

Economic and Demographic Effects of External Migration in Poland and Slovakia - Some Aspects

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Abstract

The paper presents the external migration flows and their impacts on economic and social life in analyzed countries. The travel inside the EU is totally free after Poland and Slovakia joined the EU, and they fructified this opportunity. There are important economic consequences of these movements, because external migration is an ever-growing phenomenon that has important development implications for both sending and receiving countries. For a sending country migration and the resulting remittances lead to increased incomes and educational outcomes, and promote economic development. On the other hand, migration processes influence on changes in the age structure. This process is very important from the labour market point of view. Hence, the aim of this publication is to identify the post-accession effects of foreign migration, especially the consequences for the labour market in Poland and Slovakia. Applied quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted based on survey results and data from Eurostat statistical databases. The survey was conducted since March – till April 2017 on a sample of N = 254 respondents, using the diagnostic survey method. The temporal scope of the analyses was largely determined by data accessibility.

Keywords: labour market, migration processes, aging population

1. Introduction

Demographic processes taking place over the last years have had an important impact on the course of changes on labour market, in particular its supply and demand sides. Analysis of demographic changes, including projections data, allows to evaluate the changes and consequences of the observed demographic trends. Currently, the dynamics of changes in the number of people in many countries depends on fertility rate, death rate and international migrations. In the post-war period, the rate of natural increase was the main factor in the increase in the number of people in Europe. However, as a result of a systematic fall in fertility rate and an increase in international migrations, the roles have changed, and the dynamics of population change and population structure in many countries across Europe have been determined over the last decades, with varying intensity, by international migrations. The choice of the countries comprising the Visegrad Group for appropriate analyses conducted in this paper is not a random one. The fact that the process of political transformation was initiated within a similar time horizon in these countries and their accession to the EU structures occurred in 2004, as well as a combination of social and economic developments, are the main rationale for this choice. Migration processes can be considered in macro- and microeconomic contexts. From the macroeconomic perspective, the effects of migration affect in particular the situation on the labour market, which, combined with the growing process

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of population ageing, leads to shrinking and ageing of potential labour force. In turn, from the microeconomic perspective, shortage and ageing of potential labour force represent an increasing challenge to employers. In view of the above, the aim of this publication is to assess the impact of external migrations on changes in the figure and structure of population in Poland and Slovakia, and to show the complexity of the factors that determine them. Further, the paper will present results of a survey showing respondents' views on the need to employ foreigners.

2. Methodological Information

Studies into contemporary migrations are an important, needed and difficult research area. Apart from the changeability of the subject area and research objects, the quantitative aspect encounters numerous problems. Statistics on external migrations for the group of countries analysed in this paper provide a lot of information about their scales, resources and directions. However, the quality of presented quantitative data varies. This is probably due to the existence of various information sources in each of these countries, which are based on different legal regulations, and the lack of a unified set of terms used in statistics. In view of the above, for the purpose of this publication, the authors conducted appropriate quantitative and qualitative analyses, using the existing data published by Eurostat. Having regard to the significance and topical nature of the issues of migration, this publication presents selected results of a survey on the perception of problems connected with the ageing and shrinking of potential labour force by the surveyed population, among other things. The survey was conducted among a population of university students (N=254) of part-time studies of the first and second degree in Poland and Slovakia in the period from March to April 2017. The method used was non-probabilistic sampling based on a diagnostic survey¹ conducted on respondents gathered at one place and time. The research was empirical in nature, and the resulting findings refer to the surveyed population only and are not representative. They may however fill the gap in regional studies on migration processes. Below are selected characteristics of the research sample.

Table 1. Selected characteristics of the surveyed population

Feature	in [%]			
	female		male	
Sex	76.9		23.1	
age group	<25	26-34	35-39	40-44
	76.4	15.7	5.8	2.1
Type of job	blue-collar		white-collar	
	51.8		48.2	
years worked	up to 1	1-5	6-10	10>
	35.2	51.3	8.6	4.9

Source: own work based on survey

¹ The diagnostic survey method is a way of gathering knowledge about the structural and functional phenomena and dynamics of social phenomena, opinions and views of selected communities.

3. Theoretical Background

Migration processes can be considered, among other things, in terms of their duration, reach and form. In the first case, we talk about internal migration, which involves movement of population within one country or region. External migration, in turn, is when population moves from one administrative, political unit, e.g. a country, to another. At this point, it is worth explaining migration movements in the light of selected migration theories. Migration theories can be divided e.g. by variables that determine population migration processes and are economic, sociological and geographical in nature. Economic theories assume that migrations are most impacted by economic variables, e.g. labour market situation, standard of living and personal income level of the population, level of population wealth or level and scope of social benefits. Sociological theories concentrate on motives of migration decisions and are sometimes equated with behavioural studies, e.g. migration networks theory, institutional theory. Geographical theories, in turn, are theories that analyse the spatial diversity of the environment, identifying in it both factors that attract and constitute barriers to migration, e.g. mobility transition theory (Janicki, 2006). Due to the limited size of this publication and the scope of research issues addressed in it, only selected economic theories will be presented. Research by Castels and Miller shows that the migration phenomenon will gradually increase in the future and cover the whole world. This means that many countries will be both the source and destination of migrations (Castels and Miller, 2003). Review of migration theories along with their critical assessment is a challenge regularly taken up by researchers representing different scientific disciplines, such as economics, sociology or demography among other things. In the area of migration determinants research, there are currently a variety of theoretical models or perspectives, which employ varying concepts, assumptions, frames and levels of analysis (Arango, 2000). Because the majority of these theoretical models were developed from specific empirical observations, they often grew in isolation and are separated by disciplinary boundaries (Arango, 2000; Kurekova, 2011). Contemporary migration literature (Massey et al. 1993; Bijak, 2006; Portes, 1999; Todaro and Smith, 2006, Kaczmarczyk and Okólski, 2008, Skibiński A, 2017, Rączaszek, 2004) contends that although these theoretical approaches offer different hypotheses, they need not be taken as mutually exclusive, but rather as complementary. One of the basic and best-known theories is neoclassical theory of migration. The purpose of its creation was to answer the question about the causes of labour force flows. According to this theory, migration is driven by geographic differences in labor supply and demand and the resulting differentials in wages between labor-rich versus capital-rich countries. The central argument of the neoclassical approach thus concentrates on wages. Under the assumption of full employment, it predicts a linear relationship between wage differentials and migration flows (Massey et al. 1993; Borjas 2008). According to the assumptions of this theory, migration decisions are based only on economic considerations, and potential migrants are fully aware of the situation of the receiving country's labour market. These assumptions appear to be simplified, as they do not take into account the possibility of return migrations and overlook social factors, e.g. reunion of families. Therefore, it is important to mention the new economics theory of migration. According to this theory, migration decisions

are not merely individual economic decisions taken by individuals seeking to improve their own standards of living. Underlying this theory is the belief that rather than the gap in pay levels, the most important factor encouraging one to take a migration decision is the desire to reduce the risk of financial inefficiency through diversification of the household's income sources. This suggests that the biggest migration tendency will be shown by societies with a big internal gap in living standards (Ruhs and Vargas-Silva, 2015). From the perspective of the research issues addressed in the paper, it is important to present the assumptions of Dual labour market theory. In this theory, the labour market is divided into two separate segments - the primary one, with relatively well-paid and prestigious professions and positions, and secondary one, with less prestigious and lower paid positions at work. In accordance with the assumptions of this theory, the process of labour market segmentation is the most important determinant of economic migrations, and with the growing social and economic development the secondary labour market segment is becoming less and less attractive to employees, which increases the scale of the demand for foreigners' labour (Piore, 1979). Massey gave a summary of the assumptions of this theory, stressing that the causes of international migrations are attributed to the demand side of the labour market of receiving countries, and governments of such countries do not raise the wage level in the secondary segment of the labour market, as immigrants are a response to the demand for labour in highly developed economies (Massey, 1999). Taking into account the theoretical aspect, an attempt was made to indicate the characteristics of migration processes for Poland and Slovakia (tab. 2).

Table 2. Selected characteristics of migration in the Visegrad Group countries

Country	Effects of migration	Migration type	Net migration	Selected causes
Poland	In-flow of immigrants to fill in shortages of workers on the labour market in the different sectors of the economy industry, construction, agriculture, medical services. Improving situation on the labour market. Selective outflow of human capital with varied level of skills and education Increasing emigration of medical staff	Dominating economic migration, reemigrations	Lack of balance - prevalence of emigrants Projected balance through increasing the share of immigrant work force	Dominant role of pull factors. Economic situation Unfavourable situation on the labour market. Chronic surplus of labour supply. Salary relation Structural mismatches on the labour market Migration policy
Slovakia	In-flow of immigrants to mitigate effects of population ageing and fill in employee shortages in the different sectors of the economy, industry, agriculture Selective outflow of human capital with varied level of education.	Dominating economic migration Reemigrations to a lesser degree	Approaching the balance Increasing share of immigrant work force	Dominant role of pull factors. Economic situation Migration policy Salary relation

Source: own work based on: Skibiński A. (2017). *The migration processes and their consequences for the labour market in the Visegrad Group Countries - selected aspects*. *Olsztyn Economic Journal* 12 (1/2017)

Thus, migration processes are a very complex issue, and none of the existing migration

theories is able to explain the changeability of complex migration processes in a fully convincing way. Due to the interdisciplinarity of migration analyses as a research subject and complexity of this phenomenon, there is no one unambiguous research method or a common way of explanation. Therefore, works on migration show multitude of approaches to and interpretations of this process.

4. Demographic Effects of External Migrations. Example of Poland and Slovakia

The observed demographic changes to a large extent determine the social and economic development in the group of countries analysed. While estimating potential labour force, indicators are selected to estimate the scale of and directions in the changes in demographic processes. They include rate of natural increase, which is the surplus of births over deaths, and net migration, which is the difference between the inflow (immigration), and outflow (emigration) of population. These indicators to a large extent determine the population's size and age structure, with the latter determining the pace of demographic changes in terms of population reproduction (population reproduction in the process of generation replacement). According to literature on the subject, migrations are usually relevant in economic terms, as they modify regional labour force, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Let's look at selected demographic indicators presented in table 3.

Table 3. Selected demographic indicators for the Poland and Slovakia taking into account demographic projection for the period 1990-2060

Countires	Total of population [in1000]					
	Years					
	1990	2004	2009	2015	2030*	2060*
EU 28	475187.71	492555.79	502090.23	508293.36	508223.62	522946.53
Poland	38038.40	38190.60	38135.88	38005.61	37525.74	33293.80
Slovakia	5287.66	5371.87	5382.40	5421.35	5314.02	4574.33
Natural change of population [in the persons]						
EU 28	927158	383171	510559	-135183	-724843	-1410446
Poland	157377	-7391	32649	-25613	-122044	-179581
Slovakia	25370	1895	8304	1776	-19322	-35876
Net migration [in the persons]						
EU 28	721368	1659353	714284	1897836	1244057	1036681
Poland	-12620	-9382	-1196	-12792	-903	11566
Slovakia	-2322	-1085	-295	3127	2464	2403

*projections data

Source: own calculation based on: Eurostat data, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database> [access: 10.05.2017]

Analysis of the data from table 3 suggests that in the pre-accession period, i.e. between 1990 and 2004, the overall increase in population was caused in these countries mainly by a positive rate of natural increase, with negative net migration. However, the long-term negative net migration combined with the negative rate of natural increase, especially in Poland, after 2004 resulted in population shrinking. In the case of Slovakia,

the population growth after 2004 was mainly caused by the positive rate of natural increase and positive net migration between 2009 and 2015. The demographic forecasts are not optimistic, as the data indicate a growing process of depopulation for this group of countries. In the case of Poland, the demographic effect of emigration in particular refers to population figure and structure, among other things through impact on reproductiveness, which could have been realised if not for the departure of migrants aged 18-44. According to data from the Central Statistical Office (GUS), over 225 thousand people permanently emigrated from Poland after the EU accession (i.e. they deregistered their permanent residence due to leaving the country), of whom 113.5 were males and 111.5 thousand females. They were mainly young people: 16% were below 20, 27% were aged 20-29, and 19% were aged 30-39. However, the quoted number of 225 thousand people does not fully reflect the scale of the post-accession emigration (Report, 2014). In the case of Slovakia, the situation looks differently. The overall inflows of immigrants to Slovakia had been constantly rising from 2004, when the country entered into the EU, and reached its top in 2008 when the number of incoming immigrants registered for permanent residence reached 8 765 persons. In 2009, the number of new immigrants fell by some 2.5 thousand on yearly basis mainly due to the effects of economic crisis. According to most recent data, authorities registered 4 829 new immigrants for permanent residence. The emigration flows from Slovakia have been relatively steady in recent years². Thus, in the case of Poland, the net migration was impacted in particular by the intensity of emigration, whereas in the case of Slovakia - the intensity and scale of immigration after 2004. After 2015, both the countries saw a rapid increase in immigration. At this point, it is important to show the difference in median age between immigrants coming to EU countries and a national population.

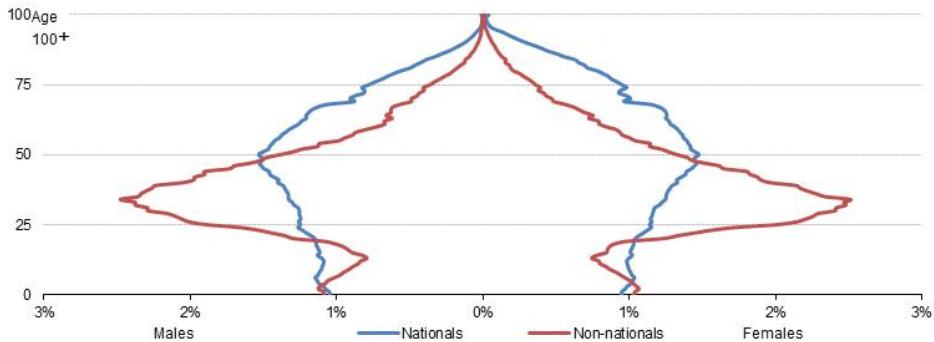


Fig. 1. Age structure of the national and non-national populations, EU-28 in 2015
Source: Eurostat data base <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

Figure 1 shows that immigrants into EU Member States in 2014 were, on average, much younger than the total population already resident in their country of destination. In 2015, the median age of the total population of the EU-28 was 42 years. By contrast, the

² See more: An overview of the migration policies and trends – Slovakia, <http://migrationonline.cz/en/an-overview-of-the-migration-policies-and-trends-slovakia> [access: 11.06.2017]

median age of immigrants to EU-28 in 2014 was 28 years (Eurostat yearbook, 2016). Migration processes are related to the growing process of population ageing, as external migrations are and will be a significant factor in the dynamics of potential labour force ageing.

Table 4. Change in population figure by economic age groups in Poland and Slovakia taking into account demographic projection.

Country	Years						Dynamics indicator	
	1990	2004	2009	2015	2030	2060	2015/1990	2060/2015
							1990-100	2015-100
Percentage of pre-working age people (0-14)								
EU 28	-	16.4	15.7	15.6	14.9	15.0	95.1	96.1
Poland	25.3	17.2	15.3	15.0	13.7	13.0	59.3	86.7
Slovakia	25.5	17.6	15.6	15.3	12.9	11.5	60.0	75.2
Percentage of working-age people (15-64)								
EU 28	-	67.2	67.0	65.5	61.2	56.6	97.4	86.4
Poland	64.7	69.8	71.2	69.6	63.7	54.1	107.6	77.7
Slovakia	64.2	70.8	72.2	70.7	65.7	53.3	110.1	75.4
Percentage of people outside of working age 65+								
EU 28	-	16.4	17.3	18.9	23.9	28.4	115.2	150.26
Poland	10.0	13.0	13.5	15.4	22.6	32.9	154.0	213.6
Slovakia	10.3	11.6	12.2	14.0	21.4	35.1	135.9	250.7

Source: as in table 3

Analysis of data from table 1 allows a few important detailed conclusions to be drawn. In the pre-accession period, i.e. between 1990 and 2004, there was an increase in the percentage of working age population, with the biggest growth in this group of population registered in Slovakia (growth by 11.7 %, compared with the 7.8% growth in Poland). Second, in the post-accession period, i.e. between 2004 and 2015, the situation changed. Each of the countries analysed saw a decrease in the share of working age population in the overall population. Third, based on projections data, this trend is expected to continue with further shrinking of potential labour force, but with a slightly different dynamics. It can be thus concluded that the decrease in the rate of working age population growth became particularly visible in these countries after 2004. The causes of labour force ageing and shrinking should be directly attributed, among other things, to the lower fertility rate and longer life expectancy, and partly also to growing migration processes in this group of countries. Summing up, contemporary external migrations in these countries will have far-reaching consequences in terms of demographic processes, and even if a certain proportion of migrants return to those countries in the future, EU enlargement will have a lasting impact on the age structure of the population of Poland and Slovakia.

5. Economic Aspect of Migrations as Perceived by the Population Surveyed

Immigration is a very important determinant of the scale of external migrations, mostly economic ones, from the perspective of the receiving country. Quantitative data

clearly show that in the future there will be an increase in the number of immigrants arriving in the countries from the group analysed. Available data explicitly indicate that the relatively improving social and economic situation of these countries, especially on the labour market, is becoming the main factor attracting immigrants. It should be stressed however that the increase in the number of immigrants does not have to be caused only by pull factors. Of importance are also the factors that push immigrants out of their countries of origin, e.g. impossibility to find a job in their place of residence, unsatisfactory income or problems with implementing personal plans. With the growing process of ageing and shrinking of potential labour force, employers are increasingly facing the problem of shortage of employees with specific qualifications. Therefore, they are willing to employ immigrants to fill in the gap in the domestic labour supply.

There is an agreement in the academic literature that in economic terms migrations are beneficial to receiving countries (Kahanec et.al, 2010, Sipa, 2017). They are even more so in the case of migration of highly qualified people. It is thus stressed that the presence of migrants leads, among other things, to an increase in work effectiveness in strategic sectors (through innovativeness growth caused by diversified work environment) and allows, as already mentioned, the domestic supply of qualified labour force to be supplemented. In view of the above, the authors' main aim of conducting a survey among students of part-time studies employed in the SME sector, was to find out the views of the surveyed population on the need to employ foreigners by domestic employers. Of importance in terms of demand for foreigners' labour was to ask the respondents the following question: In the light of the current demographic trends connected with the process of population ageing and shrinking of potential labour force, is the need to employ foreigners recognised in your company?

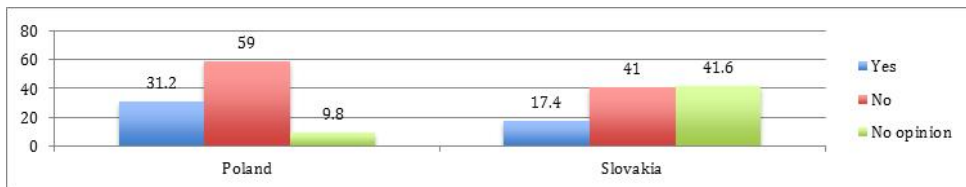


Fig. 2. Respondents' views on the need to employ foreigners [in %]

Source: as in table 1

Among the surveyed population, most respondents did not notice the need to employ foreigners in the company they were employed in, with Slovaks more often than Poles indicating no opinion on this issue. Poles, in turn, more often recognised the need to employ foreigners. It can be thus concluded that the awareness of the consequences of unfavourable demographic trends is higher among Polish respondents. However, the next stage was to find out respondents' views on the forms of employment of foreigners. For that purpose, the following question was asked: In your opinion, what is or should be the form of employment of foreigners?

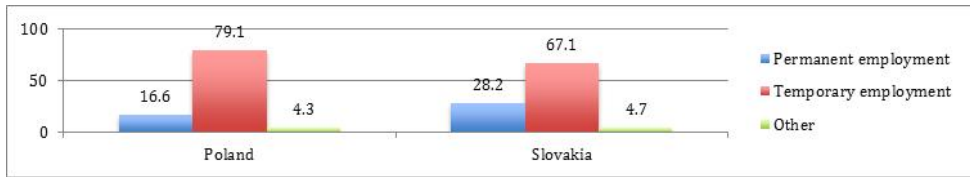


Fig 3. Respondents' views on the form of employment of foreigners [in %]

Source: as in table 1

In this case, the views of respondents from Poland and Slovakia were similar, with the overwhelming majority of the surveyed population indicating the temporary employment of foreigners. Academic literature often indicates benefits and threats arising from immigration (Borjas, 1995, Gorzeń- Mitka, 2016). In order to identify possible benefits of employing foreigners, respondents were asked the following question: What are potential benefits of employing foreigners for an enterprise?

Table 5. Respondents' views on potential benefits of employing foreigners

Type	[ranking of indications]	Poland [in %]	[ranking of indications]	Slovakia [in %]
reduction of costs connected with a company's business activity (reduction of production costs)	2	31.1	3	18.2
increasing work effectiveness and ensuring production continuity	3	22.3	4	16.1
experience exchange between domestic and foreign employees (international cooperation)	1	33.8	1	39.1
improvement of a company's competitiveness on the market	4	10.8	2	26.6
other	5	2.0	5	0.0

Source: as in table 1

Both in Poland and Slovakia respondents most often indicated experience exchange (international cooperation), reduction of costs connected with a company's business activity and improvement of a company's competitiveness on the market. No significant differences in the ranking of indications were observed among the surveyed population from Poland and Slovakia. Thus, from the perspective of the employer, the expressed views are strategic in nature given the changeability of micro- and macroenvironment in which an enterprise functions.

Integration of immigrants in the Polish and Slovak societies on the labour market is a multifaceted process accompanied by various barriers and difficulties. These barriers can be "rigid", resulting mainly from legal regulations, and "soft", resulting, among other things, from human relationships or prevailing negative stereotypes concerning both foreigners and their role on the labour market (Świdrowska, 2015). In view of the above, respondents were asked the following question: Do you notice any barriers to employing foreigners? The answers provided by the respondents have been presented in table 6.

Table 6. Respondents' views on barriers to employing foreigners by employers.

Type	[ranking of indications] Poland [in %]		[ranking of indications] Slovakia [in %]	
high employment costs connected, among other things, with preparing and initially training employees to perform the work	4	14.5	3	18.9
too complicated formal and legal procedures	2	25.0	2	22.6
language barriers	1	27.1	1	38.7
insufficient cooperation between employment agencies and Foreigners Office	3	20.1	4	18.8
other	5	12.5	5	1.0

Source: as in table 1

Respondents mainly indicated language barriers and too complicated formal and legal procedures, followed by issues connected with employment costs and lack of cooperation with institutions dealing with employment of foreigners. The last point in this paper is presentation of respondents' answers to the following question: From what countries do employers preferably employ or would employ foreigners?

Table 7. Respondents' views on employment of foreigners by country of origin

Country	[ranking of indications] Poland [in %]		[ranking of indications] Poland [in %]	
Belarus	2	14.3	4	9.2
Ukraine	1	74.3	1	36.7
Russia	3	5.7	3	16.4
Romania	4	1.4	2	26.2
Turkey	6	0.0	5	6.9
other	5	4.2	6	4.6

Source: as in table 1

The answers received are not surprising and are consistent with official data from Statistical Offices of Poland and Slovakia on the countries of origin of immigrants residing in those countries. Respondents most often indicated immigrants from neighbouring countries, e.g. Ukraine, Belarus, Romania or Russia.

6. Conclusion

Given the specificity of the research issues addressed in this paper and the prospect of changes expected due to the impact of demographic processes on the supply and demand sides of the labour market, an attempt was made to find out the views of the surveyed population on employment of immigrants by domestic enterprises. The resulting findings indicate economic benefits of employing foreigners, although the majority of respondents were not in favour of their employment. This may result, among other things, from insufficient awareness among the surveyed population of the consequences of the growing process of population ageing in these countries. Respondents also indicated formal and legal as well as language barriers as main barriers

to employing foreigners.

In turn, the analysis of statistical data shows that external migration processes have a significant impact on labour markets in Poland and Slovakia with varying intensity in the form of:

- impact on the age structure of population, causing population ageing and as a consequence ageing and shrinking of potential labour force,
- outflow of labour force, in particular working-age mobile population,
- in-flow of immigrants,
- in the analyzed countries, economic migrations dominate, with their causes being mainly the economic situation, situation on the labour market and migration policy.

Summing up, it can be concluded that external migrations of population represent a highly complex and complicated process. These processes appear to depend on a number of factors indicated in the numerous migration theories referred to in this publication.

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