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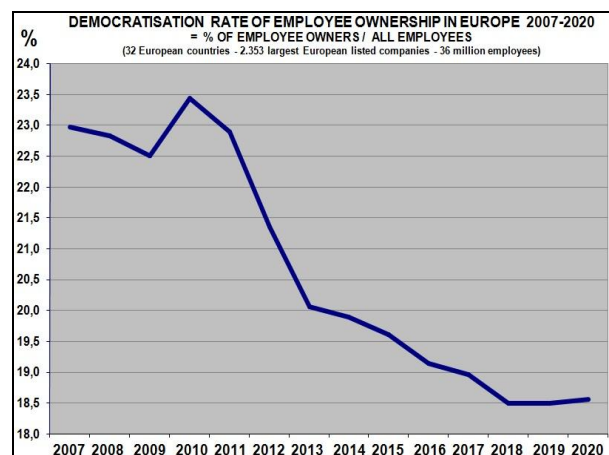
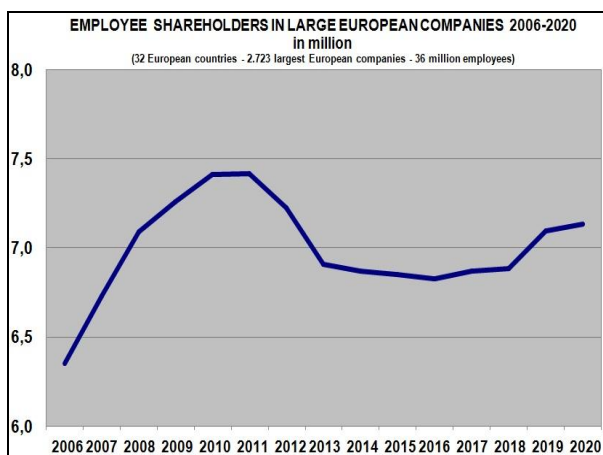
Further progress last year for employee share ownership in Europe

The European Federation of Employee Share Ownership (EFES) releases the new "Annual Economic Survey of Employee Share Ownership in European Countries".

It reveals a new progression towards employee share ownership in Europe last year, **even during this new crisis**. The upward trend in the number of employee shareholders continues, with 7.1 million people in large companies. If we add one million employee shareholders in SMEs, the total number in Europe reaches 8.1 million.

Together they held 310 billion Euro in May 2020, down from 350 billion a year earlier. This was the first shock of the pandemic crisis. Since then, however, many perspectives have changed and at the beginning of 2021, European employees hold 420 billion Euro in shares in their companies, **a record figure never reached before**.

The development of employee share ownership has continued in large European companies in 2020. More and more of them are organizing employee share plans. In 2020, 94% of all large European companies had employee share ownership, on which 88% had employee share plans of all kinds, while 53% had "broad-based" plans for all employees, and 60% had stock option plans. Finally, 29% of all large European companies launched new employee share plans, a proportion that tends to increase from year to year.



The pandemic crisis is far from being the first crisis experienced by European employee share ownership. For the more than 50 years that employee share plans have been tested in large European companies, crises of all kinds have occurred repeatedly. Each time, the scenario of malicious interpretations and warnings is the same: "we told you so", "it's far too risky", "this time it's done, employee share ownership is dead". Yet the facts are there: For more than 50 years, European employee share ownership has not ceased to confound the naysayers. **The more employee ownership spreads, the more it is supported.**

Yet employee share ownership is in danger within Europe. It is becoming less and less democratic. The fall in the democratization rate of employee share ownership has been dramatic over the last ten years, and this affects all European countries, with the notable exception of the UK. This fall is mainly linked to the relocation trend of large European companies. In the context of rapid relocation and lack of tax harmony, it is increasingly difficult for companies to export their employee share plans outside their home country.

The new Annual Survey will be available from April 1 on the EFES website on www.efesonline.org. The detailed publication can be [downloaded here](#).



EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF EMPLOYEE SHARE OWNERSHIP

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 shareholders, companies and all persons, trade unions, experts, institutions looking to promote the development of employee share ownership in Europe.

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