

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.

UNITED KINGDOM (UK)

Compared to other European countries, employee ownership is at the top in UK. For 25 years in fact, UK and France have been in contention for the number one position in Europe.

Considering the global percentage of capital held by employees in large companies, France was more effective, seeing that UK is at 2.54% compared with 2.63% in Europe - but 4.52% in France ([Graph 2](#)).

UK is at the top just behind Ireland and Finland considering large companies having some employee share ownership – with 99% compared to 100% in Ireland, but only 91% in France ([Graph 3](#)).

France surpasses UK for large companies having "broad-based" employee share plans (all-employee plans) – It is 77% in UK compared to 86% in France, both countries being well above the European average of 51.9% ([Graph 4](#)).

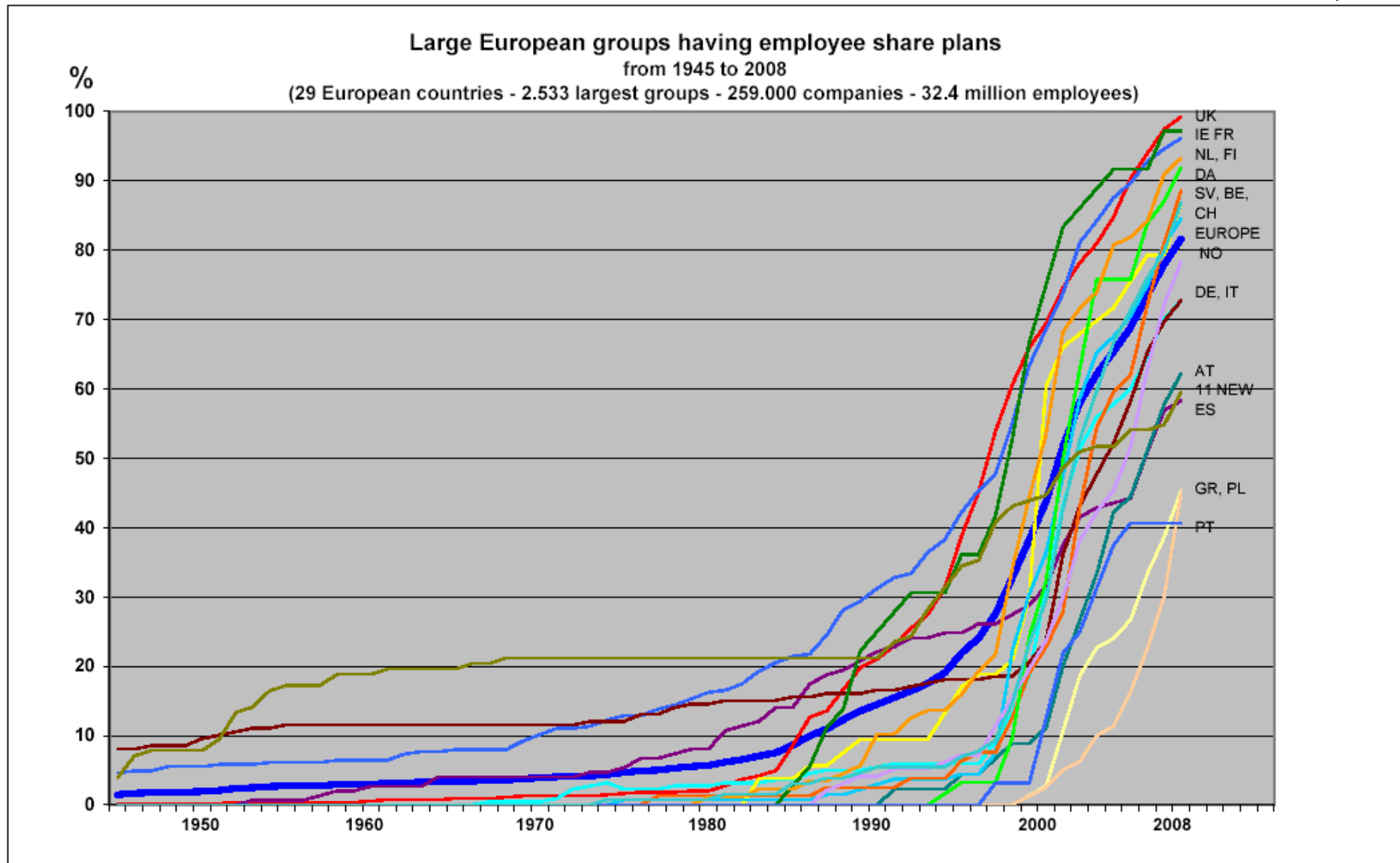
Same high dynamics in UK and France. 52% of large British companies launched new employee share plans in 2007/8 – compared with 36.6% in Europe, 53% in Belgium, 52% in Denmark and The Netherlands, 50% in France ([Graph 5](#)). It is a feature that the top European are also amongst those with highest dynamics !

UK was not far from number one for employee share plans in large companies: Large British companies launched their first employee share plan in 1995 on average, not very different from Ireland and France ([Graph 6](#)).

UK and Ireland are at the top regarding stock options, which is not the case for France. 94% of Large British companies have stock option plans – compared with 97% in Ireland, much higher than the 64% in France ([Graph 7](#)).

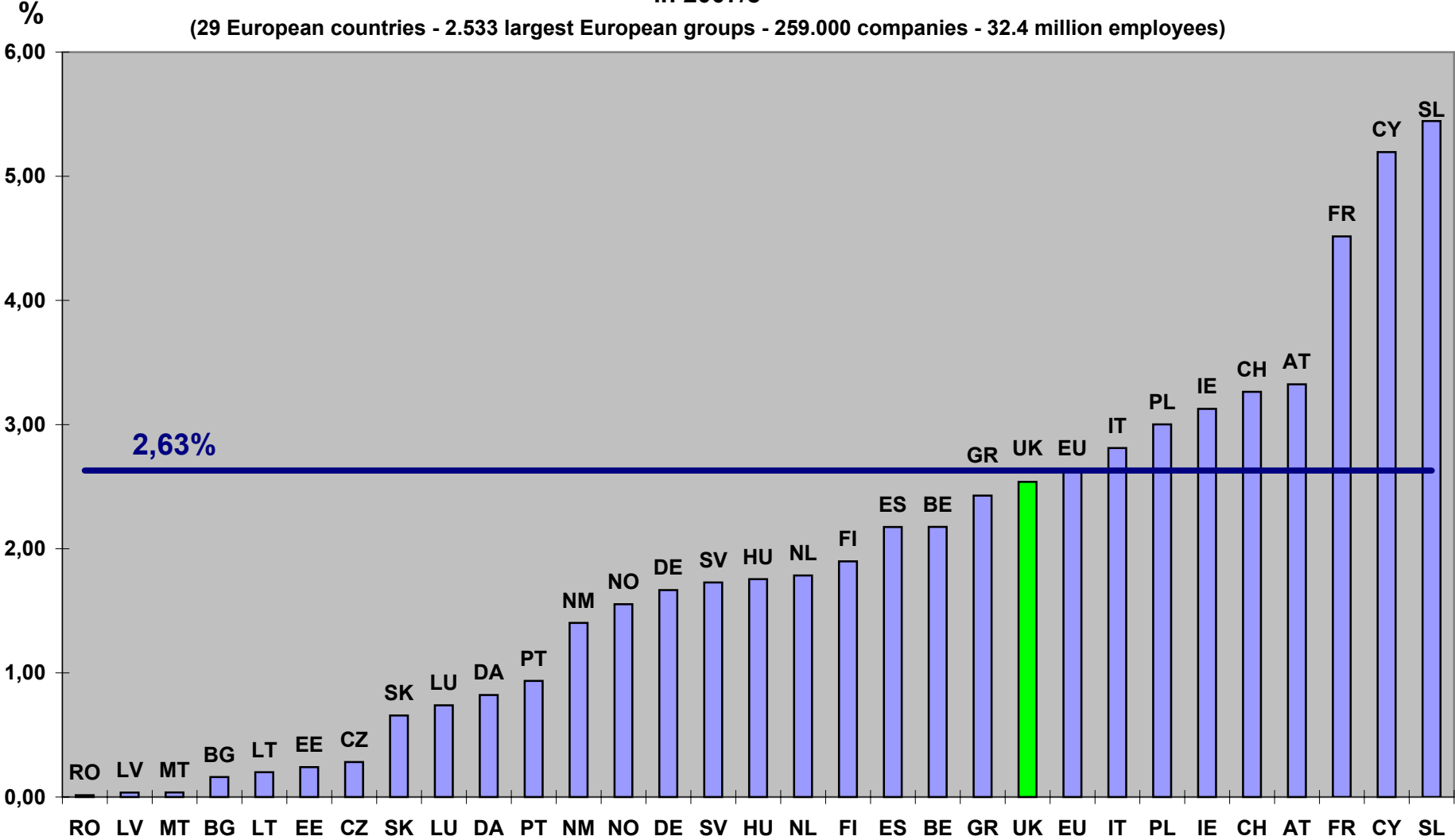
As a consequence, UK is still lower than France for the proportion of employee owners amongst all employees in large companies: It is 34% in UK compared with 46% in France – but still only 28.2% in Europe ([Graph 8](#)). The democratisation of employee ownership is clearly more effective in France than in UK.

Finally, UK is also some what lower than France for large companies having "significant" employee ownership: 69% in UK and 75% in France, compared with 53.9% in Europe ([Graph 9](#)).



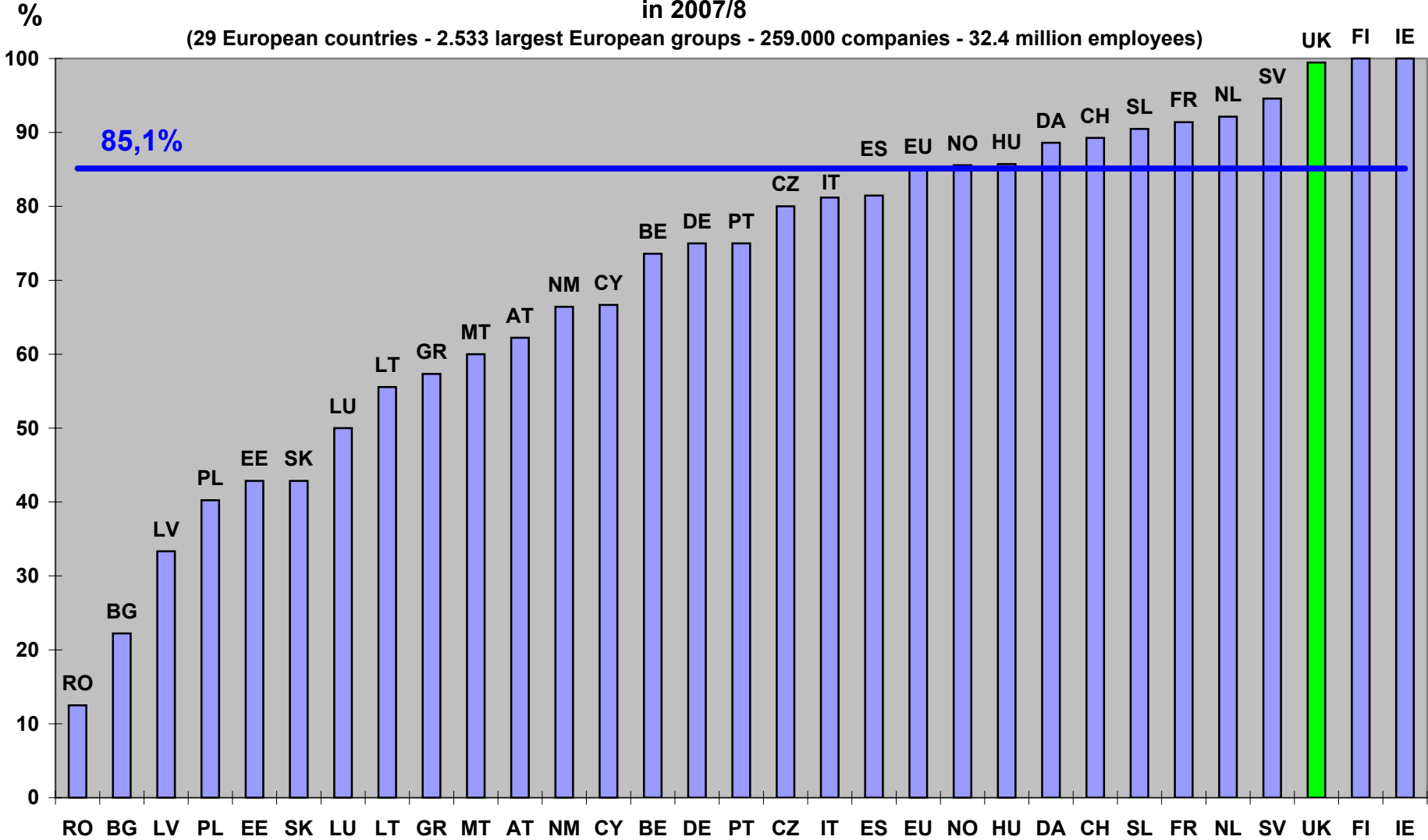
% CAPITAL HELD BY EMPLOYEES IN EUROPEAN COMPANIES in 2007/8

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



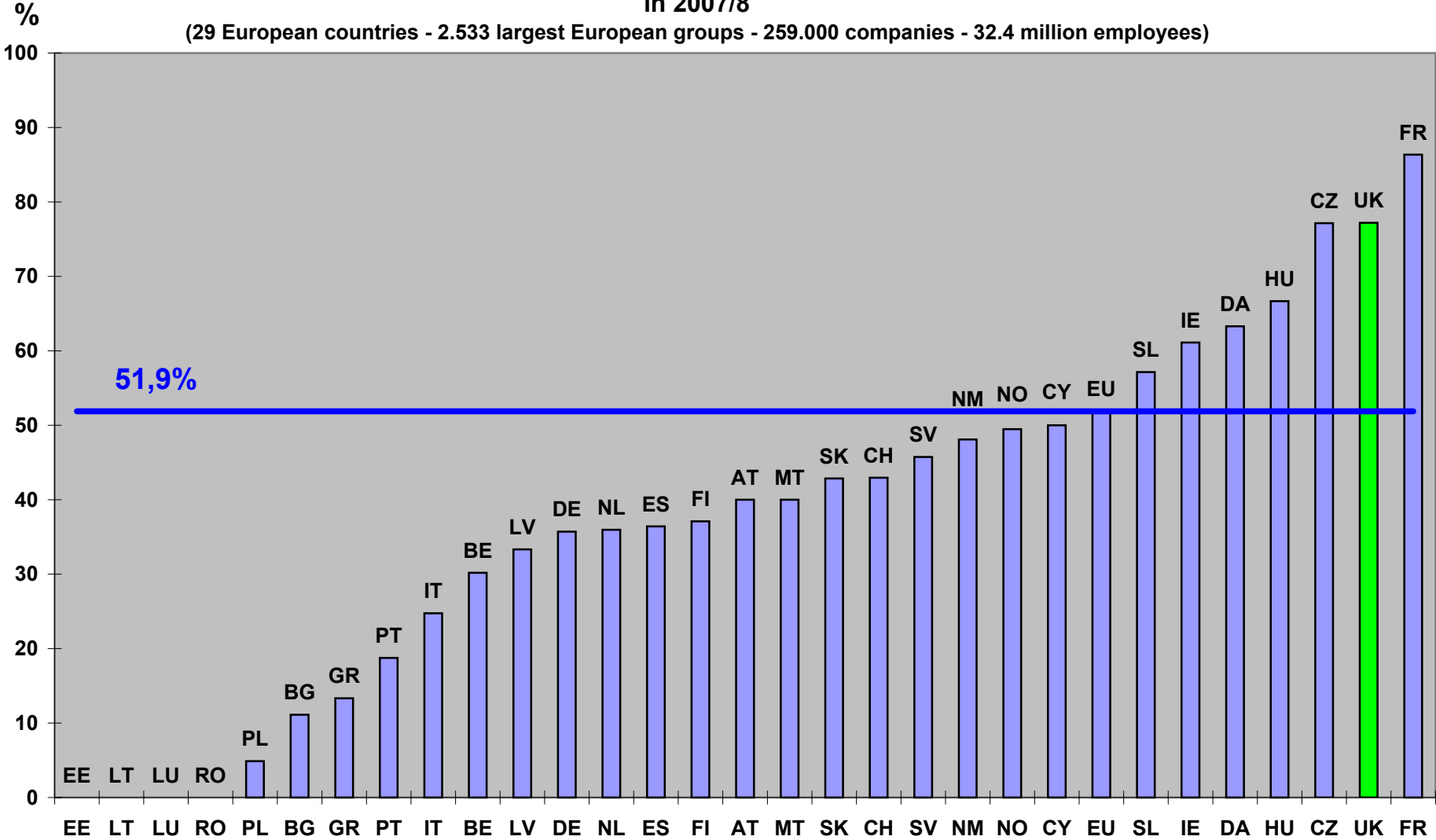
% EUROPEAN GROUPS HAVING EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP in 2007/8

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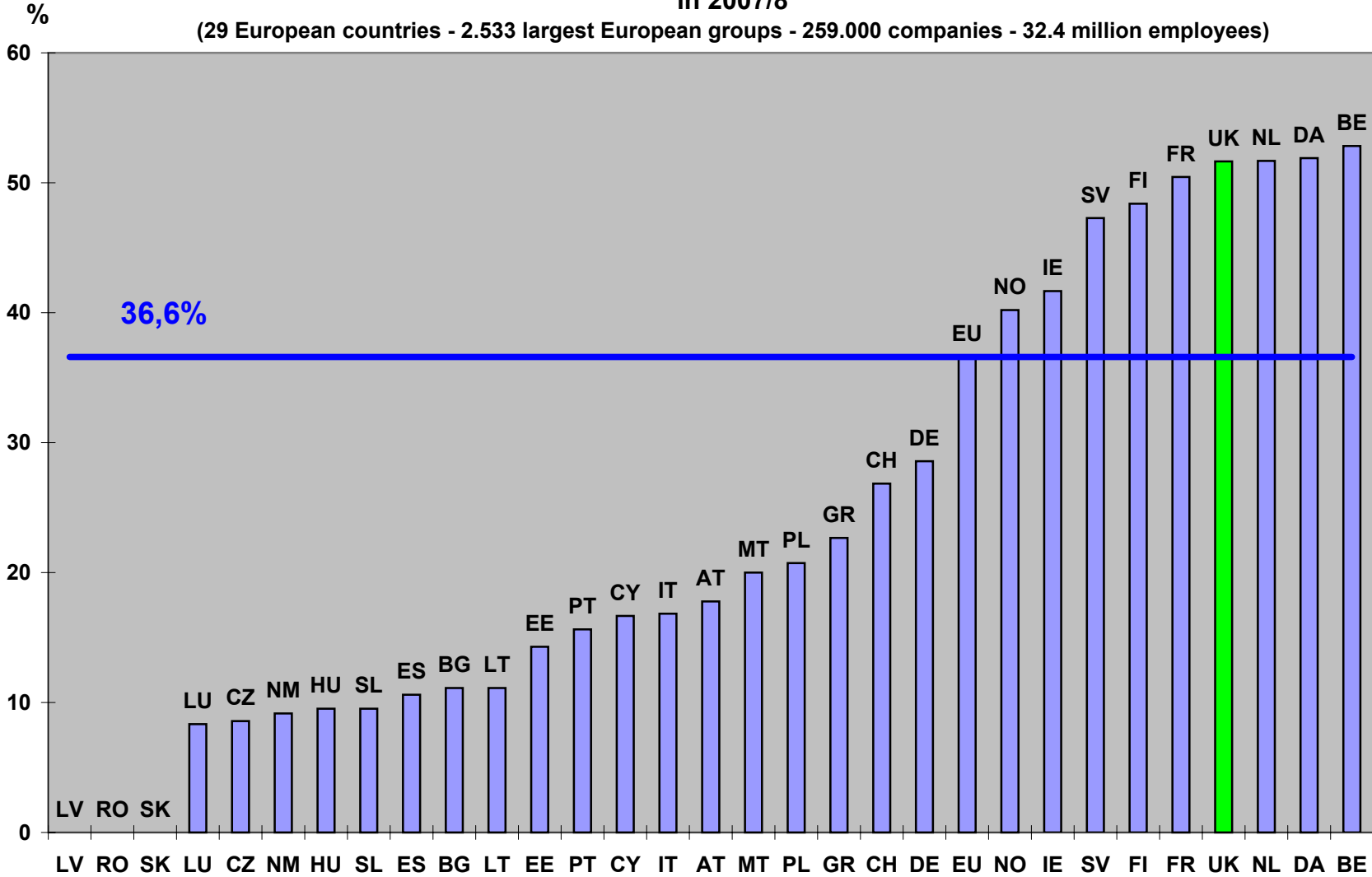
% EUROPEAN GROUPS HAVING BROAD-BASED EMPLOYEE SHARE PLANS in 2007/8

(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

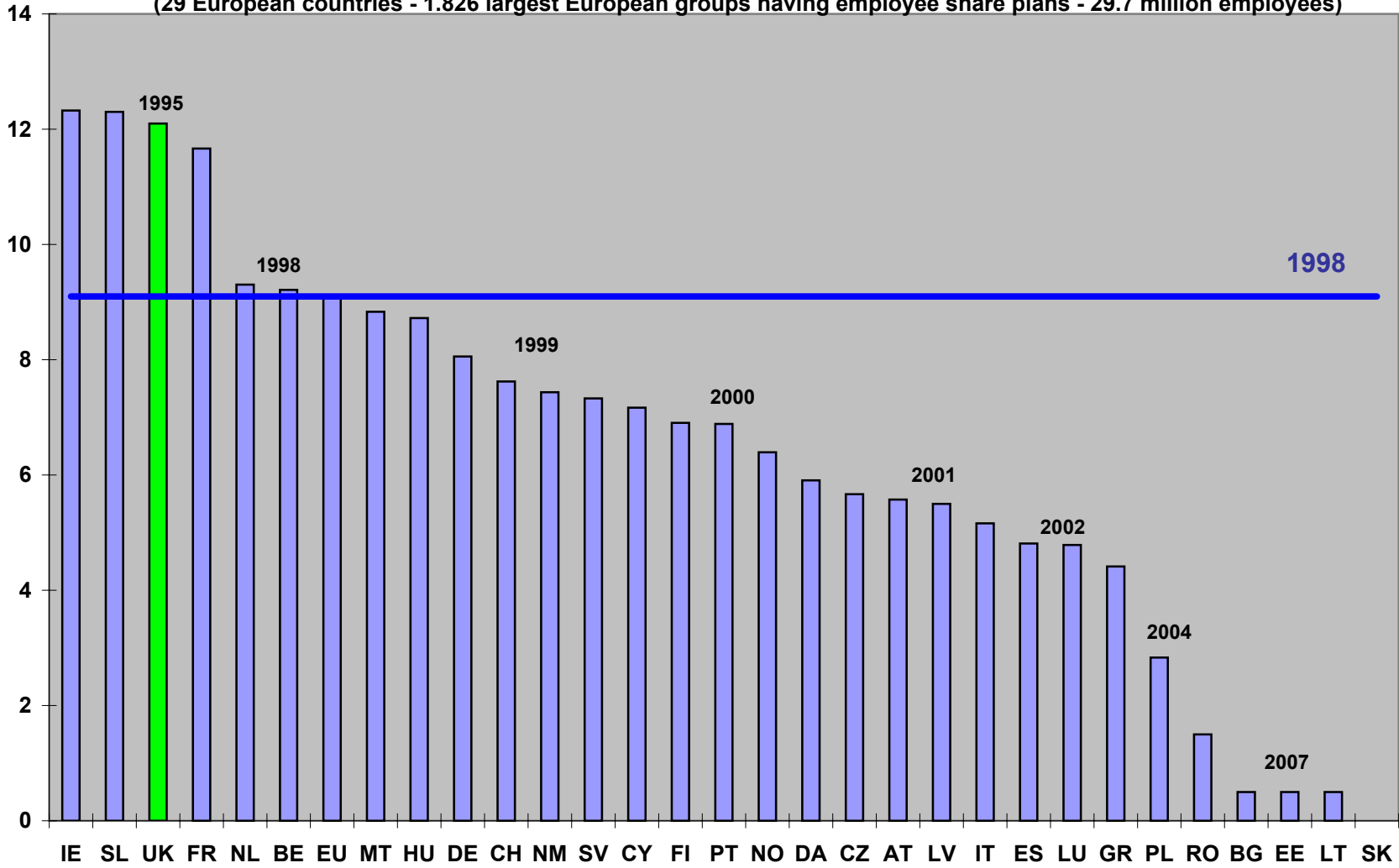
(29 European countries - 2.533 largest European groups - 259.000 companies - 32.4 million employees)



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

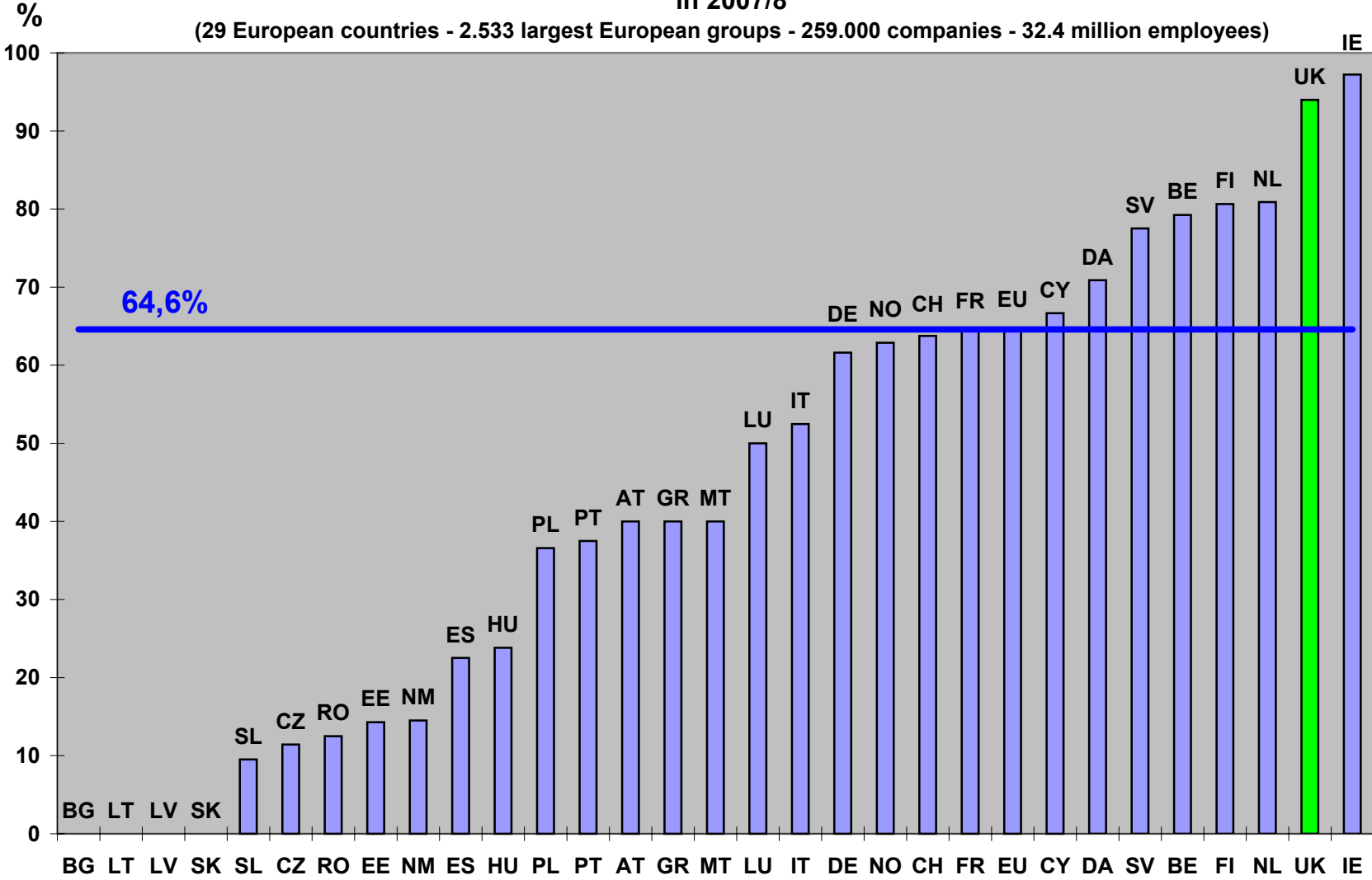
(29 European countries - 1.826 largest European groups having employee share plans - 29.7 million employees)

Number of years



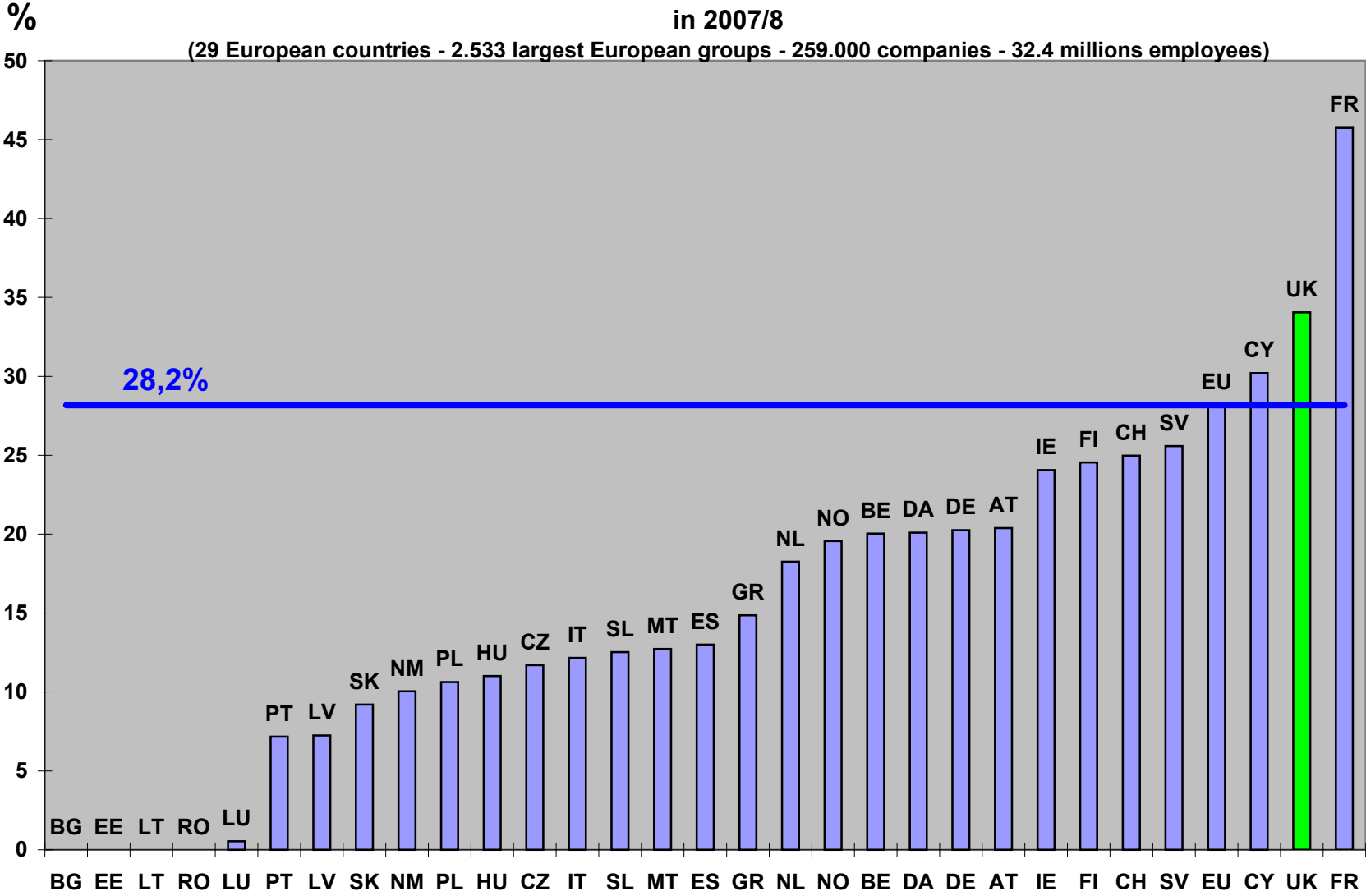
% EUROPEAN GROUPS HAVING STOCK OPTION PLANS in 2007/8

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



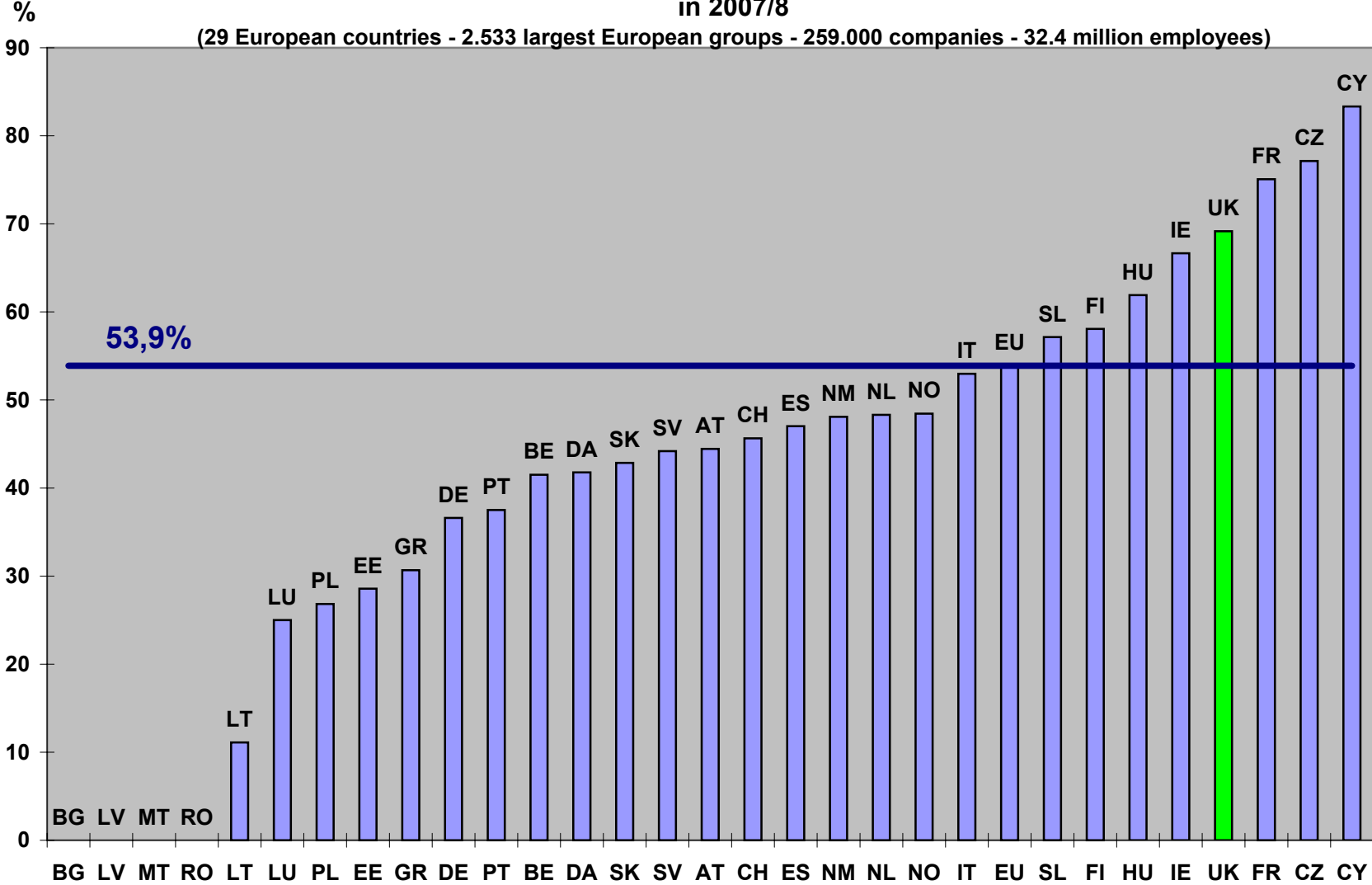
% EMPLOYEE OWNERS AMONGST ALL EMPLOYEES in 2007/8

(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)

