

Annual Report

***"PROMOTING QUALITY MEDIA, DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS, AS
WELL AS DIGITAL LITERACY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT,
WORLDWIDE"***

2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
About MEMO 98	4
Key achievements	5
Projects	6
Public events	12
International missions	14
Future plans	17
Financial overview	18
Team & Contacts	19

Executive Summary



IVAN GODÁRSKY

Media & Legal Expert, MEMO 98

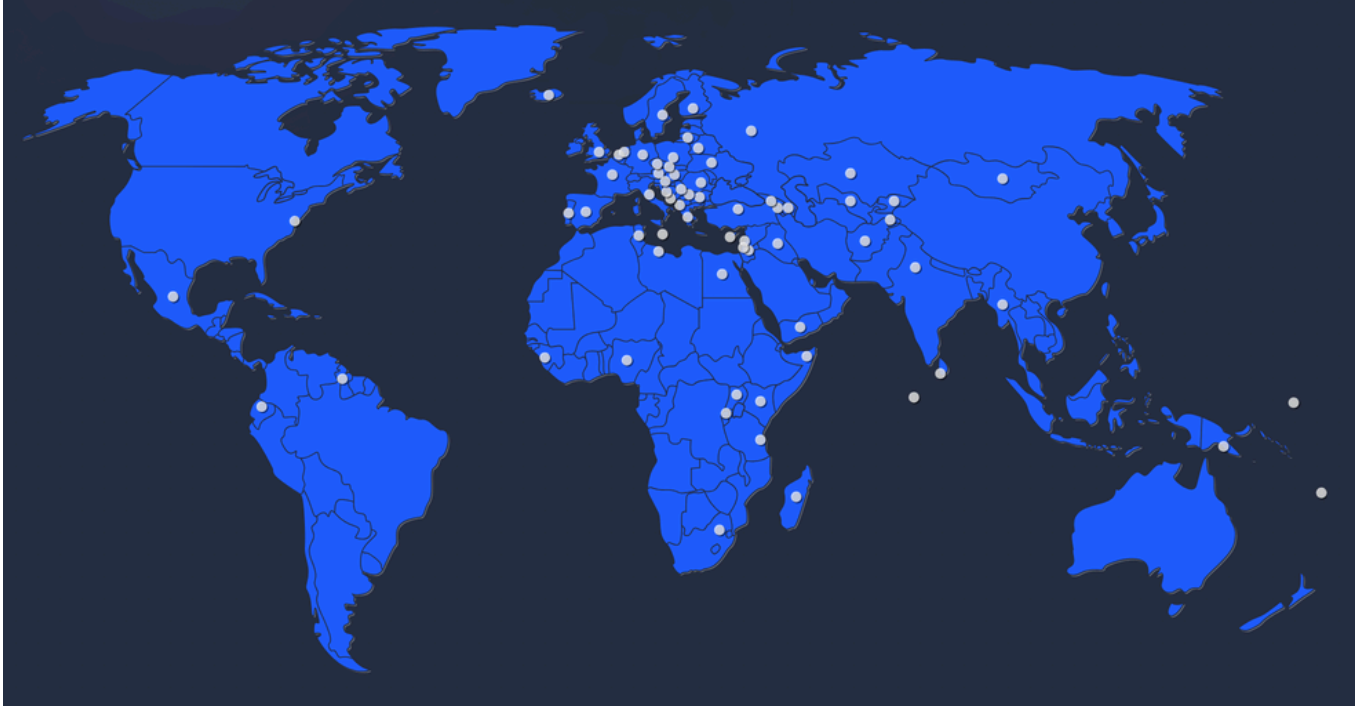
In 2022, we reached almost a quarter century since MEMO 98 was founded—an organization born out of the democratic struggle of the late 1990s and supported early on by partners like National Democratic Institute (NDI), and National Endowment for Democracy (NED). We still carry ‘98’ to remind ourselves of that critical turning point when we committed to defend democratic values through media monitoring and civic engagement.

Unfortunately, 2022 marked a historic turning point – Russia invaded our neighbour, Ukraine, and in February unleashed a full-scale war, a situation unprecedented in Europe since the end of World War II. Our activities have also shifted in several directions towards providing the greatest possible support to Ukraine and reflecting on these tragic developments.

Alongside Ukraine-related activities, we have tried to enrich our activities’ portfolio and further strengthen our role as one of key defenders of democratic integrity, civic space, and media freedom. Through project *Pioneering Anti-SLAPP Trainings for Freedom of Expression* we raised public awareness and expert knowledge in abusive legal methods against public participation, used often against critical media, journalists, activists, civil society or ordinary citizens.

We contributed to election integrity, through various types of election observation in the framework of the EU and the OSCE/ODIHR. Regularly, we participated in the events of European Platform for Democratic Elections (EPDE), a network of like minded civil society partners, reinforcing our non-governmental pro-democratic grass-roots’ engagement.

About MEMO 98



VISION

MEMO 98 envisions societies where people have free access to comprehensive, reliable, and diverse information. We strive to ensure that media serves as a pillar of democracy, enabling informed public debate and critical thinking. Through media monitoring, civic engagement, and strategic advocacy, we defend freedom, democratic values and fight disinformation. Our vision is a resilient information space where truth, accountability, and transparency thrive.

MISSION

- Monitor traditional and social media to track media manipulation, disinformation, including gender-based, and challenges to electoral integrity, resulting in democratic backsliding.
 - Deliver timely, data-driven and factual analysis to enrich public debate and empower citizens, especially first- and second-time voters.
 - Support vulnerable groups, including women and seniors, to resist disinformation and engage in democratic processes.
 - Provide technical assistance and expert legal analysis as well as advocacy to strengthen media regulation, institutional accountability, and democratic safeguards.
 - Collaborate with influencers, creatives, and media to amplify credible information through innovative and audience-specific campaigns.
 - Build partnerships with national and international actors to align Slovak democratic resilience efforts with global best practices.
-

Key achievements

In 2022, we implemented eight major projects focused on strengthening democratic participation, media freedom, and electoral integrity in Slovakia and beyond. We prepared professionals for the election observation (*EODS consortium*), trained law practitioners and prepared first-to-date Slovak curriculum concerning SLAPP and provided media expertise for the Parliament's Advisory Committee concerning new director of the public broadcaster. We organized high-level debates, briefings, and contributed to election observation missions from America to Asia. We continued to defend democratic values, drawing on a quarter century years of experience and a global network of trusted partners. Above all, we stood in support with UKRAINE in its fight for freedom against the authoritarian Russian regime.



Projects

**8 PROJECTS
IN SLOVAKIA AND ABROAD**



Public events

**OVER 10 BRIEFINGS, EXPERT
PANELS, DISCUSSIONS**



International missions

**3 ELECTION OBSERVATION
MISSIONS**

Projects



EODS III (EU)

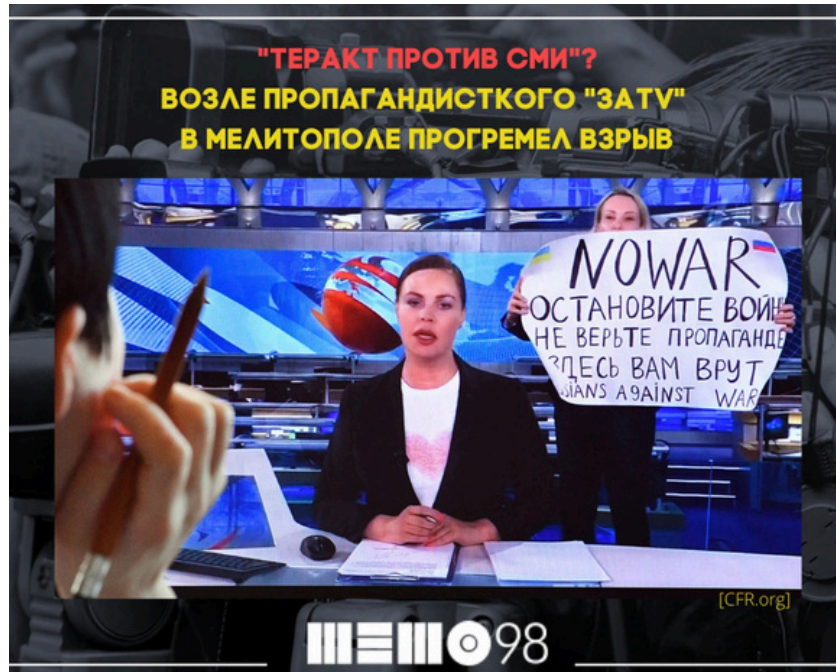
The EODS III – *Election Observation and Democracy Support* is the EU supported project that was launched in February 2021 to build on the activities and resources developed by the previous EODS and NEEDS projects with and aim to provide full support to the election observation activities conducted by the EU and to prepare potential participants of the election missions. The EODS III is led by a three partners' composed consortium, including Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), Democracy Reporting International (DRI) and MEMO 98.



EODS organises a training for Legal Analysts in EU EOMs

A training for the core team position of Legal Analyst in European Union Election Observation Missions (EU EOMs) was organised by Election Observation and Democracy Support (EODS III), from 4 until 7 October 2022, at the EODS office in Brussels. The 4-day activity aimed at providing participants with knowledge and tools to work as Legal Analysts in EU EOMs. The group of 12 participants from EU Member States, included nationals from Czech Republic, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden. Legal Analysts are principally responsible for assessing the compliance of the legal framework with international standards for democratic elections, the implementation and enforcement of national laws, and the implementation of complaints and appeals procedures.

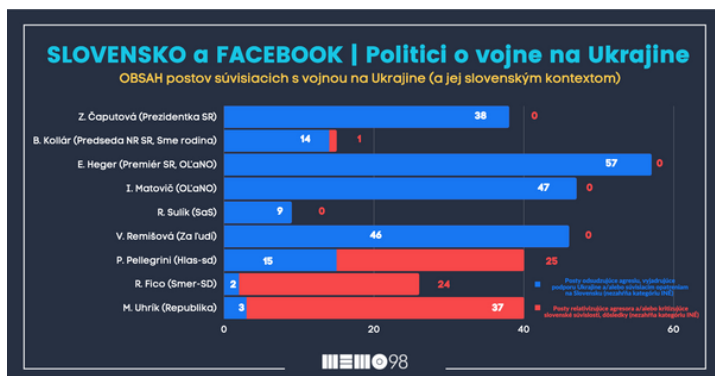
Projects



COUNTERING DISINFORMATION - MEDIA INSIGHTS (IFES)

In a reaction to a Russian aggression against Ukraine, we started to issue a regular bulletin *Media Insights – War On Ukraine / ВОЙНА НА УКРАИНЕ - Медиа Обзор* accompanied by posts through our Telegram channels *In fact, the Media / На самом деле медиа* (@nasamomdelemedia) and *Russia in Media Focus / Россия в медиа фокусе* (@glasnost2022). The bulletins and posts contained the results of the media monitoring of Russian state TV, news agencies, and online sources, complemented by news from independent international media sources to distribute these insights outside the country. The newsletter included main spotlights from Russian and international news coverage focusing on relevant information, key propaganda and disinformation narratives, statistics, quotes, expert opinions, independent views, as well as other pertinent developments.

The newsletter (25 bulletin issues and 17 short videos) were issued between May and November 2022.



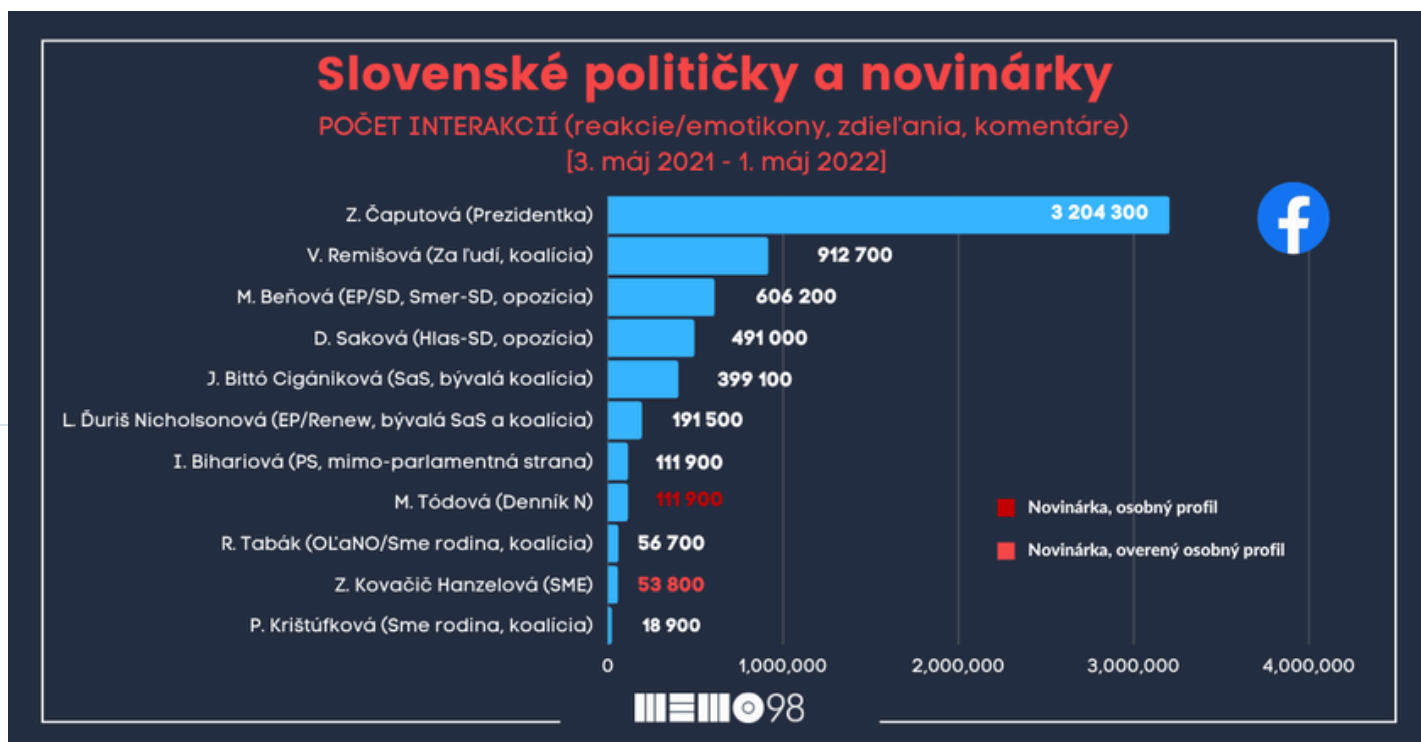
Projects

HOW ARE WOMEN POLITICIANS TREATED ON FACEBOOK (OIP)

Since 2021, MEMO 98 was engaged by the Open Information Partnership to conduct research into the vulnerabilities social media exposure by the known Slovak female journalists and politicians, including President Zuzana Čaputová in the face of disinformation and information manipulation. As part of our research, we also focused on actors who have been spreading (or have spread) disinformation on Slovak Facebook for several years, but whose activities against female politicians and journalists have not yet been systematically investigated. Specifically, we monitored thirteen actors – politicians and political parties.

This initiative highlighted the urgent need to address online violence against women in politics and media, an issue with global reach. MEMO 98's research was a natural follow-up to analyses from 2020-2021 in Fiji and Papua New Guinea (supported by the International IDEA) documenting how female politicians were disproportionately exposed to online abuse.

These projects demonstrated MEMO 98's ability to apply its expertise in different contexts and contribute to international discussions on gender equality, online safety, and democracy.



Projects



PIONEERING ANTI-SLAPP TRAINING FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (EU)

in 2022 we launched the PATFox (*Pioneering Anti-SLAPP Training for Freedom of Expression*) project, as part of a wider EU-funded initiative to counter Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs), which threaten freedom of expression and public oversight. MEMO 98 led the Slovak component of this 11-country project. The initiative focused on equipping legal professionals and law students, as well as journalists and civil society actors with the knowledge and tools to identify, resist, and defend against SLAPPs. Key results included the development of a Slovak curriculum by Dr. Tomáš Langer, LL.M., the publication of a case study (“*Konspiratori.sk vs Hlavne spravy*”) in Slovak and English, and the delivery of expert workshops for lawyers and public-interest defenders. The project enhanced awareness, legal preparedness, and resilience among target groups while reinforcing broader protections for investigative journalism and civic engagement.

LOCAL CURRICULUM SLAPP IN SLOVAKIA



Projects

FAKTY ALEBO VÝMYSLY ONLINE

POKIAL ČÍTATE ČLÁNOK, O KTOROM MÁTE POCHYBNOSŤ, PREVERTE HO POMOCOU NIŽŠIE UVEDENÝCH KRITÉRIÍ. DÔVERYHODNÝ ČLÁNOK BY MAL NAPŔIŤ ČO NAJVIAC Z NICH.

SPRAVODAJSTVO

Uvádza fakty, informuje o tom čo, kedy a kde sa stalo. Informácie sú overené viacerými zdrojmi. Názory a komentáre sú jasne oddelené od správ.

AUTOR

Je podpísaný(á) pod článkom, stojí za ním a je zaň zodpovedný. O autorovi(ke) sa dá dozvedieť viac, nebojí sa rozprávať o svojej práci a verejne prezentovať svoje názory.

NADPIS

Nepokúša sa upútať pozornosť formou nesúvisiacich výrokov či prehánaním.

FOTOGRAFIE

Sú dodatočné vizuálne informácie s uvedenými zdrojmi. Popisky zodpovedajú fotografiám. Fotografie neboli účelovo pozmenené s cieľom manipulovať alebo zavádzať.

VYVÁŽENOSŤ

Všetky dotknuté strany majú priestor vyjadriť svoj názor. Žiadna strana nie je uprednostnená, či očiernená na úkor inej. Názory a komentáre sú uvedené v kontexte problému a môžu zahŕňať vyjadrenia expertov.

NEPRAVDY A KONŠPIRAČNÉ TEÓRIE

Objektívny autor stavia na overených faktoch a vyjadreniach expertov / relevantných ľudí, nie na svojich špekuláciách. Autor úmyselne neklame.

MANIPULÁCIA

Autor sa môže pokúsiť niečo docieľiť tým, že bude apelovať na vaše emócie. Toto nemusí byť problematické samo osebe, nedá sa to však nazvať spravodajstvom.

Prečo by Vám vlastne niekto chcel klamať?
PRETOČTE STRANU→

VYTVORILO MEMO98 PODĽA MATERIÁLOV EXPIDA Transitions

JE V KAŽDOM VTÍPE ZRNKO PRAVDY?

NIE VŽDY. INTERNET JE PLNÝ KLAMSTIEV, POLOPRAVD A MANIPULÁCIÍ, KTORÉ MÔŽU BYŤ NEBEZPEČNÉ.

PREČO BY TO ALE NIEKTO ROBIL?

SATIRA / HUMOR

Mnoho nedorozumení je zapríčinených zdieľaním vymyslených informácií, ktorých originálny účel bola satira alebo vtíp.

OMYL = ZLÁ ŽURNALISTIKA?

Chyby sa stávajú, reportéri nie sú neomylní. Je možné, že informáciu zle overia, alebo sa chytiť na návnadu. Je dôležité, aby omyl priznali a napravili.

TROLLING

"Trollovia" sa vyžívajú v tom, že hnevajú iných ľudí. Nemajú záujem o diskusiu, chcú ostatných "vytočiť". Vymýšľajú klamstvá s cieľom nachytať ľudí a médiá, niektorí sú za to dokonca platení.

NEZNALOSŤ

Na sociálnych médiách sa často zdieľajú neoverené informácie.

PRESTÍŽ / POPULARITA

Sociálne médiá podporujú v ľuďoch pocity jedinečnosti. Je pritažlivé byť populárny a ovplyvňovať mnoho ľudí, občas kvôli tomu klamať alebo manipulovať niektorým stojí za to.

FINANČNÝ ZISK

Senzácie, šokujúce/neuveriteľné informácie, či konšpirácie upútajú pozornosť, vďaka čomu sú aj zdrojom príjmu formou reklamy. Čím viac kliknutí na článok, tým väčší zisk.

PODVODNÉ EMAILY

Niektorí chcú vašu pozornosť, osobné dáta alebo peniaze, a urobí takmer hocíčo, aby ich získal.

POLITICKÁ PROPAGANDA

Snaha získať podporu pre politickú stranu/kandidáta (alebo naopak dehonestovať inú/iného). K jej metódam patrí aj šírenie klamstiev, manipulácií a nenávisti, s cieľom zneistiť a rozdeliť spoločnosť.

ÚMYSELNÉ UBLIŽENIE

Anonymita na internete umožňuje ublížiť, ponížiť, ohovárať a šikanovať ostatných pomocou klamstiev a manipulácií.

ČO ROBIŤ? Vyberte si dôveryhodné zdroje podľa návodu na prvej strane, napanikárte, nepodielajte sa na šírení neoverených informácií. Aj keď to myslíte dobre, špeciálne v krízových situáciách je šírenie poplašnej správy trestné. Nezúfajme však, POZITÍVNE INICIATÍVY A VZÁJOMNÁ POMOČ MNOHONÁSOBNE PREVAŽUJÚ snahy tých, ktorí súčasnú situáciu zneužívajú.

COUNTERING DISINFORMATION WITH SENIORS (NED, GOOGLE)

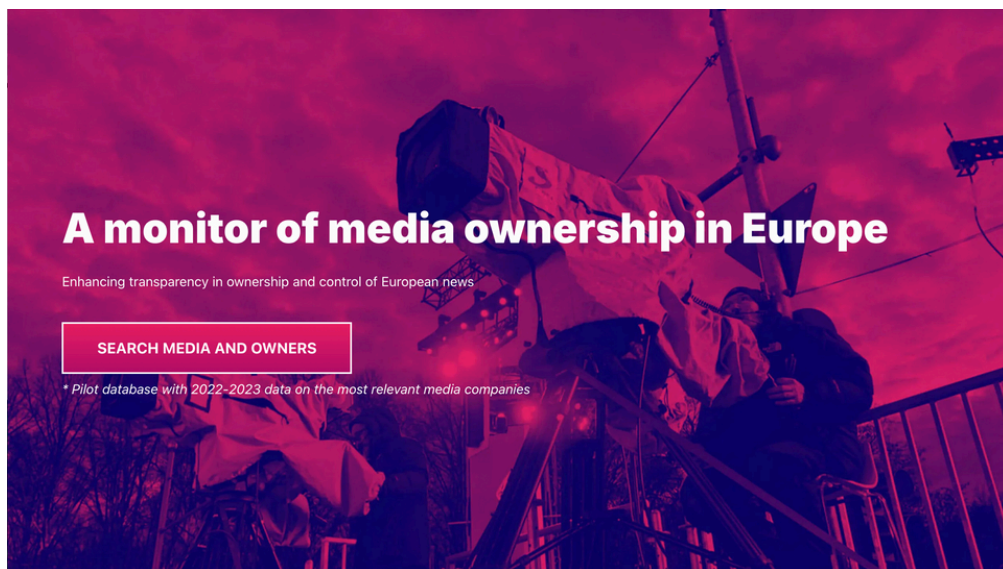
MEMO 98 and its partners (Czech organization Transitions and also partners from Poland and Hungary) continued to advance media literacy among older adults through the projects supported the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The initiative delivered more than 20 educational activities—including targeted workshops, inter-generational discussions, and training-of-trainers sessions aimed at building local capacities. In total, over 200 seniors were actively engaged. The project strengthened media and to some aspects digital resilience, encouraged informed civic engagement, and fostered meaningful inter-generational dialogue in an era of rapidly advancing technological change.

Projects

EUROMEDIA OWNERSHIP MONITOR EU12 (EU)

MEMO 98 partnered with 11 academic institutions in the EurOMo (Euromedia Ownership Monitor) project - a pilot project, co-funded by the European Commission as part of the European Democracy Action Plan. The monitoring instrument drew on the experience of the [Euromedia Research Group \(EMRG\)](#). This is a network of researchers based in EU Higher Education Institutions with over 30 years experience in research and knowledge dissemination on media politics and economics in Europe and beyond, including the operationalisation of the [Media for Democracy Monitor \(MDM\)](#). The EMRG established the research consortium that operated EurOMo, under the guidance of the University of Salzburg.

The EurOMo had a single mission: enhance transparency of news media ownership and control in EU countries. It monitors media ownership and control by publishing databases with information on ownership and control of the most relevant news media in all EU countries, media ownership laws and relations between digital platforms and news media; findings such as country reports, ownership networks of cross-country media companies and an index to comparatively assess the level of transparency of information on ownership and control across EU countries.



EurOMo, in numbers

620+

News media

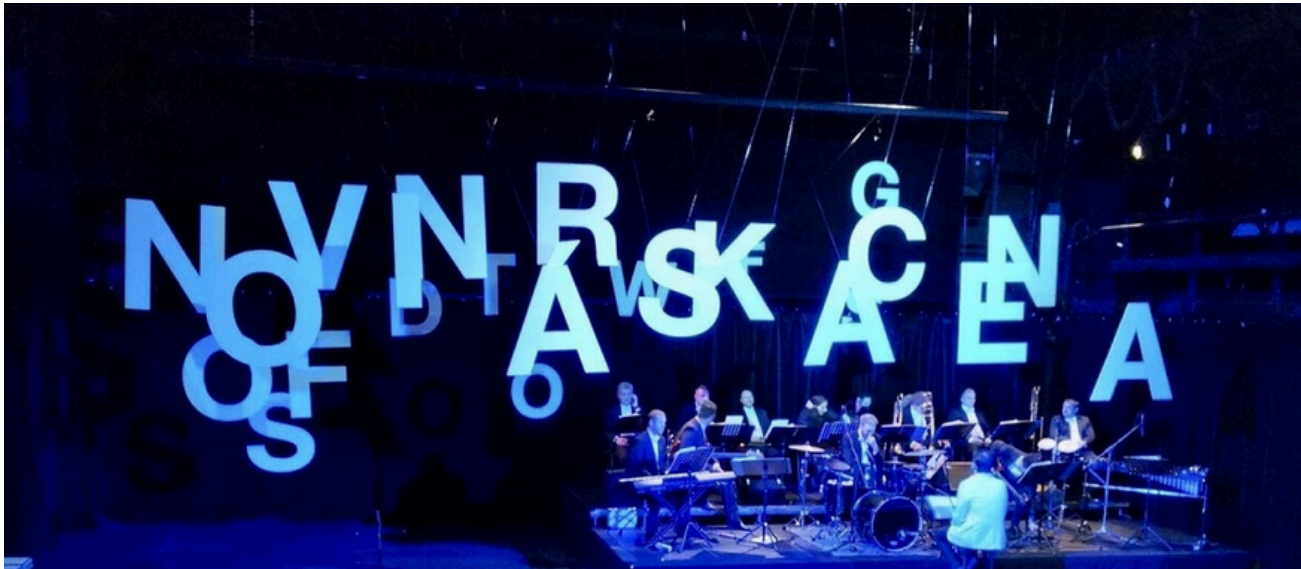
2,600+

Shareholders

100+

Researchers involved

Public events



THE JOURNALISM AWARD 2021 (18TH EDITION)

MEMO 98 has been a partner of the most prestigious journalism award over a decade (since 2005). The award is to recognise and highlight quality journalism and to award the excellent journalists' work. In the long term, the Award, announced by the Open Society Foundation, is interested in promoting media freedom and highlighting the indispensable role of independent journalism for a free society and a functioning democracy.

For five years (2017-21) Solutions Journalism Award was honoured as of the special awards during the annual ceremony, under MEMO 98 auspices. Winners included journalists from *Týždeň* (Denisa Gdovinová 2x, Filip Olšovský), *Denník N* (Juraj Koník), *SME* (Micheala Žureková) and *Euractiv* (Marián Koreň, picture below is from this year's awarded article "EU subsidies are driving birds away from our fields. The story of the corncrake gives hope that this can still be stopped").



Public events

BRIEFINGS, DEBATES AND DISCUSSIONS

In 2022, MEMO 98 played an important role in shaping public discussions on electoral integrity, role of election oversight bodies. MEMO 98 also participated in several expert analyses and consultations media matters, most importantly on public media, that has started already in 2021. During the year, Ministry of Culture invited MEMO 98 representatives (alongside its partners from Transparency International Slovensko and Reporters Without Borders) to offer an expert view on public media independence.

Ivan Godársky was part of the 15-members expert committee, an *ad hoc* advisory panel established by the Parliamentary Committee for Media and Culture for the selection of a new general director of RTVS, Slovak public broadcaster. As a result, Ľuboš Machaj, one of the recommended candidates from among the eight hearings was in June elected in the Parliament.



International missions

In 2022, MEMO 98 experts played significant roles in international election missions and projects, contributing their expertise across a range of electoral contexts.

Marek Mračka acted as Press Officer for the EU Election Observation Mission in Kenya for the country's general election, where he coordinated all public communications, organized press events, and supported the delivery of the mission's key messages to both domestic and international audiences. Earlier in the year, he worked as a Media Analyst for the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission for the presidential and early parliamentary elections in Serbia.



International missions

Ivan Godársky served as a Media Analyst for the OSCE/ODIHR Limited Election Observation Mission to the United States to the Mid-Term Congressional Elections. He assessed the legal and regulatory framework governing media coverage, monitored the fairness and pluralism of media reporting, and briefed the mission leadership on emerging challenges. His work provided valuable input into the final recommendations aimed at assessing media independence and equitable access for all electoral contestants.



International missions

MEMO 98 contributed to resilience building and international standards-based election reporting in Georgia.

Rasťo Kužel conducted a training for the Central Election Commission (CEC) and media representatives under the auspices of the Council of Europe. The program addressed best practices in election reporting, with a strong emphasis on countering disinformation and preparing for the challenges posed by artificial intelligence in electoral contexts. By equipping stakeholders with practical tools and knowledge, the training enhanced the professional capacity of both election administrators and journalists. Earlier in the year, he provided online training to the Georgian CEC on building resilience to disinformation in elections. The sessions emphasized recognizing manipulative narratives, strengthening internal protocols, and enhancing communication strategies to counter disinformation. This remote engagement supported the Commission's ongoing efforts to safeguard electoral integrity despite increasing digital threats.

In addition, with UNDP and EU, he assisted to build the capacity of Georgian civil society organizations in media monitoring through trainings, evaluating and supervising local CSOs performance in their media monitoring activities ahead of the local elections. Using both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods, he helped them to develop long-term sustainability and independence, ensuring their ability to monitor media and contribute to democratic processes beyond the project's duration.

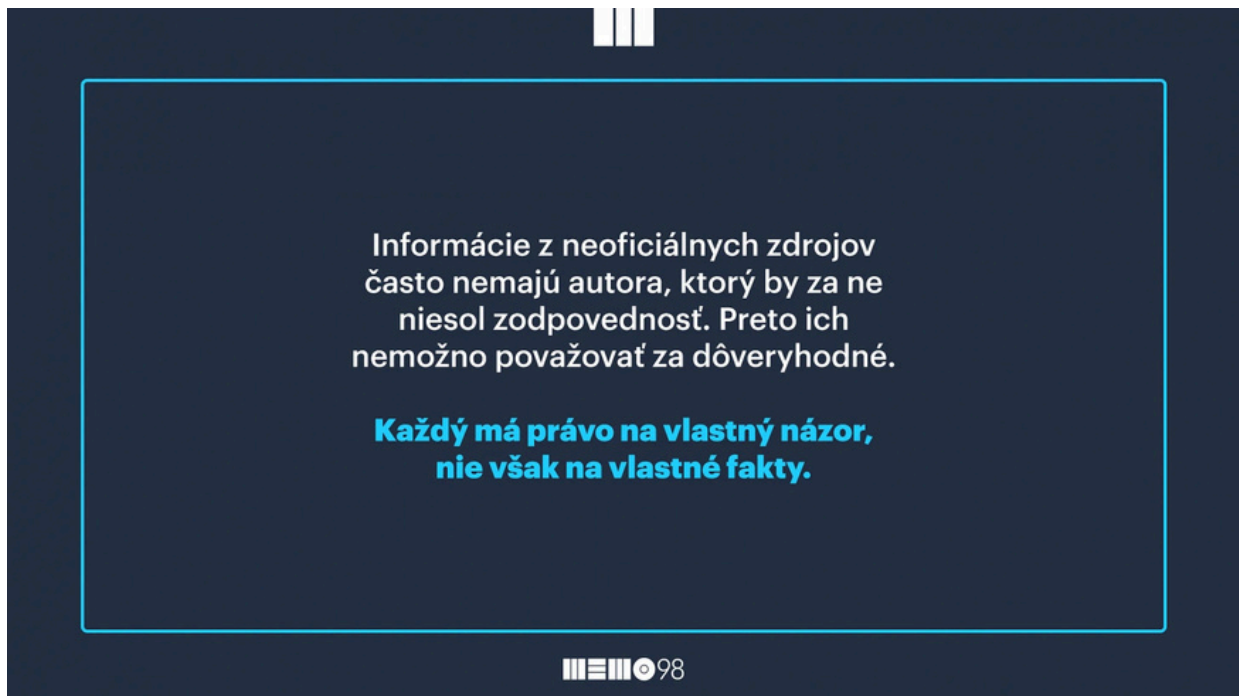


Rasťo Kužel played also a role in Cyprus.

He collaborated with the Center for Information Resilience on a project funded by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, focused on hostile information operations and disinformation in Cyprus. His work involved monitoring and analyzing the Cypriot Archbishop election through the lens of hostile state influence, domestic disinformation, and broader information operations. Using open-source intelligence (OSINT) methods, he contributed to research that identified patterns of manipulation and influence, strengthening resilience against disinformation campaigns.

Future plans

In the upcoming years, 2023-24 primarily, MEMO 98 will focus on strengthening Slovakia's democratic resilience by enhancing electoral integrity, by providing expert assessments of the public media and the current media ownership, by conducting digital literacy activities, by countering disinformation and by fostering civic engagement. Importantly, the organization will continue its media monitoring activities to detect and expose long-term Slovakia and foreign propaganda trends, as manifested in hybrid threats originating in Russia. These insights will inform strategic communication campaigns and legal advocacy efforts aimed at protecting the integrity of democratic institutions.



Information from unofficial sources often has no author to take responsibility for it. Therefore, it cannot be considered reliable.
Everyone has the right to their own opinion, but not to their own facts.

Education, media literacy and civic engagement remains core priorities, with special emphasis on regional outreach and inclusion of underrepresented groups. Through expertise, public debates and youth engagement, MEMO 98 will highlight democratic values and importance of civil society. The organization will also advocate for critical media and independent electoral oversight mechanisms. Overall, MEMO 98 aims to help preserve democratic standards in Slovakia while contributing to broader regional initiatives to resist democratic challenges.

2022 Financial Overview

MEMO 98 implemented a wide range of impactful projects supported by trusted international donors. Thanks to their financial contributions, we were able to carry out strategic work in media monitoring, democratic participation, countering disinformation, and media literacy – both in Slovakia and abroad. Below is a summary of all donor fundings:

Project Title	Donor	Amount
EODS III Election Observation and Democracy Support (2021-24)	EU	EUR 19,200
European Voters - Together for Electoral Integrity (2021-23)	European Exchange	EUR 0
Seniors and Disinformation in V4, Countering Disinformation Among Vulnerable Populations (2021-22, 2022-24)	National Endowment for Democracy (NED), Google, Transitions (<i>combined</i>)	USD 18,100
How Are Women Politicians Treated in Social Media (2021-22)	Open Information Partnership (OIP)	GBP 5,950
Fostering Professional and Objective Reporting (2022)	NED, Birodi	USD 4,300
Countering Disinformation in Eurasia - Media Insights (2022)	International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)	USD 31,850
Euromedia Ownership Monitor EU12 (2022-23)	EU	EUR 2,200
PATFox Pioneering Anti-SLAPP Training for Freedom of Expression (2022-24)	EU	EUR 11,450

Team & Contacts



Rasto Kužel

kuzel@memo98.sk



Ivan Godársky

ivang@memo98.sk



Marek Mračka

marekm@memo98.sk

Senior mediálny analytik



Olena Sadovnik-Galamon



Laksiej Lavončyk



Iryna Chupryna



Kira Kalinina



Veronica Laputská



Petra Richterová



Dumitru Lazur

Sociálne média a analytik dát



Samuel Mračka



Branislav Kohn

Website

www.memo98.sk | www.infovolby.sk

Social media

facebook.com/memo98.sk
instagram.com/memo_98_sk/
x.com/memo98slovakia

Email

memo98@memo98.sk

Phone

+421 903 581 591

Address

Štefana Králik 1/A, 84108 Bratislava, Slovakia