

**EUROPEAN ACCREDITATION NETWORK** for Educational Activities



**EAN**

**ACCREDITATION  
BOOK**

**CRITERIA & PROCEDURE  
FOR ACCREDITATION  
OF EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES  
IN EUROPE**

Quality

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**QUALEETYS**  
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Excellence

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# Table of content:

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

### DEFINITIONS

### INTRODUCTION

#### CHAPTER I: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

#### CHAPTER II: SCOPE OF ACCREDITATION

#### CHAPTER III: CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION

a) Guiding principles

b) Accreditation Criteria

#### CHAPTER IV: ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE

A) Accreditation steps

B) Deadline Timeframe

C) Supporting Documents

D) Evaluation methodology

E) Appeal mechanism

F) Continuing professional development credits

#### CHAPTER V: COSTS

#### CHAPTER VI: MISCELLANEOUS

Management of Data protection

On-site Inspection visit

Revision of the Accreditation Book

# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CPD</b> .....	Continuing Professional Development
<b>CPE</b> .....	Continuing Professional Education
<b>EA</b> .....	Educational Activity
<b>EAN</b> .....	European Accreditation Network
<b>EPDC</b> .....	European Professional Development Credits
<b>EU</b> .....	European Union
<b>OECD</b> .....	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

# DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this document, the following definitions will be used:

## **Accreditation:**

Process through which the EAN delivers a certificate to an organiser of educational activity assessing that this activity complies with the quality criteria laid down in this document.

## **Accreditation fee:**

Amount of euros paid by the organiser of an educational activity to quality assure the activity under the EAN criteria and process.

## **Affiliations:**

Official connection with a public or private institution.

## **Conflict of interest:**

A situation whereby a person or an organisation is involved in multiple interests, financial interest, or otherwise, one of which could possibly undermine the impartiality of the individual or organization. The situation creates a risk that professional judgement, statements or actions regarding a primary interest will be unduly influenced by a secondary interest.

## **Educational Activity:**

Activities that aim to educate or instruct and that impart knowledge or skill

## **Industry-sponsored session:**

Activity organised by a healthcare industry i.e. pharmaceutical or biotechnology company.

## **Learning objectives:**

Statement describing what a participant is expected to learn from an educational activity. The learning objective provides a detailed description of what the participant will be able to do when the educational activity ends.

**Organisers:**

Person or organisation that set-up an educational activity.

**Organising Team:**

Group of persons that contribute to organise an educational activity.

**Repetitive courses:**

Educational activity that is organised one or more time over a specific period of time. The activity is the same but organised for instance in another place at another date and which speakers are identical.

**Quality assurance:**

The process or set of processes that ensure the quality of educational activity. Quality assurance should ensure a learning environment in which the content of programmes, learning opportunities and facilities are fit for purpose.

# INTRODUCTION

The European Accreditation Network for Educational Activities (hereafter "the European Accreditation Network or EAN") is a network that aims to promote and encourage the creation and development of high quality educational activities for health professionals. Given the need for health professionals to remain up-to-date with their knowledge skills and attitudes to provide high quality of care, the engagement in educational activities is of great importance and is part of lifelong learning.

Lifelong learning may be broadly defined as learning that is pursued throughout life: learning that is flexible, diverse and available at different times and in different places. Lifelong learning crosses sectors, promoting learning beyond traditional schooling and throughout adult life (ie post-compulsory education). This definition is based on Delors' (1996) four 'pillars' of education for the future.

- Learning to know - mastering learning tools rather than acquisition of structured knowledge.
- Learning to do – equipping people for the types of work needed now and in the future including innovation and adaptation of learning to future work environments.
- Learning to live together, and with others – peacefully resolving conflict, discovering other people and their cultures, fostering community capability, individual competence and capacity, economic resilience, and social inclusion.
- Learning to be – education contributing to a person's complete development: mind and body, intelligence, sensitivity, aesthetic appreciation and spirituality.

Lifelong learning stirs up creativity, initiative and responsiveness of healthcare professionals and enables them to adapt the evolving and changing environment of today's healthcare systems. In doing so, health professional are able to manage uncertainty, communicate across and within cultures, sub-cultures, families and communities and negotiate conflicts.

Moreover, there learning can be formal or non-formal. The distinction between

both can be made given the environment where learning takes place. Whereas formal learning occurs within institutions established primarily to deliver education and training, often leading to recognised outcomes and qualifications, non-formal learning has intended education and training outcomes. However, the setting is outside dedicated learning institutions, most often in places where learning is not the primary business. Informal learning is of different nature.

Continuing professional development (CPD) or continuing professional education (CPE) is the means by which people maintain their knowledge and skills related to their professional lives. CPD obligations are common to most professions. Many professions define CPD as a structured approach to learning to help ensure competence to practice, taking in knowledge, skills and practical experience. CPD can involve any relevant learning activity, whether formal and structured or informal and self-directed.

**The EAN aims to support health professionals in their need to engage into CPD through providing a quality mark on Educational Activities. Attending high quality Educational Activities is an essential element of health professional engagement in continuing Professional Development.**



# CHAPTER I: Aims and objectives

The EAN has been established to provide accreditation of educational activities (i.e training courses, congresses, symposiums, e-learning modules and training programmes). Thanks to an extended network of experts, the EAN provides an external auditing of educational activities based on pre-set criteria focusing on the quality of the education and its benefits to participants.

The aims of the Accreditation are to:

- improve the quality of educational activities for health professionals
- enable health professionals to attend educational activities organised in another country with guarantee that the activity is of high quality
- help health professionals to fulfil their Continuing Professional Development requirements
- offer a quality mark to educational activities and encourage continuous improvement of these
- provide standard evaluation of educational activities based on pre set quality criteria
- provide an expert-based view on educational activity
- support the EU's priorities regarding lifelong learning

## CHAPTER II: Scope of accreditation

The Accreditation Network provides accreditation for educational activities for health professionals with an aim to quality-assure these. In this regard, The Accreditation Network provides accreditation for:

### **1. Short-term Activities (1 to 5 days):**

Congresses, Courses, Symposium, Annual scientific meetings, Short training Session, Workshop, hands-on courses...

### **2. On-line modules**

It includes on-line short-term training session and other e-learning activities that aim to improve the competence of the participant. On-line modules must comply with the EAN criteria and also include a greater degree of interactivity. The participant must be engaged in the learning experience and fully benefit from the module.

### **3. Training programmes:**

Training programmes provided by national recognised institutions and linked to a training curriculum. It must be composed of several modules that altogether enable the participant to be trained in a given area.

### **4. Commercial or Industry-sponsored activities:**

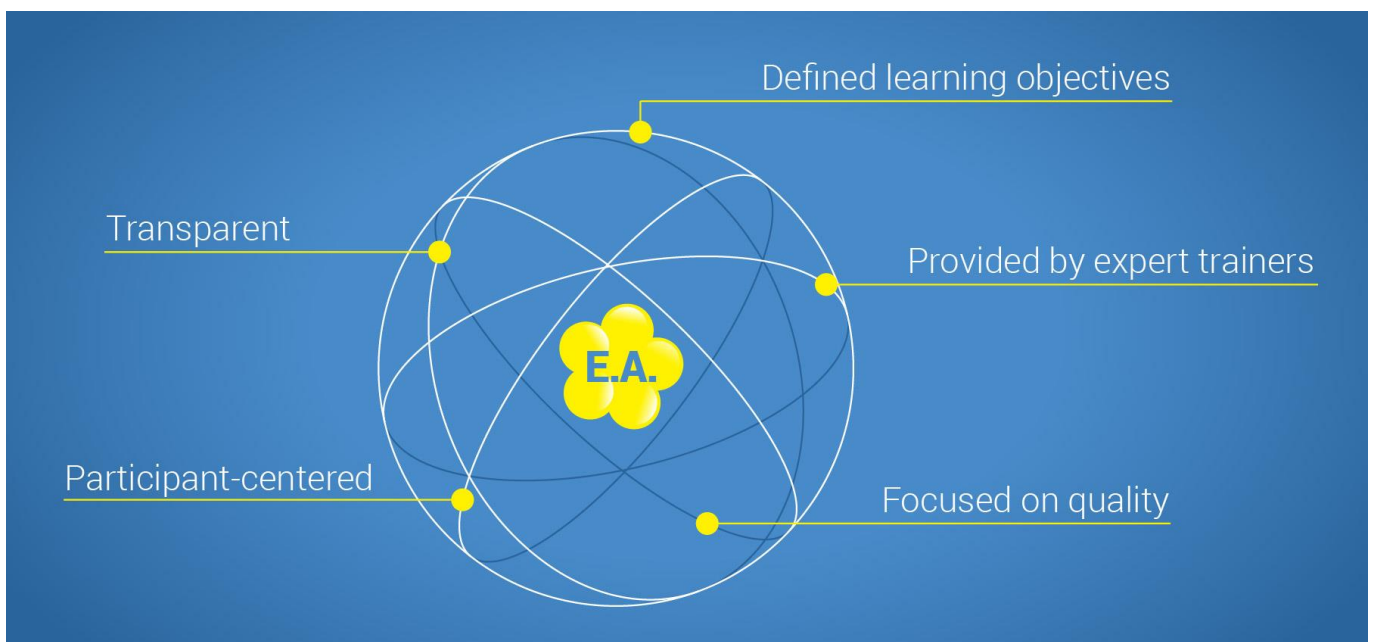
The EAN recognises that Industry-sponsored activities can be of interest to health professional to be informed about the latest product, technique, service proposed by the industry. In this regard, the EAN accepts that industry-sponsored activities follow the same quality control process albeit not being eligible to provide European CPD credits for the attendees. The EAN aims to ensure that the information provided during industry-sponsored session will ultimately benefit the participant.

## CHAPTER III: Criteria for accreditation

The criteria for accreditation of Educational Activities (EA) follow guiding principles that serve as basis for their evaluation.

### a) Guiding principles

Any Educational activity should follow the EAN 5 guiding principles such as outlined below:



### b) Accreditation Criteria

The Accreditation Network has developed specific criteria that aim to assess the quality of a given Educational Activity.

#### Eligibility Criteria

- The E.A is dedicated to health professionals
- the E.A is first and foremost Educational
- The E.A is
  - A short term training session (up to 5 days)
  - An e-learning module
  - A training programme
  - A commercial or Industry-sponsored session

#### Exclusion criteria

- The activity is focused only on promotion of a product, a technique or a drug and does not provide any educational value.
- The activity is informative only and does not empower the participant to benefit from the activity and improve his/her competence.

### Selection Criteria

#### 1.) Relevance of the issue addressed to achieve the objectives set

The objectives of the EA should be clearly defined, realistic and address issues relevant to the participant. The main topic should cover an area of practice of the health professional that will help the participant to improve his/her daily practice. The content of the educational activity should aim to achieve the learning objectives defined by the Organising Team.

The main topic/objective of the E.A can be subdivided into several educational objectives that will altogether contribute to implement the main objective.

The ultimate goal of an E.A is to enable the health professional to improve the quality of care for patients. As a result, the E.A must be consistent with the health professional's needs.

The topic of the E.A will address one or more of the three components of competence: knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Organisers of E.A will demonstrate that the objectives set are addressed.

#### 2.) Quality of the work programme

The work programme has been designed to be participant-centred, motivating, engaging and providing added value to the participant. The programme has been set for a specific target group and the activities proposed within this programme enable the participant to achieve the educational objectives set. The programme proposed is consistent with the objectives set.

The work programme has been shaped to benefit fully to the participant's involvement.

### 3.) Quality of the Organising Team

It is of utmost importance that the teachers/trainers providing the educational activity be expert in their field with solid interest in educational issues. The Organising Team involves persons with profile, experience and expertise to deliver all aspects of the activity.

The programme has been set up by experts in their fields that are members of the Organising Team. The distribution of responsibilities and tasks is clearly set and demonstrates the commitment and active contribution of all members of the Team. There is an efficient coordination and communication management plan within the Organisation Team.

Speakers to educational activities have to be experts in their field. The quality of the Educational Activity is closely related to the quality of the speakers. The Organisation Team has to carefully select the speakers in order to provide educational added value to the participant. The organising team ensures that all speakers disclose their affiliations in their presentation and commits to evaluate and manage the risks of conflict of Interest of speakers. The selection procedure of speakers is established prior to the Activity.

Members of the Organising Team are not in a position of conflict of interest and discloses its affiliations.

The educational activity must include a quality management process that enable both the participant and the organising team to engage into continuous improvement of the quality of the activity to meet the constantly evolving participants' needs. The Educational Activity must not seek to promote one product over the other but offer the participant the capacity to develop personal judgment and informed choice.

### 4.) Impact on the participant

The objective of all Educational Activities is to improve the participant knowledge, skills and/or attitudes in a given field and to enable the participant to improve his/her daily practice. It must therefore be participant-centred, objective-driven.

Active participation of the participant is therefore essential to ensure the greatest impact on the participant's daily practice.

The feedback from participant is an essential part of the quality plan that the E.A must have. The participant should be able to rate the organisation, the

content, the quality of lectures and the relevance of the issue addressed by the session or E.A.

As a result, a feedback system and rating mechanism of the overall activity must be made available either at the end of the E.A or at the end of each session of the E.A. It is the organiser's responsibility to measure through different ways (surveys, feedback form and any other technique) how participants have benefit from the activity proposed.

Participants should be able to translate the information received during the E.A into concrete practices.

## 5.) Transparency

Transparency in the Educational activity's elaboration, funding, implementation and exploitation is essential to increase the participant's trust and acceptance. Organisers of Educational activities are responsible to establish and implement a transparency policy and ensure that the funding of the activity does not jeopardise its content. Information on the Educational Activity's organisation, programme and funding has to be made available to the participants. Though not all information can be made available to the public, the Organising Team must ensure that all information can be easily accessed upon request.

The transparency also covers the affiliations of the speakers (see criteria 3). The Organisation Team takes responsibility to ensure that the Activity is free from bias, that industry-sponsored session are clearly displayed in the programme and identified as such and known to the participants. Industry-sponsored session must follow a separate accreditation process such as detailed in this document.

The Organisation Team invites organisers of industry-sponsored session to submit a specific application to the EAN for their module, session.

The Organisation Team ensures that CVs of all speakers are available upon request at the time of application. The EAN does not require the CVs of all speakers to be uploaded at the time of application but these should be kept available should an evaluator request it.

# CHAPTER IV: Accreditation procedure

## A) Accreditation steps

The application process follows the pattern below:



- **Step 1:** REGISTER ON EAN portal

In order to submit an application for accreditation for your Educational Activity, please create a user account on the website [www.eanea.eu](http://www.eanea.eu)

- **Step 2:** check the eligibility and exclusion criteria

Look at the criteria elaborated by EAN and determine whether your activity is eligible to receive European accreditation.

Prepare the supporting documents required for submitting an application

- **Step 3:** fill in the application form

The EAN has created a dedicated online portal. Once you have created an account and registered your organisation, you may submit an application. The language used to fill-in the application form is English.

- **Step 4:** Your application is being evaluated

The accreditation process lasts 1 month. Once your application has been evaluated by the EAN independent experts that check the content of your application against the criteria listed in this Accreditation Book.

- **Step 5:** Receive feedback from EAN

Once the evaluation is performed, you will receive a certificate and a letter stating that the E.A. has received a certain number of European Professional Development Credits "EPDC". Organisers of EA will be responsible for providing the participants with the European Certificate including the relevant number of credits allocated to this EA. Participants will then be able to demonstrate that they are engaged into CPD activities.

At all stage of the process, organisers of EA can see the status of their application on their online profile.

## **B) Deadline Timeframe**

Applications should be submitted three months before the start date of the EA. The EAN though accepts applications submitted less than three months before the start date. In such a case, a higher fee is applicable.

No applications can be submitted within less than 35 days before the start date of the educational activity. This allows the organisers to receive the feedback from EAN well in advance of the EA. Applications submitted less than 35 days before the starting date of the event will not be considered eligible.

## **C) Supporting Documents**

The organisers of E.A must provide the following supporting documents in the framework of their application:

- A detailed programme of the EA including the title of the session, the timing of the session and the name of the speakers. Industry-sponsored session should be clearly visible in the title of the session.
- A list of members of the Organising Committee including their affiliations
- The declaration on honour from the Chair of the Organising Committee to abide by the terms and conditions of EAN (see template provided on the website)

## **D) Evaluation methodology**

The Educational Activity will be evaluated by three independent reviewers who will check the compliance of the E.A with the selection criteria such as described above.

In this regard, they will rate each criteria with a mark from 1 to 5 (5: Excellent; 4: Good; 3: Fair; 2: Poor; 1: Weak) and draft a short paragraph providing further details as to how they were lead to rate the criteria. A report will be then issued based on the comments and rating of the three independent evaluators.



Organisers of EA may not be in contact with any evaluators in order to prevent undue influence on the accreditation process.

In case of positive evaluation, the evaluation report together with a certificate including the number of credits awarded will be sent to organisers.

In case of negative evaluation, the evaluation report will be sent to the applicant detailing the reasons for not granting credits.

EAN evaluators are free to decide whether an EA is to be considered as a short-term activity thus eligible for receiving CPD credits or, given its content, to be considered as a commercial or industry-sponsored session. Should the evaluators decide so, the organiser of the EA will be informed of this and the EA will follow the rules pertaining to industry-sponsored session (i.e. no CPD credits and different fee).

#### Evaluation of commercial or Industry-sponsored sessions:

Satellite Symposiums provide information of valuable importance to health professionals. Albeit not eligible to receive CPD credits, the EAN values the quality of the "commercial or industry-sponsored session" and can provide for a quality evaluation of the session based on the same quality criteria than for E.A. It will provide a quality mark to the session without CPD credits granted to participants.

The application process, criteria and methodology follow the same pattern as Educational activities.

Organisers of commercial or industry-sponsored session have to submit a dedicated application to EAN to have their activity evaluated. In this regard, should the session be part of a broader event, the commercial or industry-sponsored session cannot be evaluated by EAN as part of the application for the main EA.

#### **E) Appeal mechanism**

In case of non-accreditation of an E.A, the organisers can cast an appeal to the EAN.

The appeal mechanism has to be requested within 1 weeks of the notification of decision of non-accreditation through a formal request explaining why the EAN decision is not appropriate. The appeal mechanism is not included in the one-month evaluation process. The EAN cannot be held responsible for the extension of delay due to the appeal mechanism.

The E.A will be examined by an Appeal Committee which will review the evaluation report, contact the evaluators and the organisers request and confirm or not the decision of the first evaluators. The appeal procedure can last up to two weeks as from the day the organisers have submitted an appeal and paid the appeal fee. By introducing an appeal, the organisers agree to comply with the Appeal Committee Decision. The decision of the Appeal Committee cannot be questioned. The appeal procedure is subject to a flat fee of 200€.

#### **F) Continuing professional development credits**

The EAN provides European CPD credits according to the following rule 1 hour = 1 credit with a maximum of 8 credits per day.

Lunch breaks, coffee breaks and commercial or industry-sponsored sessions are not eligible for receiving CPD credits. Commercial or industry-sponsored sessions are eligible for evaluation from EAN but will not receive CPD credits.

The EAN recommends that health professionals receive at least 30 credits per year.

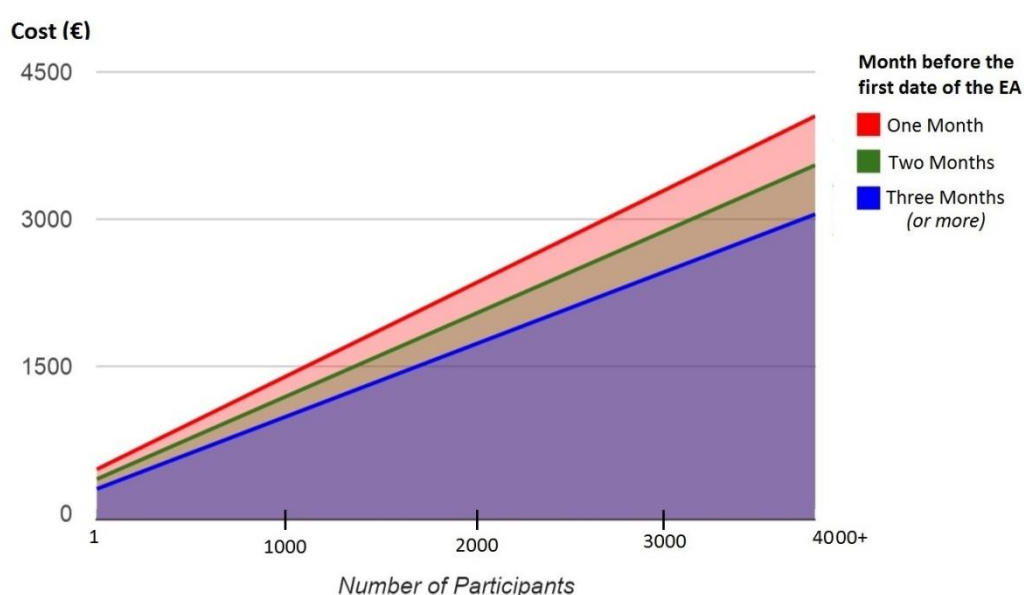
## CHAPTER V: Costs

The cost to apply for accreditation of your E.A is calculated according to 2 elements:

- the expected number of participant to the EA
- the day of submission of complete application.

In order to avoid thresholds in fees, the fees follow a linear approach. In this regard, the accreditation fee ranges from 250€ (minimum fee) to 4350€ (maximum fee).

### Cost per participant and month before the date of the Educational Activity



A calculation tool is available on the website to calculate the cost of your application.

Activity	Fee
Short-term training session;	From 250€ to 4350€
e-learning session	Flat fee - 500€
Repetitive course	Short-term session fee + 100€ per session
Commercial or industry-sponsored session	Flat fee – 450€
Appeal fee	200€

## Reimbursement Policy

If the E.A has been sent in evaluation to the EAN experts, no reimbursement will be made.

In case of cancellation of event, the Organisation Team can postpone the request of accreditation or request partial reimbursement of the accreditation fee if the event has not been evaluated.

Partial reimbursement means that the EAN reimburses 90% of the total amount of fee within 60 days.

If the event is postponed, the Organiser does not have to pay again, but must provide new dates at which the Educational Activity will occur. In case the event is postponed, no major change in the programme, speakers or other important element should occur.

Should EAN fail to evaluate the EA, the organisers shall be entitled to claim partial reimbursement of the fee.

## Repetitive courses

In case of repetitive courses, the organisers may submit a single application provided that the following courses are the same.

*Example: If the same course is organised in different countries with the same title, the same speakers and the same programme, then it can be considered as a repetitive course.*

If the course/session/event is organised in different countries with different speakers but same title and programme, then it can also be considered as a repetitive courses. Please contact the EAN should you have any further question on this issue.

The cost of repetitive course is depending on the total number of participants that will benefit from the course + 100€:

## CHAPTER VI – Miscellaneous

### Management of Data protection

Personal data provided by organisers of Educational Activities are kept by EAN and remain strictly confidential. Authors of the data may have access to their data.

### On-site Inspection visit

The EAN can send on-site inspectors to check the compliance of the accredited educational activity with the criteria set out in this accreditation book. Inspectors will elaborate an On-site Inspection Report that will assess whether the activity meets the 5 criteria.

In case the report shows that the activity failed to comply with the criteria. The EAN will contact the organisers and request motivated response as to the discrepancies between the information provided at the application stage and the findings of the on-site inspection.

The response will then be evaluated by EAN which will decide whether to take any action against the organiser.

EAN may decide:

- to send a formal letter to organisers stating the discrepancies and providing recommendation as to how to solve this issue
- revoke the accreditation and publicise on the EAN website
- any other action that will be deemed necessary to repair the prejudice of EAN

### List of Educational Activities

All E.A that have undertaken the accreditation process and received an EAN certificate will be listed on the public webpage of the EAN. In doing so, EAN will enable health professionals seeking training courses to find quality-assured activity.

## Revision of the Accreditation Book

The EAN will review this document on a regular basis. It keeps the right to change part of this document whenever appropriate.

An in-depth review of this document, in consultation with EAN members and taking into account the feedback of organisers of EA, will be undertaken every three years.

EAN will disseminate information on the revision process in due course as part of its quality management process.

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