



Global guide to hiring talent in
Colombia



Colombia is a leading nearshoring destination and talent hub.

Over the past decade, the country has transformed from a regional economy into a gateway for global companies looking for technology developers and engineers, sales and business development professionals, customer success and customer support talent in the Americas.

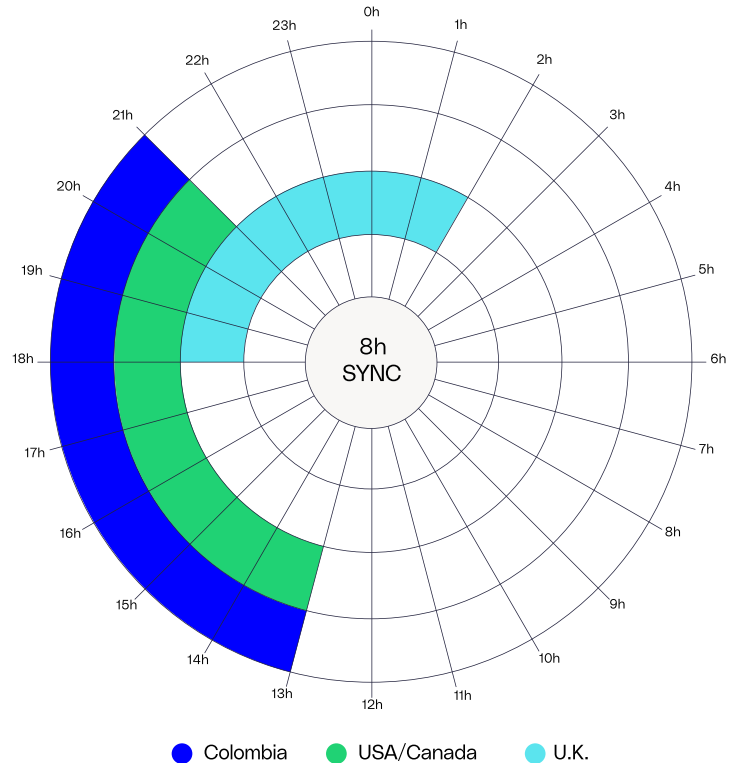
You already have a foothold in one market. But as many growing companies find out, relying on a single market means one regulatory change can bring your entire operation to a standstill. By expanding into another country, you create a safety net for your operations. Our guide will show you why Colombia is the perfect destination to build your next global team.

Test the Colombian market – without long-term commitments. Use [G-P Contractor™](#) to hire and pay local project-based talent in minutes. Expand your global presence without compliance risks or administrative overhead.

Time zone compatibility

Colombia has one of the region's largest economies, with a population of 52.3 million and a GDP of USD 363.5B. Beyond the numbers, one of its key strengths is its time zone compatibility with North America and Western Europe.

- **U.S. alignment:** Colombia operates on UTC-5 (COT) year-round. This aligns perfectly with the U.S. East Coast, allowing for a full eight-hour workday of simultaneous collaboration.
- **Canada:** Colombia shares the same time zone as Toronto and Montreal (November–March), with only a one-hour difference during daylight savings.
- **The U.K.:** Colombia is 5–6 hours behind the U.K., allowing for daily synchronization during Colombia mornings and U.K. afternoons.










High-quality work at an efficient cost

Hiring in Colombia offers cost benefits compared to North American and Western European markets. Colombian salaries are cost-effective for global budgets, even when factoring in mandatory benefits.



Cost of hiring comparisons

 Colombia	 U.K.	 U.S.A.
<p>Employer burden rate</p> <div data-bbox="196 520 519 577">  45.5% </div> <p>IVA/Indirect taxes</p> <div data-bbox="196 688 519 745">  19% (IVA) </div>	<p>Employer burden rate</p> <div data-bbox="651 520 974 577">  23.5% </div>	<p>Employer burden rate</p> <div data-bbox="1099 520 1422 577">  13-22% </div>
<p>Mandatory benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13th month (Prima) • Cesantías (severance savings fund) • Healthcare • Pension.* 	<p>Mandatory benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National insurance • Workplace pension 	<p>Mandatory benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FICA (Soc Sec/Medicare) • FUTA/SUTA

*Only applicable to employees earning an ordinary salary. Employees paid an integral salary aren't entitled to these benefits.

The employer burden in Colombia is also offset by:

- **Favorable exchange rates:** The strength of the USD/EUR against the COP creates significant purchasing power.
- **A-Level talent at competitive rates:** Salary ranges remain favorable compared to other tech and service hubs. This allows access to top-tier talent at a lower total cost.

Wage standards in emerging tech hubs change fast. **Use G-P Gia™, our AI-powered global HR agent, to stay ahead of the curve.**

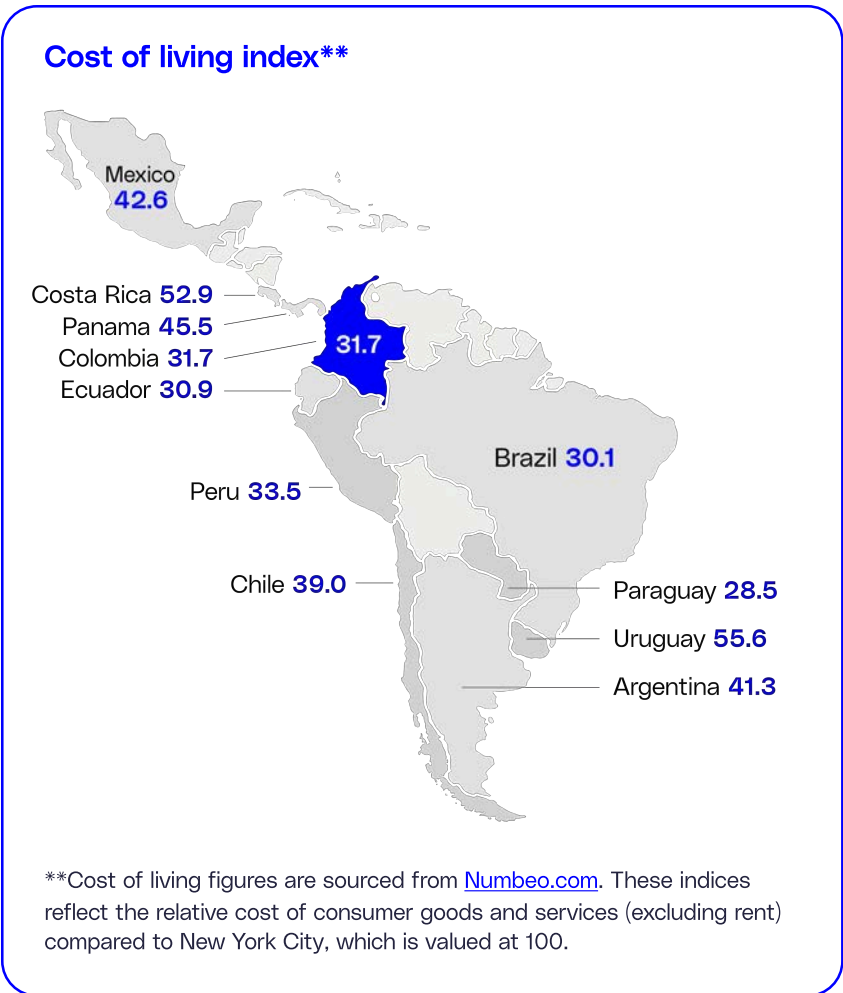
Gia gives you real-time insights into hiring trends and compensation standards to hire confidently across Colombia's top cities.

The regional context

While Colombia's employer burden rate is higher than the U.S, the country remains competitive within Latin America, especially when viewed alongside the cost of living index.

Country	Employer burden (%)*
Argentina	37.9%
Brazil	55.8%
Chile	10.35%
Colombia	45.5%
Costa Rica	32.67%
Ecuador	26.3%
Mexico	26.99%
Panama	25.7%
Paraguay	20.5%
Peru	13.3%
Uruguay	28.3%

*Employer burden rate figures are from internal G-P data.



Choosing the right hiring location depends on the industry, local regulations, and your talent needs. Ask Gia to help you compare the hiring landscape in Colombia versus [your local market]. Our AI-powered HR agent gives you expert-backed insights to guide your strategy, helping you identify which hub aligns with your business goals.



Colombia's talent ecosystem

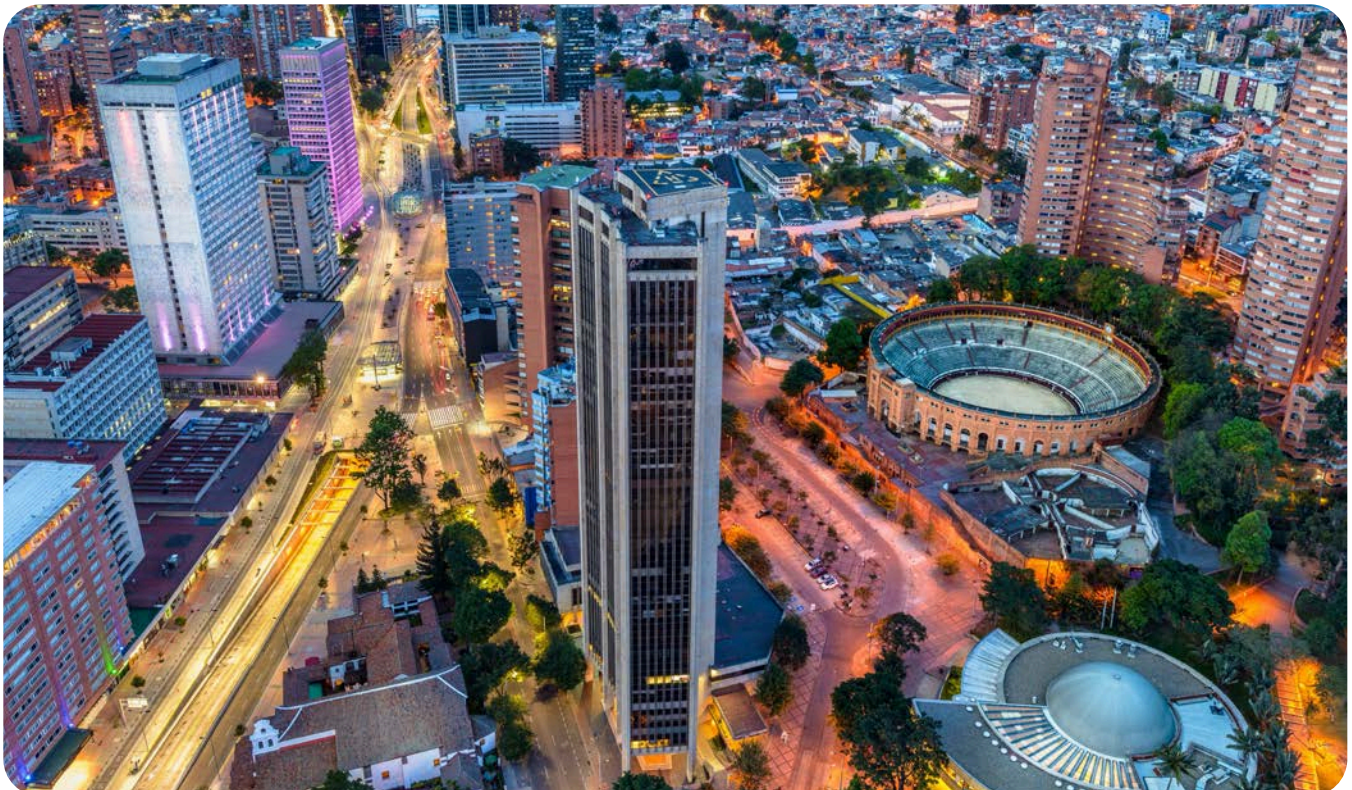
Colombia has a diverse talent ecosystem across four main cities.

Bogotá

Bogotá sits in central Colombia – 11.9 million people live in the city and its metro area. This accounts for 20% of the country's total population.

Key industries:




-  **Technology:** Bogotá is the center of Colombia's tech industry. It's the leading city for foreign investment and hosts regional offices for giants like Microsoft, IBM, and Oracle.
-  **Customer success and support:** [Bogotá has the highest concentration of bilingual professionals.](#) The talent pool is experienced with Fortune 500 companies like Mastercard, HubSpot, and Amazon based in the city.
-  **Sales and business development:** Bogotá is the main hub for enterprise sales and SaaS business development. The city has plenty of account executives, sales directors, and B2B software sales talent.



Medellín

Medellín is Colombia's second largest city. It's located in the northwest of the country – 4.2 million people live there.

Key industries:




-  **Technology:** Medellín is a center for innovation. For example, it's strong in software development and is a popular base for U.S. nearshoring, supported by initiatives like [Ruta N.](#)
-  **Customer success and support:** Medellín has become [the preferred landing spot for North American startups](#) in Colombia. Professionals in the city are known for skills in technical support and SaaS onboarding.
-  **Sales and business development:** Medellín's workforce is famous for its Paisa culture. This is a cultural trait defined by persuasion, charisma, and a “get it done” attitude. This makes the city a great location for sales teams. The city is known for sales development representatives (SDRs), outbound sales, and growth marketing.



Barranquilla

Barranquilla is a coastal city located in the northern Caribbean region of Colombia. The city has 2.4 million residents.

Key industries:

-  **Tech:** Barranquilla is an emerging coastal cluster thanks to new infrastructure investments and a supply of specialized professionals in data and logistics. This region offers lower cost bases than the country's capital.
-  **Customer success and support:** Barranquilla has built a reputation as a specialized BPO (business process outsourcing) hub. It's known for high-volume customer support, sales, and logistics/supply chain support. The city is [investing heavily in bilingualism programs](#).
-  **Sales and business development:** Barranquilla offers a more cost-effective entry point for scaling high-volume sales teams compared to Bogotá. The city is known for inside sales, telesales, and multilingual sales support in English and Portuguese.



Cali

Cali is located in southwestern Colombia. It's the only major Colombian city with quick access to the Pacific coast, making it a key economic location for global trade. Around 3.4 million people live in the city.

Key industries:

-  **Tech:** Cali is Colombia's third-largest tech hub. The city focuses on fintech and digital media. It has strong university programs feeding a growing regional demand for tech talent.
-  **Customer success and support:** Cali is great for companies looking for high-quality service at a lower entry cost. It's known for consumer services, content moderation, and general customer engagement.
-  **Sales and business development:** Cali is strong in consumer goods (CPG) and agribusiness sales. Talent here has deep networks across the Pacific alliance countries such as Peru, Chile, and Mexico.



Key roles and skills

Colombia is a recognized hub for global technology. With companies like AWS and Google already operating in the country, the workforce is highly skilled and experienced in meeting global standards. This makes it much easier to find professionals who can jump right into your multinational team.

Technology:

- **Software engineers in Colombia are uniquely skilled** thanks to their experience building solutions that power [the country's huge fintech industry](#). They've spent years developing digital banking apps and building the secure, large-scale systems used by global leaders like [Rappi](#) and major global banks.
- **AI and machine-learning specialists:** AI is a national focus. The country [invested USD 115M to become a regional leader](#). As a major fintech center, Colombia's AI experts are skilled in developing tools for digital banking, such as instant credit scoring and fraud detection, helping millions transition to online financial services.
- **Cybersecurity experts:** As the [third most targeted country for cyberattacks](#) in Latin America, Colombia's professionals have front-line experience defending against ransomware and phishing. They're skilled at maintaining compliance with the region's data protection laws. Recent [government investment in national cyber-defense](#) is creating a new generation of specialists trained in the latest global security protocols.
- **Cloud architects and DevOps engineers:** With the recent launch of [AWS local zones](#) and Microsoft's USD 500M infrastructure investment, Colombia has moved from a consumer of tech to a regional producer. These investments have turned the country into an elite training ground where over 100,000 professionals are being certified in global cloud and DevOps standards.



☑ Customer success and support:

- **High-touch customer success managers:** Colombia [leads Latin America in specialized front office and customer experience \(CX\) confidence](#). Local customer success managers (CSMs) can easily align with U.S. and U.K. business cultures. Due to intense regional competition, these professionals are experts in churn analysis, skillfully retaining at-risk accounts.
- **Technical support engineers (tier 2 & 3):** After being recognized as a [specialized tech zone](#), Medellín now receives funding for technology-based companies to enhance science, technology, and innovation activities. This has poured millions of dollars into training the exact technical support talent you're looking for.
- **Implementation and onboarding specialists:** The massive growth of SaaS in Colombia has created specialists focused on the “day one” client experience. These professionals, often PMP-trained, grew up with the tech boom in Bogotá and understand that a poor first 90 days means a lost client.
- **Bilingual support leads (team leads/QA):** Barranquilla and Cali are regional hubs for mid-level management. These excel at managing hybrid teams and maintaining a consistent U.S. or U.K. brand voice across large teams. They're metric-driven (CSAT, NPS) and use modern tools to ensure optimal staffing for your support desk.



📊 Sales and business development:

- **SDRs and BDRs:** Colombian SDRs are highly qualified, with experience at U.S. tech companies and B2B firms. They understand North American business culture and advanced sales models. The success of Colombian tech companies like Rappi and [Addi](#) has given Colombia-based sales professionals excellent experience.
- **Account executives:** Bogotá and Medellín are [hubs for successful Latin America unicorn startups](#), creating a pool of highly skilled account executives (AEs).
- **Business development managers:** Colombia has moved beyond bilingualism. Thanks to a national push for multilingual proficiency, it's now the main hub for companies targeting all of Latin America. Colombia is one of the few places in the world where you can find a high density of professionals who can jump between English (for your headquarters), Spanish (for the local market), and Portuguese (for Brazil customers). By hiring trilingual business development managers in Colombia, you can manage your entire South American strategy from a single location.

Compliance assured with G-P

With G-P, hiring in Colombia is as simple as hiring locally. We manage the entire employment lifecycle, so you can focus on building your team.

Contracts and probation

We make sure your contracts are compliant from day one. Colombia's employment law states that contracts have to:

- Be in writing
- Ideally be in Spanish
- Include salary, working hours, duties, and duration

Contract types include [indefinite-term and fixed-term](#). The probation period has to be in writing and is capped at two months for indefinite contracts, or one-fifth of a fixed-term contract. During probation, either party can terminate the contract without notice or severance pay.

Working hours, overtime, and holidays

We stay on top of mandatory compensation requirements:

- Workweek: Maximum 44 hours, gradually [reducing to 42 hours per week by July 15, 2026](#).
- Overtime: Overtime ranges from 25–150% and varies depending on the shift (day or night) and whether it's a business day or holiday. Surcharge payments are applicable from 35–110%.
- Holidays: Colombia employees get 18 paid national holidays per year.



Mandatory benefits

We take care of benefits and give you specialized payroll management.

Benefit	Requirement
Annual leave	15 working days of paid leave after one year of service
13th month salary (Prima)	Bonus equal to one month's salary , paid in two installments (June 30 and December 20) Note: This bonus isn't applicable to employees classified under the Integral Salary scheme – a special compensation scheme designed for high-wage earners.
Maternity and paternity leave	18 weeks for maternity and two weeks for paternity (fully paid by social security)

Managing Cesantías and 13th-month payments manually can be a compliance headache. [G-P EOR](#) automates these payments into a single monthly invoice.

Worker classification

We make sure that all talent, whether employee or contractor, is classified correctly according to Colombian law. By partnering with our local experts, you mitigate all associated liability and avoid 5,000 times the monthly minimum wage.

Offboarding

Dismissals in Colombia have to be on lawful grounds and require strict adherence to due process and documentation. [Termination without just cause](#) is allowed, but you have to pay severance based on the employee's salary and length of service.

G-P guides you through every step, from providing the 30-day notice required for fixed-term contracts to managing complex severance calculations.

Comparing termination laws by region

Termination requirements vary significantly across Latin America. For instance, while Colombia's process is structured, it's less complex than in Brazil or Mexico, where employers face higher risks and more procedural hurdles regarding unions and group dismissals. See the table below for a quick comparison:

Feature	 Colombia	 Mexico	 Brazil
Termination types	Just cause (specific list) and without cause (indemnity required)	Justified (limited) and unjustified (requires Constitutional severance)	Dismissal with cause, without cause, and mutual agreement (Rescisão Comum)
Severance pay	Based on tenure: ~30 days for first year and 20 days per subsequent year (varies by salary level)	Three months of salary plus 20 days pay per year of service, and a seniority premium of 12 days pay per year of service	FGTS penalty: 40% of the total balance of the employee's FGTS fund, plus notice period pay
Legal procedures	Mandatory descargos: A due process hearing where the employee can defend themselves before termination	Settlement focus: Agreements must be ratified by the labor conciliation center to avoid future lawsuits	Homologation: complex final payroll calculations; union presence often required for specific categories

Ditch the guesswork. Use Gia to draft compliant Colombian employment contracts and HR documents in minutes.



Start building your Colombia-based team today

Our SaaS and AI-powered products – [EOR](#), [Contractor](#), and [Gia](#) – make it easy to build your team in Colombia.

With more than a decade of experience, the largest team of HR, legal, and compliance experts, and a global proprietary knowledge base, G-P is the [recognized leader in global employment](#).

[Contact us](#) or [book a demo today](#).