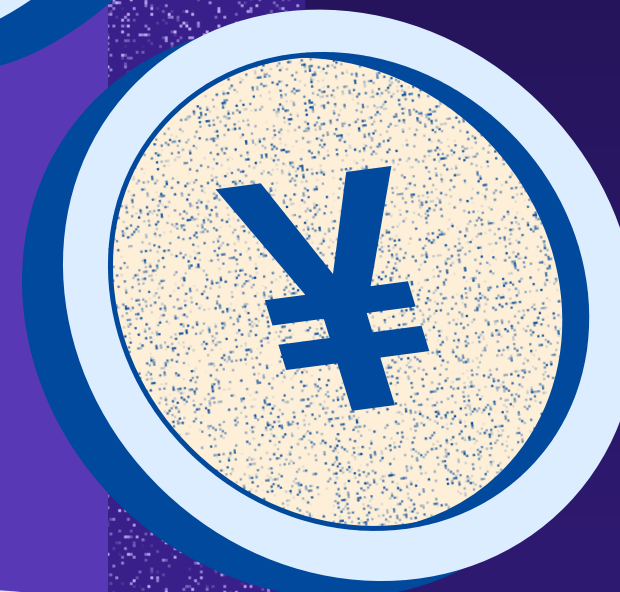
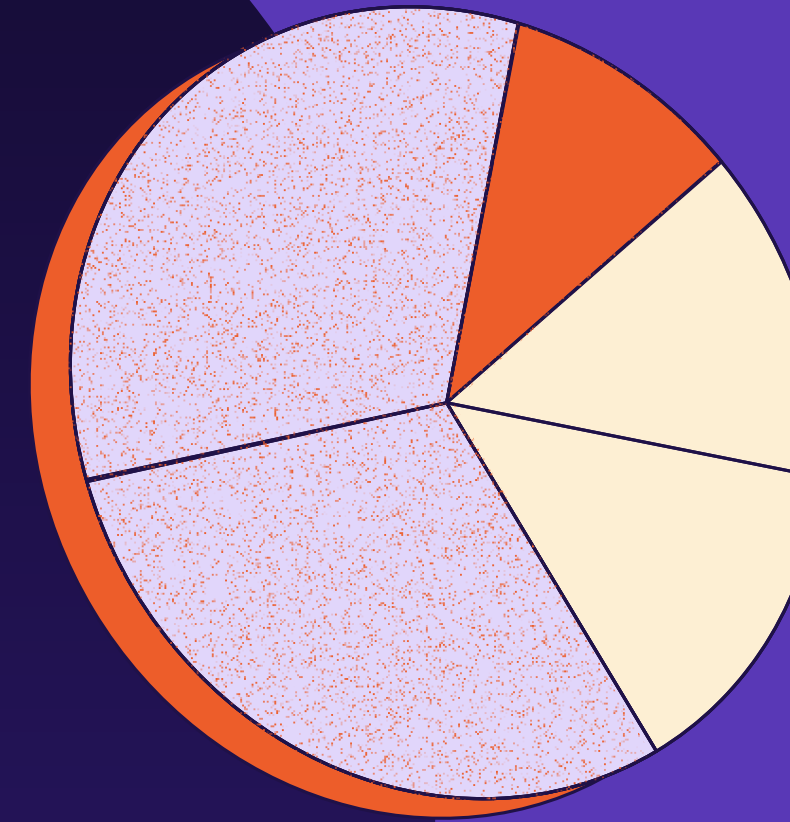
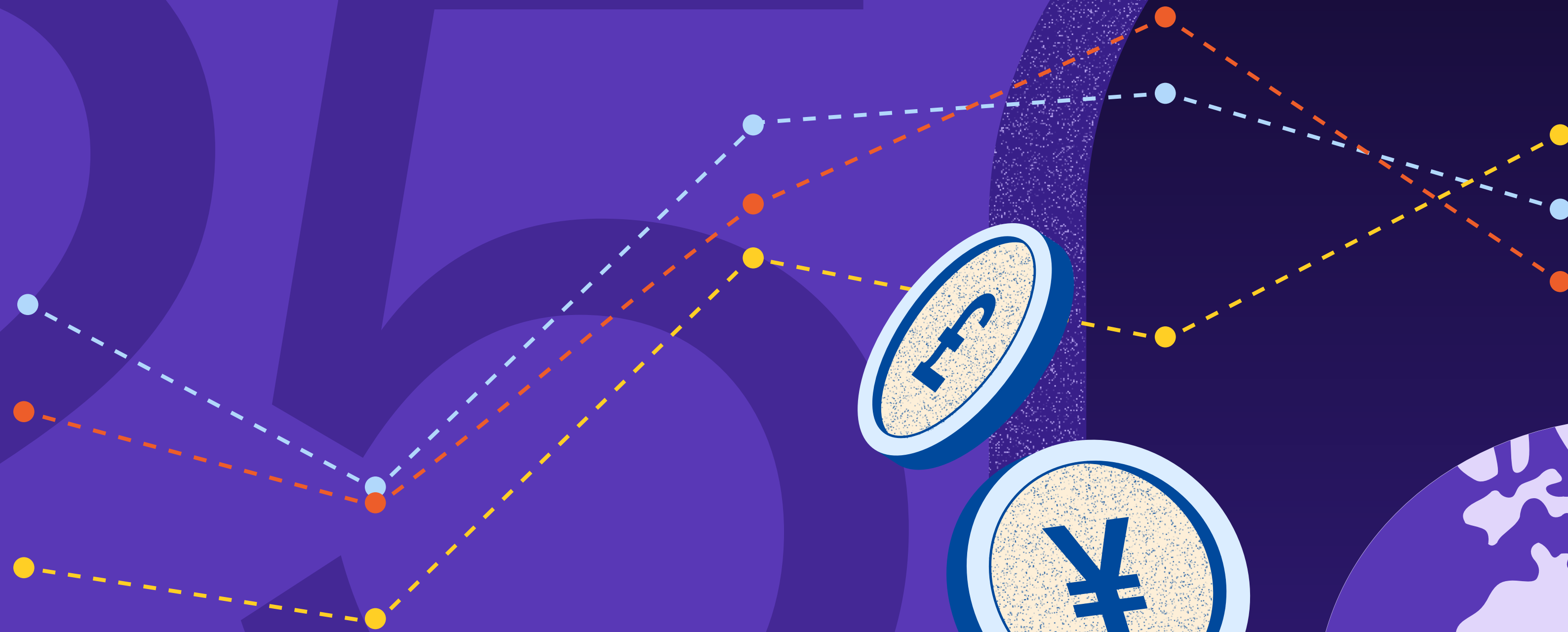


The State of Global Compensation Report



deel.

carta

Introduction

Our second annual report from global payroll and HR company Deel and our partners at Carta—The State of Global Compensation—continues to supply founders, HR leaders, and industries with insights into what people are being paid across the globe, enabling companies and their teams worldwide to make more informed and equitable compensation decisions. Compensation remains a crucial tool to help businesses stay competitive in today's dynamic marketplace.

This report contains trend analyses of compensation across key occupations in developed and emerging economies, with enhanced coverage and expanded data collection compared to our inaugural 2024 report.

Market Commentary

Compensation leadership remains concentrated:

Based on our expanded data, Canada, the U.S., and Great Britain continue to lead in compensation across job categories, consistent with global trends identified in our previous analysis. Sweden and Norway demonstrate compensation levels comparable to the UK. While Switzerland and Lichtenstein's smaller sample sizes don't compare to larger countries, their compensation remains high.

AI role evolution mirrors data science transformation:

The emergence of specialized AI positions reflects a pattern similar to the data science boom eight to 10 years ago, with AI conversations shifting from theoretical to practical implementation. Organizations are now creating highly targeted AI roles specific to functions like finance, HR, and product, rather than broad AI engineering positions. These specialized roles in AI, cybersecurity, and digital marketing command 20% to 25% premiums above base compensation levels due to the lack of established benchmarks.

Global inflation impacts vary significantly:

Companies continue to struggle with inflation-adjusted compensation, particularly in hyperinflation locations like Turkey and Argentina, where organizations implement smaller, incremental increases due to frequent economic changes. Some companies are responding with one-time lump sum cash payments instead of compounding increases on base pay to avoid long-term financial commitments.

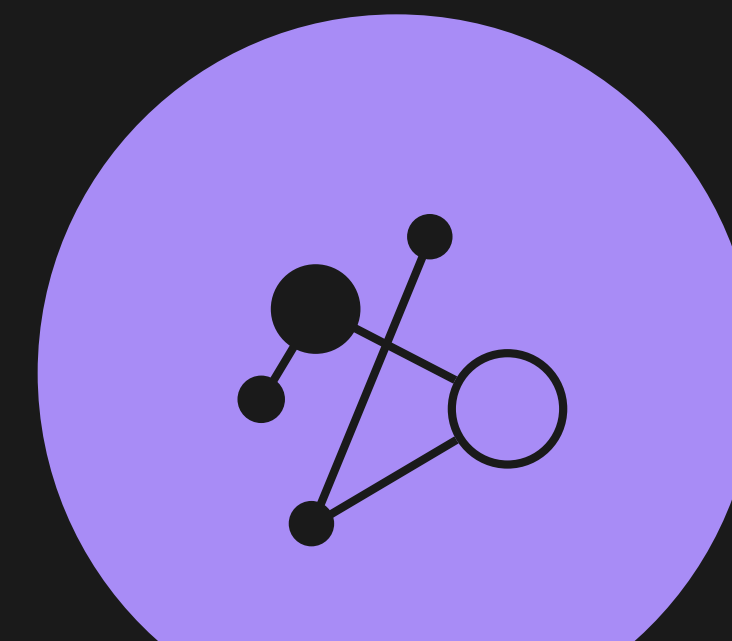
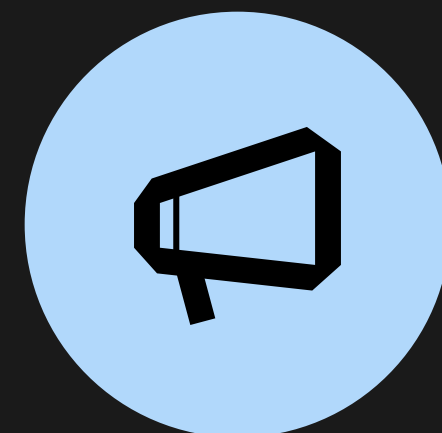
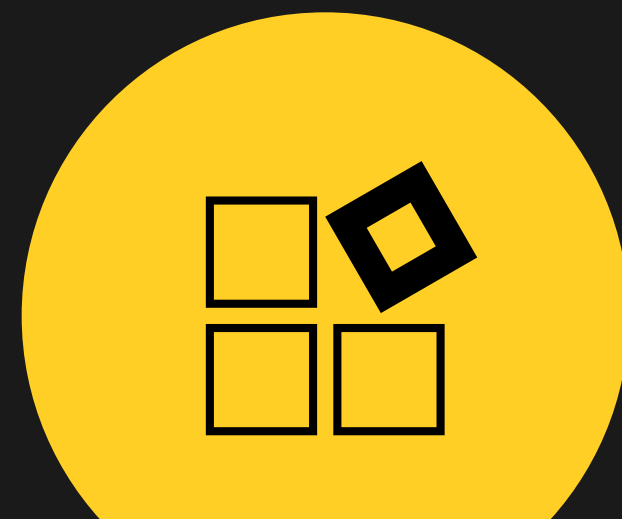
Rising compensation and the shift toward equity-heavy packages for technical talent

Total compensation, including equity, is steadily increasing for highly skilled technical talent in many parts of the world. Data from Carta shows that median equity grants for engineers as a share of company ownership have grown consistently from 2021 to 2025, with especially strong acceleration in emerging markets such as Brazil and India. This reflects a broader global shift toward equity-heavy compensation models.

The United States continues to lead in equity package size, followed by Canada and France. While Canada and France have seen notable growth in median equity awards, the Netherlands and the UK have trended downward over the same period.

Compensation for AI and ML engineers is rising even more sharply across all company valuation tiers. Salaries at the 90th percentile are growing faster than median pay, highlighting intensifying competition for highly specialized talent. Early-stage startups, in particular, are boosting salaries significantly to attract top AI talent despite smaller valuations.

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Introduction

(continued)

Recommended Focus Areas for HR Professionals

Consider country and employment type diversification to meet hiring goals: Consider Argentina, Mexico, and Brazil when recruiting contractors. These countries have robust contractor talent pools that continue to grow with 80-90% of workers paid through Deel being contractors. Markets like the U.S. and Germany continue to be dominated by FTEs, at around 80-90%. However, we did see slight upticks in contractor numbers in the Netherlands, Spain, the UK, and Canada. This is partly driven by talent clustering in non-traditional locations like these countries and Singapore which was accelerated by remote work capabilities and new visa types specifically created for remote and freelance work.

Consider gender pay gaps when making technical hires:

Analyze your organization's pay equity within tech and product departments first. Our data shows that gender pay gaps remain more pronounced in tech and product roles compared to sales positions, where some improvements have been observed. The most significant challenge continues to be the lack of female representation in leadership positions across product, tech, and sales industries, with some organizations now specifically targeting female candidates for leadership roles in these sectors.

Reevaluate total compensation beyond base pay:

As equity grants grow as a share of company ownership across markets, HR teams should move beyond traditional salary-focused strategies and design compensation packages that integrate short-term cash rewards with long-term equity incentives. Positioning equity as a central component - not a supplementary perk - can help attract top talent, align employee interests with company growth, and improve retention without overextending fixed payroll costs.

Localize equity offers to stay competitive globally:

The variation in equity grant levels across countries underscores the need for market-specific equity benchmarks. HR leaders should tailor equity components to local norms and expectations. For example, leveraging larger ownership stakes in emerging markets like Brazil and India, where equity is increasingly valued as part of total compensation.

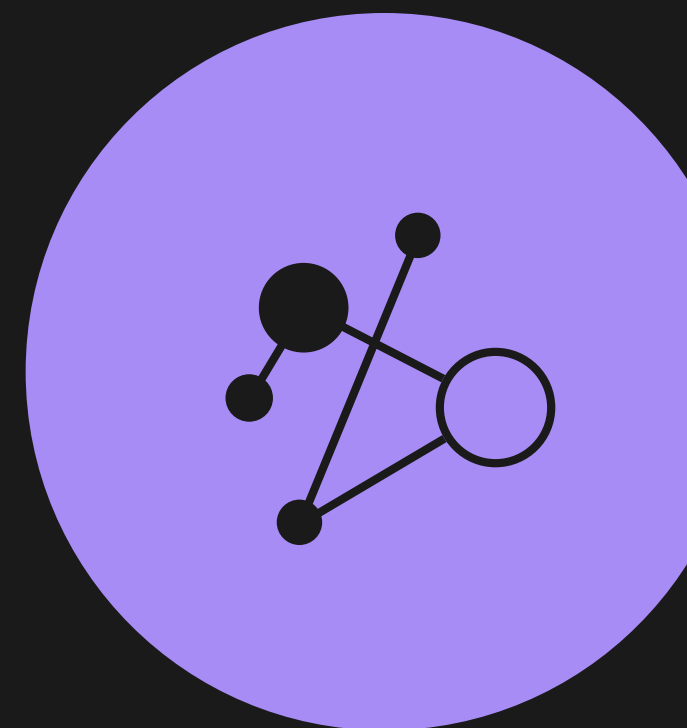
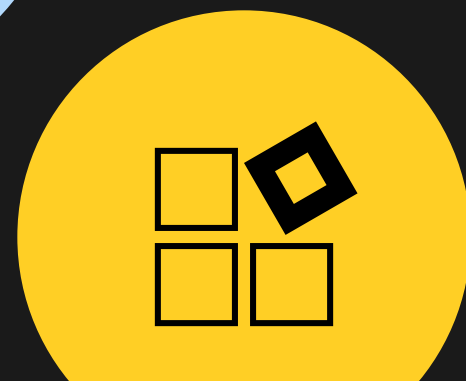
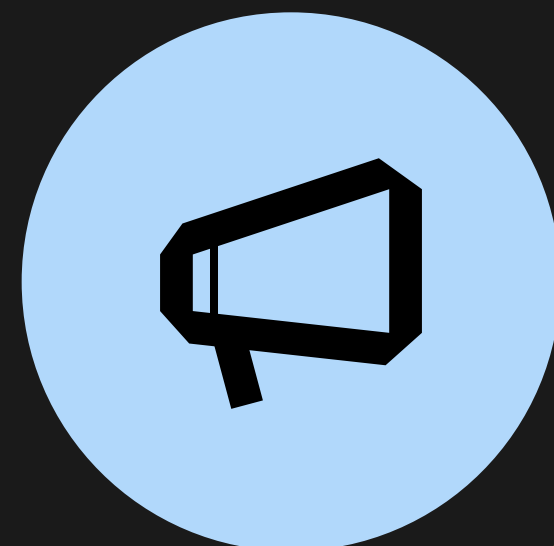
Adjust for rapid salary escalation in AI and ML roles:

The faster growth of top percentile salaries relative to median levels indicates rising competition for top talent. HR teams should consider proactive salary reviews and targeted retention strategies for high-performing engineers in specialized fields like AI and machine learning to avoid losing them to aggressive market offers.



Jessica Pillow

Global Head of Rewards, Deel



Methodology & Deep Dive Analysis Structure

Enhanced Coverage and Methodology

From 2024 to 2025, we have significantly expanded our coverage and refined our taxonomy for job title groups. This enhancement provides a much more comprehensive list of job title groups and, importantly, an increased sample size that enables us to report on countries and dimensions we were unable to cover in our previous report. All countries analyzed meet a minimum sample size requirement of 50 contracts from our data collection start date, ensuring statistical reliability across our findings. Deel's has over 1 million contracts and 35,000+ customers across more than 150 countries.

Equity data comes from thousands of Carta Total Compensation customers with over 900,000 current salary and equity data points used by CTC. Companies that have contractually requested that Carta not use their data in anonymized and aggregated studies are not included in this analysis. Equity values for initial packages are expressed as a percentage of fully diluted company shares, or in notional USD amount based on the company's most recent valuation. Only companies with a valuation of at least \$300 million USD were included in the global comparisons.

This expanded analysis represents our most comprehensive view of global compensation trends to date and serves as a practical guide for organizations navigating the complex landscape of international talent acquisition and retention.

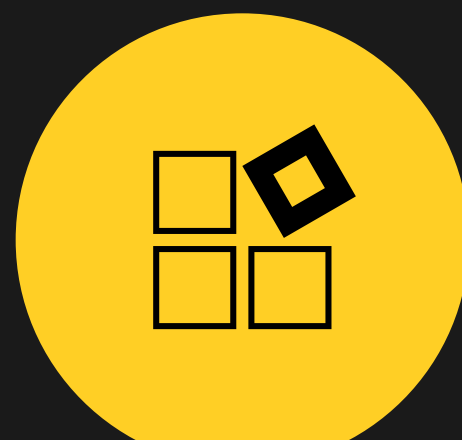
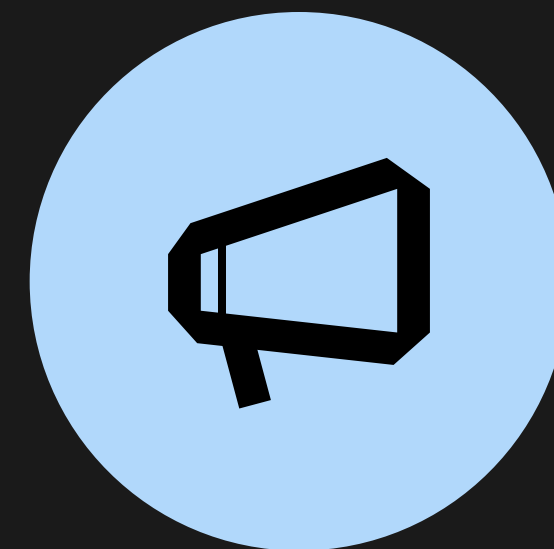
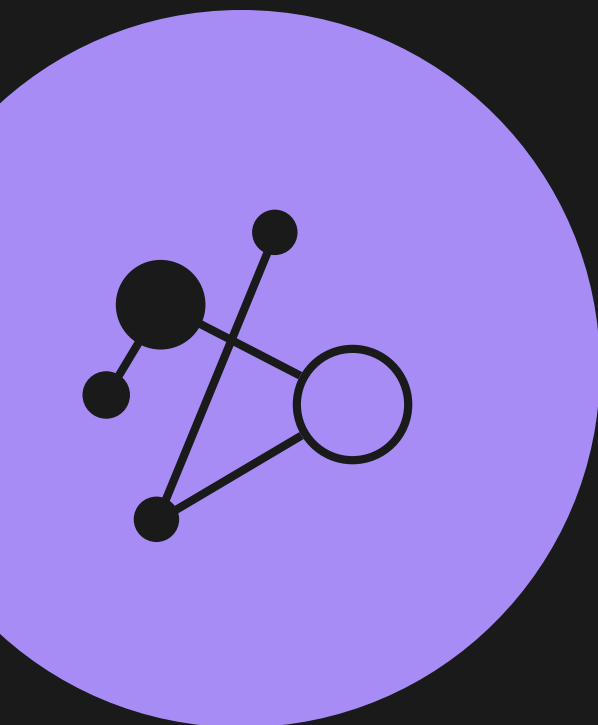
Deep Dive Analysis Structure

This year's report provides comprehensive analysis across three major sectors:

Engineering and Data Deep Dive: Covering advanced software development, AI solutions, cloud computing specialists, cybersecurity research, data management, and technical leadership roles across 15 countries (AR, AU, BR, CA, CO, DE, ES, FR, GB, IN, MX, NL, PL, US, SG). Research from Carta also shows the change in equity allocations (by percentage company ownership) over the last several years, as well as the rapid rise of total compensation for machine learning and AI engineers.

Product and Design Deep Dive: Analyzing creative design, user experience design, product management, and design leadership roles across 12 countries (AR, BR, CA, CO, DE, ES, GB, IN, MX, NL, PL, US).

Sales and Marketing Deep Dive: Examining B2B channel marketing, sales strategy, content management, brand management, and sales leadership positions across 14 countries (AR, AU, BR, CA, CO, DE, ES, FR, GB, IN, MX, NL, PL, US).

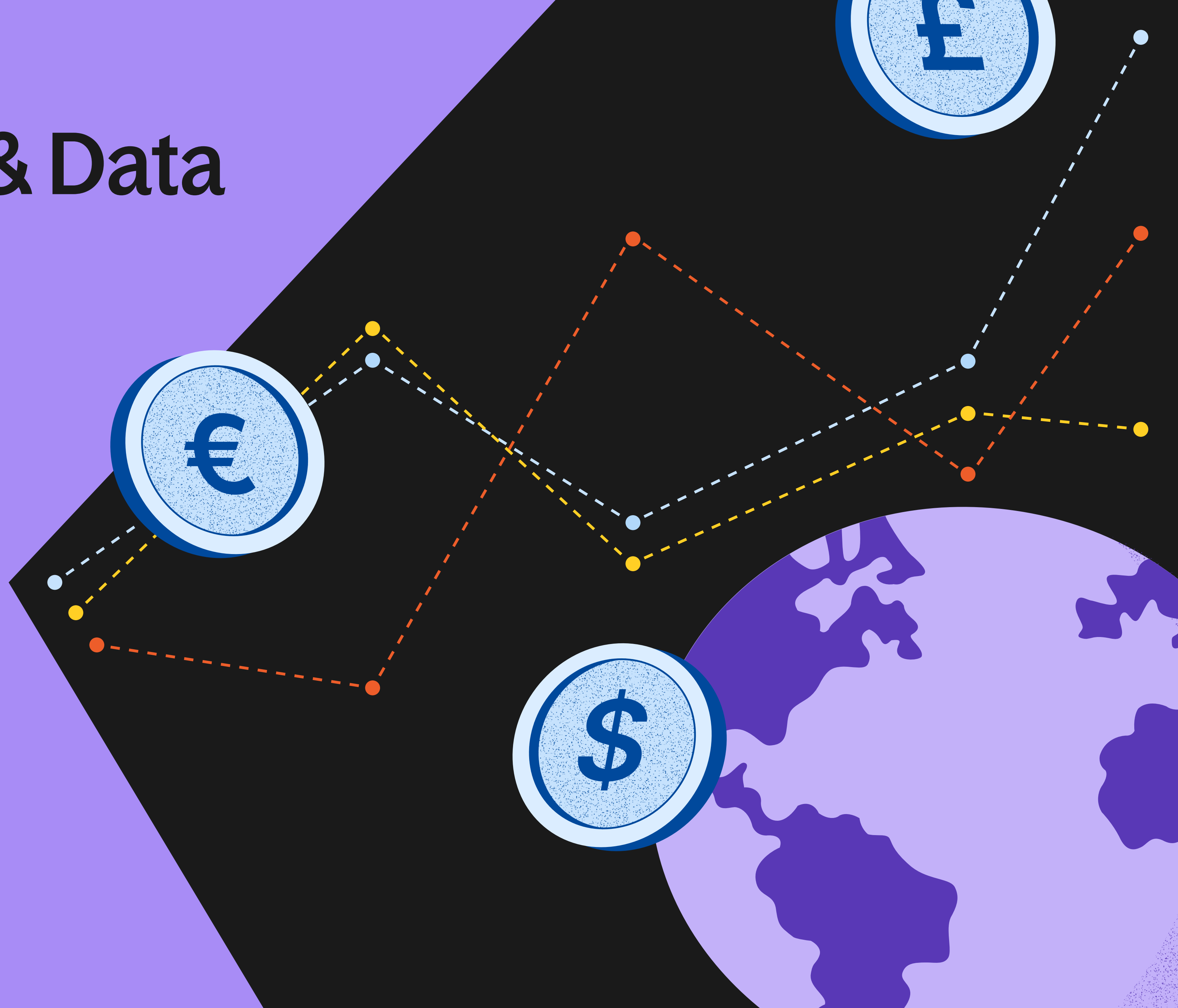


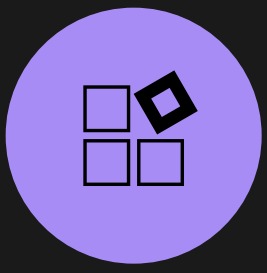
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DEEP DIVE



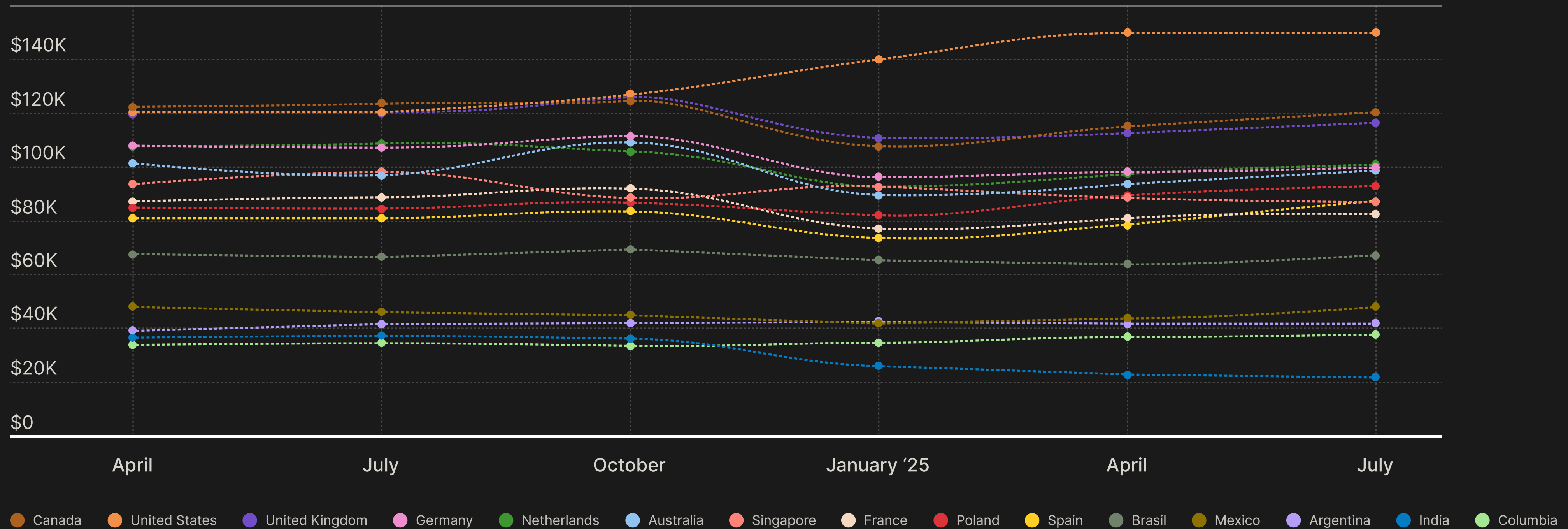
Engineering & Data

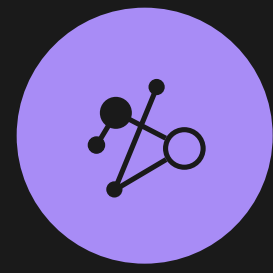




Compensation Picks up In the US and Dips in India

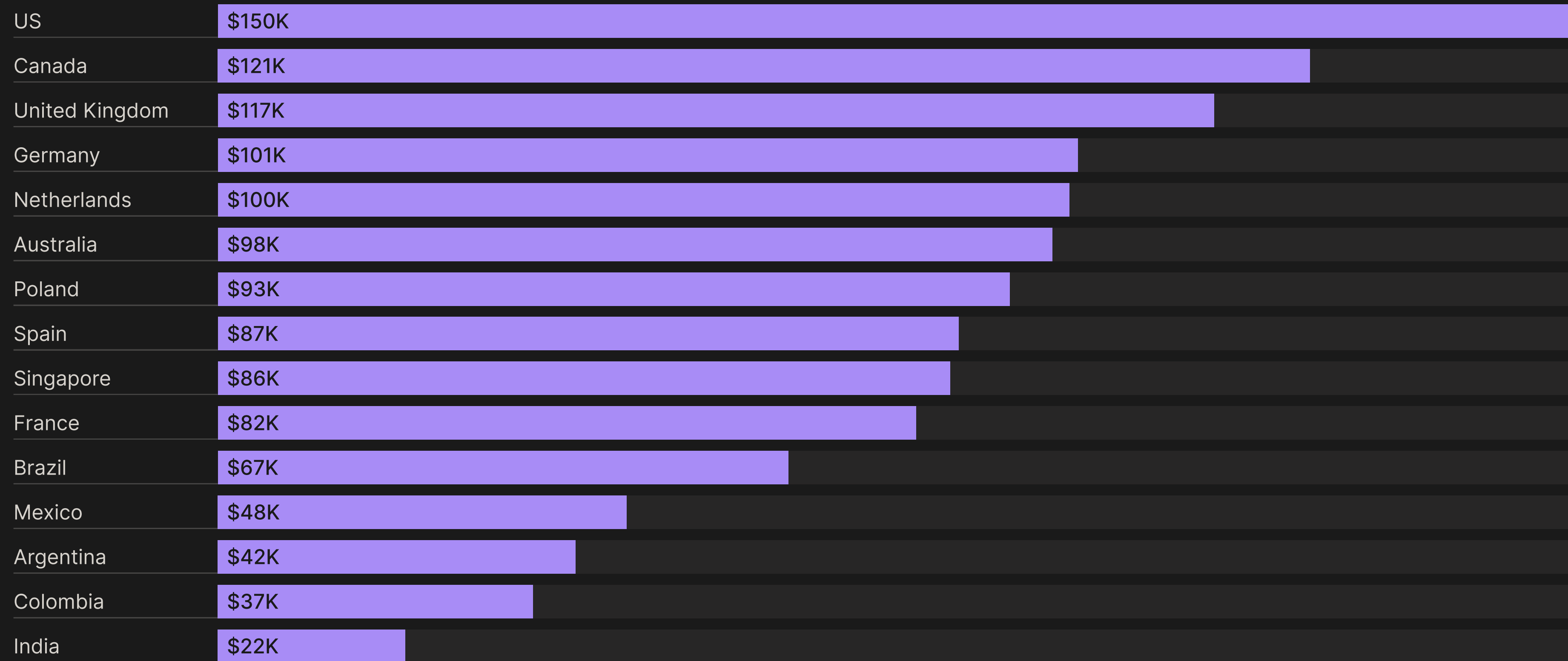
Median Compensation





US, Canada, and UK Continue to Lead in Median Compensation

Median Compensation per Country

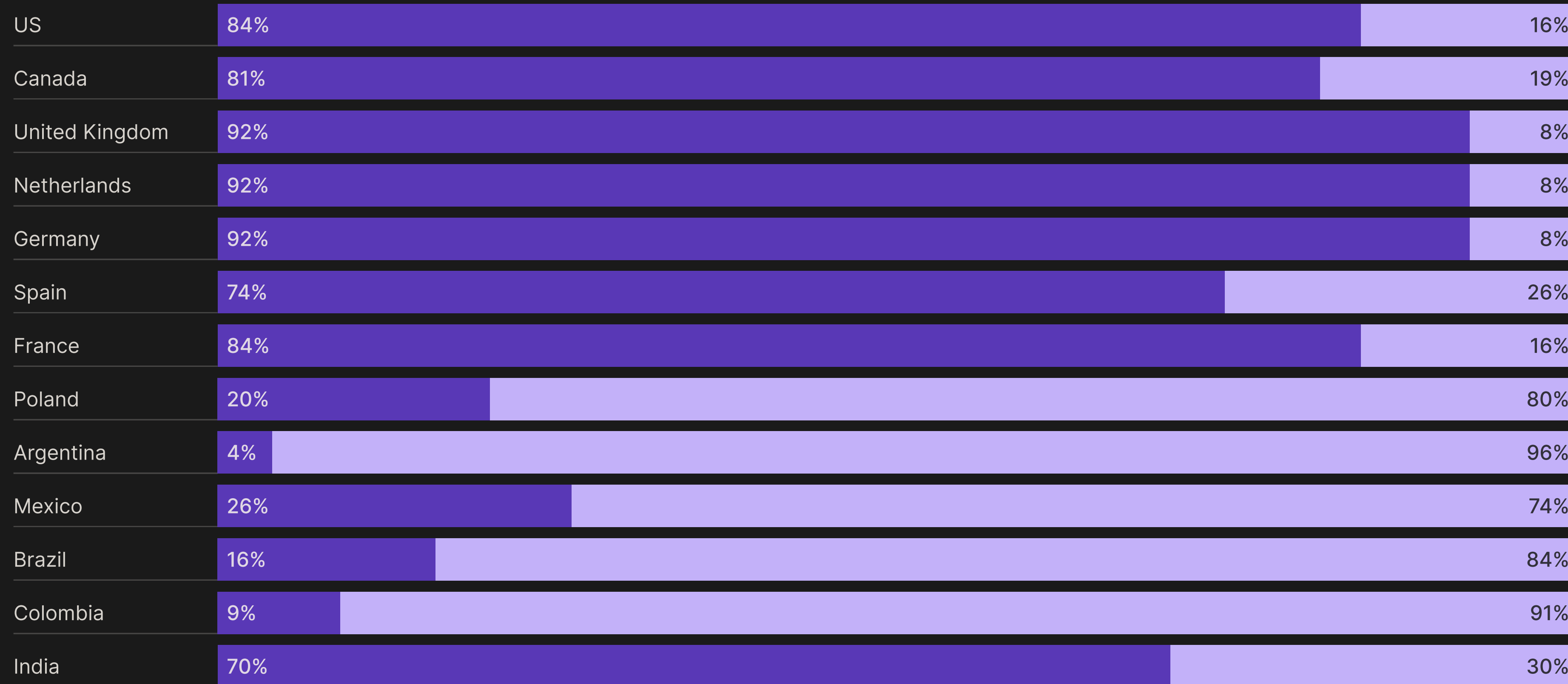


● Median compensation per country

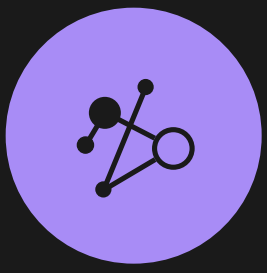


Countries with Highest Compensation Lead FTE Ratio

Split FTE vs IC

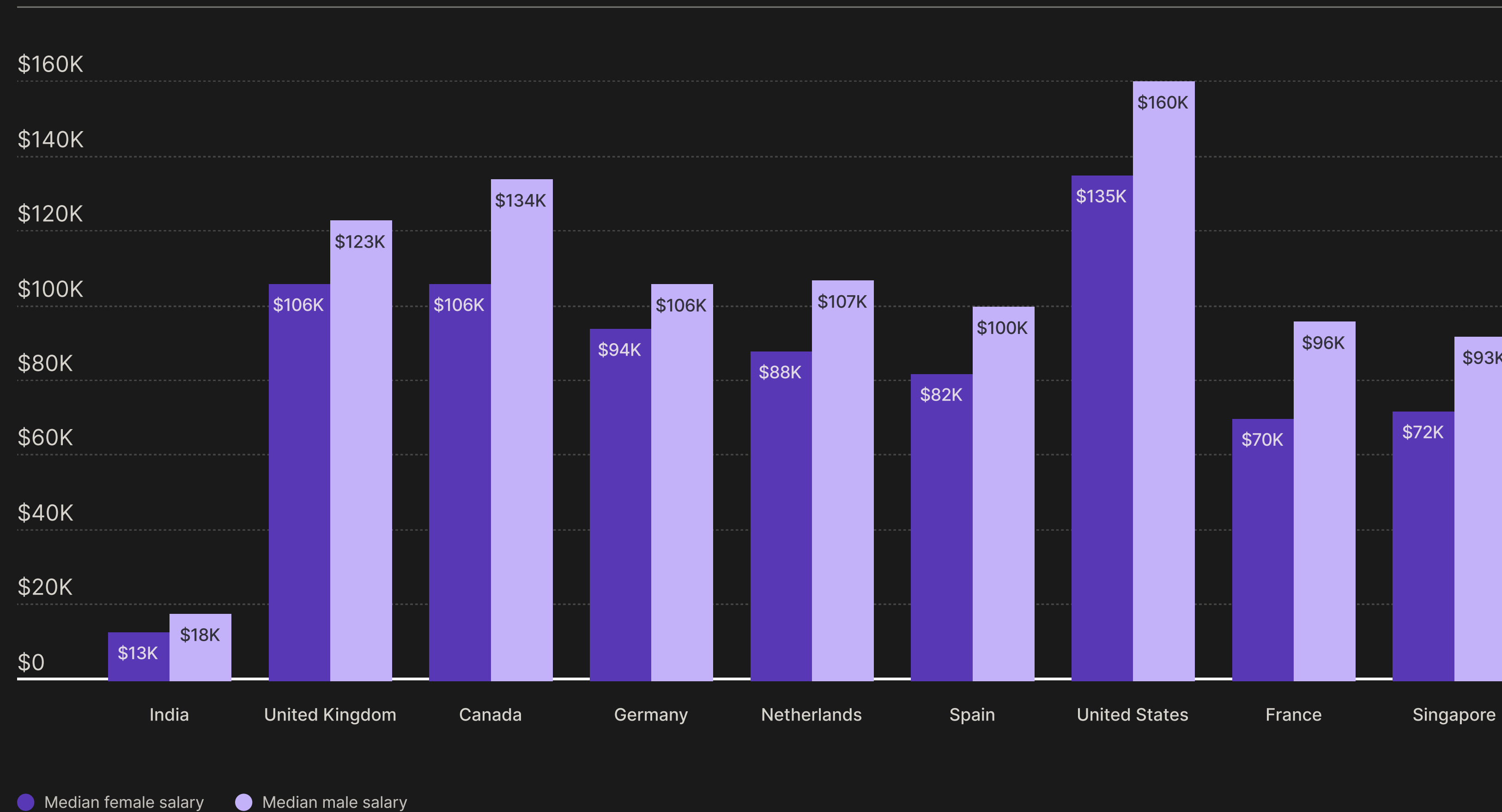


● Full-time equivalent - contract sample size ● Independent contractor - contract sample size

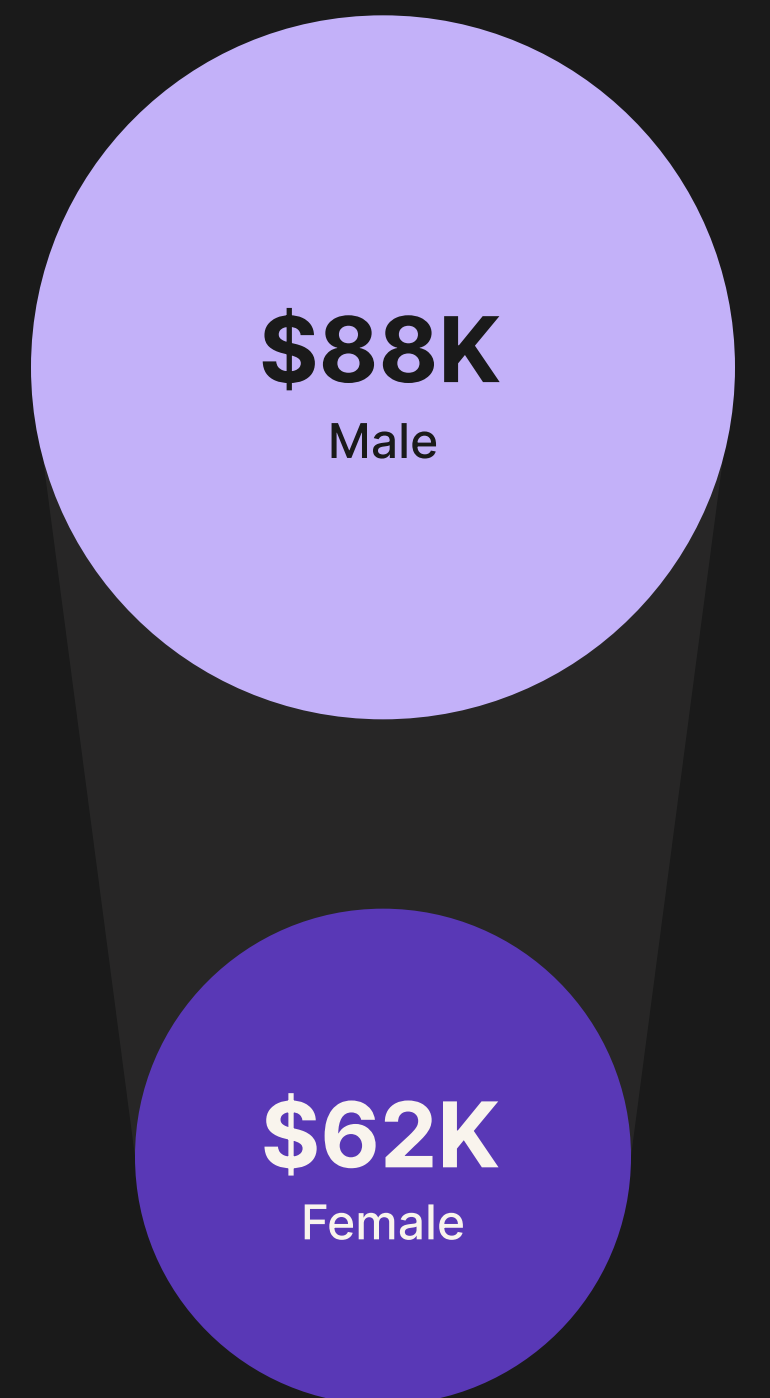


Gender Wage Gap Still Prevalent Across Tech Roles

Gender Salary Gap per Country



Overall Salary Gender Gap

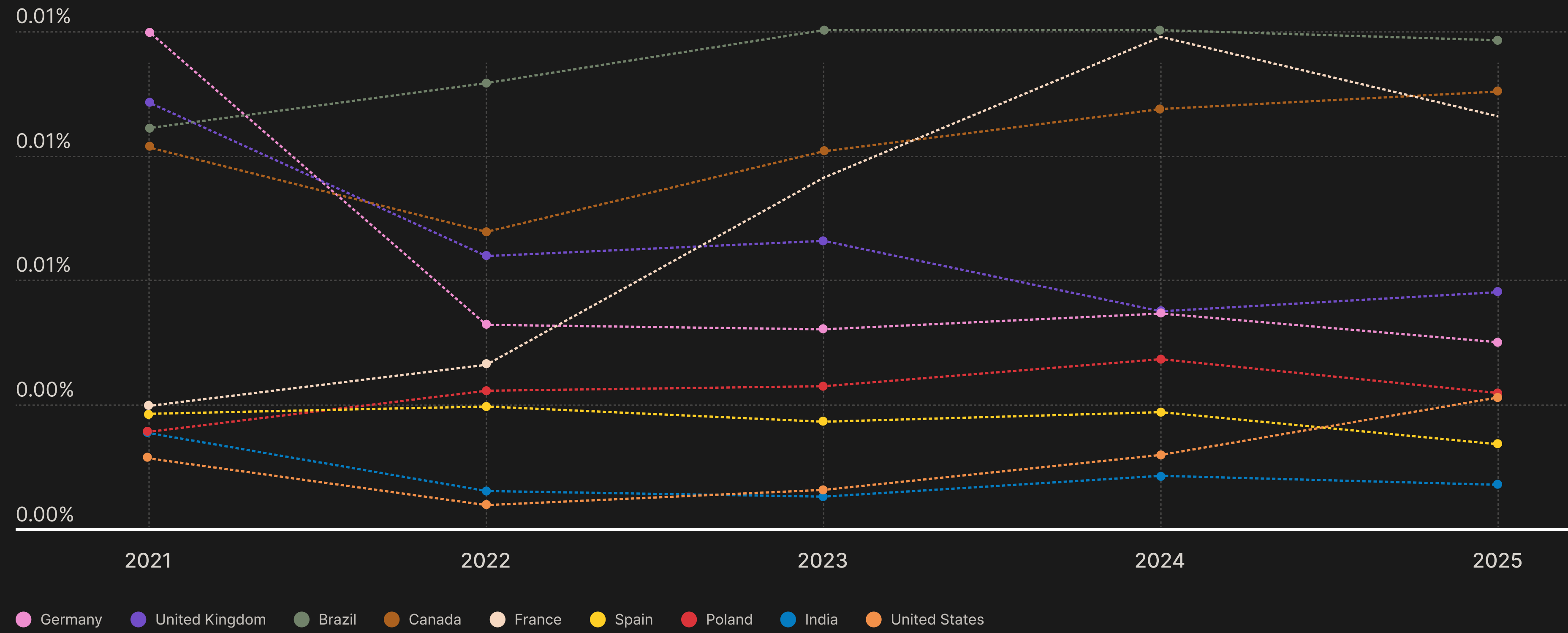




Equity as Part of Compensation Becomes Increasingly Popular in Countries Like Brazil & India

Equity Grant (% Company Ownership) by Country (2021–2025)

Data from Carta

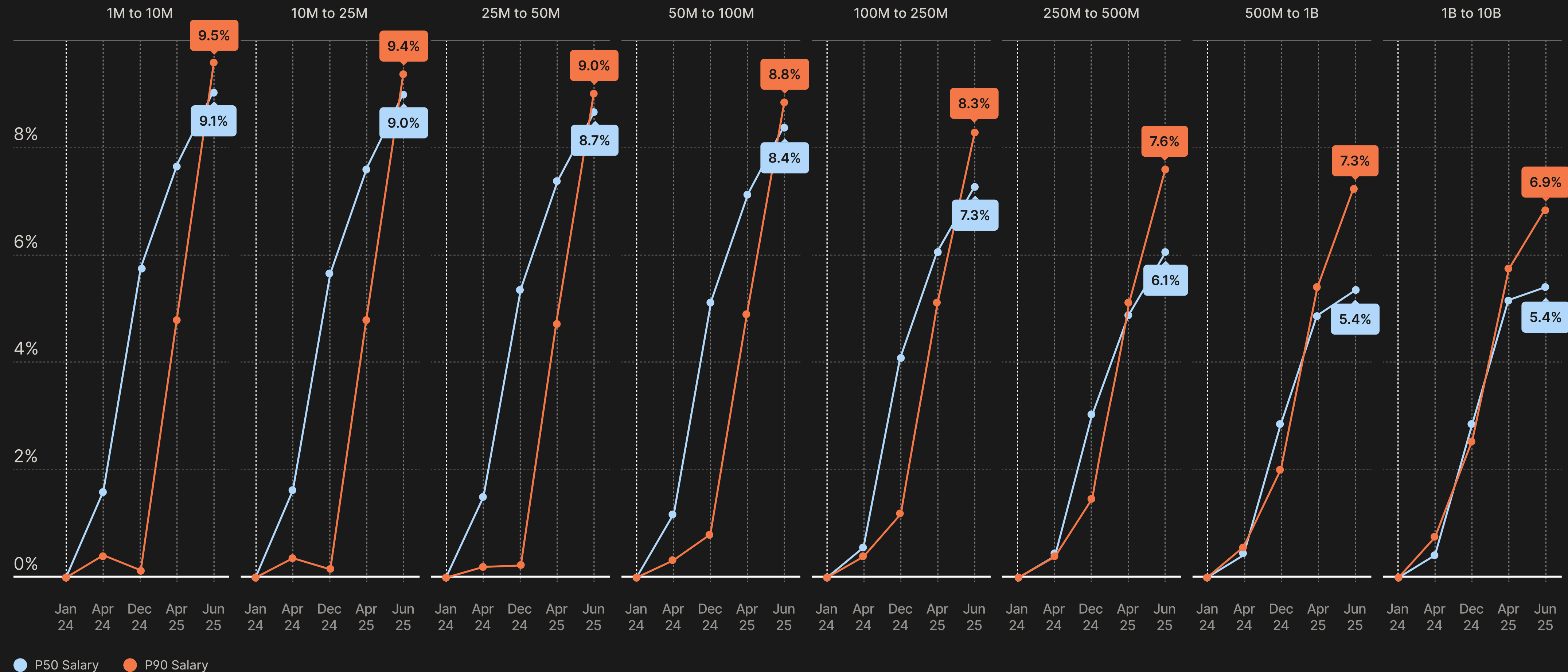




Total Compensation for Top-Tier ML & AI Engineers Rapidly Growing Globally

AI/ML Engineer Total Compensation Growth by Valuation Tier

Data from Carta

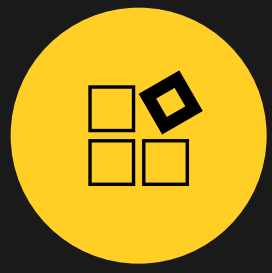


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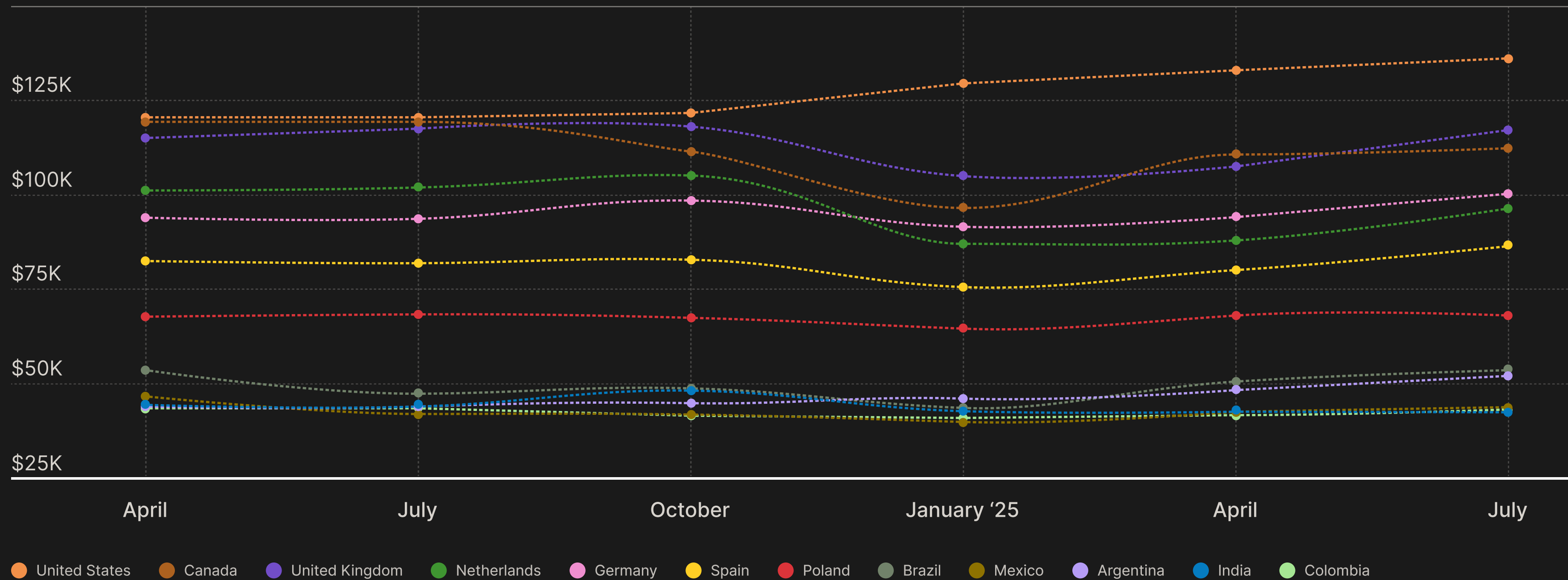
Product & Design

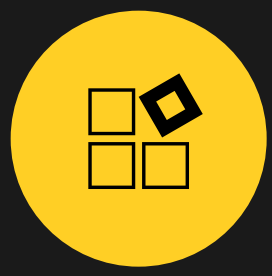




Compensation Sees Steady Uptick in the US

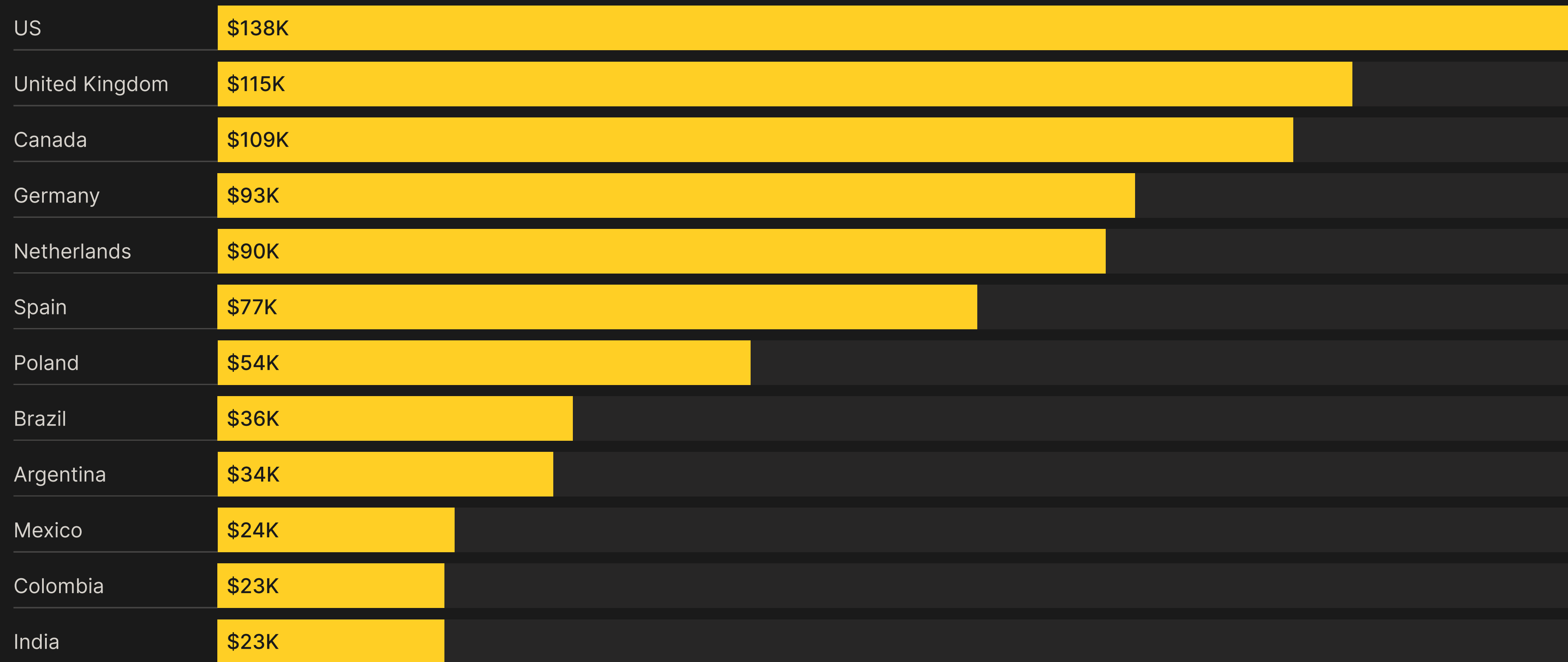
Median Compensation Over Time



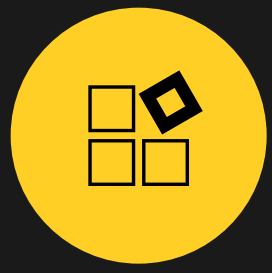


US, Canada, and UK Continue to Lead in Median Compensation

Median Compensation per Country

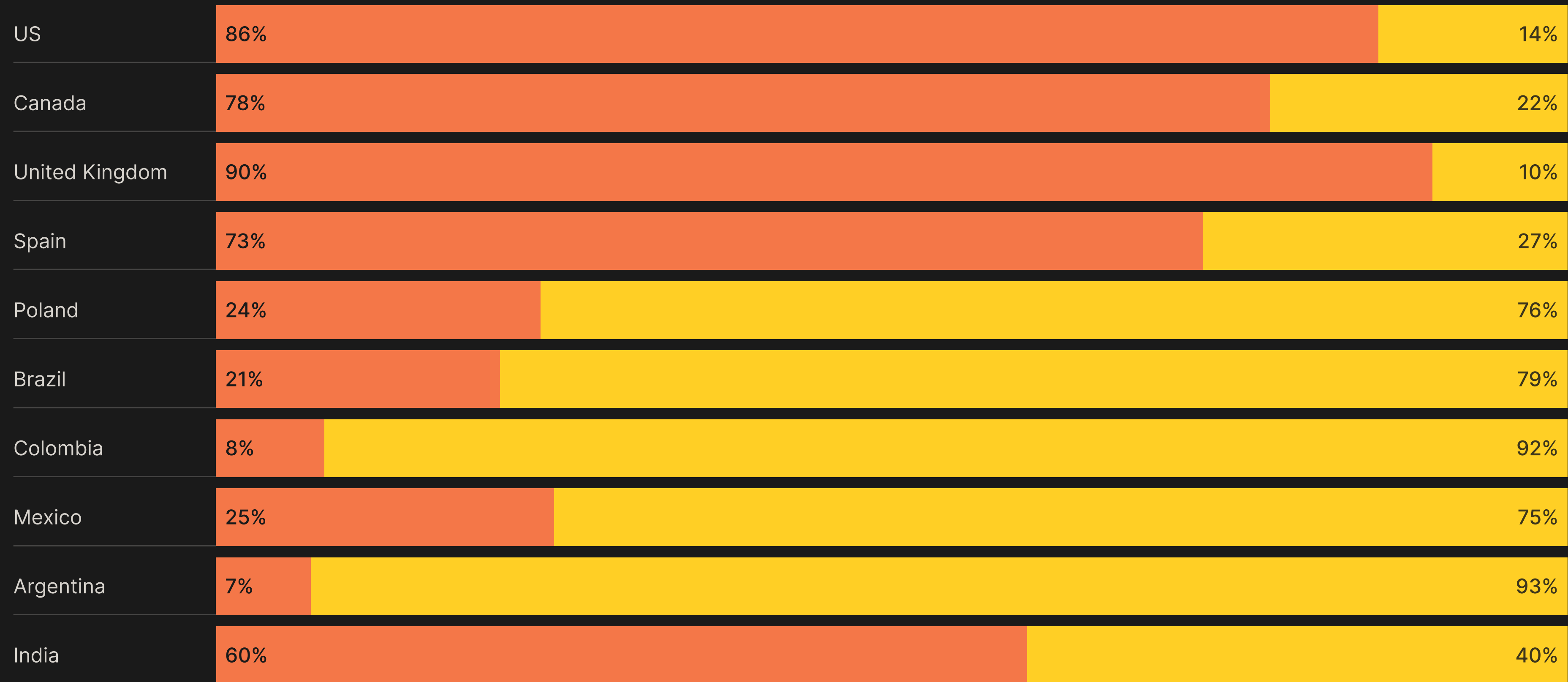


● Median compensation per country



Argentina Sees Rise in FTE Since Last Year

Split FTE vs IC

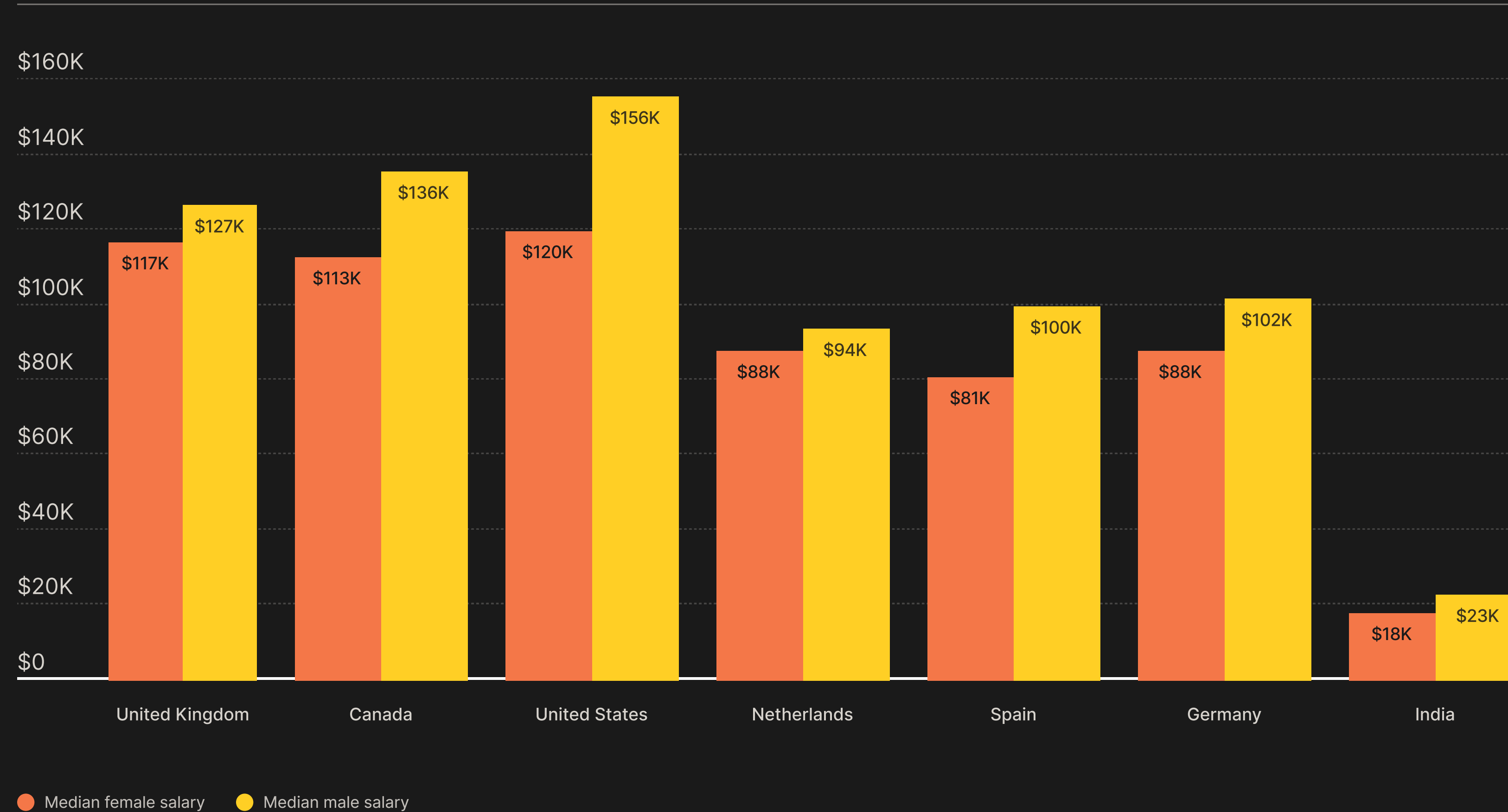


● Full-time equivalent - contract sample size ● Independent contractor - contract sample size



US Gender Wage Gap Widens

Gender Salary Gap per Country



Overall Salary Gender Gap



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Sales & Marketing

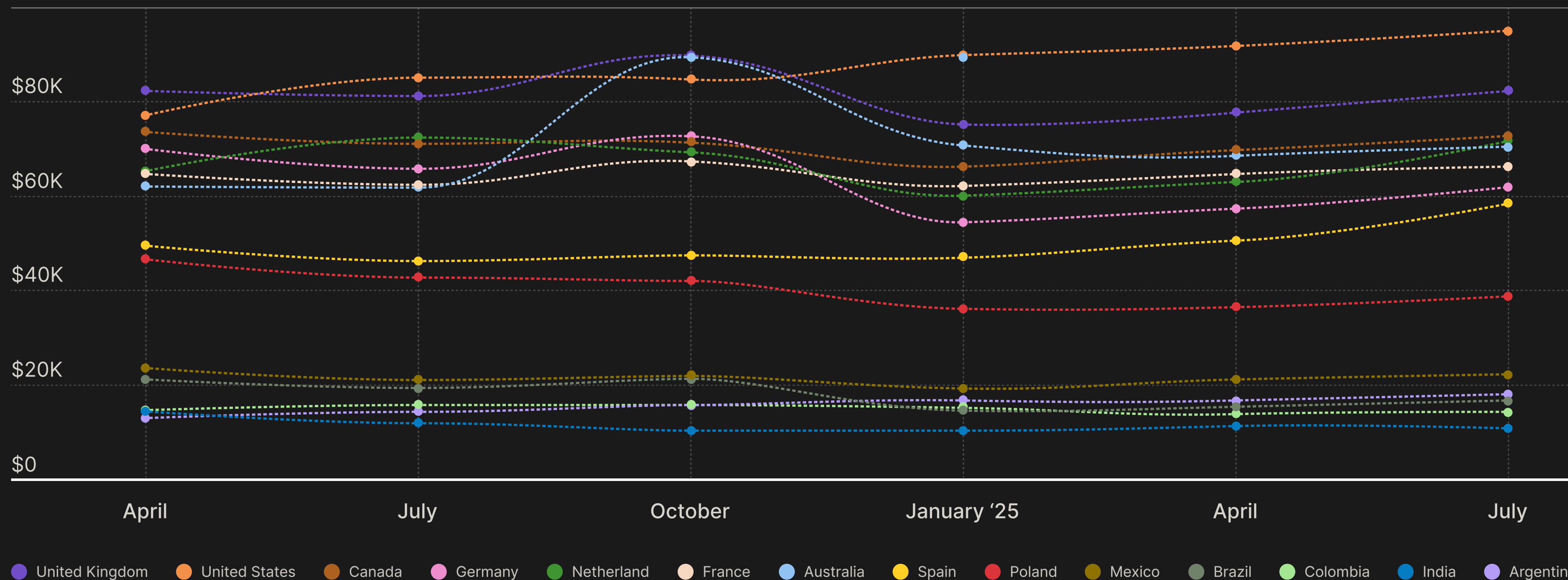


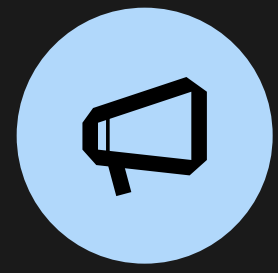
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United Kingdom, Australia See Salaries Rise in Q3 of 2024

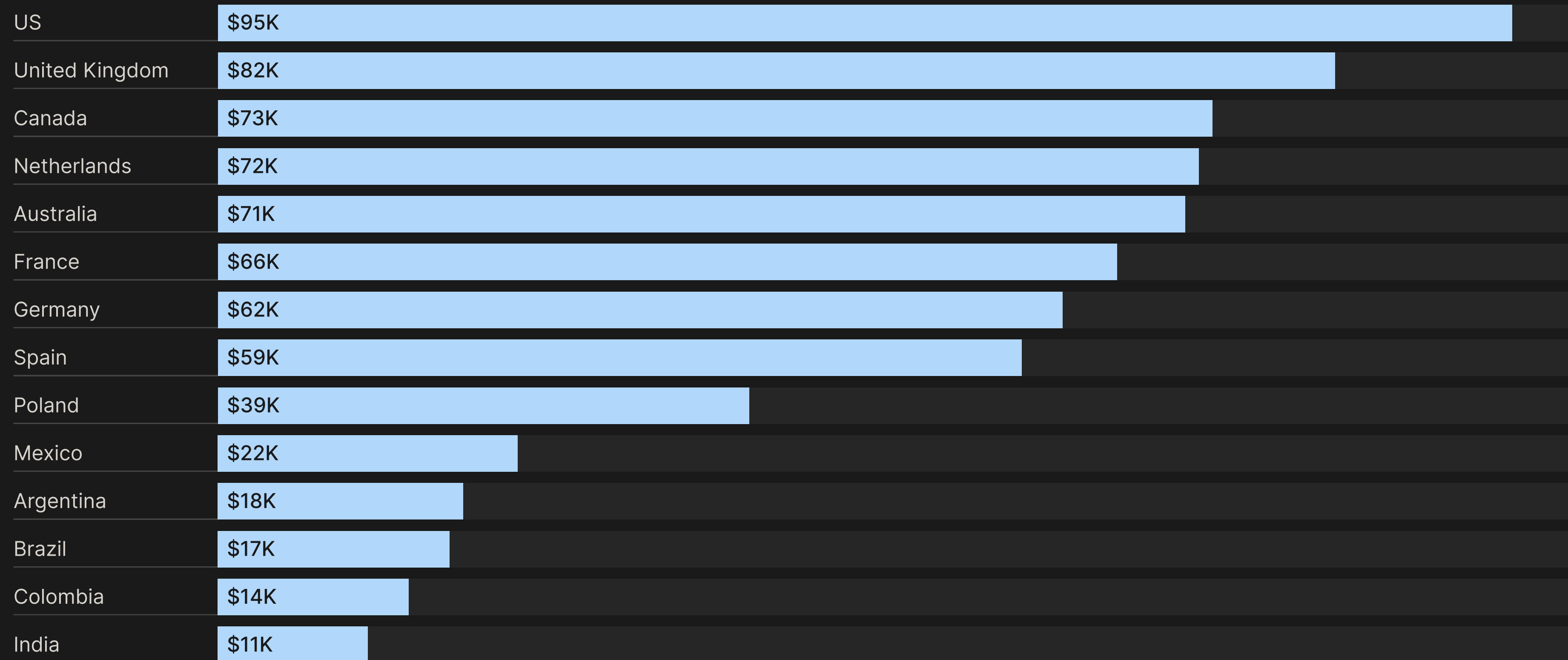
Median Compensation Over Time





US, Canada, and UK Continue to Lead in Median Compensation

Median Compensation per Country

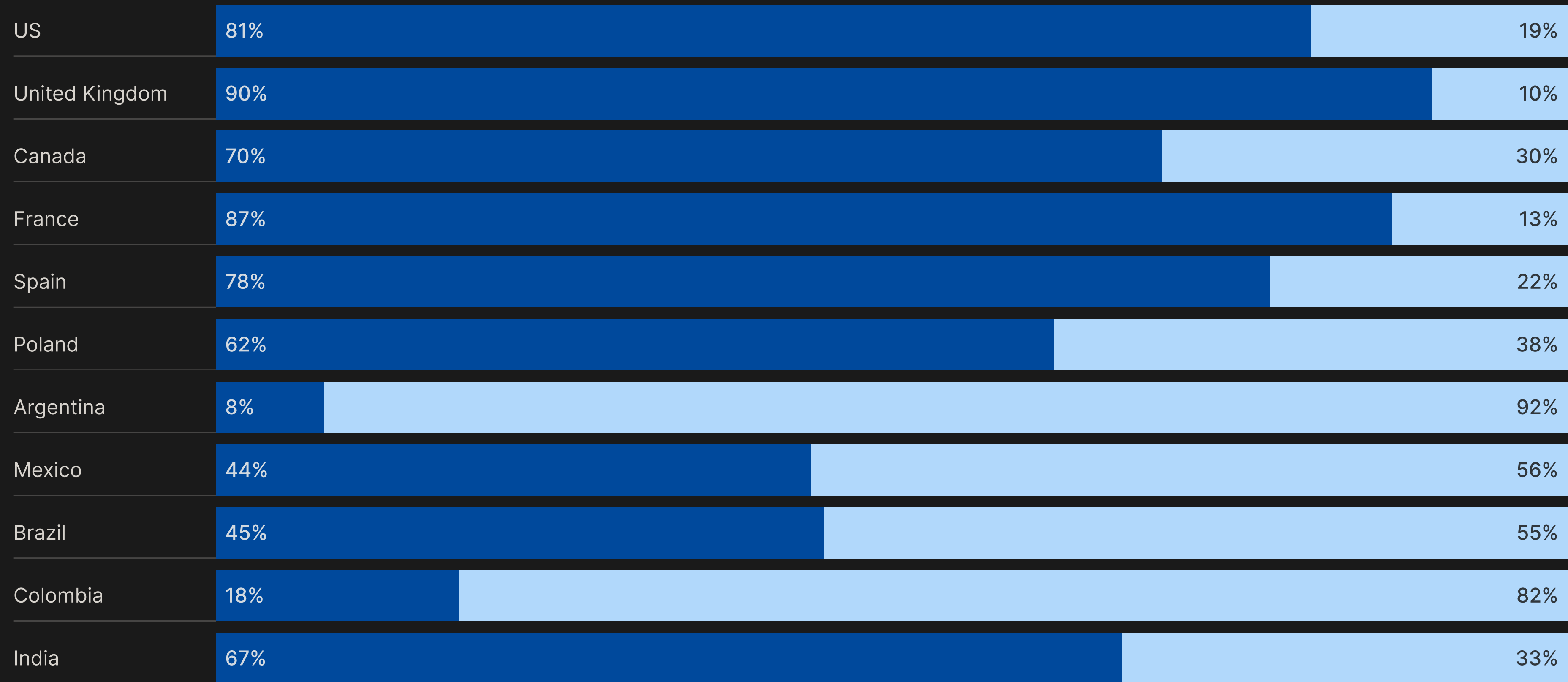


● Median compensation per country

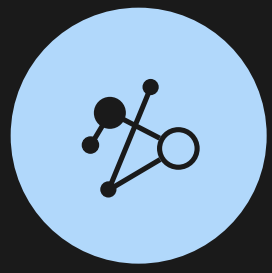


Similar to Product Roles, Argentina's FTE Growth Dominates

Split FTE vs IC

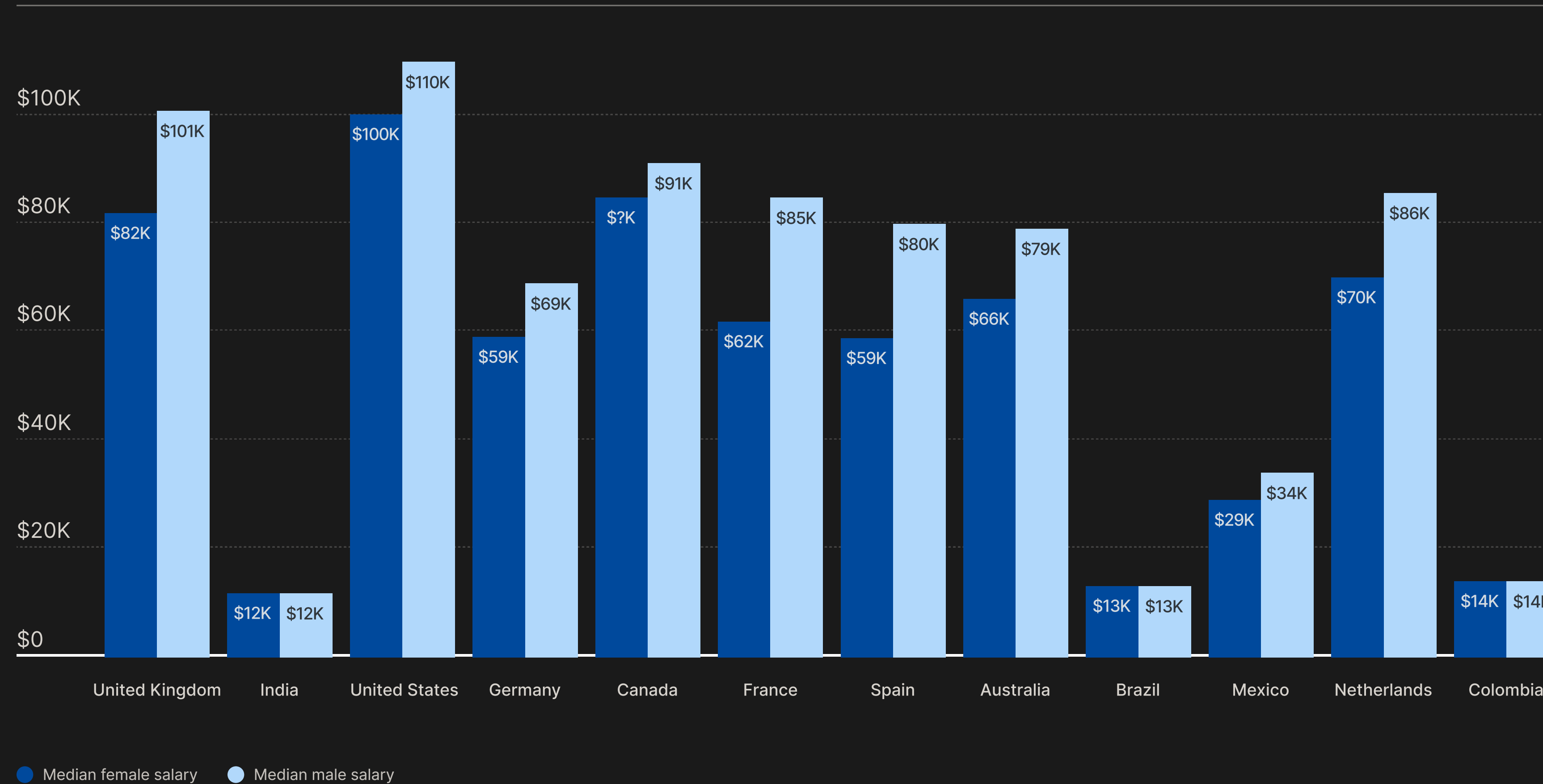


● Full-time equivalent - contract sample size ● Independent contractor - contract sample size



Brazil and Colombia Close Gender Gap

Gender Salary Gap per Country



Overall Salary Gender Gap

