



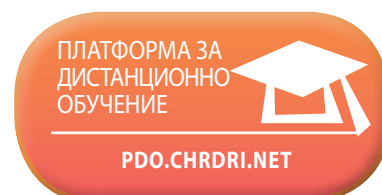
**ADDRESS BY MR.
ALEXANDER SHOPOV,
DIRECTOR OF CHRDRI**



**THE COORDINATION COUNCIL OF THE CENTER
IN SUPPORT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS
ACTIVITIES IN THE CRISIS SITUATION**



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



ADDRESS

Dear readers,

No matter how hard we have tried to control the newly emerging situations and to cope with all the obstacles and complications, unfortunately it was inevitable at some point the severe epidemic situation in the country and the problems it led to in all areas and sectors of life, to reflect also on the work of the Center.

Till the last week of November, in strict compliance with all the anti-epidemic measures, CHRDMI managed to conduct in attendance a significant number of professional training and retraining courses, as well as a number of seminars in face-to-face form under the project „Integrated Trainings for The Administration in Institutions, working on the Labor Market and in the Social Sphere”, without endangering the health of students, lecturers and administrative staff. The dedication of the Center’s employees and the understanding of the students allowed us to work together and without interruption being present in the campus from the beginning of June until now and for a total of over 8 months of this so controversial and full of uncertainties year, in which most of the fruitful and constructive activities not only in our country but all over the world were totally frozen.

Unfortunately, the epidemic situation in the country does not allow on-site trainings to be held in the coming weeks, but nevertheless, as director of CHRDMI, I am explicit that in a crisis situation, the training process should not only be held from stopping, but on the contrary – we should turn to it as to a powerful tool that will allow us to overcome the consequences of the crisis. It is in view of this perspective that CHRDMI has taken measures to organize additional distance classes during this period for the students that have already enrolled in our courses for the unemployed.



This step is extremely important in the context of our efforts to legitimize state-subsidized vocational training in distance form. This kind of development of the educational methods was urgent and unavoidable, evoked by the epidemic situation, but also a natural path outlined by the rapid development of the new technologies. As an authoritative institution in the field of vocational trainings for adults and a direct executor of the MLSP employment policies, CHRDRİ insists on the legitimization of the distance vocational training, and believes that priority should be given to this step.

The COVID-19 epidemic necessitated in 2020 a large part of the seminars under the project „Integrated training for labor market and social administration“ also to be conducted in a remote form. The lack of legal barriers and the well-developed digital products of CHRDRİ allowed the successful implementation of a large number of trainings through various distance learning platforms. Nevertheless, it was necessary to call for an extension of the project by one calendar year, which will allow the fulfillment of all set goals and the implementation of that part of the activities that could not be optimally accomplished through the means of new technologies. Thirteen seminars and two initiatives with project funding will be held in 2021 for employees of the state administration, municipalities, non-governmental organizations and social partners.

We are currently working hard on planning and preparation for the next school year in the field of vocational training. In 2021, the training schedule of the Center envisages conducting of 19 courses for professional qualification and retraining, supplemented with 6 courses in key competencies. According to the preliminary plan, nearly 340 unemployed people will be trained. Classes are set in face-to-face form, but can also be converted into a remote in case of need, which however requires an urgent change in regulations.

During the upcoming year we intend to deepen our cooperation with the MLSP by offering a package of seminars that would be useful for their internal career development and upgrading their knowledge and skills. Based on our previous experience in the project, funded with the support of OPHRD 2014-2020, we plan to develop a new project for the next programming period, again aimed at the administration of MLSP and second spending budget units, as well as other administrations, which will allow us further strengthening of the administrative capacity of the Center and maintaining and upgrading the established good practices in the preparation and implementation of seminars for the public administration. The project will again have a strong social focus in the areas of expertise of the MLSP.

Alexander Shopov,

director

THE COORDINATION COUNCIL OF THE CENTRE IN SUPPORT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS ACTIVITIES IN THE CRISIS SITUATION

According to the Rules of Procedure of the CHRDR (<https://www.chrdri.net/bg/category/11/ustroystven-pravilnik>) a coordination council is being convened on a regular basis. It includes representatives of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the Ministry of Education, The Institute of Public Administration, the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training, the Employment Agency and the academic community. The main function of the Council is to support the activities of the Director by facilitating the process of mutual information and coordination between institutions. Its specific tasks include also: discussions and proposal for approval by the Minister of Labor and Social Policy of the three-year Development Strategy of the Center; discussions over the operational plans concerning all the activities of the Center and approval of reports for their implementation, giving recommendations concerning development of programs and projects for trainings, as well as proposals for improvement of the educational process.

The meeting of the council held in the beginning of December, performing all its normative functions, was extremely important with a view to the search for optimal options for the work of the Center in the situation of the current crisis.

First of all, being conducted in a remote format through the Moodle platform, the Council expressed unequivocal support for continuing the learning process through the means of modern information and communication technologies. Mr. Ivan Bakalov, Head of the Educational Activity Department, presented in detail the operational problems that the Center is facing because of the requirements for the suspension of the education in face-to-face form. He clearly formulated the contrast between the flexibility of the activities part of the project "Integrated Trainings for the Administration in Institutions, working on the Labor Market and in the Social Sphere", which in the situation of obligatory physical distancing imposed by the epidemic crisis can be converted into an online ones, and the trainings for the unemployed, financed under the National Action Plan for Employment, where such a transformation is legally inadmissible.

This essentially means:

- violation of the rights of the unemployed to have access to training programs in a time of crisis, in which retraining is a key tool for their realization on the labor market in the dynamics caused by the crisis;
- depriving them of receiving their scholarship for tuition for an indefinite period of time;
- the Center is not able to perform its activities under the National Action Plan for Employment for the period of interruption of attendance;
- unfair deprivation of the vocational training of the opportunity to move to a distance format if necessary, which opportunity is provided for pre-school, school (including vocational) and university education;
- detention of digitalization process, typical for the modern society, and lack of support in the development of digital competencies, which could significantly increase the chances for realization of the unemployed on the labor market;
- non-use of the available and proven digital products of CHRDMI in the field of vocational training;
- neglect of the experience and expertise accumulated over the years by CHRDMI in the implementation of professional training in distance format for the representatives of the public administration;
- lagging behind the trends in vocational training from the other countries in the European Union.

Mr. Bakalov reported that despite all the difficulties in 2020 in the limited period of about 6 months, in which it was possible professional trainings face-to-face to be conducted, with a compressed schedule and maximum load of the Center's resources, 90% of the trainings in the operational plan for the unemployed have been carried out, and currently additional classes are organized in electronic format. In order to objectively demonstrate the possibility for successful vocational training for the unemployed in distance format, a one-week module „C ++“ was conducted within the course „Software development“. Mr. Bakalov reported in detail the results of the training and the presented data clearly showed its effectiveness. The exam conducted in real-time on the Moodle platform showed an extremely high level of understanding of the material. And the satisfaction with the used teaching methods, measured by specially adapted ROIT questionnaires, was also almost 100%.

During the discussion that followed the representatives of the Coordination Council strongly supported the need for legislative changes that will make it possible professional courses to be conducted in distance form, sharing the experience of the institutions represented by them. Particularly valuable in this regard was the support of the representatives of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training, who also stated their intention to initiate a regulatory change that would ensure not only the CHRDMI, but also all vocational training centers the opportunity for conducting trainings entirely in a digital environment.

The Strategy for the development of the Center in the period 2021 - 2023 was also presented to the Coordination Council. The main focus was on maintaining the resilience of the trends for successful development of CHRDMI over the years, strengthening of the administrative staff, including in the context of their work in an epidemic situation, as well as updating and maintaining of the facilities.

The implementation of the integrated approach within the project "Integrated Trainings for the Administration in Institutions, working on the Labor Market and in the Social Sphere", which allows the exchange of experience and good practices on the same topic by representatives of various institutions and organizations, as well as development of digital products and forms of training that can be equally effective in conducting seminars for the public administration as well as in trainings for the unemployed, were highlighted as particularly important moments and successful practices that must be continued in the period 2021 - 2023.

In this regard, it is important to develop new teaching techniques and methods adapted to the virtual environment. As an important goal for the forthcoming three-year period was emphasized not only the increase in the number of trained persons, but also the strict monitoring of the quality of the provided training services. That's why it will be necessary the fruitful cooperation with representatives of

the human resource units and the expansion and deepening of the interaction and coordination with the Directorates „Labor Office“ and the Directorate „Regional Employment Service“ to be continued.

Ms. Lina Kostadinova, Chief Expert on Methodological Activities at the CHRDMI outlined the main points in the proposed draft training plan for the National Action Plan for Employment in 2021. To the traditionally successful courses of the Center (which can be viewed on our website <https://www.chrdri.net/bg/category/27>), in accordance with the data from the labor market survey, the professions „Herbalist“, „Manicurist-pedicurist“ and „Social Assistant“ will be added. The work on the last of these three new occupations will allow the experience gained in this area in professional training for the state administration to be used and applied in courses for the unemployed.

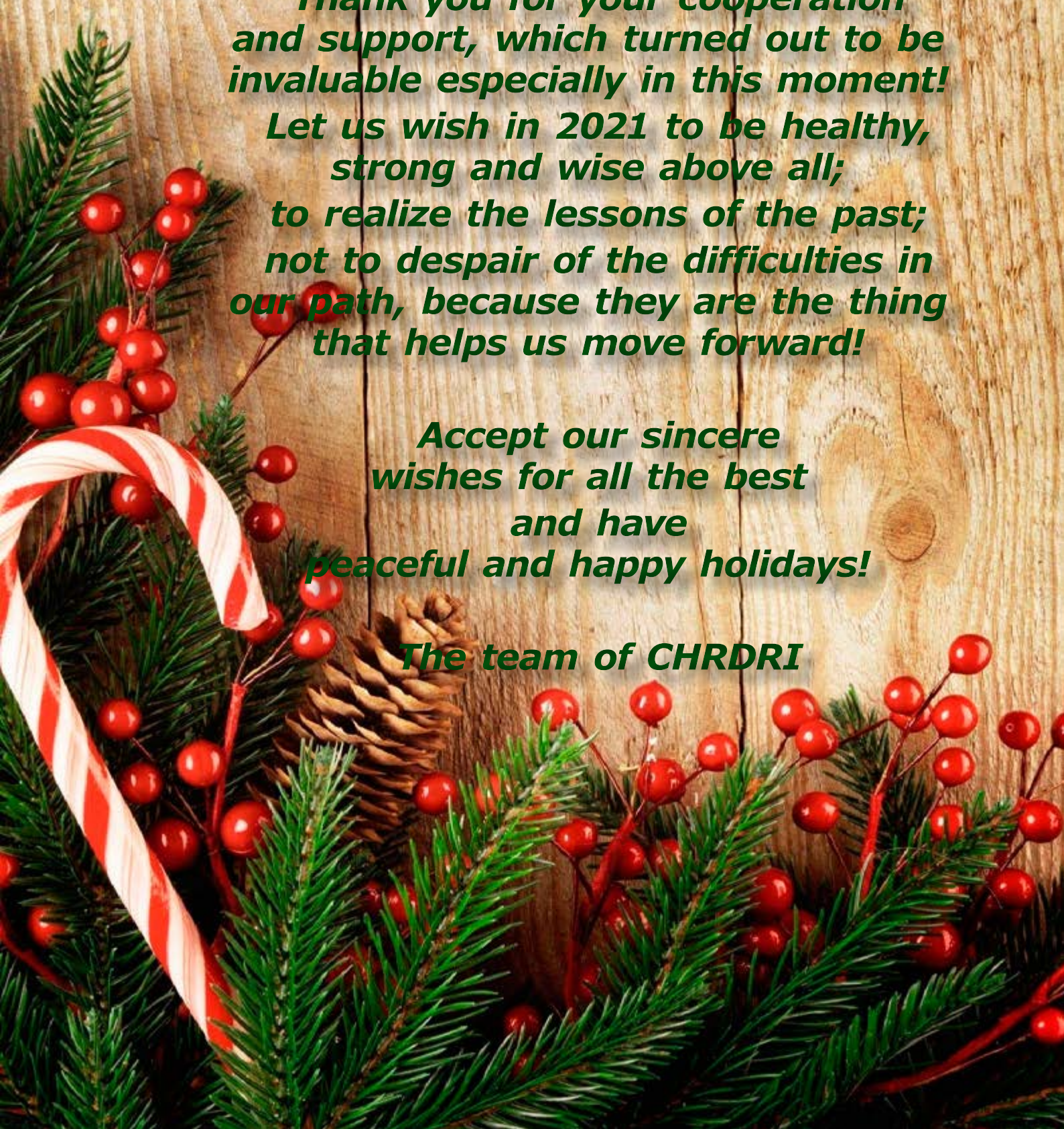
***Dear colleagues and friends,
Undoubtedly, 2020 was difficult and
unpredictable. It was not only full
of challenges that pushed us to the
limits of our possibilities, but also
helped us believe in them.***

***Thank you for your cooperation
and support, which turned out to be
invaluable especially in this moment!***

***Let us wish in 2021 to be healthy,
strong and wise above all;
to realize the lessons of the past;
not to despair of the difficulties in
our path, because they are the thing
that helps us move forward!***

***Accept our sincere
wishes for all the best
and have
peaceful and happy holidays!***

The team of CHRDRI



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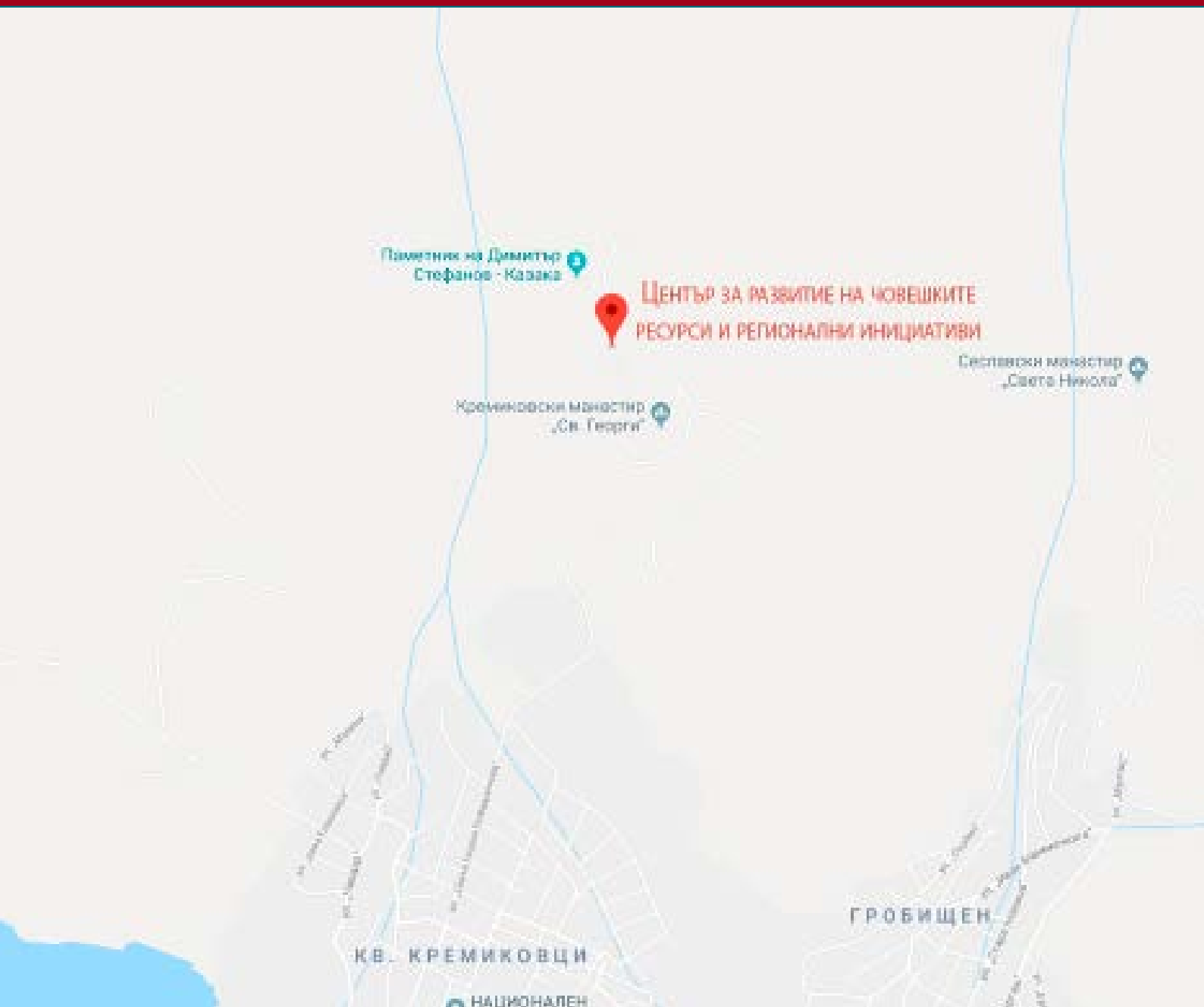
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