

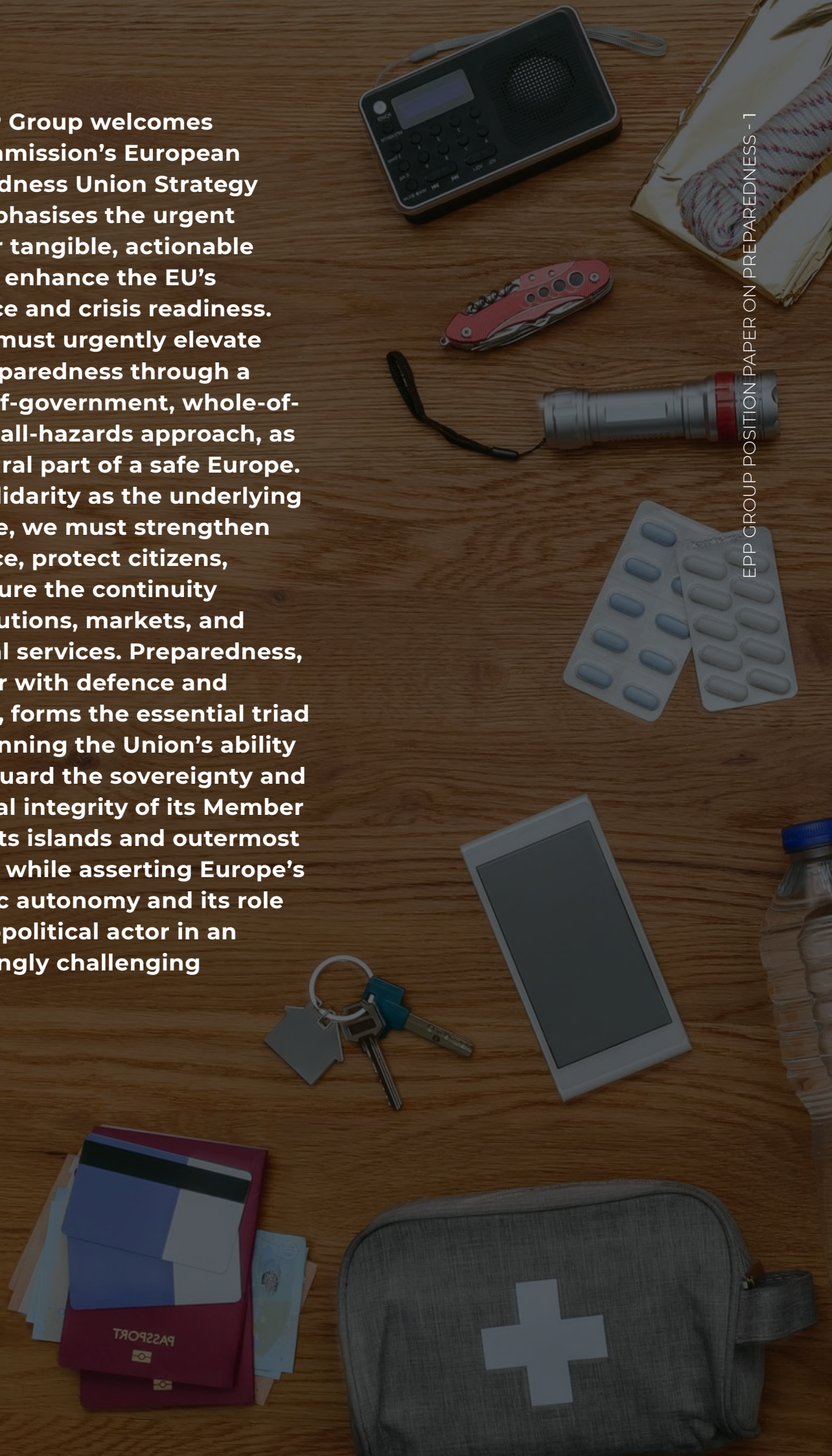


PREPAREDNESS: A WAKE-UP CALL FOR EUROPE

EPP GROUP POSITION PAPER

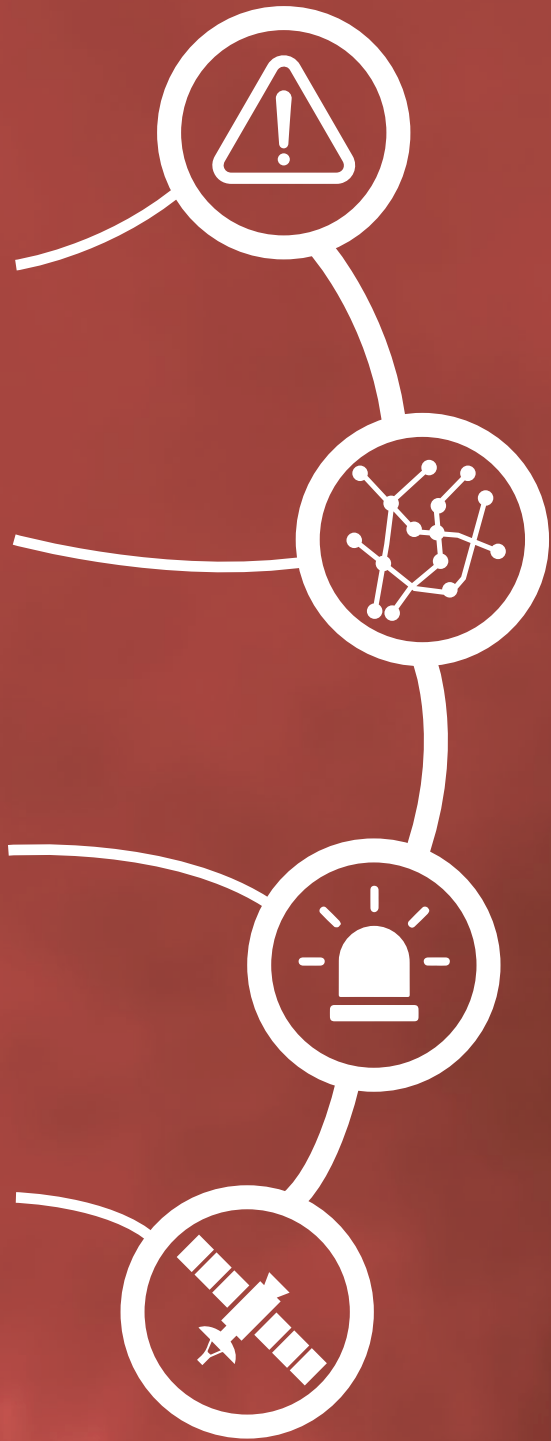


The EPP Group welcomes the Commission's European Preparedness Union Strategy and emphasises the urgent need for tangible, actionable steps to enhance the EU's resilience and crisis readiness. The EU must urgently elevate civil preparedness through a whole-of-government, whole-of-society, all-hazards approach, as an integral part of a safe Europe. With solidarity as the underlying principle, we must strengthen resilience, protect citizens, and ensure the continuity of institutions, markets, and essential services. Preparedness, together with defence and security, forms the essential triad underpinning the Union's ability to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its Member States, its islands and outermost regions, while asserting Europe's strategic autonomy and its role as a geopolitical actor in an increasingly challenging world.



Foresight and anticipation

- **Common risk assessment**
Build shared recognition and understanding of the existential threats to Europe and its security, thereby creating a basis for responsible and collective decision-making.
- **Enhanced exchange of information**
Strengthen communication between civil and military sectors involving public and private actors across the EU. Enhance cooperation between intelligence and law enforcement agencies across the EU and improve their respective data sharing.
- **Emergency protocols**
Establish and ensure compatibility of crisis response procedures within EU institutions, Member States, and EU-NATO frameworks including through regular joint exercises and simulations, guided by the principle of solidarity, mutual trust, and national sovereignty and covering even the most extreme military contingencies.
- **Early-warning systems**
Invest in early warning infrastructure and equipment, such as satellite monitoring and detection systems, to cover all EU territory and borders, including the outermost regions.



Resilience of vital societal functions

- **Enhance climate adaptation**

Address the growing impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters through all relevant policies and investments, in particular in vulnerable regions, such as islands, coastal communities and outermost areas.

- **Full DSA enforcement**

Ensure a safe, accessible, and resilient online environment, with a focus on systemic risk assessment and mitigation, development of crisis response mechanisms, fighting disinformation and protection of democratic institutions, including elections.

- **Digital resilience and cybersecurity**

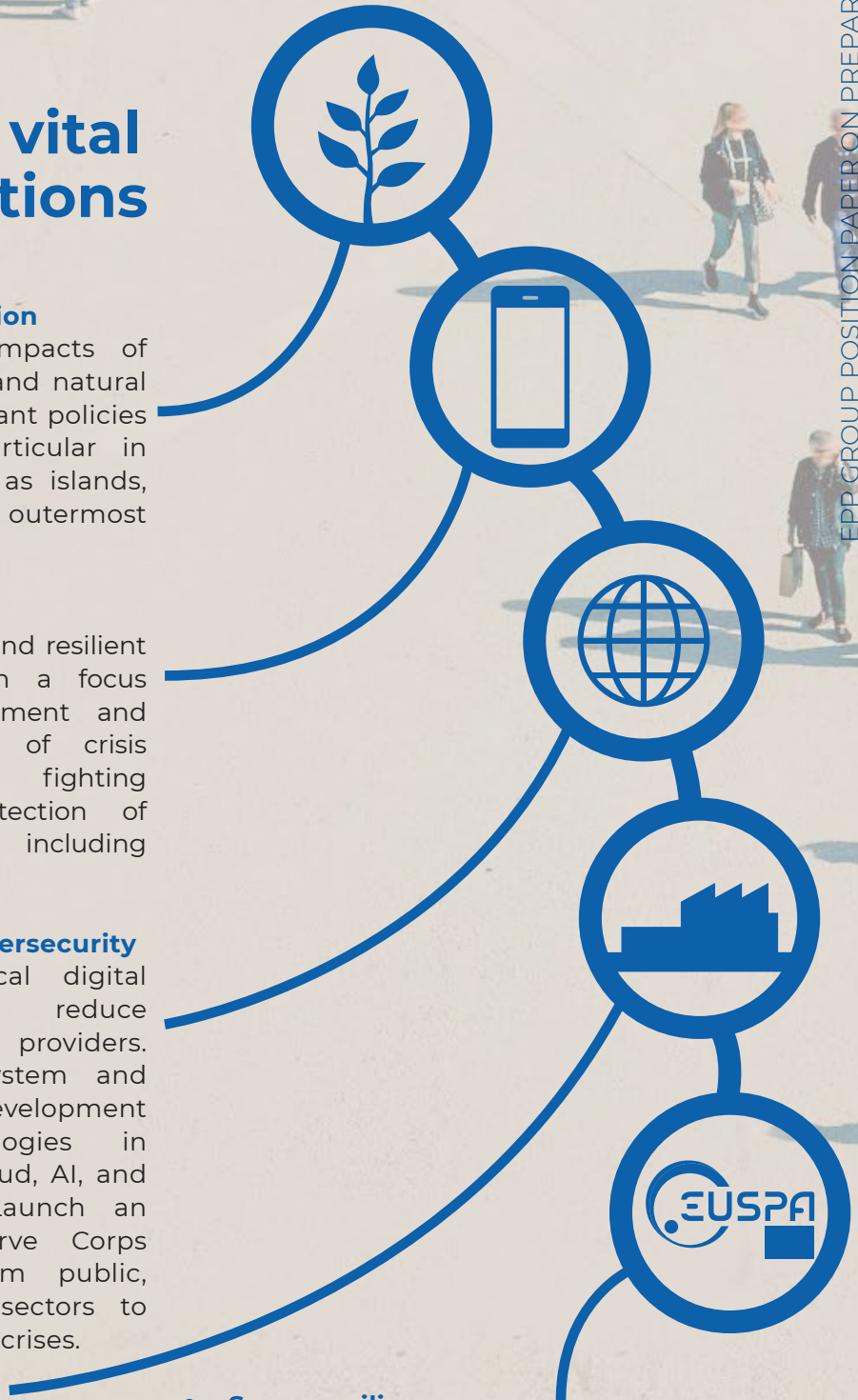
Protect the EU's critical digital infrastructure and reduce dependencies on foreign providers. Ensure a secure ecosystem and support for large-scale development of European technologies in critical areas, such as Cloud, AI, and Quantum computing. Launch an EU Cybersecurity Reserve Corps comprising experts from public, private, and academic sectors to support Member States in crises.

- **Industrial resilience and competitiveness**

Ensure sufficient manufacturing capacity by strengthening the resilience and strategic autonomy of critical supply chains through coordinated industrial policies and cutting red tape. Enhance EU-level stockpiling of key components (e.g. semiconductors, medical supplies, rare earths) and accelerate permitting and investment in clean tech manufacturing clusters.

- **Space resilience**

Ensure the swift implementation of the Infrastructure for Resilience, Interconnectivity and Security by Satellite (IRIS2), and Earth observation, notably with the Copernicus programme and through the support of the European industrial consortium, SpaceRISE. Expand space-based infrastructure, in particular the satellites, and invest in the European Union Agency for the Space Programme.



Civil-military cooperation

- **Increased civil-military cooperation**
Enable faster crisis response, more efficient resource use, and better coordination and interoperability, including regular drills.
- **'Military Schengen'**
Increase armed forces mobility through better EU-NATO coordination in transport and logistics, focusing on infrastructure, harmonised rules, and cross-border cooperation. Support the PESCO Programme and the upcoming Commission plan on military mobility.
- **Boosted civil and military defence funding**
Support building joint infrastructures, dual-use procurement (e.g., CBRN protection), shared R&D, strategic reserves of critical resources and enhanced protection of critical infrastructure.



Crisis response

- **Strengthen DG HERA**

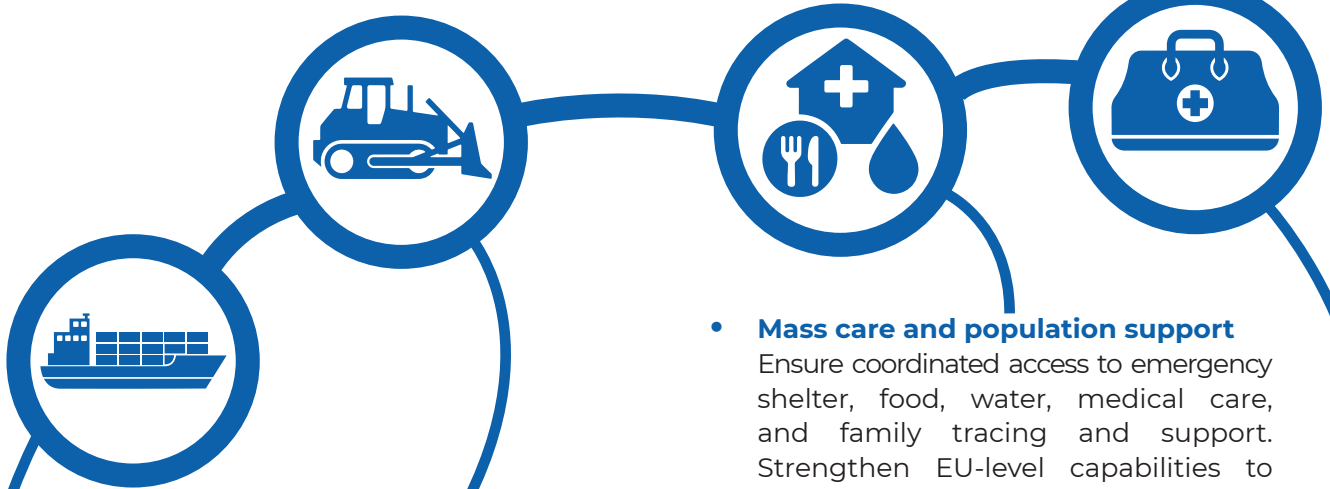
Ensure the capacity to procure medical countermeasures to counter epidemics, CBRN threats and bioterrorism, and maintain a strategic EU stockpile of such countermeasures. Ensure sufficient resources for DG HERA, including for swift emergency disbursements. Expects the upcoming Strategies on Stockpiling and Medical Countermeasures to contribute to the EU's resilience and preparedness.

- **First responders**

Better cooperation in terms of personnel, equipment and other resources, building on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

- **Strengthen the ECDC**

With resources and capacity to coordinate EU-level crisis management and rapid responses to health crises and cross-border health threats.



- **Acquisition of heavy equipment via rescEU**

Expand EU disaster response capabilities and stockpiles with emergency domestic and cross-border distribution protocols. Ensure the capacity for regional distribution of rescEU assets and swift response to simultaneous crises.

- **Mass care and population support**

Ensure coordinated access to emergency shelter, food, water, medical care, and family tracing and support. Strengthen EU-level capabilities to assist displaced or heavily affected populations, including through robust channels to alert and inform people in crisis situations.

- **Implementation of IMERA**

Enhance the management of critical supply chain disruptions and ensure the movement of goods, services, and people during emergencies.

- **Medical readiness**

Boost Europe's autonomy in pharmaceuticals, critical medicines and medical devices by securing production and delivery, reducing dependency on external suppliers, addressing recurring shortages, and building a resilient, innovative health industry ready for future crises and capable of ensuring that border regions and islands have adequate access to health services.

Energy security

- **Promotion of the integration of the Energy Union**
Support and accelerate the development of energy interconnections between Member States to build an efficient and cohesive energy market, allowing a more stable energy grid and secure distribution of energy resources and reducing reliance on external partners.
- **Secure and protect critical energy and communications infrastructures** by ensuring EU-based control and resilience, including EU repair capabilities, reducing reliance on non-EU providers, and protecting key assets, including strategic submarine cables.
- **Fast-track strategic gas and electricity interconnection projects** to end the energy isolation of peripheral, outermost, and island regions of the Member States.
- **Ensuring stable baseload power**
A firm dispatchable electricity generation, including nuclear power, alongside storage, flexibility and system services, will continue to play an important role for European energy security, ensuring stable and reliable production of energy for both industries and consumers.



Food security and sovereignty

- Food supply security**
 Streamline food security in agricultural, climate, and environmental legislation and policies, including through strategic investment in EU-based fertiliser production, support for domestic cultivation of protein crops and diversification of animal feed sources. Include food markets and stores in broader preparedness strategies across the entire food supply chain.

Public-private cooperation

- Flexible public procurement**
 Adapt the procurement rules to ensure quick, continuous and effective provision of critical supplies and services in times of crisis.



Resilience through external partnerships

- Advance mutual resilience with third countries**
 Work jointly to anticipate, prepare for, prevent and respond to crises to lower the risk of spill-over effects for the EU of crises beyond our borders and to support our partners. Incorporate recent Ukrainian military and civil protection experience and expertise into the EU preparedness measures.
- Integrate preparedness and resilience at the EU level into cooperation with NATO**, including through structured dialogue, exchange of practices and coordination.

Crisis-ready budget

- Adapt the EU budget** by making progress on own new resources and enabling targeted joint borrowing to ensure flexibility and availability of resources in emergencies.





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