

## PRESS RELEASE PRESS CONFERENCE – WFTC SYMPOSIUM GENOA 2026

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### LIGURIA HOSTS THE WFTC SYMPOSIUM AT PALAZZO DUCALE IN GENOA FROM 18 TO 20 MAY. COUNCILLOR NICOLÒ: "OUR REGION CONFIRMS ITSELF AS A POINT OF REFERENCE FOR MAJOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL ISSUES"

GENOA. Liguria is preparing to host, from 18 to 20 May 2026 at Palazzo Ducale in Genoa, the WFTC Symposium Genoa 2026, a global working assembly promoted by the World Federation of Therapeutic Communities (WFTC), in collaboration with the CEIS Genoa Foundation and the Italian Federation of Therapeutic Communities (FICT).

The Symposium, which takes place every ten years in a different city around the world, represents one of the main moments of global dialogue in the sector, and the choice of Genoa reflects the recognition of a territory that over the years has developed a particular sensitivity and attentiveness towards vulnerability and care pathways. The event will bring together approximately 200 delegates from five continents, including institutional representatives, therapeutic communities, universities and international organisations working in the field of addiction. It is a global dialogue structured not as a traditional conference, but as a shared working process organised into plenary sessions and thematic groups, aimed at building common guidelines at a global level. The outcome of this work will be the drafting of the "Genoa Declaration 2026", an international policy document that will define guidelines, minimum standards and shared perspectives in the field of residential therapies, social-relational education and the labour inclusion of people with addictions.

"Liguria once again confirms itself as a point of reference on major Health and Social issues," emphasises **Massimo Nicolò, Regional Councillor for Health, Social Health Policies, Social Affairs and the Third Sector**. "Hosting this event means placing at the centre one of the most complex challenges of our time — addiction — which requires increasingly integrated and multidisciplinary responses. Engaging with experts from around the world is an opportunity to share organisational models and best practices, strengthening our care system. As the Liguria Region, we are committed to developing pathways that combine prevention, treatment and social inclusion, with particular attention to new forms of addiction."

"It is an honour for our city to host the WFTC Symposium 2026," comments **Monsignor Marco Tasca, Archbishop of Genoa**. "It will be a unique opportunity not only to discuss addiction but above all to offer shared and common solutions, generated through an operational and participatory process among the various delegates involved. It is a very important signal, highlighting the importance of developing care frameworks as well as education, inclusion and reintegration for people with addictions. Genoa has a very long and well-established tradition of volunteering and assistance — it is a city that shows great sensitivity towards vulnerability. Hosting this symposium is a further enrichment of what is already being done, not only in the field of addiction."

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"It is an honour for our city to host the WFTC Symposium," explains **Cristina Lodi, Municipal Councillor for Welfare**. "It will be a unique and invaluable opportunity for dialogue and exchange on a topic that affects us very closely — addiction. The fight against addiction, whether to substances or gambling, is one of the most delicate challenges of our time, and it is a battle we can only win if we all work together: institutions, associations, third-sector organisations and health authorities. Genoa is a city where a great deal is already being done in this regard, but we can do even better, and I am confident that after the Symposium we will all come away enriched and more ready to further improve our addiction prevention policies. The administration itself is very sensitive to this issue, and one of the first measures taken was the establishment of a shared social-health working table with the ASL (Local Health Authority), formerly ASL 3, COREAD and the Municipalities, precisely to begin implementing that social-health integration which is not only necessary, but essential."

"On 18 May, Genoa will host an international Symposium dedicated to addiction, with experts from around the world," states **Enrico Costa, President of the CEIS Genoa Foundation and Vice-President of WFTC**. "It will be an opportunity to compare educational models and policies developed in very different contexts, shaped by varying levels of toxicity, psychiatric vulnerabilities and institutional regulations. The choice of Genoa as the venue recognises the city's capabilities and sensitivity in welcoming and supporting the most vulnerable people, and its specific approach to enhancing each person's life project. For three days, Genoa will become a global laboratory, where shared guidelines will be built that can have a real impact on services and policies in the field of addiction across various countries. The complexity and severity of distress require integrated responses that combine care, relationship and social inclusion. The community model continues to demonstrate its effectiveness in accompanying people through concrete pathways of change."

The phenomenon of addiction continues to represent one of the major contemporary social and health challenges, with an evolution that encompasses both substance use and behavioural addictions, such as gambling and the problematic use of technology. In this context, the need to strengthen integrated intervention models capable of combining prevention, treatment and inclusion is becoming increasingly urgent.

The Symposium fits into this scenario as a concrete space for work and dialogue at a global level: on 18 May, the opening plenary will be held with institutional greetings, a round table and the launch of proceedings; the afternoon of the 18th and the entire day of the 19th will be dedicated to thematic working groups, organised into international panels; on 20 May, finally, the closing plenary will take place, with the sharing and final definition of the Genoa Declaration.

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