



Summit of the Heads of Government
of the Central European Initiative
Zagreb, 3-4 December 2018

Building Security, Boosting Economy, Enabling Prosperity

Almost 30 years ago the Central European Initiative (CEI) was established as the first regional forum following the fall of the iron curtain, the biggest political turning point for Europe after the end of the Second World War. From the very beginning, the CEI has advocated and promoted European integration processes and contributed to the overall progress of its members. In the meantime, many of the states joined the EU, while others are still on their path towards the EU or working to develop closer relations with the EU. Nevertheless, numerous challenges persist and the CEI Summit is an opportunity to address them.

Security is a common challenge to our stability, our economies and our future, regardless of how far we, as the CEI Member States, have come or aspire to come with regard to EU membership. Continuing migration movements are a particular challenge. Their effective management requires close cooperation and coordination on border protection, countering human trafficking and smuggling of migrants, as well as information sharing, capacity building and exchange of best practices. EU enlargement is the key to enhancing security and stability in Europe by virtue of enlarging the area of application of common values and principles of democracy, rule of law, free market economy and open society. At the same time, strengthening political, administrative and judicial functionality at national levels, promoting regional cooperation, interconnecting countries of the region, and assisting the Southeast European and Eastern European partners in fulfilling their individual goals with regard to their EU and NATO membership are also key elements for strengthening Europe's internal and external resilience. To this end, the CEI Summit provides an excellent framework and an opportunity to exchange views and share knowledge on building sustainable security.

The economies of the region benefit from cooperation and integration with economies of the EU. Through its Technical Cooperation Programme and Know-how Exchange Programme as well as through its designing and managing projects financed by the EU and its financial partners, the CEI has helped create first regional projects in Europe. It would be important to discuss how to use the CEI's capacities and experience most efficiently, in order to address new economic challenges and advance sustainable growth.

Connectivity encompasses the CEI's activities on economic development, interconnected transport networks and environmental sustainability as key prerequisites for democracy, stability and prosperity. Furthermore, advancing prosperity should include investments in youth empowerment, education and advancement of scientific cooperation.

The Heads of Government have been invited to Zagreb to reflect upon how to join efforts to contribute to creating a more competitive region, which is more secure, economically viable and prosperous in the long-term.