

UC San Diego

SCHOOL OF GLOBAL POLICY AND STRATEGY  
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ELECTORAL NEWSLETTER  
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# Democratic Integrity: Mexico 2024

JUNE 2ND: ELECTION DAY

# Summary

**"Democracy is a political regime which assumes certainty in the rules and uncertainty in the results."  
Adam Przeworski**

The climax of the 2023-2024 electoral process in Mexico is approaching: this Sunday, June 2, more than 98 million people will be called to vote for 20,708 elected positions.

At the federal level, voters will choose the Presidency of the Republic, and members of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate. Local elections will also be held in Mexico's 32 states.

This edition of "Democratic Integrity: Mexico 2024," offers a guide for understanding the release of election results by electoral authorities. In the "Last Glimpse" section, we explain how citizens may mark their ballots for the federal elections, in which two electoral coalitions of three parties each, as well as a single party candidate are running for office.

Election day begins at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday, June 2, when the National Electoral Institute (INE) will set up more than 170,000 polling stations nationwide. The polls will close at 6:00 p.m. From that moment, and not a minute earlier, the media will be allowed to release the results of exit polls.

The electoral authorities have two tools to reliably inform citizens, the media, and political actors of results on the night of election day: the Preliminary Electoral Results Program (PREP) and the Quick Count.

# June 2: Preliminary Results

## The Preliminary Electoral Results Program (PREP)

### 1. At what time does the PREP start?

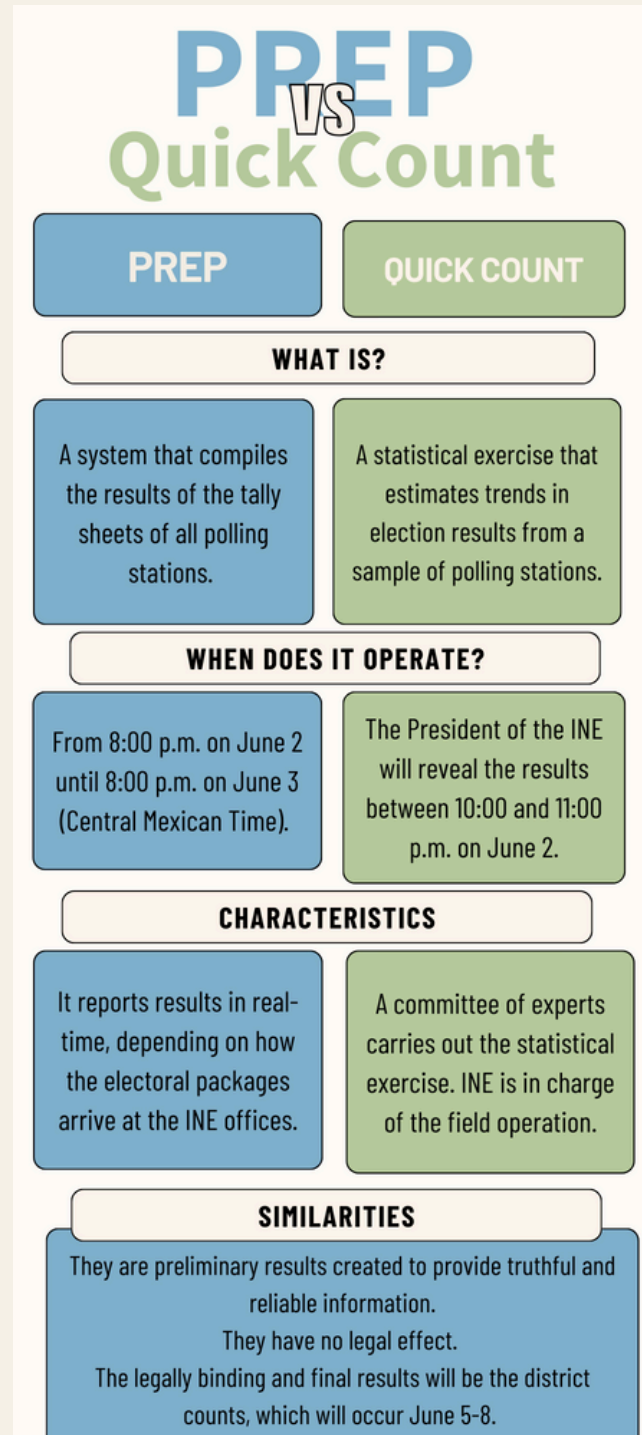
Data from the INE's Preliminary Electoral Results Program (PREP) will begin releasing at 8:00 p.m. Central Mexican Time. The system will provide public information about results from the presidential, chamber of deputies, and senate races. Likewise, the PREP operation for local elections will begin between 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. in each of the 32 states.

The INE oversees the federal PREP and each local electoral institute manages its own PREP (for gubernatorial, local, congressional, or municipal elections).

### 2. Is it a sample or a census?

The PREP is a census of the tally sheets. The goal is to collect and digitize all the tally sheets from all polling stations.

These tally sheets contain the signatures of the polling station officials and the party representatives who supervised each voting table.



Source: Compiled by the authors based on information from the National Electoral Institute.

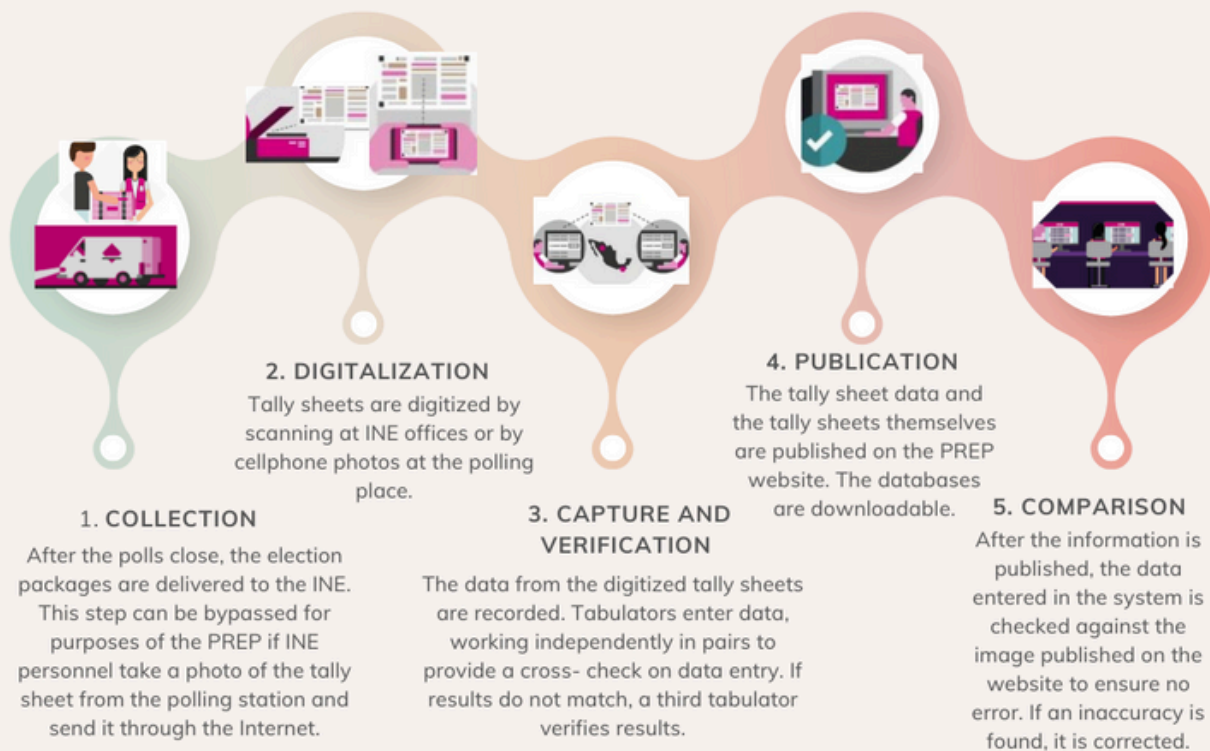
### 3. How is information captured in the PREP?

Polling stations close at 6:00 p.m. At that time, the polling station officials will begin counting votes and recording them on the tally sheets under the supervision of the political party representatives and electoral observers. Finally, the electoral packages are assembled and transferred to the INE district councils.

Once the electoral packages are received at the INE offices, the tally sheet images are digitized. This step can even be accelerated if INE's Assistant Electoral Trainers (CAEs) are able to take a picture of the tally sheet with a smartphone at the polling station. In this case, the photo is sent to the INE through an application, where it is processed, saving the time of physically transporting the packages. The data from each tally sheet are recorded twice by different people to avoid errors.

The tally sheet image that can be consulted in the system is the one filled in with the handwriting of the polling station officials. At the end of the election day, all the political party representatives take a copy so that they may also check that the results provided by the PREP are the same as those recorded at each polling station.

## How does the PREP work?



Source: Compiled by the authors based on information from the National Electoral Institute.

#### 4. Does the PREP present the information in real time, or does someone filter it?

Once the information from each tally sheet is received and processed by the INE, it is published online. This allows anyone with internet access to track the progress of Mexico's electoral results anywhere in the world.

Electoral authorities, political parties, the media, and citizens receive the information at the same time. No information is withheld; it is all made public simultaneously.

#### 5. What level of disaggregation of information does the PREP provide?

Information from the PREP can be accessed at every level of aggregation, from the individual polling station, to the district, state, electoral region, and national levels.

The PREP aims to collect information from more than 170,000 tally sheets for the presidential election, 170,000 for the Chamber of Deputies, and 170,000 for the Senate, as well as registering the votes from Mexicans living abroad, persons in pre-trial detention, or those who choose to participate by early vote. Thus, the PREP will process more than 530,00 records.

Some reasons why the PREP may not be able to publish a tally sheet include:

- The polling station was not installed.
- The election package was delivered without the tally sheet.
- The package was received more than 24 hours after the start of the PREP's operation, which may occur due to weather or distance, or because the electoral package was lost.

#### 6. At what time can the PREP determine a winner?

Because the PREP's information is released as soon as it arrives at INE offices and is processed, data from urban areas are often published before more remote regions. It is also normal for early results to not show definitive trends. It is impossible to determine a fixed percentage of information received in the PREP to estimate a winner, as this depends on how close each election is.



Source: Compiled by the authors based on information from the National Electoral Institute.

When following the PREP it is best to be patient. You will receive detailed and reliable information from all the polling stations.

## 7. At what time does the PREP close?

The PREP will operate for 24 hours beginning at 8:00 p.m. on election day. The objective is to collect and provide detailed information on each polling station, no matter how remote its location. The system closes no later than 8:00 p.m. on Monday, June 3. It may close earlier if the count of 100% of the installed polling stations is completed before that time.

Public information will be updated at least three times per hour.

## 8. How do you know that the PREP data are accurate?

Since the PREP provides the data and the image of the tally sheet from which the data were taken, it is possible to verify the accuracy of the information polling place by polling place and district by district.

## 9. Can fraud be committed in the PREP?

No. The PREP has multiple safeguards to ensure its information is accurate. For example, the summary of the votes for each party and each candidate in each district is verified multiple times to avoid errors.

In addition, as its name implies, the PREP is a preliminary results program that cannot be considered definitive or binding in any legal sense. Altering the PREP result would be pointless because it would have no legal effect.

The purpose of the PREP is purely informative. The INE also safeguards against cyberattacks by sharing PREP data with a network of media and university websites that also publish the results, ensuring their continuous transmission should attacks occur.

# Did you know...

Is it possible to verify the authenticity of the digitized tally sheets in the PREP?

When the report is digitized, a unique code is generated. This code is associated with each tally sheet.



With this code, you can check if the image of the tally sheet:

- Has been manipulated with any image editing software.
- Has experienced any attempts at modification of the file.
- Contains legitimate information.

Source: Compiled by the authors based on information from the National Electoral Institute.

## 10. Where can you follow the federal PREP?

On June 2, you can access the website [prep2024.ine.mx](http://prep2024.ine.mx) from any smartphone, tablet, or personal computer.

### The INE's Quick Counts

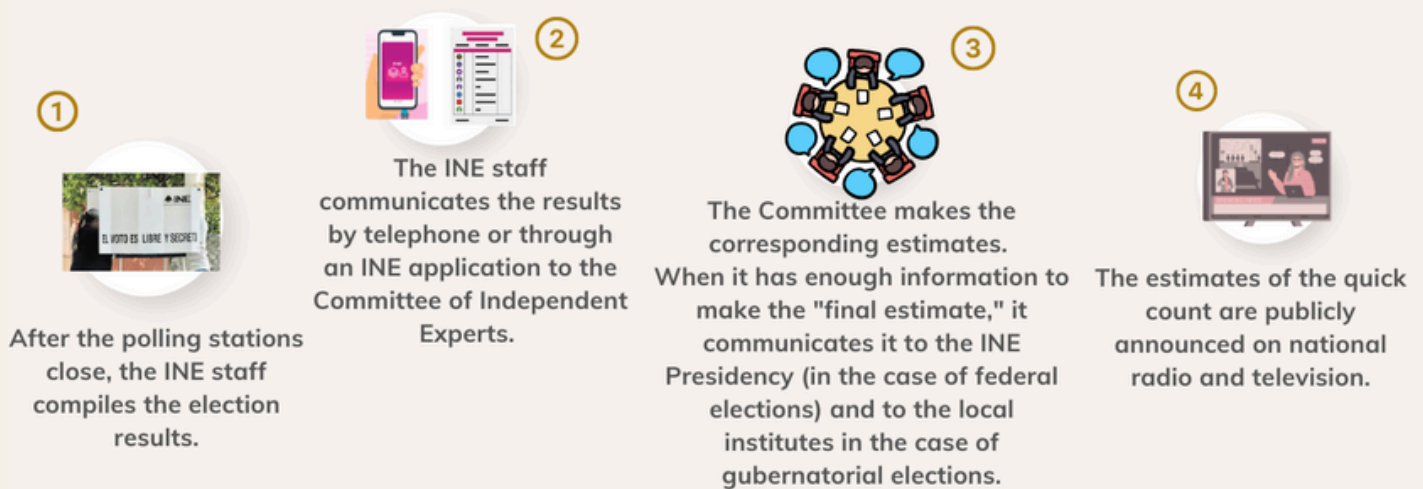
#### 1. What is a Quick Count?

It is a statistical projection that estimates the election outcome a few hours after the polls close.

It is based on a representative sample of all polling stations. Based on the results of selected polling stations, an estimation is made of the percentage of votes each candidate will obtain.

The quick count therefore presents a statistical approximation of the minimum and maximum vote percentages for each candidate.

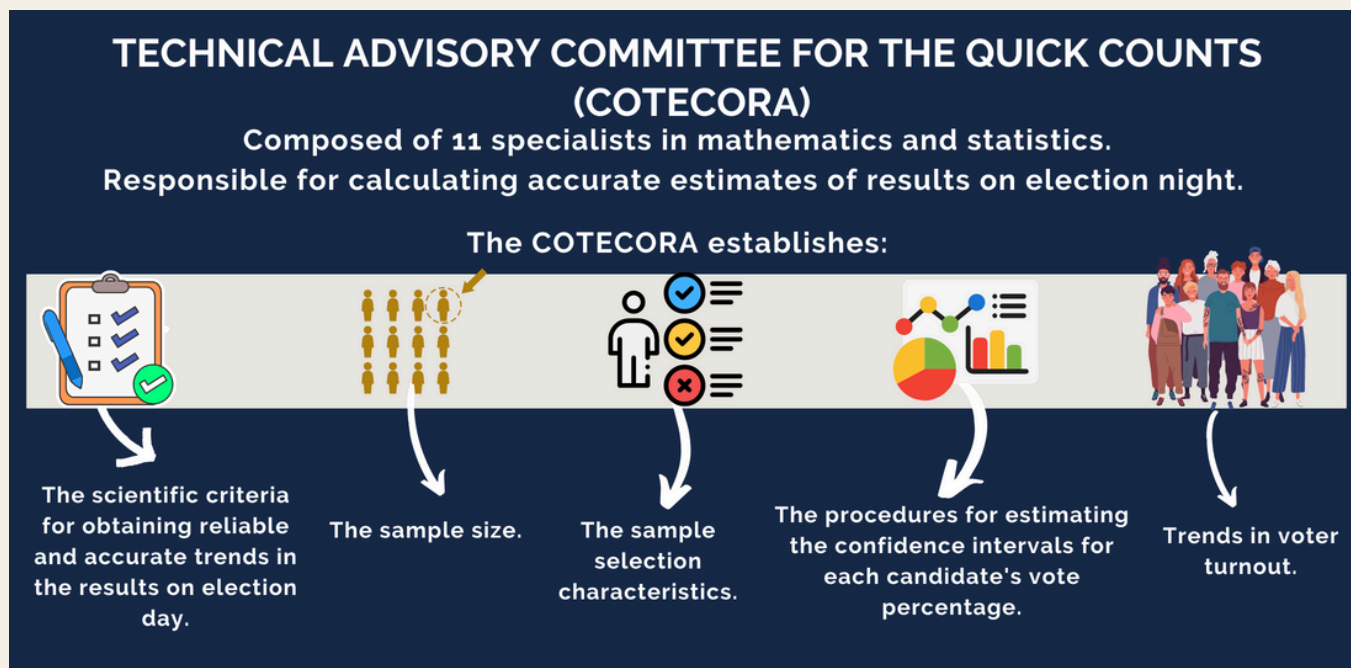
#### How does the Quick Count work?



#### 2. How is Quick Count different from Exit Polls?

The quick count is not a survey or exit poll because it does not ask people how they voted but takes the results from the tally sheets at the end of the election day. Its source of information is votes cast and counted. Exit poll information is based on what voters say to a survey taker, not verifiable data.

Therefore, exit polls are unreliable exercises for predicting an election's outcome, especially in highly contested elections. Their value is that they allow us to know, for example, the profile of voters for specific candidates or parties: the age, gender, or education of those who supported one option or another.



### 3. What Quick Counts will there be this June 2?

The INE will be in charge of twelve quick counts:

- For the Presidency of the Republic;
- For the Chamber of Deputies;
- For the Senate;
- For the head of government of Mexico City;
- For eight governorships: Chiapas, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Morelos, Puebla, Tabasco, Veracruz, and Yucatan.

### 4. How reliable is a quick count?

Since 1994, the electoral authority has conducted 49 quick count exercises, beginning with federal races in 1994, and subsequently in local elections. In every one of them, the results were accurate. They all coincided with the official final counts. These quick counts have occurred in eight federal elections (1994, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2006, 2012, 2015, 2018, and 2021); two citizen participation exercises (the referendum of 2021 and the recall of the mandate of 2022); the elections for the Constituent Assembly of Mexico City; and 38 gubernatorial elections.

For more information on the Quick Counts, review the INE's agreement INE/CG444/2024 at: <https://repositoriodocumental.ine.mx/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/169669/CGex202404-18-ap-05.pdf>



## 5. When are the results of the quick counts available?

This depends on the speed with which the INE's Quick Count Technical Committee receives information from the statistical sample from the INE's workers around the country.

The quick count results for the presidential election are expected to be made public around 11:00 p.m. on June 2. The president of the INE will announce these estimates on national radio and television.

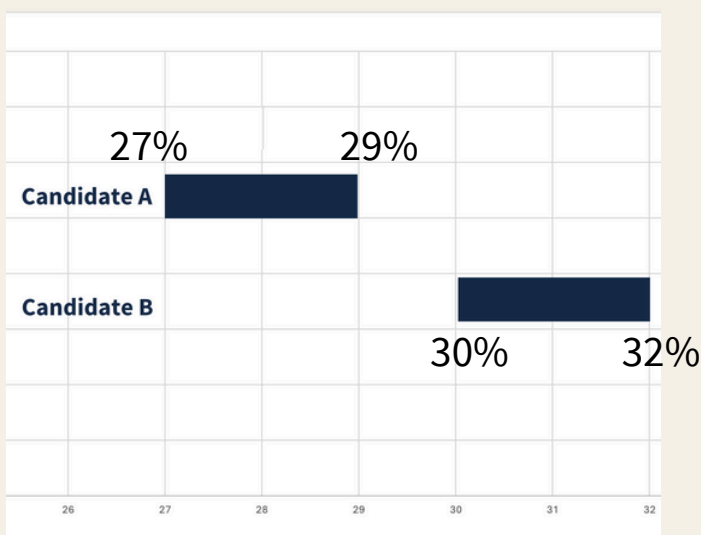
## 6. What happens if an election is too close to call?

Since the quick count estimates the minimum and maximum votes percentages for each candidate, if the top two vote-getters overlap, a winner cannot be determined with confidence. In this scenario, it is necessary to wait for the district count results. The district count is the official summary of the election results and the only tabulation that is legally binding. Even if the margin in the election is only a few votes, district counts will determine the winner.

In a hypothetical example, if Candidate A is estimated to receive between 28% and 32% of the votes, and Candidate B between 31% and 34%, the overlap in the quick count means that the winner cannot be determined with certainty.

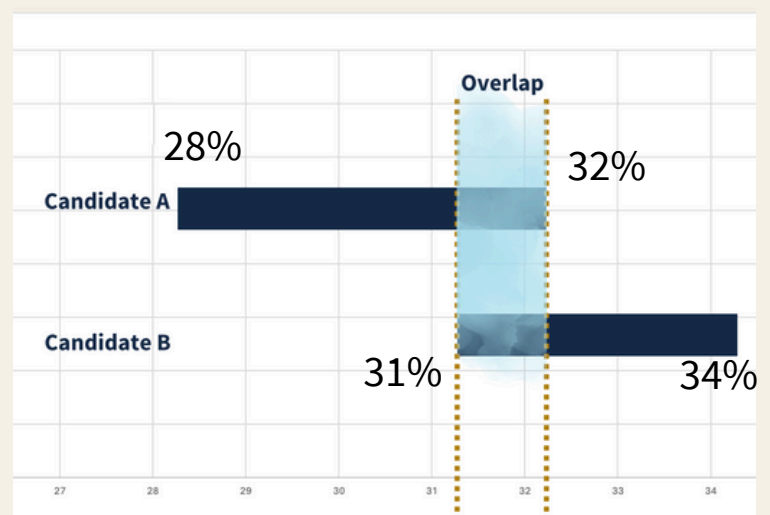
### Uncontested vs. contested election scenario

**Scenario 1: No overlap. Quick Counts can declare a winner**



Estimated Voting Percentage

**Scenario 2: There is overlap. Quick Counts cannot declare a winner**



Estimated Voting Percentage

# Last Glance

## Valid ways to vote the presidential ballot

In this election, two of the presidential candidates have been nominated by three political parties in coalition. Xóchitl Gálvez was nominated by the National Action Party (PAN), the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), and the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). Claudia Sheinbaum was nominated by Morena, the Labor Party (PT), and the Partido Verde Ecologista de México (PVEM). Jorge Álvarez Maynez, on the other hand, was nominated only by Movimiento Ciudadano (MC).

By law, the parties integrating a coalition must appear on the ballot with their own logo. This allows voters to identify a party preference and for electoral authorities to calculate whether parties reach the necessary vote percentage to retain their registration.



Source: Simulador del voto. Laboratorio Electoral en: [https://laboratorioelectoral.mx/simulador\\_2024](https://laboratorioelectoral.mx/simulador_2024)

There must not be any doubt about the voter's intention. Voters should:

- Identify their chosen candidate;
- Identify the party or parties nominating this candidate;
- Mark the corresponding party emblem or emblems;
- Mark only inside the lines of the emblem box.
- 

On June 2, both Xóchitl Gálvez and Claudia Sheinbaum will appear three times on the ballot. Therefore, it is crucial to be aware that:

- One or more party logos may be marked, as long as the parties chosen are part of the same coalition.
- For coalition candidates, their name will appear on the ballot along with the name of each supporting party.
- A coalition candidate may be supported by voting for one, two, or all three parties in the same coalition. In each case, only one vote is counted for the candidate.
- If a person marks the logo of two or more parties but the parties are not in coalition, the vote is invalid because it indicates competing candidacies.
- The blank space at the bottom right of the ballot is for write-in votes. By law, voters may use this space to indicate any individual (even if they do not appear on the ballot). In this case, the vote will be given to an unregistered candidate. Only registered candidates may legally win the election, however.
- These rules apply regardless of whether the ballot is cast in Mexico, from abroad via the internet, by mail, or at any of the 23 Mexican consular offices worldwide where in-person voting will occur.

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