

Serhii Kononenko is a professional with long-standing experience in the fields of security, public administration, and regional development. He graduated from the Odesa I. I. Mechnikov National University, where he obtained the title of Candidate of Legal Sciences, and from the Odesa State Academy of Food Technologies. He complemented his education with a series of advanced training courses in law and security, including at the Security Service of Ukraine Academy. He has more than two decades of experience in the Security Service of Ukraine, where he served from 1998 to 2019, reaching the rank of colonel. He later headed a specialized private security company, and since 2023 has served as Director of the Regional Development Agency of Odesa Region. Over the course of his career, he has completed numerous international programs in areas such as international partnership, financial investigations, anti-corruption, sustainable development, and industrial digitalization.

Between 2023 and 2025, he coordinated major projects, including the opening of the European Integration Office in Odesa and the implementation of the Swiss-Ukrainian project UCORD. He has been involved in strategic research on urban and regional development within programs of the Council of Europe. He also contributed to the development of the Odesa Region Reconstruction Strategy and promoted the adoption of European best practices in the security sector through the SafeSkills project. He initiated the launch of the first international startup accelerator in southern Ukraine and established the Southern Ukrainian Reconstruction and Recovery Cluster.

He has participated in more than 230 events as a speaker or organizer, actively contributing to reconstruction forums, strategic planning processes, and the strengthening of regional resilience. For his service and contribution, he has been awarded two SBU medals, honorary insignia, and national and international distinctions. His professional activity is complemented by civic engagement aimed at supporting vulnerable groups, preserving cultural heritage, and strengthening local communities. He is a strong advocate of international cooperation, sustainable recovery, and innovative initiatives.

He was awarded the Diploma of Excellence in Bucharest and the Cultural Diplomacy Award in Kyiv. Serhii Kononenko combines extensive security expertise with a strategic vision for regional development. He is passionate about sports, including football, volleyball, boxing, and billiards.