



## Special Session Proposal

### Smart specialization for peripheral areas? From failure to solutions

**André Torre**

University Paris-Saclay, INRAE, AgroParistech

**Stefano Corsi**

University of Milan

**Michael Steiner**

University of Graz

**Frédéric Wallet**

University Paris-Saclay, INRAE, AgroParistech

**Hans Westlund**

KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm

### Abstract

The successful Smart Specialization Strategy is essentially linked to selection criteria based on three concepts: embeddedness, connectedness, and related variety or relatedness.

Our studies conducted over several years in a wide range of territories in Europe, show that this strategy is suited to well-developed or intermediate regions combining both urban and rural areas, provided they have a sufficiently large population base. But it only offers very limited possibilities for peripheral/rural regions, because of the lack of scale, which results in the following problems:

- low density (lack of - strong - relations)
- lack of diversification (relatedness only applies to a highly diversified industrial structure)
- lack of intermediate organizations and innovation brokers

In our recent book (1) we show that the smart approach must be modified and enriched to consider the specificities of these areas. Six key factors must be considered

- Support variety and diversity
- “Borrow size”

- Implement education measures
- Making use of amenities
- Improving the multidimensionality of infrastructures
- Managing land uses

We invite you to a discussion about possible solutions future developments in peripheral and rural areas on the basis of our main results and propositions.

**(1) Torre A., Corsi S., Steiner M., Wallet F. and Westlund H. (eds.), 2020, *Smart development for rural areas*, Routledge, 226p.**