



## **SOUTHERN SLUMP IN HIRING INTENTIONS**

### **MANPOWERGROUP EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK SURVEY REVEALS SOUTH EAST HIRING INTENTIONS REMAIN BELOW NATIONAL AVERAGE FOR FIFTH CONSECUTIVE QUARTER**

- **Outlook of +4% for the region**
- **But, growth in the engineering and utilities sectors**
- **Southern salaries attract top talent to the region**

**14 MARCH 2017:** Hiring intentions in the South East have fallen one point to +4% going into the second quarter of 2017. This is one point behind the national average, according to ManpowerGroup, the world's workforce experts. Employment optimism in the region has remained behind the national average for the fifth consecutive quarter.

The ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey is based on responses from 2,119 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.

Simon Edwards, Operations Director at Manpower, said: "The South East has faced a prolonged hiring slump, but there are signs that the market is beginning to pick up. We're seeing more demand for workers in technical fields like engineering and manufacturing, particularly for service engineers to install and maintain electric car charging points in parking areas across the region. There has also been growth in the utilities sector, as employers hunt for engineers to fit and maintain new smart meters.

"We're continuing to see people relocate to the region, drawn by the higher salaries on offer. Mechanical engineers are in high demand in the South East but skills shortages mean employers, like local high-end manufacturers Sunseeker and Tesla, are having to look further afield to find talent."

Nationally, private sector hiring has dropped to its weakest level since Q1 2014. Employers in six of the nine sectors surveyed reported a falling Outlook. The overall Net Employment Outlook, which includes both public and private sector employers, has dropped two points to +5%.

Mark Cahill, ManpowerGroup UK Managing Director: "The impending trigger of Article 50 is clearly affecting confidence in the jobs market. The private sector plans to hire at its slowest rate since 2014 (+4%), with only construction, manufacturing and transport and communications planning to hire at previous levels. The employment rate is at its highest level since records began in 1971, but if you lift the bonnet to look at the engine of the economy, job creation has slowed and employers are becoming more cautious. The companies which

have powered Britain's economy through the immediate post-referendum period are easing off the gas."

All but five regions report falling Outlooks for the coming three months compared to the previous quarter. The biggest fallers are the two strongest Remain-supporting areas of the UK: Scotland, down 11 points to -3% and London, down five points to +3%. The West Midlands, the South West and Yorkshire & the Humber all fell three points to +5%. The North East is down one point to +5%. Northern Ireland and the North West are the only risers, both up three points to +7% and +6%, respectively. Three other regions report unchanged Outlooks: the East (+9%) is still the most optimistic region, ahead of the East Midlands (+8%), while Wales (+2%) reports the second weakest outlook in the UK.

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**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 [manpowergroup.co.uk/meos](http://manpowergroup.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 43 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 ManpowerGroup 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 over 58,000 employers in 43 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) is the world's workforce expert, creating innovative workforce solutions for nearly 70 years. As workforce experts, we connect more than 600,000 people 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 2016, ManpowerGroup was named one of the World's Most Ethical Companies for the sixth 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).