

URUDEX RESEARCH · 2026 · EDITION 1

# LATAM Engineering Salary Benchmark

What software engineers across Latin America are paid in 2026, by country, by seniority, by specialisation, by stack, and what employers actually spend once benefits and taxes are loaded in.

# Executive summary

Latin America's senior engineering compensation has converged into a tight, well-documented band, and the gap to US pay remains wide enough to keep the region a deliberate hiring choice.

This benchmark draws on the two most-cited operational datasets in the LATAM talent market: Howdy's verified payroll data covering 12,500+ developer employment agreements across seven countries, and Revelo's 2026 hiring guide. All figures are annual gross compensation in USD unless explicitly noted.

A note on what the numbers measure. The by-country averages are blended across all seniority levels, drawn from real payroll agreements. The seniority bands are a separate, more recent cut of the same dataset. Revelo's senior ranges run higher because they measure senior-only roles at US-facing companies, a reminder that 'the LATAM salary' depends heavily on which slice you're looking at.

Where a figure could not be traced to a named source with a published methodology, it was left out. This is a market reference for setting bands, not a substitute for a live, role-specific check.

**~\$57k**

Regional average developer compensation, all levels (Howdy, 2026)

**60-65%**

Typical cost saving vs an equivalent US hire (Howdy, 2026)

**12,500+**

Verified payroll agreements behind the dataset

DATA

# Average compensation by country (2026)

Blended average annual compensation across all seniority levels, from verified payroll agreements. These are the take-home figures, not the fully-loaded cost to the employer.



KEY TAKEAWAY

The spread between the highest- and lowest-paying market is ~\$10,000. Inside any single country, the gap between a mid-level and a senior engineer is larger than the gap between Argentina and Brazil.

## BREAKDOWN

# Year-over-year movement

How the average country figures shifted between Howdy's verified 2025 dataset and its 2026 benchmarks. Country-wide movement is modest; demand is concentrated in mid-level and senior roles.

---

Argentina · 2025 -> 2026	<b>\$63,163 -&gt; ~\$64,000</b>
Uruguay · 2025 -> 2026	<b>\$61,732 -&gt; ~\$63,000</b>
Chile · 2025 -> 2026	<b>\$61,266 -&gt; ~\$62,000</b>
Peru · 2025 -> 2026	<b>\$61,265 -&gt; ~\$62,000</b>
Mexico · 2025 -> 2026	<b>\$55,894 -&gt; ~\$57,000</b>
Colombia · 2025 -> 2026	<b>\$55,894 -&gt; ~\$57,000</b>
Brazil · 2025 -> 2026	<b>\$53,253 -&gt; ~\$54,000</b>

---

BREAKDOWN

# Compensation by seniority band

Annual gross USD by experience tier, region-wide, from Howdy's 2026 cost benchmarks. This is the band the role itself commands, country variance moves it less than experience does.

---

Junior · 0-2 years	<b>\$40,000 - \$45,000</b>
Mid-level · 2-5 years	<b>\$50,000 - \$60,000</b>
Senior · 5+ years	<b>\$65,000 - \$75,000</b>
Principal	<b>\$80,000 - \$95,000</b>
Staff	<b>\$90,000 - \$105,000</b>

---

## ANALYSIS

# Seniority is the lever, not country

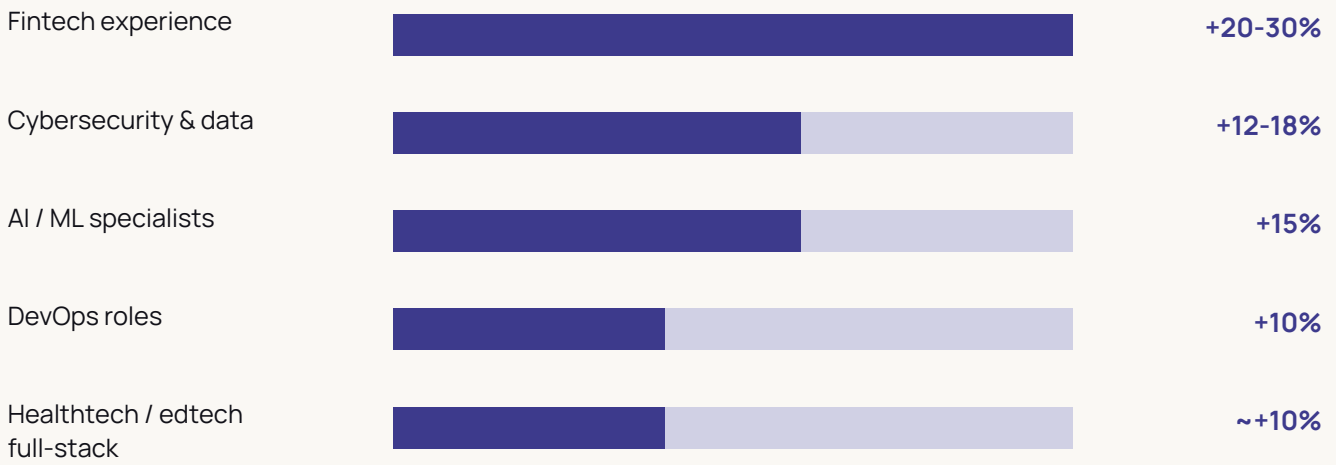
The single most useful number in this report is the gap between a mid-level engineer (\$50,000-\$60,000) and a senior (\$65,000-\$75,000), about \$15,000 region-wide. The full country-by-country spread is \$10,000. Promoting a mid into a senior role costs more than relocating the same role across LATAM.

The implication is practical: hire for the seniority and specialisation the work actually needs, then let country fall out of where the right person is. Country still matters for time-zone overlap and English level, but it is the wrong place to look for compensation arbitrage inside LATAM.

DATA

# Specialisation premiums

Premium over a baseline generalist developer rate for in-demand specialisations, per Howdy's 2026 benchmarks. These are percentage premiums, not absolute salaries, applied on top of the seniority band the role sits in.



KEY TAKEAWAY

Howdy advises adding 25-50% to general job-board rates when recruiting genuinely high-demand skills. Cloud and DevOps engineers with AWS, Azure, or Kubernetes expertise also command \$15-25/hour above mid-level generalists.

## BREAKDOWN

# Senior compensation by stack

Annual USD ranges for senior roles by language / stack, drawn from Howdy's 2026 dataset. Useful for setting an opening band on a specific role.

---

AI / ML · senior	<b>\$85,000 - \$100,000</b>
Go / Rust · senior	<b>\$80,000 - \$100,000</b>
Ruby on Rails · senior	<b>\$75,000 - \$95,000</b>
Mobile (iOS / Android) · senior	<b>\$70,000 - \$90,000</b>
Full-stack React / Node · senior	<b>\$65,000 - \$85,000</b>
Python / Blockchain / Golang · generalist	<b>\$41,000 - \$48,000</b>

---

DATA

# Senior salary range by country

Senior (5+ years) annual USD ranges at US-facing companies, per Revelo's 2026 hiring guide. These are absolute ranges, not premiums, the band a senior offer lands in once country is taken into account.



KEY TAKEAWAY

Brazil's higher senior ceiling reflects fully-loaded cost (taxes + 13th month + benefits), not take-home alone. Argentina and Colombia run lower at the top of band because total employer cost is more competitive there for US-facing roles.

## Take-home vs cost-to-employer

The numbers above are what an engineer earns. The number a hiring team budgets against is bigger, by 20-40%, once mandatory employer obligations are loaded in. The most important obligations in LATAM are the employer share of social security and the 13th-month salary mandate.

Employer social-security and payroll-tax rates vary materially across the region. Colombia is the highest at 29%; Peru's corporate tax rate is 29.5%; Chile sits at 27% corporate; Mexico's employer social-security load is roughly 24%; Argentina ranges 23-27%; Brazil's INSS adds 20% when a contractor is reclassified as an employee, with a 20% retroactive penalty on top of misclassification. Central America averages around 10%. These are the rates that turn a \$5,000 base into a \$6,300-\$7,100 monthly all-in cost.

On top of taxes, most LATAM countries mandate a 13th-month salary (an extra month of pay, usually split across two installments), and employers should budget another ~\$6,500 per year for the benefits package, health, equipment, training, that competitive offers in the region now include.

BREAKDOWN

# Employer-side costs by country

Mandatory employer obligations on top of base salary, from Howdy's 2026 EOR cost benchmarks.

---

Mexico · employer social security & payroll	<b>24%</b>
Argentina · employer obligations	<b>23-27%</b>
Brazil · INSS (employee classification)	<b>20%</b>
Colombia · employer obligations	<b>29% (highest in LATAM)</b>
Peru · corporate tax rate	<b>29.5%</b>
Chile · corporate tax rate	<b>27%</b>
Central America · employer load	<b>~10%</b>
13th-month bonus	<b>Mandatory in most LATAM markets</b>

---

BREAKDOWN

# Fully-loaded monthly cost by hiring model

What a mid-level engineer with a \$5,000 monthly base actually costs the employer under each engagement model, per Howdy's 2026 benchmarks.

---

Independent contractor	<b>\$6,000 / mo · no employer taxes, no fees</b>
EOR Mexico	<b>\$6,350 / mo · \$850 taxes + \$500 EOR fee</b>
EOR Colombia	<b>\$7,050 / mo · \$1,450 taxes + \$600 EOR fee</b>
Direct employment (own entity)	<b>\$8,892 / mo · taxes + entity/benefits</b>
Staffing agency, year 1	<b>\$12,083 / mo · includes placement amortisation</b>

---

## What this means for hiring teams

The headline is stability. A senior LATAM engineer in 2026 lands in a \$65,000-\$75,000 take-home band region-wide, and the cost gap to a US hire, roughly 60-65% once US fully-loaded costs are counted, has narrowed only modestly year over year. Teams still pricing roles off 2023 data are now meaningfully under market for senior talent.

Country is a weaker lever than most assume. The entire by-country take-home spread is under \$10,000; the gap between a mid-level and a senior engineer inside any single market is larger than that. Hire for the seniority and specialisation the role actually needs, and let country fall out of where the right person is. Where country does matter is on the fully-loaded side: Colombia's 29% employer load and Brazil's 20% INSS plus misclassification risk move the total cost of the same role by thousands of dollars.

Specialisations compound. A senior fintech engineer in Brazil is the base senior band (\$65,000-\$75,000) plus the 20-30% fintech premium plus the country employer load, three multipliers stacked. Budget the stack against the senior band, then add the specialisation premium, then add the country obligations, in that order.

Treat these as reference bands, not offer letters. Real numbers move with English level, time-zone overlap, engagement model, and how specialised the stack is, and the dataset is built from US-facing remote roles, which is the relevant comparison for most global teams but not the only one. When in doubt, anchor the offer on the seniority band, not the country average.

## SOURCES

# Where this data comes from

Every figure in this report traces to a source below. Ranges are medians unless noted.

### [1] 2025 Latin America Software Developer Salaries: Verified Data

Howdy.com · Published Nov 2025, updated Jan 2026

<https://www.howdy.com/blog/2025-latin-america-software-developer-salaries>

*Used for: 2025 country averages; 12,500+ verified payroll profile methodology; regional average and US savings range*

### [2] 2026 LatAm Software Engineer Cost Benchmarks by Country

Howdy.com · Published Jan 2026, updated May 2026

<https://www.howdy.com/blog/latam-software-engineer-cost-benchmarks-2026>

*Used for: 2026 country averages; seniority bands (junior to staff); specialisation premiums; stack-specific senior ranges; employer tax rates by country; fully-loaded monthly cost by hiring model; EOR pricing*

### [3] 2026 Latin America Software Developer Salaries

Howdy.com · Published 2026

<https://www.howdy.com/blog/latin-america-software-developer-salaries-2026>

*Used for: 2026 country averages; year-over-year movement (~2% country-wide); 'experience level, not geography' compensation read*

### [4] Hire Software Developers in Latin America, 2026 Salary & Hiring Guide

Revelo · Updated May 2026

<https://www.revelo.com/blog/hire-software-developers-latin-america>

*Used for: Senior salary range by country (low/high); cost multipliers vs US; US-facing senior corroboration*

ABOUT URUDEX

# A verified LATAM talent network.

Urudex connects the top professionals in Latin America with the global companies that need them most. Senior-only by default. Time-zone aligned. English C1+. Verified.

[urudex.com](https://urudex.com) · [hire@urudex.com](mailto:hire@urudex.com)