The Public Service Algorithm (PSA)
Using AI to Shine a Light into Journalism That Matters

What is the PSA?

The Public Service Algorithm is a collaborative effort from Public Service Media's most trusted newsrooms in Europe. They use artificial intelligence (AI), specifically, a type of AI known as a large language model (or LLM), to assist them in identifying and highlighting journalism that genuinely serves the public.

Instead of promoting content based on its click-worthy potential, the PSA helps editors find stories that match core public service values like:

- Cross-border Relevance – Is the story important across borders?
- Forward Looking – does it point to constructive answers, not just problems?
- Diversity – does it amplify voices we don't often hear from?
- In-depth Analysis – does it go beyond headlines and explain why things matter?

So, how does it actually work?

Every news article in the Digital News Hub is processed by the algorithm, which scores them on each of those values, ranging from 0 (not at all) to 5 (very strong).

Editors can then see which stories rank highly, and importantly, they can check why.

The system is designed to be transparent, allowing editors to view the exact criteria used by the algorithm and adjust the scores as needed. When they do, that feedback helps the system improve over time. This partnership between human judgment and machine help is what we call "human-in-the-loop."

What are the main benefits, then?

1. Saves time and helps limit the involvement of resources
2. It puts public values into action: It's hard to apply big ideas like "diversity" or "European relevance" consistently. The PSA aims to make these values more measurable and usable across newsrooms in different countries.
3. Encourages richer, more inclusive journalism: Stories featuring fresh voices or highlighting solutions will likely appear more frequently.
4. Builds trust through transparency: Unlike secretive commercial algorithms, the PSA openly displays how it scores content and incorporates human input.
5. Future-ready design: It can evolve over time and avoid being locked into any one technology.

Why is continued investment important?

Like any smart tool, the PSA requires support to continue improving. We are currently testing it to preselect the content that appears on this page from the thousands of articles we receive each day. Please let us know how we're doing by using the feedback form on each article.