



World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report Finds Economic Participation is Key for Future Growth

October 12, 2010 at 9:53 AM EDT

MILWAUKEE, Oct 12, 2010 /PRNewswire via COMTEX News Network/ -- The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2010 released today shows that women are still falling behind men when it comes to economic participation. Manpower Inc., a partner of the Forum's Women Leaders and Gender Parity Programme, echoed the flagship annual report's call for a true gender revolution to mobilize an underutilized pool of talent.

(Logo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20060221/CGTU012LOGO>)

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20060221/CGTU012LOGO>)

Manpower Inc. has long been concerned about the lack of engagement of women in the global workforce, and the damage this could cause to long term economic growth and sustainable development. Barbara Beck, Manpower Inc.'s President of the EMEA region, is a Programme leader and uses her expertise and experience of the global labor market to advocate women in work and encourage employers to realise the potential of this vital segment of their workforce. Earlier this year, at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos, Beck led the session *Achieving Gender Parity: What Works?* which reviewed groundbreaking solutions for closing gender gaps. Last year, Manpower Inc. released a paper detailing how women are an underleveraged solution and called for the increased engagement of women in the global workforce as a key component of long-term economic growth and sustainable development.

The Global Gender Gap Report shows some encouraging signs of progress, in the 134 countries covered 96% have closed health gaps and 93% have closed education gaps. Yet, only 60% of countries have succeeded in closing economic participation gaps.

A recent Manpower *Talent Shortage Survey* indicated that 31% of employers around the world are having trouble filling certain jobs due to a mismatch of available skills and workers. Women's active economic participation will be a crucial step in alleviating talent shortages now, and in the future as demographic shifts and economic recovery result in the global squeeze on talent becoming more acute.

"As the working-age population continues to shrink around the world, the mismatch between where talent is available and where it is needed will inevitably worsen," said Jeff Joerres, Manpower Inc. Chairman and CEO. "Solving this conundrum is not easy and means considering untapped and underleveraged talent pools. Unfortunately, women remain chronically underrepresented in the workforce. Women bring diversity of thought, perspective and background, which creates energy in organizations that in turn translates into more profitable business."

Inflexible work structures, lower pay and the cost of childcare continue to be the biggest global barriers to women in the workforce, employers need to reconsider existing work models in order to both retain and attract potential employees. Likewise, women must seize the opportunity. Some innovative employers are making use of flexible policies to engage with workers, particularly women, who may be unable, or unwilling to work according to the traditional 40-hour office-based working week. These initiatives include job sharing, flexitime and telecommuting among others. Virtual working technologies can allow workers to 'plug in and play' and work from a location and at a time that is convenient to them, which can serve to unlock a previously untapped labor pool.

"For the first time ever, flexibility in the world of work is becoming more commonly accepted, and technology is making it possible," continued Joerres. "Employers need to revise outdated work models and people practices to drive engagement of female employees, and look beyond their usual talent sources to tap into the skills of this vital talent pool."

This is a start, but more needs to be done to fully engage women and tap in to their potential. For countries and companies to flourish, women must play a bigger role in the workforce. Long-term competitive advantage will depend on enabling more individuals to take part in the workforce in a sustainable way.

For more information, visit <http://www.weforum.org/gendergap>

About Manpower Inc.

Manpower Inc. (NYSE: MAN) is a world leader in innovative workforce solutions; creating and delivering services that enable its clients to win in the changing world of work. With over 60 years' experience, Manpower offers employers a range of services and solutions for the entire employment and business cycle including permanent, temporary and contract recruitment; employee assessment and selection; training; outplacement; outsourcing and consulting. Manpower's worldwide network of nearly 4,000 offices in 82 countries and territories enables the company to meet the needs of 400,000 clients per year, including small and medium size enterprises in all industry sectors, as well as the world's largest multinational corporations. The focus of Manpower's work is on raising productivity through improved quality, efficiency and cost-reduction across their total workforce, enabling clients to concentrate on their core business activities. Manpower Inc. operates under five brands: Manpower, Manpower Professional, Elan, Jefferson Wells and Right Management. More information about Manpower Inc. is available at www.manpower.com.

Manpower Inc. has five women in executive management positions and two women on its board of directors. 70% of Manpower's total revenue is generated by business units led by women. In 2010, Manpower Inc. CEO and Chairman Jeff Joerres was recognized in a national report by the InterOrganization Network report as a "guy who gets it" when it comes to the importance of diversity in the workplace. In 2009, Manpower Inc. was named one of Pink Magazine's "Top Companies for Women" for the second consecutive year.

SOURCE Manpower Inc.

Copyright (C) 2010 PR Newswire. All rights reserved