

Summary

This project investigates in detail the historical development of the Swedish competition legislation as well as the nature of the cartel contracts that were registered in the Swedish cartel register. The project consists of two parts, one which uses data we have collected from archived material, and another which takes the form of an Economic History paper.

The first part of the project has involved exploration of the Swedish cartel register and the coding of cartel contracts as part of an international cartel project. This wider project is an ongoing comparison project between partners from several countries which all once had systems where cartels were legal. The aim here is to see what the cartel contracts in these countries had in common and if anything can be said about illegal cartels using this information. Eventually this work will emanate in a book where the information from the Swedish cartel register will be one part.

As part of our commitments in this collaboration, we acquired the entire content of the Cartel Register in digitalized form from Riksarkivet, i.e. the 4 777 cartel contracts that were registered between 1946 and 1993. From this and according to a shared template on contract characteristics, we coded 237 cartel contracts belonging to industries we had in common with our collaborating partners. Emphasis was put on 20 preselected manufacturing industries found in both Austria and Finland; the countries which the leading teams of the collaboration are from.

The second part of this project has been to write an Economic History paper. This is still very much work in progress. The paper explores the evolution of competition legislation in Sweden and aims to understand the driving forces that were behind. Our method is to chronologically assess the changes that were made to legislation, and with the help of case studies describe how they were implemented and their likely effects on industry performance in Sweden.

We observe a steady and successive tightening of competition legislation all the way from its origin in 1925 until the adoption of the modern EU competition legislation in 1993. Interestingly, we also observe an increased element of regulation in the practise of the competition law after the Second World War. This seems to have implied that the practise of competition law in the 1970s and 1980s protected incumbents and harmed entrants, and thereby mainly focused on competition in the market rather than competition for the market.

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1. The first part of the document is a list of names and titles, including "The Hon. Mr. Justice" and "The Hon. Mr. Justice".