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New-Year Hiring Plans Indicate Progress Toward Recovery in World's Largest Economies According to Quarter 1 2011 Global Manpower Employment Outlook Survey

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MILWAUKEE, Dec. 7, 2010 /PRNewswire/ -- Results for the first quarter 2011 global Manpower Employment Outlook Survey released today by Manpower Inc. (NYSE: MAN) suggest a more positive start to the new year for the global labor market. Data reveals improved hiring expectations from 12 months ago in 28 of 39 countries and territories, including the G7 countries of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States, where hiring plans are stable or improved from both the fourth quarter of 2010 and this time last year. Despite continued mixed results across Europe, German employers are reporting their strongest hiring plans since early 2008. Meanwhile, hiring intentions among U.S. employers remain modest but signal the most optimistic first-quarter outlook in three years. Job prospects continue to be robust across the Asia Pacific region with Chinese and Indian employers reporting the most optimistic hiring intentions globally.

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"The stability and incremental improvement reflected in the data for the G7 countries indicates progress toward recovery for the global labor market. In fact, Net Employment Outlooks for the G7 countries are all in positive territory for the first time since the third quarter of 2008," said Jeffrey A. Joerres, Chairman and CEO of Manpower Inc. "Nonetheless, the global market still has a long way to go as employers are not yet confident enough to hire for permanent positions on any noteworthy scale. With workforces stretched so thin in recovering markets, we're seeing companies experience a choke point as demand picks up—at this point companies are either hiring very selectively and/or increasing their use of contingent labor. The employment picture is very different in the Asia Pacific market where employers are feeling the talent crunch in the face of strong demand and are working hard to recruit and retain employees."

The Manpower survey shows employers in 32 of 39 countries and territories expect varying degrees of positive hiring activity in the first three months of the year, with those in India, China, Taiwan, Brazil, Turkey and Singapore reporting the strongest hiring plans. In contrast, employers in Greece and the Czech Republic, Austria, Ireland, Spain and Romania report the weakest and only negative forecasts globally. Employers in Bulgaria, Slovenia and Turkey were surveyed for the first time this quarter.

Employer hiring plans continue to be mixed across the 21 countries surveyed in the Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) region, with positive activity expected in 14 countries. While Net Employment Outlooks weakened in 11 countries from three months ago, a year-over-year comparison reveals stronger Outlooks in 12 countries. Hiring activity in the EMEA region is expected to be strongest in Turkey, Germany and Sweden and weakest in Greece and the Czech Republic. The strong hiring pace anticipated in Turkey is due in part to demand in the Construction sector where 45 percent of employers intend to add staff.

"The bright spot in Europe continues to be Germany, where the unemployment rate is at its lowest in 18 years and engineers and financial professionals continue to be in high demand. In fact, the hiring forecast from Finance and Business Services employers is the strongest first-quarter outlook since we began surveying the German market in 2003," said Joerres. "In contrast, employer hiring confidence in the Greek and Spanish markets continues to erode. However, data for Italy shows improved hiring expectations for the third consecutive quarter resulting in the first positive forecast from Italian employers in more than two years."

Employer hiring expectations continue to be strong in the Asia Pacific region where job prospects improve year-over-year in all eight countries and territories surveyed. Compared to three months ago, job prospects are improved or remain stable in six countries and territories. Regional hiring plans continue to be strongest in India, China and Taiwan and weakest in Japan, despite a cautiously optimistic forecast from employers.

"In India and China, employer demand remains high; individuals with in-demand skills continue to be poached by rival firms making engagement and retention strategies a critical priority for both foreign and domestic organizations," said Joerres. "Meanwhile, Chinese manufacturers, particularly those in textiles, are being challenged with worker shortages, rapidly rising wages and competition from other low-cost countries."

Across the 10 countries surveyed in the Americas region, forecasts from employers are stronger in comparison to the first quarter of 2010 in all countries except Guatemala and mixed compared to three months ago. However, all countries in the region should experience generally positive hiring activity in the quarter ahead. Regional hiring plans are most optimistic in Brazil and Peru and least optimistic in Guatemala and the U.S., although the report from U.S. employers has improved slightly from both three months ago and last year at this time.

"Seasonally adjusted data for the United States indicates the most optimistic first-quarter hiring sentiment in three years; yet 73 percent of employers indicate they will keep staff levels unchanged," said Joerres. "So while we're seeing positive signals in the data, only time will tell if we've reached the inflection point in the U.S. labor market recovery. On the other hand, the enthusiasm in the Brazilian market continues to be bolstered by the Services sector where over half of employers are telling us they will increase their payrolls in the next three months. In Mexico and Argentina, opportunities for job seekers should be much improved compared to 12 months ago, particularly in the Mexican Manufacturing sector where employer hiring intentions remain the most optimistic in eight years."

The next Manpower Employment Outlook Survey will be released on 8 March 2011 to report hiring expectations for the second quarter of 2011. The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is available free of charge to the public through their local Manpower representative in participating countries.

To receive e-mail notification when the survey is available each quarter, interested individuals are invited to complete an online subscription form at: <http://investor.manpower.com/investors/alerts.cfm>.

About the Survey

An innovative workforce solutions company, Manpower Inc. 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 world's most extensive, forward-looking employment survey, polling nearly 64,000 employers in 39 countries and territories.

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 its 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.

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