



25
years

1989 - 2014

CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE

CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE: 25 years

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Mission of the Central European Initiative



The Central European Initiative (CEI), a regional intergovernmental forum open to change, is committed to supporting European integration through cooperation between and among its Member States and with the European Union (EU), other interested public institutions or private and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as well as international and regional organisations.

In order to offer a solid contribution to European integration the CEI combines multilateral diplomacy and project management, both as donor and recipient, while also bridging European macro-regions.



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Foreword by the Secretary General



Giovanni Caracciolo di Vietri

The Central European Initiative (CEI) is celebrating its 25th Anniversary since its foundation. We wish to dedicate this special publication to outline how the CEI has developed over the years.

On 11 November 1989 - immediately after the fall of the Berlin wall - four countries (Italy, Austria, Hungary and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on the eve of its dissolution) felt compelled to take action and adopt a Joint Declaration stating their readiness "to strengthen good-neighbourly relations and develop a manifold cooperation between their respective countries". To this end, they launched what is known today as the Central European Initiative.

I am proud to be able to say that since its inception more than two decades ago, the CEI has taken root, grown and finally blossomed into the largest and oldest regional intergovernmental forum, committed to supporting European integration through cooperation among its Member States and the European Union (EU).

Currently counting 18 Member States, the Organisation has become a recognised promoter of EU-non-EU-country partnership and regional cooperation, a clear demonstration of how much can be achieved when all countries make determined efforts to implement internationally-agreed frameworks. But why has it worked so well, what work lies before us? A 25th anniversary is a time for taking stock of progress made so far. During these years we have contributed much to reaching an open and democratic society in Europe, especially during the great changes our continent has seen since the fall of the Iron Curtain.

After 25 years, it is also important to look forward to future goals and opportunities for the CEI. The Organisation has faced many challenges and there are many more ahead. The CEI strategic objectives will ever more focus on supporting its MS on their path towards European integration; promoting the alignment of the CEI Member States to EU standards; implementing small and medium-sized projects and converting constructive ideas into innovative results. Through its project-oriented working method, the CEI is a flexible basis for regional cooperation of its three Eastern Partners.

In this context, the aim of the political cooperation is to supply the countries and their institutions with a flexible, pragmatic platform for regional cooperation, while focusing on their preparation to a future accession to the European Union (EU). In doing so, the CEI will continue paying special attention to capacity building of its non-EU Member States, pursued through know-how transfer and exchange of experience among EU and non EU countries. I see this as solid evidence that the CEI is maintaining its validity even in these difficult times of political turbulence and economic crisis.

The CEI will therefore continue to be actively engaged in supporting projects in various areas of cooperation, thus providing greater possibilities for studying, financing and executing national and international projects. It will also fully exploit its geographical position - connecting the Baltic, the Danube, the Adriatic-Ionian, Black Sea and Alpine regions - in order to continue acting as a bridge between Macro-regions.

October 2014

Message

from the Prime Minister of the Republic of Italy Matteo Renzi



On behalf of the Italian Government, one of the four Founding Members of the Central European Initiative, as well as main donor and host country, I wish to extend my warmest greetings on this wonderful Anniversary.

For 25 years this Organisation has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to provide manifold assistance to its countries. It has played the role of an all-European institution for regional cooperation, while adapting very well to the various political changes. The CEI has further strengthened and consolidated its activities despite the repercussions of the global financial crisis affecting almost all its Member States.

The CEI Secretariat based in Trieste has strongly committed itself to improving the efficiency of available resources. Not only has it benefitted from contributions provided by Italy, but it has also exploited alternative sources for its activities which, inter alia, brought about an increased participation in EU Programmes.

An important element of the CEI's success is its 23-year experience with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) of which Italy is the main donor and continues to support with great determination. The EBRD-CEI Partnership has significantly contributed to strengthening the CEI's project-oriented dimension and in improving the capabilities in the governance of the Western Balkans countries.

The promotion of joint activities has enhanced cooperation with other regional and international mechanisms (both at bilateral and multilateral level). Those who have had leadership roles throughout the years are to be heartily congratulated.

Currently, Italy is holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Ukraine and the Eastern Neighbourhood are among the various topics on the Agenda centered on a new EU foreign policy approach.

The Italian EU Presidency is also strongly committed to ensuring the effectiveness of EU Macro-regional Strategies. In this regard, the CEI establishes links between European Macro-regions, thus making a CEI-EU link ever more crucial. It is interested in the evolving EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, a region with great potential, especially in the light of the integration of the Western Balkans in the EU and the CEI could also be involved in the foreseen EU Strategy for the Alpine Region.

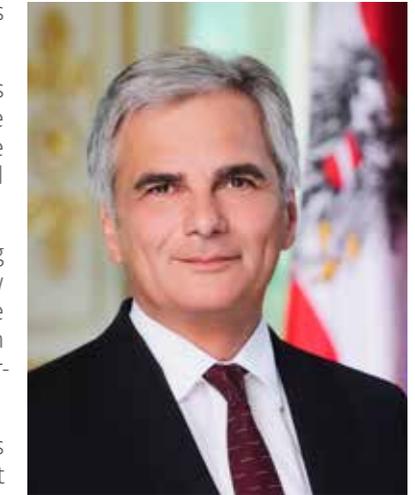
Italy commends both the past and present of this highly respected Organisation and looks forward to seeing it embark on its second quarter of a century with fresh confidence. May it continue fostering our common endeavour: European Integration, peace and solidarity through regional cooperation.

October 2014

Matteo Renzi

Message

from the Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria Werner Faymann



Austria, a Founding Member of the Central European Initiative and its second main donor, is proud to hold the CEI Presidency in this celebrative year.

2014 is a year to recall some of the most fateful events in the history of Europe: 100 years since the outbreak of World War I; 75 years since the outbreak of World War II; 25 years since the fall of the Iron Curtain; 10 years since the European Union's first enlargement to include countries of the former Communist block; 25 years since the establishment of the Central European Initiative.

During these 25 years the Central European Initiative has enlarged from the four founding members Austria (neutral), Italy (EU and NATO member), Hungary (COMECON and Warsaw pact member) and Yugoslavia (non-aligned) to 18 out of which 10 are EU members, five are linked to the EU with Stabilisation and Association Agreements and three with Association Agreements, thus illustrating the huge political transformation Europe as a whole has undergone.

The Central European Initiative spans from the Baltic Sea to the Adriatic and Black Sea. It is bound together by the Danube and is the oldest and largest organisation in our region; it continues playing its bridging role between European Macro and other Regions in order to strengthen synergies and accompany our members on their path towards Europe by supporting the development of modern, democratic societies and sound market economies.

With a market of 240 million inhabitants, the CEI constitutes an important engine for a further prosperous economic development of our continent. The project orientation of the CEI and especially its involvement in the implementation of EU projects makes our Organisation an honest broker among EU members, the acceding EU countries and the EU Eastern Partnership members.

Austria thanks the Secretariat of the Central European Initiative for its valuable work and support and wishes our Organisation a prosperous future.

October 2014

Werner Faymann

Testimonials

from Ministers for Foreign Affairs

"CEI, as the largest and oldest forum on regional intergovernmental cooperation in Europe, presents today a structure with a consolidated profile and a significant contribution to the EU enlargement process."

» **Ditmir BUSHATI**
[Minister for Foreign Affairs - ALBANIA](#)

"The benefit that the CEI provides is its geographic scope connecting the Adriatic-Ionian, the Baltic and the Black Sea regions bound together by the Danube. The fact that the EU Commission has confirmed an enhanced role for the CEI in the context of the Danube Strategy is a very good step."

» **Sebastian KURZ**
[Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs - AUSTRIA](#)

"The core mission of the CEI in the future should remain largely the same – to foster European integration and to prevent new divisions in Europe through pragmatic cooperation and mutual assistance."

» **Alena KUPCHYNA**
[Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs - BELARUS](#)



Vienna, 3 June 2014, Ministers for Foreign Affairs

"Different experience of the CEI member states, while some of them were in the transition period, served as a guide for Bosnia and Herzegovina on its path towards Euro-Atlantic integration.

Bosnia and Herzegovina fully supported the CEI Agenda for 2014-2016, particularly the areas of cooperation grouped into three thematic pillars covering the whole range of CEI activities: towards a knowledge-based society, towards a sustainable economy and towards an inclusive society."

» **Zlatko LAGUMDŽIJA**
[Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA](#)

"For a quarter of a century CEI has served as an important political, economic, and social bridge between countries, cultures, and peoples. It has been a useful platform, facilitating regional cooperation and European integration, contributing to stability and prosperity in line with EU values and principles. Bulgaria consistently supports the process of European integration of the countries of the region. We see the fulfilment of membership criteria, the maintenance of good neighbourly relations, and regional cooperation as of paramount importance to which CEI continues to offer its valuable contribution."

» **Daniel MITOV**
[Minister for Foreign Affairs - BULGARIA](#)

"The CEI is a valuable regional promoter of European standards and European integration processes, as well of mutual understanding, cooperation and exchange of experience among its Member States that asks for our continuous and firm support."

» **Vesna PUSIĆ**
[First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs - CROATIA](#)

"As the EU enlargement process has moved on, the CEI has gradually shifted its focus towards transmission of its accession experience to non-EU countries and towards supporting these countries during their convergence processes."

» **Lubomír ZAORÁLEK**
[Minister for Foreign Affairs - CZECH REPUBLIC](#)

"Responding appropriately to the current challenges, CEI has stimulated a huge amount of economic development project in the region. Our shared regional knowledge, mutual respect and understanding help us to cooperate in the framework of these projects and might be helpful in finding solutions for the main questions in the future."

» **Péter SZIJJÁRTÓ**
[Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade - HUNGARY](#)

"As one of its founding members, we deem it essential to reaffirm our strong support to the CEI and to its role of impulse to European Integration through regional cooperation. The geopolitical uniqueness of the CEI is irreplaceable and is expressed by its added value in terms of membership ranging from Central to Eastern Europe "via" the Western Balkans, as well as in terms of projects financed through the CEI Trust Fund at the EBRD, financed by Italy."

» **Federica MOGHERINI**
[Minister for Foreign Affairs - ITALY](#)

"The announced support for the Macedonian 2015 CEI Chairmanship is also a support for the continuity and the intensification of regional cooperation. Over the course of our CEI Chairmanship, we will endeavor to press ahead with the idea of building a bridge between macro-regions, with the aim of establishing stronger links among the beneficiaries."

» **Nikola POPOSKI**
[Minister for Foreign Affairs - MACEDONIA](#)

"We applaud CEI's readiness to contribute to the removal of existing barriers and divisions hindering European integration". The prospect of EU membership is a most powerful incentive to build transparent and predictable political and economic systems and to ensure the rule of law. Over the past 25 years, the CEI has affirmed its role in promoting stability, prosperity and cohesion among its member states and enhancing the regional cooperation for European integration."

» **Natalia GHERMAN**
[Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Integration MOLDOVA](#)

"The fact that, after 25 years of its existence, ten states of the Central-European Initiative are the EU members, whereas other states are candidates, potential candidates and EU partners, represents the best proof of the Initiative's credibility, as well as its valuable contribution in the integration processes. It is very clear – cooperation is a key for better future of all our citizens. And I am sure that CEI is one of the best frameworks of regional cooperation from which we all can benefit!"

» **Igor LUKŠIĆ**
[Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Integration MONTENEGRO](#)

"While serving the idea of uniting Europe for the past 25 years the CEI had to face many challenges. The fact that today 10 out of 18 CEI countries are EU members clearly shows the positive effects of this transformation. We understand that CEI's role is to continue to face new challenges and support further the process of political, economic, cultural and social integration of Europe."

» **Grzegorz SCHETYNA**
[Minister for Foreign Affairs - POLAND](#)

"We should all continue to assist Western Balkan states on their way towards European and Euro-Atlantic integration. Romania considers that a similar approach needs to be adopted with regard to the Republic of Moldova, a country that has constantly proved its determination to follow the European path even against a very challenging regional environment. Our cooperation within CEI must remain key for better tackling the common challenges (organized crime, corruption etc.) and grasping the regional opportunities (cross-border cooperation, promoting broad economic projects etc.)"

» **Titus CORLĂȚEAN**
[Minister for Foreign Affairs - ROMANIA](#)

"Prompt response, concrete and efficient assistance show that CEI is important not only as a political idea, but also in concrete terms of assistance in overcoming the difficulties encountered by our citizens during emergencies."

» **Ivica DAČIĆ**
[Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs - SERBIA](#)

"In the 25 years of its existence the CEI has lived up to its purpose and now the emphasis on the strengthening of regional cooperation should be further stepped up."

» **Miroslav LAJČÁK**
[Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs - SLOVAKIA](#)

"Stability and development of the Central European countries are important for the Europe as a whole. The commitment to continue the enlargement process of Western Balkan states is the only guarantee of sustainable development for the entire region. The CEI regional cooperation is not losing ground; on the contrary, it has advantages in establishing regional links and work together in the economic, cultural and political spheres."

» **Karl ERJAVEC**
[Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs - SLOVENIA](#)

"Over the last decade the Central European Initiative remains one of the most effective organizations for overcoming the hurdle of geographic distance and plays a major role in the process of promoting European values around the Baltic, the Danube, the Adriatic and the Black Sea regions."

» **Andrii DESHCHYTSIA**
[Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs - UKRAINE](#)

Presidency: Hungary

Italy, Austria, Hungary, SFR Yugoslavia establish the Quadrangone

Fall of the Iron Curtain**1989****1990****1991****1992****1993****1994****1995****1996****1997****1998****1999****2000****2001****Presidency: Italy**

Czechoslovakia joins (Pentagonale)

Presidency: SFR Yugoslavia

Poland joins (Hexagonale)

Secretariat for Hexagonal projects established in London (later renamed Office for CEI Fund at EBRD)

Presidency: Austria

Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina join

Italian CEI Fund at the EBRD established
Organisation renamed Central European Initiative

Presidency: Hungary

Czech Republic, Slovakia and Macedonia join

Presidency: Italy

CEI Instrument for the Protection of Minority Rights adopted

Official programme established: CEI Summit, MFA Meeting and other ministerial meetings in CEI areas of activity

Presidency: Poland

CEI Guidelines and Rules of Procedure adopted

Decision to establish Centre for Information and Documentation (CEI CID)

Austria joins EU

Presidency: Austria

Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine join

Amb. Paul Hartig (Austria)
1st Director General

CEI CID inaugurated in Trieste
CEI Headquarters Agreement concluded between Italian Government and Austrian CEI Presidency
European Council endorses CEI mission



Amb. Paul Hartig



CEI CID opening ceremony

Presidency: Bosnia and Herzegovina

First CEI Plan of Action adopted

CEI CID renamed CEI-Executive Secretariat

Sarajevo Declaration

Coordination among regional organisations initiated

Presidency: Czech Republic

10th Anniversary celebrated

CEI actively engaged in Stability Pact

Publication on occasion of 10th Anniversary**Presidency: Italy**

CEI Cooperation Fund established

Presidency: Hungary

FR Yugoslavia (later renamed State Union of Serbia and Montenegro) joins

Presidency: Croatia

CEI Solidarity Fund established
MoU with UNECE

Platform for a Dialogue between the CEI and the EU on a Political Level for the Development of CEI-EU Cooperation circulated at Summit in Zagreb

First CEI Summit Economic Forum held in Zagreb: CEI major activity in the economic/business area until 2009

Timeline: history highlights and facts

Presidency: **Macedonia**

Amb. Harald Kreid (Austria)
2nd Director General

CEI Guidelines and Rules of Procedure amended and adopted by CEI Summit in Skopje



Amb. Harald Kreid

Presidency: **Slovenia**

KEP Italy established
CEI University and Science and Technology Networks operational

Slovenia, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary join EU (largest enlargement to date)



Publication on occasion of 10th Anniversary of the CEI Instrument for the Protection on Minority rights

Presidency: **Albania**

Montenegro joins

Concept of Feature Events endorsed: activities carrying the name of the CEI or dedicating special segment to it.

New agreement between Italy and EBRD for CEI Fund

Presidency: **Moldova**

Amb. Pietro Ercole Ago (Italy)
1st Secretary General

Change of titles of the executive level of the Secretariat (Secretary General replaced Director General)

Implementation of CEI Repositioning



Amb. Pietro Ercole Ago

Presidency: **Montenegro**

Amb. Gerhard Pfanzelter (Austria)
2nd Secretary General

Participates in elaboration of Danube Strategy and enhanced partnership with EU

Establishment of International Group of Experts (IGE) on Strengthening of the CEI resulting in Budva Recommendations adopted by the MFAs



Amb. Gerhard Pfanzelter

Presidency: **Ukraine**

Participates in Sixty-Seventh Session of UN General Assembly where resolution 67/7 on Cooperation between United Nations and Central European Initiative was adopted

MoU with Vienna Economic Forum



Amb. Gerhard Pfanzelter, CEI Secretary General, and Amb. Elena Kirtcheva, the Secretary General of the Vienna Economic Forum met at the CEI Headquarters in Trieste on 4 June 2012 in order to sign an MoU.

Presidency: **Austria**

2nd MoU with RCC

UN General Assembly adopts Resolution on Cooperation between UN and CEI

2002

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

2008

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013

2014

Presidency: **Poland**

CEI Medal of Honour established

Enhanced cooperation with Parliamentary Dimension and with the Business Dimension

Conference on CEI Cooperation - bringing together Chairs of all Working Groups, CNC and Secretariat - regularly organised in Trieste.

EC Focal Point for the CEI established



Medal of Honour

Presidency: **Slovakia**Presidency: **Bulgaria**

KEP Austria established
Decision on repositioning adopted

Romania and Bulgaria join the EU

Presidency: **Romania**

1st MoU with RCC
MoU with UNESCO Office in Venice



Publication on occasion of 20th Anniversary

Presidency: **Serbia**

Obtains observer status in UN General Assembly unanimously granted by Resolution 66/111

MoU with BSEC

Implementation of Budva Recommendations



MoU with BSEC signed on 7 March 2011 at BSEC HQs. from left: BSEC SG, Amb. Chrysanthopoulos and CEI SG Amb. Pfanzelter

Presidency: **Hungary**

Amb. Giovanni Caracciolo di Vietri (Italy)
current Secretary General

Revisited Business Dimension

Croatia joins EU



Amb. Giovanni Caracciolo di Vietri

25 years in words

The early days 1989-1994

The origin of the Central European Initiative lies in the creation of the **Quadragonale** established by Italy, Austria, Hungary and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) in Budapest on 11 November 1989 (two days after the fall of the Berlin Wall). The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the four founding members on that occasion, adopted a Joint Declaration stating the *readiness of their Governments to strengthen good-neighbourly relations and to develop manifold cooperation between their respective countries*. The Quadragonale political dimension was able to achieve considerable success in a very short period of time and can be regarded as the first attempt to respond to the request of the former communist countries to approach the Western European institutions.

This success was confirmed by immediate requests from other Central European countries to join the Quadragonale. At the first Meeting of the Heads of Government after its inception, held in Venice in August 1990, the Quadragonale was enlarged with the admission of Czechoslovakia, thus renamed **Pentagonale**. A year later, the Meeting of Heads of Government in Dubrovnik in July 1991 admitted Poland as a full-fledged member, therefore transforming the Pentagonale into **Hexagonale** (or **Hexagonal Initiative**). The Hexagonale was a structured forum acting at ministerial level (Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Heads of Government and Committee of National Coordinators) and at operational level through several Working Groups.

In 1991, the Hexagonal Initiative and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), signed an **Agreement for the Establishment at the EBRD of a Secretariat for Hexagonal Projects**, based on the complementary objectives and functions of the two parties. In 1992, the Italian Government and the EBRD signed an **Agreement on the establishment of a**

CEI Fund within the Bank, entirely provided by Italy.

The Yugoslav crisis, which started in 1991 severely hampered the functioning of the Hexagonale, but it also proved the vitality and worthiness of the Initiative that managed to survive the dramatic dislocation of one of its founding members, initially by suspending the SFRY and then gradually readmitting the new states emerging on its territory. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia were admitted by the Vienna Meeting of the Heads of Government in July 1992, where the renaming of Hexagonal Initiative into **Central European Initiative (CEI)** was decided upon.

With the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993, both the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic were admitted to the CEI. At the Budapest Meeting of the Heads of Government in July 1993, a proposal for the admission of Macedonia (tenth member of the Initiative) was approved. That same year the **Secretariat for CEI Projects** later renamed **Office for the CEI Fund at the EBRD**, started operating at the EBRD Headquarters in London. The first commitment by Italy for a **Technical Cooperation Project** in Ukraine was approved.

The Italian CEI Presidency, in 1994, actively worked to strengthen the CEI as a forum for preparing and facilitating the accession of its members to the EU. In addition, the CEI had established an Association Council in which Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine (so called “associated countries”) participated with a view of setting the basis for their cooperation with the CEI.

The Turin Meeting of Heads of Government in November 1994 decided upon a restructuring of the official programme of the CEI high-level meetings by holding the **Meeting of Heads of Government (CEI Summit)** and the **Meeting of Ministers of**

Foreign Affairs (MFA Meeting) of the CEI Member States and by convening ministerial meetings in the areas of CEI activity on an annual basis. The Turin Meeting also endorsed the **CEI Instrument for the Protection of Minority Rights**, a far-reaching document negotiated by the competent Working Group. The original text, adapted to the situation of Central Europe, was proposed by Italy according to existing international documents. The CEI Instrument was a major political success: over the years it has been signed by thirteen CEI Member States¹.

The expansion 1995 – 2006

In 1995 and 1996 a certain form of institutionalisation of the Initiative took place. During the CEI Summit in Warsaw in October 1995, the Heads of Government agreed on two key decisions: adopt the **Guidelines for Activities and Rules of Procedure of the Central European Initiative**, document which *summarizes in basic form the Initiative’s objectives, its structure and operating principles*; and set up a **CEI Centre for Information and Documentation (CEI CID)** in Trieste, upon an offer made by Italy, namely by the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region and the City of Trieste.

The CEI CID was inaugurated in Trieste in March 1996. It aimed at preparing, compiling and disseminating documentation for facilitating the exchange of information among the various CEI structures and for promoting the activities of the CEI. The CEI Presidency, represented at the time by Austria, and the Italian Government, signed the **Agreement on the Seat of the CEI CID in Trieste (Headquarters Agreement)** in Vienna on 24 July 1996. On the basis of this Agreement, the CEI CID, later renamed CEI-Executive Secretariat (CEI-ES), operates with the legal status of an International Organisation.

The MFA Meeting held in Vienna in May 1996 approved the full membership of the associated countries and the CEI Summit in Graz in November 1996 admitted Moldova as its sixteenth member. In view of the enlarged CEI membership, the widening scope of its activities and the enhanced role of the CEI in the process of European integration, it was agreed that urgent measures were necessary in order to improve the structure of

the CEI CID in terms of financing, personnel and equipment. Following this enlargement, priority attention was given to efforts aimed at advancing cohesion and harmonious economic and social development in the region. This was because of the fact that these 16 countries had substantial disparities in their economic strength and performance as well as different levels in the transition and integration process, especially regarding their status of relations with the European Union (EU). The CEI countries started to see EU membership as the most viable and sound way of being integrated in the western society. This perception among the CEI Member States was consolidated by the accession of Austria to the EU in 1995. The CEI, thanks to the presence of Italy and Austria, represented a natural link between the EU and the countries of Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe. **The Presidency Conclusions of the Florence European Council of 21 – 22 June 1996 at point 4 “Regional cooperation in Europe”** stated that it *recalls the importance of the Central European Initiative (CEI), welcomes its recent enlargement, and invites the Commission to submit a report to the European Council in Dublin on appropriate initiatives for more intensive cooperation*.

Under the CEI Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1997, the basic concepts for the future political and operational orientation of the CEI were elaborated. The MFA Meeting in June 1997 decided to orient activities in the various bodies of the CEI to concentrate on strengthening the capacities of the least advanced member countries and those having the greatest need for accelerated economic development or recovery. The CEI Summit in Sarajevo in November 1997 confirmed this orientation and adopted two documents of major importance: the **Sarajevo Declaration** and the **CEI Plan of Action 1998-1999**. The CEI Summit in Sarajevo also renamed the CEI Centre for Information and Documentation into **CEI-Executive Secretariat (CEI-ES)**. With the adoption of the Sarajevo Declaration and the Plan of Action 1998-1999 it was agreed that one of the main tasks of the CEI, as a forum for cooperation, should be that of reducing the impact of existing and possible disparities among and between CEI Member States and to avoid the creation of new dividing lines in Europe.

In the meantime, the CEI was developing numerous activities and initiatives for cooperation, ranging from workshops and

¹Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro and Slovenia.

seminars, to projects of specific interest to the countries of the region or in the European context. In many cases the CEI activities and projects were designed to provide political and operative expertise to the countries of Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe and complement the strategic programmes pursued by other international organisations, in particular the EU. To this end, the CEI has maintained strong links with the European Commission (EC), with relevant organisations of the United Nations (UN) and with other international organisations and international financial institutions, especially the EBRD. Furthermore, a transparent and concrete cooperation with these organisations has been activated.

Cooperation between the CEI and other regional actors also dates back to 1997 when a first initiation meeting with representatives of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) for an exchange of information and future cooperation was held in Trieste in April followed by other coordination meetings.

A Memorandum of Understanding between the CEI and the UNECE and a Cooperation Agreement between the UNECE and the CEI/EBRD Secretariat on Technical Support to the CEI were signed in 1998. The latter presented a basis of the financial contribution made by the CEI Trust Fund at the EBRD for the establishment of a CEI Focal Point at the UNECE premises in Geneva to assist the cooperation process.

In order to reach the objectives defined in the Sarajevo Declaration and in the Plan of Action, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, at their meeting in Brioni in June 1998, considered the possibility of making available supplementary financial resources through the co-financing of relevant CEI projects. The **CEI Solidarity Fund**, based on voluntary contributions from the CEI Member States was established that same year at the CEI - ES in Trieste, to facilitate the participation of CEI experts in CEI and CEI-sponsored meetings.

In 1998, at the CEI Summit in Zagreb in November, when Austria held the EU Presidency, a paper entitled **Platform for a Dialogue between the CEI and the EU on a Political Level for the Development of CEI-EU Cooperation** was circulated.

It was based on a Commission Report adopted at the European Council in Dublin in 1996, defining the areas of common interest and the instruments of cooperation between the CEI and the EU. In the framework of the Zagreb Summit a meeting between the CEI Troika² and the EU Presidency at ministerial level produced a **Joint Communiqué on the Cooperation between the CEI and the EU**.

New initiatives to develop the **CEI Parliamentary and Business Dimensions** were also launched in 1998. The engagement of national parliaments in the CEI was highly welcomed by the Ministers and represented a new and important development for the CEI. The first CEI Business Forum, later renamed **CEI Summit Economic Forum (SEF)**, was held on the occasion of the CEI Summit in Zagreb.

In 1999 the Stability Pact (SP) for South Eastern Europe was established. The CEI saw it as an instrument consistent with the CEI strategy of cohesion and solidarity in Europe. The CEI was committed to participating in and contributing to the implementation of the SP objectives. The MFA Meeting in Karlovy Vary in June 1999 adopted a **CEI Position Paper for a Strengthened Cooperation with the SP**.

On the occasion of the CEI Summit in Prague in November 1999 a solemn commemoration of the CEI's 10th anniversary was held in the Prague castle.

At the CEI Summit in Budapest in November 2000, the CEI membership increased to seventeen members with the admission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (afterwards called State Union of Serbia and Montenegro). The CEI enlargement process ended in August 2006 when Montenegro became its eighteenth Member State.

Due to an increased number of projects submitted for CEI financing, the meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, held in Milan in June 2001, decided to establish the **CEI Cooperation Fund** on the basis of annual contributions from all CEI Member States for financing **CEI Cooperation Activities**, small scale regional projects.

In November 2001, the CEI Summit held in Trieste welcomed

the **CEI Youth Forum**, an idea launched by Poland, in order to establish a dialogue with the youth in the CEI area and to give voice to their needs and aspirations. Furthermore, on that occasion, the idea of establishing a "CEI University" was launched with the aim of bringing together young people from the countries of the region in order to contribute to European integration. This idea represented the basis for creating a Network of Universities in the region, the **CEI University Network**.

A relevant institutional reform was introduced in 2002 with the amended CEI Guidelines and Rules of Procedure, adopted by the CEI Summit in Skopje in November 2002. These Guidelines have strengthened the role both of the CEI Parliamentary Dimension and the Business Dimension and were meant to help streamline the CEI activities.

CEI relations with Brussels resulted in the appointment of an **EC Focal Point for the CEI** in 2003. Coordination with other regional actors active in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe was enhanced in 2002. A number of meetings with the regional organisations took place and continued until present time.

The years 2003 and 2004 witnessed a real bloom of the CEI activities. Cooperation with the Parliamentary and Business Dimensions was enhanced. The importance of the Working Groups as the main instruments for demand-driven CEI Cooperation Activities increased. An annual Conference on CEI Cooperation, bringing together the Chairs of all Working Groups was organised on a regular basis. The role of the CEI in the economic field increased, as a result of the strengthening of the CEI structures in economic areas, the impact of the annual CEI Summit Economic Forum and projects and programmes managed by the CEI-PS at the EBRD.

The **CEI Medal of Honour** was created by the decision of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs in Wroclaw in June 2003 for awarding the persons having acquired special merits in the framework of the CEI.

The **CEI University and Science and Technology Networks**, financed by Italy, became operational at the beginning of 2004. On 1 May 2004, five CEI Member States (the Czech Republic,

Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) joined the EU. This event greatly changed the framework of political and economic cooperation not only for the whole continent, but also for the CEI and put more emphasis on the need for extended cooperation preventing new dividing lines between members in different stages of transition and different formats of association with the EU. The commitment of the Organisation shifted towards the countries remaining outside of the EU. The **CEI Know-how Exchange Programme (KEP)**, an instrument for co-financing of projects focusing on the transfer of know-how and best practice from EU to non-EU Member States of the CEI, was launched that same year and financed out of the CEI Trust Fund at the EBRD fully provided by Italy. The CEI-ES also started its active participation in the implementation of **EU-funded projects**.

At the CEI Summit in Tirana in November 2006 the Heads of Government reconfirmed this general position: the EU perspective had proven to be a driving force for the CEI non-EU Member States.

The renewal 2007-2013

Following the EU enlargements of 2007 with Bulgaria and Romania, the CEI initiated a process of repositioning - self-assessment analysis and reflection - in order to appropriately respond and adjust itself to the modified scenario. Once mainly focusing on policy dialogue and institutional cooperation, the CEI has progressively moved its priorities towards economic growth and human development with special focus on capacity building, sharing of experience and know-how transfer.

The CEI Summit in Sofia in November 2007, adopted a set of decisions on the **CEI Repositioning** in order to *render this intergovernmental Forum of eighteen Member States a more effective instrument of cooperation, better equipped to serve the needs of its Member States and to more fully exploit its comparative advantages such as its unique membership, its high political visibility, its demand-driven operational activities and its intergovernmental networks*. One of the decisions regarded the streamlining of CEI activities. Other decisions tackled the transformation of CEI structures (e.g.

² Former, current and incoming CEI Presidencies

transformation of the Working Groups system into **Networks of CEI Focal Points**). With respect to securing sufficient financial resources to carry out CEI programmes and projects, the Member States *committed themselves to make every effort during the forthcoming years to improve gradually their financial contribution to the Operational Activities*. The CEI Summit also decided upon the establishment of a CEI Special Fund for Climate and Environment Protection (CEI Climate Fund) administered by the CEI-ES. Already in December 2007 the Czech Republic transferred the first contribution to the Fund.

In 2008, an additional financing to the Know-how Exchange Programme was provided by Austria, through the Austrian Development Agency.

In 2008 and 2009 a number of actions were made in order to meet the objectives of the repositioning set in Sofia. Particular attention was paid to the strengthened cooperation and coordination with the other regional actors, in particular with the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative (AII), BSEC, CBSS, and with the newly established Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), successor of the SEE Stability Pact. Contacts were revived as well with the main European and international organisations such as the Council of Europe (CoE), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). In 2009 the CEI signed Memoranda of Understanding with RCC and UNESCO Office in Venice. Moreover, since 2008 the CEI obtained the role of Lead Partner in a number of EU-funded projects.

The EU strategies on macro-regions gave new impetus to the CEI and regional cooperation in Europe, opening new challenges for effective multi-level governance and promising avenues for transnational partnership thanks to its perfect geographical position. At the beginning of 2010 the Organisation actively participated in the preparation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) and was acknowledged as a bridge between the Baltic, Danube, Adriatic-Ionian and Black Sea Regions. The CEI has officially been recognised as a Danube Region stakeholder

and is mentioned in the EUSDR Action Plan under chapters on energy and competitiveness.

The MFA Meeting in June 2010 - through the **Budva Recommendations** - confirmed the CEI's central mission: bringing non-EU countries closer to the EU. The Budva roadmap was the conclusion of the **International Group of Experts (IGE) on Strengthening of the CEI**, established in March 2010. It was composed of representatives of the CEI Enlarged Troika (former, current and incoming CEI Presidencies and Italy as the host country, which also chaired the Group) and the Secretary General. The Group established excellent foundations for streamlining CEI's activities and enhancing its role in the region, thus making the Organisation a more effective instrument in the process of EU rapprochement and further EU accession of its non-EU countries. That same year the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the EBRD signed a new agreement with which the CEI Fund at the EBRD was replenished by the Italian Government with EUR 6 million. This important achievement provided most of the resources needed to pursue the Budva roadmap.

The Organisation continued enhancing relations with regional and international actors, cooperation relations with the RCC deserves mentioning in particular in the framework of the **Sustainable Energy Development Regional Initiative (SEDRI)**. The following year, 2011, the CEI signed a **Memorandum of Understanding with BSEC**. It also implemented a contract with the EC (Directorate General on Enlargement) for **Improving Cooperation in South-East Europe by Actions for Strengthening the RCC**.

Under the Serbian CEI Presidency in 2011 the Organisation obtained an **Observer Status in the General Assembly of the UN**, unanimously granted by the General Assembly on 9 December by resolution 66/111, opening a global perspective to CEI's activities. With regard to the EU macro-regional strategies, the interest of the organisation started moving also towards other potential EU Strategies, i.e. the Adriatic and Ionian Region. The principles proposed by the EU 2020 Strategy: promoting a knowledge-based economy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, were also in the limelight.

The observer status in the UN General Assembly put the CEI on the global map of the most important regional organisations working for world peace, security, development and democratic progress. This was confirmed in the framework of the Sixty-Seventh Session of the UN General Assembly under the agenda item "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations" held in New York on 19 November 2012. On that occasion, upon the initiative of the Ukrainian Presidency, the resolution 67/7 on the **Cooperation between the United Nations and the Central European Initiative** was unanimously adopted by the General Assembly. Moreover, on 4 June 2012 the Vienna Economic Forum (VEF) and the CEI signed a Memorandum of Understanding for enhancing cooperation and developing joint activities.

In 2013 the CEI was dedicated to the elaboration of the **CEI Plan of Action (PoA) 2014-2016** adopted by the Heads of Government. The document is a structured roadmap setting out clear and agreed priorities of cooperation in the framework of the CEI. It is aligned with the entry into force of the EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 and in line with provisions of the EU 2020 Strategy. It intends to capitalise on the main strengths of the Organisation, based on its distinctive methodology for the promotion of effective regional cooperation through a combination of multilateral diplomacy and project management.

Under the Hungarian CEI Presidency in 2013, the Member States in cooperation with the CEI Secretariat, have elaborated a new concept for the CEI Business Dimension. In this context, the MFA Meeting in Gödöllő (Hungary) on 31 October 2013, agreed upon revisiting the Business Dimension and introducing a new approach, aimed at addressing the specific needs of SMEs and those of the large businesses. The revisited Business Dimension shall be an effective tool meeting the needs of the business communities within the CEI Region and shall serve to promote growth through enhanced business interaction and clustering. The Ministers endorsed the **Position Paper "Revisiting the CEI Business Dimension"** as a guiding tool for future activities. In this context, they tasked the Secretariat to start the necessary institutional changes in order to incorporate a solid basis for a sustainable functioning of the new BD into the CEI Structures.

An ambitious agenda 2014-2016

2014 - the year celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Central European Initiative - is under the Austrian CEI Presidency with activities and events in line with the priorities outlined in the CEI Plan of Action. Efforts were made in particular to strengthen CEI's (international) visibility and streamline a value added/cost effective cooperation with other regional and international organisations. In this context, a meeting with representatives of various regional, international organisations and international financial institutions was held on 24 January in Vienna, while on the occasion of the MFA Meeting on 3 June in Vienna a new Memorandum of Understanding between the CEI and the RCC was signed. In addition, events have been organised on cooperation with the Eastern Partnership and for the celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the CEI Instrument for the Protection of Minority Rights. The CEI Summit as well as the Economic Forum on 24 November in Vienna were dedicated to perspectives and visions in a changing time.

The CEI is seeking to contribute to the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region foreseen to be launched in 2015.

The developments of these last years have shaped the Central European Initiative into the Organisation it is today. The next Chapter is dedicated to the current stance of the Organisation, its structure, areas of cooperation, funds and instruments and main activities...

CEI TODAY

structure, funds, instruments and figures

STRUCTURE

The CEI operates in a flexible manner to promote intergovernmental, inter-parliamentary and business cooperation.

The CEI Executive Secretariat (CEI-ES) was established in Trieste under the Austrian CEI Presidency in 1996 and since then has been financed by Italy. It operates with the legal status of an International Organisation, based on a Headquarters Agreement concluded between the Italian Government and the CEI Presidency. The seat in Trieste, via Genova 9, was made available to the CEI by the Italian Government through the Friuli Venezia Giulia (FVG) Autonomous Region, free of charge and ties, under terms described in a Protocol concluded between the CEI Secretariat and the FVG Autonomous Region, signed in Trieste on 20 December 1999.



Meeting of the CEI PD Parliamentary Committee, Vienna, 10-12 June 2014.

Governmental Dimension

Provides political and economic orientation and is responsible for the organisational and financial directives of the CEI. It is composed of the [Committee of National Coordinators \(CNC\)](#), key body responsible for the definition, coordination, management and implementation of CEI cooperation; Working bodies ([networks of Focal Points](#), project implementation groups and ad hoc task forces); the [Secretariat](#), executive body managing the overall activities of the Organisation. It also deals with the development and implementation of projects and is located in Trieste (Italy).

Decisions are taken and approved by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the Heads of Government, meeting respectively once a year. The [Presidency](#) is held by a CEI Member State and rotates on an annual basis.

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 Political Leadership.

FUNDS & INSTRUMENTS: strategic approach to regional cooperation

Strategic objectives

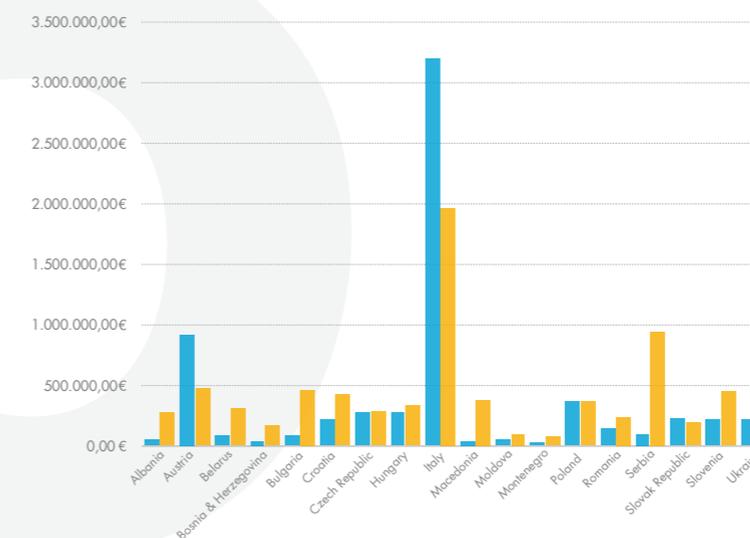
- Support CEI Member States on their path towards European integration;
- Promote the alignment of CEI Member States to EU standards;
- Implement small and medium-sized projects;
- Open to convert constructive ideas into innovative results.

In order to meet the strategic objectives outlined in its [Plan of Action 2014-16](#) for the benefit of its Member States, the CEI makes use of a variety of Funds and Instruments covering 10 main areas of cooperation:

Areas of Cooperation

Towards a Knowledge-based Society	Towards a Sustainable Economy and Development	Towards an Inclusive Society
Research and Innovation	Transport, Logistics and Accessibility	Intercultural Cooperation
Life-long Education and Training	Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy	Media
Information Society	Climate, Environment and Rural Development	Civil Society
	SMEs and Business Development	

Contribution to / from the CEI Cooperation Fund



Thanks to the [CEI Cooperation Fund](#), financed by annual contributions from all Member States, the CEI succeeds in implementing a large number of small and medium-sized projects such as seminars, workshops, conferences, training courses, fostering mobility and people-to-people contacts in the CEI region. Through the supported Cooperation Activities the intra-CEI mobility rate has grown to an average of 5,000 people every year. Since its inception in 2002, 857 activities have been co-financed with around €8 million and an overall value of about €52 million.

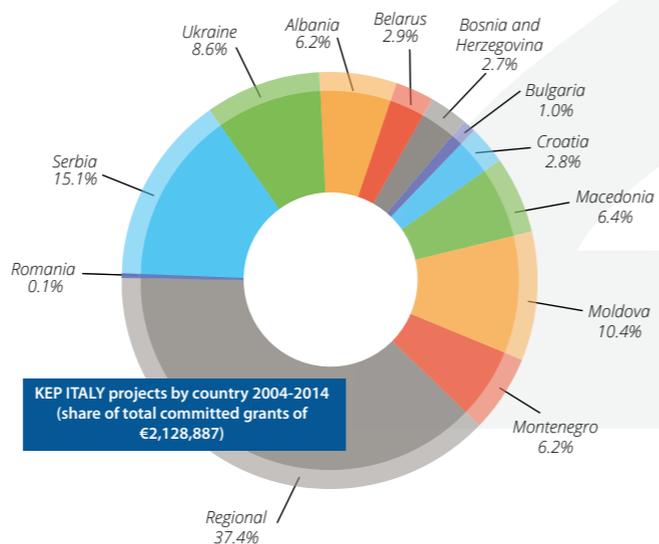
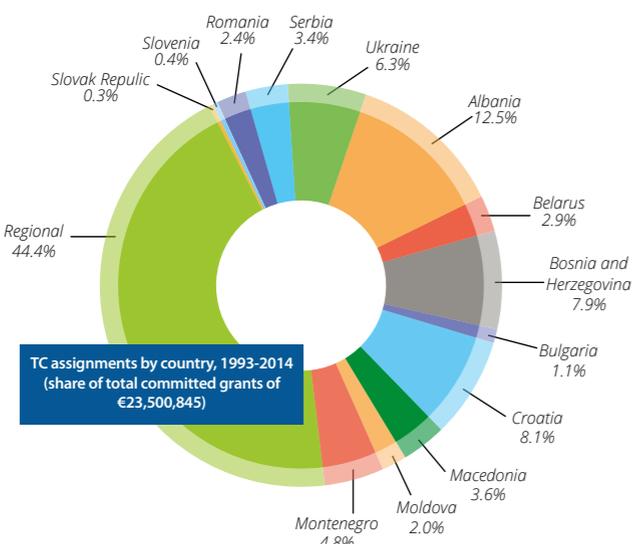
- Overall contribution to Cooperation Fund 2002-2014
- Contributions MS received from the CF 2002-2014

The **CEI Fund at the EBRD** supports the CEI Member States on their path towards European integration. The CEI-EBRD Partnership has significantly contributed to strengthening CEI's project-oriented dimension.

The Fund, towards which the Italian Government has solely made a total contribution of €38.5 million, mainly provides grant-type assistance for specific components of Technical Cooperation (TC) projects. Since its inception, the Fund has provided more than €23 million for funding more than 120 TC projects mobilising €4.8 billion of international investments in the countries of operations.

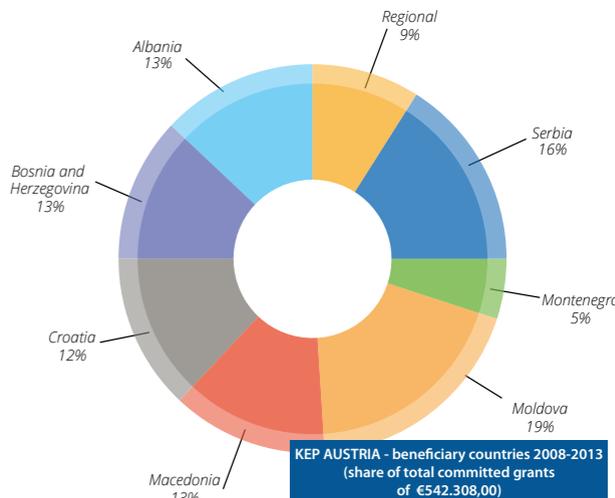
The CEI Fund has also contributed a total of more than €2.1 million to the **Know-How Exchange Programme (KEP)** supporting 75 projects. The KEP is a development instrument aimed at supporting the transfer of experience from organisations in the EU to peers in the non-EU countries within the CEI region.

*In 1992, the Italian Government established the **CEI Fund at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)** "to assist the Bank's countries of operation in Central and Eastern Europe in their economic and social transformation process". It is managed by the Office for the CEI Fund at the EBRD.*



Since 2008 the KEP has also been financed by Austria through an agreement with the Austrian Development Agency in 2007. 22 projects of an overall value of about €1.2 million have been supported with more than €542.000.

By participating in **EU Projects**, the CEI is able to achieve tangible results for the ultimate benefit of its Member States. Since 2004, 18 projects have been implemented with a total fund mobilisation of €21.2 million. The experience gained over the years qualifies the CEI as a credible and reliable player in the field of EU project design and management. Its long-standing activity in the promotion of regional cooperation and well-established networks in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe makes the CEI a relevant partner in the construction of project partnership and in the elaboration of concepts and constructive ideas to be turned into innovative EU project applications.



EU projects under implementation

Title of Project	Acronym	Duration	EU Programming Period	Programme	Sector	CEI Role	Total Budget	Administered by the CEI	CEI Financial Contribution
Accessibility and Development for the Re-launch of the Inner Adriatic Area	ADRIA A	01/2010 - 10/2014	2007 - 2013	Italy-Slovenia CBC Programme	Transport	LP	3.289.000,00	3.289.000,00	0,00
Sustainable and Energy Efficient Mobility Options in tourist Regions in Europe	SEEMORE	03/2012 - 03/2015	2007 - 2013	Intelligent Energy Europe	Energy	P	1.974.225,00	133.928,00	33.482,00
Rail Hub Cities for South East Europe	RAIL4SEE	05/2012 - 12/2014	2007 - 2013	South East Europe Transnational Programme	Transport	P	4.826.900,00	390.000,00	0,00
European Digital Traffic Infrastructure Network for Intelligent Transport Systems	EDITIS	07/2012 - 12/2014	2007 - 2013	Central Europe Transnational Programme	Transport / ICT	P	2.424.272,15	244.972,50	0,00
Accessibility Improved at Border Crossings for the Integration of South-East Europe	ACROSSEE	10/2012 - 12/2014	2007 - 2013	South East Europe Transnational Programme	Transport	LP	3.025.246,64	3.025.246,64	0,00
green growing of SMEs: Innovation and Development in the energy sector in mEd aRea	WIDER	01/2013 - 06/2015	2007 - 2013	MED Programme	Energy	P	2.292.142,00	120.500,00	0,00
Defining Social responsibility Interventions for Grounded Networking in Machine Tools Sector	DESIGN-MTS	07/2013 - 12/2014	2007 - 2013	CIP Programme	SMEs	P	266.341,22	42.540,69	10.635,00
Delivery of sustainable supply of non - food biomass to support a "resource-efficient" Bioeconomy in Europe	S2BIOM	09/2013 - 08/2016	2007 - 2013	7th Framework Programme	Energy	P	5.151.300,00	267.600,00	40.900,00
European Biofuels Technology Platform - Support for Advanced Biofuels Stakeholders	EBTP-SABS	10/2013 - 09/2016	2007 - 2013	7th Framework Programme	Energy	P	579.155,00	75.600,00	8.190,00
International Cooperation Network for the Danube Region	Danube - INCO. NET	01/2014 - 12/2016	2007 - 2013	7th Framework Programme	Research & Innovation	P	1.996.467,00	176.955,43	19.170,17
Development of North Adriatic ports multimodal connections and their efficient integration into the Core Network (NAPA STUDIES)	TEN-T NAPA	07/2014 - 12/2015	2007 - 2013	TEN-T Programme	Transport	P	5.630.000,00	100.000,00	50.000,00
							31.455.049,01	7.866.343,26	162.377,17

Networking through science and education

The **CEI Science and Technology Network (S&TN)** and the **CEI University Network (UniNet)** are proven effective tools for promoting regional cooperation in the scientific and academic fields. The contacts established over the years with renowned Centres of Excellence and universities of the entire region are contributing to fostering mobility of scientists, professors and graduate/postgraduate students as well as to the development of tangible programmes and projects. Through these exchanges the CEI has given its contribution to the development of a strong knowledge-based society, which is one of the main objectives of Horizon 2020.

The Programme, promoting the alignment of CEI Member States to EU standards, provides grants for projects related to capacity building and transfer of good practices and contributes to the economic and social advancement of non-EU countries. It supports the recent EU Members in their transformation from recipients to donors of development assistance and promotes principles of foreign development aid as well as international collaboration among institutions in CEI countries.

PRIZES and Awards

In order to honour and encourage initiatives and activities of talented and often young people from CEI Member States, over the years several CEI Prizes & Awards* have been offered.

Below the award and prize winners of activities still ongoing in present time:



Skopje, 16-17 October 2014:
winners of CEI SEEMO Award for Outstanding Merits in Investigative Journalism.

CEI SEEMO Award for Outstanding Merits in Investigative Journalism:

it aims to honour the work carried out by investigative journalists and their contribution to investigative reporting despite the difficult conditions under which they often have to operate. Organised in cooperation with SEEMO, the CEI Secretariat is in charge of the overall coordination. The awarding ceremony usually takes place during the South East Europe Media Forum. (From €2500 to €5000 each)

2008	Drago Hedl from Croatia	2013	Mahir Šahinović (Bosnia and Herzegovina) award in the section "Professional Journalists" Rosen Tsvetkov (Bulgaria) in the section "Young Professional Journalists"
2009	Besar Likmeta from Albania	2014	Brankica Stanković (Serbia) in the section "Professional Journalists" Sadeta Fišić, Jovana Kljajić and Maida Salkanović (Bosnia and Herzegovina) in the section "Young Professional Journalists"
2010	Adrian Mogoș from Romania		
2011	Włodzimir Kalicki from Poland		
2012	Blaz Zgaga and Matej Surc from Slovenia		

CEI Fellowship for Writers in Residence:

promoted in the context of the Vilenica International Literary Festival, it aims at encouraging cross-border cooperation and promotion in the field of literature for young writers from non EU CEI countries and it is intended to be used for a three-month stay in any CEI Member State of the candidate's choice. (From €2500 to €5000 each)

2006	Goce Smilevski from Macedonia	2011	Ognjen Spahić from Montenegro
2007	Marianna Kiyanovska from Ukraine	2012	Ajla Terzić from Bosnia and Herzegovina
2008	Ivana Sajko from Croatia	2013	Artem Chapeye from Ukraine
2009	Dragan Radovancevic from Serbia	2014	Mirko Božić from Serbia
2010	Maja Hrgović from Croatia		



Sežana (Slovenia) 3 September 2014:
Mirko Božić from BiH, winner of CEI Fellowship for Writers in Residence 2014 within Vilenica International Literary Festival.
As emphasised by the international jury, "Mirko Božić's literary project is a unique reading of the history of his motherland written on the basis of uncommon material tightly related to his family and personal life."

CEI Award at the Trieste Film Festival:

promoted by the Alpe Adria Association, the CEI award is addressed to film directors from CEI countries. (From €2500 to €5000 each)

2006	Georgi Djulgerov from Bulgaria	2011	Dušan Hanák from Slovakia
2007	Kujtim Cashku from Albania	2012	Milco Mancevski from Macedonia
2008	George Agadjanean from Moldova	2013	György Pálfi from Hungary
2009	Dragan Nikolic from Serbia	2014	Eszter Haidú from Hungary
2010	Kujtim Cashku from Albania		

CEI Award in the framework of the International Design Contest "Trieste Contemporanea":

organised every two years by the Trieste Contemporanea Committee, the competition is open to designers from all 18 CEI countries as well as from Germany, Turkey and the Baltic Countries. The CEI award is addressed to the best design from non-EU CEI countries. The jury meeting is usually hosted at the CEI HQs and the CEI officer in charge of culture is member of the jury. (From €2500 to €5000 each)

2006	Marija Hristovska from Macedonia	2012	Ena Priselec from Croatia
2008	Vladimir Stankovic from Serbia	2014	Ivana Sovilj from Serbia
2010	Aliaksei Hur from Belarus		

CEI Award at International Competition for Chamber Music Ensembles "Premio Trio di Trieste":

organised by the Chamber Music Association, the competition includes a CEI award meant to honour prominent ensembles coming from CEI countries. (From €2500 to €5000 each)

2003	Duo RO-MA from Hungary	2011	Duo Enescu (Alina Bercu and Dragos Manza) from Romania
2005	Elena Kolesnitschenko and Igor Bobovych from Ukraine	2013	Josef Suk Piano Quartet from Czech Republic (awarded with the opportunity to perform in the framework of the CEI Summit in Vienna)
2007	"Frant Duo" from Poland		



Trieste, 22 January 2014:
Hungarian Director Eszter Haidú, winner of CEI Prize at 25th Trieste Film Festival. Her documentary "Judgment in Hungary", is a classical courtroom-drama about the trial in Budapest of a group of Hungarian right-wing extremists who in 2008 and 2009 committed a series of attacks on random members of the Roma community. Six people were killed and five were injured.



Trieste, 19 September 2014: Ivana Sovilj Serbian designer, winner of the CEI Award 2014 in the framework of the International Design Competition "Trieste Contemporanea". Her project represents the medieval city of Korčula, situated on the Adriatic Croatian island bearing the same name.
Photo: urban structure of the city where streets are oriented to have a continuous exchange of air, while remaining sheltered from strong winds. The map of the city resembles a fishbone or "skeleton" symbol of the city.



Vienna, November 2013: Josef Suk Piano Quartet

* CEI Prize at "Maremetraggio" 2004-2010, From Research to Enterprise 2004-2006, CEI Award for Innovative SMEs 2006, CEI Nanochallenge Special Prize 2006

PHOTO ALBUM 2014

activity highlights

Trieste, 10 January:

Sen. Stefania Giannini - newly elected Head of the Italian Parliamentary Delegation to the CEI Parliamentary Assembly - visited the CEI HQs to start up a new active phase of CEI Parliamentary Dimension.
From left: Stefania Giannini, Giovanni Caracciolo di Vietri.



23 January 2014: Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the CEI-ES sign new 3-year agreement for KEP Austria.
From Left: Giovanni Caracciolo di Vietri, Margit Waestfelt, Martin Ledolter.



Vienna, 23 January:
1st CNC Meeting under Austrian CEI Presidency.



Trieste, 26 May:
CEI and Friuli Venezia Giulia Region sign agreement for enhancing cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe.
From left: Debora Serracchiani; Giovanni Caracciolo di Vietri.



Vienna, 3 June:
CEI-RCC Memorandum of Understanding signed.
Photo from upper left: Sebastian Kurz; Margit Waestfelt; Goran Svilanovic; Giovanni Caracciolo di Vietri.

Vienna, 3 June: Press Conference at Western Balkans Conference
From left: Giovanni Caracciolo di Vietri, Federica Mogherini, Sebastian Kurz.



Trieste on 21 June: International Symposium "Opera Houses and Music Festivals in Central and Eastern Europe: Looking for New Talents and New Audiences".
Promoted by the CEI, in cooperation with Teatro Lirico Giuseppe Verdi in Trieste, the event aimed at encouraging cooperation in view of possible projects co-financed by the European Union.



Vienna 24 January: Conference CEI as a Bridge between European (Macro-) Regions / Synergies with International Organisations.
From left: Heidemaria Guerer, Johannes Hahn; Michael Linhart.



Belgrade, 18 February:
(KEP Italy) BIOGOS Project, first expert workshop focused on preparation of legislation in field of biofuels in Croatia; challenges in implementing Directive 2009/28/EC in Croatia and at European level and on Croatian legislation system in this field.



Igalo, Montenegro, 13-18 July:
Summer School "European Union and Legal Reform 2014".



Trieste, 2 September:
Vilenica Pre-opening event with Hungarian writer László Krasznahorkai.



Trieste, 24 September:
Meeting of the CEI Ministers for Science and Technology.
From left: Stefania Giannini, Elmar Pichl, Giovanni Caracciolo di Vietri.

Sarajevo, 18 March:

Final Conference of EU funded Project "Improving Cooperation in South-East Europe by Actions for Strengthening the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)".
The gathering entitled Enhancing Growth through Regional Action - South East Europe 2020 highlighted the major results of the Project an example of the special attention the European Commission is paying to regional cooperation in SEE.
From left: Renzo Daviddi, Goran Svilanovic, Heidemaria Guerer, Margit Waestfelt, Sanjin Arifagic, Ugo Poli.



London, 10 April:
International Symposium "25 Years of the Central European Initiative and 25 Years from the Fall of the Iron Curtain".
From left: Olaf Osica, Mihai Răzvan Ungureanu, Géza Jeszenszky, Dimitrij Rupel and Gianni De Michelis.



Trieste, 9 October:
Seminar "20 Years of the CEI Instrument for the Protection of Minority Rights - A Retrospective Glance and Future Challenges".
From left: Miklós Boros, Antti Korkeakivi, Francesco Palermo, Ilze Brands Kheris.



Trieste, 10 October:
On occasion of CNC Meeting, CEI Medal of Honour to Roberto Antonione long-time friend and supporter of CEI. From 2008 to 2013 he was President of the Italian Parliamentary Delegation to CEI and chair of International Group of Experts on Strengthening of CEI in 2010.
From left: Giovanni Caracciolo di Vietri; Roberto Antonione; Heidemaria Guerer.



Skopje, 16-17 October:
VIII South East Europe Media Forum (SEEMF) on "Media in South East Europe: Not enough or too much information?"

CONCLUSION

and future outlook

Since its inception in a quickly-evolving European political environment, the CEI has always adapted to the needs of its Member States.

While acting as an intergovernmental platform for high-level consultations, helping maintain cooperative relations among its countries, the Organisation has a strong record of achievements through its project-oriented approach. A combination of multilateral diplomacy and project management has enabled the CEI to promote a number of high-quality, result-oriented activities through its various funds and instruments as well as through the participation in EU-funded projects attracting additional resources for their implementation. These activities aim at fostering cohesion and integration between and among its EU and non-EU countries, transferring experience and best practices, capacity building and cross-border cooperation. The fact that the CEI is both a donor and a recipient institution represents a comparative advantage for achieving its mission of promoting regional cooperation for European integration.

The latest main achievements obtained in all its areas of activity and cooperation have contributed to drawing a map to be followed for moving on in this direction. These are comprehensively outlined in the Plan of Action 2014-16 aimed at bringing its Member States closer together in joint initiatives. Making tangible contributions towards a knowledge-based and sustainable economy in an inclusive society is thus on top of the CEI's Agenda. In this context, special attention will be dedicated to enhancing cooperation in the field of research and innovation through tailor-made programmes and projects.

In the forthcoming years, the CEI will focus on refining its ability

in designing and implementing EU-funded projects, involving partner institutions from candidate and partner countries, to contribute to the enlargement process in a tangible manner. Further efforts to support its Member States targeted by the Eastern Partnership (EaP) and bring them closer to the EU will be made. Cross-border and transnational activities will also be promoted with regard to the multilateral dimension of the EaP.

Our expertise in the implementation of EU-funded projects will fuel the future involvement in the EU macro-regional strategies. The CEI is receiving strong encouragement from the EC to further develop its contacts and working relationship with the priority areas coordinators. The EC considers the CEI's experience and track record in capacity building and networking actions an asset, especially for non EU countries. The CEI is already active in several fields covered by the EUSDR, such as science and transport, and in the field of competence building. It is also following the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region, recently endorsed on 24 October 2014. It stands ready to contribute to the implementation of each and every one of the strategies involving its Member States. Taking into account that on 19 December 2013, the European Council had invited *the Commission, in cooperation with Member States, to elaborate an EU Strategy for the Alpine Region by June 2015*, the CEI will exploit possibilities for cooperation in this new strategy as well. The CEI will do its utmost to become a key-actor in the strategies' implementation, ensuring synergies and complementarities through specific in-house managed projects.

These are ambitious goals, which can be achieved only by constantly improving its records, while adapting to the fast changing circumstances of the European political landscape and with the full support of its Member States.



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