Dr. Kris Ruijgrok

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Google Scholar

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About

I am a researcher with 10+ years of experience in investigating the interaction between democracy and digital technology. I use mixed methods research designs to analyze and expose the challenges and opportunities of digital technologies.

Employment

2024 Aug-present — **Assistant Professor - University of Amsterdam**
Political science department, program group Transnational Configurations Conflict and Governance. Studying digital authoritarianism in South and South-East Asia India. Teaching in the Interdisciplinary Social Science bachelor.

2023 Apr – 2025 Aug — **Post-Doctoral Researcher at KITLV – University of Leiden**
Co-coordinator of the research project Cybertroopers in South-East Asia which studies comparatively how social media-based public opinion manipulation is organized in Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia.

2023 Oct – 2024 Dec — **Post-Doctoral Researcher – University of Amsterdam**
Part of the Digital Citizenship group, studying participatory propaganda and online influence operations from Russia.

2021 Mar – 2023 Mar
2018 Sept – 2019 Dec — **Lecturer and Researcher at PPLE College - University of Amsterdam**
I designed and taught courses in political science, including IR, Research Methods, and Conflict & Cooperation and supervised BSc theses on the theme Internet & Democracy.

2020 Jan – 2021 Mar — **Information Controls Fellowship - Open Technology Fund**
Research project on the politics behind India's internet shutdowns. I conducted fieldwork in India, interviewing officials who issue the shutdowns, and analyzed subnational data.

2014 Feb – 2018 Jul — **PhD Candidate – University of Amsterdam**
Using a mixed-methods approach, my PhD project studied the interaction between social media and protest in authoritarian regimes. Conducted fieldwork in Malaysia and supervised a nation-wide survey.

2011 Sept – 2014 Apr — **Junior Lecturer in Political Science – University of Amsterdam**
Teaching courses in IR, Academic Skills, and Research Methods.

Education

2014 Feb – 2018 Jul — **University of Amsterdam – PhD**
Supervised by prof. dr. Marlies Glasius & dr. Ursula Daxecker. Defended in July 2018.

2011 Sept - 2012 Aug — **University of Amsterdam – Masters of Education**
Post-Graduate Certificate in Education for social sciences including a year-long internship at a secondary school.

2009 Sept - 2011 Jan — **University of Amsterdam – Masters Political Science**

(International Relations)
Graduated *cum laude* with a thesis on the potential pacifying effects of oil wealth under the supervision of prof. dr. Andrea Ruggeri.

Peer-reviewed publications

Books:

Ruijgrok, K. (2021) *Internet Use and Protest in Malaysia and other Authoritarian Regimes: Challenging Information Scarcity*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9783030683245#aboutBook

Glasius, M., de Lange, M., Bartman, J., Dalmasso, E., Del Sordi, A., Lv. A., Michaelsen, M., Ruijgrok, K. (2018). *Research, Ethics and Risk in the Authoritarian Field*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007%2F978-3-319-68966-1

Peer-reviewed articles:

Ruijgrok, K., Berenschot, W., Sastramidjaja, Y., Gaw, F., Sombatpoonsiri, J., Wijayanto, & Agonos, M. J. (2026). Influence operations 2.0: the evolution of social media manipulation in Southeast Asia. *Information, Communication & Society*, 1–21.

Ruijgrok, K., Berenschot, W., Gaw, F., Sombatpoonsiri, J., Wijayanto, Agonos, M. J., & Sastramidjaja, Y. (2025). Towards the Comparative Study of Domestic Influence Operations: Cyber Troops and Elite Competition in Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand. *Political Communication*, 1–21.

Gaw, F., Agonos, M. J., Ruijgrok, K., & Suarez, G. (2025). Influence Operations as Brokerage: Political-Economic Infrastructures of Manipulation in the 2022 Philippine Elections. *The International Journal of Communication*, 19, 1533–1553.

Sombatpoonsiri, J., Tyler Williams, S., & Ruijgrok, K. (2025). Ramping up control: how judicial harassment and online smear campaigns work in tandem to limit dissent in Thailand. *Democratization*, 1–28.

Wijayanto, Berenschot, W. Sastramidjaja, Y. Ruijgrok, K. (2024) The Infrastructure of Domestic Influence Operations: Cyber Troops and Public Opinion Manipulation Through Social Media in Indonesia. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*.

Michaelsen, M. Ruijgrok, K. (2024). Autocracy's Long Reach: Explaining Host Country Influences on Transnational Repression. *Democratization*, 31(2), 290-314

Ruijgrok, K. (2022). The authoritarian practice of issuing internet shutdowns in India: the Bharatiya Janata Party's direct and indirect responsibility, *Democratization*, 29(4), 611-633

Ruijgrok, K. (2021). Illusion of Control: how internet use increases anti-regime sentiment in authoritarian regimes. *Contemporary Politics*, 27(3), 247-270.

Ruijgrok, K. (2017). From the Web to the Streets: Internet and Protests in Authoritarian Regimes. *Democratization*, 24(30), 498-520. Awarded with the Frank Cass award 2017 for best article by a young scholar published in Democratization.

Book chapters:

Michaelsen, M., Ruijgrok, K. Digital Authoritarianism. In Anne Wolf (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Authoritarian Politics* (online edn, Oxford Academic, 23 Jan. 2024)
https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198871996.013.59

Book Reviews

Ruijgrok, K. (2021). [Review of the book *Autocracy & Resistance in the Internet Age*, by Rachel Vanderhill]. *Democratization*. https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2021.1948017

Ruijgrok, K. (2020). [Review of the book *The internet and political protest in autocracies*, by Nils B. Weidmann and Espen Geelmuyden Rød]. *Democratization.* https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2020.1732931

Non-academic publications:

Research Reports:

Ruijgrok, K. (2021). Understanding India's Troubling Rise in Internet Shutdowns: A Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis. https://www.opentech.fund/news/understanding-indias-troubling-rise-in-internet-shutdowns/

Grants

2026: Part of Horizon Europe (call: HORIZON-CL2-2025-01) consortium (3.5 million euro). Personal grant as Workpackage leader Digital Authoritarianism (81.333 euro)
2024: RPA Polarization UvA seed grant worth €15000 for the project *Translating Disinformation: How Polarizing Russian Propaganda is Appropriated in the Dutch Conspiracy Milieu* (with Jaron Harambam and Boris Noordenbos)
2023: RPA Polarization UvA Starting grant worth €5000 (with Jaron Harambam and Boris Noordenbos)
2020: Controls Fellowship at the Open Technology Fund worth $45.600

PhD Supervision

Anaškin, Eduard. (started 09-2024). Civil Society in Exile: Russian anti-war émigrés and contentious practices of transnational organizing

Media Performances

2026: Interview NOS, Internetblokkades komen wereldwijd vaker voor, meestal heel lokaal en kort. (31/1)
2025: Newsarticle based on research in Kompas (Indonesian newspaper) Pasukan Siber, Industri Bayangan yang Menggerus Demokrasi (26/8)
2025: Newsarticle based on research in Antaranews (Indonesian newspaper) Warek Undip: Kualitas ruang digital pengaruhi kualitas demokrasi. (22/8)
2023: Interview Deccan Herald (Indian newspaper). Government Fails to maintain records on internet shutdowns. (18/03)
2022: Interview The Wire (Indian news platform). Mapping the Rising Internet Shutdowns in India Since 2016. (22/10)
2021: Interview Globo (Brazilian newspaper). Índia lidera ranking de 'apagões' de internet pelo terceiro ano consecutivo, e pesquisador alerta para risco à democracia. (7/7)
2021: Interview Newsclick (Indian news platform): Why is the Indian State Increasingly Relying on Internet Shutdowns? (18/9)
2021: Scroll.in (Interview Indian news platform): BJP-run states 250% more prone to internet shutdown, finds new study. (22/06)
2021: Newsclick (Indian news platform): India Imposed Most Internet Shutdowns in World, BJP-Ruled States 3.5 Times More Likely to be Affected (23/6)
2021: Interview Bureau Buitenland, NPO Radio 1. De Indiase overheid en Facebook wakkeren samen moslimhaat aan. (1/12)
2021: Interview Bureau Buitenland, NPO Radio 1. India is kampioen internet blokkeren. (5/7)
2020: Op-ed. Het Parool (newspaper). De autoritaire staat is online nooit almachtig. (19/9)
2019: Interview NOS Met het Oog op Morgen, NPO Radio 1. Waarom de Maleisische premier twijfelt aan het MH17-bewijs. (20/6)
2018: Interview Bureau Buitenland, NPO Radio 1. Maleisië vordert honderden miljoenen van Goldman Sachs. (12/11)
2018: Interview Trouw (newspaper). Ondermijnen Facebook en Twitter onze democratie? (27/08)
2018: Interview Bureau Buitenland, NPO Radio 1. Zomer Express 2018. (23/07)
2018: Interview Nederlands Dagblad (newspaper). Internet verandert meer dan de dictator lief is. (04/07)
2018: Interview Bureau Buitenland, NPO Radio 1. Alles of Niets voor de Maleisische Premier. (07/05)

2017: Op-ed. De Volkskrant (newspaper). 21 Ideeën voor een beter internet. (17/06)
2017: Op-ed, Open Democracy. Doing it the Malaysian Way. (07/03)
2016: Interview Bureau Buitenland, NPO Radio 1. Bersih in Maleisië. (18/11)
2016: Interview Vrij Nederland (magazine). De oplossers: Hoe moeten we omgaan met Erdogan? (24/08)

Academic Conferences:

2026: The Infrastructure of Online Influence Operations, Amsterdam
2025: ECPR, Thessaloniki
2025: Online Influence Operations in South East Asia, Semarang
2025: Who are the enemies of democracy? DRD Annual Workshop, Budapest
2025: Resisting autocracy, Annual Conference of the European Governance and Politics Programme, Florence
2025: Digital Methods in Researching Authoritarian Contexts, Amsterdam
2024: Methods of Misinformation, Amsterdam (workshop organizer)
2024: EUROSEAS, Amsterdam (panel convener)
2024: EDMO, Amsterdam
2023: ECPR, Prague
2023: CDCP, Brussels
2023: Workshop Studying Cybertroopers, Amsterdam (workshop organizer)
2022: Shutdown Getdown, Oxford Internet Institute, Oxford.
2022: Methodological Challenges of Studying Social Media, Leiden.
2018: Authoritarian Practices Beyond National Regimes Conference, Amsterdam.
2018: Annual Conference on International Studies in the 21st Century, Stockholm.
2018: Politicologenetmaal, Leiden.
2017: American Political Science Association, San Francisco.
2017: Telecommunication Politics in Authoritarian Contexts, St. Gallen.
2017: International Studies Association, Baltimore (panel convener).
2016: International Studies Association, Atlanta.
2015: ENCoRe Meeting, Bonn.

Non-Academic Conferences/Presentations:

2023: Presentation for CitizenLab: Influence operations in Southeast Asia (9/12)
2022: RighsCon, Summit: The rise of authoritarianism and the role of big tech (10/6)
2021: Internet Governance Forum. Session: Error 404 - Freedom of Speech not found (7/12)
2021: RightsCon, Summit. Session: Voicing the shutdowns, with a focus on Asia (8/6)
2021: SFLC.in' Online Panel on Mapping and Fighting Internet Shutdowns around the World (16/7)
2021: Course IR/IP at the University of Amsterdam (6/10)
2020: PPLE Talent Development Program (13/11)
2020: Course IR/IP at the University of Amsterdam (6/10)
2020: RightsCon, Summit. Session 'Courts, tech, and policy: the fight to #LetTheNetWork' (30/7)
2017: Course 'Globalization' for ASW students at the UvA (22/4)
2017: Refugee Lecture Series at the UvA (5/3)
2016: Moderator at symposium from SIB Leiden on natural resources (20/4)
2016: Course 'Globalization" for ASW students at the UvA(15/4)
2015: The symposium 'Het Midden-Oosten van Paul Aarts' (12/6)
2013: Course 'Democracy and Dictatorship in the Middle East' for pol. sci. students at the UvA (21/11)

Teaching

- Bachelor Thesis Supervision ISW, 2026
- Bachelor Thesis Supervision ISW, 2025
- Advanced Quantitative Research Methods, 2024.
- Bachelor Thesis Supervision on Democratic Backsliding and Authoritarian Politics (with S. Kouwagam), 2022
- Bachelor Thesis Supervision on Internet, Social Media & Democracy (with T. Hill), 2021
- Bachelor Thesis Supervision on Sustainability in GVC (with G. Dik), 2019
- Rhetorics, 2021. Evaluation (8.1/10)
- Introduction to Statistical Analysis, 2022. Evaluation (7.8/10)
- Introduction to Statistical Analysis, 2021. Evaluation (7.7/10)

- Skills and Research Methods for Pol. Sci, 2023. (9/10)
- Skills and Research Methods for Pol. Sci, 2022. Evaluation (8.5/10)
- Skills and Research Methods for Pol. Sci, 2021. Evaluation (9.4/10)
- Skills and Research Methods for Pol. Sci, 2019. Evaluation (8.7/10)
- Conflict and Cooperation in Global Politics, 2019. Evaluation (8.9/10)
- Security: Sustainability in Coffee's GVC, 2019. Evaluation (8.3/10)
- Transnational Governance, 2022. Evaluation. (8.7/10)
- Transnational Governance, 2019. Evaluation (8.8/10)
- Transnational Governance, 2018. Evaluation (8.3/10)
- International Relations (IR/IP). 2022. Evaluation 2022 (8.5/10)
- International Relations (IR/IP). 2021. Evaluation (8/10)
- International Relations (IR/IP) (with L. Hall), 2019. Evaluation (8.5/10)
- International Relations (IR/IP). 2018. Evaluation (7.2/10)
- Authoritarianism in a Global Age (with J. Bartman), 2017. Evaluation (8.4/10)
- Authoritarianism in a Global Age (with J. Bartman), 2016. Evaluation (6.7/10)
- Research Methods, 2015: Evaluation (7.7/10)
- Research Methods, 2014: Evaluation (7.6/10)
- Academic Skills, 2013: Evaluation (7.7/10)
- Core Module International Relations, 2013: Evaluation (7.9/10)
- Core Module International Relations, 2012: Evaluation (8.1/10)
- Academic Skills, 2012: Evaluation (8.4/10)
- Introduction to International Relations, 2012: Evaluation (8.2/10)
- Introduction to International Relations, 2011: Evaluation (8.2/10)

Fieldwork

2025, Indonesia
2024: India
2023: Philippines, Thailand
2020: India
2016: Malaysia

Professional Services

2026: Roundtable-participant, Nexus of Cyber and Info Operations in Hybrid Warfare, organised by CENS RSIS
2025: Discussant, ECPR: Panel on Digital Authoritarianism
2023 - present: International Panel on the Information Environment (IPIE).
2023: Discussant, ECPR: Panel on Digital Authoritarianism
2021 - 2023: Chair of Program Committee PPLE, UvA (overseeing quality of the program).
2017: Discussant, The Empirical Study of Autocracy (ESTA), Konstanz.
2017: Roundtable-participant, American Political Science Association, San Francisco.

Manuscript reviewer for:

American Journal of Political Science, Democratization, Routledge, Journal of Peace Research, Government & Opposition, International Interactions, *Palgrave Macmillan, Nature Human Behaviour*

Languages

Dutch: native
English: fluent (Cambridge Proficiency Certificate)
French: sufficient
German: sufficient

Software

Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint): Excellent
SPSS: Excellent
STATA: Excellent

Atlas TI: Good
QGIS: Good
R: sufficient