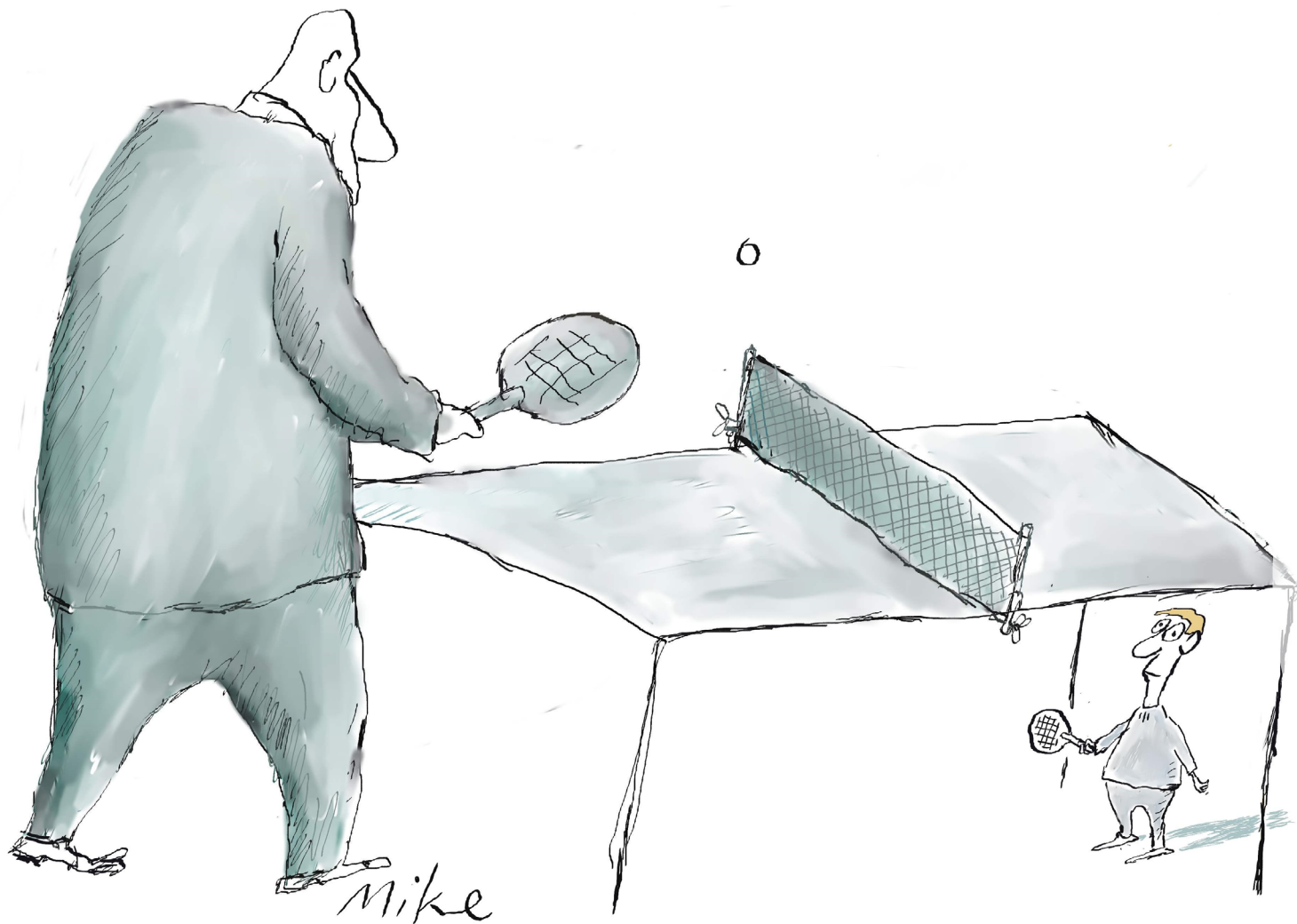


Use RTI laws across borders

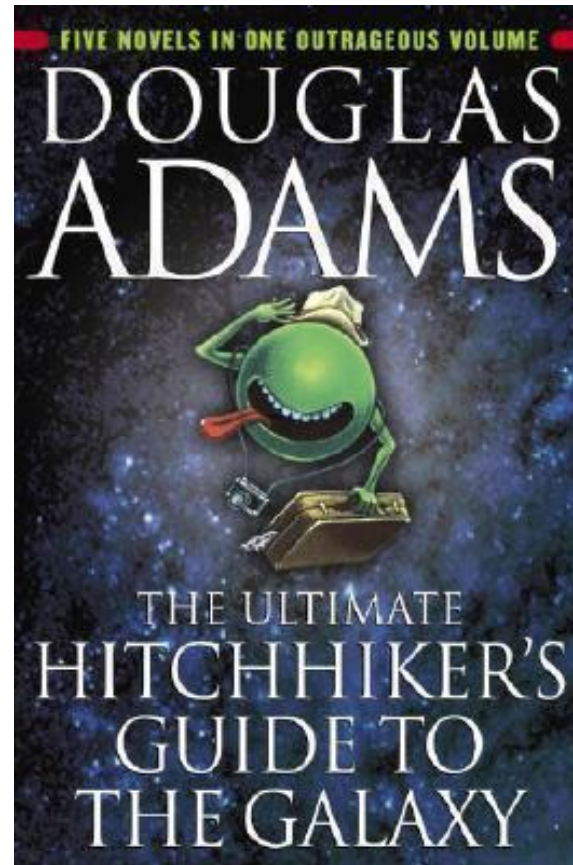
their differences can be used to a journalist's advantage



Tarjei Leer-Salvesen

Program for the day

- 10:00 Introductions are in order
Introduction to RTI and cross-border use (Staffan/Tarjei)
A guide to the world's national RTI laws and how to make use of them in cross-border journalism (Tarjei)
- 12:00 Lunch break
- 13:00 How to access information from the EU institutions (Staffan)
What is the legal framework? How does one approach this practically?
- Coffee break
- 14:30 What's YOUR problem?
In this session participants are invited to bring to the table an RTI related problem from their own home country or from cross-border work. Using the collective experience in the room, we try to suggest solutions. If we fail to find good solution, at least we learn more about how the law works and doesn't work in different countries. (everyone)
- 15:30 How to use the Aarhus Convention and GDPR as tools to obtain information from private companies (Tarjei)





AKER KVÆRNER™

More than 700 men worked for a Norwegian company at Guantanamo Bay when the Camp X-ray was established.

SAR vessels from
my
neighbourhood
became war
vessels in Iran

TIRSDAG 27. DESEMBER 2022

Nr. 300 • Årgang 148 • Leiesalg kr 45,- • www.fvn.no

Fædrelandsvennen



**Operasjons-
sykepleiere
mister ukentlig
opplæring**
Operasjonssykepleier
Robert Nestler frykter
innsparingene ved
Sørlandet sykehus kan
gå på bekostning av
pasientsikkerheten.



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god jul i Domkirka**

**÷30%
-50%**
PÅ SELSKAPSTØY
T. L Y N N
TA VARE PÅ ØYELIKKET
www.tlyn.no

FÆDRELANDSVENNEN AVSLØRER



Redningsskøyter fra Mandal ble krigsfartøy i Iran

● USA advarte i årevis om at redningsskøyter fra Båtservice i Mandal kunne bli misbrukt som krigsfartøy i Iran. ● Nå kan Fædrelandsvennen avsløre bilder av bevæpnede redningsskøyter. ● Båtservice-direktør Bjørn W. Fjellhaugen innrømmer nå at det amerikanerne fryktet har blitt en realitet. **NYHETER SIDE 8**

Local Norway newspaper vs US State Department



COMPLAINT

1. Plaintiff FÆDRELANDSVENNEN brings this Freedom of Information Act suit to force Defendant U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE to produce records between the State Department and the U.S. Embassy at Oslo regarding commercial entities Båtservice Mandal (Batservice Mandal) and Båtservice Iran (Batservice Iran). These commercial entities have attracted the State Department's concern as they were suspected of selling fast and highly maneuverable small boats the Iranian government similar to those use to carry out attacks against oil tankers. In violation of the Freedom of Information Act, Defendant has failed to issue a determination or produce any records by the statutory deadline or by the estimated completion date that Defendant provided to FÆDRELANDSVENNEN.

VG avslører

**Les den
utrolige
historien:**

ADVOKAT BESTILTE KIDNAPPING av voldtektsoffe

Ville hindre at hun vitnet i rettsak

845 000
tar medisin:
**DE BEST
ALLERG
RÅDEN**
● SIDE 1
England-Wales i dag:
**ENGLANDS
SKREKK**

- Other Norwegian journalists use cross-border RTI as well
- This story is from VG and was SKUP nominated in 2018

A close-up photograph of a person's hands gently holding a small, colorful globe of the world. The globe is positioned in the center of the frame, showing the Americas. The person's fingers are visible, with the thumb resting on the left side of the globe. The background is a soft, out-of-focus brown. Overlaid on the image is the text 'Can you guess which country has the best RTI law in the world?' in a white, sans-serif font.

Can you guess which country has the
best RTI law in the world?

RTI-rating.org
ranks the text of
the laws, but not
their actual
implementation

Global Right to Information Rating	
Home	Country data ▾
Methodology & Rating ▾	International and Su
[0 – 50]	[51 – 75]
[76 – 100]	[101 – 125]
[126 – 150]	
RTI	
Country Rating Results	
Top 10	
Afghanistan	139
Mexico	136
Serbia	135
Sri Lanka	131
Slovenia	128
Albania	127
India	127
Gambia	127
Croatia	126
Liberia	123

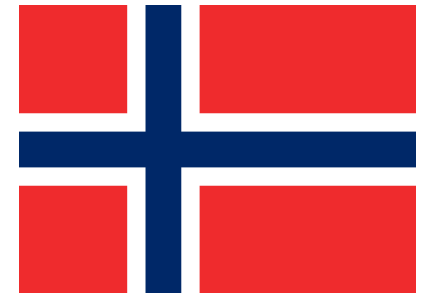
RTI laws are different



Prepare to pay
(a little)



EU institutions care
whether you are a
citizen or not



Free, fast,
you can be anonymous



What is required to file an RTI request?

Address the institution holding documents of interest

Refer to the law and your right to access information

Describe what documents you seek

Provide your own contact details

Some issues to be aware of when filing cross-border RTI requests

Do you have to live in that country to file a request?

How do they define “a document”?

Does it cost anything?

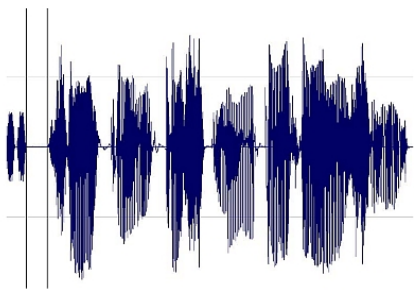
What appeal systems are in place?

Do you have to tell why you seek information?

What language can you use when filing a request?

How long time does the process take?

What is the scope of the RTI law?



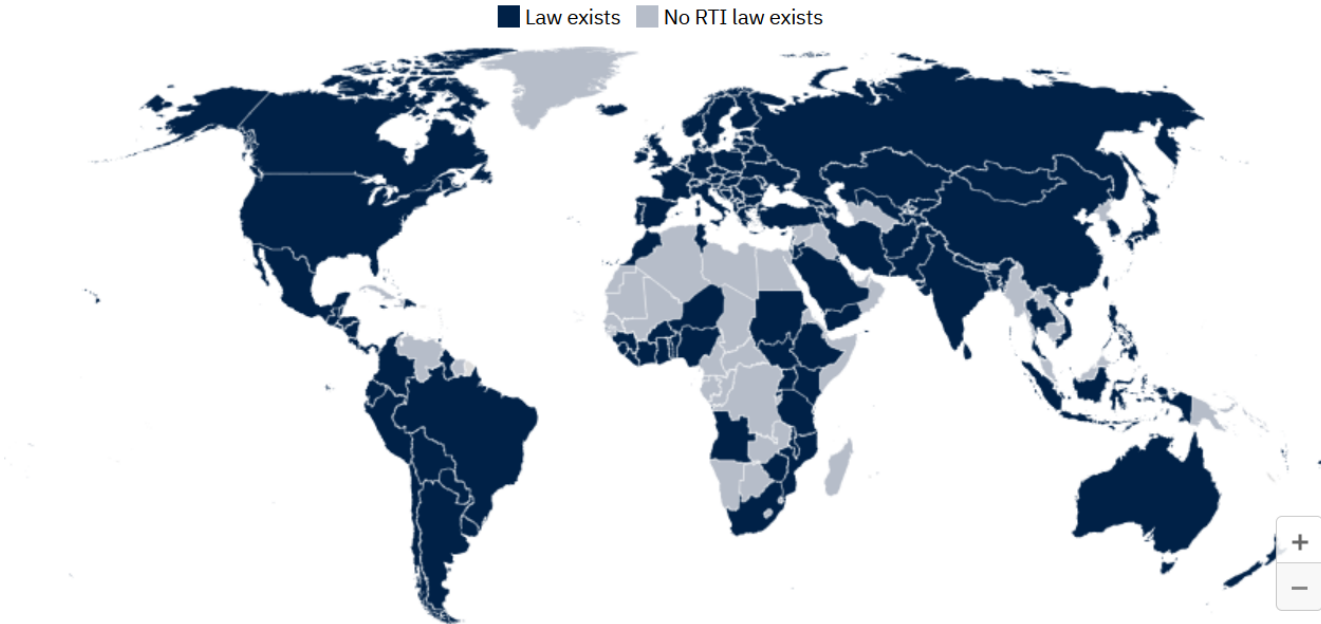
What is the definition of “a document”?

- In Norway:
- A logically defined piece of information, stored on any medium, for later reading, listening, viewing, transferring or similar

In 2023:
136 countries
with laws
on ATI/RTI

Where can journalists access info through RTI?

This map lists all countries with existing Right to Information laws and provides links to RTI-Rating.org's translations of the laws. It includes a mark out of 8 to indicate the scope of the law, notes on fees, who can file RTI requests, and links to resources where needed. These are the author's simplifications, intended as a guide to journalists. Hover for an overview, or click to make the tool tip stick so that you can scroll.



For more information on all 61 indicators that RTI-rating.org use, visit: <https://www.rti-rating.org/methodology/>

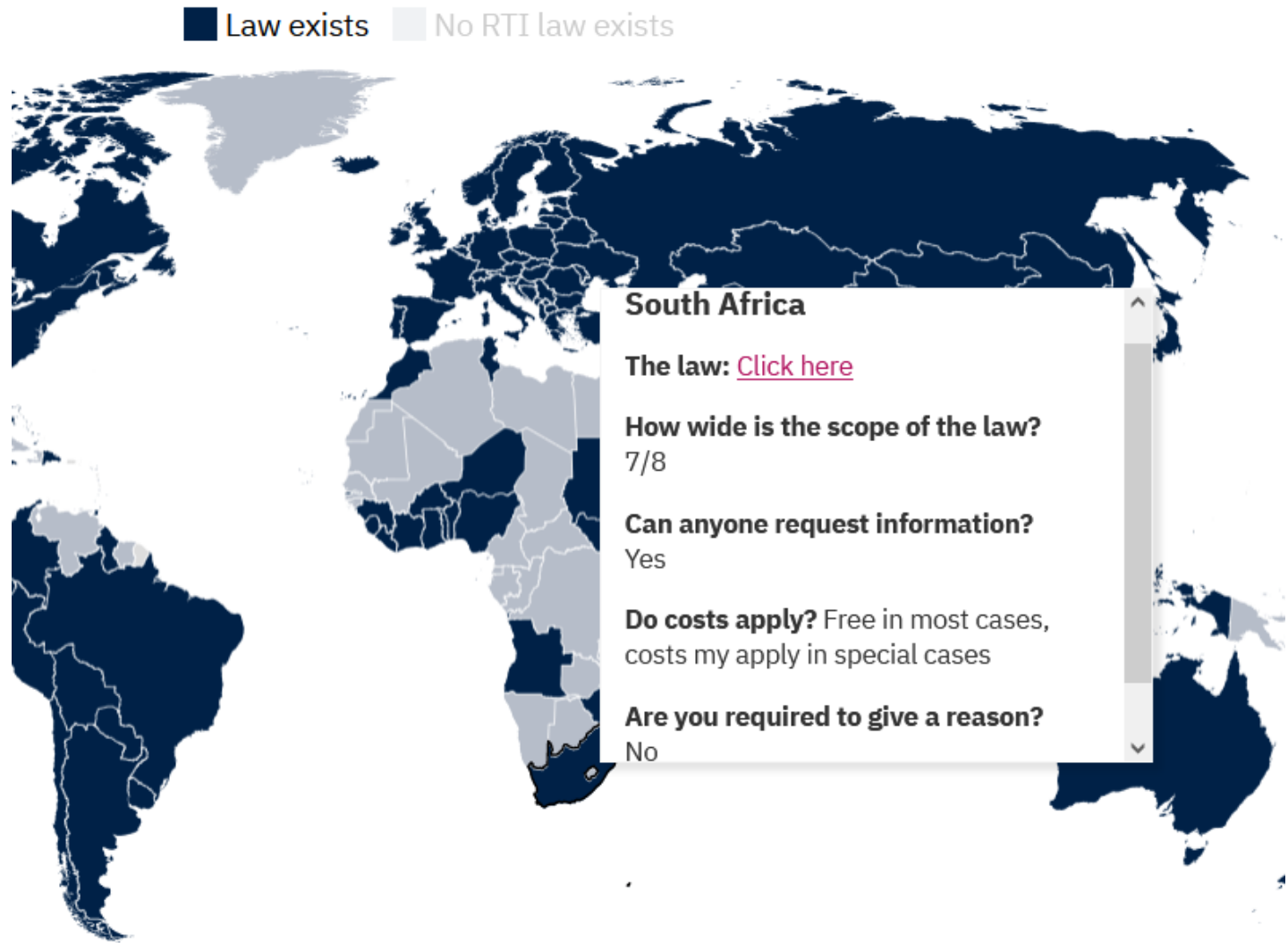
Source: [Global RTI Rating by Access Info Europe at www.rti-rating.org](http://www.rti-rating.org) (accessed March 1st 2023).



Map: Tarjei Leer-Salvesen • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#)



Click a country
for link to law
and some
quick details



Journalist Fellowship Paper

Bypassing secrecy: How investigative journalists use RTI requests across borders

By Tarjei Leer-Salvesen



[THE SUSPICION MACHINE](#)[THE FRAUD HUNTERS](#)[THE WELFARE WAR](#)[THE DIRTY SECRET](#)

AI used in
welfare fraud
detection
systems

Inside the Suspicion Machine

Obscure government algorithms are making life-changing decisions about millions of people around the world. Here, for the first time, we reveal how one of these systems works.

EVA CONSTANTARAS, GABRIEL GEIGER, JUSTIN-CASIMIR BRAUN, OHRUV MEHROTRA, HTET AUNG

MAR 6, 2023 7:00 AM

LIGHTHOUSE
REPORTS





Illegal pushbacks by Frontex in the Meditterrean



TIERRA DE
RESISTENTES

Violence, threats and killings of those who protect the land

WASTELAND - EUROPE'S PLASTIC DISASTER



How does EU countries handle their waste?

United States



File, track, and share public records requests.

 File a Request

Explore filed requests or learn how it works.

101,951
filed requests

20,909
agencies

30,650
fulfilled requests

6,817,784
released pages

Recently completed requests

See all →

Completed

35 files

Contracts between Nantucket County Sheriff's Department and other Agencies regarding Title IV-D

Josh Coffin sent this request to the Nantucket County Sheriff's Department of Nantucket, MA

Completed

5 files

Schema for Los Angeles County's CBAS and ARES Systems

Kathryn sent this request to the Department of Children and Families of Los Angeles County, CA

Completed

43 files

Ocstatic / Tactical Support Equipment emails with BCA

Sam Richards sent this request to the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension of Minnesota

Completed

16 files

thin blue line

Nicholas Marritz sent this request to the Gettysburg Police Department of Gettysburg, PA

Completed

4 files

Untitled

Michael Locke sent this request to the Brevard County Sheriff's Office of Brevard County, FL

What can an RTI request look like?

- Add name and contact details.
- In the EU, remember to add postal address, even if you want documents send by email.

Dear European Council,

Under the right of access to documents in the EU treaties, as developed in Regulation 1049/2001, I am requesting documents which contain the following information:
documents that cover the history of IntCen / SitCen.

I am a student in Braga (Portugal) doing a thesis about IntCen.

I would like to understand how this dynamic has helped the European Union to collect relevant information, for example in the fight against terrorism.

Please send the documents to me in electronic format.

Yours faithfully,



English [Deutsch](#) [Español](#) [Français](#)

[Sign in or sign up](#)

Search



[How it works](#)

[Which EU body?](#)

[Make a request](#)

[Browse requests](#)

[Blog](#)

Get answers from EU Institutions

AskTheEU.org is an online platform for citizens to send access to documents requests directly to EU institutions.

[Send a request](#)

[Find out more](#)

Show only...

Beginning with

[A](#)[B](#)[C](#)[D](#)[E](#)[F](#)[G](#)[H](#)[I](#)[J](#)[K](#)[L](#)[M](#)[N](#)[O](#)[P](#)[Q](#)[R](#)
[S](#)[T](#)[U](#)[V](#)[W](#)[X](#)[Y](#)[Z](#)

Main Institutions

[European Parliament](#)

[Council of the European Union](#)

[European Council](#)

[European Court of Justice](#)

[European Court of Auditors](#)

European Commission

[Commission Directorate Generals](#)

[European Commission Services](#)

Other Institutions and Key Bodies

Public authorities

Find an authority

Search

Found 140 public authorities

Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators

Also called ACER ACER helps ensure the single European market in gas and electricity functions properly. It assists national regulatory authorities in performing their...

9 requests.

Agriculture and Rural Development

Also called DG AGRI This Commission department is responsible for EU policy on agriculture and rural development and deals with all aspects of the common agricultural poli...

126 requests.



Browse and search requests

Keywords

Frontex

Made between

2020/03/01



and

2021/11/20



all requests

successful requests

unsuccessful requests

unresolved requests

Search

Follow these requests

Follow

RSS feed

About 200 FOI requests found



Browse and search requests

Keywords

Uganda

Made between

2020/03/01



and

2021/11/20



all requests

successful requests

unsuccessful requests

unresolved requests

Search

Follow these requests

Follow

RSS feed

About 18 FOI requests found



Get answers from the government and public sector

Make a request for information to a UK public authority: by law, they have to respond

Browse [770,234 requests](#) to [38,603 authorities](#)

Want to know something?

Start your own request

[Make a request »](#)

[Make a request](#)[Browse requests](#)[View authorities](#)[Read blog](#)[Help](#)[Volunteer](#)

Browse and search requests

Keywords

Made between



and

[all requests](#)[successful requests](#)[unsuccessful requests](#)[unresolved requests](#)[Search](#)

FOLLOW THESE REQUESTS

[Follow](#)[RSS feed](#)

LATEST

[Browse latest responses →](#)[Browse latest requests →](#)

About 200 FOI requests found

Evidence from foreign Jurisdictions by remote means

Response by [Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office](#) to [Jonathan Greer](#) on 28 October 2021.

Successful.

Dear Mr Greer, I am writing in response to your Freedom of Information request FOI2021/21774, received 24th August. Please find our response attache...

Application statistics for applications to CS (2019-2021 rounds)

Response by [University of Cambridge](#) to [Andy Lockwood](#) on 14 October 2021.

Successful.

Further to your request for information, please find attached the University's response. Regards, Information Compliance Office University of Cambrid...



Wir bringen Licht ins Dunkel der Behörden

Jede Person hat das Recht auf Informationen aus Politik und Verwaltung. FragDenStaat hilft Ihnen dabei, Ihr Recht durchzusetzen.



So funktioniert's:

1

Sie stellen eine Anfrage. Wir leiten diese an die zuständige Behörde weiter.

Anfrage erstellen

2

Sie erhalten eine E-Mail, sobald die Behörde auf Ihre Anfrage reagiert.

Einsteiger-Guide

3

Die Antwort wird für Sie und auch für andere öffentlich einsehbar, transparent und gemeinnützig.

Sehen Sie sich ein Video an ▶



Do not forget about...

Costs:

In some countries (e.g Germany) an FOI request may cost a significant fee if it is considered to be 'complicated' and time-consuming. Consider narrowing or dividing your request. When in doubt, you can ask in advance whether your request will be free or if you need a budget.

The human element of RTI requests:

There is someone on the receiving end, a person who is overworked, in an understaffed archive.

You might consider reaching out by phone or email in advance. If you ask for their guidance to what is available, both of you might save some time. And journalists and archivists should make friends more often!

Language:

Not all countries accept requests in English language. Consider using official national language

Add contact details:

Email
Phone
and a polite signature

Where do you do file RTI requests?

Some governments have their own platform for this purpose.

You can usually write letters or emails directly to the institution of interest.

There are some really nice portals developed by NGOs and newsrooms which can be used.





Norway's system:

- Browse metadata on millions of documents
- Govt must reply within 3 days
- RTI is for free
- Appeals are filed easily by replying to the email which contained the rejection

That was the benefits only. There is also:

- no sanctions for those who violate the ATI law
- a lousy, decentralized appeal system

Sak:

Saksnr. 2020/3625

Det er 27 dokumenter i denne saken



Virksomhet:

Miljødirektoratet

Tlf. 73580500

E-post post@miljodir.no

Adresse Postboks 5672 Torgarden 7485 Trondheim

Dokumenter

Tittel	Doknr. ▼	Fra/til	Dok.type	Dokumentdato	Journaldato	Publisert	Hjemmel
Question on PFAS REACH restriction and scope of Marine Applications	27	Fra Miljødirektoratet Til i henhold til adresseliste	Utgående dokument	30.08.2023	31.08.2023	07.09.2023	Vis dokument (PDF)
Svar om PFAS presentasjon og forbrukerprodukter	26	Fra Miljødirektoratet Til Nina Palmer	Utgående dokument	31.08.2023	31.08.2023	07.09.2023	Bestill
Outcome of the conformity check regarding the Annex XV restriction dossier on universal PFAS	25	Fra European Chemicals Agency	Inngående dokument	29.03.2023	11.04.2023	18.04.2023	Bestill
Consultation of a third party under Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 regarding public access to documents	24	Fra Miljødirektoratet Til European Chemicals Agency	Utgående dokument	13.10.2022	26.10.2022	01.11.2022	Offl. § 13 jf. fvl. § 13 første ledd nr. 2) Bestill

Norway's ATI portal www.einnsyn.no has metadata on actual documents

What's Your Problem?

- The idea in this session is that YOU bring issues to the table.
- What problems did you encounter in your work with RTI?
- What solutions do you seek?

- Feel free to comment and bring your own experience to the room
- This collective is wiser than each one of us



Consider the Aarhus Convention and laws on environmental information

What
countries
have ratified
Aarhus
Convention?

Where can journalists use Aarhus Convention to access environmental information?

This map lists all signatories to the Aarhus Convention, which covers access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters. There are 47 signatories, including the European Union.



Russisk bitcoin-factory at Alvdal – right by Nato's «Cold response»-event.

VG filed request to know the power consumption



Norway involved i US fracking industry:



The Aarhus
Convention works
across borders



What are the secrets ingredients in Swix ski glidewax?

Environmental information may some times override protection of trade secrets



So you say it is classified?

- Why?
- For how long?
- Who can still see it?



Two ways of using privacy laws for the journalist's advantage

- «First person RTI» / Subjects Access requests
- Or combine RTI skills with human source contact, and guide your source



Dalradian gold mine, Sperrin mountains, Northern Ireland





Anti-mining activist Corman McAleer in Northern Ireland

HOME: NEWS

Gold mining firm accused of 'espionage' against UK activist

Exclusive: A mining firm tracked a Northern Irish 72-year-old's social media and gathered information about his appearance

[Tommy Greene](#)

7 March 2023, 4.57pm



PUBLICIDAD

ALICANTE

ALICANTE | LA COMUNITAT AL MINUTO | ELCHE | ORIHUELA | PLAYAS

Juzgan a un hombre por abusos a su nietastra de solo cuatro años

El procesado, un octogenario, niega las acusaciones por las que el fiscal le pide seis años de cárcel y posterior libertad vigilada

LUIS CANDELA | ALICANTE

@l_candela

Me gusta 0

18 noviembre 2015
08:19



La Audiencia Provincial sentó ayer en el banquillo a un acusado de abusar sexualmente de la que fue su nietastra, una cría de tan solo 4 años cuando



El acusado llega preso a la Audiencia Provincial, ayer. / A. D.

PUBLICIDAD



First story

FREDAG 13. APRIL 2018

Nr. 84 • Årgang 144 • Løssalg kr. 40,- • www.fvn.no

Fædrelandsvennen

87-åringen sitter fengslet i Spania, **dømt for overgrep mot ei jente (4)**. Mannen var eldstebror i Jehovas Vitner.

Mannen er også beskyldt for flere lignende overgrep da han var menighetsleder på Sørlandet. Over hele verden anklages nå Jehovas Vitner for ikke å gripe inn mot pedofile overgripere.

DOKUMENTAR

FREDAG

SIDE 20-31

FOTO: KARTAN BILLAG

CORRESPONDENCE GUIDELINES

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BETHEL HOME RULES & REGULATIONS

CIRCUIT OVERSEER GUIDELINES

December 2016

© 2016
Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania

Circuit Overseer Guidelines
English (ig-E)

DWELLING TOGETHER IN UNITY



“Behold, how good and how pleasant
it is for brethren to dwell
together in unity!”
—Psalm 133:1, AS.

Excerpt from an S-77:

1. ☐ **DISFELLOWSHIPING.** Specify offense(s) for which disfellowshipped (See *ks91* 92-6.): Porneia.

At any point, did the wrongdoer confess to the committee? yes If not, what evidence substantiated the wrongdoing?
admitted to Fondling genitals of a 8 yr. old Boy at least 3 Times.

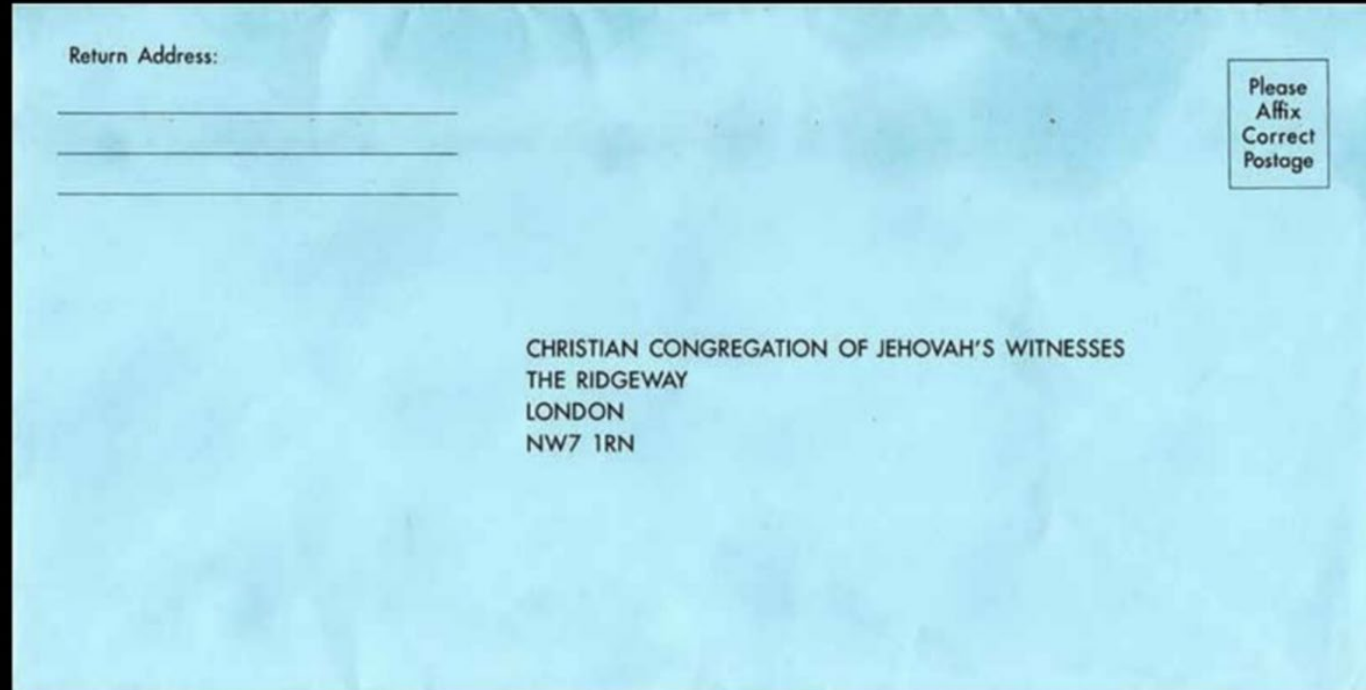
- ☐ **DISASSOCIATION.** Specify by what action(s) the person disassociated himself (such as resignation, non-neutral activity, failure to abstain from blood, or joining another religion): _____

DO NOT DESTROY

Did the individual submit a *signed* letter of resignation? _____ If not, what evidence substantiated the disassociation?

2. Give a detailed summation of the case, explaining exactly what took place. (Use additional sheet *only* if more space is needed.) For a disfellowshipping, include the reasons why you judged the person to be unrepentant. For a disassociation, include what led to the person's decision; how he responded to efforts to assist him, and what convinced you that his position was adamant.

One of the Victims Came Forward + informed 2 elders of the Sexual abuse of Himself From, the age of 8 yrs. To 12 yrs old.



Third big story

De blå konvoluttene

Nye lekkasjer fra Jehovas vitner avslører et omfattende system for lagring og utveksling av sensitiv personinformasjon. I materialene finnes blant annet historien om noen helt spesielle blå konvolutter.

NYHETER SIDE 8-15

[About privacy](#)[Privacy and society](#)[Regulations and tools](#)

General Data Protection Regulation

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) entered into applicability in the EU on 25th of May 2018.

There is thus one set of data protection rules for all companies operating in the EU/EEA, wherever they are based.

Stronger rules on data protection mean:

- people have more control over their personal data
- businesses benefit from a level playing field

Although not a member of the EU, Norway is a member of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA Agreement ensures that Norway is part of the “Internal market” based on the EU’s four freedoms – free movement of goods, services, persons and capital.

The GDPR was incorporated into the EEA agreement and became applicable in Norway on 20 July 2018. Norway is thus bound by the GDPR in the same manner as EU Member States.



**JEHOVAS
VITNER**
FORKYNNERE AV GUDS RIKE



Ny verden-oversættelsen
av
De hellige skrifter

**“For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed,
and whatever is concealed
is meant to be brought out into the open”**

Mark. 4, 22



Tip sheet

- Don't be shy. Ask for documents, but also for lists of documents and other metadata
- Learn your rights to access information. You have more tools than the national RTI law
- Check out the English interface at www.einnsyn.no – Norway's RTI portal, try ask for a document
- Does more than one office have a copy of the document you were denied? File multiple requests
- When you can, meet with the people in the archive!
- If that law (or your lack of knowledge about it) prevents you from using it, find a colleague to help you through GIJN or perhaps http://foiadvocates.net/?page_id=10289
- Want to know more about FOI across borders? Take a look at <https://gijn.org/gijns-global-guide-to-freedom-of-information-resources/>
- <https://gijn.org/gijn-africa-access-to-public-records/> (GIJN's guide to African records)
- <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/bypassing-secrecy-new-tools-facilitate-more-cross-border-investigations-rti> (Tarjei's map and journalist fellow paper)
- Alexiane Lerouge who was in the masterclass asks that you share experiences with others. Write to email: Right2knowrepo@protonmail.com