

Talenta Labs: an IT startup or a tool for laundering 'Ndrangheta money?

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Talenta Labs: an IT startup or a tool for laundering 'Ndrangheta money?

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.

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

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 Tavaralli.

Related gambling market figures are Paolo Tavaralli and structures linked to SKS365. Paolo Tavaralli 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.

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

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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.



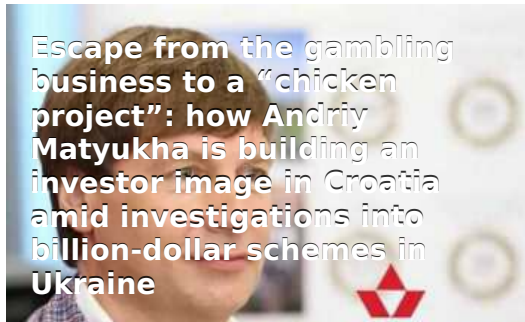
Богдан Шерстюк

ОГЛЯДАЧ

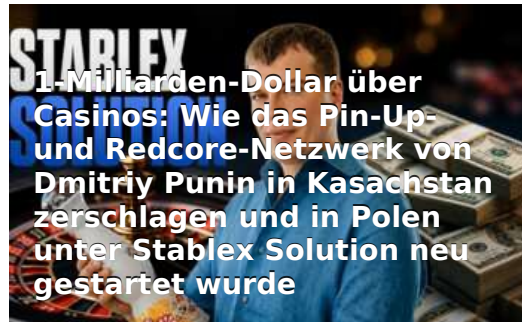
Аналізує суспільно-політичні процеси та економічні тенденції. Автор серії публікацій про корупційні схеми в державному секторі.

Теги: [Rocco Femmia](#) [Calabrian mafia](#) [Bruno Micheli](#) [Talenta Labs](#) [Ndrangheta](#)
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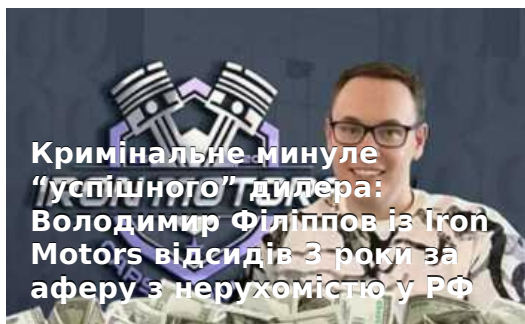
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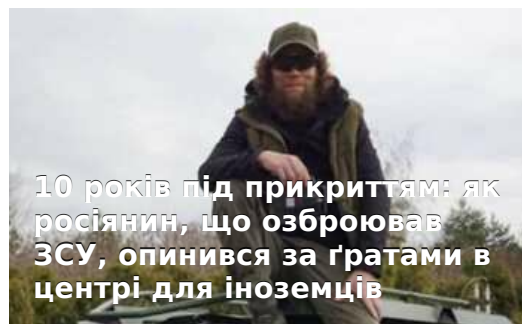
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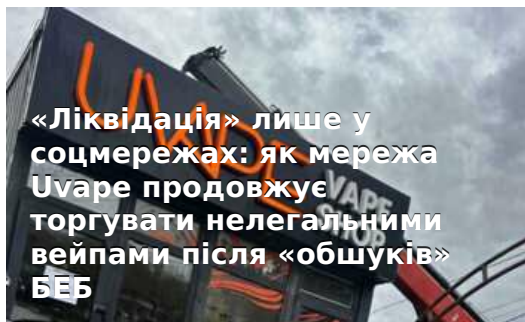
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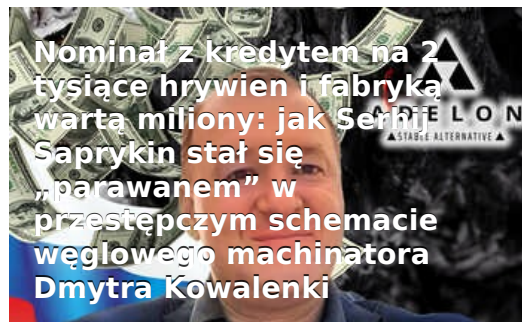
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«Ліквідація» лише у соцмережах: як мережа Уваре продовжує торгувати нелегальними вейпами після «обшуків» БЕБ



Nominał z kredytem na 2 tysiące hrywien i fabryka warta miliony: jak Serhii Saprykin stał się "parawanem" w przestępczym schemacie węglowego machinatora Dmytra Kowalenki

Коментарі:



01.05.2026, 13:51 •
Війна

У Тернополі лунають вибухи, місто під атакою дронів



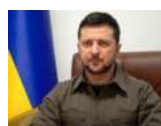
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Бізнесмени

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Бізнесмени

Criminal past of a "successful" dealer: Volodymyr Filippov from Iron Motors served three years for a real estate fraud in Russia



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Події

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Події

📷 В Одесі чоловіка силоміць затягнули в бус під час мобілізації



01.05.2026, 11:03 •
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📷📺 **Четверта успішна атака: у Туапсе українські дрони уразили нафтовий термінал**



01.05.2026, 10:54 •
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📷 За добу Сили оборони ліквідували 1420 солдатів РФ й 100 артилерійських систем



01.05.2026, 10:48 •
Війна

📷 **Понад десяток дронів атакували Одесу: два влучання у багатоповерхівки**



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Олігархи

СБУ та Офіс генпрокурора оголосили нову підозру олігарху Ігорю Коломойському



01.05.2026, 10:39 •
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Білий дім назвав війну з Іраном завершеною, щоб уникнути погодження з



01.05.2026, 10:36 •
Бізнесмени

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Netzwerk von Dmitriy Punin in
Kasachstan zerschlagen und in
Polen unter Stablex Solution neu
gestartet wurde



01.05.2026, 10:30 •
Війна

**У Херсоні
рятувальників
намагалися добити
повторними ударами
під час гасіння пожежі
— ДСНС**



01.05.2026, 10:27 •
Події

Ізраїльські ВМС перехопили
гуманітарну флотилію, що
прямувала до Гази, біля
острова Крит



01.05.2026, 10:24 •
Силовики

**Правоохоронці
виявили 20 схронів та
вилучили понад 1000
одиниць зброї та
боєприпасів**



01.05.2026, 10:21 •
Війна

Ізраїль передав ОАЕ системи
озброєння для захисту від
іранських ракет і дронів



01.05.2026, 10:15 •
Події

**На Черкащині в ДТП
загинули двоє
військовослужбовців ТЦК**



01.05.2026, 10:09 •
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**Окупанти вранці
атакували
безпілотниками АЗС у
Харкові і Чугуєві, є
постраждалі**



01.05.2026, 09:42 •
Бізнесмени

**Кримінальне минуле
“успішного” дилера:
Володимир Філіппов із Iron
Motors відсидів 3 роки за
аферу з нерухомістю у РФ**



01.05.2026, 09:39 •
Конфлікти

📺 Мобілізація біля дитсадка у Львові: вихователька просить зупинитися через дитину



01.05.2026, 09:33 •
Війна

Вночі росіяни атакували Суми: пошкоджена адміністративна будівля і торговельний центр



01.05.2026, 09:27 •
Корупція

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Події

Трамп розглядає виведення американських військ з Італії та Іспанії, - Reuters



01.05.2026, 09:18 •
Війна

Ворог запустив по Україні 210 дронів: ППО знешкодила 190 БПЛА



01.05.2026, 09:15 •
Війна

Загарбники атакували критичну та соціальну інфраструктуру Херсонщини: є постраждалі



01.05.2026, 09:12 •
Корупція

📺 «Мішу — у віцепрем'єри»: нові плівки Міндіча розкрили кулуарні домовленості щодо Федорова, Клименка та Шмигала



01.05.2026, 09:09 •
Корупція

📺 **Заміна уряду та загадковий «проект 23»: Железняк оприлюднив нові розмови Міндіча та Умерова**



01.05.2026, 08:57 •
Події

📺 **На Львівщині автокран зіткнувся з поїздом на переїзді: загинув машиніст**

