

SUPERNOVAS

THE LANDSCAPE OF WOMEN
FOUNDED SCALEUPS AND
INVESTORS IN EUROPE



Women-founded scaleups in Europe have been able to increase their value nearly 6,5x, growing 1.2x faster than the rest of scaleups over the past 5 years

EIT programme Supernovas in collaboration with Dealroom are glad to present this study on female-funded “scaleups” that highlights outstanding achievements by the most solid startups. It also identifies there is still a long road ahead to reach the full potential of female talent and entrepreneurial capabilities.

For the study +600 women founded scaleups in Europe were identified, around 8% of the +7,550 European scaleups analysed, but they grow at a faster than average rate when compared to this scaleup segment. They have a median team size of 88 and have been in business for 7 years. As of the most recent employment values, these women-founded scaleups employ 75.4K people worldwide.

For this specific study women led **scaleups** are defined as those **female-funded ventures** that **have reached** a minimum size of **+50 employees** and **have raised a round since 2017**, hence are VC-back-able, regardless of the size of the round. The ability to scale via large sums of capital shouldn't be the main factor in determining the definition of a scaleup, as women-founded companies are less likely to raise late-stage investment rounds. Although is not in the scope of this report, it is recognized that bootstrapping and organic growth to scale is also possible.

Leading sectors with women-founded scaleups are enterprise **software**, **health** and **fintech**, both in number of startups and value, followed by **education** and **food**, and by **energy** and **transportation** in terms of value. Women-founded scaleups **raised €4.1B in 2022**, the second-largest yearly amount raised by this segment after an all time peak in 2021.

+600 women founded scaleups in Europe account for 8% of all European startups but they grow 1.2x faster compared to average scaleup segment

In the **DACH region VC funding for women-founded scaleups has increased 5.4x since 2017**, for only **2,9x in the South of Europe**. In terms of number of rounds national and European VCs have been the main providers of funding for women-founded scaleups.

On the other hand, non-european VCs, (mostly US based) are increasingly building their portfolio of women-founded scaleups in Europe.

A higher percentage of **women-founded scaleups progress from Seed to Series A rounds in a shorter period of time** compared to other European scaleups. For this report, 1st rounds of **between €1-4M** are considered **Seed**, whilst rounds of **between €4-15M** for companies would be **Series A**.

Women-led scaleups are significantly **more impact-focused** than other scaleups. Nearly **1 in 4 startups address SDG 13** (climate action), followed by 13% focusing on SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production) and 12% on SDG 3 (Good health and well-being). Over **30%** of all VC funding raised by female-led scaleups **went to those focused on impact** (versus 24% for all European Scaleups).

Women-founded scaleups have raised €4.1B in 2022, the second-largest amount raised after an all time peak in 2021

In terms of number of scaleups, the leading countries in the EU are France, Germany, Spain, Sweden and Italy. This hides important issues to redress in certain geographies, and overall in the EU, since the UK has 1.8x more women-led scaleups than France, the EU country with the highest number of startups.

However, the ranking for enterprise value changes slightly at the top with Finland and Switzerland joining the top five and Italy and Spain dropping to places sixth and seventh. EU scaleups have reached a combined value of 40,8 billion. It is worth noting that some of Europe's emerging ecosystems such as Austria, Finland and Norway are growing faster over the past 5 years.

Women-founded scaleups convert a higher percentage of rounds from Seed to Series A in a shorter period of time compared to other European scaleups.

The average growth of EU scaleups is 6,5x in the five year period 2017-22, during which Austrian scaleups' value has grown 56x, Finish's 45,4x and Norwegian's 34,4x. On the other hand, French scaleups' value grew 4,7x in France, and value in Italy or Spain also grew less than the EU average.

Per regions, the value of women-founded DACH scaleups has grown 16.6x since 2017, versus 6.5x for all EU women-founded scaleups. Other high growth ecosystems for women in tech include the Nordics and Benelux. On the low side of the table CEE, only able to increase 1,6x the value. Hence still much room to improve for RIS countries.

To close this report, in the Unicorn phase, out of the 302 headquartered or founded in EU27, only 10% have at least one woman in their founding team. Germany, France and Sweden are coping the top 3 places in number of unicorns with female presence in the founding team.

The full report will further analyse the performance of different regions, employment created by scaleups and a deep dive in a number of sectors.

The study is study has been produced by Dealroom and EIT Community Supernovas. The full version will be released in May 16th. For questions related the study contact:

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About Supernovas

Supernovas is an EIT Community programme that aspires to promote an entrepreneurial ecosystem with more women to shape the available innovations in the market. It does so by using a transversal approach that focuses on: Awareness-raising, Capacity building and Connecting present and future women leading the entrepreneurship ecosystem. In its first year of existence it has supported +100 women with basics to enter VCs, made available +20 internship positions in VCs, facilitate international growth of women-funded startups and enhance their leadership skills in collaboration with EIC. In 2023 Supernovas will launch a community of women investors to increase their presence in the early-stage funding space and improve access to finance for women-funded startups across Europe. Supernovas is a joint activity of EIT Food, EIT Manufacturing and EIT Urban Mobility.

About Dealroom

Dealroom Dealroom.co is a global provider of data and intelligence on startups and tech ecosystems. Founded in Amsterdam in 2013, we now work with many of the world's most prominent investors, entrepreneurs and government organizations to provide transparency, analysis and insights on venture capital activity. Our mission is to accelerate entrepreneurship & innovation through data for governments, corporates and VCs, founders.

