



Welcome to:

**European Workplace Innovation Network | September Bulletin**

EUWIN is an initiative of the European Commission's Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

## How management and unions can jointly empower staff A Danish case



Novozymes is a biotech-based company, headquartered in Denmark and employing approximately 6,000 people in 30 countries. Its products - industrial enzymes, microorganisms, biopolymers and other proteins - allow industry to achieve more efficient use of raw materials, reduce energy consumption, replace traditional chemicals with more sustainable alternatives, and offer higher-quality products to customers. Innovation and sustainability are core to Novozymes' business values and objectives.

Novozymes also acknowledges the importance of driving innovation from the bottom up and understands that engaging with the shop floor is good for employees and good for productivity. EUWIN's new film features Vice President, Novozymes and Anders Hentze Knudsen, the United Federation of Danish Workers Shop Steward at Novozymes who discuss working practices at the company's Bagsvaerd operation in Denmark.

The main message is clear: strong partnership between management and unions can transcend traditional industrial relations agendas, empowering frontline workers in day-to-day decision-making and actively involving them in improvement and innovation.

[Read more](#) [Watch the video](#) [Download the PDF](#)

# What skills will Industry 4.0 economy require?

## OECD's paper on escaping the low skills equilibrium trap



Policymakers and employers come to appreciate the importance of workplace innovation from many different directions. Skills utilisation – the extent to which employees at all levels have the opportunity to use their competencies in the workplace – is increasingly of interest as governments and companies seek to maximise their return on investment in training provision. Workplace innovation, which provides the framework within which workers can use and develop their full range of skills, knowledge, experience and creativity in their jobs, and has much to contribute to this discussion.

In its recent publication - “Escaping the Low Skills Equilibrium Trap”, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development’s (OECD) looks closer at this issue from the local perspective <sup>1</sup>.

Investment in the supply of skills alone will not be sufficient to boost job creation and productivity in local economies. The degree to which local employers are demanding and using skills also needs to be taken into account. Where the supply of and demand for skills is low, regions can find themselves trapped in a “low skills equilibrium”. Such a situation can develop in regions where there is a concentration of employers that are pursuing price-based competition strategies, and that rely on low-skilled and standardised production. This can turn into a vicious circle as it does not pay for people to invest in skills when skills are not valued by employers. At the same time, those who do attain skills may move away to seek more appropriate jobs elsewhere.

[Download the article](#)

<sup>1</sup> OECD (2014), Job Creation and Local Economic Development, OECD Publishing. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264215009-en>. The opinions expressed and arguments employed in this chapter are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the OECD or of the governments of its member countries.

## The power of engagement – lessons Cougar Automation



In 2004 British Cougar Automation committed itself to delivering 10 out of 10 service to all of its customers all of the time. Since this requires perfection the company recognises it may never get there. However its entire strategy is dedicated to closing the gap with that vision, no matter how big or small the gap may seem.

Cougar is a UK-based company which designs and supplies automation systems for diverse customers including those in air travel, food production, water supply and waste management. Its competitive advantage lies in high levels of customer service which in turn depends on happy and fulfilled staff, and the elimination of waste.

Cougar's Chairman Clive Hutchinson bought the company in 2002. "Over the years we have learnt that the way to deliver great service is to be clear about what we are trying to achieve, match people to work that they really love, and then set our people free".

Once people understand the purpose of their work and are being encouraged to play to their strengths "we can really start the magic flowing by setting them free".

[Read more](#)

## Save the Date

Keep up to date with EUWIN events



7-8 <sup>th</sup> September	Leuven, Belgium	International Workshop on Teamworking (IWOT) Workshop. Details and registration <a href="#">here</a> .
9 <sup>th</sup> September	Leuven, Belgium	On 9 <sup>th</sup> of September 400 business practitioners will gather to share their experience and get equipped with practical tools to support the uptake of non-technological innovations. This Leuven EUWIN Conference will also be a chance to meet possible future business partners. Details and registration <a href="#">here</a> .
10-11 <sup>th</sup> September	Leuven, Belgium	Socio-technical Round Table. Details and registration <a href="#">here</a> .
7 <sup>th</sup> October	Bucharest, Romania	OSH Romania Annual Conference. EUWIN presents its Romanian action plan. More information will be available at <a href="http://www.inpm.ro">www.inpm.ro</a>
8 <sup>th</sup> October	Bucharest, Romania	Business Summit for HR. EUWIN discusses 50 cases of workplace innovation with Romanian HR managers. Register at <a href="http://hrconnection.ro/">http://hrconnection.ro/</a>
19 <sup>th</sup> October	Warsaw, Poland	EUWIN Regional Workshop (with the support of the <a href="#">Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, PARP</a> and Kozminski University)

[Find out more about our events](#)

## Please Forward

Thank you for being part of [euwin](#). Together we bring together the knowledge, experience and enthusiasm of enterprises, employees, unions, employers' organisations, policymakers and researchers from across Europe. Spread the word! Please forward this briefing to your colleagues, associates and suppliers. Ask them to sign up [here](#). Make sure they don't miss out.

