



RuralBioUp Impact Assessment Training for Regional Facilitators

Raluca-Ioana Iorgulescu, IPE

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1. Scope of Impacts Assessment



- Task 5.1 *RuralBioUp Impacts Assessment* uses a questionnaire to define a set of indicators to measure economic, environmental, and sociological impacts generated by RuralBioUp in rural areas.

- The survey has been designed for five target groups of stakeholders:
 1. policy-administration,
 2. business,
 3. research and innovation,
 4. academia and
 5. civil society.



- Processing methodology requirement:
 - the sample size of the survey has to be more than **30 stakeholders** per regional hub.
 - answering the survey: **individual**, not in group
- The **duration** of filling out the survey might vary with the type of stakeholder responding (for example, policy/administration stakeholders might need more time to collect the accurate information).
- Together with the set of indicators are defined the evaluation system and guidelines for implementing and reporting the assessment.
- Where it is deemed necessary, the questionnaire will be translated to Regional Hub's native language and administered using the most appropriate means in each Regional Hub (To be discussed in Part 2).

2. Set of Indicators



- An indicator is a tool to measure the achievement of an objective (e.g. a resource mobilised, an output accomplished, or an effect obtained).
- Indicators also serve to describe the context (economic, social or environmental).
- Indicators are aggregates of data that allow for quantification (and simplification) of a phenomenon and are used as a measurement tool to collect evidence for all evaluations.



- The objective of the RuralBioUp survey is to assess economic, environmental, and sociological impacts generated by project's activities in rural areas.
- The questionnaire will be administered by RuralBioUp Regional Hubs to their stakeholders as part of Task 5.1.
- The questions asked in the RuralBioUp survey provide the set of indicators used in the *evaluation system* (expected results) and will help assess projects' outcomes (3 years after the end of the project) and impacts (5 years after the end of the project).



- ❖ The questionnaire asks two varieties of questions:
 - Questions addressed to all respondents and are found at the beginning of the questionnaire, but also in the second part of it.
 - Questions differentiated by stakeholder type (these stakeholder types are listed).
- ❖ The first question in the questionnaire is a factual question, identifying the category of stakeholder in which each respondent is placed.
- ❖ The questionnaire includes both closed-ended questions, which are predominant, and open-ended questions. Closed questions present the most possible answer options from which the respondent is asked to select the appropriate option.



❖ The actual survey questionnaire as presented for the survey participants is divided in four sections:

1. Stakeholder General Information
2. Economic Impact Assessment differentiated by stakeholder categories
3. Social Impact Assessment
4. Environmental Impact Assessment



- ❖ *Open questions* do not offer concrete possibilities for selecting an answer. They are used to find out the respondent's opinion, without suggesting possible options. In the case of open questions, a blank space is left in the questionnaire to fill in the answer.
- ❖ There are also *partially open questions*, such as, for example, question 3. If the interviewee chose the option Yes, they must fill in the name of the value chain concretely.



- ❖ Numerous *opinion* or *attitudinal questions* are used to collect data on the views of the interviewees on aspects related to the economic, social and environmental impact of the project.
- ❖ There are opinion questions that measure the *intensity of the opinions* expressed, creating a scaling of attitudes (for example, questions 45, 48, 51, 52, and 53). To test the attitudes, the Likert scale was used (a 5-point multiple-choice scale) by which the respondent is asked to place his attitude towards an exposed topic between totally agree, agree, indifferent, disagree, and totally disagree.

3. Evaluation system and Guidelines for implementing and reporting the assessment



Elaborating the most adequate evaluation system for this project requires a process that takes place over time and involves a series of activities/stages:

1. formulating the objective/working hypothesis;
2. examining the constituent elements/factors that can influence the analyzed field;
3. delimitating the study area, respectively the indicators based on which the evaluation/analysis will be made;
4. carrying out the evaluation itself, including the agreed methodology;
5. reviewing the evaluation for the final form.



- ❖ The guidelines for implementing the assessment refer to the agreed methodology, in our case the administration of the questionnaire elaborated in correlation with the required performance indicators (KPI and partially the others) and are introduced through:
 - (a) the training offered by the authors of the questionnaire (the IPE team) to the RFs, in the MML workshop;
 - (b) the training offered by RFs to stakeholders within HUB Meetings; and
 - (c) assistance offered by task leaders to RFs and stakeholders between the three moments of regional performance evaluation, respectively month 14 (M14), month 24 (M24) and month 32 (M32).



- ❖ The guidelines for reporting the evaluation refer to the methodology (presented in the next section) for processing the results collected through the answers to the survey given by the stakeholders of each Regional Hub at the three reference points (M14, M24 and M32).
- ❖ Since monitoring of the results is to be continued even after the completion of the project (after 3 and, respectively, 5 years), the key to achieving this goal is the multiple-actors and collaborative approach at the regional level.
- ❖ Last but not least, it should be mentioned that, the ability of this evaluation process to support and influence the decision-making stems from the principles and values that shape it as a system as well as from the connections and integration it has with political processes.

4. Methodology for processing the survey results



The statistical analysis focuses on the profile of respondents and a static and dynamic presentation of the economic/social/environmental impact of the activity/activities in the RuralBioUp project on stakeholders.

Specific methods are assigned to each direction of research:

1. The distribution of respondents according to age, profession, field of activity, position in the company, stakeholder category;
2. Impact analysis at each moment of time when the questionnaire is applied to respondents: The distribution of respondents according to perception on the economic/social/environmental impact of the activity/activities in the RuralBioUp project;
3. Comparative impact analysis to figure out the evolution in time of the economic/social/environmental impact of the activity/activities in the RuralBioUp project.



The comparative impact analysis uses hypothesis testing to check the existence of a significance relationship between various indicators at different moments of time using the Wilcoxon test (rank-sum test) for paired samples (expected economic/ social/ environmental impact of the activity/activities in the RuralBioUp project).

In the case of paired samples, the Wilcoxon test is applied under the following assumptions:

- The data are measured at least on an ordinal scale, but without assuming that the distribution is normal;
- Observations are dependent;
- The purpose of applying the test is to make comparisons between two populations.



The steps in applying the Wilcoxon test for paired samples are:

1. Calculation of the differences between the values observed in the analyzed sample: $A_i - B_i$ ($i=1,2,\dots,n$, where n - sample volume);
2. Differences calculated in absolute value are given ranks, but null differences are removed;
3. Calculation of the sum of ranks for positive differences (R_+) and the sum of ranks for negative differences (R_-);



4. Specification of test hypotheses:

- The two-tailed test:

H_0 : the two populations have identical distributions;

H_1 : the distribution of population A lies to the left or right of the distribution of population B.

- The one-tailed test:

H_0 : the two populations have identical distributions;

H_1 : the distribution of population A lies to the right of the distribution of population B.



5. For samples of normal volume ($n \geq 30$), the distribution of R_+ is approximated by the normal distribution with mean $\mu_{R_+} = \frac{n(n+1)}{4}$ and standard deviation $\sqrt{\frac{n(n+1)(2n+1)}{24}}$.

6. Calculation of the test statistic:

$$z_{\text{calculated}} = \frac{R_+ - \frac{n(n+1)}{4}}{\sqrt{\frac{n(n+1)(2n+1)}{24}}}$$

7. Test decision: The null hypothesis is rejected if $|z_{\text{calculated}}| > z_{\alpha/2}$ for the two-tailed test and if $z_{\text{calculated}} > z_{\alpha}$ for the one-tailed test.

5. GDPR



Participation to the RuralBioUp Impact Assessment Questionnaire

This form is designed to collect your consent to participate to the RuralBioUp Impact Assessment Questionnaire.
RuralBioUp project is financed by the European Commission under GA no. 101060618.

All the data collected will be not used outside RuralBioUp activities and will be processed following the EU GDPR [article 6.1.a and 6.1.f] and RuralBioUp Privacy Policy -> <https://bit.ly/44MgzVP>

* Required

1. Full name *

2. OrganisationName *

3. OrganisationWebsite

4. Country *

5. E-mail *



6. Type of organisation/sector/field of action*

- Farmers
- Foresters
- Clusters
- Business support Organisations
- Policymakers
- Civil society Organisations
- Investors
- EEN local contact point

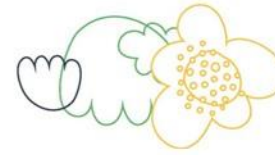
7. Privacy statement:

The information you will send will be stored and processed only for the purpose of the participation to the Impact Assessment Questionnaire developed by IPE. The data you will submit will be used only by RuralBioUp project. The project will treat your personal information with all the confidentiality and security in accordance with the established European data protection regulations and RuralBioUp Privacy Policy [link here <https://bit.ly/44MgzVP>]. You may withdraw your consent to use the data at any time. To do this, you should contact our support service at the following e-mail address: info@ruralbioup.eu*

- I agree

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RURALBIOUP PRIVACY STATEMENT

DATA PROCESSING OPERATION: RURALBIOUP HUB
CONTACTS DATABASE

Introduction

The RuralBioUp project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programme under the Grant Agreement No. 101060618.

The RuralBioUp Consortium is composed by the following partners:

- AGENZIA PER LA PROMOZIONE DELLA RICERCA EUROPEA
- LOBA - GLOBAZ, S.A.
- SPRING SUSTAINABLE PROCESSES AND RESOURCES FOR INNOVATION AND NATIONAL GROWTH
- LOMBARDY GREEN CHEMISTRY ASSOCIATION
- CIVITTA EESTI
- ZENTRUM FÜR SOZIALE INNOVATION GMBH
- ZEMEDELSKY VYZKUM, SPOL SRO
- IRISH BIOECONOMY FOUNDATION
- VEGEPOLYS VEGEPOLYS VALLEY
- ROMANIAN ACADEMY NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMIC RESEARCH
- ITALIAN BIOMASS ASSOCIATION
- LATVIJAS VALSTS MEZZINATNES INSTITUTS SILAVA

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this data processing operation is the engagement of the RURALBIOUP stakeholders in the RuralBioUp activities. The contacts collected will be involved in the project by the receipt of publications and events announcements; invitation to RURALBIOUP events; dissemination of the RURALBIOUP activities; information about the project and its services; survey forms and other communications activities related to the project and especially the hub's activities.

RURALBIOUP may be required to use information for specific communication and publicizing activities, such as pictures or audio-visual material and registration lists, in accordance with rules laid down in the grant agreement with the funding entity, and in accordance with the applicable data protection regulations.

DESCRIPTION OF DATA PROCESSING OPERATION

The personal data processed in this operation is stored in a database of the RURALBIOUP Hub Facilitator who sent the registration form, i.e. a RuralBioUp partner representing the region.

DATA PROCESSED

The data processed, including personal data, may contain the following: complete name and surname, affiliation, department and/or position held, e-mail address, level of seniority, gender, country of operation, food restrictions (for potential travel), photographs, images and audio caught in video and/or audio recordings.

TIME IMAGE, AUDIO RELEASE AND GRANT OF RIGHTS

The acknowledgment and acceptance of this document allows the RURALBIOUP Consortium to use the photographs featuring the personal data subject, as well as any images and audio of the personal data subject caught in video recordings and/or photographs, including to record or broadcast (or both) and live or as-live broadcast, in whole or in part, through any means, whether in written form, audio-visual, electronic and digital means, including live streaming for the purposes of stakeholder engagement, project communication and dissemination related to the RuralBioUp events.

CONTROLLER OF THE PROCESSING OPERATION

Agenzia per la promozione della ricerca europea (APRE) is responsible for the correct management of the data processed under this operation.

LEGAL BASIS

The legal basis for the processing of personal data under this operation is the informed consent.

SECURITY MEASURES

The RURALBIOUP Consortium Partners shall ensure that they have in place appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect against unauthorised or unlawful processing of Personal Data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data, appropriate to the harm that might result from the unauthorised or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage and the nature of the data to be protected, having regard to the state of technological development and the cost of implementing any measures.



RECIPIENTS OF THE DATA

The RURALBIOUP Consortium Partners will have access to the personal data, as well as the project's contractors and, if requested, the Program Managing Authorities.

Contractors are defined as service providers engaged by the RURALBIOUP Consortium to perform specific tasks related to the execution of the RURALBIOUP Project. Contractors shall have access to personal data on a specific need-to-know basis, they shall be made aware of this privacy statement and they shall undertake obligations no less onerous than those contained in this statement.

Personal data will not be used for other purposes than those described above. Except for the situations referred to in the previous paragraphs they will not be disclosed to any third parties.

LEGALITY OF PROCESSING

Processing is necessary for the performance of the tasks carried out on RURALBIOUP Project, under Grant Agreement n° 101060618. The processing of personal data is required to provide and receive information regarding the activities developed by the RURALBIOUP Project, as well as to register in the RURALBIOUP events. Therefore, not providing the required personal data or not accepting the privacy statement concerning this data processing operation will render it impossible to register, submit or receive information regarding said activities.

In accordance with the Regulation UE no. 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation), where applicable, as well as any other legislation or regulatory requirements in force from time to time which apply to each Party relating to the use of personal data, the RURALBIOUP Consortium assures that the personal data obtained from your submission will be incorporated into a record, property of the RURALBIOUP Consortium, having implemented all security measures.

PROVISION, ACCESS AND RECTIFICATION OF THE DATA

Each person has the right to access his or her own personal data and the right to correct any inaccurate or incomplete personal data, as well as to request at any time the removal of his/her personal data, which will be implemented within 10 working days after the specific request be deemed legitimate. Queries concerning the processing of personal data may be addressed to the following email: privacy@apre.it.

TIME LIMIT FOR STORING DATA

Records shall be retained for a period of up 5 years after the project is terminated, or until the request for removing the personal data from our database.

6. Questionnaire



Introduction

We are pleased to invite you to take part in a survey to assess the economic, social and environmental impact of the RuralBioUp project in HUB regions.

The target group of the questionnaire are the stakeholders in RuralBioUp Regional HUBs.

This questionnaire is intended for the RuralBioUp Regional HUB stakeholders to answer according to their best knowledge.

Should you need assistance please contact: ***REGIONAL FACILITATOR e-mail***

In order to have an overview of the activities foreseen in this project, below we present the Project Summary¹:

Climate change will require concerted innovative ideas and actions at the local/regional level. A sustainable European bioeconomy will not only ensure the protection of the environment and biodiversity, but will also drive the renewal of European industries, the modernisation of primary production systems and lead to the creation of jobs, particularly in rural areas, through the active participation of all regional stakeholders in their local bioeconomies.

RuralBioUp project will strengthen the cooperation among regional key actors and knowledge holders, empowering them to establish an inclusive and long-lasting ecosystem (the RuralBioUp Regional Hubs) to support the mainstreaming of bio-based business models in rural areas. In particular, RuralBioUp will establish 9 Regional Hubs (30 stakeholders per Hub) in 6 EU countries, that will co-design and implement 9 Action Plans on 18 value chains. Regional Hubs will be empowered by RuralBioUp's partners with mentoring, coaching and training activities in the implementation of their Action Plans.

Thanks to this, at least (a.l.) 1.000 innovators will be supported (through networking events and study visits) and a.l. 50 new collaborations fostered (e.g. partnership agreements between companies and/or farmers, solutions funded, etc.) to adopt small-scale bio-based solutions in rural areas. The project will leverage synergies between existing EU networks (EuBioNet, BioEast, etc.), clusters, and regional organisations and will build upon previous research results (Power4Bio, BE-RURAL, Enabling, Transition2Bio, Biovoices, etc.) by integrating and extending the existing knowledge and data in order to propose different rural business models and new bio-based value chains in the targeted regions, through the realisation of a digital tool (the RuralBioUp One-Stop-Shop) supporting regional actors to take science-based and informed decisions.

¹ Grant Agreement, Annex 1, p. 3



Questionnaire

Stakeholder General Information

1. To which stakeholder category do you belong? Please answer in Economic Impact Assessment section the questions corresponding to your stakeholder category.

- Policy/administration
- Business
- Research and innovation
- Academia
- Civil society (NGOs, associations, interest representation, etc.)

2. What value chain do you belong to?

3. Do you have any inter-value chain collaborations?

- Yes, please specify the value chain No

4. Do you have any intra-value chain collaborations?

- Yes, please specify what kind of collaboration? No

5. How many RuralBioUp networking events did you attend? What was the topic/topics of this/these networking events?



6. How many RuralBioUp trainings did you attend? What was the topic/topics of these trainings?

7. How many new start-ups related to RuralBioUp's activities do you know?

8. Have you signed partnership agreements with stakeholders from Italy, Portugal, Estonia, Austria, Czech Republic, Ireland, France, Romania, and Lithuania (RuralBioUp partners)?

Yes, please specify the value chain No

9. Have you signed partnership agreements with stakeholders from countries other than Italy, Portugal, Estonia, Austria, Czech Republic, Ireland, France, Romania, and Lithuania (RuralBioUp partners)?

Yes, please specify the value chain No

10. What are the main difficulties in your economic activity?



11. What do you think would be the economic impact of the activity/activities in the RuralBioUp project for you? Please explain your choice as detailed as possible.

Very high High Medium Low Very low

12. What do you think would be the social impact of the activity/activities in the RuralBioUp project for you? Please explain your choice as detailed as possible.

Very high High Medium Low Very low



13. What do you think would be the environmental impact of the activity/activities in the RuralBioUp project for you? Please explain your choice as detailed as possible.

Very high High Medium Low Very low



Economic Impact Assessment

<i>Policy/administration stakeholders</i>

14. Name the RuralBioUp events you attended in the last year.

15. Are you a member of a project in the field of bioeconomy? If so, please give its name.

16. Were you a member of a finished project in the field of bioeconomy? If so, please give its name.

17. Do you know of any projects in the field of bioeconomy submitted by economic agents in your region for each axis of financing?

18. How many projects in the field of bioeconomy carried out by economic agents in the region were financed by your institution? Specify the program and financing axis accessed.

19. Name the bioeconomy investors attracted to your region in the last year.



20. Does your institution organize professional courses in the field of bioeconomy?

Yes, please specify

No

21. Specify whether bioeconomy companies (farms, forestry, agricultural enterprises, etc.) have been established in your region in the last year.

Yes, please specify how many

No

Business stakeholders

22. How many RuralBioUp best practice presentations did you attend in the last year?

23. During which event these presentations were made?

24. Do you consider the presented best practices useful?

Yes, which one?

No

25. Are you interested in any of the bio-based business models presented by the RuralBioUp project?

Yes, please specify

No



26. Are you interested in any of the small-scale bio-based solutions presented by the RuralBioUp project?

Yes, please specify

No

27. What is the range of your turnover:

10.000-100.000 Euro

100.000-500.000 Euro

500.000-1.000.000 Euro

1.000.000-5.000.000 Euro

> 5.000.000 Euro

28. How many employees do you have?

1-5

6-20

21-50

51-100

> 100

29. What is the range of your turnover per person employed:

1.000-10.000 Euro

10.000-15.000 Euro

15.000-25.000 Euro

25.000-35.000 Euro

> 35.000 Euro



30. What is the range of your value-added²?

- 0-1.000 Euro
- 1.000-10.000 Euro
- 10.000-50.000 Euro
- 50.000-100.000 Euro
- >100.000 Euro

31. What is your annual investment in research and innovation?

- 0-2.000 Euro
- 2.000-10.000 Euro
- 10.000-30.000 Euro
- 30.000-70.000 Euro
- > 70.000 Euro

32. Did you have loans taken out last year?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is their amount?

- 3000 - 50.000 Euro
- 50.000 - 150.000 Euro
- 150.000 – 300.000 Euro
- 300.000 – 1.000.000 Euro
- > 1.000.000 Euro

33. To what extent did the activities of the RuralBioUp project influence your actions in the last year? Please explain your choice as detailed as possible.

- | To a Very Large
Extent | To a Large
Extent | To a Moderate
Extent | To a Small
Extent | To a Very Small
Extent |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

² Value-added is total volume of production and trade of the firm minus consumption



R&D and academia stakeholders

34. You have been attracted as new members in clusters in the last year?

- Yes, please specify the cluster(s) name(s) No

35. Name the national projects in the bioeconomy field you were partners in the last year

36. Name the EU projects in the bioeconomy field you were partners in the last year

37. Have you attracted students to scientific conferences on the topic of bioeconomy as a result of the activities of the RuralBioUp project?

- Yes, please specify No



Civil society (NGOs, associations, interest representation, etc.) stakeholders

38. Indicate the geographical area covered by your activities

39. What is the number and theme of the events organized as a result of the activities of the RuralBioUp project?

40. What is the number of projects developed as a result of the activities of the RuralBioUp project?

41. What is the number/value of sponsored contracts and alternative sources of financing as a result of the activities of the RuralBioUp project??

42. Have you publicized the activities of the RuralBioUp project in social media?

Yes, please specify

No



Social impacts

43. Which is the number of persons employed in new bioeconomy related jobs?

44. What share of your income do you spend on average on certificate food from bio-based industries (%)?

- 0%-1%
- 1%-5%
- 5%-10%
- > 10%

45. Do activities in the RuralBioUp project generate the following social impacts in your region:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Decreasing the trend of rural depopulation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improvement of land use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intensification of traditional bio-based production activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The reactivation of some traditional jobs in bio-based activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arousing interest in the biological potential of sites of cultural, historical, religious or scientific interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Positive impact on minority or vulnerable communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Environmental Impacts

49. Do activities in the RuralBioUp project have any actual or potential environmental impacts in any of the following areas?

(Please mark relevant boxes and if there are actual or potential environmental impacts, please give details.)

Environmental impact	YES	NO	If YES, please give details
Water pollution or extraction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Wildlife or habitats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Local air quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use of hazardous substances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Production of damaging or toxic waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Diminishing noise pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Preventing degradation of land (e.g. soil contamination, erosion, salinization)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

50. Did activities in the RuralBioUp project generate any other environmental impacts?

Yes, please give details

No

51. Did the activities in RuralBioUp project influence the increase of the share of renewable energy in total energy production in your region?

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree



52. Did the activities in RuralBioUp project encouraged you to use public financial instruments for reducing the dependence on non-renewable resources?

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

53. Did the activities in RuralBioUp project influenced you to use private investments for reducing the dependence on non-renewable resources?

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

54. Name of your company and your position in it

55. Age

- 18-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- > 60

56. Profession

57. Field of activity

Date:

Company:

Authorized Person and title:

.....

Signature



Thank you!

Our Consortium

Contact us info@ruralbioup.eu

@RuralBioUp



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