



GUIDELINES FOR THE ETHICAL USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ALBANIAN MEDIA

INTRODUCTION

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the media is transforming the way news are produced and distributed. However, this development raises ethical issues that require careful consideration to preserve the integrity and credibility of journalism. These new technologies have the potential to enhance and strengthen the social role of media, but only if they are used transparently, fairly, and responsibly while supporting and promoting the core values of journalistic ethics.

These guidelines aim to establish a framework for the ethical use of AI in Albanian media, drawing on the best international practices and the principles outlined in the Code of Ethics. Technological innovation should empower media outlets and journalists in fulfilling their mission of delivering high-quality and reliable information.

WHAT IS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND HOW IS IT USED IN MEDIA?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a field of computer science focused on developing systems that can perform tasks that usually require human intelligence. AI involves advanced algorithms and models designed to analyze vast amounts of data, draw conclusions, and offer real-time recommendations.

In the context of media, Artificial Intelligence can significantly improve the efficiency and accuracy of news reporting, personalize content for audiences,

and aid in combating disinformation. Journalists and editors can leverage AI to automatically process and analyze information, as well as predict audience trends in real-time. This not only reduces their workload but also allows them to use automated systems as personal assistants, helping them better understand audience preferences.

Generative AI is an advanced form of this technology, which can create new content, including text, images, audio, and videos, based on previously gathered data.

AI applications are widely used to analyze and interpret large volumes of data, allowing for the extraction of valuable insights. This capability assists journalists in utilizing data effectively to identify trending topics, assess audience reactions to content, and detect false news.

AI can help identify fake or manipulated news by cross-referencing multiple sources in record time and analyzing the authenticity of the content. Such AI capabilities are particularly important in today's era, where disinformation and misinformation can spread rapidly.

Furthermore, AI automates various editorial processes by identifying and categorizing content by topic, detecting linguistic errors, and automatically selecting appropriate materials for publication.

BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR THE USE OF AI IN MEDIA

The ethical use of artificial intelligence in Albanian media should be grounded in three fundamental principles: maintaining audience trust in the media, utilizing technology under human supervision, and ensuring transparency. By adhering to these guidelines, Albanian media and journalists can benefit from artificial intelligence while staying true to their mission of providing accurate and impartial information to their audiences.

1. The Use of Artificial Intelligence Must Not Undermine Audience Trust in the Media

Audience trust is the foundation of quality and independent journalism. The use of Artificial Intelligence is based on the principle that information must adhere to all ethical and deontological standards of journalism, as these serve as a guarantee for maintaining audience trust.

- Media newsrooms and journalists must be aware of the limitations, opportunities, and risks associated with Artificial Intelligence and should not rely entirely on it for event coverage.
 - AI has the potential to produce inaccurate, manipulated, and biased content. Therefore, all information must be verified by journalists and editorial directors prior to publication.
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- AI should serve as a supportive tool for journalists, not as a replacement for investigative reporting and high-quality public information.
 - The publication of content produced with Artificial Intelligence by media outlets must be accompanied by clear disclosures to prevent misunderstandings.
 - Media organizations should periodically review their policies and guidelines regarding the use of AI to ensure they align with audience needs and technological advancements.
 - The use of Artificial Intelligence in content production does not exempt media outlets from the obligation to respect copyright. Editorial teams must take care to ensure that materials produced with AI do not include elements protected by copyright, or if they do use them, they must clearly reference the content.

2. The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Media Must Be Under Human Supervision

No Artificial Intelligence system or application is infallible. Therefore, human oversight is crucial to ensure the accuracy and ethics of the content produced. Editors and journalists should take a leading role in the editorial process, utilizing AI as a supportive tool rather than a complete replacement for media professionals.

- All AI-generated content must be reviewed and approved by a journalist or editor prior to publication.
 - Journalists and editors should possess the necessary skills to understand and analyze AI-generated reports and recommendations to avoid technical or logical errors and to mitigate potential biases in reporting.
 - All critical or investigative reports on sensitive topics, such as politics, public health, and national security, must be based on verifiable sources and conducted under the supervision of a professional journalist or editor.
 - Newsrooms should establish clear processes for addressing ethical concerns related to the use of AI in the content provided to audiences.
 - If a newsroom employs AI systems to identify trending news or topics on social media and online platforms, a professional editor must oversee the process. This editor should evaluate whether the topic is in the public interest and ensure that it does not contain misleading or false information.
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3. The Use of Artificial Intelligence Must Be Transparent to the Public

Transparency is essential for building and maintaining audience trust. When media outlets utilize AI to create or process content, it is essential to inform the public clearly about this practice.

- AI-generated content must be explicitly labeled for audiences, using terms like “Produced with AI Assistance,” “AI-Supported,” or “Automated Content.”
- Media organizations must ensure that the use of AI does not lead to audience deception or misinformation.
- Media outlets should publicly share clear policies and procedures regarding their use of AI, informing audiences on how and why it is employed. This information should be readily accessible to interested audiences.
- Media organizations should establish mechanisms for audience feedback and complaints related to AI-generated content and ensure the public is informed about these processes.
- To enhance transparency, both traditional and online newsrooms can create multimedia materials explaining how AI is used in their processes.
- News portals that utilize AI to analyze audience data and personalize content should provide a dedicated information page outlining how this data is collected and how the information is used.

DETAILED GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Transparency and Public Awareness

It is essential that media organizations be transparent about their use of artificial intelligence (AI) in editorial processes. This includes informing the audience whenever content has been generated or modified by AI systems.

Accuracy and Information Verification

Despite advanced technology, the responsibility for the accuracy and veracity of information lies with journalists and editors. Therefore, all data processed by AI must be verified to prevent the spread of unverified information. This approach aligns with the principles of the Code of Ethics, which emphasizes the importance of accuracy in reporting.

Privacy Protection and Data Security

Media organizations must respect the privacy of individuals and ensure that the use of AI does not compromise personal data. Data processing should

comply with existing laws and ethical standards, avoiding the unauthorized collection or distribution of personal information.

Preventing Bias and Discrimination

Artificial Intelligence systems and applications can reflect biases present in the data used for their training. Therefore, media organizations must monitor and correct any potential biases in AI-generated information to ensure fair and impartial reporting.

Staff Education and Training

To promote the ethical and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence, it is essential that journalists and editorial staff receive continuous training. Training programs should focus on understanding the capabilities and limitations of AI technology, as well as the ethical issues associated with its use. Continuous training helps integrate AI effectively into news production and distribution processes.

Accountability and Responsibility

Media organizations and journalists must take responsibility for content produced with the assistance of AI. In cases of errors or misinformation, it is the media's duty to correct the information and inform the audience about any changes made, thereby maintaining transparency and credibility.

Responsible Use of AI in Audiovisual Content

The advancement of Artificial Intelligence has made it easier to manipulate audiovisual content, raising concerns, especially regarding what is known as “deepfakes”. Media organizations must be cautious in using these technologies and ensure that any modifications to content are evident to the audience to prevent misinterpretation.

PREVENTING DISINFORMATION AND CONTENT UNIFORMITY

Artificial Intelligence algorithms typically rely on existing, easily accessible data. This reliance can result in the spread of inaccurate or false information, as well as a lack of diversity in content. When media professionals do not verify information, there is an increased risk of repetitive narratives, which limits the variety of perspectives and analyses available. Therefore, it is essential for journalists to actively engage in fact-checking and to enhance content with critical and analytical insights.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure the responsible and ethical use of Artificial Intelligence in Albanian media, the following steps are recommended:

1. Establish clear institutional policies on the use of AI in editorial processes.
2. Develop an ethical oversight structure that includes both technology experts and journalists.
3. Promote collaboration between media institutions and the government to create clear and transparent regulations.
4. Increase public awareness through media literacy campaigns highlighting the advantages and risks of AI integration in media.

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