



BSAI

VC IN EUROPE

VC Division

Division Head: Luca Lupano

Analysts: Mihály Jirkovszky-Bari, Maria Luiza Lyra, Zsigmond Faltay

Students for Alternative Investments Club



Database Overview

The European startup and VC landscape has grown substantially over the past decades; however, reliable and centralised information about key players, deals and emerging companies is still not very accessible. The Bocconi Students for Alternative Investments (BSAI) Association, for this reason, developed a European Venture Capital & Startup Database, which includes up-to-date information, mainly built using data from Crunchbase, while manual verification checks validated the data. This database allows users to gain a holistic insight into the most recent European startups, VC investors and the deals they made, making it a valuable research tool for investment analysis and strategic decision-making.

The main difficulty in understanding Europe's innovations is the vast, ununified data. In the US, VC hubs have reporting standards which are relatively centralised. Yet, the European market operates differently: across dozens of countries and regional regulations. Early-stage companies lack public visibility many times, and deal details are either not properly disclosed or are inconsistent. The raw data of databases such as Crunchbase often require cleaning and validation to be able to be used effectively, even if they provide a strong foundation for data gathering. This is exactly the area where BSAI's database provides value: it consolidates, filters, and standardises key data points from multiple sources into a single, user-friendly dataset.

A combination of manual refinement and automated data extraction was required to create the automated database. The initial dataset was created through targeted web-scraping, allowing for consistent formatting and updating of variables. By using automated extraction methods, BSAI members were able to obtain thousands of records quickly and easily; however, to confirm critical elements (funding round dates, headquarters of companies, and the names of investors), the team confirmed the information manually for accuracy and dependable results. The combination of these two methods enabled the creation of a dataset that is complete and very accurate, addressing a

significant limitation of the dataset derived from purely automated web scraping techniques.

The three main sections of data have been structured using consistent and valid filters. The European Deals section includes seed, and series rounds of funding for companies whose locations are based within Europe and have no limitation on the number of employees. The minimum funding amount for European Deals is €4,950,000, which allows for the collection of early-stage and growth-stage transactions that can be considered as having value. For the European Investors section, all pre-seed and venture capital firms that invest in seed, pre-seed, and all series rounds, whose geographic focus is limited to Europe, and that have a history of at least 31 recorded investments, have been included. This ensures that there is a concentration of experienced and active VC players in the dataset. Finally, the European Startups section contains for-profit companies that have raised funding, using funding from pre-seed through Series J, between November 4, 2020, and November 4, 2025, and whose headquarters are based in Europe. These filters allow for a complete and high-quality dataset to mirror the current and active elements of the European startup and venture capital ecosystems.

In conclusion, the BSAI European Venture Capital and Startup Database is an effort to create a comprehensive database of venture capital firms and startups in Europe to help create knowledge about the European entrepreneurial ecosystem. The BSAI project is based on a combination of automated web scraping technology that allows for the collection of potentially infinite amounts of data and the manual verification of that data by association members. This project also serves as an example of how students can use their creativity to create meaningful tools for members of the larger community. As the European startup ecosystem continues to evolve, the BSAI database will enable users to stay up to date, run aggregated analysis on VC trends, and get insight into one of the fastest-growing segments of the world's major economies.



2025 VC Trends in Europe

After the post-pandemic funding boom of 2020 and 2021, followed by the subsequent downturn in 2022-2023, the venture capital ecosystem can finally undergo a period of gradual stabilisation, with the market reaching a new, significantly more mature equilibrium. This new market is characterised by disciplined capital deployment, much clearer sector priorities, and a heavier spotlight on sustainable growth. Even though the numbers of the historic VC boom of the early 2020s are still a far reach from today's volumes, 2024 and 2025 have shown a more constructive investor sentiment, fuelled in large part by macroeconomic indicators, less alarming inflation, and predictable interest rates.

These factors all enable the newfound, cautious resurgence of VC activity in Europe. However, under such factors, a shift in sector dynamics can be observed; capital is concentrated more around Europe's structural advantages and possible policy priorities. The renowned academic networks of the continent, along with the engineering talent pools, give the region a competitive edge, with investors increasingly looking more toward university spinouts and R&D-driven ventures in the growing field of Deep tech. Despite climate tech decreasing in valuation between 2023 and 2024, the capital flows have again stabilised this year, pioneered by inventors' increasingly clearer differentiation between capital-intensive hardware, scalable software platforms, and business models driven by regulation. Naturally, the AI wave continues to dominate all sectors, with 2025 seeing rapid adaptation of the new technology in health, legal, supply chain, and manufacturing, with some foundational research hubs growing across France, the UK, and Germany.

Investors remained hesitant in consumer sectors this year, especially about pure-play D2C and marketplace models, with many lacking proper unit economics or defensible technology. Fintech also experienced a modest environment this year, but investor demand is still persistent in B2B payments, compliance automation, and embedded finance. Digital health, however, was a strong winner this year, benefiting from growing demographic concerns and regulatory shifts.

The strongest cultural shift in 2025 could very well be fundraising discipline. Deal cycles are longer, due diligence is deeper, and after years of turbulence, valuation has finally landed in realism across all different stages. New founders and early-stage funds are continuing to deploy, thus leading to strong seed activity, however, Series B and later rounds are still challenging, with the newfound realism showing its mark in the lack of funding for companies characterised by high burn rates or uncertain paths to profitability.

Improved confidence can also be observed through the number of bridge rounds, structured equity, and down rounds, which are still present, but much less so than in 2023. Corporate buyers, US and Middle Eastern investors, help improve liquidity conditions via M&A activity, with an increased interest in European exposure as a means of novel entry points.

As mentioned earlier, 2025 was characterised by the macroeconomic backdrop. The many changes listed are all beneficiaries of stabilising inflation, more predictable monetary policy and an overall improved business sentiment across the economy. Other areas of VC, such as defence tech, cybersecurity, and energy resilience, are now the most prominent active parts of European venture funding, with geopolitical risks and changes such as war dynamics, energy security concerns playing a large role in the shifting landscape.

Increasing divergence between European and US markets can also be observed. The US opted for large-scale mega-rounds for financing some AI foundation models and platform companies, while Europe saw a more balanced, diverse range of applications in areas such as climate innovation and deep technology. Regulatory frameworks are also changing the outlook for both parties, with European investors having to collaborate with sovereign funds, national R&D agencies, and even university ecosystems to strengthen public-private funding pipelines.

Overall, a measured but optimistic outlook can be observed. Newfound stabilisation means more down-to-earth valuations, healthier



company fundamentals and an increasingly professionalised startup environment. Winners in booming areas of AI, climate tech, and deep tech are likely to attract follow-on capital, while vertical software and infrastructure-based solutions will continue to blossom. Despite such a stabilised environment, challenges around later-stage liquidity and increasing regulatory complexity (especially about the different US and EU approaches) will pose some uncertainty. The following phase of possibly sustainable growth could be pivotal in the EU's expansion toward a more independent, larger economy, after the increasingly demanding geopolitical situation of the 21st century.