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## **Safety at the Local Level: Examples from Austria**



**BM.I**  
**Sicherheits**  
**App**

**Towards Safe and Secure County.**  
**Challenges for Local Communities.**

**Cracow, Poland**  
**19 November 2013**

*Courtesy: BM.I*

## **What to expect:**

- I. Introduction to Austria  
(Country, Police, Municipalities)**
- II. Prevention in Austria**
- III. Upholding safety in municipalities**
- IV. Co-operation Programs**

# Introduction to Austria (1)

## Republic of Austria

- democratic republic
- approx. 84,000 km<sup>2</sup>, over 8,000.000 inhabitants
- federalist structure (powers are split between federation and provinces)
- 9 autonomous provinces (“states”)
- 117 counties/districts
- 2,354 municipalities: self-government & state admin.

## Introduction to Austria (2)

### Provinces

- specific executive powers but **no** police competencies
- provincial parliaments with select legislative powers



# Police in Austria



## Federal Police

- subordinate to Federal Ministry of the Interior
- one nation-wide law enforcement agency on **federal level**
- created in 2005 (merger of three federal agencies)
- over 20,000 officers, 9 provincial directorates, 900 stations

## Municipal Police

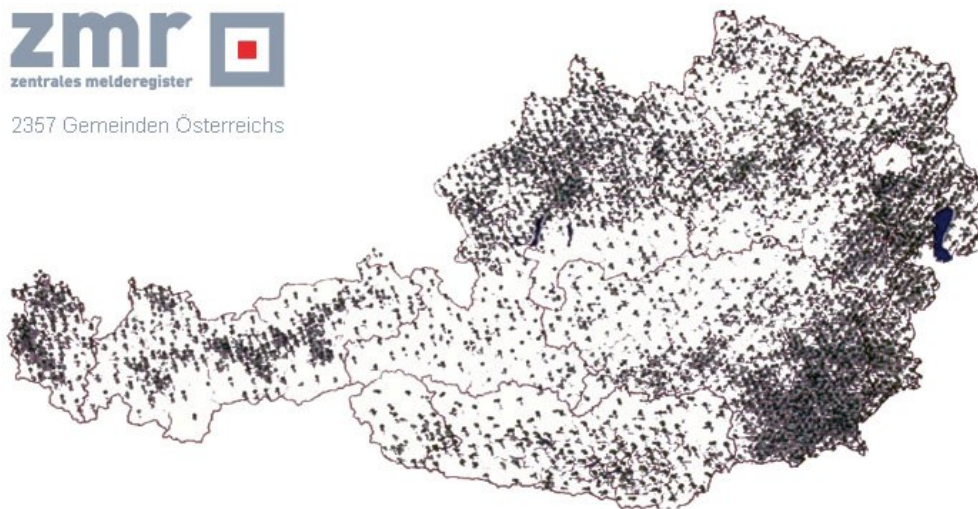
- 37 municipalities, over 300 officers

## No Provincial Police

# Municipalities in Austria



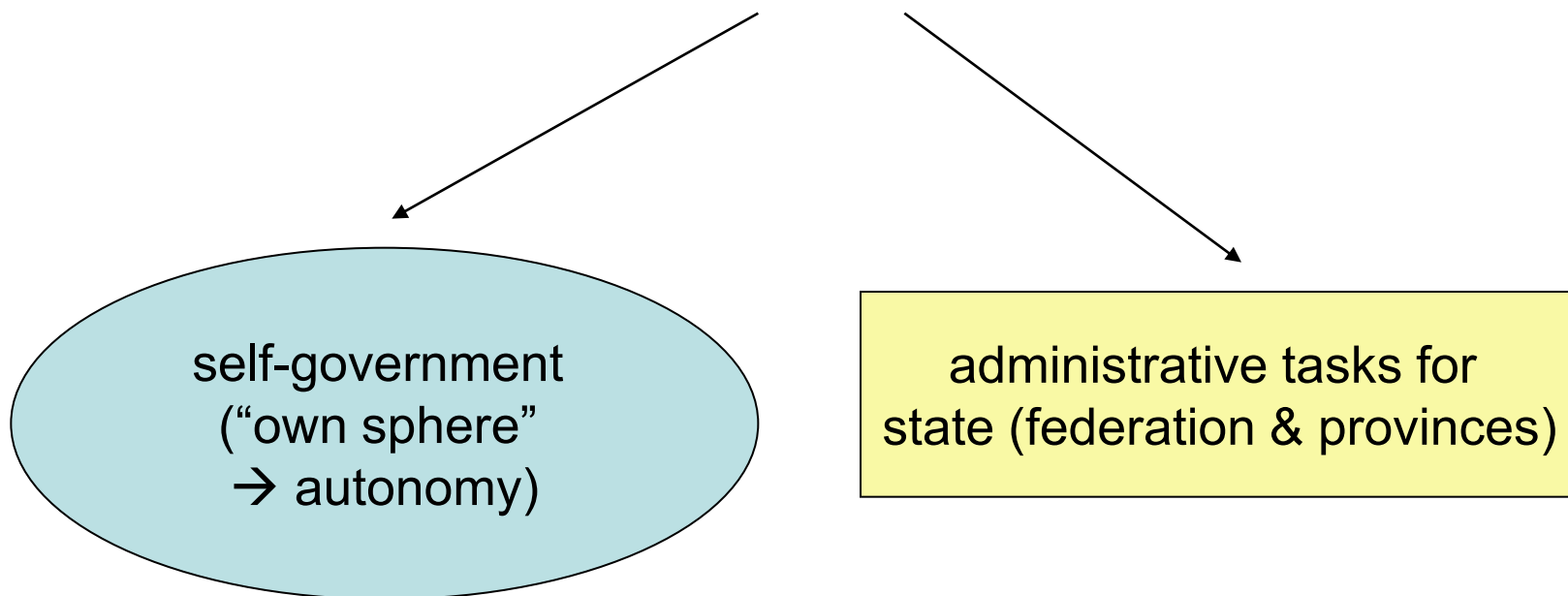
2357 Gemeinden Österreichs



- currently 2,354
- Self-government (autonomy) and administrative tasks for state (fed. & province)
- “uniformity of municipalities”  
→ same basics for big and small ones

## Municipalities in Austria (2)

Wide array of tasks



# Municipalities in Austria (3)

## Self-Government: Federal Constitution

Art. 118 (3):

*“A municipality is guaranteed official responsibility in its own sphere of competence, in particular for performing the following matters:*

*(...)*

3. **local public security administration** (Art. 15 para 2), local events control;
4. *administration of municipal traffic areas, local traffic police;*
5. *crops protection police;*
6. *local market police;*
7. *local sanitary police, especially in the field of emergency and first aid services as well as matters pertaining to deaths and interment;*
8. *public decency;*
9. *local building police*

*(...)”*



# Counties/Districts in Austria

## 117 “Bezirksverwaltungsbehörden”

- dating back to monarchy times
- mixed authorities: in charge of nation-wide and provincial matters
- no “own sphere” (no autonomous matters)
- statutory cities: both municipality and district
- Head of county/district is also “security authority” (unless a police directorate or a field office of the directorate was set up – e.g. Vienna)

**In cities with police directorate or field office:  
NO municipal police (“prohibition of competition”)**

## II. Crime Prevention in Austria (1)

### **“Crime Prevention” is part of Security Police Act**

- 1920: “Security police” supposed to be in the competence of provinces (legislation and enforcement), BUT: no laws passed
- 1929: General security police (maintaining peace, order, safety) became a federal matter
- Various attempts for a federal police law until 1993
- 1993: Security Police Act
- § 25 of Security Police Act: “Crime Prevention” – duty of Federal Police as part of criminal police activities
- **BUT: No Crime Prevention without multiple partners**

## II. Crime Prevention in Austria (2)

### **§ 25 of Security Police Act: “Criminal Police Advisory Service” (“Kriminalpolizeilicher Beratungsdienst”)**

- (1) In order to prevent dangerous attacks against life, health or property and assets of persons, security authorities shall be responsible for promoting the readiness and ability of the individual to obtain information on potential dangers to his interests and to prevent attacks in an appropriate manner.
- (2) Moreover, security authorities shall be responsible to promote actions which are intended to prevent dangerous attacks to life, health or property and assets of people.
- (3) The Federal Minister of the Interior shall be authorised to order, by contract, qualified proven institutions for the protection of victims to address persons endangered by violence including stalking (§ 107a Criminal Code, (StGB)) for the purposes of providing them with advice and immaterial support (intervention offices). (...)

## II. Crime Prevention in Austria (3)



### “Crime Prevention” with Federal Ministry of the Interior

- **Federal Criminal Investigations Office**  
(“**Bundeskriminalamt**”): Unit for Crime Prevention and Victim Protection
- **Provincial Criminal Investigation Offices**  
(“**Landeskriminalämter**”): corresponding units
- 800 prevention officers all over Austria;  
310,000 prevention activities in 2012

## II. Crime Prevention in Austria (4)

### Partners in “Crime Prevention” Matters:

- Other Ministries
  - Provinces
  - Districts/Counties
  - Municipalities
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - “Kuratorium Sicheres Österreich”
  - Providers of infrastructure
  - Associations/NGOs
- etc.



BM.I  
Sicherheits  
App

- Example: “Bündnis gegen Gewalt” (Alliance against Violence)

## II. Crime Prevention in Austria (5)



### **“Bündnis gegen Gewalt” (Alliance against Violence)**

- Initiative launched in 2010, symposium in 2012
- Contact with 300 “partners” (Ministries, provinces, municipalities, medical institutions, associations, NGOs)
- Co-ordination platform in the Interior Ministry
- 650 projects against violence all over Austria

Example: Standardized documentation and reporting structure for injuries (elaborated by doctors, forensic experts and police)

## II. Crime Prevention in Austria (6)



### Co-operation with Chamber of Commerce

- Agreements between Interior Ministry and Chamber of Commerce since 2010, new agreement on 27 May 2013
- Co-operation between police and businesses in crime prevention matters
- Chamber of Commerce: 40,000 entrepreneurs and businesses represented
- New projects: jewellers, internet crime, SMS information, ...

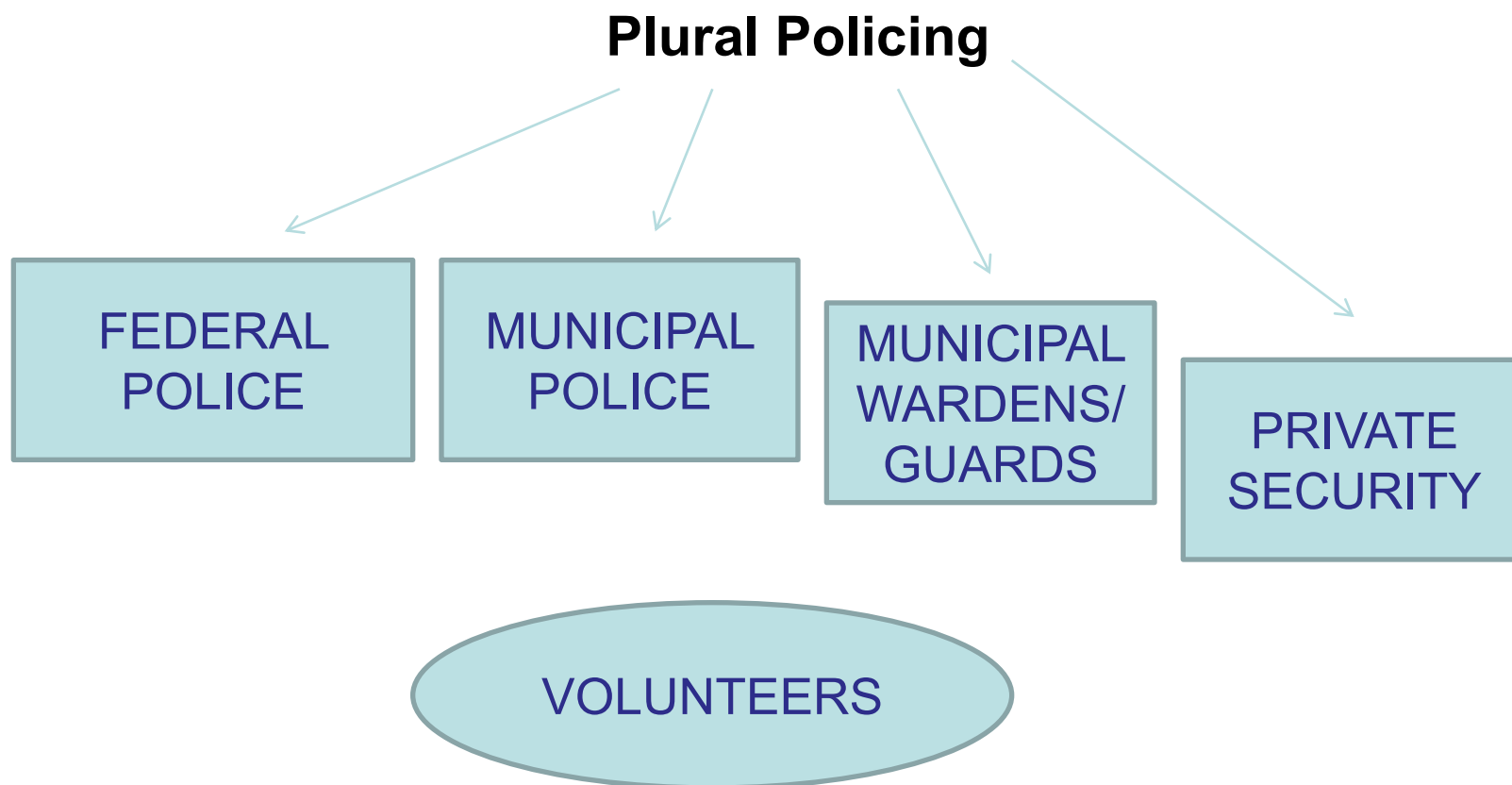
## III. Upholding safety in municipalities (1)

### “Challenges for local communities”

- Municipalities: local communities (small and large), self-administration and state tasks
- Strong ties between province and municipalities
- Municipalities represented by two associations: “Gemeindebund” and “Städtebund” (large cities)
- Plural Policing in municipalities: various stakeholders
- Reinforcement of community policing (Federal Police)



## III. Upholding safety in municipalities (2)



# Municipal Police in Austria (1)



## Municipal Police

- 37 municipalities in 6 provinces
- over 300 employees (officers, civilians, traffic agents)
- Baden = biggest force (45 employees); smallest: 1 employee
- Creation and organization no competence of the Federation
- Legal basis → province or constitution
- Organization → municipality

## Two types:

**Gemeindewachkörper**  
(“Municipal Police Corps”)

“schlichte” **Gemeindewache**  
 (“simple” Municipal Guards)

## Municipal Police in Austria (2)

### Gemeindewachkörper (“Municipal Police Corps”)

- armed
- uniformed
- organized along military lines
- Squad (certain size)
- tasks of police nature



- full police competences possible
- firearms
- training with Federal Police
- criminal investigations
- **Crime Prevention**

“schlichte“ **Gemeindewache**  
 (“simple“ Municipal Guards)

# Municipal Wardens/Guards

**“schlichte“ Gemeindewache**  
(“simple“ Municipal Guards)

- No real police competences, local public order
- “Everyman’s Rights”
- enforcement of municipal ordinances (“self-autonomy”)
- usually not armed
- different employment constructions: employees of municipality, employees of company owned by municipality, ...

**“City Watches” in some larger municipalities, e.g. Linz, Graz, Innsbruck (real municipal police not allowed) → Graz: special law, more rights**

## Parking enforcement

- Parking enforcement officers in many municipalities
- No police powers
- “Meter control” or right to fine (when road agent)
- Municipal employees or private security services employed by municipalities



Courtesy: LPD Wien/LVA

# Private Security Companies

- Increase of visibility and “uniformed presence”
- Trend: shift from private space to public spaces
- Patrolling shopping areas, residential areas, guarding buildings
- uniforms, cars, firearms (if license)
- no employees of municipality
- no general standardization of security services
- “Everyman’s Rights“, no more competences (→ liability?)

## Reasons:

- flexible (seasonal challenges), adaptable, only certain hours
- prohibition clause in large cities
- municipal police more expensive

# Municipal Guards and Security Services - Examples

Courtesy: www.graz.at



Ordnungswache Graz



Courtesy: www.linz.at

Ordnungsdienst Linz



Courtesy: St. Pölten

Ordnungsdienst St. Pölten

# Volunteers

- Citizens patrolling their own neighbourhoods (Neighbourhood Watches)
- Information networks of “observant citizens”
- Website to report traffic violations (legal?) – App?
- In the past: “Vigilantes” (Graz, ...)



## IV. Co-operation Programs at the Local Level

- Joint initiative “Safety in our communities”
- Security agreements with provinces
- Vienna: “K-Kreis” (“C-Circle”)

## Joint initiative “Safety in our communities”

- Initiative launched by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the Austrian Association of Municipalities (“Österreichischer Gemeindebund”) on 1 May 2013

### 3 elements:

- Local security managers / Village police officers
- Safety meetings (“Sicherheitsstammtisch”)
- Network meetings (“Netzwerktreffen”)

## **Local security managers / Village police officers**

Pilot stage in Burgenland from January to May 2013,  
in May 2013: roll-out phase in Austria

- Federal Police officers regularly visit communities without a police station
- Reinforcement of community police officers in small towns / villages
- “One face to the citizen” – patrols, fixed hours of presence, ...
- time for “minor problems” that may grow into “big problems” (e.g. assaults after local festivals → not enough shuttle buses)

# Local security managers / Village police officers

Bürger hoffen, dass Initiative weiter geht

## Gelungene Rückkehr der „Dorfpolizisten“

Sie patrouillieren durch die Gemeinden, haben ein offenes Ohr für die Bürger, sind Ansprechpartner in Sicherheitsfragen – die „Dorfpolizisten“. Seit dem erfolgreichen Start im Burgenland gehören die Beamten wieder fix zum Ortsbild dazu. In der Bevölkerung kommt die Initiative gut an, wie ein Lokalausgangsschein zeigt.

Früher hießen sie „Dorf-gendarmen“, jetzt nennt das Innenministerium die Beamten „Sicherheitsmana-gers“. Jedenfalls sind sie seit

VON KARL GRAMMER

Februar zurück auf Burgenlands Straßen. Mit dem Ohr direkt am Bürger. Und zu Fuß. „Der persönliche Kontakt zur Bevölkerung ist besonders wichtig“, meinen sowohl Einwohner als auch Polizisten. „Seit die Beamten wieder öfters mitten im Ort anzutreffen sind, fühlen wir uns sicherer“, sprechen Ingeborg und Rudolf Fröhlich, Pensionisten-Ehepaar aus Neufeld an der Leitha, vielen aus der Seele. Das Projekt hat sich bewährt – und die durch die Schließung etlicher Polizeiposten aufgerissene Lücke ein wenig geschlossen.

Noch ein wichtiger Punkt: „Sobald ich unsere ‚Dorfpolizisten‘ sehe, fallen mir so-

gleich Fragen und Verdächtiges, das ich beobachtet habe, ein. Deswegen würde ich nicht extra zur Dienststelle gehen, aber beim zufälligen Zusammentreffen auf dem Gehsteig lässt sich das leicht besprechen“, merkt Rudolf Fröhlich an. Er und seine Frau wünschen sich, dass „das auch künftig so bleibt“.



Ehepaar Fröhlich im Gespräch mit „Dorfpolizisten“ in Neufeld

### ● Kabarett in Schule

Mit ihrem Kabarettprogramm „Triest“ sind Thomas Stipsits und Manuel Rubey am Freitag, 20 Uhr, in der Neuen Mittelschule in Markt Allhau zu Gast. Karten: ☎ 03356/7777.

### ● Schutz der Arbeiter

150 Behördenvertreter und Betriebsräte aus dem Burgenland sowie Westungarn trafen sich zur Konferenz. Es ging um den Schutz der Arbeitnehmer.

### ● Hilfe aus Pinkafeld

Als Maturaprojekt bauten Absolventen der HTL Pinkafeld in der Hauptstadt Lome im afrikanischen Togo einen Brunnen. Die Trinkwasseranlage versorgt 3000 Gymnasiasten und 150 Lehrer.



Courtesy: Krone (left), BM.I

# Joint initiative “Safety in our communities”

## Safety meetings (“Sicherheitsstammtisch”)

- meeting with all interested citizens (approx. 2 times/year)
- presence of police (“local security manager”)
- informing the public, listening to problems

## Network meetings (“Netzwerktreffen”)

- at least 4 times a year with police (“local security manager”)
- connecting all stakeholders (associations, teachers, churches, doctors, businesses, politicians, ...)
- regular exchange of information (both ways!)

## Security agreements

- Agreements between Federal Ministry of the Interior and provinces (meanwhile most provinces)
- (local) priorities emphasized
- employment goals

### Examples:

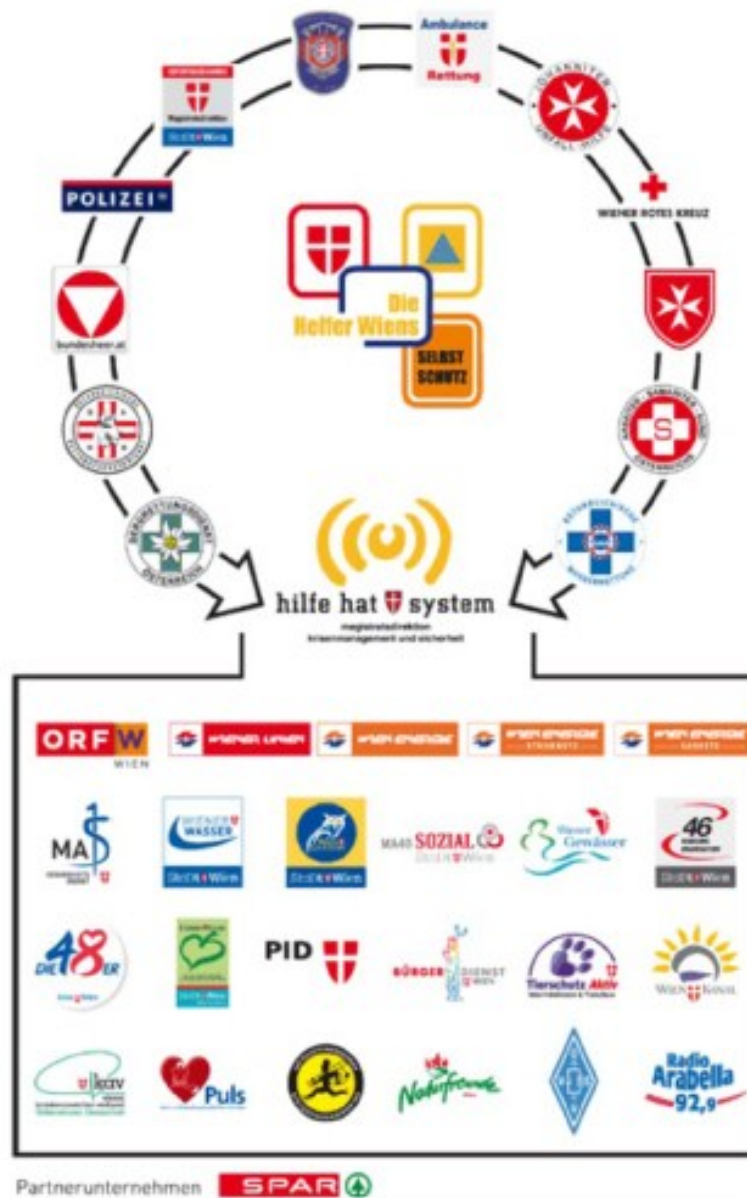
- introduction of digital trunked radio service
- changes in administrative organizations
- deployment of permanent Federal Police officers in rural communes
- etc.

## Vienna: “K-Kreis“

### **C-Circle (Circle of stakeholders in cases of crisis)**

- numerous agencies such as police, fire service, military, and various city departments in Vienna
- disaster protection (prevention), disaster relief, crisis communication
- 37 professional and volunteer organizations representing 16,000 members

# Vienna: “K-Kreis“



Courtesy: Die Helfer Wiens



# Thank You for Your Attention!

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