



# COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY STRATEGY

June 2025



EU4GREEN RECOVERY EAST - RECOVERY THROUGH A CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND POLLUTION REDUCTION IN THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES

(700002623)

## EU4Green Recovery East (700002623)

Recovery through a Circular Economy and Pollution Reduction in the Eastern Partnership countries

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## ABOUT EU4GREEN RECOVERY EAST

The EU4Green Recovery East programme is a regional programme supporting the EU's Eastern Partnership countries on their path towards a greener, more resilient, and competitive economy.

With an EU-contribution of EUR 21.3 million (2025-2028), it builds on the results of a decade of EU support for better water management and green economy adoption and focuses on five key components: (1) promoting a circular economy, (2) ensuring water is managed as a critical resource, (3) advancing legal approximation with EU environmental legislation, (4) strengthening integration into EU-wide environmental cooperation and data exchange, and (5) fostering crossborder environmental cooperation.

The programme is implemented by five partners: Expertise France with the French International Office for Water (OiEau), OECD, UNECE, UNIDO, and the Environment Agency Austria (UBA), as the consortium coordinator.

https://www.eu4greenrecoveryeast.eu













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## 2 Executive Summary

This strategy outlines key communication approaches and activities to raise awareness, engage stakeholders, and enhance the visibility of the EU4Green Recovery East (EU4GRE) programme. This strategy aligns with the EU guidance "Communicating and raising EU visibility: Guidance for external actions", 2022 edition.

Based on best practices for EU external actions and lessons learned from previous programmes like EU4Environment Water and Data, we have identified four core objectives for our communication efforts:

- 1. **Ensure visibility** of EU support for the environment in the EaP region.
- 2. **Inform stakeholders** about the programme goals, activities, and results.
- 3. Raise awareness of EU environmental goals and policies (e.g. the EU Green Deal, Chapter 27 of the EU acquis, the EU Competitiveness Compass, the EU Water Resilience Strategy), by linking them to local concerns such as jobs, health and security.\_
- 4. **Engage stakeholders** in programme activities and in the dissemination of results.

The programme identifies three tiers of target audiences:

- 1. Core stakeholders frequently involved and programme-wide perspective: EaP governments, EaP SMEs and business associations, EU institutions.
- 2. Strategic contributors involved in specific activities: EaP Academia and research institutions, EaP Environmental NGOs and CSOs, International donors and Teams Europe initiative.
- 3. Wider public indirect or occasional engagement: EaP Media and EaP Citizens.

Our choice of target audiences and activities is informed by data from previous communication efforts, particularly engagement analytics from EU4Environment. This analysis revealed that EaP governments were highly invested, had a large audience, and could act as significant multipliers of programme information. By focusing on our core **stakeholders**, we ensure more efficient and qualitative communication, leveraging their ability to relay and adapt messages. In general, relying on multipliers, particularly for reaching media or citizens, is more effective and resource-efficient than direct mass outreach.

Key Messages are tailored to stakeholder groups but consistently link EU support with local concerns like jobs creation, economic growth, public health, security of critical national resources. Sustainable growth models reduce costs for SMEs, create local jobs and reduce dependence on imports of critical raw materials, with a positive impact on strategic macro-economic security aspects. Improving environmental sustainability improves the quality of ecosystems as well as people's health and wellbeing.













## **Objectives**

Based on best practices for EU external actions and lessons learned from previous programmes like EU4Environment Water and Data, we have identified four core objectives for our communication efforts

- **Ensure visibility of EU** support for the environment in the Eastern Partnership (EaP)
- **Inform about EU4Green Recovery East** goals, progress and results.
- Raise awareness of EU environmental goals and policies (e.g. the EU Green Deal, Chapter 27 of the EU acquis, the EU Competitiveness Compass, the EU Water Resilience Strategy), with an emphasis on linking environmental protection to economic growth, job creation, security of critical resources and health and well-being for the populations.
- **Engage** stakeholders in programme's activities and in the dissemination of its results.

The first two objectives focus on visibility and recognition, the latter two objectives focus on awareness and engagement, requiring more interactive approaches.





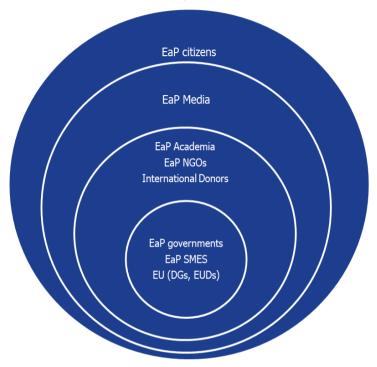






## Target audiences

Our target audiences are grouped as follows. The groups most directly affected by the programme's activities are at the centre. The further away from the centre of this circle, the less the stakeholder participate in and influence the programme. They can still be involved on a more ad hoc basis in specific activities and act as multipliers.



4.1 Core stakeholders - Frequently involved and programme-wide perspective: EaP governments, SMEs. EU.

They are the main target group directly involved in EU4GRE activities. Therefore, they are reached regularly and directly by IPs. Taking a closer look at the core stakeholders:

- **EaP governments**, including related agencies and local authorities in the circular economy, environmental management and water sectors, and parliaments.
- EaP SMEs and business associations in key value chains: they are directly targeted and engaged. Like governments, they are seen as effective multipliers.
- EU institutions: DG ENEST, DG ENV, EU Delegations, EU communication projects, as well as EU environmental agencies like European Environment Agency (EEA), and EU business associations representing the interests of EU businesses in EaP countries, such as EU business chambers. EU4GRE can harness their communication channels.













## 4.2 Strategic Contributors - Involved in specific activities: EaP Academia, NGOs. international donors.

The secondary target audience is involved in programme activities on a case-by-case basis. This audience is useful to reach the objectives of the programme, whether because they have relevant knowledge (academia), additional fundings or influence (international donors), field knowledge and legitimity among local communities (NGOs). Taking a closer look at the strategic contributors:

- EaP Academia, and research institutions. Useful due to relevant knowledge and potential as multipliers.
- **EaP Civil society organizations** and environmental NGOs (sector: environment, water, circular economy), including EaP Civil Society Forum. Useful due to relevant knowledge, networks, and potential as multipliers.
- International donors, Teams Europe initiative. Useful for additional funding or influence.

## 4.3 Wider public - Occasional or indirect engagement: EaP media and citizens.

- **EaP Media** (journalists covering environmental, economic, and EU integration topics). Potential multipliers of key messages for Green Deal, environmental awareness and acceptance of environmental investments and regulations. Media contact should ideally be coordinated through EU contacts (DGs, EU Neighbours East, EUDs
- While the ultimate aim is to also target **citizens** directly, time and budget constraints make direct mass communication challenging. The general public is better reached indirectly through our primary targets and multipliers (governments, NGOs) who can adapt messages for local contexts, or through the EaP media.

A more detailed stakeholder mapping can be found in the annex.













#### Key messages 5

Key Messages are tailored to stakeholder groups but consistently link EU support with local concerns expressed in the EU Neighbours East 2024 survey, like jobs creation, economic growth, public health, and security (of critical national resources).

Examples of such messages are given below for each stakeholder group.

- For EaP governments: "The EU supports reforms that boost green growth, create local jobs, and reduce reliance on imports — bringing your country closer to EU standards and markets, and strengthening national security."
- For EaP SMEs: "The EU helps SMEs cut costs and boost efficiency by adopting circular economy practices — unlocking access to EU markets and new business opportunities."
- For EaP NGOs and CSOs: "The EU backs a fair green transition improving health, wellbeing, and public involvement in shaping a more sustainable future."
- For EaP academia: "The EU improves access to reliable environmental data and expert insights — supporting better monitoring, research, and sustainable innovation."
- For EaP media and civil society: "The EU fosters transparency and public participation in environmental policy, while supporting job creation, improved health, and national security through sustainability."
- For EU and international donors: "EaP countries are moving towards greener, more resilient economies. Continued support helps deepen reforms and deliver longterm impact."













## Activities and timeline

The communication plan includes both cross-cutting activities, mainly led by OiEau, and country/component-specific activities, often outsourced locally and linked to specific component milestones. These activities need to be adapted to time and resource constraints.

#### 6.1 Cross-cutting activities

Cross-cutting communication activities are developed with a regional perspective in close cooperation with the EU. They are initially produced in English, with translations provided when relevant and as the budget allows.

- Visibility Kit: Development of visual identity, templates, leaflets. Goal: ensure visual coherence across channels EU4GRE don't control directly. (Jan-May 2025)
- **Partner Activation Pack**: Simple guidelines and form for partners to share updates. Goal: Since EU4GRE doesn't have a social media channel, it is important to encourage partners to publish via their own networks and report back. (Summer 2025)
- Website: Regular updates of the programme through news, explainers and story-telling formats. Ensure SEO (helps search engines understand the website's content and connect it with users), downloadable and multilingual access. Goal: digital anchor essential for visibility, credibility, and content hosting. (Starting Sept 2025)
- **Quarterly Newsletter:** Quarterly newsletter. Include visuals and "storytelling" formats; reduce frequency to increase quality. Goal: Direct communication channel; good substitute for social updates. (starting March 2025)
- Visual Story Bank: Collection of high-quality visuals from IPs and professional photographers. Goal: useful for all content needs (website, leaflets, presentations). Up to 3 professional photographers hired per year, for a maximum of 2 days.
- **Media Briefings:** briefings with journalists to help them cover complex environmental topics in a more informed way. Potentially back-to-back with field visits (timeline depends on opportunities). Ready-made media kits to be provided. 1-2 per year tied to major EU4GRE milestones. Goal: great multiplier impact and EU stakeholder engagement.
- **Explainers series:** short texts, infographics or videos explaining complex topics (e.g. circular economy, river basin management, environmental data) and the costs and benefits of aligning with the EU environmental acquis. Goal: visual, educational, and republishable. (Starting Q4 2025)
- **EaP Stakeholder Storytelling Series:** Short articles, photo essays, or videos profiles of SMEs, decision-makers, data users/producers. Goal: Human impact stories resonate across donor, media, and public channels. Up to 2 professional videos per year.
- Annual stakeholder survey: distributed via EU4GRE website and newsletter to gain insights into awareness and perception of our communications, and to refine our strategy.













## 6.2 Country and component specific activities

These activities are often outsourced locally and conducted in national languages. They are potentially funded by component-specific budgets dedicated to awareness-raising especially for component 2 and 3 (water and EU acquis, respectively). They should be selected under the following criteria:

- Impactful (especially for awareness and stakeholder trust)
- Cost-effective (relative to reach or depth of engagement)
- Trackable (clear outputs or measurable results)
- Sustainable (leave something useful behind skills, tools, insights)
- Highly effective via offline and partner-driven channels (web, newsletters, events, donor comms, media briefings)

The suggested communication activities are linked with "technical" activities actually being implemented in the countries. They may include:

#### **Informative materials:**

- Circular Economy best practice factsheets from pilot activities. 1 per key value chain in priority country (AM, MD, UA).
- River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) Factsheets: Condensed factsheets for key basins. 1 per "active" river basin in priority country (AM, MD, UA).
- o Infographics "travel of data": explaining the steps from data collection to decision-making and highlighting potential issues that can arise in the process, as well as best practices. - 1 item
- **"EU Green Deal / Chapter 27 explained" mini-series**: Q&A with experts on the EU Green Deal – 6 items

#### **Human-centered materials:**

- o "Circular Economy Champions" video mini-series featuring SMEs 3 videos, 1 per priority country (AM, MD, UA).
- "Water success stories" video mini-series (NBS, RBMP, transboundary) 3 videos, 1 per priority country (AM, MD, UA).
- "Humans Behind the Data" video mini-series 3 videos, 1 per priority country (AM, MD, UA).
- Voices Across Borders: Video, podcast or article to highlight transboundary dialogue between EaP countries. Focus on people behind this long-term process. - at least 1 video per priority country - 2 videos: MD-UA, AM-GE
- o "What the EU Green Deal Means to Me", focusing on asking people why the EU environmental acquis matters to them. - 9 items (3 per priority countries).

#### Local events (optional and dependent on opportunities)

o Local EU-Day or Environment Day events organised by the EUD, UNEP, etc. These events feature relevant programme's activities through different outreach channels, including fairs and booths.













- o River Day "My river" campaign: contest and activities to engage local stakeholders and citizens around rivers (linked to specific River Days like Dnipro Day, Danube Day, etc.).
- Water class in targeted schools.
- Citizen monitoring (e.g., water quality)
- o **Lectures at university** by IPs or local experts Cost-effective and builds future environmental leadership. Great way to test/pilot explainers or videos. Can be recorded for future use.
- Hackathon to engage students in making data accessible.

Communication efforts will be planned around programme milestones within each component (C1-C5), such as:

- C1: online courses on circular economy, circular economy digital tools for SMEs and government launches, B2B dialogue events,
- C2: new/updated RBMPs, sectoral plans/measures for nitrates, floods, supply and sanitation, NBS field visits, conventional and alternative wastewater management, basin council meetings, water monitoring expert groups meetings, lab re-accreditations, transboundary survey on the Prut with ICPDR, studies on the costs (and benefits) of investing in water,
- C3: policy briefs on the EU Green Deal, communication campaign on EU Green Deal and EU environmental acquis (chapter 27) targeting EaP governments, businesses, medias.
- C4: results of the use of remote sensing/Earth Observation tools, environmental data platforms online,
- C5: transboundary cooperation activities (transboundary river commission meetings, etc).

National Policy Dialogues (NPD) in particular will be good moment to communicate about country's challenges and progress.













#### Dissemination channels 7

We will use a mix of channels to reach our target audiences

- **Programme-owned media**: EU4GRE website and newsletter;
- Earned media (publicity gained organically through relays, rather than through owned channels or paid advertising): EU and EaP government channels through press releases, web articles, draft social media posts, media collaborations (with EU Neighbours East and EU Delegations support);
- Partner Networks: Amplify messages via EU Delegations, business associations, and NGOs:
- **Events & direct outreach:** Webinars, roundtables, workshops.













## Key dates and timeline

These dates are an important focus for the dissemination of EU4GRE communication materials, provided that communication content can be produced and validated on time:

#### **World Days**

- March: Waste, Data and Water Days.
- April: Health Day.
- May: EU Days.
  - EU4GRE will e.g. consider participating at local fairs.
- June: Environment Day and EU Green Week.
  - EU4GRE will share relevant content (from the list cited above).
- September: Clean Up Day.

#### Specific EaP River Days

Dniester, Danube, Dnipro, Sevan (May-August).

### **National Policy Dialogues**

One per year per country.

#### UN meetings and important international events of relevance for the programme

- E.g. the UN Water Convention in the UAE in December 2026.
- Biodiversity COP17 in Armenia (2026).

## **Timeline for upcoming 12 months:**

In Q3/4 of 2025, the focus will be on developing the website and continuing to produce the newsletter. The quality of the newsletter will be improved by adding sections such as 'Environmental News in the EaP Region/EU', which will cover topics such as new legislation.

A publication calendar will be set up for web news and the 'Explainers' series, which will be disseminated through the EU4GRE website and newsletter. The C&V steering committee group will help to determine the most effective topics and angles for raising awareness and increasing understanding among EaP stakeholders.

In Q1–Q2 of 2026, human-centered materials will be prepared for key green dates in March and June.













#### 9 **Monitoring**

The SMART indicators align with the four communication objectives. It includes both quantitative and qualitative KPIs, such as:

- Media mentions referencing EU support by the programme.
- Website traffic
- Newsletter open/click rates.
- Awareness levels based on annual surveys.
- Stakeholder engagement rates (communication event participation, materials reused, feedback collected).

C&V objective	Relevant KPI	Means of verification	
Ensure visibility of EU support	<ul> <li>Number of templates and guidelines created or updated.</li> <li>Number of mentions in the media, broken down by country of origin and source.</li> </ul>	Media monitoring	
Inform about EU4Green Recovery East	<ul> <li>Number of visitors on EU4GRE website.</li> <li>Number of web news published on EU4GRE website.</li> <li>Number of subscribers to the EU4GRE newsletter (baseline: 825).</li> <li>Number of EU4GRE newsletters sent.</li> <li>Open rate of EU4GRE newsletter.</li> <li>Percentage of stakeholders who report they are well informed about the EU4GRE programme, its goals and progress.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Website analytics</li> <li>Newsletter analytics</li> <li>Yearly feedback form</li> </ul>	
Raise awareness of EU environmental goals and policies	<ul> <li>Number of communication materials produced.</li> <li>Number of communication event conducted co-conducted or supported (online or in-person)</li> <li>Number of awareness-raising campaigns conducted, co-conducted or supported</li> <li>Percentage of surveyed people who report being aware of one or more materials produced by EU4GRE and report improved understanding of one or more key topics of EU4GRE.</li> </ul>	<ul><li>communication materia</li><li>List of participants</li><li>Yearly feedback form</li></ul>	











<b>Engage</b> stakeholders	<ul> <li>Number of people who participated</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>List of participants</li> <li>Communication campaigns reports</li> <li>Media monitoring</li> <li>Feedback form distributed after a communication event</li> </ul>
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## 10 Team coordination and validation workflow

Coordination is ensured by a core C&V team (OiEau, UBA) supported by a C&V Steering Group and regular meetings. Communication focal points within IPs are encouraged to contribute to content and updates.

#### Suggestions to stay agile

- Content co-creation with IPs: Assign one focal point per IP to send monthly updates, stories or media. Create a shared content calendar (Excel/Notion) they can populate.
- Prioritize formats that travel (means shareable, easily editable content for diverse channels): Short texts, infographics, and subtitled short videos work well across the 5 EaP countries and in EU communications too.
- Rapid approval protocol: For "light" content (photos, 2-paragraph stories), get precleared templates/messages to avoid long validation chains.











## 11 Risks and mitigation measures

Several risks could impact the effectiveness of the communication plan:

Risks foreseen	Mitigation measures
<b>Spread of misinformation or disinformation</b> regarding the programme, its partners, or its objectives.	<ul> <li>Analysis of misinformation, its origin and impact;</li> <li>Response communication plan;</li> <li>Prepare fact-based, easily shareable content (like the explainers) to clarify key messages;</li> <li>Use trusted multipliers and partner channels to amplify correct information.</li> </ul>
<b>Low political attention</b> to environmental topics and low-quality coverage of environmental topics in the media.	- Tailor communication to link environmental goals with socio-economic benefits (jobs, health, security), and focus on topics already prioritised by governments; - Provide journalists with ready-to-use factsheets, visuals, and story angles.
<b>Low engagement</b> from target audiences, including limited reactions to communication materials or poor event participation.	<ul> <li>Focus efforts on key stakeholder groups and multipliers rather than mass outreach;</li> <li>Co-develop content with partners to ensure relevance;</li> <li>Include interactive formats and storytelling where appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Delays in content validation</b> (especially from EU counterparts)	- Agree with EU on a "light content" fast-track validation protocol for timely items (e.g. social media posts, webnews).
High demand for translations of regional content into national languages, despite limited budget.	<ul> <li>Focus translations on high-impact or widely-used materials;</li> <li>Explore partnerships with national authorities or IPs to support translation costs.</li> <li>Consider using high-quality automated translation with light human proofreading for less sensitive content.</li> </ul>
Multiple overlapping requests from EU, EUDs and country stakeholders, leading to diluted messages and limited production capacity.	<ul> <li>Define clear selection criteria and prioritisation rules for communication content (e.g. thematic focus, strategic importance);</li> <li>Ensure regular coordination with C&amp;V steering group and with EU to align priorities and avoid duplication.</li> </ul>













Limited country-specific actions or lack of tangible results to showcase	, , ,
<b>Inability to track the reach</b> <b>and impact</b> of content shared via external (EU, other) channels.	- Request partners and stakeholders to share basic dissemination metrics (reach, engagement, audience) where possible.
Political Unrest or Geopolitical Disruptions: Instability in EaP countries or broader conflicts or tensions affecting programme activities and communication.	- Follow EU guidance on sensitive issues and adopt a cautious, apolitical communication tone.











## 12 Annexes

## 12.1 Communication outlines per country

Short communication outlines for the three priority countries (Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine) will be developed based on the final work plans by autumn 2025.

## 12.2 Visual identity







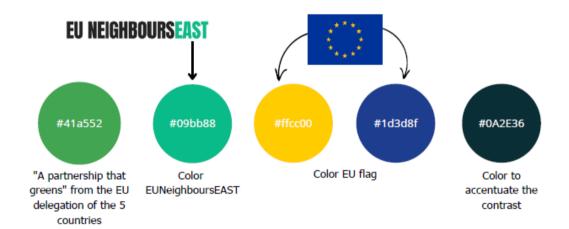




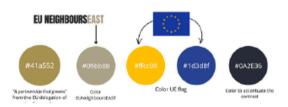


## **VISIBILITY GUIDELINES EU4GREENRECOVERY EAST**

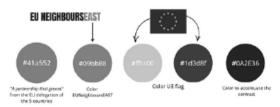
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No contrast and vision difficulties















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For contents	Content article EUNeighboursEast	Tahoma	Tahoma



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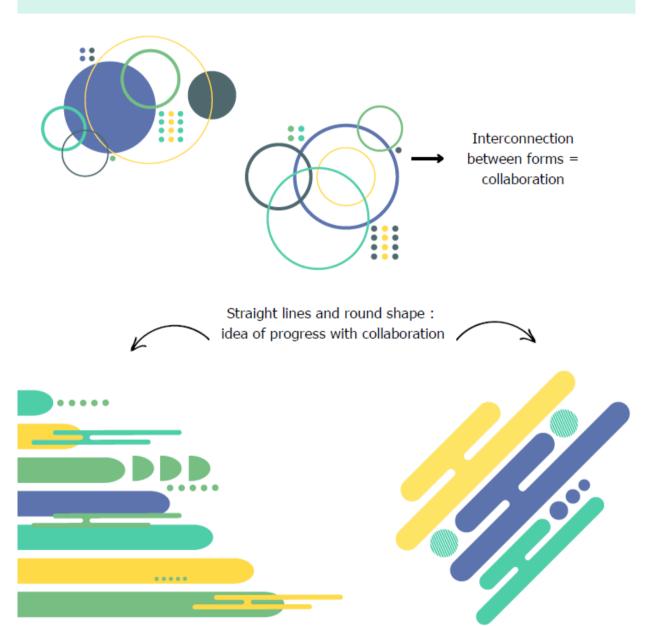


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Round: Unity, inclusion, continuity, universality.

Geometry and straight line: Stability, innovation and rigor.







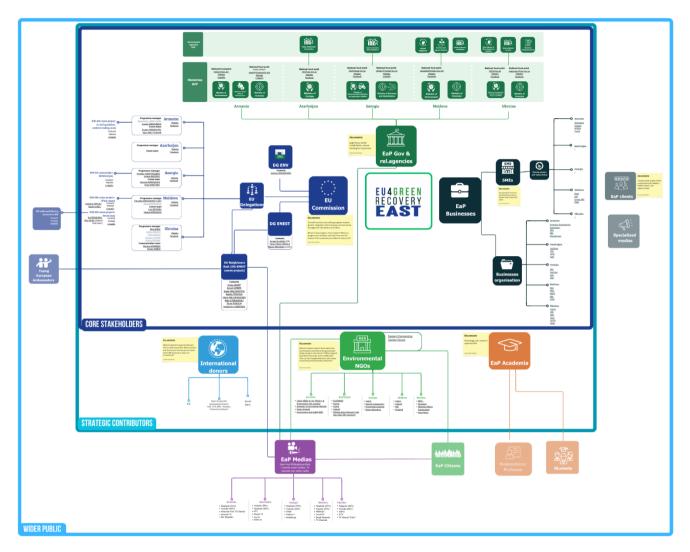








## 12.3 Stakeholder mapping (preview)



This map is intended to be updated regularly. More detailed information will be added, particularly with regard to SMEs. Where possible, key contacts for communication purposes, such as communication officers in the most important ministries will be added.

















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