

CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

Government of Norway Supports over Four Million Citizens with Easy and Secure Access to Services Provided by 1,000 Government Agencies while Saving Millions of Dollars

Infrastructure Plays an Enabling Role During Pandemic, Quickly Launching New Services and Onboarding New Users to Help Support Citizens and Foreign Workers

Known for its rugged beauty, avid skiers, and world-class education system, Norway is quickly gaining a reputation for something else — the efficient electronic delivery of government services to citizens and businesses. In an effort to reduce public sector costs and improve the quality of its public services, the Government of Norway launched the eGovernment initiative in 2006. Today, the eGovernment portal enables the country's 4.5 million citizens (82% of the population) and more than 500,000 businesses to communicate with more than 1,000 municipal, regional and national government agencies through a secure and personalized portal interface. With official Web portals, eGovernment enables citizens to quickly conduct everyday government transactions like obtaining birth and death certificates, applying for schools and student loans, managing welfare services and health information as well as paying parking tickets, automobile registration fees, utility bills, and taxes—all from the comfort of their own home.

The system is especially effective in supporting citizens and foreign workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Norway's infrastructure is proving to be sound as it is experiencing record-setting usage as citizens and workers are reporting cases, accessing aid such as economic support for homes, and more. The country was able to launch new pandemic-related services in just two months while helping up to 20,000 foreign workers stuck in the country during the pandemic to receive help, while also supporting a 40% increase in authenticating users in just one year.



"The Government of Norway's goal is to be at the forefront of the development of a digital public sector. The eGovernment initiative allows for more positive and faster interactions with the public sector for citizens and businesses, as well as more efficient use of public sector resources."

Tor Alvik
Chief Operating Officer,
Norway's Norwegian Digitalisation Agency

HIGHLIGHTS

\$681 million

Socio-economic benefit of the eGovernment initiative and ID-Porten over 10 years

4.5 million

Number of citizens that communicate with 1,000 municipal, regional and national government agencies

To ensure the security of information, Norway's Norwegian Digitalisation Agency implemented a central authentication and single sign-on service for the 1,000 different government agencies in Norway to use to offer aid to citizens. The solution enables citizens to use the same login portal regardless of which public service they intend to access. This central service is called ID-Porten and was implemented as a hub-and-spoke architecture. The Government of Norway uses ForgeRock Access Management™ at the center of ID-Porten. "When Norway first began offering online government services, all the agencies were trying to set up their own identification and authentication systems—each requiring their own resources and budgets to do so. By centralizing the authentication process with ForgeRock Access Management, the Norwegian government is able to make the most of its resources," explains Alvik.

The hub, ID-Porten, is the center of the architecture. Government agencies such as the tax office, labor and welfare agency, health economics administration agency, and water and energy directorate, are the spokes that use the authentication and single sign-on services of the hub. ID-Porten implements several levels of authentication:

- MinID, which uses PIN code authentication;
- BankID, which is a bank-issued electronic ID;
- Buypass, a private electronic ID that can also be used to bet online in Norway;
- Certificates which are stored in USB pens and issued by a private company called Commfides; and
- MinID Passport with registration based on an app reading the passport and comparing the biometrics stored to the person registering.

The federation technology involved in the hub-and-spoke architecture is SAML 2.0. ID-Porten uses ForgeRock Access Management to implement a SAML 2.0 Identity Provider with multiple authentication contexts that are mapped and plugged into the ForgeRock Access Management federation and authentication framework. In this way, each of the authentication eIDs can be associated with different authentication contexts and different authentication strengths. The flexibility of the ForgeRock Access Management architecture enables the team to extend and modify the architecture to quickly support additional eIDs when required, such as it did during the pandemic. Thanks to the SAML 2.0 federation standard, the government agencies can use any SAML 2.0 Service Provider implementation to use ID-Porten services.

In addition to security and flexibility, performance was also a key requirement of the access management system so that ID-Porten could manage large spikes in users that occur throughout the year. For example, on the day that tax returns are due, more than a million citizens are logged on at the same time to file their tax returns. Alvik explains, "Performance and uptime are keys to the success of our eGovernment environment—especially during peak periods. With the ForgeRock Access Management solution, citizens and businesses can quickly and easily access government services whenever they need to."

CHALLENGE

Deliver secure government services to Norwegian citizens and businesses in a cost-effective manner while also preparing for future changes, such as rapidly launching new services during a pandemic.

SOLUTION

Implement a flexible, hub-and-spoke access management architecture using ForgeRock Access Management™ to enable easy and secure single sign-on access to more than 4,000 government services provided by more than 1,000 agencies.

BENEFITS

- Launched new pandemic-related services in just two months.
- Onboarded 20,000 foreign workers living in Norway during the pandemic while supporting a 40% increase in existing users.
- Supports 4.5 million citizens and over 500,000 businesses accessing government services online, resulting in better security, faster processing times and millions of dollars in savings.
- Scales to ensure the delivery of services from more than 1,000 municipal, regional, and national government agencies.
- Reduces costs through a centralized ID and authentication environment which regional and municipal governments plug into, resulting in a more efficient use of government resources.
- Performs extremely well by handling more than one million users signing in on a single day without outages or degradation in performance.

Norway is one of the most connected populations in the world. Ninety-eight percent of households have access to the Internet, with 89% of those users having a broadband connection. With a current participation rate of 82% of its adult population, use of eGovernment has grown to 4.5 million users today. This kind of adoption rate is no accident: From the onset of the project, the government of Norway took steps to ensure the success of its eGovernment initiative, including a strict focus on information access and security. With citizens and businesses accessing such private information as medical test results, tax returns, and pension information, data security and access is crucial. However, to make the system simple and accessible, the need for security could not trump the need for easy access. "By centralizing the authentication process on ForgeRock Access Management, the Norwegian government is able to make the most of its resources," said Alvik.

Enabling access to over 1,000 government agencies, ID-Porten has transformed how businesses and citizens interact with Norway's government agencies, delivering high rates of electronic filing, simplifying communications with government, and delivering cost savings to both businesses and government. "The delivery of government services online to businesses and individual citizens has had a huge impact economically, streamlining processes and increasing the reliability of information," says Alvik. "By providing simple, secure access to government services, the ForgeRock Access Management solution has played a large part in the success of the eGovernment initiative."

The increase in efficiencies to the business sector is telling. Each year, Norway's half a million businesses across the country are required to file more than 80 forms with government agencies. The cumbersome paper-based process was replaced with an electronic reporting solution, enabling businesses to submit their forms via a single Internet portal. This has simplified transactions between business and government and enables government departments to better share information—helping to cut costs on both sides. A study conducted by the government in 2010 estimated that the socio-economic benefit of the eGovernment initiative and ID-Porten would amount to a savings of approximately NOK 4 billion (US\$681 million) over a period of ten years.

EXAMPLES OF IMPROVED SERVICES TO CITIZENS ARE NUMEROUS:

- Approximately 60% of the pension cases are processed automatically—a process that used to take months takes just minutes online.
- Healthcare has been transformed through a national health portal and such innovative initiatives as electronic prescription services.
- Faster processing of legal cases and immigration applications.
- Processing times for student loans and grants have been cut in half.
- Since digitizing, the State Education Loan Fund has saved approximately 60 man-years and operating costs have been reduced by nearly 20%.

About ForgeRock

ForgeRock, the leader in digital identity, delivers modern and comprehensive Identity and Access Management solutions for consumers, employees and things to simply and safely access the connected world. Using ForgeRock, more than a thousand global customer organizations orchestrate, manage, and secure the complete lifecycle of identities from dynamic access controls, governance, APIs, and storing authoritative data – consumable in any cloud or hybrid environment. The company is privately held, and headquartered in San Francisco, California, with offices around the world. For more information and free downloads, visit www.forgerock.com or follow ForgeRock on social media.



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