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April 9, 2013

Book and Journal Publishing at Springer

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Structural changes in industrial electricity use: the case of the pulp and paper industry in Sweden

Eva Henriksson, Robert Lundmark

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to analyse altering energy demand patterns and energy factor substitution possibilities over time in the pulp and paper industry in order to increase our understanding of suitable policy options for increasing energy efficiency. The investigation employs a flexible translog cost function and an unbalanced panel data set covering 32 pulp and paper mills over the time period 1974–2005 in Sweden. Specifically, we test whether energy factor demand patterns in the industry for the period 1974–1990 differ from those during the latter period, 1991–2005. The empirical results reveal that even though the Swedish pulp and paper industry is relatively insensitive to changes in energy factor input prices in the short run, we find evidence of significant changes over time. According to the results, the own-price sensitivity of fuel has increased since the 1970s and the 1980s, thus indicating that fuel demand has become more sensitive to short-run changes in relative prices. The estimated cross-price elasticities between electricity and fuel also support the hypothesis of increased substitutability over time. However, the null hypothesis of an equal own-price elasticity of electricity demand across the two time periods cannot be rejected.
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