

## **The Consistency Between the Economic Base and Smart Specialization Priorities in Rural Regions: The Case of Visegrad Countries\***

Anna KRAKOWIAK-BAL

University of Agriculture in Krakow, Krakow, Poland

Correspondence should be addressed to: Anna KRAKOWIAK-BAL; [anna.krakowiak-bal@urk.edu.pl](mailto:anna.krakowiak-bal@urk.edu.pl)

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### **Abstract**

The study discusses the problems of regional specialization in rural areas. Paper provides a framework to assess the consistency of the smart specialisation approach with existing local resources and conducts an empirical analysis based on a sample of rural regions in Visegrad countries. Presented research investigates how and to what extent the existing economic base of rural areas corresponds with priorities of smart specialisation strategies of their regions. Main findings show the highest coherence between smart priorities and the employment structure in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. These sectors should be considered as smart activities in rural areas and appropriate support by regional and local authorities. In addition, the high similarity is demonstrated in the employment structure and smart domains between European, rural and V4 rural regions. The proposed methodology is universal and is possible to apply in other regional research

**Keywords:** smart specialization; RIS3; V4 rural regions; innovation policy; smart rural development.