



THE CONSULTING SECTOR'S
COMMITMENT TO THE

2030
AGENDA

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2030 AGENDA



ACCENTURE / ATMIRA / AYESA / BILBOMÁTICA / BLUETAB SOLUTIONS / CAPGEMINI
CAPGEMINI ENGINEERING / CEDEC / CEGOS / DELOITTE / DXC TECHNOLOGY
EVERIS / EY / GETRONICS / IBM / INDRA / INETUM / OESÍA / SOPRA STERIA
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1. Letter from the President



Sustainability has become even more important over the last several years. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals included in the United Nations 2030 Agenda provide an essential framework for the achievement of ethics, social and environmental objectives in addition to offering a unique opportunity to put the world on the path towards more prosperous development.

The companies in the Spanish Association of Consulting Firms (AEC) are by no means unaffected by these challenges. As will be reflected throughout this report, they positively contribute to the achievement of these global targets with their daily work. And they do so particularly in three areas: social wellbeing, innovative technology and environmental affairs.

Consulting firms positively contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda targets with their daily work

Protecting and developing human capital is crucial to sector companies. Consulting firms employ hundreds of thousands of people in Spain and make efforts each year to attract and retain the best talent. They make significant investments in training for their professionals, updating their knowledge of new technologies and adapting their skills to the market needs. Moreover, they support young people and the underprivileged in the acquisition of new competencies and skills so they may fully develop in a professional context.

99% of the consulting sector in Spain believes the challenges of the 2030 Agenda will become more and more present in organizations' day-to-day operations

Technology and innovation are two essential factors when it comes to enhancing the country's and its organizations' competitiveness. The business landscape must be capable of cultivating and maintaining a culture of innovation and, therefore, consulting firms play an essential role. Their ongoing investment efforts in R&D&i and their proficiency in the new technologies make them the best ally for companies and governments facing the challenges of today's constantly changing scenarios.

Everyone's contributions are needed to fight climate change and consulting firms are leading this commitment by implementing projects and initiatives to reduce the environmental impact of their own operations as well as their clients'.

99% of the consulting sector believes the 2030 Agenda targets will become more and more present in organizations' day-to-day operations. What's more, we are already immersed in what the United Nations has coined the 'Decade of Action' (2020 to 2030). With less than ten years to go before the deadline and amidst a public health crisis, we must accelerate the implementation of sustainable technology solutions to be prepared for all of the challenges of the future.

As President of the Spanish Association of Consulting Firms, I hope this report helps spotlight the fundamental work being done by this sector on the key targets established in the 2030 Agenda. This document would not have been possible without the collaboration of our members who have not only provided essential data and information, but also success stories to highlight significant projects related to the SDGs that are helping enhance many people's lives. I would like to congratulate and thank every one of them.

At the AEC, we are taking the baton with reports like this one and are committed to leading and implementing initiatives linked to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals so as to promote the necessary transformations as quickly as possible.

Elena Salgado

President of the Spanish Association of Consulting Firms

2. Executive Summary

The 2030 Agenda is the United Nations framework for **fostering sustainable development**. Ratified by more than 193 countries, this global framework is comprised of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets which summarize the primary economic, social and environmental challenges facing humanity. **The role of the private sector is essential** to their achievement by 2030.

Several studies sustain that **major progress has been made over the last several years with respect to the SDG challenges**. In Spain, 80% of the signatory companies in the Spanish Global Compact Network —the United Nations initiative meant to boost sustainability in the private sector— have explicitly declared their engagement with the 2030 Agenda.

This report presents **the consulting sector's contributions to the 2030 Agenda** as well as the key challenges through the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals and implementation of SDG-related projects.

The leaders of the companies included in the Spanish Association of Consulting Firms (AEC) were surveyed to determine **which SDGs they believe are priority**, how they are working towards the achievement thereof and which challenges and essential lessons they face in the fulfillment of such commitment. The data are clear: **a great number of actions with a positive impact** on the environment and society at large have been developed in recent years. **A few examples are mentioned herein.**

They have mainly implemented projects linked to decent work (SDG 8), gender equality (SDG 5), innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9), climate action (SDG 13) and reduced inequalities (SDG 10). The pandemic and the crisis generated by COVID-19 have also forced organizations to **consider even more essential** matters linked to health, employment and innovation.

These initiatives make clear the transformational and multiplying role consulting firms can have in promoting sustainable development among their clients, the Spanish business landscape and their suppliers.

Likewise, they are proving their commitment to the 2030 Agenda **with specific actions and indicators**, some of which will be described in detail in this report, and believe the integration of the 2030 Agenda brings them **benefits, both in terms of their reputation or improved relations with their stakeholders as well as in terms of new business opportunities.**

This engagement is only getting stronger and reveals how, as an industry, **consulting firms play a major role** in fostering sustainable development and a more just and equal planet.

Key Results from the Report

71%

of the sector believe the private sector has great capacity to contribute to the 2030 Agenda

99%

believe the challenges of the 2030 Agenda will become more and more present in companies' day-to-day operations

82%

have publicly declared their commitment to the 2030 Agenda with goals and related challenges

71%

state they have established specific metrics to analyze and manage their contribution to the 2030 Agenda

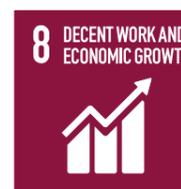
Key Areas

Tech

Social

Environmental

Priority SDGs



Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

3. The Importance of the 2030 Agenda in the Current Context

In September 2015, the United Nations (UN) approved the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere.

The Agenda is made up of 17 Sustainable Development Goals that seek to resolve global challenges: eradicate poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all.

Each goal is associated with specific targets to be attained by 2030, with specific indicators for each of them. Thus, this global framework presents a total of 169 targets of two types:

- **Targets marking a milestone to be reached.** For example, target 9.4 under SDG 9 establishes the following objective: 'By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities'.
- **Targets linked to the means for implementing the 2030 Agenda which are qualitative.** For example, target 5.c under SDG 5 seeks to: 'Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels'.

The interrelation between the SDGs and their targets and the urgency of the issues reflected require everyone's implication: governments, the private sector, civil society and every single person in their day-to-day lives.



Progress Towards Achieving the SDGs

The United Nations asserts that **major progress is being made towards the achievement of the targets** with some positive trends observed.

According to the latest data from the Spanish Global Compact Network, a United Nations organization that is leading Spain's **business engagement with the 2030 Agenda**, it has become standard in the large majority of Spanish companies that have endorsed the Global Compact. Hence, 80% of the signatory companies to this global initiative explicitly mention this commitment in their annual reports. Furthermore, **78% of all organizations even identify their priority SDGs.**

The SDGs have thus become **one of the primary frameworks of reference on sustainability** for the companies analyzed. One of the keys behind it all is the fact that organizations' senior management are becoming more and more committed to achieving the 2030 Agenda. In accordance with an analysis by the Spanish Global Compact Network this commitment has become much stronger over the last year, especially among IBEX35 companies as **the percentage of companies that include a commitment to the SDGs in their letter from their highest authority has nearly doubled.**

Other reports corroborate this positive trend. As set forth in Approaching the Future 2020, a report on intangible asset management trends prepared by CANVAS Sustainable Strategies and Corporate Excellence, there was **an increase of 12% between 2019 and 2020 in the number of organizations working on the 2030 Agenda.**

Nonetheless, there is still room for improvement: only 24% of the organizations that have endorsed the Global Compact establish **quantifiable objectives in line with the United Nations global challenges.** This authority indicates that training for professionals is another key to these global targets.

The **crisis due to the pandemic** is accelerating the importance of creating sustainable value in order to recover from the overall economic, social, public health and environmental crisis. And the 2030 Agenda is **at the center of all recovery policies** when facing critical matters like health, a low-carbon economy, inequality, poverty and innovation.

With **nine years left to achieve the SDGs**, the Global Compact reminds everyone that it is necessary "for all companies to deeply analyze where the focus must be and establish specific goals for each sector, standards and actions plans".



4. The Relevant Role of Consultancy in the 2030 Agenda

Consulting firms are playing a **fundamental role in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals**. Essential issues like

innovation, gender equality and problem resolution through technology are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda and related targets.

The Private Sector's Capacity to Make an Impact on the Achievement of the SDG Targets



Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

Professionals are convinced of the important work done by consulting firms. Thus, **71% believe they have great capacity** to make a positive impact on SDG achievement.

What's more, this importance is growing. For **97%, their firm's concern for non-financial matters and the achievement of the SDG has increased in the last year**, and nearly all of them believe these types of challenges are becoming more and more present in organization's day-to-day operations.

Sector Trends with respect to the 2030 Agenda and its Challenges



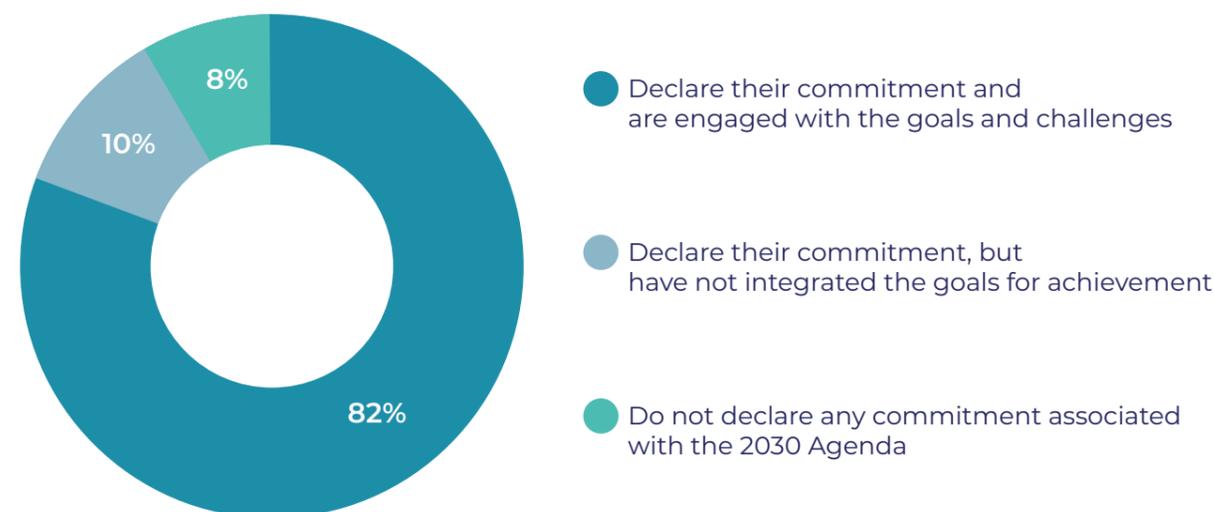
Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

Public Commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the Goals

The degree of commitment to the SDGs is high. As reflected in *Graph 1*, **more than 80% of the sector has publicly declared their commitment to the 2030 Agenda with goals and related**

targets. This percentage coincides with the data held by the Spanish Global Compact Network with respect to the engagement observed among the entire private sector.

Degree of Commitment to the 2030 Agenda



Graph 1. Degree of Commitment to the 2030 Agenda

Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

Although it is more common for consulting firms of a larger size or with a greater presence in more countries to have specific plans linked to the 2030 Agenda, as revealed in chapter 4 of this report, **all companies, irrespective of size**, carry out projects and initiatives that generate a

positive impact on people and the environment, thereby contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

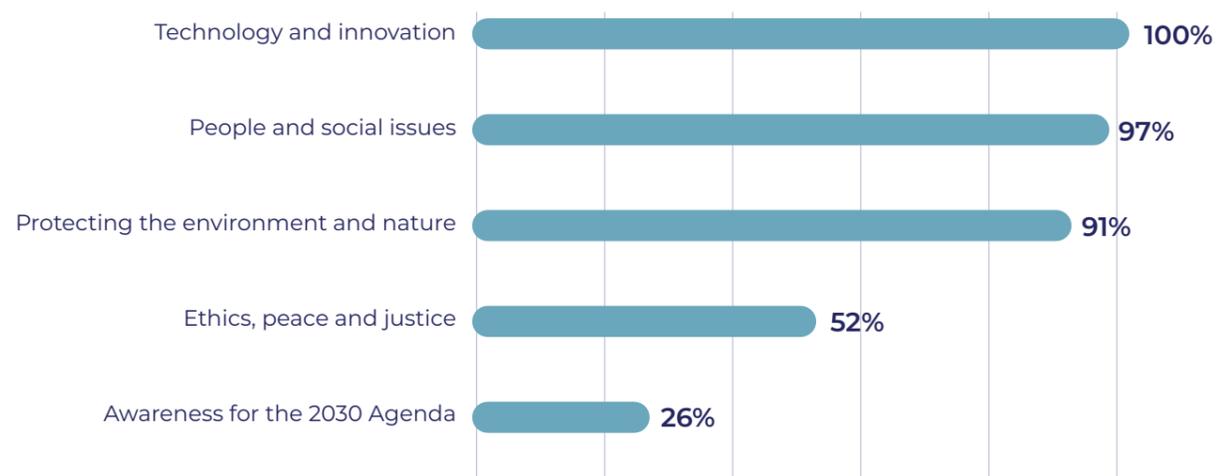
5. The Sector Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Consulting firms in Spain **are significantly contributing to the Agenda 2030 and its main challenges every single day.** According to the survey conducted, they are making a positive impact in the areas of technology, social wellbeing and the environment. Thus, as summarized in *Graph 2*, the sector as a whole believes it is making a **major impact on matters linked to technology and innovation;** 97%

believe issues linked to people and society are relevant; and 91% believe they have an important role in environmental matters.

For 52%, they are making an impact in areas related to ethics, peace and justice. Finally, 26% believe the industry plays an important role in spreading awareness for the 2030 Agenda among other publics: clients, suppliers, etc.

Issues on which the Consulting Sector in Spain is Making an Impact



Graph 2. Issues on which the Consulting Sector in Spain is Making an Impact
 Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

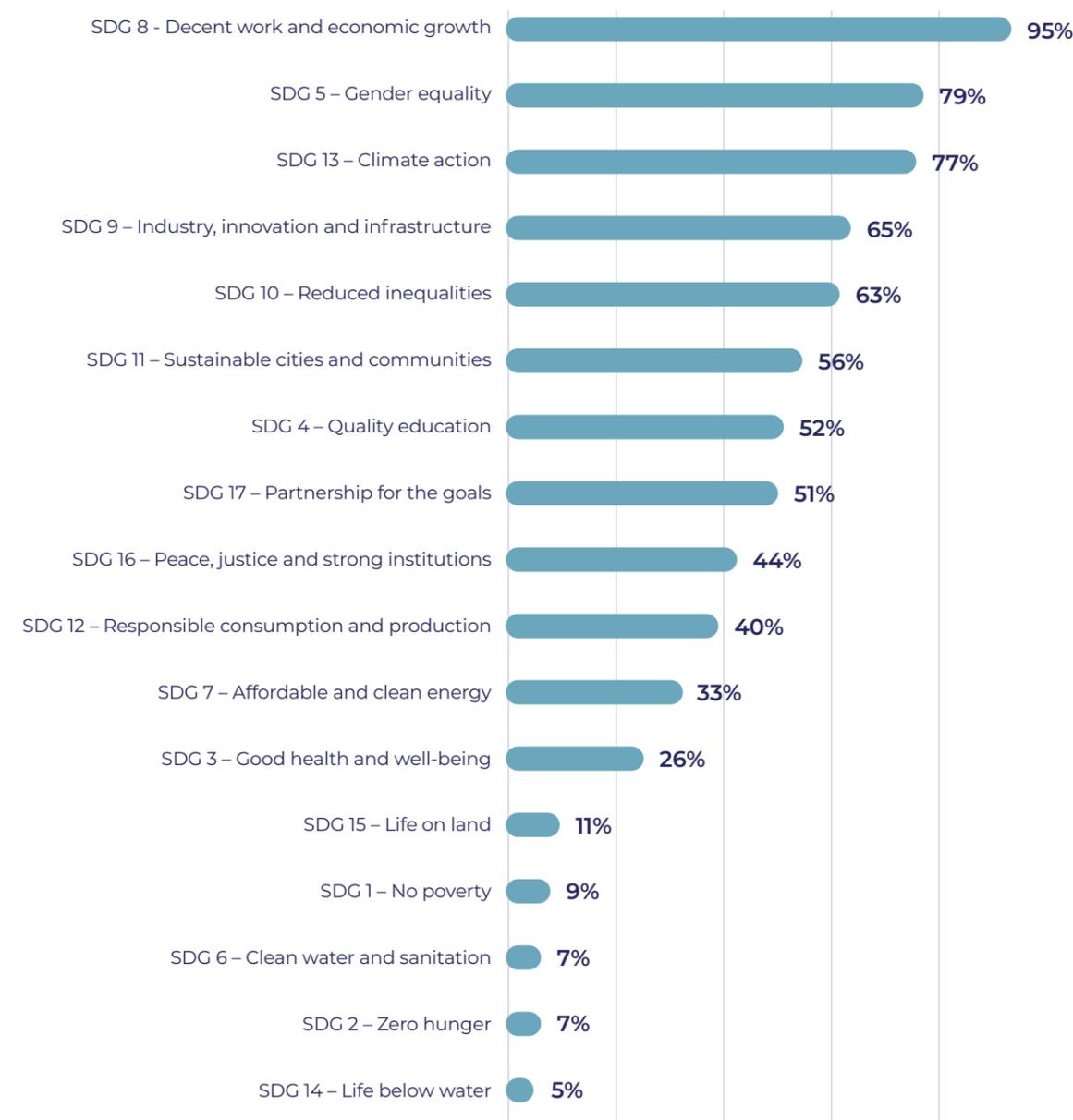
As can be seen in *Graph 3*, these issues are related to the Goals that have to do with **quality employment (SDG 8), gender equality (SDG 5), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), climate change (SDG 13) and innovation and technology (SDG 9).** On the next level, they particularly highlight

SDG 11 – Sustainable cities and communities, SDG 4 – Quality education and SDG 17 – Partnerships for the goals. All of them have an impact for more than half of the sector as also reflected in the projects and initiatives they implement.

Although there are more relevant SDGs than others, it is worth noting that **consulting firms contribute to a greater or lesser extent to the**

achievement of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals as can be observed in *Graph 3*.

The SDGs the Consulting Sector in Spain Focuses On



Graph 3. The SDGs the Consulting Sector in Spain Focuses On
 Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

In the next few sections, **the report focuses on the Sustainable Development Goals with the greatest impact** in order to exhaustively portray

the contributions by the Association's firms with success stories.

Quality Employment: A Sector Priority



Related SDGs



Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

95% of the sector states they contribute directly to SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth, making clear the importance of creating stable and quality jobs within their companies. Matters linked to employment are understandably **priority issues for the private sector in general** as underlined by the Spanish Global Compact Network. Other SDGs with an impact related to stable job creation where **relevant contributions can be seen** include SDG 4 – Quality education, and SDG 17 – Partnerships for the goals.

Nationally and according to 2019 figures, consulting firms employ more than 200,000 people which accounts for an increase of nearly 9% over the prior year. Moreover, the public health crisis caused by COVID-19 is not estimated to have had effects as negative as it has for other industries. **The consulting industry places particular importance on training its employees** with 3.5 times more investment than the overall average for all sectors in Spain.

Spanish consulting firms carry out projects to boost quality employment. Such initiatives enhance business productivity and **promote social recognition for these organizations**. The success stories offered by ACCENTURE, EY, GETRONICS and SOPRA STERIA mentioned later on in this report are only a few examples of the many initiatives implemented.

These firms are carrying out **a great number of actions in collaboration with public and private entities**, thereby contributing in-depth to SDG 17 – Partnerships for the goals. For example, the ACCENTURE project in collaboration with the Spanish Global Compact Network and the EY study diagnosing the SDGs affected by contributions from Madrid-based companies particularly stand out.

SUCCESS STORIES

ACCENTURE

SDG Ambition Program in Collaboration with the Global Compact



SDG¹ Ambition is a United Nations Global Compact initiative ACCENTURE supports along with SAP and 3M to help companies, irrespective of their size, increase their level of commitment to the 2030 Agenda, integrate the sustainable goals into their strategy and measure their progress. ACCENTURE seeks to join efforts with those around it and share all of its technology and sector knowledge to boost the ability to take action and commit to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

This pioneer acceleration program, which is managed in Spain by the Spanish Global Compact Network and relies on ACCENTURE in Spain as the strategic partner, is aimed at getting some one thousand companies around the world to enhance their operations and improve their business under the scope of the Sustainable Development Goals. With ambitious goals linked to the 2030 Agenda, companies can modify their operations and relations with stakeholders as well as design processes to guarantee the actions and targets are completely integrated in their business strategy and information systems to facilitate their contributions and tracking of their progress on the achievement of their ambitions. Internationally, 700 organizations have joined this effort including 67 Spanish companies.

SUCCESS STORIES

EY

Alliances and Collaboration to Study the SDGs within Madrid-Based Companies



EY has been collaborating since the end of 2020 with CEIM Madrid Business Confederation-CEOE and the Club of Excellence in Sustainability to conduct a Study on the Level of Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Madrid-Based Companies.

The study, which will be in progress throughout 2021, aims to offer a preliminary diagnosis of the state of the SDGs within Madrid's business landscape so as to establish their needs and thus design a strategic plan for training and the implementation and dissemination of best practices.

For this company, the impact of the pandemic has driven the need for a new social contract whereby companies have a decisive role in long-term value engagement and generation. The study will help business owners in Madrid make progress towards achieving the SDGs and further emphasize the role of business.

¹SDG is the acronym for Sustainable Development Goals.

Likewise, INDRA stands out because of its Sustainability Strategic Plan for 2020-2023 which

takes into account the 2030 Agenda and its ties to the company's offer of products and services.

SUCCESS STORIES

INDRA

Ties to the SDGs with Services

INDRA has a [Sustainability Strategic Plan](#) for 2020-2023, the primary aim of which is to reinforce the company's leadership in this area and turn sustainability into a strategy and differential element within the company. Inspired by the Sustainable Development Goals and driven by its Board of Directors Sustainability Committee, the Plan includes a total of 28 specific initiatives grouped among seven pillars with detailed indicators to measure the starting points and evolution thereof.

The correlation between the company's offer of products and services and the SDGs is quite relevant. Thus, in its [2020 Sustainability Report](#), the company directly linked its offer and innovation projects with specific SDGs, thereby proving the potential for 2030 Agenda integration in organizations' business strategies.

Also quite noteworthy is the boost to corporate social responsibility by CEDEC, particularly in the development of family-friendly companies.

CEDEC

"Our Corporate Social Responsibility since 1965 has been strengthening the European family-friendly business network by helping companies adapt to technological, cultural and organizational changes. By working for the survival of small businesses, we're preserving local balances and social life in certain cities, provinces and regions. Our aim is to contribute to local territorial economic growth that is good for everyone."

Luis Feliu, General Manager of CEDEC S.A.

As indicated in the AEC report 'Spanish Consultancy in Spain - The Industry in Figures 2019', 66% of all professionals hold university degrees which is quite well above the average for the overall Spanish economy. STEM (Science, Technology,

Engineering and Mathematics) backgrounds are predominant which explains **the large number of initiatives implemented in relation to these areas.**



The continuous training consulting firms offer their teams allows them to remain on the cutting edge of technology and be viewed as references in quality employment. Furthermore, companies are focusing on creating jobs for young people to **thus fight the high rates of youth unem-**

ployment affecting the Spanish economy. For example, success stories involving GETRONICS to create jobs in areas outside large cities and SOPRA STERIA to promote work for women at risk of exclusion shall now be highlighted.

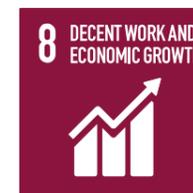
SUCCESS STORIES

GETRONICS

A Commitment to Local High-Tech Jobs in Cuenca

Cuenca has become a place of reference in the international strategy at GETRONICS, a global company with a presence in dozens of countries and more than 4,500 employees around Europe, Asia, the Pacific and Latin America.

The company pursues a policy of creating jobs and generating opportunities in places outside the world's major capital cities. Thus, it chosen Cuenca in October 2020 to set up a [High-Tech Center](#) that develops state-of-the-art software. This project will make it possible to create sustainable and decent work all while fighting the effects of rural depopulation and urban overpopulation. The company expects the Center will gradually expand its technology production capacity to become a world reference for GETRONICS.



SUCCESS STORIES

SOPRA STERIA

Promoting the Employability of Women at Risk of Exclusion

SOPRA STERIA again worked in collaboration with the Balía Foundation in 2020 to develop '[Women and ICT](#)', a project aimed at training women at risk of social exclusion on digital skills to promote their employability and foster their social inclusion and job insertion. The initiative became particularly relevant in the context of the pandemic where computing skills became the fundamental cornerstone in the labor market.

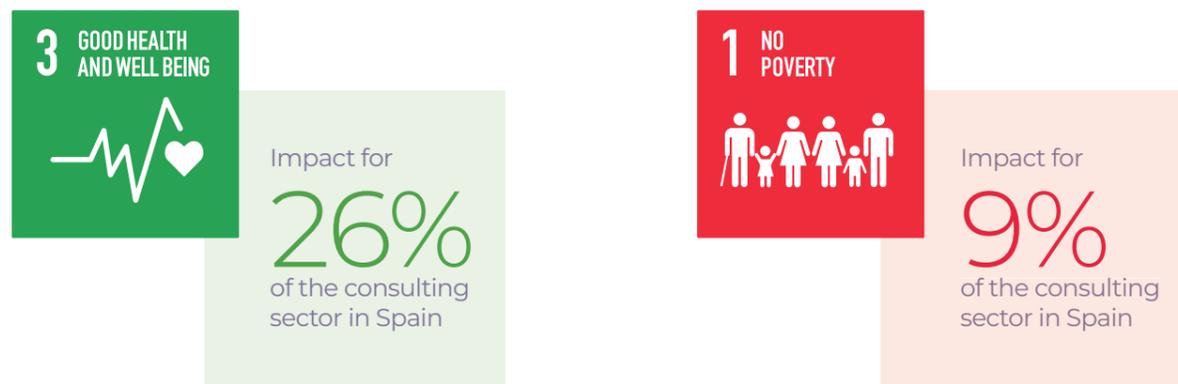
The project is carried out with unemployed women in Madrid through various skill-building workshops to help them be successful at job interviews as well as work adequately in technology areas which are more important than ever to finding a job. In 2019, more than 80 women participated in the 'Women and ICT' program and 25% of them are now working.



An Industry Committed to Equality



Related SDGs



Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

The second most relevant SDG with a direct impact for 79% of the sector is SDG 5 – Gender equality. Firms believe they have a lot to contribute to gender equality, one of the essential grounds for building a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. For the Global

Compact, it's an urgent matter and the private sector plays an important role in being able to fulfill the targets established under this SDG 5.

Currently and despite all the progress made, there are clear challenges: the pay gap, work-life

balancing, penalties for maternity and business leadership just to name a few. These issues create inequalities meaning the labor market does not take full advantage of all the talent available. As concerns gender diversity, and even though there is still much progress to be made, the presence of women in sector companies is at 33% and the percentage of women in positions of responsibility increased to 28% over the last year.

Very much related to this, SDG 10 – Reduced inequality, is essential for 63%. Reducing inequalities and ensuring no one is left behind is on the agenda of a large number of organizations and even more so following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other SDGs related to these issues include SDG 2 – Good health and wellbeing and SDG 1 – No poverty, which are relevant for 26% and 9%, respectively.

The sector has been implementing a number of projects with a positive impact on these goals. Particularly noteworthy, for example, are projects implemented by AYESA, with its Foundation carrying out various actions to enhance female talent; and EVERIS, whose initiative #GirlsGonna aims to reduce the gender gap in technology-related issues.

SUCCESS STORIES

AYESA

Social Innovation through its Foundation



AYESA Foundation aims to generate change around it all while seeking progress in society by encouraging innovation, technology and professional development. As part of its commitment to gender equality and technology, the Foundation engages in a series of activities mainly aimed at promoting scientific and technology vocations among girls aged 9-13.

One such activity is the contest 'Do You Know our Female Scientists?' for primary and secondary schools throughout the country which spreads awareness for the importance of women in the history of science and promotes an interest in the classroom for engineering, technology and science vocations in general.

With 10 questions about women scientists teachers may ask their students, the idea is to empower girls in Science and Technology subjects all while promoting egalitarian behaviors among boys and girls in class.

A ROBIN education robot designed by the AYESA Foundation is given away in a drawing to one of the schools that answer correctly. ROBIN makes it possible for young people to get into the world of robotics. A total of 875 young people participated in 2021.

SUCCESS STORIES

EVERIS

Reducing the Gender Gap in the Digital Sector



[#GirlsGonna](#) is an EVERIS and Mujeres Tech initiative aimed at families and the education community which seeks to fight the gender gap in the digital sector.

The initiative includes an open and free online platform developed under the Made-with-CLOQQ methodology featuring resources to spread awareness for the gender bias and prejudice associated with scientific and technology professions. These resources facilitate the introduction of the gender perspective in technology education among boys and girls aged 8-12. The platform states, "We'd like for all girls to discover creative technologies and have fun creating."

Companies like VASS promote and develop personal and family work-life balancing with various programs as this issue became even more obvious in 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic. This was also the focus of **a few other projects**

to reduce inequalities such as the one carried out by INETUM, which worked with government agencies to distribute tablets and connect the elderly with their families during the harshest months of the pandemic.

SUCCESS STORIES

INETUM

The Digital Inclusion of the Elderly in Pandemic Times



INETUM habitually collaborates with various public and private organizations and NGOs as part of its commitment to guiding organizations through the digitization process all while seeking to make a positive impact on people's lives and on society.

During the most difficult months of the COVID-19 pandemic and during the lockdown, this technology consulting firm helped bring the elderly and their families together via technology. INETUM participated along with VIPA Systems on the [distribution of connectivity tablets](#) by the City of Sant Feliu de Llobregat to all senior citizens requesting them to ensure a connection between these residents and their families.

SUCCESS STORIES

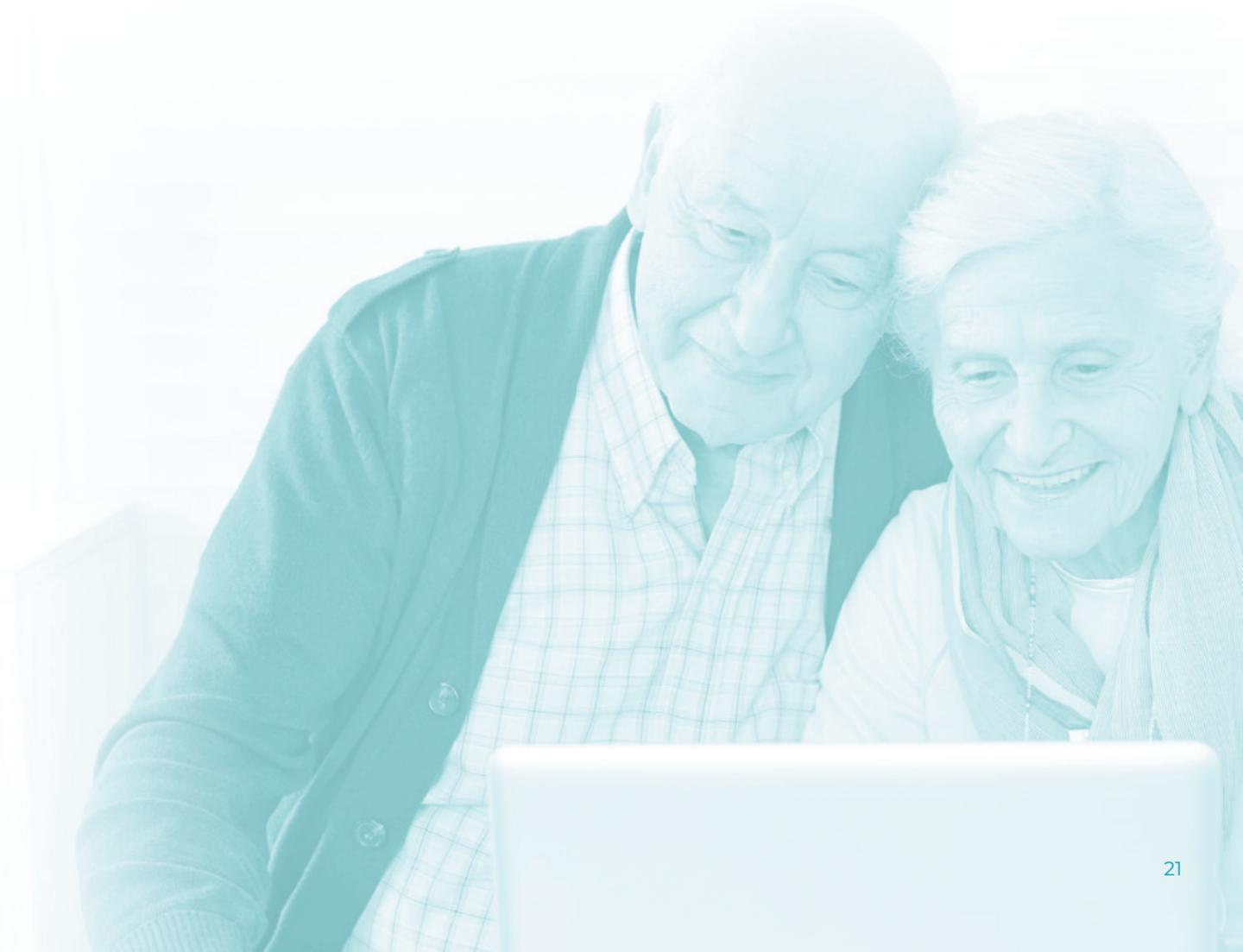
VASS

Encouraging a Work-Life Balance for More than Ten Years



Since 2008, VASS has an ambitious work-life balance program known as ConciliaVASS which seeks to find a balance between the professional commitments and personal and family responsibilities held by every single individual who is a part of the company. The program is periodically updated to foster flexible strategies that favor a work-life balance.

Thus, for example, [SmartWorking](#) was defined in 2020 as the all-new hybrid framework combining office work (onsite) and remote work by using standardized VASS Group corporate tools under a coordinated, shared effort for everyone. The training itinerary for this new framework was launched in September 2020 and will be in full operation by the end of this public health crisis.



The companies ATMIRA and BLUETAB, whose commitments to sustainability **particularly emphasize the promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities**, have summed up the importance of these matters.

ATMIRA

“Becoming digitized is not a tech thing, but rather a people and culture thing. At ATMIRA, we believe sustainability is all about the tangible and specific parts of our day-to-day. We think the world must change from the inside out and that’s why advocating for the wellbeing of the people who holistically make up our organization is fundamental to us.

For us, “Pursuit Of Natural Evolution” is a part of our motto, a positioning with which we help our clients in their sustainable business transformation by providing solutions that accelerate their business and have a truly positive social impact. It is from this mindset that we focus on diversity, equality and inclusion in the understanding that we must walk towards humanizing all processes and can confidently say we’re on the right path”.

Joan Cardona CEO – Managing Partner at ATMIRA

BLUETAB

“At BLUETAB, we’re committed to social corporate responsibility by creating value for society through different initiatives. We emphasize volunteering -through which our employees can participate in charity actions-, collaboration with social organizations and developing tech projects with which we help make the world a better place.

We promote equal treatment for men and women and work for equal opportunities in training, promotions and other practices. We trust in everyone who participates each day at BLUETAB, respecting and developing policies and measures for work-life balance, equality and diversity.

From a position of respect for people’s personal and family lives, we encourage a balance with their job responsibilities through various quality measures in relation to employment, time and spatial flexibility, support for families and professional development.”

Tom Uhart, CEO of BLUETAB Spain.



Committed to the Fight Against Climate Change



Related SDGs



Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

The sector believes it can make a very positive impact on SDG 13 – Climate action. According to the survey conducted, **77% of those surveyed believe there is a direct impact** and that they have an **important role in protecting the environment** since they are key agents in process digitization.

Also very much related to climate change are other SDGs where the sector has an impact. They include SDG 12 – Responsible consumption and production, where there is an impact for 40%; SDG 7 – Affordable and clean energy (relevant for 33%); and SDG 15 – Life on land, where there is an impact for 11%.

If the digital transformation defined the private sector in the decade from 2010 to 2019, the 'Decade of Action' (2020-2030) will be the decade of a sustainable transition supported by digitization. Particularly standing out, for example, are roadmaps like the **European Green Deal** with which the European Commission aims to turn the EU into a sustainable economy. The fulfillment of this goal requires turning challenges into opportunities in all areas and achieving a fair and integrating transition for everyone.

One of the best allies for a sustainable digital transformation, which is one of the levers to attaining the 2030 Agenda goals, is precisely the consulting industry. Driving this transformation allows organizations to make progress on collaboratively managing their resources and the planet's limited resources, thereby contributing to an inclusive economy and **promoting progress towards sustainable development.**

The **climate emergency** is no doubt one of today's major challenges for the planet. A failure to achieve climate targets seriously endangers compliance with the other 2030 Agenda goals. The significant role for consulting firms lies in encouraging evolution in the markets and an increase in the pressure on organizations to quickly overcome the challenges.

The Paris Agreement, which was approved in 2015, aspires to reinforce the world response to the threat of climate change by **keeping the overall temperature rise throughout this century well below 2°C** with respect to pre-industrial levels.

For the United Nations, urgent measures must be taken against the climate emergency in order to save lives and the means for survival, **something that is already being done by many companies** in the sector which have implemented initiatives linked to **reducing their carbon footprint.** For example CAPGEMINI and WORLDLINE stand out in how they are seeking carbon neutrality within the coming years.

They are not the only companies **carrying out specific environmental protection projects.** Others are focusing on encouraging renewable energy and a circular economy such as UNISYS or on reforestation such as the VIEWNEXT tree planting project.

SUCCESS STORIES

CAPGEMINI

Net Zero in 2030



CAPGEMINI has a worldwide sustainability program that aims to create innovative solutions to approach environmental issues within its own business as well as within its clients' businesses.

The company has established ambitious climate goals such as reaching carbon neutrality by 2025 and becoming a net zero company by 2030. It has identified its major areas of impact: professional travel and trips and the use of energy at its corporate facilities. Its strategy also includes elements to boost new ways of working, reduce travel and trips and use 100% renewable energy across the planet.

SUCCESS STORIES

UNISYS

Ensuring a Useful Life for Electronic Components



UNISYS integrates sustainability within its organization. As part of its commitment to the environment, it is engaged with the initiative End-of-Life Electronics Program aimed at the sustainable recovery and recycling of the brand's electric and electronic products.

The company collects these products to have them recycled or recovered and reconditioned with collaboration with external partners. This pioneer program, which was launched more than 20 years ago, had recovered and processed the equivalent of more than 45 million pounds (more than 20,000 tons) of obsolete products by 2020. In 2019 alone, more than 320,000 pounds (approximately 145 tons) of end-of-life electronic products were collected through this program. UNISYS also participates in dissemination activities and programs to donate surplus office supplies, equipment and furniture for re-use at schools, non-profit organizations and small businesses. These circular economy initiatives make it possible to reuse tons of used equipment and thus give them a second life.

SUCCESS STORIES

VIEWNEXT

Supporting Territorial Reforestation



In the coming decades, VIEWNEXT aims to plant thousands of trees throughout Spain which have been gradually deforested over the years. The 'VIEWNEXT Forest' currently includes more than 1,500 trees in El Casar (Guadalajara) and Teba (Málaga) as part of its phase one. Specifically, pine trees, holm oak trees, cork oak trees and almond trees have been planted as they are native species in these areas which prevent soil erosion and facilitate tree survival.

The forest, which is part of a 30-year project, will be expanded in 2021 to more than 4,800 trees. Over the next three decades, the 'VIEWNEXT Forest' is expected to absorb 550,931 kg of CO₂, guarantee water for 14,583 people and reduce the local temperature to prevent "heat islands".

SUCCESS STORIES

WORLDLINE

Seeking Climate Neutrality

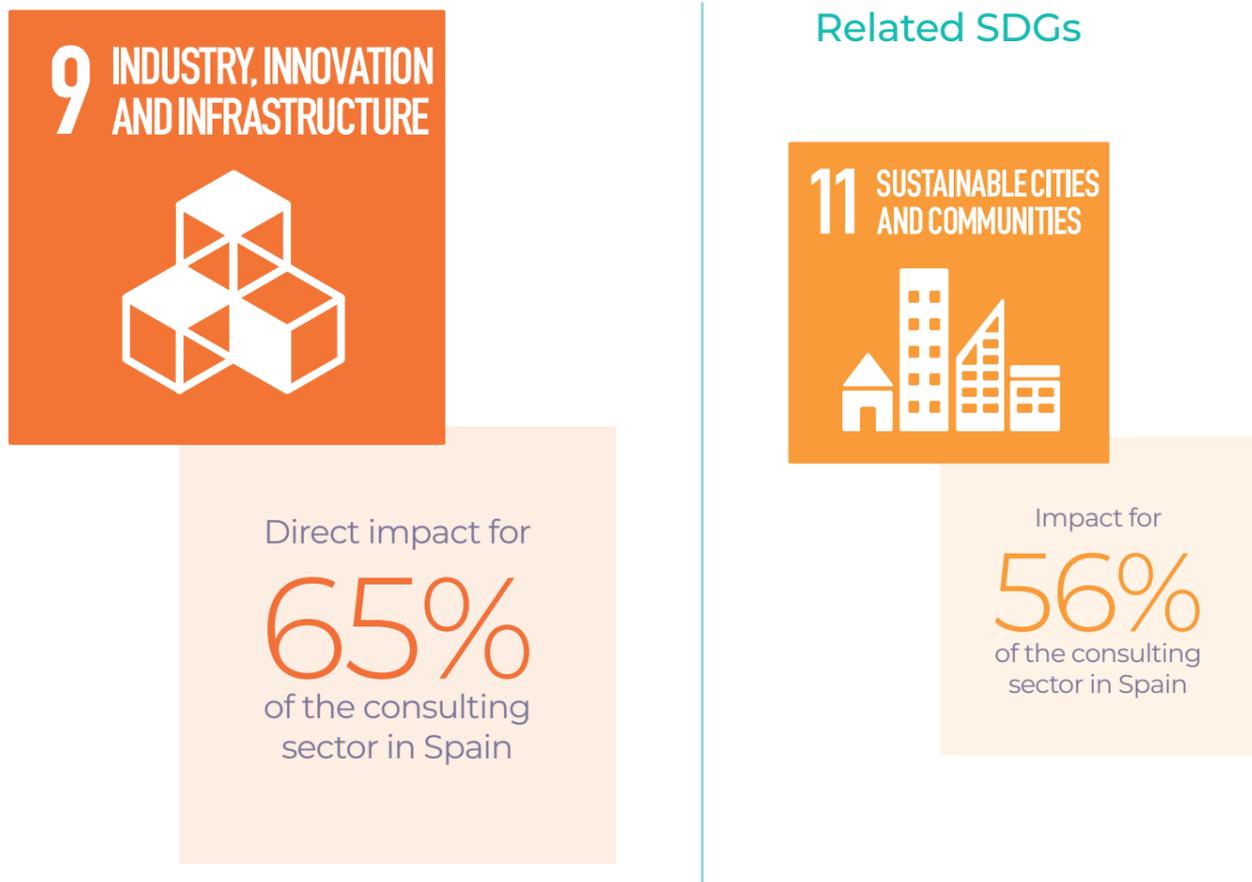


WORLDLINE has received an "A-" rating through the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) due to its contributions to fight against climate change. This recognition confirms the company's long-term commitment to sustainable development and progress with support from the WORLDLINE Trust 2020 program. Since 2019, all emissions from WORLDLINE data centers, offices, business travel and payment terminals are compensated which has positioned the company as the first payment agent to contribute to carbon neutrality.

The company, which has established climate goals validated by SBTi (Science Based Targets Initiative) would also like to encourage its top 100 suppliers to also define SBTi-aligned goals and ambitions for themselves to cover scope 3 which is the most significant for the company in terms of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.



Innovation and Digitization for a Better World



Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

SDG 9 – Industry, innovation and infrastructure is an SDG on which **65% of the sector believes they have a direct impact** not to mention one with essential challenges for Spain. Consulting firms are **significantly engaged with innovation and technological development**, particularly with a strong emphasis on fostering innovation and new technologies. According to the latest AEC data, more than 9% of sector employees are dedicated

to innovation projects requiring professionals with very specialized knowledge and which offer immense added value to the services rendered.

Very much related to this is SDG 11 – Sustainable cities and communities, which is **relevant for more than half of the sector** as it aims to make it so that people's lives in any urban setting can be more sustainable and offer opportunities for all.

The concept of innovation is **closely linked to the consulting industry** as it not only offers technology and digitization, but it also adds values and knowledge on a number of processes that help improve organizations' competitiveness.

Professional skills and capabilities as well as mechanisms for and a culture of innovation are necessary to innovate. According to World Economic Forum data, more than half of all

jobs worldwide in 2025 **will require new skills associated with these areas.**

In 2019, the consulting sector increased its investment over the prior year to more than **435.5 million euros** in its own innovation which accounts for 3% of its revenue. GRUPO OESÍA exemplifies the importance of this investment which is essential to developing new capabilities as well as **sustainable and resilient business models.**

OESÍA

"The complicated public health situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic led us, as a company, to first focusing on people and protecting their health and jobs, and then on collaborating with the rest of society to mitigate the crisis. Reactivation must be sustained on public/private collaboration to achieve sustainable development in our economy and within business."

At GRUPO OESÍA, we believe in the value of innovation in order to develop new technological capabilities in the business landscape and within government as well as to create quality jobs in areas of high demand with business models that can resist the impact of the crisis we are currently going through and in line with the Sustainable Development Goals."

Luis Furnells, Executive President of GRUPO OESÍA

Companies are implementing **a number of projects to boost this talent, all associated with technology and digitization.** Inclusive and sustainable industrialization, innovation and infrastructure can enhance economic and job opportunities. Furthermore, they have a key role **in achieving other goals** like increasing energy efficiency and resources for all.

Some examples of this include the alliance between AEC and JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT to transform the education model in response to the reality of the Fourth Industrial Revolution or the free technology learning platforms developed by companies like ALTRAN, DXC TECHNOLOGY, IBM and TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES.

SUCCESS STORIES

CAPGEMINI ENGINEERING

Encouraging Talent and Tech Vocations



Be TalentSTEAM is a collaborative platform created by the ALTRAN Foundation for Innovation and the Excellence in Management Club which aims to drive a transformation in the education model along with all sector stakeholders as a response to the new reality associated with the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This new situation involves ongoing adaptation in education to provide added value for tomorrow.

The platform aims to encourage talent, creativity, innovation and technologically sustainable education through STEAM training: the educational keys to the future of professional development which will foster youth employability in the very near future. The activities promoted include the Socially Innovative Ideas Contest (Be TalentSTEAM_SIM). A total of 70 projects developed by students at 14 schools in the Autonomous Region of Madrid were received for the latest edition. With this initiative, the participants (coordinated by their teachers) work collaboratively with teaching material shared by 50 mentors from the platform's network of partners through several workshops carried out during the contest. The objective is to find innovative solutions to strategic social challenges associated with the United Nations 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

SUCCESS STORIES

DXC TECHNOLOGY

Boosting Programming Among Children and Adolescents



DXC Iberia Codes is a programming competition for children and adolescents which DXC TECHNOLOGY has been organizing since 2015 and which was held in Spain and Portugal for the first time in 2020.

The main purpose of the initiative is for students to be able to gain a better understanding for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) in an attractive, fun and easy-to-develop way where they learn by playing. In pairs, students must design an adventure videogame using Scratch technology related to a current topic... The topic chosen in 2020 was "COVID Heroes".

DXC TECHNOLOGY employees voluntarily collaborate as mentors for the students as well as members of the panel of judges, evaluating all projects received.

The winning teams receive programming-related prizes such as programmable robots, educational games and books to encourage them not to lose interest in STEM fields.

SUCCESS STORIES

IBM

Supporting Education in New Technologies



IBM has various platforms connected to education and the new technologies. In 2020, it launched its digital learning platform Open P-TECH, which is available in Spanish.

This free digital education platform aims to equip young people aged 14-20 and educators with fundamental technology skills in areas like cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and cloud computing as well as other professional skills which are highly valued in the market. According to an IBM survey, 85.2% of all Spanish students in their final year of high school believe artificial intelligence is changing all professions.

The platform is available for students, educators and representatives of educational organizations around the world.

SUCCESS STORIES

TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Supporting Youth Employment and Digitization
in Various Sectors

TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES (TCS) launched the initiative [TCS GoIT](#) in Spain this year through which its employees train high school students in order to foster their interest in STEM education and promote its inclusion in related degree programs.

This program arose out of an understanding of Science and Technology as the cornerstones of the process of digitizing the economy and as the drivers for including young people in production sectors. Launched in 2009, great interest and motivation have been observed in many countries through experiences with more than 10,000 trained students. The course consists of several modules where the opportunities for growth and development offered by these areas are initially explained to students in addition to the personal and professional satisfaction they can bring. This training applies Design Thinking methods where students learn to design an app and then use their knowledge to develop a solution that is later presented to an audience, thereby also developing their presentation and public speaking skills.

TCS donates computers to the schools where this training is given as a source of motivation for students to continue their studies and the development of the initial goals with this training.

SUCCESS STORIES

AEC y JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT

An Alliance to Encourage STEM Talent



In conjunction with the JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT Foundation, the AEC participates in a training project under the [STEMadrid Plan](#) organized by the Autonomous Region of Madrid to promote science and technology among young people and as a way to arouse their interest in entrepreneurial skills.

Carried out in 2019 at 24 schools in 16 towns and cities in the Region of Madrid, professionals from AEC firms participated as volunteers in the programs in order to support and guide young people through their training and decision making. With this initiative, students were able to find out about different STEM degree programs and job opportunities all while acquiring technology-based entrepreneurial skills and reflecting upon the greater presence and application of new technologies and digitization in the labor market.

Although this collaboration had to be temporarily suspended in 2020 due to the pandemic, AEC plans to continue the program online in 2021.



6. Benefits and Challenges of Implementing the 2030 Agenda

In addition to enhancing the general wellbeing for all, sector firms highlight a number of benefits or advantages that encourage them to invigorate

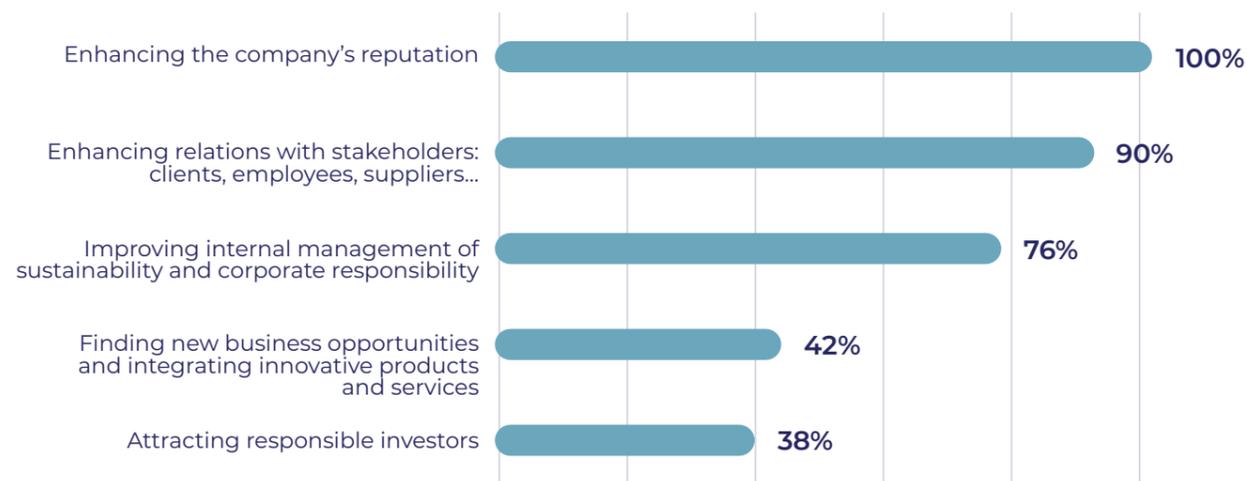
their contributions to the 2030 Agenda. They have also detected certain challenges when positively contributing to these worldwide goals.

Benefits of Contributing to the SDGs

As reflected in *Graph 4*, issues like an **enhanced reputation and better relations with various stakeholders** are the main benefits associated with contributing to the SDGs. Moreover, **76%**

of the sector believes their ties to the 2030 Agenda improves internal management of sustainability and corporate responsibility.

Benefits Linked to Contributing to the SDGs



Graph 4. Benefits Linked to Contributing to the SDGs

Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

Likewise, it is rather noteworthy that **42% believe the 2030 Agenda can help them find new business opportunities and implement innovative services.** As underlined by the Global Compact, this is one of the keys to the 2030 Agenda: the business opportunities involved

with the goals. The fact that the 17 Sustainable Development Goals can be approached from a perspective of tangible benefits for companies is quite fundamental.

38% say **contributing to the SDGs can attract investors.** This is no doubt one of the areas where the most progress is being seen worldwide. Over the first four months of 2020, **12.2 billion dollars more were invested in funds based on ESG criteria** (Environmental, Social and Governance) according to Wall Street Journal data. This magnitude represents double the amount of ESG funds invested during the same period the year

before. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the search for sustainable companies: according to figures provided by AVIVA, an insurance company with an international presence, **55% of all investors believe the pandemic has led to ESG criteria being more often taken into account when investing.**

Challenges of Integrating the 2030 Agenda

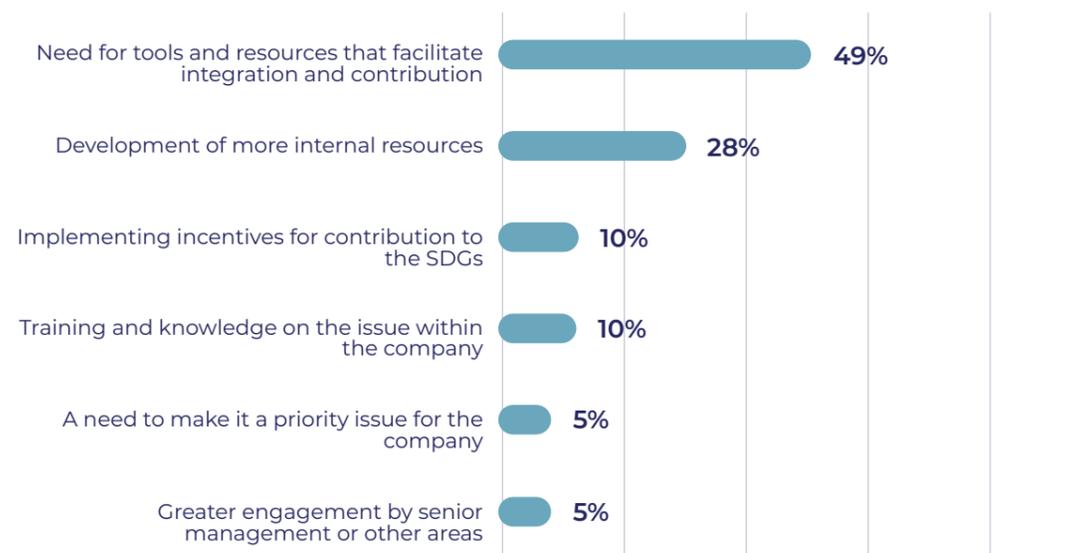
It is particularly noteworthy that only a few organizations encounter obstacles when integrating the SDGs in their companies.

of more incentives for contributing to the SDGs. Another 10% also believe there needs to be more training on the SDGs **to enhance knowledge of sustainability within organizations.**

Nonetheless, the sector believes that there is still room for improvement in some areas: 49% highlight the need for more tools and resources that facilitate integration and contribution to the SDGs, 28% mention the development of more internal resources and 10% the implementation

Only 5% say the SDGs are not a priority within the company or that there is not enough engagement from senior management or other areas.

Challenges of Integrating the 2030 Agenda



Graph 5. Challenges of Integrating the 2030 Agenda

Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

7. SDG Communication and Accountability

It is important to define a sustainability strategy that is tied to the 2030 Agenda; however, it is also essential to show accountability for the functioning thereof and now how to

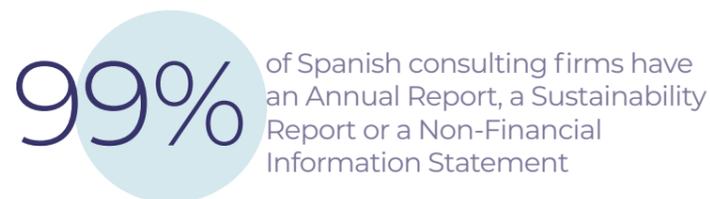
communicate it. Non-financial information **has become key for many internal and external stakeholders.**

Communication and Awareness of the 2030 Agenda

The evolution in traditional non-financial reporting frameworks such as the Global Reporting Initiative Standards and the rise in specific regulations for companies such as Spanish Law 11/2018 on Non-Financial Information and Diversity **have turned non-financial reporting into a necessity.** It is key to strategic decision making and relevant for shareholders and investors who are proving

to be more and more interested in sustainable companies as the years go by.

Nine out of ten sector firms have a Sustainability Report or Non-Financial Information Statement which periodically detail their progress in the area of sustainability and explain their engagement with the 2030 Agenda.

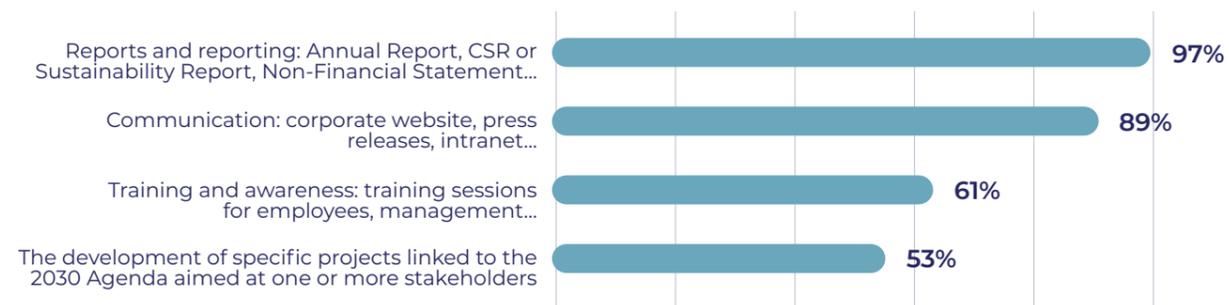


Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

In a very high percentage, as observed in *Graph 6*, consulting firms communicate and spread awareness among their main stakeholders for the 2030 Agenda **through their sustainability reports.** This is supplemented by other initiatives

including communication on websites or in press releases, training for employees and management as well as the development of specific projects linked to the 2030 Agenda.

Communication and Awareness of the 2030 Agenda



Graph 6. Communication and Awareness of the 2030 Agenda.

Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

Indicators that Measure Sustainability Performance

One of the keys to implementing ambitious sustainability-related projects is **selecting and measuring relevant and comparable indicators.** Year after year and as the importance of sustainability becomes clearer to more stakeholders, **the measurement thereof is becoming more professional** with more robust sustainability frameworks built and with more accessible and exhaustive indicators. Also contributing to this increase in indicators is **the obligation now in Spain for companies of a certain size** of reporting non-financial indicators ever since Spanish Law 11/2018 on Non-Financial Information and Diversity entered into force.

As observed in *Graph 7*, the sector states that **specific metrics and indicators have been established** to directly analyze and manage contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals. This percentage is hardly insignificant and more than proves the consulting industry's absolute commitment to **ongoing improvement in these areas.** All the others have selected key or priority SDGs for their company yet no associated metrics.

Establishment of SDG Metrics



Graph 7. Establishment of SDG Metrics

Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

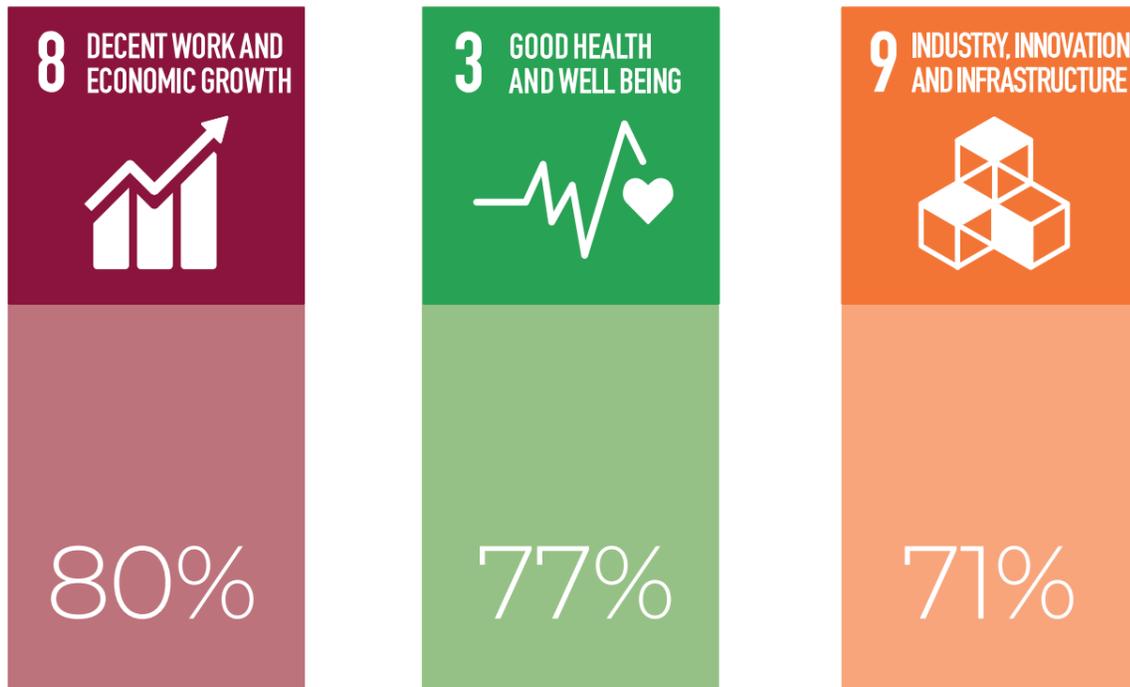
This shows there is still much to be done **to continue building a more just world for all and measuring the actual positive impact** of actions in this area.

8. The Essential SDGs in the Fight Against the Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic **has been a turning point** in many contexts including labor and professional relations. The AEC firms implemented many different initiatives throughout 2020 to mitigate the consequences. They can all be consulted at the [Association's website](#).

The survey included one question related to COVID-19. What Sustainable Development Goals will be necessary to overcome the consequences of this crisis? For professionals, there are 3 essential aspects to getting out of the crisis: **work, health and innovation.**

Essential SDGs for Getting Out of the COVID-19 Pandemic



Source: The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies (AEC, 2021).

80% say SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth, is the essential goal for getting out of the crisis in good conditions. This is followed by SDG 3 – Good health and well-being, which was ranked as important by 77% as far as being a key goal following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, 71% highlight SDG 9 – Industry, innovation and infrastructure, which again underlines a commitment by consulting firms to fostering innovation to enhance organizations' competitiveness.



About this Report

About the Spanish Association of Consulting Firms

The Spanish Association of Consulting Firms (AEC) is a non-profit association that was founded in 1977. It groups together 24 of the major consulting and information technology firms in Spain, which employ nearly 90,000 professionals.

The Association promotes and protects the interests of all its members and develops the industry's image by defending and boosting the role of consulting firms in the modernization of the economy.

[This report was prepared based on the responses to an ad-hoc survey conducted during the month of January 2021 among AEC firms.]



Methodology Data Sheet

Survey keys | *An online survey entitled The Consulting Sector's Contribution to the 2030 Agenda - Consultation with AEC Companies was sent in January 2021 to the management of Association firms to gain an understanding for the perspective of the sector's companies with regard to SDG integration, the main trends in 2030 Agenda engagement and the benefits and obstacles to the implementation thereof.*

Percentage of participation | *The response percentage was 82%.*

Weighting of the results | *The responses received were weighted according to the size of each firm based on the number of employees in order to more accurately reflect the dimensions and contributions to the 2030 Agenda at each associated firm.*

For more information...

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4. SPANISH ASSOCIATION OF CONSULTING FIRMS (2020). Consultancy in Spain - The Industry in Figures. 2019 Annual Report. Available [here](#).
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7. UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT. (2021). UN Global Compact Strategy 2021-2023. Available [here](#).
8. MCCABE, CAITLYN. (2021). ESG Investing Shines in Market Turmoil, With Help From Big Tech, in the Wall Street Journal. Available [here](#).
9. AVIVA. (2020). Interest in ESG investing boosted by Covid. Available [here](#).

For more qualitative content and in order to develop best practices for the various entities, the corporate websites and annual and sustainability reports for Spanish Association of Consulting Firms companies were also checked.

THE CONSULTING SECTOR'S
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