



ManpowerGroup's Global Hiring Confidence Index Reveals Rougher Road Ahead for Job Seekers as Global Labor Market Set to Slow Further in 1Q 2013

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MILWAUKEE, Dec. 11, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- According to ManpowerGroup's (NYSE:MAN) first-quarter 2013 Manpower Employment Outlook Survey released today, the majority of employers in the global labor market are less confident about adding staff than they were at the start of 2012, suggesting a more difficult time ahead for job seekers. ManpowerGroup's research shows softer forecasts in 29 of 42 countries and territories compared to this time last year, and compared to three months ago shows that hiring intentions fall in 21 countries. The weaker hiring sentiment is most evident across Europe, where employers in 13 of 24 countries are reporting negative outlooks for the first quarter, compared to eight countries just three months ago. Despite the uncertainty that prevails in Europe, the German labor market shows signs of resilience, as employers there report a similar forecast from three months ago. The uncertainty in demand also extends to China, where employers report the weakest hiring plans in three years. Meanwhile, U.S. employers say they will hire at the same steady pace seen over the past six months.

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"Worldwide, businesses are hesitating with investments due to uncertainty and this includes their investment in talent," said Jeffrey A. Joerres, Chairman and CEO of ManpowerGroup. "In Europe, more companies are telling us they will cut staff to adjust to the weaker demand. In fact, employers in seven European countries are reporting their weakest forecasts since we have been tracking hiring trends. But the current softening across global labor markets is much different than in 2008-2009. We are not seeing widespread doom and gloom, but rather more of a prolonged standstill in hiring. We do see a few bright spots. UK employers are reporting the strongest outlook in four years and the German market should remain steady over the next three months. In addition, job prospects in the U.S. remain stable, and perhaps now with the elections behind us the labor market can gain some traction."

ManpowerGroup's hiring confidence index reveals that first-quarter hiring plans are strongest in Taiwan, India, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia and Panama while those in Greece, Italy, Spain, Slovakia, Slovenia and the Netherlands are the weakest worldwide.

Across the Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) region, first-quarter hiring plans are positive in 11 of 24 countries with Outlooks improving or remaining relatively stable from three months ago in 13 labor markets. On the other hand, a year-over-year analysis reveals that the hiring pace is expected to weaken in three-quarters of the countries surveyed. Job prospects in the region are expected to be strongest in Turkey, Israel and Romania and weakest in Greece, Italy and Spain.

"With the eurozone's return to recession, employers are confronted with a difficult balancing act in the near term," Joerres said. "Companies must find a way to recalibrate their workforce to align with an uncertain demand for their products and services and this is no easy task. Furthermore, in Eastern Europe our data reveals a prevalent weakening trend — hiring intentions fall from three months ago in all of the countries we survey, with Polish employers reporting their first-ever negative forecast. In contrast, stronger hiring plans in Finance and Business Services are helping to fuel a modestly improved UK outlook."

Employers across the 10 countries ManpowerGroup polls in the Americas continue to report various degrees of positive hiring activity. Outlooks improve or remain stable in six of 10 countries quarter-over-quarter, but year-over-year comparisons reveal weaker hiring plans in seven countries. Regional hiring expectations are strongest in Brazil, Mexico, Panama and Colombia, and weakest in Argentina, where hiring expectations bounce back from a weakening trend of six consecutive quarters. While results for the U.S. are among the least optimistic in the region, the forecast does represent the strongest U.S. hiring pace seen since the recession.

"U.S. job seekers should encounter the same measured hiring environment, led by the Wholesale & Retail Trade sector where one in four employers say they will hire," said Joerres. "Job prospects in Mexico are the strongest in nearly five years, but companies and workers alike are trying to assess the long-term impact of the recent labor market reforms, which include lifting the ban on part-time employment. Meanwhile, Brazil's hiring forecast — although the most optimistic in the region — is the weakest on record and represents notable declines in nearly all industry sectors."

On the other side of the globe in the Asia Pacific region, hiring expectations remain positive in all labor markets. Job prospects are expected to remain largely unchanged from three months ago in the majority of countries and territories surveyed. However, forecasts weaken in five of eight countries compared to this time last year. Expected demand for talent in the region is strongest in Taiwan and India and weakest in Australia, where hiring expectations have steadily fallen over the past year and a half.

"Australia's once booming resource sector is unexpectedly slowing down due to lower commodity prices and weaker demand from Asia, however the appetite for skilled talent in the sector remains healthy," Joerres said. "Similarly, in the Indian market employer demand is notably weaker than 12 months ago across all industry sectors and more companies are uncertain about their workforce plans. We see this same growing uncertainty in China where 38 percent of employers are telling us they simply don't know whether or not they will hire in the quarter ahead. On the other hand, Taiwanese employers report the same robust hiring patterns seen over the past six months, led by continued strong hiring plans in the Services sector. Interestingly, regionwide the Finance/Insurance/Real Estate sector is expected to bounce back from last quarter with outlooks improving or remaining relatively stable across all countries and territories."

The next Manpower Employment Outlook Survey will be released on 12 March 2013 to report hiring expectations for the second quarter of 2013. The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is available free of charge to the public through local Manpower representatives in participating countries. To receive e-mail notification when the survey is available each quarter, please complete an online subscription form at: <http://www.manpowergroup.com/investors/alerts.cfm>.

About the Survey

The global leader in innovative workforce solutions, ManpowerGroup releases the Manpower Employment Outlook Survey quarterly to measure

employers' intentions to increase or decrease the number of employees in their workforce during the next quarter. It is the longest running, most extensive, forward-looking employment survey in the world, polling over 65,000 employers in 42 countries and territories. The survey serves as a bellwether of labor market trends and activities and is regularly used to inform the Bank of England's Inflation Reports, as well as a regular data source for the European Commission, informing its EU Employment Situation and Social Outlook report the *Monthly Monitor*. ManpowerGroup's independent survey data is also sourced by financial analysts and economists around the world to help determine where labor markets are headed.

About ManpowerGroup

ManpowerGroup™ (NYSE: MAN), the world leader in innovative workforce solutions, creates and delivers high-impact solutions that enable our clients to achieve their business goals and enhance their competitiveness. With over 60 years of experience, our \$22 billion company creates unique time to value through a comprehensive suite of innovative solutions that help clients win in the Human Age. These solutions cover an entire range of talent-driven needs from recruitment and assessment, training and development, and career management, to outsourcing and workforce consulting. ManpowerGroup maintains the world's largest and industry-leading network of 3,600 offices in 80 countries and territories, generating a dynamic mix of an unmatched global footprint with valuable insight and local expertise to meet the needs of its 400,000 clients per year, across all industry sectors, small and medium-sized enterprises, local, multinational and global companies. By connecting our deep understanding of human potential to the ambitions of clients, ManpowerGroup helps the organizations and individuals we serve achieve more than they imagined — because their success leads to our success. And by creating these powerful connections, we create power that drives organizations forward, accelerates personal success and builds more sustainable communities. We help power the world of work. The ManpowerGroup suite of solutions is offered through ManpowerGroup™ Solutions, Manpower®, Experis™ and Right Management®. Learn more about how ManpowerGroup can help you win in the Human Age at www.manpowergroup.com.

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