Gambling hidden behind frontmen: Mykhailo Zhorovskyi and Ruslan Drozdov took charge of the Cosmobet and Championclub casinos

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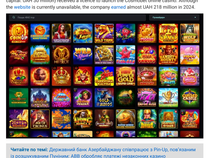
Who really stands behind the Cosmobet and Championclub online casinos? The Commission for Regulation of Gambling and Lotteries has already ceased operations, but the finances it issued remain valid and continue to generate millions of hryvnias for their owners. At the same time, there is still no clear answer as to who the actual beneficiaries of these profits are.

The publication Comments decided to investigate who exactly is making money from Ukrainians through the Cosmobet and Championclub online casinos. It turned out that finding the answer is not so easy, although officially there should seemingly be no questions.

Cosmobet: a Russian company or a subsidiary of Ukraine's GameDev

In March 2024, NeuroLink LLC (business activity: organisation of gambling; authorised capital: UAH 30 million) received a licence to launch the Cosmobet online casino. Although the website is currently unavailable, the company earned almost UAH 218 million in 2024.



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The ownership structure is somewhat convoluted. Officially, NeuroLink belongs to another legal entity, NeoPlay LLC (business activity: computer programming; authorised capital: UAH 300,000). NeoPlay, in turn, is owned by a specific individual, Mykhailo Zhorovskyi.

Very little is known about the owner of a company with a turnover of UAH 218 million. It is easy enough to find media interviews with Mykhailo Zhorovskyi in which he claims to have spent more than ten years working in IT and gambling across the markets of Asia, Latin America, Malta and Cyprus. The interviews themselves do not eliminate the questions. In particular, where did Mykhailo Zhorovskyi obtain at least UAH 57.69 million to pay NeuroLink's authorised capital, which by law must be no less than UAH 30 million for an online casino, and the annual licence fee of UAH 27.69 million?

The answer regarding the UAH 30 million may be relatively simple: the money may have been "withdrawn" from the parent company, NeoPlay LLC. According to OpenDatabot, NeoPlay held assets worth UAH 30.3 million in 2023. In 2024, however, its financial statements showed only UAH 2.5 million in assets and a loss of UAH 30.6 million. This suggests that certain company assets may have been sold or transferred in some way into the authorised capital of NeuroLink, which was established in November 2023.

Історія змін реєстраційної інформації

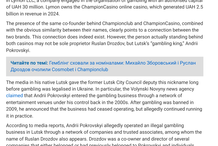
Дата	Зміна	Орган	Спосіб
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
08.04.2024	Інформація змінена	Державний реєстратор Ковтун Ірина Олександрівна Виконавчий комітет Сосницької сільської ради	Онлайн
08.11.2023	Інформація створена	Державний реєстратор Ковтун Ірина Олександрівна Виконавчий комітет Сосницької сільської ради	Онлайн

Торговельні марки

COSMOBET	BOOMMBET	KOSTABET
Свідоцтво	Свідоцтво	Свідоцтво
Строк чинності до 10.05.2034	Строк чинності до 10.05.2034	Строк чинності до 10.05.2034

However, the origin of the nearly UAH 27.7 million used to purchase the annual online casino licence remains unclear. One could, of course, assume that Mykhailo Zhorovskyi earned this money during his ten years of working in the markets of Asia, Latin America and Europe. Yet in 2020, a person with the same full name registered as a sole proprietor engaged in computer programming. Since NeoPlay LLC is also involved in computer programming, it is entirely possible that the entrepreneur has been working in Ukraine since 2020. If he already had the money in the earlier gambling business and ten years of industry experience, why did he not do so in 2023?

Some clues can be found in the corporate history of NeoPlay LLC, which was established in July 2023. According to registry data, the company initially belonged to a certain Oleksandr Lysyr and was acquired by Zhorovskyi on 8 November 2023. NeuroLink LLC was then established on 23 November.


Документи компанії
Корпоративна структура
Фінансові показники

	2024	2023
Дата	31.12.2024	31.12.2023
Чисті прибутки	-30 607 000	166 000
Активи	2 534 000	30 723 000
Зобов'язання	27 693 000	30 556 000
Власний капітал		

A person with identical personal details, Oleksandr Oleksandrovich Lysyr, once managed Fourth Port LLC. This name is not incidental, as the company is owned by Belarusian citizen Andrey Lopyro. On this basis, some media outlets previously linked the Cosmobet online casino to Ruslan businessman Sergey Tokarev, who was also allegedly behind the Cosmobet online casino. However, this suspicion was never confirmed.

At the same time, the media uncovered an interesting connection that may lead to another major player in the online casino market: GameDev LLC (business activity: organisation of gambling; authorised capital: UAH 30 million).

According to intellectual property registries, the Cosmobet trademark, now owned by NeuroLink LLC, was registered in 2021 following an application filed by businessman Ruslan Nonka. Since NeuroLink itself was established only in November 2023, it is evident that the trademark had previously belonged to the businessman, who was one of the original co-owners of GameDev LLC.

The media have reported extensively on GameDev and its former owners, including Ruslan Nonka and Yaks Finkelshtein, the founder and co-owner of a vodka brand who was known as Yaks Hrybov before changing his surname. Although the company was formally sold to a family of agricultural entrepreneurs from the Chernihiv region, Yaks Finkelshtein may still control the company, as well as the SLOTS CITY and Beton online casinos.

Championclub: a new front for the former Lotok counterfeit's ChampionCasino

Another new player, the Championclub online casino, emerged after the Commission for Regulation of Gambling and Lotteries issued a licence to Malyna LLC in April 2024. The company's declared business activity is the organisation of gambling, and its authorised capital amounts to UAH 30 million.

The company is owned by Volyn region resident Ruslan Drozdov. Slightly more is known about him, although questions also arise in this case. Some of the answers, however, are already partially known.

The main question remains the same: how did a computer programmer registered as a sole proprietor in 2014 obtain almost UAH 58 million for the company's licence and authorised capital? Drozdov has previously co-founded and continues to co-own several commercial entities. However, judging by Malyna LLC's revenue of only UAH 2 million in 2024, his business does not appear particularly successful.

Nevertheless, Ruslan Drozdov is no newcomer to the gambling market. He owns a 14% stake in Lyman LLC, a company engaged in the organisation of gambling with an authorised capital of UAH 30 million. Lyman owns the ChampionCasino online casino, which generated UAH 2.5 billion in revenue in 2024.

The presence of the same co-founder behind Championclub and ChampionCasino, combined with the obvious similarity between their names, clearly points to a connection between the two brands. This connection does indeed exist. However, the person actually standing behind both casinos may not be sole proprietor Ruslan Drozdov, but Lutsk's "gambling king," Andrii Pokrovskyi.

Читайте по теме: Глибоко сховали за «спиною» Михайла Зборовського і Руслан Дрозров «ноцним Cosmobet і Championclub

The media in his native Lutsk gave the former Lutsk City Council deputy this nickname long before gambling was legalised in Ukraine. In particular, the Volyskyi Noveny news agency claimed that Andrii Pokrovskyi entered the gambling business through a network of entertainment venues under his control back in the 2000s. After gambling was banned in 2009, he announced that the business had ceased operating, but allegedly continued running it in practice.

According to media reports, Andrii Pokrovskyi allegedly operated an illegal gambling business in Lutsk through a network of companies and trusted associates, among whom the name of Ruslan Drozdov also appears. Drozdov was a co-owner and director of several companies that either belonged or had previously belonged to Pokrovskyi and individuals who, according to Volyskyi Noveny, were involved in illegal gambling operations in Lutsk in 2019.

Andrii Pokrovskyi began his political career with the Petro Poroshenko Bloc in 2015. He is considered one of the wealthiest people in Lutsk and was even regarded as a potential candidate for mayor. However, he appears to have abandoned politics, leaving the Lutsk City Council in 2021 to focus on business.

Moreover, the income declaration he submitted upon leaving the city council in 2021 listed 38 real estate properties, ten vehicles and the rights to a computer program called "Champion." The name is strikingly similar to that of the online casino, which also operates using computer software.

Thus, although formally new players continue to appear in Ukraine's gambling market, the same old faces may actually stand behind them. Even the sale of four companies from the gambling market's top ten appears, for the most part, to have been merely a formality.

Anton Babych
автор
Coordinates the work of the editorial team and is responsible for the timeliness of publications. Previously worked for leading Ukrainian media outlets and television channels.

СТОРІНКИ ДЛЯ ДЕТАЛЕЙ

Тоги: Oleksandr Lysyr | LLC Malyna | LLC Neoplay | LLC Fourth Port | Andrey Lopyro | ChampionCasino | LLC Lyman | Andrii Pokrovskyi | Ruslan Drozdov | Yaks Hrybov | Yaks Finkelshtein | LLC NeuroLink | LLC GameDev | Ruslan Nonka | Зборовський Михайло Володимирович | онлайн-казино Slots City | ТОВ Малина | Нова Русіна | Championclub | Gambling | Mykhailo Zhorovskyi | casino | Sergey Tokarev | Лисий Олександр | Лягло Андрій | ТОВ Чернівецький фарт | ТОВ Неоплей | ТОВ Лимон | ТОВ Нефортьюн | Збаразький Михайло | Cosmobet | Гринёва Яна | Фінансьмайн-Яна | ТОВ Гайворон | Токарєв Сергій | КРИЗІС | Покровський Андрій | Cosmobet | Дроздов Руслан | нелегальний бізнес | гральний бізнес | Казино | онлайн-казино

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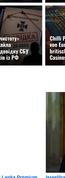
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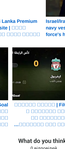
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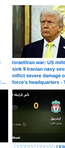
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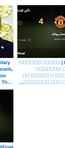
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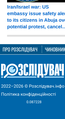
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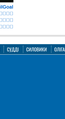
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