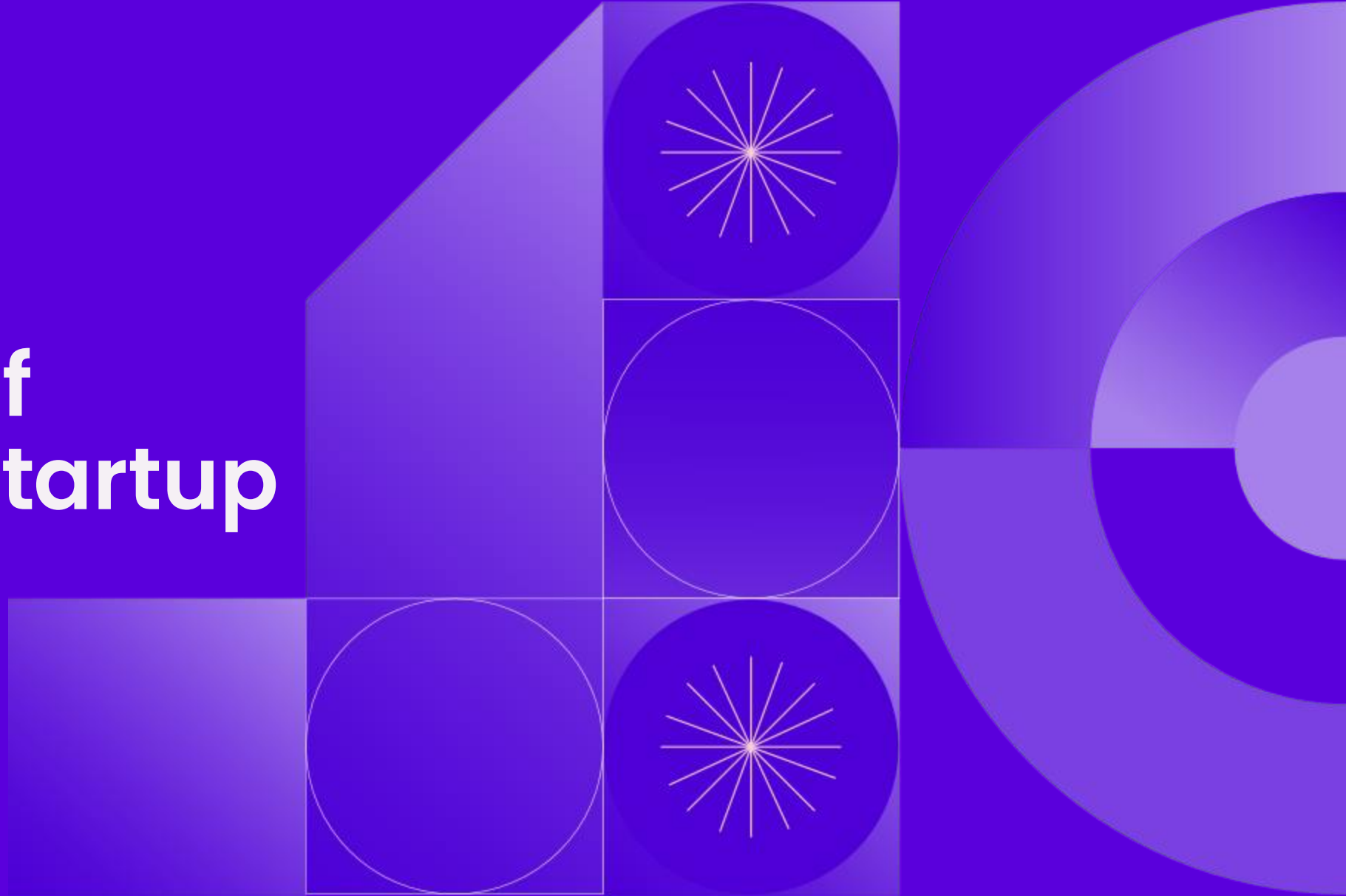


A Decade of European Startup Founders



Opening remarks

Over the past decade, the European tech landscape has transformed dramatically, now boasting a combined valuation of over \$3 trillion.

In this report, we dive into the evolution of Europe's startup landscape, uncovering the factors that have fueled fundraising success across diverse regional hubs.

It highlights how diverse teams—with a mix of skills, strong academic backgrounds, and varied demographics—consistently outperform more homogeneous groups.

Our findings further show that teams with finance and consulting expertise have a distinct edge in attracting capital. This pattern, notably different from Silicon Valley's tech-heavy founder profiles, reflects Europe's historical strength in professional services and the relative scarcity of large tech companies producing the next generation of entrepreneurs.

As we analyze the past decade's journey in this report, one thing becomes clear: European tech is forging its own path to success. The challenge ahead lies not only in building more successful startups but in creating the next generation of tech companies capable of producing tomorrow's founders—a crucial step in the ecosystem's maturation.



“The report reveals the factors that have driven fundraising success across various European hubs over the past decade.”



**Bo Ilsoe, Managing Partner
NGP Capital**

Key takeaways

1

Team composition matters

Teams with mixed-skill set raise significantly more funding, with top performers securing 43% more than the baseline.

2

Team size & education influence fundraising success

Teams with PhD founders raise 66% more, while teams with four co-founders secure 244% more funding.

3

Mixed & diverse teams raise the most

Mixed-gender teams raise 25% more than all-male teams, while teams with at least one international co-founder secure 44% more funding than local-only teams.

4

Ex-Consultants attract the most funding

Former McKinsey consultants have secured over \$14.3 billion in funding—264% higher than the overall median.



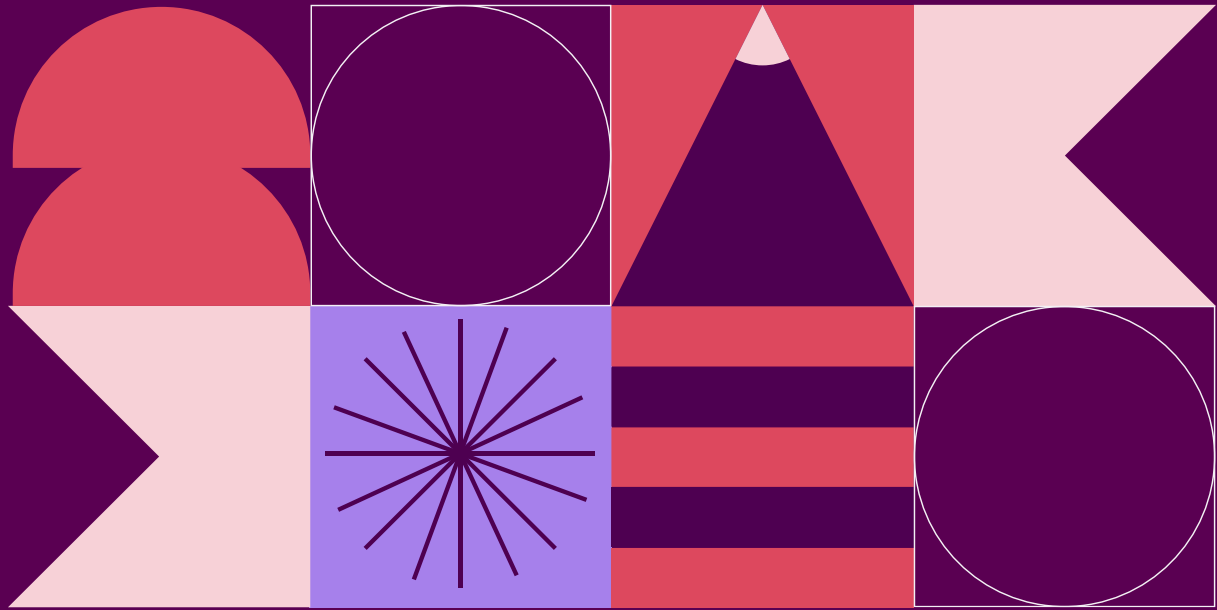
31,644 founders

17,836 European tech startups

2014 – 2024 founding year

Data profiling:

- In the analysis, we focus on the top decile (top 10%) of founders.
- Teams are considered in the top decile if they have raised at least \$20.5M, which serves as a baseline in the report.
- Companies in the data were founded in 2014 or after.
- Each founder is linked to one company in the data sample.
- The purpose is to focus on the outliers – the teams that create the largest and most celebrated outcomes.
- For more about the data, see the data & limitations section of the report.



Education

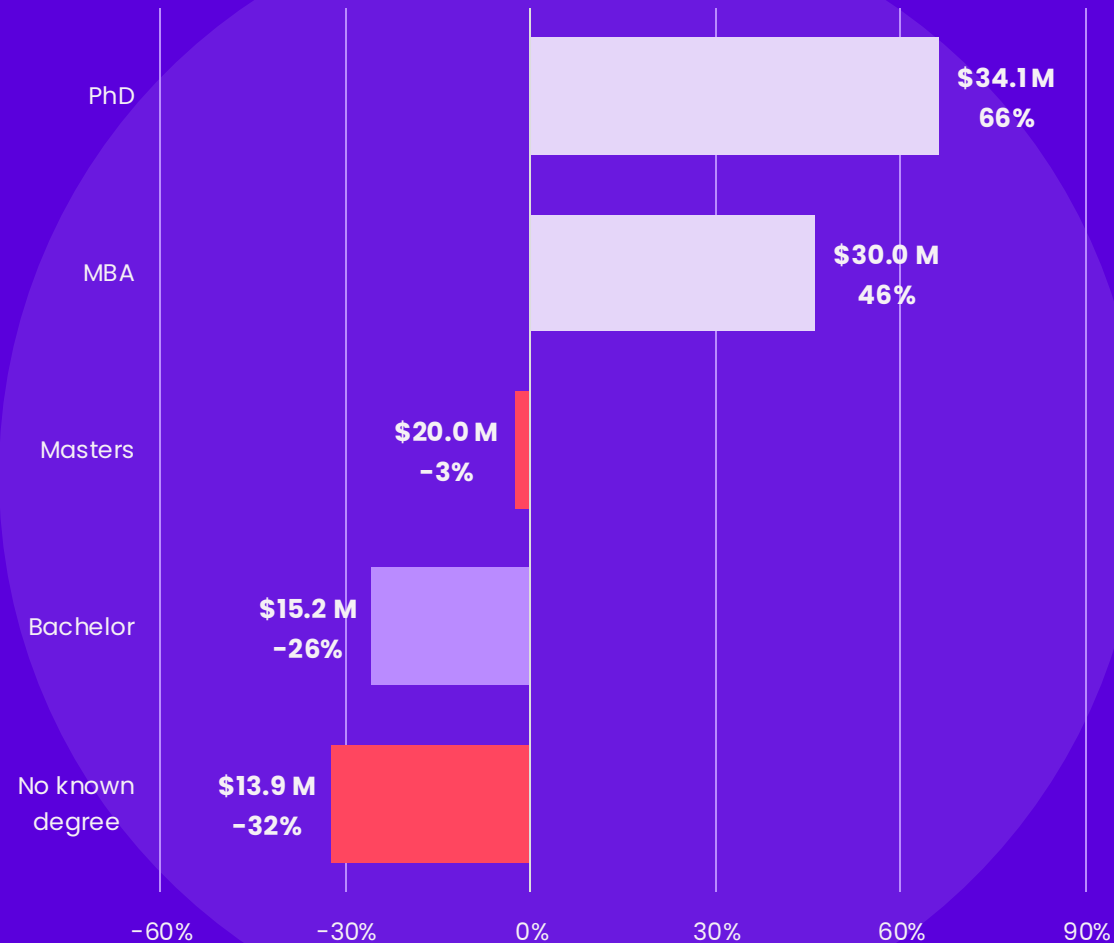
Advanced degrees worth their weight in gold



At the top, PhD founders raise €34.1M outperforming their peers by 66% in the top funding bracket.

MBA holders follow closely, securing €30.0M, a 46% premium over the baseline.

By contrast, Bachelor's degree founders face a significant gap, raising €15.2M (-26%) while founders without formal degrees struggle the most, raising just €13.9M (-32%).



Alumni from UK universities lead in startup creation in Europe



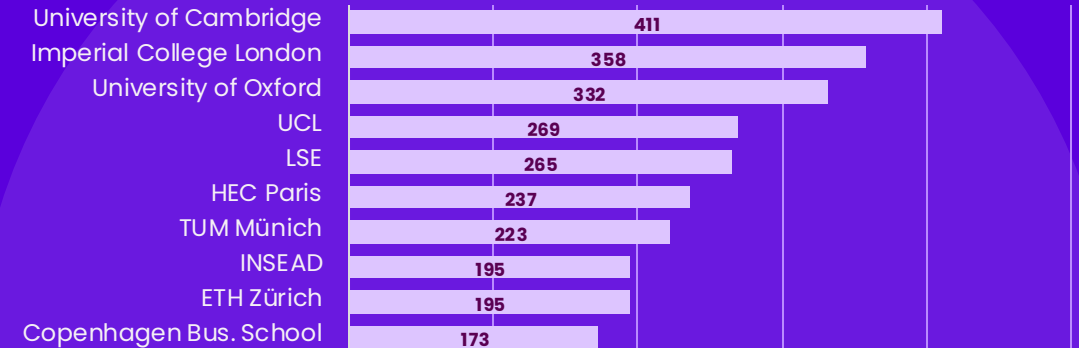
Alumni from UK universities lead in founding companies, with Cambridge, Imperial College London, Oxford, UCL, and LSE making up the top 5.



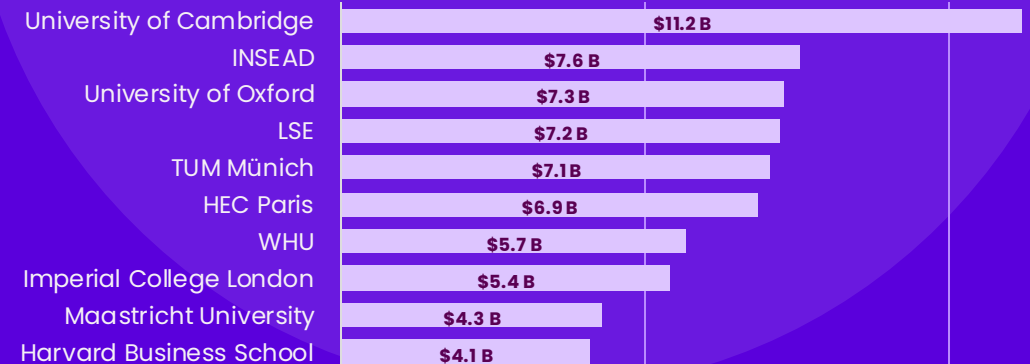
Alumni from Cambridge, INSEAD, and Oxford lead in total funding raised, with Cambridge founders securing a total of \$11.2B, followed by INSEAD at \$7.6B and Oxford at \$7.3B.



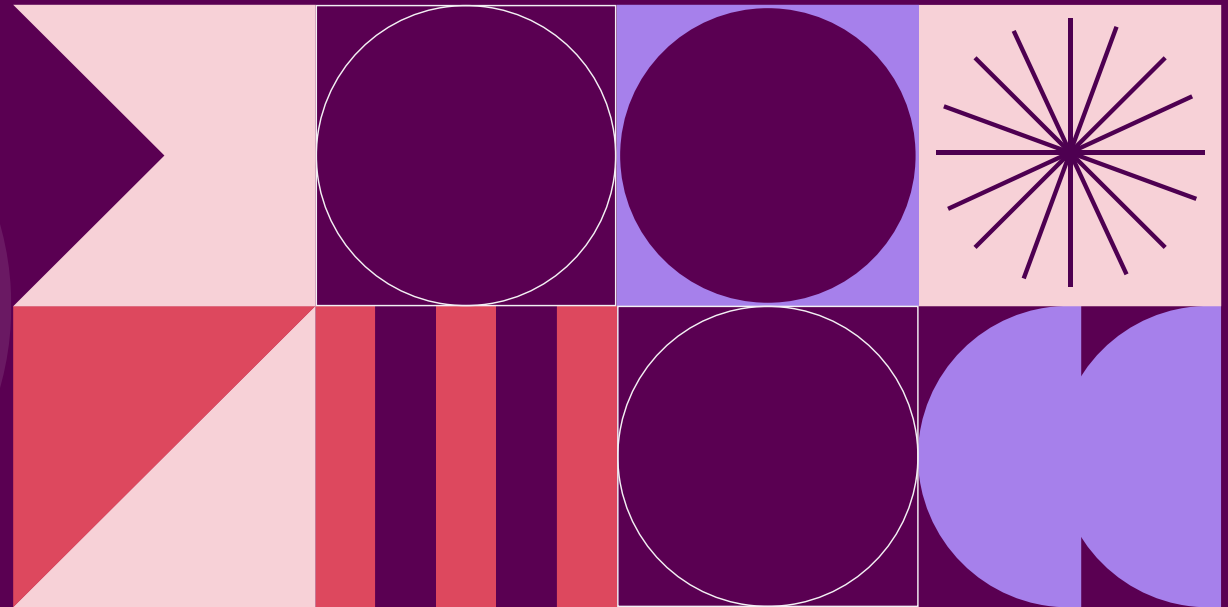
Companies Founded



\$ Total Raised



Team Composition



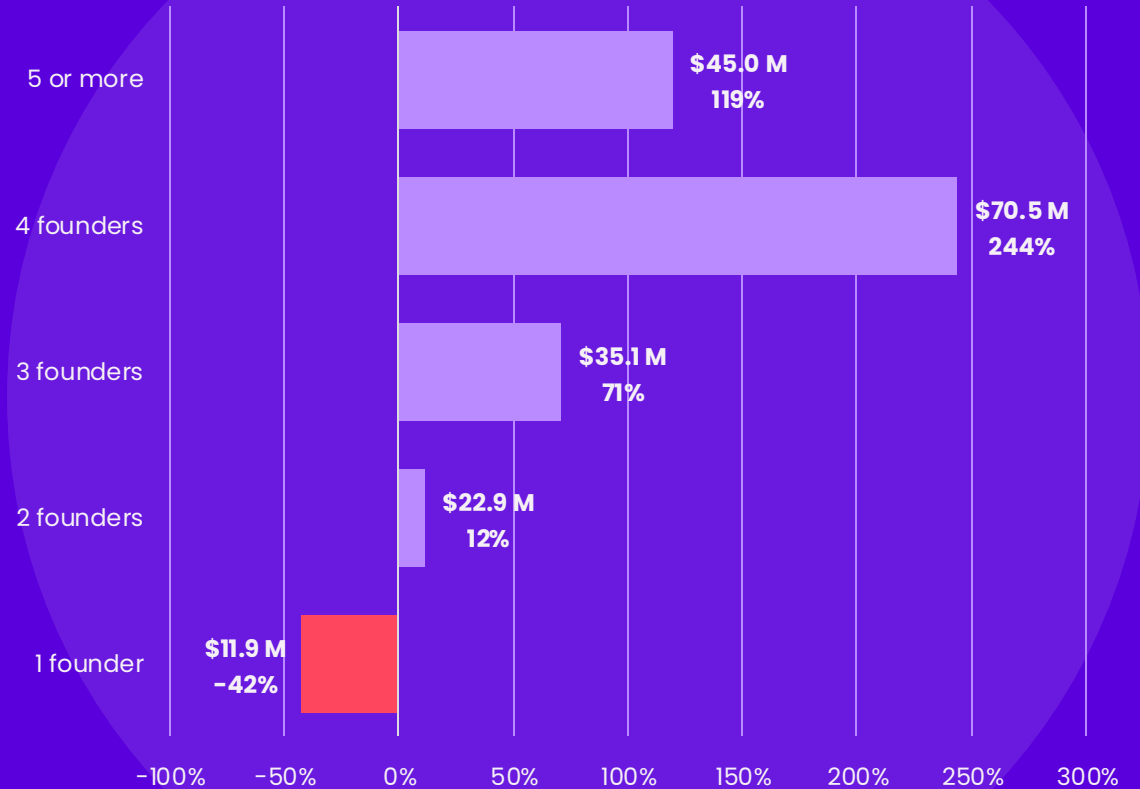
Four's a charm: optimal team size for maximum fundraising



Top teams with four co-founders raise a staggering 244% more capital than the baseline.

Funding generally increases as team size grows, peaking at four members before it begins to decline with larger teams.

Solo founders face the steepest funding disadvantage, raising 42% less than the baseline.



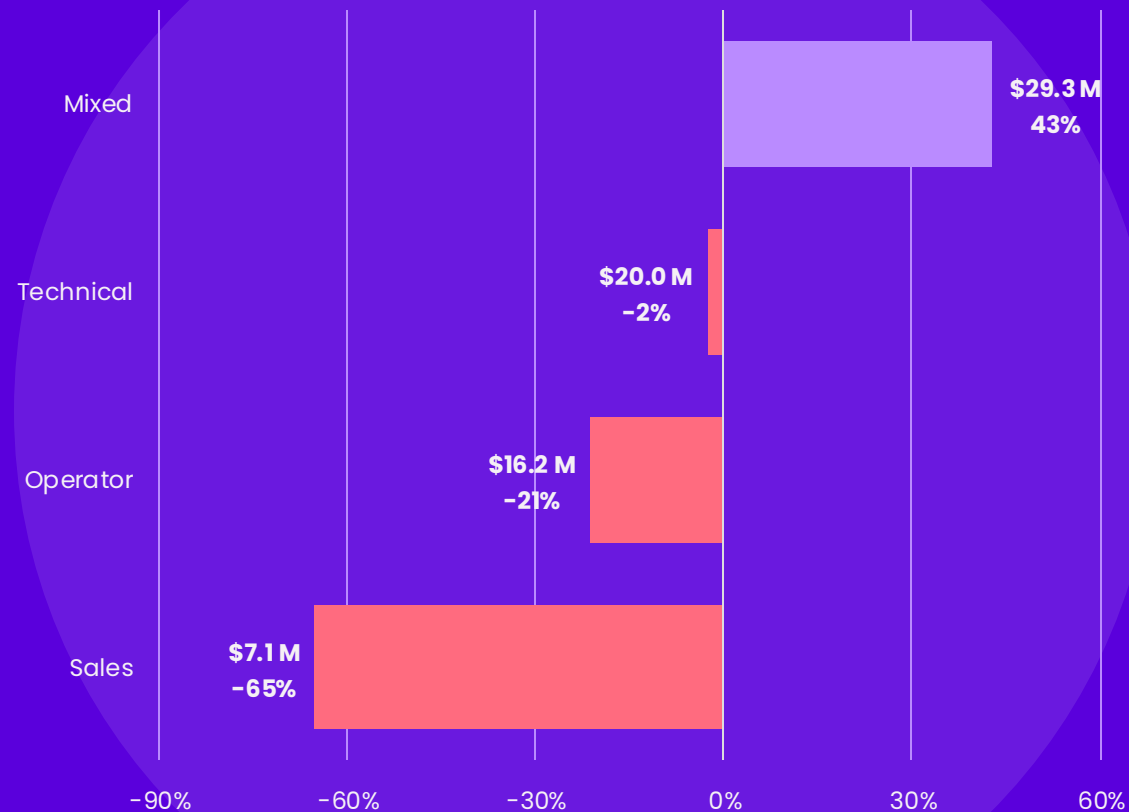
Technical skills matter, but mixed skills take the prize



Teams with mixed-skill set raise significantly more funding, with top performers securing 43% more than the baseline.

Following mixed-skill teams, top technical founders raise at least \$20M, outperforming operator-led teams at \$16.2M and well ahead of sales-focused teams at \$7.1M.

In contrast, sales-led teams lag, raising 65% less than other teams.



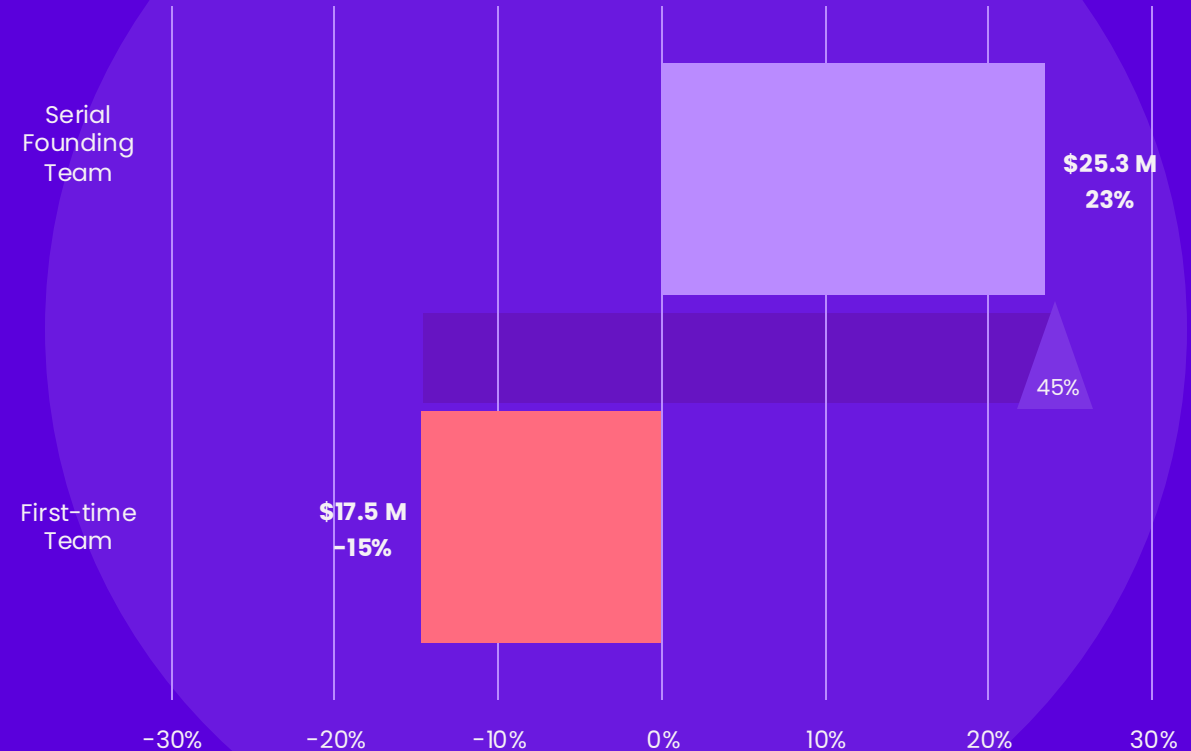
Experience pays: serial founders raise more



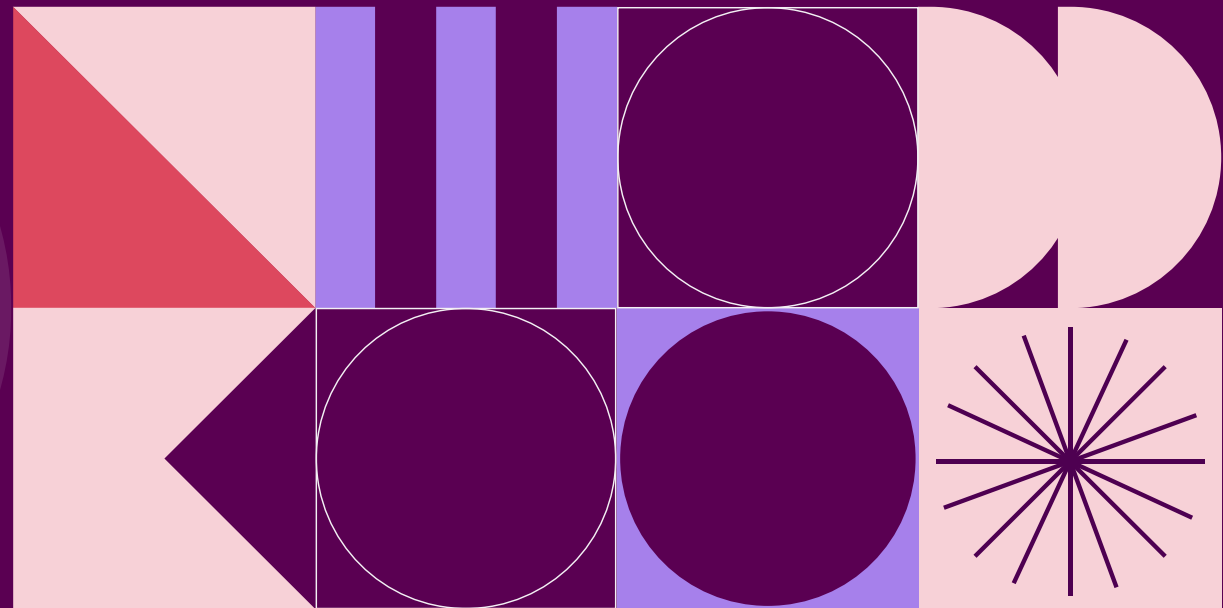
A serial founder team, defined as having at least one founder with previous company founding experience, raises more compared to teams of first-time founders.

Serial founder teams raise 45% (\$7.8M) more compared to first-time founding teams, and 23% more than the baseline.





On the other hand, first-time founders raise 15% less than the baseline.



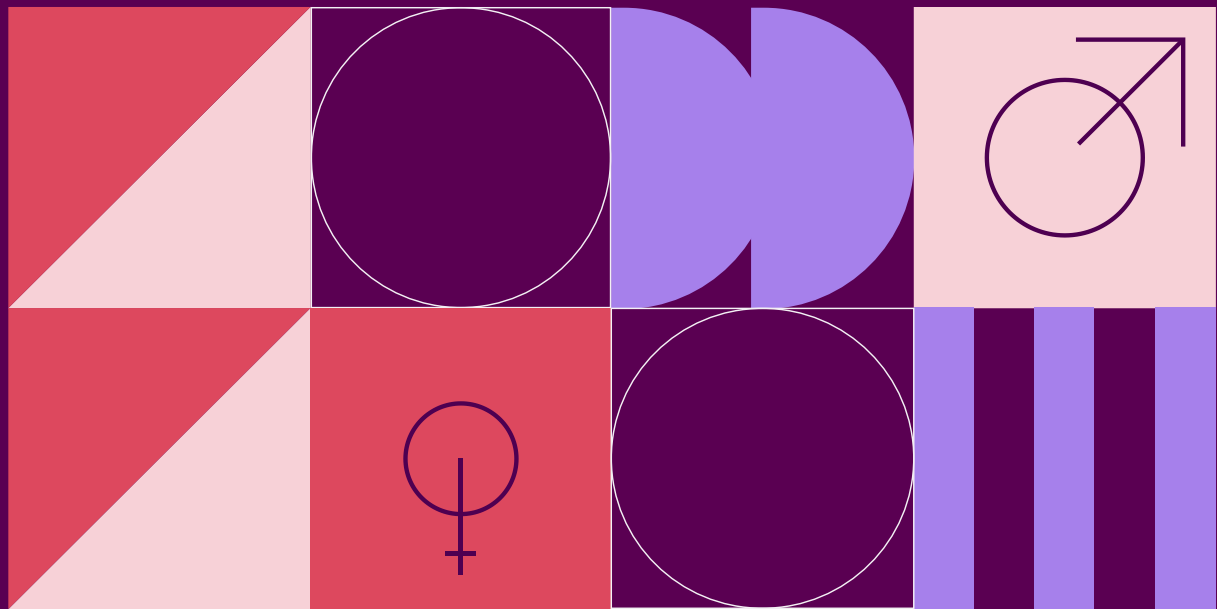
Past Work Experience



Ex-Consultants dominate Europe's startup scene

Company Name*	Companies #	Total Funding (\$)	Median funding compared to overall median
McKinsey & Company	445	\$14.4 B	264%
 BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP	379	\$11.8 B	197%
BAIN & COMPANY 	166	\$8.6 B	193%
Fortis Bank France	157	\$2.4 B	160%
 BMW GROUP	130	\$3.9 B	148%
Deutsche Bank	231	\$5.6 B	143%
 Roland Berger	119	\$2.1 B	129%
Morgan Stanley	168	\$2.9 B	128%
 Apple	107	\$1.5 B	113%
HSBC	172	\$5.1 B	99%

*At least one co-founder worked at the company



Team Diversity

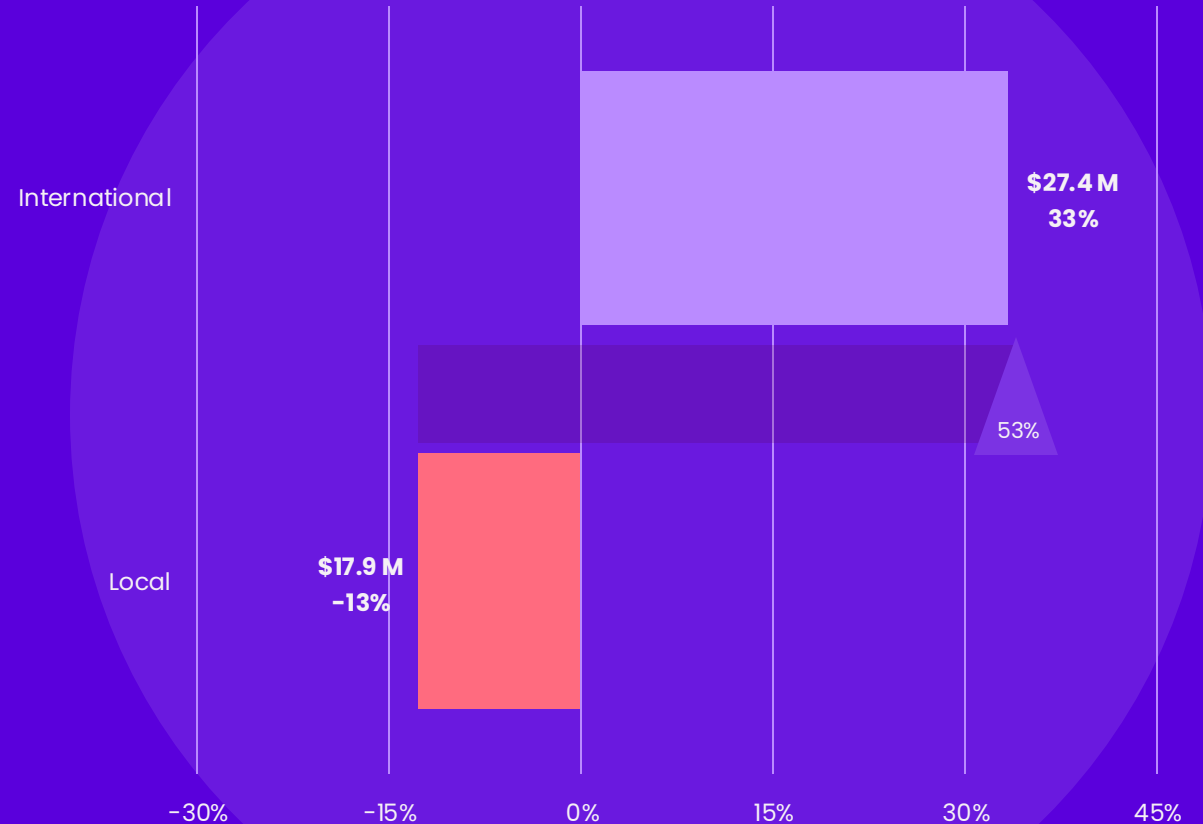
International teams outperform in fundraising



In the context of this analysis, an international founder is defined as one from a different country than their company's HQ.

Teams with at least one international founder raise more funding than fully local teams. At the top 10% mark, international teams raise \$9.5M (53%) more.

The data suggests that international teams often achieve higher funding outcomes, appealing to both founders and VCs.



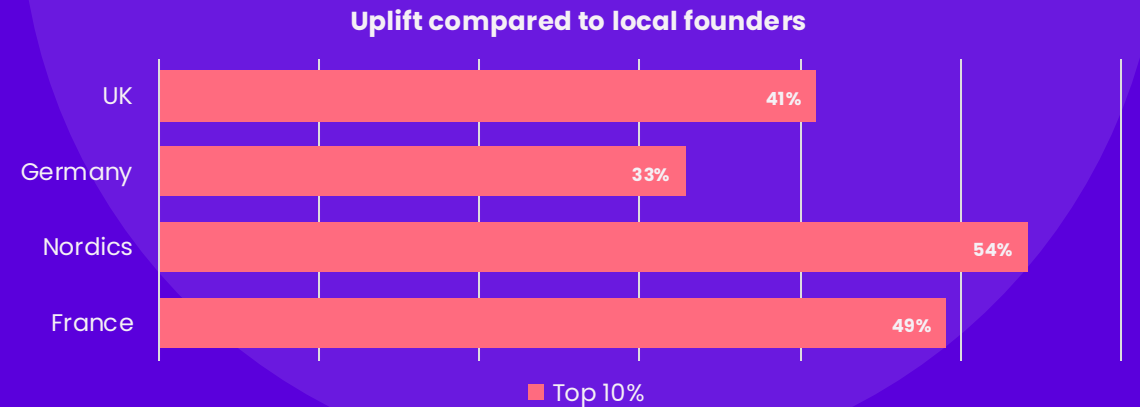
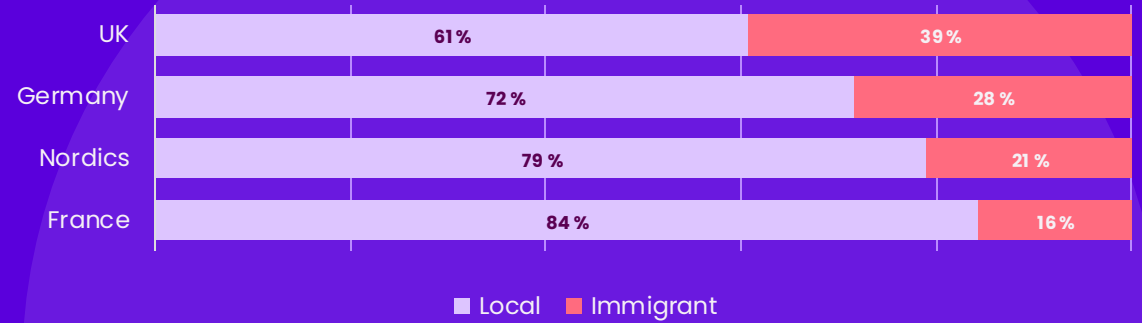
International founders fuel funding gains



The UK has the highest percentage of teams with international founders (39%), outpacing Germany (28%), the Nordics (21%), and France (16%).



In every region, having an international co-founding team boosts funding chances. Teams with at least one international co-founder secure between 33% and 54% more than local-only teams.



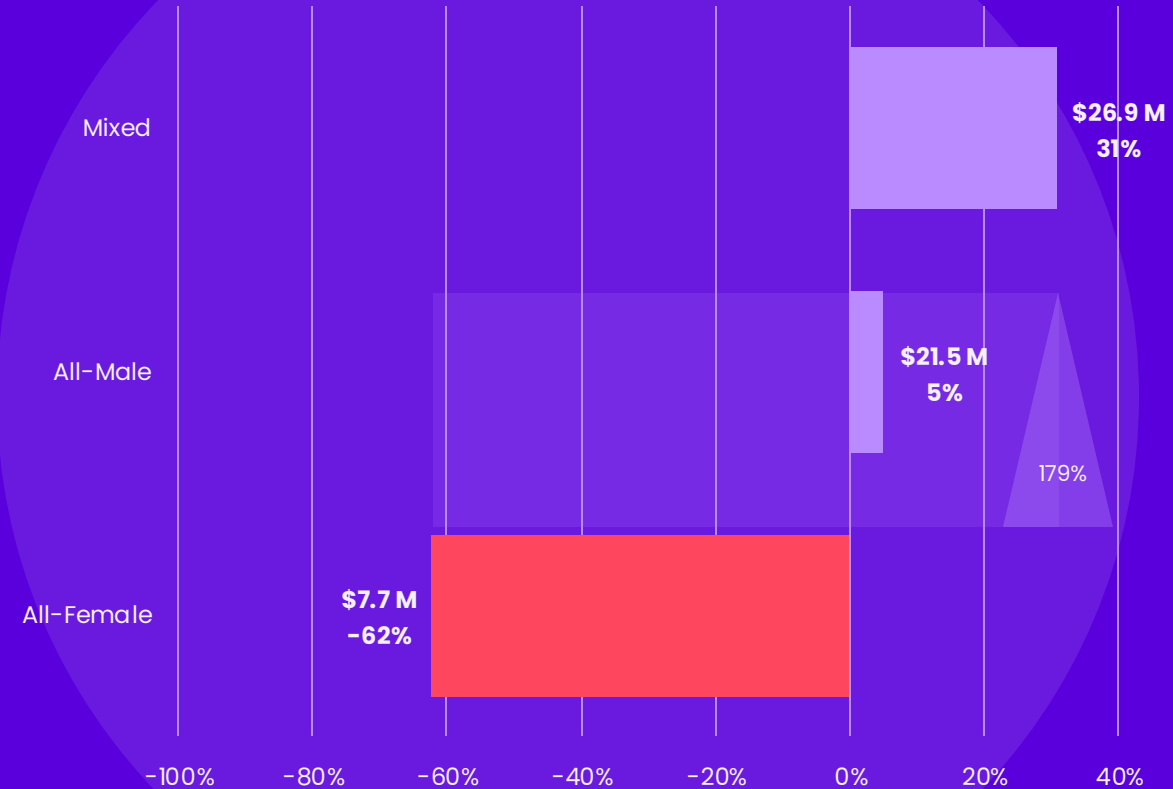
Mixed-gender founding teams raise the most



The data reveals a significant funding gap between all-male and all-female teams.

All-male teams raise 179% more (\$21.5M) than all-female teams (\$7.7M).

However, mixed-gender teams outperform all-male teams, raising 25% more (\$26.9M vs \$21.5M), indicating that gender diversity can boost fundraising success.



Conclusion



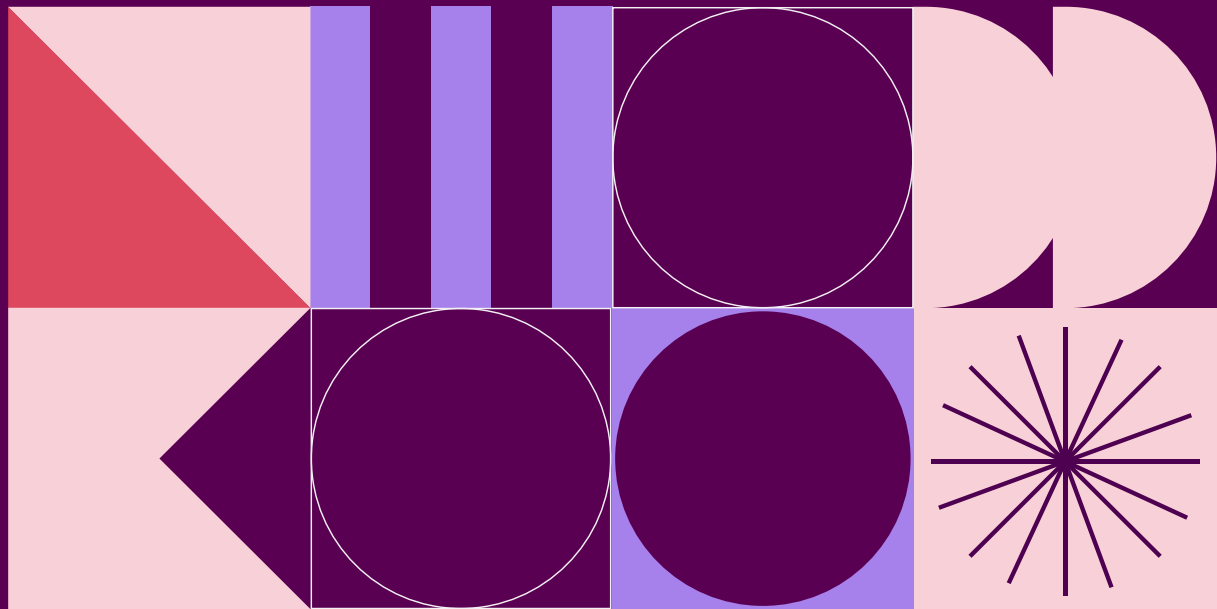
The report highlights some of the key factors that have influenced startup funding in Europe the past decade. It's worth noting, however, that this is based on past data.

Europe's startup scene has changed and evolved over the past decade, with many top companies producing a new generation of experienced repeat founders and operators.

As the ecosystem matures, we expect to see shifts in the factors that attract investment. These changes will be influenced by a new wave of founders with proven track records, stronger networks, and a heightened understanding of scaling not just in Europe but globally.

"As the European ecosystem matures, we will see shifts in the factors that attract investment, influenced by a new wave of founders."





Data & Limitations

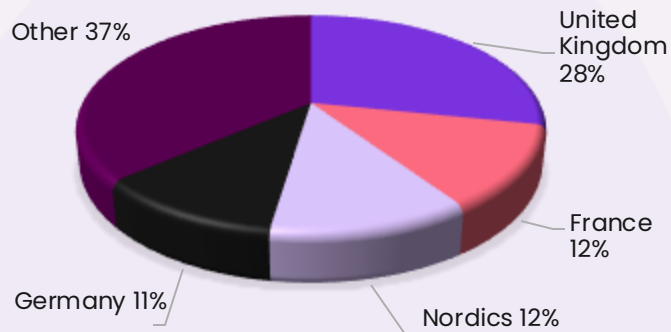
Limitations to analysis

- **Company Selection:** It includes funding for companies up to the current date, some companies will go on to raise more funds later.
- **Sector Bias:** The dataset is slightly biased based on the sector interests of NGP Capital, though most institutionally funded companies are included.
- **Missing Companies:** Out-of-business companies and some exited companies are excluded due to data availability issues.
- **Funding Analysis:** The analysis focuses on the amount of funding raised, which may not always reflect how the funds were used or the success achieved.
- **VC Bias:** The results might reflect venture capital biases as much as team and founder success, suggesting further research is necessary.
- **Gender Analysis:** Founder gender analysis is based on assumed gender and is reported at an aggregated level, which should be accurate enough for high-level insights.

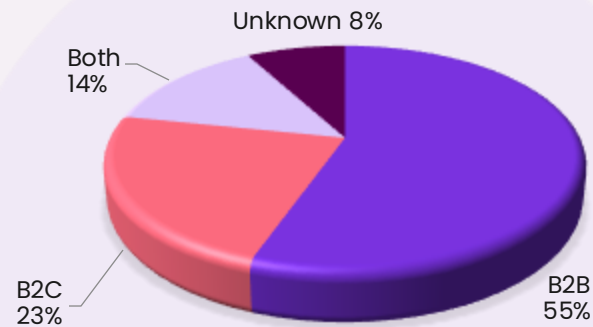
Data profiling of Companies

A drill-down on data analyzed

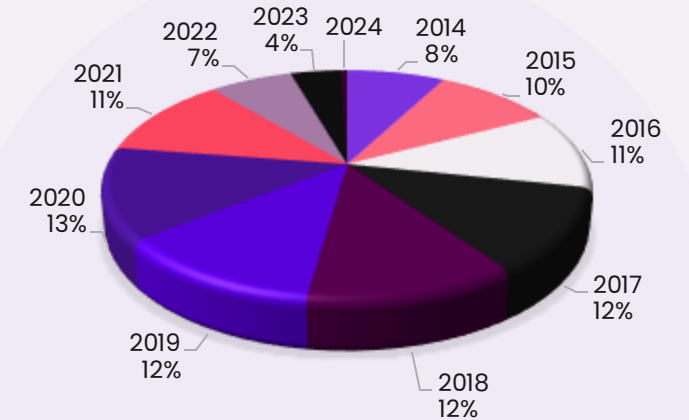
Per Region



Per Customer Type



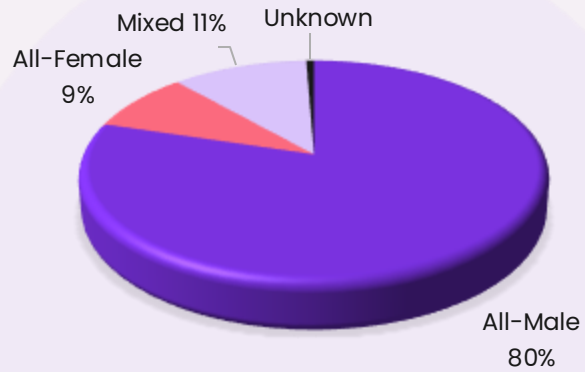
Per Founding Year



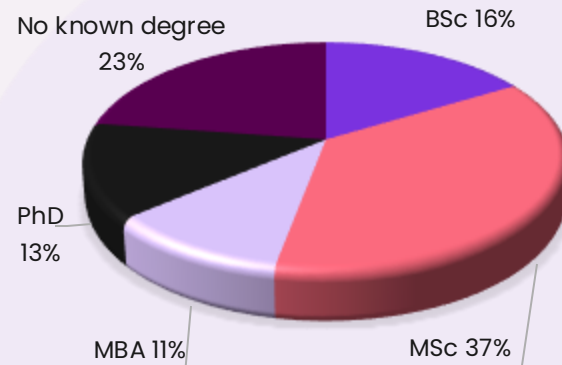
Data profiling of Teams

A drill-down on data analyzed

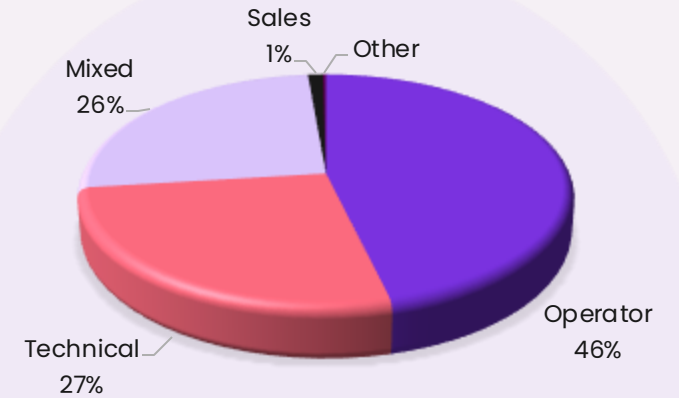
Per Gender



Per Highest Education

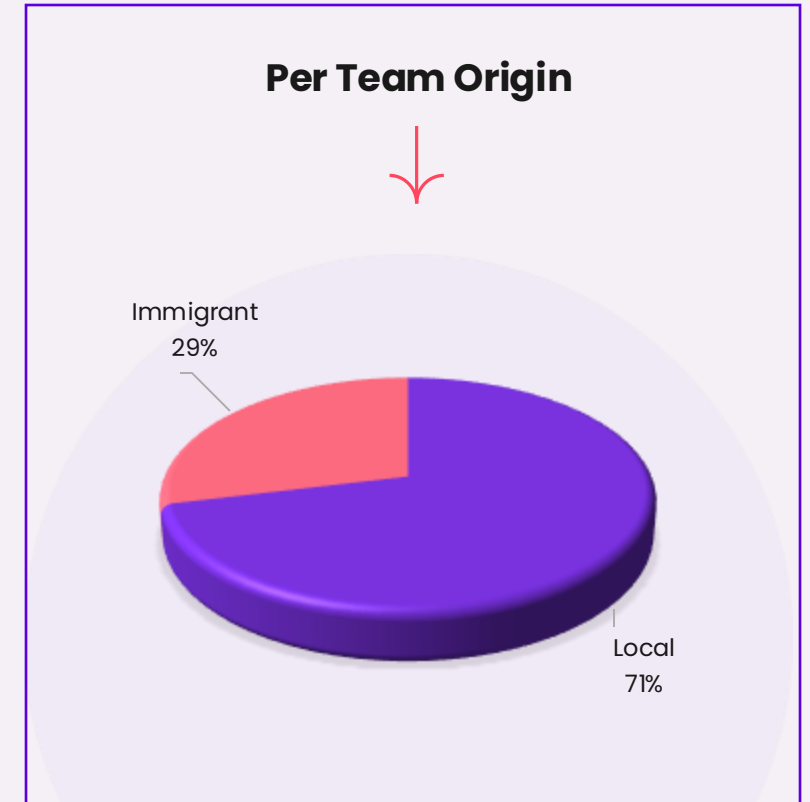
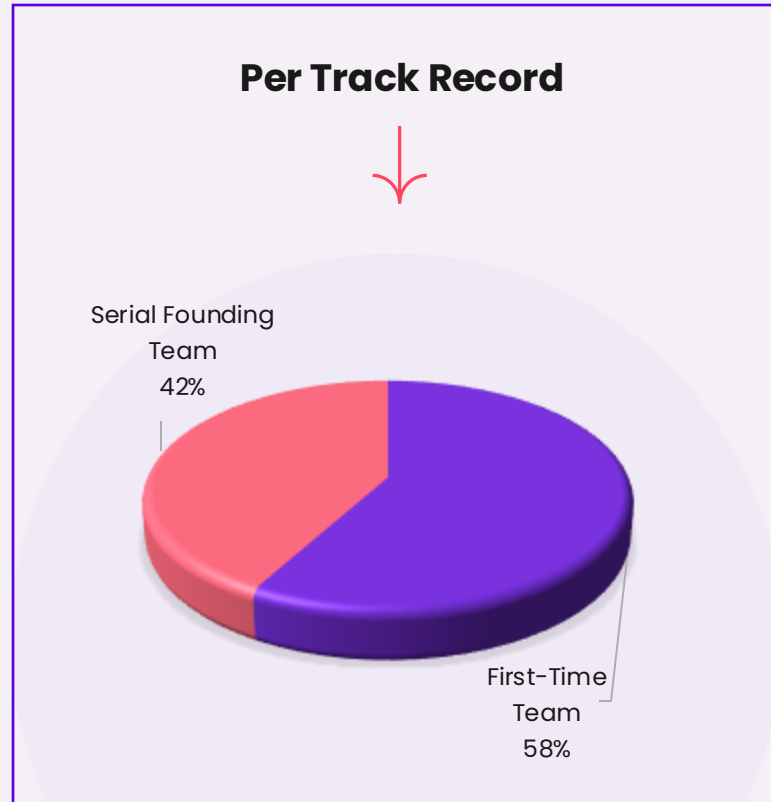
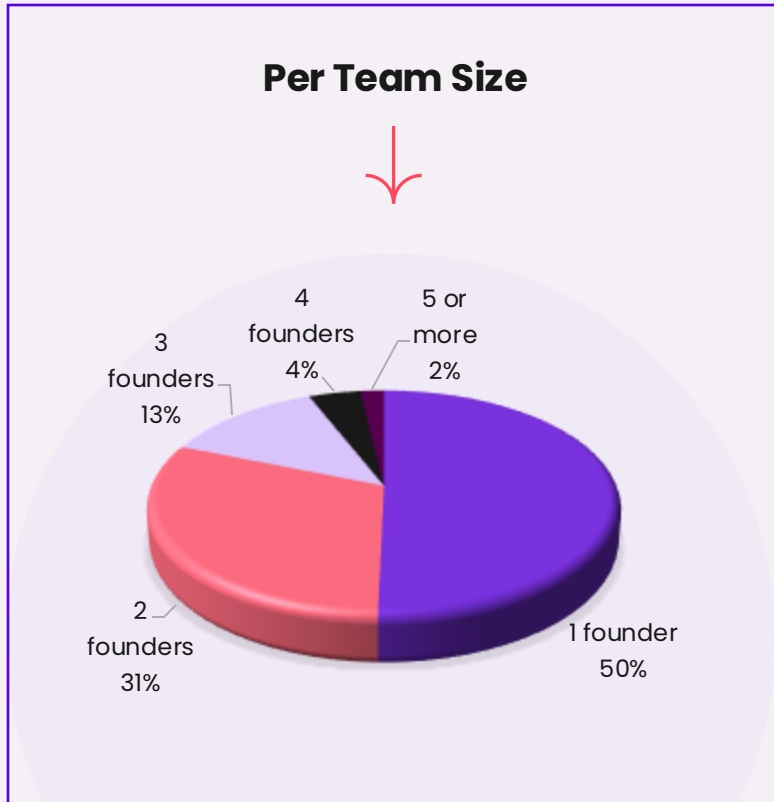


Per Background



Data profiling of Teams

A drill-down on data analyzed



About NGP Capital

NGP Capital backs early-stage B2B companies from Series A onwards in Europe and the US within enterprise software, industrial technology, cybersecurity, and Edge and Data infrastructure.

Founded in 2005, NGP Capital has over \$1.6B in AUM and has invested in more than 100 companies of which 18 became unicorns and 11 went on to IPO.

Some of the companies NGP has backed in Europe include GetYourGuide, Babbel, ANYbotics, Deliveroo, and Scandit.

To learn more visit www.ngpcap.com