

# Media Release

## Global HR Barometer : Focus Northern Europe\*

### Michael Page's HR Barometer reveals top priorities for today's HR leaders

- Change management number one priority for companies in Northern Europe
- Stronger recruitment expectations signals a new phase of economic growth
- Talent management and training & development key to win second war for talent
- Employee performance and staff turnover most widely measured KPIs
- Flex working imposing itself in companies as a popular measure for women

**[City], the xx September** - Michael Page just released its Global HR Barometer, a year-long research effort which looks at business and HR trends around the world. From February to March 2015, 2500 HR leaders from over 65 countries participated in an online survey. The research explains why change management, talent management and training & development have become the top business challenges this year and why human resources transformation is essential in the prelude of a second war for talent.

#### HR and business transformation to deal with the skills gap

35 % of HR leaders in Northern Europe consider change management and transformation projects as the number one priority in their markets. "Business leaders have to guide their organisation through an ever-growing pace of change in order to stay competitive. Companies have realised they had to make traditional HR people think strategically in a world of uneven economic growth with a widening skills gap", argues **[name & role of business ambassador ]**. Indeed, 42% of the HR leaders surveyed in Northern Europe state they expect total workforce to increase. "Talent has always been on top of the agenda but now it needs to become an inseparable part of business strategy". This echoes the second and third HR priorities: talent management (33%) and training and development (31%). "Leaders now understand their company's ability to innovate and succeed is driven primarily by the skills of its workforce. CEOs and HR Directors not only need to ensure the talent their company requires is on board, but also it is properly trained *and* retained. This is pushing many companies in **[Sweden/the Netherlands]** to rethink their approach to recruitment and talent & development".

#### KPI tracking remains a major weakness in most HR departments

Employee performance (71%) and staff management (45%) are the dominant HR Key Performance Indicators, tracked by two-thirds of organisations. "We are still lagging behind in terms of HR performance measurement. We see that HR departments struggle to make their efforts and achievements transparent. It is good to see that 29% of companies in Northern Europe spend over 10% of their total HR budget on recruitment. But board members need to secure their investment and track systematically employee performance, staff turnover and

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employee engagement in order to meet the needs of their business. Companies need to reskill their own HR staff, teach them technical skills and the right metrics to achieve business strategy execution".

## **Recruitment expectations signal new phase of economic growth**

42% of HR leaders in Northern Europe expect their organisation's total workforce to increase in the next 12 months (compared to a global 48% and a peeking 66% and 60%, respectively in India and in the UK, reporting particular staffing pressures). "Michael Page's mandates in [name of the country] show companies are taking the skills gap seriously and that technology and related industries will be in the front line in this new war for talent. HR perfectly understood that in some cases demand exceeds market supply. That's why our research shows workforce planning is a key HR priority and that staff turnover is a widely measured KPI".

## **Is HR ready for this complex mix of challenges?**

In terms of numbers of resources, organizations are not planning any significant increase in their HR teams: 67% of Northern European HR leaders expect their HR staff levels to remain the same. Only 14% foresee an increase and 19% even expect staff levels to decrease. This rises the question: can HR supply the organisation's hunger for talent? "In [name of the country], we've noticed companies have looked at ways to revamp their HR departments, making a clear distinction between shared service centres providing traditional HR services like payroll and business partners doing the strategic thinking. Staff levels aren't clearly evolving but our research shows that nearly 30% of (especially large) companies invest more than 10% of their total HR budget in recruitment. And another 29% invest between 5 and 10% of their budget. In order to find more supply, companies need to develop an attractive talent acquisition brand, provide incentives to attract top people and offer compelling career opportunities while improving retention".

## **Flex work most popular female-friendly measure**

63% of respondents were women. Taking into consideration, Michael Page surveyed HR leaders only (HR Directors, HR Managers, Vice-presidents HR and HR Business Partners), this sheds light on the fact women tend to be well represented in HR, including among the more senior positions. "Nowadays, most leading companies are implementing some form of affirmative policies promoting gender equality. There has been a national debate on the role of women in the workforce for a while now and there is still a long path ahead", advocates Ilze Lamers, Talent & Development Director at Michael Page Northern Europe. According to Michael Page's Barometer, flexible working time arrangements rank first among the measures companies in Northern Europe implemented specifically for women (29%), followed by mentoring (18.5%), networking (18%) and coaching (16%).

## **About Michael Page**

Michael Page is one of the world's best-known and well-respected professional recruitment consultancies. Established in 1976 in the United Kingdom, it now spans 155 offices in 35 countries. Michael Page is a leading provider of permanent, contract and temporary recruitment for qualified professionals and executives.

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In **[name of the country]**, Michael Page is established since ... and has offices in ...

**Consult the**Full report, regional fact sheet and executive summary here: [link of report](#)

\*The data quoted here represents the views of 272 respondents located in Northern Europe, namely: Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg.

Contact