



Federal Republic of Nigeria



NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS IN NIGERIA

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CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

Preamble

Official statistics is fundamental to development planning, good government, delivery of public services and effective decision-making in all sectors of the society. Statistics provides information to all stakeholders and the public with performance on the different sectors of the society and the economy as well as the performance of government.

Adoption and compliance with a common Code of Practice, by all the public bodies that produce official statistics, is central to maintaining a unified statistical service that meets the needs of government and society and is both credible and trusted.

The Statistics Act 2007 requires the Nigeria Statistics Authority (the National Bureau of Statistics) to prepare and publish a Code of Practice and to assess compliance against it. All bodies that produce Official Statistics are required to ensure that the Code continues to be observed. For other non - official statistics, compliance with the Code is not a formal requirement.

Official Statistics is defined in Section 4 of the Statistics Act 2007 as Statistics produced by the National Bureau of Statistics, Line Ministries and Agencies, Public Authorities, State Statistical Agencies and Local Government Statistical Units.

This Code is designed for use by the National Bureau of Statistics, the Statistical Units in MDAs and other public institutions at Federal, State and Local Government levels that produce official statistics. Its principal aim is to set out, as stated in the Statistics Act 2007, the professional standards to be followed by all agencies producing Official Statistics and set the framework for enhancing statistical development within the National Statistical System.

This Code is consistent with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the Nigeria Statistics Act 2007 (with which all producers of Nigerian Statistics are expected to comply).

It is also consistent with the Civil Service core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality. With respect to statistical work, these are interpreted as follows:

- Integrity – putting the public interest above organisational, political or personal interests
- Honesty – being truthful and open about the statistics and their interpretation.
- Objectivity – using scientific methods to collect statistics and basing statistical advice on rigorous analysis of the evidence.

- Impartiality – acting solely according to the merits of the statistical evidence, serving equally well all aspects of the public interest.

The Code contains seventeen principles and, in relation to each, a statement of associated practices and Key Indicator(s) of Compliance (KIC).

The principles and practices of the Code represent a common quality framework in the Nigerian Statistical System and are intended to ensure: that the range of official statistics meets the needs of users; that the statistics are produced, managed and disseminated to high standards; and that the statistics are clear, unambiguous and well explained.

The Code is specific but, in some cases, its requirements will need interpretation and professional judgement. The Statistician General will provide supplementary guidance to assist bodies that produce official statistics.

Some practices set out in the Code are relevant to more than one principle. In the interests of conciseness, the practices are not normally repeated under different principles.

It is implicit in the Code that, there will be sufficient managerial separation between staff responsible for official statistics and other staff of the organization, to ensure clear lines of accountability for observance of the Code.

The Statistician General in the National Bureau of Statistics as the Coordinator of the National Statistical System (NSS), shall be the Head of Assessment of Compliance with the Code.

Structure

The Code addresses three main areas (i) **Institutional Environment**, (ii) **Statistical Processes and** (iii) **Statistical Output** and is based on seventeen high level Principles. The Principles summarize the key guiding professional standards of operations for gathering, processing and dissemination of official statistics and are in line with the statutory instrument under which the National Bureau of Statistics was established. For each of the Principles, a number of Key Indicators of Compliance (KIC) have been put in place. Some of the indicators are relevant to more than one principle. In the interest of brevity, such indicators are not repeated under different Principles.

The structure of the Code of Practice is as follows:

<u>AREA</u>	<u>PRINCIPLES</u>
Institutional Environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professional Independence 2. Coordination of the National Statistical System 3. Mandate for Data Collection 4. Adequacy of Resources 5. Institutional commitment to Quality 6. Confidentiality

7. Impartiality and Objectivity
8. Cooperation and International Participation

Statistical Processes

9. Sound Methodology
10. Appropriate Statistical Procedures
11. Minimized burden on Respondents
12. Cost Effectiveness

Statistical Output

13. User Engagement and Relevance
14. Accuracy and Reliability
15. Timeliness and Punctuality
16. Coherence and Comparability
17. Dissemination, Accessibility and Clarity.

A. INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Institutional environment or factors within which official statistics are produced and disseminated have significant influence on the effectiveness and credibility of a statistical authority. The National Statistical System must be regulated by an institution which coordinates and directs the research, production and dissemination of quality statistics using appropriate policies, norms and standards. The relevant institutional factors are professional independence, coordination of the national statistical system, mandate for data collection, adequacy of resources, institutional commitment to quality, confidentiality, impartiality and objectivity, and cooperation and international participation.

PRINCIPLE	KEY PRACTICES OR INDICATORS OF COMPLIANCE (KIC)
<p>1. Professional Independence and Integrity</p> <p>The professional independence of the National Bureau of Statistics as the National Statistical Agency and other entities in the National Statistical System from interference from political, regulatory and administrative agencies and from other sources of external interference, ensures the credibility and integrity of official statistics.</p>	<p>1.1 The professional independence of the National Bureau of Statistics as the National Statistical Agency and all the other producers of statistics in the National Statistical System and their ability to compile and disseminate official statistics without external, political or other interference are specified in law.</p> <p>1.2 The Statistician General of the National Bureau of Statistics is appointed at a rank senior enough to assure access to high levels of government agencies and political authorities, the private sector, and national and international organizations.</p> <p>1.3 The Statistician General of the National Bureau of Statistics and the Heads of other statistics-producing entities in the National Statistical System are professionally competent and have expert knowledge in the field of Statistics.</p> <p>1.4 Official Statistics published by the National Statistical System is clearly distinguished from, and issued separately from political statements and comments</p>

	<p>about the figures are not published ahead of the publication of the statistics.</p> <p>1.5 The National Bureau of Statistics has a Governing Board which provides overall policy directions for the operations of the agency, and monitors the coordination of the system.</p> <p>1.6 The Management of the National Bureau of Statistics shall be adequately represented on its Governing Board.</p> <p>1.7 The National Statistical System has a Statistics Committee made up of a professionally competent group of experts who advise the National Consultative Committee on Statistics (NCCS) on the general policy and strategic plans of the system.</p> <p>1.8 The National Bureau of Statistics and all the other producers of statistics in the National Statistical System alone bear the responsibility for decisions with regard to the choice of statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases.</p> <p>1.9 The Statistician General of the National Bureau of Statistics and the Heads of other statistics-producing entities in the National Statistical System can, when appropriate, issue public statements on statistical matters, including criticisms, and address misuse of official statistics.</p> <p>1.10 Adequate controls are in place to ensure that individuals who work within the National Statistical System do not abuse the trust placed in them for personal gain.</p>
<p>2. Coordination of the National Statistical System</p> <p>The National Statistical System must be properly coordinated to enable statistics-producing entities to plan and implement national statistical activity in a participatory manner, and to maintain close contact and work jointly to improve the quality, comparability and consistency of Official Statistics.</p>	<p>2.1 The National Statistical System is formally established by legislation, the Statistics Act.</p> <p>2.2 A single entity with a well-defined mandate and clearly defined powers of coordination of the National Statistical System is established by statute.</p> <p>2.3 The National Bureau of Statistics from time to time establishes methodologies, standards, classifications and procedures for statistical production by Ministries, Departments, Agencies and other public institutions.</p> <p>2.4 The National Bureau of Statistics establishes parameters for participation and responsibilities for the other components of the national statistical system</p> <p>2.5 The National Statistical System appoints consultative committees of experts with rules of procedure to facilitate communication between the entities in the national statistical system and the principal users of</p>

	<p>Official Statistics</p> <p>2.6 The entities belonging to the National Statistical System prioritize in a coordinated manner the generation of statistical information required for decision making.</p> <p>2.7 The National Statistical System has a National Consultative Committee which provides overall strategic direction to the system and develops synergy and cooperation within the system with a view to improving on quality, comparability and timeliness of the statistical output of the System</p> <p>2.8 Annually, the national Consultative Committee on Statistics, after examining the statistical programs of the various components of the National Statistical System, evolves a National Statistical Program designed to achieve greater coordination and avoid unnecessary duplication.</p>
<p>3. Mandate for Data Collection</p> <p>The National Bureau of Statistics must have an unequivocal legal mandate to collect information for the preparation of Official Statistics. At the request of the National Bureau of Statistics or other bodies in the National Statistical System, public establishments, corporate bodies and individuals may be required by law to provide access to data for the preparation of official statistics or to submit such data, which will be treated as confidential.</p>	<p>3.1 There is in existence a law conferring on the National Bureau of Statistics and all the other producers of statistics in the National Statistical System the power to collect information for the preparation and dissemination of official statistics.</p> <p>3.2 Individuals and corporate bodies are legally obligated to provide information to the National Bureau of Statistics and other entities in the National Statistical System and the law specifies penalties for failure to provide such information.</p> <p>3.3 The law grants the National Bureau of Statistics access to, and use of, data developed by government ministries, departments and agencies</p>
<p>4. Adequacy of Resources</p> <p>The resources made available to statistical authorities for statistical activity at the three tiers of government should be sufficient and appropriate for the generation of official statistics and to meet the requirements of the Nigerian Statistical System.</p>	<p>4.1 Sufficient human (staff), financial and technological resources are available in order to meet the demand for statistical information.</p> <p>4.2 Appropriately skilled persons are employed in the statistics production process. An appropriate competence framework is used to set the requirements of statistical posts and the development needs of staff and support staff in developing their statistical, management and subject area knowledge.</p> <p>4.3 The coverage and detail of official statistics and the cost and time necessary for their generation are based on an analysis of information requirements.</p> <p>4.4 New requests for information are assessed and justified</p>

	<p>with reference to their costs using control mechanisms.</p> <p>4.5 The exclusion, inclusion or continuity of official statistics is evaluated periodically by those responsible for statistics production in order to optimize resources.</p> <p>4.6 Records are maintained showing the relationship between the statistical planning process, the work program, the allocation of resources, and the outcome.</p> <p>4.7 Expenditure is monitored against work programmes and effective stewardship of resources allocated to statistical work is demonstrated.</p> <p>4.8 Efforts are made to balance quality (for example, accuracy and timeliness) against costs (including costs to both government and data suppliers), taking into account the expected use of the statistics.</p>
<p>5. Institutional Commitment to Quality</p> <p>The organizations responsible for statistics production are committed to quality. They systematically and regularly identify strengths and weaknesses in the system with a view to continuously improving both process and product quality. Cooperation among the various units is based on rules, principles and standards.</p>	<p>5.1 A quality model and policy is clearly identified, documented and made known to the members of the National Statistical System.</p> <p>5.2 Quality guidelines are published and appropriate training in quality management is given to staff.</p> <p>5.3 The quality of the statistical output is monitored and assessed periodically to ensure it complies with internal guidelines and international standards.</p> <p>5.4 Systematic efforts are made to promote and further a culture of continuous improvement in statistics production.</p> <p>5.5 Documented procedures for quality assessment and assurance are applied at each phase of the statistical process.</p> <p>5.6 Official Statistics is produced to a level of quality that meets users' needs and users are informed about the quality of statistical outputs, including estimates of the main sources of bias and other errors.</p> <p>5.7 There is a regular and thorough review of the key statistical outputs using also external experts where appropriate.</p>
<p>6. Confidentiality</p> <p>The National Bureau of Statistics and other entities in the National Statistical System shall guarantee the protection and confidentiality of the information used to produce Official Statistics and shall refrain from identifying sources.</p>	<p>6.1 The legislation specifies unambiguously that data are confidential and prohibits their use for any purpose other than statistical ones, such as commercial purposes, taxation or judicial investigation.</p> <p>6.2 Persons with access to individual or confidential information must execute a declaration stating their respect for confidentiality and taking note of the penalties for non-compliance.</p> <p>6.3 Legal standards and commitments to confidentiality are established for the staff involved in the generation of</p>

	<p>official statistics, together with the penalties that apply for violations.</p> <p>6.4 Legal standards and commitments to confidentiality are established for consultants and contractors to all agencies in the National Statistics System.</p> <p>6.5 There must be protocols establishing guidelines on the security and integrity of statistical databases.</p> <p>6.6 Respondents are informed of the main uses and limitations in terms of access to the information that they provide.</p> <p>6.7 Access to microdata is subject to confidentiality protocols for external users who access them for purposes of analysis and statistical research.</p> <p>6.8 Information must be stored in accordance with established security and confidentiality protocols and existing standards.</p>
<p>7. Impartiality and objectivity</p> <p>The National Bureau of Statistics and other entities in the National Statistical System produce and disseminate official statistics respecting scientific independence and in an objective, professional and transparent manner, so that all users are treated equitably.</p>	<p>7.1 Official statistics are prepared using methodologies and technical processes based on impartiality, objectivity and transparency.</p> <p>7.2 The standards, classifications, methods and processes used to produce the statistics are documented and made known to the public.</p> <p>7.3 The choice of information sources, methods, processes, concepts and data dissemination paths is a professional responsibility and is based on national and international principles and best practices.</p> <p>7.4 The approaches and guidelines used will guarantee all users simultaneous access to statistical reports, in an impartial and comprehensible manner, subject to any statutory provisions for pre-release access.</p> <p>7.5 The timing of the release of Official Statistics is announced beforehand.</p> <p>7.6 Statistical reports are delivered in an objective and professional manner based on statistical considerations.</p> <p>7.7 A statement is issued on the conduct, standards and ethical values governing statistical practices.</p> <p>7.8 Details of any exemption from the compliance criteria agreed to by the head of the national statistical agency are published.</p> <p>7.9 A Revision Policy or those outputs that are subject to scheduled revisions is published together with a statement explaining the nature and extent of revisions.</p> <p>7.10 Errors discovered in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and published.</p>

<p>8. Cooperation and International Participation</p> <p>The National Bureau of Statistics and other entities in the National Statistical System cooperate in the exchange of experiences and information and work jointly on the preparation of international statistical standards and activities.</p>	<p>8.1 The National Bureau of Statistics participates in international activities of statistical interest and in the joint establishment of standards supported by international bodies.</p> <p>8.2 The National Bureau of Statistics participates in international cooperation activities in order to share with, and transfer knowledge to, international bodies and other national statistical institutes.</p> <p>8.3 International cooperation mechanisms are developed for the transfer of knowledge.</p>
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B. STATISTICAL PROCESSES

The guidelines, approaches, standards and good practices, both national and international, are the basis for the development of methodologies and processes for the production of quality statistics. The relevant aspects are sound methodology, appropriate statistical procedures, less burden on respondents and cost effectiveness.

<p>9. Sound Methodology</p> <p>The production of Official Statistics by the National Bureau of Statistics and other producers of statistics in the National Statistical System should be consistent with scientific principles and internationally recognized best practices and be fully documented.</p>	<p>9.1 The overall methodological framework used for generating Official Statistics follows national and other international standards, guidelines and good practices.</p> <p>9.2 Agreement is in place on the implementation of methodologies, concepts, classifications and good practices that follow scientific principles and guidelines for national and international acceptance.</p> <p>9.3 The survey methodology and the use of administrative registers are assessed periodically and, where necessary, adjusted to guarantee a high quality product.</p> <p>9.4 All Ministries, Departments, Agencies and other producers of statistics in the National Statistical System shall collect and keep data produced by them in a manner that ensures effective and efficient collation and collection by the National Bureau of Statistics.</p> <p>9.5 There shall be detailed concordance between the national and international benchmark classifications prepared by the competent bodies.</p> <p>9.6 At the design stage of the statistical operation, flexibility is permitted for the preparation of instruments for data capture and processing based on users' information needs.</p> <p>9.7 There are academic, inter-institutional and sectoral</p>
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	<p>committees to assess and improve the methodology used in statistical processes.</p> <p>9.8 Better instruments and procedures based on sound knowledge are promoted.</p> <p>9.9 Efficient and effective policies are in place for the recruitment of appropriately qualified persons at various levels as required to fulfill the mandate of the national statistics system.</p> <p>9.10 An appropriate system of continuous academic and vocational training is in place to ensure that staff skills and expertise are maintained at the highest possible levels.</p>
<p>10. Appropriate Statistical Procedures</p> <p>The quality of Official Statistics used by the National Bureau of Statistics and the other members of the National Statistical System must be underpinned by appropriate procedures and tools at every stage of the statistical process.</p>	<p>10.1 The methodologies, questionnaires, manuals, computer-based applications and other instruments are checked out and validated before starting the data collection process.</p> <p>10.2 Computer systems are used for data capture, codification, criticism and validation of information.</p> <p>10.3 The stages of the statistical process are reviewed or updated as required by statistical operation and research.</p> <p>10.4 Appropriate technological resources are used to carry out estimates and imputations and to review or update them periodically as provided for by the design of the statistical operation.</p> <p>10.5 Revisions follow well-established standard procedures in accordance with the established time table. Studies and analysis of revisions are made known to the public.</p> <p>10.6 The concepts and definitions used when administrative registers are used for statistical purposes comply with the parameters required in a quality statistical process.</p> <p>10.7 Statistical authorities are involved in the design of administrative data in order to make administrative data more suitable for statistical purposes.</p> <p>10.8 All entities in the National Statistical System agree on a shared commitment to the use of administrative data for statistical purposes and on assuring the quality of such data.</p> <p>10.9 Editing and validation processes are conducted in accordance with the rules of consistency and imputation.</p>
<p>11. Minimized burden on Respondents</p>	<p>11.1 The National Bureau of Statistics uses coordinated and systematic procedures for obtaining information</p>

<p>The National Bureau of Statistics and other producers of statistics in the National Statistical System should set their targets so as to gradually reduce the burden on respondents. The request for information should be in line with the needs of users, must not be excessive for the respondents and their cost burden should be assessed relative to the benefits arising from the use of the statistics.</p>	<p>relating to corporate accounts (financial information).</p> <p>11.2 The coverage and the details of the request for information from respondents are limited to information that is strictly necessary.</p> <p>11.3 A constant effort is made and techniques developed to reduce the burden on respondents.</p> <p>11.4 Sharing data between producers of statistics is promoted in order to avoid duplication of effort and statistical output.</p> <p>11.5 The statistical potential of administrative records is enhanced by the active promotion of statistical purposes in the design of administrative systems.</p> <p>11.6 The costs (to data suppliers) of proposed new data requirements are analyzed against the potential benefits.</p> <p>11.7 Existing data sources and estimation techniques are evaluated before undertaking new surveys.</p> <p>11.8 Constant efforts are made wherever possible to obtain participation in surveys through improved respondent education and awareness, and informed consent rather than using statutory powers.</p>
<p>12. Cost Effectiveness</p> <p>The National Bureau of Statistics and all the other producers of statistics in the National Statistical System must use resources efficiently and effectively.</p>	<p>12.1 The use of resources by the statistics-producing entities is controlled by internal measures and subject to audit by the appropriate authority.</p> <p>12.2 Proactive efforts are made to improve the statistical potential of the administrative data and avoid costly direct surveys.</p> <p>12.3 Regulations must enable members of the National Statistical System to share data on companies and persons in order to reduce collection costs without prejudice to statistical confidentiality or any reservations that may exist under the law.</p> <p>12.4 Information and communications technologies are used in order to optimize processes for the generation and dissemination of official statistics.</p>

C. STATISTICAL OUTPUT

Official statistics must satisfy the requirements of users and comply with the quality standards established for statistical outputs. The important considerations are the extent to which the statistics satisfy users' needs, accurate and reliable, timely, coherent, comparable, and readily accessible by users.

<p>13. User Engagement The National Bureau of Statistics and other entities in the National Statistical System must satisfy users' information needs on the basis of their requirements.</p>	<p>13.1 The National Bureau of Statistics and other producers of statistics in the National Statistical System engage actively with the users of statistics to promote trust and maximize public values.</p> <p>13.2 The supply of statistics nationally is based on mechanisms and strategies for identifying the priority information needs of the three tiers of Government, the business sector, research institutes and the community as a whole.</p> <p>13.3 The entities in the National Statistical System follow procedures for advising, training and reporting to users on the statistical outputs and for consulting them periodically on the practical use of statistical data.</p> <p>13.4 Users and producers of official statistics participate in the processes of identification, analysis and evaluation of users' information requirements through academic, inter-institutional and sectoral committees.</p> <p>13.5 Reviews are conducted periodically to determine whether the existing official statistics are satisfactory to users and the types of decision they inform.</p> <p>13.6 Systematic statistical planning arrangements, including transparent priority setting, are adopted so as to reflect the obligation to serve the public good.</p> <p>13.7 Feedback information from users regarding data quality, the format and timing of reports, and users' experience is gathered and published.</p>
<p>14. Accuracy and reliability The official statistics produced by National Bureau of Statistics and other statistics-producing members of the National Statistical System must be an accurate and reliable reflection of the actual situation.</p>	<p>14.1 The original data, intermediate results and statistical output are assessed and validated by comparing them, where appropriate, with other statistical information.</p> <p>14.2 Sampling and non-sampling errors are analyzed and documented.</p> <p>14.3 The data are collected in accordance with the methodology and designs published to guarantee reliability.</p> <p>14.4 Regular reviews of the statistical process are</p>

	<p>undertaken to introduce improvements at the different phases.</p> <p>14.5 Methodologies are updated periodically to comply with the quality criteria for producing official statistics and to bring them in line with international standards.</p>
<p>15. Timeliness and Punctuality The National Bureau of Statistics and other statistics-producing members of the National Statistical System must produce and disseminate official statistics in a timely, punctual and transparent manner</p>	<p>15.1 In order to be relevant, the statistics must be produced on a timely basis, that is, within a reasonable period after the completion of the reference period.</p> <p>15.2 The periodicity with which the official statistics are to be made available is determined bearing in mind users' requirements as well as international standards and commitments in this regard.</p> <p>15.3 A date and time is set for the dissemination of all official statistics. If the deadline is not going to be met, notification must be given in advance together with the relevant explanation and an indication of a new date for publication.</p> <p>15.4 Any significant error identified in the official statistics disseminated must be corrected and the correct figures published immediately.</p> <p>15.5 Any substantial update in the statistical methodology, procedures or techniques is announced prior to the final publication of the results.</p>
<p>16. Coherence and Comparability The Official Statistics produced by the National Bureau of Statistics and the other statistics-producing members of the National Statistical System must be coherent internally and over time and must be comparable cross regions and countries</p>	<p>16.1 Official Statistics are coherent internally and reconcilable over time.</p> <p>16.2 Statistics based on administrative registers are coherent in the use of classifications and concepts required for a quality statistical process.</p> <p>16.3 The use of statistical frameworks, classifications, procedures, indicators, concepts and good practices is promoted in the production of official statistics in order to enhance their comparability over time and with other data sets.</p> <p>16.4 Steps are taken to promote the national and international comparability of the statistics produced.</p>
<p>17. Dissemination and Accessibility The official statistics generated by the National Bureau of Statistics and the other statistics-producing members of the National Statistical System must be presented clearly and comprehensively and disseminated appropriately,</p>	<p>17.1 All users are guaranteed free and equal access to Official Statistics on the basis of clearly established and well-known procedures.</p> <p>17.2 Official statistics and the relevant metadata are made available to users clearly and precisely, and in as much detail as is reliable and practicable, subject to legal and confidentiality constraints, which should enable users to interpret them correctly and make meaningful comparisons. Formats should be adopted</p>

<p>thereby enabling equitable access by all users.</p>	<p>for the presentation of statistics in graphs, tables, and maps that enhance clarity, interpretability and consistency.</p> <p>17.3 Different media and technologies that meet requirements and ensure full coverage are used for the dissemination of official statistics.</p> <p>17.4 Official Statistics are disseminated in forms that are, as far as possible, accessible to a wide audience, and in forms that enable and encourage analysis and reuse.</p> <p>17.5 In order to promote the use of Official Statistics, relevant instructions are prepared and made available to the press and the public as a whole.</p> <p>17.6 As far as possible, technical support for data analysis is provided at the request of users, and, depending on the agreement, the results should be made public.</p> <p>17.7 Information is provided to users on the quality and reliability of statistics in relation to the range of potential uses, and on projects, working documents and methodologies.</p> <p>17.8 Official Statistics are managed in accordance with relevant public records legislation and codes of practice on records management. Deposition of official statistics for archiving (accompanied by information about their purposes, design and methods) is done in line with existing laws.</p>
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