



...Regional Cooperation for European integration.  
Bridge between macro-regions...



## ABOUT THE CEI

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The Central European Initiative (CEI), founded in Budapest on 11 November 1989, is a regional intergovernmental forum committed to supporting European integration through cooperation between and among its Member States and with the European Union (EU), other interested public institutions or private and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as well as international and regional organisations. In order to offer a solid contribution to European integration, the CEI combines multilateral diplomacy and project management, both as donor and recipient. Its institutional and geographical position enables the CEI to act as a bridge between European macro-regions.

## 18 MEMBER STATES

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10 EU MS: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia.  
8 non-EU MS: Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Ukraine.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

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- Support CEI Member States on their path towards European integration
- Promote the alignment of CEI Member States to EU standards
- Implement small and medium-sized projects

## STRUCTURE

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The CEI operates in a flexible manner to promote intergovernmental, inter-parliamentary and business cooperation.

### *Governmental Dimension*

Provides political and economic orientation and is responsible for the organisational and financial directives of the CEI. It is composed of the Committee of National Coordinators (CNC), key body responsible for the definition, coordination, management and implementation of CEI cooperation; Working bodies (Networks of Focal Points, project implementation groups and ad hoc task forces); the Secretariat, executive body managing the overall activities of the Organisation. It also deals with the development and implementation of projects and is located in Trieste (Italy). Decisions are taken and approved by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the Heads of Government, meeting respectively once a year. The Presidency is held by a CEI Member State and rotates on an annual basis.

### *Parliamentary Dimension*

CEI representatives of national Parliaments cooperate and meet in the framework of the Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Committee and the General Committees (on Political and Home Affairs; on Economic Affairs; on Cultural Affairs).

### *Business Dimension*

Promotes an active participation of the business communities of the CEI Member States in a bottom-up approach, fostering inputs, open discussions and recommendations for Political Leadership.

## AREAS OF COOPERATION

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<b><i>Towards a Knowledge-based Society</i></b>	<b><i>Towards a Sustainable Economy and Development</i></b>	<b><i>Towards an Inclusive Society</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Research and Innovation</li><li>• Life-long Education and Training</li><li>• Information Society</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transport, Logistics and Accessibility</li><li>• Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy</li><li>• Climate, Environment and Rural Development</li><li>• SMEs and Business Development</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intercultural Cooperation</li><li>• Media</li><li>• Civil Society</li></ul>

## FUNDS & INSTRUMENTS

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### ***CEI Cooperation Fund***

Provided by all Member States, it supports seminars, workshops, conferences, training courses, focusing on mobility of participants. Since 2002 more than 1000 activities have been co-financed with around €9.4 million and an overall value of about €59.9 million. It is estimated that around 5000 participants take part in the events every year.

### ***CEI Fund at EBRD***

Established by Italy in 1992, the Fund provides grant-type technical assistance (prefeasibility and feasibility studies, project implementation, management training, capacity building, and pre-loan audits) in support of investments and operations of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The Fund, managed by the Office for the CEI Fund at the EBRD, has been financed by Italy with €43.5 million. It supports projects targeting the whole CEI Region. About €26.5 million have been committed for 158 technical cooperation projects able to mobilise €5.3 billion of international investments in the countries of operations. For each euro provided by the CEI Fund, the EBRD and other financiers have invested €215.

### ***CEI Know-how Exchange Programme***

Provides grants for projects related to capacity building and transfer of good practices from EU to non-EU CEI Member States. Since 2004, around €3.3 million have been allocated by Italy through the CEI Fund at the EBRD and by Austria through an agreement with the Austrian Development Agency. So far, 117 projects for an overall value of nearly €15 million have been supported.

### ***CEI Participation in EU Projects***

Enhances the involvement of CEI countries in EU projects focusing on transnational and regional cooperation for European integration. Since 2004, 28 projects have been implemented with a total fund mobilisation of €50 million; 12 projects are currently under implementation for a total fund mobilisation of €7.7 million, of which €835,000 administered by the CEI. *Main areas of intervention:* Mobility, Research and Innovation, Social Innovation, Renewable Energy/Bioeconomy, Low Carbon Economy, Health and Cultural Heritage.

CEI Secretariat  
*Headquarters*  
Via Genova, 9 - 34121 Trieste, Italy  
Tel. +39 040 7786 777  
Fax +39 040 3606 40  
cei@cei.int / [www.cei.int](http://www.cei.int)

Office for the CEI Fund at the EBRD  
One Exchange Square - London, EC2A 2JN, UK  
cei.ebrd@cei.int / [www.ebrd.com](http://www.ebrd.com)

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