CEB
COUNCIL OF EUROPE DEVELOPMENT BANK
BANQUE DE DEVELOPPEMENT DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Trust Funds for Social Impact

Highlights 2025



Catalytic support for social projects

Trust funds play a vital role in the CEB's efforts to promote social cohesion and deliver its social mandate. Financed by contributions from donor countries, the European Union (EU) and the CEB, trust funds allow the Bank to undertake high-impact initiatives. They bolster capacity among the Bank's implementing partners and reduce project costs by financing non-reimbursable activities, such as technical assistance, which complement the Bank's lending. They also help unlock access to financing for highly social borrowers, such as microfinance institutions, by serving as collateral. Thanks to their catalytic role, trust funds enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of CEB projects. Grants, technical assistance and loan guarantees are key to addressing the capacity and funding constraints that such projects often face.

By offering swift and flexible funding, CEB trust funds allow for rapid responses to emergencies and provide targeted support to vulnerable people. In 2025, grant approvals totalled €40 million, supporting 23 projects across 15 member countries. Ukraine received the largest share of this support, with nearly €18 million, representing 44% of total approvals. Assistance to migrants, refugees and displaced persons accounted for the largest share of grant activity, totalling €21 million or 51% of approvals. Furthermore, the Bank continued to scale its support for social lenders: loans guaranteed by trust funds reached €152 million, marking an increase of more than 60% compared to the previous year.

Key 2025 trust fund data

€23M
New trust fund contributions from donors

€12M
CEB earnings allocated to trust funds

€40M
CEB grants approved with trust fund resources

€152M
CEB loans guaranteed with trust fund resources

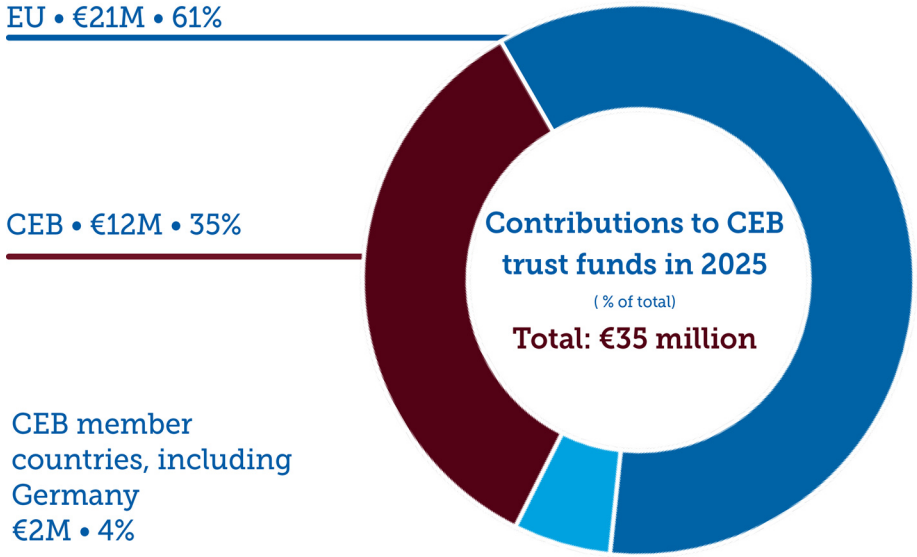
Mutually beneficial cooperation

The In 2025, contributions to CEB trust funds from donors and the Bank reached €35 million, bringing the total amount received over the past three decades to close to €1.1 billion. This substantial funding illustrates donors' commitment to the Bank's social mission and its lean and responsive operating model.

The EU contributed €21 million to the CEB during the year, consolidating its position as the largest donor to the Bank with a total of €784 million or 75% of total contributions since the creation of CEB trust funds. The strength of this cooperation highlights the complementarity of the two institutions: while the EU is the leading actor in the social sector in Europe, both in terms of policy and funding, the CEB has long-standing expertise in implementing high-impact social projects. Germany contributed €1.5 million in 2025, confirming its status as the biggest donor to the CEB among member countries, with overall contributions exceeding €23 million. In addition, the CEB allocated €12 million from its own earnings to trust funds.



Governor Monticelli with European Commissioner for Economy and Productivity Valdis Domrovskis (centre) and European Commissioner for Enlargement Maria Kos



This report highlights three collaborative initiatives involving donors and the CEB, encompassing efforts to strengthen psychosocial resilience in Ukraine, support women farmers in Albania and enhance housing conditions in Slovenia.

These examples demonstrate the diverse nature of trust fund cooperation while underscoring a common goal: that of fostering social cohesion and resilience across Europe. Donors maximise the impact of their contributions by leveraging the CEB's financing capacity and operational expertise. In turn, the collaboration enhances the quality and reach of CEB's interventions by addressing social needs that cannot be met through lending alone.

Focus on CEB Target Group Countries

As a sign of solidarity among CEB member countries, the Bank provides enhanced support to a group of 23 Target Group Countries* in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. The 2025 distribution of approved grants and guaranteed loans reflects this priority.

Grants approved in 2025: €40 million

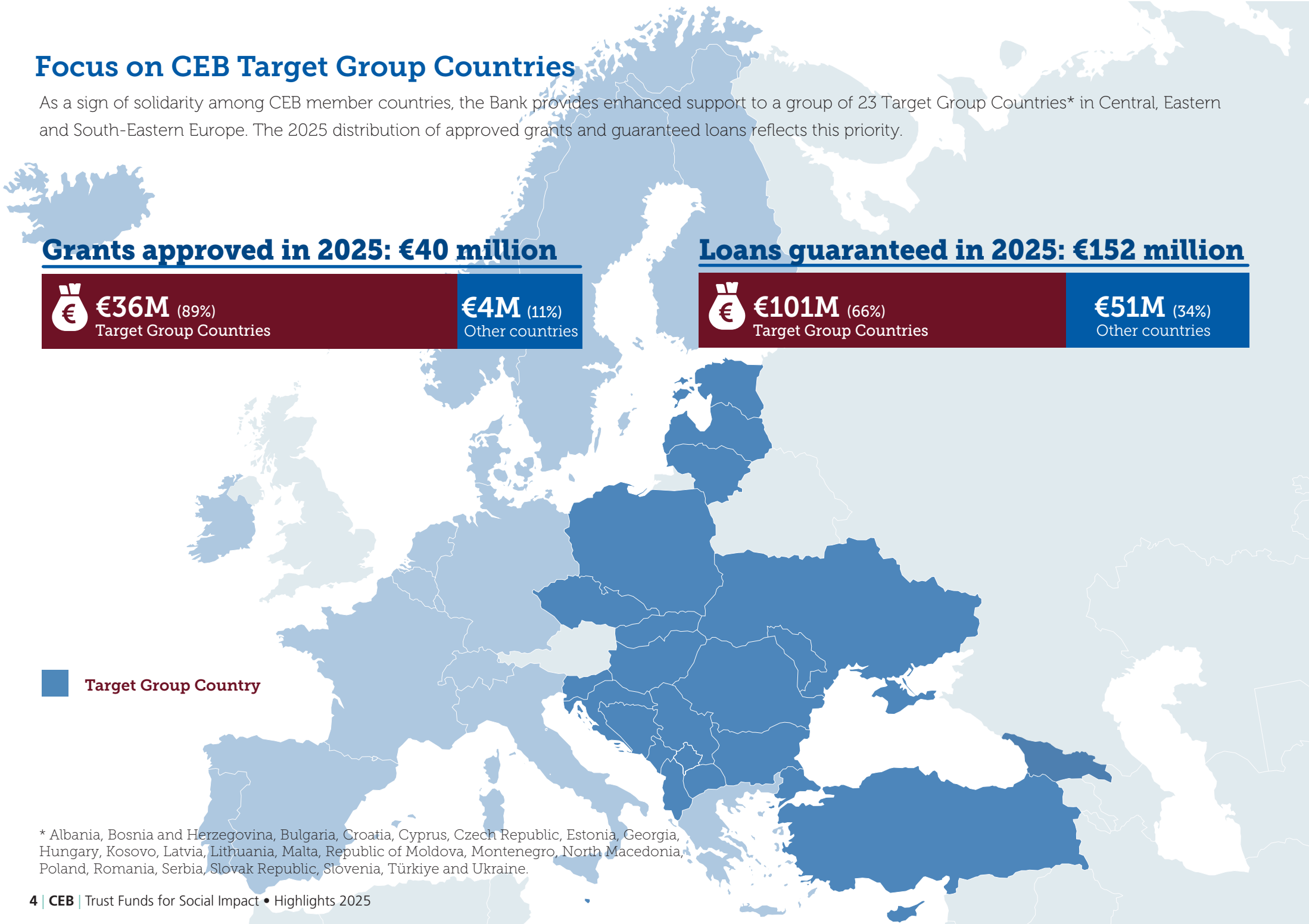
€36M (89%)
Target Group Countries

€4M (11%)
Other countries

Loans guaranteed in 2025: €152 million

€101M (66%)
Target Group Countries

€51M (34%)
Other countries



* Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Türkiye and Ukraine.

Fostering resilience in Ukraine

The ongoing Russian military aggression is placing extraordinary pressure on Ukraine's health system and people's well-being. Mental health needs are rising sharply, with an estimated 15 million people needing psychological support in 2026. If these needs remain unmet, the consequences could be long-lasting: reduced quality of life, weakened human capital and slower socio-economic recovery.

To address this challenge, Ukrainian authorities are scaling up psychosocial support through a growing network of Resilience Centres nationwide.

> If it weren't for this help, I would probably have remained in a state of isolation. Now I have more trust in people and an understanding of where to go next.
>
> **Alexander, a 24-year-old veteran who consulted a Resilience Centre**

These centres offer practical assistance to help people cope with stress, rebuild social connections and access specialised support when needed. They target groups most affected by the war, including families with children, people with disabilities, older people, veterans and internally displaced persons.

The CEB is supporting the national effort by funding training for resilience service providers and awareness-raising so that vulnerable people know where to find help. The Bank is expected to help train 600 resilience workers and to reach at least 200 000 people through information and outreach activities. This intervention is financed by a grant of approximately €550 000 from the Ukraine Solidarity Fund (USF), a trust fund established by the Bank in response to Russia's military aggression.

On the ground, participants confirm the value of this support. Mariana Oliinyk, a social worker in Volin province, notes that the USF-funded training broadened her understanding of her centre's role and strengthened her practice: "After the training, I see the Centre's work differently — not just as a provider of services, but as a space for strengthening community resilience. The knowledge I gained helps me build trust with people and choose more effective support formats."

The services are also making a tangible difference for veterans. Alexander, a 24-year-old veteran, approached the Resilience Centre in Chernivtsi after being discharged from the army and facing severe anxiety and difficulties with socialisation and communication. Over three months, a multidisciplinary team of eight specialists helped him regain stability and direction.



Empowering women in Albania

Agriculture remains a cornerstone of Albanian society. The sector accounts for nearly 20% of the country's GDP and employs more than one third of the workforce. However, many farmers lack access to credit, making it difficult to invest in modern equipment and improved practices. This limits productivity gains and highlights the need for targeted, practical support, especially for women. In rural Albania, agriculture is the main source of women's employment, but they often face extra challenges in accessing resources and knowledge.

To strengthen capacity among small farmers and rural entrepreneurs, with a particular focus on empowering women, the CEB has partnered with the Slovak Republic and FED Invest, a microfinance institution. The Slovak Republic is financing technical training, on-farm demonstrations and financial education workshops. These activities are designed to promote sustainable farming practices and advance financial education. The initiative aims to benefit approximately 1 000 current or prospective FED Invest borrowers in rural areas, with women comprising at least half of the participants. This support is made possible by a grant from the Slovak Inclusive Growth Account (SIGA), a trust fund administered by the CEB.



The SIGA grant supplements a €10 million CEB loan to FED Invest approved in 2025, aimed at strengthening microfinance operations in the country, particularly in rural regions. Promoting gender equality is an important aspect of the CEB loan, at least 35% of the loan amount is expected to be allocated to women entrepreneurs.

Esmeralda Troka, a 24-year-old farmer who lives in Bishan, a town of about 8 000 inhabitants in south-west Albania, exemplifies the potential for positive outcomes from this partnership. Thanks to a microloan provided by FED Invest, Esmeralda and her family acquired 50 goats and expanded their stables, marking a significant advancement in the development of their farm. She also noted that "the field training, the 'Ask the Expert' sessions, and the other digital services have been incredibly valuable for a young farmer like me."

> This loan allowed us to scale our operations and invest in our future. For young farmers, timely financial support is everything.
>
> **Esmeralda Troka, a 24-year-old farmer who benefitted from a FED Invest microloan**

Improving housing in Slovenia

Like many other European countries, Slovenia is grappling with a housing affordability crisis. Between 2015 and 2025, the country's real estate prices more than doubled — outpacing the EU average increase of around 60%. In Ljubljana, the country's capital, the price of a home now represents on average 12 years of income. The CEB is collaborating with the European Union to help Slovenian authorities address this challenge. In 2025, the CEB mobilised nearly €400 000 in EU-funded technical assistance to support the preparation of Slovenia's Third-Generation National Housing Strategy and Investment Plan.

> The CEB technical assistance made available to Slovenia has played an essential role in drafting our third-generation housing strategy and in developing new financial mechanisms for the provision of public housing.
>
> **Former Minister of Solidarity-Based Future Simon Maljevac**

The assignment delivered two core outputs: a comprehensive mapping of the country's housing landscape and a set of recommendations to boost investments in the sector. Both outputs were financed by the InvestEU Advisory Hub, a facility which supports the development of investment projects across the EU.

The CEB has also partnered with the European Investment Bank (EIB) to turn the strategy into reality. In November 2025, the CEB and the EIB issued a formal joint commitment to Slovenia's National Housing Agenda at the conference "Turning Vision into Homes: Slovenia's Affordable Housing Journey" – which the two institutions organised with the Slovenian government. The CEB and EIB also launched a €300 million co-financing facility with SID Banka, Slovenia's national development bank, to finance housing. Together, the evidence-based policy framework, long-term institutional set-up, coordinated IFI support and blended financing make Slovenia a leader in housing development in the EU.

The conference brought together CEB Vice-Governor Tomáš Boček and EIB Vice-President Ioannis Tsakiris alongside now former Prime Minister Robert Golob and now former Minister of Solidarity-Based Future Simon Maljevac – a level of political engagement that underscores the importance Slovenia's authorities attach to its housing agenda and to the role of international financial institutions in helping to deliver it.



Affordable, energy-efficient homes for the elderly in Slovenia



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