



BULGARIAN CEI PRESIDENCY 2022

Thanks to the sterling work of the Montenegrin Presidency, of the Executive Secretariat and of the Member States, and despite the exceptionally difficult circumstances, brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the CEI has secured the continuity of its work, including by swiftly and proactively approaching the effects of the pandemic, and has provided an excellent basis for the activities of the Bulgarian Presidency in 2022.

The Bulgarian Presidency intends to build upon the achievements of Montenegro in pursuit of the strategic goals embedded in the CEI's mission. It will rely on the well-established multilateral dialogue, the solid decision-making process and the proven instruments for cooperation of the Initiative to efficiently transform political priorities into measurable results.

The Bulgarian Presidency will seek to consolidate CEI's efforts at promoting regional cooperation and European integration, while upholding democratic values and human rights, and in pursuit of the UN Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals. Through the activities envisaged in its Programme, the Presidency will foster a constructive exchange of views on strengthening the stability, security and competitiveness of the region, dealing with challenges and exploring opportunities.

In the implementation of the CEI mission, the Bulgarian Presidency will be guided by a set of priorities that build on the common goals and objectives established by the Member States and the joint documents of the Initiative. The envisaged actions will aim at tackling the current challenges and furthering the objectives of CEI, while providing for continuity and deepening of regional integration.

Priorities

The working priorities of the Bulgarian Presidency are:

- **Economic and Social Recovery from the Pandemic;**
The economic and social recovery from the pandemic will be approached from the perspective of sustainable development and economic stabilisation. The Presidency will emphasise on the possibilities provided by regional cooperation and the CEI assets to help troubled sectors recover from the crisis and become more resilient. The possibilities, provided by CEI's Know-how Exchange Programme, to transfer know-how and best practices as a part of the recovery process will be explored. Ways of bringing the regulatory framework up to the challenges the businesses are dealing with will be sought. Given the importance of tourism for most economies in the region, special attention will be paid to this sector. At the same time, the need to accelerate the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030 and the related Sustainable Development Goals will be accounted for.
- **Enhanced Connectivity;**
In the context of Enhanced Connectivity, the focus of the Presidency will be on the possibility to easily transit passengers and goods across the region as a fundamental prerequisite for its overall economic development.
Our intention is to bring forward:
 - Factors that can help improve the efficiency of transit, such as infrastructure, road safety, multimodal transport, and border crossings and

- Possibilities to employ the instruments of regional integration in order to improve connectivity.
- Young People;
 - The key premises of the Young People priority are that:
 - The future of our societies depends on the perspectives we provide for young people. At the same time, young people are one the key beneficiaries of regional integration;
 - Young people have been disproportionately affected from the recession, caused by the crisis;
 - Young people are faced with worsening employment prospects.
 - Therefore, the Bulgarian Presidency will seek to advance CEI's Agenda for Youth, focusing on ways to:
 - Support employability of young people,
 - Enhance the development of entrepreneurship and skills for the green and digital transitions and
 - Use active labour policy measures to the benefit of young people.
- Furthering the Local Dimension.
 - The Presidency will work for deepening CEI's local dimension. It will pursue the priorities in this regard, set out by the Trieste Declaration from 2019, and provide a substantial follow up to the kick-off meeting, organised by the Montenegrin Presidency on 12 November this year. The activities within this priority will be implemented together with the National Association of the Municipalities in Republic of Bulgaria.

Events

The Bulgarian Presidency will organise events within the CEI governmental, parliamentary and economic dimension as follows:

- A meeting of the Heads of Government (CEI Summit)
- A regular meetings of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs;
- An informal meeting on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York);
- Meetings of the Committee of the National Coordinators;
- Parliamentary Assembly meeting;
- Parliamentary Committee meeting;
- High- and expert-level conferences on topics related to the priorities of the Presidency; and
- An Economic Forum in the margins of the CEI Summit.

Indicative Calendar

Date	Location	Event
mid-February	tbc	1 st CNC Meeting
late March or very early April (poss.)	London (tbc)	2 nd CNC Meeting and Steering Committee Meeting
spring	Sofia, Bulgaria	Sectorial Ministerial (Economic and Social Recovery)
early May (poss.)	Brussels (tbc)	3 rd CNC Meeting with representatives of the European Commission/Institutions
May	Sofia, Bulgaria	CEI Parliamentary Committee
June	Bulgaria	Expert Meeting/International Conference (Local Dimension)
June	Sofia, Bulgaria	4 th CNC Meeting
June	Sofia, Bulgaria	MFA Meeting
late September/early October (poss.)	New York	Informal MFA Meeting (working breakfast, working lunch)
autumn	Presidency country/Trieste	Sectorial Ministerial (Youth)
autumn	Presidency country	Expert Meeting/International Conference (Connectivity)
early October	Trieste	5 th CNC Meeting
November	Sofia, Bulgaria	Parliamentary Assembly
late November	Sofia, Bulgaria	6 th CNC Meeting
late November	Sofia, Bulgaria	CEI Summit (tbd)
late November/early December	Sofia, Bulgaria	Business Forum (in connection to the Summit) Meeting of Chambers of Commerce
November/December	New York	Bilateral meeting between the UN and Regional Organisations (biannual, next meeting in 2022)
tbc	tbc	Side-event UN (tbc)