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Weakest Norwegian hiring plans in 17 years

ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey 3Q 2020

NORWAY (June 09, 2020) – Hiring intentions for the next quarter weaken in all seven Norwegian industry sectors, according to the ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey.

Norwegian employers report sluggish hiring plans for the July to September time frame, with a seasonally adjusted Net Employment Outlook of -7 %. This is the weakest forecast since the survey began in Norway 17 years ago. Hiring plans dip sharply by 23 percentage points quarter-over-quarter and are 20 percentage points weaker compared to this time one year ago.

The global health crisis has created a high level of uncertainty among Norwegian employers. 35 percent of participating employers predict hiring will return to pre-crisis levels within 12 months, whereas 58 percent are unsure of when normal hiring will resume. 46 percent state that COVID-19 has negatively impacted their business.

“Due to the global health crisis, Norwegian businesses are facing the worst crisis since the second world war. Certain sectors are expecting slight job gains, but these numbers indicate that the overall hiring climate will be challenging for quite some time,” says Maalfrid Brath, Managing Director of ManpowerGroup Norway.

Dramatic decline for Restaurants & Hotels

Employers in two of the seven industry sectors – the Construction sector and the Wholesale & Retail Trade sector – expect to add to payrolls during the upcoming quarter, both reporting subdued Net Employment Outlooks of +4 %.

While employers in the Manufacturing sector report a Net Employment Outlook of -6%, hiring prospects in the four remaining industry sectors are the weakest reported since the survey began 17 years ago. The most dramatic numbers are seen in the Restaurants & Hotels sector, where employers report bleak hiring intentions of -39% for the next three months. The Finance & Business Services sector report Net Employment Outlooks of -1 %, the Other Production sector -3 %, and the Other Services sector -8 %.

In a quarter-over-quarter comparison, employers report weaker outlooks in all seven industry sectors. Hiring plans sink by a steep margin of 52 percentage points in the Restaurants & Hotels sector, 38 percentage points in the Construction sector, 24 percentage points in the Finance & Business Services sector, and 20 percentage points in the Manufacturing sector.



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Cautious hiring activity in Eastern Norway

Job seekers in Eastern Norway can expect a slight increase in payrolls, with a Net Employment Outlook of +1 %. Nevertheless, hiring prospects are considerably weaker both quarter-over-quarter and year-over-year, declining by 11 and 14 percentage points, respectively.

Employers in both the Northern and South/West regions anticipate the weakest hiring climate during the next three months, reporting Net Employment Outlooks of -16 % and -12%, respectively. These are the weakest hiring prospects in the regions since the survey began.

Strongest decline for large companies

Employers in three of the four organization size categories expect payrolls to decline in the next quarter, most notably Large companies, with an outlook of -13 %. Outlooks stand at -9 % and -6 % in the Small- and Micro-size categories, respectively.

Employers in medium-sized companies forecast a slight increase in staffing levels, reporting a Net Employment Outlook of +2 %.

The ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey for the third quarter 2020 was conducted by interviewing a representative sample of 418 employers in Norway. Interviewing was carried out during the exceptional circumstances of the COVID-19 outbreak. All survey participants were asked, "How do you anticipate total employment at your location to change in the three months to the end of September 2020 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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