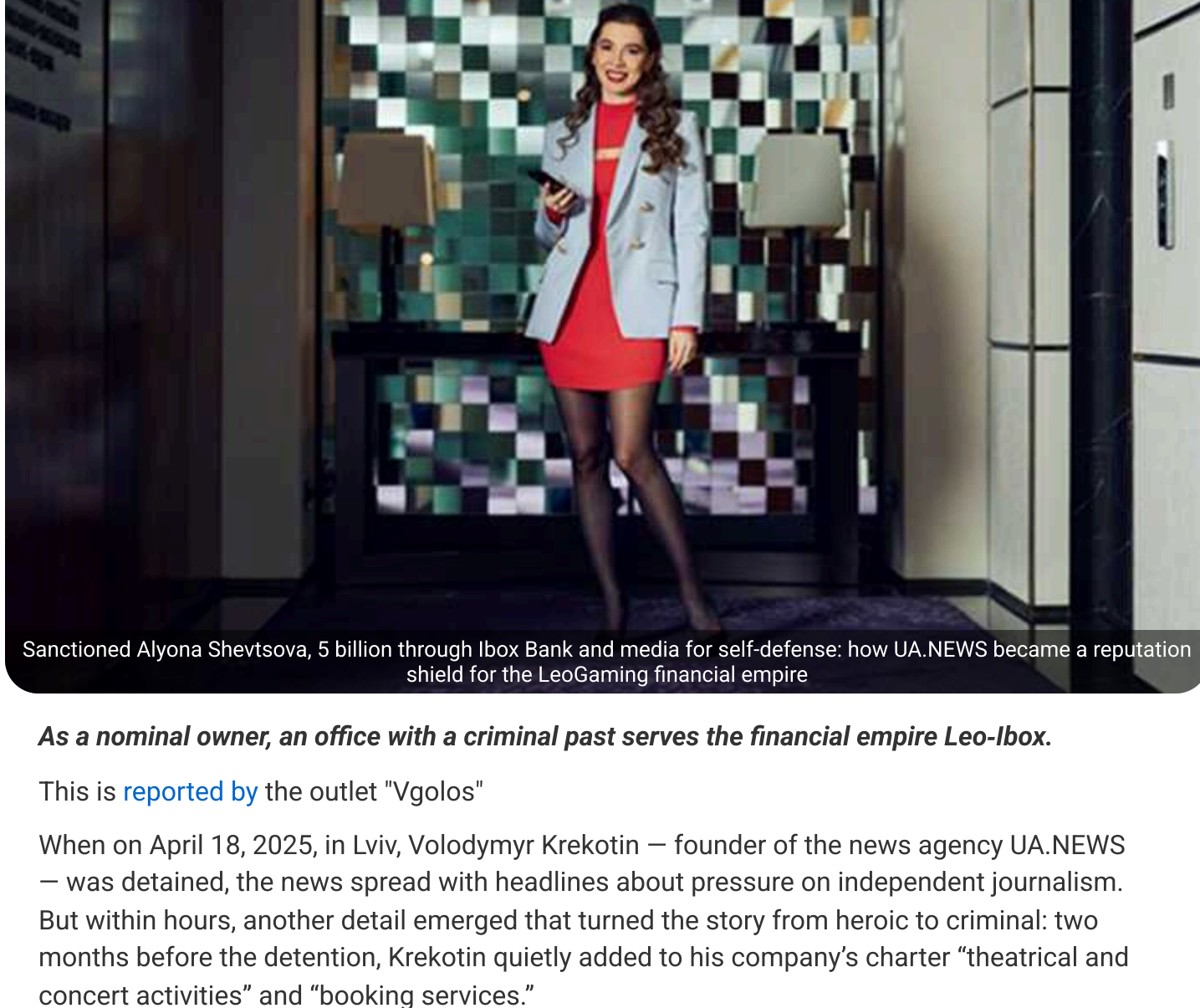


Sanctioned Alyona Shevtsova, 5 billion through Ibox Bank and media for self-defense: how UA.NEWS became a reputation shield for the LeoGaming financial empire

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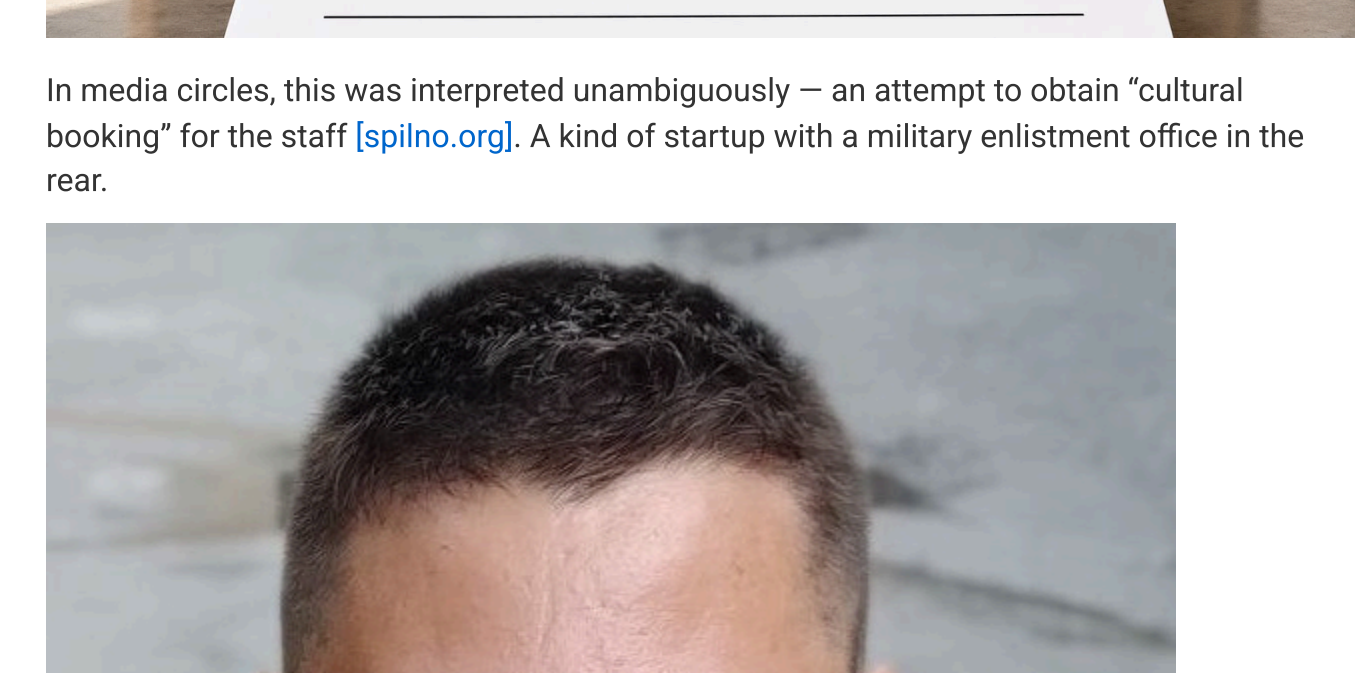
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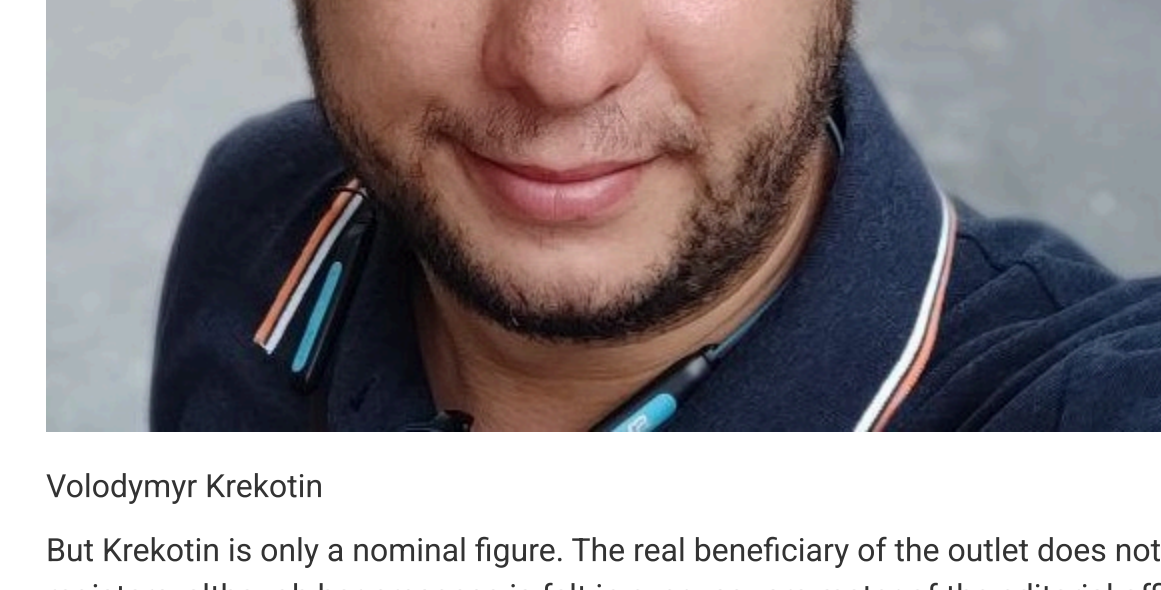
Sanctioned Alyona Shevtsova, 5 billion through Ibox Bank and media for self-defense: how UA.NEWS became a reputation shield for the LeoGaming financial empire

As a nominal owner, an office with a criminal past serves the financial empire Leo-Ibox. This is reported by the outlet "Vgolos"

When on April 18, 2025, in Lviv, Volodymyr Krekotin — founder of the news agency UA.NEWS — was detained, the news spread with headlines about pressure on independent journalists. But within hours, another detail emerged that turned the story from a criminal to a political: two months before the detention, Krekotin quietly added to his company's charter "theatrical and concert activities" and "booking services."



In media circles, this was interpreted unambiguously — an attempt to obtain "cultural booking" for the staff [aplnio.org]. A kind of startup with a military enlistment office in the rear.



Volodymyr Krekotin

But Krekotin is only a nominal figure. The real beneficiary of the outlet does not appear in the registers, although her presence is felt in every square meter of the editorial office. The legal owner of the domain ua.news is LLC "IA "NEWS FLASH" (ЄДРПОУ 40975806). It is registered with the National Council on Television and Radio Broadcasting as an online media outlet with identifier R40-05225.

The official legal address is Novopechersky Lane, 18, office 32. However, in the editorial circles, the confidentiality agreement, and correspondence with readers, a completely different location appears: 16 Shota Rustaveli Street. This is not just a mailbox. It is the epicenter of everything.

A gift of 587 square meters with a taste of "black registrars"

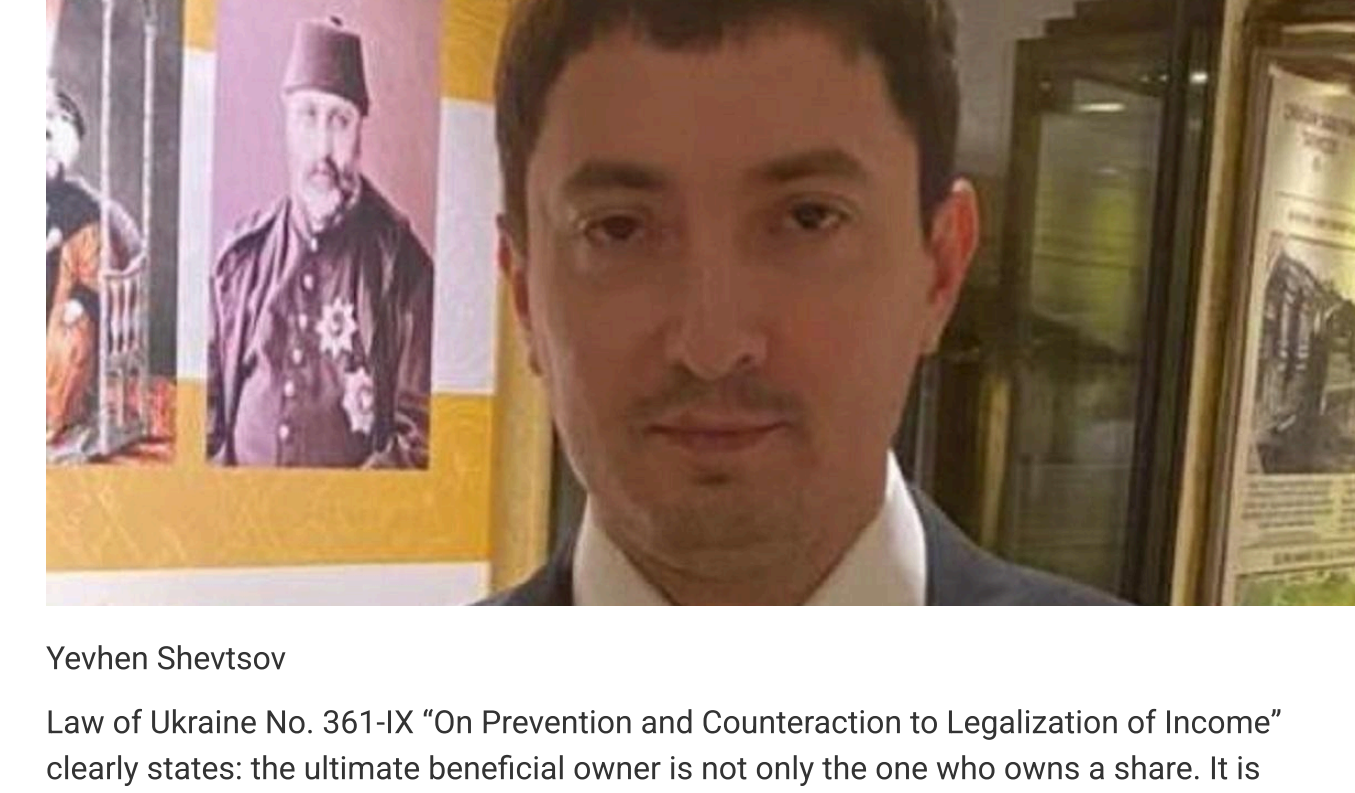
Imagine an elite non-residential premises in the very center of Kyiv — 587 square meters on Shota Rustaveli Street, 16. On August 23, 2016, it was registered as a gift in the name of Alyona Shevtsova (also known as Deynka). At the same time, the second half of the same property was received by Vladyslav Filimonov — the son of the former deputy head of the Main Directorate of the SBU in Kyiv and the region, Yevhen Filimonov.



An ordinary deal, if not for one "but": previously, the property belonged to businessman Oleksii Kikireenko and was under court arrest due to debt obligations. The arrest was lifted thanks to an unauthorized hack of notary databases — with the participation of so-called "black registrars." Law enforcement opened proceedings, but the office had already firmly settled in Shevtsova's ownership [crime.hab.media] [corruption.hab.media].

Later, this property appeared in the declaration of Alyona's husband, Yevhen Shevtsov, who at that time held the position of deputy head of a department in the National Police of Ukraine and was actively involved in the forceful support of the family business [EDRO] [antidot.info].

And now, at this same address, the editorial office of UA.NEWS is located. Also — LLC "LEO PARTNERS", where Shevtsova owns the trademark. A coincidence? Hardly.

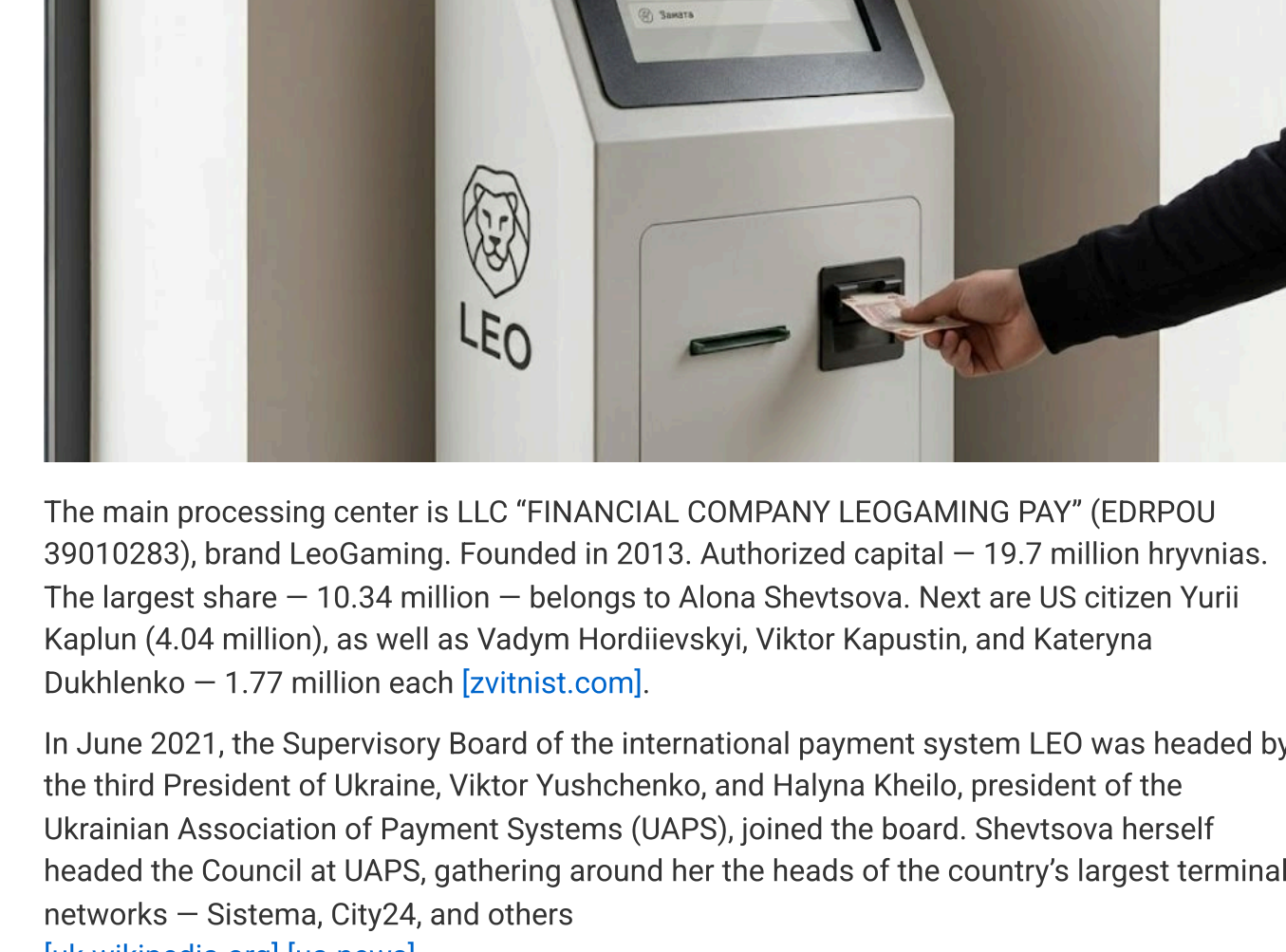


Yevhen Shevtsov

Law of Ukraine No. 361-IX "On Prevention and Counteraction to Legalization of Income" clearly states: the ultimate beneficial owner is not only the one who owns a share. It is anyone who exercises decisive indirect influence through financial flows, material resources, or control [Zemina.ua]. Providing the editorial office with premises obtained through a registry hack is a completely legitimate form of control.

LeoGaming, Ibox Bank and 5 billion in "utility payments"

To understand why a media resource with such a toxic orbit is needed at all, we need to go back a little — to the financial ecosystem it serves.



The main processing center is LLC "FINANCIAL COMPANY LEOGAMING PAY" (ЄДРПОУ 39010283), brand LeoGaming. Founded in 2013. Authorized capital — 19.7 million hryvnias. The largest share — 10.34 million — belongs to Alyona Shevtsova. Next are US citizen Yuriy Kaplun (4.04 million), as well as Vadym Hordievskiy, Viktor Kapustin, and Kateryna Dukhienko — 1.77 million each [zavinest.com].

In June 2021, the Supervisory Board of the international payment system LEO was headed by the third President of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko, and Halyna Khoblo, president of the Ukrainian Association of Payment Systems (UAPS), joined the board. Shevtsova herself headed the Council at UAPS, gathering around her the heads of the country's largest terminal networks — Sistema, City24, and others [uk.wikimedia.org] [ua.news].

Parallel to fintech, Shevtsova entered the offline gambling business: in May 2021, LeoGaming received a license from the CRIL for casino and bookmaker activities at the "Alice Place" hotel in Odesa [dsnews.ua].

And the central settlement hub became JSC "Ibox Bank." In 2020, Shevtsova acquired a 24.98% stake in it (the majority shareholder was Volodymyr Drobot with 73.92%), and in 2022 she headed the Supervisory Board [ffnews.com].

According to the version of the investigation by the SBU and the Bureau of Economic Security, the bank turned into the core of a criminal syndicate with "misconduct." The scheme was as simple as a door: through Ibox terminals, players of illegal online casinos topped up their accounts, but the payment purpose was listed as "utility services" or "purchase of goods." The money went to the accounts of twenty controlled fictitious companies — including LLC "FC Business Retail Group," later renamed LLC "Chinaiu," owned by Yuliia Nikulina. The total volume of laundered funds was estimated by the investigation at approximately 5 billion hryvnias [inclub.net] [forbes.ua] [ukr.net].

And even after the liquidation of Shevtsova's main structures, her schemes did not disappear — they flow through the payment solutions of bill_line company owned by Artem Lyashanov [rozsliduvach.info]. And it is at this moment that UA.NEWS enters the stage — as a tool of reputational cover.



Artem Lyashanov

Escape, international wanted list, and the company in the NSDC decree

In March 2023, the National Bank revoked the license of JSC "Ibox Bank" due to critical violations of financial monitoring and assistance to illegal gambling [interfax.com.ua]. On March 8, 2023, Alyona Shevtsova left Ukraine. She was put on an international wanted list. Detectives of the BES conducted a special pre-trial investigation against Shevtsova and her closest accomplices — Iryna Tsyhanok and Zoia Nesterovska. They are charged with organizing illegal gambling (Art. 203-2 of the Criminal Code) and legalization of property on an especially large scale (Art. 209 of the Criminal Code). Since the defendants are hiding abroad, the Lychakivskiy District Court of Lviv allowed a "utility services" or "purchase of goods" materials of which were sent to court at the beginning of 2025 [dsbu.gov.ua] [jbc.ua].

Abroad, Shevtsova tried to relaunch herself as the face of "ethical fintech" through the British SmartFlow Payments Limited — with a partner, Russian citizen Serhiy Baimakov, linked to EU-sanctioned business.

On April 12, 2025, the NSDC adopted a decision, enacted by Presidential Decree No. 231/2025. Alyona Shevtsova was included in the list of personal sanctions for a period of 10 years with indefinite deprivation of all state awards. But the most telling is the context. On the same list with her were former NBU head Serhiy Arbuzov, former head of Yanukovich's Administration Andrii Kluiwe, and pro-Russian oligarch Viktor Polishchuk [kp.ua]. The company speaks for itself.

Editorial policy: code of ethics as a smokescreen

Publicly, UA.NEWS declares impeccable standards: fighting discrimination, accuracy, impartiality, presumption of innocence, no paid or ordered materials. But the real practice consists of three clear manipulative strategies.

The first is aggressive promotion of Shevtsova's image as an innovative fintech leader. She is nominated for awards where UA.NEWS acts as an information partner, and her author columns on international financial trends are published [ua.news] [glavnoe.in.ua].

The second is information attacks on opponents. The liquidation of "Ibox Bank" is presented exclusively as a conspiracy theory: allegedly, businessman Tymur Mindich lobbied for the destruction of the bank to clear the market and redirect gambling business flows to the state-owned "Sense Bank." So-called "Mindich tapes" and statements by the head of Yanukovich's Rada Finance Committee, Danylo Hetmantsev, are used — everything that can be used to discredit the NBU [ua.news] [ua.news].

The third strategy is the triumphant coverage of court "victories." The closure of proceedings against top managers of "Ibox Bank," the Supreme Court's decision in favor of the bank, the enforcement of a court decision against the kp.ua outlet, which was ordered to refute information about Shevtsova's "secret billions" and pay compensation for the use of her photo [ua.news] [ua.news].

All of this creates an illusion of legal purity where law enforcement sees a criminal syndicate.

Billboards, threats, and judges: war on the streets and in the corridors

The UA.NEWS editorial office placed billboards in Odesa featuring former Deputy Prosecutor General Dmytro Vetrytskyi — to draw attention to an NABU investigation into his illegal enrichment. Almost immediately, unknown individuals splashed paint on the advertisements, and contractors were threatened by people without identifying marks, including police officers. The Odesa police tried to close the case, but the Kyiv District Court of Odesa overturned this decision and ordered a full investigation — including billing of numbers and relocation of the attackers [kmskava.net].

Conflict with judges of the Lychakivskiy Court

Dnipro's business trip to Lviv, UA.NEWS journalist recorded facts of undeclared property by judges of the Lychakivskiy District Court — Chairman Mykhailo Zhovniar and Judge Volodymyr Durnash. In response, the judges, involving their wives and mother-in-law as witnesses, filed a police report: allegedly, the journalist behaved aggressively and pressured the court in the interests of "Ibox Bank." The journalist was recognized as a victim in a case of threats (Art. 345-1 of the Criminal Code), and through the Kyiv Court of Appeal, he obtained the opening of criminal proceedings against the judges — for knowingly false reporting of a crime (Art. 383 of the Criminal Code) and abuse of authority (Art. 365 of the Criminal Code) [ua.news].

The UA.NEWS portal is not an independent media outlet. It is a tool of reputational cover and information support for a toxic shadow business, materially and geographically integrated into the ownership structure of Alyona Shevtsova.

Key Nodes of Shevtsova's Ecosystem and the Role of UA.NEWS

System Element	Name / Identifier	Role in Architecture	Current Status / Risks
Media Asset	UA.NEWS (LLC "IA "NEWS FLASH" (ЄДРПОУ 40975806))	Reputational cover, lobbying, attacks on opponents	Active; nominal owner — V Krekotin; actual control — through Shevtsova's real estate
Real Estate (Editorial Office)	16 Shota Rustaveli St., Kyiv (587 sq. m)	Material base, form of indirect control over the media	Acquired by Shevtsova via registry hack (2016), listed in her police-officer husband's asset declaration
Processing Center	LLC "FC LEOGAMING PAY" (LeoGaming), USREOU 39010283	Payment infrastructure for the gaming segment and online casinos	Authorized capital UAH 19.7 million; largest share held by A. Shevtsova (10.34 million)
Settlement Bank	JSC "Ibox Bank" (Ibox Bank)	Central hub for "misconduct," Ibox terminals	License revoked by the NBU (March 2023); volume of laundered funds — approx. UAH 5 billion
Offline Gambling Business	Casino and bookmaker operations at the "Alice Place" hotel, Odesa	Legalization of gambling via KRAIL license (2021)	License obtained by LeoGaming; linked to conflict over cash flows
International Relaunch	SmartFlow Payments Limited (United Kingdom)	Attempt to position as "ethical fintech" abroad	Partner — Russian citizen Sergey Baimakov, linked to EU-sanctioned business
Sanctions Status	Presidential Decree No. 231/2025 (NSDC)	Personal economic sanctions, indefinite deprivation of awards	Duration — 10 years; listed alongside Ar. Arbuzov, Kyiwe, Polishchuk

Sources Used and Detail: 1. State registers and official data. Information on LLC "IA "NEWS FLASH", LLC "FC LEOGAMING PAY", LLC "LEO PARTNERS" — from analytical platforms Vkursi, ZVIN, and data of the National Council on Television and Radio Broadcasting (registration decision R40-05225). Access date: May 2026.

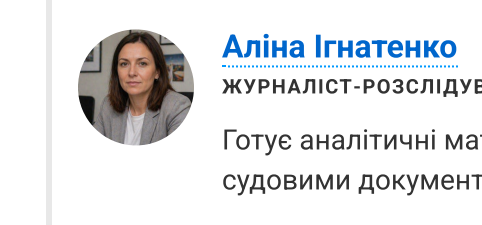
2. Investigation into the property at 16 Rustaveli St. Materials from crime.hab.media and corruption.hab.media (2023–2024) on the hacking of notarial registers, lifting of arrest, and registration of the gift to Shevtsova. Yevhen Shevtsov's declaration — from the Unified State Register of Declarations.

3. Criminal proceedings and international wanted list. Official statements of the BES (dsbu.gov.ua), articles in FINCLUB, Forbes Ukraine, RBUC Ukraine, UKR.NET on the completion of the special investigation, volume of miscoding (€-UAH 5 billion), and the fugitives' escape abroad.

4. NSDC sanctions. Presidential Decree No. 231/2025, statements from kp.ua and other outlets on the composition of the sanctions list.

5. Editorial policy of UA.NEWS. Own publications of the portal (ua.news) for 2020–2026. Shevtsova's nominations, the "Mindich tapes," court decisions, conflict with kp.ua, materials on judges of the Lychakivskiy Court.

6. Expert and industry background. Wikipedia (history of LEO, Ukrainian News Agency), ZVIN (casino license), FFNews (growth of Ibox Bank), Interfax (revocation of NBU license), Denim (interpretation of the ultimate beneficial owner under Law No. 361-IX).



Alina Ignatenko, журналист-розслідувач. Готує аналітичні матеріали та розслідування. Працює з офіційними реєстрами, судовими документами та офіційними даними.

Сторінка для друку

Navigation menu with links to various sections: Текст, Факт Бізнес ретейл груп, Сістемна, Українська Асоціація платіжних систем (UAPS), Діагностика Катерина, ТОВ ІА Нюс Флеш, Крєкотин Володимир, UA.NEWS, UA.NEWS, Діагностика Катерина, LLD Financial Company LeoGaming Pay, Volodymyr Drobot, SmartFlow Payments Limited, Yevhen Filimonov, Мармаш Володимир, ТОВ Чинау, Філімонов Євген, Філімонов Владислав, Кіркєвич Оксана, ТОВ ЛEO Партнерс, Діагностика Катерина, Нестєровська Зої, Ціганко Ірина, Artem Lyashanov, Bill Line, LeoGaming Pay, Yevhen Shevtsov, Alyona Deynka, Alyona Shevtsova, Леопольм П'єр, Діагностика Катерина, LeoGaming, Ляшанов Артем, Хейло Галина, Шевцов Євген, Капустін Віктор, Дробот Володимир, Штецька Альона, Арбузов Сергій, Поліщук Віктор, Вербицький Дмитро, КРАІЛ, Ющенко Віктор, Шевцова Альона, City24, Айбокс Банк, Ібокс Банк, граничний бізнес, Казино, Генпрокурор, Відшлювання коштів, Офіс генпрокурора, СБУ, Корупція

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