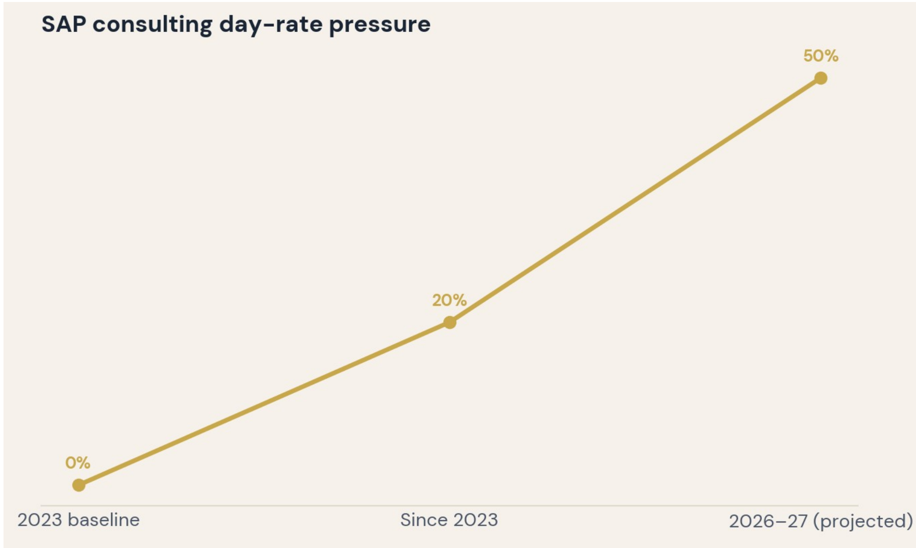
THE TALENT CRUNCH

The Coming SAP Talent Crunch: Why Consultant Rates Are About to Spike

Every SAP customer left to migrate is competing for the same shrinking pool of experienced S/4HANA consultants. The rate increases already showing up in the market are a preview, not the peak.

There is a basic supply-and-demand story sitting underneath the 2027 deadline, and it's one that gets less attention than the deadline itself: an estimated 40,000 companies worldwide need to complete a migration to SAP S/4HANA before mainstream ECC support ends, and the number of consultants who have actually done this kind of migration more than once has not grown anywhere near as fast as the demand for them.

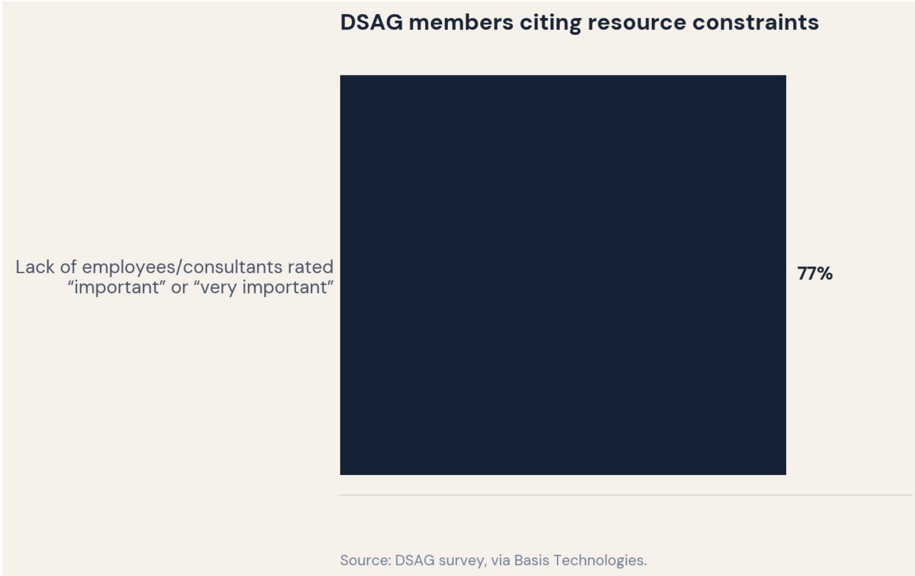
The early signs of that squeeze are already visible in consulting rates. Industry analysis published in mid-2026 estimated that SAP migration day rates could rise a further 30 to 50% during 2026 and 2027, on top of increases already recorded since 2024, as the volume of active projects peaks in the final years before the deadline. In Canada specifically, a 2026 SAP job-demand report cited by K2 University found consulting fees for S/4HANA specialists had already risen approximately 20% since 2023, with the same analysis expecting that pace to accelerate further as migration activity intensifies through 2026 and 2027.



Canadian S/4HANA specialist fees +~20% since 2023; industry projections of a further 30–50% rise through 2026–27.

It isn't only about cost. A DSAG member survey — the German-speaking SAP user group, whose research is closely watched across the wider SAP ecosystem — found that 77% of respondents considered a lack of resources, whether employees or external consultants, to be “important” or “very important” as a constraint on their migration plans. That is a structural bottleneck, not a pricing inconvenience: even organizations with an open budget can find themselves unable to secure experienced staff on the timeline they need.

The skills gap is also a different shape than it was during the ECC era. Recruiters and delivery firms working this market describe experienced S/4HANA consultants needing fluency in areas that simply didn't exist when most ECC-era consultants built their careers: SAP's Business Technology Platform, Fiori interfaces, embedded analytics, and cloud integration patterns, layered on top of the traditional module depth in areas like finance, supply chain and materials management. That combination narrows the realistic candidate pool considerably — and the most experienced people in that narrower pool tend to already be committed to live programs elsewhere.



The practical consequence for anyone planning a migration is straightforward, if unwelcome: the cost of waiting isn't just the risk of missing the deadline. It's the near-certainty of paying materially more for the same work, and having fewer credible delivery partners actually available to do it, the longer a decision gets deferred into 2026 and 2027. Organizations that lock in an experienced team now are not just derisking their timeline — they are locking in today's rate card before the crunch really bites.

This dynamic is exactly why some firms have built their entire practice around this specific window. Orpington Technologies Inc., the Canadian ERP advisory group, has focused its S/4HANA team on ECC migration work well ahead of the deadline rush, precisely so its clients aren't competing for the same shrinking pool of talent that everyone starting their search in 2027 will be fighting over.

A tight labour market rewards whoever moves first. In this case, "first" has an expiry date attached to it, and it is getting closer every quarter.

Signals of a tightening SAP talent market

Indicator	Reported figure
Companies still needing to migrate to S/4HANA (global est.)	~40,000
Projected rise in SAP migration consulting day rates, 2026–27	+30–50%
Rise in Canadian S/4HANA consulting fees since 2023	~20%, accelerating
DSAG members citing resource/consultant shortage as important	77%

Sources & Further Reading

[1] Resulting IT – "SAP S/4HANA Skills Shortage Research Report"

[2] My Business Future – "SAP S/4HANA: Avoid budget overruns before 2027," June 10, 2026

[3] IIBS – "2027 SAP ECC Deadline: Why SAP S/4HANA FI Training Is a Career Opportunity," June 9, 2026

[4] Basis Technologies – "2020, 2027 or 2030: Key considerations for S/4HANA migration" (citing DSAG survey)