

Talenta Labs and criminal capital: how an IT company entered the orbit of 'Ndrangheta

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Talenta Labs and criminal capital: how an IT company entered the orbit of 'Ndrangheta

The case of Talenta Labs stands out as a rare example of a small IT firm, with a statutory capital of just €50,000, unexpectedly ending up at the center of an international money-laundering investigation.

On paper, Talenta Labs is a software developer for online casinos. However, as a result of the investigation, it turned out that it is a link in a chain where investment funds, defendants in criminal cases, and the shadows of the Calabrian mafia 'Ndrangheta intersect.

As in most cases, journalists were the first to notice the unusual processes happening around Talenta Labs. And only after the OCCRP project released its investigation into the penetration of criminal capital into the European gambling business did the Italian prosecutor's office pay attention to the company.

Why Talenta Labs attracted attention

Talenta Labs first came into OCCRP's view in 2019. The investigators' attention was drawn to the 2017 deal when the Dutch fund Ramphastos Investments acquired 80% of the company. Formally, it was a standard acquisition of an IT developer to strengthen positions in the online gambling market. But it soon became clear that the deal was connected to a broader network of assets in the gambling industry, involving persons already under investigation. Moreover, the

source of part of the investments raised questions.

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According to the OCCRP investigation, the purchase of Talenta was not an isolated deal but part of a series of acquisitions, including the operator SKS365, whose founders were also suspected of ties to the mafia.

As previously reported by OCCRP, the Investigative Reporting Project Italy (IRPI) and De Groene Amsterdammer, the Talenta deal was preceded by the fund's purchase of a different gambling operator, SKS365, for 158 million euros (US\$173 million). That company's four founders, including its former head, Paolo Tavarelli, were accused of building the business with the help of mafia money and connections. They are now awaiting trial.

After the OCCRP investigation was published, law enforcement agencies took up the company. The Italian prosecutor's office, particularly the office in Reggio Calabria, viewed Talenta Labs not as the primary object of the crime but as a tool. The main claims boil down to three blocks: money laundering through purchase; ties to 'Ndrangheta and the presence of hidden beneficiaries.

The investigation believes that around 2.5 million euros used in the acquisition of Talenta may have come from criminal activities. One of the company's co-owners, Massimiliano Rizzo, was convicted for illegal gambling business and, according to prosecutors, acted as a contact person for 'Ndrangheta boss Rocco Femmia.

The investigation also claimed that Talenta has a hidden ownership structure, including interests of persons not formally listed in the documents. In particular, it concerned the informal involvement of Paolo Tavarelli, a figure in cases of mafia financing of the gambling business. Meanwhile, the investors themselves (Ramphastos Investments) denied conscious participation in illegal schemes and stated that they acted within the law.

But in the latest twist of the long-running probe, Boekhoorn and his partners are now accused of funding their Talenta purchase with about 2.5 million euros (\$2.7 million) that prosecutors believe came from Tavarelli's alleged criminal activities.

According to the new indictment, Tavarelli maintained a hidden financial interest in Talenta Ventures BV though his name never formally appeared in the firm's filings.

In an April 2019 interview with OCCRP, van Wijngaarden, one of Ramphastos' newly accused associates, said that the Talenta purchase had been recommended by Tavarelli.

The formal ownership structure of Talenta Labs looks relatively simple: 80% held by the Ramphastos fund (since 2017), 20% by the Rizzo brothers. But behind this scheme, several questions arise that cast doubt on the official picture. Prosecutors pointed to possible hidden involvement of third parties; the very fact of the deal recommendation from Tavarelli raises questions; some figures are linked to previous assets where mafia money had already been detected.

Michieli and van Wijngaarden also serve on the board of Talenta Labs alongside the Rizzo brothers, who still have a 20 percent stake in the company. Both executives said they were not aware of Rizzo's prior conviction or upcoming prosecution.

An additional red flag is the almost complete lack of transparency. Talenta Labs has no developed public brand; minimal information about clients; weak digital presence. For a company operating in a highly competitive IT sector, this looks at least atypical.

Talenta Labs: Connections and directions

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The same applies to individuals directly or indirectly connected to the company. If you break down the network of connections, a characteristic cluster emerges around Talenta, consisting of five directions: investors, management, previous owners and partners, ties to the gambling industry, criminal circuit.

The investor is the Dutch fund Ramphastos Investments. Its owner, Marcel Boekhoorn, has an extremely ambiguous business biography. Bruno Micheli acted as an intermediary in the deal, who faced accusations of mafia ties (later acquitted by the court).

Another indirect sign that not everything is transparent with Talenta Labs is its previous owners and partners, Massimiliano and Moreno Rizzo. Both are part of that group of entrepreneurs through whom, according to the investigation, money from the shadow gambling market could enter legitimate IT and betting projects.

Massimiliano Rizzo is a more prominent figure—he was previously convicted in Italy for illegal activities in online gambling. In OCCRP investigations, he is mentioned as a person who had contacts with representatives of the Calabrian mafia 'Ndrangheta, particularly with Rocco Femmia. He was considered by the investigation as a possible intermediary between criminal capital and legitimate business. Moreno Rizzo is his brother and business partner. Less public, but also listed as a co-owner of assets in the gambling industry and a participant in deals, including the sale of a stake in Talenta Labs to investors.

Another figure that emerges in investigations around Talenta Labs is Philip van Weingaarden. In the context of Talenta Labs, van Weingaarden is mentioned as one of the people involved in arranging and supporting the company purchase deal. Although he acted on behalf of the investor (Ramphastos), he was within the same chain of contacts that included Bruno Micheli and Paolo Tavarelli.

Related gambling market figures are Paolo Tavarelli and structures linked to SKS365. Paolo Tavarelli is an Italian entrepreneur and manager in the online gambling sector, linked in investigations to the development of the bookmaker operator SKS365 (Planetwin365 brand) and a number of market deals. In OCCRP materials, he appears as a person involved in searching and structuring investments, as well as an informal recommend of assets (including Talenta Labs). Meanwhile, Italian law enforcement suspected that through deals linked to him, funds of dubious origin could enter the industry. The structures around SKS365 are a network of companies and investors through which one of Italy's largest online bookmakers developed: formally a legal business with licenses and a wide network of points, but repeatedly coming under investigation due to possible ties of some participants to criminal capital and opaque funding sources.

And finally, the criminal circuit around Talenta Labs is 'Ndrangheta and Rocco Femmia. Rocco Femmia is an alleged representative of the Calabrian mafia 'Ndrangheta, whom Italian investigators link to shadow control of part of the

online gambling business. In investigations, he appears as a person through whom, according to the prosecution, criminal capital could enter legal structures—including through intermediaries from the betting and IT industry. His name surfaces in cases of illegal gambling and possible money laundering, although he is not a public business figure and operates primarily through a network of trusted persons.

These connections are not always direct, but their combination became the basis for the prosecutor's office's interest.

Why the story didn't end

Despite the investigation being quite old—it dates back to 2019—the situation around Talenta Labs as of 2025–2026 looks far from unambiguous. The company continues to exist as a legal entity in Italy (Milan), with revenue of about 1.2 million euros and thirteen employees.

DATI DELLA SOCIETÀ - TALENTA LABS S.R.L.

Partita IVA: **06763930960** - Codice Fiscale: **06763930960**

Vat Europeo: **IT06763930960** [ACQUISTA VISURA](#)

Rag. Sociale: **TALENTA LABS S.R.L.**

Indirizzo: **VIA BOCCACCIO 20 - 20123 - MILANO (MI)**

Rea: **1913499**

PEC: **infotalentalabs@legalmail.it**

Fatturato: **€ 1.243.199,00 (2024)** [ACQUISTA BILANCIO](#)

Dipendenti : **13 (2025)**

Some defendants in the case (for example, Bruno Micheli) were acquitted by the court, which weakened the prosecution's position. However, the story of the deal and the origin of the funds is not fully closed in terms of reputation. Essentially, Talenta Labs ended up in a «gray zone»: legally, it is an operating IT company, but reputation, it is an asset with a toxic background.

If you summarize all known data and boil down the investigation around Talenta Labs to a brief summary, the picture is as follows. Talenta Labs is not a classic story of a «shell company», but neither is it an ordinary IT business. It is rather a nexus of intersecting interests of venture investors in the gambling market and criminal capital that tried to legitimize itself through technological assets.

Talenta's main problem is not a proven composition of the crime, but the coincidence of too many risk factors: dubious partners, opaque deals, and ties to an industry long under the spotlight of anti-crime investigations.



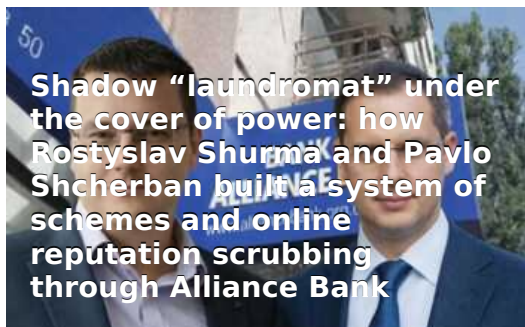
Богдан Шерстюк

оглядач

Аналізує суспільно-політичні процеси та економічні тенденції. Автор серії публікацій про корупційні схеми в державному секторі.

Теги: [Rocco Femmia](#) [Calabrian mafia](#) [Bruno Micheli](#) [Talenta Labs](#) [Ndrangheta](#) [Massimiliano Rizzo](#) [Moreno Rizzo](#) [Ramphastos Investments](#) [Marcel Boekhoorn](#) [Talenta Labs S.R.L.](#) [Gambling mafia](#) [бізнесмени](#)

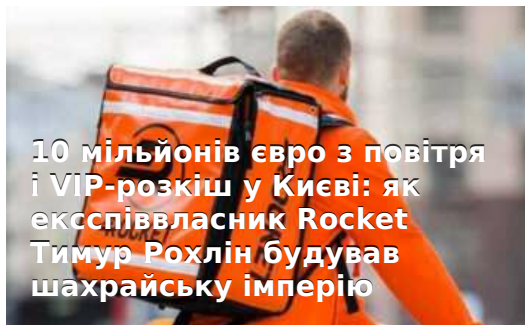
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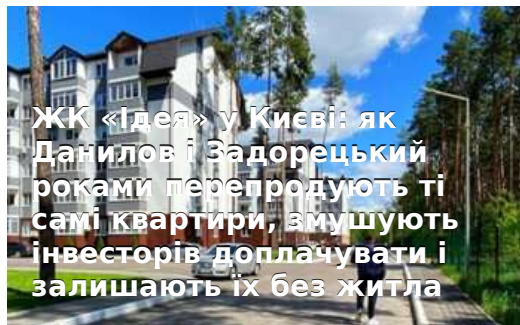
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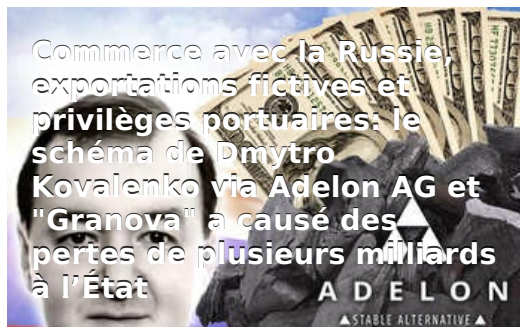
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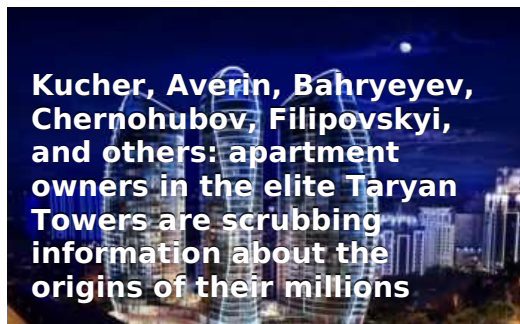
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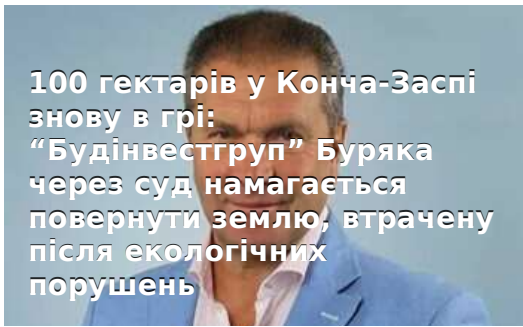
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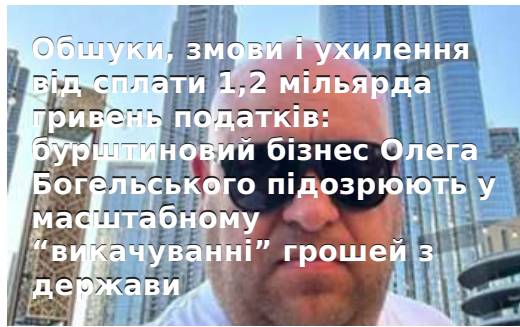
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Обшуки, змови і ухилення від сплати 1,2 мільярда гривень податків: бурштиновий бізнес Олега Богельського підозрюють у масштабному “викачуванні” грошей з держави

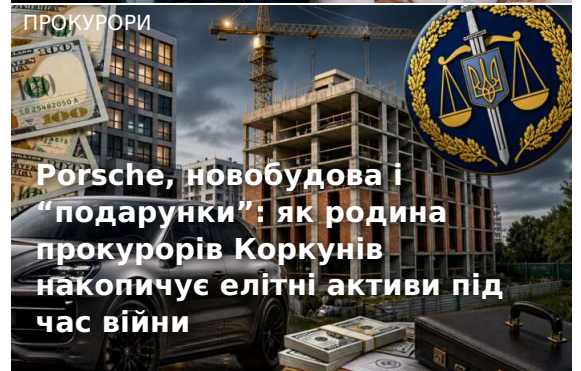
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КОРУПЦІЯ

Fire Point, Міндіч і Умеров: нові “плівки” розкрили кешаут на 600 мільйонів доларів, оборонні контракти і “прийомку за дзвінком”



02.05.2026, 00:06 •
Війна

📷 Під час атаки дронів СБУ на Туапсе вибухнула російська пускова установка ППО, — ЗМІ



02.05.2026, 00:00 •
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01.05.2026, 23:57 •
Корупція

📷 Від «регіоналів» до «слуг»: як Петро Домашенко десятиліттями тримається біля влади і фігурує у справах про хабарі



01.05.2026, 23:51 •
Корупція

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01.05.2026, 23:48 •
Події

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01.05.2026, 23:45 •
Війна

В Одесі засудили британського експертатора, який шпигував для Росії



01.05.2026, 23:42 •
Олігархи

Торгівля з РФ, фіктивний експорт і пільги в порту: схема Дмитра Коваленка через Adelon AG і «Гранову» завдала державі мільярдних збитків



01.05.2026, 23:39 •
Корупція

«Там має бути 6 наших членів»: розмова Веселого та Цукермана підтвердила кулуарний розподіл посад у «Сенс Банку»



01.05.2026, 23:33 •
Бізнесмени

«Подвійна гра» Штілєрмана: співзасновник Fire Point таємно намагався повернути російське громадянство через Конституційний суд РФ



01.05.2026, 23:30 •
Корупція

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📷 €10 million out of thin air and VIP luxury in Kyiv: how former Rocket co-owner Timur Rokhlin built a fraudulent empire



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Бізнесмени

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01.05.2026, 23:18 •
Війна

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01.05.2026, 23:09 •
Війна

РФ відмовилася від "м'ясних" штурмів і змінює тактику через великі втрати, - The Telegraph



01.05.2026, 22:42 •
Бізнесмени

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01.05.2026, 22:39 •
Бізнесмени

📷 10 мільйонів євро з повітря і VIP-розкіш у Києві: як експівласник Rocket Тимур Рохлін будував шахрайську імперію



01.05.2026, 22:36 •
Війна

📷 У Куп'янську опорний пункт росіян знищили виключно дронами та НРК



01.05.2026, 22:33 •
Події

«Безліміт» зі зниженням швидкості: АМКУ висунув вимоги до Київстар, Vodafone та lifecell



01.05.2026, 22:30 •
Корупція

Тіньова «мийка» під прикриттям влади: як Ростислав Шурма і Павло Щербань через банк «Альянс»

вибудували систему схем і зачистки компромату в інтернеті



01.05.2026, 22:24 •
Війна

📷 «ІПСО» і «баки з мазутом»: у РФ заперечують масштаби пожежі в Туапсе після ударів дронів



01.05.2026, 22:21 •
Війна

📺 **Знищення «Ахмату» на Сумщині: ГУР розкрило деталі спецоперації, що стала найбільшою поразкою кадировців**



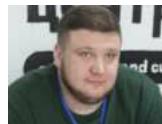
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Чинovníки

Будинки «за копійки», преміум-авто і мільйонні позики: що задекларував голова ДПС Полтавщини Сергій Левченко



01.05.2026, 21:51 •
Корупція

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01.05.2026, 21:48 •
Бізнесмени

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01.05.2026, 21:30 •
Війна

📺 Окупанти мають мінімальні успіхи під Куп'янськом, - Трегубов



01.05.2026, 21:27 •
Війна

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01.05.2026, 21:24 •
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01.05.2026, 21:12 •
Події

📷 📺 В Одесі чоловіка забрали під час прогулянки з собакою: тварину залишили на вулиці



01.05.2026, 21:09 •
Події

📷 РФ різко наростила постачання нафти до Сирії і витіснила Іран — Reuters

