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A helping hand in tough times

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The economic crisis has affected most businesses in some way and hampered job creation. Yet an ESF-sponsored project in the IJssel-Vecht region of the Netherlands is promoting an innovative form of job creation for the younger generation.

Nautus, a Dutch company, is implementing a project called 'Vouchers leerwerkbanen' which provides job vouchers for local companies to take on apprentices. Nautus realised that it is increasingly difficult for young people to find a job and get experience under their belts. It therefore introduced the voucher system for the region.



It is up to municipalities to offer firms the vouchers, which cover 50% of the minimum wage of a new young employee. New recruits have to be under 27 and unemployed to be eligible. A big communications drive was initiated to inform companies, schools, young people and municipalities in the region about the scheme.

The project, which will run until mid-2012, aims to get all of the 12 municipalities in the region involved and disburse 320 vouchers. Nautus has already given out 28 vouchers, with another 29 in the pipeline.

As a result of this project, young unemployed people have been given a chance to get on the first rung of the job ladder whilst also getting an education in school. Companies can hire young employees for 50% of the wage and contribute to lower youth unemployment in the region.

"Without the ESF, fewer vouchers would be given out and the effect of the project would be much smaller," says Leon Beernink of Nautus.

Project name: Vouchers leerwerkbanen

Area of activity: Increasing labour supply

Project duration: February 2011 – August 2012

ESF contribution: €860 000

Total budget: €2 150 000

Participants:	28 (up to 320)
Country:	The Netherlands
Organisation:	Nautus
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