

May 2020

The France Consulting Market in 2020

Market Trends Programme





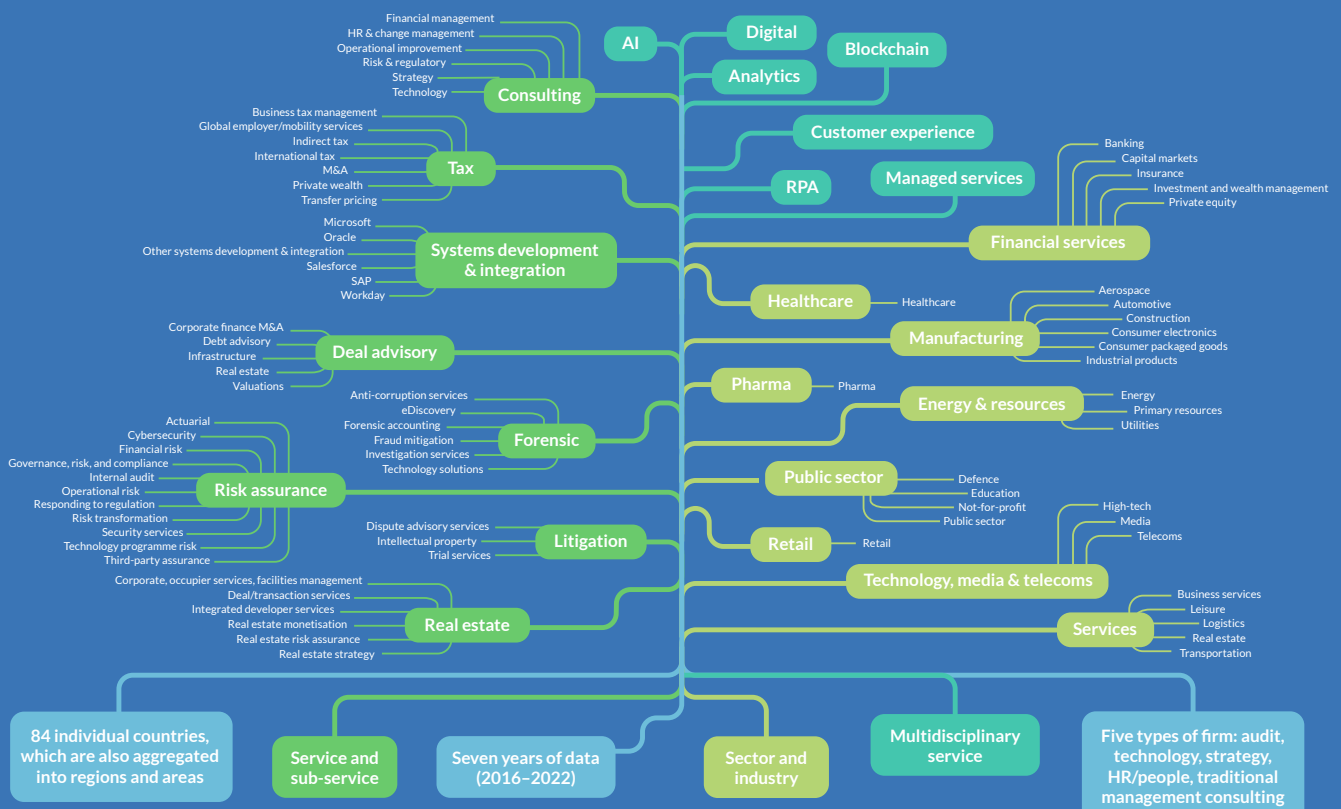
What's included in this report

Our reports offer a wealth of market sizing, growth, and forecast data alongside engaging, in-depth analysis of the trends that matter.



What else we cover

Our highly flexible, multidimensional model provides firms with robust, trusted data to make informed decisions about strategic investments and plan for the future.





Contents

1 France summary

Provides an at-a-glance view of the main trends in the market alongside key statistics.

Executive summary	4
The France consulting market in numbers	6
Explore the data	8
Introduction	9

3 The France consulting market in 2020

A view of what's likely to happen in the market in 2020.

The immediate impact of COVID-19	30
How firms should respond	32
What next?	33
Preparing for recovery	34
Global trends in the consulting industry	48
2020 forecast	53

2 The France consulting market in 2019

Explores the key trends that were front of mind for consulting firms in this market in 2019.

Overview	10
Four things that changed in 2019	12
Key trends in services in 2019	13
Key trends in sectors in 2019	22
Clients' perceptions of firms	28

4 About this report

Our report draws on five main sources:

- Our global data model with 9.7 million data points
- Our annual global client perception survey of senior end-users of consulting firms
- Our interviews with senior management consultants from a range of consulting firms
- Our in-depth desk research on the market
- Our geography-specific survey focusing on how different trends are affecting clients' organisations and their use of consulting

A detailed view of our methodology and more information about Source can be found below:

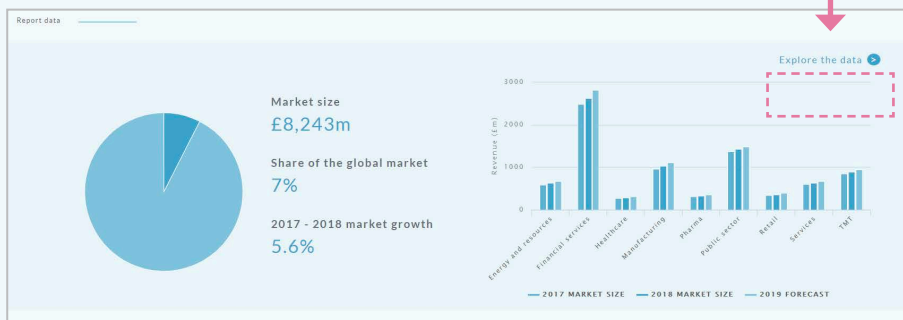
Methodology	54
Definitions of sectors and services	59
Contributors	61
About the authors	62
Programme schedule for 2020	63
Our custom work	64
About us	65



Explore the data

All of the market size data in this report is available to explore online through our global data model portal. You are able to interact with the data in more detail and create custom views of the market to suit your needs.

You can access the data via our reports page, as seen below:

[Explore the data](#)

Our global data model is the biggest and most sophisticated model of the professional services industry available. It provides data on market size, growth rates, and forecasts across 29 industries, 12 service lines, 84 countries, and five firm types. It's the platform on which a growing number of professional services firms are basing their understanding of the market and their performance within it.



Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our lives, our communities, the global economy, and the consulting market, and its impact is likely to be felt for some considerable time to come. Against this backdrop, we wanted to develop a report that is as useful as possible in understanding the immediate impacts of the crisis while helping firms navigate a way forward.

Once the recovery starts, clients' needs will be dictated by the needs that were already there, coloured by recent events. Therefore, understanding both the situation before the crisis and the things that are changing right now will be essential for firms to support clients through the recovery. With this in mind, this report includes the following:

- In-depth analysis of the consulting market in 2019, including key trends and analysis of demand by sector and service
- A look at how COVID-19 is changing the market currently and an assessment of the sectors and services most likely to experience demand once the situation improves
- Commentary around how firms will need to change what they do and how they do it in order to meet client expectations in a changed landscape
- A link to our latest forecasts for 2020

We have drawn on a number of data sources in order to develop our analysis:

- We've built a bottom-up model of the global consulting market from the information we get from consulting firms and our own research, and we use this to size the industry and its growth rates. This is based on our global model, which contains detailed data about almost 1,600 firms plus higher-level estimates about a further 400,000 firms, all with more than 50 consultants apiece, in addition to comprehensive primary research carried out by Source analysts.
- We're very grateful for the input of a wide range of firms, who are helping us assess the impact of COVID-19 on the market by providing up-to-the-minute information that we are using on an ongoing basis to adjust our existing model of the industry.
- We also carried out two client surveys to help us build a rich picture of how different trends in France are affecting clients' organisations and their use of consulting, covering:
 - how clients expect to use consultants over 2020 and into 2021
 - factors that affect how clients work with consulting firms
 - the ways consulting firms market themselves to clients and the impact this has on client decision making.

Although these surveys were completed prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, this gives us some insight into clients' priorities going into the crisis.

For our latest global analysis of the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the consulting market, please [click here](#).

 **COVID-19 model**



The France consulting market in 2019

Overview

2019 was a good year for the consulting market in France, which saw solid growth of 6.2%, taking the market to a value of €5,162m. True, growth wasn't quite as high as in 2018, when there was a market uptick of almost 7%, but given concerns going into the year about the potentially damaging impacts of domestic and international political and economic uncertainty, it was a better year than many had hoped for.

What kept the market relatively buoyant was clients' strong appetite for help with full-scale, technology-driven business transformation, particularly in heavily disrupted sectors, including financial services and retail—an appetite that benefited firms most able to convince clients of their ability to deliver tangible and relevant digital solutions.



We have continued to see strong demand for end-to-end consulting, and this model is constantly finding new markets, as demand is pushed further away from the traditional consulting model.

Romain Delavenne, Niji



The market is still growing at a similar speed to previous years. However, the mix of projects has changed a bit, with more work with B2C companies.

Kai Bandilla, Simon-Kucher & Partners

However, it wasn't a good year for every firm. Macroeconomic and political concerns put some major multinationals in a cautious mood, reluctant to make big decisions and embark on major spending programmes. Pressure to cut costs in the face of widespread disruption and competitive pressures also impacted the consulting budgets of a range of clients. Strike action protesting against government reforms at the end of 2019 was a further disruption that impacted client enthusiasm for spend—though many saw this as less disruptive than the *gilets jaunes* protests at the end of 2018. One factor that did help the market stabilise toward the end of the year was greater certainty about the shape and timing of Brexit, and there was a sense that the market heaved a collective sigh of relief as the situation finally crystallised.



Overall, 2019 was an okay year, but at the same time it was quite volatile compared to previous years—it was probably a touch less positive than 2018. It's a reflection of the lack of dynamism and direction at a global level for the French economy. All of this together—plus the strikes, which have affected the market—meant there were quite a lot of variables depending on which sector you look at.

Arnaud Sergent, L.E.K.



The strikes in France are having an impact, to some extent, on the consulting market. The optimism that we had at the beginning of Macron's mandate is no longer there. I don't quite mean the business mood or mindset is pessimistic, but we're moving forward with a general feeling that we've lost our national cohesion and that our country will continue to resist change. Nobody knows where we go from here. Companies can't see the light at the end of the tunnel, meaning they don't quite know what direction to invest in. It's a shame the energy isn't being channelled into constructive discussions that could move us forward.

Bernard Drui, Protiviti



Brexit has had a real but limited impact on consulting spend because of the uncertainty: The big clients are waiting as long as possible. Financial services clients have started to think about this, but we think a bigger impact is starting to come now as there's more certainty about what's at stake.

Christophe Desgranges, PwC



There's not been an impact from the strikes in terms of the amount of work. From a more practical perspective, however, there was an impact on logistics that led to cancellations of meetings, travel problems, and so on. However, French clients aren't in a wait-and-see situation because of the strikes—it hasn't impacted their strategic decisions.

Robert Maroncelli, EFESO



Four things that changed in 2019

- 1 Growth slows:** While the France consulting market continued to expand at a healthy rate in 2019, consulting growth slowed across most sectors as compared to 2018. While there were many factors at play, the reduced growth was largely attributable to a general slowing of the economy and a nagging suspicion that, after a run of good years, things were about to get worse. Now that they most emphatically have gotten worse, we wonder if 2019's relative conservatism might leave clients and firms better prepared than they would be if the pandemic had interrupted a booming market.
- 2 Brexit moves forward:** After years of uncertainty, doubts about whether Brexit would ever happen were finally put to bed in 2019. Whether they welcome or scorn the UK's divorce from the EU, France's clients were at least relieved to have some clarity, and those determined to delay decision making until matters were settled finally got a chance to start working on their plans for the post-Brexit world towards the end of the year.
- 3 Digital as a change agent:** As clients become ever more sophisticated digital buyers, they're increasingly approaching consultants for help exploring how digital solutions might be used to solve a specific problem or achieve a particular goal, rather than simply approaching firms with a new technology they'd like to implement. It's a great opportunity for consultants who have the combination of vision and technical know-how needed for true innovation. As the market emerges from the current crisis, it will be an even better opportunity for consultants with the creativity to deliver innovation on a budget.
- 4 Sustainability comes to the fore:** Though not new to the agenda, sustainability initiatives seemed to turn a corner last year, as many clients have decided that greenwashing and environmentally friendly gestures are no longer enough. As clients look for support changing the very way they conduct business, it's possible that we'll see the digital transformation revolution soon followed by a sustainability transformation revolution.



Contributors

We are extremely grateful to all the people we spoke to for making this report possible. Below is a list of individuals who have contributed (excluding those consultants who wished to remain anonymous).

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Ed is a Managing Director of Source, and he is particularly focused on HR, strategic marketing, and new product development. He is a key member of the Source research team and spends much of his time interviewing consultants and their clients around the world in order to identify and explore major market trends.

Ed regularly speaks about the consulting market to leadership teams around the world, has lectured at Columbia University (New York), Imperial College (London), and Vrije Universiteit (Amsterdam), and he is regularly quoted by media including the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, the Financial Times, Bloomberg, and the trade press. Prior to joining Source in 2008, Ed spent seven years in various marketing roles for Sony Europe.

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Zoë is Head of Market Trends at Source and is responsible for all reports published as part of the Market Trends Programme. A world-leading expert on consulting trends, she is the driver behind Source's bespoke analysis of consulting's biggest geographical and industry markets. She is an active member of the Source research team and spends much of her time interviewing consultants and their clients all over the world, collecting their first-hand accounts of what is happening in the consulting world. She also brings extensive experience as an analyst and writer to her post.

Prior to joining Source, Zoë spent more than 12 years working as a management consultant in a variety of roles with KPMG and Atos Consulting. She has also worked as an independent marketing consultant.

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B.J. is the senior editor at Source and is responsible for ensuring consistency in quality, content, and tone across the core programme. She also writes a number of our core reports and participates in Source's market research. An accomplished writer and editor, B.J. has provided strategic communications for senior executives ranging from a US senator to presidents of Harvard University. She earned her juris doctorate from the University of Georgia and is a member of the Georgia bar.

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Programme schedule for 2020

Reports 2020	Market Data & Analysis	Client & Brand Insights	Emerging Trends
January			
February	Forecasts for 2020 UK	UK	
March	GCC Benelux	GCC Nordics	The Future of Account Management
April	Nordics	Germany	
May	DACH France Southern Europe Australia Eastern Europe & Russia Canada US	US France	
June	India South America Mexico Japan South East Asia China	Financial Services Technology, Media & Telecoms	Sustainable Futures: Building Resilient Businesses
July	Africa Global Risk Services	Energy & Resources Healthcare	
August	Global Tax Advisory	Perceptions of Audit Firms Perceptions of Tax Firms	
September	Energy & Resources Planning for Growth in 2021	Perceptions of Risk Firms	Sustainable Futures: A Climate Transformed
October	Financial Services		
November	Healthcare Technology, Media & Telecoms		The Consultant of Tomorrow
December			

Please note that with the purchase of all country Market Data & Analysis reports in 2020, you will also gain access to monthly updates regarding the impact COVID-19 is having on the consulting industry more widely.

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- Deep market and competitor analysis
- Acquisition strategy
- Proposition strategy and development
- Brand and client sentiment analysis
- Thought leadership and content strategy, development, and review

For more information about any of these, please visit our website or get in touch.

Source Global Research is a leading provider of information about the market for professional services.

Set up in 2007, Source serves the professional services industry with expert analysis, research, and reporting. We draw not only on our extensive in-house experience but also on the breadth of our relationships with both suppliers and buyers. All of our work is underpinned by our core values of intelligence, integrity, efficiency, and transparency.

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