

# Access City Award 2018

Examples of best practice in making EU cities more accessible



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## **Foreword**



After eight years, the Access City Award has become an established European accolade and I am proud to find that cities continue to innovate in order to meet the needs of everyone.

In fact, the quality and range of innovation shown by this year's winners continues to take us to new levels of accessibility in Europe and to provide a continuing source of inspiration and quidance for other cities.

From the perspective of the European Commission, the Access City Award is a clear indication of how important accessibility is to cities across Europe. Many cities face difficult terrain, financial restrictions or must pay attention to the preservation of their historic buildings.

We welcome the continued and growing emphasis on creating an inclusive Europe in which all citizens can enjoy the freedom to live, work and spend their leisure time without barriers to their mobility or participation.

This publication is intended to give policy ideas and practical examples to help and inspire other cities facing similar challenges. EU cities everywhere have a shared ambition to improve accessibility – not just for their older citizens and those with disabilities – but for the benefit of everyone.

This year's winners are examples which, we hope, will encourage many other cities to take part in the challenge next year. Lyon, Ljubljana, Luxembourg and Viborg show that wherever you are in the European Union, you can make changes that will have a direct impact on your citizens' lives.

#### Marianne Thyssen

Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility

## Access•City Award 2018



Easy-to-read version

#### Who are we?

We are the European Commission and the European Disability Forum.



The **European Commission** suggests laws that make Europe better for its people.



The **European Disability Forum** works to protect the rights of people with disabilities in Europe.

Often, we work together to make Europe a better place for people with disabilities.

For example, every year we team up to organise the **Access City Award**.

#### What is the Access City Award?

The **Access City Award** is a prize we give every year to cities that work hard to be accessible.



A city is accessible when all people can live in it, move around and use all services without problems.

For example, a city is accessible when all people can easily:

- Get the bus or the metro to go to work.
- Use ticket machines to buy a ticket.
- Go around the streets and enter public buildings.
- · Get information that they can understand.

This is important for all people and most of all for people with disabilities and older people. Often things are not accessible for them. If things are not accessible, they will not be able to take part in the community like all other people. They will be left out.

For example, if buses do not have ramps, people in wheelchairs will not be able to go to work or to travel around.

So, the Access City Award is a chance for cities in Europe to show the work they do to be accessible for all people.





#### Taking part in the next Access City Award

This year, the European Union celebrates culture and how it passes from older people to younger people over time. Culture can be art, music, theatre, food and other things of a country that show a lot about its history and its people.

Like all other things, culture should be accessible for all people too.

For example, people with disabilities should be able to visit a museum or other buildings and places where they can learn more about the culture of a country.

MUSEUM

So this year we give 2 extra prizes to cities that work to make culture accessible for all people.

## Participating in the Access City Award 2019

#### Which cities can take part?

Not all cities can take part in the Access City Award. To take part in the Access City Award, cities should:

- Be in countries that are part of the European Union.
   The European Union is a group of 28 countries in Europe that came together to make Europe a better place for its people.
- Have more than 50 000 people living in them.
   If a country has less than 2 cities with this many people,
   2 or more smaller cities can join together.
   If together they have more than 50 000 people, they can take part in the Access City Award.
   Only the 2 extra prizes on accessible culture can be given to smaller cities that have fewer than 50.000 people living in them.





The city that won the Access City Award last year cannot take part again this year.

#### How can cities take part?

Cities that want to take part in the Access City Award must apply online.

People who run the cities and make important decisions for them should fill out a form on the internet.



In this form, they should:

- Say why they think their city should win the Access City Award.
- Give examples and show how their city makes things accessible for people.
- Talk about how they plan to continue this good work in the future.

Cities that want to take part in the Access City Award this year can have a look at this website:

http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1141

We will put all news about the Access City Award on the website.

We will also say by when cities must complete the form to take part in the Access City Award this year.

#### How do we choose the winner?

Some groups of people check the work of all cities that apply for the Access City Award.

People with disabilities and older people are part of these groups.



They check what cities do to make things accessible for the good of their people.

For example, they check if cities have accessible:

- · Buildings and streets.
- · Buses, metros and other public transport.
- Ticket machines and cash machines.
- Websites and other technology that people can use to communicate.
- Information that is easy to read and understand for everyone.



They see which of the cities does the best job in making these things accessible for all people. This city wins the Access City Award.



#### When will we present the winner?

In December 2018, we will have a big meeting in Brussels to talk about the rights of people with disabilities. In this meeting, we will also say which city wins the Access City Award of this year. We will then hand over the Access City Award to this city.



#### More information?

If you want more information, please send us an email to: **secretariat@accesscityaward.eu** 

## Introduction

The Access City Award scheme was launched in 2010 to promote accessibility in the urban environment for Europe's growing population of older people and people with disabilities.

Every year the Award sees a wide range of entries from countries across the European Union. After a first sift by national juries, the shortlisted entries go to a European level jury of experts in accessibility who decide on the winners and on the "special mention" categories.

The categories that are chosen can vary from one year to another. In the context of the Access City Award 2018, a special mention was awarded, in addition to the first, second and third

placed winners. The special mention recognised a city that has succeeded, with great ingenuity, in adapting its need for accessibility to work in harmony with its need to preserve its historic city centre and its challenging hilly topography.

These awards highlight that improving accessibility is not always about large scale investment or major works. It can also be about understanding needs and using limited resources to best effect. Even small changes can go a long way in making sure that people can participate in urban life.



## **Lyon,** France



First prize in the 2018 Access City Awards went to Lyon in France.

Known as "la Ville des Lumières", Lyon is a major European metropolis, located where northern and southern Europe meet. It is built around two hills and crossed by the Rhone and Saône rivers.

With a population of nearly 515,000, it comprises Old Lyon, the medieval and Renaissance part of the city, the Presqu'île in the Haussmann style, the Part Dieu business district and the modern Confluence District.

#### A cross-cutting approach

The city of Lyon has chosen to address accessibility as a cross-cutting issue

and to invest substantially in creating a barrier-free and inclusive environment.

With the two themes of physical accessibility and accessibility to city life, Lyon has implemented a programme which started in 2016 and will run until 2024.

To co-ordinate and drive the programme, a mission head has been appointed, reporting to the city's General Secretariat. A network, including 13 city departments is engaged in implementing initiatives which cover culture, education, childhood support, sports, HR, citizenship and public areas.

A consultative body which comprises elected representatives, city services



With the new surface treatments in Parc Blandan, the accessible path with a smooth surface is clearly detectable and it's easy to tell the difference between the surfaces.

"

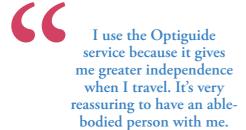


and 62 local associations, including people with disabilities and older people, is deeply involved in suggesting priorities, reviewing options and monitoring progress on delivery.

## Promoting independent mobility

Between 2008 and 2020, €97 million is being invested in an accessible metro and accessible trams. All buses and most bus stops are already accessible.

The Optibus dedicated service for people with disabilities provides over 100,000 trips a year and 4,800 trips annually are made using Optiguide, which provides door to door information and individual guidance to enable people to travel independently by public transport.



Myriam



### Using technology to break down barriers

The city website has a page dedicated to people with disabilities which brings together all useful information on access and other issues. The city's magazine is available in both braille and audio formats.





The city's app includes a function that enables residents to report malfunctioning of lights or other barriers to accessibility. Geolocation and photographs enable the city's services to intervene swiftly to deal with problems. The app also enables the user to identify parking spaces reserved for people with disabilities.

The enform@lyon app has been introduced to encourage sports activities at facilities available around the city. The app includes itineraries which can be followed by people with mobility impairments.

A public transport app allows travellers to choose the most accessible itinerary, for example by identifying shorter routes or those with level access. The app includes an "accessibility alert" function that lets people know about lift or escalator breakdowns and repairs.



I think it's great that we are able to visit the theatre stage sets. That gives us insights into the little details of the performance. We really are VIPs.

Lise

77

#### **Culture** and education

The Théâtre des Célestins organises tactile visits to stage sets and meetings with actors to enable people with visual impairments to get a better idea of how the theatre works. It also offers wheelchair spaces, assistive listening devices and a differential pricing policy for theatregoers with disabilities.

Libraries in the city have over 3,500 audio books and provide a home porter service for older people and those with disabilities unable to carry books themselves. In 2016/2017 there were 15 lectures and exhibitions featuring sign language and audio description.

The city believes in the importance of integrating and including children with disabilities into mainstream society, so access to sports activities and school restaurants is provided for every child. To achieve this policy of full access, an additional €110,000 is being invested to strengthen the supervisory team and train 120 directors of schools and other establishments.

### Integration and inclusion at home and at work

The city's programme includes providing access to 700 buildings and public areas at a cost of €38M.

An experimental approach to intergenerational housing has been implemented in a housing development of 75 units, where 25 are reserved for older people and those with disabilities and include a 24/7 assisted living service.

In the employment sector, all municipal employees are given training on disability awareness when they join and integration in the workplace is well above legal requirements with disabled people holding 7.8% of jobs with the city. Between 2016 and 2018, Lyon is investing a further €1M to equip work stations to meet the needs of employees with a disability.

The Municipality also promotes the employment of disabled people in the wider community by favouring companies with good employment records in the delivery of city contracts.

# **Ljubljana,**Slovenia

Second prize

Ljubljana, the capital and largest city of Slovenia has been awarded second prize in the 2018 Access City Awards.

The city, with a population of over 288,000 is located at a point in central Slovenia where four geographical regions meet with the river Ljubljanica running through it. To the south, the city spreads over the flat Ljubljana Marshes, with hills surrounding the remaining sides.

The city has preserved its historic legacy and enjoys many green spaces.

Access problems can be reported by phone, Internet or using an app called Better Outdoors. Under the "rapid repair" scheme, the city will put right within 24 hours urgent complaints that affect access.

Free travel around the area is available in electric vehicles, 3 out of 6 of which are wheelchair accessible. There are also electric train and funicular rides up the hill to Liubliana Castle.

#### Creating an accessible Eco Zone

Ljubljana won the title of European Green Capital in 2016 and is working to combine the goals of improved accessibility with reduced emissions to make a city that is better for everyone.

The city centre has been transformed into an accessible "eco zone" with very limited motorised traffic, infilled gaps between cobblestones, tactile guidance strips, dropped kerbs and ramps.

For citizens with disabilities, especially hearing-impaired people, life in Ljubljana is easier and every year more accessible via visual electronic media and public announcements. We are happy and pleased that our municipality is taking very good care of people with disabilities.

Nikolaj Vogel, City Association for the Deaf Ljubljana



#### Getting around the city

All the city's buses are low floor with space for wheelchair users, almost all with boarding ramps and with audible and visual on-board announcements. Bus stops in the city centre have real time information about bus arrivals and more stops will be equipped with such technology in the coming year.

Travel is free for disabled residents and their carers. A system of unique identification cards means that assistance can be provided quickly if needed during a journey.

A demand responsive service, which users can call when they want it, is available for those who need door to door transport.

In addition to many new footbridges over the river, the "Mesarski most" (Butcher's bridge) provides wheelchair access to boats.

The city's public toilets are free of charge and currently 10 out of 19 are accessible.

### Smart, accessible tourism and culture

Since 2016, a city centre Information point has been in place specialising in information for visitors over 65 and those with a disability.

A city map of accessible locations is available.





Over the years, Ljubljana has become a modern European city, increasingly adapted to people with disabilities. It started with the ramps, next there were sound traffic lights at intersections. For the last few years we have also had announcements in the city buses and in lifts, especially in health facilities. What is also important is to enable people in wheelchairs to enter buildings of public importance such as banks, post offices, health centres, municipalities, administrative units.

Dr. Luj Šprohar Association for the Blind Ljubljana

"Smart" solutions have also been introduced to make the city's cultural life more accessible. These include sign language in theatres, tactile exhibits and maps (for example of the castle), adapted videos, multisensory guiding and easy-to-use information.

Online information from the city meets web accessibility standards and further upgrades are planned. The website includes a facility for citizens to communicate direct with the city authorities.

#### Access to work

Job opportunities and adapted social housing and accessible public transport make Ljubljana an attractive city for disabled people to live and work.

There is a wide range of initiatives to promote both open and sheltered employment opportunities. One example of social entrepreneurship is the restaurant "Druga Violina" (Second Violin) in the old city centre where people with intellectual disabilities participate in a real work environment



The initiative for greater accessibility gives us hope that Ljubljana will become even more accessible.

Sandi
City Association for the Deaf Ljubljana



## Accessibility: a key indicator of quality of life

Ljubljana's mayor promotes the importance of accessibility as a key indicator of quality of life in the city and demands that city services give priority to access issues and the protection of the most vulnerable groups in society.

The city's overall policy on sustainable development is to ensure that all developments are based on the principle of inclusion both for residents and visitors.

There is a comprehensive monitoring system in place for all developments and one of the key satisfaction indicators is accessibility for mobility impaired groups. These efforts are recognised and welcomed by the city's disability organisations.

#### **Next steps**

Plans for further accessibility improvements include upgrades to web accessibility, continuing to adapt both facilities and content in the city's cultural institutions, installing tactile ground markings and ensuring that the social housing stock is fully accessible. Staff training in disability awareness is also a key priority.

## Luxembourg, Luxembourg

Third Prize

The City of Luxembourg, with a population of 116,328, has been awarded third prize in the 2018 Access City Awards.

Built on rock, and dating from 963 AD, the narrow streets and steep slopes present major accessibility challenges for the City's Technical Departments.

The municipality is committed to improving accessibility for people with disabilities and older people and is working on delivering an action plan based on The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The bus service of the municipality of Luxembourg has improved and most passengers are helpful. Some shops have a ramp while others help their clients to access the shops. Construction sites are usually secured. In case of problems the municipality can always be contacted. In general, continuous efforts are made.

Joëlle Oesch

Member of the participatory committee



"



#### Design for All

The City of Luxembourg has a clear focus on the concept of "specific needs" rather than identifying people in terms of their disability. Underlying this philosophy is the concept of Design for All, which is about creating an environment within which everyone can live comfortably.

Examples of improvements that have benefitted everyone include audible signals at all street crossings, low floor buses equipped with ramps and audible and visual approuncements on all buses.

In addition to accessible public transport there are minibuses that pick people up from home, which offer a reduced fare to wheelchair users.

#### Promoting accessibility

The City runs awareness raising weeks to promote a better understanding of accessibility and inclusive living.

The programme includes an annual Mobility Week and Music Festival, an Inclusion Gala featuring performers with disabilities and accessible guided tours of the town and the museum.



For all events, accessible parking and toilets are provided and accessible shuttle buses are organised.

The City's Information and Specific Needs Department works with the tourist office, museums and other public places which have been made accessible – the registry office is just one example. All polling stations are also accessible. All new and refurbished buildings are progressively being brought up to accessibility standards.

The museum has an exhibition called "Museum for All", which integrates the needs of all citizens including immigrants, children and older people using language that is understandable for everyone.



#### Leading by example

The municipality goes well beyond its legal duties and meets accessibility challenges with enthusiasm across all departments and at both political and official levels.

All departments are engaged in delivering the accessibility agenda and all initiatives are fully funded by the City.

Thanks to a clearly designated central office led by Madeleine Kayser, and strong cooperation with all representative organisations of persons with disabilities, Luxembourg city has made massive progress towards more accessible infrastructure and increased awareness on different disability issues, which in turn has stimulated positive actions in other cities around the country and the greater region.

Patrick Hurst

President of the association
"Nëmme Mat Eis"

All Council proceedings are translated into sign language and any other form of assistance needed is provided. German Sign Language courses are run three times a year (at different levels) and are open to the public.

The success of all these initiatives is founded on collaborating with people with specific needs to identify problems and establish priorities.

#### **Employment opportunities**

The municipality is strongly committed to providing employment for people with disabilities. Currently 5.75% of municipal employees are people with disabilities, including those with learning disabilities and workers who have become disabled during their careers.

The Integration and Special Needs Department supports these workers with adaptations to the work environment, special transport or other needs. "

One interesting fact about accessibility in our town is the bluetooth beacon technology to make it easier for visually impaired people to locate bus stops and to get next bus stop announcement by using a mobile app.

Josianne Rommes

Member of the participatory
committee

"

## Harnessing technology to promote accessibility

In 2017 the municipality launched two new projects to deliver accessible technology.

The first is a new website developed to meet responsive web design standards, so it is accessible to blind people using screen readers. The Communication and Public Relations Department is also working on ensuring that all its online publications, such as brochures and flyers, are also available to those using screen readers. They are also encouraging others working in graphic design and communications to do the same.

The second new initiative has been the introduction of iBeacons at bus stops to deliver information on the next bus to arrive at the stop to users of the City's app. This is particularly valuable to people with vision impairments but will also be extended over time to benefit tourists and other public transport users.

# Viborg, Denmark

Special **Mention** 

Viborg in Denmark has been awarded a Special Mention for "Accessibility in an Historical Setting". This award recognises what has been achieved to improve accessibility despite the challenges of both history and topography.

Viborg, which has 50,200 inhabitants, is one of the oldest cities in Denmark, dating back to 900 BC, and is situated on slopes above two lakes. The City is characterised by steep alleys, narrow pathways and cobblestone paving.

#### An inclusive cultural heritage

The starting point for the access initiatives in Viborg was the project "Accessibility in an historical city centre - new ways to enhance cultural heritage in Viborg" which was developed by the City and four Danish Foundations between 2010 and 2016.

The aim of the project was to find innovative solutions both to remove physical barriers and to improve communication so that the historic legacy of Viborg would be available to all without damage to its authenticity.

#### Accessibility without making a fuss

There has been a clear focus on solutions that "don't make a fuss": in other words. discrete and inclusive solutions rather than "special" facilities that single out people with disabilities.



As users we have been an active part of the genesis of this project which gives us

We are pleased that accessibility has been seen in a wider perspective than the mere physical aspects.

The process has been positive. Our proposals have been adopted and further developed thus giving us great value. We are sure that other people will benefit from this also.



In the historic city, several public squares, gardens and streets have been made accessible with new level pavements, ramps and tactile guide strips. The Nytorv Square is a new fully accessible public area that has been created from an old car park.

The steepest alleyways in the City have been modified with resting platforms and new ramps have been introduced in several city gardens.

The materials used throughout reflect the existing cityscape – using granite for new levelled pavements, resting places and ramps. The new signs and city models have been made with Tombac (a copper-zinc alloy), the material already used in the City's benches, bins etc. These new features have enhanced the City's attractiveness for everyone and have provided the impetus for new cultural events and facilities including street markets, outdoor cafés and concerts.

## Modern communications for a historic city

A three-dimensional city model has been developed to enable people with vision impairment to "grasp" the city. Information is provided both in text and in braille.

An app, Spot Viborg, guides visitors through three itineraries in the historic city. Using GPS tracking, sound and vision, the app also includes information

about accessible toilet facilities and parking places. For those who do not want to follow a set itinerary, the app also pinpoints individual attractions leaving the visitor free to create their own route. The app is available in Danish, English and German.

The plan is to evaluate the app after three years of use to see what changes or developments might be needed.

## Political and community engagement

The vision of the municipality of Viborg is that everyone should have the opportunity to live a healthy and active life with access to a wide range of cultural, leisure and other experiences. A Disability Policy was adopted by the City in 2009. It was based on feedback from workshops and meetings with local citizens, organisations of people with disabilities and older people and major city centre stakeholders. The policy includes a checklist for accessibility covering public places and buildings with recommendations for action.





A Disability Council provides advice to the municipality on all public construction projects and there are two joint working groups focussing on "natural accessibility" and accessibility of the City.

The City believes that this approach, which works across all political and management levels, is the most effective way to make progress.

The policy sets out values and principles as well as priorities for action.

The project "Accessibility in an historical city centre – new ways to enhance cultural heritage in Viborg" was developed and delivered in collaboration with a "Knowledge Panel" which includes representatives of national Danish organisations with expertise in accessibility and a local

working group comprising local people, accessibility experts and major city centre stakeholders including the local tourist office and trade association.

#### What next?

The City of Viborg plans to continue this initiative, building on the lessons learnt. Among future projects is the further development of the area around the cathedral and to expand the existing project to provide inclusive access to a wide range of attractions including museums, theatres and exhibitions as well as more city squares and gardens.

# Participating in the Access City Award 2019

The Access City Award is organised by the European Commission together with the European Disability Forum. It encourages cities to share their experience and to improve accessibility for the benefit of all.

Would you like to have your city's projects featured in the next booklet of the Access City Award? Do you want to share your experiences and actions with other cities?

### Take part in the Access City Award 2019!

The ninth edition of the Award will be launched in spring 2018 (date to be confirmed). Applications can be made by completing and submitting the online application form by the deadline set. Detailed information will be available at:

#### http://ec.europa.eu/social/main. jsp?catId=1141

Participating in the Access City Award is not only an opportunity to gain recognition, but also a unique chance to review the current situation in your city for your own internal auditing purposes and to measure progress. Studying the questions in the application form is an excellent way to analyse your accessibility policies and to identify their strengths and weaknesses.

#### Who can apply?

The applicant must be a government authority of a city of over 50,000 inhabitants in one of the EU Member States. In Member States with fewer than two such cities, urban areas composed of two or more towns may also participate if their combined population exceeds 50,000 inhabitants. As the Access City Award cannot be won by the same city in two consecutive years, the winning city in 2018 is not invited to take part again in 2019. All other cities, including the runners up, the second and third prize winners and the special mention cities, are encouraged to participate again.

To help prepare for participation in the competition, the guidance note and the participation rules are available in all official EU languages on the Access City Award website:

http://ec.europa.eu/social/main. jsp?catId=1141

#### **Selection process**

The juries will consider measures taken and planned in the following areas:

- The built environment and public spaces;
- · Transport and related infrastructure;
- Information and communication, including new technologies (ICTs);
- · Public facilities and services.

The juries will evaluate the applications taking into account the following five criteria:

- Scope of the actions
- · Ownership, level of commitment
- Impact
- · Quality and sustainability of results
- Involvement of people with disabilities and relevant partners.

The selection process is divided into two phases: pre-selection at national level and final selection at European level. The **National Juries** in each country select a maximum of three cities from among the national applicants using the evaluation criteria provided by the European Commission. These national candidates go forward to the second phase of the competition and are assessed by the **European Jury**.

The winner of the Access City Award 2019 will be announced on *in early December* **2018**. The ceremony is part of the annual European Day of People with Disabilities Conference in Brussels.

### The Access City Award Secretariat

The Access City Award Secretariat can assist with the preparation. If you need any additional information, please contact: secretariat@accesscityaward.eu



## The next Access City Award will celebrate the European Year of Cultural Heritage

In 2018, the European Union is celebrating cultural heritage. The next edition of the Access City Award will therefore be recognising cities that have gone to great lengths to ensure that their heritage and culture is accessible to all.

Alongside the traditional first, second and third place prizes, two special prizes will be awarded to celebrate heritage and cultural accessibility achievements. While one special prize will follow the standard rules of being given to a city with more than 50,000 inhabitants, the other will – for the first time ever – give cities with less than 50,000 inhabitants a chance to take part in the competition and win an award.

The Access City Award webpage will be updated regularly over the coming months, so stay tuned for more information about these special prizes.

#### Getting in touch with the EU

#### In person

All over the European Union there are hundreds of Europe Direct information centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you at: https://europa.eu/european-union/contact\_en

#### On the phone or by email

Europe Direct is a service that answers your questions about the European Union. You can contact this service:

- by freephone: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (certain operators may charge for these calls).
- at the following standard number: +32 22999696 or
- by email via: https://europa.eu/european-union/contact\_en

#### Finding information about the EU

#### Online

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#### EU law and related documents

For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law since 1952 in all the official language versions, go to EUR-Lex at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu

#### Open data from the EU

The EU Open Data Portal (http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en) provides access to datasets from the EU. Data can be downloaded and reused for free, both for commercial and non-commercial purposes.

The annual Access City Award recognises European cities for their efforts to make themselves more accessible for people with disabilities and the elderly. This brochure celebrates the achievements of the 2018 winners and runner-ups – Lyon (France), Ljubljana (Slovenia), Luxembourg (Luxembourg) and Viborg (Denmark) – and highlights the concrete steps they have taken to improve the accessibility of their cities. These steps include accessible metros and trams, navigation apps, 'eco zones' with limited traffic and awareness events.

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