



Biography - Rast'o Kužel

Mr. Rast'o Kužel is a media and election expert with over 20 years of international experience. Since 1998, he has been the Executive Director of MEMO 98, a proficient media institution with extensive experience of delivering media monitoring on behalf of international institutions as well as technical assistance to civil-society groups. Rast'o has worked as media and election analyst, consultant, and trainer, participating in some 28 OSCE/ODIHR election observation missions, most recently in Iceland, the Netherlands and Italy.

He has also worked in more than 150 election and media-related projects and missions in the framework of the UN, Council of Europe, OSCE, IFES, NED, NDI, DRI, and IMS, most recently in Moldova, Myanmar, and Ukraine. In 2011, Rast'o lead a consortium that implemented a UNDP project focusing on media assistance to public broadcaster, non-governmental organizations, and election administration in Georgia. In 2014, Rast'o worked with the European Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina as public outreach and media analyst officer, helping a network of seven non-governmental organizations in their observation activities during elections. He also has an intensive experience electoral & media related trainings of different stakeholders participating in elections, including the regulatory bodies, the media, and NGOs.

For the last four years, Rast'o has focused intensively on the issue of propaganda and disinformation, conducting a research on the impact of Russian narratives in the former Soviet Union countries and beyond, conducting [trainings](#) in media monitoring and fact checking and participating at various events focusing on this issue, including [RightsCon](#), [Beacon Project](#) or more recently the [Digital Disinformation Forum](#) at the Stanford University the main objectives of which was to network senior actors across politics, technology, academia, media, philanthropy, and activism to strengthen information integrity, particularly in the context of elections. Rast'o has also focused on the [role of social media](#) during elections and ways to tackle their negative impact on elections processes as well as ways how to [monitor](#) these trends in the context of international observation of elections. He also contributed to [publication](#) by the Foreign Policy Centre examining the ways in which the governments of former Soviet Union (FSU) look to shape international narratives about themselves by using media, social media, advertising and supportive organisations to promote their worldview and challenge the people, institutions and ideas that oppose them.

In 2015, along with six partner organizations from the Eastern Partnership Countries (EaP), Rast'o conducted a [research](#) of the Russian main channels in connection of propaganda and disinformation and evaluating the potential impact of these channels on the EaP countries.