Mexico's Engineering Talent in Data, 2026

For engineering leaders deciding whether to build a team in Mexico: how deep the talent pool is, where it works, what US and European employers pay, and how the working day lines up with yours.

174,476
STEM graduates in 2022 to 2023, about one in three higher-education graduates

1 in 3
salary-survey respondents work for a US-headquartered employer

UTC−6
Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey, all year

Software developers and analysts employed in Mexico, quarterly, Q1 2019 to Q1 2026

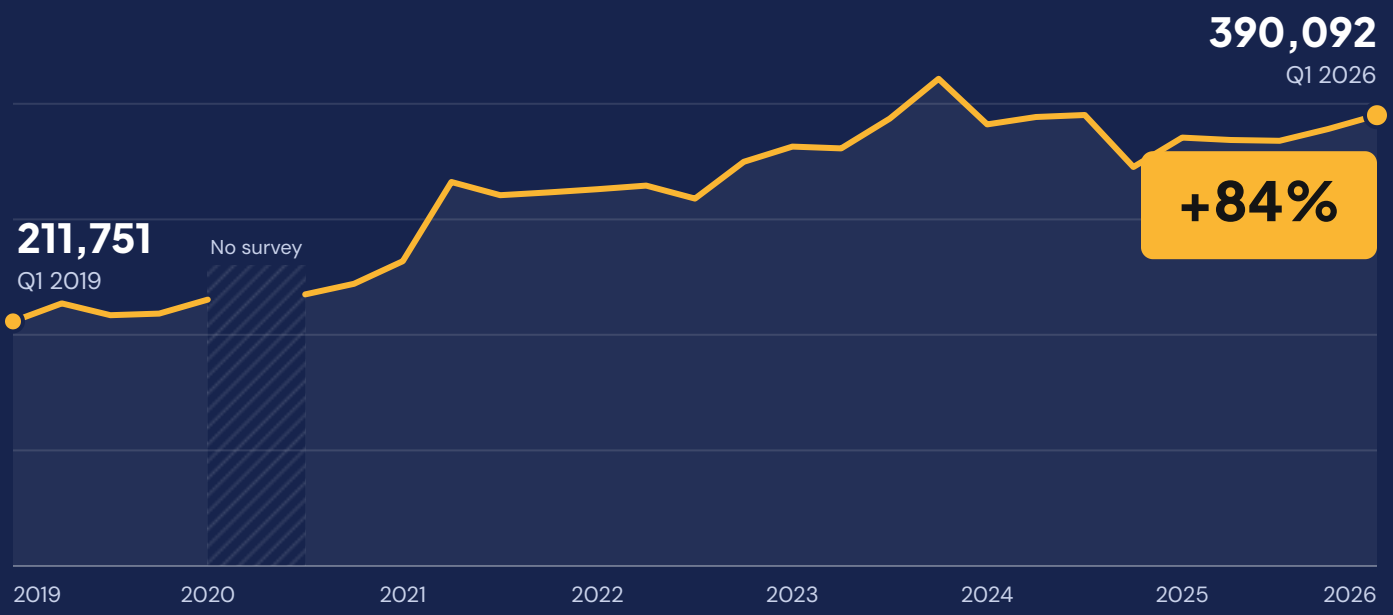


Chart and figures: INEGI ENOE via Data México (SINCO 2271, survey estimates, no survey in Q2 2020); SE citing ANUIES; CodersLink Tech Salaries Report 2026; Ley de los Husos Horarios. Notes and sources on pages 18 and 19.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Mexico's engineering talent, in data

A report to share with Engineering, Finance and People when you make the case for a team in Mexico: how deep the talent pool is, where it works, what US and European employers pay, and how the working day lines up with yours.

CodersLink Research. CodersLink builds and scales software engineering teams in Mexico. Published November 2026, updated 18 November 2026, with figures read 9 to 18 November 2026. Every figure carries a numbered source; notes, methodology and sources are at the end of the report.

Contents

OVERVIEW	Key figures	3
TALENT POOL	Mexico's developer workforce grew 84% in seven years	4
CITIES	Three states hold more than half of Mexico's developers	5
PAY AND US EMPLOYERS	One in three surveyed engineers works for a US employer	6
PAY BY ROLE	Median pay for nine engineering roles	7
TIME ZONES	Mexico keeps one clock; the gap to the US moves with the season	8
EUROPE	European investment rose in 2025, then slowed	9
INDUSTRIES	Electronics and software are gaining weight	9
GLOBAL COMPANIES	Global technology companies have built here for decades	10
HOW WE BUILD	From the first engineer to your own team in Mexico	11
CLIENT TEAMS	Four published cases, from one team to a full hub	12
HIRING SPEED	Engineering roles take longer than most to fill, so shortlist speed matters	13
AI ADOPTION	Most developers use AI tools; a third trust their accuracy	13
REGION	Mexico in Latin America	14
COMPLIANCE	What to settle before the first hire	14
TALENT LEADERS	What leaders who build teams across borders have learned	15
NEXT STEPS	How to start a team in Mexico	18
METHOD	Methodology, notes and sources	19

How to read the figures. Preliminary government figures may be revised. Survey estimates carry sampling error. Salary figures are net monthly USD from a self-selected, self-reported sample (n=10,246, July 2025 to March 2026). They are salaries engineers reported, not CodersLink rates, and this report derives no savings percentage from them.

OVERVIEW

Key figures

Mexico employs about 390,000 software developers and analysts, 84% more than in Q1 2019. One in three engineers who answered CodersLink's 2026 salary survey works for a US-headquartered employer.

390,092

Software developers and analysts employed in Mexico, Q1 2026 (survey estimate), up 84% since Q1 2019



Data México, INEGI ENOE [1]

UTC-6

-8 | -7 | **-6** | -5

Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey, all year since October 2022

Ley de los Husos Horarios [2]

174,476

STEM graduates in 2022 to 2023, about one in three higher-education graduates

SE, citing ANUIES [4]

~320,000

Tech workers in Mexico City in 2024, Latin America's largest tech talent market

CBRE Scoring Tech Talent 2025 [5,6]

$4,431

Median net monthly pay reported at US-headquartered employers, 68% above Mexican employers ($2,633)

CodersLink Tech Salaries Report 2026 [7]

1 in 3

Survey respondents who work for a US-headquartered employer (3,477 of 10,246)

CodersLink Tech Salaries Report 2026 [7]

16.9%

Mexico's share of US goods trade, January to September 2026, the largest of any partner ($779.2B)

US Census Bureau [8]

48.2%

Share of Mexico's foreign direct investment from US investors, H1 2026 ($16.871B, preliminary)

Secretaría de Economía [9]

Talent pool

390,092 people worked as software developers and analysts in Q1 2026, up from 211,751 in Q1 2019 and 5.2% higher than a year earlier.[1]

Working day

On a 9:00 to 18:00 day, a team in Mexico City shares 7 to 9 working hours with each of New York, Chicago, Denver and San Francisco, in both seasons.[2,3]

Competition for talent

Respondents at US-headquartered employers reported a median of $4,431 net a month, 68% more than at Mexican employers ($2,633), unadjusted for role.[7]

TALENT POOL

Mexico's developer workforce grew 84% in seven years

INEGI's labor survey counted 390,092 people working as software developers and analysts in Q1 2026, up from 211,751 in Q1 2019 and 5.2% higher than a year earlier. About 1.47 million people have university-level training in computing and ICT, a different and wider measure. Both counts have grown, so a team started now draws on a larger pool than in 2019.[1]

FIGURE 1 **People employed as software developers and analysts in Mexico, quarterly, Q1 2019 to Q1 2026**



Source: Data México (Secretaría de Economía), INEGI ENOE, occupation SINCO 2271, read 11 Nov 2026.[1] Survey estimates; quarter-to-quarter moves include sampling noise. No survey in Q2 2020. The full quarterly series is in the methodology section.

Two ways to count

Employed in the occupation

390,092 people whose main job is classified as software developer or analyst (SINCO 2271), Q1 2026. This is the closest official count of working software engineers. It excludes engineers classified under other occupations, such as IT managers or network specialists.[1]

Trained in computing

~1.47 million people aged 20 and over with university-level training (licenciatura or higher) in computing and ICT, Q1 2026 (1,474,049; 95% confidence interval 1.40 to 1.55 million). About 1.13 million of them were employed, and about 276,000 worked as software developers and analysts; the rest of the 390,000 developers have other university-level training, such as engineering, none at that level, or are under 20.[10]

The two figures are not additive, and neither counts engineers available to hire today. No official source measures availability.

The graduate pipeline

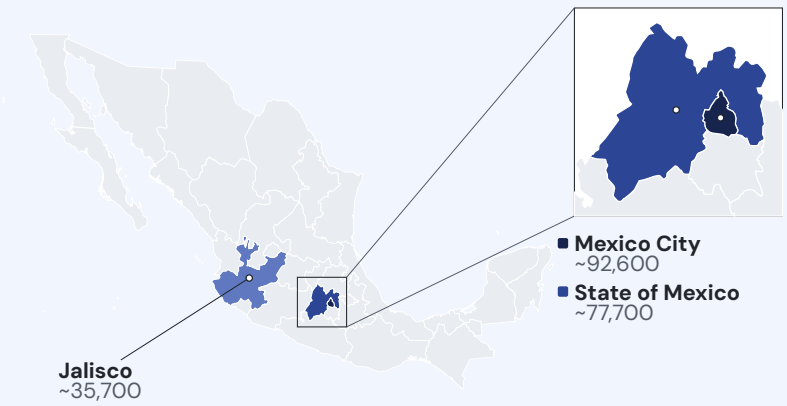
Mexico's universities graduated 174,476 STEM students in 2022 to 2023, 33.9% of 514,088 higher-education graduates. Of those, 30,024 graduated in ICT and 122,450 in engineering, manufacturing and construction. Mexico City and the State of Mexico together produced 22.5% of the country's STEM graduates.[4]

CITIES

Three states hold more than half of Mexico's developers

Mexico City, the State of Mexico and Jalisco (Guadalajara) account for about 206,000 of Mexico's 390,000 software developers and analysts. CBRE ranks Mexico City as Latin America's largest tech talent market and Monterrey as the region's fastest-growing one.

FIGURE 2 **Software developers and analysts by state, Q1 2026**



About 206,000 of 390,092 work in the three states



Mexico City · State of Mexico · Jalisco · Rest of Mexico

Source: Data México, INEGI ENOE, SINCO 2271, Q1 2026.[1] Three largest states; rounded by the source. Mexico City ~92,600; State of Mexico ~77,700; Jalisco (Guadalajara) ~35,700.

Mexico City

About 320,000 tech workers in 2024, the largest tech talent market in Latin America, ahead of São Paulo and Santiago in CBRE's ranking. EF English score 433.[5,6,12,13]

Where it fits. Start here for rare or specialized profiles. Expect more competition if you hire in volume.

Guadalajara

Jalisco counts about 35,700 software developers and analysts. IBM opened its Guadalajara campus in 1975. EF English score 509.[1,13,14]

Where it fits. Start here for a team you plan to grow steadily, in a city with a long electronics and software history.

Monterrey

The fastest tech-talent growth in Latin America in CBRE's study (112%). Highest EF English score among major Mexican cities (529). One hour twenty minutes nonstop from Austin.[5,13,15]

Where it fits. Start here when US stakeholders, especially in Texas, review the work often and in person.

Pay follows the same map. In CodersLink's Tech Salaries Report 2026, Nuevo León (Monterrey) reported the highest state median, $3,551 net a month (n=1,092), ahead of Jalisco ($3,500, n=1,454) and Mexico City ($3,323, n=2,548). These medians cover all roles and are not adjusted for role mix.[7]

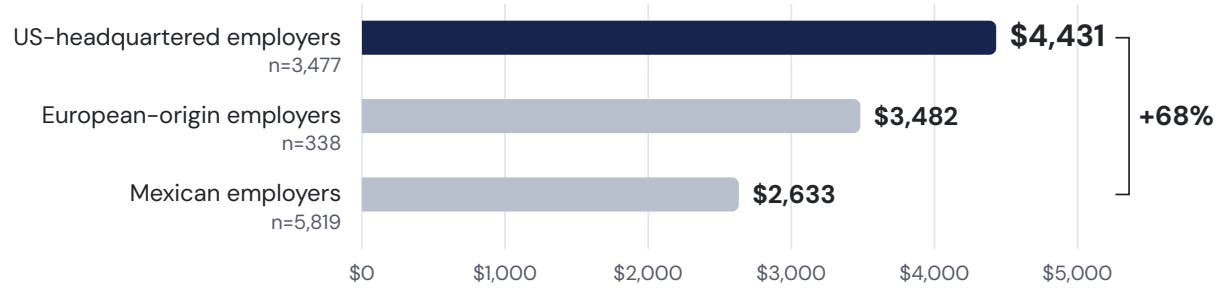
"Where it fits" lines are CodersLink criteria from placement history, not measured scores; this report does not rank cities. CBRE's tech-worker definition is broader than SINCO 2271, so its city count and the state counts above are not comparable or additive.

PAY AND US EMPLOYERS

One in three surveyed engineers works for a US employer

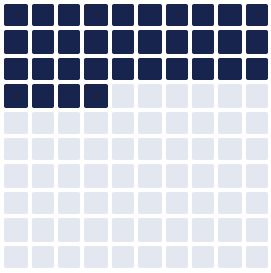
In CodersLink's Tech Salaries Report 2026, about one in three respondents (3,477 of 10,246) worked for a US-headquartered employer. Those respondents reported a median of $4,431 net a month, 68% more than respondents at Mexican employers ($2,633).[7]

FIGURE 3 **Median net monthly pay by employer's country of origin, USD**



Source: CodersLink Tech Salaries Report 2026, table by employer origin, July 2025 to March 2026.[7] Net of Mexican income tax. Medians are not adjusted for role, seniority or English level. United States $4,431 (n=3,477); Europe $3,482 (n=338); Mexico $2,633 (n=5,819).

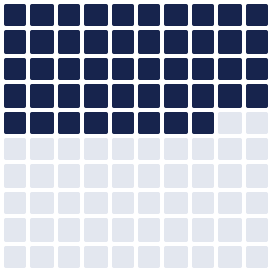
FIGURE 4 **Two measures of US presence in Mexico's tech market**



1 in 3

salary-survey respondents work for a US-headquartered employer (3,477 of 10,246)

CodersLink Tech Salaries Report 2026 [7]



48.2%

of Mexico's foreign direct investment came from US investors in H1 2026 ($16.871B, preliminary), up from 42.9% a year earlier

Secretaría de Economía [9]

Each grid has 100 squares; one square is one percentage point. Sources: CodersLink Tech Salaries Report 2026; Secretaría de Economía, Informe al Congreso 2T 2026, preliminary.[7,9] Share of Mexico's FDI from US investors: 48.2% in H1 2026, 42.9% in H1 2025.

The same pattern shows in capital and trade. US investors supplied $16.871 billion, 48.2% of Mexico's foreign direct investment in H1 2026, up from 42.9% a year earlier (preliminary).[9] Mexico was the largest US trading partner in goods from January to September 2026.[8]

English level is linked to a pay gap as wide as employer origin: engineers at C2 English reported a median $4,061 against $1,951 at B1, about 2.1 times, again unadjusted for role.[7]

Reading these medians. The sample is self-selected and self-reported. The gap between US and Mexican employers is not adjusted for role, seniority or English, and US employers may hire more senior, English-first roles. Read it as evidence of competition for talent, not as a price list. Salaries are not CodersLink rates, and this report derives no savings percentage from them.

PAY BY ROLE

Median pay for nine engineering roles

Take-home pay engineers reported in the Tech Salaries Report 2026 for nine engineering roles, with sample sizes: the nine engineer titles with the most responses in the software, AI, data and DevOps and cloud families. These are national medians, the same data behind the team pay and fit estimator on the web page.

TABLE 1 **Median net monthly pay by role, USD, all seniorities and by seniority**

Role	Median	Middle 50%	Responses (n)	Mid-Level	Senior	Lead
Software Engineer	**$3,046**	$1,938 to $4,431	924	$2,717 n=282	$3,600 n=290	$3,323 n=234
Fullstack Engineer	**$3,060**	$2,215 to $4,154	842	$2,732 n=242	$3,311 n=291	$3,323 n=161
Backend Engineer	**$3,100**	$2,333 to $4,431	815	$2,659 n=200	$3,177 n=313	$3,600 n=151
Cloud Engineer	**$2,571**	$1,385 to $3,790	796	$2,559 n=279	$3,731 n=215	$1,980 n=136
AI Engineer	**$2,989**	$1,772 to $4,174	785	$2,996 n=248	$3,996 n=199	$2,215 n=186
Frontend Engineer	**$2,769**	$1,994 to $4,015	525	$2,226 n=148	$2,769 n=243	$3,783* n=72
Data Engineer	**$3,376**	$2,932 to $4,534	376	$3,465 n=120	$3,533 n=166	n/a
DevOps Engineer	**$3,772**	$3,083 to $4,726	370	$3,992 n=117	$3,823 n=157	$4,320* n=45
Site Reliability Engineer	**$4,029**	$3,453 to $4,961	255	$4,250* n=69	$4,067 n=132	n/a

Source: CodersLink Tech Salaries Report 2026, n=10,246 self-reported, verified responses, July 2025 to March 2026.[7] Medians are net of Mexican income tax, in USD, from a self-selected sample, and are not adjusted for English level, employer or company size. "Middle 50%" is the range between the 25th and 75th percentiles. Seniority cells marked * have moderate confidence (fewer responses); n/a means too few responses to report. These are salaries engineers reported, not CodersLink rates. For the whole sample, the median for all tech roles is $3,139 net a month; middle half of responses between $2,116 and $4,382.

Titles do not map one to one to US levels: across all roles, Lead respondents reported a lower median than Senior ($3,046 against $3,546), a pattern covered in our FinTech guide The Cost of Trust. Match on scope, not title.[7]

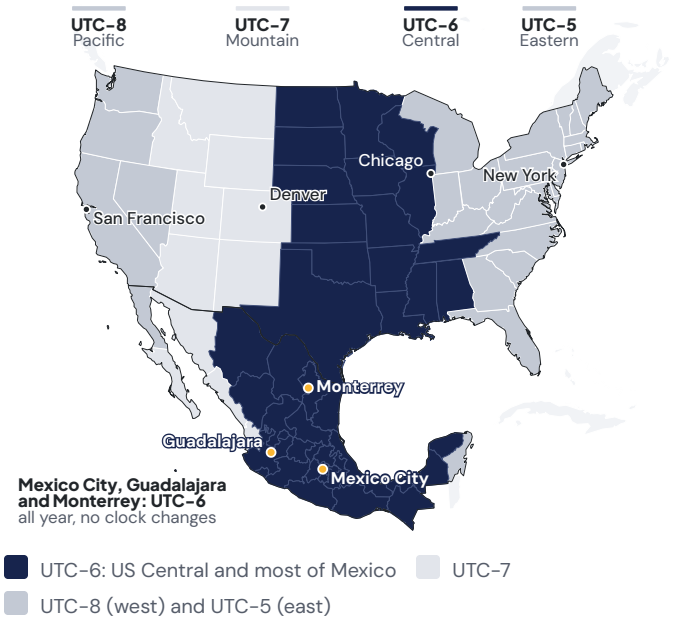
> “
>
> Expanding our team into Mexico has given us access to a strong pool of highly skilled bilingual professionals while allowing us to stay closely connected to our US operations.
>
> Beyond the strong capabilities, the geographic proximity, overlapping time zones, and ease of collaboration have made Mexico a natural extension of our strategy. It's a compelling destination for US companies looking to scale their engineering, sales and support capabilities without sacrificing communication, collaboration, or quality.
>
> **Vivek Reddy**
> Head of People, Numeral · AI-native sales tax and VAT compliance platform

TIME ZONES

Mexico keeps one clock; the gap to the US moves with the season

Since October 2022, Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey stay on UTC-6 all year. US clocks still change, so the gap to each US zone moves by one hour with the season. It never exceeds two hours for the contiguous US.

FIGURE 5 Time zones in the contiguous US and Mexico, US standard time (November to March)

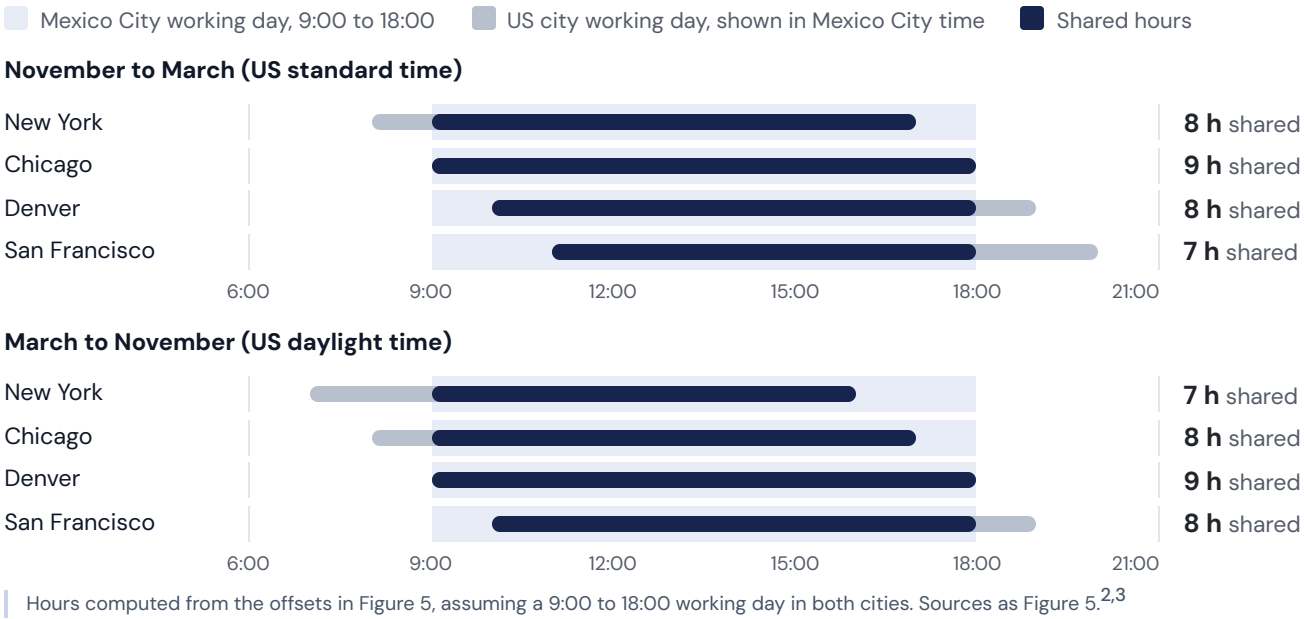


Mexico City time compared with US time zones, 2026

US zone (example city)	US standard time (Nov to Mar)	US daylight time (Mar to Nov)
Eastern (New York)	Mexico City is 1 h behind	2 h behind
Central (Chicago, Austin)	Same time	1 h behind
Mountain (Denver)	1 h ahead	Same time
Arizona (Phoenix, no DST)	1 h ahead	1 h ahead
Pacific (San Francisco)	2 h ahead	1 h ahead

Sources: Ley de los Husos Horarios, DOF 28 Oct 2022; IANA tz database, America/Mexico_City and America/Monterrey.[2,3] Zones simplified to whole states; several US states are split, and some northern Mexican border municipalities still change clocks with the US. Map: Natural Earth (public domain).

FIGURE 6 Shared working hours with Mexico City, by season



Hours computed from the offsets in Figure 5, assuming a 9:00 to 18:00 working day in both cities. Sources as Figure 5.[2,3]

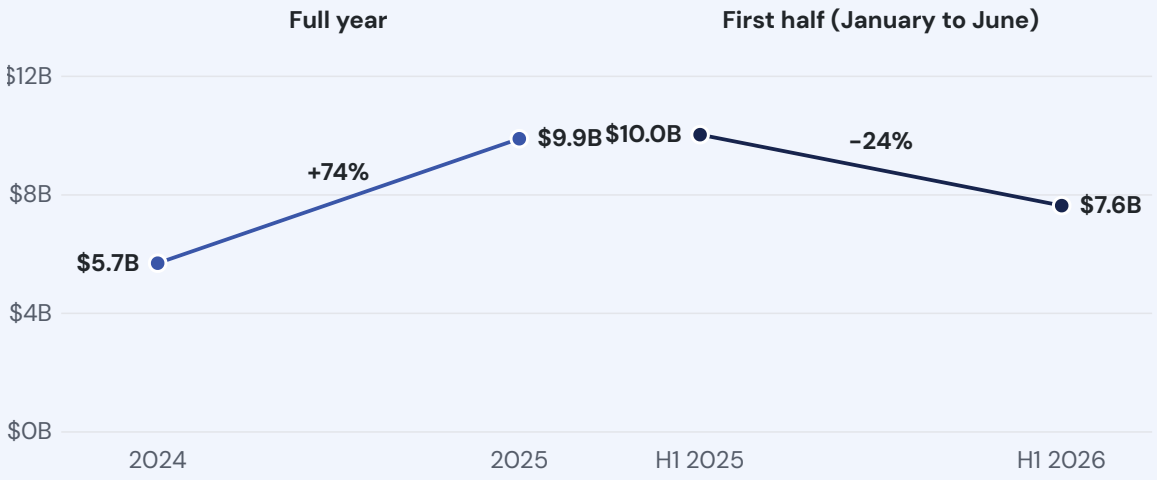
On a 9:00 to 18:00 day, a team in Mexico City shares 7 to 9 working hours with each of the four US cities in Figure 6, in both seasons. Because the offset is not fixed, plan recurring meetings in the US organizer's zone and expect them to move one hour on the Mexican side twice a year.

EUROPE

European investment rose in 2025, then slowed

EU-27 direct investment in Mexico reached $9.9 billion in 2025, up from $5.7 billion in 2024. In H1 2026 it fell to $7.6 billion from $10.0 billion in H1 2025, a 24% drop in a series that swings widely from half to half.

FIGURE 7 **EU-27 foreign direct investment in Mexico, USD billions**



Source: Secretaría de Economía, Informe al Congreso 4T 2025 and 2T 2026, Cuadro 2.[9,16] Full years and first halves shown separately, from different reports; later reports may revise earlier halves. Preliminary. USD millions: 2024, 5,695.6; 2025, 9,896.2; H1 2025, 10,034.5; H1 2026, 7,635.9.

Spain, the Netherlands and France were the largest EU sources in 2025. Switzerland, outside the EU, invested $2.04 billion, up from $540.1 million in 2024, then $133.5 million in H1 2026. The ministry does not break technology investment down by country of origin.[9,16]

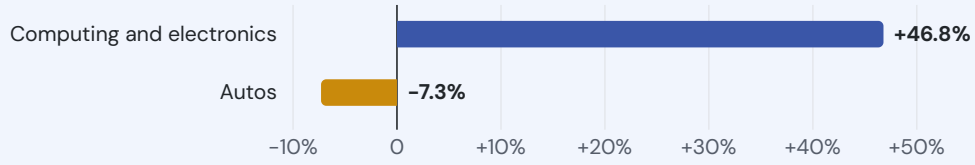
In the salary survey, 338 respondents worked for European-origin employers and reported a median $3,482 net a month, 32% above Mexican employers. The subsample is small and unadjusted for role, so treat it as directional.[7] European teams handling personal data should read the compliance notes: the EU has not issued an adequacy decision for Mexico.

INDUSTRIES

Electronics and software are gaining weight

Mexico's computing and electronics exports rose 46.8% in 2025 while auto exports fell 7.3%, and Mexico became the second-largest supplier of these goods to the US.[17]

FIGURE 8 **Change in Mexico's exports, 2025**



Source: BBVA Research, via BBVA.[17]

Foreign direct investment in software publishing reached $334.9 million in H1 2026, the highest first half in the 2018 to 2026 series. Investment in professional, scientific and technical services reached $687.7 million, also a first-half high. Both figures are preliminary.[9]

Total FDI reached a record $34.968 billion in H1 2026. Most of it (88.5%) was reinvested earnings, which points to companies already operating in Mexico expanding rather than new entrants.[18] Mexico-based startups raised 21% more capital in 2025 than in 2024.[19]

> "Companies that already operate in Mexico keep reinvesting there, and we see the same logic reaching engineering. If a company's customers and operations are in North America, Mexico is a practical place to build its engineering team.
>
> **Jesús Salas**
> CEO, CodersLink

Global technology companies have built here for decades

IBM has operated in Mexico since 1927 and Microsoft since 1986. Since September 2024, Microsoft, AWS and Salesforce have each announced multi-year investment commitments in Mexico, from $1 billion to more than $5 billion.

FIGURE 9 **Global technology companies in Mexico, selected milestones**

First operations, 1927 to 2006 dots placed on a 1920 to 2010 scale



1. **1927** IBM begins operating in Mexico. [20]
2. **1975** IBM opens its Guadalajara (El Salto) campus. [14]
3. **1986** Microsoft opens its Mexico subsidiary, its first office in Latin America. [21]
4. **2006** Bombardier begins operations in Querétaro. [22]

New commitments, 2024 to 2025 bar length = announced amount

- **Sep 2024** **Microsoft** $1.3B over three years for cloud, AI and skills. [23]
- **Jan 2025** **AWS** More than $5B over 15 years for its Mexico cloud region. [24]
- **Oct 2025** **Salesforce** $1B over five years, including a Global Delivery Center. [25]

Sources: as cited on each milestone. Commitments as announced by each company; amounts are not comparable year by year.

HOW CODERSLINK BUILDS THE TEAM

From the first engineer to your own team in Mexico

Many engineering teams in Mexico grow in stages: a few engineers inside existing squads, then a dedicated hub, then hiring at volume on the company's own payroll. CodersLink supports each stage, so you change the model, not the partner.

STAGE 1

Staff Augmentation

Add engineers to the teams you already run.

Engineers join your squads role by role, work your hours and your processes, and you need no Mexican entity.

Published case: Particle, 19 engineers and designers in under 120 days.

STAGE 2

MESHubs

Build a dedicated hub, then take it in-house.

A team of 15 or more people in one city, built and operated with CodersLink and transferred to your own entity when you are ready (build, operate, transfer).

Published cases: Q2, 57 people and its own entity at 24 months; NetProtect, 6 to 40 people in 18 months.

STAGE 3

Nearshore RPO

Hire at volume onto your own payroll.

When you have an entity and a defined hiring push, CodersLink runs the recruiting and you keep every hiring decision.

Published case: Pinterest, where CodersLink contributed to 22 engineering hires in 12 months.

NO ENTITY YET

Employer of Record (EOR): hire in Mexico without your own entity

Companies without their own Mexican entity can hire through CodersLink's Employer of Record (EOR) service. CodersLink handles the contracts, payments and compliance in Mexico, while the client chooses who joins, directs the day-to-day work and keeps its roadmap and culture. When a company sets up its own entity, CodersLink can discuss moving the team onto it.

- Contracts and records in Mexico
- One point of contact for the engagement
- Monthly payments and invoicing
- Onboarding, offboarding and equipment logistics when selected

Contract, IP and security terms are agreed in the engagement contract.

Decision guide: which model usually fits

Your situation	Model
Engineers inside your existing teams, role by role, without a Mexican entity	**Staff Augmentation**
A dedicated hub of 15 or more people that you may take in-house later	**MESHubs** (build, operate, transfer)
A recruiting team and an entity, with a defined hiring push	**Nearshore RPO**
Hiring in Mexico without your own entity	**Employer of Record**

CLIENT TEAMS

Four published cases, from one team to a full hub

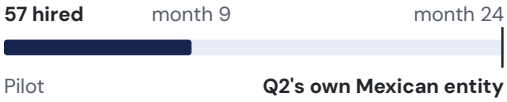
The stages above, in practice: 19 hires in under 120 days, 22 engineering hires in 12 months, a hub that grew from 6 to 40 people and a 57-person hub on the client's own entity.[26]

Q2

MESHubs, Monterrey

57

professionals hired in under nine months



Texas banking software company. A 24-month path from pilot to Q2's own Mexican entity.

Particle

Staff Augmentation

97%

retention after 12 months



19 engineers and designers
six domains, in under 120 days

California IoT company. 19 engineers and designers across six domains in under 120 days.

Pinterest

Nearshore RPO, Mexico City

22

engineering hires in 12 months



For Pinterest's first Latin American engineering hub, across three initial teams, with Pinterest keeping every hiring decision.

NetProtect

MESHubs, Guadalajara

6 to 40

people in 18 months



Moved support and engineering from offshore operations in Asia to Guadalajara, then took the full team onto its own payroll after 18 months.

Outcomes as published in each case study.[26] More published cases: One Inc, a specialized technology team in eight weeks; Oportun, a data engineering team in Mexico; Rackspace, cloud talent hired in Mexico; Minted, product and engineering roles in Mexico; Ziff Davis, four technical disciplines in Mexico.[27]

> **Across many companies and verticals over the years, I've seen strong engineering teams succeed in different parts of the world. Eastern Europe has long delivered excellent talent and execution, and Mexico has always been a compelling option as well. Partners like CodersLink make it straightforward to build dedicated, high-performing teams in Mexico while keeping the quality bar high. Mexico remains a great choice when the fit is right.**
>
> **Jacek Materna**
> CEO, TrueLoyal · Loyalty software company for consumer brands

HIRING SPEED

Engineering roles take longer than most to fill, so shortlist speed matters

39 days

Median US time-to-fill for nonexecutive roles, across all occupations.[28]

47 to 49

Days from application to start date for engineering roles, among the longest of any function in LinkedIn's 2021 data.[29]

CodersLink estimate: time to three vetted profiles

Standard roles	3 to 5 business days
Specialized roles	5 to 10 business days
Scarce or niche profiles	10 to 15 business days

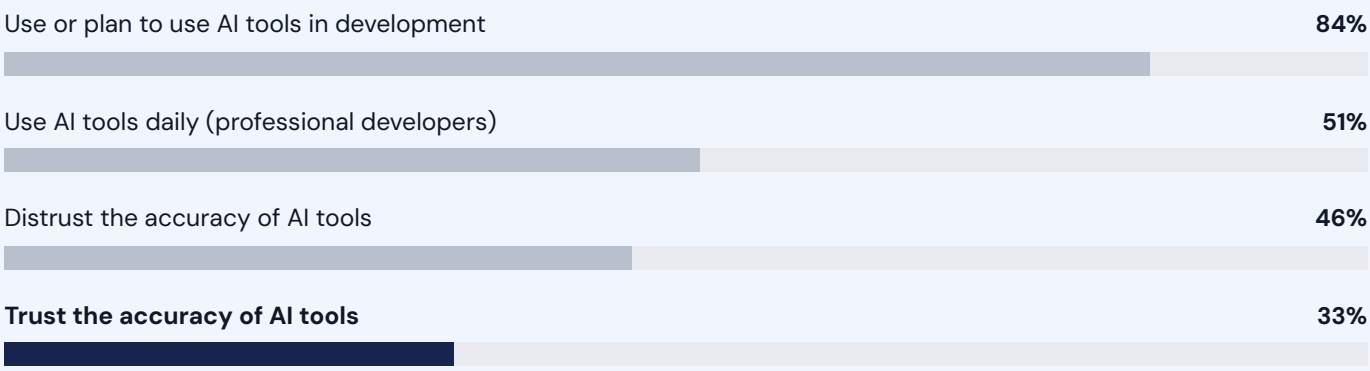
Estimates, not a commitment; the service level is agreed at intake.[15]

AI ADOPTION

Most developers use AI tools; a third trust their accuracy

These are global figures. No official source measures AI-tool adoption among Mexican engineers.

FIGURE 10 **Developers and AI tools, share of respondents, 2025**



Source: Stack Overflow Developer Survey 2025.[30]

Microsoft said in July 2025 that 90% of Fortune 100 companies use GitHub Copilot.[31] Google's DORA 2024 research found that a 25% increase in AI adoption was associated with an estimated 1.5% decrease in delivery throughput and a 7.2% decrease in delivery stability, even as individual productivity rose.[32] For hiring, that makes review discipline and testing habits more important. In the salary survey, AI Engineer is one of the most reported roles (n=785, median $2,989 net a month).[7]

REGION

Mexico in Latin America

CBRE names Mexico City, São Paulo and Santiago as Latin America's three largest tech talent markets, with Mexico City first at about 320,000 tech workers in 2024. Monterrey recorded the fastest tech-talent growth in the region, 112%.[5,6]

Average tech wages across Latin America run about 39% of US levels, a regional figure rather than a Mexican one.[12] Mexico scores 431 in EF's English Proficiency Index, 96th of 117 countries and regions and below the global average of 485, but IT professionals score 544.[13]

~320,000
Tech workers in Mexico City in 2024, Latin America's largest tech talent market.[5,6]

112%
Monterrey's tech-talent growth, the fastest in Latin America in CBRE's study.[5]

544
EF English score of IT professionals in Mexico, against 431 for the country (EF EPI 2026).[13]

We do not publish developer counts by country: available figures come from vendors using different definitions. English scores are from EF EPI 2026, published 18 November 2026.

COMPLIANCE

What to settle before the first hire

EU personal data

Mexico is not on the European Commission's list of adequacy decisions. Transfers of EU personal data to teams in Mexico typically rely on Standard Contractual Clauses under GDPR Article 46. Confirm the mechanism with your counsel.[33]

Trade framework

At the July 2026 joint review the US declined to extend USMCA. The agreement remains in force, now with annual joint reviews, and expires on 1 July 2036 unless all three parties agree to extend it.[34]

Employment model

Without its own Mexican entity, a company can hire through CodersLink's Employer of Record (EOR) service. See how CodersLink builds the team on page 11.

Engineers who need to work in the US

For FY2027, USCIS figures cited in our white paper show about 211,600 H-1B registrations for 85,000 visas. The paper, Beyond the H-1B Lottery, compares that route with TN status for Mexican professionals under USMCA and with building the team in Mexico.[37]

Intellectual property, employment model and security requirements are set in each engagement contract and reviewed with your counsel. This report is not legal advice.

INSIGHTS FROM TALENT LEADERS

What leaders who build teams across borders have learned

The data shows where Mexico's engineers are and what they cost. Running a team well is a different question. We asked heads of talent and engineering at global companies on Hacking Borders, CodersLink's podcast, and distilled their frameworks into decisions you can act on, each linked to the Mexico data in this report.

Hacking Borders
Conversations with the people who hire and lead engineering teams across countries. Subscribe for new conversations.

hackingborders.substack.com

1 · Choosing the location

Mexico data: talent pool, page 4; cities, page 5

Size the market for the end state, not the first hires

Almost any market can supply three to five engineers, so that proves little. Model what the site looks like in two or three years and test the market against it: density of relevant talent, the share who work comfortably in English, university output and how many employers compete for the same pool.

> **Do this:** project headcount for year three and check it against talent density, English and graduate pipeline.

José Benitez Cong, Head of Global Recruiting

Put the office where the talent lives

In large, congested cities the address matters as much as the city: a long daily commute quietly shrinks your candidate pool. If the site will build core technology, agree with leadership early on career paths, so engineers there trust their growth as much as those at headquarters.

> **Do this:** map where your target engineers live before signing an office lease.

José Benitez Cong, Head of Global Recruiting

Start from why, then map the talent

A center of excellence needs similar skills side by side, so map where those skills, universities and rival employers cluster. Hiring the best person anywhere makes location matter less. Seniority changes the answer too: experienced specialists thrive remotely, while newer engineers need colleagues nearby.

> **Do this:** write down the purpose of the site and set a seniority mix that fits the guidance it can offer.

Jason Gingrich, Head of Recruiting, Atomic Semi

2 · Hub or distributed

Mexico data: three states hold most developers, page 5

Hiring anywhere is not hiring everywhere

Single employees alone in a country, far from their team, became engagement and retention risks even when they performed well. The fix was workforce planning that picks a few hubs, chosen for business direction, depth of talent and working-hour overlap with the teams they support.

> **Do this:** cluster hires in one or two chosen locations instead of scattering single hires.

Tracy St. Dic, Global Head of Talent, Zapier

Let the product decide

Teams that build or touch hardware get complicated and expensive when fully distributed, so they need enough people in one hub. Pure software can run distributed, if you hire people mature enough to manage their own rhythm and trust the process that hired them.

> **Do this:** classify the work first, then choose a dense hub or a distributed team.

Jason Gingrich, Head of Recruiting, Atomic Semi

3 · Before the first hire

Mexico data: hiring models, page 11; next steps, page 18

Treat global hiring as an operating model

Finding engineers abroad is the easy part; the real question is whether your company can run a team across borders. Strong engineers judge you by how clearly you operate, and vague ownership reads as a weaker company.

> **Do this:** simulate a day of collaboration with the new team, decisions and handoffs included, and fix the gaps first.

Moses Sison, VP of People, Tessera Labs

Name your reason, then commit to one place

Expansion follows a product into a market, buys access to talent at a different cost, or builds something new. Name the reason, work through its legal and coordination consequences, then concentrate: spreading thinly across sites adds real cost and drag.

> **Do this:** document the reason for expanding and stay in one location until it works.

Andrew Trout, Head of People and Talent, Odyssey

Budget for lead time and the people around the team

Leaders plan for engineers in seats one quarter and are still searching the next. Check pipeline depth skill by skill, since a city strong in full-stack can be thin in systems work, and budget for the local HR and support roles the team will need.

> **Do this:** add at least a quarter of slack to the hiring plan and set a success metric up front.

Jerry Carter, CTO, Nasuni

4 · Cost and value

Mexico data: pay at US employers, page 6; pay by role, page 7

Compare cost role by role, everything included

The old rule that one expensive engineer buys several abroad no longer holds across the board. Compare two or three levels down, by specialty, and count the full cost of operating in a country: payroll arrangements, contracts and compliance work.

> **Do this:** build a fully loaded, per-role cost comparison before choosing a location.

Andrew Trout, Head of People and Talent, Odyssey

The lowest cost can carry the highest price

Choosing a location or hire mainly because it is cheapest often costs more once coordination, time-zone friction and language gaps are counted. Cost can lead for simple administrative roles; for engineering it cannot be the only factor.

> **Do this:** compare locations on the total cost of delivered work, not on salary alone.

Moses Sison, VP of People, Tessera Labs

5 · Time zones and collaboration

Mexico data: shared working hours, page 8

Let teams iterate locally, coordinate globally

The common failure is hiring abroad for capacity while routing every decision, even code review, through headquarters: that adds up to a day of delay and removes the parallel work you hired for. Give each site components it owns, with clear interfaces, and keep rituals like stand-ups within a sustainable time span.

> **Do this:** give the new site end-to-end ownership, including review authority, of defined components.

Jerry Carter, CTO, Nasuni

Make the time-zone cost explicit

Large time gaps push someone into late hours; name that cost instead of leaving it unspoken. Always-on chat is a lazy substitute for coordination. Teams need explicit norms for when and how to communicate, stronger async habits and the discipline to separate important from urgent.

> **Do this:** publish core overlap hours, response times and async norms before the first hire starts.

Andrew Trout, Head of People and Talent, Odyssey

Insights drawn from Hacking Borders conversations recorded in 2026. Guests speak for themselves, not for CodersLink, its clients or their employers; they discuss distributed teams in general, and the links to Mexico data are CodersLink's.[35]

6 · Hiring speed and quality

Mexico data: hiring speed, page 13

Interview capacity, not sourcing, sets the pace

Scaling plans focus on sourcing until the math shows engineers cannot absorb the interviews. Plan backward from interview hours, weight each role by market availability, seniority and backfill status, and show leadership what is achievable.

> **Do this:** calculate the interview hours your engineers can give before setting a hiring target.

Kelli Presto, Head of Talent Acquisition, Speak

Measure time to fill by country from day one

Without clean data you cannot see how long hires really take. With it, some markets turn out to take several times longer than the US for the same role, and that evidence should shape when hiring starts and even where a role sits.

> **Do this:** track time to fill by country and role, and start earlier where markets are slower.

Kelli Presto, Head of Talent Acquisition, Speak

Map scarce skills before the roles open

In narrow fields everyone contacts the same few people. Map the market for every skill on the next one to two years of roadmap and build relationships early, then show hiring managers adjacent profiles they had not asked for. A job description is a snapshot, not the need.

> **Do this:** keep a running talent map for each critical skill on your roadmap.

Jason Gingrich, Head of Recruiting, Atomic Semi

Set the bar centrally, judge hires by results

Fast growth brings new interviewers and a drifting bar. Give a senior leader per function ownership of the bar, write the process down, then measure quality of hire against what people achieve once they join.

> **Do this:** document the rubric and review each hire's performance against their interview signals.

Tracy St. Dic, Global Head of Talent, Zapier; José Benitez Cong, Head of Global Recruiting

7 · Onboarding and retention

Mexico data: client teams, page 12

Make work visible so new hires can self-serve

A new engineer in another country often does not know whom to ask or how to start a build. Publish processes, decisions and owners so answers are findable. Prepare the home team too, and give remote engineers the same autonomy and career path as headquarters.

> **Do this:** publish onboarding docs and an owner directory before the first remote hire.

Jerry Carter, CTO, Nasuni

Give every site a two-year career path

Ask what people at a new site will be doing in two years: they will want promotions and growth. Internal mobility is a strong lever only when managers are rewarded for developing people rather than keeping them. Hire for adaptability and speed of learning in a changing company.

> **Do this:** document career paths and internal mobility for each site.

Andrew Trout, Head of People and Talent, Odyssey

8 · AI and engineering quality

Mexico data: AI adoption, page 13; pay by seniority, page 7

Use AI to multiply seniors, but keep the pipeline

AI tools multiply senior engineers' output, while juniors can now build beyond their judgment. Hiring only seniors empties your future workforce. Measure the whole system: if coding drops from days to hours but review still waits half a day, you produce more without shipping more.

> **Do this:** keep a senior and junior mix with mentoring, and measure end-to-end delivery time.

Jerry Carter, CTO, Nasuni

Point freed capacity at the bottleneck

AI largely removed the code-writing bottleneck, so review became the next one. Handing a faster engineer more tickets rewards output, not value; direct the capacity to the current constraint, and judge teams on customer outcomes across the full delivery cycle.

> **Do this:** find your delivery bottleneck and assign AI-freed time to it.

Rebecca Murphey, Honeycomb; co-author of Build

NEXT STEPS

How to start a team in Mexico

Four decisions, in this order.

1

Scope the team

Roles and seniority decide the city and the timeline more than budget does. State the English level in the requisition.

2

Choose the model

Start with Staff Augmentation, grow into a MESHubs hub, hire at volume with Nearshore RPO. Without your own entity, hire through an Employer of Record (EOR).

3

Choose the city

Mexico City for rare profiles, Guadalajara to grow steadily, Monterrey for frequent in-person review from Texas, or a national remote search.

4

Budget with rates

Salary medians are take-home pay. Compare engagement rates by role and seniority with your own fully loaded cost.

Plan your expansion to Mexico

Tell us which roles you need and when, and we will tell you whether Mexico fits and which model to start with.

Plan your team

METHOD

Methodology, notes and sources

Developer counts

Occupation counts are INEGI ENOE survey estimates for SINCO 2271 (software developers and analysts), published by Data México; quarter-to-quarter moves include sampling noise and there was no survey in Q2 2020.[1] The training count is a CodersLink analysis of INEGI ENOE public microdata, using the definition that reproduces INEGI's published 2020 figure (about 976,000).[10,11] It counts training, not occupation, and includes people who did not finish their degree, as INEGI does. Field-of-study codes changed in 2021, so growth is compared only from 2022: about 3.4% a year, Q1 2022 to Q1 2026.

Salaries

CodersLink Tech Salaries Report 2026: n=10,246 verified, self-reported responses, July 2025 to March 2026; net monthly USD at 18.00 MXN per USD; updated 21 Apr 2026. Medians are not adjusted for role, seniority, English level, employer or company size unless stated. Seniority cells below the report's confidence threshold are not reported.[7]

Time zones and shared hours

Offsets use each zone's clock rules for 2026 (Mexico stays on UTC-6), assuming a 9:00 to 18:00 working day in both places.[2,3]

Investment, trade and other figures

Preliminary government figures may be revised. Investment figures are as published by the Secretaría de Economía; trade figures are goods only.[8,9,16] URLs were read between 9 and 18 November 2026 unless the entry gives another date. Source numbers match the notes on the web page.

Using these charts

You may embed or republish the charts in this report, unaltered, with credit to CodersLink and a link to coderslink.com/employers/mexico-engineering-talent. The underlying public data belong to the sources listed. Source 38 supports content on the web page and is listed so that the numbering matches it. Figure numbers in this report follow its own reading order.

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METHOD

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TABLE 2 **Figure 1 data: software developers and analysts employed in Mexico, by quarter (INEGI ENOE, SINCO 2271)**[1]

Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2019	211,751	227,323	217,099	218,497
2020	230,546	No survey	235,027	244,173
2021	263,708	332,366	320,917	323,264
2022	326,049	329,106	317,884	349,706
2023	362,887	361,465	387,233	421,573
2024	382,128	388,491	390,228	345,335
2025	370,654	368,677	367,900	378,171
2026	390,092			

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PLAN YOUR TEAM

Build your engineering team in Mexico

Tell us which roles you need and when, and we will tell you whether Mexico fits and which model to start with: Staff Augmentation, MESHubs, Nearshore RPO or Employer of Record.

Plan your team

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The data, online

The data behind this report, with sources, at coderslink.com/employers/mexico-engineering-talent