

Abstract

Main goal of this thesis is to provide analysis of the key regulatory changes of the European merger control and to evaluate their real impact on the efficiency of the merger regulation. Our main contribution is the empirical analysis of the unique representative sample of 161 mergers covering the final regulatory assessments in the period from 1990 to 2008. We use stock market data to identify mergers wrongly assessed by the Commission. PROBIT model is then used to further investigate the sources of these decision errors. Our results suggest that the Commission's decisions are not purely explained by the motive of protecting consumer welfare and that other political and institutional factors do play a role. We did not find evidence that the Commission protect competitors at the expense of consumers and foreign firms. Moreover, according to our results, the regulatory reform in 2004 has significantly enhanced efficiency of the European merger control. To the author's best knowledge, this is the first study using stock market data to evaluate the recent regulatory reform of the European merger control.