

WORLD DESIGN TALKS

Intervention by H.E. Mr Paolo Trichilo, Ambassador of Italy

Ljubljana, 21 June 2019

Mr. Mayor of the City of Ljubljana,
Representatives of the Slovenian Government,
Authorities of the World Design Association,
Esteemed Professors,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am extremely glad to participate in today's event, and I agree that Ljubljana is a perfect location for hosting the World Design Talk on sustainable cities and communities, given that it was recognized as the Green Capital of Europe in 2016 and in the light of the constant debate on the new frontiers of design taking place in this city. Over my almost four years in this beautiful country, I have been impressed by the deep concern conveyed by Slovenian professionals about issues such as the social responsibility of designers.

As Italy is an internationally acclaimed country for design as a distinctive feature of its tradition, culture, creativity and innovation, I would like to underline that we contributed to such a debate through the joint initiatives undertaken by the Italian Embassy, the Italian Cultural Institute and the Italian Trade Agency. We invited as keynote speaker at the Italian Business Forum the archi-star Massimo Iosa Ghini and participated in BIG Architecture and Month of Design, organised by Zavod Big in the City of Design, events traditionally hosting Italian architects. In particular, a testimony to this endeavor is the Italian Design Day, a series of lectures organized at the same time in one hundred cities all over the world, at the initiative of the Italian Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Culture. I see a strong connection between what will be discussed here today and the three editions held in Ljubljana at MAO – Museum of Architecture and Design: in 2017, the topic was “multipliscinary design”, which portrayed design as an all-encompassing phenomenon in our culture; in 2018 the theme was “Broken Nature”, on design and sustainability for the environment, and in 2019 the title was “Design and the City of Future”, on the newest possible solutions for our cities, involving infrastructures, mobility, preservation of the natural, cultural and architectural heritage.

These activities show us that design has established itself as a way of thinking, associating its inherent creativity to wide and growing scopes. This idea is well exemplified by the twenty - second international exhibition of La Triennale di Milano, entitled "Broken Nature: Design takes on Human Survival", which can be visited until September the 1st. This event deals with the bonds between men and his natural environment; it highlights how the real subject of design will no longer be to resolve only immediate issues, but also those that will have an impact on the long term. Slovenia participates in the Triennale with a project curated by the Academy of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Ljubljana.

Finally, I would like to recall that Italian design companies are the most numerous in EU: 30,000, generating 4.5 Billion Euros of revenue (+ 12,5% in the last 5 years) with ever advanced solutions for an increasingly sustainable world, also thanks to the competitive advantage linked to a widespread excellent training system, like the Politecnico in Milan with its 4,000 students. The role of design as a driver of competitiveness appears even more important if we combine it with the green economy: Italian companies that simultaneously invest in green technologies and design have a higher performance of 21 percentage points in terms of employees, 18 points in terms of turnover and 17 points in relation to exports compared to other companies. Over the last 5 years, today's decisive challenges already pushed more than three-hundred-forty-five-thousand Italian companies to invest in technologies that can reduce environmental impact, save energy and limit carbon dioxide emissions.

I wish you productive talks and thank you for your attention.