



# Workforce Report

**icims**® Insights

**OCTOBER 2024**

*Holiday Hiring Preview*

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Award winning  
data program





# iCIMS Insights October snapshot

All eyes continue to focus on the labor market. iCIMS data showed job openings continuing to be at a higher level than September 2023, with applications holding steady and hires down 4% from last year.

Our holiday hiring preview digs into retail and transportation data to get a read on recent activity and see how it stacks up against the last few holiday seasons.

How are consumers feeling as we head toward retail's busiest time of the year? Where will they do their shopping? And will they look for seasonal jobs to help pay the bills? This report answers those questions and more.



Our analysis of iCIMS data captures the insights that employers need to understand an ever-changing labor market and make better decisions for their businesses.

— Rhea Moss, Global Head of Workforce & Customer Insights, iCIMS

## Top findings this month:



Job openings are up 7% from September 2023.



Openings for transportation jobs rose 15% between September 2023 and September 2024.



72% of job seekers prefer part-time seasonal work to full-time seasonal roles.

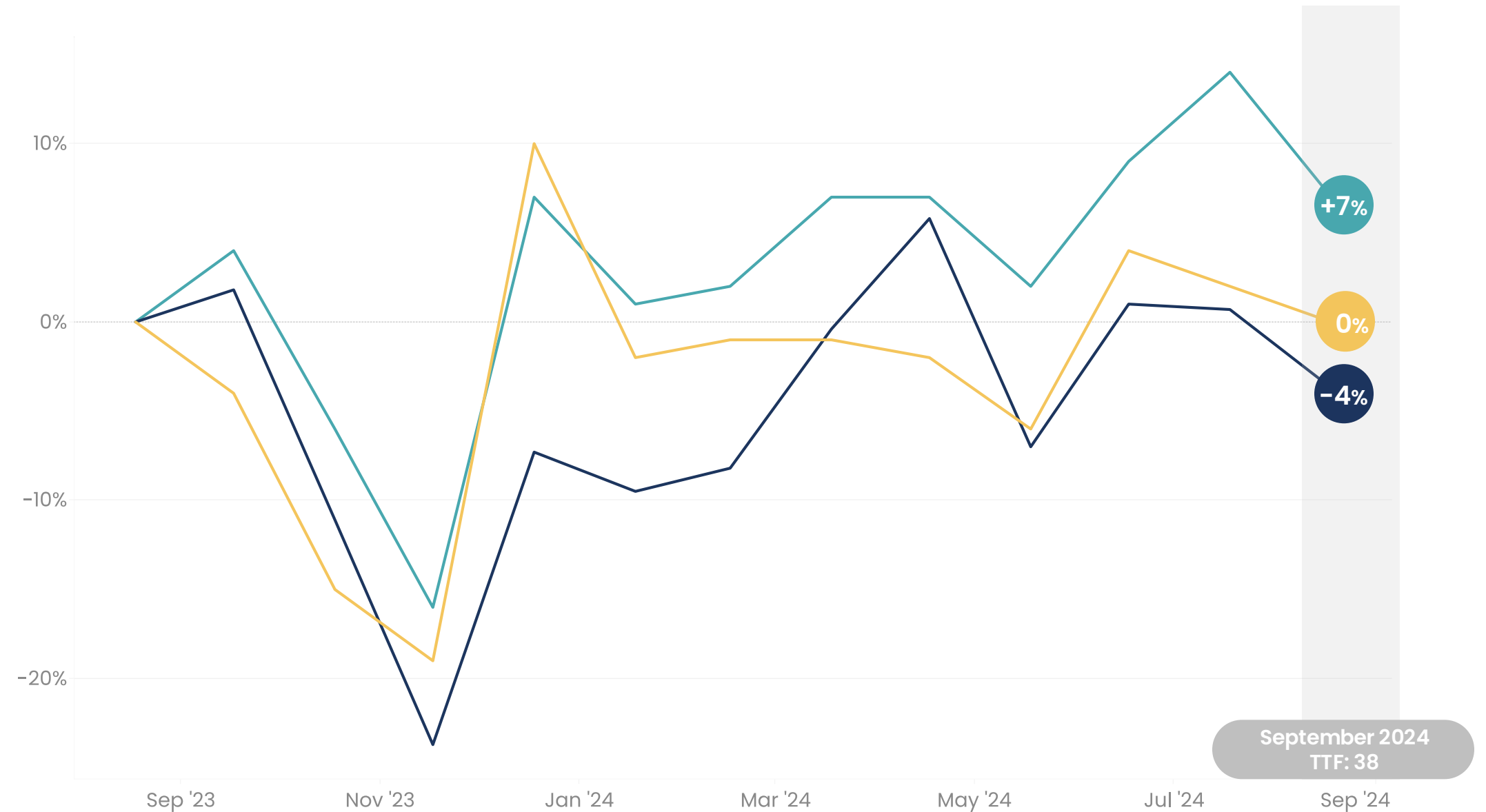


Cautiously optimistic?  
Employers continue to open more jobs than last year.

**iCIMS Insights quick take:**

- Job openings continued to dip last month but are still up 7% from September 2023. Is this a sign that employers are feeling optimistic following the Federal Reserve's long-awaited rate cuts last month?
- This activity aligns with the Bureau of Labor Statistics' most recent – and unexpected – report of higher-than-expected job growth in September. Unemployment also declined from 4.2% to 4.1%.
- Despite all the fluctuations, time to fill (TTF) has remained steady year over year. In September, it clocked in at 38 days, down from 39 days one year earlier.

since September 2023



September 2024  
TTF: 38

**Platform indicators**  
Job openings, applications and hires  
September 2023–September 2024

# 2024 Holiday hiring preview

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How are employers preparing for the upcoming holiday season, and does customer service still matter?

We looked at two industries typically impacted by holiday shopping to gauge **employer and candidate sentiment around seasonal hiring** and uncover how activity this year stacks up against the last few years.

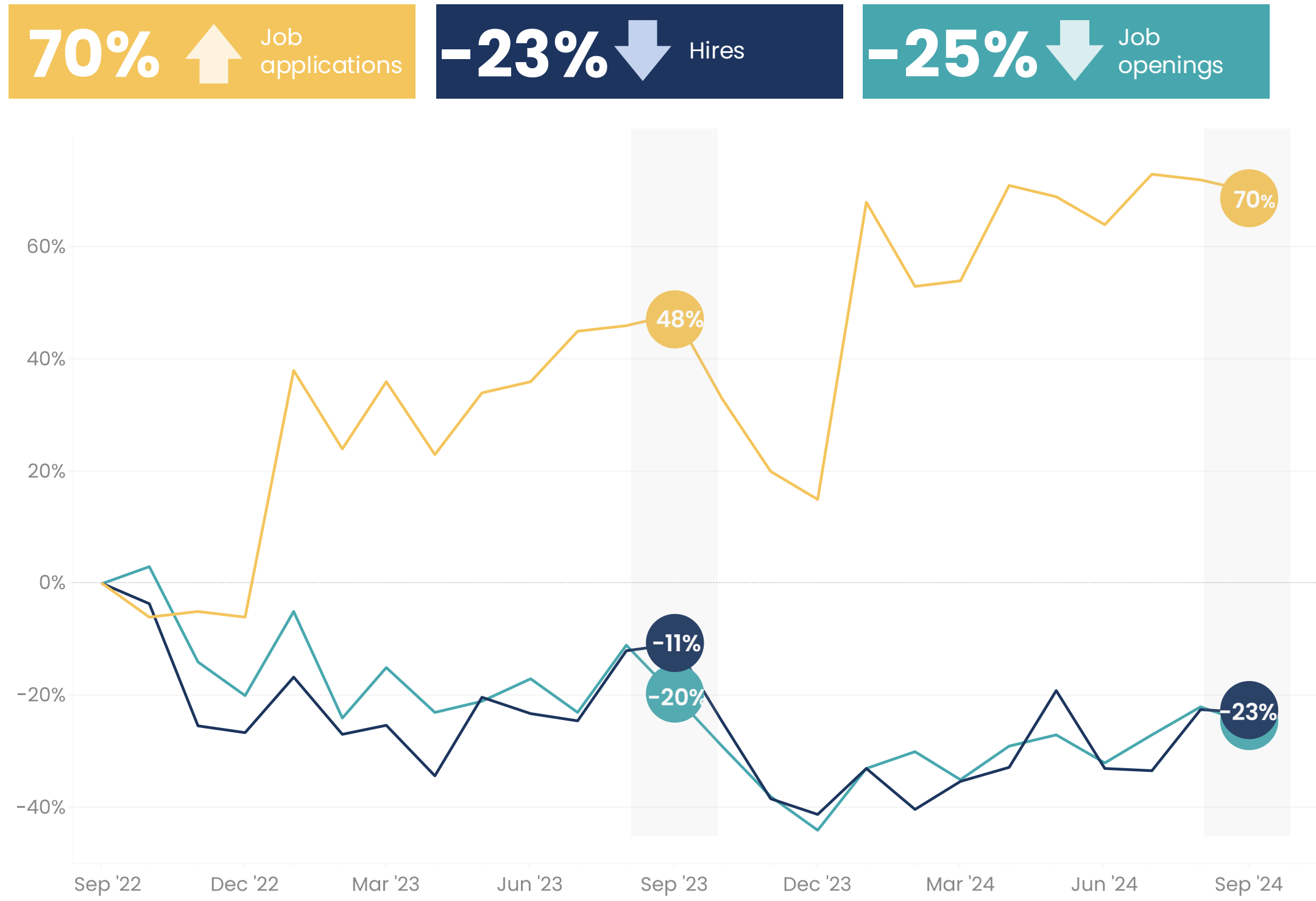


# Retail jobs look better and better — applications explode over two years

## iCIMS Insights quick take:

- Job seekers are bullish about nabbing a job in retail, with applications up 70% since September 2022 and 15% from last year.
- What's the hiring vibe for retailers this holiday season? Openings and hires have continued to drop over the last two years, falling 25% and 23%, respectively.
- But retail's not the only game in seasonal hiring. A recent iCIMS survey of 1,000 US consumers revealed that almost as many job seekers are interested in seasonal desk jobs (33%) as positions in retail (34%).

since September 2022



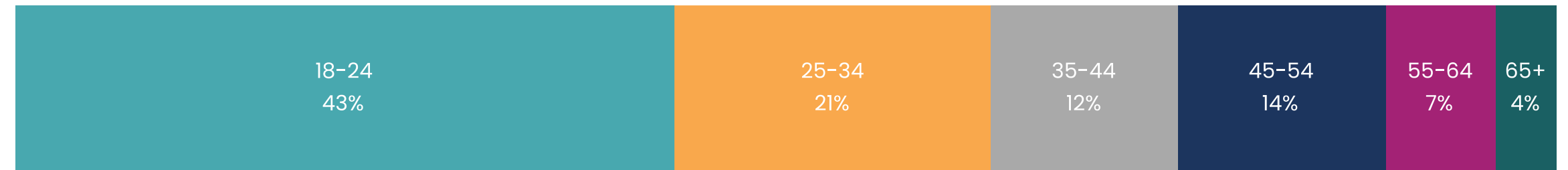
**Retail platform indicators**  
 Job openings, applications and hires  
 September 2022–September 2024



# For Gen Z, landing a job in retail slaps

## iCIMS Insights quick take:

- The breakdown of applicant age bands for retail jobs in September reflected overall trends. Gen Z made up the largest pool of applicants by age, and 64% of applicants were under 35.
- For all the talk about older workers coming out of retirement to work, only 11% of retail applicants in September were over 54.
- Looking at retail applicants by gender, women made up over half of September's pool. This aligns with iCIMS research, which revealed more female respondents (37%) interested in seasonal retail jobs than males (31%).



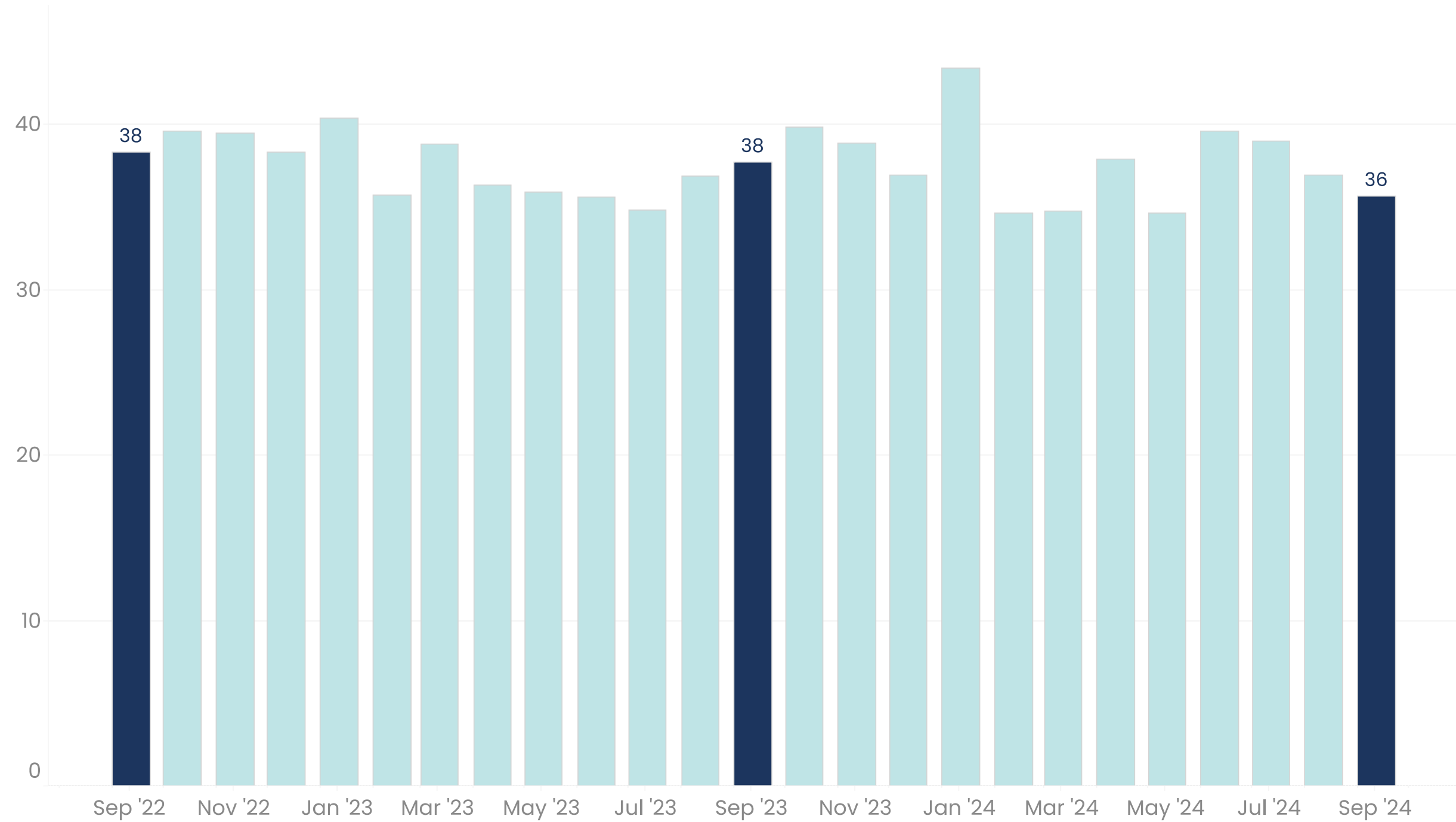
**Retail applicants by age and gender**  
September 2024



# Despite all the applicants, retail recruiters are filling open seats faster

## icims Insights quick take:

- Even though retail has seen a surge in applications since the start of 2024, TTF has decreased since last September.
- Could this swift hiring account for why 40% of candidates described their most recent job search as “quick and easy” and only 9% found it “depressing and hopeless”?
- icims research found that almost one quarter of respondents (23%) said the most frustrating aspect of the application process was feeling like their application went into a digital black hole.



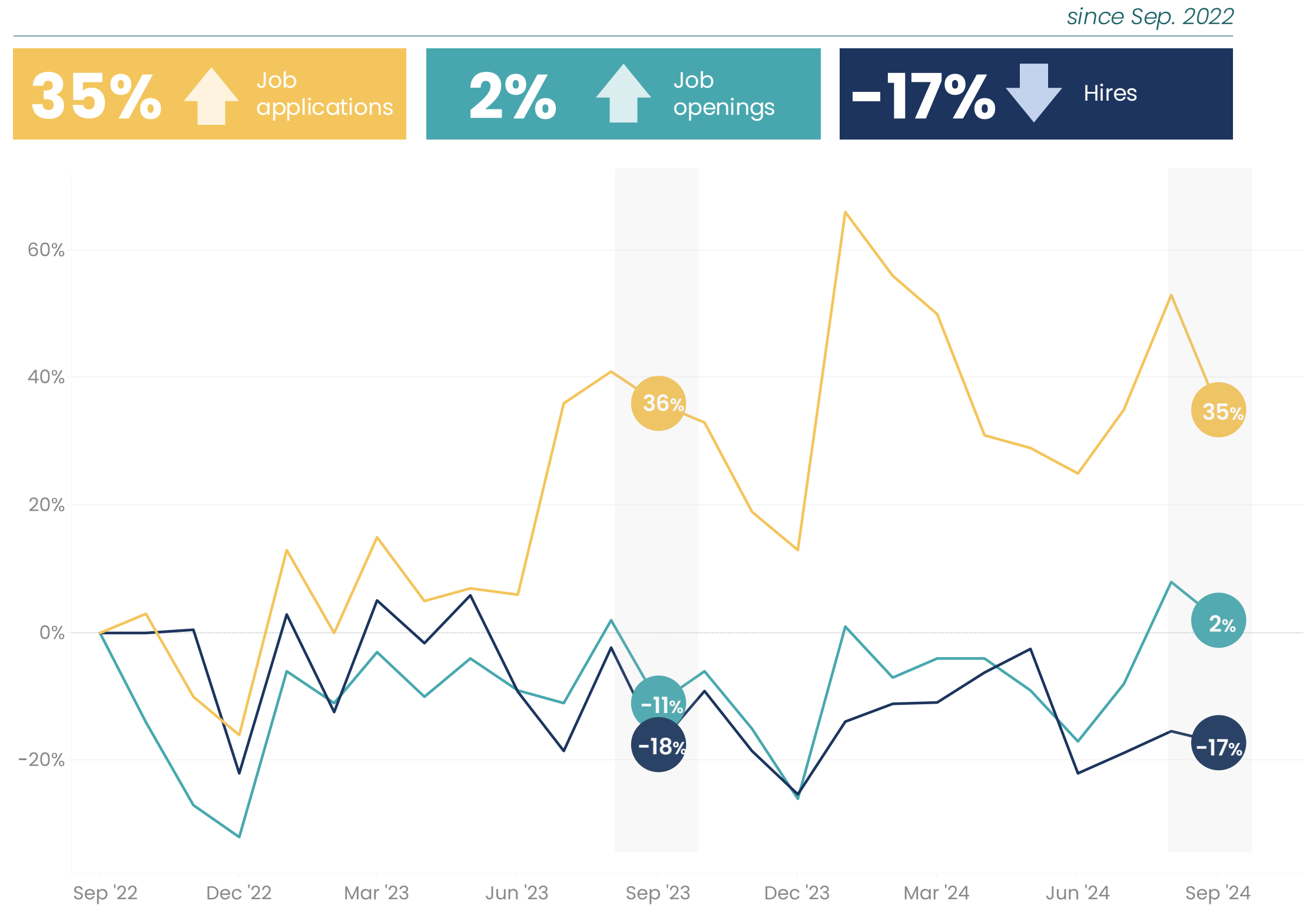
**Retail time to fill**  
September 2022–September 2024



# Online shoppers rejoice: Openings for transportation jobs are up from last year

## icims Insights quick take:

- Could a 15% uptick in openings for transportation jobs since last September mean packages will arrive even faster this holiday season?
- While applications are up 35% from September 2022, they dipped slightly lower from September 2023.
- Hires, however, are down 17% from where they were in September 2022. The good news: that remains consistent with last year's hiring number.



### Transportation platform indicators

Job openings, applications and hires  
September 2022–September 2024

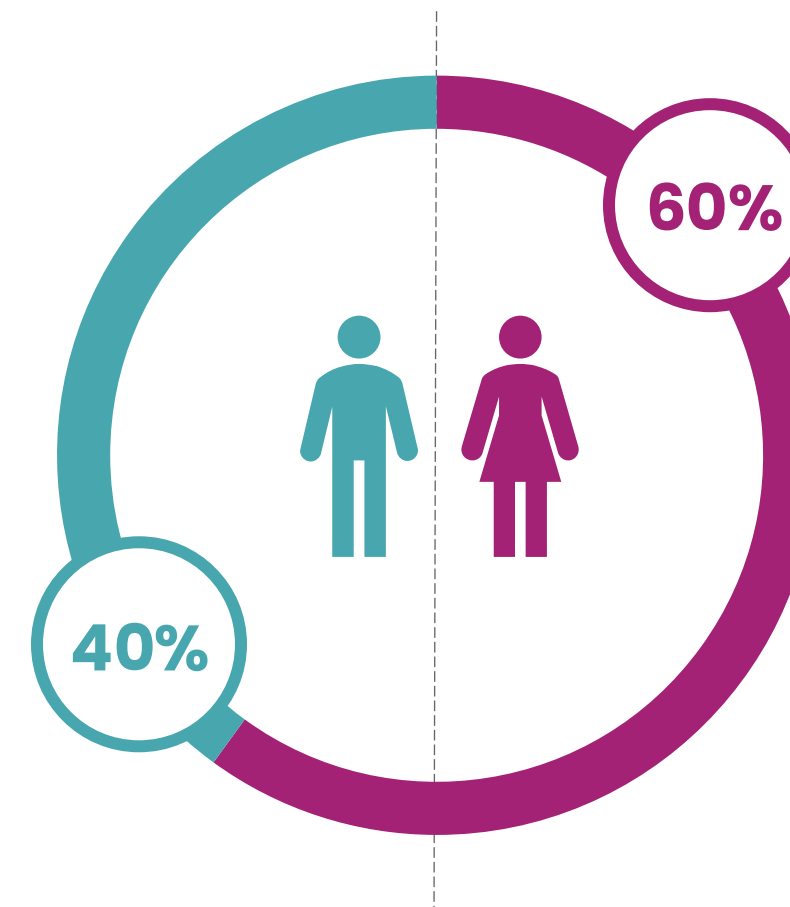
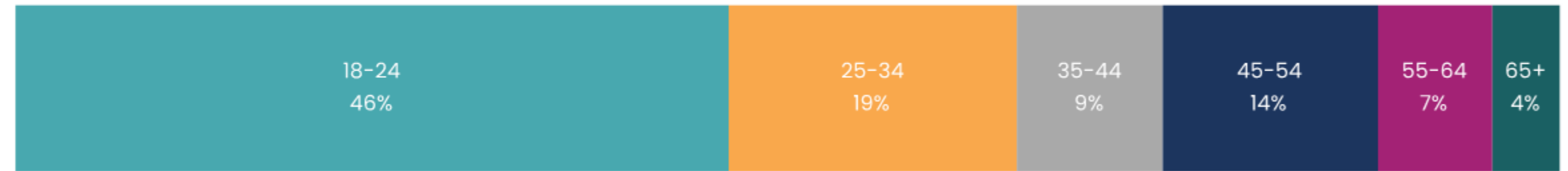




# 65% of applicants for transportation jobs are under 35

## icims Insights quick take:

- Most applicants for transportation jobs were under 35 in September. Our research found that the youngest applicants in particular want frequent status updates on their applications (about once a week or more).
- In our survey, more male respondents (19%) were interested in seasonal delivery work, compared to 10% of female respondents.
- Looking to attract more female candidates? Then make it snappy. According to our [2024 Talent Experience Report](#), a whopping 73% of women said they expected the job application process, from applying to offer, to take three weeks or less (compared to 63% of men who said the same).



**Transportation applicants by age and gender**

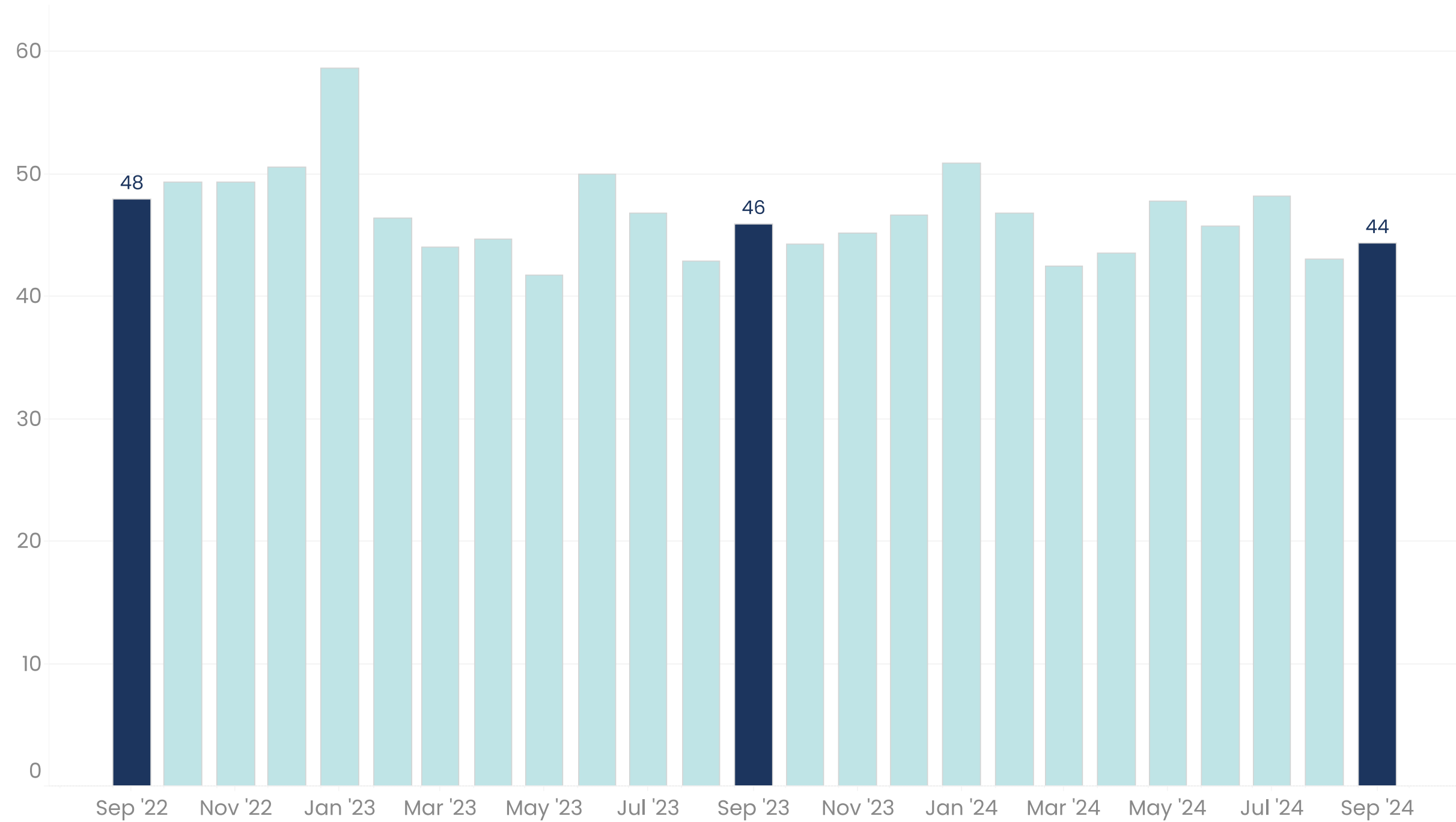
September 2024



# Transportation jobs take about six weeks to fill

## icims Insights quick take:

- Transportation hiring teams have been tasked with doing a lot more with a lot less, but that hasn't slowed them down. Since September 2022, TTF dropped by four days to just over six weeks.
- The brief US port strike of 45,000 dockworkers earlier this month illustrated just how vital transportation roles are to keeping the country's economy humming — not to mention the busy holiday shopping season. From toys to artificial trees, the strike could have been a lump of coal in many business's holiday stockings.
- To ease pressure on delivery workers during the holiday season, many retailers have been using promotions and incentives to encourage consumers to shop early, according to USA Today.



**Transportation time to fill**  
September 2022–September 2024



# For seasonal jobs, candidates prefer part-time roles

## icims Insights quick take:

- 72% of survey respondents prefer part-time seasonal work, compared to 28% who prefer full-time work. Female respondents were more likely to say they prefer part-time seasonal work (79%) compared to 65% of male respondents.
- Full-time job openings grew 5% between September 2023 and September 2024 while part-time openings only squeaked 1% higher during the same period.
- TTF for full-time roles (39 days in September) is in line with overall TTF (38 days) but almost one week longer than TTF for part-time roles in September (34 days).







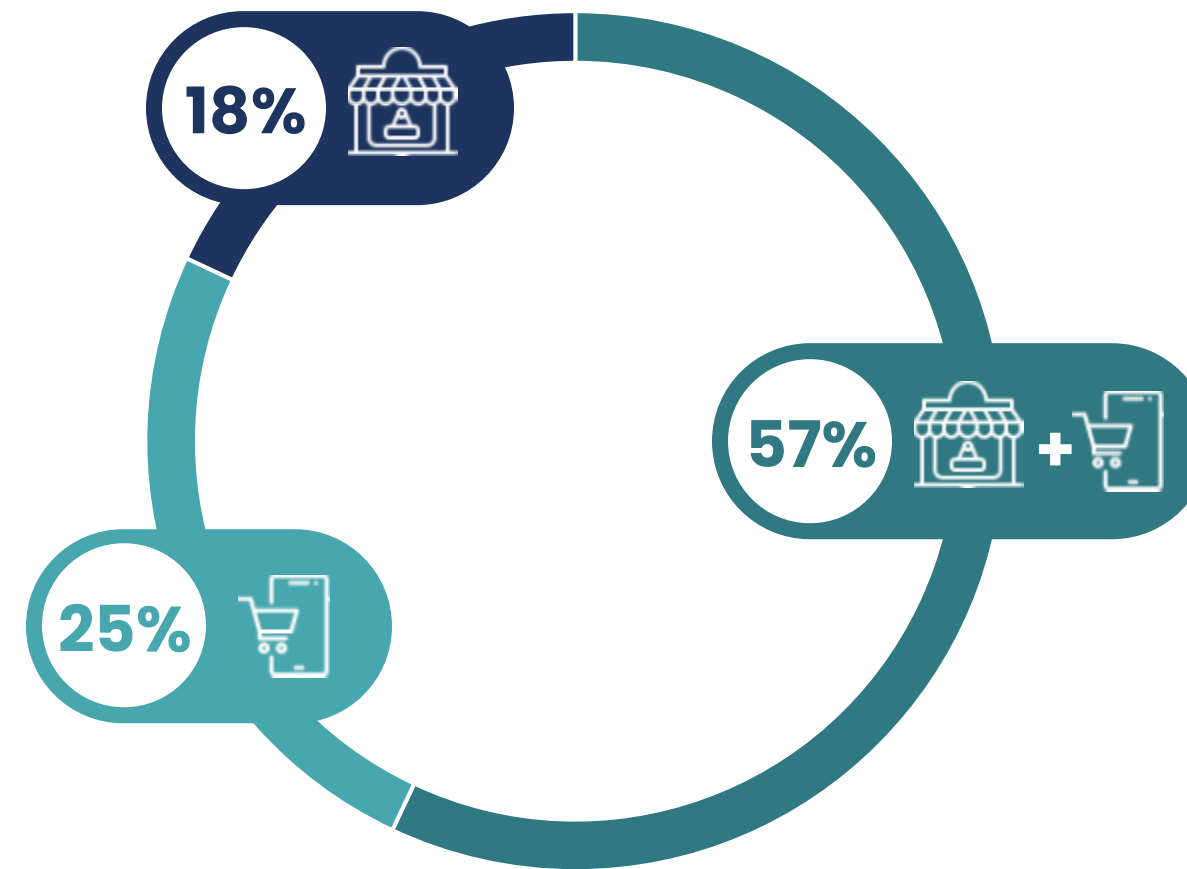
# Customer service is important to the holiday shopping experience

## iCIMS Insights quick take:

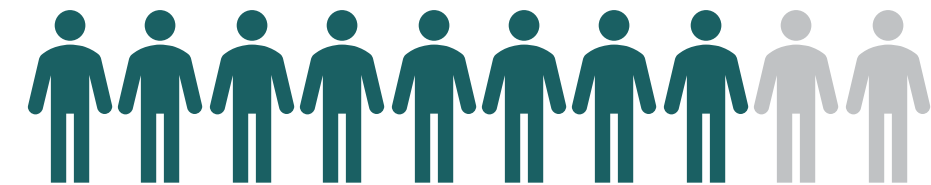
- Holiday shoppers say customer service matters. Almost eight out of ten survey respondents say that it's important to the holiday shopping experience.
- Shopping in store is still a thing, especially with older consumers. Twenty-seven percent of baby boomers still plan on hitting brick-and-mortar shops for their holiday shopping compared to 12% of millennials.
- However, millennials place much more value on customer service, with 44% reporting it's "very" important to their holiday shopping experience and 32% of baby boomers reporting same.

To give shoppers the experience they've come to expect, **retail employers must have their staffing in place** and be ready to serve customers

Respondents plans to shop  
**in-store**  / **online**   
this holiday season



About 8 out of 10 respondents say customer service is important to the holiday shopping experience

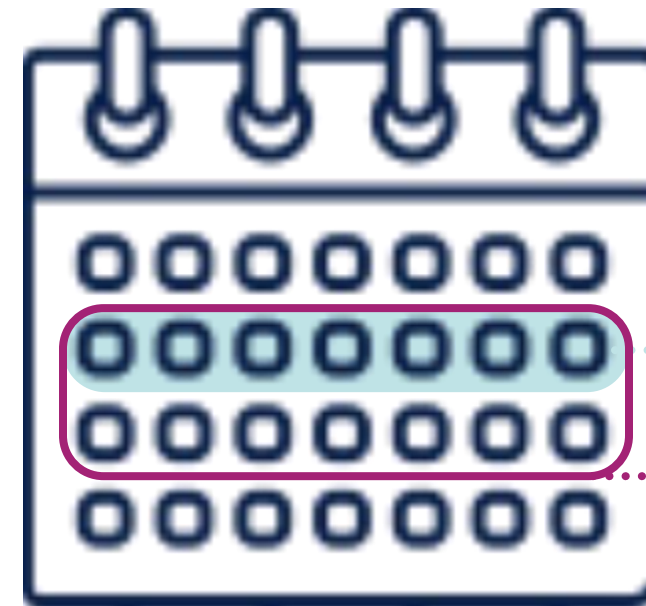




# Seasonal workers expect a quick hiring process and are in it for the money

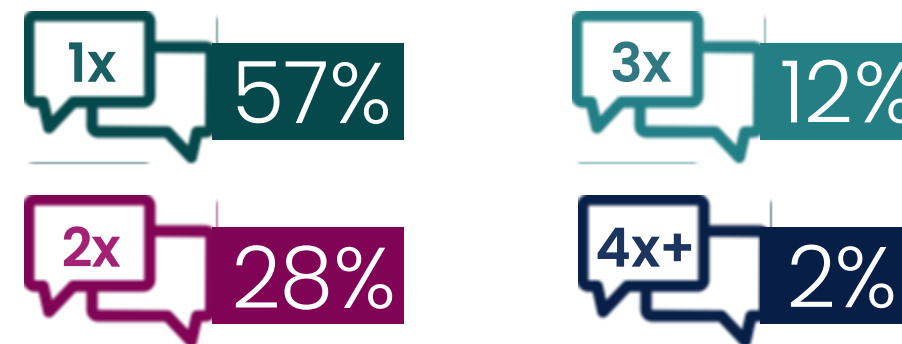
## iCIMS Insights quick take:

- When asked about their primary expectations from a seasonal job, a majority (67%) of respondents said competitive pay, followed by a pleasant work environment (53%) and employee discounts (50%).
- When asked about concerns for seasonal employment, 53% said inconsistent hours or scheduling conflicts, 46% said high workload or stress levels and 42% said inadequate compensation.
- While almost three-quarters of respondents prefer in-person interviews for seasonal jobs, younger candidates prefer interviews in the comfort of their own homes. Our research revealed that 64% of both millennials and Gen Z would choose in-person over virtual interviews.



- 62% of respondents said they expect to hear back **1–7 days** after they applied for a seasonal job.
- 25% of respondents said they expected to hear back **1–2 weeks** after they applied for a seasonal job.

### How many interviews do candidates for seasonal positions expect?



71% of respondents prefer in-person interviews for seasonal jobs.



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insights?

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### icims 2024 Talent Experience Report

Explore what candidates want right now and how talent acquisition pros are delivering those experiences in our second annual [Talent Experience Report](#).

### icims 2024 CHRO Report

CHROs and chief people officers share insight into what's top of mind in the year ahead in [icims 2024 CHRO Report](#).  
Unsurprisingly, HR leaders are juggling many challenges and priorities in an uncertain hiring climate.

### Complete guide to using AI in recruiting

AI has the potential to revolutionize hiring, but getting started can feel overwhelming. Based on our history of using AI across our hiring platform, we've developed [4 steps](#) to help you evaluate and implement AI in your recruiting process.



# About iCIMS

iCIMS is a leading provider of talent acquisition technology that enables organizations everywhere to build winning workforces.

Visit [www.icims.com](http://www.icims.com) to learn more.

Workforce data is vital to driving business forward.

### iCIMS Insights provides data that is:

- Current
- Cross-industry
- Dual-focused on employer and job seeker intentions and activity

### Data derived from:



3+ million global platform users



200+ million applications in 2023



570+ million candidate profiles



5.5+ million hires in 2023