



Dear Readers,

Florence is the capital city of the Italian region of Tuscany and of the province of Florence. The city lies on the River Arno and is known for its history and its importance in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, especially for its art, architecture and cultural heritage. It was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1982.

On the cover there is the most popular architectonic complex in the City – the Basilica of Saint Mary of the Flowers as the cathedral church located in Piazza del Duomo including the Baptistery and Giotto's Campanile. In the small pictures: Ponte Vecchio on the Arno river, Piazza della Signoria where is Bartolomeo Ammanati's Fountain of Neptune, which is a masterpiece of marble sculpture and the detail of the east pair of the relief sculptures of the bronze doors dubbed by Michelangelo known as "the Gates of Paradise" in the Florence Baptistery of St. John can be seen. The Italian poet Dante Alighieri and many other notable Renaissance figures, including members of the Medici family, were baptised in this Baptistery.

As the cradle of the Renaissance the city is visited by thousands of tourists every year. Among people visiting the city there are also participants of numerous conferences organized here. The International Conference "The Future of Education" will take place in Florence on 16th -17th June 2011. The aim of the Conference is to promote the sharing of good practice and transnational cooperation in the field of the application of innovative education and training strategies, methodologies and solutions, including among others E-learning, Distance Education, Human Computer Interaction.

Handing over the next issue I would like to emphasise that exactly 20 years ago on 1st June 1991 the Division of Materials Processing Technologies, Management and Computer Techniques in Materials Science of the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice, Poland, which I have an honour to direct since its very beginning was founded. Today it is a dynamic team of approximately 75 scientists and researchers with very large research and teaching achievements. On this occasion I would like to thank all my closest co-workers for many years of cooperation and wish further, subsequent achievements in the future.

I wish an interesting reading, and as usual encourage PT authors to prepare their work for publication in next issues.

Gliwice, in May 2011

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