

**PHILIPS**

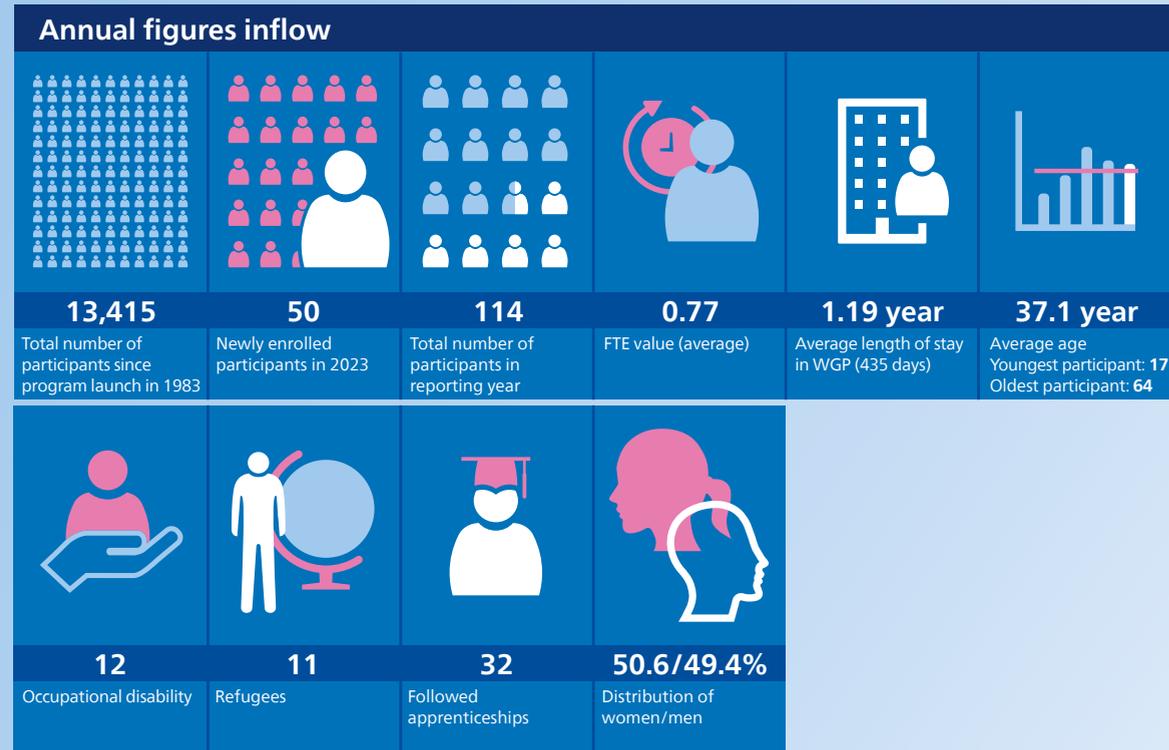
Annual report 2023

Employment Scheme

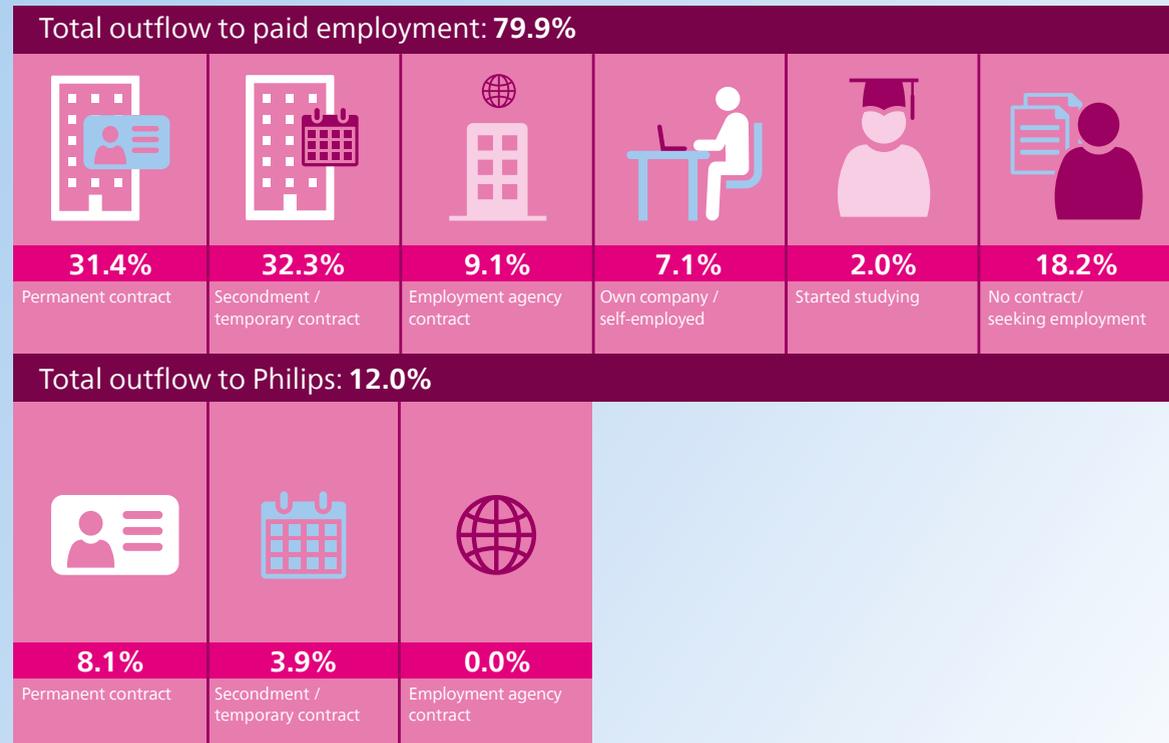


Solidarity  
and development

# Philips Employment Scheme 2023



### Annual figures outflow



## Solidarity and development

We are delighted to present the annual report on Philips' Employment Scheme (WGP). The year 2023 was marked by growth, development, and inspiring stories from participants in our program. As the manager of the Employment Scheme, I take pride in the impact we have made.

The WGP's mission is to support jobseekers in finding employment and developing their potential. Through various initiatives and partnerships, we have assisted candidates in exploring new career opportunities and acquiring relevant skills across diverse sectors.

As we reflect on the past year, we also look forward to the future with enthusiasm. In 2024, we celebrate a significant milestone: the first participant joined exactly 40 years ago. This moment highlights the enduring impact of our program on individuals and communities.

To commemorate this milestone, we are organizing an annual congress on Tuesday, November 12th. This event will provide a platform for sharing success stories, exploring new partnership opportunities, and fostering innovation in the field of employment.

On behalf of the WGP, I express our gratitude to all partners, participants, and staff who have contributed to the success of our program. Together, we remain committed to creating an inclusive labor market where everyone has the opportunity to fulfill their potential.

**Frank Visser,**  
Cluster Manager Employee & Social Sustainability  
Philips Nederland

**Colophon** A publication of Philips HR Benelux  
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# A year of paid work experience at Philips!

Together with the trade unions, Philips has developed a unique program offering job seekers the opportunity to secure sustainable employment. A year of paid work experience within Philips is combined with an extensive development program. Research shows this approach to be particularly effective: over the last three years, more than 70% of participants have found regular employment after completing the program! The development program is mandatory and can be followed during working hours. The following objectives have been set:

1. Enhancing participants' self-efficacy through the Employment Scheme.
2. Developing participants' career, work, and learning competences.
3. Empowering individuals to take control and responsibility for their future.

## Apprenticeship training (BBL)

During apprenticeship training, participants have the opportunity to gain practical experience on the job, leading to valuable work experience and the attainment of a recognized diploma. Whether

one's interests lie in technology, administration, or sales, apprenticeships provide avenues in various fields to start a great career!

## Employment Scheme development program

### Career coach

Participants' personal development is vital, and there needs to be sufficient room for learning. Therefore, each WGP participant is assigned a personal career coach. In addition to periodic coaching sessions, at least one three-way meeting involving the supervisor, participant, and coach is held.

### Workshops

Special workshops are organized, such as a Kick-off at the Philips Museum, a Mindset Day, and Job marketing Training. Participants work towards realizing their wishes and goals for the year and learn to deal with challenges when looking for work, as well as opportunities in the labor market.

'An apprenticeship with Philips obviously looks good on your CV.'

Marina

### E-Miles & V-Miles

Like regular Philips employees, Employment Scheme participants receive **1000 E-Miles** and **1000 V-Miles** each year. E-Miles are used for Employability activities, V-Miles for Vitality. These can be used to participate in workshops, career scans and seminars.

### GoodHabitz

With an extensive array of over **80 interactive online courses** covering personal leadership, assertiveness, and communication, individuals can enhance their soft skills at their convenience.

'The development program has been a real gift.'

Sandra

'Working is learning as well as doing.'

Marcin





**Hacer**  
(Management assistant,  
Philips Museum)

## Hacer's Journey to Job Satisfaction

**Due to her conscious choice of motherhood and various other circumstances, Hacer found herself with an unfinished bachelor's degree in HRM and a fifteen-year gap on her CV. Re-entering the job market under such circumstances was undoubtedly challenging.**

However, Hacer had not remained idle during those years. She actively volunteered in various fields, particularly focusing on the participation of women and girls. Despite her valuable contributions, she felt her own career was 'incomplete'. "With my children now twelve and nineteen, it's time to focus on myself as well," she asserted.

After relocating from Limburg to Brabant, she connected with the Philips WGP through UWV and

embarked on a journey as a management assistant at the Philips Museum. Initially, she had to navigate many aspects on her own, as there wasn't a formal induction period. Despite the challenges, this experience proved to be a significant learning opportunity, enabling her to gain a deeper understanding of herself. "I truly discovered my strengths and weaknesses and learned what I can do for others," she reflected.

Empowered by the knowledge she acquired, Hacer is now even drafting an onboarding document for her successor. "This way, the next person won't have to figure out as much on their own," she noted, embodying her commitment to supporting others on their journey. Over the past few months, Hacer has acquired a wealth of valuable

knowledge, spanning from note-taking and project-based work to practical skills and recognizing her own limits through targeted workshops from the Employability & Vitality program and online training courses from GoodHabit (see sidebar). "What I've learned most of all is that a manager and an employee are equals. I don't just work for my manager, but we collaborate, and above all, I work for my own happiness."

**'The WGP has been a true journey of discovery for me and has taught me to work on myself and enjoy work again!'**

To further enhance her professional knowledge and delve into different aspects within Philips, Hacer joined a group of management assistants from other Philips departments. She also receives significant support from her career coach, Saskia, and had the opportunity to extend her WGP contract to bridge the gap between her current knowledge and the competencies required in future roles. "I read a lot of vacancies and look at what is required. I constantly discuss with my manager what additional tasks I can undertake within my current role to acquire the missing knowledge and skills." Eventually, she aspires to transition into an HR role within the non-profit sector, but she is willing to take it one step at a time.

**Amrutha** (Data analyst and researcher)

## Amrutha's success story

**Amrutha relocated to the Netherlands from India two and a half years ago with her husband and child due to her husband's work. Eager to continue her career, which had encompassed roles in banks and as a Montessori primary education teacher in India, she faced challenges in finding suitable employment in the Netherlands.**

Many positions required Dutch language proficiency, and teaching was not an option due to lacking qualifications. Through an acquaintance, Amrutha discovered the WGP and applied for roles with Philips in Amsterdam. Initially, opportunities seemed scarce, leading to disappointment. However, after being invited for an interview, she began her journey with Philips in the summer of 2022. Soon thereafter, she became pregnant with her second child, temporarily pausing her WGP participation during maternity leave. Fortunately, she received a six-month contract extension, allowing her to maximize her work experience.

Currently, Amrutha works as a data analyst and researcher in the Market Access and Reimbursement department. Despite initial doubts about her role, she finds herself thriving. Each day brings new learning opportunities, and she immerses herself in reading to familiarize herself with the subject matter. In addition to her daily tasks, Amrutha has pursued further knowledge online and through various data management courses, both personally and professionally.

She performs a unique and diverse range of tasks, setting her apart in the job market. Currently,

her focus lies on exploring future work opportunities, both within and outside Philips. Her career coach provides motivation and guidance on networking, aiding her in navigating this process.

One challenge she encounters within Philips is the difficulty for WGP participants to gain visibility within the Recruitment department and among managers with job vacancies. This poses a hindrance, as valuable skills and talents within the organization may go unnoticed.

**'The WGP trajectory has nourished both my brain and my children!'**

Nevertheless, she remains grateful and satisfied with the opportunities provided by the WGP. It has not only enriched her professional development but has also increased her visibility in the Dutch job market. With optimism, she anticipates that her next job opportunity is on the horizon.



**The Philips Employability & Vitality program is designed to support employee development and health. This comprehensive program offers a wide range of coaching, workshops, seminars, and online training through GoodHabit. Each employee receives 1000 E-miles and 1000 V-miles per year and can allocate them as they see fit. Some of the many intriguing workshops include: Masterclass Job Marketing 3.0, Strengthen your LinkedIn profile, Personal Influence and Impact, Strengthen your Self-Confidence, and From Stress to Focus.**



**Jon**  
(Sales associate Philips Myshop)

## From Volunteer to Cyber-Security Specialist

**A few years ago, Jon felt like he was constantly climbing uphill. Struggling with depression, burnout, and a loss of interest in everything, he still had a desire to contribute to society. He found solace in volunteering at an organic farm, where he could engage in fulfilling physical work without much interaction with others.**

With the help of a supportive coach at the Learning and Work Advisory Centre, who broke through his resistance, Jon was introduced to the WGP. Given his affection for Philips and PSV, Jon quickly decided to work as a sales assistant with Myshop in the Philips Stadium. Although the start was challenging, with difficulties in communicating and dealing with diverse customers, Jon consistently received positive feedback for his friendliness and

helpfulness. Initially, his goal was simply to get out of bed and go to work each day, considering it a successful day if he achieved that.

**'The WGP has truly been a stepping stone in my life; I don't know how things would have turned out otherwise.'**

He experienced personal growth and learned to recognize and protect his limits better. Earning his own money, he cautiously began considering his future. Jon deeply appreciated the support from his career coach, Saskia, as well as from his colleagues and team lead, Sabine.

Given the opportunity to explore various professional fields, Jon found himself drawn to the world of IT. With abundant opportunities and a perfect match with his interests, he quickly made the decision to pursue it. Following a three-week orientation with Techgrounds, Jon began working as a junior customer advisor with a cyber-security specialist after completing a course to become a cloud engineer.

"It was an intense period, but my mindset was always positive. 'Don't despair, this will work out!'" Jon says. His current role offers him many opportunities for learning and growth, and he now sees his future in a positive light. "I have been given the freedom to explore further, and that feels like a big luxury!"

**Sabine** (Teamlead sales Philips Myshop)

## Patience and broad-minded thinking

**When Sabine Kersten assumed the role of sales team leader at Philips Myshop four years ago, she entered an organization that had been offering work experience positions to job seekers from various backgrounds for years. Quickly realizing that the number of positions in her sales team was too high to provide proper coaching, she made the strategic decision to reduce the number of positions from 4 to 2. This adjustment allowed her to facilitate a smoother onboarding process for new participants without neglecting the development of her other team members.**

For Sabine, ensuring a positive experience for both the department and the job seeker is paramount. She feels a strong commitment to those who come

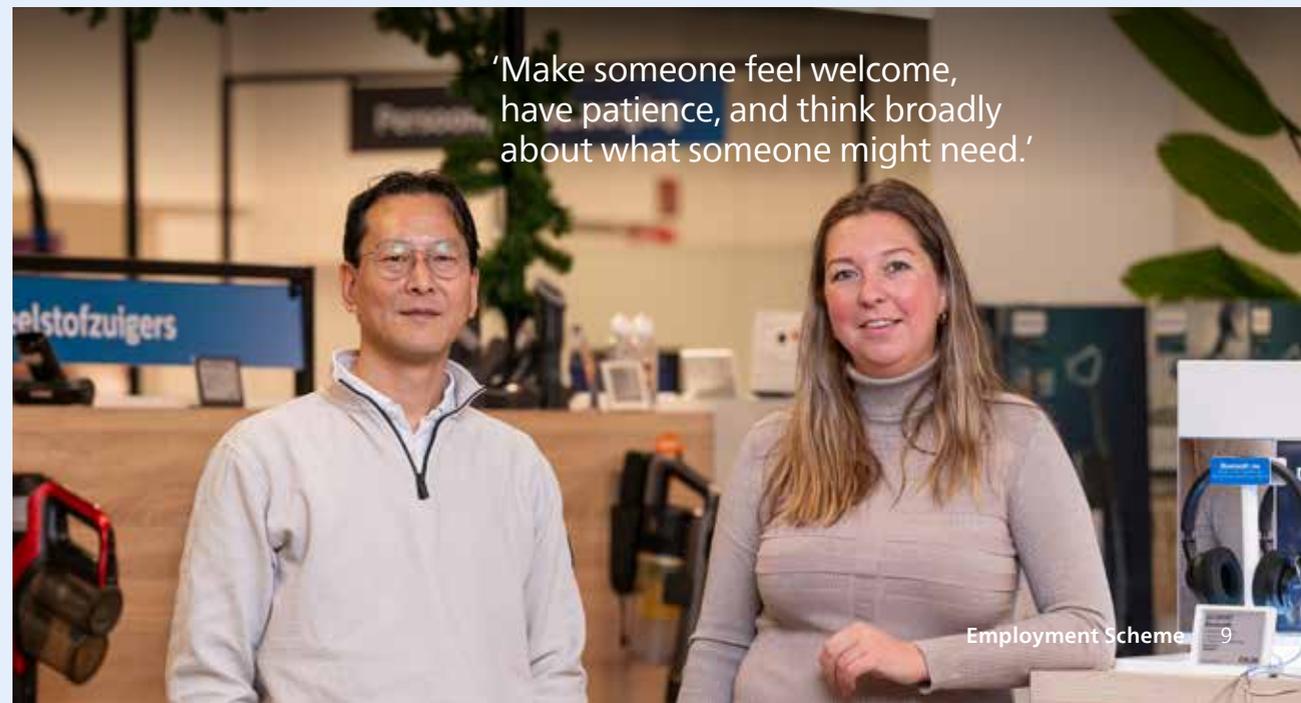
to work for her through the WGP and is willing to provide support in any way possible, provided there is genuine motivation. However, if someone demonstrates a lack of effort without a clear reason, she is less inclined to invest energy in that individual. Additionally, Sabine emphasizes the importance of having a good feeling about someone from the start, as it enables her to fully commit herself and provide the necessary guidance for growth.

Her advice to other managers considering hiring a WGP candidate is to be patient and think broadly about what might be beneficial for the individual. She advocates for allowing space for development and exploration during working hours, even if it is not directly related to the work in their own department. Sabine highlights the case of Jon,

whose WGP position provided an opportunity to rebuild resilience and employee skills, despite his lack of interest in becoming a salesman in the future.

Sabine believes in clarity and setting expectations. "If someone shows initiative and demonstrates a desire to develop, I'm happy to brainstorm about all the possibilities. I certainly encourage people in that regard, but I am not going to nag if initiative is lacking," Sabine says.

Moreover, she emphasizes the importance of making individuals feel welcome from day one and ensuring they know who they can turn to for support. According to Sabine, while it may not be complicated, it is incredibly important for the success of a placement.



**'Make someone feel welcome, have patience, and think broadly about what someone might need.'**

## Djurre (Employee Maintenance Technical Department)

# A Success story of Growth and Prospects

**After completing his high school diploma (VWO), Djurre faced a series of setbacks in his academic pursuits. Unfortunately, the COVID pandemic exacerbated his challenges, leading to significant delays and ultimately the end of his most recent study. His diagnoses of autistic spectrum disorder and ADHD added further complexity to his situation. At twenty-four years old, with no completed education or work experience, Djurre found himself at a crossroad, what next?**

With support from the municipality of Smalingerland, Djurre was included in the target group register and received assistance in finding work. It was through this avenue that he became aware of the WGP at Philips Drachten. Djurre's immediate desire was to dive headfirst into work without any gradual increase in hours; he wanted to work a full forty hours a week from the start. Remarkably, this approach suited him well. The structured environment provided by his work was precisely what he needed, leading to noticeable positive changes in him. Djurre quickly grasped the tasks at hand, and with each passing day, his self-confidence grew.

In the warehouse of the Maintenance Technical Department, Djurre played a vital role in ensuring the smooth operation of the factory by managing spare parts inventory. His responsibilities included assisting customers at the counter, unpacking and organizing parts, and gradually taking on more administrative tasks using SAP software. Through his dedi-

cation and perseverance, Djurre became proficient in SAP, confidently referring to himself as an SAP expert.

Throughout his tenure, Djurre not only honed his technical skills but also developed valuable employee skills. His commitment to his work led him to become a member of a trade union, demonstrating his dedication to the workplace community. Despite challenges such as colleagues leaving or being on sick leave, Djurre embraced the opportunity to take on additional tasks, contributing to the team's success and his personal growth.

**'The WGP year has brought me a lot of joy, happiness and progress!'**



Djurre was afforded ample time to learn new skills, manage his breaks, and develop strong bonds with his supportive colleagues. He described his experience as the perfect first job. However, the most challenging aspect of his WGP experience was leaving. Despite his hopes to stay, it wasn't meant to be. The farewell from his colleagues was warm and emotional, with a surprise dinner and a thoughtful gift.

Now working with the Tax Administration, Djurre is participating in a program exposing him to various aspects of the organization to help him determine his best fit. Adjusting to new tasks, settings, and interactions with colleagues has been a significant transition. Although he doesn't yet feel the same level of joy as he did at Philips, Djurre recognizes that his first golden job set a high standard.



**Nicole**  
(Integrated Communication Specialist)

## Advancing in Marketing and Communication

With a degree in International Business & Languages and an internship in Spain under her belt, alongside proficiency in multiple languages including Dutch and Slovak, she delved into social media and professional web design, taking on text and marketing projects. Despite her qualifications, junior positions eluded her due to lack of experience, a struggle exacerbated by the challenges of COVID-19. During this time, she channeled her energy into creating content on her TikTok and YouTube channels, offering tips and sharing her experiences, driven by her passion for helping others.

In the summer of 2023, she found her footing in the Brand, Communication & Digital department as an integrated communication specialist. Here, she crafts online newsletters, refines photos, and handles

translations among other tasks. Supported by a colleague who previously participated in the WGP program, she feels understood and well-guided.

**'This is my most enjoyable job so far; it doesn't even feel like work!'**

Despite the initial deluge of new information, she values the support as she navigates her role. Her journey reflects her resilience and determination to carve out her dream career path, fueled by her unwavering passion and eagerness to learn.

Nicole's role offers a diverse range of tasks, providing her with ample learning opportunities not only in marketing-related fields but

**Before Nicole was connected with WGP by the Employment Team of the Eindhoven municipality, she had accumulated some short-term experience both domestically and abroad. However, breaking into her desired field of Marketing and Communication turned out to be more challenging than she had expected.**

also in areas such as sustainability and business operations. She eagerly utilizes resources like the E- and V-miles programs, career coaching, and webinars on topics like influencer marketing and AI/Chat GPT to further her professional development.

Thrilled with the opportunity, Nicole embraces the diversity within Philips, appreciating the variety in age, cultures, backgrounds, and experience among her colleagues. Her guiding principle underscores the importance of maintaining the right mindset and staying positive amidst challenges. "I believe that with perseverance and determination, success will naturally follow, even when faced with uncertainties."



**Sevim**  
(Apprenticeship Trainee Allround Assistant Business Services)

## Professional and personal growth

**Sevim was searching for a company for an apprenticeship as part of her Allround Assistant Business Services study and was able to start with Brainport for Each Other through Philips. Under the umbrella of the "Community WGP," Philips offers community initiatives the opportunity to employ apprentices through a WGP contract. Sevim's studies at Summa College began in February 2023, and shortly after, she started her work at Brainport Development.**

Sevim's educational journey had been somewhat erratic; from starting at Gymnasium level to obtaining her high school (HAVO) diploma, then starting vocational training (MBO 4) in Hospitality before switching to her current course. She learned a lot about herself and what she wants to achieve, and that goal is now crystal clear: becoming a pilot! And not just any pilot, but one who understands all technical aspects of an aircraft as well. So the next stop will be a bachelor's in Aviation Technology, followed

by further specialization through a master's in Aerospace Engineering at the university. Ambition and eagerness to learn are abundant in this young lady.

She has also shown this eagerness to learn at Brainport Development. She had never worked in a business environment where formal communication was conducted through email, and she had no idea how Outlook, Teams, and Excel worked. However, thanks to the solid support from her manager and colleagues, and the use of online learning modules provided by Philips, she quickly mastered everything. She now handles administration and diaries, organizes meetings, drafts contracts for new cooperation partners, and takes care of the layout of the website and newsletters. In addition to her four days at Brainport Development, she also spends one day per week at Summa College for her studies. Because she is keen to proceed to the bachelor's program straight away, she aims to finish her current course in one and a half years instead of three. She is

expected to graduate this summer and pursue further studies in September.

**'They look at me as an individual, not just at my results. This is the best apprenticeship I could have wished for.'**

Sevim clearly senses alongside professional development substantive personal growth. Prioritizing, for example, was not her strong suit, but in that regard, she has learned a great deal. As has showing discipline and responsibility. These are important qualities for the pilot she aspires to become. She recently obtained her private pilot's license and is planning to fly to Greenland herself this summer.

## Brainport for Each Other

# 'Only by working together can we create a Brainport region for everyone'

**Ensuring everyone participates in our society, regardless of origin or level of education, is the goal of Brainport for Each Other. Whether someone struggles with reading or needs assistance with financial matters, Brainport for Each Other operates under the motto: "We can and must help each other move forward because everyone matters." In the Brainport region, collaboration is key to achieving the most significant impact. Brainport for Each Other aims to harness collective efforts by uniting social organizations, public authorities, schools, and businesses.**

Despite consisting of 'only' twenty-one municipalities with over 800,000 residents, the region has a substantial influence, particularly in technology and innovation. Brainport Eindhoven, synonymous with cutting-edge

technology, is where some of the world's most advanced machines, products, and innovations are conceived and built. These innovations directly address pressing global challenges such as energy transition, healthcare improvement, and smart, sustainable mobility. The overarching goal of Brainport Eindhoven is to create an environment where people can live, work, and thrive.

Brainport for Each Other perfectly aligns with this objective. The initiative's founders, including the Eindhoven Partner Foundation, Impact040, Brainport Development, Together for Eindhoven, and the Municipality of Helmond, and the Municipality of Eindhoven, contribute their expertise, networks, and enthusiasm to drive positive change. However, they cannot achieve this alone.

To enhance the daily lives of all individuals in the Brainport region, collaboration from all sectors is essential. Municipalities, social organizations, educational institutions, and increasingly, employers, are actively engaged in addressing societal challenges. Philips, for instance, participates by offering paid work experience positions through the WGP, which are seconded to social organizations.

Furthermore, Philips has been a longstanding participant in the Brainport for Each Other dinner, facilitating connections between businesses and social organizations to explore avenues for mutual support. Additionally, Philips encourages its employees to engage in voluntary work one day per year during working hours, fostering a culture of meaningful collaboration and community impact.



Attendees at the Brainport for Each Other dinner in 2023.



Utkan (Software developer)

## Career Steps and Language Acquisition at Philips

**Hailing from Turkey, Utkan has been residing in the Netherlands for over eight years with his wife and two children. Possessing a PhD and extensive work experience, he faced challenges in finding a suitable job here.**

Obstacles such as initially lacking a permanent residence permit, insufficient Dutch language skills, and employers' bias that his academic background might lead to boredom often resulted in rejections. While his theoretical technical expertise garnered praise, employers consistently

avored other candidates. As a postdoctoral researcher at TU/e, Utkan realized his aspiration to work in an industrial setting, where his research could translate into tangible outcomes. Discovering the Work Experience Program (WGP), he secured a position as a software developer in Philips' R&D department in Best. There, he received exceptional support and mentorship, with his manager recognizing his potential, accommodating his needs, and fostering his growth.

However, a restructuring in Philips' R&D function led to the loss of some positions and the

departure of colleagues, leaving Utkan feeling unsettled and missing his team. Nonetheless, this experience served as a realization that career paths can diverge unexpectedly.

Through the Philips WGP, Utkan also enrolled in Dutch language courses provided by Taalkracht (Language Power), enabling him to acquire grammar and conversational skills directly applicable in the workplace and practice with fellow WGP participants.

**'The WGP has helped me gain industry expertise as well as expand my network.'**

With a six-month contract extension, Utkan plans to utilize the upcoming months to further broaden his network and explore potential opportunities for a permanent position within Philips. Should this not materialize, he remains open to leveraging his network outside the company. Nevertheless, he has found a role that aligns well with his aspirations and where he aims to continue his development.

**Sufficient command of the Dutch language is often crucial in finding a suitable job. Many participants with a foreign background can manage work-related matters effectively in English but aspire to be competent in Dutch as well. For this reason, Philips offers a Dutch language course provided by Taalkracht, a part of ROC Summa College Eindhoven. The course takes the different language proficiencies of the participants into account. The course lasts for fifteen weeks, with participants receiving three hours of instruction weekly covering vocabulary, speaking, and listening skills. The focus is primarily on commonly used language in the workplace, allowing for ample practice outside of the lessons.**



Ivona (Department assistant)

## Professional Development with Philips WGP

**What was at the top of her list for Ivona from Croatia when she and her Dutch husband came to the Netherlands five years ago? Learning even more and gaining experience!**

In Croatia, she had already worked in different job settings. She worked in various roles in the tourism sector, as a secretary for a fruit company, and as a marketing assistant for a software organization. When she first arrived in the Netherlands, she worked in practical roles such as an order picker and assembly worker. She became pregnant and focused full-time on motherhood for a year and a half. When her child started day-care, she wanted to return to work as soon as possible and continue her professional growth. She started in a part-time administrative role and then got in touch with Philips WGP through the UWV (Employee Insurance Agency).

She joined Philips Healthcare in Best and started working as a department assistant in an R&D team. She found this super interesting and learned a lot. She also

quickly discovered that Philips is complex and it takes quite some time to understand how the different parts are connected and what everything that comes your way entails. At the same time, this fully satisfied her desire to learn a lot and build a good network.

**'The WGP is incredibly useful and can really bring about a change in your life and career provided you're open to it.'**

The team she works with welcomed her incredibly well and was always open to providing help and information. She felt like part

of the team from day one, which empowered her to take on tasks and proactively ask for work. She additionally attended professional training sessions, actively worked on her Dutch language skills, and thus really maximized this work experience. In the meantime, she increased her working hours from twenty-four to thirty hours per week on top of that.

She now has a regular position as a department & management assistant and has even become the coach of the new WGP employee in the team. She was involved in the selection process and can now provide someone with a lot of information and support based on her own experience, which she is more than happy to do! She also remains open to further development and opportunities. Ivona radiates positivity and drive, so it is almost certain that these opportunities will come her way.



**Dave**  
(Development Test Environment Engineer)

## A Fresh Start at Age 58

**Dave hadn't dared to dream that at 58 he would secure a permanent job. Yet, that's exactly what happened after his WGP program, with Philips, no less!**

Over the past forty years, he worked for various organizations, fulfilled his military service in the Air Force, and became the father of two now grown sons. In 1988, he discovered ICT and experienced a golden age as a contractor at various companies during the rise of this industry. Seven years ago, he became a caregiver for his mother, even moving in with her to care for her as best he could. Additionally, he faced some personal problems, which led to a burnout in 2020.

He got the opportunity to follow a reintegration program through a reintegration agency (PM Arbeid) and thus came in contact with the WGP. He started in September 2022 as a Development Test Environment Engineer in Fedor

Groos' team, initially working twenty hours per week. Over the course of the WGP year, he increased his hours to thirty-two per week.

Not only did his work hours increase, but his sense of self-worth also rose from an absolute zero to feeling that he mattered and was useful again. He also learned to be resilient and, above all, to accept that setbacks are sometimes part of the process, but they do not mean things are going badly. Bounce back, learn from it, and move on! Work provided him with the structure he needed, and the support he received from his manager and colleagues was invaluable.

Of course, there were also challenging moments at times. Especially managing his own available energy, with the constant care for his mother, was sometimes difficult. Rebuilding his professional knowledge after being out of the industry for a few years took

quite some energy as well. He immersed himself in learning about the technical aspects of his job, as well as focusing on his personal development through online courses, WGP workshops, coaching sessions, and conversations with his manager. He seized every opportunity the WGP offered him to fully reintegrate into the work process.

**'I want to stay here until retirement!'**

Dave focused on finding a new job after completing the WGP program. He received an offer from another company. The lease car was already chosen when a vacancy suddenly came up with Philips! He did not have to think long and turned down the other job. Since October 1, 2023, he has been employed full-time at Philips and feels like he is on top of the world.

**Fedor** (Group leader, MR & Precision Diagnostic)

## A worthwhile investment

**Fedor Groos works as a group leader in MR & Precision Diagnostic at Philips Healthcare. In the five years he has been doing this, he has given at least ten people the opportunity to further develop themselves through the WGP, and almost all of these people found a new job immediately after the WGP period.**

He enjoys seeing how people develop and how they find a regular job independently after a year, which previously seemed unattainable. He also uses his own network for this, helps people with how they can present themselves, and practices job interviews with them.

He has also seen Dave transform from a nervous, insecure man into someone who is a huge asset to the team. Fedor's approach was: "We'll just explore what's possible and what works." Dave

seized this opportunity with both hands, and thus Fedor was able to teach him the MR systems, along with the software that needs to be updated within them, step by step. Dave already brought a wealth of IT knowledge from his past and really excels in it within the department.

**'Look beyond the nerves and the lack of knowledge or experience, and discover together what is possible. Let yourself be surprised!'**

When the opportunity arose to hire someone for his team, Fedor went all out during his vacation to have Dave considered. It took

a lot of effort and a hassle, but on the very last day, the decision was made, and since then, Dave has been an integral part of his team, and also on a permanent contract to boot. The best icing on the cake!

Fedor is keen to show other managers that hiring someone from the WGP offers many benefits, such as reducing workload and providing additional support for the team. Of course, this does require an investment in time and guidance, but it is valuable to see how someone grows. He advises to focus on the potential of the candidate during an introductory interview and to use the first month of probation well to get a better understanding. Many people are so nervous during a first interview that they do not present themselves well, and that is a shame.





**Ammar** (Junior Mechanical Engineer)

## A new Beginning after the Hardships of War

**Amidst the chaos of rockets streaking through the air and bullets pelting the roof of his house in Aleppo, Ammar remained steadfast in his pursuit of a master's degree in Mechanical Engineering. However, the war disrupted his studies as crucial components became unavailable. Undeterred, he sought education elsewhere and ventured to Hungary alone, though the country wasn't particularly receptive to refugees. After completing his studies, he and his wife chose the Netherlands as their new home.**

Navigating bureaucracy, finding a place to live, and becoming a first-time father, Ammar eventually connected with the Work Guidance Program (WGP) through the municipality. His interview at Philips Healthcare in Best led to an unexpected opportunity. Recognizing his potential, the manager created a tailored work experience role for him, focusing on 3D printing and design. Ammar's ingenuity shone through as he developed a fully 3D-printed model of an MRI

patient table, showcasing tangible results of his efforts.

What struck Ammar the most was the incredibly positive collaboration he experienced with his colleagues. He found himself learning a great deal from them and was impressed by the prevailing sense of equality in the workplace. The openness of communication, particularly with his manager, was a revelation for him. He remarked, "I was very surprised by the open communication I could have with my manager. He even inquired how I would like to develop professionally. No-one would ask that in Syria!"

Despite these positive experiences, Ammar sometimes felt like a stranger among his colleagues. During breaks, conversations in Dutch about unfamiliar topics left him feeling isolated, as his Dutch skills were not yet proficient enough to fully participate. Nonetheless, he was actively working on improving his language skills. Initially, he attended Dutch language classes offered by Philips through Summa

Taalkracht (Language Power), and he continued his studies online. Ammar's determination to improve his Dutch proficiency reflects his commitment to integrating into his new environment and fully participating in the workplace culture.

**'The WGP has made me more confident and introduced me to the Dutch job market. I'm going to make it here.'**

He is also incredibly grateful for the help his career coach Nicole provided. She helped him to keep his sights on job opportunities outside Philips. After his WGP year, he was able to start immediately at Coredux in Tilburg as a manufacturing engineer. Here, he can continue to develop and gain experience in the coming years. He misses his parents, who still live in Syria, immensely, but they are incredibly proud of their son!



**Save the date!**

# WGP Annual Congress 2024

Tuesday, November 12  
Evoluon, Eindhoven



For more information, please visit [wgpcongres.nl](http://wgpcongres.nl)

