



37<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL  
**NO - DIG**  
FLORENCE 2019

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Dario Nardella  
Mayor of Florence

*37<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL NO-DIG Conference & Exhibition  
Florence, Lower Fortress 30/9 – 2/10/2019*

I'm pleased to welcome you to Florence and open the 37<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL NO-DIG Conference & Exhibition here in the Lower Fortress. I've been asked to do the honours as the mayor of this city and as the coordinator of ANCI, the national association of Italian municipalities, for the metropolitan cities. (The City of Florence and ANCI are sponsors of this conference.)

For most of you, who've come here from the four corners of the Earth, your image of Florence is fundamentally linked to its history, its glorious past. After all, just steps from here you'll find Renaissance palaces, the cathedral, Palazzo Vecchio and Ponte Vecchio, and right now we're in the Lower Fortress, built by Pier Francesco da Viterbo and Antonio da Sangallo the Younger between 1534 and 1537 by order of Alessandro de' Medici.

It may seem bizarre to be talking about innovation in this "old" city, and yet, just yesterday, the "Wired Next Fest"—one of the most important innovation festivals—ended at Palazzo Vecchio and today your own conference is starting.

But if you think about it, innovation has always been in Florence's DNA. The artistic beauties of this city are examples of bold innovation since the fifteenth century. Just take a look at the cupola built by Brunelleschi. Creativity and innovation are the lifeblood of this land and they're typical of Made in Florence products, ranging from fashion brands to the Nuovo Pignone industrial hub.

Innovation has been our goal for a long time and today Florence is at the forefront of this field. It ranked first among Italian cities in the "digital transformation" category of the iCityRate 2018 list, thanks to the range of digital services and public databanks available to its residents. Our innovation model placed Florence among the top 7 city finalists worldwide for the "City Award" at the Smart City Expo in Barcelona, one of the biggest events in the world dedicated to smart cities, along with world class cities such as London, Melbourne, Singapore, and Santiago del Chile.

Among the goals of my platform for the next 5 years as mayor of Florence, sustainable development linked to new technologies is one of the key points. We've decided to create an Urban Innovation Office as a central steering point within the city administrative structure, focussing on the relationship between innovation and urban transformation. At the same time Florence aims to be a world hub for high-level training and research, with a vast education and technological innovation plan that will take shape in a former military barracks. It will be called "Florence's Granary."

Another fundamental point is that of environmental sustainability.

In terms of the topic of your congress, the management of network services within the City of Florence is carried out following three fundamental principles: transparency, simplicity and control.

Since 2011 the city administration has been using management software that allows the network management bodies to apply for documentation on changes to public land remotely and directly. The software also makes it possible for the administration to manage all interventions in a coordinated way. The use of trenchless technology on city roads is a subject that's very topical and that should be promoted carefully in the city of Florence, given the difficulties arising from the presence of numerous underground services.

This is why we ask network management bodies to carry out georadar campaigns that allow us to update our maps and authorize trenchless techniques for laying service lines. It's interesting that between today and the 2nd of October we'll have a first-hand opportunity to see the latest proposals in the no-dig sector. So, I wish you a productive conference as well as an enjoyable stay in this city that may be old but that never tires of creating and innovating, for a sustainable future.