



European Public Sector Award EPISA 2019



**“New solutions to complex challenges –
A public sector citizen-centric,
sustainable and fit for the future”**

#epsaawards2019



European Institute of Public Administration
Institut européen d'administration publique

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What is the European Public Sector Award?

The EPSA brings together the best, most innovative and efficient performers from the European public sector. The vision of EPSA and EIPA is to create an arena in which Europe's public sector institutions can excel and become exemplars for the rest of the world. Therefore, the objective of EPSA is to make this valuable experience transparent, available and usable.

The European Public Sector Award: the European Network of Public Sector Excellence

The EPSA is the only Europe-wide public sector award, which is open to all public administrations from all levels across Europe. It is a biennial scheme started in 2007, which will be run and managed for the sixth time in 2019 by the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA).

So far, EPSA has brought together over 1200 cases of public excellence. All awarded cases contain inspirational and working solutions which are ready to be replicated by other countries in a new context and in new forms once adapted to their own specific context.

Consequently, EPSA is an important **European learning arena**.



Target: EPSA targets all sectors of public administration, with an emphasis on specific themes/categories;

Scope: EPSA awards projects which have proven their success by tangible results and impact;

Focus: EPSA focuses on recognition and dissemination of good practice.

The EPSA 2019 provides an excellent opportunity for innovative and efficient performers from the public sector to present their work and to become part of an extensive European network of public sector excellence, in which they can benchmark their achievements with their peers and at the same time learn from each other.

The EPSA 2019 awards will be presented on the occasion of a high-level event to be held on 4-6 November 2019 in Maastricht, the Netherlands, during the Finnish presidency of the Council of the EU. This event offers a significant opportunity for European public sector bodies to demonstrate innovative performance and outstanding achievements to an extensive audience and to be recognised for being at the leading edge of public sector innovation across Europe.

‘Whether you want recognition for what you have done, want to help others learn from your success or learn yourself from others, apply now for EPSA 2019’.

Michael Burnett, EPSA 2019 Project Leader

General context of EPSA 2019

Public administrations in Europe at all levels continue to face many very difficult and complex and often multiple challenges, many of which are not susceptible to rapid resolution.

Historically low levels of growth, increasing competitive pressures from outside Europe, constraints in public finances, pressures on demand for both services and social benefits as a means of enhancing social inclusion are still in the focus of public entities across Europe. Furthermore, demographic change, climate change and the pace of technological transformation, continuing austerity and the resultant austerity fatigue add to the highly complex context the public sector has to navigate in and in which it strives to provide the most appropriate solutions.

Public administrations are also faced more than ever with continuing challenges to economic and social stability and social cohesion such as uncertainty about the future stability of the banking sector, uncertainty about the stability of the Eurozone, historically unprecedented levels of migration from outside of Europe's external borders, the increased threat of terrorism and its challenge to the functioning of Schengen (and thus one of the core principles of the EU - free movement of people) cyber security and the maintenance of social security (i.e. the need to enhance social protection for vulnerable groups through innovative solutions in public service provision).

In response to these challenges public administrations need to show competence through, for example, effective policy-making and strategic and operational planning, ensuring that policies are actually delivered through effective performance management of service delivery (including securing value for money and addressing corruption in public procurement) and ensuring that policies can continue to be delivered (i.e. are sustainable), including when faced by unexpected events (i.e. are resilient).



This topic will give creative public administrations the chance to showcase how they have developed new and effective solutions to the interplay of political, economic, fiscal, security and social security challenges and how they are balancing competing demands on them in an uncertain environment.

The EPSA 2019 will be a unique opportunity to celebrate their achievements.

The EPSA 2019 theme

“New solutions to complex challenges – a public sector citizen-centric, sustainable and fit for the future”



Under the overarching theme **“New solutions to complex challenges – a public sector citizen-centric, sustainable and fit for the future”**, EPSA 2019 seeks to showcase and reward those cases submitted by public administrations which have found new solutions in public service delivery and policy-making for the increasingly complex, difficult to address and often multi-dimensional challenges faced by the public sector in Europe. These challenges come at a time of an increasingly rapid pace of change, requiring public sector bodies to address both immediate needs and issues with important future consequences and to effectively prioritise their actions.

In many cases the new solutions called for by this theme are needed because previously tried solutions may no longer be able to respond to “wicked” problems in many areas where resources are often dispersed among different stakeholders and citizens have multiple needs and growing demands that require different approaches.

EPSA 2019 thus aims to reward creative solutions in public administrations that show how the public sector is responding effectively to major challenges.

Possible projects for submissions to EPSA 2019 could include those with objectives such as:

- Effectively address the societal challenges, including economic and social inclusion, that are highest priority for their stakeholders
- Introduce systemic changes, which improve the sustainability of successful outcomes such as the modernisation of governance and leadership within an organisation, increase the attractiveness of the public sector as an employer and take into account the diversification of the workforce
- Deal with digital transformation by applying solutions provided by new technologies (using, for example, artificial intelligence, robotics and machine learning) as well as by facilitating the way into a digital future for society and businesses
- Address very poor past levels of service and/or critical service failures, which may arise in response to unexpected events outside the control of the public sector entity such as high levels of migration or natural phenomena
- Enhance trust in government by delivering better results for stakeholders
- Introduce innovative solutions that rely more closely on citizen engagement and on partnerships with the private or non-profit sector for better public service delivery.



The examples above are also intended to emphasise that projects may be related to organisational change, policy formulation, service design and delivery and monitoring of outcomes that may involve digital transformation, while recognising that this is not the only dimension of innovation.

The EPSA 2019 award categories

All levels of public administration will be rewarded since the theme aims to be inclusive. Therefore, EPSA 2019 will present awards in three different categories based on the level of administration:

Category 1: Projects/cases submitted by organisations from the **European or National level**. The European level refers to European institutions or agencies and the National level refers to the level of sovereign states.

Category 2: Projects/cases submitted by organisations from the **Regional level**. The Regional level refers to the first level of administrative and political sub-division of a state.

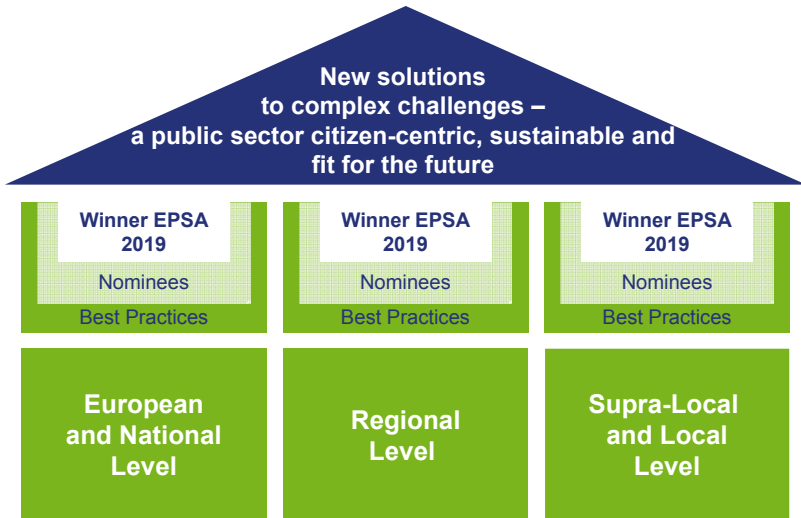
Category 3: Projects/cases submitted by organisations from the **Supra-Local or Local level**. The Supra-Local and Local level refers to the administrative and political levels below the regional level.



In case of projects that include partners from different levels of government, the administrative category will be defined by the status of the lead applicant as designated by the partners.

This will enable the recognition of good practice at all levels of government, which may include co-operative actions between different levels within the public sector.

There will be three levels of recognition in each administrative category - Award Winner, Nominees and Best Practice Certificates.



Projects benefitting from EU supportive actions, such as the European Social Fund (ESF) Thematic Objective 11 ('Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration'), are asked to identify any such support during the registration process.

EPSA is looking for projects which will assist the European Commission, Secretariat General - Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS) in their objective of spreading good practice in public administrations across the EU.

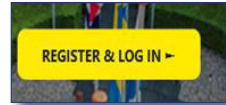
Previous EPSA participants may re-submit projects from the previous EPSA editions insofar as they are based on a material adaptation, update and/or extension of past projects, including the achievement of significant results since any previous submission.

Application period

The online application period is open from

**25 February 2019 until
18 April 2019 (24.00 CET)**

www.epsa2019.eu
[REGISTER and LOGIN]



More information on EPSA



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The EPSA 2019 timeline at a glance



Why should you participate in the EPSA 2019?

1. Your projects are offered the opportunity to be showcased, rewarded and to benefit from an increased visibility at European level – irrespective of the size or type of your administration. Your administration will improve its image by having its results and achievements published on the www.epsa2019.eu website and in the EPSA 2019 publication as well as via other channels of dissemination;
2. The EPSA offers you maximum benefits and new collaboration opportunities as part of a network of excellence, promoting efficient networking, practice exchange and knowledge transfer across Europe;
3. The EPSA works with an independent, impartial and internationally acknowledged pool of experts throughout its evaluation process. They conduct an external assessment (the Evaluation Summary Notes) of your project's potential at the European level, whilst also indicating options for improvement and further development. These ESNs will be provided automatically to you by the EPSA Team in case your project is awarded a Best Practice Certificate and upon request whether you will receive a BPC or not.

4. Participation in the EPSA is an excellent opportunity to show appreciation to your employees and partners and bring their work to the attention of a wider European audience;
5. The online application process is simple and straightforward and participation in the competition is free of charge;
6. The travel and hotel accommodation for the EPSA 2019 nominees participating in the final events will be at the expense of EPSA/EIPA. (1 person per nominated delegation);
7. If you submit a project to EPSA 2019, whether awarded or not, you will be invited to attend the EPSA final events on 4-6 of November 2019 in Maastricht where you can learn from the leading-edge public practices in Europe.

The EPSA assessment and evaluation methodology: impartial, independent and effective

All submitted projects, which meet the eligibility criteria, are assessed against **six evaluation criteria**:

- 1** Innovation
- 2** Stakeholder involvement
- 3** Relevance of actions taken
- 4** Impact/Results
- 5** Sustainability
- 6** Potential for adaptability by other entities

Sufficient detail must be provided in the applications to demonstrate the quality of the achievements of the case and the lessons learnt.

The assessment is carried out in an independent and impartial multi-step evaluation process.

STEP 1: Individual online evaluation

By each evaluator, in isolation and remotely based. Each project will be evaluated by impartial evaluators.

Date: 20-31 May 2019

STEP 2: Consensus meeting

To reach a commonly agreed list of ranked projects per category, including the best practice certificate recipients; and to agree on top-ranked shortlisted projects for onsite visits.

Date: 13-14 June 2019

STEP 3: Onsite validation visits

To shortlisted projects for validation and verification purposes.

Period: July to mid-September 2019

STEP 4: Jury meeting

To select and decide on the EPSA 2019 nominees and winners.

Date: October 2019



The EPSA 2019 team provides a **provisional ranking list based on the total scores.**



The EPSA / EIPA team will **report on the outcome based on the 3 previous steps.**



STEP 1: a set number of projects within a concrete award category is allocated to each evaluator based on their professional background and sector (a mix of academia, the practice field and the private sector), nationality (evaluators may not assess projects from their country of origin or employment) and gender. **Each project is assessed online**, independently and exclusively, by different experts. The evaluators do not know each other, or how the other evaluators assessed the respective project.

STEP 2: During the **Consensus Meeting**, all evaluators come together to review and discuss the first available provisional ranking based on their individual scorings and possible discrepancies. Furthermore, they unanimously decide on the Best Practice Certificate Recipients and on the top short-listed projects in each award category for the onsite visits.

STEP 3: The **onsite visits** serve to validate and verify the results and recommendations of the previous two evaluation steps, i.e. to spot-check whether the content of the application form of the project corresponds to the 'reality'; to find the answers to the unanswered questions raised by the evaluators, to detect possible inconsistencies and to gather additional or missing information and data. EIPA representatives do not re(assess) the projects! These on-site visits are planned to take place in the weeks of 1 July, 8 July, 15 July, 26 August, 2 September and 9 September to allow for time to ensure the availability of the necessary stakeholders.

STEP 4: the final step consists of the **Jury Meeting**, where several jurors (high-ranking stakeholders and/or political personalities, different to the evaluators) decide on the nominees and the award winners in each category based on the short-listed projects of the onsite visits.

The EPSA 2019 official partners

EPSA 2019 is supported by 10 official partners, the European Commission, Secretariat General – Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS), Austria, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Norway. Moreover, the Final Event and Award Ceremony will be hosted by the City of Maastricht and the Dutch Province of Limburg.



European Commission



Italy



Austria



Luxembourg



Denmark



the Netherlands



Hungary



Norway



Gemeente Maastricht

provincie limburg



The EPSA 2019 team



Michael Burnett (UK)
EPSA 2019 Project Leader; Category leader;
EIPA Expert



Julia Bosse (DE)
EPSA 2019 Project Officer; Category leader;
EIPA Researcher



Claude Rongione (IT)
EPSA 2019 Information Officer



Jolanda Peters (NL)
EPSA 2019 Project Assistant

The European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA)



Established in Maastricht in 1981 and having Centres in Luxembourg and Barcelona, the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) is ***Europe's leading centre of excellence on European integration and the new challenges for public management.***

It is EIPA's mission to support the European Union and its Member States and the countries associated with EIPA by providing relevant and high quality services to develop the capacities of public officials in dealing with EU affairs. We offer our services to officials from the EU institutions and related bodies, and to civil servants within the national, regional and local administrations of the Member States, applicant countries and other countries in the framework of their relationship with the EU.

EIPA is the leading centre of European learning and development for the public sector. With over 35 years of experience, EIPA is the place where people who deal with European affairs can learn in a multi-cultural environment benefiting from our unique combination of practical know-how and scientific excellence. We help you to meet the challenges of Europe and the complexities of modern public management.



European Institute of Public Administration



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