

WHO WE ARE

The Central European Initiative (CEI) was founded in Budapest on 11 November 1989. It is a regional intergovernmental forum committed to supporting European integration and sustainable development through cooperation between and among its Member States and with the European Union, international and regional organisations as well as with other public or private institutions and non-governmental organisations. While acting as a platform for political dialogue, the CEI has developed a strong operational, result-oriented approach to regional cooperation. It combines multilateral diplomacy and fund, programme and project management as both donor and recipient. The everyday CEI activities are handled by the CEI-Executive Secretariat in Trieste, including the development and implementation of projects.

17 MEMBER STATES

Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine.

THREE-PILLAR SYSTEM

• Governmental Dimension

Composed of the Committee of National Coordinators (CNC), responsible for the CEI cooperation; decisions are approved by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Heads of Government. The annual rotating Presidency is held in turn by each of the 17 CEI Member States.

• Parliamentary Dimension

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

• Business Dimension

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

WHAT WE DO

CONNECTIVITY



DIVERSITY



HOW WE DO IT

CEI Cooperation Fund

Provided by all Member States, it supports projects of small scale and limited duration such as seminars, workshops, training courses or other kinds of meetings focusing on mobility and networking. Since 2002 more than 1140 activities have been co-financed with around €10 million and an overall value of about €65 million. It is estimated that around 5000 participants take part in the events every year.

CEI Fund at EBRD

In 1992, the Italian Government established the CEI Fund at the EBRD for financing projects and activities targeting the non-EU CEI Member States. Since its inception, the Italian contribution has reached €47.5 million. The Fund mainly finances grant-type Technical Cooperation (TC) projects in support of EBRD investments and operations. To date over 160 TC assignments with a total cost of around €27.5 million have been undertaken. In addition to Technical Cooperation, the CEI Fund is the main source of financing for the Know-how Exchange Programme (KEP), a grant facility supporting capacity building and best-practice transfer from institutions in CEI-EU countries to benefit recipients in non-EU CEI Member States. To date, about €2.8 million have been committed by the CEI Fund in order to support over 100 KEP operations.

CEI Know-how Exchange Programme

Provides grants for projects related to capacity building and transfer of good practices from EU to non-EU CEI Member States. Since 2004, over €3.5 million have been allocated by Italy through the CEI Fund at the EBRD and by Austria through an agreement with the Austrian Development Agency and by Poland. So far, 134 projects for an overall value of over €15 million have been supported.

CEI Participation in EU Projects

Enhances the involvement of CEI countries in EU projects focusing on transnational and regional cooperation for European integration. Since 2004, 30 projects have been implemented with a total fund mobilisation of over €52 million; 14 projects are currently under implementation and 3 are in the pipeline for a total fund mobilisation of about €26 million, of which about €3 million administered by the CEI. The CEI-Executive Secretariat designs, manages and implements the projects, acting as both Partner and Lead Partner.

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