

An aerial photograph of a truck yard, showing numerous semi-trucks parked in rows. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. A vertical line of yellow dots runs down the left side of the page, partially overlapping the truck yard image.

# Labour Market Snapshot



# Note to readers

Labour market information (LMI) is actionable intelligence pertaining to the supply and demand of labour. It puts raw data into context and facilitates better decisions by employers, workers, job seekers, policymakers, educators, career practitioners, academics, students, parents, and more.

LMI at Trucking HR Canada is prepared by our team of analysts using Statistics Canada census and labour force survey data, as well as qualitative and quantitative research directly from employers that fills gaps in the publicly available data.





# Trucking and logistics labour market stabilizing in 2023

## Introduction

One of Trucking HR Canada's top strategic priorities is to help meet our industry's HR challenges by providing relevant, accurate, and accessible labour market information (LMI). Our quarterly reports provide data that is not available anywhere else along with in-depth analysis by experts who understand the trucking and logistics sector.

Trucking HR Canada is committed to bringing you employment information and strategies to help meet the demands of the changing supply chain landscape. We use these quarterly insights to keep our programs and resources up to date to help you build the skilled workforce your organization needs to thrive.

In 2021, employment in the trucking and logistics sector hit a 10-year record high of almost 790,000 as the economy rebounded following the severe response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout 2022 and 2023, labour market pressures in the sector started to ease. In 2023, employment was less than 1% above the 10-year average at 752,200. While the number of vacancies for drivers is decreasing, employers are still wrestling with lower-than-average unemployment rates, indicating that the pool of experienced drivers seeking work is relatively small. This underscores the ongoing need to recruit and train brand new drivers to meet the demand for trucking services.

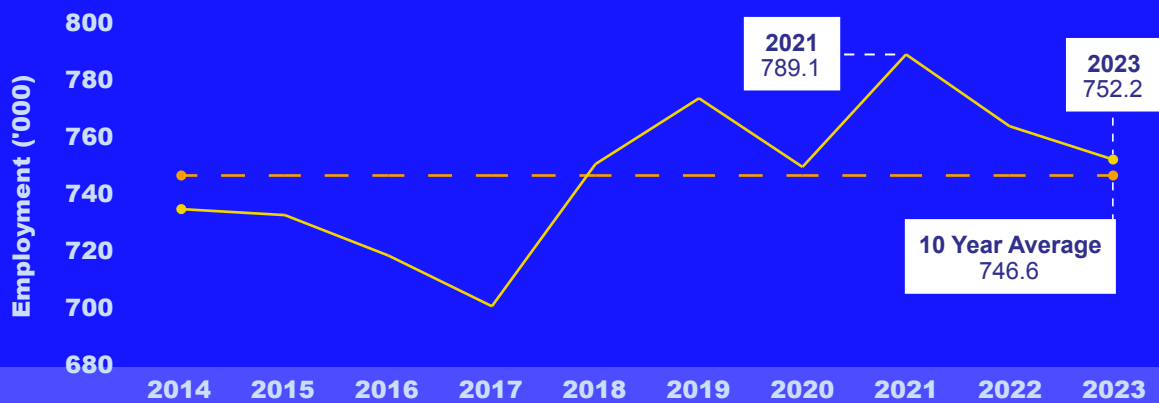


## After a post-pandemic surge, Canada's trucking and logistics labour market is stabilizing

The COVID-19 pandemic shocked Canada's labour market and it is still suffering from lingering effects. Many industries suffered almost complete shutdowns and unemployment rates across the Canadian economy spiked. The post-pandemic impacts are still playing out across the country, with persistent labour shortages in health care, accommodation and food services, and construction, to name a few. The experience in the trucking and logistics sector was somewhat different. Although demand for trucking services dropped off sharply in the first few months of 2020, it surged later in the year as Canadians adjusted their purchasing patterns and the demand for food, fuel, medical supplies and personal protective equipment increased. The impact was significant in the trucking and logistics

sector. Trucking HR Canada's 2020 and 2021 labour market research found that 60%–70% of trucking and logistics employers had to reduce hours or lay off workers during the first few months of the pandemic but by mid-2020, employment rebounded, with total annual employment in 2020 sitting roughly at the ten-year average. As the Canadian economy began to recover from the initial shock of the pandemic, the labour market in trucking and logistics surged, with employment across the sector hitting a ten-year high of almost 790,000 in 2021 and vacancy rates for drivers hitting record highs. By the close of 2023, employment in the sector was cooling with the total number of workers at 752,200, less than 1% above the ten-year average.

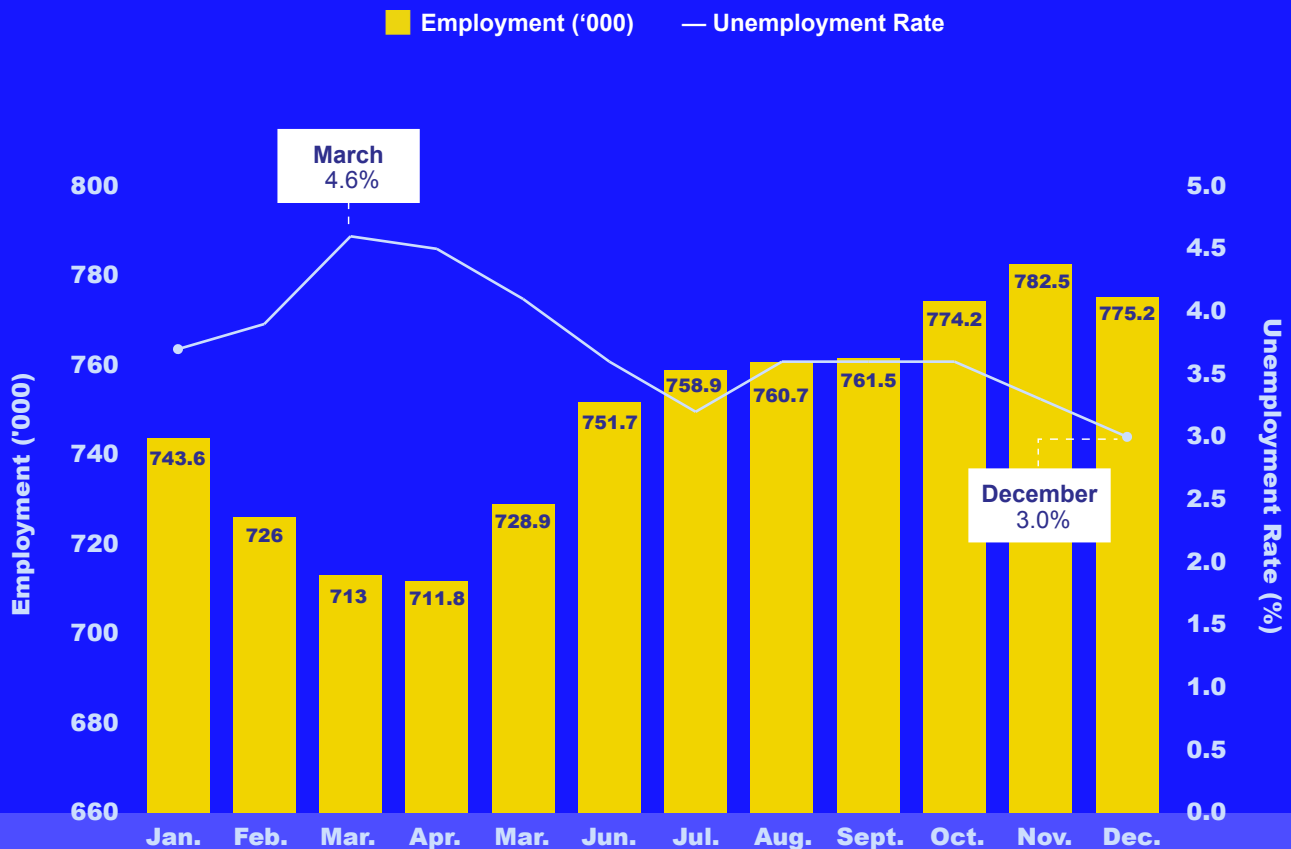
### EMPLOYMENT ('000) IN CANADIAN TRUCKING AND LOGISTICS SECTOR, 2014–2023



Following a significant drop in employment in the trucking and logistics sector in the first quarter of 2023, the number of workers in the sector surged through the last three quarters of the year, peaking at 782,500 in November. At the same time, the

unemployment rate dropped from a high of 4.6% in March to just 3% in December, the lowest unemployment rate among trucking and logistics workers all year.

### TOTAL EMPLOYMENT ('000) AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (%) TRUCKING AND LOGISTICS SECTOR, 2023 3-MONTH MOVING AVERAGE



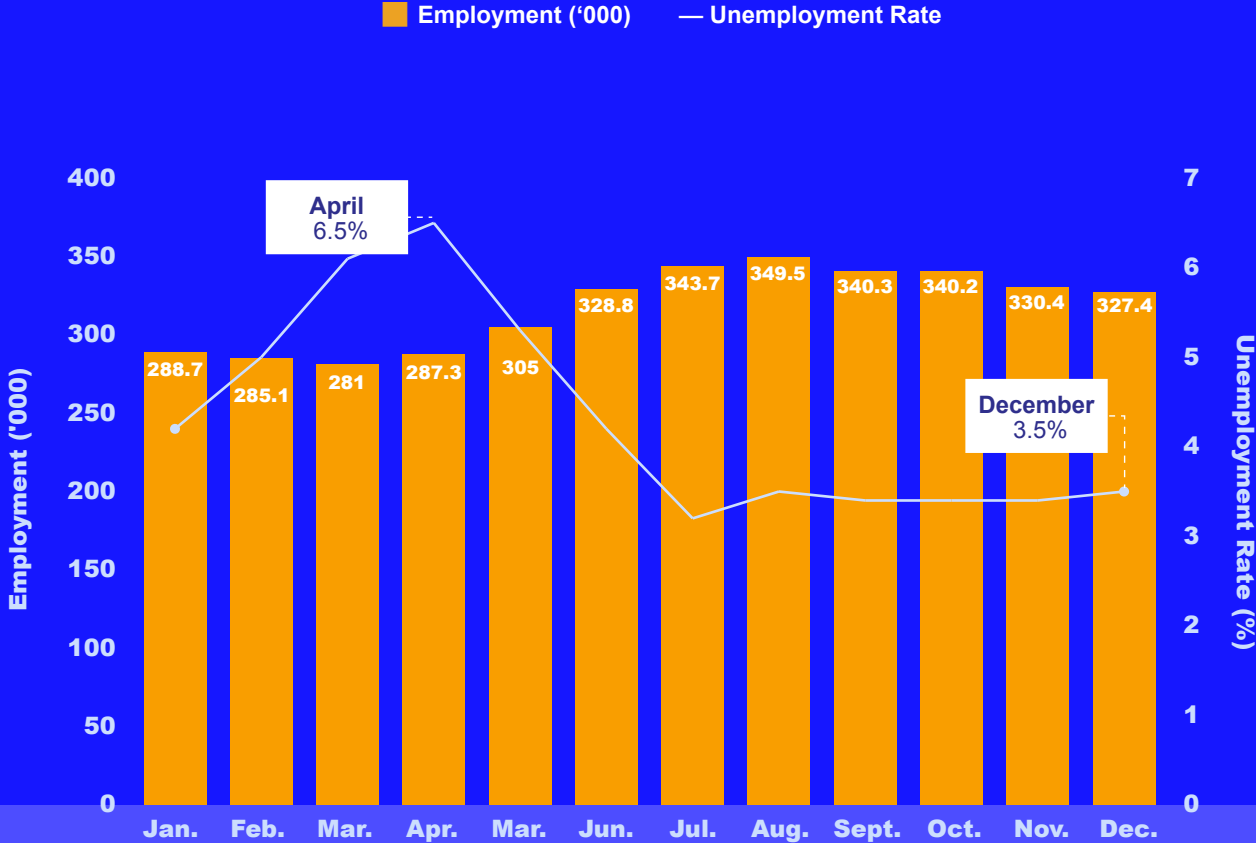
Graph Source: Trucking HR Canada, Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, custom data request, 2023

# Drivers' employment rose in the last two quarter of 2023

Employment among transport truck drivers increased over the course of 2023, averaging 317,300 drivers. Unemployment of truck drivers peaked in April 2023, reaching 6.5%, but dropped

sharply over the last three quarters of the year, settling at 3.5% in December. The lower unemployment rate indicates a smaller pool of potential job applicants in the driver occupation.

**TOTAL EMPLOYMENT ('000) AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (%)  
TRANSPORT TRUCK DRIVERS, 2023  
3-MONTH MOVING AVERAGE**



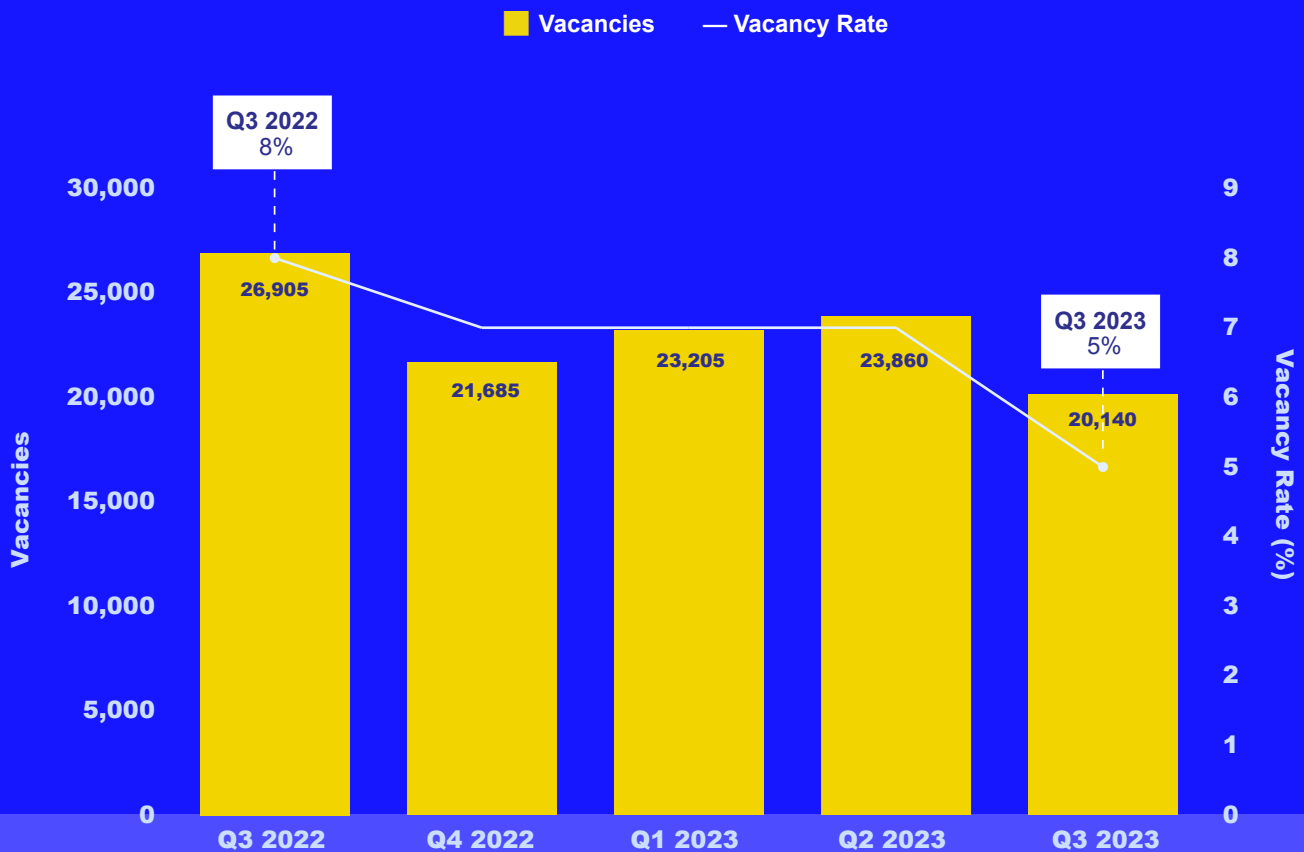
Graph Source: Trucking HR Canada, Statistics Canada, Labour force survey, custom data request, 2023

## Vacancy data for the third quarter could point to easing of the driver shortage

Between Q3 2022 and Q3 2023, the number of vacant driver position decreased by 6,765 positions and the occupational vacancy rate is

estimated to have decreased from 8% to 5%. This could signal an easing of the tightness in the labour market for drivers.

### NUMBER OF VACANCIES AND VACANCY RATE (%) TRANSPORT TRUCK DRIVERS Q3 2022–Q3 2023



Graph Source: Trucking HR Canada and Statistics Canada Labour force survey, custom data request and Table 14-10-0328-01 Job vacancies, proportion of job vacancies and average offered hourly wage by selected characteristics, quarterly, unadjusted for seasonality, 2023

# Fresh insights coming soon

Trucking HR Canada is finalizing its updated labour market system and databases. In 2024, we will be publishing an updated comprehensive labour market outlook report. This report will showcase brand new labour market analysis and forecasts to 2030. The report will also reveal the results of THRC's newest employer survey, highlighting the changing priorities, HR challenges and labour market outlook of Canadian trucking and logistics employers.





**Trucking HR Canada's labour market information initiative has the following reports available:**

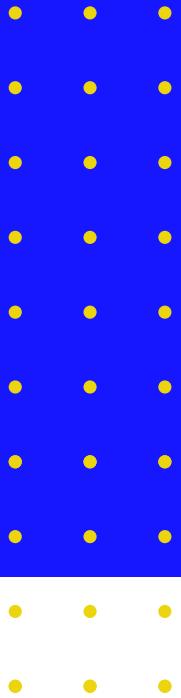
- ✦ [Labour Market Snapshot January 2023](#)
- ✦ [Labour Market Snapshot June 2023](#)
- ✦ [Labour Market Insights Special Vacancy Report August 2023](#)
- ✦ [Labour Market Snapshot November 2023](#)

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