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## LABOUR MIGRATION IN CONFRONTATION WITH LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Unemployment is one of the long-term, persistent problems plaguing most member states of the EU. It is an economic, social and political problem. Both micro- and macroeconomic theory deal with this problem. 'Imbalance' is the word which resonates throughout the micro- and macroeconomic approaches to unemployment; the following text will explain what imbalance in this context means. For the moment we can say that the practical expression of this imbalance is discrimination on the labor markets of the EU member states. This discrimination manifests itself in many different ways; in open or latent/hidden forms. For instance, barriers which, either makes it more difficult or completely impossible for national minorities, older people or women to access to the labor market. Arguably, it is not a new problem. In certain, very brief way, this matter is reflected upon in the Treaty of Rome. However, in this Treaty, questions related to the labor market are not emphasized as independent problems. In the then prevailing economic thought [i.e. in the 1960s]; constant and equal economic growth was to lead to high employment; or, very low unemployment. In case of a deviation from this condition; i.e. the product moves from its potential level [we are talking about production or inflationary limits], there was to hand economic policy which would return the economy to its previous level.

From this, it can be seen that unemployment was in principle reduced to a cyclical component and the presumption was that it could be solved by the application of Keynesian, namely; fiscal policies. Doubt was cast on the efficiency of Keynesian concepts as an influential factor on the labor market in the 1970s and 1980s; when the two big oil shocks and their consequent 'stagflation' led to long term chronic unemployment; and again in the 1990s when the first steps of the EU started to take off. At that time unemployment was

around 10%; therefore it was the gravest EU problem.

### Theoretical view to the phenomenon of unemployment

The imbalance on the labor market, of which unemployment is a factual expression, must be addressed by specific means. The rate of economic growth achieved at the present time is no guarantee of high employment. The core of economic theory is the expression 'natural unemployment rate', which is higher in the EU than in the USA. The measures which are aimed at removing the barriers and obstacles on the labor market are ranked among the active employment policies. Their successful application can lead to the reduction of this natural rate, and also, to the elimination of long-term unemployment, which, essentially, comes together with structural unemployment. Barriers and discriminatory practices on the labor market, which prevent certain individuals' access to this market; we understand as limitations on the offer side of the economy. It contributes to the above mentioned balance; which we will first analyze from the microeconomic perspective.

It is a known fact that the possibility of creating price equilibrium is the basic means used in the process known as 'cleaning the market'. Demand and supply amounts even themselves out ex post during the processes of the never ending conflict and adjustment. This equilibrium is simultaneously, constantly, interrupted and renewed. Nonetheless, economic theory states that these processes can only come into play on such a market where price movement is given by the spontaneous development of market forces. It is clear that the labor market does not belong among such markets. Here are at least some of the most

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basic reasons why this is so. The equalized prices on this market are wages [more precisely, wage rates], which are, naturally, under the influence of market forces, but at the same time are influenced by a whole host of other forces and factors. This means that the 'wage movement', as the 'price' of work, is limited - especially the movement downwards - and, it has, therefore, a reduced basic function as an economic parameter. Economic theory proves that, on the labor market, wages are almost exclusively higher than equalized, which leads to the chronic prevalence of the supply of jobs over the demand for them. Already in this basic microeconomic concept is embedded the basic economic imbalance which is precisely a characteristic of the labor market.

Let us now characterize at least the basic reasons for this fact:

The institution of the 'minimum wage' plays in basic neoclassical paradigms the role of the price threshold. Regulation prevents wages going down, and so leads to the job supply being greater than the demand. This situation is boosted in cases where, in certain states, the life minimum approaches, or even supersedes the minimum wage. „However, the minimum wage is probably not the main cause of unemployment. Certainly, most workers in the economy have higher than minimum wages; with some of them even having much higher than the minimum wage. This issue mostly applies to the least qualified workers who do not have any other alternatives, and for whom retraining would be most difficult.“ [Brozova, 2003.]

Now, something about the activities of the trade unions, which influence the labor market in several respects. The height of wages is decided on the basis of collective agreements, which then naturally - at least in the short-term - lose downward flexibility. At present unions defend the interests of those who are in employment; i.e. insiders. Their interests are, of course, different to those of outsiders; i.e. the unemployed. For this reason the first group has an interest in higher wages. If they were reduced, it could possibly enable the employment of more people from the ranks of the unemployed. If in these two cases

the unions knock the labor market out of its equilibrium, it brings us to the third case, where everything is the other way around. By this is meant the situation where the unions outweigh firms' monopoly of strength on the labor market; that is those which demand labor.

Wage efficiency. This concerns a whole block of causes, some of whose impact we will briefly explain here. In economic situations, which are for firms disadvantageous, model scenarios show that wages can sink. In previous paragraphs it was explained that Trade Union activities will prevent this happening. Surprisingly, firms' own behavior will, paradoxically, prevent wages sinking, too; it is in their own best interests to even 'overpay' the properly qualified individuals in order to keep them on the staff. This aspect of companies' behavior corresponds to another phenomenon which we shall call 'negative choice and moral hazard', and which microeconomic has noted on several markets. In the case of the labor market, firms accept higher wages so that they have a greater chance of employing high quality, properly qualified workers. High wages, of course, are no guarantee that this will be the case. Naturally, low wages will lead to the employment of lower quality worker because the higher quality ones will seek employment elsewhere. This form of worker selection is called 'negative choice'. 'Moral hazard' is the situation where the employee to maximize his own advantage by sacrificing the employer's best interests; e.g. by doing only the bare minimum and turning out shoddy work. The employer, to prevent this, must carry out intensive supervision at no small cost to the firm. Therefore, firms' accept higher wages, which probably lead to better efforts on the employees' part, because they do not wish to lose their jobs. Higher than equalized wages, in that case, reduce 'moral hazard.'

The microeconomic approach, in outline, maps out the imbalance of the labor market through the prism of neoclassical theory; imbalance is given by the higher wage rate rather than equalized wages. For further explanation it is necessary to use the macroeconomic angle, which works with the expres-

sion; 'unemployment'. This term shall again be understood as imbalance which has, however, close ties to other macroeconomic elements, namely product and price levels. Let us remember that economic theory differentiates between frictional, structural and cyclical components of unemployment. Orientation on to the cyclical component of unemployment is peculiar to J.M. Keynes and his followers. According to Keynes' analysis of 20<sup>th</sup> century capitalism shows an economy with a deeply embedded imbalance. This imbalance is caused by insufficient aggregate, efficient demand and it has a fatal influence on the labor market. „ In Keynes' theoretical system the real volume of employment depends on effective demand; it is, in other words, the function of expenditure on consumption and investments. Because, with consumption there is a functional feedback [consumption itself is a function of employment]; employment is, in the final analysis, a function of investment. Insufficient private investment causes the economy to work by incomplete use of resources; i.e. it achieves equilibrium by means of the existence of unemployment. The so called Keynesian unemployment is, thus, a consequence of the above mentioned inefficient [aggregate] demand.“ [Brozova, 2003].

It remains to be said that cyclical, involuntary, unemployment is when reduced production eliminates jobs. In such a case the invisible hand of the market, in its allocation role, is helpless, and so must be complemented by systematic government policy. Keynes tended to fiscal policies, whereby insufficient consumer spending should be substituted by government spending. The efficiency of monetary policy gets caught in the so called liquidity trap, that is why it attracts skepticism. The practical expression of this theoretical concept was the "Stop and Go" approach practiced in the 1950s and 1960s. In case of recession the government applied the 'Go'; i.e. fiscal expansion part; while in cases of policy conjunction, 'Stop'; i.e. fiscal restriction; was applied. By means of these changes the unemployment, and also inflation, rates were influenced. Theoretically the problem is expressed in the form of the original Phillips Curve, including its expansion,

worked out by P. Samuelson and R. Solow; and which shows that reducing unemployment leads to the growth of prices and vice versa. In this interpretation, whose description has been somewhat simplified, economic policy reaches a point on the Phillips Curve; i.e. a certain combination of the unemployment and inflation rates.

The neoclassical branch of economic theory has a completely different approach to the labor market and how to influence it. Neoclassical concepts work with real, not nominal, wage rates, and their central category is the so called natural unemployment rate, which, in the longterm, is not influencable by demand side economic policies. This natural unemployment rate contains within itself frictional and structural components; not cyclical. Monetarism, a la M. Friedman, stresses that deviations of employment from its natural level is possible only in the shortterm, when economic subjects suffer financial illusion; the growth of nominal wages is mistakenly interpreted as growth in real wages, which leads to the absorption of larger amounts of work and to the reduction of unemployment under its natural rate. Upon dissipation of the financial illusion, households limit supply of work and employment returns to its natural level. Attempts to, in the longterm, stimulate production, thereby increasing employment, can only lead to the generating of inflation. It can be clearly seen from this theory that economic policy cannot, in the longterm, influence the unemployment rate; scepticism is mainly aimed at fiscal policy whose restrictive effect, furthermore, reduces the efficiency of economic policy.

Another, even more 'covering' relationship to the traditional economic policy, is that of the school of rational expectation, which is presented in literature as new classic macroeconomics. Subjects build their expectations into future development of their own prices [firms] or wages [workers], which, in principle, prevents deviation of production from its potential growth, and thus, unemployment, from its natural rate. The stimulation given by fiscal policy is ineffective in the short-term. However, financial illusion is not excluded from this concept; it is a random and unsys-

tematic phenomenon. Mistaken interpretation of aggregate elements can be considered only where there is an unexpected reduction in money supply. Workers can comprehend this phenomenon as a reduction in real wages - it also includes a reduction in nominal wages - and limited job supply. The concept of rational expectation is founded on the neoclassical view of the labor market, and the unemployment which appears, is seen as voluntary.

It is of course very difficult to comment on the implementation of this theoretical concept into the practical economic policies in operation in the EU member states. As has been already explained in the foreword, influencing of the labor market did not play any significant role in the beginning of Europe integration. The situation radically changed during the 1990s, when the high unemployment rate in most member states called for a solution, not only from the position of the member states themselves, but also from the position of the EU organs as a whole. The problem was not so much the height of the unemployment rate, rather, its structure; a considerable amount of the total unemployment was the long-term unemployment, i.e. that which lasted more than one year. The danger this presents could be felt in the social sphere and also, the economic sphere [the long-term unemployed lose their working and professional habits, qualifications, which really leads to the devaluation of the production factor of work as a key source of economic growth, and what is more, their reduced consumption as a result of their bad economic situation, weakens the creation of GDP]. Economic theory judges this type of unemployment to be a result of the extensive structural changes which were intensely carried out in the EU in the 1990s. These structural changes led to the complete suppression of, then, traditional branches, and with them, too, the liquidation of an enormous number of jobs. Naturally, the coming of new technology meant at the same time the creation of new job opportunities; however, this only for a new type of worker - one with maximum qualifications and flexible in the meaning of constant self-education.

It is obvious that a large number of

workers lack sufficient abilities to take advantage of this new trend, and so, they enter the vast army of the unemployed. This is the classic case of loss of human capital and constant squeezing out of the labor market. This phenomenon is sometimes called technological unemployment and is understood to be a variant of structural unemployment. Briefly said, it concerns the narrowing of the labor market for less qualified workers. There is then a great disharmony between supply and demand on the labor market, which, as practice has very convincingly shown, can be eliminated only with the greatest of difficulty.

#### **Active employment policy as a method of solving the problem**

That is why, in the second half of the 1990s, the EU embarked upon a systematic and conceptual assault on the labor market with the objective of eliminating this disharmony. It is in this context we shall now remind ourselves of the Treaty of Amsterdam[1998], which it is possible to understand as the basic document for the formation of an active employment policy. The process which was started here was further developed at the summits in Lisbon and Nice. It concerns a long-term coordinated process in which the principle of subsidiarity is thoroughly employed. It means that the steering committee for employment fulfils the monitoring and coordinating roles, whilst the practical solutions of the active employment policy stays exclusively in the jurisdiction of the individual governments of the EU member states. On the basis of analyses of the problems of the labor market and unemployment, the EU organs set the basic priorities, which were integrated into the following four 'pillars':

**Employability.** By this is meant the boosting of the active and preventative measures of the employment policy. Greater flexibility of the work force, easier access to the labor market, formation of adequate qualifications, etc; all belong here. At the Stockholm Conference the European Commission's action plan on the area of qualifications and mobility of the workforce and should support retraining programs and migration to seek

work; it should also lead to greater worker information as to current demands for labor in the various EU member states.

**Business:** The measures contained in this pillar concentrate on the setting up and running of small and medium sized firms. It also deals with invitations to invest in the enterprise, transparency and unambiguity of bankruptcy law, the creation of a comprehensive information package for business people, etc.

**Adaptability:** This contains the principles of the modernization of the labor market, namely, the efforts to overcome disharmony between the supply and demand sides on the labor market. Adapting the labor force to the new conditions include training and retraining programs, the use of shortened working hours, greater flexibility in working time and other ways of organising work.

**Equal opportunity:** This pillar aims to remove all barriers and discriminatory practices which prevent the access of workers to the labor market.

It would be certainly possible to continue describing the complex economic and social processes, which at the turn of the millennium operate on the labor markets of the EU member states. Limited space in this article prevents me giving the relevant statistics. Processes already underway will be used in the longer time horizon, so that whatever evaluation of the results of the active employment policy could only be, at the present time, nothing more than preliminary. Nonetheless, we can state now that in most EU member states the unemployment rate is going down, which gives rise to a certain optimism. The development enables us to draw the following conclusions:

Integrating Europe, in the area of the labor market, prefers prevention to cure. The influencing of the labor market is done by means of very complex processes for which the phrase 'Active Employment Policy' was created. This policy is realized on the basis of four subjects - the EU, governments of the individual member states, firms and households. The results of these activities depend upon a whole host of other circumstances; e.g. the economic cycle[ i.e. is the economy sunk

in recession or is it enjoying a boom] and political circumstances [whether the government consists of socialist or liberal parties].

The EU has implemented the active employment policy into the wide framework of its social policy. If there has been war declared on poverty and social exclusion, then the active employment policy [especially those of its aspects aimed at limiting long-term unemployment]; could be an important instrument in this endeavour.

### Migratory flows and unemployment rate

The past two years have brought many changes. Unemployment rates in EU-10 decreased: the largest relative fall was in Estonia, and there was a significant decrease in Poland, where the unemployment rate is the highest in the European Union. Slight increases in the unemployment rates were in Malta, Cyprus, Slovenia and Hungary, but these rates remain below the EU-25 unemployment rate (8,2 % in May 2006).<sup>1</sup> Only some countries (Austria, Ireland, Germany and the UK) observed a relatively large inflow of Central and Eastern European workers, but in general the migratory flows were not remarkable and the migration from the new Member States is marginal compared with that from third countries. At the EU15 level, new Member State nationals account for 0,4 % of the non-native population compared to an overall 5,1 % of resident foreigners. The percentage of foreigners present for example in Germany is 7 % of the total population and only 0,7 % of them come from the new Member States. A complementary workforce is needed in most of the labour markets, especially in the construction sector and services industry. Furthermore there is a trend in most Western European countries for the native population to become more and more reluc-

<sup>1</sup> Unemployment rates fell from 8,2 % in May 2005 to 4,9 % in May 2006 in Estonia, from 18,1 % to 16,4 % in Poland. Unemployment rates increased from 7,2 % to 8,3 % in Malta, from 5,1 % to 5,5 % in Cyprus, from 6,2 % to 6,5 % Slovenia and from 7,1 % to 7,3 % in Hungary.

tant to do certain jobs because of their higher level of education. Therefore, there is little probability that migrants crowd out nationals in the labour market.

Transitional Arrangements are still however in force and work permits are still required from new Member State nationals in Austria, Germany and in the non-liberalised sectors in Belgium, France and Luxemburg.

Both Austria and Germany are historically concerned at migration from Central and Eastern European Countries. Pre-enlargement predictions estimated that this tendency would grow after accession and thus Austria would absorb around 10 % of all EU-10 migrants and projected that two-thirds of all migratory flows from accession countries would target to Germany. These estimates made Germany and Austria the most determined not to grant free access to their labour markets for workers from the new Member States and led them to maintain the work permit requirement, treating Czech workers on an equal footing with third country nationals and not with their fellow European citizens.

Having a common border with the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia, *Austria* introduced a control restricting access to its labour market, which will continue beyond 2006 in its current shape and form. In 2005, there were 14 693 Hungarians employed in Austria, 12 615 Poles, 5565 Slovaks, 3575 Czechs, 4748 Slovenians etc. A total of 46 034 EU-10 nationals were employed in Austria, which when compared with a period two years before, means an increase of only 6170.<sup>2</sup>

*Germany* has been the country of destination for many migrants from Central and Eastern European Countries for many years. According to the OECD<sup>3</sup>, in 2000 12,2 % of the low educated adult migrants in the EU-15

originated from Eastern Europe and 33,5 % from other Western European countries. In 2000 the European Commission reported the presence of 230 000 non-EU foreigners mostly from the current new Member States in Germany and 3 500 commuters (under special regimes) mainly from Poland and the Czech Republic. By the end of 2004, EU-10 nationals represented 6,7 % of the total foreign population. At the same time, the largest group of foreigners resident in Germany (almost 70 %) originated from third countries. Migration from EU-14, which was approximately four times greater (24,7 %) than migration from Central and Eastern Europe, was also an important phenomenon. In 2005, the inflow of migrants from both EU-25 and third countries was on the increase. By the end of 2005, Germany hosted 6,7 million foreign nationals equalling 8,2 % of the total population. The most significant migration was from Italy, Poland and Greece.<sup>4</sup> The most represented A8 nationals in Germany are Polish, followed by a considerably lower proportion of Hungarians, Slovenians, Czechs and Slovaks.<sup>5</sup> When we look at the number of years spent in Germany, we find on average, that Poles and Romanians have been resident in Germany for around 10 years already and Hungarians and Slovenians for even longer.<sup>6</sup> This means that migratory flows from these States occurred long before enlargement in 2004.<sup>7</sup>

On the whole this leads us to the result that the restrictions on the labour market were not necessary. The difficulties of the German economy seem to be coming to an end. Unemployment decreased in the first quarter of 2006 by a monthly average of 65 000 and the number of unemployed persons is expected to decrease further from 10,6 % in 2006 to 10,2 % in 2007, while the labour force is expected

<sup>2</sup> Huber, P.: The effects of enlargement on Austria: Long run perspectives and some first results. "A regional approach to free movement of workers: labour migration between Hungary and its neighbouring countries" conference organised by the European Studies Centre of the University of Szeged, Hungary. June 2006.

<sup>3</sup> „Effects of migration on sending countries: What do we know?” OECD Development Centre Working Paper No. 250, June 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Migration from Italy was 540 810 equalling to 8 % of the total foreign population, from Poland 326 596 or 4,8 % and from Greece 309 794 or 4,6 %.

<sup>5</sup> Federal Statistical Office, Germany. Available online at: [www.destatis.de/basis/e/bcvoelbevoetab4/hm](http://www.destatis.de/basis/e/bcvoelbevoetab4/hm)

<sup>6</sup> Poles are resident in Germany 9,5 and Romanians 8 years; Hungarians are resident in Germany 12,1 and Slovenians even 27,7 years.

<sup>7</sup> Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge. *Cfr. supra* note 103.

to increase by 240 000.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, in July 2004 there were 627 000 vacant positions in the German labour market; in 2004 14,9 % of the companies in the high-tech industries had difficulties in recruiting new specialists. This number doubled in 2006 to 33,1 % facing such problems.<sup>9</sup>

The *Czech Republic* seems to be an attractive place for EU-15, A8 and third country nationals. The proportion of foreigners has grown in last three years: from 3,3 % in 2003 to 4,2 % in 2005 (168 031 at the end of 2003 to 218 982 at the end of 2005<sup>10</sup>).

Access to the Czech labour market is free for all EU-15 nationals since the day of accession. Meanwhile the country is also actively recruiting a skilled workforce from outside the EU. (So far the project covers workers from Bulgaria, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Moldavia, Serbia, Montenegro, Canada and the Ukraine.) Workers from Germany and the United Kingdom are the most represented from EU-15, while from among the Accession States, it is predominantly Slovaks (59 721), who come to work in the Czech Republic.<sup>11</sup> This is all the more understandable, as there is practically no language barrier between Slovaks and Czechs and given the common history of the two countries, Slovaks are hardly ever considered by Czechs as foreigners. Almost one third of the foreign population living in the Czech Republic works in Prague or Central Bohemia. They take jobs both as skilled and unskilled workers.<sup>12</sup>

On the other hand, given the Czech workers' unwillingness to migrate, estimates about the low mobility rates of the country are confirmed. There were 31 234 Czechs employed in the EU-25 Member States during

2005, mostly in the United Kingdom (17 600), Ireland (5761), Italy (4217) and Germany (2010). It is a very significant point, that while the conditions of accessing the labour market in Ireland and Italy were completely opposite (free access in Ireland and work permit system with quotas in Italy), the two countries have a similar number of Czech workers. This shows that there was no direct correlation between the application of Transitional Arrangement and the choice of migrants.

The labour migration from the Accession States after May 2004 targeted the traditional destinations of Germany and Austria, and more recently the United Kingdom and Ireland. Reasons motivating the choice of migrants depend on the accessibility of the targeted labour market, and also on the prospects of finding employment and the ability of the individual to adapt. On the whole, A8 labour migration remained low. The number of EU-10 nationals residing in EU-15 is only around 0,2 % of the total EU-15 population. Countries which host the most migrant workers from Central and Eastern European Countries, both in absolute terms (Germany, the United Kingdom) and in relative terms (Ireland), were able to absorb the increased inflow, and indeed rely on the additional workforce. Restrictions on access to the labour market have not resulted in a significant increase in the numbers of self-employed migrants. The presence of A8 workers is a real contribution to the national production and there are good experiences that A8 migrants are hard-working. The employment rates of A8 nationals in some countries (Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom) are higher than those of nationals and are very similar to employment rates of the native population in the remaining European countries. Migrants are usually young (18 – 35 years) and have secondary or higher education, but they often take up employment which does not correspond to their qualifications. Labour migration is mainly of temporary nature with most migrants taking up seasonal jobs. Migrants in fact play a key role in filling employment gaps.

The European Union, as it has developed since its inception, is no longer regarded

<sup>8</sup> The Labour Market in July 2006: Improvement on the labour market: Employment up - unemployment down. Bundesagentur für Arbeit, Germany.

<sup>9</sup> Europe faces shrinking pool of workers. Available online: [www.examiner.com](http://www.examiner.com)

<sup>10</sup> Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic (situation on 31/12/2005).

<sup>11</sup> Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic (situation on 30/04/2006). Available online: [www.mpsv.cz](http://www.mpsv.cz)

<sup>12</sup> „Foreigners working in the Czech Republic” 29/07/2006 at: [www.czech.cz/zpravy/news](http://www.czech.cz/zpravy/news)

as a new phenomenon, though there are different perceptions in different member states and often heated debates over its future – as shown by referenda results and the on-going debate in the United Kingdom. The success of the overall development, however, and its acceptance as permanent and ‘normal’ has been strengthened by the decision of those five additional countries to open their labour markets to the nationals of the new Member States from 2006.

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### ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ СТРУКТУРЫ МОТИВАЦИИ СПЕЦИАЛИСТОВ ПРИ ПОСТРОЕНИИ СИСТЕМЫ ОПЛАТЫ ТРУДА

Вопросы трудовой мотивации являются важными для любой организации, поскольку эффективный работник – это высоко мотивированный работник. Традиционно работа по формированию системы заработной платы строится таким образом: в организации уже действует некая система оплаты труда, администрация ощущает необходимость ее изменения. Однако представление о желаемой системе оплаты зачастую строится на неверном представлении о реальных трудовых мотивах персонала.

На украинских предприятиях в на-

стоящее время основными проблемами в механизме мотивации работников являются:

- недостаточная гибкость механизма формирования оплаты труда, его неспособность реагировать на изменения в эффективности и качестве труда отдельного работника;
- отсутствие вообще какой-либо оценки или необъективная оценка предпринимателем индивидуальных трудовых показателей наемных работников;

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