

Annual Report of the Secretary General 2019







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Introduction

Introduction

by the Secretary General



It was a great pleasure and honour to receive the confidence of the Member States, entrusting me with the task of Secretary General of the Central European Initiative (CEI), as of January 2019. I am committed to doing my utmost to work as a mediator and a bridge-builder and to help finding strategic solutions in order to meet and broaden the purposes and principles of the CEI mission: European integration and sustainable development.

2019 was a cornerstone for the CEI, the largest forum aimed at strengthening regional cooperation in Europe. It celebrated its 30th Anniversary. Starting from an initial attempt to overcome divisions in Europe, it has evolved into an innovative multilateral diplomacy forum, currently bringing together 17 Member States¹ from Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe. In the course of the three decades of its existence, the CEI has reconfirmed its role in actively promoting the European Integration process and significantly contributing to sustainable development. These achievements are pursued through multifaceted platforms for high-level consultations on regional matters at governmental, parliamentary and economic level as well as through multistakeholder partnerships, combined with project management. In that regard, the CEI has proved to be a versatile tool capable of adapting to new scenarios and has gained a strong record of achievements through its project-oriented approach.

Nevertheless, recent challenges have demonstrated that every aspect of state security can be jeopardised by transnational threats. In order to continue to be able to respond to the current geopolitical situation in the years ahead, we believe tackling current challenges and transforming them into tangible results for our Member States can only be possible through joint action from our countries. Furthermore, in a period of key EU decisions regarding the

methodology of the accession process and of establishing closer links between the EU of the non-EU CEI Member States concerned, the CEI remains committed to further promoting European integration as it is crucial for strengthening the joint vision of a strong, stable and united Europe, through the application of common values and principles.

Bearing this in mind, and by using the 30th Anniversary of our Organisation, which called for an ever further commitment to supporting European integration and sustainable development through regional cooperation, I undertook a series of visits to the Member States with genuine faith in expanding the further prospects of the CEI and belief that pursuing far-reaching priorities in these increasingly challenging times is more relevant than ever. In this context, I am grateful to the Member States, which hosted my collaborators and myself and have jointly explored the possibilities for further strengthening the CEI's role in the future, particularly in new areas such as youth and local development. These latter, then incorporated in the recommendations of the Foreign Ministers at their meeting in June.

At the same time, the CEI's role as genuine platform for multilateral diplomacy and project management continued along the lines driven by the CEI Plan of Action 2018-2020 through all mechanisms for cooperation, from both a political and project point of view. This combination has enabled the promotion and implementation of numerous high-quality, result-oriented projects and activities. Through its various funds and instruments of cooperation, such as the multilateral Cooperation Fund, the CEI Fund at the EBRD and Know-how Exchange Programme, both financed by Italy, and several prizes, the CEI has granted about 2 million EUR to various projects and activities in 2019. Through its by participation in EU-funded projects, the CEI also attracted additional resources.

In support of the above-mentioned, I wish to emphasise the following achievements from these funds and instruments throughout the year:

- Out of the CEI Cooperation Fund 45 Cooperation Activities were approved, supporting mobility and people-to-people contacts in various areas;

¹ Republic of Albania, Republic of Belarus, 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.

- The CEI Fund at the EBRD committed about 1.2 million EUR for funding 9 Technical Cooperation Projects linked to larger EBRD and other international financiers' investments, targeting non-EU CEI Member States;
- Promoting further European integration of the non-EU countries of the constituency from the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe continued through the CEI Know-How Exchange Programme, supported through the CEI Fund at the EBRD financed by Italy, out of which we have funded 8 projects for transfer of knowledge, experience and best practices between peers from EU countries to those from the non-EU ones;
- Refining the CEI's ability in designing and implementing EU-funded projects carries on – 22 EU funded projects have been administrated by CEI-ES with over 4 million EUR for a total fund mobilization of 38.2 million EUR.

For the purpose of fostering cooperative relations, partnerships with other international and regional organisations remain standard working practice. The Italian CEI Presidency organised a side event on the occasion of UN High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development 2019 at UNHQ. It also organised a CEI presentation at the Council of Europe. Ties with the EU were strengthened thanks to a joint meeting between the National Coordinators and the Permanent Representations and representatives of EU institutions, as well as through the opening of the CEI Representation Office in Brussels. Moreover, Memoranda of Understanding were signed with the ALL and RAI Secretariats.

In order to promote the CEI Youth Agenda and the Local Dimension, as recommended by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in their "Trieste Declaration" adopted on 12 of June 2019, the CEI continued to permanently work on putting these commitments into practice and has launched pilot actions.

On the whole, we managed to organise, implement and support 90 projects and activities in 2019. The details are outlined in the CEI's Plan of Action 2018-2020 Interim Implementation Report 2019, endorsed by the Heads of Government at their CEI Summit in Rome on 19 December 2019.

In this regard, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the extraordinary efforts made and deep commitment expressed by the Italian CEI Presidency for its support in providing tailor-made platforms for cooperation in numerous areas and in preparing the ground for new initiatives in the future.

Last but not least, I thank my closest collaborators of the Executive Level of the Secretariat, Antal Nikoletti, Nina Kodolja and Zoran Jovanović, for their support and cooperation, with whom we almost simultaneously started our respective mandates. I would also like to thank the whole staff of the Secretariat, the High Representatives of the CEI Member States, the CEI National Coordinators and all other CEI partners for their daily contributions.

Finally, I wish the Montenegrin CEI Presidency every success while they continue serving the needs of the region. We are aware that an important number of activities in priority areas were implemented in 2019, but there is still a considerable amount of challenges we are facing and that require joint engagement in the current dynamic and, sometimes, unpredictable times. Current challenges know no borders. In this context, I wish to repeat a sentence which I heard over and over again during our visits to the Member States "there is never too much regional cooperation".

Roberto Antonione
Secretary General



Priorities and Programme

Priorities and Programme of the Italian CEI Presidency

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On 1 January, Italy took over the rotating Presidency of the Central European Initiative (CEI). The Italian CEI Presidency launched a new step forward towards creating a new climate in the region. Thanks to its dynamism, the CEI has been promoted as a positive platform for exchange of experiences and good practices among its Member States, in the context of both European integration and sustainable development.

At the same time, the Italian CEI Presidency in 2019 pursued the goal of strengthening the CEI role as a unique intergovernmental forum, with a varied membership and an agile structure suitable for facilitating political dialogue on many different topics.

Priorities of the 2019 Italian CEI Presidency

In the light of these premises, the Italian Presidency aimed at highlighting the CEI role as a facilitator of political dialogue and an accelerator of reforms, both at the EU level and in the framework of multilateral international cooperation, starting with valuing the CEI observer status in the UN General Assembly.

During 2019 European integration remained a crucial focus for the CEI activities especially because several developments occurred. In particular, the EU took decisive step towards resetting the methodology of the enlargement process for the new candidate countries. Despite this overall challenge, the Western Balkans endure their EU Perspective. The path to the EU, however, requires the adoption and implementation of numerous rules and standards, full respect for the democratic values, development of good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation, economies prepared to face competition etc. Hence, the transfer of knowledge on European integration issues was considered of the utmost importance and was adequately tackled by the Italian CEI Presidency.

In addition, many other challenges were faced. First and foremost, the massive brain-drain phenomenon from the CEI countries where young skilled people are leaving their countries for better job opportunities. There was also an increased focus on local development, on improved inter-connections within the region, in terms of ensuring good governance, especially in the field of anti-corruption, and strengthening transport and economic links, on promotion of research and innovation as well as on public health.

Thus, these increasingly important issues had been tackled more systematically at regional level in the framework of the activities proposed by the Italian CEI Presidency, through an intensified political dialogue and in cooperation with other international players as well as through a strong project oriented approach.

Programme of the Italian CEI Presidency

In line with the objective of revitalising the CEI as a significant arena for regional cooperation, the Italian CEI Presidency focused on meeting the priorities and challenges by launching traditional and new-initiated actions.

In particular, the Italian CEI Presidency intended to strengthen regional dialogue mainly in the fields of connectivity, scientific diplomacy, the fight against corruption as well as valorising diversity, with a specific focus on enhancing the local dimension. As youth and their perspective is a common denominator for the future of societies in the entire CEI region, this has also been among the leading Italian priorities. In this context, numerous high-level meetings, expert forums, and other events were organised on these topics.

These particular events and activities were implemented within the rich programme of the Italian CEI Presidency (*the Calendar of the Italian CEI Presidency is attached as Annex 1*):

CNC Meetings

The CEI Committee of National Coordinators (CNC) met six times in 2019, with an exceptional participation of the Member States and their active role in the deliberations: three CNC meetings were held in Rome (22 February, 10 October, 18 December), one in London (10 April), one in Brussels (15 May) and one in Trieste (11 June). The CNC was



committed, in particular, to brainstorming the new areas of the CEI, firmly supporting the development of a Youth Agenda and a Local Dimension. Furthermore, the CNC was involved in drafting and negotiating various documents for adoption from the high-level meetings as well as the strengthened relationship with the EU and other relevant stakeholders. It also approved a number of projects and launched a number of ideas and proposals, tackled by the Secretariat throughout the year.

Steering Committee Meeting

On 10 April in London, the Headquarters of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) hosted the annual CEI Steering Committee (SC). The gathering was attended by the CEI National Coordinators and representatives from the CEI countries at the EBRD Board of Directors who discussed the recent developments in the CEI-EBRD cooperation. On that occasion, the 2018 Annual Report of the CEI Fund at the EBRD was presented and the Budget 2019 of the Fund was submitted for approval from the Committee's members.



Meeting between the CNC and Permanent Representations with EU Institutions

This event upon the initiative of the Italian CEI Presidency 2019 was held on 15 May at the premises of the Italian Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels. It was attended by representatives of the Permanent Representations of the CEI Member States to the EU as well as of the European Commission and the European Parliament. It served as a platform to explore possibilities for political and project cooperation with the EU institutions. Representatives of the European Commission, the Director-General for European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Christian Daniellsson, the Director at the Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, Lena Andersson Pench and the



European Parliament's Director General for External Policies of the EU, Pietro Ducci, highlighted the strong cooperation among EU institutions in fostering European integration and how regional cooperation, and in particular regional organisations were a powerful tool to achieve this goal.

MFA Meeting

The Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the CEI Member States was held on 12 June in Trieste, under the topic "Central European Initiative at thirty and towards the future: common vision, shared values, European standards, strong regional cooperation". It was chaired by the Foreign Minister of Italy, Enzo Moavero Milanesi. The Ministers focused on the number of priority areas for joint CEI cooperation such as security, including anti-corruption, connectivity, the local dimension and Youth. The Ministers also took note of the importance of a stronger use of the Observer Status in the UNGA through presenting common positions on certain issues in the framework of UN events. Furthermore, the Ministers underlined the importance of the EU integration process, mentioning that the CEI would continue to support its non-EU partners in their European aspirations. The Meeting witnessed the adoption of the Trieste Declaration, including the specific areas for



further cooperation i.e. a possible establishment of a CEI Local Dimension; and development of a “CEI Agenda for the Youth”. The Ministers also adopted a decision on the CEI Co-operation Fund budget for 2020.

Working lunch with Permanent Representatives of CEI Member States to the Council of Europe

The Permanent Representative of Italy to the Council of Europe (CoE) organised a working lunch for the Ambassadors/Permanent Representatives of the CEI Member States to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg on 20 June. It resulted in a useful open exchange of views on the possibilities of cooperation between the CoE and the CEI: looking for complementarity, employing expertise of the CoE for the needs of CEI Member States, exploring the possibility for cooperation with the CoE Development Bank.

CEI side-event at UN “The contribution of regional cooperation and partnerships to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: the experience of the Central European initiative (CEI)”

On 17 July, on the occasion of the UN High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development 2019, the Central European Initiative – Executive Secretariat, in cooperation with the Italian CEI Presidency, the Italian Permanent Mission to the UN, organised a side-event on “The contribution of regional cooperation and partnerships to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: the experience of the Central European initiative (CEI)”. The event, held at the UN Headquarters, aimed at exchanging knowledge and experiences with all relevant stakeholders regarding best practices of regional partnership, such as the CEI, for the attainment of the UN Agenda 2030 in general, and the SDGs in particular. Miroslav Jenča, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia, and the Americas and Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, delivered keynote speeches, underlining the



importance of the regional cooperation formats and their valuable input to the UN actions, in the delivery of the SDGs, thus contributing to the overall global security and peace. In addition, a number of long-standing partners and beneficiaries of the CEI funds and instruments showcased their experience in developing regional actions, with the help of the CEI, in the attainment of the SDGs, in particular those under review of this year’s HLPF.

Informal MFA Meeting in New York

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the CEI Member States gathered on 25 September in New York for their traditional meeting on the margins of UNGA (74th Session). It was chaired by the Foreign Minister of Italy, Luigi Di Maio. The Ministers focused on how to achieve the goal of consolidating the CEI’s position in the regional and international arena, in particular within the UN framework, on issues of common interest related to the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including youth empowerment.



Ministerial Meeting on Science and Research “How can regional cooperation in science and technology foster sustainable development in CEI Member States?”

The Ministers of research, innovation and higher education of the CEI Member States met in Trieste on 13 December. The gathering was held under the title “How can regional cooperation in science and technology foster sustainable development in CEI Member States?”. The main output of the meeting was the adoption of the “Trieste Declaration on Science”, a framework within shared actions to be promoted in favour of international cooperation and Science Diplomacy. In summary it: stresses the relevance to meet regularly in this format as part of the annual calendar of the CEI Presidency; encourages the establishment of a CEI Network of Experts on



Science Diplomacy, in order to explore this concept further including through the implementation of trainings, capacity building actions, research activities and networking; expresses support to improve cross-border and transnational Cooperation fields such as prevention and mitigation of natural disasters; welcomes initiatives promoting, in the schooling systems of the CEI countries, knowledge concerning the challenges of sustainable development; stresses that cooperation between the CEI and the United Nations (UN) should be enhanced through a stronger connection with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

CEI Summit

The Heads of Government of the CEI Member States or their representatives as well as high-level representatives of international and regional organisations and institutions, including the newly appointed EU Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Olivér Várhelyi, gathered in Rome on 19 December for the concluding event of the Italian CEI Presidency, the CEI Summit. Italian Prime Minister, Giuseppe Conte, who chaired the event titled



“European integration, regional cooperation and business opportunities”, highlighted that these three elements were perfectly interlinked within the CEI activities and that the concept of connectivity was flawlessly displayed within the varied membership of the CEI in Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe. The Summit also witnessed the closing celebrations of the 30th Anniversary of the Organisation. The meeting was concluded with the formal transfer of the CEI Presidency from Italy to Montenegro.

CEI Dialogue Forum on Youth

The Istituto Affari Internazionali and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, on organised a CEI Dialogue Forum on Youth in Rome 10-11 October, under the Italian CEI Presidency, as a direct follow-up of the MFA Trieste Declaration. The Forum gathered experts from the CEI Member States, representing institutions, the industry, aca-



demia and civil society – focused on youth empowerment, employment, mobility, and a balance between competition, public policies and modern entrepreneurship. It was also a chance to share ideas, exchange experiences, discuss new forms of regional cooperation and provide new directions and policy recommendations on how the CEI could approach to the economic trends in its region.

Conference on Anti-corruption “Curbing corruption: learning from the decade behind us and looking into the decade ahead”

On 26 November, experts in anti-corruption from CEI Member States, students and other experts in the field, gathered at the LUISS Guido Carli University in Rome for the conference on anti-corruption “Curbing corruption: learning from the decade behind us and looking into the decade ahead”. The gathering served as a platform for best practice and experience sharing in order to meet the needs of the CEI

countries in their fight against corruption in areas of common interest. The conference was concluded with the signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding between the CEI-ES and the RAI Secretariat in order to pinpoint joint forms of collaboration.

Summit of the Public Health Alliance Central Eastern Europe (PHACEE)

On 18 December, around 50 delegates from 20 countries gathered in Rome - at the premises of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità - ISS (Italian National Public Health Institute) - to participate in the Summit of the Public Health Alliance Central Eastern Europe (PHACEE) supported under the Italian CEI Presidency. The event aimed at fostering cooperation in Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe and at promoting a Public Health Alliance that could encompass every action to protect, advocate and advance health safety and security



without any discrimination and territorial division. The Summit also aimed at encouraging effective response to health threats and at sustaining public health leadership to achieve sustainable development by 2030. The discussions focused on the key strategies to fight antimicrobial resistance and healthcare-associated infections under the One Health perspective.

CEI-PD Parliamentary Committee Meeting

The meeting of the CEI Parliamentary Committee under the title “Strengthening the local dimension of the Central European Initiative” took place on 27-28 May in Trieste at the premises of the Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia (ARFVG). In this context, it was emphasised that the local and regional authorities represent the governance level closest to the citizens and could provide a significant contribution to the EU integration process and to sustainable



development. The gathering was attended by Italian MPs, President of the ARFVG as well as national delegations of CEI Member States. After a constructive debate, the Parliamentary committee adopted the Final Document.

Meeting of CEI-PD General Committee on Political and Home Affairs

The meeting of the General Committee on Political and Home Affairs of the CEI Parliamentary Dimension was held in Sofia at the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria on 11-12 February. The discussions focused on the European perspective of the Western Balkans region, analysing synergies and perspectives of the integration processes, and exploring how to further increase cooperation among all CEI Member States. As outlined in the conclusions of the meeting, participants reached a common understanding on: “activating inter-parliamentary dialogue through various events on topics relevant to the countries and their citizens; developing the CEI PD as a flexible and pragmatic platform of regional cooperation with a priority focus on activities supporting EU integration process of the Western Balkan countries and in a wider scope; and improving the visibility of the inter-parliamentary format by sending timely and clear messages to the EU institutions on issues of strategic



significance to Europe such as the enlargement process, energy infrastructure connectivity, fight against organized crime...”.

Meeting of CEI-PD General Committee on Cultural Affairs

The meeting of the General Committee on Cultural Affairs of the CEI Parliamentary Dimension was held in Budapest on 29 March. The participants discussed a comprehensive tourism policy to stimulate the competitiveness of the economy in a sustainable manner, preserving natural and environmental values for future generations in the CEI Member States. To this end, cross-border tourism was identified as an excellent tool that also adds value to the CEI region’s economic development and fosters regional cooperation. As outlined in the conclusions of the meeting, participants also reached a common understanding on the growth of touristic regions and promotion of their sustainable development; the establishment of such a legislative environment and related system of organisations that allow the elaboration of individual guidelines for the certain destinations; the creation of different elements of supply in the form of a touristic package; the improvement of destinations by increasing competitiveness, assortments and standards; education of all stakeholders at the local community level.

CEI-PD Parliamentary Assembly Meeting

The Parliamentary Assembly of the CEI Parliamentary Dimension was held in Rome on 7-8 November under the topic “Developing Infrastructures for More Competitive Businesses in the CEI Area”. Representatives from CEI Member State Parliaments attended the meeting and contributed to the discussion. They adopted a Final Declaration which, in particular, underlines the importance of implementing an effective approach to infrastructure policy in CEI countries and urges the governments of CEI Member States to act and collaborate in all appropriate fora for the elimination of legal and regulatory hindrances in the

energy market in view of the future inclusion of all CEI countries within the framework of a common energy policy, while improving the competitiveness of businesses and boosting trade flows.

CEI Business and Expert Forum

The CEI Business and Experts Forum “Infrastructural and multimodal connectivity as factor of development and integration”, was held in Milan on 15 November. The event was organised under the Italian CEI Presidency by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in association with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport and the CEI-Executive Secretariat with the support of Assolombarda. It gathered around 150 participants from public institutions, enterprises, banks, the European Commission and experts from CEI Member States. The participants had the chance to analyse the development potential of land (road and railway networks) and sea connections, as well as projects for ports, strengthening economic relations and trade flows with the CEI countries also in light of the potential development of large global land and sea trade routes. Special attention was also paid to macro-regional policies and sustainable technological solutions, transit connections as well as financial instruments for the realisation of connectivity projects in the CEI area.







Activities Activities

of the CEI-Executive Secretariat

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The main role of the CEI-Executive Secretariat (CEI-ES) is to provide administrative and conceptual support to the CEI Structures and take appropriate initiatives aimed at promoting the accomplishment of the CEI mission. With the establishment of the Secretariat, the Organisation has assured a permanent structure necessary for a systematic approach to widespread CEI activities. The overall guidance and orientation for CEI activities in general and for the Secretariat in particular remains embodied in the long-term CEI strategy, which is reconfirmed both at political level and in the Plan of Action, thus reflecting the priority interests for cooperation among its Member States.

The CEI-ES strongly supports the activities of the Presidency and other decision-making and operational structures of the CEI, not only by providing continuous administrative and conceptual support, but also by taking appropriate initiatives aimed at promoting the realisation of the CEI objectives. The CEI Secretariat's staff was actively involved in the implementation of the CEI Plan of Action 2018-2020 and other activities promoted by the Italian CEI Presidency.

The CEI-ES also oversees the funds, programmes and instruments for cooperation complementing the institutional activities: the Cooperation Fund, supported by all Member States, the CEI Fund at the EBRD and the KEP (these last two are financed by Italy), and the participation in EU-funded Projects (the contributions and resources stemming from the EU grants are outlined in Annex 2). They aim at financing various cooperation projects implemented in the CEI Member States, while the Secretariat takes care of their sound management and administration. Through this function, the CEI has developed an important aspect, i.e. programme management, and has gained an additional role in the trans-national and cross-border context. This represents an added value, in particular for the design, implementation and management of large projects, such as the EU-funded projects. To carry out this task, the CEI-ES has a special unit through which it actively participates in various EU programmes, both as Lead Partner and Partner - thus, enhancing the involvement of its countries in EU-funded projects. The staff of the Unit for EU-funded projects is financed out of the budget of the projects funded through EU Programmes.

The CEI-Executive Secretariat - equipped with new leadership composed of the Secretary General Roberto Antonione from Italy, the Alternate Secretary General Antal Nikolett from Hungary and the Deputy Secretaries General Nina Kodelja from Slovenia and Zoran Jovanović from Serbia, who also form the Executive Level – also vigorously undertook actions for promoting the CEI. *The Secretariat's staff with its respective tasks are outlined in Annex 3.*

Institutional Activities

The CEI Executive level and the other staff members were actively involved in a number of official visits and bilateral meetings. They also maintained regular contacts with other international and regional organisations and participated in many CEI, CEI-sponsored or other international events as follows:

Visits to the CEI Member States

A delegation of the CEI-Executive Secretariat (CEI-ES), led by Secretary General (SG) Roberto Antonione and with the participation of members of the Executive Level and other collaborators of the CEI-ES, made a tour in 14 CEI Member States. They met with a number of high-level government representatives. The aim of the mission was to present the new leadership of the Secretariat and the CEI programmes and activities as well as discuss the future strategic direction of the CEI and further possibilities for enhancing cooperation, especially with regard to the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership areas. The first round of visits was conducted on 21-23 January in Prague, Bratislava and Budapest; the second in Skopje, Sofia and Belgrade on 5-7 February; then Ljubljana on 19 February; while in Podgorica, Sarajevo and Zagreb from 4-6 March. On 1-3 April, the CEI delegation





visited Warsaw and Minsk. The last visit for this year was held on 6 May in Tirana. On all these occasions, the CEI delegation had meetings with high and highest government officials of the countries, who confirmed their commitment to the CEI framework, identifying together with the CEI team, numerous possibilities for future cooperation in addition to the already existing ones, i.e. youth and the local development.

ASG Meeting with Commissioner Navarcsis

On 5 February in Brussels, ASG Antal Nikoletti met with Tibor Navarcsics, EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport. The aim of the meeting was to explore possibilities for cooperation and synergies in the fields of Culture and Education, taking into account the CEI potential in terms of membership and well-functioning instruments, which could be further expanded with additional funds. The CEI Cooperation Fund, the Know-how Exchange Programme and the participation in EU-funded projects were briefly presented with concrete examples of implemented activities and projects. The Commissioner particularly welcomed the CEI focus on the Eastern Partnership countries and noted that the KEP could be a valuable instrument to implement projects also in the field of creative industries. Follow-up contacts were established with the Commissioner's team for regular exchange of information.

“Trieste for Science – Sharing Innovation for Change”

SG Roberto Antonione presented the CEI action in support of science diplomacy during an event focused on the launch of the publication “Trieste for Science – Sharing Innovation for Change” on 12 February at the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region. While praising the quality of the publication, panelists discussed visions and initiatives to consolidate the strategic role of Trieste, and more widely of the Region FVG, in the field of science, technology and innovation. This was particularly



needed in view of the forthcoming Euro Science Open Forum (ESOF), to be hosted in Trieste in 2020. ESOF is the largest interdisciplinary science meeting in Europe, providing a unique framework for interaction and debate among scientists, innovators, policymakers, business actors, journalists and citizens. In this regard, SG Antonione recalled the support received from CEI Member States with regard to the application of Trieste for hosting ESOF 2020. He also pointed out that the CEI Secretariat had already promoted initiatives aimed at encouraging encounters between scientists and diplomats.

Western Balkans Fund visit to the CEI-ES

On 15 February, a delegation of the Western Balkans Fund (WBF) visited the CEI-Executive Secretariat in Trieste. The aim of the gathering was to exchange information about respective programmes and activities as well as explore possibilities for synergies and cooperation. The two institutions shared many similarities with regard to the promotion of regional cooperation and good-neighbourly relations, in particular through mobility and people-to-people contacts. Their work was also focused on building a prosperous region, which required common standards and joint actions. In this context,



participants agreed on the importance of cooperation and continuous exchange of information in order to make the best possible use of available resources, leverage funds and share information and experience.

Regional Cooperation Council visit to the CEI-ES

The Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), Majlinda Bregu, visited the CEI-Executive Secretariat in Trieste on 7 March. The aim of the visit was to explore possibilities for synergies and cooperation as well as to identify possible joint areas of action between the two Organisations, in particular through capacity building, youth policies, trade, digitalisation and people-to-people contacts. In doing so, the importance of developing tangible joint activities with regard to the promotion of regional cooperation and good-neighbourly relations was particularly stressed. The importance of local authorities was also highlighted. The interlocutors, while agreeing that regional cooperation was an essential tool to facilitate political dialogue and improve citizens' lives, expressed the readiness of both secretariats to cooperate towards these objectives.

Italian Delegation to CEI Parliamentary Dimension visit to the CEI-ES

On 11 March, the Italian delegation to the CEI Parliamentary Dimension (CEI PD), led by President Marco Maggioni, visited the CEI-ES. SG Roberto Antonione presented the work of the CEI and the activities carried out since its inception as well as the current activities of the Secretariat. The members of the delegation, welcoming the meeting, expressed their interest in the numerous CEI programmes and activities and had the chance to receive more detailed information on their operational methodology from the competent staff members.



“Both Ways” -art and science beyond borders

Contemporary art curators and science communication experts from Central and Eastern Europe gathered, on 15 March in Trieste, at the ESOF2020 Headquarters (Sottostazione Elettrica) and at the CEI-ES Headquarters, to discuss how to build bridges between the “two cultures”. The initiative is based on the close cooperation between the CEI, Fondazione Internazionale Trieste and Trieste Contemporanea. The aim of the meeting, framed within the proESOF preparatory activities, was to define a common ground of ideas that would culminate in the ESOF 2020 week when groups of experts from art and science would engage in a multi-faceted exhibition based on the common values shared by these disciplines in the production of knowledge. During the meeting, participants identified a possible title for the initiative - “Both Ways” - aiming to revive, in an original way, a smooth dialogue between the two ways of thinking, which are apparently distant, but both able to outline the future world. The event was concluded with a public debate open to general discussions.



International high-level conference on inter-basin cooperation on marine litter in Danube River and Black Sea

International high-level Conference on “Inter-basin Cooperation on Marine Litter: a focus on the Danube River and the Black Sea” took place on 4 April in Sofia. The event was organised by the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS). The discussions, which focused on how to tackle marine litter efficiently, paid special attention to the Danube River and the Black Sea basin. The aim of the event was to facilitate exchange of knowledge and best practices among renowned experts, business and policymakers and government officials.

Dissemination event on experimental cross-border integrated ticket Trieste - Ljubljana

On 18 April, the presentation of an experimental cross-border single ticket valid for both public transport operators between the cities of Trieste and Ljubljana was hosted at the CEI-ES and opened by SG Roberto Antonione. Thanks to the collaboration of the two operators - Trieste Trasporti and Slovenske Železnice (Slovenian Railways) - citizens can buy their integrated ticket online at an economical rate and travel between the two cities without interruption using the railway station of Villa Opicina as an interchange hub between the two means of transport. The initiative - part of the EU-funded project CONNECT2CE led by the CEI-ES and funded under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) / Interreg Program Central Europe 2014-2020 – was to be tested in the period March – August 2019. CONNECT2CE aims at improving the accessibility of public transport in peripheral, rural and cross-border areas of Central Europe. The dissemination event was complemented by a round table on the theme "Results and challenges of promoting public transport in a cross-border dimension".

Memorandum of Understanding between CEI-ES and Ministry of Justice

On 3 May, the CEI - Executive Secretariat and the Italian Ministry of Justice (Department of Penitentiary Administration - Triveneto Office) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The Ceremony took place at the CEI Headquarters, where SG Roberto Antonione and Director Enrico Sbriglia signed the agreement for opening a new joint line of action in the area of judiciary cooperation. The MoU also envisages to secure a necessary flow of information between the two parties through dedicated channels.

Memorandum of Understanding between CEI-ES and All

The CEI-ES and the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative (All) Permanent Secretariat signed a Memorandum of



Understanding (MoU) in the framework of the meeting of the Adriatic and Ionian Council. The Ceremony took place in Budva on 8 May, where SG Roberto Antonione and All Secretary General Giovanni Castellaneta signed the agreement for a shared action for their regions. The signature seals a strong long-standing partnership and contributes to fostering regional cooperation and sustainable development. It also foresees further steps for a joint preparation and implementation of activities as well as an exchange of expertise in project management in areas of common interest to the benefit of the citizens and facilitation of information flows between the two parties.

CEI Representation Office in Brussels

CEI Representation Office was opened in Brussels, hosted by the Liaison Office of the Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia in Brussels. The initiative aims at increasing CEI's visibility in Brussels, thus strengthening ties with the European



institutions. The event was held back to back with the meeting of the Committee of National Coordinators (CNC), Permanent Representations and EU Institutions under the Italian CEI Presidency on 15 May.

Conference on accessibility in cultural policies

The conference held in Trieste on 30 May - focusing on accessibility for all in cultural policies - gathered representatives of the Ministries of culture of the CEI Member States, as well as delegates for museums, external officials, associations and other international experts on the subject of accessibility. The activity was part of the EU-funded project COME-IN!, funded under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), aimed at improving the capacity of cultural and museum operators to attract all visitors by promoting cultural heritage and making sites more accessible to people with disabilities. The CEI-ES in its capacity as the Lead Partner,



together with the other project partners, presented the general contents of COME-IN! as well as the results obtained: the "Guidelines for accessibility in museums", the "Guide for Museum Operators", and the COME-IN! Label. The representatives of the Ministries of culture of the CEI Member States brought their own national experiences concerning the inclusion and accessibility of cultural policies (best practices, investments, regulations).

Trieste Eastern Europe Investment Forum

CEI Alternate Secretary General Antal Nikoletti participated in the Trieste Eastern Europe Investment Forum on 7 June. The fourth edition of the event brought together over 150 participants working in international sectors and banking, insurance and asset management experts, analysts, regulators and policy makers, development policy officers and academics to discuss current issues related to investments, growth and opportunities in Eastern Europe for businesses and the financial sector. The event aimed at stimulating a debate among all participants and stakeholders and at changing the perspective for a Europe that is often depicted as divided and fragmented. They all agreed that stability is an essential growth component in Europe and in its neighboring countries, with a credible enlargement perspective.



Visit to the Council of Europe

On 20 June in Strasbourg, SG Roberto Antonione and DSG Nina Kodelja met with the Council of Europe Group on External Relations (CoE GR-EXT), which prepares the decisions of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in the field of external relations. While presenting the mission and current activities of the CEI, he paid special attention to the focus given by the CEI Ministers of Foreign Affairs in their Trieste Declaration, i.e. the establishment of a CEI Local Dimension and the development of a CEI Agenda for Youth. The exchange of views between the parties demonstrated a mutual intention to cooperate in areas of common interest, expertise and priorities. In addition, they met with the Permanent representatives of the CEI Member States at the CoE, in the framework of the working lunch organised within the Italian CEI Presidency. They also exchanged views with the Director General of Human Rights and Rule of Law,



Christos Giakoumopoulos, with whom they discussed, in particular, the possibility of cooperation in the area of anti-corruption as well as with the Director General of Democracy Snežana Samardžić-Marković, with whom they explored possible cooperation in the areas of culture, involvement of local and regional Authorities, youth as well as media freedom.

2nd European Games in Minsk

Upon the invitation by the Prime Minister of Belarus, Sergei Rumas, SG Roberto Antonione participated in the opening of 2nd European Games (21- 30 June), in Minsk on 21 June. The event aims at strengthening the significance of sport as an important instrument for promoting peace, faith and mutual understanding between countries and nations.

8th Forum for Danube Strategy on connectivity and regional mobility

On 27-28 June in Bucharest the CEI-ES participated in the 8th Forum for the Danube Strategy, a key event of the 2019 EUSDR Presidency. The event was organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, the European Commission and the Danube Transnational Programme. The gathering under the title “Building cohesion for a shared prosperity in the Danube Region” focused on connectivity and regional mobility as well as on links between Macro-Regional Strategies and cohesion. The CEI-ES is involved - among other priority areas - in the activities of the Steering Committee of Priority Area 10 "Capacity Building", which also supports the Danube Civil Society Forum.

CEI – ANSA panel discussion on journalism and media in the CEI region

On 8 July in Trieste, the CEI-ES - in cooperation with the News Agency ANSA - organised a panel discussion on journalism and media in the CEI region. The welcome address was delivered by CEI Deputy Secretary General, Nina Kodelja. Contributions on their professional and personal experiences were presented by Maja Sever, HRT - Croatian Radio



Television; Remzi Lani, Executive Director, Albanian Media Institute; Ivan Cadjenovic, Daily Press "Vijesti", Montenegro; Anna Babinets, OCCRP, Ukraine; Oliver Vujovic, SEEMO Secretary General. The debate was moderated by Francesco De Filippo, editor in chief of ANSA FVG, and was attended by representatives of the local media who presented their experience as Italian journalists with first-hand knowledge and experience. The audience had the chance to exchange views and information with the speakers in a lively debate.

Meetings with UN Officials

On the occasion of the CEI side-event at UN “The contribution of regional cooperation and partnerships to the



implementation of the 2030 Agenda: the experience of the Central European initiative (CEI)” on 17 July in New York, SG Antonione and DSG Kodelja also met with Miroslav Jenca, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia. The participants underlined the importance of the regional cooperation formats and their valuable input to the UN actions, in the delivery of the SDGs, thus contributing to the overall global security and peace.

14th Bled Strategic Forum

Under the title ‘(Re)sources of (In)stability’, the 14th Bled Strategic Forum, took place between 31 August and 3 September in Ljubljana/Bled, Slovenia. It was dedicated to discussing the role of (re)sources regarding peace and security, sustainable development and economic progress. DSG Nina Kodelja participated in the Panel discussion on “Western Balkans-Europeisation, Democratisation, Shared Responsibility”, sponsored by the CEI, with focus on European perspective for Western Balkans and importance of regional cooperation.



“Bridge for Cities 4.0”

On 3 September, together with UNIDO Italy, and the Trieste Port Authority, the CEI-ES participated in “Bridge for Cities 4.0” in Vienna. The event - organised jointly by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Finance Center for South-South Cooperation (FCSSC) - promoted the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development via the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in all participating countries, encouraging municipal officials and development stakeholders to scale up their engagement in inclusive and sustainable urban-industrial development initiatives. The role of the Fourth Industrial Revolution aimed at providing a wide and multidisciplinary perspective on how cities can tap into advanced technologies and new industrial solutions to enhance the quality of life for their citizens. This, by reducing cities’ carbon footprint, improving public services as well as creating new jobs and attracting skilled labour.

Economic Forum in Krynica

ASG Antal Nikolett participated in the 29th edition of the Economic Forum in Krynica, Poland on 3-5 September, the largest conference in Central and Eastern Europe fostering the creation of a favourable climate for the development of political



and economic cooperation between the EU Member States and their neighbours. The event focused on “Europe of Tomorrow. ‘Strong’ Meaning What?” and gathered officials from 60 different countries. In two distinctive panels ASG Nikolett had the chance to discuss various challenges faced by the CEI region related to the economy and youth, this latter with focus on education in the digital era.

COME-IN! Final Conference and Award Ceremony

On 11 September, the final event of the COME-IN! project took place at the European Parliament. The project has brought to life tangible results to improve access to European



cultural heritage and equal opportunities for all: the COME-IN! Guidelines, elaborated to allow museum operators to crosscheck the different dimensions of accessibility throughout the service chain; the Handbook for Museum operators to guide museums and galleries on how to train their staff and to design and organise accessible exhibitions; and the COME-IN! Label, as an internationally recognised tool promoting accessibility and inclusion. On this occasion, the host of the event, MEP Marion Walsmann awarded the COME-IN! Label to six museums from Austria, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Poland and Slovenia for their investments and efforts in making their exhibitions and museums more accessible. All partners will continue to promote and attribute the COME-IN! label to all the museums that will demonstrate their engagement in becoming accessible for all and are ready to make a contribution to the next EU Disability Strategy.

Forum on “Start of the SEEIIST Design Phase”

The CEI-ES participated in the Forum on the “Start of the SEEIIST Design Phase” held in Budva on 18 September, upon invitation by the Minister of Science of Montenegro, Sanja Damjanović. The purpose of this event was to inform the public about the advancements of the SEEIIST project at a decisive moment when it passed from the phase of conception to



the phase of design. The meeting was opened by the Prime Minister of Montenegro, Duško Marković, who underlined the need for more scientific research projects that, through technology transfer and international cooperation, bring new knowledge, better working methods and better prospects for work and life, especially to the Balkans. On that occasion, the CEI Secretary General delivered a statement, in the framework of the panel dedicated to the International Organisations supporting the project.

World Youth Forum in Trieste

Our young professionals actively took part in the World Forum in Trieste on 27-29 September. Their paper titled "There's No time left – climate crises are knocking on our future's door", mentioned the CEI commitments towards environmental protection and climate change. This year's Forum "There's no time left: Environment, Right, Geopolitics" aims at raising awareness on the "There's no time left" alert, enlarging its vision to include also other emergencies (ethical and economic ones) the planet is facing and that are taking centre stage both in terms of analysis and practices.

Salzburg Europe Summit on local and regional authority cooperation

DSG Zoran Jovanović attended the Salzburg Europe Summit held on 6-8 October under the General theme: "Europe and Peace, 1919-1989-2019". In his presentation during the General Assembly of the Institute of the Regions of Europe, one of the regular events of the Summit gathering local and regional authorities, Jovanovic pointed out that the CEI was actively working on the establishment of its Local Dimension. He informed the audience that more space for cooperation among local and regional authorities and with partners abroad could be explored within various CEI funds and instruments.



Governor Fedriga visits the CEI-ES

On 14 October, the Governor of the Friuli Venezia Giulia (FVG), Autonomous Region Massimiliano Fedriga, paid a visit to CEI-ES. Hosted by SG Antonione together with his team, the visit was a chance to shed a light on the CEI current and future activities as well as those supported by the Region. Antonione highlighted that the good relations with the Region went back to 1996 when the seat in Trieste had been made available to the CEI by the Italian Government through the FVG Region itself, and offered free of charge and ties, under terms described in a Protocol eventually concluded and signed between the CEI Secretariat and the FVG Autonomous Region, in Trieste on 20 December 1999.



International Forum for Cultural Diplomacy

The annual International Forum for Cultural Diplomacy, organised by the International Association for Cooperation and Cultural Diplomacy, in cooperation with the CEI-ES and under the patronage of the City of Trieste and the Region Friuli Venezia Giulia, was held at the CEI HQ on 16-18 October. The purpose of the event was to stimulate a greater involvement of women in cultural diplomacy, as a tool to promote mutual understanding, empathy and respect for different cultures as well as to improve and strengthen the position of women and address other complex challenges of the global society. The Forum was opened with the International Exhibition CULTURAL CONNECTIONS - SOLUTION FOR THE FUTURE" which included 14 female artists from different CEI countries.

International Forum of Aquileia Euroregion

Under the title "1989-2019 the awakening of the Mitteleuropa, nostalgia for the future", the 15th edition of the Forum held on 18 October in Udine, witnessed the participation of diplomatic and institutional representatives from 14 Central and Eastern European and Balkan countries



as well as of representatives from regional/local institutions and academia. ASG Nikoletti talked about the common challenges where solutions can be reached through joint cooperation within the region, more cohesion and understanding of mutual interests. The Forum, co-financed under the CEI Cooperation Fund, was organised around five panels, each with vivid discussions: a) Mitteleuropa 1989 - 2019 between past and future, b) Europe and Central Europe, Brussels and Visegrad, c) The Brussels Wall: an invisible curtain has fallen in Europe, d) Institutional, commercial, cultural, parallel diplomacy: an orchestra without leader, e) Western Balkans: always on the waiting list.

XII Eurasian Economic Forum

ASG Antal Nikoletti participated in the XII Eurasian Economic Forum under the title “Economy of trust and diplomacy of business from the Atlantic to the Pacific”, held in Verona, on 24 and 25 October. The Forum allowed space for constructive discussions with the partners on the Eurasian continent and fostered economic dialogue between East and West. Furthermore, it acted as a useful platform for the participants to debate on relevant topics. Politicians and social activists, business representatives, diplomats, experts and media representatives from the Greater Eurasia countries took part in the Forum. The agenda of the event included the following topics: “Global challenges for the global energy market”, “Business diplomacy in contemporary geopolitics”, “New financial models for new challenges”, “Transport, infrastructure, logistics”, “The social economy: developing healthcare, education, environmental protection, and labour relations” and “Industrial Revolution 4.0 and the economy of the future in Greater Eurasia”.

Workshop: improving inland and maritime cross-border inter-modal connectivity

On 31 October, the CEI-ES in Trieste hosted a workshop in the framework of the Interreg Central Europe project CON-

NECT2CE and the Interreg ADRION project Inter-Connect focusing on identifying strategic priorities to improve inland and maritime cross-border intermodal connectivity. The event opened by SG Roberto Antonione, gathered key stakeholders - representatives from the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, the Municipalities of Koper and Trieste, private and public transport operators (Trieste Trasporti, Ferrovie Udine Cividale, Trenitalia) as well as two representatives from the European Groups of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC Euregio Senza Confini and EGTC GO). The discussion allowed stakeholders to identify the aspects that could be improved as well as future opportunities for boosting intermodal connectivity and maritime lines (such as ESOF 2020).

Opening of 'Casa Tartini' in Piran, Slovenia

The Opening Ceremony of the restored and remodeled Tartini House (Casa Tartini) in Piran, Slovenia took place on 8 November, with the participation of DSG Nina Kodolja. The House where the great composer and violinist Giuseppe Tartini was born in Piran, Slovenia (at the time, part of the Republic of Venice), has been renovated in the framework of tARTini project, funded by Interreg Italy-Slovenia. The renovation of the House represents one of the most important results of the project and constitutes an essential highlight in the countdown to the 250th anniversary of Tartini’s death in 2020. Among other valuable pieces, the famous violin of Tartini, known as the great “Master of the Nations”, of priceless value, will be exposed at Casa Tartini, as part of a multimedia exhibition that will also help to develop further scientific and academic research activities. The event was hosted by the Municipality of Piran, Lead Partner of the project.

Mayor of Trieste Dipiazza visits the CEI-ES

On 11 November, the Mayor of Trieste, Roberto Dipiazza, paid his first official visit to the Executive Secretariat. The gathering, hosted by SG Roberto Antonione, was an



opportunity to present the Organisation to the Mayor. It was also a chance to informally celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the CEI established in Budapest in 1989. Dipiazza thanked the Secretariat for everything the CEI had already done and was doing for Trieste and the CEI region.

Coordination Meeting of Regional Organisations

The event was organised by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), at its Headquarters in Barcelona on 13 November, in the framework of the consultation process among the Regional Organisations and as a follow-up of the last meeting in Trieste in 2017. It was opened by the Secretary General of the UfM, Nasser Kamel, and attended by representatives of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Central European Initiative (CEI), represented by DSG Nina Kodolja, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) and the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative (AII) as well as by a number of high-level officials of the UfM. The aim of the meeting was to exchange



information on the respective activities with the aim of guaranteeing complementarity of their work and pursuing mutual objectives producing better results and greater impacts. Special attention was paid to the identification of joint actions and initiatives in the field of Climate Action. At the outskirts of the meeting, the representatives of the regional organisations agreed to create a network of focal points, through which synergies will be assured. They further recognised the need of working together on awareness-raising and on inviting other regional organisations operating in the wider Euro-Mediterranean region and beyond to join the process. The next coordination meeting will be hosted by BSEC's Permanent International Secretariat, in 2020 in Istanbul.

16th Vienna Economic Forum

On 17-18 November ASG Antal Nikolett participated in the 16th Vienna Economic Forum (VEF) under the title "Vienna

Future Dialogue 2019: Economy meets Politics, From Planned Economy to Market Economy - 30 Years after the Fall of the Iron Curtain". The Forum gathered participants from different EU countries, Western Balkan countries and Turkey, including politicians (head of governments and ministers), representatives of international institutions and organisations such as the International Monetary fund (IMF), European Investment Bank (EIB), business representatives, etc. Furthermore, VEF acted as a useful platform for the participants to debate on relevant topics. The agenda of the Forum included the following topics: "Opening of 16th Vienna Economic Forum - Vienna Future Dialogue 2019", Working Session on "From Planned Economy to Market Economy - 30 Years after the Fall of the Iron Curtain", Annual Award Ceremony "Republic of North Macedonia – Cooperation Country of the Year 2019" and Vienna Economic Talks "Economy As A Driving Force, One Region – One Economy".

NAMIRG: final exercise at sea

On 22 November, the final exercise at sea of the NAMIRG project took place in the Port of Pula, Croatia. In 2018 and 2019, the team of 27 firefighters from the fire brigades of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region (Italy), Koper (Slovenia) and the Istria County (Croatia), followed several courses and training on several locations, carried out four on-board fire-fighting simulations and exchanged experiences with other international Maritime Incident Response Group - MIRG teams from the Netherlands and Finland. The final exercise, which consisted of the rescue of a ship following a simulated fire incident, was an opportunity to showcase what had been achieved during the lifetime of the project, paving the way for more transnational cooperation and efficient emergency response to incidents on-board at sea. The rescue exercise included the intervention of two tugs, a support motorboat and a helicopter that loaded the wounded of the simulation on board. The exercise marked the end of the two-year



project NAMIRG aimed at creating the first transnational system for efficient emergency response at sea. The project was co-financed by the European Commission Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid, and coordinated by the CEI-ES.

Memorandum of Understanding between CEI-ES and RAI

The CEI - Executive Secretariat and the Regional Anti-corruption Initiative (RAI) Secretariat signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in order to pinpoint joint forms of collaboration in the anti-corruption area. The MoU was



signed during the conference on anti-corruption held on 26 November in Rome under the title “Curbing corruption: learning from the decade behind us and looking into the decade ahead”, in the framework of the Italian CEI Presidency.

26th OSCE Ministerial Council

DSG Nina Kodelja participated in the main OSCE yearly event, hosted by the Slovak Chairmanship in Bratislava from 4 to 6 December. The gathering was attended by representatives of all 57 OSCE participating states, a vast majority from the MFA level, as well as by OSCE partners for Co-operation. The CEI was invited and present alongside many other International organisations and agencies. The discussion touched upon the situation in Ukraine, the activities of the OSCE field missions and on the OSCE mission as a comprehensive security European organisation.

Roundtable "A supporting Europe: judicial and security cooperation"

On 3 December, the Round Table under the title "A supporting Europe: judicial and security cooperation" was held at the CEI-ES. The event was a chance to reflect upon

cooperation in judicial and criminal matters within the EU framework established by the Lisbon Treaty, as well as on possible cross-border and transnational collaborations, to be explored also with the CEI's support. The discussions highlighted common views about the importance of promoting actions aimed at exchanging knowledge and good practices. A lot is needed in light of the transnational nature of the main security threats, which, therefore, require concerted responses among countries and individuals. In this regard, a contribution from an intergovernmental forum such as the CEI can be particularly useful for building multi-level partnerships between the countries.



Seminar on Adriatic ports facilitation and logistics: how to unlock potential of inter-modality in Western Balkans

On 4 December, over 40 officers of the Transport ministries of the Western Balkan Countries, senior regional officials, the Western Balkans 6 Chamber Investment Forum- Trieste and representatives of Ports and transport operators gathered at the CEI-ES to attend the Seminar on “the Adriatic Ports facilitation and logistics: how to unlock the potential of inter-modality in the Western Balkans”. The event - co-organised by The Transport Community Permanent Secretariat and the CEI – ES with the support of Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia – aimed at sharing experience gained within the framework of the Adriatic ports’ system in order to unlock the potential for the development of intermodal transport, both internally among the countries and internationally. The round table between the ports evaluated concrete options for improving intermodal connectivity and logistics across the Adriatic sea in relation to the WB by enhancing the role of Adriatic Ports and the reliability of corridor supply chains in the region.

NAMIRG: promotional event

On 10 December, the final promotional event of the NAMIRG project took place at the European Parliament. The CEI-ES team met with Members of the European Parliament, representatives from the European Commission's Directorate General for EU Civil Protection & Humanitarian Aid (DG ECHO), and representatives from the Permanent Delegations of Slovenia, Croatia and Italy to the EU, to present the outcomes of the project. The event gave the project leaders and firefighter brigades the chance to explain how the project was developed, the difficulties encountered and how they managed to put into place a specially trained and equipped team of firefighters who can now be transported on board of a helicopter to ships on fire to bring humanitarian aid. Moreover, the partnership successfully elaborated a personnel training manual, a handbook on standard operating procedures (SOP) for preparing the NAMIRG squad and define the operations to follow in the event of a fire at sea and guidelines for materials and devices necessary for the NAMIRG team during helicopter transfer and fire-fighting operations. The promotion of the activity will continue.

Serbia's Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development visits CEI-ES

Mladen Šarčević, Serbian Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development, visited the CEI-Executive Secretariat right after the Ministerial Meeting on Science and Research in Trieste on 13 December, in the framework of the Italian CEI Presidency. Discussions focused on steps to be taken for future cooperation in the field of science.



Signing of MoU for promotion of services examined within case study on Trieste

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the promotion of examined services of the Inter-Connect Project case study on Trieste, was signed at the CEI-ES on 16 December by the

CEI – Executive Secretariat, the Autonomous of Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, the Municipalities of Trieste, Muggia and Koper, Trieste Trasporti and Liberty Lines. The MoU aims at developing innovative ways to improve the connectivity of cross-border public transport between Trieste, Muggia and Koper, with a particular focus on maritime connections. It also reaffirmed the involvement and commitment of the stakeholders to support the measures that had been identified and adopted in the case study led by the CEI-ES within the Inter-Connect project.

NAMIRG: final conference

On 16 December, the final conference of the European project NAMIRG took place at the premises of the Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia. NAMIRG has paved the way for transnational cooperation as regards incidents at sea, but efforts need to be continued to transfer the knowledge acquired to other countries, and ensure continuous training



of the squad to guarantee a 24/7 response to emergencies at sea. The knowledge gained could be transferred to other countries and be useful across Europe.

Feature Events, Prizes and Awards

The CEI-Executive Secretariat continued the promotion of its Feature Events as well as of its Prizes and Awards - crucial elements in the role of the Organisation as a dialogue forum:

Trieste Film Festival

The CEI is one of the long-standing sponsors of the Trieste Film Festival, held on 17-22 January. This Festival, organised by the Alpe Adria Cinema Association, is the Italian leading appointment with Central and Eastern European cinema, offering a unique retrospective of quality filmmaking production from the CEI region. In particular, the CEI supported the Midpoint Feature Launch Eastweek, an international script-writing workshop involving film schools

and academies from Central and Eastern Europe, whose main objective is to develop the selected projects from the delicate phase of the initial idea through a series of tutorials, masterclasses and case studies. The CEI support was also given to the co-production forum “When East Meets West”, gathering funders, commissioning editors, sales agents, distributors and producers.

CEI Award 2019 at Trieste Film Festival

The CEI Award (3.000 EUR) at the Trieste Film Festival was bestowed upon the Serbian film director Željimir Žilnik “for his aesthetic and intellectual consistency”. This award is traditionally assigned to an artist who best interprets the contemporary reality of Europe and dialogue among cultures. At the Festival, Žilnik presented the film “The Most Beautiful Country of the World” which follows a group of young migrants in Vienna who break through the administrative labyrinths of checking and gaining status and residence.



CEI

Venice Forum for contemporary art curators

Under the inspiring topic “Effervescible. Seeking ongoing relevancy”, the 9th CEI Venice Forum for Contemporary Art Curators from Central and Eastern Europe was held in Venice, on 9 May, at the premises of the Academy of Fine Arts. Organised by the Trieste Contemporanea Committee, and supported by the CEI through the Cooperation Fund as one of its flagship activities in the field of culture, the Forum is a biennial event dealing with contemporary art promotion and the exchange of curatorial practices coinciding with the opening of the Venice Biennale. During the Forum sessions, prominent curators and experts from various CEI countries presented their concepts, activities and proposals in view of creating a preview-map of what would be of relevance in the context of the contemporary debate in the arts in 2019-2020. The main idea was to bring together different voices to exchange views and ideas in search of a current definition of

the principle of relevance, thus promoting an open debate and a real exchange of experiences. A special session was devoted to several young curators, selected from an open call and from the Q-rated workshops, who had the opportunity to present their approaches and ongoing concepts. The Forum was held under the patronage of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

Vilenica International Literary Festival

The Vilenica International Literary Festival was held on 10-15 September in Slovenia. The CEI is one of its long-standing sponsors. The main focus this year was on autobiographical writing. The gathering featured numerous literary and cultural events such as roundtable discussions, readings, presentation of contemporary literature and symposia. A literary evening was held in Trieste on 10 September, with the participation of two Slovene authors, Jasmin B. Frelih and Ace Mermolja, moderated by Martin Lissiach. The CEI supported two segments of the Festival at its 34th edition, a CEI Roundtable “Ego in Fabula”, which took place on 11 September in Ljubljana; and a CEI Fellowship for Writers in Residence.

CEI Fellowship for Writers in Residence

The CEI has been presenting the CEI Fellowship for Writers in Residence in collaboration with the Slovene Writers’ Association, as part of the Vilenica International Literary Festival, since 2006. The Fellowship seeks to encourage cross-border cooperation and promotion in the field of literature for young writers from non-EU CEI Member States. The



Fellowship award of 5,000 EUR is meant to be used for a three-month residency in any CEI Member State of the candidate’s choice. During this period the author is expected to work on the project indicated in the application form. The Fellowship was granted to Ivan Shopov, from North

Macedonia. It will allow Shopov to finish his first novel, the working title of which is *Panic at the Museum*, where he explores individual responsibility and collective madness, basing the text on Macedonian society (Skopje 2014 project) by combining satire, phantasy and humour, while touching on the matter of artistic integrity and the role of art in society, the artists' responsibility, the point of persisting with truth as a value when society itself is based on lies.

South East Europe Media Forum

Over 250 participants representing editors-in-chief, leading journalists, business professionals, civil society and academia from the CEI region and beyond as well as representatives of



international organisations and state institutions gathered in Zagreb, Croatia, on 4-5 November for the South East Europe Media Forum (SEEMF). This year the event focused on "The Future of Public Broadcasting and Print Media in South East Europe: Financing, Independency, New Business Models". Welcome speeches were delivered by the representatives of the three partner institutions – the South East Europe Media Organisation - SEEMO, the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Media Program SEE and the Central European Initiative. The Forum's agenda addressed key issues such as: Public Service Media under pressure – between finance struggles and political influence; multimedia – "rescue package" for established media outlets?; print media as pillar for democracy. The debate witnessed a lively participation from the audience with several questions and contributions. The need for promoting education activities especially to train the new generation of journalists was particularly tackled, considering the challenges and opportunities of the new technologies, on one side, and the necessity to preserve the standards and the ethics of journalism, on the other side. During the SEEMF, the CEI SEEMO Award for Outstanding Merits in Investigative Journalism 2019 was presented.

CEI SEEMO Award for Outstanding Merits in Investigative Journalism

The Award had a special focus on environmental issues. 23 nominations, covering 11 countries, were submitted, confirming the region-wide impact and relevance of the Award. It was bestowed upon Ermin Zatega (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Mubarek Asani (North Macedonia) in the section "Professional Journalists" and Arlis Alikaj (Albania) in the section "Young Professional Journalists". Ermin Zatega and Mubarek Asani work at the Center for Investigative Journalism (CIN) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The award was meant to recognise their contribution to the investigative journalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Western Balkan



region, especially for the impact their teamwork stories had on society in a challenging environment. Their stories have contributed to awareness raising, also at the European level, of the environmental problems affecting the entire region. Arlis Alikaj had been working on a new story dealing with illegal logging in Albania. This award is meant to acknowledge his courageous reporting and the importance of the work of young local journalists. During his work, Alikaj had to face many challenges including harassment and threats. A Special Mention was assigned to Jagoda Bastalić from Croatia, for her independent work in investigative journalism and in-depth professional reporting made for the public broadcasting company Croatian Radiotelevision (Hrvatska radiotelevizija - HRT). The jury also decided to bestow a special mention to Dina Đorđević for her contribution, as young journalist working in a team with Vladimir Kostić, in investigating important environmental topics in her country, Serbia, while facing threats and several challenges.

Projects, Programmes and Instruments

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 co-financed projects represent a major tool for attaining the goals outlined in the CEI Plan of Action, as well as a unique capacity of the CEI, if compared to other regional organisations. 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”.

In the time frame 2004-2019, the CEI participated in the successful implementation of 36 projects with a total fund mobilisation of 63.33 million EUR. In 2019 alone, 20 projects were under implementation (6 were closed in the course of the year) with a total mobilisation of 37.5 million EUR, of which over 4 million administered by the CEI-ES (*the full list of the EU-funded projects under implementation in 2019 is attached as Annex 4*).

Technical Cooperation Programme

The Technical Cooperation projects (TCs) constitute the largest part of the activity funded by the CEI Fund at the EBRD, entirely financed by Italy. 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-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. The strategic focus of technical assistance has moved over time in the direction of non-EU CEI Member States, in order to help them to reach European Union (EU) standards. The projects have been coherent with the framework and general objectives of the EBRD and other international financial institutions (IFIs) and have represented a fundamental means of development for CEI countries of operations. One of the objectives of TC projects at the EBRD is to support the Bank’s investments and loans either at the EBRD project preparation or at the project implementation phase. As such, TCs are often related to international investments. It should be underlined that the CEI has undertaken projects which yield high co-financing ratios.

Between 1993 and 2019, the CEI Fund has dedicated over 28.8 million EUR for 180 TC assignments. These TC projects are expected to mobilise over 6.6 billion EUR of international investments. The EBRD alone is expected to contribute to those investments with approximately 4.4 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 2019, the TIR is estimated to be 1:230. The EBRD’s share, alone, is expected to reach approximately 154 EUR for each euro of the CEI Fund dedicated to TC projects: this represents the EBRD Investment Ratio (EIR).

In 2019, the CEI Fund at the EBRD committed 1,179,910 EUR for 9 Technical Cooperation assignments (*the full list of the TC projects approved in 2019 is attached as Annex 5*).

Know-how Exchange Programme

Launched in 2004, the Know-how Exchange Programme (KEP) is a development assistance instrument aimed at supporting transfer of experience from the EU to the non-EU countries within the CEI region. The Programme originates from the belief that European integration and economic development in non-EU CEI Member States can be strengthened by transferring good practices and introducing benchmarks already tested and established in countries that have gone through the EU accession process. As such, the KEP offers grants to institutions from EU countries willing to share their experience with their partners in the non-EU CEI countries. The Programme operates through calls for proposals.

Since its establishment, the KEP Projects have been financed by the CEI Fund at the EBRD, financed by Italy (KEP Italy), and managed by the Office for the CEI Fund at the EBRD. In 2008 and 2011 the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs made two voluntary contributions of 25,000 EUR each to support KEP activities, while in 2017 an additional 40,000 EUR has been voluntarily contributed again by Poland.

To date, 109 projects have been financed for a total CEI Fund contribution of over 3.1 million EUR with an overall project value amounting to 14.4 million EUR. The projects targeted recipient institutions from almost all non-EU CEI Member States.

In 2019, the KEP Italy co-financed 8 new projects with resources from the CEI Fund at EBRD with a contribution amounting to 270,075 EUR and an overall total cost of projects of about 605,158 EUR (*the full list of the KEP projects approved in 2019 is attached as Annex 6*).

Projects financed by the Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia (ARFVG)

The CEI-ES signed an agreement with the ARFVG in Trieste on 26 May 2014, with the aim to strengthen cooperation between the two parties and further develop relations between the FVG and the countries of Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe. Through this enhanced partnership, the CEI contributes to increasing the FVG international links and reinforcing the role of the Region in the Adriatic-Ionian macro-regional strategy, as well as to developing new economic relations with the Balkans and the Danube area, and the countries bordering the Black and Baltic Seas. The CEI's longstanding experience in promoting regional cooperation as well as the solid experience in managing EU projects serves to this purpose.

In this framework, the CEI-ES has developed a more structured cooperation through the realisation of a number of projects and cooperative actions with a total fund mobilisation of about 1 million EUR in 2019. *The 2 projects implemented this year are outlined in Annex 7.*

Cooperation Activities

The CEI Cooperation Activities (CAs) are multilateral small-scale projects, in some cases linked to a larger project. They are entirely financed out of the CEI Cooperation Fund to which all Member States contribute annually, according to an agreed scale of contributions.

Since the start of its operations in 2002, the CEI Cooperation Fund has co-financed - with an amount of more than 10.7 million EUR – about 1200 Cooperation Activities for a total value of the activities amounting to more than 67 million EUR. It is estimated that the annual mobility generated by the Cooperation Fund in its eighteen years of operation is of about 5,000 people.

In 2019, 45 Cooperation Activities were approved. The total CEI contribution for these activities amounts to 344,340,16 EUR or about 15% of the total cost of the projects representing a total value of around 2.34 million EUR (*the full list of Cooperation Activities approved in 2019 is attached as Annex 8*).

Advanced Training Programme for Young Officials

The Programme, financed out of the CEI Cooperation Fund, aims at providing training for young professionals on work at the CEI-ES, thus gaining knowledge not only on its numerous institutional and promotional activities, but also on the importance of regional cooperation in general through both multilateral diplomacy and project and programme management. In 2019 several young professional in the framework of both the fifth and sixth edition of the Programme performed their traineeship at the CEI-ES: Simon Andov from North Macedonia (External Relations); Ksenija Martinović from Montenegro (Project Management), Faris Mahmutović from Bosnia and Herzegovina (Public Relations and Communication), Lorena Zajmi from Albania (Policy Research), Darija Sesar from Bosnia and Herzegovina (Liaison) and Alina Juhasz from Hungary (Administration).

Annexes
Annexes

1

Calendar

Calendar of Events of the Italian CEI Presidency 2019

<i>Date</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Event</i>
22 February	Rome	1st Meeting of the CEI Committee of National Coordinators (CNC)
10 April	London	2nd Meeting of the CEI Committee of National Coordinators (CNC) and Meeting of the Steering Committee of the CEI Fund at the EBRD
15 May	Brussels	3rd Meeting of the CEI Committee of National Coordinators (CNC) with the Permanent Representations and Representatives of EU Institutions
27-28 May	Trieste	Meeting of the CEI Parliamentary Committee
11 June	Trieste	4th Meeting of the CEI Committee of National Coordinators (CNC)
12 June	Trieste	Meeting of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the CEI Member States (MFA Meeting)
20 June	Strasbourg	Working lunch with Permanent Representatives of CEI Member States to the Council of Europe
17 July	New York	CEI side-event at UN "The contribution of regional cooperation and partnerships to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: the experience of the Central European initiative (CEI)"
25 September	New York	Informal MFA Meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly
10 October	Rome	5th Meeting of the CEI Committee of National Coordinators (CNC)
10-11 October	Rome	CEI Dialogue Forum on Youth
7-8 November	Rome	Meeting of the CEI Parliamentary Assembly
15 November	Milan	CEI Business and Expert Forum "Infrastructural and multimodal connectivity as factor of development and integration"
26 November	Rome	Conference on Anti-corruption "Curbing corruption: learning from the decade behind us and looking into the decade ahead"
13 December	Trieste	Ministerial Meeting on Science and Research "How can regional cooperation in science and technology foster sustainable development in CEI Member States?"
18 December	Rome	Summit of the Public Health Alliance Central Eastern Europe (PHACEE)
19 December	Rome	CEI Summit of the Heads of Government

Contributions

Contributions to the CEI-ES Budget 2019

Contribution from Italian MFA (including contribution to Cooperation Fund)	€ 1,400,053.00
Contribution from Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia (ARFVG), including for CEI-ARFVG Projects	€ 324,023.13
Contribution from Member States to CEI Cooperation Fund (excluding Italy)	€ 284,030.00
EU Grants and Refunds, in the framework of EU-funded projects	€ 1,054,089.05

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Staff

Staff of the CEI-Executive Secretariat 2019

CEI-Executive Secretariat

Executive Level

Roberto Antonione <i>Secretary General</i>	Overall management of the CEI activities.
Antal Nikoletti <i>Alternate Secretary General</i>	Overall management of the CEI activities. CEI Economic Dimension.
Nina Kodelja <i>Deputy Secretary General</i>	Overall management of the CEI activities. Institutional relations.
Zoran Jovanović <i>Deputy Secretary General</i>	Overall management of the CEI activities. CEI Parliamentary Dimension.

Executive staff

Lidija Arsova <i>Senior Executive Officer</i>	Liaison with Member States (CNC and CEI Presidency); External relations; Preparation of CNC meetings, MFA Meetings and CEI Summit; Coordination of Annual Report and Plan of Action.
Barbara Fabro <i>Senior Executive Officer</i>	Cooperation Activities and Feature Events in the areas of Intercultural Cooperation and Media; communication and media relations including CEI website's news and CEI newsletter (until March 2019); CEI Award for Outstanding Merits in Journalism and other CEI Prizes/Awards.
Alessandro Lombardo <i>Senior Executive Officer</i>	Head of Programme - Unit for EU Projects; management of EU projects including related financial administration; Coordination of CEI activities in the field of Scientific Cooperation, Science Diplomacy and Innovation, including Cooperation Activities in these areas; CEI Executive Secretariat's financial management.
Tania Pibernik <i>Senior Executive Officer</i>	Cooperation Activities in the area of Education and Training, Capacity Building and Information Society; English reviser/copy-editor of CEI website, publications and official documents; corporate image. Communication and media relations (from March 2019).
Paola Plancher <i>Senior Executive Officer</i>	Supervision of procedural requirements and administrative evaluation of CEI Cooperation Activities. Coordination of ministerial and other high-level meetings organized at CEI Headquarters.
Slavena Radovanovic <i>Senior Executive Officer</i>	Cooperation Activities in the area of Climate, Environment and Rural Development; management of EU projects including related financial administration; coordination of Young Officials from CEI Member States; coordination of intern recruitment.

Administrative staff

Roberta Milano <i>Senior Administrative Officer</i> <i>/Accountant</i>	Head of Human Resources; responsible for Personnel Administration and General Services; Accounting; Cooperation on budgetary issues: overall financial planning, monitoring and reporting of Italian Contribution (L. 286/1997 and 142/2003) and overall financial planning, monitoring and reporting of contributions provided by the Region FVG (LR 11/1996, 18/2011 and 19/2000).
Loretta Brcic <i>Senior Administrative Officer</i>	Assistance to SG; assistance to accounting; assistance to administration of personnel issues; supervision on relations with suppliers; supervision on conference services.
Antonio Monteduro <i>Senior Administrative Officer</i>	Archives and Protocol; switchboard; management of the official CEI e-mail address; any other office management tasks delegated by the administrative office.

Staff

Staff of the CEI-Executive Secretariat 2019

Frida Cottic <i>Administrative Officer</i>	Assistance to SG; travel desk for SG, ASG and DSG; relations with suppliers and MFA with regards to ID cards, passports and plates; administrative support to CEI-ES and to Office of the CEI Fund at the EBRD; overall office maintenance; hospitality and conference services, including internal meetings; errands
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Francesca Taliani de Marchio <i>Senior Secretary</i>	Detached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy
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Office for the CEI Fund at the EBRD

Elisabetta Dovier <i>Programme Manager</i>	Management of the CEI Fund at the EBRD: Technical Cooperation Programme and the Know-how Exchange Programme.
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Simona Mameli <i>Executive Officer</i>	Liaison Officer at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy. Support in the management of the CEI Fund at the EBRD.
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Unit for EU Projects

Anna Marconato <i>Programme Manager</i>	Head of Finance and Administration – Unit for EU Projects; Project Manager of COME-INI, NAMIRG, SENTINEL, PRE-RIGHTS, TAAAFE.
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Ugo Poli <i>Project Manager</i>	Project Manager of SECNET, TARTINI, ICARUS; Focal Point Migrations; Focal Point Anti-corruption; Member of EUSDR PA10 SC.
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Paolo Dileno <i>Project Manager</i>	Project Manager of CONNECT2CE, ADRIPASS, INTERCONNECT.
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Peter Canciani <i>Project Manager</i>	Project Manager of SUMPORT, SULPITER, ETIP, CELEBIO.
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Olga Izquierdo Sotorriò <i>Project Officer</i>	Day-to-day support to project management and reporting.
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Lara Cocco <i>Project Officer</i>	Day-to-day support to project management and reporting.
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Alice Pappas <i>Project Officer</i>	Day-to-day support to project management and reporting.
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Ana Sinkovic <i>Project Officer</i>	Day-to-day support to project management and reporting.
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Ana Aligrudić <i>Project Assistant</i>	Assistance to reporting, day-to-day project management and communication activities.
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Cooperation with ARFVG

Carlo Fortuna <i>Programme Manager</i>	Project Manager of SILK2FVG, WB6Facility
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Lisa Chen (Chen Qiong) <i>Project Officer</i>	Day-to-day support to project management and reporting (SILK2FVG).
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4

EU-funded Projects

EU-funded Projects Implemented in 2019

Title	Implementation date	EU Programme	Area	CEI-ES Role	Total cost (€)	CEI budget (€)
COME-IN! Cooperating for Open access to Museums - towards a widEr Inclusion	07/2016 - 09/2019	Interreg Central Europe	Cultural Heritage	LP	2.727.737,50	381.980,00
SECNET Cross-border institutional cooperation to strengthen cyber-security in sea-port areas	10/2017 - 03/2019	Interreg Italy-Slovenia	Port security and governance	PP	1.299.675,00	133.650,00
SULPITER Sustainable Logistics for Urban and Regional Planning	06/2016 - 05/2019	Interreg Central Europe	Mobility	PP	2.440.658,30	180.050,00
SUMPORT Sustainable Urban Mobility in MED PORT cities	02/2017 - 12/2019	Interreg MED	Mobility	LP	2.358.759,20	392.562,11
NAMIRG North Adriatic MIRG (Maritime Incident Response Group)	01/2018 - 12/2019	DG ECHO	Environment/Civil Protection	LP	904.698,91	138.522,20
CONNECT2CE Improved rail connections and smart mobility in Central Europe	06/2017-05/2020	Interreg Central Europe	Mobility	LP	2.602.924,73	314.029,60
SENTINEL Advancing the role of social enterprises in the economic and social sector of Central European countries	05/2017 - 05/2020	Interreg Central Europe	Social innovation	PP	2.110.521,20	250.537,50
ITHACA Innovation in Health And Care for All	01/2017 - 12/2021	Interreg Europe	Health	SC	2.263.152,61	98.300,00
ADRIPASS Integrating multimodal connections in the Adriatic-Ionian region	01/2018 - 12/2020	Interreg ADRION	Mobility	LP	1.423.893,50	211.895,00
INTER-CONNECT Intermodality Promotion and Rail Renaissance in Adriatic-Ionian Region	01/2018 - 12/2020	Interreg ADRION	Mobility	PP	1.604.192,00	197.745,00
BLUE_BOOST BOOSTing the innovation potential of the quadruple helix of Adriatic-Ionian traditional and emerging BLUE sectors clusters through an open source/knowledge sharing and community based approach in favour of MED blue and green growth	01/2018 - 04/2020	Interreg ADRION	Innovation / Blue economy	PP	1.489.422,00	252.598,00
TARTINI Cultural tourism along the heritage of Giuseppe Tartini	10/2017 - 02/2020	Interreg Italy-Slovenia	Cultural Heritage	PP	1.286.926,00	212.059,00

EU-funded Projects

EU-funded Projects Implemented in 2019

4HELIX+ Empowering the 4 helix of MED maritime clusters through an open source/knowledge sharing and community-based approach in Favour of MED blue growth	02/2018 - 07/2020	Interreg MED	Innovation / Blue economy	PP	2.193.983,75	148.808,75
DIGITAL HEALTH EUROPE Digital transformation in Health and Care	01/2019 - 12/2020	H2020	Health	PP	3.999.993,75	41.400,00
ETIP-B-SABS 2 European Technology and Innovation Platform on Bioenergy	09/2018 - 08/2021	H2020	Bioenergy	PP	997.720,00	93.750,00
ICARUS Intermodal Connections in Adriatic-Ionian Region to Upgrowth Seamless solutions for passengers	01/2019 - 06/2021	Interreg Italy-Croatia	Mobility	PP	2.200.000,00	170.000,00
CELEBIO Central European Leaders of bioeconomy network	06/2019 - 06/2020	H2020 (BBI-JU)	Bioeconomy	LP	749.350,00	197.500,00
ACSELL ACcelerating SmE innovation capacities with a Living Lab approach	08/2019 - 07/2023	Interreg Europe	Innovation	PP	1.726.686,00	161.600,00
PRE-RIGHTS Assessing impact and performance of preventive measures on EU Directives and Framework Decisions	10/2019 - 09/2021	Justice	Judicial cooperation	LP	806.673,00	207.152,00
TAAFE Towards an Alpine Age-Friendly Environment	10/2019 - 06/2022	Interreg Alpine	Social innovation	PP	2.168.317,23	135.399,84

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TC Projects

TC Projects Approved in 2019

Title	Beneficiary country	CEI Grant (€)
Serbia: Route 7 Highway - Lender's Monitor	Serbia	125,000
Serbia Voz Rolling Stock Acquisition - Lender's Monitor	Serbia	75,000
Renewable Energy Auctions support to Moldova - Policy Dialogue	Moldova	200,000
Analysis of Climate Change Risks to Critical Transport Infrastructure Networks in Ukraine	Ukraine	149,910
Climate Resilience Assessment for Belarus - Regional Bridges and M3 Road Rehabilitation	Belarus	75,000
Advice for Small Businesses in Moldova (Youth and Skills)	Moldova	300,000
Sustainable and Eco-tourism Programme - Albanian National and Regional Roads Project	Albania	75,000
Enhancing Public Procurement Professionalism Capacity Building Programme	Regional, non-EU CEI Member States	60,000
Increasing Market Opportunities for High-quality Food Product	Regional (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia)	120,000

KEP Projects

KEP Projects Approved in 2019

KEP Italy

Title	Know-How Provider Country	Know-How Recipient Country	CEI Grant (€)
CEI support for strengthening Energy Regulatory Authorities in the Western Balkans - Third phase	Italy	Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, North Macedonia	39,928
MEAT BIOHAZ	Italy	Serbia	40,000
INNOKEP-FEED: Innovative Know-how Exchange Programme in Animal Nutrition and Feed Technology	Italy	Serbia	39,950
On the Flood Wave of Vardar River. Flood Risk Management for Skopje	Italy	North Macedonia	40,000
Capacity Support of Regional Cooperation in Mine Action	Slovenia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	17,500
Promoting geological, ecological and cultural heritage through sustainable development and creation of geo-parks - GECCOSPARK	Italy	North Macedonia	40,000
Introducing modern learning methods in North Macedonia using Italian experiences - INLEARN	Italy	North Macedonia	33,840
Non-invasive and multi-analytical approach to the discovering of "Old Believer Faith icons" of VETKA Museum (Gomel Region, Vetka) - ICONS	Italy; Poland	Belarus	18,860

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CEI-ARFVG Projects

CEI-ARFVG Projects Implemented in 2019

Title	CEI-ES role	Implementation date
WB6 Facility	CEI-ES Implementing partner	September 2018 - September 2021, Western Balkans
SILK2FVG plus	CEI-ES Implementing partner	May 2018 – April 2021

Cooperation Activities

Cooperation Activities Approved in 2019

Ref. No.	Activity	Proposer	Institution	PoA Area	CEI Grant (€)
1202.122-20	South East Europe Media Forum SEEMF	Serbia	South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO)	5. Media Freedom	11,235.00
1202.001-20	Trieste Film Festival 31st edition 2020 - Feature Launch Workshop @ East-week / CEI Award / GoCritic!	Italy	Alpe Adria Cinema	4. Intercultural Cooperation	11,250.00
1202.114-20	Regional Conference Save the Rivers Sarajevo 2020	Czech Republic	Arnika – Citizens Support Centre	3. Environmental Protection	8,940.00
1202.071-20	Contact #2 (CERIC-CEI Open ACces Training, second edition)	Other	CERIC (Central European Research Infrastructure Consortium)	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	9,000.00
1202.055-20	CEI Round-Table Discussions at Vilenica	Slovenia	Slovene Writers' Association	4. Intercultural Cooperation	11,235.00
1202.099-20	Summer Seminar for Good Governance – European and Regional Dimensions / XXI Annual Summer Seminar for Young Public Policy Professionals from South Eastern Europe and the Black Sea Region	Bulgaria	Economic Policy Institute (EPI)	1. Good Governance	6,771.00
1202.008-20	Maritime Renaissance – Eastern Adriatic Trade Routes in Post Medieval Period	Croatia	International Centre for Underwater Archaeology in Zadar (ICUA Zadar)	4. Intercultural Cooperation	5,094.00
1202.016-20	EDIFICE4EUROSCIENCE Enhancing Dialogue on Innovation and Future – Initiative for the Central and Eastern European Open Science	Italy	Fondazione Internazionale Trieste per il progresso e la libertà delle scienze	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	8,940.00
1202.061-20	FluoMicro@ICGEB – Course of Fluorescence Microscopy 2020	other	International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB)	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	6,180.00
1202.083-20	Strengthening cooperation among different actors dealing with asylum seekers returnees in Albania and WB countries	Albania	Center for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), Tirana	1. Good Governance	8,082.00

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Cooperation Activities

Cooperation Activities Approved in 2019

1202.003-20	X Spring School on “IoT, economic and management challenges for e-health integration in the enlarged Europe” in the frame of the Higher Education in Clinical Engineering (SSIC-HECE) Masters’ Program	Italy	SSIC-HECE (Higher Education in Clinical Engineering) of the University of Trieste	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	7,311.00
1202.018-20	15th international conference DisCo 2020: Active Learning in Digital Era: How Digital Tools promote a Conscious, Open-minded, Creative and Social-Oriented Thinking	Czech Republic	Center for Higher Education Studies (CHES)	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	7,566.00
1202.054-20	CEI Piano Forum 2020: MUSICAL DIPLOMACY	Italy	Piano FVG	4. Intercultural Cooperation	4,500.00
1202.060-20	Public Health Alliance in Central-Eastern Europe – PHACEE Summit 2020	Italy	Istituto Superiore di Sanità (organ of the Italian National Health System for the Ministry of Health)	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	8,353.20
1202.090-20	Regional Forum “Remembrance and intercultural dialogue”	North Macedonia	ALDA Skopje	4. Intercultural Cooperation	8,646.00
1202.111-20	CEI Foodie Dialogues: Short Food Supply Chains Boost for non-EU CEI	Poland	Development Policy Foundation (DPF) Warsaw	2. Economic Growth	8,943.60
1202.015-20	11th CEI Regional Forum for Health, Wellness and Spa Industry (Rural & Wellness Tourism)	Serbia	Cluster of Health, Wellness and SPA Tourism Serbia (Cluster Wellness Serbia)	2. Economic Growth	5,696.00
1202.066-20	Education and Industry Advancing Together in Tourism and Hotel Industry of Central Europe / EIAT Conference	Serbia	Centre for Tourism Research and Studies	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	8,904.00
1202.035-20	FESTIVAL IDENTITY 2020 – workshops for film professionals from across Europe	Czech Republic	DOC.DREAM Services, s.r.o.	4. Intercultural Cooperation	7,587.53

Cooperation Activities

Cooperation Activities Approved in 2019

1202.064-20	Biodiversity protection across borders - legal watch over extractive and energy industries	Czech Republic	Justice and environment	3. Environmental Protection	4,273.50
1202.086-20	Trieste2020 Balkan Science Journalism Workshop	Italy	Center for Ethics in Science and Journalism	5. Media Freedom	7,947.50
1202.025-20	The European Union and Legal Reform Summer School (EULR)	Italy	Johns Hopkins University SAIS Bologna Center	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	7,441.50
1202.033-20	XVI International Forum of Aquileia Euroregion – The Past that Does Not Pass	Italy	Mitteuropa Association	4. Intercultural Cooperation	6,325.00
1202.067-20	RISE enlaRging epoS mEmbership	Italy	OGS - National Institute of Oceanography and Applied Geophysics	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	6,622.00
1202.021-20	International Conference: IT solution. Open new jobs and exchange of cultures due to the development of the Craft network, tourism, through modern technology	Moldova	Association of Professional Women of Moldova	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	8,085.00
1202.123-20	III International Conference Media and Persons with Disabilities	Serbia	International Academy	5. Media Freedom	7,097.75
1202.116-20	Young Bled Strategic Forum	Slovenia	Center for European Perspective (CEP)	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	8,250.00
1202.089-20	International Exchange on Water Utility Performance - Utility Benchmarking Program for Water Supply and Sewage Utilities in Ukraine, UBP Ukraine	Ukraine	NGO "Danube Water Centre"	1. Good Governance	7,815.37
1202.059-20	SEEIIST (South East European International Institute for Sustainable Technologies) meets Industry	Bosnia and Herzegovina	University of Sarajevo	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	8,153.20

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Cooperation Activities

Cooperation Activities Approved in 2019

1202.068-20	16th International Summer School "National Energy and Climate Plans 2021- 2030 in CEI Member States"	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Regional Education and Information Centre for Sustainable Development in South East Europe (REIC)	3. Environmental Protection	8,156.50
1202.029-20	Unlocking the potential for successful technology transfer (Technology Transfer Brokerage Event)	North Macedonia	YES - Youth Entrepreneurial Service (YES) Foundation	2. Economic Growth	7,298.50
1202.037-20	Business and Arbitration in an era of globalization: Challenges and perspectives	North Macedonia	Economic Chamber - Permanent Court of Arbitration	1. Good Governance	7,139.00
1202.093-20	Terra Madre Balkans - bringing together stakeholders for sustainable food system in the region	North Macedonia	Slow Food	2. Economic Growth	8,195.00
1202.009-20	Conference on making Theatre for/with vulnerable groups (working title)	Slovenia	Slovene National Theatre Maribor	4. Intercultural Cooperation	8,236.14
1202.040-20	Annual Meeting of the Transnational SE Advocacy Network	Hungary	Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta, Hungary	2. Economic Growth	5,483.50
1202.043-20	Second Trieste International Forum for Cultural Diplomacy "Promoting the role of young people in the field of Cultural Diplomacy"	Italy	International Association for Cooperation and Cultural Diplomacy	4. Intercultural Cooperation	5,000.00
1202.048-20	Danube Future Interdisciplinary School: "2020: Sustainable development in the Danube River Basin. Where we are and how we tackle future challenges?"	Romania	University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Cluj-Napoca	2. Economic Growth	8,239.00
1202.013-20	Agricultural Heritage Systems: Place of Central-European Countries	Belarus	Republican Scientific Unitary Enterprise "The Institute of System Researches in Agroindustrial Complex of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus"	2. Economic Growth	6,076.13

Cooperation Activities

Cooperation Activities Approved in 2019

1202.094-20	Dis/Entangling Technoscience. Vulnerability, Responsibility and Justice	Italy	Italian Society of Science and Technology Studies (STS Italia)	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	7,672.50
1202.084-20	WHEN EAST MEETS WEST Co-production Forum - WEMW	Italy	ITALY – Friuli Venezia Giulia Audiovisual Fund	4. Intercultural Cooperation	8,250.00
1202.002-20	17th Annual Scientific Conference of Montenegrin Sports Academy "Sport, Physical Activity and Health: Contemporary Perspectives"	Montenegro	Montenegrin Sports Academy, Podgorica	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	8,195.00
1202.074-20	Towards Social Economy: Young Social Innovators as Forerunners of Positive Change	North Macedonia	Mladiinfo - Association for Education Mladiinfo International	2. Economic Growth	5,959.25
.1202.104-20	Warsaw 2020 - "Youth's Vision for the Future of Europe"	Other - European Youth Parliament through Schwarzkopf-Stiftung Junges Europa (SF)	Schwarzkopf-Stiftung Junges Europa (SF) Hamburg	4. Intercultural Cooperation	8,250.00
1202.079-20	How to implement adaptation measurements to climate changes	Slovakia	City TV Foundation	3. Environmental Protection	7,727.50
1202.051-20	18Th International Conference on Mathematical Methods in Electromagnetic Theory (MMET*2020)	Ukraine	Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE)	6. Scientific Cooperation / Education and Training	8,217.00



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