The CEELI Institute is located in the Villa Grébovka, a large and lovingly renovated 19th century villa, in a historic neighborhood in central Prague. Our setting, inside one of Prague’s most beautiful parks, offers a serene and peaceful environment of study, exchange and convening. The villa is rich in history, having served as a Habsburg playground during Austro-Hungarian times, and later as the home of the Young Pioneers during the communist era.

The surrounding neighborhood is one of Prague’s nicest, providing leafy avenues, stately 19th century architecture, and a wide variety of restaurants and cafes. There are also easy transportation links to all parts of the city. The villa is a safe space that nurtures those who stay with us.

VISION
Globalization of the rule of law

MISSION
The mission of the CEELI Institute is to advance the rule of law in the world in order to: protect fundamental rights and individual liberties; promote transparent, incorruptible, accountable governments; lay the foundation for economic opportunity and growth; and encourage peaceful resolution of disputes.

IMPLEMENTING THE MISSION
The Institute implements its mission by:

- providing world-class, interactive training and skills development to legal professionals and others committed to the rule of law, both at the Institute’s state-of-the-art facility in Prague and locally in other countries, as requested,
- convening professional conferences, exchanges, and retreats and serving as a private venue for international meetings, discussions, and negotiations,
- continuing its historical readiness to respond promptly to emerging threats to the rule of law and a willingness to partner with other organizations that complement the Institute’s resources and further its mission,
- remaining committed to the pro bono ethic of the Institute’s founders and distinguished faculties, and
- maximizing the relevance, effectiveness, and impact of the Institute’s programs.
CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF VACLAV HAVEL

AND SANDRA DAY O’CONNOR

The CEELI Institute was greatly honored to have Czech President Vaclav Havel formally dedicate our renovated Villa Grebovka on our home campus in 2007, together with U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor. Their presence continues to inspire us. Havel’s remarks at the Villa Grebovka dedication are meaningful today as they were then.

“I came here to congratulate the CEELI Institute for the completion of this beautiful building, and for the joy out of this occasion. It seems important to record how difficult it is and how much time it takes to build the rule of law, especially in countries which were long ruled by totalitarian regimes. Law is to serve justice. And judges need to be well trained and competent. They need to have some experience and training. It’s the hope of everyone at CEELI that judges in Prague are going to be able to uphold the rule of law.”

The CEELI Institute

Vaclav Havel
The CEELI Institute

June 8, 2007

“I can’t tell you how wonderful it is to be here for the dedication of this completed building, the CEELI Institute. We hope to help ensure that what we call the rule of law. One thing that is clear and that is the importance of an independent judiciary in achieving and maintaining the rule of law. We have to ask what independence means. It means that the judge in applying the law and deciding cases can do so without fear of sanction or retribution or punishment by the other two branches of government, by the executive or the legislature, because the judge has decided some case in a way that one of those branches doesn’t like. And we need judges who are fair and impartial and free of corruption. Judicial independence is not just an end in itself; it’s a means to the end, it’s the mechanism to preserve the rule of law. We have to allow judges in our countries to have some experience and training. It’s the hope of everyone at CEELI that judges in Prague are going to be able to uphold the rule of law.”

Hon. Sandra Day O’Connor
The CEELI Institute

June 8, 2007

WHAT’S IN A NAME:

We are sometimes asked, “What does CEELI stand for?” The CEELI Institute is a permanent legacy of the American Bar Association’s Central and East European Law Initiative (ABA/CEELI), a pro bono public service project started in 1996 shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The CEELI project was intended to advance the rule of law by assisting the law reform process in the aspiring democracies of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. More than 5,000 American lawyers, judges, and legal scholars, as well as distinguished professionals from Canada and Europe, served without pay as CEELI volunteers in more than 30 countries, providing nearly $190 million in pro bono legal services and assistance. Today, the CEELI Institute, as an independent Czech NGO, proudly carries on that legacy, not just in Central and Eastern Europe, but throughout the world.

BUILDING LEGAL SKILLS AND CAPACITY

Strengthening Civil Society Advocacy in Central and Eastern Europe

Promoting Corruption Reforms in the Balkans

Building Legal Skills and Capacity: Support for the judiciary in Central and Eastern Europe

STRENGTHENING JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY

The Conference of Chief Justices of Central and Eastern Europe

Central and Eastern European Judicial Exchange Network

CEELI Publications: The Manual on Judicial Independence

CEELI Publications: Practical Guidelines on the Use of Social Media by Judges

Judicial Training on EU Law and Treaty: Partnering with the Association of Croatian Judges

Providing Lifelines for Syrian Judges in Exile

India: Judicial Exchanges and Curriculum Development

Providing Lifelines for Syrian Judges in Exile

Indigenous People’s Rights and Handling of Cases

India: Judicial Exchanges and Curriculum Development

Bangladesh: CEELI Hosts Judges for Intensive Counterterrorism Program

FIGHTING CORRUPTION

Intensive Anti-Corruption Training Programs for Prosecutors, Investigators, and Judges

Advanced Anti-Corruption Training

Supporting Anti-Corruption Advocates

Identifying Unexplained Wealth of Public Officials: CEELI Assists

Civil Society in Developing New Anti-Corruption Tools

Strengthening Public-Private Partnerships Against Corruption: CEELI Promotes Effective Corporate Compliance Training

Promoting Corruption Reforms in the Balkans

CEELI CONVENES

CEELI Convenes

Villa Grebovka

Community Events

CEELI Institute Staff

CEELI Institute Contributors

CEELI Institute Boards & Management
The rule of law – the advancement of which is the sole mission of the CEELI Institute – has become a cornerstone of public discourse. The news is replete with reports of both virulent public demonstrations decrying abuses or the absence of the rule of law and discouraging reports of slipshod, or reversals, in rule of law reforms. We see backsliding not only in countries in which grass-roots movements of the 1990s demanded that the rule of law replace autocratic regimes, but also in countries that have long championed the rule of law, but have seen surges in “populist” sentiment. For the CEELI Institute, addressing these global cross-currents is an institutional priority.

The rule of law challenges today are different from the challenges of 20 years ago when the Institute first opened its doors in Prague. Gone are the euphoria for reform that swept central and eastern Europe and the consensus view that the gold standard for the rule of law is the United States, whose history and experiences reformers were eager to learn.

Today’s challenges begin with the very question of precisely what the phrase “rule of law” means. In the face of conflicting definitions and authoritarian regimes that are imposing in professing support for the rule of law, there is a need for training not only the core elements of the rule of law, but also on the benefits, responsibilities, and threats that accompany a commitment to create and preserve a society based on the rule of law.

As an international leader on the rule of law, the CEELI Institute must continually evaluate both its goals and our program activities. Happily, at a time when strong demand for CEELI Institute offerings has generated a growing curriculum and crowded calendar, we are well-positioned to do both. Years ago, the Institute’s programs extended its reach far beyond central and eastern Europe and central Asia. Core programs related to judicial independence, lawyer excellence, and anti-corruption training have expanded and benefited from continual innovations. Although participants in Institute programs now number in the thousands from nearly 50 different countries, the Institute can expand its reach further through additional partnerships, training of trainers, distance learning, and continued funding from individuals and organizations that support advancing the rule of law.

The greatest asset in implementing the Institute’s mission is the enduring reality that equal treatment before the law, limited government, independent judges, transparent law-making, incorruptible institutions, and a free press – core elements of the rule of law – have proved to be the best guarantors of freedom and individual dignity and the best protectors against arbitrary, repressive, or discriminatory rule. The most eloquent testimonials to that reality come from those who have lived in the absence of the rule of law and, consequently, are among its most passionate advocates.

Even as law-based societies periodically fall short in living up to their own ideals or imperfectly implement the requirements and responsibilities that come with the rule of law, the values that the term embodies remain unassailable. As we approach the Institute’s 20th anniversary, our renewed commitment to the Institute’s rule of law mission and the values it espouses has never been more urgent.

Christopher Lehmann
Executive Director

A Message from the Executive Director

Homer E. Moyer, Jr.
Founder and Chairman of the Board
The CEELI Institute

A Message from the Chair and Founder

The twentieth anniversary of the CEELI Institute is a time both for reflection and for recommitment to our vision of the globalization of the Rule of Law. The work we do to advance the Rule of Law and to support independent judiciaries, strengthen human rights, and promote governmental transparency is more important now than at any time in the past two decades. In many countries the stakes are higher than ever, and democracy itself is under threat.

The communities that we work with – courageous lawyers, anti-corruption activists, judges trying to maintain their independence – are in the front lines of defending the rule of law and democratic values. This means they are also the organizations and individuals most easily targeted and demonized by repressive governments. Our role is critical in assisting these communities, their members, and their work with training, expertise and innovation. We are one of only a handful of organizations working in this region which is capable of offering the needed support. The CEELI Institute remains a haven in Central Europe; we provide a safe and congenial space in which judges, lawyers, human rights defenders and civil society can continue to gather and work. And the free and open city of Prague continues to (CULJ) its promise to serve as a place of respite, study, training, advocacy and engagement.

Today’s challenges demand resilience and ever more creative responses. We embrace the challenges of responding to governmental efforts to restrict the role and independence of judges, curb the press, constrain the work of defense lawyers, and intimidate human rights defenders. We are not powerless. A myriad of international and European legal mechanisms are available to be used in protecting the rule of law and those most vulnerable to its weakening. These offer powerful tools that offer important checks on the overreach by national states. In Europe, for example, the available response mechanisms include the European Union’s Charter of Fundamental Rights, EU legislation, and the European Convention on Human Rights. New forms of training for lawyers on application of these tools is just one of the programs areas we have bolstered over the past year.

We will not be daunted in our mission. Our name says Central Europe, but our reach is global. The CEELI Institute will continue to be a place where those working to advance the Rule of Law can gather in furtherance of that cause.
Since its founding, the CEELI Institute has engaged over 12,000 participants from over 45 countries worldwide. In 2019, we conducted over 60 individual programs, reaching over 1700 participants, from over 40 different countries. CEELI engaged over 150 volunteer faculty members, from over 25 different countries.

Programs conducted in: Bulgaria, Burma, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, India, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Slovakia and Turkey.

Participants/Faculty: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Estonia, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, Syria, the UK, Ukraine and the US.
The CEELI Institute is proud to this year celebrate twenty years of service in promoting the Rule of Law in Europe, Eurasia and across the globe. Born out of a vision of creating a world class center dedicated to this effort, the Institute has now brought together thousands of legal professionals from over 50 countries to pursue the effort of fostering law based societies.
The Conference of Chief Justices of Central and Eastern Europe

In 2007, the CEELI Institute helped launch the Conference of Chief Justices of Central & Eastern Europe, which brings together the senior judges from the region’s highest courts to share and develop strategies and best practices to promote judicial integrity and accountability, to improve court management, and to combat corruption in the courts. The CEELI Institute’s efforts have supported the work of the Conference since its inception.

The Conference was launched in Prague, at the Institute, with support from the U.S. Department of State, and with personal involvement and commitment of United States Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts and Associate Justice Sandra Day O’Connor. The Conference continues to be a self-sustaining body that meets annually in one of the participating countries. Conferences over the past several years have been hosted by the Chief Justices of Albania (2012), Montenegro (2013), Georgia (2014), Croatia (2015), Serbia (2016), Hungary (2017), Lithuania (2018) and Slovakia (2019). The Supreme Court of Azerbaijan will host the conference in 2020.

The CEELI Institute continues to provide guidance and expertise to the Conference, led by the efforts of CEELI Institute Board member, Judge John M. Walker, former Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. Judge Walker is joined in this effort by Judge Clifford J. Wallace, former Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, whose extensive experience includes establishing a similar conference for the countries of Asia and the Pacific.

Among the notable achievements of the Conference was the signing, in 2015, of a Statement of Principles of the Independence of the Judiciary (known now as the Brijuni Statement after the name of the seaside Croatian town where the document was drafted). The Brijuni Principles state: “[T]he implementation and protection of all rights depends on the existence of a competent, independent, and impartial judiciary.” The CEELI Institute is gratified to be able to support the publication and distribution of the Brijuni Statement of Principles of the Independence of the Judiciary, which has been widely circulated throughout the region and beyond. The Statement is also available on the CEELI Institute website at www.ceeliinstitute.org.

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THE BRIJUNI STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY

The “Brijuni Statement of Principles,” signed by the judges of the 19 participating courts of the Conference of Chief Justices, now stands alongside the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct and other key international instruments which provide a foundation in international law for the concept of an independent judiciary as fundamental to the rule of law. As the Brijuni Principles state: “[T]he implementation and protection of all rights depends on the existence of a competent, independent, and impartial judiciary.” The CEELI Institute is gratified to be able to support the publication and distribution of the Brijuni Statement of Principles of the Independence of the Judiciary, which has been widely circulated throughout the region and beyond. The Statement is also available on the CEELI Institute website at www.ceeliinstitute.org. 2019 saw the addition of Bulgaria to the list of signatories, bringing the total number to 19. The original, signed copies of the Brijuni Statement are preserved and maintained by the Supreme Court of Croatia.
Central and Eastern European Judicial Exchange Network

The CEELI Institute has provided long standing support for the Central and East European Judicial Exchange Network, comprised of some of the best and brightest young judges from eighteen countries in the region who have come together to share best practices on issues of judicial independence, transparency, accountability, efficiency, and ethics. The judges are increasingly concerned about coping with the external pressures – political, societal, media – that work to undermine judicial independence in the region. To date, the Network has brought together over 150 young, reform-minded judges from across the region on an ongoing basis to pursue projects designed to promote judicial independence and institutional reform.

Among the specific topics addressed within the Network are judicial ethics; management of conflicts of interests and outside activities; comparative procedures for discipline and dismissal of individual judges accused of corruption or malfeasance; appropriate communication with the press and public; the impact of social media on the judiciary; the degree to which judges as public officials must sacrifice some degree of privacy in the interest of transparency; the implications for judges of asset disclosure requirements; the manner and degree to which judges should be required to disclose their personal information; the standards and conditions for lustration procedures.

CEELI Publications: The Network’s Manual on Judicial Independence

The CEELI Institute is proud to have worked with judges from the Central and East European Judicial Exchange Network to create The Manual on Independence, Impartiality and Integrity of Judges: A Thematic Compilation of International Standards, Policies and Best Practices. The Manual – first conceptualized by the Network judges themselves – represents a systematic effort to survey relevant international standards applicable to the judiciary. The judges have undertaken a comprehensive review of more than 160 relevant international instruments, and organized the material according to thematic areas.

The Manual constitutes an easy-to-use reference tool to facilitate day-to-day work of judges both in the region and worldwide. It is particularly useful in societies still undergoing transitions, and where the judiciary is still struggling to assert and establish their full independence. The Manual provides easily accessible, substantive legal support for issues related to the status, work, rights, and responsibilities of judges. It has proved useful to judges who are pushing back against governmental infringements on their functions. For example, Section II of the Manual assembles all relevant international standards which establish and clarify the principle of judicial independence in the administration of justice. Judges needing to justify their role in administration can quickly access the necessary underlying legal support.

The Manual represents an extraordinary commitment of time and effort by the Network judges who participated in this project. They undertook extensive independent research and editing, coming together periodically at the Institute to coordinate and collaborate on their work. The Manual is a “living document” which is continually updated to incorporate relevant new source material. This project has been made possible through the support of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) at the U.S. Department of State.

CEELI Publications: Practical Guidelines on the Use of Social Media by Judges

In 2019, CEELI published its newest report: “Practical Guidelines on the Use of Social Media by Judges” representing the culmination of two years of work by the CEELI Institute and members of its Central and Eastern European Judicial Exchange Network. Social media presents new and unavoidable ethical and professional issues for judges, not only in the CEE region, but across the globe. The admonition for judges to simply “stay off” of social media is no longer a workable option in most environments. These Guidelines recognize that participation on social media platforms is an intrinsic part of modern life; they also recognize that for many judges, participation on social media actually represents new and unavoidable ethical and professional issues for judges.

The CEELI Institute was invited by the OSCE to participate in sessions of the United Nation’s Global Judicial Integrity Network, CEELI is one of only a handful of nongovernmental organizations selected to join judges from around the globe at these events. CEELI’s contributions include organizing and moderating panels on the independence of the judiciary, and on the professional and ethical challenges for judges raised as a result of the increasing use of social media by members of the profession. These topics are ones that CEELI has explored in depth within the context of its ongoing Central and East European Judicial Network.

The Manual is a “living document” which is continually updated to incorporate relevant new source material. This project has been made possible through the support of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL).
Judicial Training on EU Law and Treaties: Partnering with the Association of Croatian Judges

The CEELI Institute is continuing its partnership with the Association of Croatian Judges to deliver a series of legal education programs for judges from Central and Eastern European Union member states on relevant EU instruments and directives governing the application of both civil and criminal law—norms which are often not fully applied in national courts. The project is designed to promote greater understanding among CEE judges on the appropriate application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights as well as selected EU directives in both civil and criminal law. Simultaneous interpretation into Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, and Romanian will make the program broadly accessible for non-English speaking judges from across the region. This project reflects our well established partnership with the Association of Croatian Judges, which has included collaboration by the Institute and the Association on an ongoing series of international judicial conferences in Croatia and the Czech Republic. This project is funded by the European Commission.

Providing Lifelines for Syrian Judges in Exile

The CEELI Institute continues to partner with the Swedish-based International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC) to deliver programs that offer expertise as well as a professional lifeline to Syrian judges and lawyers, predominantly to those now in exile in Turkey. Many of the exiled legal professionals remain actively involved with international organizations working in Turkey as well as in Europe, engaged in various efforts, including maintain basic public records of births, death, and marriages, as well as monitoring of cases of where citizens’ land and property rights are violated. All of these Syrian legal professionals are looking ahead to possible scenarios that might occur in Syria.

In 2019, CEELI convened several programs for Syrian judges in Prague and in Gaziantep, Turkey focusing on housing, land and property (HLP) issues, which continue to be priority concerns for the judges. The programs included study of examples from other post-conflict environments where this issue was relevant, such as Bosnia, Colombia and Kosovo. The sessions not only deliver expertise, but also serve to facilitate coordination among Syrian legal professionals currently based in various countries, help the judges monitor the situation on the ground in Syria, and help them formulate recommendations on how to address housing land and property issues in the post-conflict phase. The programs also serve to connect the judges with international organizations active in the housing, land and property field.

At present, the exiled Syrian legal professionals often feel cut off and removed from the larger world. Our efforts are intended to support their morale, and to also provide opportunities for them to engage with networks of judges from other countries that have emerged from conflicts. Ultimately, the success of post-conflict processes in Syria will depend on the expertise and readiness of Syrian actors, who are prepared to lead reform efforts. The project is funded by the Swedish International Development Administration (SIDA).
India: Judicial Exchanges and Curriculum Development

In 2019, the CEELI Institute continued its multi-year partnership with the National Judicial Academy (NJA) of India and the U.S. Federal Judicial Center (FJC), to promote exchanges between U.S. and Indian judges, and to develop a practical curriculum focused on issues related to the adjudication of complex cases involving terrorism and national security crimes. The exchanges and curriculum were both based around the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF) Hague Memorandum on Good Practices for the Judiciary in Adjudicating Terrorism Offenses (2015), reflecting the fact that both India and the US are members of the GCTF, and both participated in the drafting of the Hague Memorandum (the CEELI Institute is also proud to have participated in the drafting of that document). This project resulted in the creation of the first India-specific counterterrorism curriculum to be used at the NJA. Using The Hague Memorandum as a framework for the effort, the new curriculum is designed for Indian trial court judges on the frontline in handling terrorism cases. The curriculum reflects Indian national legislation and judicial practice, while at the same time incorporating a modern pedagogical approach in lieu of more traditional lecture-based teaching methodology. Eight Indian high court justices worked with experts from the FJC and with US judges to design and refine the curriculum. In 2019, the Institute helped the NJA successfully launch the curriculum, with three separate sessions of the course being delivered at the NJA in Bhopal, India, for a total of 80 trial court judges.

CEELI’s work in India was highlighted at a panel at the 2019 biannual conference of the International Organization of Judicial Training’s (IOJT), held in Cape Town, South Africa. The IOJT is an international non-profit organization established to promote the rule of law by supporting the work of judicial education institutions around the world. The panel, “Adjudicating Terrorism-Related Cases: A Curriculum Development Model,” highlighted CEELI’s multi-year project working with the NJA and the FJC. The panel brought together CEELI staff with FJC Director of International Judicial Relations Mira Gur-Arie, the Hon. Joymalya Bagchi of the Calcutta High Court, and IOJT President, the Hon. Eliezer Rivlin. The unique project model, which coupled training on modern pedagogy for judges with the creation of a national counterterrorism curriculum, drew wide praise from representatives from judicial training institutions from around the world, many of which struggle to incorporate modern teaching techniques into their systems.

A group of Bangladeshi judges with counterterrorism responsibilities spent two weeks at the CEELI Institute in September 2019, as part of a program designed to strengthen capacity of the Bangladeshi judiciary to adjudicate terrorism cases. The program was part of a collaboration with the Washington DC based National Centre for State Courts’ (NCSC), and used, as a common reference point, the relevant Good Practice documents produced by the Global Counterterrorism Forum. The Bangladeshi judges participated in substantive exchanges with colleagues from Canada, the Czech Republic, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Topics centered on best practices in adjudicating terrorism and other complex criminal matters, and afforded the Bangladeshi delegation opportunities to discuss common challenges with their international colleagues. The program also included intensive work to draft a specialized bench book for use by judges handling terrorism cases; by the program’s conclusion, the draft bench book was well on its way to becoming an effective tool for the judiciary of Bangladesh in the fight against terrorism and related crimes.

BANGLADESH: CEELI HOSTS JUDGES FOR INTENSIVE COUNTERTERRORISM PROGRAM

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Intensive Anti-Corruption Training Programs for Prosecutors, Investigators, and Judges

The CEELI Institute’s highly acclaimed training program on “Investigating and Prosecuting Official Corruption” continues to be in high demand. The Program is now in its seventh year, and the Institute again conducted spring and fall sessions of the week-long course. The program brings together an extraordinary faculty line-up consisting of some of the world’s most experienced anti-corruption prosecutors, forensic accountants, and practitioners.

The CEELI Institute anti-corruption programs are designed as highly interactive trainings which walk participants through the actual investigation of a case involving official corruption in the public procurement process. Participants work in small groups to develop their own investigation strategy, learning to use time-tested investigative tools along the way, and ultimately making a recommendation to the larger conference on whether this was a case they would pursue to prosecution or not. The course is designed to develop and improve practical skills as the participants pursue the investigation, augmented by expert guidance and instruction.

The CEELI Institute puts great emphasis on designing and conducting programs that use case-based, interactive curricula. Using practical case scenarios as a learning tool demands that participants take an active role in the workshop. With each session, participants are presented with additional facts and legal obstacles to confront and overcome as the fact pattern becomes more complicated. Participants start with a few red flags, indicating a possible case involving corrupt activities. They work in small groups to pursue their investigation.

The case studies are designed to expose participants to all aspects of an investigation – initial allegations or suspicions, preliminary inquiries, development of an investigation plan, collection and analysis of documentary materials, forensic accounting analysis, interviews of witnesses and targets, and preparation for trial or other disposition. The use of a case scenario as a teaching tool allows the participants to form close bonds as the training progresses, challenging their intellect and expanding their skills and knowledge base as they are exposed to new approaches in the investigation and prosecution of complex high level corruption cases. The case scenario is supported by relevant faculty presentations on key topics. Our highly experienced faculty provide mentoring to the small groups, as well as one-on-one mentoring throughout the program.

This year’s programs drew together investigators and prosecutors from a number of countries in the region, and beyond, including Armenia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Lithuania, Moldova, Slovakia and Ukraine. Participants were funded by a number of donors interested in promoting anti-corruption efforts, especially as official corruption has emerged as one of the most prevalent and pernicious threats to the rule of law around the world. Past sponsors have included the United Nations, the US State Department’s INL Bureau, USAID funded projects, the Canadian Embassy in Prague, and various US embassies in the region.
Advanced Anti-Corruption Training

Recognizing the demand for more sophisticated anti-corruption training, the CEELI Institute this year developed and debuted an intensive follow-on anti-corruption curriculum (“Anti-Corruption 2.0”) that builds off of our intensive one week course, and focuses in more depth on selected aspects of anti-corruption investigation and prosecution. We continue to use an interactive, case based teaching methodology. The three-day program addresses issues related to complex procurement fraud, forensic accounting, data analytics, use of metadata in investigations, multi-jurisdictional investigations, money laundering and asset recovery. This follow-on course is designed primarily for participants who seek to deepen their skills in these specific areas, including investigators, prosecutors, judges, investigative journalists and representatives of civil society.

Supporting Anti-Corruption Activism

Official corruption undermines public trust in democracy and the rule of law, strengthens oligarchies and autocracies, bolsters populist responses, harms state institutions, and weakens legal and judicial systems. In response, the Institute supports civil society organizations, journalists and lawyers striving for greater public accountability and transparency in Central and Eastern Europe. CEELI efforts tackle the problem from two angles.

First, we work to train journalists, civic advocates, lawyers and civil society organizations on methods of conducting research about governmental activities, on finding and collecting publicly available data, and on using that data in the design of advocacy efforts to highlight and expose official corruption. We support activists in their development of anti-corruption campaigns to promoting public accountability, including public interest litigation. Second, because successful efforts by activists often draw retaliation from powerful, public officials or from the oligarchs, we will also work to equip lawyers to effectively represent bloggers, activists and investigative journalists who are exposing corruption and who are attacked as a result of their efforts. CEELI’s efforts engage civil society participants from the Visegrad, Baltic and Balkan regions, as well as the Eastern Partnership countries.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS:

“Great opportunity to meet new colleagues and build professional relationships.”

“Absolutely outstanding course; exceptionally well-conceived.”

“One of the best experiences of my professional life.”

“This is the best training I have ever participated in. I really admired the step-by-step approach through hypothetical cases, continued on through the mini-lectures and experiences of the faculty and the group.”

“This was an exceptional experience. There was complete understanding among participants, regardless of the differences between legal systems, and we all share a mutual goal of preventing corruption through efficient and proactive investigation.”

“I appreciated the balance between practical and theoretical parts of the seminar.”
Public corruption must be addressed through private and corporate mechanisms, as well as through government action. To this end, in 2018, the CEELI Institute launched its unique curriculum designed to promote effective corporate compliance with relevant international anti-corruption standards. The program is targeted at individuals in transitioning countries who have responsibilities for advising their clients or employers on internal corporate compliance. CEELI recognized a growing demand for such training, particularly for practitioners in countries where corruption is still a major civil concern. In-house advisors are increasingly required to have detailed knowledge of relevant anticorruption statutes, as well as the broader international context in which multi-national corporations must now function. Avoiding corporate liability for corrupt practices is now critical to business operations, yet many lawyers in the region have had limited experience with international anti-corruption laws and with corporate compliance mechanisms. In designing this program, CEELI has again called on its exceptional roster of private-sector anti-corruption experts. This program examines various situations which present corruption risks, and explains how a good compliance program is a risk-reduction tool that can help manage corruption risks and reduce the likelihood of improper conduct and violations of law. Attention is given to the operation of well-known anti-corruption instruments, including the operation of the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), the UK Anti-Bribery Law and the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC). The program was offered again in 2019, and based on the enthusiastic participant response, we look forward to organizing another session in 2020.

CEELI has helped to assemble an impressive consortium for this project, and is working with domestic stakeholders and influencers in the three countries to pursue action plans tackling relevant anti-corruption reform recommendations. This latest project continues long-standing collaborative work between CEELI and IFES, which has included organization of a number of joint roundtables at the Institute in Prague, as well as the hosting of IFES regional events. Funding for this project was recently renewed by the State Department’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) and we look forward to the next phases of this effort.

The CEELI Institute was delighted to partner with the International Foundation Electoral Systems (IFES) over the past year on a new project to strengthen the implementation of anti-corruption standards in Europe, with particular focus on Bulgaria, Romania and Montenegro. The project focuses on the identification of priority substantive anti-corruption reform recommendations, and on steps to assist local stakeholders in pursuing actual implementation of those reforms; for example, the project is addressing as of yet unmet recommendations arising out of the evaluation processes undertaken by the Council of Europe’s Group of States against Corruption (GRECO). CEELI was recently delighted to partner with the International Foundation Electoral Systems (IFES) over the past year on a new project to strengthen the implementation of anti-corruption standards in Europe, with particular focus on Bulgaria, Romania and Montenegro. The project focuses on the identification of priority substantive anti-corruption reform recommendations, and on steps to assist local stakeholders in pursuing actual implementation of those reforms; for example, the project is addressing as of yet unmet recommendations arising out of the evaluation processes undertaken by the Council of Europe’s Group of States against Corruption (GRECO).

SECTION II. FIGHTING CORRUPTION

Identifying Unexplained Wealth of Public Officials: CEELI Assists Civil Society in Developing New Anti-Corruption Tools

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Promoting Corruption Reforms in the Balkans

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Supporting Defense Lawyers

The legal profession itself remains under distress in many countries in the region, including Russia and Turkey. Challenges are particularly great for members of the criminal defense bar who represent human rights activists, journalists, or other unpopular defendants. Our programs continue to bring together criminal defense lawyers from regions and countries where the conduct of their profession is under stress. Programs address current challenges to the independence of their profession, mechanisms for maintaining the rule of law, strategies for providing defendants with access to counsel, and tools for using international law (including the European Court of Human Rights) as a check on repressive domestic actions. The CEELI Institute also works to bolster technical legal skills and assist in developing effective litigation strategies for questioning repressive laws.
The CEELI Institute, working in cooperation with the Centre de la Protection Internationale (Strasbourg), has created a three-session course for young lawyers seeking to handle cases involving violations of the rights guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights, and seeking to practice before the Court. The CEELI Institute, working in cooperation with the Centre de la Protection Internationale (Strasbourg), has created a three-session course for young lawyers seeking to handle cases involving violations of the rights guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights, and seeking to practice before the Court.

**Working with human rights lawyers and parliamentarians in Myanmar**

The CEELI Institute continued its long-term program in Myanmar in partnership with Prague-based NGO Burma Center Prague. The project focuses on providing support and mentoring to networks of Myanmar lawyers engaged in pro bono legal defense efforts – above all the Myanmar Lawyers Network, and the Union Lawyers and Paralegals Association – by providing financial support directly to the networks for operational costs and for training in Yangon. Additionally, CEELI works with these organizations to provide trainings to lawyers in regions across the country. The trainings include a practical trial skills component developed in cooperation with the National Institute for Trial Advocacy, as well as lectures and discussions on political and legal transformation as well as lectures and discussions on political and legal transformation.

In 2019, the CEELI Institute also continued its efforts to support opposition members of the parliaments in Myanmar, on both national and regional levels. Progress in changing legislation and paving the way for a genuine democracy is critical to securing democratic changes in the country. In the past year, the CEELI Institute organized legislative roundtables in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and Pathein for members of both the national and regional parliaments, focusing also on better understanding of the recently amended anti-corruption legislation in Myanmar and best practices in setting up well-functioning and systemic anti-corruption efforts. This program has been supported by the Czech Foreign Ministry’s Transition Program.

**Substantive Legal Skills Training**

Since our inception, the Institute has worked to provide relevant in-service training and education for legal professionals. These efforts include the organization of substantive legal training programs for practicing lawyers from the region. Using a comparative law approach, recent programs have addressed personal insolvency law for an audience of bankruptcy lawyers; small and medium law firm management; effective corporate compliance; and a variety of criminal law issues, including search and seizure and illegal detention.

**Trial Skills Training at CEELI**

The CEELI Institute continues to provide advocacy skills training for young lawyers from the Eurasia region. The one and two-week programs are designed to build the confidence of young legal professionals in areas that are most relevant to human rights advocacy in a trial setting – i.e. oral presentation and argument, motion practice, and persuasive speaking. Programs involve daily activities, including witness testimony exercises, and culminate in a mock trial. Participants receive detailed feedback from faculty mentors throughout the program, enhanced by the small size of the class and high student-faculty ratio. Faculty include a roster of highly experienced international trainers. The courses reflect tried and true interactive components developed for use in clinical legal education programs, including the international programs run by the National Institute for Trial Advocacy (NITA). We find that young lawyers are very enthusiastic about such training opportunities, often noting that the practical aspects of the workshop are something they have never experienced in their prior legal education opportunities.

**Practicing Law Before the European Court of Human Rights: CEELI Launches a New Three-Part Training Series on Preparation and Handling of Cases**

The CEELI Institute, working in cooperation with the Centre de la Protection Internationale (Strasbourg), has created a three-session course for young lawyers seeking to handle cases involving violations of the rights guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights, and seeking to perfect appeals to the European Court of Human Rights, in cooperation with the Centre de la Protection Internationale (Strasbourg), has created a three-session course for young lawyers seeking to handle cases involving violations of the rights guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights, and seeking to perfect appeals to the European Court of Human Rights, in cooperation with the Centre de la Protection Internationale (Strasbourg), has created a three-session course for young lawyers seeking to handle cases involving violations of the rights guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights, and seeking to perfect appeals to the European Court of Human Rights, in cooperation with the Centre de la Protection Internationale.
The CEELI Institute conducts a wide range of workshops for lawyers and civil society representatives, focusing on mechanisms for enhancing government accountability to civil society, strengthening the public's capacity to demand transparent government, and supporting efforts of lawyers engaged in representing and defending NGOs and journalists. The Institute's efforts are designed to support civic-minded organizations and individuals in their efforts to access and obtain public information, to undertake public oversight activities, and to use such information to conduct advocacy campaigns, investigative efforts and legal actions aimed at increasing government accountability. The Institute also seeks to support those seeking to advance the rule of law and strengthen human rights protections.

Strengthening Civil Society Advocacy in Central and Eastern Europe

Faced with increasing government crackdowns on their work, civil society organizations across Central and Eastern Europe need to perfect the skills necessary to fight back. Accordingly, the CEELI Institute continues to initiate and deliver programs to promote legal advocacy by and on behalf of civil society organizations in the region. CEELI's workshops focus on how to effectively use a myriad of available EU laws and instruments to hold national member states accountable. Participants have examined how to enforce the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights, how to pursue legal remedies in the European Court of Justice, how to lobby EU agencies charged with enforcing relevant EU laws, directives and regulations, and how EU laws, instruments and case law can be used in their domestic courts. Participants have also examined best practices for preparation and use of effective fact-finding reports documenting attacks by national governments on civil society, including their use in lobbying efforts in Brussels. Finally, participants have discussed future possible coordination among regional civil society actors, and the formation of more effective links among existing groups defending civil society space in the region.

These efforts reflect the need to organize aggressive civil society responses to a larger trend of repressive governmental actions seen across the world. To carry out their missions, civil society needs to be able to exercise its rights fully and without unnecessary or arbitrary restrictions. Within the past decade, however, countries such as Poland, Hungary and Azerbaijan have enacted legislation that effectively stymies CSOs growth and activity. In particular, laws and regulations relate to the recognition or registration of CSOs, reporting and operating requirements, and access to foreign resources and funding. It is particularly disturbing that these developments are happening within the European Union itself, which declared democracy and the rule of law to be the pillars of its policymaking. Now is the time to organize an effective response.
Safeguarding Treatment of Human Rights Defenders under EU Visa Policy

Current European Union policies on multiple entry and long stay visas raise substantial barriers for human rights defenders (HRDs) seeking to come to Europe for limited periods of time for fellowships, study, engagement, respite, and in some cases, security. These are individuals who are engaged in work in their home countries, and who fully intend to return home after their stays in the EU. The CEELI Institute is developing recommendations for reform of current EU visa policies in ways that would improve the treatment of human rights defenders and smooth their access to visas. CEELI has undertaken a comprehensive survey of HRDs from nine countries in Eurasia as well as in-depth interviews with HRDs on their travel and visa application experiences. This work has illustrated some of the legal and practical barriers that HRDs face when applying for visas to enter Europe, and clarified the need for systemic and administrative changes that could improve the visa process. Already this work has captured the attention of key officials at the European Parliament and the Council of Europe. We hope this research will be useful to European policy makers as they review this complex area of EU law and regulations with an eye to better accommodating the work of HRDs.

SECTION IV. SUPPORTING CIVIL SOCIETY

Respite and Fellowship Program for Human Rights Lawyers and Civil Society Activists

With generous support from a variety of donors, the CEELI Institute is continuing its program, begun in 2015, to provide respite, fellowship and sabbatical opportunities in Prague for human rights lawyers and other activists working under stressful, challenging and sometimes dangerous conditions in their home countries. Our program is designed to help mitigate the damaging effect of the severe stress and untenable workloads carried by many among the community of human rights lawyers and activists. Often working in hostile and authoritarian environments, these lawyers and activists work tirelessly to defend their clients and advance human rights – often at great risk to themselves and their families. Participants in the program have included lawyers working on difficult cases of human rights abuse, and those defending NGOs. Fellowships provide opportunities for participants to enrich their work in international settings, or simply in need of opportunities for rest, recuperation, and safety. The specifics of each fellowship are tailored to the individual needs of the participant. Fellows come for short-to-medium term stays of up to six months. CEELI has recently expanded this program to provide fellowship opportunities at partner organizations across Europe, including Kings College, London, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Prague, and several organizations in France and Germany.
Throughout 2018, the CEELI Institute was pleased to work with a cross-section of diverse, implementing organizations to host a wide variety of events devoted to fighting corruption and to advancing the principles of rule of law, human rights, and democracy. These included:

- Journey: An International Journalism Bootcamp, a two-week program for internationally selected university students, sponsored by the Bakala Foundation, Prague
- Continuing Legal Education Programs for Eurasian Lawyers, Series of Training Programs organized by the American Bar Association/Rule of Law Initiative (ABA/ROLI)
- Political Finance Roundtable, Organized by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)
- Young Policy Advisors from the Western Balkans, Training Program Organizes by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR)
- Medical Law in the Czech Republic, an ongoing, monthly series of programs for Czech lawyers addressing legal and bioethical issues, organized by the Czech Academy of Health Care Management (ongoing)
- International Foundation for Study Abroad, Ongoing foreign-exchange student events (ongoing)
- Emory University, Clinical Legal Education Program — International Partnerships
- Radio Free Europe, Workshop

“CEELI stands as a testament that the rule of law offers the best way forward.”

The Hon. Beverley McLachlin, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada

CEELI CONvenes

- Czech Winemaker of the Year, Industry Workshop, The Czech Wine Archive
- Dutch Embassy: European Resilient Democracy Initiative, organizational meetings
- The CEELI Institute Annual Meeting, in June, is always a highlight of the year, bringing together the Institute’s US and Czech board members, along with prominent judges, lawyers, civil society representatives, and diplomats from throughout the region. This year’s meeting, “The Rule of Law Reform Under Threat; Challenges and Responses”, took on the tough topic of how to respond to the increasing challenges to the Rule of Law seen across Europe and beyond.
- Czech Union of Judges
- United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- European Chief Compliance Officers Forum, annual meeting
- Magistrats européens pour la démocratie et les libertés (MEDAL)
- CEELI Institute staff participated as experts on panels and programs organized by organizations across Europe and the US, including: the UN Global Judicial Integrity Network; the Dallas Bar Association; Masaryk University, Brno; the OSCE (Warsaw); the European Affairs Bureau, US Department of State (Vienna); the Aspen Leadership Seminar (Germany) and the Boris Nemstov Forum (Warsaw).

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Villa Grébovka

The CEELI Institute completed the Villa’s transformation into a state-of-the-art conference and residential center in June 2007. The Villa today is an extraordinary, self-contained training and residential center with lecture halls, classrooms, dining facilities, fitness centre, and residential accommodations for up to 44 guests. All Villa facilities are fully handicap accessible. The on-site accommodation and conference facilities encourage a “dawn to dusk” conversation among participants and faculty that is not easily fostered in a hotel setting. The setting also provides additional layers of a security in an extremely safe city. Additional accommodation is available at reasonably priced hotels within walking distance.

Prague’s location in the heart of Europe, and its extensive air connections make it easily accessible to visitors from across the globe. Visitors will find that the city is easy to negotiate. Prague remains one of Europe’s most beautiful and historic destinations, yet also offers visitors all the vibrancy and benefits of a world class city. English is widely spoken and there is excellent public infrastructure. Prague offers a rich variety of cultural attractions, and is also undergoing a gastronomic resurgence. Prices remain reasonable, and are lower than in comparable neighboring locales in Austria, Germany and Switzerland.
Community Events

The CEELI Institute frequently opens its doors to the surrounding community and to Prague’s not-for-profit community for a wide range of programs and events. This year’s activities included jazz and classical concerts, documentary films, architectural tours, and theatre productions, all of which brought the community into the Villa. Larger events included the City of Prague 2’s annual wine festival, educational programs, and several gourmet food festivals. The Villa and surrounding park are also becoming increasingly popular for use as film sets. Throughout the year CEELI opens the Villa as a setting for television and film productions.
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For information on how you can donate to support the rule of law around the world, visit www.ceeliinstitute.org/give