

Abstract

The automotive industry has recorded a dramatic increase in the importance of Europe's economy. This sector is currently generating 4% of the EU's GDP and employing over 12 million people which give this industry the leadership among EU employers. The automotive industry became a key industry in Central and Eastern Europe. Among European countries this leadership without a doubt equally applies to Slovakia which is currently holding the biggest car producers (Volkswagen, PSA Peugeot Citroen and Kia Motors and expecting in the upcoming year Jaguar). The purpose of this study is to focus on resale price maintenance, the role of Block exemption regulation in the automotive industry, particularly in Slovakia, the importance of free trade and trade policy as well as free movement of goods, Article 101 TFEU, regulations (and Commission Guidelines and Supplementary Guidelines) in the automotive industry. Especially, to illustrate how the EU competition authorities regulate the market and which regulations affect the trade between the Member States. The further research will support the argument that based on the common historical background, current development and certain shared characteristics of the automotive industry, the EU countries are facing different obstacles with regards to implementation of the EU competition law. The main goal of this research paper is to demonstrate based on the collected data and on the interview with two major dealers on the market which are IMPA a.s. and Porsche Inter Auto that RPM is a crucial problem among the EU Member States in the automotive industry, particularly in Slovakia. Dealers are dramatically losing their freedoms/power and are pushed by the importers to collaborate in contrary with the EU competition law. The purpose of this study is mostly informative and should rather provide valuable knowledge for further discussion of the position of the automotive industry and its elements in the European Union.