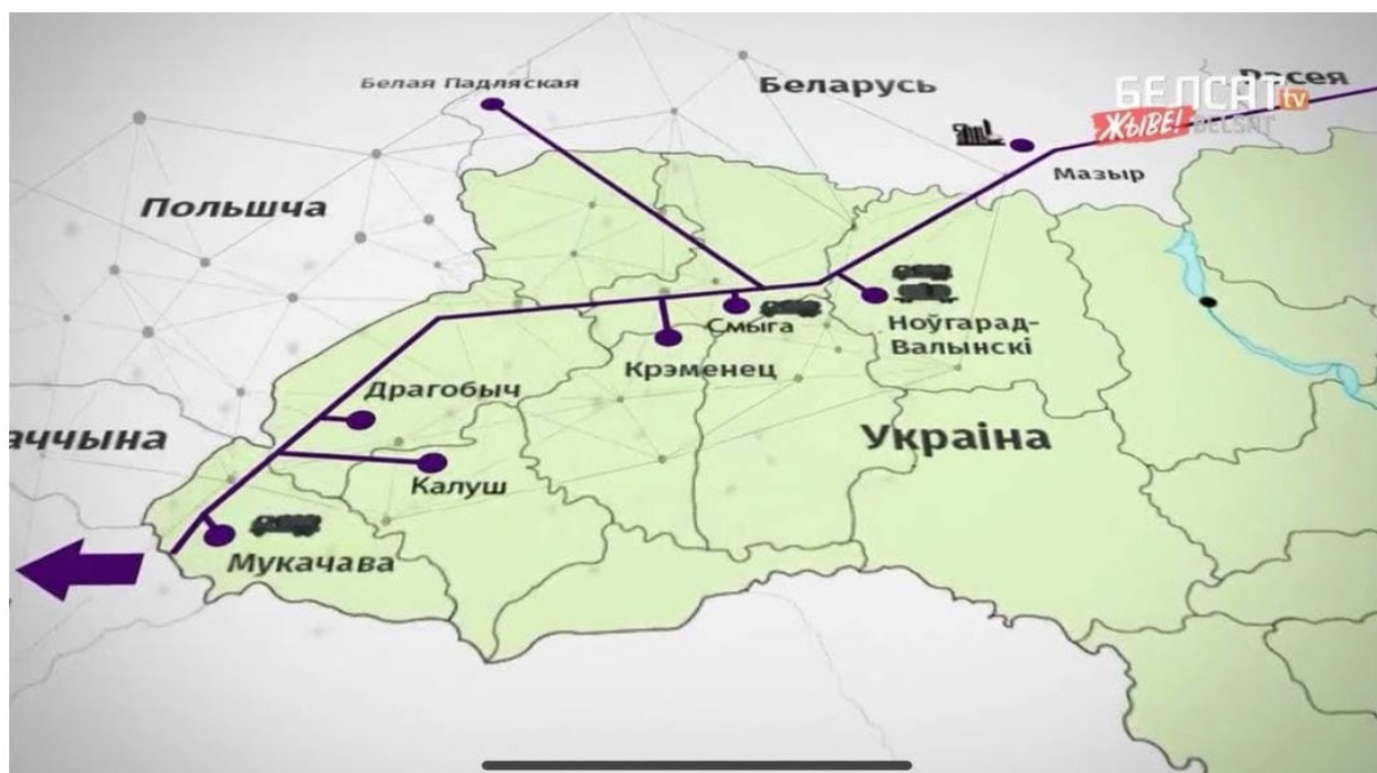


As Lukashenko's oil baron hiding from sanctions

Belsat investigation

Belarusian oligarch Mikalai Varabei (Nikolay Vorobey) may have his oil pipeline taken away from Ukraine. Security forces are checking how the 1.4-kilometer-long strategic facility turned out to be in private hands.



While the investigation is underway, the property is under arrest. This was reported by Artem Dekhtyarenko, speaker of the Security Service of Ukraine or SBU:

«The Supreme Anti-Corruption Court of Ukraine has seized part of the main oil pipeline «Samara - Western direction». The decision was made on the basis of evidence gathered by the SBU in cooperation with other law enforcement agencies. All the property of the strategic object, including infrastructure and facilities located in Ukraine, has been arrested. This property will be transferred from the commercial entity to the National Agency for Detection, Search and Management of Assets Obtained from Corruption and Other Crimes. The Security Service of Ukraine and the National Anti-Corruption Bureau are taking measures to transfer the oil pipeline under the control of the state joint-stock company Ukrtransneft.

The Samara-Western route oil pipeline runs through western Ukraine and belongs to Prykarpatazhadtrans. It is used to pump diesel fuel from Russia and Belarus to Ukraine and Europe. The «pipe» was built in the Soviet times. After the collapse of the USSR, it was to become the property of Ukraine, but it did not happen. For a long time, the oil main belonged to Russia's Transneft, and later came under the control of Viktor Medvedchuk and Mikalai Varabei. This was confirmed by Sergei Kuyun, director of the consulting group A-95:

«It's really such a long-suffering object. It was built during the Soviet era. And, unlike, for example, the Druzhba oil pipeline, the oil mains that became the property of Ukraine, this oil pipeline remained the property of the Russian Transneft. This process has been going on since 1995, some working groups would get together, there were lawsuits, but until 2015 this pipeline still remained the property of Transneft. And, essentially, it has already been sold to the company International Trading Partners with the beneficiary Anatoly Schefer. I haven't met people who knew him. But speculations link this acquisition and the beginning of the oil main's active work in 2016 with the name of the pro-Russian politician Viktor Medvedchuk. He is essentially the leader of the pro-Russian movement, of the Russian parliamentary faction, the leader of the party «opposition platform «For Life», Putin's daughter's godfather.»

Experts consider the nationalization of the oil pipeline a strategy of the authorities to put pressure on the lobbyist of Russian interests in Ukraine Viktor Medvedchuk. Recently, three TV channels' broadcasting, owned by his associate Taras Kozak, was stopped in Ukraine. The purchase of these channels was carried out, including through Varabei's Absolutbank. From the same bank Medvedchuk received a fee of 2.3 million hryvnia.

ЄДИНИЙ ДЕРЖАВНИЙ РЕЄСТР ДЕКЛАРАЦІЙ
осіб, уповноважених на виконання функцій держави або місцевого самоврядування

ПРО РЕЄСТР ВІДКРИТИЙ API СТАТИСТИЧНІ ДАНІ Подати декларацію

Пошук

шукати скільки

Тип декларації: Рок: Тип документа: Тип посади: Категорія посади: Період подання: Висхідний розмір: Відповідає:

Дата та час подання: 17.09.2019 11:40
Повідомлення про суттєві зміни в майновому стані

1. Інформація про суб'єкта декларування

Прізвище: Медведчук
Ім'я: Віктор
П'я батькові (за наявності): Володимирович
Підписаний номер: [Конфіденційна інформація]

Місце роботи: Місце роботи або виконання служби (або міграційні роботи на виконання служби державою)
Верховна Рада України
Займана посада (або посада, на яку претендує чи кандидат): народний депутат України

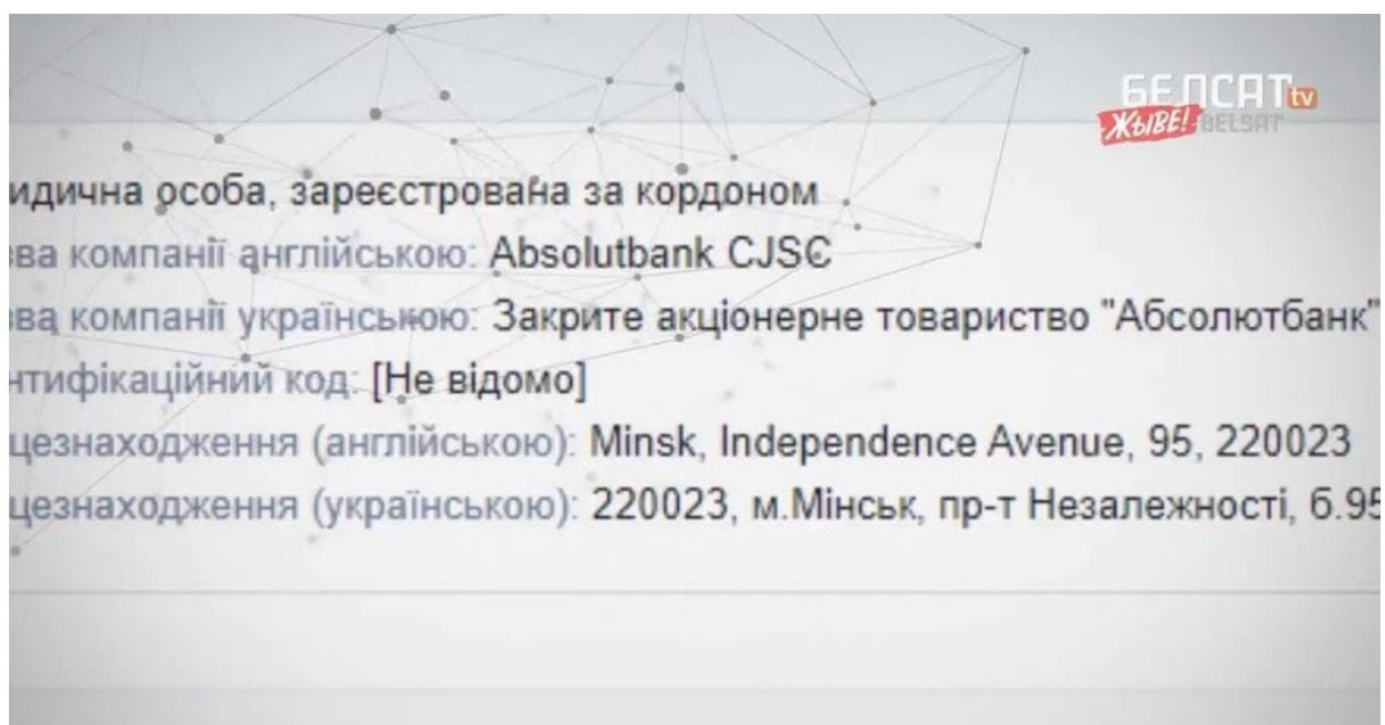
Категорія посади (заповнювати, якщо це вас стосується):
Тип посади: [Не застосовується]
Категорія посади: [Не застосовується]

2. Доходи, у тому числі подарунки

DATA

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Медведчук
Віктор
Володимирович
[Конфіденційна інформація]



Sergei Kuyun, director of the A-95 consulting group, talks about Medvedchuk's ties:

«For example, none of the companies involved in the operation and supply of diesel fuel from Russia through the pipe and without the pipe, through Rosneft - there's no Medvedchuk anywhere. But, for example, I often remember what preceded Varabei's purchasing the pipe - it was several visits of Medvedchuk to Lukashenko. In Ukraine, too, in business circles, in political circles, they understand that Mikalai Varabei probably wouldn't have made such a decision without the blessing of the President. There is a full understanding that such projects, tied to the policy and interests of the Russian Federation, are still not a private initiative.»

Prykarpatahadtrans called the actions of the Ukrainian authorities an attempt to seize the company illegally. The owners said they did not violate the law and intended to protect their property from raiding under the slogan of «fair Bolshevik» nationalization. Prykarpatahadtrans commented on the situation:

Sharikov-style intention to seize property from «bad» private owners and give it to «good» heads of state is obvious. The 1917 slogan «take away and divide» is gaining popularity again.

According to Radio Svaboda, oil products transportation via the pipeline has been stopped since February 15. But the lack of pumping through Prykarpatahadtrans should not cause destabilization in the Ukrainian fuel market, as it is as diversified as possible. Alexander Sirenko, an analyst at UPECO, spoke in this regard:

“At the same time, when this oil pipeline is not working, which has happened before, and nothing happened in Ukraine: not with the prices, our agricultural workers continued to work in the fields. Of course, we noticed its absence, but we lived for a year and a half - from 2014 - 2015 and, in fact, in Ukraine, nothing so global happened in the market. On the contrary, new directions opened up for us. We began to look at maritime supplies differently. And actually the bet is on them now.»

Diesel fuel supply is not the only Varabei's business in Ukraine. He supplies our southern neighbors with road bitumen. According to A-95, last year the Petroleum Bitumen Plant supplied almost 60,000 tons of bitumen. Compared to 2019, it is an increase of 74%. The company's share in total consumption was about 7%. Alexander Sirenko, UPECO analyst, talks about the quality of Belarusian bitumen:

«Belarusian bitumen is of good quality. The bitumen plant has the capability of adding emulsions that are in the production range. These emulsions improve the quality. It's difficult to say that they play a dominant role there, because there were other volumes from other plants, from other areas. Including directly from Mazyr - from the Mazyr Oil Refinery.»

In Belarus, one of Mikalai Varabei's key assets is a large oil trader Interservice, located in Navapolatsk. Varabei became its owner in the early 2000s. Interservice was suspected of duty-free purchases of Russian oil products and their resale to EU countries under the guise of solvents and thinners. This multibillion-dollar scheme lasted a year and a half, from early 2011 to mid-2012. Russian authorities suspended it a few months after a journalistic investigation into the scheme was published by the Belarusian portal Naviny.by and Russia's Novaya Gazeta. Also, according to Naviny.by, Belarusian re-exporters sold Russian oil products to the West at significantly lower prices, leaving a major part of the profits from this scheme abroad. This was confirmed by Tatsiana Manionak (Tatiana Manionok), economic observer, energy expert:

«In fact, it was a re-export of Russian oil products. Not only Belarusian businessmen took part, but also Russian and Kazakh ones - it was such a business, which, of course, was on the verge of some legislative violations.»

In 2012, Interservice acquired the state-owned company EmulBit Village (Vioska EmulBit) for US\$4.5 million. The company was renamed to Bitumen Plant. Now it is the leading bitumen producer in Belarus. This company was spotted in gray schemes with the re-export of Russian oil products in 2018. Unlike in 2011 and 2012, when gasoline and diesel were re-exported from Belarus under the guise of chemical products, this time the oil products themselves were not hidden, but simply documented as though made in Belarus. This was confirmed by Tatsiana Manionak (Tatiana Manionok), economic observer, energy expert:

«Russia knew about it and then, in fact, from 2018, at the end, it was decided to set quotas on imports of Russian oil products to ban the export of sublimated oil products.»

Last year, Varabei's Interservice became the founder of the New Oil Company. According to market sources, the company owns 75% of the shares. The remaining 25% belong to the Belarusian Railways and the Development Bank. The New Oil Company has become the exclusive supplier of oil products from Belarusian plants. Previously, only the state-owned Belarusian Oil Company was involved in this. Belarus earned US\$2.7 billion from oil trade in 2020, and US\$5.2 billion in 2019. This was confirmed by Aliaksandr Zaiats (Alexander Zayats), economic commentator:

“There was a story that the Belarusian Oil Company was a monopolist. There's been a lot of criticism towards them. And there came the idea: let's look at another company for BOC to show its effectiveness. At least, that's the story I heard. And then there was a proposal to create the New Oil Company to see which of them could sell petroleum products better and more efficiently.»

The New Oil Company is selling fuel oil from the Mazyr Oil Refinery and Naftan from Navapolatsk. Deliveries are offered through the ports of the Baltic States. In Riga, Varabei's partner Alexei Chulets owns the BLB Baltijas Terminals. Chulets also owns the Estonian company NT Marine, which owns two vessels and offers petroleum products transportation service by sea. Aliaksandr Zaiats (Alexander Zayats), an economic commentator, tells more:

“They took shipments of dark oil products through Latvia. He has a partner there, Estonian. And they traded quite well back in the days of Interservice with Latvia. They have their own terminal there.”

In addition to the assets in the oil sector, Varabei owns the Krasny Bor hunting farm, the Interforest wood processing company, the BelKazTrans freight forwarder, and the aforementioned Absolutbank. He is also a co-owner of Bremina Group, which is building a large logistics complex on the border with Russia. Lukashenko created a tax offshore in the Orsha district for this project. Varabei's partners in the logistics business are Aliaksei Aleksin (Alexey Oleksin) and Aliaksandr Zaitsau (Alexander Zaitsev). These three are now considered the most influential businessmen in Belarus. Ihar Illiash (Igor Ilyash), an investigative journalist, tells us about them:

“Today Varabei, together with Zaitsau and Aleksin, are the most influential oligarchs closest to Lukashenka. In recent years, they have gained privileges and monopolies in various areas of business. In particular, they are all involved in the mega-project Bremina Group.

In December 2020, Mikalai Varabey came under personal EU sanctions with the wording for supporting the Lukashenko regime. He is mentioned in the EU papers as one of the leading businessmen with interests in oil, banking and other spheres, as well as a co-owner of Bremina Group, which enjoys tax benefits and other support from the Belarusian authorities. Vadim Iosub, senior analyst at Alpari Eurasia, tells us about the sanctions:

«Sanctions most likely don't even create new reputational costs. They are introduced in response to pre-existing reputational costs. There are examples in the world when companies from countries that have not imposed sanctions are afraid to work with companies against which third countries have imposed sanctions.»

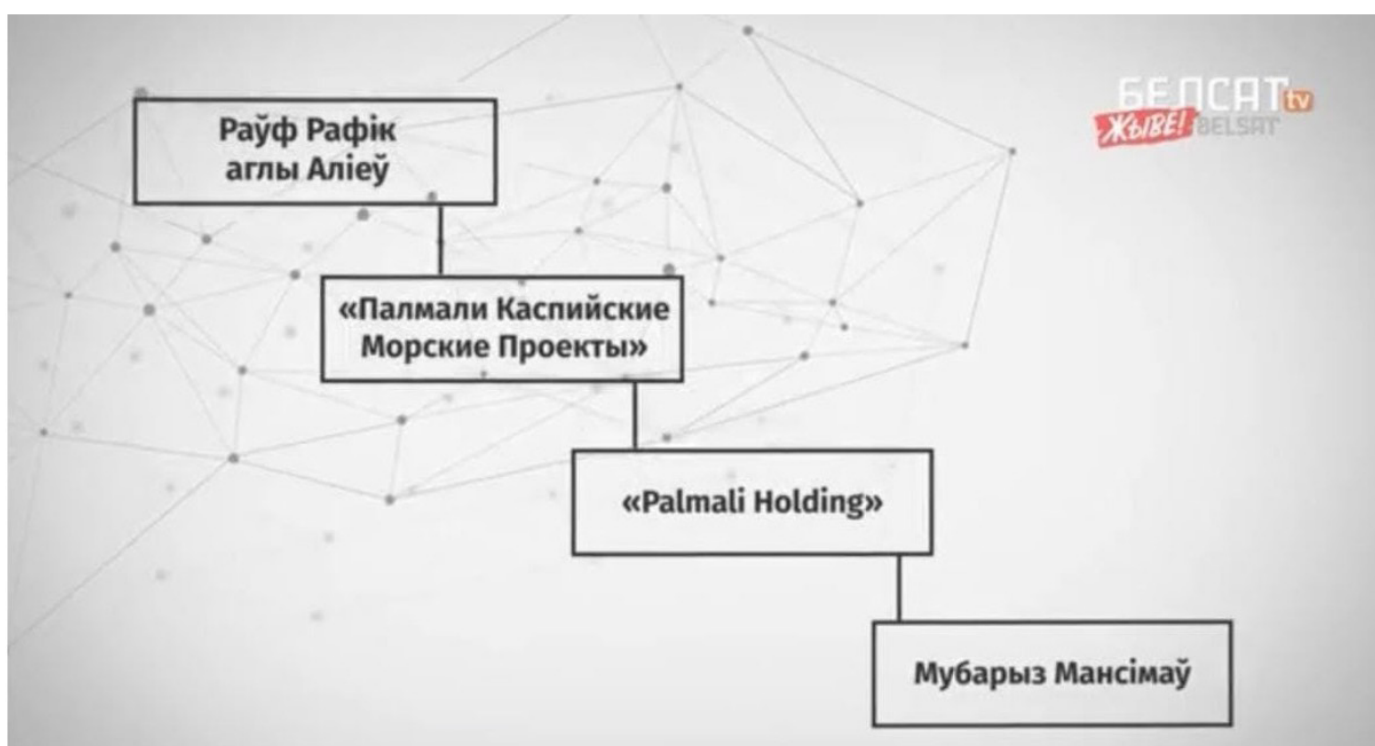
After the imposition of European sanctions, Mikalai Varabei made his underlying assets over to his managers. «Chirvony Bor now belongs to Iryna Pakratava (Irina Pokratova), Viachaslau Atrakhimovich (Vyacheslav Atrakhimovich) and Alesia Berazhnaia (Alesya Berezhnaya).» This was confirmed to us by Ihar Illiash (Igor Ilyash), an investigative journalist:

«He transferred his underlying asset, Red Forest, to which all the rest of them were tied. That is, Interservice, a major oil trader, was registered on Chirvony Bor, while Absolutbbank, New Oil Company, and Bitumen Plant were registered on Interservice. In fact, by changing the owners of one company, he changed the owners of his entire business, core assets. This is done in order to get out from under the Western sanctions.»

Pankratava lives in Navapolatsk and was self-employed. Atrakhimovich works as the chief accountant of Interservice, and Alesia Berazhnaya is charge of this company.

Until October 2020, Berazhnaya was the owner of the Russian company Resource Tanker, which in 2015 was founded by Varabei's «Chirvony Bor». Resource Tanker owns two refineries in the Moscow and Sverdlovsk regions and sells oil products to the United States, China, and the United Arab Emirates. Now the asset belongs to a number of other businessmen, including Rauf Rafik Agli Aliyev.

Rauf Rafik Agly Aliyev has a Belarusian passport. He managed the Rostov company, which is part of the shipping holding Palmali. The holding is owned by the Turkish businessman Mubariz Mansimov. For a long time he was one of the ten biggest businessmen and had good relations with the authorities, but later fell into disgrace for supporting the opposition. Now his business is on the verge of bankruptcy. Mkalai Varabei is also connected with the Palmali holding through Maltese companies. Ihar Illiash (Igor Ilyash), an investigative journalist, tells us about it:



“These are two very mysterious companies that were registered in 2012 and 2014. In one of them, he is the owner, along with other oligarchs - Zaitsau, and Allatin Aikach, who is a very, very influential person in Mubariz Mansimov’s holding. We don’t have exact information about what these two Maltese companies were doing - we didn’t find it, couldn’t find it - but the very nature and business, the specialization of the Varabei’s business, and the business specialization of Mubariz Mansimov suggest that, most likely, these two companies were involved in the oil trade.”

While Varabei has only transferred Belarusian companies to his managers now, his Austrian assets have long belonged to his daughter Katsiaryna (Katerina). She graduated from a private American university in Vienna and married Eugene Smushkovich, a Russian citizen and manager of the Swiss bank Julius Baer. In Austria, Mrs Smushkovich owns Power Chemical Trading GmbH and Devana Services GmbH. The former

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МІНІСТЭРСТВА ЮСТЫЦЫІ РЭСПУБЛІКІ БЕЛАРУСЬ вул. Калектарная, 10, 220004, г. Мінск Тэл./факс: 200-86-87, 200-97-55 E-mail: kanc@minjust.by, minjust@mail.gov.by	МИНИСТЕРСТВО ЮСТИЦИИ РЕСПУБЛИКИ БЕЛАРУСЬ ул. Коллекторная, 10, 220004, г. Минск Тел./факс: 200-86-87, 200-97-55 E-mail: kanc@minjust.by, minjust@mail.gov.by
18.01.2021 № 10-11/1/546	

Выписка из Единого государственного регистра юридических лиц и индивидуальных предпринимателей о юридическом лице по состоянию на 18.01.2021

№ п/п	Наименование показателя	Значение показателя
1	Регистрационный номер	391033635
2	Состояние	Действующий
3	Регистрирующий орган (на дату формирования выписки)	Верхнедвинский райисполком

6	Полное наименование на белорусском языке	Таварыства з абмежаванай адказнасцю "Чырвоны Бор"
7	Сокращенное наименование на белорусском языке (при наличии)	ТОО "Чырвоны Бор"
8	Государственный орган (иная организация), осуществивший	Верхнедвинский райисполком
	с 04.04.2013	по 13.04.2015
	Частное туристическое предприятие "Красный Бор"	


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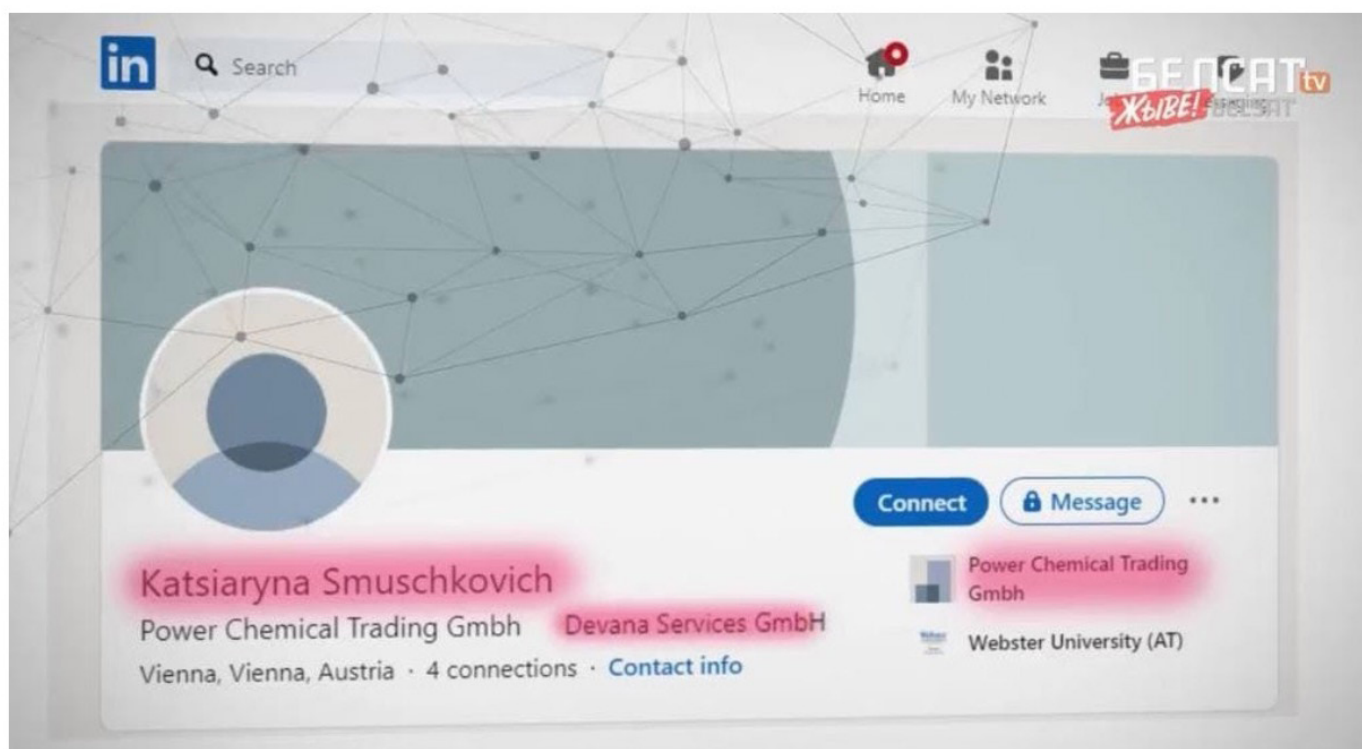
	по 21.12.2020	Воробей Николай Николаевич (Республика Беларусь)	БЕЛСАТ tv ЖЫВЕ! BELSAT
	по 21.12.2020	Воробей Тамара Яковлевна (Республика Беларусь)	
ий решение о			

ственное имя, (такое имеется) (ства)	Панкратова Ирина Эдуардовна (Республика Беларусь)	БЕЛСАТ tv ЖЫВЕ! BELSAT
в ЕГР	21.12.2020	
процентном и в виде дроби) и ином виде вклада) в , вид валюты	30%, 4500000 (денежный), Белорусский рубль (BYN)	
ственное имя, (такое имеется) (ства)	Бережная Алеся Александровна (Республика Беларусь)	

is engaged in petroleum products trade. The latter attracts European tourists to the Chirvony Bor. The information was confirmed by Ihar Illiash (Igor Ilyash), an investigative journalist:

“The main asset registered to his daughter Katsiaryna is Power Chemical Trading, an oil trading company registered in Vienna. It is known that its first owner was Varabei himself. A few years ago, he transferred this asset to Katsiaryna - his daughter. Why he did it - it wasn't done in connection with the sanctions, then there were no sanctions - is unknown. But most likely, she is such a nominal figure in this business. If you check her public information, her social networks profiles, then this is a person who mainly leads a secular life. It doesn't look like she's in serious business all the time.»

ственное имя, таковое имеется) нства)	Бережная Алеся Александровна (Республика Беларусь)	
я в ЕГР	21.12.2020	
процентном ли в виде дроби) и ниём вида вклада) в е, вид валюты	40%, 6000000 (денежный), Белорусский рубль (BYN)	
ственное имя, таковое имеется) нства)	Атрахимович Вячеслав Геннадьевич (Республика Беларусь)	



LinkedIn profile page for **Katsiaryna Smuschkovich**. The profile is associated with **Power Chemical Trading GmbH** and **Devana Services GmbH**. The location is listed as **Vienna, Vienna, Austria**, with 4 connections. The page includes a search bar, navigation links for Home and My Network, and a logo for БЕЛСАТ ЖЫВЕ! BELSAT TV. The profile picture is a circular icon with a blue and white design.

Eolinus Beteiligungsverwaltung is registered at the same Vienna address as the Power Chemical Trading office. According to the investigation of the TUT.by portal, it was this company that ordered the business jet, which was allegedly used by Viktor Lukashenko in March last year. But formally the Austrian firm is owned by Alexei Lesenkov, who heads a subsidiary of NT Marine in Russia. Ihar Illiash (Igor Ilyash), an investigative journalist, commented on this information:

Stock-im-Eisen-Platz 3/38
1010 Wien

Firmenbuchnummer:
FN 392867 x

UID-Nummer:
•ATU67848617

Beginndatum der Rechtsform:
2013-01-31

per chemischen Produkten
für die Mineralöl- und
chemische Industrie:

Geschäftsführer
Frau Smuschkovich
Katsiaryna
Privatperson
gemeinsam
vertretungsberechtigt

Geschäftsführer
Herr Mag. Javadov Tarlan
Privatperson
alleinvertretungsberechtigt

Gesellschafter
Frau Smuschkovich
Katsiaryna
Privatperson
Anteil: 100,00%

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Frau Smuschkovich
Katsiaryna

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“Well, the fact that they are registered at the same address is a common scheme where the assets are in the hands of the same person. Such clear evidence. What does the company do? It is known in public only for one thing - that it was a business jet customer spotted in 2019. Which Lukashenko, and his son Viktor, flew on board of. In particular, they flew to the UAE, that is, it’s obvious that this asset is also associated with the oligarchs close to Lukashenko.

European sanctions could negatively affect Mikalai Varabei’s business. And he is already suffering from them. In December last year, the National Bank of Ukraine denied Varabei the purchase of BTA Bank. According to the financial regulator, in accordance with the requirements of regulations, the application of sanctions to a person is grounds for the loss of his impeccable business reputation during the term of

the sanctions and three years after their abolition. Sergei Kuyun, director of the A-95 consulting group, expressed his opinion in this regard:

“Now, due to the new circumstances, I mean the EU sanctions, to be honest, I have a hard time imagining how the company associated with it will now export all Belarusian products. These are large volumes and this immediately creates huge risks. Exports can stop at any time. Nominally, he left the ranks of shareholders of these companies, but still many European banks are skeptical of this reshuffle. Suspecting that these deals aren’t very clean, that they’re formal”.

Eolinus Beteiligungsverwaltungs GmbH in Wien

Eolinus Beteiligungsverwaltungs GmbH

Inhaber dieses Unternehmens? [▶ Eintrag erweitern](#)

Stock im Eisen Platz 3/38
1010 Wien

Nachfolgende Informationen werden von Creditreform, Europas größter Wirtschaftsauskunftei, zur Verfügung gestellt.

Eolinus Beteiligungsverwaltungs GmbH	Tätigkeitsbeschreibung: Handel mit Waren und Dienstleistungserbringung	Handelnde Personen: Geschäftsführer
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Tätigkeitsbeschreibung:
Handel mit Waren und Dienstleistungserbringung aller Art; Beteiligungsverwaltung.

Handelnde Personen:
Geschäftsführer:
Herr Lysenkov Aleksei
Privatperson
alleinvertretungsberechtigt

Gesellschafter:
Herr Lysenkov Aleksei
Privatperson
Anteil: 100,00%

Mikalai Varabei is perhaps the only private supplier of oil products in Belarus. According to investigations by a number of media outlets, he has close business relations with Alexander Lukashenko's family. At the same time, he is trying to avoid EU sanctions by re-registering his assets with his own employees. Meanwhile, neither his daughter nor the companies registered to her in Austria have yet come under restrictions from Brussels.