DevSkiller

Top IT skills report 2021

Demand and hiring trends

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2021 REPORT



Foreword

The demand for IT skills has never been greater as the world continues down the digital revolution path. In fact, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics projects the IT industry to grow 22% by 2029. Driving this demand is the growing need for new applications and software across all kinds of industry.

While there is definite growth forecasted, the past year has not been without its challenges due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The pandemic has rocked the global economy to its core and has significantly impacted the IT skills workforce.

Despite all of this, our mission remains unchanged. DevSkiller was founded on the principle of providing valuable information to IT recruitment professionals to assist them with their hiring decisions. This purpose is what motivated us to begin preparing these reports three years ago. If you like, you can compare this year's data to that which we reported in 2019 and 2020.

Within the report, you may notice differences between what was recorded in years past. In some of those sections, we have concluded that the COVID-19 pandemic caused the changes. You may also find that some sections have remained relatively constant, which is a testament to the popularity of certain IT skills within the industry. This year's report was compiled from 304,645 coding tests sent to developers in 156 countries by companies in 62 countries.

The increased data set has provided us with more information on the most popular IT skills and greater details about technical recruitment geography. We've also included a new section on the most popular web browsers and operating systems used by developers on our platform and information about the most popular technologies within the DevOps tech stack.

This report was designed to assist your technical recruitment efforts, and I hope that it serves you well moving forward.

Jakub Kubrynski, DevSkiller CEO



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2020 tech industry overview

In previous years, this is the point where we'd usually begin to deliver the findings of our report. However, because 2020 was a year like no other, we made the decision to include this overview so you have a better understanding of where the industry stands after the past twelve months.

We've broken it down into three key sections:

- → Global IT market
- → Salary
- → Employment patterns

Please be aware that most of the information in this section has been gathered from external sources. If you'd like to view the findings from the DevSkiller platform, we suggest that you skip ahead to Section 1.1.



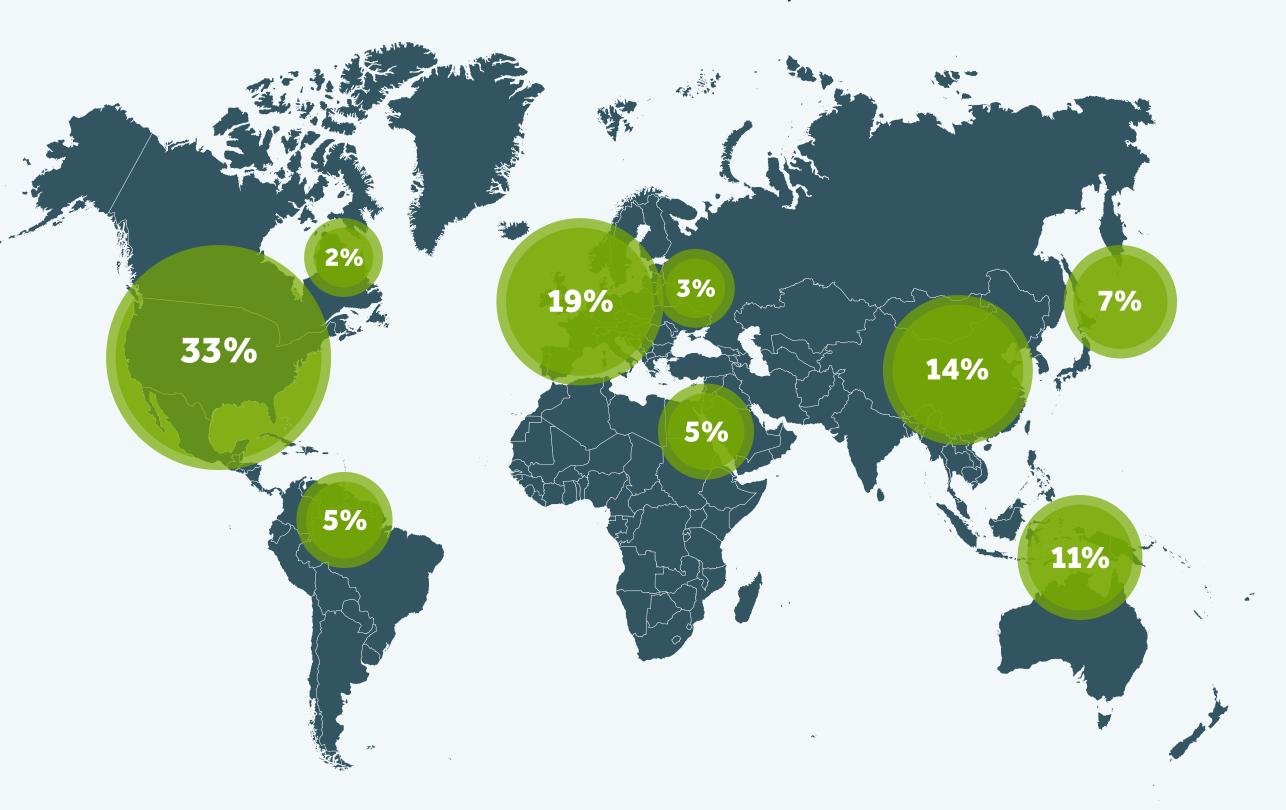


Global IT market outlook - 2021 forecast

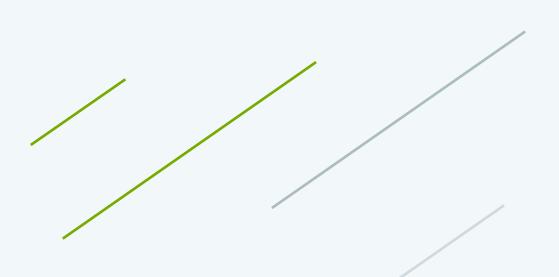
This year we've analyzed the state of the global IT market for 2020 and the outlook for 2021. As reported by CompTia, research consultancy firm IDC projected global IT revenue to be \$4.8 trillion for 2020 back in August, however due to the COVID-19 pandemic it failed to reach that mark. The IDC does however project that the global IT market should surpass \$5.0 trillion in revenue for 2021 which is more inline with the initial forecasts for 2020 (pre COVID-19).

As expected, in 2021 the US will be the largest tech market in the world with 33% of the total revenue or \$1.6 trillion. Outside of the US, Western Europe (19%) and China (14%) are the next two largest technology markets projected for 2021.

THE GLOBAL TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY: \$5.0 TRILION



Estimated 2021 spending at constant currency. Encompasses hardware, software, services and telecommunications. Source: IDC



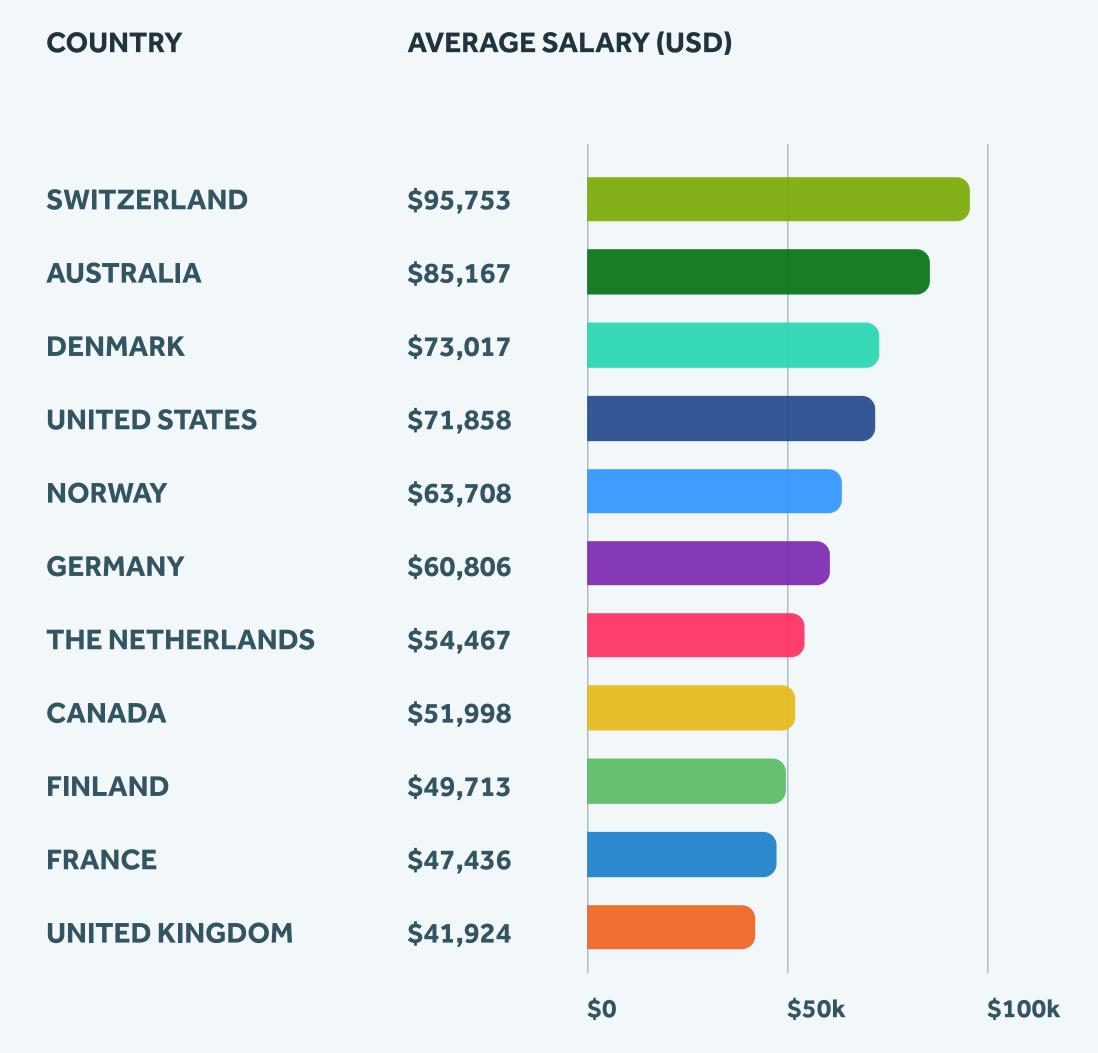


Software developer salary

Despite the effect that COVID-19 has had this past year, the IT industry is still positioned well for success. The pace at which it continues to grow, makes a career in IT incredibly attractive for many people. Competitive salaries are another driving factor.

Software developers are some of the most well paid professionals in the world. The growing demand for skilled developers means that salaries will only continue to rise. This year, we have analyzed the average software developer salaries in some key countries around the world.

Please note that the values seen are valid at the time of publication of this report. If you'd like more job specific salary information then please visit our software developer salaries page. We regularly update this data to keep our readers informed of any movement in IT salaries.



Source: PayScale



Employment patterns

In this section, we've investigated some notable employment patterns for developers within the industry.

IT employee turnover

2020 was unprecedented. The Coronavirus pandemic ravaged local economies and completely shifted work patterns across all industries. Interestingly, the traditionally fluid IT industry saw a huge shift in the amount of employee turnover compared to previous years.

In 2019, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported a 3.2% average monthly employee turnover for the technology industry. By comparison, from June to October 2020 the average employee turnover was 2.08%.

This finding represents a 35% decrease in employee turnover. What's clear is that the uncertainty of the job market has kept developers in their current roles for longer than previous years. We anticipate that high employee turnover will return as the industry continues to bounce back in the post COVID-19 market.



Work experience and training patterns

At DevSkiller, our stack specific coding tests cover a range of IT skills for junior, middle, and senior-level developers. This flexibility gives employers the opportunity to accurately test for developers for all levels of experience. This year, we wanted to identify the required years of experience for developers depending on seniority.

According to PayScale, the industry standards for software developers are as follows:

→ Entry level: Less than 1 years of experience

→ Early career: 1-4 years of experience

→ Mid career: 5-9 years of experience

→ Experienced: 10-19 years of experience

→ Late career: 20 or more years of experience

Many developers aim to advance professionally in order to earn more money. As noted in the 2020 Stack Overflow developer survey, the number one job hunt factor for developers is better compensation. An improvement in salary can be possible with a lateral career move but in most cases requires a vertical move. For developers, this means earning that promotion through years of experience or gaining new IT skills.

There is also the option for developers to land better paying jobs by furthering their education. According to a survey from Indeed, people who pay to learn IT skills spend on average \$38,507 for their continued education as opposed to \$15,715 for other industries. This money is well spent though if you consider the aforementioned average salaries for software developers.

Desirable soft skills

In this report, we go into great detail about the key IT skills that employers are looking for in their developers. What we don't currently record are the desirable soft skills for a developer. According to Hackernoon data, the key soft skills for developers are as follows:

→ Empathy

→ Open-mindedness

→ Communication

→ Problem solving

→ Teamwork

→ Accountability

→ Approachability and helpfulness

→ Creativity

→ Patience

→ Time management



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Technical hiring & skills insights

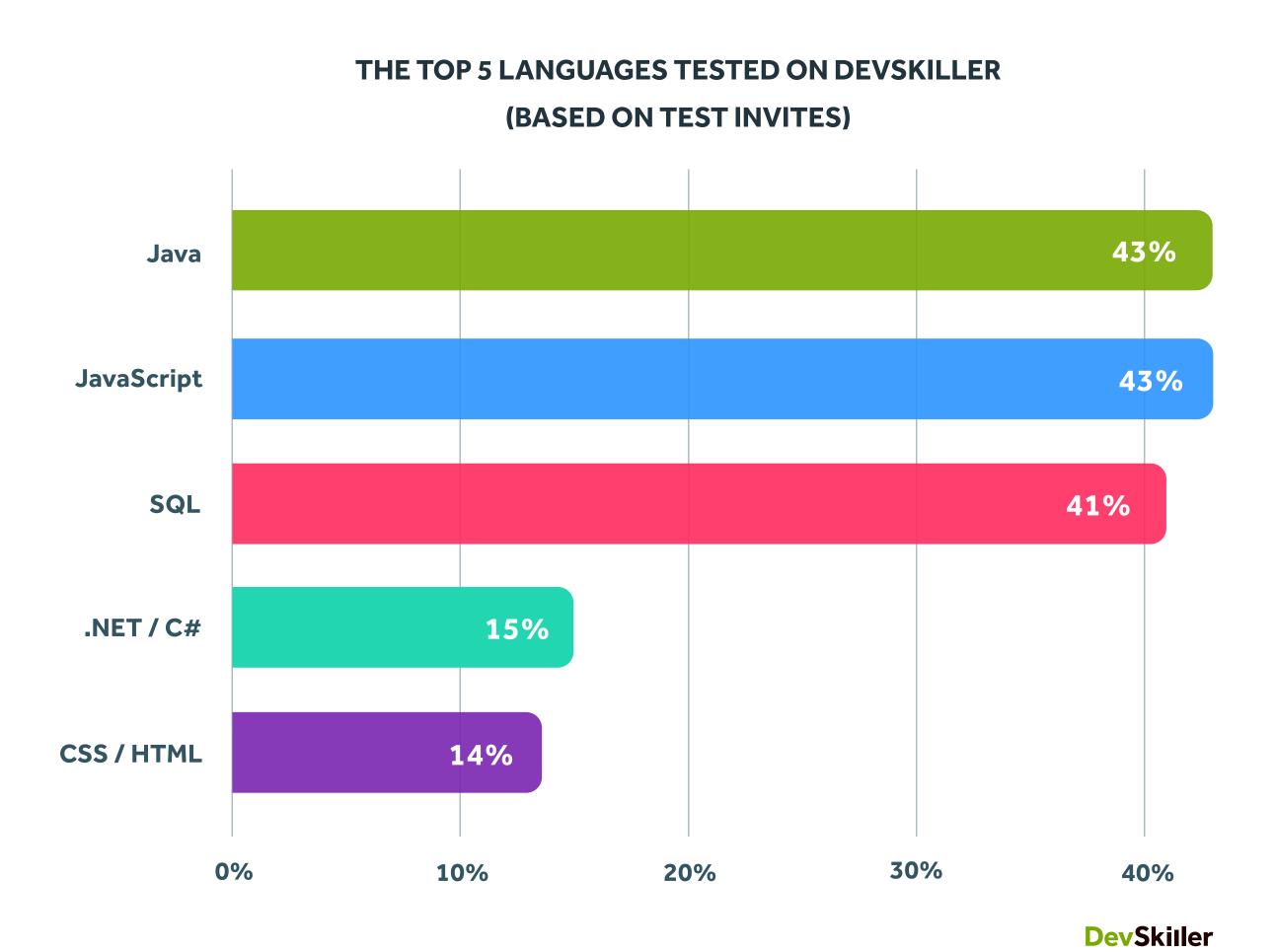


/ 1.1 /

Java and JavaScript are the most popular IT skills tested (43%)

Java and JavaScript are tied for first place as the most in-demand IT skills for 2021. The two popular languages were seen in 43% of test invites.

This year's most significant development is Java climbing back to join JavaScript for the top spot – a position it has not occupied since 2019. Rounding out the remainder of the top 5 are SQL, .NET/C#, and CSS/HTML for the second year running.





The return of Java to the top spot shows that despite the importance of the front-end in software development, many companies seek developers who are skilled in back-end technologies. The 2020 Stack Overflow Developer Survey draws a similar conclusion where JavaScript held the top spot once again, with Java placing only a couple of positions behind.

As we found in last year's report, the top 5 IT skills are commonly tested with other languages across our platform. We will elaborate on this further in section 3. However, it goes to show that more and more companies are searching for developers competent in these IT skills.

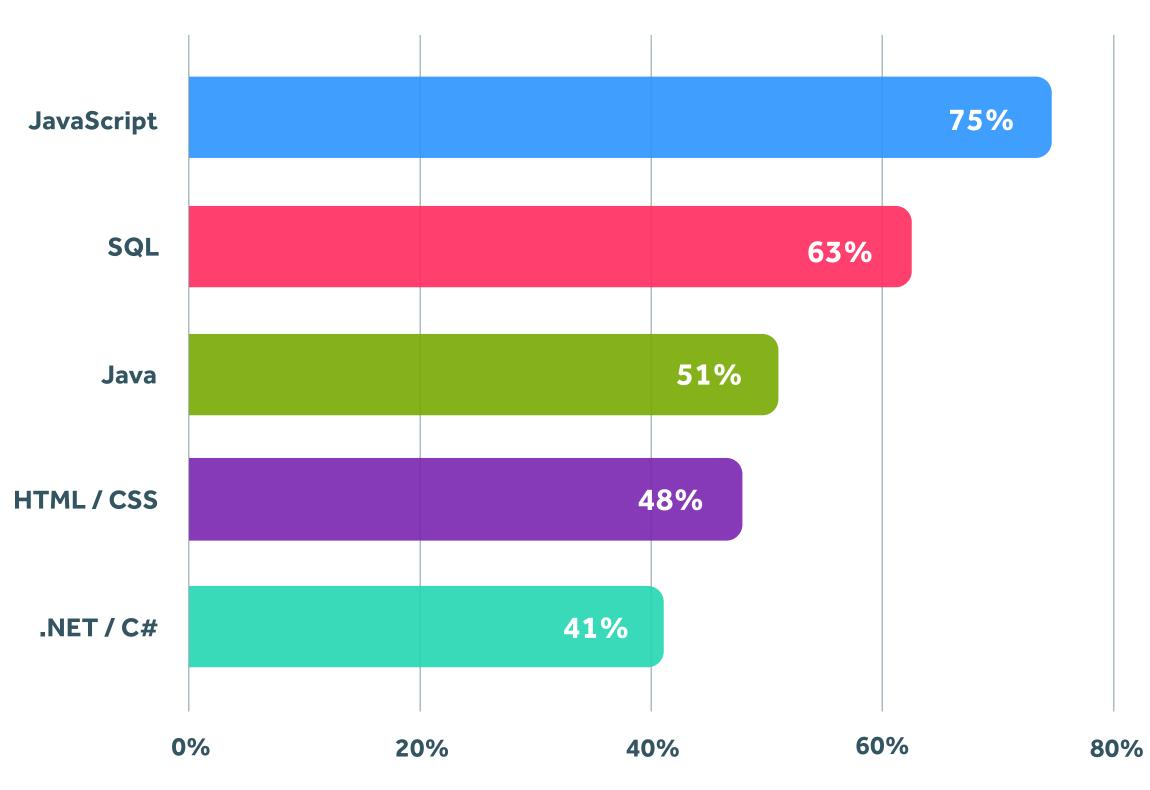


/ 1.2 /

75% of companies are looking for JavaScript developers

Despite small changes to specific tech stacks' overall popularity, the top 5 IT skills that companies are looking for have remained unchanged from last year. In 2020, 75% of companies were looking for JavaScript developers. SQL came in second place with 63%, while Java has dropped slightly to 51%. HTML/CSS and .NET/C# have both seen small improvements from last year at 48% and 41%, respectively.

THE TOP 5 TECHNOLOGIES THE MOST COMPANIES ARE LOOKING FOR TECHNICAL SKILLS IN





Our findings indicate that JavaScript remains the go-to frontend IT skill, a trend that is reflected in the Stack Overflow 2020

Developer Survey – where it too holds the top spot. It's important to note that we are aware of the growing shift towards TypeScript as a replacement to JavaScript. The reason it was not specified in this report was because we classify most TypeScript coding test invitations on our platform as JavaScript. Next year we will be placing greater emphasis on distinguishing these two IT skills.

SQL again remains the most popular database IT skill. While companies are continuing to opt for Java and .NET/C# to solve technical issues, Java remains the preferred option. The increase in popularity of HTML/CSS highlights the constant and growing need for skilled web developers.



/ 1.3 /

JavaScript is the most popular language tested together with other IT skills

With JavaScript featuring prominently over the first few sections in this year's report, it's little surprise that it remains the most commonly tested language with other technologies.

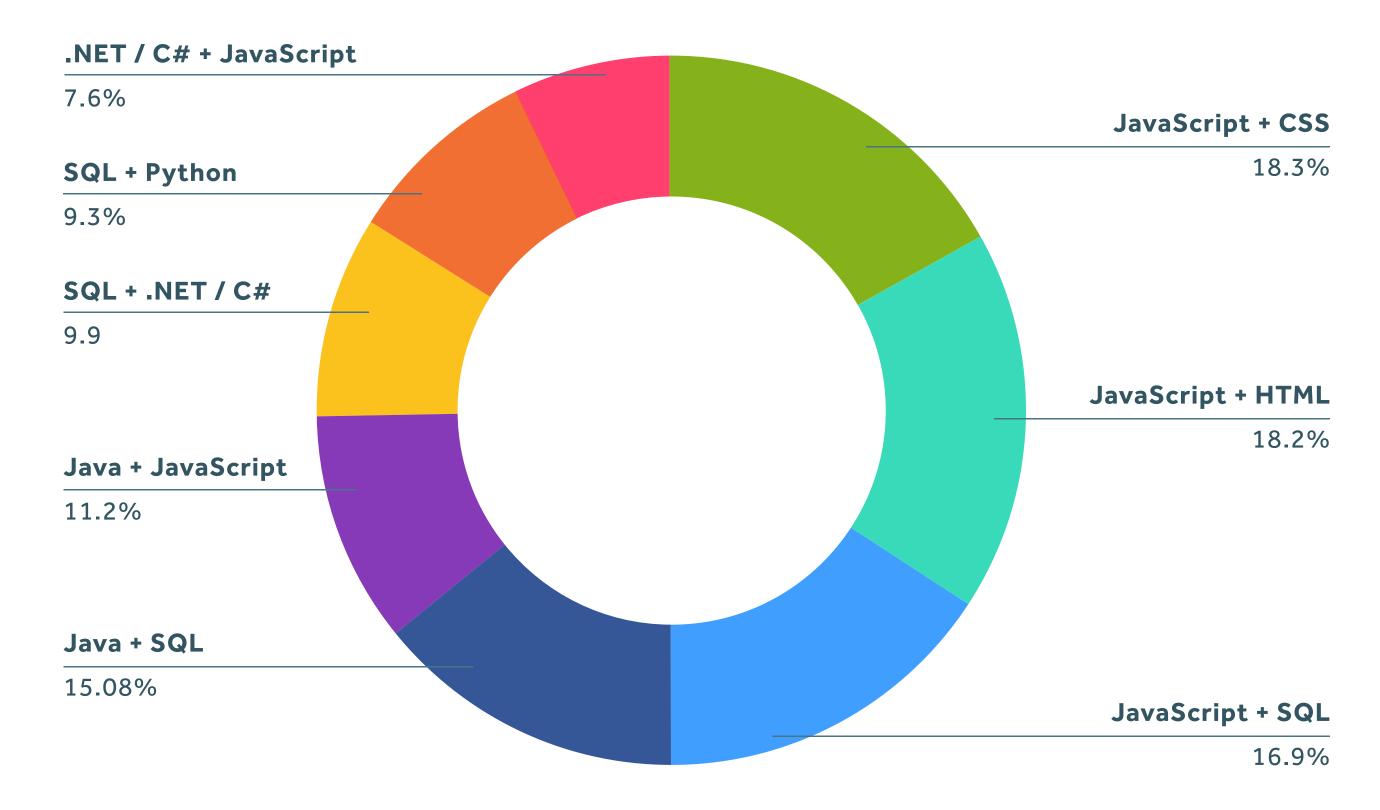
We again selected the top 8 languages that were most commonly tested together and found little change over the previous year's findings.

This year, JavaScript and CSS held onto the top spot, narrowly edging out JavaScript and HTML. Following them was JavaScript and SQL, Java and SQL, Java and JavaScript, SQL and .NET/C#, SQL and Python, and .NET/C# and JavaScript as the other most commonly tested technologies. This year's most significant development was Python making its way into the top 8, indicating its popularity of useability and back-end functionality.



THE TOP 8 TECHNOLOGIES TESTED TOGETHER

Our findings highlight companies' desire for developers with a broadened range of knowledge. On the front-end, JavaScript leads the way as the most popular language, while Java and Python lead the back-end, and SQL compliments a server-side stack.









React, MySQL, Spring, ASP.NET, Data Analysis, HTML, Laravel, and Bash are the most popular technologies in their respective tech stacks

JS JavaScri	pt	SQL		Java		.NE	T / C#
1 React	35.08%	1 MySQL	53.11%	1 Spring	35.96%	1 ASP.NET	45.93%
2 ES6	24.19%	2 SQL Server	20.66%	2 Spring Boot	20.47%	2 SQL Server	39.60%
3 Angular2+	16.18%	3 HSQLDB	18.77%	3 Hibernate	18.03%	3 MVC	36.35%
4 Node.js	15.26%	4 PostgreSQI	13.87 %	4 Maven	16.08%	4 .NET Core	26.04%
5 Redux	10.82%	5 MongoDB	10.47%	5 Gradle	8.77%	5 Entity	19.35%
						Framework	

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2

5

Django

3 NumPy

4 Flask

Pandas

Python

Data Analysis 35.22%

20.96%

6.50%

4.40%

2.10%



CSS

1	HTML	94.33%
2	WCAG 2.0	25.37%
3	HTML 5	20.20%
4	Sass	9.85%
5	LESS	8.62%

The real power of **RealLifeTestingTM** is that developers are tested not only in their knowledge of the language but also in their ability to understand the varying resources and tools of the given tech stack that they'll be using. This section will outline the most popular IT skills, resources, and technologies of the eight most popular tech stacks on our platform.



PHP

1	Laravel	26.65%
2	Symfony	17.07%
3	Doctrine	8.38%
4	Codelgniter	6.89%
5	Wordpress	3.89%



DevOps

1	Bash	70.61%
2	networking	65.31%
3	Docker	54.69%
4	System Admin	54.69%
5	Shell	12.24%







React is the most popular technology in the JavaScript tech stack once again, with 35% of tests



Spring is used in 36% of Java tests

Unsurprisingly, React leads the way for the second year as the most popular technology within the JavaScript tech stack. Just as it did last year, React tops the Hacker News hiring trends extending its streak to 31 consecutive months – at the time of publication. Despite dropping a few percentage points, ES6 came in second place once again, with just under a quarter of JavaScript developers tested using it. Rounding out the top 5 were Angular2+, Nodejs, and Redux. Vue.js slipped to 6th this year, narrowly missing the top 5.

Despite remaining the most popular Java tech stack resource, Spring has lost some ground compared to last year (47%). Spring Boot, which is an enhanced extension of the Spring framework, comes in at second place. The rise in popularity of Spring Boot comes as little surprise considering its ease of use for configuring Spring applications. Rounding out the top 5 were Hibernate, Gradle, and Maven, seen in 18.03%, 16.08%, and 8.77% of Java tests, respectively.





MySQL leads the SQL tech stack once again with 53% of tests



ASP.NET is seen in almost half of all .NET/C# tech stack

MySQL has grown in popularity year over year, with a near 16% increase for the database management system in 2020. Despite dropping in percentage, SQL Server held onto second place, seen in 20.66% of all SQL tests. HSQLDB (18.77%) and PostgreSQL (13.87%) made the top 5 once again this year, while MongoDB, a new addition, rounded out the top 5 with 10.47%.

ASP.NET leads the way for the .NET/C# tech stack once again with a whopping 45.93%. This is the second year running where the ASP.NET web app framework has topped the list, highlighting the continued importance of web development in the .NET/C# tech stack. .NET server technology – SQL Server (36.90%), overtook MVC (36.35%) by a narrow margin to come in second place this year. Not far behind was .NET Core with 26.04%, while Entity Framework came in the fifth position with 19.35%.





HTML was in 94% of all CSS tests

Given that the two technologies are so interchangeable, it's little surprise that HTML features so predominantly in the CSS tech stack. The two front-end technologies are so intertwined that you'd be hard-pressed to find a developer who is competent in one but not the other. Following HTML was WCAG 2.0, which featured in just over a quarter of CSS tests. Accessibility focused HTML5 came in third place with 20.20%. Rounding out the top 5 were CSS preprocessors Sass (9.85%) and LESS (8.62%).





Laravel remains the most popular resource in the PHP tech stack with 26.65% of tests

Despite dropping slightly from last year, Laravel remains the most popular framework of the PHP tech stack. Symfony was the other clear standout seen in 17.07% of tests. The remaining three, Doctrine, Codelgniter, and WordPress, were all seen in less than 10% of PHP tests. The difference in popularity between Laravel and the others makes sense as Laravel is a multi-faceted Framework that can handle complex web applications. Doctrine, for instance, is a persistence library that doesn't offer the same functionality as Laravel.





Data Analysis used in 35.22% of Python tests



DevOps

Data Analysis is the most commonly tested IT skill of the Python tech stack. Holding its place for the second year running is the popular open-source web framework Django with 20.96%. NumPy, Flask, and Pandas round out the top 5 with percentages of 6.50%, 4.40%, and 2.10%, respectively.

This is the first year that we've included the DevOps tech stack in this section of the report, and it's little surprise given the speed at which it has grown in popularity in recent years. Looking at the results, Bash is seen in 70.61% of DevOps tests. Following it was networking (65.31%), Docker and System Administration tied with 54.69%, and Shell coming in 5th with 12.24%. An important note, in the previous year, DevSkiller was not supporting Kubernetes and infrastructure, which explains why they were not included in the report. However, we do follow the market closely and have since added support for these technologies, so keep a lookout for them in next year's report.

/ 1.5 /

Candidates wait on average 2 days and 13 hours to take a coding test

The average wait time between a candidate receiving a coding test invitation and taking the test is 2 days and 13 hours. This finding represents a slight increase from last year's report (2 days and 6 hours). The slight increase could be attributed to candidates taking longer to prepare themselves for their coding test invitation.

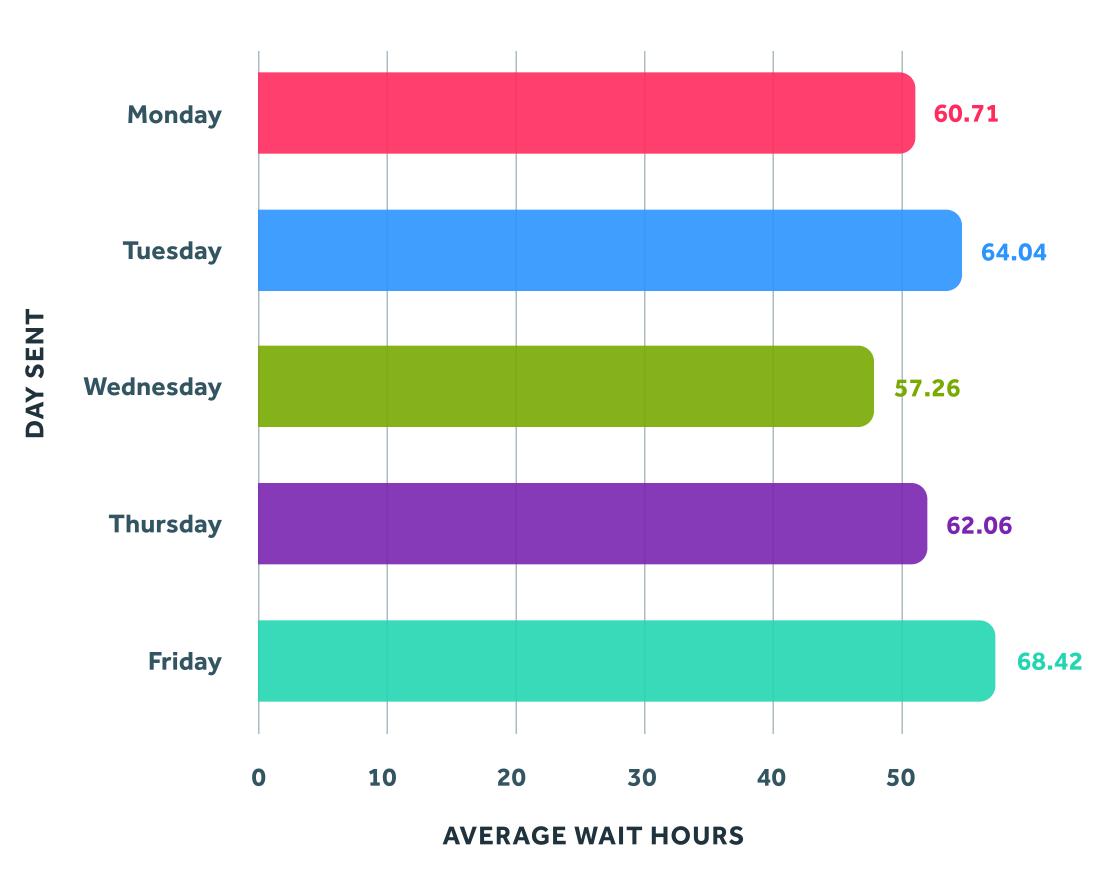




Coding tests sent on Wednesday get the fastest response time for the second year running

For the second year running, coding tests sent on a Wednesday get the fastest responses. The average response time has climbed higher; however, Wednesday remains the most responsive day. As we saw in section 5, the increase in time may be attributed to candidates taking longer to prepare themselves before they sit the test.

THE AVERAGE WAIT IN HOURS BASED ON THE DAY OF THE WEEK THE INVITE IS SENT



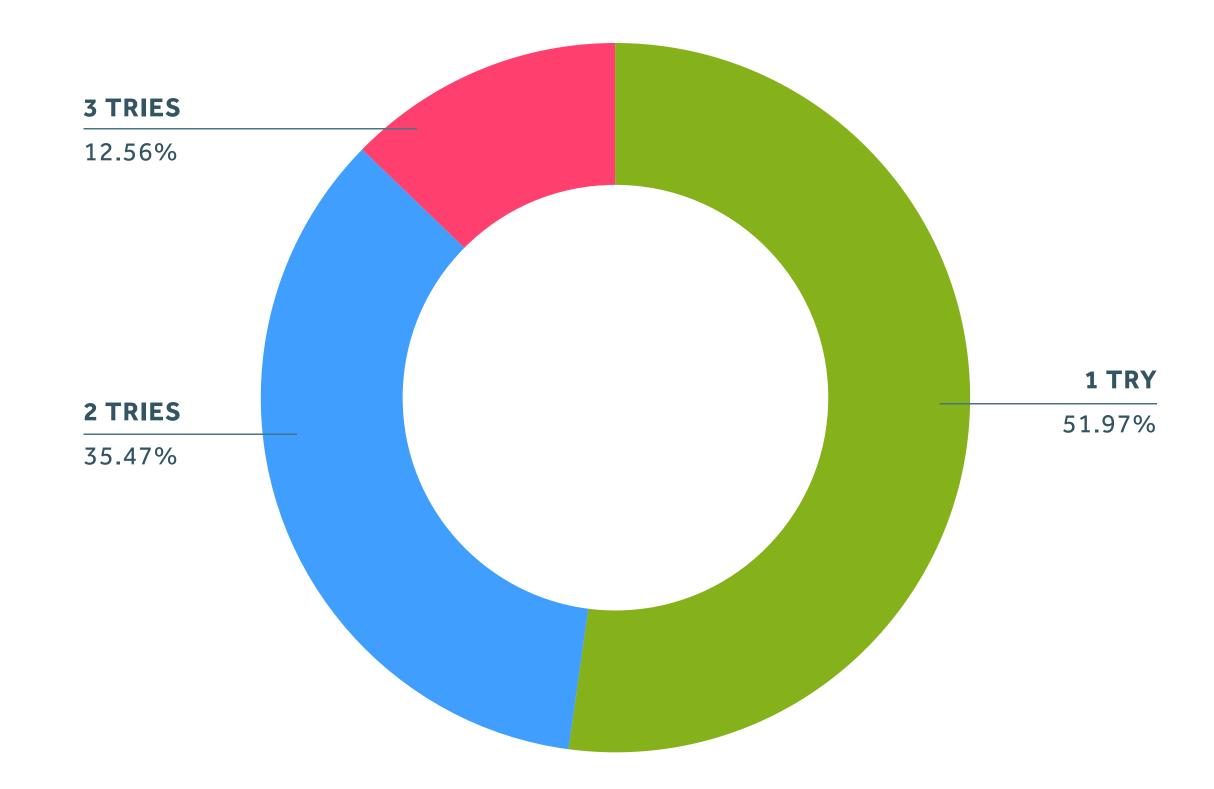
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/ 1.7 /

A record-breaking year for tech recruitment certification!

The DevSkiller Tech Recruitment Certification Course had a record-breaking year in 2020 with more than 3x attendance than last year. The increase is likely caused by recruiters amping up their recruitment knowledge after the initial breakout of COVID-19 and subsequent recruitment freeze. In fact, almost half of the certifications took place in April and May – directly after most countries were forced into lockdown.

Over half of the people (52%) sitting the course are passing on the first try, which indicates that they're studying harder than ever before.

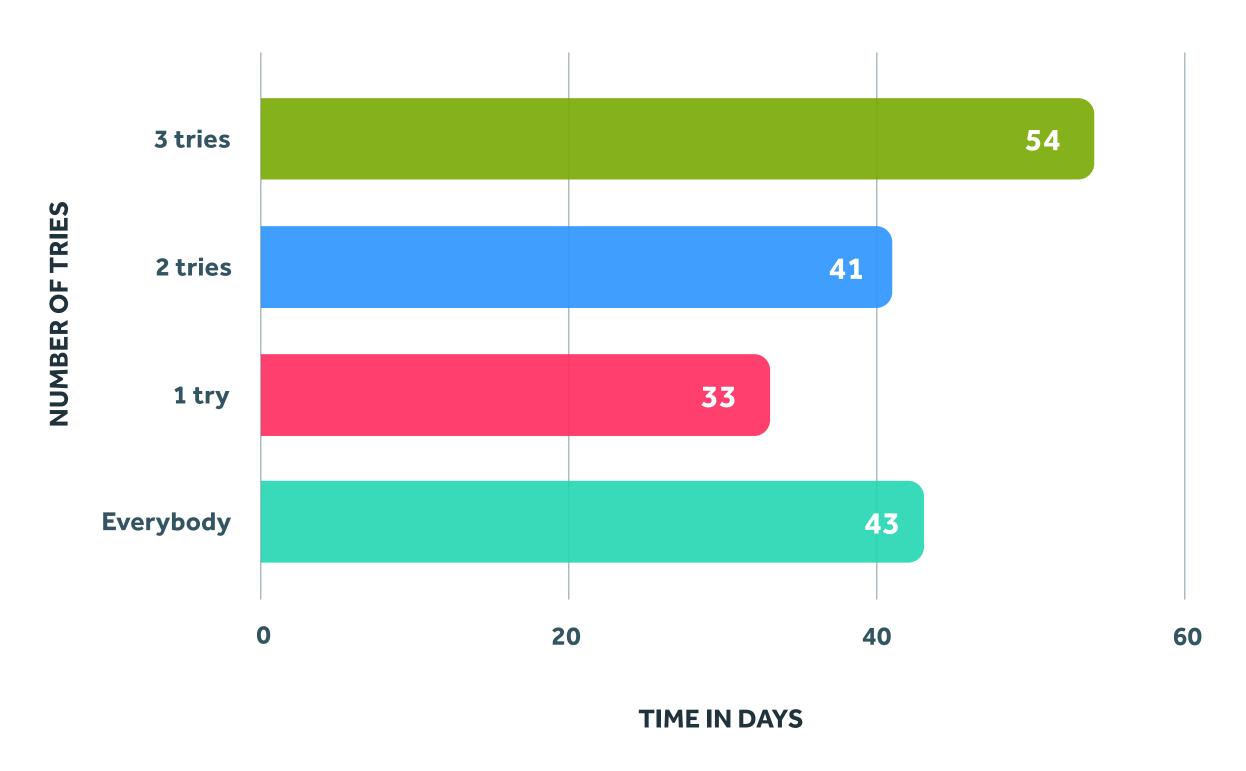




This year, the average number of days to get tech certified was in line with last year's results (43 days).

As expected, those who needed three tries to pass the course took the longest time at 54 days, representing a slight increase to last year (53.09 days).

THE TIME IN DAYS IT TAKES RECRUITERS TO BECOME TECH RECRUITMENT CERTIFIED DEPENDING ON THE NUMBER OF TRIES THEY NEED TO PASS





1.8 /

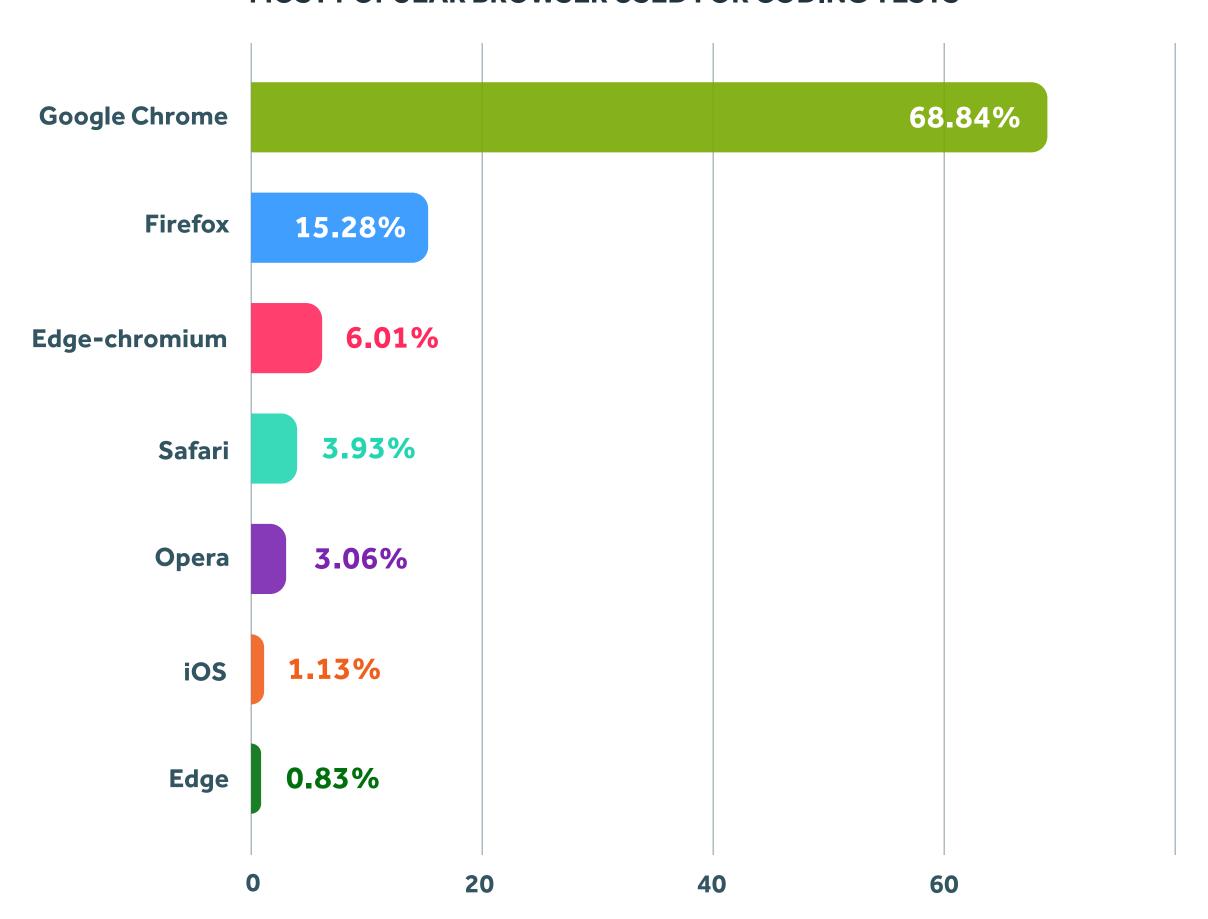
Google Chrome and Windows 10 are the most popular browser and operating system on our platform

This year we've analyzed the most popular browsers and operating systems used by candidates on our system. Unsurprisingly, Google Chrome (68.84%) was the preferred browser by a considerable margin. Our findings mirror the data from StatCounter Global, which lists Google Chrome as the preferred browser at 63.54% – at the time of publication.



Firefox (15.28%) came in second place, followed by Edge-chromium (6.01%) and Safari (3.93%). Interestingly, StatCounter has Safari in second place while Firefox sits at third. This suggests that the developers don't necessarily follow the same trends as the rest of the general public regarding their browser preference.

MOST POPULAR BROWSER USED FOR CODING TESTS



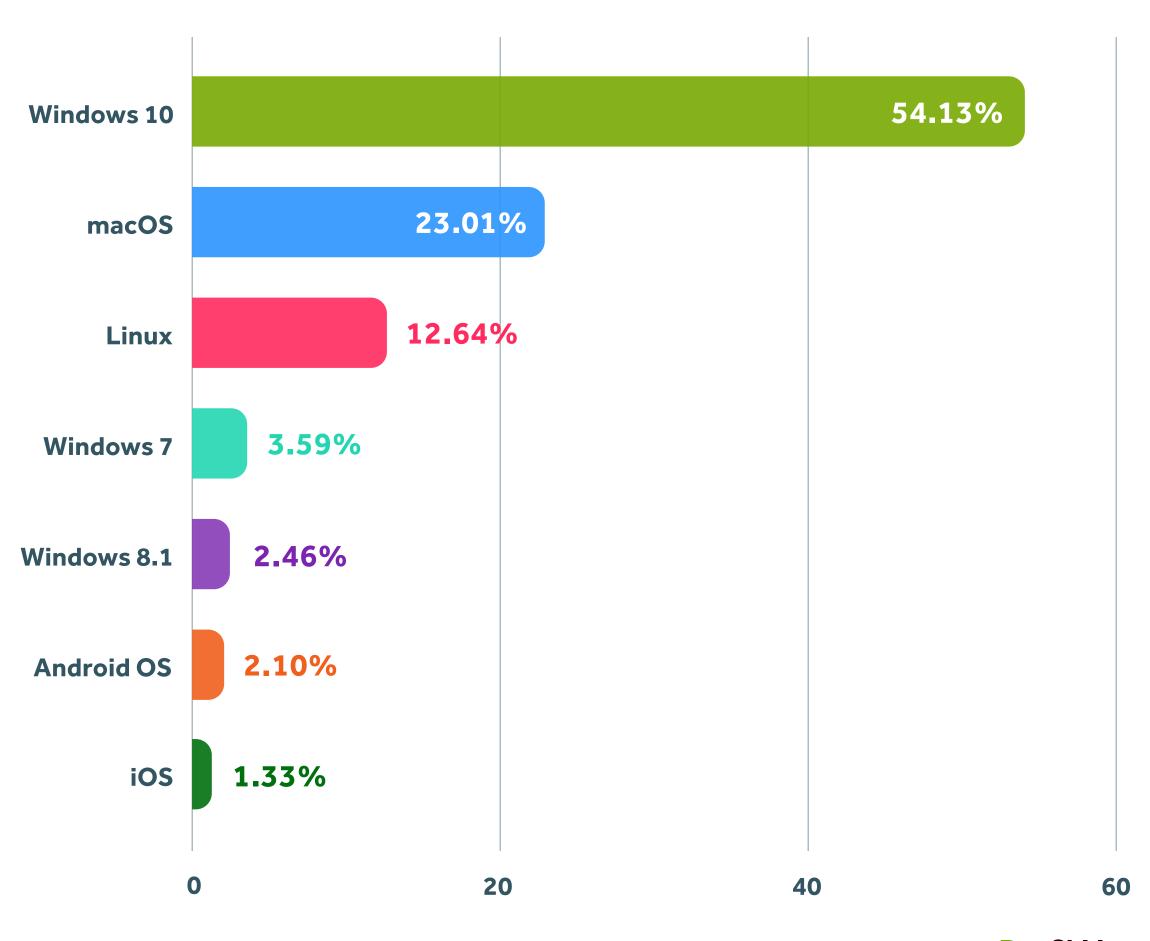


Our research for the most popular operating system also offered interesting findings. Taking out the top spot was Windows 10, with 54.13% of developers using this operating system as their preferred option.

This finding was in line with data from the 2020 Stack Overflow

Developer Survey, where almost half of the developers surveyed used Windows as their primary operating system. Following that was macOS (23.01%), Linux (12.64%), while Windows 7, Windows 8.1, Android OS, and iOS were all used by less than 5% of developers.

MOST POPULAR OPERATING SYSTEM USED FOR CODING TESTS



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The geography of IT skills recruitment



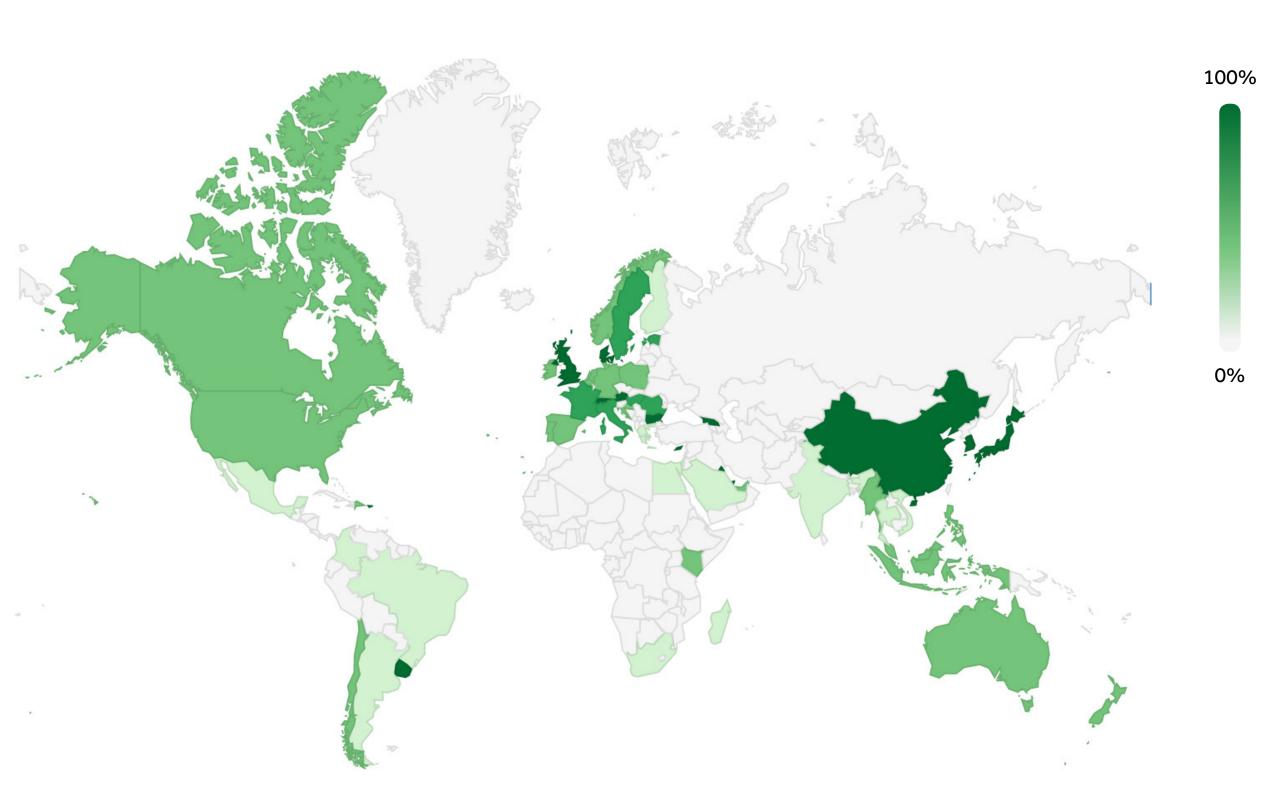


Countries are looking abroad more than ever for their technical hiring needs

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant changes in company hiring patterns. As a result, most companies have undergone rapid transformations into remote-friendly or even remote-first workplaces, which has prompted a substantial rise in international hiring.

This year, the UK, Canada, Australia, Indonesia, Denmark, and Chile all saw increases in their international hiring percentage.

THE PERCENTAGE OF INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL HIRING BY COUNTRY





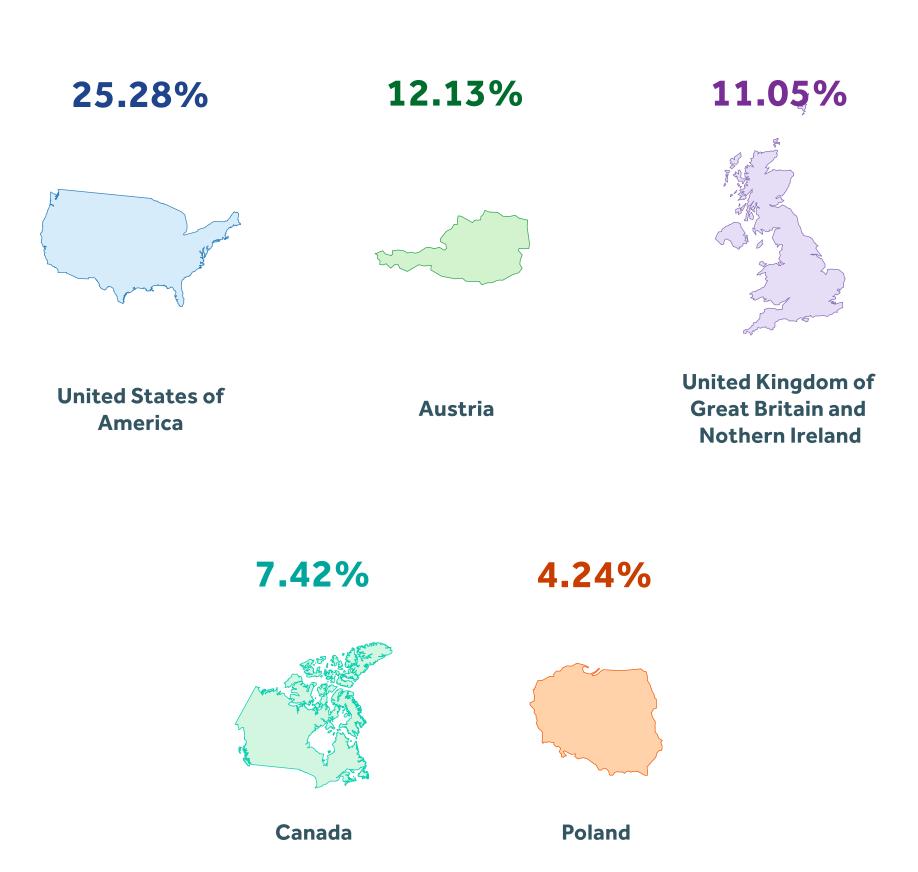


The US continues to be a driver of international technical hiring

For the third year running, the US remains the number one driver of international technical hiring. This year, the US accounted for just over a quarter (25.28%) of overseas candidates tested on our platform. The other big mover this year was Austria to second place with 12.13%

The UK climbed up the ranks to third position this year with 11.05%. This result comes as no surprise considering the increase of international technical hiring that was noted in section 9. Rounding out the top five were Canada (7.42%) and Poland (4.24%).

THE PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL OVERSEAS CANDIDATES TESTED ON OUR PLATFORM







The US is driving international recruitment but has only the 5th largest labor market for overseas recruitment

Once again, the US leads the pack in international hiring but has slipped to the 5th largest labor market. Last year, we saw the US drop from the second position to fourth, and as we can now see, this is a continuing downward trend.

This finding isn't as much a criticism of developers from the US but rather a testament to developers' quality from other markets. Brazil holds its position in the top 5, while developers from Russia and Canada are becoming increasingly larger sources of developer candidates outside the US.

Interestingly, Canada and Brazil are in first and second position for the top countries that the US recruits its developers. As we noted last year, the proximity and the relative time difference makes them desirable for US companies to source developers.

The other continuing trend is companies concentrating on the allocation of IT skills to outsourced-focused countries. This trend, we expect, is likely to continue for years ahead.



THE TOP 5 COUNTRIES OVERSEAS CANDIDATES COME FROM AND THE COUNTRIES THAT RECRUIT THEM



1. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



2. United States of America



3. Brazil

- 1 Russian Federation
- 2 India
- **3** Georgia
- 4 Poland
- 5 Ukraine

- 1 Canada
- 2 Brazil
- 3 Mexico
- 4 Argentina
- 5 Colombia



- ² Canada
- 3 Argentina
- 4 Ireland
- 5 Germany



4. Canada

- 1 The US
- 2 Tunisia
- 3 Cameroon
- 4 Morocco
- 5 Algeria



5. India

- 1 The US
- 2 Ukraine
- 3 Netherlands
- 4 The UK
- 5 Finland

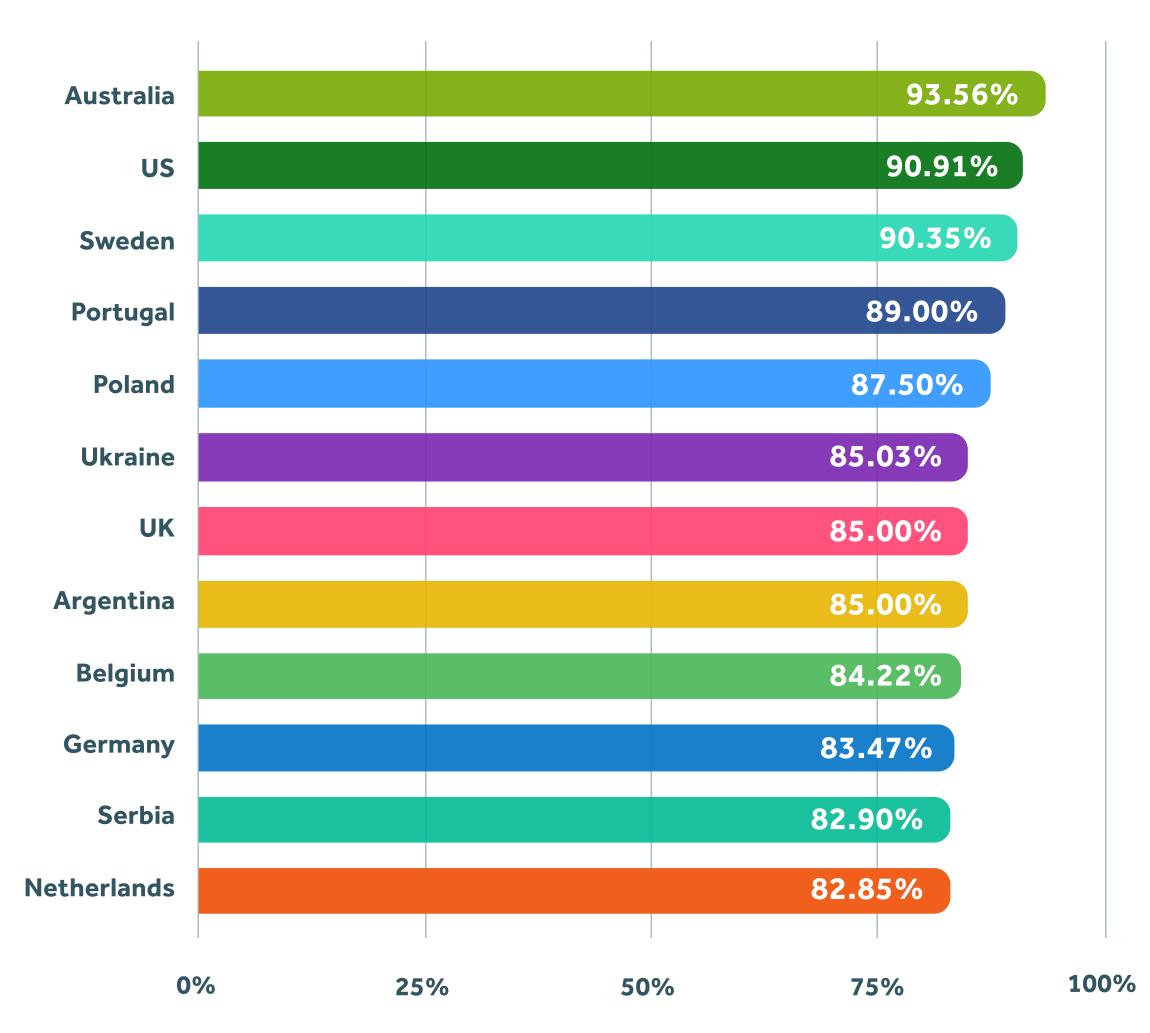


/ 2.4 /

Australian developers score the highest on coding tests

In previous years, we have used the mean score to determine the highest scoring developers by country. This year, we have analyzed the 90th percentile which demonstrates the result that only the top 10% of all candidates in a given country score higher than. We made this change because the mean score includes outliers that often influence averages and skew results.

COUNTRIES WHOSE DEVELOPERS SCORED THE HIGHEST ON CODING TEST

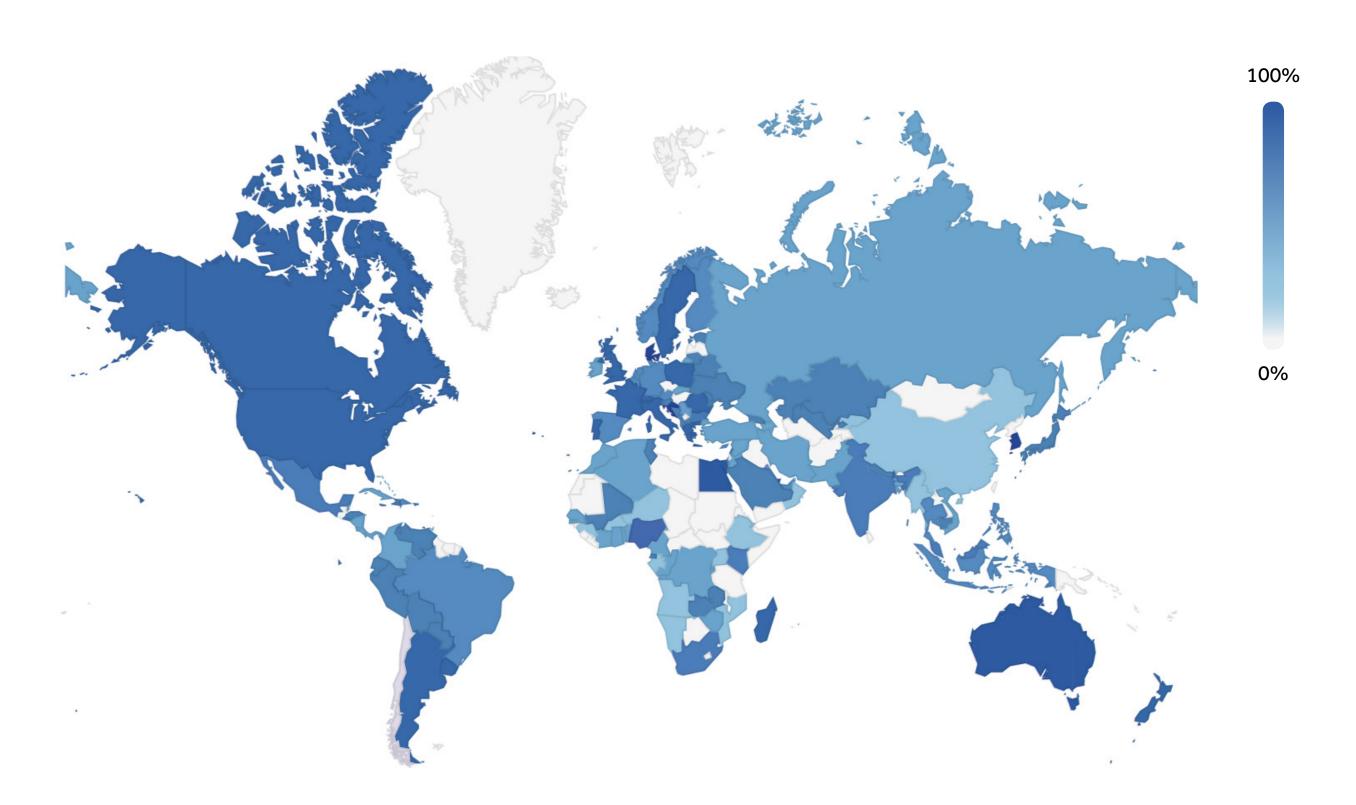




COUNTRIES WHOSE DEVELOPERS SCORED THE HIGHEST ON CODING TEST

Australia took out the top spot this past year, with only 10% of their developer scoring higher than 93.56% on their coding test.

Developers from the US came in second (90.91%). Rounding out the top 5 were Sweden (90.35%), Portugal (89%), and Poland (87.50%).







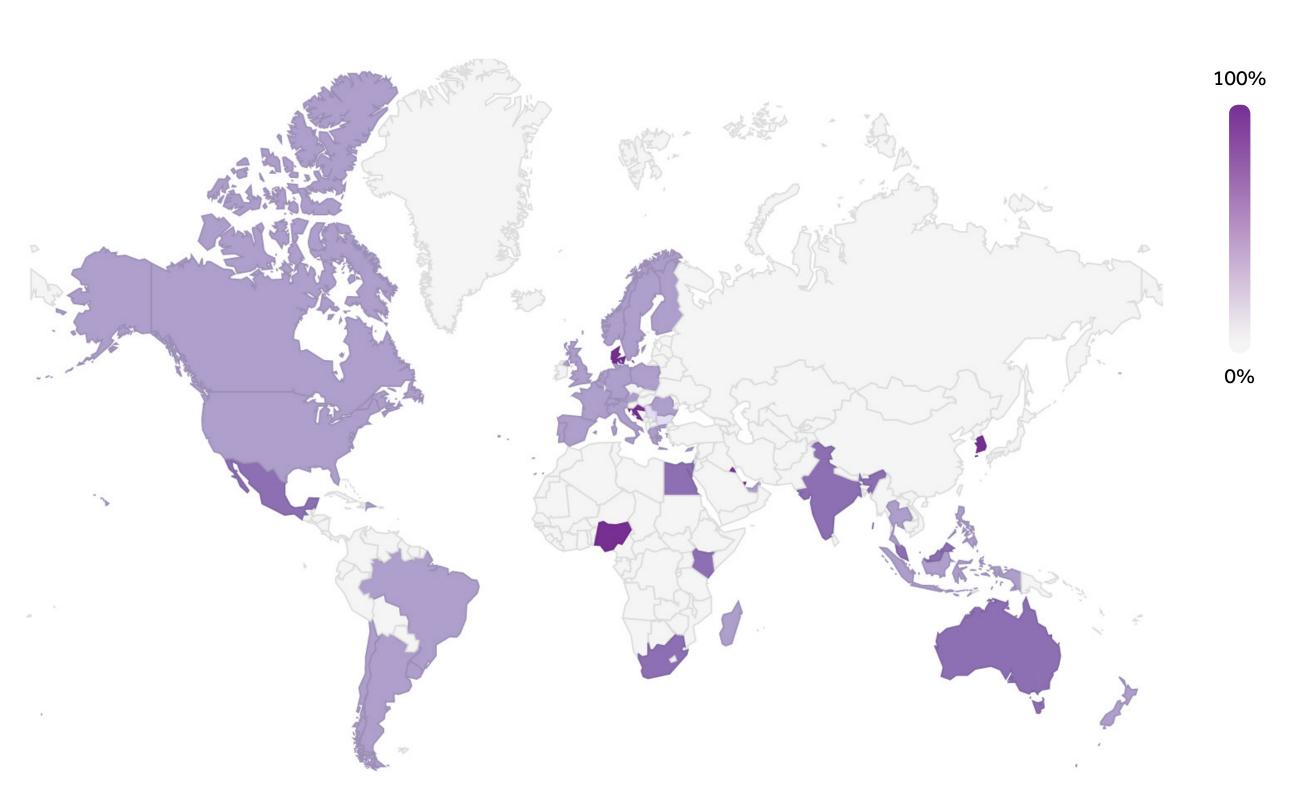


Companies from Qatar (72.27%) have the highest scoring candidates

On average, candidates from Qatari companies scored 72.27% on coding tests in 2020.

This finding indicates that companies from Qatar are testing their candidates at an appropriate level instead of giving developers overly difficult tests. The remainder of the top 5 were Croatia (67.30%), Denmark (66.38%), Kuwait (64.57%), and Nigeria (63.05%).

THE COUNTRIES WHOSE COMPANIES GET THE HIGHEST SCORING CANDIDATES



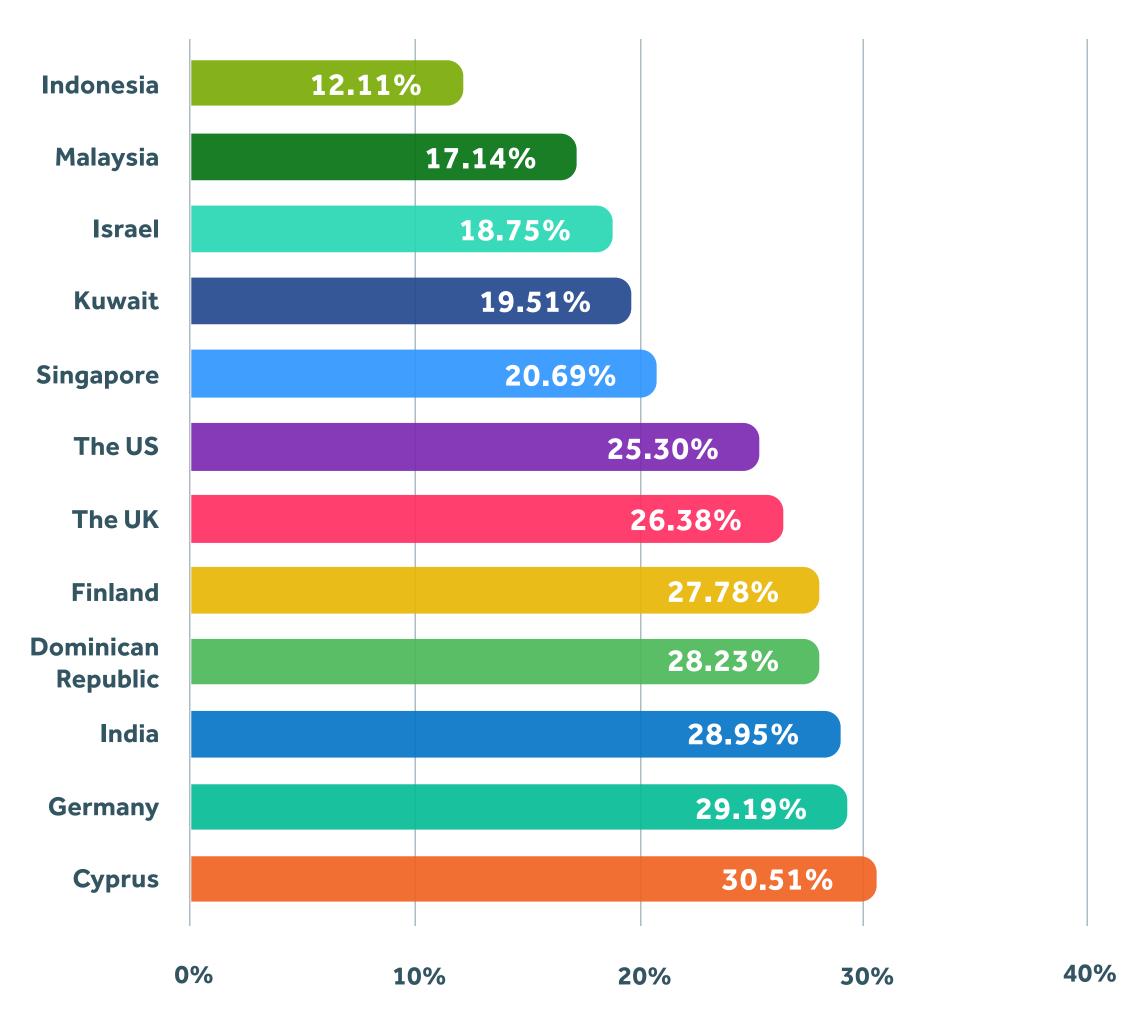




Companies from Indonesia (12.11%) are the most selective

Companies continue to be selective about the candidates they accept. This year, Indonesian companies were the most selective – only taking 12.11% of candidates for consideration. Following Indonesia was Malaysia (17.14%) and last year's most selective country – Israel (18.75%).

THE PERCENTAGE OF CANDIDATES ACCEPTED BY THE RECRUITER BY COUNTRY





The impact of the COVID-19 outbreak was felt heavily last year and resulted in many developers losing their jobs. As a result, companies have had a wider candidate pool to choose from, which has allowed them to be more selective about who they consider. Although the pandemic has heavily affected hiring patterns this past year, we expect selectivity to continue for companies that test candidates from particular countries.

Often, a company's selectivity is dependent on the countries they source their developers from, and this trend is unlikely to waver in the post-COVID-19 labor market.





More candidates are taking their coding tests than ever before

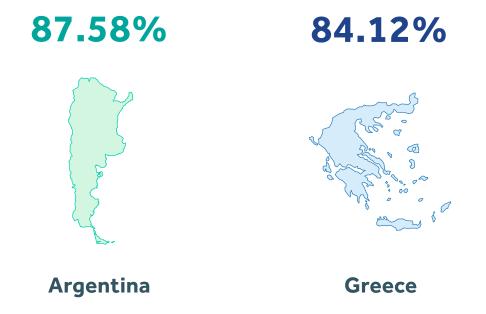
This past year we saw our highest uptake rates ever. What's even more impressive is that companies send out DevSkiller coding tests to a greater number of candidates than last year.

In the past year, a record 69% of tests were sat by candidates

- a stark difference to last year, where only 41% of candidates took
the test. Canada (98.51%) had the highest rate of candidates sitting
their test they were sent.

COUNTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST UPTAKE RATES







We are continuously looking at ways where we can improve our platform and the candidate experience. This year's improvement gives us immense pride that in-stack coding tests powered by **RealLifeTestingTM** methodology have become the accepted form of technical screening for many recruiters.

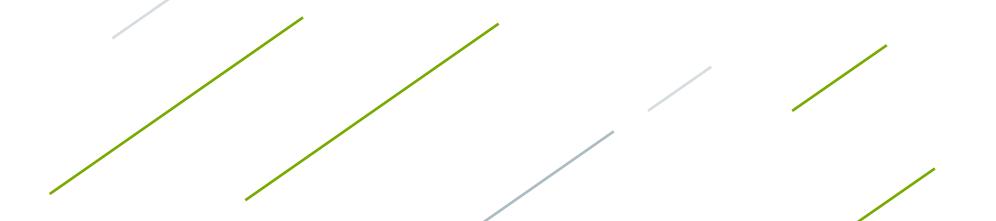
The higher uptake in this year's report is most likely due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Candidates who have either been forced into unemployment or uncertain about their job security are not ignoring their coding test invitations.



94% of developers finished the coding test invitation they received

94% of developers finished the coding test sent to them for recruitment purposes, up from 93% last year. This shows that candidates who are sent a relevant, stack-specific coding test are taking them more seriously than ever before. Formerly, coding tests were met with skepticism from recruiters about the accuracy and legitimacy of results. Recruiters were once wary that coding tests did not accurately reflect the candidate's skills or readiness for the role.

We are now seeing both recruiters and developers embracing in-stack coding tests powered by the **RealLifeTestingTM** methodology. This form of testing provides clarity for recruiters and is also appreciated by developers who are sick and tired of outdated screening procedures such as whiteboard testing.



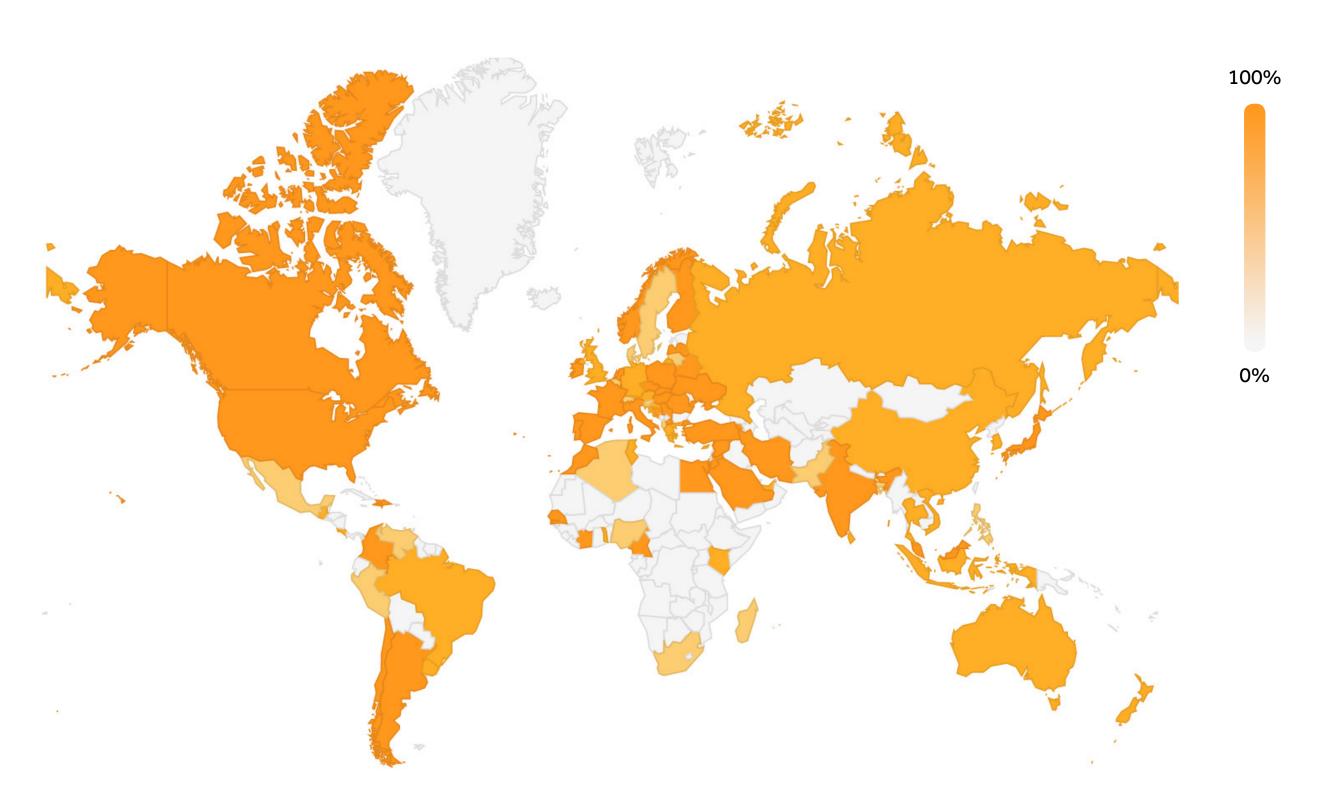


THE PERCENTAGE OF DEVELOPERS WHO FINISH THEIR CODING TESTS

This sentiment is reflected with an astonishing 94% of developer candidates completing the coding test invitation sent to them. We've seen a steady increase in this section since we began compiling these reports – 91.9% two years ago, 93% last year, and now an even greater percentage this year.

There are, of course, some variations across different countries.

Only 66.67% of candidates from Qatar completed the coding test sent to them. By comparison, 98% or more of the candidates from Saudi Arabia, Hungary, Luxembourg, Armenia, Ethiopia, Romania, Peru, Slovakia, and Denmark completed the tests they started.







The methodology we used for this study

The data we used for this study came from a 365-day snapshot of users on our platform between December 1st, 2019 through December 1st, 2020. The insights are based on 304,645 coding tests taken through the DevSkiller platform by candidates in 156 countries. All data presented here is generic aggregated demographic information. It is not linked to any specific information regarding certain candidates or companies.

*In sections 1.1 and 1.2 the percentages don't add up to 100%. Why is that?

Section 1.1

A DevSkiller test can include multiple technologies. For instance, you could have a test in Java and a test in Java+SQL. In this sample, 100% of the tests test Java and 50% of the tests test SQL. In the same way, the percentage in the chart refers to when the technology is tested in any test.

Section 1.2

Similar to section 1.1, a company might test developers in multiple technologies. To make it clearer, let's look at a group of two companies. The first company sends out a JavaScript+CSS test. The second company sends out a PHP+JavaScript test. In this group, 100% of the companies test JavaScript, 50% test CSS, and 50% test PHP. The percentage in the chart refers to when the technology is used in any test by a company.



If you have any questions or comments about the report please reach out to us at research@devskiller.com.

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