INDUSTRY
SECTOR
REPORT

Consulting

JUNE 2026

ie UNIVERSITY
TALENT & CAREERS

Executive Summary

The consulting industry in 2026 is undergoing a major structural transformation. Clients are moving away from open-ended advisory toward execution-focused, AI-enabled work — expecting consultants to implement solutions, manage transformations, and deliver measurable impact. AI is now embedded across consulting workflows, shrinking the traditional junior analyst model and raising the bar for entry-level hiring. Starting salaries at top firms have been frozen for three consecutive years and major firms have announced headcount reductions — signals of a permanent recalibration, not a cyclical correction.

The market is polarizing. Large global firms consolidate complex transformation mandates at the top; boutique and specialist firms are the fastest-growing segment, particularly in AI, ESG, cybersecurity, operations, digital health, and supply chain resilience; and mid-tier generalists face the greatest competitive pressure. Demand is strongest in digital transformation and AI implementation, operations and restructuring, ESG and regulatory advisory, human capital transformation, and in-house strategy and transformation teams.

Talent demand is shifting toward T-shaped professionals who combine analytical breadth with deep sector expertise, AI fluency, and implementation experience. For IE University, consulting represents 14.1% of total placements in 2025 with 302 students placed. Boutique firms are now the largest consulting sub-sector destination for IE graduates — reflecting the broader market shift toward specialization. The MBA consulting placement rate of 21% compares to 50% at INSEAD, 42% at IESE, and 40% at LBS, with geographic concentration in Spain as an additional structural risk to address.

IE's international student body, multidisciplinary education, multilingual talent, and global alumni network of approximately 10,000 consulting professionals align well with the industry's growing need for cross-functional, internationally minded talent. The key strategic priorities are: strengthening AI and analytical preparation from the start of programs; accelerating boutique ecosystem development — the largest untapped pipeline opportunity; expanding employer relationships in DACH, Benelux, the Middle East, and Latin America; and leveraging the alumni network more systematically as employer development partners and direct connectors between students and hiring processes.

EMERGING ROLES · CONSULTING SECTOR 2026
High-growth roles now vs. roles emerging as the EU AI Act matures

Roles Scaling Now
Most significant growth in demand

- AI STRATEGY CONSULTANT
- GenAI IMPLEMENTATION LEAD
- ESG & SUSTAINABILITY ADVISOR
- IN-HOUSE STRATEGY ANALYST
- CYBERSECURITY RISK ADVISOR

Looking Ahead
Growing as the EU AI Act matures

- RESPONSIBLE AI ADVISOR
- AI GOVERNANCE SPECIALIST
- TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM LEAD

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report provides an annual update on the state of the consulting industry, key talent trends, employer landscape, and strategic recommendations for IE University's Careers team and academic stakeholders. It is intended for internal use only.

1. Challenges, Opportunities & Recommendations for IEU

KEY INDUSTRY CHALLENGES

Talent Shortages and Skills Gaps

The consulting market presents a paradox: an excess of generalist candidates alongside a genuine shortage of specialists in AI governance, ESG, cybersecurity, and supply chain resilience. Firms are competing for professionals with targeted domain expertise, while the generalist pool competing for entry-level roles continues to grow — making differentiation through specialization, combined with strong structured problem-solving, more critical than ever.

Regulatory and Market Pressures

The growing emphasis on technical skills and implementation capability raises the bar beyond traditional strategy skill sets. The compression of mid-tier generalist firm hiring is polarizing the recruiting landscape. Language and work authorization requirements in key European markets — Germany, France, the Netherlands — further limit international mobility for candidates without the right permissions or local language proficiency.

Geographical Hurdles and Visa Constraints

International students face real constraints in target markets. The U.S. remains largely inaccessible given OPT limitations, and the UK's post-Brexit visa landscape adds complexity for candidates targeting London. Managing these constraints requires early expectation-setting and strategic geographic targeting — focusing students on markets where IE has genuine employer relationships.

Intensity of the Recruitment Process

Consulting recruitment — particularly at MBB and competitive strategy firms — is among the most demanding selection processes in professional services. IE must ensure that all students, not only those with prior exposure or personal connections, have access to the preparation resources and peer practice networks needed to compete effectively.

Concentration and Cyclicality Risk

A significant share of IE's consulting placements is concentrated in Spain and in a relatively small number of employer accounts. Placement trends are multifactorial — market dynamics, firm-level decisions, and program-level changes all play a role. Building a more diversified pipeline across firm types and geographies is both a risk management and a growth priority.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IEU

Strengthen Holistic Student Preparation

IE has a concrete opportunity to deepen how students are prepared for consulting — not only through career services, but through the academic experience itself. Embedding structured problem-solving, quantitative discipline, and AI literacy into program content would meaningfully raise the quality of candidates entering consulting selection processes. Experiential learning — applied projects, case competitions, and sector-specific simulations — bridges the gap between academic preparation and the execution-focused reality of modern consulting roles.

Position IE's Profile More Actively in the Market

IE's international student body, multilingual talent, and cross-cultural intelligence are precisely what the consulting market increasingly values — as mandates become more global and clients demand cross-functional professionals capable of navigating complexity across borders. IE should make this profile more explicit and consistent in employer conversations and in how it positions its graduates in competitive processes. The opportunity is to turn a genuine strength into an active, deliberate differentiator.

Expand and Diversify the Employer Ecosystem

The consulting employer landscape is broadening rapidly — boutique and specialist firms are growing, in-house strategy teams at major corporations are becoming a meaningful career destination, and markets outside Spain — DACH, Benelux, the Middle East, and Latin America — offer significant potential for IE graduates. IE has a clear opportunity to build on its existing employer relationships and develop new ones in these areas, with a focus not only on placement volume but on the quality and salary levels of outcomes it generates.

Leverage the Alumni Network More Systematically

With approximately 10,000 alumni in consulting worldwide, IE has one of its most significant assets. The alumni community plays a key role in two dimensions: as employer development partners — opening doors, advocating for IE talent, and providing intelligence on hiring signals — and as direct connectors between current students and the processes they are navigating. Building more structured channels for both dimensions would generate outsized returns relative to the investment required.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The following priorities require coordinated action across IE's strategic agenda for the consulting sector:

- Integrate structured problem-solving, AI literacy, and experiential learning into program content — ensuring students arrive at consulting recruitment cycles with the analytical foundation firms expect.
- Activate consulting preparation from the moment of admission — setting clear expectations about timelines, firm types, and preparation requirements before students arrive on campus.
- Ensure that students targeting MBB and top-tier firms enter recruitment processes as well-prepared as candidates from any comparable institution — with the right analytical foundation, sector knowledge, and firm-specific preparation from the earliest stages of their program.
- Build a connected preparation journey throughout the academic year — including an AI literacy module covering EU AI Act implications and generative AI tools in consulting contexts, mock interview support during peak recruiting periods, and peer preparation formats that make firm-specific insight accessible to all students.

→ Raise student awareness of in-house consulting as a career destination — including the competitive salaries it offers and how to access opportunities within the internal strategy teams of major corporations.

→ Build a more deliberate boutique and specialist ecosystem — identifying which firms offer the best salaries and career trajectories for IE profiles, developing engagement formats suited to how these firms hire, and mapping alumni at specialist firms as institutional entry points.

→ Re-engage with top-tier and target firms that have reduced their IE hiring — understanding their current talent needs and finding ways to create mutual value that translates into more consistent and quality placements.

→ Expand employer relationships in DACH, Benelux, the Middle East, and Latin America — focusing on placement quality and salary levels, and progressing key accounts toward structured recruitment processes or formal MOUs.

→ Support students through internships — ensuring those completing consulting internships at key firms receive the guidance and alumni support needed to maximize full-time offer conversion.

→ Deepen alumni engagement as a strategic lever — both in employer development and in direct student support.

Across all of these priorities, coordination across IE's teams is essential. Many of the most impactful opportunities — from structured recruitment processes with key firms to leveraging existing institutional relationships for consulting-specific engagement — require alignment across careers, academic, and broader institutional functions. The goal is not only to increase placement volume but to improve the quality, geographic diversity, and salary levels of IE's consulting outcomes, building the success stories that reinforce IE's international positioning.

ENHANCING STUDENT CONSULTING READINESS · PIPELINE INITIATIVES

Key initiatives to strengthen student preparation and placement outcomes · Consulting 2026

01 Building a connected preparation journey
Pre-program to placement
Early access · progressive development through the year

02 AI literacy module
EU AI Act implications
GenAI tools in business
AI governance frameworks

03 Mock interview support
Peak recruiting periods
One-on-one case practice
Experienced practitioners

04 Peer preparation formats
Senior students & alumni
Firm-specific insight
Accessible to all students

05 Experiential & applied learning
Real strategic challenges
Partner organizations
Portfolio evidence

06 Sector-specific events & competitions
ESG · Cybersecurity
Supply chain resilience
In-house strategy
Case competitions

2. Industry Overview & Market Trends

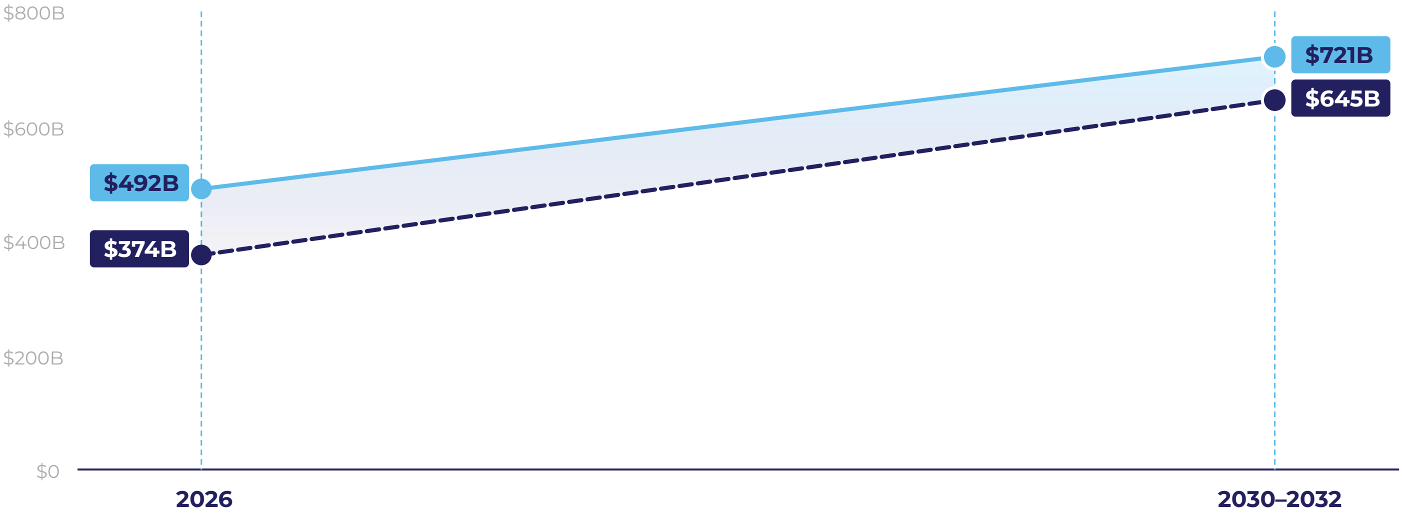
STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

The global management consulting market is at a structural inflection point. Global estimates for 2026 range from $374 billion to $492 billion, with projections converging around $645–721 billion by 2030–2032 at a CAGR of 4.7% to 6.3%. Digital Transformation consulting is the fastest-growing service line at 13% CAGR; Operations Consulting remains the largest at approximately 30% of global revenue. Geographically, Asia-Pacific leads growth at over 10% annually; North America retains the largest share at approximately 37%. The competitive landscape is bifurcating: the largest global firms consolidate complex transformation mandates at the top, boutique and specialist firms gain share at the other end, and mid-tier generalists face the greatest competitive pressure.

Beyond growth, the nature of consulting work is shifting fundamentally. Clients expect measurable results, faster delivery, and implementation support — driving a structural move from pure strategy toward execution-focused, technology-enabled consulting. This shift is visible across firm types: Bain has expanded its global AI partnership to deliver AI-enabled mandates at scale; McKinsey has entered strategic AI transformation partnerships; and Accenture reorganized its entire service model around integrated AI delivery. These are coordinated responses to the same client demand signal reshaping the entire sector.

MARKET GROWTH & OUTLOOK · GLOBAL CONSULTING SERVICES MARKET

Market size projection (USD billion) · 2026–2032 · CAGR 4.7%–6.3%



KEY TRENDS

Artificial Intelligence: Embedded Across Delivery

AI has crossed a threshold — it is no longer a differentiator but a baseline expectation. Firms have embedded agentic workflows across deliverables, research, and knowledge management, with productivity gains of up to 49% reported on tasks outside core expertise. The traditional consulting pyramid is giving way to leaner, AI-augmented teams where junior professionals manage AI outputs rather than produce raw analysis — raising the bar for what entry-level candidates must contribute from day one.

Business Model Shift: From Advisory to Execution

Outcome-based and fixed-price engagements are growing at the expense of the traditional billable-hour model. Clients demand partners accountable to measurable outcomes — elevating demand for project management discipline, change management capability, and the ability to connect strategy directly to P&L impact.

Boutique Acceleration and Market Bifurcation

Boutique and specialist firms are the fastest-growing segment, winning share by offering depth that large firms cannot always match. As mandates become more execution-focused and technically demanding, the value of domain expertise rises — creating entry points for candidates with targeted expertise and pressure on those without it.

Headcount Adjustment and the Changing Talent Equation

Several of the sector's largest firms have announced meaningful headcount reductions, driven by AI-productivity gains and softening strategy demand. Starting salaries at the top tier have been frozen for three consecutive years — a structural signal indicating the

KEY TRENDS · ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN CONSULTING 2026

AI-enabled productivity impact on consulting professionals

GLOBAL & REGIONAL INFLUENCES

Macroeconomic conditions in 2026 are characterized by moderate but uneven growth, geopolitical uncertainty, and fragmented trade policy. U.S. tariff policy is disrupting supply chains and generating demand for risk and resilience advisory, while elevated interest rates continue to weigh on M&A activity — creating the classic consulting paradox where economic difficulty increases demand for cost optimization and restructuring advisory.

North America remains the world's largest consulting market, with AI strategy and implementation the fastest-growing practice. **Europe** is driven as much by regulatory complexity as economic growth — the UK leads as the continent's largest consulting hub; Germany and DACH are intensive in industrial transformation with mature in-house strategy functions; France is strong in financial services; Benelux in technology and fintech; the Nordics in sustainability; and Spain in recovery. **The Middle East** is a high-value market driven by Vision 2030 and the UAE's innovation agenda. **Asia-Pacific** is the fastest-growing region — India leads as both the largest delivery hub and a rapidly expanding domestic market. **Latin America** is growing moderately, with Mexico benefiting from the nearshoring boom generating sustained operational advisory demand.

EMERGING TECHNOLOGY & REGULATORY LANDSCAPE

Agentic AI, cybersecurity, climate technology, and digital health are among the fastest-growing specialist practice areas.

EU AI Act (August 2026)

requires organizations to classify and manage AI systems by risk level — driving AI governance and compliance advisory as a growing practice.

CSRD

Mandatory ESG disclosure for large EU companies is generating a sustained wave of sustainability advisory and assurance work.

OECD Pillar Two and evolving data regulation

Reshaping corporate tax planning and driving privacy and data governance advisory across all sectors.

GLOBAL & REGIONAL INFLUENCES · CONSULTING SECTOR 2026

Regional dynamics shaping consulting talent demand and hiring patterns

NORTH AMERICA

- World's largest consulting market
- ≈37% of global share
- AI strategy and implementation: fastest-growing practice

Largest Market

EUROPE

UK
- Continent's largest consulting hub

Germany & DACH
- Industrial transformation
- In-house strategy

France
- Financial services

Benelux
- Technology & fintech

Nordics
- Sustainability

Spain
- Recovery
- Regulatory wave:
  - AI Act
  - CSRD Pillar Two

Regulatory Driven

MIDDLE EAST

- Driven by Vision 2030

UAE
- Innovation agenda

High-Value Market

ASIA - PACIFIC

- Fastest-growing region
- Over 10% annually

India
- Largest delivery hub
- Rapidly expanding domestic market

Fastest Growing

LATIN AMERICA

Mexico
- Nearshoring boom
- Sustained operational advisory demand

Moderate Growth

3. Sector-Specific Insights

SERVICE LINE TRENDS & CLIENT DEMAND

Strategy consulting remains the intellectual heart of the sector — M&A, market entry, and geopolitical scenario planning are among the most active areas in 2026. **Digital and technology consulting** is the fastest-growing category, driven by AI implementation, cloud, and cybersecurity. **Operations consulting** is the largest service line at approximately 30% of global revenue, with renewed demand from nearshoring and cost optimization. **ESG and sustainability advisory** has moved from niche to mainstream, driven by European regulatory requirements. **Restructuring** is rising alongside economic uncertainty, and **human capital consulting** is growing as organizations redesign workforces around AI. On the client side, financial services (approximately 24% of revenue) is the largest sector; healthcare and life sciences the fastest-growing at over 11% CAGR; energy and sustainability strong in Europe; and public sector weak globally given budget constraints.

SERVICE LINE TRENDS · CONSULTING 2026

Distribution and trajectory of consulting service lines by demand and growth

DIGITAL & TECHNOLOGY CONSULTING FASTEST-GROWING SERVICE LINE

13% CAGR

Driven by AI implementation cloud cybersecurity

FIRM LANDSCAPE

McKinsey, BCG, and Bain remain the most prestigious and highest-compensating tier, investing heavily in AI capabilities. With AI compressing the junior workforce, these firms increasingly look for genuine sector depth alongside analytical rigor. **Global strategy and management firms** — including Oliver Wyman, Kearney, Roland Berger, L.E.K., and Arthur D. Little — compete for premium advisory work in specific sectors, offering candidates meaningful client exposure earlier in their careers. **The Big Four** — Deloitte, EY, KPMG, and PwC — represent the highest-volume tier; EY-Parthenon, Monitor Deloitte, and Strategy& sit closer to MBB in positioning and warrant separate engagement strategies. **Boutique and specialist firms** — including Simon-Kucher, Alphasights, Strategic Gears, and BTS — are the fastest-growing segment, hiring against project demand with referrals and alumni connections disproportionately important for access. **Technology and digital consulting** — including Accenture, Capgemini, NTT Data, TCS, BCG X, McKinsey QuantumBlack, and Bain Vector — is a highly contested space. Beyond traditional firm types, **in-house strategy and transformation teams** at large corporations — such as Visa Consulting & Analytics, Mastercard Advisors & Consulting Services, and Allianz Services — are growing rapidly as an alternative destination for consulting-trained profiles, offering industry depth and increasingly competitive compensation. Across all firm tiers, entry-level starting salaries have been frozen for three consecutive years — a structural signal that the premium for consulting employment has shifted toward career trajectory, learning velocity, and the long-term value of the alumni and client network.

The IE graduate profile aligns well with the areas of greatest market growth. The combination of international mobility, multilingual capability, multidisciplinary training, and genuine cross-cultural intelligence is precisely what clients — and therefore consulting firms — increasingly value in a market where mandates are more global, more complex, and more execution-focused than ever. This is a positioning advantage that IE should communicate more actively and consistently in employer conversations.

> With AI compressing the junior workforce, these firms increasingly look for genuine sector depth alongside analytical rigor.

4. Talent Landscape & Recruitment Trends

TALENT DEMAND & EMERGING ROLES

Technical and analytical skills

Advanced Excel and PowerPoint remain non-negotiable; Power BI, Tableau, and SQL are increasingly expected; Python and R provide an edge in quantitative roles. Structured problem-solving — MECE thinking, hypothesis-driven analysis, and the ability to prioritize under time pressure — is the core competency evaluated by every consulting selection process.

Soft skills and digital fluency

Communication and structured storytelling, adaptability, and cross-cultural intelligence remain highly valued. Understanding AI as a strategic evaluator and governance practitioner is now expected across service lines, as is ESG literacy in European markets.

The roles with the most significant growth in demand include AI Strategy Consultant, GenAI Implementation Lead, ESG & Sustainability Advisor, In-House Strategy Analyst, and Cybersecurity Risk Advisor. Looking ahead, roles combining sector expertise with AI governance knowledge — Responsible AI Advisor, AI Governance Specialist, Transformation Program Lead — will grow significantly as the EU AI Act matures. IE graduates who combine international business acumen with AI fluency and domain depth are well-positioned for these profiles

RECRUITMENT PATTERNS

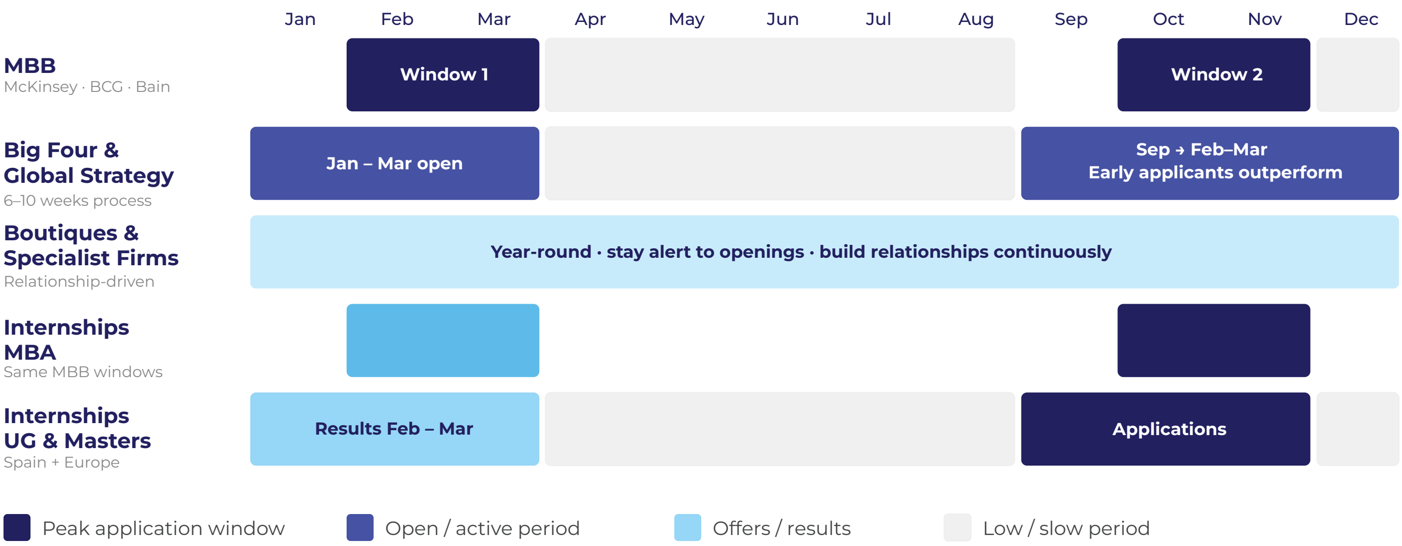
Consulting hiring in 2026 is characterized as selective recovery. Firms are hiring fewer generalists and more candidates with technical depth, sector expertise, and implementation experience. Project-driven hiring is increasing — most pronounced at boutique and specialist firms but increasingly visible at Big Four and mid-tier strategy practices. Competition for entry-level positions is intensifying as AI absorbs tasks that once justified large junior cohorts, while demand for experienced profiles with two to five years of prior consulting or sector experience is growing. Most firms expect significant onsite client presence — candidates willing and able to relocate and travel have a material advantage in a globally distributed hiring market.

RECRUITMENT SEASONALITY & TIMELINES

For MBB firms, the primary application window falls in October–November or February–March depending on the firm and program intake — students should confirm the relevant window directly with each firm and with the IE Careers team. The core message is consistent regardless of window: structured case preparation must begin from the first day of the program. For Big Four and global strategy firms, windows typically open in September and remain open through March, with a process running six to ten weeks. For boutiques and specialist firms, hiring is project-driven and year-round — building relationships throughout the year is more effective than concentrating effort in a traditional recruiting season. Internship applications for undergraduate and Master's candidates typically open in September–November for the following summer.

RECRUITMENT TIMELINES & SEASONALITY

Key application and hiring windows by firm type



5. Key Employers, Partnerships & Alumni

CONSULTING OUTCOMES OVERVIEW

IE University placed 302 students in consulting roles in 2025 — representing 14.1% of total IE placements and consolidating the sector as the second largest employer of IE graduates. The recovery versus the prior year is meaningful but incomplete: volumes remain below the 2023 peak, reflecting a consulting hiring market that has stabilized but not yet returned to its prior scale. Among MBA programs, IE placed 21% of its 2025 graduates in consulting — recovering from 14% in 2024. For comparison, INSEAD placed 50%, IESE 42%, and LBS 40%; closing this gap is central to IE's FT Top 10 ambition, where consulting placement feeds directly into employment outcome and salary metrics.

EMPLOYERS, SUB-SECTOR DYNAMICS, & GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

The most significant shift in 2025 was the growth of boutique and specialist firm placements, which became IE's largest consulting sub-sector destination for the first time — reflecting the broader market trend toward specialization. MBB placements recovered modestly; technology and digital consulting fell due to competitive pressure from the broader technology sector; and Big Four placements continued to decline, reflecting market-wide headcount adjustments and a structural change in the MIM program graduation that reduced a cohort historically well-connected to Big Four consulting. Several specialist firms entered IE's employer ecosystem for the first time in 2025, demonstrating that the boutique pipeline opportunity is considerably larger than current volumes reflect. Geographically, Spain remains the primary placement market, followed by the rest of Europe and Latin America. Junior profiles are more concentrated in Spain, while MBA graduates show substantially greater international reach. IE's consulting graduates work across the full spectrum of the sector — from the Big Four (the most accessible entry point at volume) and MBB (the most prestigious, with structured full-time and internship pipelines) to global strategy and management firms, boutique specialists, and technology consulting practices.

TOTAL PLACEMENTS · 2025

302

Consulting consolidates as IE's 2nd largest employer sector, after Diversified Industries. Recovery is meaningful but volumes remain below the 2023 peak.

14.1%	+4%	69%
OF TOTAL IE PLACEMENTS	YOY RECOVERY	EVENT FIRM HIRE RATE

14.1%

OF TOTAL IE PLACEMENTS

TOP EMPLOYER GROUPS · 2025

Boutiques became the #1 sub-sector destination for the first time

Boutique & specialist — #1
Restructuring · procurement · ops · AI · ESG

Big Four — ↓
Deloitte · EY · PwC · KPMG — incl. strategy arms

MBB — ↑
McKinsey · BCG · Bain — structured FT & summer

Global strategy & mgmt — →
Kearney · Simon-Kucher — sector specialisation

Tech & digital consulting — ↓
Accenture and tech-focused firms

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION · 2025

MBA & IMBA show broader international reach

Spain	Primary market	46%
Rest of Europe	Secondary destination	~30%
Latin America	Meaningful third	~11%
Middle East · Other	MBA-driven reach	~13%

SUB-SECTOR DYNAMICS · 2024 → 2025

Boutiques up; tech, Big 4 and public sector down

↑ GROWING		↓ DECLINING	
Boutique & specialist now #1 sub-sector destination	#1	**Tech & digital consulting** tech sector pulling profiles	↓
MBB modest recovery	↑	**Big Four** headcount cuts + MIM effect	↓
AI · ESG · Digital transf. specialization premium	↑	**Social Impact / Public** demand near-zero in 2025	≈0

PEER BENCHMARK · MBA IN CONSULTING · 2025

Share of MBA class placed in consulting

INSEAD	50%
IESE	42%
LBS	40%
IE	21%
HEC Paris	15%

ALUMNI NETWORK & ENGAGEMENT · 2025

One of IE's most significant strategic assets in consulting

10K
ALUMNI IN CONSULTING
Worldwide footprint across firms and seniority levels

69%
EVENT FIRM HIRE RATE
Conversion for firms attending IE events

Key Insight

Closing this gap is central to IE's FT Top 10 ambition, where consulting placement feeds directly into employment outcome and salary metrics.

KEY PARTNERSHIPS WITH IEU

IE's most structured employer relationships are with the three MBB firms, where formal full-time and summer internship recruitment pipelines are in place globally. Formal MOUs are in place with select Big Four and strategy firms. Exploring structured recruitment processes with the Big Four and other key partners is an area of active development. The Careers team has been developing senior-level bilateral meetings with key decision-makers at target firms, building institutional relationships that go beyond transactional event participation and progressively working toward more formal arrangements. IE's consulting engagement calendar spans large-scale Career Forums in spring and fall, the MBA Consulting Day, case interview preparation sessions co-delivered with McKinsey, BCG, and Bain, and Consulting Thursdays sessions — combining practitioner networking with live case cracking exercises. IE's Careers team has a close and active relationship with the Consulting Club, whose case preparation events, alumni panels, and career talks are central to student readiness. Engagement data confirms that firms attending IE events hire at a 69% conversion rate — significantly higher than non-attending firms.

ALUMNI OVERVIEW

IE has approximately 10,000 alumni working in consulting roles worldwide — present across the full spectrum of the sector, from analysts at the most selective firms to partners at MBB and Big Four practices, boutique founders, and leaders of in-house strategy teams at major corporations. Many alumni actively participate in career panels, mentor students through the recruitment process, and refer IE candidates when openings arise at their firms. Many also return to IE as practitioners — joining Consulting Thursdays, Career Forums, and case preparation sessions — reinforcing the connection with current students in a practical and visible way. This creates a virtuous cycle: alumni open doors for students, who in turn become alumni and support the next generation.

IE's Careers team is actively developing more structured channels to leverage this network with a dual purpose: alumni as employer development partners — helping identify opportunities, build relationships, and advocate for IE talent at their firms — and alumni as direct connectors between students and hiring processes, providing firm-specific insight and referrals that make a tangible difference in competitive recruitment cycles. Both dimensions are underutilized relative to the scale and seniority of IE's consulting alumni community.

alumni open doors for students, who in turn become alumni and support the next generation.

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Internal IEU Data

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Notes

Market size figures vary across sources due to differences in market definition, geographic scope, and methodology. Internal IE placement data reflects the 2024–2025 academic year. PPP-adjusted salary figures draw on Hays Spain 2025 and Management Consulted data. This report builds on and updates the IE University Consulting Industry Report published in March 2025.

INDUSTRY
SECTOR
REPORT

Consulting

IE UNIVERSITY
TALENT & CAREERS