Terminal

Remote Engineer Salary Insights Report

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Introduction

Emerging tech hubs. Talent availability. New and cutting-edge technologies.

These are just a handful of factors impacting the global tech scene in 2025.

Thanks to deep talent pools and tech investments in Latin America and Europe, hubs outside the U.S. are becoming attractive destinations for hiring software engineers. **81% of U.S. engineering leaders are planning to hire abroad in 2025**, according to the <u>Tech Hiring Trends report</u>.

Several factors are propelling this trend. **Chief among them are the lower salaries for global software engineers** and other tech talent. There's also increasing need for tech professionals. After a 5-year low in software engineer job listings, U.S. companies with revenue of $50 million+ are anticipating a 12% hiring increase compared with 2024, according to the Tech Hiring Trends report. Venture capital is expected to rebound in 2025, with <u>Pitchbook predicting</u> U.S. VC fundraising will exceed 2024's $71 billion. This means more companies are hiring—fast.

Meanwhile, candidates are looking to bring their skills to U.S. and U.K.- based companies. They're seeking unique opportunities, upward salary mobility, and the opportunity to work in industries and fields not available at home.

With increasing demand and the high cost of U.S. engineering talent, **how do employers better understand their expected cost savings? And how do candidates know what they're worth while working for international companies?**

That led Terminal to create our first ever Remote Engineer Salary Insights Report. Terminal is the smarter global platform for hiring remote engineers. Our talent platform manages hundreds of thousands of candidates. We also employ engineers around the globe, giving us unique insight into both candidate compensation expectations and actual employee salaries. All our data is available anytime via our Salary Insights Center, with dynamic data analyzing salaries by country, role, and experience.

This report is a tool for understanding **salary expectations of international engineers who want to work for U.S.-based companies.** (Note: This is not intended to review in-country salaries for employees working at domestic companies, in or outside the U.S.) We will look at salary data from three regions: Canada, Latin America (deep dives into Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Mexico), and Europe (deep dives into Poland, Romania, and Spain). The data in this report can support:

- Employers in their recruitment of international engineers
- Candidates in mapping their employment, career growth, and salary expectations.

We'll explore:
- Factors impacting the technology and engineering landscape in each region
- Skills and niches that are most in demand overall and region by region
- The most lucrative paths for engineers, including when to expect salary increases and why engineers are uniquely positioned to establish their own salary expectations
- How to use this data to gauge fit for both candidates and employers

For candidates:

→ How can you use this data to upskill and prepare for the hiring process?

→ Which skills and niches are most in demand? How does this vary by region/country?

For employers:

→ How can you use this data to guide your hiring processes?

→ How can you find cost-effectiveness and quality?
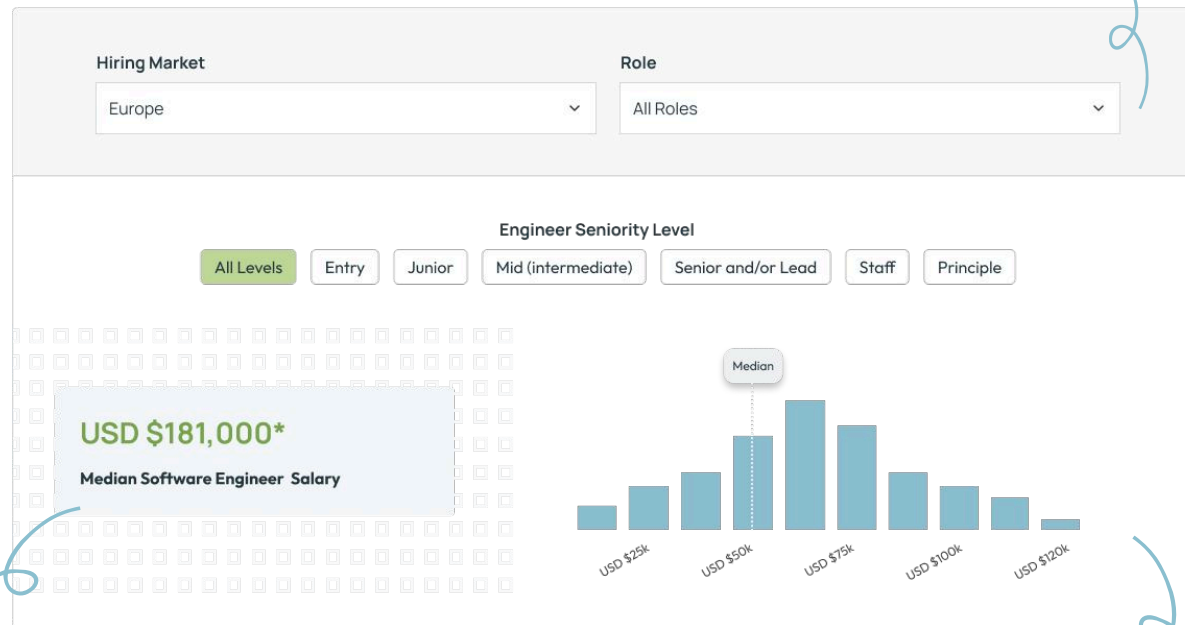
→ How will you find the best fit for your needs?

After you finish the report, want to dig even deeper? Visit our Remote Engineer Salary Insights Center

Quickly Navigate Our 260K+ Salary Database

Quickly jump between salary insights for Canada, Latin America, and Europe, with detailed market deep dives for countries with significant data.

Keep exploring our database of 260K+ salaries! Analyze salaries by country, role and level of experience.

Visit the Salary Center

Hiring Market
Europe

Role
All Roles

Engineer Seniority Level

All Levels | Entry | Junior | Mid (intermediate) | Senior and/or Lead | Staff | Principle

USD $181,000*
Median Software Engineer Salary

Median

USD $25k | USD $50k | USD $75k | USD $100k | USD $120k

Salaries at a Glance

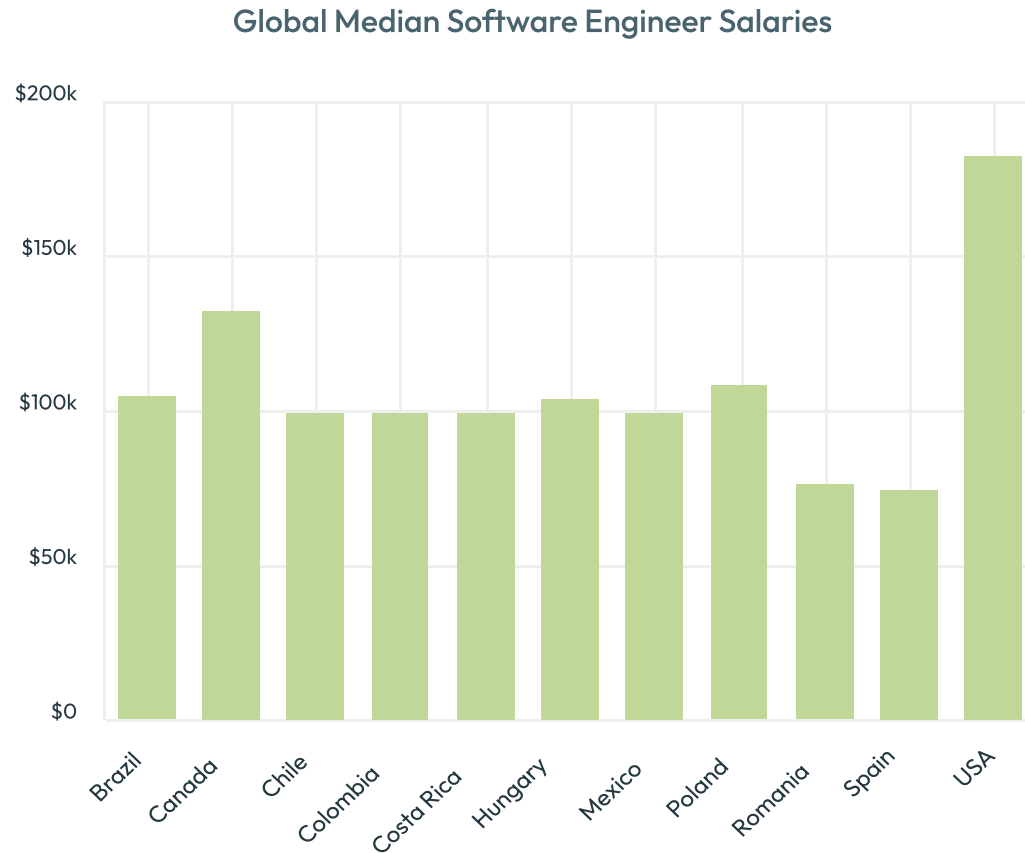Quickly view regional and country median salaries for each role and level

Dynamic Charts

Learn how salaries are distributed for each geography, role and level

Global Salary Comparisons

Global Median Software Engineer Salaries

Note on the Data: Terminal collected salary expectations for full-time employment from 260,000+ candidates across 10 countries. Our data sources also include nearly 500 job postings and 1,000 employed engineers sourced through Terminal. This data was cleaned, normalized, and modeled to represent an accurate picture of salary expectations in each country.

While the U.S. offers several advantages for hiring software engineers, costs are often challenging. The median software engineer salary in the U.S. is $182,500 - considerably higher than talent in most other countries. In competitive areas like the San Francisco Bay Area, the median salary is even higher ($260,000).

Salaries in Canada, Latin America, and Europe are 28% - 60% lower than the U.S.. Canada's median salary is at the upper end, at $131,958. In LatAm, salaries are within the same range of $99,300+. Europe's median earnings are more variable. In Poland, engineers earn $107,897 on average, while in Spain the median salary is $73,773.

Cost of Living Comparisons

One important factor to consider is the cost of living. The U.S. ranks 14th globally, making it a comparatively expensive place to call home. Since the cost of living is lower in most other countries, salary expectations are naturally lower.

USA
14

Canada
21

Spain
38

Costa Rica
39

Mexico
45

Chile
46

Poland
56

Romania
61

Colombia
71

Employment Costs

Hiring internationally requires added employment cost for mandatory benefits and taxes, calculated as a percentage of the base salary. These costs vary widely across markets. For example, in Latin America, these costs range from 9% in Chile to 40% in Costa Rica. Since employers should factor in these costs when considering the overall cost of hiring, we have incorporated an analysis of these costs into the report.

Comparing Salaries Across Roles

"Engineer" is far from the only role in the software field. Tech includes a wide variety of roles, each of which contributes to building functional systems and platforms. Here, we will look at the following roles:

- Backend engineer/developer
- Frontend engineer/developer
- Full-stack engineer/developer
- Data engineer
- Data analyst
- Data scientist
- AI/ML engineer

- Automation QA engineer
- Manual QA engineer
- Engineering lead
- DevOps engineer
- Mobile developer
- Designer

Specialized, data-driven roles with niche and cutting-edge skills are the highest-paid. In Canada, LatAm, and Europe, AI / machine learning engineers earn the highest median salary across regions at $104,382. Data scientists come in second with a median salary of $100,234. DevOps engineers also have a high-paying salary at $95,340.

Meanwhile, less technical and more junior roles tend to be lower-paying. Designer is the lowest-paid position overall, earning a median salary of $70,330. Data analyst, which is often a precursor to advancing to data scientist, is the second-lowest paid at $78,844.
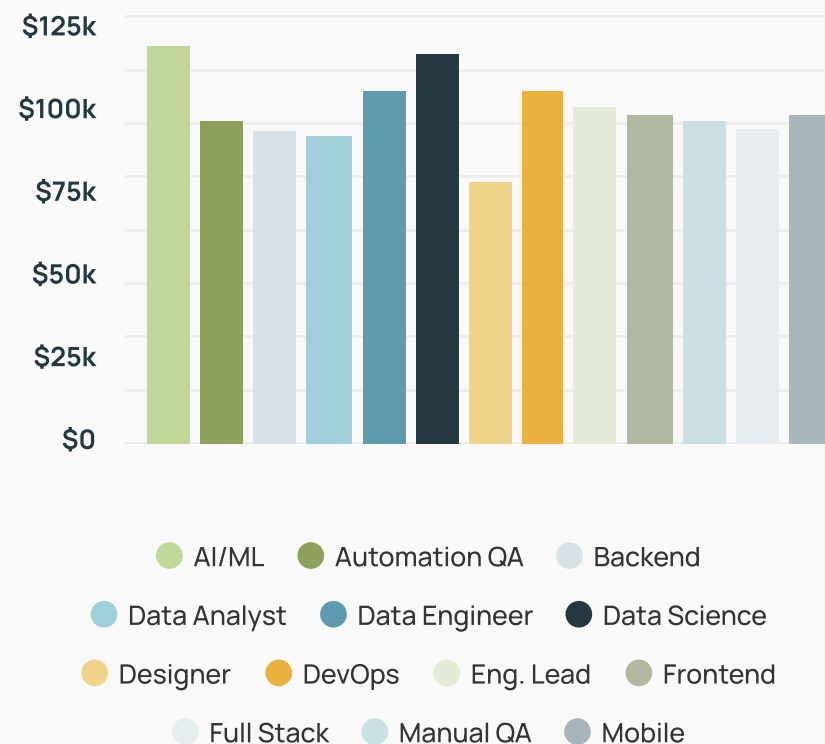
In the middle, we find more generalized and easier-to-find software engineering roles, including backend developers ($80,357), full stack developers ($84,037), and frontend developers ($84,818). Automation QA engineers and manual QA engineers also earn salaries roughly in this middle range —$87,060 and $85,690, respectively. These are core roles that often comprise a engineering team.

Mobile developers ($86,739) and engineering leads ($86,734) also have middle-high median salaries. Although these are not always core roles, they are still commonly found on smaller teams.

Companies in different industries and at varying stages of maturity may not require all of these roles. For example, a startup probably won't need a specialized AI/ML engineer in its early stages and can rely on general software developers to perform many of its tasks, unless the company specializes in artificial intelligence.

Next, we will take a closer look at how salaries for given roles vary by market.

Median Salary by Role

Legend:
- AI/ML
- Automation QA
- Backend
- Data Analyst
- Data Engineer
- Data Science
- Designer
- DevOps
- Eng. Lead
- Frontend
- Full Stack
- Manual QA
- Mobile

(Note: Data is not available for every role in every country.)

Regional Salary Analysis

Canada, Latin America, & Europe

Canada

The median salary is 38% higher in the U.S.

$131,958
Software Engineer Median Salary

10%
Added Employment Cost

Data Scientist
Highest-paid role

North America's fastest-growing tech hub, Canada is home to top CS schools like the University of Toronto, the University of Waterloo, and the University of British Columbia. 43% of grads have advanced degrees in CS or a related field.

Canada boasts a large tech community that promotes learning. There has been tremendous growth in VC investment, leading to numerous successful startups, like Wealthsimple, Hopper, Shopify, TouchBistro, and ApplyBoard.

Canada ranks 21st in terms of cost of living. Given this ranking, it's not surprising that the median engineering salary, while still lower than U.S., is one of the highest among the regions we're discussing. However, the median salary is 38% higher in the U.S. (or 26% with the added 10% employment cost).

In contrast to other regions, **engineers experience the greatest salary boost early in their careers, between Entry and Junior (levels 1 and 2).** On average, engineers see a salary increase of 21.7% during this period.
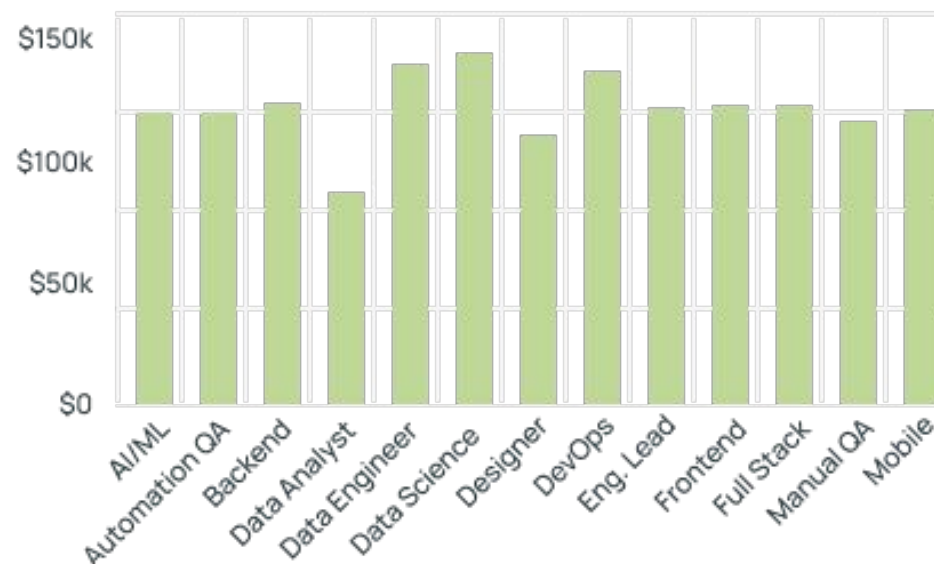
Median Salary by Experience Level

Entry	Junior	Mid	Senior/Lead	Staff	Principal
$81,230	$98,858	$108,291	$122,852	$142,318	$165,060

Canada offers numerous opportunities for engineers, with high earning potential for almost all roles. **Data-driven roles tend to be the most lucrative career paths, with data scientists earning the highest median salary of $144,372.** Meanwhile, less technical and more junior roles are lower-paying; a data analyst, often a precursor to data scientist, earns a median salary of $86,948, and a designer earns $110,704.

There is a significantly higher concentration of higher-paid backend and full-stack engineers at the top levels of the payscale than frontend engineers, which show lower salary distribution. Unsurprisingly, engineering leads are well paid, with their salaries reflecting seniority and managerial expertise. Automation and manual QA engineers have a similar salary distribution, seemingly demonstrating that they are valued similarly by employers.

Median Salary by Role in Canada

Want Even Deeper Insights?
Explore all our Canada data, including dynamic breakdowns by role and experience level.

[Explore the Salary Center]

Latin America

The median salary is 84% higher in the U.S.

$99,450
in Mexico
Highest Median Salary

$99,389
in Chile
Lowest Median Salary

9%   40%
in Chile   in Costa Rica
Added employment Cost
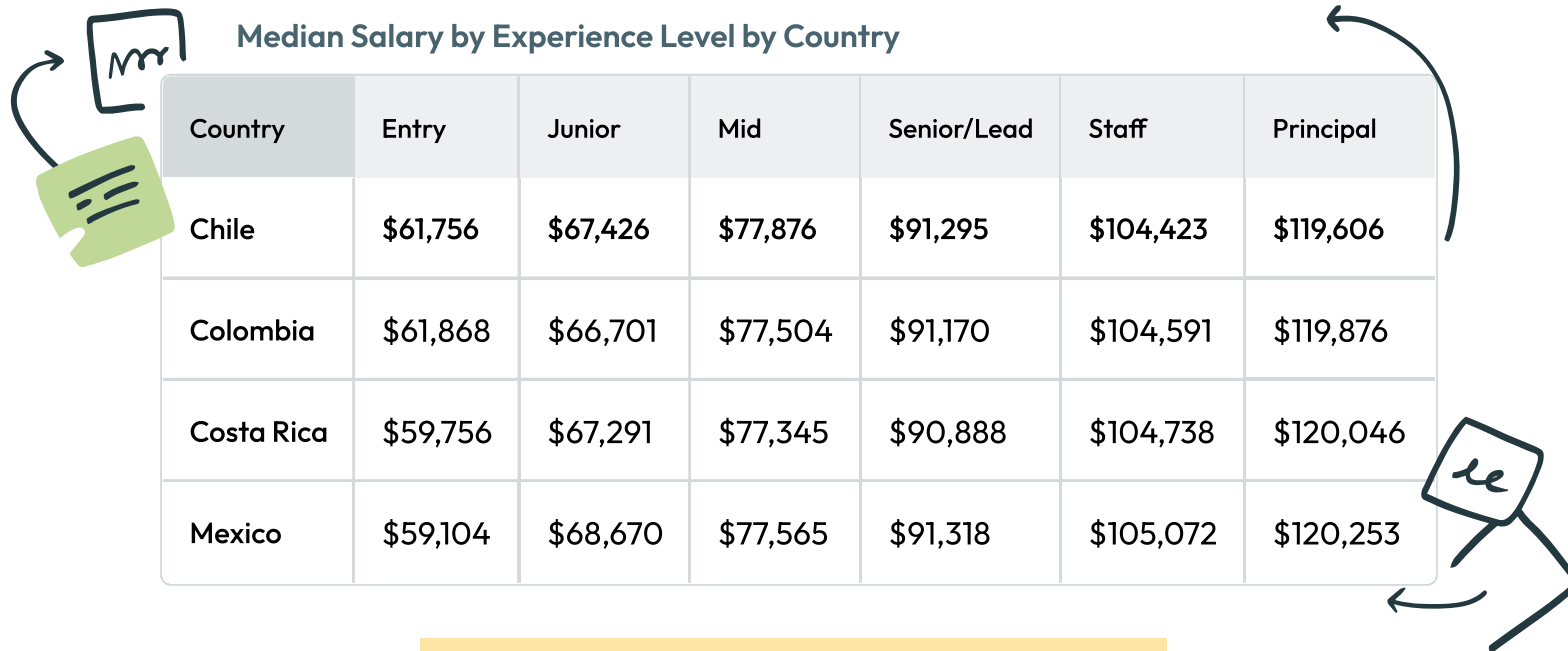
Data Scientist & DevOps
Highest-paid roles

Latin America has **largely comparable salaries between countries within the region, where overall median salaries are ~$99,300**, despite discrepancies in cost of living: Costa Rica, Mexico, and Chile rank 39, 45, and 46, respectively, while Colombia ranks 71.

LatAm has made great investments in tech talent in the past couple of decades, which is reflected in its deep pool of highly skilled engineers. Colombia, the third-largest and fastest-growing tech hub in Latin America, has more than 100K highly skilled engineers, 66% of whom have earned an advanced degree in computer science or a related field. Nearly 20% of software engineers in Colombia have experience working for successful startups like Rappi, Platzi, and Twilio. The country is also home to engineering teams from top tech companies like HP, Oracle, and IBM.

While salaries are consistent across levels, employment costs are not. Chile has a low employment cost of 9%, while Costa Rica's is 40% (Mexico and Colombia have 25% and 27%, respectively).

Median Salary by Experience Level by Country

Country	Entry	Junior	Mid	Senior/Lead	Staff	Principal
Chile	$61,756	$67,426	$77,876	$91,295	$104,423	$119,606
Colombia	$61,868	$66,701	$77,504	$91,170	$104,591	$119,876
Costa Rica	$59,756	$67,291	$77,345	$90,888	$104,738	$120,046
Mexico	$59,104	$68,670	$77,565	$91,318	$105,072	$120,253

Salaries are 46% lower than the U.S median.

Chile
Salary + 9% added employment cost is 68% higher in the U.S.

Colombia
Salary + 27% added employment cost is 45% higher in the U.S.

Mexico
Salary + 25% added employment cost is 47% higher in the U.S.

Costa Rica
Salary + 40% added employment cost is 31% higher in the U.S.

Latin America, like many other regions, places a high value on specialized and data-driven roles. For example, in Mexico, Chile, and Colombia, data scientists earn the highest median salaries ($107,846, 107,510, and $108,384, respectively). In Costa Rica, DevOps engineers are the highest-paid, with a median salary of $104,386.

The lowest-paying roles in Latin America are those that are less technical or specialized, likes designers (Colombia [$92,113] and Mexico [$73,880]).

Overall, the region tends to value broadly and widely applicable technical roles, evidenced by high concentrations of top-paid full-stack and backend developers across Latin America. In some countries, such as Chile and Colombia, full-stack developers see higher concentrations of top salaries than backend developers do, suggesting a greater demand for multi-skilled talent. Meanwhile, Mexico shows a more even spread of salary distribution for full-stack, backend, and frontend developers, speaking to a greater focus on the user experience.

Median Salary by Role in LatAm
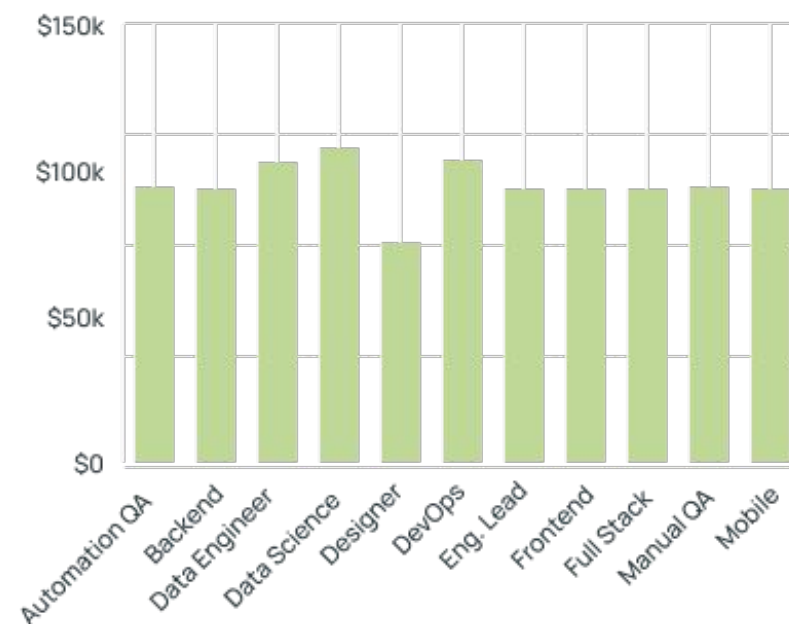
Want Even Deeper Insights?
Explore all our LatAm data, including dynamic breakdowns by role and experience level.

[Explore the Salary Center]

Europe

The median salary is 69-147% higher in the U.S.

$107,897
in Poland
Highest Median Salary

$73,773
in Spain
Lowest Median Salary

22%   36%
in Poland   in Spain
Added Employment Cost

DevOps & Full Stack
Highest-paid roles

Of the regions we've analyzed, **Europe has the largest salary differences from country to country.** Poland's salaries are second only to Canada's in the markets studied here. Despite Spain's high cost of living ranking (38) compared with Poland's (56) and Romania's (61), Spain has the lowest median salary.

Spain's low salaries may be attributed it being a relatively new tech hub. The country saw a huge increase in developers between 2017 and 2018, a growth rate of 15% (second only to Turkey's growth during this period). Recognizing Spain as an up-and-comer, big tech companies Google, Microsoft, and Apple set up branches alongside unicorns MongoDB, Stripe, and DataDog.

Poland, on the other hand, is an established source of top tech talent. Its ~166K software engineers are the **3rd best in the world**, according to HackerRank. It boasts top employers like Microsoft, Oracle, Cisco, Google, Zendesk, Box, and Snowflake, and over 10% of engineers have worked for top product companies. Poland's many startup programs, incubators, and accelerators, including Startup Poland, Space3ac, Startup Hub Poland, and the Poland Business Harbour (PBH) programme, help nurture and grow tech talent.

Median Salary by Experience Level by Country

Country	Entry	Junior	Mid	Senior/Lead	Staff	Principal
Poland	$76,240	$84,040	$94,497	$110,737	$122,784	$138,805
Romania	$50,602	$55,223	$65,282	$81,161	$87,949	$99,067
Spain	$48,462	$54,315	$61,001	$79,257	$85,476	$96,276

Poland

Salaries are 69% higher in the U.S.

Salary + 22% added employment cost is 39% higher in the U.S.

Spain

Salaries are 142% higher in the U.S.

Salary + 10% added employment cost is 120% higher in the U.S.

Romania

Salaries are 147% higher in the U.S.

Salary + 36% added employment cost is 82% higher in the U.S.

Europe is unique in that salaries are roughly comparable for different roles within a country. Spain has the largest salary by role discrepancy, with DevOps engineers earning a median salary of $79,633 and automation QA engineers earning $66,313. In Poland and Romania, the difference between the highest and lowest paid roles is less than $7,000.

This suggests that technical roles are equally valued in the region. **Software, QA, and specialized engineers have similar earning potential,** meaning candidates can choose paths that most closely align with their skills and career goals without having to contend with large salary discrepancies. Full-stack, backend, and DevOps engineers are still generally higher-paid, while front-end, automation QA, and manual QA engineers sit at the lower end of the salary scale.

(Note: Roles are less well-represented in the data set for European countries.)

Median Salary by Role in Europe
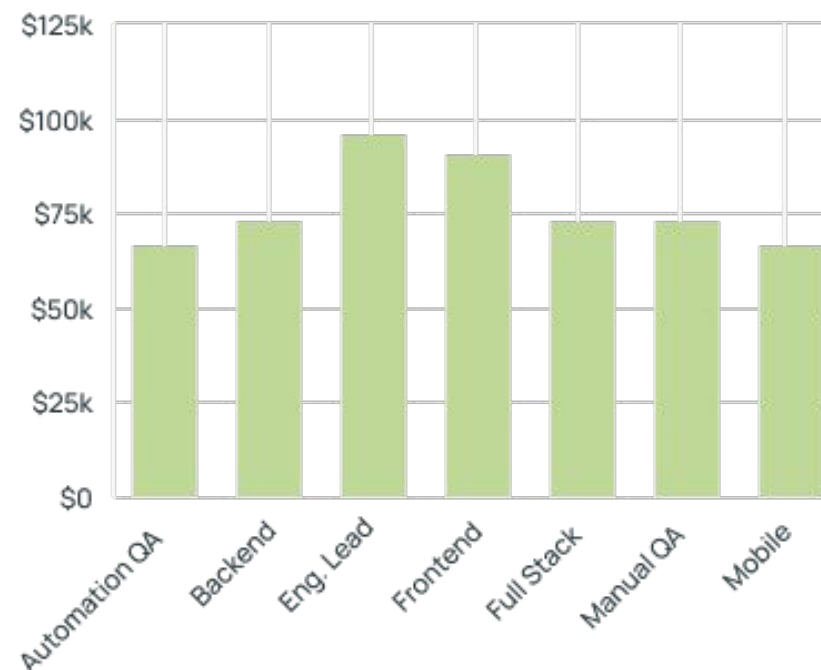
Want Even Deeper Insights?
Explore all our European data, including dynamic breakdowns by role and experience level.

[Explore the Salary Center]

Conclusion

Key Considerations

This data can help you make better-informed decisions to fill open roles, identify gaps in your development strategy, and innovate at scale.

When using this report, account for both skill level and special skills. For example, while **Spain has the lowest overall median salary expectations**, you will have a difficult time finding specialized roles like AI/ML engineers. Meanwhile, **Canada's salaries are typically the highest, but the country has the most widely available specialized roles.**

On a related note, bear in mind that soft skills, English proficiency, and cultural similarities can greatly affect the success of your projects. Canada is the most culturally similar to the United States and naturally has the highest level of English proficiency (English is one of two official languages, along with French).

Average costs are higher—though still lower than those in the U.S.— but when you consider easier communication, time zone alignment, and work style similarities, costs may even out thanks to fewer collaboration and communication hiccups. Note: The English Proficiency Index (EPI) can help you gauge English proficiency in various countries.

Company fit is related to cultural fit, but the two factors are not identical. It's important for employers to assess and interview candidates to ensure both. Candidates, too, should ask questions to gauge fit, remembering it's a two-way street.

Marketplaces like Terminal allows employers to have face-to-face time with candidates without having to vet them themselves. This saves time and effort while still ensuring quality candidates and cultural and company fit.
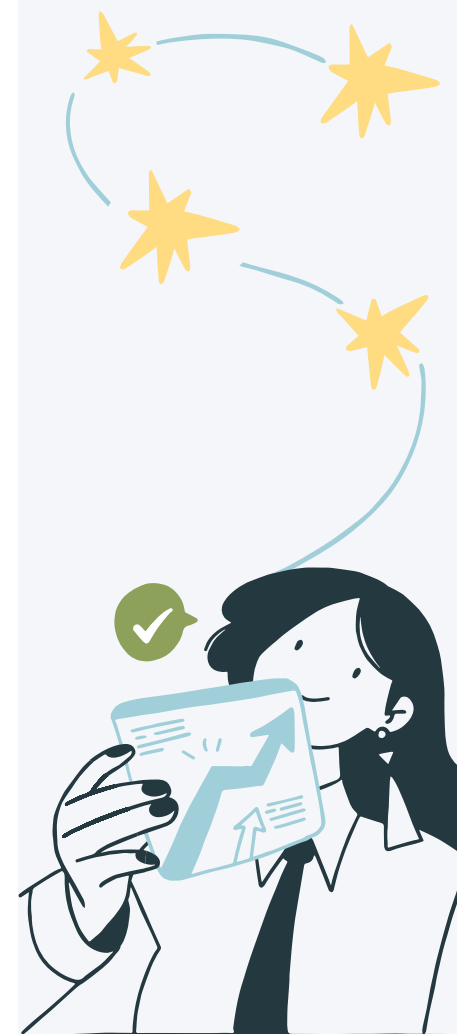
International Hiring Considerations

The opportunity to find affordable top talent is a critical aspect when designing your team structure and strategy. However, international hiring is complex in some ways, given factors like employment costs and local employment laws and compliance. Platforms like Terminal help streamline the hiring process, handling vetting and assisting with employment concerns and requirements in hiring markets abroad.

Specialized roles demand special considerations. According to our data, these roles are more widely available in countries like Canada. However, employers must be willing to pay a higher price, given the skills required.

Demand for roles doesn't necessarily correlate to higher salaries. For example, almost all teams need a designer in some capacity, despite this being the lowest-paying role we've studied. Meanwhile, not all teams will require more expensive roles like AI/ML engineers.

A Final Note to Candidates

Remember: There's no definitive resource for how much you can make working internationally. While this data is based on international salary expectations, candidates are in a unique position to establish their own value.

Ultimately, this guide can serve as a resource to help you assess your qualifications and determine which opportunities to pursue and how to maximize your value and potential in your career and growth.

Explore All the Global Salary Data

Whether you're a candidate or employer, this data can support your journey. Gain key insights, assess role potential, and better evaluate professional fit. **Explore salaries in-depth and compare earnings region to region with Terminal's Salary Insights.**

Visit the Salary Insights Center