

CEI NEWSLETTER

In this Issue...

CEI-ES and UNESCO-BRESCE
Sign Memorandum of Understanding

Strengthening Relations with CEI Focal Points

Annual Report 2008 of Secretariat for CEI
Projects

CEI Research Fellowship Programme Launches
First Call for Proposals

CEI Award for Outstanding Merits in Investigative
Journalism – Call for Proposals 2009

Enhancing Cooperation between BSEC and CEI

"Mapping Models of Regional Cooperation in
Europe": the CEI Experience

FOCUS ON CEI KEP – AUSTRIA:
ADA – CEI Partnership in Promoting Austrian
Development Cooperation

CEI UniNet: Students from Moldova and Poland
Benefit from Mobility Programme

CEI – ES and Mittelfest Association Sign
Cooperation Agreement

Fourth CEI Venice Forum for Contemporary
Art Curators

Coming up Events

7-9 May
Dubrovnik, CEI Dubrovnik Diplomatic Forum

7-9 May
Bucharest, CEI-PD Parliamentary Committee

21 May
Belgrade, WINS – ICT Dialogue Forum

28 May
Sofia, CEI University Network Executive Board

29 May
Vienna, CNC Meeting

3 June
Venice, 4th CEI Venice Forum for Contemporary Art Curators

CEI-ES and UNESCO-BRESCE Sign Memorandum of Understanding

The CEI-ES and the Venice Office of UNESCO - Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (BRESCE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Venice on 20 April.

The MoU represents a framework for promoting joint cooperation and coordination in the cultural and scientific fields in view of an increased impact and effectiveness of the respective programmes and instruments.

The areas of common interest include i.e. cultural heritage conservation, intercultural dialogue, climate change and sustainable energy, earth sciences and relate technologies. Cooperation can take the form of expertise exchange, co-sponsorship, co-organization and co-financing.

In the coming period, concrete activities for joint implementation will be identified on the basis of an exchange of proposals between the two organisations.

In the framework of this cooperation, the Interna-

tional Training Workshop on "Sustainable Tourism Development in UNESCO Designated Sites in South Eastern Europe" deserves mentioning. It is organised by the UNESCO BRESCE Office in Venice and the **National Park Dolomiti Bellunesi**, in cooperation with the CEI and the **Ministry of Tourism and Environment Protection of Montenegro** (3 – 8 May 2009, Durmitor National Park, Montenegro).



Strengthening Relations with CEI Focal Points

Among the tasks to be carried out after the repositioning process of the CEI was the involvement of the national experts (so-called Focal Points) in the CEI areas of activity.

In order to reach this goal, on 25 March, Amb. Pietro Ercole Ago travelled to Albania to meet the Albanian CEI Focal Points, after having visited Serbia and Moldova for the same purpose.

The focus of talks was the need to intensify cooperation among the Focal Points, the local National Coordinators and the CEI Executive Secretariat (CEI-ES) in Trieste as well as to enhance the role of the Focal Points in various CEI activities.

In this regard, Amb. Ago invited them to be more active in both submitting and evaluating project proposals. Their response was very positive, showing a concrete willingness to cooperate and Amba-

sador Ago agreed to send a representative from the CEI-ES to explain the technicalities of the CEI operational activities.

The gathering was also an opportunity to meet the Albanian Foreign Minister Lulzim Basha, who after some words on the upcoming membership of Albania in NATO, also thanked the CEI for its support in the transformation and consolidation of the democratic system in Albania and for its concrete

help in various economic sectors. He also stressed that Albania appreciated very much the work performed by the CEI and intended, therefore, to double its national contribution from the year 2010.

The next meeting with the Focal Points will take place in Bosnia and Herzegovina (11 May) which will be followed by others in the CEI non-EU MS.

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Annual Report 2008 of Secretariat for CEI Projects

The activities of the Secretariat for CEI Projects funded by the CEI (Italian) Trust Fund at the EBRD over the past year are comprehensively outlined in the recently published Annual Report of the Secretariat. In 2008, it committed EUR 736,450 for eight Technical Cooperation projects in key sectors such as energy efficiency, transport and small and medium-sized enterprises. It also supported nine Know-how Exchange Programme projects for a total contribution of EUR 325,000 in areas such as agriculture, SME development, energy, and public administration. Moreover, the report summarises the results of the eleventh CEI Summit Economic Forum which

took place on 8-9 October 2008 in Chisinau.

In view of the CEI Trust Fund replenishment for a 3-year period by the Italian Government, this edition also provides a preliminary insight into the operational strategies of the Secretariat for CEI Projects such as

working towards getting eligible contributions under the CEI funds recognised as official Development Assistance (ODA); country strategies strongly focused on the EU integration process and, priority sectors covering transport, municipal and environmental infrastructure, energy efficiency, agribusiness, financial institutions, SMEs and power and energy.

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Enhancing Cooperation between BSEC and CEI

On 6 April, the 20th BSEC Ministerial Meeting in Yerevan gathered 12 Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, representatives of other countries and organisations such as the EU and the OSCE and of regional initiatives such as the CEI.

On that occasion, Amb. Pietro Ercole Ago, CEI-ES Secretary General, underlined the importance of close cooperation among the regional organisations in Europe and illustrated the contacts having taken place between the CEI and BSEC, also mentioning the next bilateral meeting to be held in June in Istanbul as well as the Coordination meeting of all the regional organisations to take place on the 15 June in Trieste.

He particularly stressed that “a coordinated approach could indeed provide a most ef-

fective response to the global economic – financial crisis and promote the development of those countries of Europe not yet members of the EU and necessitating specific forms of support and assistance”.

The meeting was opened by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Nalbandian and by the Secretary General, Amb. Chrysanthopoulos, who while illustrating the concrete progress of the organisation also highlighted the positive results of the cooperation between BSEC and the CEI. A Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation on projects of common interest will soon be signed.

“Mapping Models of Regional Cooperation in Europe”: the CEI Experience

Transferring the experience of Visegrad Cooperation to the Western Balkans and the Eastern Neighbourhood countries in the context of an enlarged Europe was the main objective of the Conference on “Mapping Models of Regional Cooperation in Europe” attended by Amb. Gerhard Pfanzelter, CEI-ES Alternate Secretary General (Budapest, 27 March 2009). The initiative, promoted by the International Centre for Democratic Transition – ICDT gathered the representatives of regional cooperation organisations such as the CEI, RCC, Nordic Council, GUAM, Visegrad Cooperation etc. On that occasion Amb Pfanzelter, considering the fact that the CEI was estab-

lished in Budapest on 11 November 1989, presented the experience of the CEI as a singular model of regional cooperation in Europe which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. The first panel, where Amb. Pfanzelter’s intervention was included, was dedicated to the experience of regional cooperation organisations with the representatives of the Nordic Council (H.E. Siri Ellen Sletner, Norway Ambassador to Hungary), Regional Cooperation Council (Ms Jelica Minic, Deputy Secretary General) and GUAM (Amb. Valeri Chechelashvili, Secretary General).

Special reference was made to the very valuable instrument developed by the CEI

namely the CEI Know-how Exchange Programme as well as to the partnership with the ICDT in the project “Enhancing Sustainable Local and Rural Development in the SAP Countries by Introducing the LEADER Experience”. The presence of the CEI in this conference shows the continuous interest of our EU partners on the one hand and our Western Balkans/South East European and Eastern Partnership partners on the other in the work the CEI doing. In this context it appears that the EU Eastern Partnership offers a significant potential for the CEI involvement in the future, including possibilities for an increased participation in EU projects in this part of Europe.

CEI Research Fellowship Programme Launches First Call for Proposals

The first call for Proposals under the CEI Research Fellowship Programme (CERES) was launched on 28 April 2009.

Experienced researchers from CEI Member States are encouraged to apply for a fellowship by submitting a complete application via email to the following address: ceres@cei-es.org by **28 June 2009**.

The relevant Application Form and a Guide for Applicants containing all useful information can be downloaded at www.ceinet.org/CERES.

For more information:
lombardo@cei-es.org

CEI Award for Outstanding Merits in Investigative Journalism – Call for Proposals 2009

The CEI, in cooperation with the South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO), has just launched the Call for Proposals 2009 for the CEI Award for Outstanding Merits in Investigative Journalism. It is open to nationals of CEI Member States who have acquired special merits in investigative journalism. The winning candidate will receive an award of 5.000 EUR, offered by the CEI Executive Secretariat, on the occasion of the CEI Journalists’ Forum (Poland, September 2009).

Deadline for submission:
15 June 2009.

Call for Proposals and Application Form available at www.ceinet.org / www.seemo.org.

For information: fabro@cei-es.org

FOCUS ON CEI KEP – AUSTRIA:

ADA - CEI Partnership in Promoting Austrian Development Cooperation



The 2008 agreement between the CEI and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), body managing the Austrian Development Cooperation, has provided additional resources for the CEI Know-how Exchange Programme (KEP).

The KEP aims at facilitating know-how transfer, technical assistance and capacity building from CEI - EU countries to CEI non-EU Member States. The ADA-CEI partnership for the period 2008 - 2010 has enabled the CEI to face an increasing number of applications.

In 2008 the CEI KEP-AUSTRIA supported four projects covering rural development, SME financing, renewable energy and European integration in Macedonia, Moldova and Serbia. The total Austrian contribution amounts to EUR 120.000,00.

Support to Macedonian AFSARD Agency

The project was carried out in Macedonia from May to October 2008 between the Agrarmarkt Austria, Austrian Agency for Agriculture and Rural Development, and Macedonian Agency for Financial Support in Agriculture and Rural Development (AFSARD).



▲ Visit to a greenhouse in Austria supported by European funds

The project aimed at strengthening the administrative capacities of AFSARD for the management of the EU pre-accession instrument for rural development – IPARD. The Agrarmarkt Austria, contributed with know-how transfer in all the stages of the programme management and project implementation. The Agency was successfully accredited by the EC and is ready to allocate EU funds.

Strengthening Moldovan Credit Guarantee Fund

This Project is currently under implementation between the Organisation for Development of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (OSME) and the Austria Wirtschaftsservice Gesellschaft (AWS), the main Austrian investment promotion company. SMEs in Moldova account for about 98% of enterprises, but have limited access to financing. Since the OSME needs adequate skills in order to efficiently run the Credit Guarantee Fund (CGF) in Moldova., the AWS is benchmarking the OSME situation, reviewing the legal and institutional framework and assisting OSME management. The main aim of this activity is to improve SME financing instruments.

Establishing Centre for Implementation of Low-cost Technologies for Solar Cells in Macedonia

The project is under implementation in Macedonia between the Italian National Research Council - Institute of Nano-structured Materials - Bologna and Ss Cyril and Methodius University, Faculty of Electrical Engineering of Skopje. The project aims at establishing the Centre for implementation of low-cost technologies for solar cells in Macedonia. The activities envisage the upgrading and purchasing of equipment, training of research and technical staff as well as strengthening cooperation with government, research, industry and SMEs. The Centre will represent the first institution of its kind in the Region, for the promotion of solar cells technologies and their low-cost production.



Visegrad for European Serbia

The project is being organised in Serbia by the Pontis Foundation, one of the largest and oldest non-profit organisations in Slovakia, and the Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence. Although the European perspectives seems to be realistic for today's Serbia, debates about European future are mainly located in Belgrade. The objective of the project is to improve Serbian local government and citizens knowledge and understanding about specific aspects of European integration and challenges of the EU membership. To that end 7 Roundtables will be organised in 7 Serbian towns/regions (Užice, Kraljevo, Niš, Kragujevac, Leskovac, Vranje, and Novi Sad) that will serve as platform for know-how exchange between Visegrad countries and Serbia.

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CEI UniNet: Students from Moldova and Poland Benefit from Mobility Programme

From 27 March to 10 April, the Cracow University of Economics in Poland (CUE) together with the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova in Chisinau (ASEM) organized a seminar within the framework of the Central European Initiative University Network. This Joint Programme, under the title "Business organisations in a dynamically changing environment in Europe", was held in Chisinau from 27 March - 4 April and in Cracow from 5-10. It gathered 11 students from Poland and 10 students from Moldova. The support from the CEI-University Network provided about 80% of the financial resources for the mobility programme.

Poland and Moldova, even though are distant from one another, share



▲ Seminar participants in front of main building of Cracow University of Economics

some common historical experience and face parallel economic and social challenges. Therefore, the seminar enabled its participants to look at different aspects of activities of business organizations from an international point of view taking into account issues linked to transition processes in economy.

Projects elaborated by mixed groups of Polish and Moldovan students supported by academic tutors resulted in different, interesting ideas of doing business in Poland and Moldova.

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CEI - ES and Mittelfest Association Sign Cooperation Agreement

In order to promote a more effective achievement of the common objectives in the field of preservation of cultural heritage and cultural diversity in the CEI region, the CEI-Executive Secretariat and the Mittelfest Association have recently signed a cooperation agreement.

The Mittelfest Festival, held annually in Cividale del Friuli (Italy), is a multicultural and artistic event organised for the first time in 1991 by the Region Friuli-Venezia Giulia in the framework of the "Pentagonal Initiative". It has since then been held under the CEI patronage.

This year, in addition to its artistic dimension, a series of conferences focusing on the historical and political developments after the fall of the Berlin wall will be held. Special attention and visibility will be also paid to the 20th anniversary of the CEI.

Fourth CEI Venice Forum for Contemporary Art Curators

In the European Year of Creativity and Innovation, the 2009 CEI Venice Forum – a CEI Feature Event – will be focusing on current debates in the field of art.

Art curators will gather to discuss ways of transferring new elements regarding the role assigned to art in the production of (visual) meaning by paying special attention to the new use of images created for mediation and transmission.

Among the Forum key questions:

- **What are the criteria of evaluation and acknowledgement currently used by curators for defining and distinguishing cultural innovation (and responsibility) of contemporary visual arts?**
- **Which are today the appropriate and delegated places for receiving and promoting artistic creative innovation?**

The Forum, organised by the **Trieste Contemporanea Committee**, will be held in **Venice on 3 June** at the **Palazzo Zorzi**, UNESCO-BRESCE Headquarters.

Participation is open to experts and curators as well as to the commissioners of the Venice Biennale responsible for the national pavilions of the Central and Eastern European countries.

Online registration available at: www.continentalbreakfast.org

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