

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Lincoln Global, Inc., The Lincoln Electric Company v. George Giannou
Case No. D2025-4720

1. The Parties

The Complainants are Lincoln Global, Inc., United States of America (“United States”) and The Lincoln Electric Company, United States, represented by CSC Digital Brand Services Group AB, Sweden.

The Respondent is George Giannou, Greece.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <lincolnelectric-ro.com> is registered with One.com A/S (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on November 14, 2025. On November 14, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On November 19, 2025, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain name which differed from the named Respondent (The RDAP server redacted the value) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainants on November 19, 2025, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting the Complainants to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainants filed an amended Complaint on November 20, 2025.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amended Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Policy” or “UDRP”), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Rules”), and the WIPO Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Supplemental Rules”).

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on November 25, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was December 15, 2025. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on December 16, 2025.

The Center appointed Francisco Castillo-Chacón as the sole panelist in this matter on December 24, 2025. The Panel finds that it was properly constituted. The Panel has submitted the Statement of Acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence, as required by the Center to ensure compliance with the Rules, paragraph 7.

4. Factual Background

The Complainants are sister companies owned by Lincoln Electric Holdings Inc (“Lincoln Electric”) founded in 1895 based in the United States. In 1911, Lincoln Electric introduced the first variable voltage, single operator, portable welding machine in the world. The company continued to expand in the United States, and in 1936 started to expand globally when it established The Lincoln Electric Company Pty Ltd in Australia.

Today, Lincoln Electric has become the world leader in the design, development and manufacture of arc welding products, robotic arc welding systems, plasma and oxyfuel cutting equipment and has a leading global position in the brazing and soldering alloys market. Known as The Welding Experts®, Lincoln Electric’s solutions are used across diverse industry sectors in over 160 countries. In 2024, Lincoln Electric was named one of “America’s Best Mid-Size Companies” by Time Magazine, one of “America’s Great Workplaces” by Newsweek, and one of the “World’s Most Ethical Companies” by the Ethisphere Institute, as a sixth-year honoree.

The Complainants own several European Union trademarks, including LINCOLN ELECTRIC Registration No. 004725941 registered on November, 27, 2006, in classes 6, 9, and 35; LINCOLN ELECTRIC Registration No. 015346935 registered on August 31, 2016, in classes 1, 7, and 8; and LINCOLN ELECTRIC Registration No. 004982468 registered on January 15, 2008, in classes 6, 7, 9, and 35.

The Complainants also own over 450 domain names which incorporate the LINCOLN ELECTRIC trademark and its variations, including its primary domain name <lincolnelectric.com> which was registered in 1996 well before the disputed domain name was registered.

The Complainants’ domain name date back to January of 1996, this predates the registration date of the disputed domain name, which is June 18, 2025. The disputed domain name does not resolve to an active website.

5. Parties’ Contentions

A. Complainants

The Complainants contend that they have satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain name.

Notably, the Complainants contend that the mark LINCOLN ELECTRIC is well-known in their industry. The Complainants further contend that the trademark has a long and extensive use, and that it is a key player in its industry.

In addition, the Complainants assert that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name since the Complainants have no relationship with the Respondent and the latter is not commonly known by the disputed domain name. The Respondent certainly had knowledge of the internationally famous LINCOLN ELECTRIC mark when the disputed domain name was registered given the distinctiveness and international reputation of the LINCOLN ELECTRIC mark. The Respondent is not using the disputed domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services, nor making any legitimate noncommercial or fair use of them.

The Complainants state that the disputed domain name was registered and it is being used in bad faith given that: (a) the Respondent was aware of the LINCOLN ELECTRIC mark; and (b) the Respondent is not using the disputed domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services, nor making any legitimate noncommercial or fair use of them.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainants' contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

It is well accepted that the first element functions primarily as a standing requirement. The standing (or threshold) test for confusing similarity involves a reasoned but relatively straightforward comparison between the Complainant's trademark and the disputed domain name. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition ("[WIPO Overview 3.0](#)"), section 1.7.

The Complainants have shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.2.1.

The disputed domain name incorporates the Complainants' entire trademark, with the addition of a hyphen and two letters, which does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity.

The disputed domain name consists of the LINCOLN ELECTRIC mark with the addition of the letters "RO", which in this case may be construed as a geographic reference to Romania. This does not prevent the disputed domain name from being confusingly similar to the Complainants' trademark. The Panel finds that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainants' LINCOLN ELECTRIC mark. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.8.

The Panel finds the first element of the Policy has been established.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy provides a list of circumstances in which the Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognized that proving a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name may result in the difficult task of "proving a negative", requiring information that is often primarily within the knowledge or control of the respondent. As such, where a complainant makes out a *prima facie* case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element shifts to the respondent to come forward with relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the domain name (although the burden of proof always remains on the complainant). If the respondent fails to come forward with such relevant evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.1.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds the Complainants have established a *prima facie* case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. The Respondent has not rebutted the Complainant's *prima facie* showing and has not come forward with any relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

The Panel finds the second element of the Policy has been established.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

The Panel notes that, for the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, paragraph 4(b) of the Policy establishes circumstances, in particular, but without limitation, that, if found by the Panel to be present, shall be evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith.

- (i) circumstances indicating that the Respondent has registered or has acquired the disputed domain name primarily for the purpose of selling, renting, or otherwise transferring the disputed domain name registration to the Complainants who are the owners of the trademark or service mark or to a competitor of the Complainants, for valuable consideration in excess of its documented out-of-pocket costs directly related to the disputed domain name; or
- (ii) the Respondent has registered the disputed domain name in order to prevent the owner of the trademark or service mark from reflecting the mark in a corresponding disputed domain name, provided that the Respondent has engaged in a pattern of such conduct; or
- (iii) the Respondent has registered the disputed domain name primarily for the purpose of disrupting the business of a competitor; or
- (iv) by using the disputed domain name, the Respondent has intentionally attempted to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its website or other online location, by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant's mark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of the Respondent's website or location or of a product or service on the Respondent's website or location.

The Panel finds that it is more likely than not that the Respondent was aware of the Complainants and their reputation in the LINCOLN ELECTRIC mark at the time the disputed domain name was registered. The Complainants are one of the largest companies in their field with worldwide operations. In the absence of an explanation from the Respondent, the Panel infers that more likely than not the letters "RO" in the disputed domain name refer to "Romania", where the Complainant is operating, suggesting that the registration of the disputed domain name was likely done in awareness of the Complainant's mark and in the absence of rights or legitimate interests amounts to registration in bad faith.

Panels have found that the non-use of a domain name (including a blank page) would not prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.3. Having reviewed the available record, the Panel notes the distinctiveness or reputation of the Complainant's trademark, and the composition of the disputed domain name, and finds that in the circumstances of this case the passive holding of the disputed domain name does not prevent a finding of bad faith under the Policy.

The Panel finds that the Complainants have established the third element of the Policy.

7. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the disputed domain name <lincolnelectric-ro.com> be transferred to the Complainants.

/Francisco Castillo-Chacón/

Francisco Castillo-Chacón

Sole Panelist

Date: January 6, 2026