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Modest workforce gains expected in Norway

ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey 2Q 2021

NORWAY (March 09, 2021) – Norwegian employers expect slow-paced workforce gains during the second quarter of 2021. Half of them expect their employees to return to the office this year.

Norwegian employers are reporting a seasonally adjusted Net Employment Outlook of +4% for the next quarter, improving by 2 percentage points when compared with the previous quarter. When compared to the same period last year, however, outlooks are declining by 11 percentage points.

Over a third of Norwegian employers expect their employees to combine remote and workplace-based working, while nearly half expect their employees to be doing their job at the workplace all or most of the time in the next 6-12 months.

“Norwegian employers are slowly recovering from the sharp decline that followed the shock of the crisis. Hiring levels are weaker than before the crisis, but we see jobs coming back in most sectors. Outlooks are the highest they have been in a year, indicating that employers are starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel,” says Maalfrid Brath, Managing Director of ManpowerGroup Norway.

Five of seven sectors hiring

Hiring prospects strengthen in six sectors quarter-over-quarter, but weaken in all seven sectors when compared with this time one year ago.

Workforce gains are expected in five of the seven industry sectors in the next quarter. The strongest sector hiring pace is anticipated in the Finance & Business Services sector, where outlooks stand at a strong +16%, improving by 7 percentage points quarter-over-quarter, but declining by 5 percentage points year-over-year.

Steady job gains are also expected in the Manufacturing and Other Production sectors, both with outlooks of +11%. Reporting outlooks of +8%, employers in the construction industry expect a fair hiring climate in the next quarter. Hiring plans in the sector remain relatively stable when compared with the previous quarter, but decline by a steep margin of 35 percentage points in comparison with last year at this time.

For the fourth consecutive quarter, hiring sentiment is weakest in the Restaurants & Hotels sector, with outlooks for the coming quarter of -22%. The hiring intentions weaken by 10



percentage points quarter-over-quarter and by 37 percentage points when compared with this time one year ago.

Optimism in SouthWest

The strongest regional hiring pace is anticipated in the SouthWest. Outlooks in this region stand at +10%, improving by 4 percentage points quarter-over-quarter, but declining by 12 percentage points year-over-year.

Northern Norway reports the weakest regional outlook of -1%, declining by 4 and 17 percentage points from 1Q 2021 and 2Q 2020, respectively.

Large firms expect to trim payrolls

Job gains are forecast for three of the four organization size categories during the upcoming quarter. The strongest labor market is expected by employers in medium sized businesses, with a Net Employment Outlook of +7%, improving by 4 percentage points from the previous quarter. Outlooks stand at +6% and +3% for micro- and small-size employers, respectively.

Large firms, on the other hand, expect to trim payrolls, reporting an outlook of -2%. This is a decline of 3 percentage points compared with the previous quarter, and a sharp decline of 30 percentage points compared with this time one year ago.

Covid-19 repercussions

Employers were asked some additional questions about the impact of Covid-19 on their workplace.

Forty-six percent of Norwegian employers say they will likely urge their employees to get vaccinated, but not demand it. In comparison, the regional figure for Europe, the Middle East and Africa is only 29%. Less than 10% of Norwegian employers are likely to require some or all of their employees to be vaccinated.

Employers were also asked how Covid-19 has impacted the staffing levels in the categories full-time workers, part-time workers, contractors, temporary workers and freelance workers. As many as 26% of employers say they have decreased the number of part-time employees, while only 5% say they have increased the number.

The ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey for the second quarter of 2021 was conducted in January 2021 by interviewing a representative sample of 456 employers in Norway. All survey participants were asked, "How do you anticipate total employment at your location to change in the three months to the end of June 2021 as compared to the current quarter?" The Net Employment Outlook figure is derived by taking the percentage of employers anticipating total employment to increase and subtracting from this the percentage expecting to see a decrease in employment at their location in the next quarter.



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Participants were also asked the following additional questions:

- *When do you expect to hire at the same level or higher than before COVID-19?*
- *Once a COVID-19 vaccine is publicly available in your country, which of the following policies are you most likely to pursue, with regard to your own employees?*
- *Have you increased or decreased the number of employees in each of these categories in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?*
- *Which one of the following represents how the majority of your workforce will work in the next 6-12 months?*

To view complete results for the ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey, visit: www.manpowergroup.com/meos. The next survey will be released June 8, 2021 and will report hiring expectations for Q3 2021.

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