Overview

The starting point for the CEB’s strategic thinking was its role as the only development bank in Europe with a social mandate. Given the wide range of social issues that Europe will need to address in the medium term, this mandate can only grow in importance. Derived from this positioning, the CEB has defined three lines of action:

- **Inclusive growth**: working to promote access to economic opportunities to ensure a prosperous future for all. The CEB aims to support inclusive growth and especially investments in sectors such as housing and social care, health and education, and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

- **Support for vulnerable groups**: helping to integrate the most vulnerable citizens by tackling complex subjects such as gender, age, homelessness, disability, migrant background or emergency response.

- **Environmental sustainability**: promoting the protection of the environment, climate mitigation and adaptation by emphasising these aspects in all its projects. Project screening will be reinforced so that misalignments with the Paris Climate Agreement can be identified early on. This means that the Bank promotes the integration of environmental sustainability and climate measures in all socially-oriented projects. This is achieved, among other things, by reducing a project’s carbon footprint through improvements in energy efficiency in housing, transportation and social infrastructure.

Focus on the CEB and the Sustainable Development Goals

The Development Plan sets out a framework with which the CEB can support its member countries in their efforts to realise their respective SDG agendas. At strategic level, the CEB will prioritise a set of ten key SDGs closest to the Bank’s mandate and three lines of action. The figure below presents those ten key goals. At operational level, the CEB’s potential contribution to the SDGs is identified at the project appraisal phase and then regularly assessed at portfolio level, for all potential projects having been screened since the end of 2019.

The Bank’s contribution to the priority SDGs is categorised into the following three groups:

- **Alignment with the CEB’s core social mandate**: the CEB’s primary mission to undertake investments that promote social cohesion and inclusiveness, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups, is well aligned with two broad goals, namely SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities).

- **Cross-cutting issues**: namely SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 13 (Climate Action) are screened for in all CEB projects. Firstly, the CEB addresses gender inequality as a cross-cutting structural disadvantage, considered in the framework of the social aspects of the projects it finances. Secondly, the CEB carries out environmental/climate action screening on all its projects (see the CEB’s Environmental and Social Safeguards Policy).
“I am pleased that we have been able to incorporate the SDGs into our strategic planning for 2020-2022. We have taken special care to develop a practical approach to screening new projects for their potential SDG contribution and to ensure that all CEB project financing is in compliance with the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change. We remain fully committed to supporting all our members in reaching their SDG targets.”

Rolf Wenzel, Governor

- From a sectoral perspective, six SDGs particularly resonate with the Bank’s social mandate and long-standing experience in promoting inclusive and sustainable growth: SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

Through its financing of sustainable projects, the CEB aims to directly support its member countries in achieving the SDGs, with a special focus on the following priority SDGs, closely aligned with the Bank’s social mandate:

### SDGs identified as most relevant for the CEB’s activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alignment with the CEB’s social mandate</th>
<th>Cross-cutting issues, screening of all CEB projects</th>
<th>Project-specific, sector-based relevance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SDG 1 (No Poverty)</td>
<td>SDG 5 (Gender Equality)</td>
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<td>SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)</td>
<td>SDG 15 (Life on Land)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

For more on SDGs, see the ‘CEB Handbook for the Preparation and Implementation of Projects’ which was revised in early 2020 to include, among others, the SDGs.