



Promoting the rights of the new generations

The Ospedale degli Innocenti signalled a new way of providing childcare. Abandoned children were not only nourished and cared for, but they were also educated and integrated into society. Florence took the foundlings into its care and offered them a "beautiful" place, in keeping with the civilization of the time. The challenge was to provide a future for those who, through no fault of their own, were born with a disadvantage.

Considered over the centuries as a **universal model of for the reception and care of children**, the Institute has now become

a public company providing services for people (law n. 43/2004, Region of Tuscany) which continues its historical mission without interruption.

The Institute operates in accordance with the objectives established by the **UN Convention of the Rights of the Child** (1989), through study of the condition of children, testing services, promotion of children's culture and also the protection and enhancement of its own monumental, historical and artistic heritage.



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Donations to the Institute

Donations to the Istituto degli Innocenti can be made, specifying their destination, by post office payment to c/c n. 28640506, made out to the Istituto degli Innocenti, or by bank transfer to c/c n. 536/01, IBAN IT35Wo616002832000000536Co1 - Banca CR Firenze - Agenzia 859 Filiale Enti e Tesorerie, Via del Castellaccio n. 36/38, - 50122 Firenze. Donations benefit from tax relief as established by the law for companies and individual persons.

Under the high patronage of the President of the Italian Republic

Istituto degli Innocenti



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From the Renaissance, the children's place

The Istituto degli Innocenti in Florence is the oldest public institution in Italy dedicated to protecting children. The Prato merchant Francesco Datini founded it through a legacy in his will. In 1410 he donated one thousand florins for the creation of a place dedicated exclusively to caring for children. With a contract drawn up 1419, still conserved in the Institute's historical Archive, the Silk Guild commissioned **Filippo Brunelleschi** to build it. It was here that he established the standards for the new Renaissance architecture. Many great artists, like **Domenico del Ghirlandaio**, worked in the institution and contributed to increasing its prestige and its monumental heritage.

In 1445 the Ospedale degli Innocenti's historical archive records its first resident, a girl named **Agata Smeralda**. From the Renaissance to the present day about 500 children have been given hospitality at the Innocenti, where during the 1600s unmarried mother also began to receive assistance.

With the increased attention to children's health, under the Lorraine dynasty, the foundling hospital became a place in which to study medicine, obstetrics and childcare. In 1756 Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti tested the smallpox vaccine there and from 1834 to 1923 the Innocenti was the head office of the smallpox vaccine Institute.

