Subscription API

The Subscription API enables creating **email subscriptions** for company announcements and press releases published at Via Ritzau in Denmark, Via TT in Sweden, NTB kommunikasjon in Norway or STT Info in Finland. The four mentioned systems are all based on the same software called *PRS*.

The Subscription API can be used to add a subscription functionality e.g. to a publishers website as part of their investor relations -pages.

This document provides technical information to aid in creating an integration to the Subscription API. Readers of this documentation are expected to be familiar with HTTP, the PRS service and to understand what concepts such as publisher, subscriber, press release, company announcement mean in the PRS service.

Terminology:

PRS site: Via Ritzau, Via TT, NTB kommunikasjon or STT info

Publisher: a company or organisation that uses a PRS site to publish press releases and/or company announcements

Subscriber: A person subscribing emails for press releases and/or company announcements published on a PRS site

Authorization

Access to the Subscription API is restricted using API keys. An API key must be included in every request to the API. The API key is placed in the request header `x-api-key`. The API verifies that the API key in requests matches the publisher's API key in the system.

The actual API key itself is a universally unique identifier (UUID) that is generated by the system. The API key must be kept secret and not shared with external parties.

API key is publisher specific and thus allows subscribing to only one specific publisher.

How to get an API key

A publisher can fetch the API key from the PRS site. The API key can be found under 'Settings' > 'API key'. If the API key has not been enabled for the publisher, then please contact customer service to enable it.

Availability

The API might encounter short downtime during maintenance periods. In such events the downtime usually lasts a couple minutes or less.

Email address verification and subscription activation

Email address verification is performed for all new subscriptions. A verification email is sent to each new email address. The email contains an activation link. By clicking the activation link the subscriber verifies their address and thus activates the subscription. When the subscription has been activated, the subscriber starts receiving emails for press releases and company announcements of the publisher.

Updating an existing subscription

Existing subscriptions can be updated using the same mechanism as for creating a new subscription. A possible update scenario could be e.g. adding subscription to company announcements when user has a prior subscription for press releases of the same publisher. The subscriber need not be aware of any existing subscriptions as the API handles updating the subscription accordingly.

The system sends a verification email to the email address. By clicking the activation link in the email the changes take effect. If the verification email is ignored then the old subscription stays in effect.

API endpoints:

Subscribing

Purpose: Creating a new subscription, updating an existing subscription

URL: https://<prs_site>/protected-subscription-api/v1/subscribe

HTTP method: POST

Required HTTP headers: `x-api-key` - this must include the api key of the publisher

Query string parameters:

NOTE: Even thought the HTTP method is POST, these parameters are transmitted as part of the URL via the query string, not the request body. E.g:

- https://www.sttinfo.fi/protected-subscription-api/v1/subscribe?publisherId=389&releaseType=PR,IR&languageRestriction=fi,da,sv&email=subscriber@example.com

parameter	required/optional	description	possible values	example
publisherId	required	id of the publisher. Multiple comma-separated ids can be provided if subscribing to multiple subpublishers of a PR agency. In such a case the	number[]	123456

		x-api-key of the PR agency must be used for authentication.		
email	required	email address of the subscriber	valid email address	subscriber@domain.com
name	optional	Name of the subscriber	free text, max 200 characters	Jane Doe
releaseType	required	What kind of releases to subscribe: • `PR` - press releases only. • `IR` - company announcements only. • `SM` - short messages only. • Any combinations of the values above for multiple types	comma separated list of release types	PR,IR
languageRestriction	optional	Only releases and announcements in the selected language will be sent to the subscriber. When this parameter is not present the subscriber will receive releases of all languages. • I.e. subscribing with '`da`' gives only danish language releases of the publisher and '`da,en`' gives both danish and english language releases	comma separated list of ISO 639-1 language codes from the list of currently supported languages: • en • fi • sv • da • no	en,da
emailLanguage	optional	Specifies in which language the subscription activation e-mail should be sent. Only the two primary languages are supported for each agency, e.g. Finnish and English for STT Info. If the language is not supported by the site or the emailLanguage parameter is not specified, the site's default language is used.	"en" language code is supported for all agencies. In addition, the following languages are possible per site: STT Info: "fi" Via TT: "sv" Via Ritzau: "da" NTB Kommunikasjon: "no"	en

returns:

http status	response body	explanation
200	The body may contain technical logging information. The user of the API does not need to check this information. Only status code is significant.	Request was processed successfully
400	empty	Invalid request parameters, please check documentation. If problem persists, please contact support.
403	empty	Unauthorized request. Returned in the following cases: • The given publisherId and api key do not match. • The publisher is not in active status in the system • The request is identified as being a cross-origin request and thus rejected.
429	empty	Rate limit exceeded. See below for explanation.
500	empty	Server error. If problem persists, please contact support.

example urls

- https://www.sttinfo.fi/protected-subscription-api/v1/subscribe?publisherId=389&releaseType=PR,IR&languageRestriction=fi,da,sv&email=subscriber@example.com

- https://kommunikasjon.ntb.no/protected-subscription-api/v1/subscribe?publisherId=389&releaseType=PR,IR&languageRestriction=fi,da,sv&email=subscriber@example.com
- https://via.tt.se/protected-subscription-api/v1/subscribe?publisherId=389&releaseType=PR,IR&languageRestriction=fi,da,sv&email=subscriber@example.com
- https://via.ritzau.dk/protected-subscription-api/v1/subscribe?publisherId=389&releaseType=PR,IR&languageRestriction=fi,da,sv&email=subscriber@example.com

Input validation

For any invalid parameter the response HTTP status is 400. API user is expected to validate e.g. email address before requesting the API.

How the API should be used

The API must be accessed via a server

The server must include the API key and all required parameters to the requests.

Do not use the API from a browser

Using the API from browsers is disallowed. This prevents leaking the API key to users.

The API rejects any cross origin requests by checking the `Origin` HTTP header. If the header is present, the request is rejected. This rejects requests from most common scenarios where direct access from browser is tried.

Do not exceed the rate limits

The API enforces a rate limit of 10 requests per second. After this, throttling will occur first (for the next 20 requests) and then subsequent requests will be dropped and status code 429 returned.

Use pre-defined parameters and limit UI selections to suit the desired use-case

Consider allowing the user to define only these parameters: `email`, `name`. Hard-code `publisherId`, `releaseType`, `languageRestriction` to suitable values.

Protect the subscription form from automated form submissions!

The subscription form that invokes our API **must** have a captcha or similar mechanism in place to prevent bot attacks. If there is not, sooner or later a scanner will find your website and bots will start to abuse our API for subscription activation e-mail spamming. If such an attack is suspected, your access to the subscription API will be immediately revoked without advance notice. An attack like this can cause thousands of subscription e-mails to go out in a relatively short amount of time. When a single mailbox receives too much mail, the receiver will have trouble receiving any e-mail at all. Therefore it is possible that an unprotected subscription form is used in a Denial of Service attack against a government mailbox, as an example. **Protecting the subscription form from bot attacks is not optional!** See below for an example of an unprotected form and a protected one.



Example - creating a new subscription and activating it:

1. John Doe fills a form with their email demo@example.com and name "John Doe" at the publisher website and clicks submit
2. Publisher's backend server receives the request for a new subscription
3. Publisher's backend server makes a request to the Subscription API with appropriate headers and parameters
4. Subscription API processes the request and sends a verification email to demo@example.com
   - Subscription API returns HTTP status code 200
5. Publisher's website shows confirmation to the user and asks them to check their inbox for verification email
6. John Doe opens their inbox and finds the verification email
7. John Doe clicks the activation link in the email
   - The link opens www.sttinfo.fi, kommunikasjon.ntb.no, via.tt.se or via.ritzau.dk
8. Agency website pops up and confirms that the subscription has been activated for John Doe to demo@example.com email address.
   - Each new announcement and release will be sent to demo@example.com