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ManpowerGroup's Global Hiring Confidence Index Reveals Employers in More than 75% of Countries and Territories Surveyed Report Positive Hiring Activity

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MILWAUKEE, March 13, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- According to ManpowerGroup's (NYSE:MAN) second-quarter 2012 Manpower Employment Outlook Survey released today, hiring activity in the majority of the world's labor markets is expected to remain relatively stable or improve from three months ago, suggesting added stability in an environment where employers continue to struggle with fluctuating demand. The Services sector continues to be the driving force behind the robust forecasts for Brazil and India, while in Asia Pacific demand in the sector is losing some steam. Meanwhile, Finance job prospects weaken noticeably across Europe compared to last year at this time and U.S. data reveals a slow, steady improvement trend. Employers in 32 of 41 countries and territories surveyed report varying degrees of positive hiring activity for 2Q, with those in 37 expecting relatively stable or improved hiring activity compared to the first three months of the year.

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"Our research highlights incremental improvements in select geographies, although the improvements still have a large dose of hesitancy and skepticism built in," said Jeffrey A. Joerres, Chairman and CEO of ManpowerGroup. "No doubt, we're encouraged by the increased stability the numbers reveal this quarter, but uncertainty — caused by the disconnection between events at the macro level and the micro level in Europe — continues to temper the appetite for hiring."

The global forecast for the quarter ahead is mixed with Net Employment Outlooks declining from three months ago in just 11 countries and territories (compared to 30 in 1Q) and improving in 23. Compared to 12 months ago, Outlooks are softer in 24 countries and territories, and improve in 13. Worldwide, employer hiring expectations are strongest in India, Brazil, Taiwan, Peru and Turkey, and weakest in Greece, Spain and the Czech Republic, where a greater percentage of employers in these three countries are planning to trim payrolls rather than hire staff.

Employer hiring plans remain positive in all 10 countries Manpower surveys in the Americas, with Net Employment Outlooks improving from three months ago in seven countries. Conversely, the year-over-year comparison is mixed, with Outlooks weakening in five countries but improving in four. Regional hiring expectations are strongest in Brazil and Peru and weakest in the U.S., although employers here report the most optimistic forecast since fourth quarter of 2008.

"The U.S. market continues its slow, steady marathon with Outlooks improving from three months ago in all 13 industry sectors. To the north, hiring in Canada's Mining sector is driving demand for engineers, electricians and construction workers in the province of Alberta, as oil companies here are working to develop the largest oilfield outside of the Middle East," said Joerres. "Brazil's forecast is being fueled by the strongest Outlook to date in the Services sector where employers are already hiring ahead of the 2014 World Cup, an event that is projected to create 700,000 jobs. Competition for talent will continue to escalate in Brazil as professional skills shortages force employers to source more talent from abroad and economists expect the unemployment rate to drop below six percent," said Joerres.

The holding pattern on hiring is most prevalent across the Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) region with employers in 12 of 23 countries reporting relatively stable hiring plans compared to the first quarter of the year and those in nine anticipating an increase in the hiring pace. The hiring picture is mixed compared to this time last year, with Net Employment Outlooks falling in 13 countries but improving in seven. Regional hiring plans are strongest in Turkey, Israel, Romania and Norway, and weakest in Greece and Spain.

"The bright spot in Europe continues to be a resilient German labor market that is attracting skilled workers from weaker markets in the region; yet, shortages for in-demand skills such as healthcare professionals, engineers and software developers persist. Despite the relatively positive 2Q forecast in the German Finance and Business Services sector, the Outlook has weakened from 12 months ago, and highlights a broader weakening trend across the region as large finance companies look to restructure and reduce costs," said Joerres. "Meanwhile, in Greece the troubles continue but fewer employers are telling us they will be shedding staff in the quarter ahead. Only time will tell whether recent EU backing will bring the added stability needed to inject some confidence into the country and region."

Hiring intentions remain solid across the Asia Pacific region. However, employers report notable year-over-year declines in six of eight countries and territories. Compared to three months ago, the only notable weakening in hiring plans is reported in Hong Kong. Indian employers continue to report the strongest plans in the region and Hong Kong and Japan the weakest, but Japanese employers are reporting their strongest outlook for 2Q — the country's traditional peak hiring quarter — since 2008.

"While the hiring pace in Japan is not yet back to pre-recession levels, the stronger second-quarter seasonal boost in hiring is good news for job seekers," said Joerres. "Meanwhile, the year-over-year weakening trend in job prospects seen across Asia Pacific is most evident in China, where the pace of hiring is expected to slow considerably in every industry sector. On the other hand, in India the booming hiring pace should continue as employers in the IT and ITes Services segments are taking advantage of the global slowdown to get better talent at a lower cost. This bucks the trend in Services hiring seen elsewhere in the region, where hiring confidence declines from both last year and three months ago in six of eight countries and territories."

The next Manpower Employment Outlook Survey will be released on 12 June 2012 to report hiring expectations for the third quarter of 2012. 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://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 41 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.

Note to Editors:

Commentary is based on seasonally adjusted data where available. Full survey results for each of the 41 countries and territories included in this quarter's survey, plus regional and global comparisons, can be found in the ManpowerGroup Press Room at www.manpowergroup.com/meos. In addition, all tables and graphs from the full report are available to be downloaded for use in publication or broadcast from the ManpowerGroup Web site at: <http://www.manpowergroup.com/press/meos.cfm>

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 nearly 3,900 offices in over 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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