

# Annual Report of the Secretary General 2024



# CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE

The Central European Initiative (CEI) is a regional intergovernmental forum established in 1989, gathering 17 Member States in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe\*.

It supports a united Europe with shared values embracing all countries, regions, peoples and citizens; and fosters the strengthening of capacities of its Member States towards good governance, rule of law and sustainable economic development as key prerequisites for stability, social cohesion, security and prosperity in the CEI region.

One central mission: supporting European integration and promoting sustainable development through regional cooperation.

*\*According to the CEI Guidelines and Rules of Procedure the CEI Member States are: Republic of Albania, Republic of Belarus (suspended in March 2022), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Bulgaria, Republic of Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italian Republic, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Republic of Poland, Romania, Republic of Serbia, Slovak Republic, Republic of Slovenia and Ukraine.*



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# INTRODUCTION

In 2024, the CEI has continued to advance its core objectives, while also undertaking a retrospective review on the results achieved so far. Namely, it has capitalised on the established good practices and successful models of regional cooperation, and prepared new ways ahead in the light of the increasing complex challenges. In this regard, a *Convention for the Strengthening of the Central European Initiative*, coordinated by the CEI-Executive Secretariat (CEI-ES), was established and operated in the first half of the year as an informal assembly of representatives of countries dealing with CEI issues, namely of Governments and Parliaments.

The key objectives of the *Convention* included reflections on the CEI strengthening through the following: enhancing its political role, strengthening its relations with EU institutions and reinforcing the role of the CEI-ES. In this context, numerous inputs, including practical steps, to increase the relevance, efficiency and visibility of the Organisation have been put forward. On this basis, a number of targeted *Recommendations for the Strengthening of the Central European Initiative* have been developed, highlighting the CEI's untapped potential in a holistic manner through an approach that is also feasible in order to achieve the desired outcomes. In addition, the *Convention* contributed to increasing interactions and dialogue between the Parliaments and Governments, which is key especially in the current challenging times which require important decisions from policy makers.

In this setup, the Albanian CEI Presidency, in cooperation with the CEI-ES, played an important role in preserving the CEI's resilience throughout 2024. Amidst outside geopolitical shifts and internal determination of the future collective efforts, the Presidency remained steadfast in its commitment to advancing the CEI's mission in promoting European integration and sustainable development, in particular in support of the UN Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by leveraging collaboration and innovation to address emerging issues and capitalise on new opportunities through intensified political dialogue. From health to culture and tourism, education and youth, to enhanced connectivity, the undertaken initiatives of the Presidency in 2024 have made tangible impacts, reinforcing the spirit of cooperation and solidarity that lies at the heart of the CEI. In this context, a number of high-level and expert events in the framework of the Albanian CEI Presidency, supported by the CEI-ES, have been undertaken, including interactions with the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN), and with other actors such as the World Health Organisation Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe), the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP), the Transport Community (TCT) and other international and regional organisations.

At the same time, the CEI-ES has safeguarded the CEI's role as genuine platform for multilateral diplomacy and project management, while also promoting a multistakeholder approach and strategic partnerships. This combination has enabled the promotion and implementation of projects and activities with the EU, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the WHO/Europe, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Office of Innovation, the TCT Permanent Secretariat; strengthened cooperative links with the Secretariats of the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative (AII), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC); as well as the establishment of a structured cooperation with the Council of Europe in the sector of youth.

Moreover, thanks to the CEI funds, programmes and instruments of cooperation, such as the multilateral Cooperation Fund and the CEI Fund at the EBRD financed by Italy - this latter including the Technical Cooperation (TC) Programme and the Know-how Exchange Programme (KEP) - numerous CEI projects and activities have been implemented. In addition, through its participation in EU-funded projects and cooperation with the Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia (ARFVG), the CEI-ES has also attracted additional resources for more institutional and project activities.

Finally, the CEI-ES has made efforts to enhance its communication strategy. In particular, appropriate actions in connection to institutional and expert meetings have been undertaken, as well as to increase the visibility of the CEI projects.

## CENTRAL ACTIVITY: Strengthening of the CEI

In light of the complex challenges affecting international peace and security, as well as the need for a further breakthrough in the EU enlargement process, it was considered that there was still a greater demand to strengthen the promotion of the European integration process and sustainable development as the key models to effectively address the vulnerabilities of our times. In this regard, it was also acknowledged that an Organisation such as the CEI - with these two strategic objectives at the core – could further step up its role, at both political and operational level, in providing quick and flexible solutions to the challenges.

The need to provide more political impetus to the Organisation goes back to its origins. In the early years after the CEI's establishment, regional cooperation proved to be a valuable tool to face the turbulent times in Europe, and a successful model for fostering the European integration process as the most important project for upholding the peace, security and economic development of the continent. It also laid the foundations for the EU enlargements, which included numerous countries from Central and Eastern Europe. Under such circumstances, the CEI was seen as a very useful actor where the countries in the initial stages of EU membership were “learning” from countries already part of the EU, or embedded in the integration process. Over the years, this specific role of the Organisation, acting as a platform for exchange of experiences and know-how between the EU and non-EU CEI countries, has grown and become an added value to be further promoted.

Against this backdrop, a process of reflection and consideration on how to build on this feature was launched in the framework of the *Convention for the Strengthening of the Central European Initiative*. The work of the *Convention*, coordinated by the CEI-ES, has been carried out throughout 2024 on the occasion of three meetings: one in Trieste on 12 February, and two in Rome on 22 April and 5 July, respectively.

As a final outcome, the *Recommendations for the Strengthening of the Central European Initiative* have been elaborated. The document aim is to serve as an effective and straightforward Roadmap, stemming from the views presented by the participants of the *Convention*. In particular, the *Recommendations* focus on:

1. *Enhancing the CEI political role*: revitalising the full spectrum of CEI structures and meetings within the Governmental Dimension; revitalising the full spectrum of structures and meetings within the Parliamentary Dimension; strengthening interactions between the Governmental and Parliamentary Dimensions, as well as among all dimensions; enhancing result-oriented strategic partnerships; increasing the CEI's presence at European and international events; further supporting Ukraine.
2. *Strengthening the CEI relations with EU institutions*: strengthening cooperation on EU enlargement-related reforms within the CEI framework; enhancing liaison with EU institutions; considerations to obtain delegated cooperation from the EC.
3. *Reinforcing the role of the CEI-ES*: reinforcing the multistakeholder approach of the activities; ensuring the right composition of competencies in the CEI-ES; stepping up fundraising efforts.

It is believed that these *Recommendations* would help in identifying possible tangible steps for the CEI to address current and future challenges through an approach that is also feasible in order to achieve the desired outcomes. It is also believed that they would enable the CEI to strengthen its ability to steadfastly deliver on its mission through building cooperation, solidarity and trust among the countries, as well as to increase its international visibility.

The process of providing a follow-up though a possible undertaking of specific actions of the *Recommendations* through the appropriate CEI structures would start in 2025.





## PRESIDENCY

*The Chairmanship of the CEI (CEI Presidency) rotates annually at the beginning of the calendar year and is based on the alphabetical order of the English names of the CEI Member States, unless decided otherwise. It convenes the meetings envisaged by the CEI Guidelines and Rules of Procedure and other meetings of interest for the Organisation in the framework of the established priorities and programme of the Presidency.*

# PRIORITIES AND PROGRAMME OF THE ALBANIAN CEI PRESIDENCY

Albania took over the rotating CEI Presidency on 1 January 2024. The country has demonstrated its commitment as a member and a strong supporter of the CEI. During this tenure, the Albanian CEI Presidency, supported by the CEI-ES, has fostered cooperation aimed at facilitating people-to-people contacts, supporting cooperation among local governments, academic, professional, cultural and non-governmental organisations and educational institutions, promoting tourism and expanding parliamentary cooperation.

Furthermore, Albania has endorsed all the initiatives of CEI members to assist the Ukrainian people in coping with the consequences of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. The Presidency also continued to develop the political dialogue on the current challenges in the framework of the well-established platforms of the Governmental and Parliamentary Dimensions (Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs - MFA Meeting, Committee of National Coordinators - CNC, Parliamentary Committee, Parliamentary Assembly).



The Albanian CEI Presidency focused on the following priorities:

- *European Integration*: supporting regional cooperation, with the aim of promoting the path towards EU integration of the non-EU CEI countries, while maintaining new momentum for EU expansion. Keeping in mind that in the 2023 enlargement reports setting out the state of play of prospective EU members, the European Commission backed the start of accession talks with Ukraine and Moldova and the granting of candidate status to Georgia, the EU should maintain its geostrategic focus on the Western Balkans as well.
- *Tourism and Culture*: deepening the efforts made so far to promote the cultural-tourist attractions of the CEI region and convert this region into a major tourist destination. The aim is to develop a comprehensive tourism package that goes beyond the traditional tourism made up of visits to the sea and mountain areas or archaeological sites, adding the gastronomic and medical tourism. Promoting tourism diversification in the CEI region is the main target.
- *Health*: health is a right and not a privilege. This is the core philosophy for building the Albanian 2021-2030 Health Strategy, which is based on the basic principles of solidarity, universality and reducing inequalities. The Albanian CEI Presidency focuses on assessing health challenges as part of cross-sectional policies in the CEI region, and strengthening regional cooperation on public health through harmonisation with the European Health Union Regulations/Strategies, and Programmes. The CEI members are encouraged to share best practices and explore improved synergies and regional cooperation on health.
- *Strengthening parliamentary cooperation*: establishing and deepening partnership structures based on the principles of parliamentary democracy and the respect for human rights is a main goal during the mandate of the Albanian CEI Presidency. Parliaments play an essential role in democracy: they serve as a check on the executive and provide an effective representation of diverse society stakeholders. The impact of regional parliamentary cooperation directly relates to the EU integration process of the Western Balkans. Therefore, upgrading the role of the Parliamentary cooperation as well as introducing the role of the *Convention*, is an indicator of inclusive cooperation within the CEI platform.

In addition, the Albanian CEI Presidency continued to build upon the cooperation with the UN, and the observer status in the UN General Assembly, and also presented a Joint Statement of CEI Member States at the Regional Forum 2024 of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in Geneva on 13 March.

In this framework, the Albanian CEI Presidency, in cooperation with the CEI-ES, implemented a rich programme of activities.

The Calendar of the Presidency is presented in Annex 1.

## ACTIVITIES OF THE ALBANIAN CEI PRESIDENCY

*The Presidency organised and supported a number of activities as envisaged by the established priorities and programme, in the framework of the CEI Dimensions (Governmental, Parliamentary, Economic and Local), activities in partnership with other international and regional organisations, as well as activities aimed at stepping up cooperation with the EU, the UN and other organisations.*

### CNC Meetings

The CNC met four times in 2024 (in Trieste on 29 February, 4 June and 8 October, and in Tirana on 19 November). The CNC is the key body responsible for the definition, coordination, management and implementation of CEI cooperation as well as for the implementation of CEI programmes and projects through appropriate structures. It meets frequently in order to discuss and coordinate cooperation within the various CEI bodies and with other international and regional organisations. In 2024, the CNC meetings witnessed an active participation of the Member States in the deliberations. The Committee drafted and negotiated different documents for adoption from the high-level meetings and discussed the strengthening of relationships with international and regional stakeholders. The agenda included discussions on CEI key institutional activities, administrative matters and project management aimed at advancing regional cooperation and sustainable development across various sectors. Several projects, ideas, and proposals were approved, then tackled by the Secretariat throughout the year.



### Joint Statement at the UNECE Regional Forum 2024 (Geneva, 13 March 2024)

On 13 March in Geneva, the Albanian CEI Presidency on behalf of the CEI Member States, delivered a Joint Statement at the UNECE Regional Forum, reaffirming the CEI's strong commitment to sustainable development and the UN Agenda 2030. The Statement highlighted past and future CEI actions, support for the SDGs through political and financial means, the value of partnerships—particularly with WHO/Europe—and the importance of regional cooperation in accelerating SDGs implementation.

### CEI-WHO-OBS Policy Dialogue on Pharmaceutical and Health Product Systems (Trieste, 18-19 April 2024)

On 18-19 April, a Policy Dialogue titled "Building resilient pharmaceutical and health product systems" was jointly organised by the CEI, the WHO/Europe and the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies (OBS). International experts shared their knowledge on strategies to ensure safe, effective and quality medicines, including regulatory systems, anticipate and address medicine shortages, as well as pricing, reimbursement and procurement of innovative medicines to protect populations from financial hardships. The importance of collaborative efforts in addressing common challenges faced by member countries such as addressing medicine shortages and joint procurement was underlined. Moreover, the imperative of evidence-based policies and innovative approaches was highlighted, with the goal of ensuring equitable access to healthcare for all segments of society. At the closing of the event, the participants reflected on the wealth of knowledge exchanged, reaffirming their commitment to fostering resilient pharmaceutical and health systems, also through a regional approach. New topics for future policy dialogues have also been raised, expressing the importance of such exchanges and learning opportunities.

### Parliamentary Committee Meeting (Tirana, 30 June - 1 July 2024)

The meeting of the Parliamentary Committee took place in Tirana on 30 June - 1 July. The gathering primarily focused on the role of Parliaments in the oversight of the executive and in the EU integration process. The meeting also emphasized the need for stronger interparliamentary cooperation. Moreover, the meeting provided the opportunity to recall the improved cooperation between the CEI Governmental and Parliamentary Dimensions, which can reinforce the role of the Organisation as a valuable political platform contributing to the stabilization of the region, its economic development and social progress. The meeting concluded with a Joint Statement reaffirming the CEI's role as an effective forum of regional cooperation, based on fundamental values shared by the CEI and the EU. It also highlighted the importance of reinforcing the role of the Parliament as it is crucial for the preservation of democratic principles of representation and public participation.



### Informal Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs (New York, 27 September 2024)

On 27 September, the Foreign Ministers of CEI Member States gathered in New York for their annual informal meeting, on the margins of the 78<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly. The meeting served as a platform for discussion by the Foreign Ministers on the most topical issues under the current geopolitical scenario of the region, marked by the continuing Russian aggression against Ukraine, and the EU enlargement. The informal setting of the meeting allowed for open exchanges on these pressing topics, reflecting also on the CEI's ongoing commitment to fostering stability and cooperation in the region. In this context, the Ministers emphasised the importance of strengthened regional cooperation and unity in addressing common challenges.

### International Conference on Tourism (Tirana, 27 September 2024)

The International Conference "Tourism in the Eastern and Southeastern Europe – New paths of development" was held in Tirana on 27 September, in the framework of the Albanian CEI Presidency and SEECF Chairmanship. The event was organised by the Albanian National Tourism Agency, under the theme "Tourism and Peace". It was an opportunity to discuss the challenges and solutions for the future of tourism in the region, thus making it a unitary attraction through combined tourist offers. The goal of the conference was to share knowledge and experiences from the CEI region, thus providing a discussion platform on issues of common interest in this sector, bringing together representatives of institutions dealing with the tourism sector in the CEI countries. The main topics addressed during the conference included the promotion of tourism through innovative tools and best practices, the improvement in sector standards, and resource management. It was highlighted that these challenges can be overcome by aligning educational programmes with industry demands and exploring the expansion of tourism beyond traditional offerings. This latter included a focus on interdisciplinary approaches to enhance the economic impact of the tourism sector in the region.



### Parliamentary Assembly Meeting (Tirana, 1 October 2024)

The meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly was held in Tirana on 1 October. Under the theme “Strengthening regional cooperation as a fundamental factor for European integration”, participants from the delegations actively contributed to the debate by sharing views on the need for enhanced regional cooperation to address global challenges and ensure a sustainable future. They especially underlined the need to foster dialogue among CEI Member States to promote peace and stability, boost economic development through joint investments and infrastructure projects, as well as support the EU enlargement process, with a special focus on regional cooperation, human rights, and the rule of law. Prior to the plenary session, the new Chairpersons and Co-chairpersons of the three General Committees on Political Affairs, Economic Affairs and Cultural Affairs were elected. The meeting ended with the adoption of a Joint Final Declaration, which also aimed at stronger cultural, educational, and youth initiatives to enhance regional ties, and encouraged investment in research and innovation to drive economic growth.

### International Workshop on Cultural Heritage (Tirana, 23 October 2024)

On 23 October, the Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation of Albania, organised the International Workshop: “Digitization, Access, and Protection in the Cultural Heritage Sector” in Tirana. The event highlighted how digitalization is crucial for preserving and promoting cultural heritage management in Albania, where museums, archives and libraries are ushering in a new era, by using technology to conserve the treasures of history. Experts shared innovative strategies, including the successful approaches of Albania’s National Museum of Photography “Marubi”. The museum’s comprehensive strategy for cataloging, digitalizing, and conserving Albania’s photographic heritage was presented, and a tour of Albania’s historical sites was offered. This showed Albania’s commitment to preservation, and it also underlined the important role of the museum, which acts as a cornerstone for research and public engagement. Overall, this workshop - also organised in the framework of the Albanian SEECP Chairmanship of - offered possibilities for joint CEI-SEECP cooperation initiatives in the field of cultural heritage, promoting regional development and sustainable tourism in Southeast Europe.



### International Workshop on Education and Youth (Tirana, 31 October 2024)

The International Workshop, “Internationalization in Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities”, was held in Tirana on 31 October. The workshop aimed at exploring the strategies for future collaboration in higher education. The representatives from the CEI Member States’ universities reflected on the economic and political impact of internationalization, as well as on its role in fostering cultural diversity and inclusion. During the event, the importance of one of the CEI’s primary goals of contributing to the improvement of the quality of life and prospects of young people was highlighted.

### Expert Panel on Transport and Connectivity (Vlora, 14-15 November 2024)

On 14-15 November, the Albanian CEI Presidency in collaboration with the CEI-Executive Secretariat and the Transport Community Secretariat, organised in Vlora the Expert Panel under the theme “Enhancing cross-border connectivity in the CEI region exploiting sustainable transport solutions”. The event gathered high-level officials, transport experts, and stakeholders from across CEI Member States, along with representatives from business and regional organisations, to discuss the advancement of sustainable cross-border connectivity in the region. In this

framework, the event addressed the practical ways to facilitate regional trade and passenger transit through transport policies, cross-border agreements and investments. Discussions focused on two main sessions: in the first technical session, speakers addressed freight transport challenges and proposed innovative solutions such as multi-modal systems and “smart borders”, whilst the impact of joint border controls, and digitalized administrative advancements was also underlined. The second session focused on innovative approaches to rail and road transport for citizens and urban planning. The conference ended stressing the importance of sustained dialogue, investment, and digital innovation to achieve a unified, sustainable, and efficient transport network in the CEI region.

#### **International Workshop on Sustainable Economic Growth (Tirana, 18 November 2024)**

The Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation organised in Tirana on 18 November, the International Workshop “Sustainable Economic Growth in Central & South-East Europe and Albania - Discussion of Strategies for Promoting Sustainable Practices on the Path to European Integration”. This activity brought together policymakers, businesses, business organisations and chambers of commerce as well as representatives from international and regional organisations. Key discussions focused on the assessment of the long-term goal of EU Integration and the connection with the instruments of the Common Regional Market and the EU Growth Plan (2024-2027). The participants exchanged views regarding sustainable economic growth in Central and South-Eastern Europe. They discussed strategies for promoting sustainable practices on the path towards European integration, highlighting the importance of cooperation between Albania and the Member States of both the CEI and SEECP, with the aim of creating common instruments for sustainable economic growth.

#### **Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Tirana, 20 November 2024)**

On 20 November 2024, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the CEI Member States convened in Tirana for their annual meeting. The gathering was held back-to-back with the last Committee of National Coordinators Meeting for 2024 under the Albanian Presidency. It focused on strengthening the CEI’s role in regional cooperation, advancing European integration, supporting Ukraine and the Ukrainian people, as well as on addressing pressing global and regional challenges. It emphasized how CEI plays a critical role in fostering dialogue, solidarity and constructive regional cooperation and partnerships across the region, and how this role became even more vital in view of the pressing international challenges. The Ministers praised the Organisation’s ability to quickly adapt to new circumstances throughout its history and introduced the “Recommendations for the Strengthening of the CEI”, underlining the importance of maintaining this virtue in the future through continuous strengthening. During the meeting the Ministers emphasised higher promotion of the EU integration process as it represents a geo-strategic investment in peace and democracy, as well as a cornerstone of stability, security and prosperity for the whole CEI region.



#### **UN Resolution on Cooperation between United Nations and Central European Initiative (6 December 2024)**

On 6 December, the UN General Assembly, recalling its resolution 66/111 of 9 December 2011 by which it granted observer status to the CEI, adopted the Resolution on Cooperation between the United Nations and the CEI by a recorded vote of 114 in favour, 10 against with 26 abstentions. The document acknowledged the CEI’s efforts to promote the goals and objectives of the UN through regional cooperation and sustainable development. In this regard, the Resolution took note of the CEI’s institutional activities, the CEI Plan of Action 2024-2026, CEI’s support to Ukraine, and of the CEI’s project activities. It also underlined the cooperation established between the Initiative and the WHO/Europe, and the growing partnership with UNICEF.



## SECRETARIAT

*The CEI-Executive Secretariat (CEI-ES) was established in Trieste in 1996. It operates with the legal status of an International Organisation, based on a Headquarters Agreement concluded between the Italian Government and the CEI Presidency. The CEI-ES provides administrative and conceptual support to the CEI structures. It also manages funds and instruments, financing the CEI Project activities, and takes appropriate initiatives aimed at promoting the realisation of the CEI's mission.*

# ROLE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CEI-EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

The CEI-ES activities mainly continued along the lines driven by the CEI Plan of Action 2024-2026. In this regard, it undertook initiatives at both institutional and project level, by putting forward new ideas and innovative solutions. In doing so, the CEI-ES has played an active role in international relations and multilaterally diplomacy, and in programme and project management.

In practical terms, in 2024 the CEI-ES has focused on the coordination of the work of the *Convention*. It also strongly supported the Albanian CEI Presidency in the preparation and organisation of the activities within its programme. Likewise, the CEI-ES has maintained cooperation with all the Member States within the CEI Governmental, Parliamentary and Economic Dimensions. It has also continued to develop the CEI Local Dimension and the CEI Youth Agenda, and to promote a multistakeholder approach (including NGOs, academia, private sector, local actors, media and other actors) and partnerships with international and regional intergovernmental organisations in its activities. At the same time, the CEI-ES has continued with the administration of the CEI Cooperation Fund, to which all Member States contribute, in order to make sure that a spillover effect is secured with the project activities, especially in terms of generating further financial resources and of building institutional capacities and creation of networks. This way the Fund genuinely contributes to the overall CEI mission to act as platform for exchange of experiences and knowledge, in particular between the EU and non-EU CEI countries.

In the context of the CEI's support to Ukraine, the CEI-ES has contributed to advancing the activities of the Network of Ukrainian Educational Hubs, initiated by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and implemented by the Association of Innovative and Digital Education. In addition to the major Educational Hub launched in Poland in 2022, a number of activities were promoted in 2023-2024 in Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary and Slovakia especially to support the social and labour integration of the Ukrainian refugees. The co-financial support provided by the CEI Cooperation Fund was complemented with the Secretariat's active involvement in the project development through participation in relevant meetings and visibility actions.

Furthermore, the CEI-ES has maintained cooperation with the European Commission (EC) and other international and regional organisations (UN, WHO/Europe, UNICEF, AII, BSEC, RCC, TCT, Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative-RAI, Regional School of Public Administration -ReSPA, etc.). It has also developed joint activities and projects with these organisations; established new cooperation links, e.g. in the sector of youth with the Council of Europe obtaining Observer Status at the Council of Europe's Youth Department statutory bodies; and maintained contacts with the respective Secretariats, etc. Moreover, in addition to the above reported activity with the WHO/Europe in the framework of the Albanian CEI Presidency (Trieste, 18-19 April), several other activities were organised by the CEI-ES at its Headquarters.

The CEI-ES participated in a number of Cooperation Activities supported by the CEI Cooperation Fund, and was actively involved in the CEI Flagship Events (Cooperation Activities supported through the CEI Cooperation Fund, which provide an added value and are of strategic significance in pursuing the CEI mission, they ensure high visibility and media outreach to the CEI). In addition, the CEI-ES was involved in the promotion of a number Prizes and Awards on the occasion of some of the traditional events supported by the CEI. These are offered in order to honour and encourage initiatives and activities of talented and often young people from CEI Member States.

The CEI-ES also continued with the implementation and management of projects and initiatives financed by external sources, namely the EU and ARFVG, contributing to the overall CEI mission. This task is performed by a dedicated office at the CEI-ES - the Project Management Office (PMO) - through which the CEI-ES is actively participating in various EU Programmes, both as Lead Partner and Partner. It is also organising numerous activities and events stemming from these projects, as well as from those in the framework of the Joint Work Programmes (JWPs) between the CEI-ES and ARFVG.

The list of the staff members and the budget of the CEI-ES are represented in Annex 2 and 3, respectively.

## INSTITUTIONAL ACTIVITIES OF CEI-ES

*The CEI-ES is actively involved in official visits, bilateral meetings and meetings with other international and regional organisations. It also participates in CEI-sponsored events and in various international and regional events.*

### Trieste Film Festival 2024 (Trieste, 19 - 27 January 2024)

The CEI supported the Trieste Film Festival - the leading Italian festival dedicated to Central and Eastern European cinema and beyond - held in Trieste on 19 - 27 January. The programme included a great number of international and national premieres of feature films, short films, and documentaries as well as special sections such as the “Wild Roses” presenting European female filmmakers. Other activities like exhibitions, concerts, readings, book presentations, meetings, thematic panels and masterclasses took place during the Festival. The CEI gave special support also to the TSFF ACADEMY, a film literary project representing a unique training opportunity for film students from universities and film academies across the CEI Member States, thereby contributing to the promotion of mobility of emerging European film professionals and young talents.

### CEI Award 2024 at Trieste Film Festival (Trieste, 25 January 2024)

The CEI Award, in the framework of the Trieste Film Festival, is traditionally assigned to the artist who best interprets the contemporary reality of Europe and dialogue among cultures. This year, the CEI Award 2024 was assigned to the young Hungarian filmmaker, born in Romania, Katalin Moldovai for her film *Without Air*. The film was also presented at the latest Toronto and Warsaw Film Festivals, where it won the Best Film category in the Competition for First and Second Feature Films. In occasion of the ceremony held in Trieste on 25 January 2024, it was highlighted how the CEI long-standing cooperation with the Trieste Film Festival promotes young talents from the CEI region and provides opportunities for valuable training and networking activities.



### Promotional Roadshow of the “Big Science Business Forum (BSBF)” in CEI Member States

On 27 February, the Italian Embassy in Serbia hosted the inaugural day of the roadshow aimed at promoting the “Big Science Business Forum 2024 (BSBF) in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe”, an initiative designed and supported by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the CEI, the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region (Italy) and the BSBF organising committee. The event took place in Belgrade in collaboration with the Ministry of Science, Technological Development, and Innovation of the Republic of Serbia, and the Serbian Chamber of Commerce. The significance of selecting Belgrade as the venue for the roadshow’s first day was justified by Serbia’s substantial investments in high-tech sectors such as ICT, agritech, biotechnology, and artificial intelligence. The second and third event of the “BSBF promotional roadshow in CEI Member States” were held in Bratislava and Prague, on 20 and 21 March, respectively. The discussion focused on research-industry collaborations and on how the BSBF 2024 can provide an additional platform for strengthening partnerships aimed at consolidating the emerging Big Science common market in Europe. The initiative continued in Warsaw on 16 April and in Budapest on 7 May. The promotional roadshow was then followed by the “BSBF visits Croatia”, with an event taking place in Zagreb on 13 June, and then moved to Ljubljana for the “BSBF visits Slovenia” event on 14 June. The 8<sup>th</sup> and concluding event of the promotional roadshow of the BSBF in CEI countries took place in Podgorica on 12 July. Overall, the BSBF promotional roadshow reached out to about 300 key-stakeholders, ensuring a strong contribution from Central, Eastern and South-Eastern European countries to the future development of Big Science.



### International Conference Equal Pay Day (Prague, 11-12 April 2024)

the International Conference Equal Pay Day was held in Prague on 11-12 April, bringing together around 800 participants, 40 speakers, 80 mentors and 2000 mentees from 16 countries. The event was organised by the Business and Professional Women-BPW Czech Republic and it represented the 2024 "CEI Flagship Event". The conference offered the opportunity to debate new trends in women's entrepreneurship and equal opportunities with high top corporate executives, HR managers, major experts as well as personalities from the public sphere and diplomacy, sharing good practices and experiences. During the International Conference, participants supported the idea of promoting "women role models" and take action to enhance both professional development and personal growth of women. The event also focused on the advancement of activities implemented by the CEI Region in leading professional women and women empowerment as it is one of the priorities of the CEI Plan of Action 2024-2026. CEI's support also proved fundamental in elaborating the "Call to action: Integrating Ukrainian women into the workforce and society". This project aims to accelerate the integration of Ukrainian women and young people into the workforce and contribute to their financial independence.



### International Conference on Palliative Care (Trieste, 24-25 May 2024)

On 24-25 May, the International Conference on palliative care, under the theme "Overcoming Barriers and Borders in Palliative Care: 100 Units of Opportunities," was held in Trieste, as part of the celebrations for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of University of Trieste. The purpose of the event was to establish new synergies and cross-border cooperation to encourage the exchange of knowledge and best practices in the field of palliative care. The conference, organised by the Italian National Association for Palliative Care in collaboration with the University of Trieste, WHO/Europe, and the CEI-ES, brought together numerous care specialists, experts, academics, researchers, and students to discuss various aspects of palliative care, including networks and models of care, education for healthcare providers, research, pain and symptom treatment, and essential medicines.



### Study Visit on Territorial Cooperation between Italy and Slovenia (Trieste and Gorizia, 28-29 May 2024)

On 28-29 May, a two-day study visit was held in Trieste and Gorizia. The initiative, titled "Territorial Cooperation, Multilevel Partnerships and EU Integration: Lessons Learned at the Border Between Italy and Slovenia," was organised in the context of the well-established relationship between the CEI-ES and the ARFVG, in collaboration with the Robert Schuman Institute of Budapest. The main objective of the study visit was to promote the territorial and cross-border cooperation, focusing on the Italy-Slovenia experience. The event witnessed the participation of a delegation of young administrators, members of local or regional elective assemblies, officials responsible for economic development and those involved in the EU enlargement process in CEI countries. This event confirmed the CEI's active support for European integration through the exchange of best practices and experiences, involving young decision-makers from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Moldova, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Ukraine. On 29 May 2024 in Gorizia, a roundtable on cross-border cooperation in view of the GO!2025 initiative was organised, where the Mayor of Gorizia illustrated the collaboration path implemented between the two border cities.

### Participation in Plenary meeting of SEEHN ( Sarajevo, 20-21 June 2024)

The CEI-ES participated in the 47<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting of the South-East Europe Health Network (SEEHN) in Sarajevo on 20-21 June, which focused on "Strengthening Community Health Services". The event was organised by the Bosnia and Herzegovina SEEHN Presidency, the Executive Committee, and the Secretariat of the network. Attendees included National Health Coordinators and alternates from SEEHN Member States, directors of SEEHN Regional Health Development Centers, and representatives from partner countries and regional and international organisations. The meeting aimed to promote discussions and cooperation among SEEHN Member States to strengthen healthcare systems and public health partnerships in the Western Balkans and beyond. Participants discussed SEEHN's efforts to build capacities related to community health services in the Member States. The meeting also offered a platform to share best practices, innovations, and potential solutions for the SEE region. The overall goal of the project is disease prevention and health promotion, with a particular focus on vulnerable and socially excluded groups, ensuring that no one is left behind.

### "Trieste Contemporanea" CEI Award (Gorizia, 31 August 2024)

On 31 August, the CEI awarding ceremony took place at the Municipality of Gorizia, where Drini Berati won the CEI Award at the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Design Contest "Trieste Contemporanea", with his project "The Weaver's Seat". The competition consisted of several prizes including the CEI Award 2024 addressed to designers from non-EU CEI Member States.

### CEI Award for Young Writers 2024 (Ljubljana, 3 September 2024)

On 3 September 2024, Monika Herceg received the CEI Award for Young Writers 2024 in Ljubljana, during the Vilenica International Literary Festival. The award was offered by the CEI in cooperation with the Slovene Writers' Association. During the event it was highlighted how the aim of this initiative was not to only acknowledge outstanding young writers, but also to support the translation of contemporary literary works and their circulation across the CEI region. The CEI Award represented a recognition of Monika Herceg's exceptional talent as one of the most prominent voices of contemporary Croatian literature.

### Coordination Meeting of Regional Organisations (Trieste, 17 September 2024)

The 18<sup>th</sup> Coordination Meeting of Regional Organisations was hosted by the CEI-ES in Trieste on 17 September. The meeting witnessed the presence of high-level representatives from the Secretariats of regional organisations, such as the Adriatic Ionian Initiative, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, and the Regional Cooperation Council, as well as other special guests like the European Commission, the Regional School of Public Administration, and the Regional Anti-corruption Initiative. The discussion highlighted the importance of regional cooperation for European integration, sustainable development, and shared prosperity across sectors such as governance, connectivity, finance, and people-to-people networks, through a holistic approach. The participants expressed their desire to further seek and work on opportunities for enhanced cooperation through joint projects and expressed the need for secure partnerships, in order to reach a solid collaboration towards transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance. A special focus was put on good governance, given the need for strong institutions to implement the UN 2030 Agenda and establish closer links with the EU.



### Parallel Session on "Opportunities for Big Science in Central Europe" for the BSBF (Trieste, 2 October 2024)

On 2 October, the Promotional roadshow of the "Big Science Business Forum" culminated in the Parallel Session on "Opportunities for Big Science in Central Europe" held in Trieste. The discussion focused on how to enhance the involvement of companies from Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe in the discourse on Big Science. The event also underlined the contribution of the BSBF promotional roadshow to the consolidation of the European Big Science common market, which reached out to Serbia, Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia and Montenegro between February and June 2024. Best practices, opportunities, as well as barriers, were openly debated with the aim of encouraging future stronger connections between Big Science Organisations and operators from this broad area of Europe.



**Balkan Economic Forum (Zagreb, 18 October 2024)**

The CEI-ES participated in the high-level Balkan Economic Forum in Zagreb on 18 October. The event - held under the auspices of and co-financed by the CEI as its flagship event for 2024 - gathered academics, students, media and other figures of the public and private sectors. The focus of the forum was to explore and implement innovative strategies and creative solutions to address the current economic challenges faced by the Balkan countries and stimulate economic growth which, in turn, should strengthen regional cooperation, peace and security. During the event, crucial topics like circular economy, climate resilience, clean energy and challenges in boosting innovation and entrepreneurship were discussed. Regional cooperation as a strong tool to address the economic challenges of the Balkans and urge their EU accession process was also highlighted.



**Participation in Council of Europe’s intergovernmental committees on youth (Strasbourg, 21-23 October 2024)**

Thanks to the CEI’s observer status, obtained earlier in 2024, within the Council of Europe’s intergovernmental committees on youth, namely the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) and Joint Council on Youth (CMJ), for the first time the CEI participated in the meetings of the aforementioned CoE youth statutory bodies. The committees meet twice a year, in Strasbourg and Budapest respectively, and address a whole range of issues relevant for the youth sector. The meetings provided for an in-depth discussion of a number of topical issues, such as the organisation of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth, coming up in October 2025 in Malta, development of a reference framework for integration of a Youth Perspective, revision of the Charter for Young People’s Participation in Local and Regional Life, conclusions of the 4th European Youth Work Convention organised by the CoE and the EU, etc. The meetings also provided a structured overview and a detailed update on the most relevant activities and processes that took place during the past six months, both within the CoE Youth sector itself and within its 46 Member States and Observers, including the CEI.



**Public event on rail connectivity in the CEI region (Trieste, 8 November 2024)**

On 8 November, the CEI-ES, in cooperation with the FVG Region and the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat, hosted the public event “Advancing regional integration through enhanced passenger rail services in the CEI region”. Key stakeholders, including representatives from ministries of transport, rail operators and experts, discussed the importance of modernising the rail network and promoting new international passenger train services to meet the growing demand for cross-border and international services. In this context, a study carried out on the improvement



of passenger rail connections along the route Trieste - Ljubljana – Zagreb - Belgrade was presented. This study was carried out by Politecnico Milano and is one of the activities funded by the Joint Operational Plan between the CEI-ES and the FVG Region. Moreover, during the event, the topic of the enhancement of rail passenger connectivity in the whole Adriatic Ionian Region was tackled. Participants emphasized the need for reforms in interoperability, safety, and border procedures, with a focus on making the region's rail network more sustainable and efficient. The event concluded with broad support for the study's recommendations and a commitment to further improve regional rail connectivity.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Joint Meeting on primary Health Care Models in the Western Balkans (Trieste, 12-14 November 2024)**

On 12-14 November, public health authorities from the Western Balkans, relevant WHO representatives from technical teams and country/field offices, CEI representatives, Friuli-Venezia-Giulia health authorities and invited experts, gathered in Trieste for the 4<sup>th</sup> Western Balkans Inter-country/area meeting titled "Strengthening primary health care models to manage complex chronic conditions in the Western Balkans". The gathering focused on the integrated management of complex chronic conditions through a primary healthcare approach, with discussions on the current state of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The event also addressed the related management of the main challenges and strategies in service delivery models. During the workshop stakeholders and experts from the Western Balkans engaged in meaningful discussions, presented their experiences in NCDs management, highlighted key challenges in setting integrated care pathways and management, underlining the importance of capacity building, education and empowerment of nurses in NCDs management, prevention and healthy lifestyles, as well as improved service organisation. Furthermore, participants agreed on the need for constant collaboration in the region and stronger multi-sectoral cooperation. The meeting concluded on 14 November with a field visit to the Health Authority of Trieste (ASUGI), where topics of health and social care integration, innovative initiatives on integrated management of hospital discharge and mental health and chronic conditions were addressed.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Conference on Science Diplomacy (Trieste, 20-21 November 2024)**

The inaugural Conference on Science Diplomacy in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe was held on 20-21 November at the CEI Headquarters in Trieste. It included diplomats, academics, and science diplomacy practitioners from across the region. Organised jointly by the CEI and the University for Continuing Education Krems (UWK), in cooperation with the EU Science Diplomacy Alliance (EUSDA), and with the financial support of the FVG Region, the conference focused on exploring science diplomacy governance and capacity building in the target region, while fostering greater regional collaboration through multi-stakeholder partnerships. The event responded to a dynamic backdrop, marked by the establishment of the EU Science Diplomacy Alliance in 2021 and the European Framework for Science Diplomacy. As science diplomacy increasingly becomes a key tool in foreign policy and research, the conference tackled pressing challenges such as the necessity to enhance the involvement of the diplomatic community in science diplomacy discussions, and to reach a common understanding of the potential of science diplomacy in addressing global challenges effectively. Three main themes guided the discussions: capacity building and skills development, governance and institutionalisation, and multi-stakeholder partnerships. In addition, expert-led workshops, provided deeper insights into skill-building and governance strategies, which benefitted from the active participation of the audience. The conference helped establish a preliminary network of science diplomacy enthusiasts in Central, Eastern, and South-Eastern Europe, which will be involved in future activities in this area of work.



### Meeting with UNESCO Chairs in the framework of RESILIENHANCE Project (Udine, 27 November 2024)

On 27 November in Udine the CEI- Executive Secretariat took part in the “ResiliEnhance Platform 2024 Meeting” gathering experts and stakeholders from Central and Eastern Europe at the International Centre for Mechanical Sciences (CISM) in Udine. The event marked a key milestone in the ResiliEnhance Programme was organised by the CEI, the UNESCO Chair at the University of Udine, and the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, with support also from CISM. The importance of the ResiliEnhance initiative was highlighted, particularly in strengthening the UNESCO Chairs Network across CEI countries. The platform reflects a shared commitment to building resilience in an increasingly complex and unpredictable world. With the event focusing on the rising frequency of natural disasters, it was emphasized that resilience should be viewed not only as a response to current crises but as a proactive approach to anticipate and prepare for future challenges. This calls for transformative systems that address vulnerabilities at their core. In this framework, participants discussed the role of governance in disaster risk reduction, stressing the importance of flexible and responsive systems.



### XVIII South East Europe Media Forum (Podgorica, 27-28 November 2024)

On 27-28 November, the CEI Flagship Event XVIII South East Europe Media Forum (SEEMF) was held in Podgorica. In The event, under the title “Media and Elections - Professional and Political Challenges”, was attended by around 200 participants from all CEI countries. Journalists, media experts, politicians, representatives of international organisations and academia debated the role of media in elections in various panel discussions. In particular, the impact of different political environments on media practices and electoral integrity was explored, as well as the critical role of strategic public communication in countering false narratives and maintaining public trust and the role of media in shaping public opinion, informing voters, and influencing election outcomes. The role of independent media was further described as essential in the democratization process, to promote values like freedom of expression, rule of law and transparency.

### CEI SEEMO Award 2024 (Podgorica, 27 November 2024)

On 27 November 2024 the ceremony of the CEI SEEMO Award for Outstanding Merits in Investigative Journalism was held in Podgorica during SEEMF. The Award is meant to promote high-quality investigative journalism and acknowledge the efforts of investigative journalists often working under difficult conditions in the context of threats to media freedom and personal safety. This year, environmental matters were among the topics of the award. The President of Montenegro, the CEI National Coordinator for Montenegro and representatives of the CEI–ES assigned the CEI SEEMO Award 2024 to the Romanian winner Adrian Mogoș, under the category “Professional Journalists”. Under the category “Young Professional Journalists”, the winners ex aequo are Dino Cviko from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Giorgio Michalopoulos from Italy. Special mentions were assigned to Taras Zozulinsky (Ukraine), Cornelia Cozonac (Moldova), Elvin Luku (Albania), Saša Dragoljo (Serbia), Jovana Georgievski (Serbia), Ivana Milosavljević (Serbia).



### Workshop on Training for Energy Transition in the Port Sector (Trieste, 28 November 2024)

The Workshop Connecting the Adriatic-Ionian Region through Advanced Technology and Training for the Energy Transition in the Port Sector was held in Trieste on 28 November, convening stakeholders from across the Adriatic-Ionian region to foster sustainability, connectivity, and competitiveness in the port sector. The event was organised by the CEI -ES in partnership with the fvg Region and brought together North Adriatic Ports Association (NAPA) representatives, experts and international partners committed to shaping a greener and more resilient future for the region. The workshop focused on two main objectives: identifying practical pathways for integrating technologies within Adriatic-Ionian ports and defining the skills needed to implement them. Participants also examined the implications of EU regulations such as the EU Green Deal and the European Climate Law, which formalizes the goal of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Resolutions from the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) have also been discussed, particularly those regarding pollutant limits, which encourage the adoption of green technologies such as cold ironing, hydrogen, and LNG infrastructures. In alignment with the UN 2030 Agenda and the European Green Deal, the CEI continues to support projects focused on connectivity and sustainability, which enhance regional competitiveness and promote environmental stewardship.



### 1<sup>st</sup> Regional Workshop UNICEF-CEI in the framework of UPSHIFT Project (Trieste, 29 November 2024)

The 1<sup>st</sup> Regional Workshop on the UPSHIFT Programme was organised by the CEI in collaboration with UNICEF on 29 November, gathering UNICEF experts and government representatives from CEI Member States at the Organisation's Headquarters in Trieste. The event - attended by numerous representatives from Ministries of Education and/or Youth as well as international experts - provided a significant platform for dialogue and the exchange of best practices on scaling UPSHIFT delivery in education systems. The programme aims at enhancing young people's transversal skills, seeking to facilitate school-to-work transitions and youth empowerment through an innovative learning process rooted in entrepreneurial skills, human-centered design, and problem-solving. During the workshop, successful UPSHIFT experiences were showcased, with a focus on integrating its principles into national educational systems. Participants explored how the UPSHIFT approach could be adapted both regionally and within individual CEI Member States to integrate technical learning with transversal life skills to ensure youth smoother access to work. Key topics included the need to strengthen formal education systems to meet modern challenges, emphasising innovation and the use of digital technologies. The meeting concluded with a collective commitment from participants to work towards accelerating the integration of UPSHIFT into the formal education systems of Member States.



### Participation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mission for Natural Heritage Institutional Dialogue Event (Malaga, 29-30 November 2024)

On 29-30 November, the CEI-ES attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mission for the Natural Heritage Institutional Dialogue, in the framework of the EU-funded project TREASURE - Testing novel environmental quality measures in and around euro-med ports. The event was organised in collaboration with the 6<sup>th</sup> International Marine Science Communication Conference in Malaga (Spain) and activities took place between two days. On the first day, the discussion focused on marine and coastal restoration, and on projects to be implemented in line with the target set under the EU Nature Restoration Law (30% of terrestrial, coastal, freshwater, and marine ecosystems in good condition by 2030). On the second day, participants concentrated on capacity-building related to green growth and circular economy.



### Preparatory Meeting on Serbian CEI Presidency (Belgrade, 3 December 2024)

A delegation from the CEI-ES, led by SG Roberto Antonione, visited Belgrade on 3 December 2024 for consultations on CEI Presidency 2025 under the Republic of Serbia. On this occasion, also the SG designate, Franco Dal Mas, was present. During the visit, the delegation was received by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and their discussions primarily centered on the political focus and priorities for the year. Primary topics on the agenda were tackled, like the need for enlargement, security, connectivity and economic growth across the CEI region. Representatives also mentioned investments in science and research, youth promotion, and healthcare as issues of primary importance. Furthermore, the CEI - Executive Secretariat, provided information about the necessary activities for a tangible cooperation and information exchange between the Secretariat and the country of Serbia for a successful outcome of the Presidency.



### Participation in the 6<sup>th</sup> Monitoring Committee of SEE 2030 Strategy (Belgrade, 5 December 2024)

Upon invitation by the Regional Cooperation Council, the CEI-ES attended the Sixth Meeting of the SEE 2030 Strategy Monitoring Committee in Belgrade on 5 December 2024, where it presented its activities related to the UN 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The presentation outlined CEI's long-standing commitment to sustainable development, its alignment of SDGs within its Plan of Action, and its efforts to track progress through annual reporting. It also highlighted institutional initiatives and detailed ongoing and completed regional projects linked to the SDGs. The meeting also featured discussions among SEE economies on strategic priorities and directions for implementing and monitoring the SEE 2030 Strategy. As the main governance body for the strategy, the Committee provides a platform for reviewing progress and shaping future actions.



# FUNDS, PROGRAMME AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES OF CEI-ES

*The CEI-Executive Secretariat continued to provide administration and management to the CEI funds and programmes and to follow the implementation of the supported project activities, as well as to design and implement projects in the framework of its instruments for cooperation.*

## CEI Cooperation Fund

The multilateral CEI Cooperation Fund is provided by all Member States on an annual basis ever since its establishment by the MFA Meeting in 2001, according to an agreed scale of contributions, and is administered by the CEI-ES. The CEI-ES also closely follows the implementation of the activities supported through this Fund and participates in the activities as appropriate.

## Cooperation Activities

The CEI Cooperation Activities are multilateral small-scale projects such as seminars, workshops, training courses or other kinds of meetings focusing on mobility and networking. In some cases they can be linked to larger projects. They are co-financed by the CEI Cooperation Fund to which all Member States contribute annually. The Fund operates through annual Calls for Proposals. Since the start of its operations in 2002, the CEI Cooperation Fund has co-financed - with an amount of about 12,5 million EUR around 1,300 Cooperation Activities for a total value of the activities amounting to more than 70 million EUR. In 2024, 44 activities were implemented in 2024 (the approval is represented in Annex 4).

activity name	country	applicant	approved CEI contribution	Stream*	PoA objective/s	SDG
Nature based solutions to tackle biodiversity loss and increase climate resilience (NATUREBES)	North Macedonia	NGO Stena Stenae	7.462,50 €	TA	2.7	15, 13
XII Spring School on "IoT, economic and management challenges for e-health integration in the enlarged Europe"	Italy	SSIC-HECE (Higher Education in Clinical Engineering) of the University of Trieste	8.175,75 €	TA	2.3	3
The Twelfth International Conference on Radiation, Natural Sciences, Medicine, Engineering, Technology and Ecology (RAD 2024 Conference)	Serbia	RAD Centre	11.250,00 €	TA	2.3	3
Horizons of Sustainability: The Power of Creative Innovation for Transformation of Rural and Non-Urban Futures	Croatia	Kultura Nova Foundation	11.250,00 €	TA	2.12, 2.8	11
12th edition of the "European Remembrance Symposium" organised in Warsaw, Poland	Poland	Institute of European Network Remembrance and Solidarity	11.250,00 €	TA	2.12	16
International conference: The future of cycling in Albania	Albania	Active Mobility	11.078,25 €	TA	2.7	13
Young Bled Strategic Forum 2024	Slovenia	Centre for European Perspective	11.225,79 €	TA	2.2	4, 16
CEI Round-Table Discussion at Vilenica and CEI Award for Young Writers	Slovenia	SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION	11.250,00 €	TA	2.12	4
19th Summer School for Junior Anti-Corruption Practitioners from South-Eastern Europe	other	Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative Secretariat	11.250,00 €	TA	2.1	16
Trieste Film Festival - Training and Development Projects for Young Talents	Italy	Alpe Adria Cinema	11.250,00 €	TA	2.12	4

\*Stream: TA – Thematic Agenda of CEI Plan of Action, FE – Flagship Events, FS – Focused Section, PRES – Presidency, IO – Cooperation with International and Regional Organisations

activity name	country	applicant	approved CEI contribution	stream	PoA 2021-2023	SDG
54th NSC of EYP Italy Milan 2024 - Let's melt the pot: keep stirring that cosmopolitan	Italy	European Youth Parliament Italy	11.250,00€	TA	2.12	4, 16
DisCo 2024: Empowering Digital Entrepreneurial, and Sustainable Competencies Development in the Age of AI	Czech Republic	Centre for Higher Education Studies	7.332,75 €	TA	2.2	4
XX Central European Forum: 50 <sup>o</sup> Anniversary "A dream without borders"	Italy	Mitteleuropa Cultural Association	11.250,00 €	TA	2.12	4
Fight against hidden discrimination towards people with sensory disabilities (HiDis)	Italy	EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR INCLUSION BEYOND THE BORDERS (E.N.I.B.B.) – ETS	11.250,00 €	TA	2.2	4
International workshop: Promoting an AI supported eco- activism in the Western Balkans	North Macedonia	Association Center for innovation and development INOS Prilep	5.509,50 €	TA	2.8	11
Capacity Building Training and Exchange Visits for Rural, Grassroots, Minority Organisations in the CEI region	Hungary	Minority Rights Group Europe Service Providing Non-profit Private Limited - liability Company	11.250,00€	TA	2.1	4
Balkan Young Talents	Serbia	International Documentary Film Festival Beldocs	11.250,00€	TA	2.1	4
6th SEE Mosaics Meeting “Mosaics from 1900’s Modern Materials, New Problems in Focus”	Hungary	Hungarian University of Fine Arts	7.500,00€	TA	2.3	4
Upcelerator fully remote idea stage accelerator for startups in Eastern Europe	Moldova	"Dreamups" Innovation and Entrepreneurship Accelerator	11.250,00€	TA	2.1	9
Hop On: Youth empowerment for the future of Europe (PENDING INFORMATION)	Hungary	European House	9.000,00€	TA	2.6	4
Original Boost – Young Entrepreneur Bootcamp	Serbia	Original	11.250,00€	TA	2.1	4
CET (CERIC-CEI) “Science @ CERIC 2024 - Celebrating 10 Years of Scientific Excellence”	other	CERIC-ERIC (Central European Research Infrastructure)	11.250,00€	TA	2.2	7
Role of diasporas in the socio-economic development of Western Balkan countries	Albania	Center for Economic and Social Studies (CESS)	9.172,50€	TA	2.9, 2.1	4
The 6th International Congress on Rural Tourism: Rural Tourism: Sustainable, Digital and Inclusive	Croatia	Croatian Association for Tourism and Rural Development "The Village Membership Club"	11.250,00€	TA	2.7, 2.8	11
EYP Action for CEI Youth: European Youth Parliament Presidents’ Summit 2024	other	Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe (European Youth Parliament)	11.131,88 €	TA	2.2, 2.1	4, 16
Energy Security as the Basis for Just Transition in Post- industrial Areas. Countering Disinformation — Warsaw Security Forum 2024	Poland	Casimir Pulaski Foundation	11.250,00€	TA	2.5	7
Eleventh CEI Venice Forum for Contemporary Art Curators	Italy	Trieste Contemporanea	11.250,00 €	TA	2.12	4

activity name	country	applicant	approved CEI contribution	stream	PoA	SDG
XXIV Summer Seminar for Young Public Policy Professionals “Future Scenarios for Central and Eastern Europe in Times of Continuous Uncertainty”	Bulgaria	Economic Policy Institute	11.175,00 €	TA	2.1, 2.2	4, 16
Interaction Teen Doc Workshop 2024	Serbia	Independent Film Centre Filmart	10.578,75 €	TA	2.12	4
Blue Danube Film Festival – CEI young filmmaker’s forum	Hungary	Blue Danube Cinewave Ltd.	8.025,00 €	TA	2.12	4
Spring General Assembly of Board of European students of technology 2024	Serbia	Board of European students of technology - Belgrade	11.248,40 €	TA	2.2	4
Balkan Economic Forum 2024	North Macedonia	Association for regional development Balkan Economic Forum	13.300,00 €	FE	2.6, 2.9	8, 9, 12
XVIII South East Europe Media Forum (SEEMF)	Serbia	South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO)	19.990,00	FE	2.11	4, 16
Equal Pay Day conference going international! III.	Czech Republic	Business & Professional Women CR z.s.	14.498,00	FE	2.2	5
Social and labour integration of Ukrainian refugees in 4 CEI countries	Ukraine	Association of innovative and digital education	39.100,00	FS	2.2	4
Capacity building in war related eye care in Ukraine, Moldova and Romania	Moldova	Association for the Study of Chronic Diseases	39.900,00	FS	2.3	3
CEI-WHO POLICY DIALOGUE Trieste April 2024	Italy	CEI - WHO	15.000,00	IO	2.3	3
UNICEF – CEI Workshop: UPSHIFT: Increasing entrepreneurship engagement and learning outcomes for young people within the region	Italy	CEI-UNICEF	15.000,00	IO	2.2, 2.9	4
Meeting of the Parliamentary Committee of the Parliamentary Dimension of CEI	Albania	Parliament of Albania	7,000,00 €	PRES	2.1	16
International Conference “Tourism in Central and Southeastern Europe - Embracing new paths of development”	Albania	the National Tourism Agency of Albania (NTA)	10.000,00€	PRES	2.8	11
Digitization, access, and protection in the Cultural Heritage Sector	Albania	Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation	10.000,00 €	PRES	2.12	4
Internationalization in higher education, challenges and opportunities	Albania	Ministry of Education and Sport	6.430,00 €	PRES	2.2	4
Expert Panel: “Enhancing cross-border connectivity in the CEI region exploiting sustainable transport solutions”	Albania	Ministry for Infrastructure and Energy of Albania	10.000,00 €	PRES	2.4	9, 11
International Workshop “Sustainable Economic Growth in Central & Southeast Europe and Albania - Discussing strategies for promoting sustainable practices in the way forward to the European integration”	Albania	Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation	10.000,00 €	PRES	2.9	8

## CEI Fund at the EBRD

Established in 1992 and financed by Italy with a total contribution amounting to 59 million EUR, the CEI Fund at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) mainly provides grants for the Technical Cooperation Programme in support of investments and operations of the EBRD. The Fund also supports the CEI Know Know-how Exchange Programme which fosters capacity building and transfer of good practices from EU to non non-EU CEI Member States. Both Programmes are managed by the Office of the CEI Fund at the EBRD.

### Technical Cooperation Programme

The Technical Cooperation (TC) projects constitute the largest part of the activity funded by the CEI Fund at the EBRD. TC is traditionally offered in the form of grant type assistance. Operations include support for feasibility and pre-feasibility studies, project implementation, management training, capacity building and pre pre-loan audits. These activities target a number of priority areas, including agribusiness, business and finance, energy, institutional development, municipal infrastructure and services, SME support, and transport. Since its inception, the CEI Fund at the EBRD has committed about 36.3 million EUR towards 206 TC assignments. These projects have been coherent with the framework and general objectives of the EBRD and other international financial institutions and have represented a fundamental mean of development for the countries of operations of the CEI Fund that are non non-EU CEI Member States. One of the objectives of TC projects is to support the Bank's investments and loans either at the project preparation or at the project implementation phase. It should be underlined that the CEI has undertaken projects which yield high co-financing ratios. Indeed, these projects are expected to mobilise around 8.5 billion EUR of international investments. The EBRD alone is expected to contribute to those investments with around 6.5 billion EUR. A Total Investment Ratio (TIR) can be calculated to show how many euros the international community is expected to invest for each euro granted by the CEI Fund for TC projects. Between 1993 and 2024, the TIR is estimated to be 1:262. The EBRD's share, alone, is expected to reach approximately 200 EUR for each euro of the CEI Fund dedicated to TC projects: this represents the EBRD Investment Ratio (EIR). The TC projects under implementation or closed in 2024, are outlined in the table below, while the approved projects in 2024 are represented in Annex 5.

Project name	Committed €	Country of operation	Sector of operation	Commitment stage	PoA objectives	SDGs
Moldova Railways: Assistance in preparation and implementation of tender for rolling stock rehabilitation	250.000,00	Moldova	Transport	disbursing	1.1	11
North Macedonia: Railway Corridor VIII (second phase): PIU Support	350.000,00	North Macedonia	Transport	disbursing	1.1	11
Project Preparation along the Silk Road in CSEE: Assessing and Tackling Policy Obstacles to Infrastructure Investment in the Region	90.000,00	Regional	Transport	disbursing	1.1	11
Implementation of the Corporate Governance Action Plan (CGAP) for "Korporate Elektroenergjitike Shqiptare Sh.A"	300.000,00	Albania	Energy/Climate	disbursing	1.1	7
Albania Secretariat to the Investment Council	175.000,00	Albania	Institutional Development	disbursing	2.1	8
Moldova Railways - Fleet Renewal Project	50.000,00	Moldova	Transport	committed	1.1	11
Green Economy Transition - Project Preparation and Implementation Framework	185.000,00	Regional	Energy/Climate	disbursing	1.1	11
Albanian Railways - Assistance with Civil Society Engagement	120.000,00	Albania	Transport	disbursing	1.1	11
Preparation of the Study on improvement of public transportation and preparation of tender for a multi-year public lines distribution	150.000,00	Montenegro	Transport	disbursing	1.1	11
Serbia Route 7 Highway - Lender's Monitor	125.000,00	Serbia	Transport	disbursing	1.1	11

Project name	Committed €	Country of operation	Sector of operation	Commitment stage	PoA objectives	SDGs
Serbia Voz Rolling Stock Acquisition	75.000,00	Serbia	Transport	disbursing	1.1	7
Moldova: Support for the Competitive Procurement of Renewable Energy	200.000,00	Moldova	Energy/ Climate	committed	1.1	7
Investment Climate and Governance Expert for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro	145.000,00	Regional	Institutional Development	disbursing	2.1	13
Advice for Small Businesses in Moldova (Youth and Skills)	300.000,00	Moldova	SME support	disbursing	1.2	8
Serbian Climate Resilience and Irrigation Project (SCRIP) - Development of irrigation strategy	149.189,73	Serbia	Agribusiness	committed	1.3	13
Increasing market opportunities for high-quality food products	120.661,00	Regional	Agribusiness	disbursing	1.2	8
Methane Emissions Reduction Programme in Gas Supply Chains	110.200,00	Ukraine	Energy/ Climate	disbursing	1.4	7
Corridor Vc - Tunnel Prenj: Corporate Governance Action Plan	150.000,00	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Transport	committed	1.1	11
Green City Action Plan for Brcko District	275.000,00	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Municipal infrastructure	disbursing	1.6	8
Green Cities Framework 2 Window 2 (GrCFW2) Sarajevo Public Transport e-Mobility – Project Implementation Support	430.000,00	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Transport	disbursing	1.1	11, 13
Green Cities Framework 2 Window 2 (GrCFW2) Sarajevo Public Transport e-Mobility – Project Design	70.000,00	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Transport	disbursing	1.1	11, 13
Chisinau Solid Waste – Project Implementation Support Services	300.000,00	Moldova	Municipal infrastructure	disbursing	1.6	8
Port of Brcko – Corporate Development Plan	250.000,00	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Transport	disbursing	1.1	11
Improving Corporate Governance in Family-Owned Enterprises	40.000,00	Serbia	SME support	disbursing	1.2	8
Support for the Implementation of Renewable Energy Auctions in Montenegro	250.000,00	Montenegro	Energy/ Climate	disbursing	1.4	7
Brcko District: Electrical Grid Expansion - Due Diligence & Advance Procurement	150.000,00	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Energy/ Climate	committed	1.4	7
Youth in Business Programme in the Western Balkans	1.500.000,00	Regional	SME support	committed	1.2	8

Project name	Committed €	Country of operation	Sector of operation	Commitment stage	PoA objectives	SDGs
Serbia: High Speed Rail Belgrade to Nis - Serbian Railways Infrastructure: Corporate Governance Action Plan	150.000,00	Serbia	Transport	disbursing	1.1	11
Serbian Rail Sector Reform and Regulatory Capacity Building	400.000,00	Serbia	Transport	committed	1.1	11
North Macedonia: Rail Corridor VIII, Phase 3 - Supplementary Environmental and Social Due Diligence and Monitoring Programme	70.000,00	North Macedonia	Transport	committed	1.1	11
Feasibility study for Albania-Montenegro 110 kV overhead transmission line connection Dajc (Kosmac) - Briska Gora (Ulcinj)	250.000,00	Regional	Energy/Climate	committed	1.4	7
Advisory to MSMEs and Start-Ups in Moldova	500.000,00	Moldova	SME support	disbursing	1.2	8
Rail Corridor VIII - Phase 2 - Lender's Monitor Advisor	500.000,00	North Macedonia	Transport	committed	1.1	11
Decarbonisation and Action Plan for Javno Preduzeće Elektroprivreda Srbije (EPS)	350.000,00	Serbia	Energy/Climate	approved	1.1	7
Preparation of a Corporate Plan for the organisational strengthening of Public Enterprise for State Roads	200.000,00	North Macedonia	Transport	approved	1.1	11
Ukrenergo Transmission Network Emergency Restoration - Gender and Inclusion TC support	200.000,00	Ukraine	Energy/Climate	approved	1.1	7
Continuation of the Programme "Advisory to MSMEs and Start-Ups in Moldova"	500.000,00	Moldova	Enterprise development	approved	1.2	8
Continuation of "Youth in Business Programme in the Western Balkans"	500.000,00	WB	Enterprise development	approved	1.2	8
Ternopil Trolleybus Project - Project Implementation Unit	370.000,00	Ukraine	Transport	approved	1.1	11
Serbia Project Science Phase 2 - Environmental & Social Due Diligence	120.000,00	Serbia	Enterprise development	approved	1.2	8

### Know-how Exchange Programme (KEP)

Launched in 2004, the KEP is a development instrument aimed at supporting the transfer of expertise from institutions in the EU to peers in the non non-EU countries within the CEI region. By co co-financing capacity building and technical assistance projects, the KEP offers grants to institutions willing to share their experience with their partners in the non non-EU CEI Member States, thus helping non non-members to advance on their path towards EU standards and policies. The Programme operates through calls for proposals. Since its establishment, 160 projects have been financed through the KEP for a total CEI Fund contribution of over 4.8 million EUR with an overall project value amounting to over 17.8 million EUR. The KEP projects under implementation or closed in 2024, are outlined in the table below, while the approved projects in 2024 are represented in Annex 6 :

Project name	Country of know-how provider institution	Country of know-how recipient institution	Total project cost (€)	CEI co-financing (€)	Implementation stage	PoA objectives	SDGs
Capacity Support of Regional Cooperation in Mine Action (SEEMACC)	Slovenia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	20.288,52	8.750,00	closed	2.1	11
MARteFund: developing cooperation in the creative sector in the Western Balkans through replication of an Italian expertise in project design and fundraising	Italy	Regional	65.404,76	32.702,36	closed	2.5	8
Programming the EU Cohesion Policy: Exchange Programme on Chapter 22 in Serbia and Montenegro	Italy	Regional	76.825,25	36.841,08	closed	2.1	16
Assessing the effectiveness and affordability of tariff-setting methodologies in covering drinking water and wastewater services costs in the Western Balkans	Italy	Regional	99.825,00	36.425,00	closed	2.1	6
Reducing the impact of earthquakes in Albania through collaboration: Computing seismic hazard to support the update of Albania's building code	Italy	Albania	66.698,00	26.698,00	under implementation	2.1	16
Executive Program "Countering Corruption within Public Administration Through Transparency"	Italy	North Macedonia	82.820,00	39.820,00	under implementation	2.1	16
Harmonising the Regulatory FRAMEwork for the ORGanic food production in Montenegro with the Regulation (EU) 2018/848 - FRAME.ORG MONTENEGRO	Italy	Montenegro	74.700,00	37.350,00	closed	2.1	12
Supporting the Albanian Regulatory Authority to improve the efficiency of the wholesale electricity market	Italy	Albania	84.980,00	39.905,00	under implementation	2.1	7
Promoting capacity building in Serbia through the transfer of technical knowledge and environmental protection measures in beekeeping sector (ProTechBee)	Italy	Serbia	78.093,60	39.046,80	under implementation	2.1	12
CEI support for increasing capacity of research and action in Occupational and Environmental Health in Republic of Moldova	Italy	Moldova	79.951,37	39.970,90	under implementation	2.2	3
CEI support to the implementation of the new electricity package adopted by the Energy Community Ministerial Council incorporating EU acquis on market integration with Western Balkans	Italy	Regional	83.200,00	40.000,00	under implementation	2.1	7
Assessment of air and water quality laboratories' capacities in Albania	Italy	Albania	57.411,00	28.411,00	under implementation	2.1	6
CEI support to DATA ROL (Data Protection and the Rule of Law) in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Croatia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	80.000,00	40.000,00	under implementation	2.1	16

Project name	Country of know-how provider institution	Country of know-how recipient institution	Total project cost (€)	CEI co-financing (€)	Implementation stage	PoA objectives	SDGs
Executive Program "Effective Management and Anti-Fraud Controls in the Use of EU funding instruments"	Italy	Regional	82.030,00	39.780,00	under implementation	2.1	16
Territorial cohesion and place-based policies: an Exchange programme on Chapter 22 (COPE22)	Italy	Regional	79.472,00	39.700,00	under implementation	2.1	16
EU-SEE Forum for intercultural exchange on Sustainable management of cultural heritage (SMACH Forum)	Italy, Slovenia	Regional	82.720,00	40.000,00	under implementation	2.3	11
CEI support to strengthen institutional capacity and performance of Ukrainian agri-food sector and rural development through application of EU policy tools and good practices	Poland	Ukraine	95.530,00	38.380,00	under implementation	2.1	12
CEI support to training and research to unlock and enhance the potential of sustainable blue economy for regional cooperation and EU integration (TRUE BLUE)	Croatia, Italy, Slovenia	Regional	80.000,00	40.000,00	under implementation	1.3	12

### Project Management Office

The design and implementation of projects and activities, of either cross-border or transnational nature, is a powerful tool for the attainment of the goals and objectives included in the CEI Plan of Action, as well as for fostering the CEI's main mission: European integration and sustainable development. Within the CEI-Executive Secretariat, the Project Management Office (PMO) is the structure responsible for the implementation of projects and activities funded by external sources, in particular by the European Union and the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia - ARFVG. The PMO takes care of the whole project cycle, from fundraising to networking and partnership building, from project design and drafting to implementation, from reporting to follow-up and capitalisation. So far, the PMO has contributed to the realisation of more than 60 regional projects, acting both as Lead Partner and Partner, in fields such as transport, energy, circular bioeconomy, blue economy, research & innovation, culture, environmental protection, social innovation, economic development and health and, more often in recent years, across one or more of these fields in a multidisciplinary approach. This has enabled to turn shared priorities into concrete regional events and actions and to establish a broad cooperative network with hundreds of stakeholders throughout the CEI area and beyond, for the ultimate benefit of our Member States and their citizens.

### EU-funded projects

Since 2004, the CEI-ES has been developing specific expertise in the design, management and implementation of projects co-financed by the European Union under its sectoral, structural and external programmes. EU projects represent an important tool for attaining the goals outlined in the CEI Plan of Action. Partners from CEI Member States benefit from further progress and expansion of this field of work, which proves to be a strategic instrument to fulfil the CEI core mission of promoting "regional cooperation for European integration". Indeed, numerous workshops, conferences, trainings, as well as experimental/pilot actions are organised in the framework of these projects, with the aim to share experience and elaborate joint solutions with relevant local, regional and national stakeholders and explore further opportunities for mutual development and growth. Furthermore, scientific research and data collection are often undertaken as well as development of strategies aimed at supporting the elaboration of joint actions on shared priorities. . In the time frame 2004-2024, the CEI participated in the successful implementation of 58 projects (both as Lead Partner - LP and Project Partner - PP), with a total value of about 105 million EUR, of which about 12 administered by the CEI-ES. The following projects were implemented throughout 2024:

Project name	Implementation period	EU Programme	Area	Role *	total cost (€)	CEI budget (€)	PoA objective/s	SDGs
ASAP – Adriatic Sensitive Areas Protection – mechanism	01/09/2024 - 28/02/2027	Interreg IPA ADRION	Environmental Protection	LP	1.413.387	231.209	2.7	3,8,12, 14, 15
BIOLOC - Biobased and social innovation to revitalise European local communities	11/10/2022 - 30/09/2025	Horizon Europe	Circular bioeconomy	LP	2.499.638	428.750	2.6	1, 5, 7,8,10, 12,13
GREEN PATH - Green mobility solutions for Pioneering Actions Towards a Healthy and sustainable commuting	01/05/2024 - 31/10/2026	Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE	Connectivity and Sustainable Mobility	PP	2.365.017	280.700	2.4	9,11
GREEN ME UP - GREEN bio-METHane market Uptake	01/08/2022 - 31/07/2025	Horizon Europe	Circular bioeconomy	PP	1.999.059	137.813	2.6	7, 9, 11, 12, 13
GRETA - Greening Regional Freight Transport in Functional Urban Areas	01/04/2023 - 31/03/2026	Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE	Connectivity and Sustainable Mobility	PP	2.544.540	268.890	2.4	9,11
IDEAHL - Improving digital empowerment for active healthy living	01/05/2022 - 30/04/2024	Horizon Europe	Health and Social Innovation	PP	2.847.000	203.625	2.3	3, 17
NAMIRS - North Adriatic Maritime Incident Response System	04/03/2022 - 28/02/2024	EC DG ECHO – Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid operations	Environmental Protection	LP	950.398	149.845	2.7	3,8,12, 14, 15
PROCAREFUL - PRO.active CARE F.or U.sers L.ife	01/03/2023 - 28/02/2026	Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE	Health and Social Innovation	PP	2.290.000	226.400	2.3	3



Project name	Implementation period	EU Programme	Area	Role *	total cost (€)	CEI budget (€)	PoA objective/s	SDGs
RIBES - Regional Inclusive Biobased Entrepreneurship Solutions	01/03/2024 - 28/02/2027	Horizon Europe	Circular bioeconomy	LP	4.999.455	548.750	2.6	1, 5, 7,8,10,12,13
SUSTANCE - Sustainable public transport solutions and innovative governance schemes for improving connectivity in Central Europe	01/04/2023 - 31/03/2026	Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE	Connectivity and Sustainable Mobility	LP	2.013.259	314.130	2.4	9,11
TREASURE - Testing novel environmental quality measures in and around euro-med ports	01/01/2024 - 30/09/2026	Interreg EUROMED	Environmental Protection	PP	2.501.582	233.450	2.7	3,8,12,14,15

**Projects financed by ARFVG**

The CEI-ES has established a close cooperation with the ARFVG with the aim to develop relations between the Region and the countries of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, also in line with the scope of the CEI Local Dimension. Through this enhanced partnership, the CEI contributes to increasing the ARFVG international links and reinforcing the role of the Region in the Adriatic-Ionian macro-regional strategy. It also develops new economic relations with the Balkans and the Danube area, and the countries bordering the Black and Baltic Seas. In this regard, various activities implemented or promoted by the CEI-ES, including at institutional level and in cooperation with other international and regional organisations (e.g. WHO/Europe, ALDA), are financed out of the budget provided by the Region. The CEI’s longstanding experience in promoting regional cooperation as well as the solid expertise in managing EU projects especially serve this purpose. In this framework, the CEI-ES has developed a structured cooperation through the realisation of a number of projects and cooperative actions, the latter are included in agreed Joint Work Programmes (JWPs), with a total value of about 600,000 EUR in 2024. The projects and cooperative actions implemented in 2024 are outlined below:

Project name	CEI-ES role	Implementation date	PoA objective/s	SDGs
Joint Work Programme 2023-2024	Implementing partner	March 2023 – December 2024	2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10	3, 8, 12, 17
Joint Work Programme 2024-2025	Implementing partner	July 2024 – December 2024	2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10	3, 8, 12, 17
Project “The Community of Practice for international cooperation in FVG”	Implementing partner	April 2024 – December 2024	2.1	17





# ANNEXES

**ANNEX 1***Calendar of Events of the Albanian CEI Presidency 2024*

Date	Place	Event
12 February	Trieste	1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Convention for the Strengthening of the Central European Initiative
29 February	Trieste	1 <sup>st</sup> CNC Meeting
13 March	Geneva	Joint Statement of CEI Member States at UNECE Regional Forum
18-19 April	Trieste	CEI-WHO-OBS Policy Dialogue on Pharmaceutical and Health Product Systems
22 April	Rome	2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Convention for the Strengthening of the Central European Initiative
4 June	Trieste	2 <sup>nd</sup> CNC Meeting
30 June - 1 July	Tirana	Parliamentary Committee Meeting
5 July	Rome	3 <sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Convention for the Strengthening of the Central European Initiative
27 September	New York	Informal MFA Meeting
27 September	Tirana	International Conference on Tourism
1 October	Tirana	Parliamentary Assembly Meeting
8 October	Trieste	3 <sup>rd</sup> CNC Meeting
23 October	Tirana	International Workshop on Cultural Heritage
31 October	Tirana	International Workshop on Education and Youth
14-15 November	Vlora	Expert Panel on Transport and Connectivity
18 November	Tirana	International Workshop on Sustainable Economic Growth
19 November	Tirana	4 <sup>th</sup> CNC Meeting
20 November	Tirana	MFA Meeting
6 Decemeber	New York	UN Resolution on Cooperation between United Nations and Central European Initiative

## ANNEX 2

Budget 2024 of the CEI-ES (1 January—31 December)

Revenues		€
Balance carried forward from previous year		1.665.160,13
Executive Secretariat		112.810,94
Cooperation Fund ( <i>allocated</i> )		777.823,44
European Projects ( <i>allocated</i> )		637.674,91
FVG Projects and Programmes ( <i>allocated</i> )		136.850,84
Contribution from Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Laws 286/1997 and 142/2003	1.145.881,90
Contribution from Member States to CEI Cooperation Fund	CEI MFA decision Chisinau, 22.11.2023	461.000,00
EU Grants and Refunds		820.172,77
SUSTANCE	subsidy contract CE0100054	-28.218,51
GRETA	subsidy contract CE0100118	54.150,77
PRO.CARE.FULL	subsidy contract CE0100187	103.145,58
ICARUS	subsidy contract 10043644	0
RIBES	grant agreement 101134911	410.583,23
ACSELL	subsidy contract PGI05966	0
SUSTOURISMO	subsidy contract 1135	0
TREASURE	subsidy contract Euro-MED0200218	800,00
TAAFE	subsidy contract 845	0
GREENPATH	subsidy contract CE0200886	800,00
MIMOSA	subsidy contract 10249002	112.492,69
ASAP	subsidy contract IPA-ADRION00103	0
INTERCONNECT PLUS	subsidy contract 1272	23.703,01
NAMIRS	grant agreement 101048578	35.665,42
IDEAHL	grant agreement 101057477	50.394,33
BIOLOC	grant agreement 101060558	42.875,00
GREEN ME UP	grant agreement 101075676	13.781,25
other projects		0
transfers to/from Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region		0
Contribution from Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region		366.260,00
LR 18/2011 DGR 592 (29.04.22) - contribution 2022		117.500,00
LR 18/2011 DGR 384 (03.03.23) - contribution 2023		0
LR 18/2011 DGR 583 (30.04.24) - contribution 2024		150.000,00
LR 19/2000, DGR 1896 (01.12.23)		13.760,00
LR 11/1996		85.000,00
Reimbursement from CEI Fund at EBRD		4.705,95
Reimbursement from CEI Cooperation Fund		0
Loans and transfers		0,00
	<b>Total revenues</b>	<b>4.463.180,75</b>

## ANNEX 2

Budget 2024 of the CEI-ES (31 January—31 December)

## Expenditures

	€
EU projects (activities and events)	127.282,07
SUSTANCE	subsidy contract CE0100054 27.456,32
GRETA	subsidy contract CE0100118 15.440,16
PRO.CARE.FULL	subsidy contract CE0100187 12.763,98
ICARUS	subsidy contract 10043644 0
RIBES	grant agreement 101134911 9.209,00
ACSELL	(subsidy contract PGI05966 0,00
SUSTOURISMO	subsidy contract 1135 0,00
TREASURE	Euro-MED0200218 6.675
TAAFE	subsidy contract 845 0
GREENPATH	subsidy contract CE0200886 13.461,40
MIMOSA	subsidy contract 10249002 0
ASAP	IPA-ADRION00103 2.883,54
INTERCONNECT PLUS	subsidy contract 1272 0
NAMIRS	grant agreement 101048578 13.969,86
IDEAHL	grant agreement 101057477 4.900,19
BIOLOC	grant agreement 101060558 3.388,25
GREEN ME UP	grant agreement 101075676 16.254,23
other projects	880,55
Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region Joint Work Programmes and International Cooperation Projects	184.429,63
LR 18/2011 DGR 384 (3 March 2023) - contribution 2023	156.699,70
LR 18/2011 DGR 583 (30 April 2024) - contribution 2024	27.498,63
LR 19/2000 DGR 1896 (1 December 2023)	231,30
LR 19/2000, project "SILK2FVG PLUS"	0
Cooperation Fund activities	492.588,87
Duty travels	67.922,16
Events, meetings, sponsorships	51.565,28
Sponsorships/awards/contributions in line with PoA	6.750,00
Institutional meetings/hospitality	44.815,28
Human resources	1.631.496,81
Infrastructural costs*	21.585,90
Running costs**	171.775,06
Loans and transfers	0,00
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>2.748.645,78</b>

## Balance carried forward to 2025 1.714.534,97

Executive Secretariat (of which € 81.000 to be transferred to Cooperation Fund 2025)	184.139,54
Cooperation Fund (allocated)	748.348,78
European Projects (allocated)	706.577,24
FVG Projects and Programmes (allocated)	75.469,41

\* utilities (electricity, water, heating)

\*\* subcontracts/services, headquarters' maintenance, insurance, equipment (IT), official car, telephone/connectivity, postage, stationery, bank expenses

# ANNEX 3

Composition of the CEI-ES in 2024

## Executive level

**Roberto Antonione**, *Secretary General*

**Nina Kodelja**, *Deputy Secretary General (until September 2024)*

**Ivana Holoubková**, *Deputy Secretary General (until January 2024)*

**Zsuzsanna Király**, *Deputy Secretary General*

## Staff

**Lidija Arsova**, *Senior Executive Officer*

**Barbara Fabro**, *Senior Executive Officer*

**Alessandro Lombardo**, *Senior Executive Officer*

**Tania Pibernik**, *Senior Executive Officer*

**Paola Plancher**, *Senior Executive Officer*

**Slavena Radovanovic**, *Senior Executive Officer*

**Elisabetta Dovier**, *Programme Manager of the CEI Fund at the EBRD*

**Anna Marconato**, *Senior Programme Manager*

**Peter Canciani**, *Project Manager*

**Paolo Dileno**, *Project Manager*

**Ana Sinkovic**, *Project Manager*

**Ana Aligrudić**, *Project Officer*

**Alice Pappas**, *Project Officer*

**Stefania Silvestri**, *Project Officer (until June 2024)*

**Gabriele Mingolla**, *Project Assistant*

**Sheila Perosa**, *Project Officer (until October 2024)*

**Carlo Fortuna**, *Programme Manager*

**Loretta Brcic**, *Senior Administrative Officer*

**Frida Cottic**, *Junior Administrative Officer*

**Roberta Milano**, *Senior Administrative Officer*

**Antonio Monteduro**, *Senior Administrative Officer (until January 2024)*

## ANNEX 4

Cooperation Activities approved in 2024

no.	reference No.	title	country	institution	total cost (€)	CEI grant (€)
1	302.5.2024.002	Nature based solutions to tackle biodiversity loss and increase climate resilience (NATUREBES)	North Macedonia	NGO Stena Stenae	25.480,00 €	7.462,50 €
2	302.5.2024.004	Balkan Economic Forum 2024	North Macedonia	Association for regional development Balkan Economic Forum	26.805,00 €	13.300,00 €
3	302.5.2024.006	XII Spring School on "IoT, economic and management challenges for e-health integration in the enlarged Europe"	Italy	SSIC-HECE (Higher Education in Clinical Engineering) of the University of Trieste	21.980,00 €	8.175,75 €
4	302.5.2024.007	The Twelfth International Conference on Radiation, Natural Sciences, Medicine, Engineering, Technology and Ecology (RAD 2024 Conference)	Serbia	RAD Centre	63.750,00 €	11.250,00 €
5	302.5.2024.008	Horizons of Sustainability: The Power of Creative Innovation for Transformation of Rural and Non-Urban Futures	Croatia	Kultura Nova Foundation	104.795,86 €	11.250,00 €
6	302.5.2024.010	12th edition of the "European Remembrance Symposium" organised in Warsaw, Poland	Poland	Institute of European Network Remembrance and Solidarity	167.700,00 €	11.250,00 €
7	302.5.2024.012	International conference: The future of cycling in Albania	Albania	Active Mobility	36.671,00 €	11.078,25 €
8	302.5.2024.013	Young Bled Strategic Forum 2024	Slovenia	Centre for European Perspective	77.706,24 €	11.225,79 €
9	302.5.2024.014	CEI Round-Table Discussion at Vilenica and CEI Award for Young Writers	Slovenia	SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION	67.590,00 €	11.250,00 €
10	302.5.2024.015	19th Summer School for Junior Anti-Corruption Practitioners from South-Eastern Europe	other	Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative Secretariat	34.301,82 €	11.250,00 €
11	302.5.2024.016	TRIESTE FILM FESTIVAL: TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS FOR YOUNG TALENTS	Italy	Alpe Adria Cinema	521.700,00 €	11.250,00 €
12	302.5.2024.017	54th NSC of EYP Italy Milan 2024 - Let's melt the pot: keep stirring that cosmopolitan	Italy	European Youth Parliament Italy	47.018,00 €	11.250,00 €
13	302.5.2024.021	DisCo 2024: Empowering Digital Entrepreneurial, and Sustainable Competencies Development in the Age of AI	Czech Republic	Centre for Higher Education Studies	29.159,00 €	7.332,75 €
14	302.5.2024.022	XX Central European Forum: 50° Anniversary "A dream without borders"	Italy	Mitteleuropa Cultural Association	49.760,00 €	11.250,00 €
15	302.5.2024.023	Fight against hidden discrimination towards people with sensory disabilities (HiDis)	Italy	EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR INCLUSION BEYOND THE BORDERS (E.N.I.B.B.) – ETS	30.000,00 €	11.250,00 €
16	302.5.2024.027	International workshop: Promoting an AI supported eco- activism in the Western Balkans	North Macedonia	Association Center for innovation and development INOS Prilep	14.850,00 €	5.509,50 €

## ANNEX 4

Cooperation Activities approved in 2024

no.	reference No.	title	country	institution	total cost (€)	CEI grant (€)
17	302.5.2024.028	Capacity Building Training and Exchange Visits for Rural, Grassroots, Minority Organisations in the CEI region	Hungary	Minority Rights Group Europe Service Providing Non-profit Private Limited- liability Company	31.295,00 €	11.250,00 €
18	302.5.2024.029	Bakan Young Talents	Serbia	International Documentary Film Festival Beldocs	47.493,00 €	11.250,00 €
19	302.5.2024.030	6th SEE MOSAICS MEETING "MOSAICS FROM 1900's MODERN MATERIALS, NEW PROBLEMS IN FOCUS"	Hungary	Hungarian University of Fine Arts	20.000,00 €	7.500,00 €
20	302.5.2024.034	Upcelerator fully remote idea stage accelerator for startups in Eastern Europe	Moldova	"Dreamups" Innovation and Entrepreneurship Accelerator	92.831,19 €	11.250,00 €
21	302.5.2024.035	Hop On: Youth empowerment for the future of Europe	Hungary	European House	24.000,00 €	9.000,00 €
22	302.5.2024.036	Original Boost - Youngerpreneur	Serbia	Original	41.900,00 €	11.250,00 €
23	302.5.2024.037	CET (CERIC-CEI Clean Energy Training)	other	CERIC-ERIC (Central European Research Infrastructure Consortium)	37.105,00 €	11.250,00 €
24	302.5.2024.038	XVIII South East Europe Media Forum (SEEMF)	Serbia	South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO)	114.647,00 €	19.990,00 €
25	302.5.2024.039	Role of diasporas in the socio-economic development of Western Balkan countries	Albania	Center for Economic and Social Studies (CESS)	25.290,00 €	9.172,50 €
26	302.5.2024.040	The 6th International Congress on Rural Tourism: Rural Tourism: Sustainable, Digital and Inclusive	Croatia	Croatian Association for Tourism and Rural Development "The Village Membership	73.035,00 €	11.250,00 €
27	302.5.2024.042	Social and labour integration of Ukrainian refugees in 4 CEI countries	Ukraine	Association of innovative and digital education	52.580,00 €	39.100,00 €
28	302.5.2024.043	EYP Action for CEI Youth: Strengthening Participation, Activism and Media Literacy among Youth in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe	other	Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe (European Youth Parliament)	36.105,00 €	11.131,88 €
29	302.5.2024.044	Energy Security as the Basis for Just Transition in Post- industrial Areas. Countering Disinformation — Warsaw Security Forum 2024	Poland	Casimir Pulaski Foundation	84.800,00 €	11.250,00 €
30	302.5.2024.045	Eleventh CEI Venice Forum for Contemporary Art Curators	Italy	Trieste Contemporanea. Dialogues with the Art of Central Eastern Europe. (Trieste Contemporanea Committee)	36.870,00 €	11.250,00 €

## ANNEX 4

Cooperation Activities approved in 2024

no.	reference No.	title	country	institution	total cost (€)	CEI grant (€)
31	302.5.2024.046	XXIV Summer Seminar for Young Public Policy Professionals "Future Scenarios for Central and Eastern Europe in Times of Continuous Uncertainty"	Bulgaria	Economic Policy Institute	91.085,00 €	11.175,00 €
32	302.5.2024.049	Equal Pay Day conference going international! III.	Czech Republic	Business & Professional Women CR z.s.	166.926,00 €	14.498,00 €
33	302.5.2024.051	Interaction Teen Doc Workshop 2024	Serbia	Independent Film Centre Filmart	33.855,00 €	10.578,75 €
34	302.5.2024.053	Intercultural dialog - through networking and collaboration— CANCELLED	Slovenia	GO! 2025 - European Capital of Culture, Nova Gorica	35.470,00 €	10.755,00 €
35	302.5.2024.054	Blue Danube Film Festival – CEI young filmmaker's forum	Hungary	Blue Danube Cinewave Ltd.	29.900,00 €	8.025,00 €
36	302.5.2024.055	Spring General Assembly of Board of European students of technology 2024	Serbia	Board of European students of technology - Belgrade	72.419,00 €	11.248,40 €
37	302.5.2024.056	Capacity building in war related eye care in Ukraine, Moldova and Romania	Moldova	Association for the Study of Chronic Diseases	64.900,00 €	39.900,00 €
38	302.5.2024.059	Meeting of the Parliamentary Committee of the Parliamentary Dimesion of CEI	Albania	Parliament of Albania	12.450,00 €	7.000,00 €
39	302.5.2024.060	International Conference "Tourism in Central and Southeastern Europe - Embracing new paths of development"	Albania	the National Tourism Agency of Albania (NTA)	37.900,00 €	10.000,00 €
40	302.5.2024.061	Digitization, access, and protection in the Cultural Heritage Sector	Albania	Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation	18.330,00 €	10.000,00 €
41	302.5.2024.063	Internationalization in higher education, challenges and opportunities	Albania (Presidency)	Ministry of Education and Sport	6.430,00 €	6.430,00 €
42	302.5.2024.064	Expert Panel: "Enhancing cross-border connectivity in the CEI region exploiting sustainable transport solutions"	Albania (Presidency)	Ministry for Infrastructure and Energy of Albania	13.000,00 €	10.000,00 €
43	302.5.2024.065	International Workshop "Sustainable Economic Growth in Central & Southeast Europe and Albania - Discussing strategies for promoting sustainable practices in the way forward to the European integration"	Albania (Presidency)	Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation	18.330,00 €	10.000,00 €
44	302.5.2024.058	CEI-WHO POLICY DIALOGUE	CEI - WHO	other	30.000,00 €	15.000,00 €
45	302.5.2025.062	UNICEF – CEI Workshop: UPSHIFT: Increasing entrepreneurship engagement and learning outcomes for young people within the region	CEI-UNICEF	other	35.000,00 €	15.000,00 €
<b>total</b>					<b>2.615.203,11 €</b>	<b>540.839,07 €</b>

# ANNEX 5

TC Projects approved in 2024

n.	earmark document number	project name	country of operation	sector of operation	committed €	expected related investment (€ million)
1	50010663	Continuation of the Programme "Advisory to MSMEs and Start-Ups in Moldova"	Moldova	SME support	500.000	n/a
2	50010668	Continuation of "Youth in Business Programme in the Western Balkans"	Regional	SME support	500.000	up to 100
3	50010766	Ternopil Trolleybus Project - Project Implementation Unit	Ukraine	Transport	370.000	15
4	50010788	Serbia Project Science Phase 2 - Legal Due Diligence	Serbia	SME support	120.000	up to 100
5	50010789	Serbia Project Science Phase 2- Environmental & Social Due Diligence	Serbia	SME support	20.000	
<b>total</b>					<b>1.510.000</b>	<b>215</b>

## ANNEX 6

KEP Projects approved in 2024

n.	reference number	project name	country of know-how provider	country of know-how recipient	total project cost (€)	CEI co-financing (€)
1	304.4.2024.002	Civil Society for Good Governance and Anti-Corruption in Southeast Europe: CEI Support to Capacity Building for Evidence-Based Advocacy, Policy Impact and Citizen Engagement	Bulgaria	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia	80.000	40.000
2	304.4.2024.006	Capacity enhancing of the Albanian marine pollution preparedness and response system	Croatia	Albania	78.500	39.000
3	304.4.2024.007	EU Natural gas markets: fundamentals, regulatory frameworks and challenges for market integration and decarbonisation	Italy	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro	80.000	40.000
4	304.4.2024.010	Resilience and Preservation: Security, Migration, and Cultural Heritage Protection in Ukraine	Italy	Ukraine	38.935	18.900
5	304.4.2024.011	Urban Nexus: Empowering Local Governance in the Western Balkan (UrbaNEX – WB)	Italy	Albania, Serbia	98.078	39.498
6	304.4.2024.017	CEI support to strengthening the Parliaments of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine, in the context of the EU Accession	Italy	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Ukraine	69.992	34.992
7	304.4.2024.021	Technical assistance for the creation of a National Promotional Institution (NPI) in Albania	Italy	Albania	100.000	40.000
8	304.4.2024.023	CEI for Ukraine's Future. Empowering Ukrainian Municipalities through Polish Expertise in Fund Management and Project Practices for Pre-Accession Readiness of Ukraine	Poland	Ukraine	102.005	40.000
9	304.4.2024.034	MAAM - Media Advocacy Action for Moldova: Empowering Moldova's Public Watchdogs to Safeguard Media Freedom	Romania	Moldova	80.850	39.313
10	304.4.2024.040	Bridge to Resilience	Bulgaria	Ukraine	39.000	19.500
11	304.4.2024.049	CEI support to Technology Transfer for Hospitals in Albania and North Macedonia (ALBAU-TT-CRO)	Italy	Albania, North Macedonia	89.752	40.000
12	304.4.2024.054	Enhancing Sustainable Tourism Development in Montenegro	Croatia	Montenegro	80.000	40.000
<b>total</b>					<b>937.112,36</b>	<b>431.202,12</b>

## ANNEX 7

Events under projects and initiatives funded by the EU and the Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia 2024

Title	Organising institution/s	Venue	Date	Source of funding
BIOLOC – 12 Regional Hub’s joint monthly meeting	Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI)	online	6 February	Horizon Europe
GRETA – Project steering committee meeting	Institute for Transport and Logistics Foundation (ITL)	Bologna, Italy	14-15 February	Interreg Central Europe
<a href="#">NAMIRS Final Conference</a>	CEI-ES	Trieste, Italy	20 February	EU Civil Protection Mechanism (DG ECHO)
<a href="#">SUSTANCE – Stakeholders’ round table</a>	CEI-ES	Trieste, Italy	21 February	Interreg Central Europe
<a href="#">IDEAHL Local Regional Event: European Strategy for Digital Health Literacy</a>	CEI-ES	Trieste, Italy	27 February	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2023-2024 – 1<sup>st</sup> event of the Promotional roadshow of the “Big Science Business Forum (BSBF)” in CEI Member States</a>	CEI-ES, MAECI, ARFVG, BSBF organising committee	Belgrade, Serbia	27 February	ARFVG
BIOLOC – 12 Regional Hub’s joint monthly meeting	Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI)	online	5 March	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">ADRIEX 2024 - Tabletop Exercise aimed at testing the Adriatic marine pollution incident contingency plan</a>	Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC)	Bar, Montenegro	5-7 March	EU Civil Protection Mechanism (DG ECHO)
<a href="#">IDEAHL Project Final Conference: A Digital Health Strategy for Healthy and Active Living</a>	All-Digital in cooperation with the CEI-ES and Asturias Principality	Brussels, Belgium	6 March	Horizon Europe
PROCAREFUL Project Consortium meeting	Welfare Organisation for Baden-Württemberg (WWBW)	Stuttgart, Germany	6-7 March	Interreg Central Europe Programme
<a href="#">BIOLOC Project Consortium meeting</a>	CEI-ES	online	20 March	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2023-2024 – 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> events of Promotional roadshow of the “Big Science Business Forum (BSBF)” in CEI Member States</a>	CEI-ES, MAECI, ARFVG, BSBF organising committee	Bratislava, Slovakia Prague, Czech Republic	20-21 March	ARFVG
SUSTANCE Project Consortium meeting	EURAC Research	Bolzano, Italy	20-21 March	Interreg Central Europe
<a href="#">RIBES Project Kick-off meeting</a>	CEI-ES	Trieste, Italy	21 March	Horizon Europe
EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) PA1b – 29 <sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting	EUSDR PA1b coordinator	Ljubljana, Slovenia	26 March	Interreg Central Europe
BIOLOC – 12 Regional Hub’s joint monthly meeting	Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI)	online	2 April	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">TREASURE Kick of meeting</a>	Development Agency for Empolese Valdelsa (ASEV)	Livorno, Italy	3-4 April	Interreg EU-ROMED
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2023-2024 – 4<sup>th</sup> event of the Promotional roadshow of the “Big Science Busi-</a>	CEI-ES, MAECI, ARFVG, BSBF organising committee	Warsaw, Poland	16 April	ARFVG

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Title	Organising institution/s	Venue	Date	Source of funding
<a href="#">GreenMeUp project Consortium meeting</a>	Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving (CRES)	online	16 April	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">GreenMeUp project Midterm review meeting</a>	Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving (CRES)	online	18 April	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">Launch event of the SUSTANCE Experimental direct train connection Villa Opicina – Rijeka</a>	Slovenian Railways – Passenger transport (SZPP), CEI-ES, HZ Passenger transport (HZPP)	Villa Opicina, Italy Rijeka, Croatia	24 April	Interreg Central Europe
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2023-2024 – 5<sup>th</sup> event of the Promotional roadshow of the “Big Science Business Forum (BSBF)” in CEI Member States</a>	CEI-ES, MAECI, ARFVG, BSBF organising committee	Budapest, Hungary	7 May	ARFVG
BIOLOC – 12 Regional Hub’s joint monthly meeting	Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI)	online	7 May	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">9th EUSAIR Forum: how CEI-led European projects contribute to achieving strategy</a>	EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Region (EUSAIR)	Šibenik, Croatia	15-16 May	EUSAIR
<a href="#">GreenPATH project steering committee meeting</a>	Institute for Transport and Logistics Foundation (ITL)	Bologna, Italy	22-23 May	Interreg Central Europe
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2023-2024 - International Conference “Overcoming Barriers and Borders in Palliative Care: 100 Units of Opportunities”</a>	CEI-ES, University of Trieste, WHO/Europe	Trieste, Italy	24-25 May	ARFVG
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2023-2024 - Study visit “Territorial Cooperation, Multilevel Partnerships and EU Integration: Lessons Learned at the Border Between Italy and Slovenia”</a>	CEI-ES, Robert Schuman Institute	Trieste, Gorizia, Italy	28-29 May	ARFVG
BIOLOC – 12 Regional Hub’s joint monthly meeting	Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI)	online	4 June	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2023-2024 – 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> events of the Promotional roadshow of the “Big Science Business Forum (BSBF)” in CEI Member States</a>	CEI-ES, MAECI, ARFVG, BSBF organising committee	Zagreb, Croatia; Ljubljana, Slovenia	13-14 June	ARFVG
<a href="#">GreenMeUp project – 4<sup>th</sup> Danube Hub meeting</a>	CEI-ES, FTN, ULBS, Albinok Foundation	online	19 June	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">Natural Heritage Mission &amp; Thematic Projects common meeting and European Maritime Day</a>	EUROMED Natural Heritage Mission	Rovinj, Croatia	26-27 June	Interreg EU-ROMED
<a href="#">BIOLOC Midterm review meeting</a>	CEI-ES, European Research Executive Agency (REA)	online	27 June	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">How to enhance cross-border public transport for a more integrated EU</a>	European Commission – Border Focal Point Network	Online	27 June	N/A
BIOLOC – 12 Regional Hub’s joint monthly meeting	Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI)	online	2 July	Horizon Europe

## ANNEX 7

Events under projects and initiatives funded by the EU and the Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia 2024

Title	Organising institution/s	Venue	Date	Source of funding
<a href="#">RIBES project Executive Board meeting</a>	CEI-ES	online	8 July	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2023-2024 – 8<sup>th</sup> event of the Promotional roadshow of the “Big Science Business Forum (BSBF)” in CEI Member States</a>	CEI-ES, MAECI, ARFVG, BSBF organising committee	Podgorica, Montenegro	12 July	ARFVG
BIOLOC – 12 Regional Hub’s joint monthly meeting	Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI)	online	6 August	Horizon Europe
BIOLOC – 12 Regional Hub’s joint monthly meeting	Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI)	online	3 September	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">SUSTANCE - Stakeholders’ round table</a>	CEI-ES	Trieste, Italy	10 September	Interreg Central Europe
<a href="#">RIBES – Bulgarian Multiactor Transformative Forum meeting</a>	Agricultural University Plovdiv (AUP), Q-PLAN, CEI-ES	online	10 September	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">ASAP Kick-Off Meeting</a>	CEI-ES	Trieste, Italy	24 September	Interreg IPA ADRION
<a href="#">RIBES project Steering Committee meeting</a>	CEI-ES	online	24 September	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">RIBES – Greek Multiactor Transformative Forum meeting</a>	Mediterranean Institute for Nature and Anthropos (MedINA), Q-PLAN, CEI-ES	online	25 September	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">RIBES – Slovak Multiactor Transformative Forum meeting</a>	Bioeconomy Cluster (BEC), Q-PLAN, CEI-ES	online	25 September	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">SUSTANCE consortium meeting</a>	Istrian Development Agency	Pula, Croatia	25-26 September	Interreg Central Europe
PROCAREFUL consortium meeting	Udruga MI, Split	Split Croatia	26-27 September	Interreg Central Europe
BIOLOC – participation in the conference “How Bioeconomy and Social Innovation can improve the Food System” in the framework of G7 Agriculture	BLUREV project, European Commission (DG-RTD)	Siracusa, Italy	27 September	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">RIBES – Western Balkans Multiactor Transformative Forum meeting</a>	Balkan Rural Development Network (BRDN), Q-PLAN, CEI-ES	online	27 September	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">RIBES – Croatian Multiactor Transformative Forum meeting</a>	Energy Institute Hrvoje Požar (EIHP), Q-PLAN, CEI-ES	online	30 September	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2023-2024 - Parallel Session “Opportunities for Big Science in Central Europe”, in the framework of the “Big Science Business Forum (BSBF)” (Trieste, 1-4 October 2024)</a>	CEI-ES	Trieste, Italy	2 October	ARFVG
<a href="#">RIBES – Serbian Multiactor Transformative Forum meeting</a>	Faculty of Technical Science University of Novi Sad, Q-PLAN, CEI-ES	online	4 October	Horizon Europe

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Title	Organising institution/s	Venue	Date	Source of funding
<a href="#">GRETA workshop at Green Logistics Expo</a>	CEI-ES	Padova, Italy	9 October	Interreg Central Europe
<a href="#">Workshop in Sarajevo on sustainable blue economy: strengthening synergies between projects ASAP and TRUE BLUE (KEP project)</a>	University of Sarajevo	Sarajevo, Italy	10 October	Interreg IPA ADRION
<a href="#">RIBES – Italian Multiactor Transformative Forum meeting</a>	Cluster SPRING, Q-PLAN, CEI-ES	online	10 October	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">GreenPATH consortium meeting</a>	EUREF Campus	Berlin, Germany	15-16 October	Interreg Central Europe
<a href="#">GRETA consortium meeting</a>	Lukasiewicz – Poznan Institute of Technology	Poznan, Poland	15-16 October	Interreg Central Europe
<a href="#">Second Project meeting of the TREASURE project</a>	Fundacion Valencia Port	Valencia, Spain	15-16 October	Interreg EU-ROMED
<a href="#">RIBES – Polish Multiactor Transformative Forum meeting</a>	Rzeszów Regional Development Agency, Q-PLAN, CEI-ES	online	25 October	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">RIBES – Romanian Multiactor Transformative Forum meeting</a>	“Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu, Q-PLAN, CEI-ES	online	25 October	Horizon Europe
BIOLOC – 12 Regional Hub’s joint monthly meeting	Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI)	online	5 November	Horizon Europe
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2023-2024 - Public event “Advancing regional integration through enhanced passenger rail services in the CEI region”</a>	CEI-ES, Transport Community Treaty (TCT) Permanent Secretariat, Politecnico di Milano	Trieste, Italy	8 November	ARFVG
EUSAIR TSG3 meeting	EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Region (EUSAIR)	online	12 November	Interreg IPA ADRION
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2024-2025 - 4<sup>th</sup> joint-meeting on Strengthening Primary Health Care Models to Manage Complex Chronic Conditions in the Western Balkans</a>	CEI-ES, WHO/Europe, ARFVG	Trieste, Italy	12-13 November	ARFVG
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2024-2025 - 1<sup>st</sup> Conference on Science Diplomacy in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe</a>	CEI-ES, University for Continuing Education Krems (UWK)	Trieste, Italy	20-21 November	ARFVG, UWK
<a href="#">Second Coordination Meeting on the Mediterranean Strategy 2022-2031</a>	Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC)	Lija, Malta	21 November	Interreg IPA Adrion
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2023-2024 - Meeting with UNESCO Chairs in the framework of the project RESILIENHANCE</a>	University of Udine, CEI-ES	Udine, Italy	26-27 November	ARFVG
<a href="#">CEI-FVG JWP 2023-2024 - Workshop “Connecting the EUSAIR Macro-Region through Advanced Training for the Energy Transition in the Port Sector”</a>	CEI-ES, ARFVG	Trieste, Italy	28 November	ARFVG
<a href="#">Institutional Dialogue for Mediterranean Nature</a>	EUROMED Natural Heritage Mission	Malaga, Spain	28-29 November	Interreg EU-ROMED



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