

# European Public Sector Award 2011

## Project Catalogue



European Institute of Public Administration  
Institut européen d'administration publique

# ELECTRONIC PUBLIC RECORDS

Submitted by Agency for Public Management and eGovernment (Difi)

## Contact details of lead applicant

**Organisation** Agency for Public Management and eGovernment (Difi)

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## Administrative level of lead applicant

National

## Size of organisation

>100

## Number of people involved in the project

1-5

## Type of sector

Public administration, modernisation, institutional affairs, reform

## Key words of project

Open government, public records, access to information, transparency

## Case description

'Electronic Public Records' (OEP) is a joint publishing system that allows government agencies, ministries and the Office of the Prime Minister to publicise public records online. The aim of OEP is to make the public sector more open and accessible by utilising today's technology. The service was launched on 18 May 2010, and is part of the Norwegian Government's ambition to enhance democracy and the government's openness. OEP is founded on the Norwegian Freedom of Information Act. The public's right to view public case documents is a fundamental democratic principle rooted in Norwegian law and practice. All government bodies must keep public records. OEP aims to improve public access to public documents across all government agencies.

Government agencies use OEP to upload their respective public records following a standard entry format. Entries for these public records are compiled in a common database for OEP. OEP does not store actual documents in its database, but rather stores record entry data for each document. Record entry data makes up the metadata for each letter or document registered within an agency's case and archive system. The entry fields include case title, document title, sender/recipient, exemption authorisation (for documents to be kept from public access), document date and public record date. Contact details for the authority responsible for the document are also listed for each entry. OEP then presents this information to the user through a common user interface, [www.oep.no](http://www.oep.no). Through [www.oep.no](http://www.oep.no), users can search for, and request to inspect, public information and documents. Each government agency is responsible for processing inspection requests for documents they have entered *via* OEP. The agency then contacts the user directly by email, fax or letter. Users may also contact the listed authority directly themselves, if they wish to have more information about a specific document or case.

Online access to public records means everyone, independent of geographic location, can access public documents. The largest user group of OEP comprises journalists and media representatives. However, an increasing number of citizens and NGOs are using OEP. At present, OEP is available in Norwegian and Sami. From April 2011, it will be available in English. OEP provides users with the unique opportunity of familiarising themselves with public sector activities. It allows users to follow a case over time and furthermore view cases involving several government agencies. Online public records allow faster access to information, enabling journalists and other users to comment upon present issues. By 2012, all Norwegian government agencies obliged to publicise their public records online will be connected to OEP. This will include the Office of the Prime Minister, all ministries, directorates and county governor offices: 150 agencies in total. As of January 2011, 73 government agencies are connected to OEP.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is considering instructing Norwegian embassies and consulates abroad to use OEP. If this is agreed, Spanish, French and German language versions of OEP will be launched. OEP is developed on open source code. OEP complies with the Norwegian Personal Data Act and Personal Data Regulations.

