur, his or her usual working hours, code of conduct and rules of confidentiality.
Communicate	with the intermediary organisations about any problem or changes regarding the placement.
Comply	with all arrangements negotiated for his or her stay in order to achieve the stated objectives, particularly execute the planned activities and the work/learning project and to do his or her best to make the stay a success.
Submit	a report in the specified format, together with the requested supporting documentation to substantiate costs, at the end of the stay.

THE INTERMEDIARY ORGANISATIONS UNDERTAKE TO:

Select	suitable, recently established, new entrepreneurs (NE) and host entrepreneurs (HE) and ensure that they are both able to achieve the objectives of the stay.
Facilitate	the matching between a qualified and suitable NE and HE and ensure that both parties agree on a work/learning project whose contents are transparent and acceptable and whose objectives are achievable.
Prepare	the NE and HE for the practical, professional and cultural aspects of the stay.
Help	to manage transport, accommodation, visa/work permit arrangements, social security cover and insurance, to the extent necessary and desired.
Provide	contact details of all parties involved and ensure that final arrangements are in place before the NE leaves his or her home country.
Establish	appropriate communication channels for all parties. Evaluate progress on the project on an ongoing basis and take appropriate action if required.
Disburse	funding to the NE as appropriate, on the basis of agreed activities, milestones and reporting.
Evaluate	with each NE the personal and professional development achieved.

THE HOST ENTREPRENEUR UNDERTAKES TO:

Comply	with all arrangements negotiated, particularly the NE's work/learning project, and to do his or her best to achieve the objectives and make the stay a success.
Assign	to the NE tasks and responsibilities that match his or her knowledge, skills, competences and objectives and ensure that appropriate equipment and support are available and that the NE's work/learning objectives are achieved.
Foster	the NE's understanding of entrepreneurship and how to start-up a business.
Provide	practical support if required.
Submit	a report in the specified format at the end of the stay.

THE NEW ENTREPRENEUR: (Forename + surname)

I agree with the above mentioned stay abroad and the principles that concern me.

Signature of the NE Place and date:
 (Forename + surname)

THE NE's INTERMEDIARY ORGANISATION: (Name)

I agree with the above mentioned stay abroad and the principles that concern my IO.

Coordinator's signature Place and date:
 (Forename + surname)

THE HE's INTERMEDIARY ORGANISATION: (Name)

I agree with the above mentioned stay abroad and the principles that concern my IO.

Coordinator's signature Place and date:
 (Forename + surname)

THE HOST ENTREPRENEUR: (Forename + surname)

I agree with the above mentioned stay abroad and the principles that concern me.

⁶ To be filled in by the NE. The summary of the proposed stay should not be longer than two pages.

Signature of the HE

Place and date:

.....

.....

Where can I find more information?

New entrepreneurs and experienced entrepreneurs
can register via the website:

www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs

Further information can be obtained from:

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Support Office

c/o EUROCHAMBRES,
Avenue des Arts, 19 A/D B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 (0)2 282 08 73 - Fax: +32 (0)2 230 00 38
e-mail: support@erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu

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