

## **WEST MIDLANDS DEFIES ELECTION UNCERTAINTY TO HIT HIRING HIGH**

### **MANPOWERGROUP EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK SURVEY REVEALS THE REGION'S EMPLOYERS ARE AT THEIR MOST CONFIDENT LEVEL IN A YEAR**

- **Outlook of +9% for the region**
- **Growing number of opportunities in manufacturing, engineering, warehouse and logistics**
- **Employers prepared to increase pay to guarantee the best candidates**

**13 JUNE 2017:** Employers in the West Midlands have grown in confidence this quarter, despite wider economic uncertainty caused by last week's General Election, according to ManpowerGroup, the world's workforce experts, in the first employment survey to be published since the General Election. With an Outlook of +9%, a jump of four points from last quarter, the West Midlands is the second most optimistic region in the UK.

The ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey is based on responses from 2,109 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.

Jason Greaves, Operations Director at Manpower, said: "It's pleasing to see that, after a brief wobble last quarter, the jobs market in the West Midlands is back to its powerful best. It is built on solid foundations and this has been demonstrated by the fact that even the noise of the election has not deterred employers here from their plans to hire. With a new metro mayor promising to champion the region, and Britain's biggest bank, HSBC, relocating its UK banking operations from London to Birmingham, confidence here is riding high."

"We are seeing sustained and growing opportunities within manufacturing, engineering, warehouse and logistics across the region. In fact some employers are investing in high volume recruitment drives that are generating good levels of interest with prospective candidates. Although there have been some job losses with the closures of EY Electrical and 2 Sisters Food Group, there are many new opportunities in the region with companies such as Lidl and Cosma International. Employers have been seeking pay advice to ensure their opportunities are attractive and they are increasingly open to upping the rates of pay on offer to guarantee the best candidates."

Nationally, companies are demonstrating cautious optimism with an Outlook of +5%, despite a triple whammy of uncertainty over the last few months - a snap election, the triggering of Article 50, and weak economic data for the first half of 2017. Whilst on first glance the election uncertainty might appear unhelpful to employers, ManpowerGroup believes that the shock result could offer hope for businesses who had feared the impact of a hard Brexit on hiring.

James Hick, ManpowerGroup Solutions Managing Director: “You might have expected hiring confidence to have taken a real hit, but employers have been standing firm. However, unquestionably they feared the outcome of a hard Brexit on the jobs market. The election result throws into question the Conservative commitment to slash immigration to the “tens of thousands” and double the levy on non-EU workers to £2,000. The simple truth is that some sectors will stall without skilled workers from overseas, which could result in the UK economy entering a tailspin.”

Hick continues: “People might be surprised to learn that in the last year 80,000 Bulgarians and Romanians entered the UK workforce, while the size of the UK-born workforce did not increase at all<sup>1</sup> – demonstrating just how accustomed we have become to a steady stream of labour from overseas. Slamming the door shut will leave us seriously exposed.”

It is a diverse picture across the regions this quarter. Yorkshire and Humber is top of the regional charts on +11%, its highest level since 2014. London is also riding high, with a five point jump this quarter, to +8%. It’s a mixed picture in the west: the West Midlands is up four points to +9%. But the South West is down three points to +1% (its lowest level since 2014), and the North West is also down three points to +3%. In the east of the country it’s also a pretty uneven picture: the North East and East of England are both in line with the national average (+5%) whereas the South East is up five points to +9%, but the East Midlands has slipped to +3%, its least optimistic outlook in over six years. Northern Ireland (+4%) and Scotland (+2%) are both below the national average and Wales is at the bottom of the regional table with an Outlook of 0%, the lowest level for the country since 2014.

**For further information, please contact:**

Brunswick – 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 [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 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**

---

<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics, UK labour market statistical bulletin, May 2017.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/employmentbycountryofbirthandnationalityemp06>

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 59,000 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 nearly 70 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 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).