

# **Pathways of regional specialization in the Spanish wind energy sector**

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## ***TRACK 1: THE GREENING OF REGIONAL INNOVATION POLICY***

This study provides analytical evidence on the pathways of industrial specialization that fostered the wind energy sector in Spanish regions. We carry out a qualitative comparison of the different configurations based on the observation of key technological, economic and institutional factors with a view to identify whether and how different regional contexts facilitate or not an emerging sector. This exercise illustrates the contingent nature of policy, and the diversity of routes that have been used to promote smart specialization around what many consider an ultimately mature technology.

Spain is a relevant case in point considering that in a relatively short span it has become a world leader both in terms of both energy and specialized technology production. We argue that this trajectory would not look so triumphal had it not been for the pivotal role of regional actors such as utilities, technology manufactures, research centres and local government in facilitating the creation and the mobilization of specific forms of know/how. Accordingly, we identify the multilevel interactions between public and private sectors that unleashed the latent potential of this sector. More than this, we contrast three archetypal regions (Castilla y Leon, Galicia and Basque country) to disentangle the commonalities and the specificities of the attendant policy mix. The empirical study is based on the triangulation of information from case study research which is further complemented by network analysis, longitudinal analysis of specialization and variety indexes as well as content analysis of documents and interviews.

**Key words:** pathways, knowledge, regions, industrial specialization, wind energy