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DUTCH EMPLOYERS CONTINUE TO REPORT CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC HIRING PLANS

Elections appear to have little impact on employer confidence

Diemen, 14th March 2017 – Dutch employers continue to expect hiring will continue at a modest pace through the April-June time frame. The second-quarter forecast is unchanged when compared to the current quarter, and the Net Employment Outlook for Q2 of 2017 remains a cautiously optimistic +5%. These are the results of the ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey (MEOS Q2) by ManpowerGroup, a survey conducted among over 58,000 employers worldwide, 750 of which are in The Netherlands. Together with the prior quarter's identical result, the forecasts are the most optimistic reported by Dutch employers in eight years.

“In the last few months uncertainty among employers is caused by multiple factors”, says José Brenninkmeijer, Regional Managing Director for ManpowerGroup Netherland. “Like the Brexit, the aftermath of the US elections and of course the Dutch elections of last week. But these circumstances appear to have had little impact on the hiring intentions of employers. This is the ninth consecutive quarter that the outlook is positive and it appears to reflect continuing confidence among Dutch employers.”

Flourishing Finance & Business Services sector

Employers in eight of nine industry sectors expect more hiring activity in the second quarter of 2017. Employers in the Finance & Business Services are most optimistic, reporting a Net Employment Outlook of +12%, which is a single percentage point stronger than previous quarter. However employers in the Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries sector report the weakest—and only negative—sector Outlook for 2Q 2017. Standing at -5%, the Outlook declines by 1 and 6 percentage points from 1Q 2017 and 2Q 2016, respectively. Employers from all regions expect to add to their workforce, including those in the North who reported a negative score last year.

Impact elections a long way off

The influence of the aftermath of this week's elections could lead to more uncertainty amongst employers. “We expect to see some effects of the election in next quarter's outlook, but employer hiring plans may not be impacted until the fourth quarter, when the new cabinet proposes its new policies. Like the US where we don't see any significant impact on employer confidence after Trump's election,” says Brenninkmeijer. The US forecast remains unabatedly at +17%, a single percentage point stronger than the first-quarter result.

European employers

Employers in almost every European country expect an increase in hiring. Italy is an exception to the rule, reporting a forecasts of -2. Other European countries showing a drop: Belgium's forecast declines from +6% previous quarter to 0 this quarter and United Kingdom from +7 to +5. Germany's forecast improves slightly from +6% to +7%. “All over Europe employers appear to have a positive outlook on payroll growth in the second quarter of 2017,” concluded Ms. Brenninkmeijer.

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Note to the editor, not for print:

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