

# SMART CITIES AND FITCE 2019 IN GHENT

**This year's FITCE Congress takes place in Ghent with the theme of Smart Cities. Ed Smith spoke to José Van Ooteghem, Marlies Van der Wee and Walter Van Hemeledonck, key members of the team orchestrating the event, to find out more.**

## Where will the conference be held and what are the main themes?

The conference will be held in the historic venue Het Pand, a former Dominican monastery, which is now part of Ghent University. Ghent is an important industrial and commercial centre within Belgium and has a very influential university, supporting over 80,000 students. The city is a leader in the Smart City field and some of its projects, such as De Nieuwe Dokken (<https://denieuwedokken.be/over>), which demonstrates smart energy use and the reuse of waste water and TMAAS ([www.trafficmanagement-asaservice.com/](http://www.trafficmanagement-asaservice.com/)) which aims to transform expensive, inflexible traffic management centres to dynamic, smart and digital control centres, will be showcased during the congress.

The congress will demonstrate how ICT technology supports socio-economic development and brings new solutions and opportunities to a city, to transform it into a true "smart" city. Applications based on smart sensors, sharing knowledge based on open data platforms, and improvements on traffic planning, energy generation and consumption and social interactions will be examined. These improve operational efficiency, share information with the public and enhance both the quality of government services and citizen welfare. The conference is concerned with how these ideals will be realised and how existing barriers to deployment can be overcome.

The joint CTTE-FITCE congress is being organised by FITCE and IDLab, a part of Ghent University and imec. CTTE (conference on telecommunications techno-economics) is the major international event for the presentation of original and fundamental concepts and studies in the field of telecom, internet and media techno-economics. FITCE.be is the forum for digital professionals

**Where?** Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium

**When?** 25-27 September

**How to get there?** <https://visit.gent.be/en/good-know/practical-information/how-get-ghent>

**More details?** <https://cttefitce2019.eu/>

where experts from different backgrounds meet in an informal atmosphere. IDLab is an important research group in the field. The strong synergy between these organisations, Smart City projects and Ghent University, has driven the choice of both topic and location.

## Why are Smart Cities of particular interest to ITP members?

Smart Cities will be a major exploiter of ICT-based technologies and will be a major source of revenue for the industry. Important topics to be covered will be the role of communications networks, the Internet of Things, smart sensors, energy and mobility. The topics will extend beyond engineering principles and capabilities to include commercial, legal, environmental and regulatory aspects, providing a conference, which is multidisciplinary in nature.

## What are the most exciting aspects of the congress as planned?

Not only are the topics covered of significant interest, but the standard of debate is expected to be very high, with illuminating interactions between local authorities, researchers and the views of commercial service providers and technology providers. These participants in the market are expected to offer very different perspectives on the market. The Call for Papers has been deliberately structured to solicit contributions from as wide a cross section of the application space as possible. These will be supplemented by strong keynote speeches and engaging panel discussions, on a both national and international level.

## Apart from technical briefings, what will attendees get from the congress?

This is an exciting new development at an early stage of its evolution and exposure to the debate as well the content of the presentations, will provide a good view of the issues and opportunities offered by this technology. Specifically, it will improve understanding of the drivers of Smart Cities, particularly the often neglected citizen's perspective.

## Who is likely to benefit?

We believe that this conference will be of interest to a wide audience, allowing anyone attending to learn directly from a range of projects by engaging directly with implementers and project instigators. It will also provide operational and commercial, as well as research based insights, appealing to professionals across the experience range, who need social, commercial or technical insights into this important opportunity for the ICT Industry.

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES



The conference timetable has been organised to allow delegates to take advantage of both the formal sessions and to enjoy the ambience of this historic city and its rich amenities. There will also be a separate partner's programme providing a rich and interesting cultural experience.

([www.youtube.com/embed/fLXhjLJ1Rs](http://www.youtube.com/embed/fLXhjLJ1Rs) shows the wonders the city has to offer.)