



Interim Implementation Report 2018 of the CEI Plan of Action 2018-2020

Elaborated by the CEI-Executive Secretariat, the Interim Implementation Report 2018 of the CEI Plan of Action 2018-2020 is intended to present the standing point of the implementation of the document with regard to the two main chapters: I. CEI Strategic Approach to Regional Cooperation and II. CEI Agenda for 2018-2020.

Acronyms and abbreviations

AII	Adriatic and Ionian Initiative
ARFVG	Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia
BSEC	Black Sea Economic Cooperation
CBSS	Council of the Baltic Sea States
CEI	Central European Initiative
CEI-ES	Central European Initiative - Executive Secretariat
CNC	Committee of CEI National Coordinators
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EUSAIR	The EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region
EUSALP	The EU Strategy for the Alpine Region
EUSDR	The EU Strategy for the Danube Region
KEP	Know-how Exchange Programme
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
SWG RRD	Standing Working Group for Regional Rural Development
TC	Technical Cooperation
UN	United Nations
UNGA	UN General Assembly

Executive Summary

Regional cooperation is one of the key prerequisites in the process of **European integration** and **sustainable development**. In this context, the CEI has established two long-term priorities in its Plan of Action 2018-2020, i.e. **strengthening connectivity** and **valorising diversity** in the region.

A number of traditional and new actions have been launched by the CEI - in particular by the Croatian Presidency and the Executive Secretariat - in order to: intensify the **political dialogue**, enhance **parliamentary cooperation**, pursue **cooperation with the UN**, in the framework of the CEI's observer status in the UNGA, as well as strengthen **cooperation with the EU** and **other international and regional organisations**. The CEI-Executive Secretariat has put particular focus on **specialisation**. In its activities and projects, it has concentrated its efforts on issues where the CEI can make a difference.

Furthermore, the CEI has worked on enhancing its **project cooperation** through its funds and instruments, i.e. **Cooperation Activities** (small-scale projects aimed at networking and people-to-people contacts such as conferences, seminars, workshops, festivals, cultural and youth exchanges, educational and science meetings, media events, etc.), **Advanced Training Programme** (for Young Professionals from non-EU CEI Member States on work at the CEI-ES), **Feature Events and Prizes** (institutionalised events for networking, training and mobility in the fields of media, intercultural cooperation and life-long education and training), **KEP** (for activities linked to the capacity building, transfer of know-how and exchange of experience from EU to non-EU CEI countries), **TC Programme** (for technical assistance in support of larger EBRD operations and investments) and **EU-funded Projects**.

Through the above cooperation tools, the **CEI has organised, implemented and supported 112 projects and activities**, covering all the goals and objectives in the framework of the CEI Plan of Action 2018-2020, as follows:

- the CEI has engaged in actions in the field of **Good Governance** aimed at *processing and exchanging experience on large-scale migration* issues through the organisation, implementation and promotion of 4 projects and activities. The CEI has provided a platform for *promoting safe and secure e-Government solutions*, through a cooperation activity for the exchange of good practices related to eHealth. To *strengthen institutional capacities and promote effective anti-corruption measures and open data*, the CEI has organised, implemented and promoted 15 projects and activities;
- in the framework of **Economic Growth**, and in order to support the *strengthening of transport networks*, the CEI has organised, implemented and promoted 16 projects and activities. Moreover, 8 projects and activities have been implemented and promoted with the aim of *improving research and innovation systems*. The CEI has also launched and supported 5 projects and activities with the intention of *supporting transition to Circular and Bioeconomy and promoting Blue Growth*. Nevertheless, the CEI has also worked on *strengthening rural and area-based development* by implementing or supporting 11 projects and activities;
- the CEI has undertaken and promoted a number of actions in the field of **Environmental Protection** aimed at *fostering adaptation to climate change* (4 projects and activities), *promoting sustainable energy and energy efficiency* (8 projects and activities) and *preserving natural capital, especially biodiversity* (2 projects and activities);
- every year, the CEI supports activities aimed at encouraging **Intercultural Cooperation**, in particular *promoting intercultural dialogue and preserving cultural diversity*. This year 4 projects and activities have been promoted with the aim to achieve this objective. The *safeguarding of cultural heritage and the supporting of creative industries* have also been encouraged. In this context, 6 projects and activities have been organised, implemented and promoted. In addition, *fostering cultural diplomacy* (9 projects and activities) and *improving social integration of people from groups at risk of exclusion* (3 projects and activities) have also been adequately tackled;
- the CEI has also supported activities fostering **Media Freedom**, especially for *promoting media pluralism, transparency and independence* (2 projects and activities) and for *enhancing quality journalism* (1 activity);
- finally, the CEI has promoted **Scientific Cooperation and Education & Training** by organising events and providing funding through its instruments aimed at *promoting international scientific cooperation and initiatives in support to science diplomacy* (6 projects and activities), *implementing life-long learning and developing competencies through mobility* (5 projects and activities) and *enhancing scientific literacy and technological knowledge and capacity* (2 projects and activities).

Introduction

The CEI Plan of Action 2018-2020 has been developed as a focused and project-oriented roadmap for this three-year period. Special attention has been paid to the real needs and proposals expressed by the CEI Member States, while also taking into account the evolving environment in the region.

The document intends to capitalise on the main strengths of the Organisation, based on its distinctive methodology for the promotion of **regional cooperation** through a combination of **multilateral diplomacy** and **fund, programme and project management**. While remaining a platform for political dialogue, in support of the **European integration** process and the **sustainable development** in the region, the CEI has developed a strong operational approach aimed at achieving these two strategic objectives.

The goals and objectives of the Plan of Action are fully in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the EU Macro-Regional Strategies also affecting the CEI area. The goals are interlinked, interdependent and represent the main areas of interest of the CEI Member States, as outlined in the CEI Guidelines and Rules of Procedure.

Despite the different levels of development among the CEI Member States, the goals and objectives of the document are relevant to all of them and are pursued through goal-oriented multilateral cooperation, going beyond a purely intergovernmental dynamics, and collaborative, multi-stakeholder partnerships. Thus, they involve both governmental and non-governmental actors – including civil society, business actors, scientific communities, academia and media. Furthermore, partnerships with other organisations are considered a part of normal working practice.

In practical terms, the CEI's main goal through the implementation of the Plan of Action is to bring its Member States closer together in joint initiatives and encourage further regional cooperation in a structured and result-oriented manner, while committing the Organisation to a continuous improvement of its performance.

I. CEI Strategic Approach to Regional Cooperation

Regional cooperation is a cornerstone of securing peace, stability and prosperity. It is also one of the prerequisites of the process of European integration, which is one of the CEI's strategic objectives, together with the promotion of sustainable development. The CEI Plan of Action 2018-2020 has, indeed, been devised to meet these two strategic objectives and has established two long-term priorities, i.e. **strengthening connectivity** and **valorising diversity** in the region.

A number of new developments have occurred with regard to the European integration process in 2018. A credible enlargement perspective for the Western Balkans has been reinforced, the Eastern European countries have made favourable steps forward as well. The path to the EU, however, requires the adoption and implementation of numerous rules and standards, full respect of the democratic values, development of good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation, economies prepared to face competition etc. Hence, the transfer of knowledge on European integration issues has been considered of utmost value and importance and has adequately been tackled both by the Croatian CEI Presidency and the CEI-Executive Secretariat.

In addition, numerous transnational challenges have affected the CEI countries this year. First and foremost, the renewed migration crisis. Increasing numbers of migrants are trying to reach the Western region through the South East European routes and the Mediterranean. On the other hand, there is also a massive brain drain from the CEI countries where young skilled people are leaving their countries in search of better job opportunities. Thus, these increasingly important issues had been tackled more systematically at regional level in the framework of the CEI's political structure.

On the other side, there was also an increased focus, through different fora, above all the EU, on improving interconnections within the region in terms of ensuring good governance, strengthening transport and energy links, combating climate change, promoting research and innovation, introducing digitalisation, improving education, enhancing cultural relations etc.

In this context, the CEI, in particular the Croatian Presidency and the Executive Secretariat, was fully committed to adequately meeting the priorities and challenges. Indeed, traditional and new-initiated actions were launched within the CEI framework in 2018, pursuant with the Plan of Action 2018-2020:

- **intensified political dialogue** - in line with the already established practice, activities included: several meetings of the CNC, an annual formal [meeting of Foreign Ministers \(MFA Meeting\)](#) under the topic "Central European Initiative: perspectives of tomorrow", with particular regard to "European integration: experiences and challenges" and "Common efforts in backing regional stability", as well as an [informal MFA meeting](#) at the outskirts of the UN General Assembly, and a meeting of Heads of Government (CEI Summit) under the topic "Building Security, Boosting Economy, Enabling Prosperity". The Croatian CEI Presidency paid particular attention to the various important issues for the region. Therefore, numerous high-level meetings, expert conferences, and other events have been held throughout the year on topics such as building stronger partnerships and twinning in the process of European integration, migration in the twenty first century, intermodal transport development, fostering cohesion and competitiveness through regional cooperation, energy efficiency, sustainable tourism, cultural heritage and media freedom. In addition, a few cultural events (concerts) took place as a contribution to the promotion of intercultural dialogue. A Business Forum for advancing economic cooperation was also organised. The important outcomes and significant inputs gained through the MFA Meetings, Summit, CNC gatherings, High-level and Expert Conferences, Events, Forums, have contributed to significantly stepping forward cooperation towards European integration and sustainable development within the CEI Member States and on the challenges occurred throughout the year;
- **parliamentary cooperation** – the CEI activities also included cooperation among parliaments. The Croatian CEI Presidency organised the meetings of the [CEI Parliamentary Committee](#) and the CEI Parliamentary Assembly on the topic of sustainable tourism. Furthermore, the Polish Chairman of the [General Committee on Economic Affairs](#) of the CEI Parliamentary Dimension organised a meeting of this committee in Warsaw with the participation of high-level representatives of the Polish Government, i.e. Andrzej Adamczyk, Minister of Infrastructure, Krzysztof Tchórzewski, Minister of Energy, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Investment and Development. The main topics of the meeting were infrastructure, road, energy and connections in the CEI region on the North-South axis, with a special focus on the Via Carpathia road construction project;

- **cooperation with the UN**, in the framework of the CEI's observer status in the UNGA, was also strongly supported – besides the traditional informal MFA meeting at the outskirts of the opening of the general debate of the 73rd session of the UNGA, the CEI, through the Croatian Presidency, presented a *Draft Resolution on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Central European Initiative*, adopted by the General Assembly on 26 November 2018, on the occasion of the biannual meeting among UN and regional organisations;
- **cooperation with the EU**, and in particular the EC – strengthening this cooperation has always been for the CEI one of the main priorities. At political level, it was pursued through participation of the EC representatives in the meetings of the high-level structures, namely the MFA Meeting and the CEI Summit. At practical level, a number of contacts have been established with various Directorates General of the Commission in the framework of the CEI EU-funded projects. Moreover, the CEI further enrolled in the implementation of the EU Macro-Regional Strategies and actively participated in a number of events in the context of the EUSDR, EUSAIR and EUSALP;
- promotion of **cooperation with other international and regional organisations** – particular attention was paid to the harmonisation of CEI priorities and specific projects with that of the others aimed, in particular, at establishing common actions and joint events, but also at avoiding proliferation of similar initiatives among various regional organisations, as well as their overlapping and duplication. In this context, cooperation with the OSCE was enhanced and a joint project for young entrepreneurs (YDEAS - Young Developers and Entrepreneurs to Advance Start-ups in the Western Balkans) was launched and finalised, in the framework of the CEI Fund at the OSCE. A project of the BSEC on the inter-basin cooperation on marine litter, with a focus on the Danube River and the Black Sea, to be implemented next year, has also been co-financed by the CEI this year. Moreover, the Croatian CEI Presidency organised a joint event with the Council of Europe under the title “‘Cultural Routes of the Olive Tree’ as a model for Europe’s values, heritage and sustainable development”. Last but not least a [Memorandum of Understanding with the SWG RRD of South-Eastern Europe](#) aimed at promoting effective regional cooperation in the field of agriculture and rural development was signed. Besides these new activities, cooperation has been pursued through a regular reciprocal participation of partners in various events and activities, in particular with the AII, BSEC, CBSS and RCC;
- with regard to this latter point, the CEI, and in particular the Executive Secretariat, put an accent on **specialisation** and concentrated on issues where it can make a difference. The recent actions, indeed, focused on several central themes, stemming from the two strategic objectives, which needed a broader regional engagement, such as for example that of the mobility, the circular economy and in particular the blue growth, the accessibility and social integration and the cultural and science diplomacy. In their broader term, these topics cover numerous areas such as culture, education, migration, research and innovation, science and technology, environment, transport, energy, business and so on. Thus, numerous events, activities and projects made part of the Secretariat’s programme of activities, with a view to encouraging cooperation among CEI members in these areas;
- last but not least, the CEI, and in particular the Executive Secretariat, has worked on a strong intensification of the **project cooperation and tailor-made programmes** for the needs of its countries. In this context, the following instruments have been put at the disposal of the Member States:
 - **Cooperation Activities** (co-financed out of the CEI Cooperation Fund, contributed by all CEI Member States) – the activities mainly promote networking and people-to-people contacts, such as conferences, seminars, workshops, festivals, cultural and youth exchanges, educational and science meetings, media events, etc. on topics where smaller amounts make an effective impact. The utility of this instrument is demonstrated by the fact that a large number of applications for co-financing requests have been submitted this year and 43 Cooperation Activities were eventually approved with 368,460 EUR;
 - **Advanced Training Programme for Young Professionals** (fully financed out of the CEI Cooperation Fund) – the CEI is strongly promoting learning-at-workplace activities. In this context, throughout 2018 it has engaged several young professionals in the area of external relations, communication and project management (from Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and R. Moldova). After their training period, they are expected to return to their countries and apply the knowledge gained during their stay at the Executive Secretariat in Trieste. Participants from the previous editions of the Programme, are currently employed in national institutions (e.g. last year’s trainee in the area of External Relations was afterwards employed by the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of Montenegro within the Directorate General for Multilateral Affairs);
 - **Feature Events and Prizes** – the CEI has further promoted its “Feature Events”. They are events, which are recurrent in nature and highly contribute to enhancing the CEI visibility. These events either carry the name of the CEI in their title or dedicate a special segment to the CEI, providing valuable opportunities for networking, training and mobility in the fields of media, intercultural cooperation and life-long education and training. Moreover, in order to honour and encourage initiatives and activities

of talented and often young people from CEI Member States, several Prizes have been offered, in particular in the fields of culture and media.

- **KEP** (financed out of the CEI Fund at the EBRD funded by Italy – KEP Italy and of a voluntary contribution provided by the Polish Government – KEP Poland) – the CEI has paid special attention to the promotion of joint projects between the EU and non-EU CEI Member States related to transfer of know-how, exchange of experience and capacity building, such as trainings, study visits, etc. Indeed, this specific Programme, has proven to be the most efficient and stimulating mechanism for the transmission of best practices in all areas of activity. As an outcome of this year's Call, 6 KEP projects were approved with 228,057 out of KEP Italy and 2 with 40,000 EUR out of KEP Poland.
- **TC Programme** (financed out of the CEI Fund at the EBRD, entirely funded by Italy) – through this Programme the Fund offers grant-type assistance in support of specific components of investments and operations of the EBRD. TC operations include support for feasibility and pre-feasibility studies, sector and environmental engineering, management training, capacity building, pre-loan audits. The CNC has recently approved the financing of three TC projects by the CEI Fund at the EBRD. These projects will target all the non-EU CEI Member States in priority sectors such as energy, transport and capacity building for a total cumulative cost of 595,000 EUR.
- **EU-funded Projects** – the CEI, through its Executive Secretariat, makes use of EU funding programmes as a valuable tool for the attainment of one of its strategic objectives - the promotion of regional cooperation for European integration – as well as for the implementation of its tri-annual Plan of Action. The CEI-Executive Secretariat is currently involved in 16 EU-funded projects with a total amount of about 25 million EUR of which about 3 million EUR administered by the CEI-Executive Secretariat in a number of areas such as transport, energy, research and innovation, environmental protection, social innovation, culture.

II. CEI Agenda for 2018-2020

The Agenda, covering a three-year period (2018-2020), represents a roadmap aimed at promoting regional cooperation for enhancing democratic and inclusive societies and sustainable economies of the CEI Member States. In this regard, the CEI has identified two key priorities aimed, in particular, at promoting connectivity and valorising diversity in the region, which underpin the CEI's two strategic objectives on promoting European integration and the sustainable development.

In this context, and for adequately tackling these issues, the CEI launched, supported and organised a high number of actions in close cooperation with stakeholders from the CEI Member States (Governments, Ministries, Expert groups, Regional organisations and institutions, NGOs). The activities dedicated to these two priorities and to the goals and objectives established, address the core challenges and opportunities for CEI Member States reflecting a common vision of the economic, social and environmental prosperity of the region attained through joint actions.

I. Connectivity

Goal 1: Good governance

Good Governance as a basis of democratic stability and security as well as a conditional asset for achieving sustainable development is at the top of the CEI Agenda in 2018.

Throughout the last years, Europe and the CEI Region have faced with unprecedented migration flows. Since all countries are equally concerned about migration, it was decided to undertake common actions. Thereby, the CEI has resolutely and determinedly engaged in actions aimed at processing and exchanging experience on large-scale migration issues, including through promoting exchange of practice and knowledge among public and non-governmental actors dealing with migration at central and local level and encouraging cooperation in combating illegal migration and trafficking in human beings.

Moreover, the CEI has provided a platform for cooperation in the field of e-Governance and the exchange of good practices for the implementation of safe and secure e-Governance solutions, in particular eHealth. Promoting e-services and cybersecurity and improving the digital literacy are also among the CEI priorities.

The CEI is also actively promoting the strengthening of institutional capacities and effective anticorruption measures and open data by supporting the establishment of common integrity standards of public administrations and trainings for public administration officers on effective anti-corruption measures as well as raising awareness on fair public procurement.

1.1. Processing and exchanging experience on large-scale migration

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
Third Annual Conference of the Western Balkans Migration Network "A search for that special place under the sun in modern Europe: migration in the twenty first century"	CEI Presidency Event	The Institute of Economics Zagreb, Croatia	25-26 May 2018, Zagreb - Croatia
MIGRALONA Project - Strengthening collaboration between the local and the national tiers in the management of migrations	Project funded by the ARFVG	CEI-ES implementing partner, with the support of NALAS, association of the SEE Municipalities; MARRI, the Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative	Regional, six workshops in the Western Balkans between December 2017 and March 2018
Territorial and Urban Potentials Connected to Migration and Refugee Flows	ESPON Targeted Research	Consortium led by University of Bologna	01/07/2017 - 01/07/2018
	EU-funded Project	(CEI-ES Partner)	
International Symposium "Combating Illegal Migration and Illicit Human Trafficking"	Cooperation Activity	Department for International Affairs of the University King Danylo, Ukraine	16 – 17 March 2018, Ivano-Frankivsk - Ukraine

1.2. Promoting safe and secure e-Government solutions

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
CEI-HECE Spring School on "IoT, economic and management challenges for e-health integration in the enlarged Europe"	Cooperation Activity	Higher Education in Clinical Engineering (HECE) of the University of Trieste, Italy	14-17 May 2018, Koper - Slovenia

1.3. Strengthening institutional capacities and promoting effective anti-corruption measures and open data

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
International Conference - "Knowledge sharing for building stronger partnerships in the process of European integration"	CEI Presidency Event	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia	25-26 April 2018, Zagreb - Croatia
Ministerial Conference "Fostering Cohesion and Competitiveness through Regional Cooperation"	CEI Presidency Event	Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds of the Republic of Croatia	6 June 2018, Zagreb - Croatia
WB6 Facility	Project funded by the ARFVG	CEI-ES implementing partner	September 2018-September 2021, Western Balkans
Establishing of Origination and Execution Capacity Program for SME Direct Finance in Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Regional (Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine)
Albania Secretariat to the Investment Council	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Albania
CEI Support to Small Business Initiative: Expansion of Origination and Execution Capacity Program for SME Direct Finance and Risk Sharing in Belarus	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Belarus
Capacity building Programme for Enhancing Public Procurement Professionalism International Master in Public Procurement Management (IMPPM). 6th Generation (2018/2019)	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Regional
Regional Western Balkans Master Programme in Public Procurement Management. 1st Generation, (2017/2018)	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Regional
Support anti-corruption capacity building in Albania	KEP Italy Project	OSCE - Governance in Economic and Environmental Issues Department (GEEID)International Academy of Anti-Corruption (IACA)	Closed in 2018, Albania
Strengthening governance through public procurement in the Western Balkans - "Regional Western Balkans Master Programme in Public Procurement Management"	KEP Italy Project	Department of Economics and Finance, University of Rome tor Vergata, Italy	September 2017 - June 2018, Regional
Regional Hidden Economy Forum	Cooperation Activity	Center for Research and Policy Making (CRPM), Macedonia	7 February 2018, Skopje - Macedonia
International Conference on Enhancing arbitral Resolution of Disputes	Cooperation Activity	Economic Chamber of Macedonia	19-20 April 2018, Skopje - Macedonia
Pre-Presidency Conference	Cooperation Activity	Institute for Advanced Studies Vienna, Trans European Policy Studies Association TEPSA, Austrian Society for European Politics	7-8 June 2018, Vienna - Austria
"Building sustainable links in the Danube region" - citizen participation on local, national, macro-regional and EU level	Cooperation Activity	Citizen Participation Forum, Bulgaria	15-16 October 2018, Sofia - Bulgaria
International Conference European Integration through the Perspective of Cooperation between Civil Society and Local Authorities	Cooperation Activity	European Movement Republic of Macedonia	6-7 November 2018, Skopje - Macedonia

Goal 2: Economic growth

In a period when national economies are becoming increasingly interdependent, the need for enhanced harmonisation of the entrepreneurial environment, transparency and predictability of transport and customs procedures, energy connectivity and simplified regulations for trade and business is more and more important. Thereby, economic growth is one of the main priorities of the CEI.

Throughout this year, a number of projects have been supported and implemented by the CEI in order to enhance transport policies of the CEI Member States, to improve coordination and reduce barriers affecting CEI countries, to promote the capitalisation process to increase accessibility to the main transport networks as well as to promote inter-institutional cooperation among CEI Member States in order to coordinate the development of a common transport strategy. Environmentally-friendly transport and transport methods were also promoted.

Along the same line, the CEI has launched various actions financed by the CEI funds but also within EU-funded projects in order to improve research and innovation systems and to support transition to Circular and Bioeconomy and promoting Blue Growth.

Due to the fact that over one third of the population in the CEI Member States living in rural areas, rural and area-based development remain among the most important fields of the CEI's activity.

2.1. Strengthening transport networks

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
International Expert Conference on Combined Cargo Transport	CEI Presidency Event	Ministry of the Sea, Transport and Infrastructure of the Republic of Croatia	29 May 2018, Zagreb - Croatia
Sustainable Urban Logistics Planning To Enhance Regional freight transport (SULPITER)	EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Partner)	01/06/2016 - 01/06/2019
Sustainable Urban Mobility in MED port cities (SUMPORT)	EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Lead Partner)	01/02/2017 - 31/07/2019
Improved rail connections and smart mobility in Central Europe (CONNECT2CE)	EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Lead Partner)	01/06/2017 - 31/05/2020
Cross-border institutional cooperation for Port Security Enhancement (SECNET)	EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Partner)	01/10/2017 - 31/05/2020
Integrating multimodal connections in the Adriatic-Ionian region (ADRIPASS)	EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Lead Partner)	01/01/2018 - 31/12/2019
Intermodality Promotion and Rail Renaissance in Adriatic – Ionian Region (INTER-CONNECT)	EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Partner)	01/01/2018 - 01/12/2019
SILK2FVG	Project funded by the ARFVG	CEI-ES implementing partner	01/01/2017 – 31/12/2018
Rail Corridor X in Serbia and Macedonia: Lender's Monitor Advisor	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Regional
Macedonia: Railway Corridor VIII - Energy Management System for PERI	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Macedonia
Local Roads Reconstruction and Upgrade Project	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Montenegro
Moldova Railways: Assistance in preparation and implementation of tender for rolling stock rehabilitation	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	R. Moldova
Macedonia: National Roads Programme - Project Implementation Unit support	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Macedonia
Supporting Public-Private Partnerships in the Transport Sector in Belarus: Road Sector Reform	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Belarus
Corridor Vc in Republika Srpska - Procurement Certification Support	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Capacity building on PPPs (Public Private Partnerships) for road construction and exploitation for Albanian authorities with the participation of Serbia and other Western Balkan countries	KEP Italy Project	ANAS S.p.a., Italy; ANAS International Enterprise S.p.A., Italy; AIPCR Italy World Road Association	Closed in 2018, Albania

2.2. Improving research and innovation systems

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
Young Developers and Entrepreneurs to Advance Start-ups (YDEAS)	CEI-OSCE Joint Activity CEI Fund at the OSCE	OSCE and CEI through the CEI Fund at the OSCE	8-27 July 2018, Turin, Italy 8-9 November 2018, Tirana - Albania
Innovation in Health and Care for All (ITHACA)	EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES subcontractor)	01/01/2017 - 31/12/2021
Development and regulation of the University of Belgrade laser-laboratory infrastructure for education and research	KEP Italy Project	European Laboratory for Non-linear Spectroscopy (LENS), Italy	January 2017 – December 2018, Serbia
Innovation Vouchers scheme for resource efficiency technologies and services in Serbia - Support to the implementation and marketing of the innovation vouchers scheme in the country	KEP Italy Project	Department of Management Engineering, Politecnico of Milan, Italy	Closed in 2018, Serbia
SAFEMEAT - developing a system for easy and accurate monitoring of gas in meat products during storage and distribution	KEP Italy Project	National Research Council - Institute of Photonics and Nanotechnologies, Italy	February 2018 - December 2019, Serbia
From startup to scaleup: Scaling up Europe's entrepreneurial future	Cooperation Activity	YES - Youth Entrepreneurial Service (YES) Foundation	7-8 June 2018, Skopje - Macedonia
Conference on Radiation and Applications in various Fields of Research	Cooperation Activity	RAD Association, Serbia	18-22 June 2018, Ohrid - Macedonia
7TH International Conference on Logic and Applications	Cooperation Activity	Inter University Center, Croatia	24-28 September 2018, Dubrovnik - Croatia

2.3. Supporting transition to Circular and Bioeconomy and promoting Blue Growth

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
Boosting the innovation potential of the triple helix of Adriatic-Ionian traditional and emerging BLUE growth sectors clusters through an open source/knowledge sharing and community based approach (BLUE BOOST)	EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Partner)	01/01/2018 - 31/10/2019
Empowering the 4 helix of MED maritime clusters through an open source/knowledge sharing and community-based approach in favour of MED blue growth (4helix+)	EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Partner)	01/02/2018 - 31/07/2020
WASTE MGMT in Vinnytsia – Capacity building and transfer of knowledge for increasing and improving professional skills in waste management in the Region of Vinnytsia	KEP Italy Project	Contarina Spa, Italy	Closed in 2018, Ukraine
WASTE OIL FREE Integrated Waste-Oils Management System - Transfer of Best Practices for Safe, Sustainable and Eco-friendly Transport in Serbia	KEP Italy Project	University of Chemistry and Technology, Prague; The Czech Technology Platform for Sustainable Chemistry, Czech Republic	February 2018 - December 2018, Serbia
Sustainable Approach to Managing Construction and Demolition Waste (SAMCODE)	KEP Italy Project	Department of Physics And Earth Sciences, University of Ferrara, Italy	January 2018 - August 2019, Macedonia

2.4. Strengthening rural and area-based development

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
Cooperation with SWG-RRD	Institutional Activity	CEI-ES signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Standing Working Group on Regional Rural Development (SWG RRD)	Trieste, September 2018

SENTINEL Advancing and strengthening Social Enterprises to maximize their impact in the economic and social sector of Central European countries	EU-funded project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Partner)	01/06/2017 - 31/05/2020
Kotor Fortress Urban Regeneration - Technical and Market Due Diligence	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Montenegro
Water Sector in Coastal Area Reform	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Montenegro
SMART RIVER GOVERNANCE 2.0	KEP Italy Project	Alta Scuola, Ecoazioni, Italy	January 2018 - March 2019, R. Moldova
Regional Conference on Cultural and Historical Potential in Tourism	Cooperation Activity	Cultural Center Parobrod Belgrade, Serbia	31 March 2018, Belgrade - Serbia
2018 Danube Future Interdisciplinary School	Cooperation Activity	"Angel Kanchev" University of Ruse, Bulgaria	9-16 September 2018, Ruse - Bulgaria
CoCoBeLa (Coordinated Cooperation Between LAGs)	Cooperation Activity	Hranice Development Agency and Local Action Group from Hranice– LAG from Hranice, Czech Republic	10 – 11 September 2018, Hranice - Czech Republic
9th CEI Regional Forum for Wellness & Spa Industry	Cooperation Activity	Cluster of Health, Wellness and SPA Tourism Serbia (WELLNESS SERBIA)	17 October 2018, Vrnjacka Banja - Serbia
Workshop on promotion of traditional meat products and exchange of good practices in meat processing sector in Western Balkans (EXQUISITE)	Cooperation Activity	Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in South Eastern Europe – SWG, Macedonia Regional Development Agency of Zlatibor, Serbia	16-18 October 2018, Jahorina – Bosnia and Herzegovina
Regional tourism entrepreneurship conference based on EIAT platform	Cooperation Activity	Centre for Tourism Research and Studies (CTRS), Serbia	November 2018, Serbia

Goal 3: Environmental Protection

As one of the global challenges, environmental protection and climate change are at the top of the CEI priorities for moving towards sustainable growth. Furthermore, the CEI fully recognises the two-way relationship between environment and security. Thereby, the CEI strives to transform environmental security risk into opportunities for cooperation that can enhance stability and contribute to sustainable development.

In this context, the CEI has undertaken and supported a number of actions and activities to foster adaptation to climate change, promote sustainable energy and energy efficiency and preserve natural capital, especially biodiversity.

These CEI actions and activities have meaningfully contributed toward improving ecosystem services and ecological connectivity, disaster prevention and on the adaptation to climate change.

Moreover, disseminating the importance of renewable energy sources, facilitating the exchange of best practices of CEI Member States and supporting activities promoting energy performance of public or residential buildings are also among the activities carried out within the CEI Framework in 2018.

3.1. Fostering adaptation to climate change

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
NAMIRG - North Adriatic MIRG (Maritime Incident Response Group)	EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Lead Partner)	01/01/2018 - 31/12/2019
Dams safety: a new approach for the monitoring of the dams with the use of remote sensing	KEP Italy Project	University of Padua - Interdepartmental Research Center of Geomatics (CIRGEO), Italy	January 2017 – June 2018, Albania
HYMEUR-Hydrometeorological Modelling for Environmental Quality Control	KEP Italy Project	University of Brescia, Italy	Closed in 2018, Serbia
Improving Disaster Risk Reduction skills and Resilience-building Practices in the Western Balkans: EMS WeB	KEP Italy Project	Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Italy	January 2018 - December 2018, Regional

3.2. Promoting sustainable energy and energy efficiency

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
Conference “Energy Efficiency in Buildings-for a better tomorrow”	CEI Presidency Event	Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning of the Republic of Croatia	26-27 September, 2018, Zagreb - Croatia
European Technology and Innovation Platform Bioenergy – Support for Advanced Biofuels Stakeholder (ETIP Bioenergy SABS)	EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Partner)	01/09/2016 - 30/09/2018
European Technology and Innovation Platform Bioenergy - Support of Renewable Fuels and Advanced Bioenergy Stakeholders 2 (ETIP-B-SABS-2)	EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Partner)	01/09/2018 – 31/08/2021
Support to ZS for Implementation of Energy Information Management System - Serbia	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Serbia
Independent System Operator of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Consultant for the Project Implementation Unit	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Implementation of the Corporate Governance Action Plan (CGAP) for KESH (Korporata Elektroenergjitike Shqiptare)	TC Project	EBRD/CEI	Albania
CEI support to strengthening Energy Regulatory Authorities in the Western Balkans	KEP Italy Project	Italian Regulatory Authority for Electricity, Gas and Water (AEEGSI), Gestore dei mercati energetici (GME), Terna, Italy	November 2017 - October 2018, Regional
Second International Conference Women in Energy	Cooperation Activity	Association of Engineering Societies – Engineering Institution of Macedonia and EVN Macedonia	4-5 June 2018, Skopje - Macedonia

3.3. Preserving natural capital, especially biodiversity

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
Preserving Kotor Bay as natural and historical heritage - Analysing sea pollution sources and raising ecological awareness	KEP Italy Project	lefluids s.r.l., Italy	Closed in 2018, Montenegro
Nature-Based Solutions for Smart Cities (Next)	Cooperation Activity	Belarussian-Russian University (BRU), Belarus	15-26 August 2018, Mahiliou - Belarus

II. Diversity

Goal 4: Intercultural cooperation

The CEI region has a great potential in terms of traditional values, diversity of expression, artistic creations and dynamic creative sectors. Thus, fostering intercultural cooperation through constructive dialogue and cultural exchange is a key factor to contribute to mutual understanding between people, communities and countries.

The CEI supports, every year, activities that promote intercultural dialogue, creative industries, cultural heritage and cultural diplomacy. Cultural heritage and creative industries play an important role in achieving inclusive and sustainable development. Culture cannot only strengthen relationships and enhance social progress, but it can also help promote job creation and competitiveness. Promoting cultural heritage attracts tourism and boosts economic growth.

Moreover, the CEI supports mobility activities, such as an artists/writers-in-residence programme, especially addressed to young people. It promotes the distribution of cultural goods and services outside national contexts, especially in the fields of audio-visual production and artworks and contributes to initiatives and activities aimed at strengthening interethnic, intercultural and intergenerational solidarity and cooperation, as well as solidarity and cooperation with/between disabled people and other vulnerable groups across the CEI region.

4.1. Promoting intercultural dialogue and preserving cultural diversity

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
CEMAN-Central European Music Academies Network	CEI Presidency Event	Conservatory of Music G. Tartini, Italy	26 October 2018, Zagreb – Croatia 28 October 2018, Trieste - Italy
CEI Concert – A recital by Andreas Ottensamer at Dubrovnik Summer Festival	CEI Presidency Event	Dubrovnik Summer Festival, Croatia	14 August 2018, Dubrovnik - Croatia
How to use the maximum of cultural and historic potentials and the diversity of the region in order to increase and develop tourism?	Cooperation Activity	Municipality of Stari Grad, Serbia	May 2018, Serbia
XIV International Forum of Aquileia Euroregion “The Betrayed Europe – Illusions and Disillusions”	Cooperation Activity	Mitteleuropa Cultural Association, Italy	19 October 2018, Udine - Italy

4.2. Safeguarding cultural heritage and supporting creative industries (CIs)

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
International Workshop The “Cultural Routes of the Olive Tree” as a model for Europe’s values, heritage and sustainable development	CEI-Council of Europe Joint Activity CEI Presidency Event	Ministry of Tourism, Croatia	14-16 November 2018, Mali Losinj - Croatia
International Conference “Underwater cultural Heritage in Europe Today”	CEI Presidency Event	International Centre for Underwater Archaeology in Zadar, Croatia	25-27 October 2018, Zadar - Croatia
tARTini Promoting cultural heritage of Giuseppe Tartini, the great musician from Piran/Pirano (SI)	INTERREG VA IT-SLO EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Partner)	1/10/2017 - 30/09/2019
HERITAGE FIRST AID: cultural tourism in support of Heritage Conservation	KEP Italy Project	SACIARKEO-Archaeological Service of Central Italy-s.r.l.; University of Urbino - Conservation and Restoration’s School, ITALY	February 2018 - February 2019, Albania
Conference on European and Cultural Heritage - a sustainable way / best practice within the CEI	Cooperation Activity	Institute of the Regions of Europe (IRE)	26-27 April 2018, Novi Sad - Serbia
3rd LAB for European Project Making cycle	Cooperation Activity	LAB for European Project Making	30 June - 8 July 2018, Rijeka - Croatia

4.3. Fostering cultural diplomacy

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
Trieste Film Festival	CEI Feature Event	Trieste Film Festival, Italy	19-18 January 2018, Trieste - Italy
Vilenica Literary Festival - CEI Round-Table Discussions at Vilenica	CEI Feature Event	Slovene Writers’ Association and KUD Vilenica Art Society	7 September 2018, Lipica - Slovenia
CEI Prize at the Trieste Film Festival	CEI Prize	CEI-ES	2018, Director from Romania
CEI Fellowship for Writers in Residence	CEI Prize	CEI-ES	2018, Writer from R. Moldova
CEI Prize at International Design Contest “Trieste Contemporanea”	CEI Prize	CEI-ES	2018, Designer from Serbia
WHEN EAST MEETS WEST Co-production Forum	Cooperation Activity	FVG Audiovisual Fund and the Trieste Film Festival	21-23 January 2018, Trieste - Italy
Workshop: Ex Oriente Film	Cooperation Activity	Institute of Documentary Film and One World International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival	3-9 March 2018, Prague - Czech Republic
CEI PIANO FORUM 2018 – “A music road map”	Cooperation Activity	Friuli Venezia Giulia International Piano Competition	7 May 2018, Sacile - Italy

FESTIVAL IDENTITY 2018 – workshop for festival organizers from across Europe	Cooperation Activity	DOC.DREAM Services, s.r.o.	25-30 October 2018, Jihlava – Czech Republic
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4.4. Improving social integration of people from groups at risk of exclusion

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
COME-IN! Cooperating for Open Access to Museums – towards a wider inclusion	EU-funded Project	Partner consortium (CEI-ES Lead Partner)	01/07/2016 - 30/06/2019
Professional intergovernmental know-how exchange on the implementation of large scale Secondary School Scholarship and Mentoring Program for Roma Students	KEP Italy Project	Roma Education Fund (REF), Hungary	January 2017 – June 2018, Regional
Social inclusion for Roma families - Strengthening the Toy Library Network	Cooperation Activity	Roma Education Fund, Hungary	September 2018, Hungary

Goal 5: Media freedom

The mass media have become an essential part of everyone's life and play a constructive role in today's society. They represent an essential pillar of a democracy – from increasing public awareness to collecting views, information, and also the attitude of the people towards certain issues. The freedom of expression is an essential fundamental right and can only be exercised in a free, independent and pluralistic media environment, through a transparent media governance.

The CEI supports activities that stimulate networking and exchange of experience among media owners, journalists' associations, universities, NGOs and other competent institutions, also in view of monitoring media developments in the region, taking into account national, EU and international legal frameworks. The promotion of knowledge and implementation of EU standards and directives is also one of the institutional objectives.

The CEI, in line with the efforts undertaken by other regional and international organisations, is committed to further supporting and promoting media freedom, quality reporting and freedom of expression. These elements are high on the list of improvements to be achieved on the road to EU membership.

5.1. Promoting media pluralism, transparency and independence

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
Press freedom in South East Europe debate	Institutional Activity	CEI-ES and ANSA	29 June 2018, Trieste - Italy
South East Europe Media Forum (SEEMF)	CEI Feature Event	South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO)	15-16 November 2018, Tirana - Albania

5.2. Enhancing quality journalism

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
CEI SEEMO Award for Outstanding Merits in Investigative Journalism	CEI Prize	CEI-ES	2018, 2 Journalists from Serbia and 1 Young Journalist from Bosnia and Herzegovina

Goal 6: Scientific cooperation and education & training

The scientific cooperation sector, including education and training, has an important role in tackling global science challenges and developing political and business links between countries.

Scientific cooperation is emerging as a useful tool to build bridges and strengthen relations. The CEI aims at enhancing scientific education in its region as a contribution to the consolidation of the European Research Area (ERA). CEI actions in this regard include: promotion of the international scientific cooperation and initiatives for supporting science diplomacy, enhancing scientific literacy and technological knowledge and capacity.

In order to increase employability, special attention is paid to the life-long learning concept and to the implementation of EU educational and employment policies in non-EU CEI Member States. Particular attention is also paid to the youth involvement in politics as well as youth unemployment as a growing problem the CEI region is facing. The CEI contributes to the implementation of life-long learning and to developing competencies through mobility.

6.1. Promoting international scientific cooperation and initiatives in support to science diplomacy

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
The Secretary General of the Italian Foreign Ministry, Amb. Elisabetta Belloni, meets the Science & Innovation System of the ARFVG	Institutional Activity	CEI-ES	7 February, 2018, Trieste-Italy
Promotion of proESOF and ESOF 2020 towards CEI scientific communities	Institutional Activity	CEI-ES	Regional
Contribution to support mobility of CEI participants in OGS Summer School on Blue Growth in the Euro-Mediterranean Region 2018	Institutional Activity	CEI-ES	18 – 27 June, Piran-Slovenia, Trieste-Italy
Delegation of Science Representatives from CEI Member States visits Scientific Centers in Trieste	Institutional Activity	CEI-ES in collaboration with the ARFVG, AREA Science Park and ELETTRA Sincrotrone Trieste	4 October, 2018, Trieste - Italy
OGS-Fellowships to Master in Sustainable Blue Growth	Cooperation Activity	Italian National Institute of Oceanography and Applied Geophysics (OGS), University of Trieste, Italy	2018, Regional
Third Zeldovich Meeting held in Minsk	Cooperation Activity	ICRANet and the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus	23-27 April, Minsk - Belarus

6.2. Implementing life-long learning and developing competencies through mobility

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
Advanced Training Programme for Young Professionals from non-EU CEI Member States	Institutional Activity	CEI-ES	2018, Regional (beneficiaries from Albania, Macedonia, R. Moldova and Montenegro)
XIX Summer Seminar for Young Public Policy Professionals from South Eastern Europe and the Black Sea Region	Cooperation Activity	Economic Policy Institute, Bulgaria	28 May-1 June 2018, Albena - Bulgaria
11th National Selection Conference of the European Youth Parliament Serbia "Young Europe – Europe of opportunities"	Cooperation Activity	European Youth Parliament Serbia	4-9 July 2018, Novi Sad - Serbia
Straniak Academy for Democracy and Human Rights	Cooperation Activity	Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights	2-15 September 2018, Saranda - Albania
Young Bled Strategic Forum BSF 2018 – Sustainable security: the role of youth in bridging the divide	Cooperation Activity	Center for European Perspective (CEP), Slovenia	7-11 September 2018, Bled - Slovenia

6.3. Enhancing scientific literacy and technological knowledge and capacity

RECENT AND ONGOING CEI PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Title	Type of activity	Organising Institution	Implementation Date and Place
SEENET-MTP Balkan School and Workshop	Cooperation Activity	SEENET-MTP Centre, the Faculty of Sciences and Mathematics, University of Niš, Serbia and the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, University of Craiova, Romania, CERN TD and ICTP	3-14 June 2018, Nis - Serbia
International Conference DisCo 2018: Overcoming the challenges and the barriers in Open Education	Cooperation Activity	Centre for Higher Education Studies and West Bohemia University, Czech Republic	25-26 June 2018, Prague - Czech Republic