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Global Manpower Employment Outlook Survey Reveals Employers in 25 of 33 Countries and Territories Surveyed Set to Slow Hiring From Three Months Ago

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MILWAUKEE, Sept 09, 2008 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Job seekers can expect a slower fourth-quarter hiring pace in the majority of the world's labor markets, revealed the Manpower Employment Outlook Survey of global hiring trends released today by Manpower Inc. (NYSE: MAN). While more subdued employer hiring forecasts continue to reflect current economic challenges and uncertainty, reports from employers in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Canada, France, Germany and Sweden indicate that hiring in many markets is expected to be steady in the next three months.

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

"The recent downturn is weighing on the minds of employers. They are not conducting widespread layoffs across all industry sectors, which is encouraging; yet, we are not seeing much appetite to add staff either," said Jeffrey A. Joerres, Chairman and CEO of Manpower Inc. "Some key markets, such as the U.S., U.K. and Spain are clearly struggling to gain traction in the current downturn, while others, such as France and Germany, appear to be holding their own. In the coming months we will continue to see employers around the globe making do with the people they have, finding ways to contain costs and being very cautious about hiring decisions."

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is the most extensive, forward-looking employment survey in the world with interviews of nearly 55,000 employers each quarter. The survey data reveals that the most favorable fourth-quarter hiring plans globally are reported by employers in India, Costa Rica, Peru, Singapore, Taiwan, Colombia, Romania, Poland, Argentina, Australia and South Africa. Conversely, employers in Spain, Ireland and Italy are reporting the weakest and only negative hiring expectations for the quarter ahead.

It would appear that the growing pessimism seen in the U.S. market over the past two quarters has moved eastward into Asia Pacific as employers in the region have become notably more conservative in their hiring plans. While outlooks remain positive, employers across all of the eight countries and territories surveyed expect to pull back on hiring from the third quarter. On the other hand, compared to one year ago, the pace of hiring is expected to improve in India and Taiwan, and remain relatively stable in China.

"With the exception of Taiwan, regional hiring expectations among Service sector employers are notably weaker from one year ago and a fall in confidence in this key growth sector has a major impact on these labor markets," said Joerres. "As was the case last year at this time, job prospects should remain robust in India with much of the activity occurring in the Mining and Construction sector, which is being fueled by large infrastructure projects. Similarly, Taiwanese employers are set to accelerate hiring from this time last year, partially due to the continued demand for talent in the Finance/Insurance/Real Estate sector."

Hiring expectations in the Americas region is expected to be strongest in Peru, Costa Rica and Colombia, which joins the Manpower survey for the first time this quarter, expanding labor markets covered by the survey to 33 countries and territories. On the other hand, employers in the U.S. and Guatemala are the least optimistic about adding employees in the quarter ahead.

"The U.S. labor market is expected to lose more momentum with employers telling us they will hire at the slowest pace in five years. Waning consumer confidence is also contributing to weaker demand by employers in the Wholesale/Retail Trade sector where hiring expectations are at a 17-year low," said Joerres. "While fourth-quarter is a traditionally slower hiring period in many markets as employers budget for the upcoming year, hiring in the Retail sector is typically stronger due to the holiday season. This weaker employer confidence is particularly alarming, as it could indicate a less than Merry Christmas for job seekers. Meanwhile, south of the border Mexican hiring intentions -- while still healthy -- signal the first contraction of strong employer hiring patterns in four years."

Across the 17 countries surveyed in the Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) region, employers in Romania, Poland, South Africa, Greece, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden are most optimistic about hiring in the next three months while Spanish, Italian and Irish employers are the least optimistic. Hiring in the region is generally expected to be softer with employers in 12 of 17 countries expecting to hire at a slower pace compared to three months ago. Notably, employer hiring plans in Spain are at a five-year low.

"Our data indicates weaker job prospects in the Finance and Business Services sector across Europe and this is most apparent in the U.K., where employers are reporting the weakest job prospects in this sector since 1999 and the least optimistic national forecast in 14 years," said Joerres. "Interestingly, hiring sentiments have improved from three months ago in the Manufacturing sector in Austria, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland, which is helping to bolster the outlooks for these countries. In fact, the national outlook from Dutch employers is the most optimistic since the survey was established there in 2003."

The next Manpower Employment Outlook Survey will be released on 9 December 2008 to report hiring expectations for the first quarter of 2009. 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>.

Note to Editors

Commentary is based on seasonally adjusted data where available. Full survey results for each of the 33 countries and territories included in this

quarter's survey, plus regional and global comparisons, can be found in the Manpower Press Room at <http://www.manpower.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 Manpower Web site at <http://www.manpower.com/library>.

Note that in Quarter 2 of 2008, the survey adopted the TRAMO-SEATS model for seasonal adjustment of data. As a result, you may notice some seasonally adjusted data points change slightly from previous reports. This model is recommended by the Eurostat department of the European Union and the European Central Bank and is widely used internationally.

About the Survey

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is conducted quarterly to measure employers' intentions to increase or decrease the number of employees in their workforce during the next quarter. It is the most extensive forward-looking survey of its kind, unparalleled in its size, scope, longevity and area of focus. The Survey has been running for more than 45 years and is one of the most trusted surveys of employment activity in the world. The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is based on interviews with nearly 55,000 public and private employers worldwide and is considered a highly respected economic indicator.

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is currently available for 33 countries and territories: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Romania, Singapore, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the United States. The program began in the United States and Canada in 1962, and the United Kingdom was added in 1966. Mexico and Ireland launched the survey in 2002, and 13 additional countries were added to the program in 2003. New Zealand joined the program in 2004, China, India, Switzerland and Taiwan were added in 2005, and Argentina, Peru, Costa Rica and South Africa joined in 2006. Colombia, the Czech Republic, Greece, Guatemala, Poland and Romania joined in 2008. For more information, visit the Manpower Inc. Web site at <http://www.manpower.com> and enter the Research Center, or contact Bruce Bock, Sr. Global Communications Manager at bruce.bock@manpower.com

About Manpower Inc.

Manpower Inc. (NYSE: MAN) is a world leader in the employment services industry; creating and delivering services that enable its clients to win in the changing world of work. Celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2008, the \$21 billion company offers employers a range of services 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 4,500 offices in 80 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 on Manpower Inc. is available at <http://www.manpower.com>.

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