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**For immediate release:**

## ***Annual Survey of Employee Share Ownership in Europe in 2016***

***The European Federation of Employee Share Ownership (EFES)***, will release the new "Annual Economic Survey of Employee Share Ownership in European Countries" on March 7.

Employee share ownership is growing across Europe. The ownership stake held by employees in large European companies has never been so high before, with 3.20% in 2016 compared to 2.48% in 2006. This growing average means that, even among largest European companies, the employees' ownership stake is significant, strategic or even controlling in many cases.

The Survey is based on the 2.335 European listed companies of significant size in 2016. All together, this was a stock market capitalization of 10.147 billion Euro in 2016, or 99% of the whole European stock market capitalization and 95% in terms of employment. These 2.335 companies give thus an exhaustive picture of all European listed companies.

Among these companies, the employees' ownership stake was "significant" in 1.220 or 52% of them (employees holding 1% or more), it was "strategic" in 464 or 20% of them (employees holding 6% or more) and it was "controlling" in 266 or 11% of them (employees holding 20% or more). These figures are considerable.

Many remarkable cases can be pointed out among European companies, even the largest, considering employee ownership. For instance Voestalpine - steel industry in Austria - with 48.000 employees holding 14.5% or 721 million € in 2016, Saint-Gobain - building materials in France - with 170.000 employees holding 8.1% or 1.788 million €, Veidekke - heavy construction in Norway - with 7.000 employees holding 15.4% or 241 million €, Svenska Handelsbanken in Sweden with 12.000 employees holding 10.3% or 2.082 million €, Mondragon Corporación - multisectoral in Spain, with 74.000 employees holding 89.9% or 4.026 million €, Siemens in electronics in Germany with 348.000 employees holding 3.1% or 2.532 million €, Prysmian in wire and cable industry in Italy with 19.000 employees holding 2.5% or 115 million € in 2016.

In most of these companies, employee ownership is the result of employee share plans with some common characteristics: They are for all employees, on voluntary base, price discount and fiscal support, annually offered, and having to cope with different rules and tax legislation in each European country. Representation and participation in corporate governance is even more complicated and it can be found mainly in those countries where it is foreseen in dedicated legislation.

Marc Mathieu, Secretary General of the EFES said: "*Voestalpine is certainly one of the most remarkable cases in Europe considering employee ownership and participation in corporate governance.*"

The new Annual Survey will be available on the EFES website on [www.efesonline.org](http://www.efesonline.org). The detailed publication can be [downloaded here](#). It is based on the unique database of employee share ownership, gathering all official information published by European companies.

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:**

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***The European Federation of Employee Share Ownership (EFES) is an international not for profit organization. EFES is the voice of employee share ownership in Europe. It was established in 1998 as the umbrella organisation of employee owners, companies and all persons, trade unions, experts, researchers, institutions looking to promote the development of employee share ownership and participation in Europe.***