

SERHII MORHUNOV WINS THE “INNOVATIVE MAYOR 2017” RATING



January 30, 2017, Vinnytsia, Ukraine - The NGO-HUB hosts the “Innovative Mayor 2017” Award ceremony. The rating founders Jaroslawa Johnson, President and CEO of the Western NIS Enterprise Fund, and Iryna Ozymok, Founder of the International Mayors Summit, and the WNISEF’s Local Economic Development Program Manager handed the award to the Mayor Serhii Morhunov. They pointed out, that many innovative ideas in the city’s environment, economics, administrative services, energy efficiency, etc. were successfully implemented in Vinnytsia. All these projects make life of the citizens more comfortable.

The “Innovative Mayor 2017” rating aims at showcasing cities with up to 500,000 citizens, where innovations have the most successful ground. Being part of the "Ukrainska Pravda" special project and the International Mayors Summit, the rating ran through several steps.

The final stage, All-Ukrainian online poll, made the Mayor of Vinnytsia, Serhii Morhunov, hit the rating’s top. On January 30, he was awarded the "Innovative Mayor 2017" award.

"This award is for Vinnytsia and its citizens. Together, we can address various issues, because our team works integrally, as a single unit. I’m not trying to say that everything is perfect, but there is a comprehension and vision, so I want to thank my colleagues for their work. Since the day our “Transparent Office” public services center was opened in 2008, we witness a continuous flow of visitors from different territorial communities, willing to adopt our experience. One can’t globally resolve the issues in a year or two. Though, today all the Vinnytsia’s citizens know the "24-hour Watch" number, and they call it,

addressing with various questions. Regarding the work of the Transparent Offices I must say that officials should consider people as clients and therefore provide them with quality services. The authorities may have some ideas, implement them, but they won't bring any result without cooperation with the community, - says the **Mayor Serhii Morhunov**. - I would also like to stress out that only a strategic vision for years to come will allow the community to develop in different aspects of life. To my mind, the issue of integrated city development, which is being currently reviewed by the Vinnytsia's citizens and partners, is the prospect of all the territorial communities and this issue needs to be emphasized."

The rating founders congratulated the Mayor on taking the award. "The innovative mayors' rating is the first of the kind in Ukraine, and it enables independent evaluation of the quality of mayors' work in their cities. With all my heart I congratulate the Mayor of Vinnytsia on this victory, and I wish him to proceed with introducing qualitative changes and set the pace for other Ukrainian mayors," said **Jaroslawa Johnson, President and CEO of the Western NIS Enterprise Fund**.

"The rating process had three stages. We dealt with over 400 nominees, made up the list of the top 20, and the next stage was the top 5. These contenders were put out for online poll with more than 13,000 Ukrainian voters, and the Mayor of Vinnytsia got 38% of the votes. Speaking of innovation, we do not measure the potential impact of "flying taxi" or "robot systems". What we mean is the fact that today innovation is the high-quality and efficient functioning of the services that will help citizens save time, money and have a comfortable life. We know that Vinnytsia had already been put into urban life comfort ratings. A member of our jury is a man in a wheelchair, and he made a point that Vinnytsia is quite mobile, and projects are not only conceived, but implemented. We're pleased to know that 43 public transport stops in Vinnytsia were modernized in 2016-2017, and they are now equipped with ramps and tactile tiles for the visually impaired. It is a much needed innovation. We know about the "24-hour Watch", which handles people's requests, we know about the projects of children's ombudsmen," said **Iryna Ozymok, Founder of the International Mayors Summit, Local Economic Development Program Manager of the Western NIS Enterprise Fund**.

After the salutatory part the municipal team presented their urban innovations in various spheres, encompassing energy efficiency, e-governance, work of the Transparent Offices, healthcare, and other sectors.

"I'm happy to know that Vinnytsia has the majority of aspects, which are necessary for the city and important for the citizens who live and work here. Safety is the main people's value, and you have some progress in this area; you have a new Situation Center, whose staff can quickly respond to a plenty of scenarios. Economic opportunities are also important, since all the people are eager to work, earn money and develop ", - added **Iryna Ozymok**.

The invited guests also pointed out the work on improving the city's inclusive environment, making it comfortable for people with special needs. "It is highly important that we do not even strategically assign people with disabilities into separate programs. Every citizen has absolutely equal rights, and city is being made comfortable for everybody, but not for someone specifically. I am proud that in Vinnytsia the Strategy presupposes this vision and I want to see it throughout Ukraine," said **Raisa Panasiuk, the Commissioner for Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities**.

Western NIS Enterprise Fund (WNISEF) is a \$150 million regional fund, a pioneer in Ukraine and Moldova with more than two decades of successful experience in investing in small and medium-sized companies. WNISEF was funded by the U.S. government via the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Since its inception 20 years ago, WNISEF's cumulative investments total over \$168 million to 118 companies

employing around 25 000 people and made it possible to unlock \$1.5 billion for companies in Ukraine and Moldova. In 2015 WNISEF has launched a \$35 million legacy program focused on export promotion, local economic development, impact investing and economic leadership. WNISEF is funding innovative, high-impact, reform focused programs aimed to transform lives of the ordinary people in Ukraine and Moldova.

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