

## **PUBLIC SECTOR SET FOR PRE-ELECTION HIRING SPIKE**

### **MANPOWER EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK SURVEY REVEALS 10 POINT LEAP IN PUBLIC SECTOR JOBS OPTIMISM**

- **Public sector hiring set to outpace the private sector**
- **Scotland jobs Outlook slumps following oil price plunge**
- **Employment prospects in Utilities hit eight-year high**

**10 MARCH 2015:** There has been a surprise jump in public sector jobs optimism in the run-up to the general election, while private companies take a ‘wait and see’ approach to the outcome in May, according to ManpowerGroup, the world’s workforce experts. With an Outlook of +12%, hiring intentions in the public sector are double the national average of +6% for the second quarter of 2015.

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is based on responses from 2,100 UK employers. It asks whether employers intend to hire additional workers or reduce the size of their workforce in the coming quarter. It is the most comprehensive, forward-looking employment survey of its kind and is used as a key economic statistic by both the Bank of England and the UK government. The national Seasonally Adjusted Net Employment Outlook of +6%<sup>1</sup> for the third successive quarter indicates that the UK jobs market continues to plot a steadily optimistic course.

“You’d think that, with austerity cuts across government departments, public sector hiring would be in the doldrums. But what we’re seeing is the reverse. The jobs Outlook has jumped 10 points on last quarter to +12%, its most optimistic level for four years. There are several explanations for this bounce. First, our data may suggest that the public sector is front-loading its hiring in the run up to the general election. Equally, staff shortages mean some organisations need to take on staff in order to maintain frontline services. Take the NHS, where well over 100 trusts in England alone are looking abroad for clinical workers amid a need for doctors and nurses. Finally, as the public sector looks to streamline its services, we’re seeing a growing focus on digitisation, leading to an increase in hiring for new skills. We’ve already helped a number of government departments in this area,” says Mark Cahill, ManpowerGroup UK Managing Director.

“Meanwhile, at +7%, the private sector is hardly stalling, but it has remained at the same level for four consecutive quarters. In an improving economic environment, you might expect private sector optimism to be increasing at a faster pace, but it looks as though uncertainty ahead of the general election may be causing some businesses to sit on their hands,” continues Cahill.

The picture looks less rosy in Scotland, the only region in the UK where the jobs market is set to worsen in the coming quarter. At -1%, Scotland records its first negative Outlook for two years, eight points lower than its Outlook heading into last year’s independence referendum. Cahill comments, “The fall in oil price has hit Scottish jobs hard, with the energy industry providing employment for around 200,000 people across Scotland and the economy of its third largest city, Aberdeen, reliant on the sector. We’ve already seen several big players, including the likes of

---

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise stated, all figures reported are based on seasonally adjusted data.

Shell, Wood Group and Halliburton, slashing jobs as they make tough spending decisions needed to weather the storm. These initial cuts look to be just the start, and we expect to see a further impact across the supply chain as the year progresses.”

The fall in oil price is putting pressure on Utilities firms to cut their prices. Perhaps counterintuitively, the Outlook for jobs in the sector has risen to +18%, its highest level for eight years, as the spotlight is shone once again on customer value and switching. Mark Cahill again, “Utilities hiring is set to surge, as the big six energy providers cut prices and focus increasingly on customer service. A number of utilities firms have asked us to help find hundreds of new staff to support households seeking to make the most of the opportunity to reduce their monthly bills by switching contracts,” adds Cahill.

Many of the roles in the Utilities sector are in call centres in Birmingham, Derby and Nottingham, so it is perhaps no surprise that the East and West Midlands record the strongest hiring intentions among the regions, at +11% and +12% respectively, together with the North West at +11%. With the exception of Scotland, all of the UK regions are optimistic going into the second quarter. The East of England rose two points to +9% and London held steady at +7%.

**For further information, please contact:**

Brunswick – Anita Scott / Nick Cosgrove / Helen Smith                      020 7404 5959

Email: [manpower@brunswickgroup.com](mailto:manpower@brunswickgroup.com)

Twitter: [#MEOSUK](https://twitter.com/MEOSUK)

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

A 'Net Employment Outlook' is calculated by subtracting those employers who plan to reduce staffing levels from those who plan to hire staff. A positive result indicates that more employers plan to increase rather than decrease staffing levels; a negative result reflects the opposite. [% increase - % decrease]

Commentary and full details on every sector and region can be found in the survey report at [manpower.co.uk/meos](http://manpower.co.uk/meos), or by calling the Press Office on 0207 404 5959/ [manpower@brunswickgroup.com](mailto:manpower@brunswickgroup.com)

For international comparisons and visual library with graphs, visit [manpowergroup.com](http://manpowergroup.com)

Commentary is based on seasonally adjusted data where available. Full survey results for each of the 42 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](http://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>

Note that in Quarter 2 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 world 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 nearly 66,000 employers in 42 countries and territories. The survey serves as a bellwether of labour 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 labour markets are headed.

**About ManpowerGroup**

ManpowerGroup™ (NYSE: MAN) has been the world's workforce expert, creating innovative workforce solutions, for more than 65 years. As workforce experts, we connect more than 600,000 men and women to meaningful work across a wide range of skills and industries every day. Through our ManpowerGroup family of brands – Manpower®, Experis™, Right Management® and ManpowerGroup™ Solutions – we help more than 400,000 clients in 80 countries and territories address their critical talent needs, providing comprehensive solutions to resource, manage and develop talent. In 2014, ManpowerGroup was named one of the World's Most Ethical Companies for the fourth consecutive year and one of Fortune's Most Admired Companies, confirming our position as the most trusted and admired brand in the industry. See how ManpowerGroup makes powering the world of work humanly possible: [www.manpowergroup.com](http://www.manpowergroup.com).

**About Manpower UK**

Manpower is the global leader in contingent and permanent recruitment workforce solutions. It is part of ManpowerGroup, the world leader in innovative workforce solutions, which creates and delivers high-impact solutions that enable clients to achieve their business goals and enhance their competitiveness.

With a network of 300 offices in cities across the country, Manpower has provided organisations in the UK with a continuum of staffing solutions from the incidental to the strategic for 55 years, working with businesses such as BT, IBM, Royal Mail and Xerox to help them win.

In the Human Age, where talent has replaced access to capital as the key competitive differentiator, Manpower UK leverages its trusted brand to develop a deep talent pool, providing clients with access to the people they need, fast.

Manpower UK creates powerful connections between organisations and the talent they need to enhance their competitiveness and unleash their workforce potential. By creating these powerful connections, we help everybody achieve more than they imagined, and power the world of work.

For more information, see [www.manpower.co.uk](http://www.manpower.co.uk)