Abstract

Block Exemptions represent means of exemption from the prohibition of restrictive agreements set by the Article 101 (1) TFEU. The main aim of my thesis is to analyze and describe the development of an approach to block exemptions and to present how the block exemptions work in practice.

Generally, block exemptions are issued in the form of Block Exemption Regulations according to Article 101 (3) TFEU. The wording of this provision specifies the conditions under which certain types of agreements may be exempted from the prohibition set by Article 101 (1) TFEU. Regulations are issued by the Council or by the Commission, which is more often. If an agreement accomplishes the criteria laid down in a block exemption regulation, there is no need to notify that agreement individually because the agreement is automatically valid and effective.

The thesis is composed of six chapters. The first two chapters are introductory. Chapter One refers to the protection of competition in general. Subsequently, Chapter Two deals with main exemptions from the prohibition of restrictive agreements, such as agreements exempted from the prohibition under Article 101 (3) TFEU or the *de minimis* rule of exemption from the prohibition.

Chapter Three, which is subdivided into three parts, explains the development of the approach to concept of block exemptions. Firstly, the attention is focused on the European Economic Community/European Union historical context. Separately, the consequences of acceptance of the Regulation No. 1/2003 are outlined in the second Part. Afterwards, Part Three analyzes relevant Czech legislation.

Chapter Four concentrates on practical issues of block exemptions, such as the process of issuing, typical features of their content or non-application of the Block Exemption Regulations.

Afterwards, the types of block exemptions are illustrated with examples in Chapter Five of this piece of work. The horizontal, vertical and sector block exemptions are presented.

Chapter Six is subdivided into two parts and provides an outline of relevant case law. Part One highlights the most important decisions by the European Court of Justice

or by the Commission. The second Part considers the approach to decision-making by Czech trial courts and the Office for the Protection of Competition.

Conclusions are drawn in the last part of the thesis where the main findings are summarized.