

ANNUAL ECONOMIC SURVEY OF EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN 2008

INTRODUCTION TO COUNTRY FILES

Employee ownership is progressing faster and stronger across Europe than anyone could expect. This is a quick and recent new development in most European countries. However, some countries began earlier while others dawdled on the way (see [Graph 1](#)). The new Annual Survey for year 2008 shows that employee ownership declined a bit on the threshold of the financial crisis, from 283.3 to 240.2 billion Euro (-15.2%). However, this was still much more than the 206.2 billion one year before. As a percentage, employees' share stabilized on 2.63% in the capital ownership structure. Considering recent trends, employee ownership is going to double within the next 5-10 years, from 9.1 million employee owners now to 16 millions, from 28.2% of all employees in large European companies now to 40-50%, and capitalisation held by employees going to raise from 2.63% now to 4-5%. This is the main conclusion of the economic survey of employee ownership in the European countries in year 2008. This survey is based on information about each of all large European companies – which also means a similar information for each of all European countries. Furthermore, it is based on information given by companies themselves in Annual Reports – which means a quick information and a high quality. The full version of this Annual Survey is available at the European Federation of Employee Share Ownership.

IRELAND (IE)

Compared to most other European countries, employee ownership looks highly developed in large Irish companies. On many points, Ireland has been rated number 1 in comparison to other European countries.

Considering the global percentage of capital held by employees, Ireland looks high with 3.13% compared with 2.63% in Europe but far from France (4.52%) – see [Graph 2](#). However top executives are represented here with 1.57%, 50% of all capital held by employees, a high proportion compared to many countries, and especially France.

100% of Irish large companies have some employee share ownership – giving number 1 to Ireland ([Graph 3](#)).

Ireland appears to be higher than the average of all European countries regarding large companies having "broad-based" employee share plans (all-employee plans), with 61% compared to 51.9%. However, this is far from the 77% in the UK and the 86% in France ([Graph 4](#)).

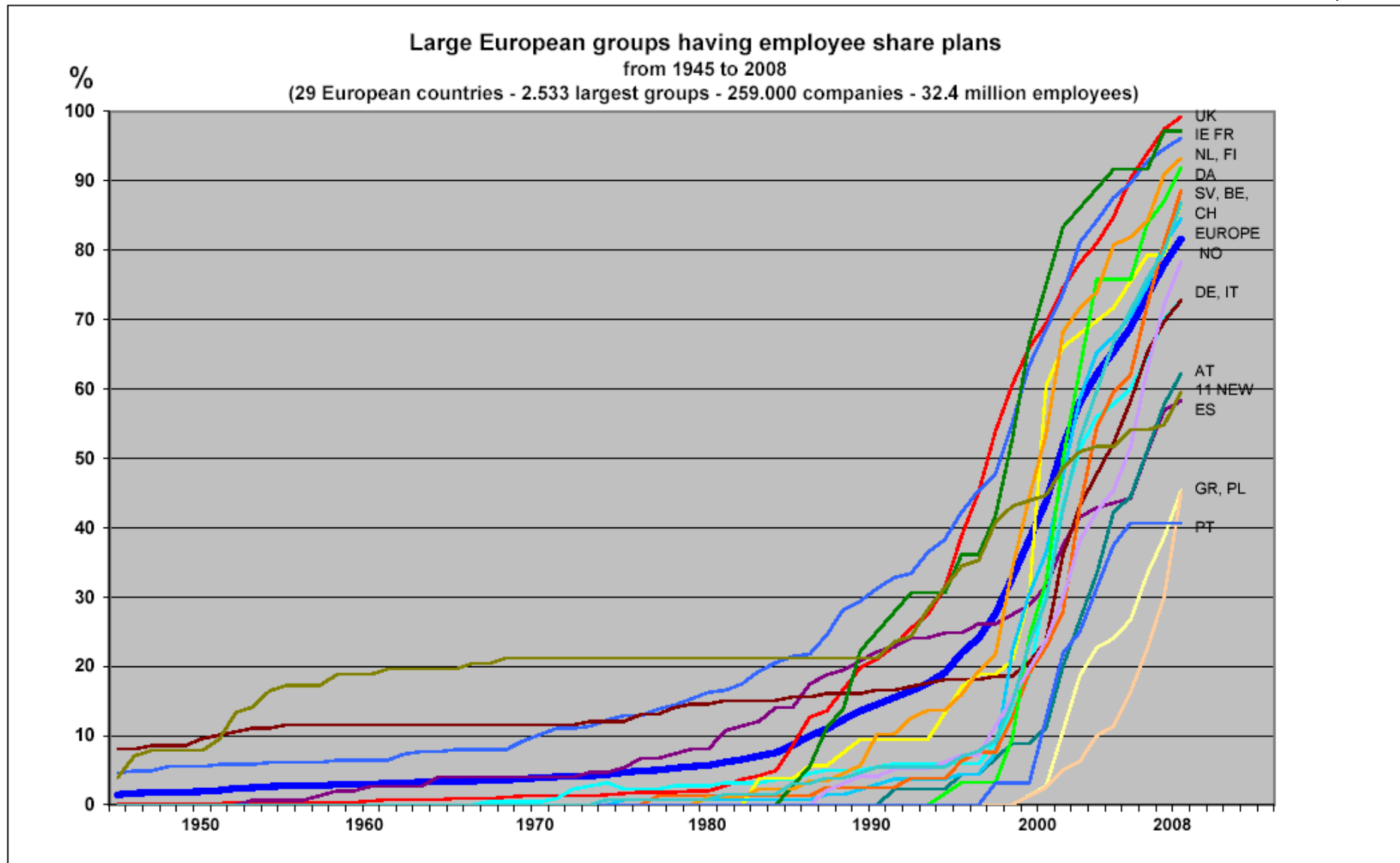
High dynamics. This is remarkable: Yet being number 1 on many points, dynamics in Ireland is high. 42% of Irish large companies launched new employee share plans in 2007/8 – compared with 36.6% in Europe ([Graph 5](#)).

Large Irish companies launched their first employee share plan in 1995 on average – a long time before most European countries ([Graph 6](#)).

Ireland is also very high (in fact number 1) regarding stock options. 97% of large Irish companies have stock option plans – compared with 64.6% for Europe ([Graph 7](#)).

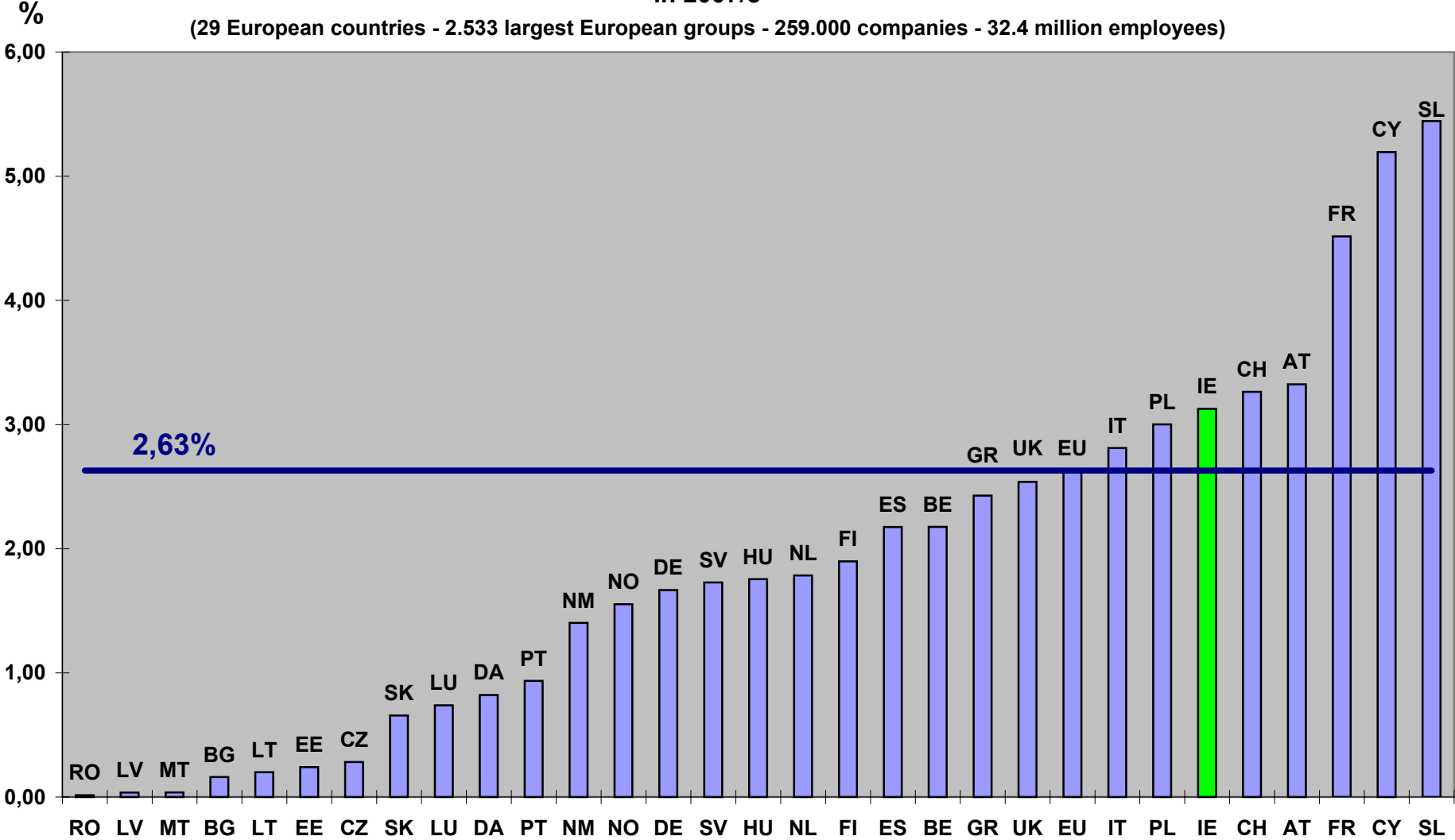
Consequently, the proportion of employee owners amongst all employees is not the best in Ireland: It is even lower than the average of all European countries with 24% compared to 28.2%, much lower than the 34% in UK and 46% in France ([Graph 8](#)).

Finally, Ireland is high for large companies having "significant" employee ownership, with 67% compared to 53.9% in Europe ([Graph 9](#)).



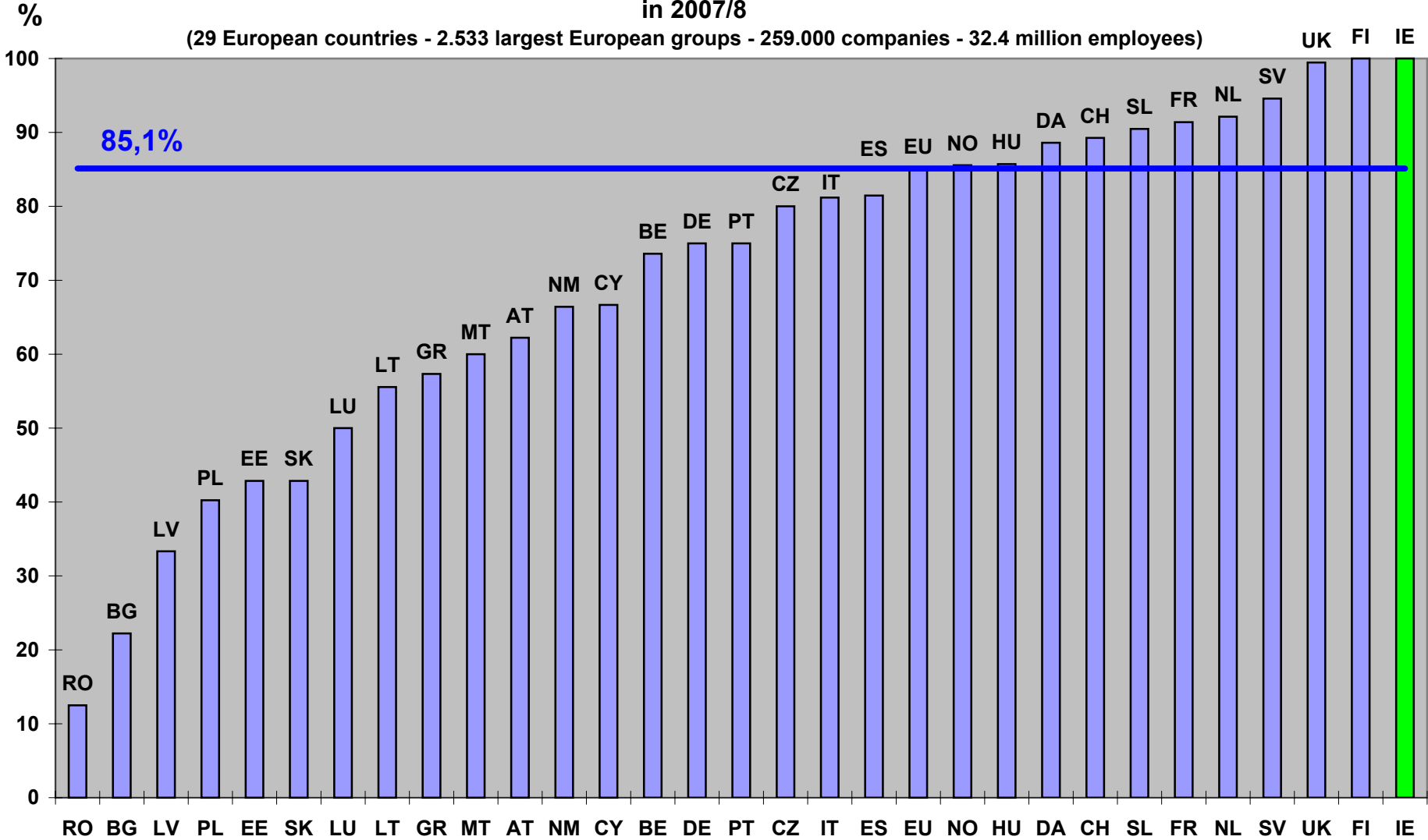
% CAPITAL HELD BY EMPLOYEES IN EUROPEAN COMPANIES in 2007/8

(29 European countries - 2.533 largest European groups - 259.000 companies - 32.4 million employees)



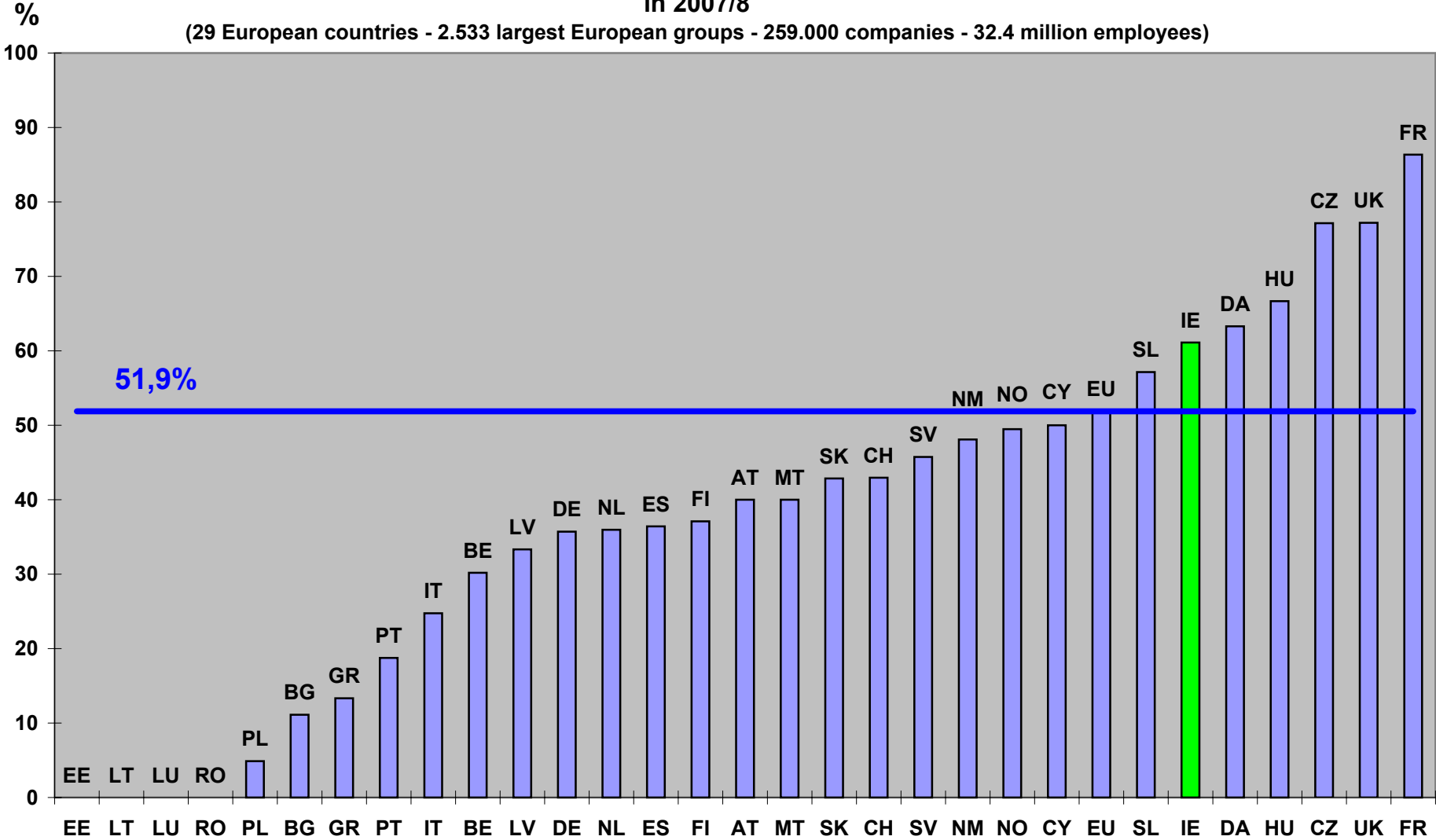
% EUROPEAN GROUPS HAVING EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP in 2007/8

(29 European countries - 2.533 largest European groups - 259.000 companies - 32.4 million employees)



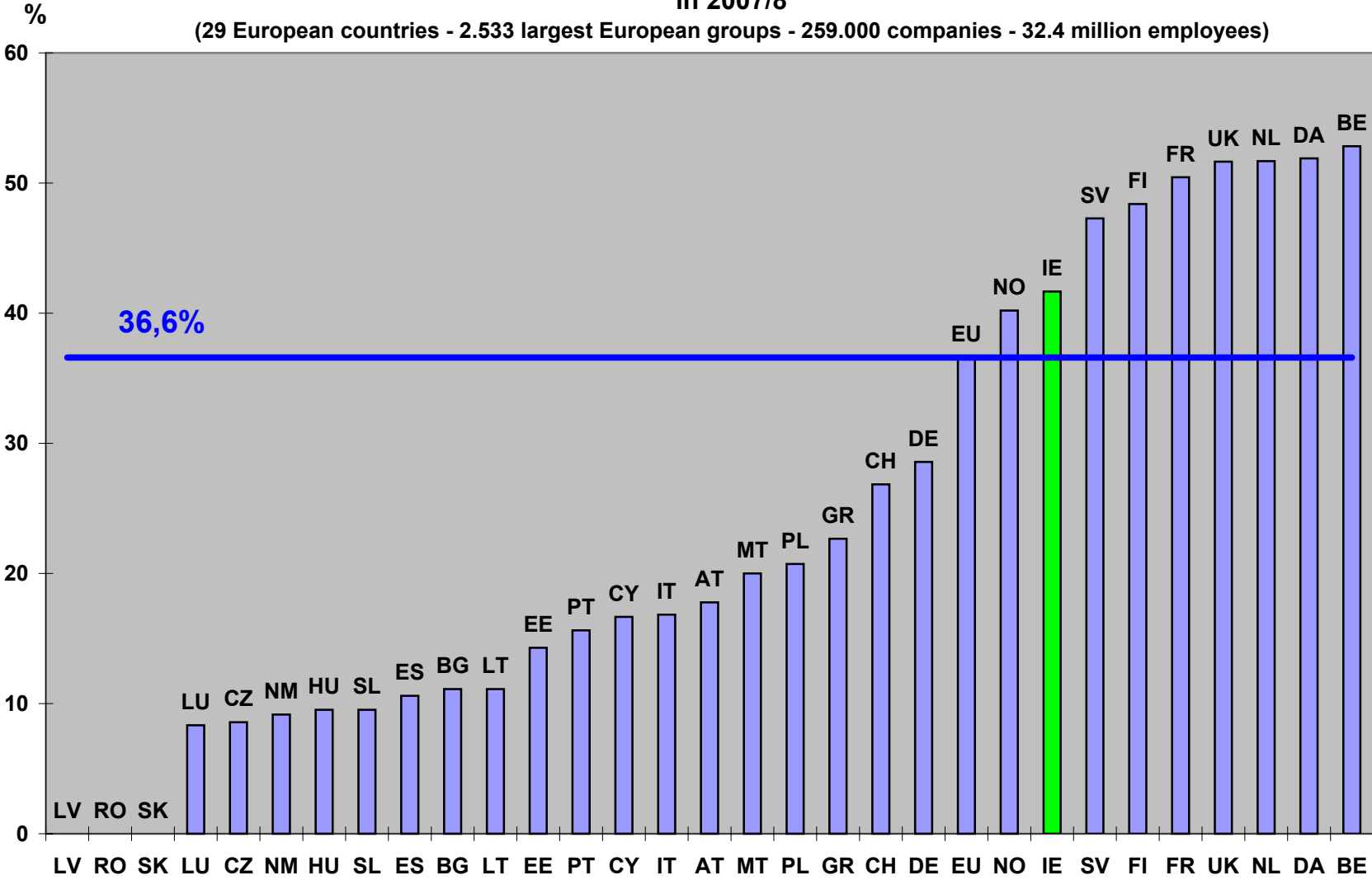
% EUROPEAN GROUPS HAVING BROAD-BASED EMPLOYEE SHARE PLANS in 2007/8

(29 European countries - 2.533 largest European groups - 259.000 companies - 32.4 million employees)



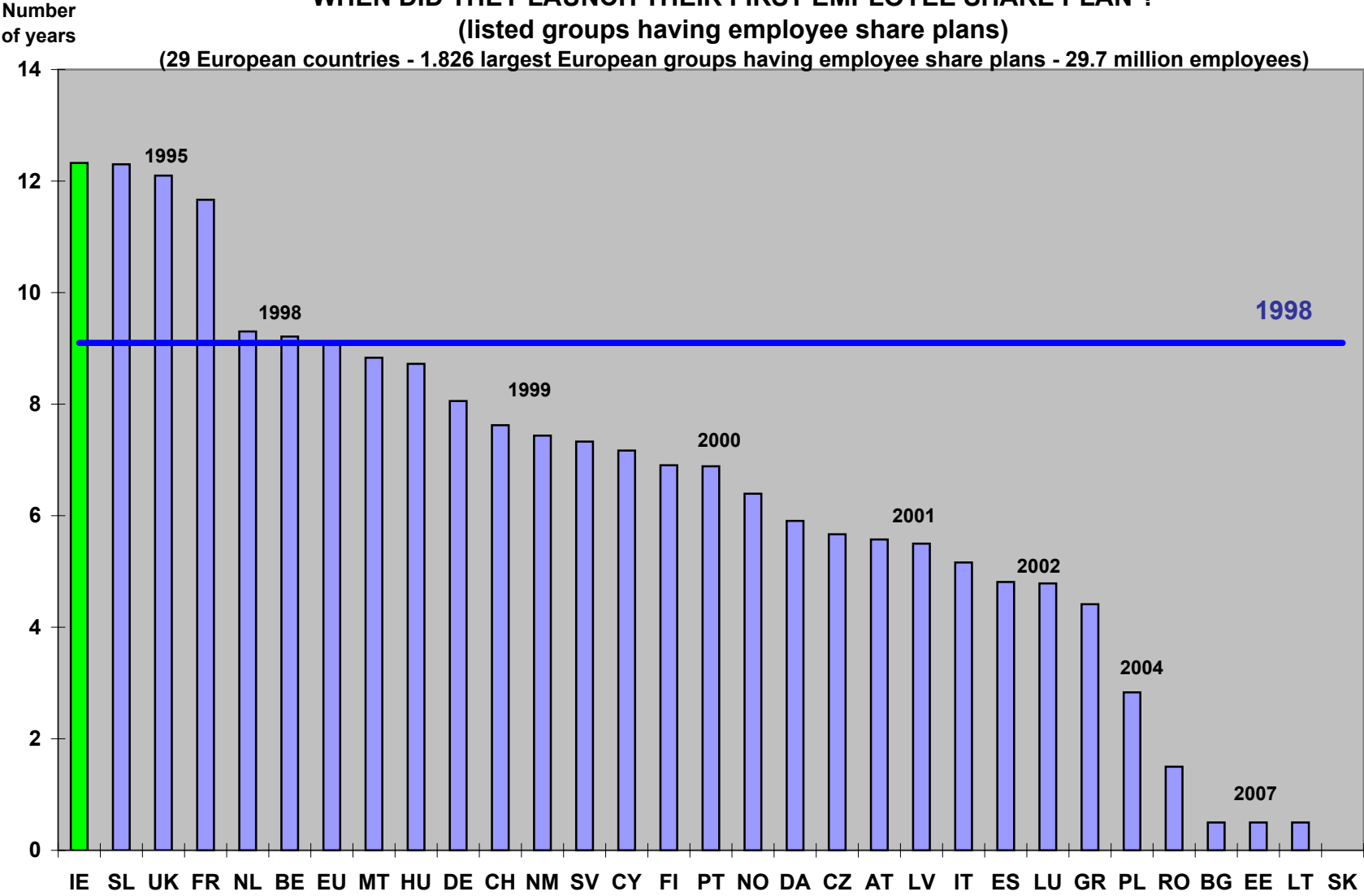
% EUROPEAN GROUPS HAVING LAUNCHED NEW EMPLOYEE SHARE PLANS in 2007/8

(29 European countries - 2.533 largest European groups - 259.000 companies - 32.4 million employees)



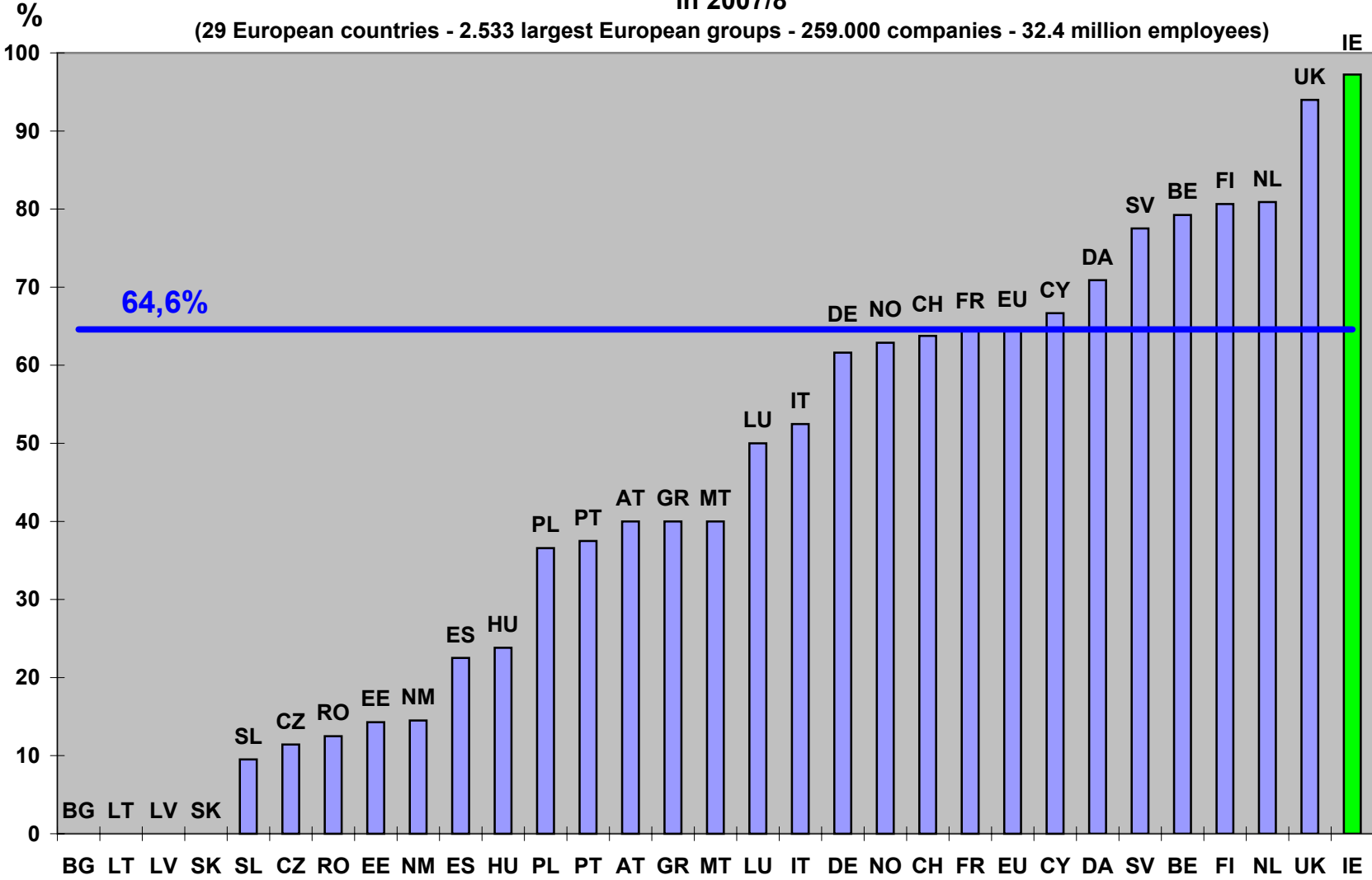
WHEN DID THEY LAUNCH THEIR FIRST EMPLOYEE SHARE PLAN ? (listed groups having employee share plans)

(29 European countries - 1.826 largest European groups having employee share plans - 29.7 million employees)



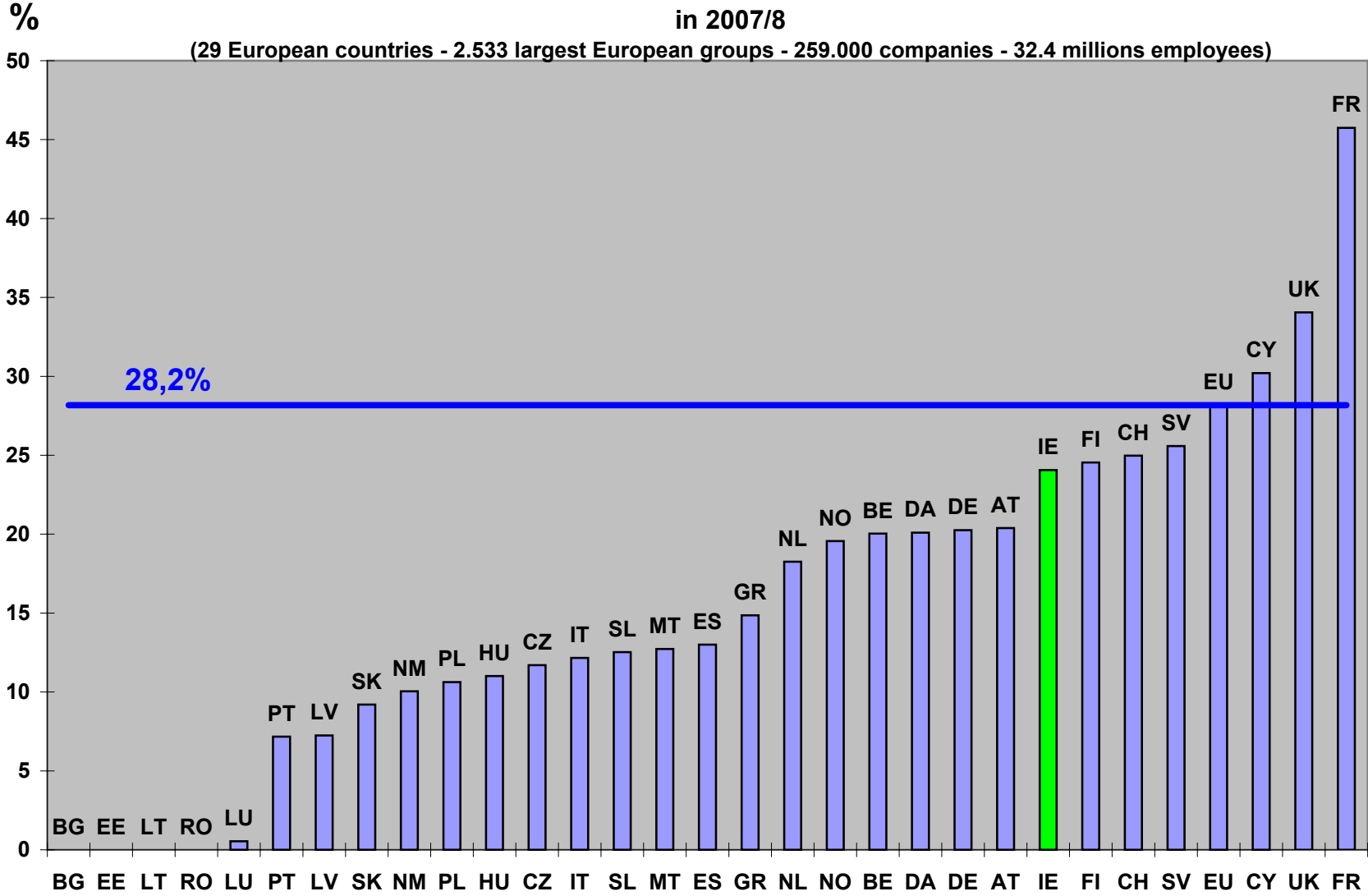
% EUROPEAN GROUPS HAVING STOCK OPTION PLANS in 2007/8

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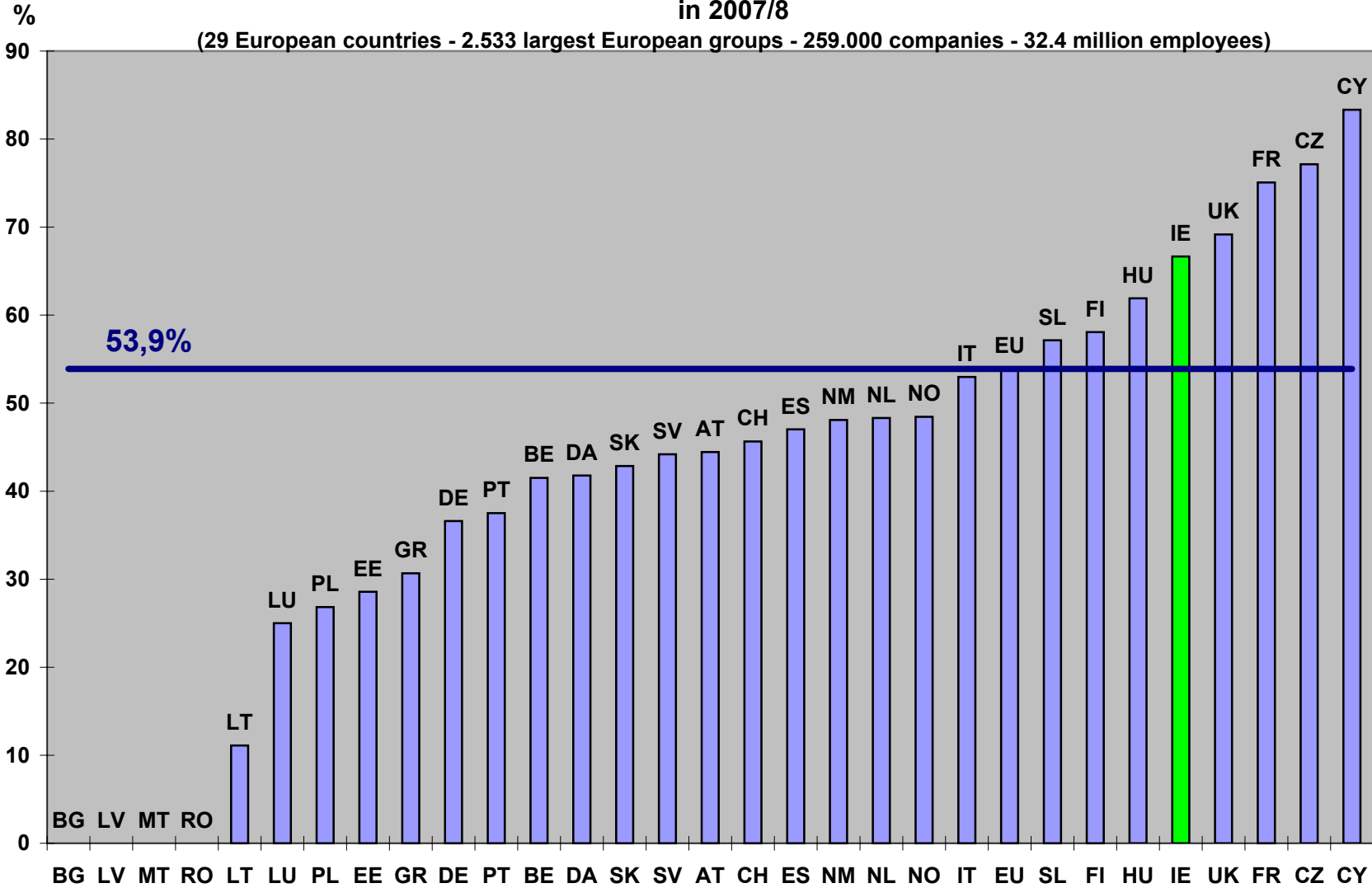
% EMPLOYEE OWNERS AMONGST ALL EMPLOYEES in 2007/8

(29 European countries - 2.533 largest European groups - 259.000 companies - 32.4 millions employees)



% EUROPEAN GROUPS HAVING "SIGNIFICANT" EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP (EO>1%) in 2007/8

(29 European countries - 2.533 largest European groups - 259.000 companies - 32.4 million employees)



CAPITAL HELD BY EMPLOYEES: EXECUTIVES' AND NON-EXECUTIVES' SHARES
 in 2007/8

(29 European countries - 2.533 largest European groups - 259.000 companies - 32.4 million employees)

