# SF3.4. Intimate Partner Violence

### Definitions and methodology

This indicator measures intimate partner violence through the self-reported lifetime prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner. Information comes from cross-national or national surveys, including the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (EU FRA) Violence Against Women survey. In principle, data cover women aged 18-74, refer to physical and/or sexual violence only, and cover both current and previous partners. However, definitions and population groups differ across countries, which affects comparability. (See the notes to Chart SF3.4.A and the "Comparability and Data Issues" section below for more detail).

Attitudes among women towards intimate partner violence are measured through the percentage of women aged 15-49 years who consider a husband to be justified in hitting or beating his wife for at least one of the specified reasons, i.e. if his wife burns the food, argues with him, goes out without telling him, neglects the children or refuses sexual relations. Data come from the OECD Gender, Institutions and Development Database (<u>https://oe.cd/ds/GIDDB2019</u>), which itself uses data from the World Values Survey (<u>www.worldvaluessurvey.org</u>) and UNICEF (<u>https://data.unicef.org/</u>).

## Key findings

It is difficult to measure intimate partner violence, and even more difficult to compare the prevalence of intimate partner violence across countries. Based on self-reported information from population surveys, across OECD countries with recent data, an average of about one quarter (23%) of women report having experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner at some point their lifetime. In some countries, including Denmark, Latvia, Turkey and the United States, about one in three women self-report ever having experienced intimate partner violence. However, these data, and especially cross-national differences in these data, should be interpreted with caution. Survey-based estimates likely underestimate the extent of the problem as many victims are reluctant to admit abuse, and cross-national differences in survey-based estimates are further affected by differences in interviewing and survey methodology. (See "Comparability and Data Issues" below). This makes comparison very difficult.

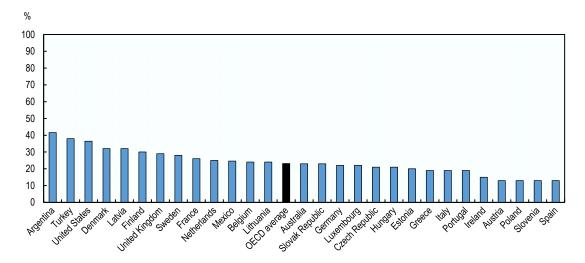
Social norms and legal frameworks can either drive social transformation or act as barriers to ending violence against women. Data from the OECD Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) 2019 shows that, despite years of advocacy to protect women's physical integrity, legislative progress has been uneven across OECD countries. In 14 countries, the legal framework protects women from violence, including intimate partner violence, rape and sexual harassment, without any legal exception. In 16 OECD countries, survivors of violence still face legal obstacles: one country still allows reduced penalties in case of so-called honour crimes; in four countries domestic violence is not a criminal offense; in 11 countries, the law provides legal protection from sexual harassment but does not include criminal penalties.

Social norms can also be powerful disincentives for women to report and pursue legal recourse against perpetrators. Social acceptance of domestic violence against women by women themselves weakens the functioning of legal frameworks and is an obstacle to addressing violence against women. Data from SIGI 2019 shows that, within OECD countries, 8% of women say that a husband may be justified in hitting or beating his wife, with rates ranging from 1% or less in Denmark and Ireland, up to 18% in Korea and 20% in Germany (Chart SF3.4.B). In emerging economies, acceptance of violence against women can be much higher – 34% of women in Indonesia and 61% of women South Africa say that spousal violence can be justified.

**Other relevant indicators**: SF3.1: Marriage and divorce rate; SF3.3: Cohabitation rate and other forms of partnership; CO4.3: Substance abuse by young people; CO4.4: Teenage suicides; CO1.2: Life expectancy at birth.

## Chart SF3.4.A. Prevalence of intimate partner violence

Self-reported lifetime prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner, women, 18- to 74-yearolds, selected countries, latest year available

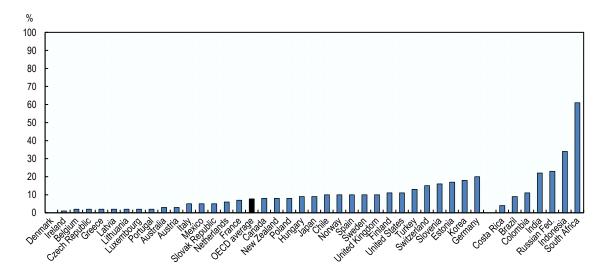


Note: Data refer to 2012, except for Turkey (2014), Argentina and the United States (2015), and Australia and Mexico (2016). Data for Mexico refer to women aged 15-49, for Turkey to ever-married women aged 15-59, for Argentina to women aged 18-69, and for Australia and the United States to women aged 18 and over. Data for European countries come from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (EU FRA) Violence Against Women survey 2012. Data for other countries come from a range of secondary sources. Cross-country differences in definitions, question wording and survey methodology mean that comparisons should be made with caution. For example, unlike all other countries, data for Turkey cover ever-married women and violence by a male partner, only. Data for the United States include "stalking", in addition to physical and sexual violence. Data for Mexico cover previous partners only if the woman was married to or in a union with the previous partner. See Table SF3.4.A for detailed information on the sources, definitions, and question wordings used.

Source: For European countries, the EU FRA Violence Against Women survey 2012; for Australia, Personal Safety Survey (PSS) 2016; for Mexico, Bott S, Guedes A, Ruiz-Celis AP, Mendoza JA. (2019), "Intimate partner violence in the Americas: a systematic review and reanalysis of national prevalence estimates", Rev Panam Salud Publica. Vol. 43, No. 26. https://doi.org/10.26633/RPSP.2019.26, based on the Encuesta Nacional sobre la Dinámica de las Relaciones en los Hogares (ENDIREH) 2016; for Turkey, Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey survey 2014; for the U.S., National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) 2015; for Argentina, Primer Estudio Nacional sobre Violencias contra la Mujer 2015.

### Chart SF3.4.B. Attitudes among women towards partner violence

Percentage who consider a husband to be justified in hitting or beating his wife, 15-49 year-olds, women, 2010-2017



Source: OECD (2019), Gender, Institutions and Development Database, https://oe.cd/ds/GIDDB2019.

#### Comparability and data issues

Measuring intimate partner violence and other forms of Violence Against Women (VAW) is difficult. Many victims are reluctant to admit to abuse, so survey-based estimates likely underestimate the problem. Administrative data, like police reports, are often even less informative; many violent crimes go unreported because victims fear further violence and mistrust the criminal justice system to provide adequate protection. Cultural norms, fear of harm (towards the woman and her loved ones), stigma, and inadequate ability to self-support also contribute to non-disclosures of violent behaviour.

Comparisons of intimate partner violence across countries are especially difficult. Where surveys do exist, differences in survey methods (e.g. question wording, sampling methods, population coverage, definitions, and survey timing) greatly affect comparability. For example, even among the limited number of countries shown in Chart SF3.4.A, there are several cross-country differences in age groups, definitions of violence, and definitions of "intimate partners". More information on the survey estimates used in Chart SF3.4.A can be found in Table SF3.4.A.

Countries also differ in respondents' likelihood of reporting harassment. Many factors explain observed differences across countries in the reported prevalence of IPV: the social acceptability of talking about violence with other people, underlying levels of gender equality, acceptance of IPV in society, women's exposure to the risk of violence (e.g. whether or not they work outside the home), and differences in countries' overall levels of violent crime may all contribute to higher or lower levels of disclosure of violence. Data collection agencies largely define IPV as including four broad categories of "direct" violence (physical, sexual, psychological and economic), but different organisations have different interpretations of how IPV is defined and understood. There is also the challenge of whether to measure prevalence versus incidence of violence – in other words, whether to measure each individual act of violence experienced by a victim, for each perpetrator. Measuring each event can help illustrate the gravity of the abuse, but it places a high burden of recollection on the victim and, in the aggregate, may be less accurate than a simple prevalence count.

Differences in political and cultural factors mean that individual countries need to collect their own data to serve as baselines for measuring progress. For countries that have carried out multiple waves of surveys with questions on sexual harassment and/or violence against women, it is possible to observe change over time. However, it is difficult to say whether higher or lower rates of reporting indicate substantive change on the ground, greater awareness of what constitutes sexual harassment, and/or willingness to report.

A leading cross-national survey on violence against women (the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (EU FRA) Violence Against Women survey) shows the difficulty in interpreting violence rates. The survey finds a counterintuitive result: there is a positive correlation between the prevalence of genderbased violence and European Gender Equality Index scores (EU FRA, 2014). European countries that score high in gender equality (like the Nordics) also often have some of the highest levels of reported violence against women (see e.g. Chart SF3.4.A). However, when comparing extreme forms of violence – so-called "coercive control", in which an intimate partner supresses a victim's autonomy, rights, and liberties through physical, emotional, and psychological abuse – countries with higher levels of gender equality perform better. Countries with the lowest share of women under a partner's coercive control were Sweden, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, and the Czech Republic, all of which had rates below 5%. The highest prevalence of coercive control was in Eastern Europe (EU FRA, 2014).

#### Sources and further reading:

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (EU FRA) (2014), Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Main results report, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, <u>https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\_uploads/fra-2014-vaw-survey-main-results-apr14\_en.pdf</u>

International Transport Forum (2018), Women's Safety and Security: A public transport priority, OECD Publishing, Paris, <u>www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/womens-safetysecurity\_0.pdf</u>.

OECD (2019), SIGI 2019 Global Report: Transforming Challenges into Opportunities, Social Institutions and Gender Index, OECD Publishing, Paris, <u>https://doi.org/10.1787/bc56d212-en</u>.

OECD (2018) Gender Institutions and Development Database, https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=GIDDB2019.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2018), Global study on homicide: Gender-related killing of women and girls, UNODC, Vienna, <a href="http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/GSH2018/GSH18\_Gender-related\_killing\_of\_women\_and\_girls.pdf">www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/GSH2018/GSH18\_Gender-related\_killing\_of\_women\_and\_girls.pdf</a>

# Table SF3.4.A. Details on the sources used for Chart SF3.4.A

Country	Year	Source organisation	Survey	Population covered	Description and notes	Question wording	Link to source
Australia	2016	Australian Bureau of Statistics	Personal Safety Survey (PSS)	Women aged 18 and over	Data refer to the percentage of women who report having experienced physical assault and/or forced sexual activity by a current or previous partner since age 15. Physical assault includes pushing, grabbing, shoving, slapping, kicking, biting, hitting, being hit with an object and having an object that could hurt being thrown at them. Forced sexual activity includes any forced or attempted forced sexual activity against the respondent's will. Partners are defined as a person the respondent lives with, or lived with at some point, in a married or de facto relationship. These includes current and previous partners, as long as the respondents lived with the partner at some point. Boyfriend/girlfriends or dates, which refer to a person that the respondent dated, or was intimately involved with, but did not live with, are not included. The partner can be a man or a woman.	<ul> <li>WS1: The next questions are about any sexual activity you may have been forced into, since the age of 15 Has any man [WS2: including your current partner] ever forced you, or tried to force you, into sexual activity against your will?</li> <li>WS3: The next questions are about any sexual activity you may have been forced into by a woman, since the age of 15] Has any woman [WS2: including your current partner] ever forced you, or tried to force you, into sexual activity against your will?</li> <li>The following questions are about any incidents of physical assault against you, since the age of 15.</li> <li>[WS4: Apart from any incidents you have already mentioned, has/Has] a man [WS2: including your current partner] ever done any of these to you with the intent to harm or frighten you? Thrown anything at you that could hurt you; pushed, grabbed or shoved you; slapped you; kicked, bitten or hit you with a fist; hit you with something else that could hurt you.</li> <li>WS6: The following questions are about any incidents of physical assault against you by a woman, since the age of 15. [WS4: Apart from any incidents you with a fist; hit you with something else that could hurt you.</li> </ul>	https://www.abs.go v.au/ausstats/abs @.nsf/mf/4906.0
Argentina	2015	Ministerio de Justicia y Derechos Humanos	Primer estudio nacional sobre violencias contra la mujer: basado en la International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS)	Women aged 18-69	Data refer to the percentage of women who report having experienced physical violence and/or sexual violence by a current or previous partner since age 16. Physical violence includes pushing, grabbing, hair pulling, slapping, kicking, biting, hitting, being hit with objects, strangulation or suffocation, burning or scalding, and the threat or use of a weapon. Sexual violence includes forced sexual intercourse (through physical force or threats), attempted forced sexual intercourse, unwanted and distressing sexual touching, and forced sexual activity with a third party. Data refer to acts by men only. Partners are defined as current or former spouses (husband or common- law partner) and/or current or former boyfriends. The couple may or may not be living together.	<ul> <li>C2a Since the age of 16, has any man ever THROWN SOMETHING AT YOU OR HIT you with something that hurt or frightened you? (¿Le arrojaron o la golpearon con algo que pudiera lastimarla o asustarla?)</li> <li>C3a (Since the age of 16,) Has any man PUSHED OR GRABBED YOU OR TWISTED YOUR ARM OR PULLED YOUR HAIR in a way that hurt or frightened you? (¿La empujaron, agarraron, torcieron el brazo o le tironearon el pelo de tal forma que la lastimaron o asustaron?)</li> <li>C4a (Since the age of 16,) Has any man SLAPPED, KICKED, BIT OR HIT YOU WITH A FIST? (¿La cachetearon/patearon o pegaron con el puño?)</li> <li>C5a (Since the age of 16,) has any man tried to STRANGLE OR SUFFOCATE YOU, BURN OR SCALD you on purpose? (¿ Trataron de ahorcarla, o ahogarla o quemarla con alguna sustancia?)</li> <li>C6a (Since the age of 16,) Has any man used or threatened to use a KNIFE OR GUN on you? (¿Usaron o trataron de usar un cuchillo o una pistola hacia usted?)</li> <li>C7a (Since the age of 16,) Excluding sexual violence, has any man ever been physically violent towards you in a way that I have not already mentioned? (¿ Usaron otro tipo de violencia fisica?)</li> </ul>	http://www.saij.gob .ar/primer-estudio- nacional-sobre- violencias-contra- mujer-basado- international- violence-against- women-survey- ivaws-ministerio- justicia-derechos- humanos-nacion- lb000215-2017- 07/123456789- 0abc-defg-g51- 2000blsorbil

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European Union Member States	2012	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights	Violence against Women: An EU- wide survey	Women aged 18-74	Data refer to the percentage of women who report having experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner since age 15. Physical violence includes pushing, shoving, slapping, being hit by a thrown object, hair pulling, punching and kicking, burning, suffocation, stabbing or shooting, and having the head banged against something. Sexual violence includes forced sexual intercourse, attempted forced sexual intercourse, and other forms of sexual activity performed without consent or with consent out of fear of the partners' actions. Partners are defined as "persons with whom the respondents were, or had been, married, living together without being married, or involved in a relationship without living together". The partner can be of any sex or gender.	<ul> <li>E03 [] Your current partner hasE03b Pushed you or shoved you? E03c Slapped you? E03d Thrown a hard object at you? E03e Grabbed you or pulled your hair? E03f Beat you with a fist or a hard object, or kicked you? E03g burned you? E03h Tried to suffocate or strangle you? E03i Cut or stabbed you, or shot at you? E03j Beat your head against something?</li> <li>E04a Your current partner has forced you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way? E04b Apart from this, your current partner has attempted to force you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way? E04b Apart from this, your current partner has attempted to force you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way? E04c Apart from this, your current partner has made you take part in any form of sexual activity when you did not want to or you were unable to refuse? E04d Or have you consented to sexual activity because you were afraid of what your current partner might do if you refused?</li> <li>G04 [] has any of your previous partnersG04b Pushed you or shoved you? G04c Slapped you? G04d Thrown a hard object at you? G04e Grabbed you or pulled your hair? G04f Beat you with a fist or a hard object, or kicked you? G04g burned you? G04j Beat your head against something?</li> <li>G05 [] has any previous partner done any of the following to you? G05a Forced you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way? G05b Apart from this, your current partner has attempted to force you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way?</li> </ul>	https://fra.europa.e u/sites/default/files/ fra-violence- against-women- survey- questionnaire- 1_en.pdf

						partner has made you take part in any form of sexual activity when you did not want to or you were unable to refuse? <b>G05d</b> Or have you consented to sexual activity because you were afraid of what your current partner might do if you refused?	
Mexico	2016	Bott S, Guedes A, Ruiz-Celis AP, Mendoza JA. (2019), "Intimate partner violence in the Americas: a systematic review and reanalysis of national prevalence estimates", Rev Panam Salud Publica. Vol. 43, No. 26. https://doi.org/10. 26633/RPSP.201 9.26	Encuesta Nacional sobre la Dinámica de las Relaciones en los Hogares (ENDIREH)	Women aged 15-49	Data refer to the percentage of women who report ever having experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current or previous partner, either during the relationship after the relationship ended. Physical violence includes hair pulling, pushing, slapping, tying up, kicking, being hit by a thrown object, hanging or choking, hitting, stabbing and shooting. Sexual violence includes forced sexual intercourse, sexual intercourse under threat or blackmail, being forced to perform a sexual act, being forced to view pornography, and being forced to have unprotected sex. Partners are defined as men with which the women has had an intimate relationship, either through marriage, free union, or dating, regardless of whether or not they have lived together. Questions on previous partners is asked only to women who have previously been married or in a free union.	<ul> <li>Q13.1. ¿Desde que inició la relación con su esposo o pareja: 1. la ha empujado o le ha jalado el cabello; 2. la ha abofeteado o cacheteado; 3. la ha amarrado; 4. la ha pateado; 5. le ha aventado algún objeto; 6. la ha golpeado con el puño o con algún objeto; 7. la ha tratado de ahorcar o asfixiar; 8. la ha agredido con cuchillo o navaja; 9. le ha disparado con un arma de fuego; (page 32) 25. le ha exigido con amenazas o chantajes tener relaciones sexuales, aunque usted no quiera; 26. cuando tienen relaciones sexuales la ha obligado a hacer cosas que a usted no le gustan; 27. ha usado su fuerza física para obligarla a tener relaciones sexuales; 28. la ha obligado a mirar escenas o actos sexuales o pornográficos (fotos, revistas, videos o películas pornográficas); 29. la ha obligado a tener relaciones sexuales sin protección.</li> <li>Q12.17. Alguna de sus parejas o esposo(s) anteriores, ¿durante su relación o después de separarse): 1. la golpeó o agredió físicamente (abofeteado, golpeado con el puño, pateado)? 2. la lastimó con un cuchillo o arma de fuego? 5. la agredió sexualente (intentó obligarla o la obligó a tener relaciones sexuales por la fuerza o con amenazas)?</li> </ul>	http://iris.paho.org/ xmlui/bitstream/ha ndle/123456789/50 485/v43e262019.p df?sequence=5&is Allowed=y
Turkey	2014	Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Directorate General on the Status of Women	Domestic Violence Against Women in Turkey	Ever-married women aged 15-59	Data refer to the percentage of ever-married women who report ever having experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current or previous partner. Physical violence includes pushing, shoving, slapping, being hit by a thrown object, hair pulling, punching and kicking, burning, choking, and the threat or use of a weapon. Sexual violence includes forced sexual intercourse, sexual intercourse performed out of fear of the partner's actions, attempted forced sexual intercourse, and sexual acts that the respondent found degrading or humiliating. "Partners" refers to current or former intimate partners such as husbands, fiancés, betrotheds and boyfriends. Data cover ever-married women only.	<ul> <li>504A Has your current husband/partner, or any other husbands/partners ever: a)</li> <li>Slapped you or thrown something at you; b) Pushed you or shoved you or pulled your hair?; c) Hit you with his punch or with something else that could hurt you?; d) Kicked you, dragged you or beaten you up?; e) Choked or burnt any part of your body?; f)</li> <li>Threaten you with a weapon like a knife or gun or actually used them against you?</li> <li>504B Did you experience (a to f) with your last husband/partner?</li> <li>505A Has your current husband/partner, or any other husbands/partners ever: a) physically force you to have sexual intercourse even you did not want to?; b) had sexual intercourse with you in a time that you did not want to because you were afraid of what your partner or any other partner might do during sex?; c) forced you to do something sexual that you found degrading or humiliating?</li> <li>505B Did you experience (a to c) with your last husband/partner?</li> </ul>	http://www.hips.ha cettepe.edu.tr/eng/ dokumanlar/2008- TDVAW Main Re port.pdf
United States	2015	United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS)	Women aged 18 and over	Data refer to the percentage of women who report ever having experienced physical violence, sexual violence or stalking by a current or previous partner. Physical violence includes slapping, pushing or shoving, being hit with a fist or something hard, kicking, hair pulling, being slammed against something, choking or suffocating, beating, deliberate burning, and use of a knife or gun. Sexual	How many of your current or ex-romantic or sexual partners have ever: <b>G01</b> slapped you? <b>G02</b> Pushed or shoved you? <b>G05</b> hit you with a fist or something hard? <b>G06</b> kicked you? <b>G07</b> hurt you by pulling your hair? <b>G08</b> slammed you against something? <b>G09</b> tried to hurt you by choking or suffocating you? <b>G10</b> beaten you? <b>G11</b> burned you on purpose? <b>G12</b> used a knife on you? <b>G13</b> used a gun on you? How many people have ever: <b>D03</b> kissed you in a sexual way when you did not want it to happen?; <b>D04</b> fondled, groped, grabbed, or touched you in a sexual way when	https://www.cdc.go v/violencepreventio n/datasources/nisv s/2015NISVSdatab rief.html

	violence includes rape, being made to penetrate someone else, sexual coercion, and unwanted sexual contact. Stalking involves a pattern of harassing or threatening tactics used by a perpetrator that is both unwanted and causes fear or safety concerns in the victim. Partners are defined as romantic or sexual partners and include spouses, boyfriends, girlfriends, people with whom the respondent dated, were seeing, or "hooked up." Partners can be of any sex or gender, although some of the asked-about sexual acts refer specifically to acts committed by men.	<ul> <li>you did not want it to happen? D05_01 The first time these things happened to you, how did you know the person who did any of these things to you? D05_10 The 10th person?</li> <li>How many people have you had vaginal, oral, or anal sex with after they pressured you by doing any of the following?</li> <li>D15 Telling you lies, making promises about the future they knew were untrue, threatening to end your relationship, or threatening to spread rumors about you?; D16 Wearing you down by repeatedly asking for sex, or showing they were unhappy?; D17 Using their influence or authority over you, for example, your boss or your teacher?</li> <li>D18_01 The first time these things happened to you, how did you know the person who did any of these things to you? D05_10 The 10th person?</li> <li>How many PEOPLE have ever used physical force or threats of physical harm to E33 put their mouth on your vagina or anus? E34 put their fingers or an object in your vagina or anus? How many MALES have ever used physical force or threats of physical harm to E35 put their penis in your anus? E37 put their penis in your mouth? E45_01 The first time these things happened to you, how did you know the person who did [the aforementioned] to you? E45_10 The 10th person?</li> <li>Has anyone ever: C01 followed you around and watched you when you did not want them to? C02 approached you or showed up in places, such as your home, work, or school when you did not want them to? C03 used GPS technology used in a phone or in social media, such as Facebook. C04 left strange or potentially threatening items for you to find? C05 sneaked into your home or car and did things to scare you by letting you know they had been there? C06 used technology such as a hidden camera, recorder, or computer software to spy on you from a distance? C07 made unwanted phone calls to you, including hang-ups and yoice messages? C08 sent you unwanted etxt messages, photo messages, enails, or messages frough Facebook, Twitter, or other social media? C09</li></ul>
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