Specialization of countries in the global market of financial services

Abstract. The author provides a critical analysis of the applied techniques of specialization indices calculation. According to the author’s calculations of the CSC index, the Balassa index (by export and employment) and the Krugman index of specialization of countries in the global financial services market for 2005-2015, the countries of the world were divided into the following groups: zero exporters of financial services, countries with absolute specialization, countries with factor-export specialization, countries with factor specialization, countries with export specialization, countries with partial export specialization and countries without explicit specialization. The findings of the research indicate that such countries as Luxembourg, Switzerland, the United States, Ireland, Canada and the United Kingdom have absolute specialization in financial services. Among the countries with factor-export specialization are South Africa and Australia; with factor specialization - Israel, South Korea, New Zealand and Austria; with export specialization - Kiribati, Hong Kong, Singapore, Afghanistan, Bermuda, Burkina Faso, Cyprus, Lebanon, Germany, and Latvia, with partial export specialization - Malta, Algeria, Liberia, Sweden, Benin, Guyana, Japan, Norway and France. Countries without explicit specialization are represented by the rest 123 countries of the world.

Keywords: Financial Services; Index of Specialization; Global Market of Financial Services; CSC Index; Balassa Index; Krugman Index

JEL Classification: F01; G15; G20

DOI: https://doi.org/10.21003/ea.V168-02
and Longhi (2002) who combine the problem of specialization and the problem of concentration of countries. Most publica-
tions are relevant to specialization of countries and are dedicated to the specialization of the EU member states (Aiger-
ger, 2000; Amity, 1997; Brühlhart, 2000; Frias, Iglésias and Neira 2000; Herzog and Unal, 2011; Palan and Schmiedeberg, 2008; Stefiaki-Kopoboru and Kuczewska, 2016; Traistaru, Nijkamp and Longhi, 2002.). Analyses of specialization have been con-
ducted mainly with regard to the regional level. Thus, we are unaw-
ares of any world analytical calculations.

The Heckscher-Ohlin theory is the most widespread and uni-
versal theory among researchers, according to which countries
specialize in those industries that use the factors which they have in excess. If the theory is adapted to financial services, highly
skilled workforce is the most important factor in the creation of financial services (Lindeman, 2011; Marel, 2011), although some
researchers mention the capital (Hoekman and Mattoo, 2007).

Therefore, only those countries that have a comparable advan-
tage in highly skilled workforce can specialize in financial services.

At the same time, M. Lindeman (2011) emphasises that a de-
crease in total company tax shield (Total tax rate (% of profit), so-
sophistication of the financial market and its performance accord-
ing to the international standards (Financial market sophistica-
tion), explicit limitations on capital flows by the financial services
exporter country (Restriction on capital flows), existence of free
competition and minimal intervention by the govern-
ment in the fi-
nancial sector (through direct regulation, property rights, etc.) (Fi-
nancial freedom), cancelling of any restrictions on foreign invest-
ment into exporter countries (Financial openness), exchange rate,
capital transfers, real estate, industries, etc.) (Investment freedom),
transparent and protected property rights from the part of the
government side (Property rights), low corruption within govern-
ment institutions (Freedom from corruption) are among the fac-
tors which have the greatest influence on countries’ export spe-
cialization in the global financial services market.

The reason for specialization could be in excess of factors,
presence of economies of scale, inter-firm relationships and
proximity of production (Krenz, 2014a). As noted by A. Rey
(2009), specialization in financial services is determined by
obtaining advantages resulting from the monopoly over other
countries.

A. Krenz (2014a) finds some negative points in terms
of specialization of countries. She mentions that excessive spe-
cialization of a country or its excessive growth may lead to
asymmetric shocks, which could adversely affect the coun-
try’s economic development. This point of view is also shared
by A. Hirschman (1980) who analysed the impact of specia-
zation in the global trading system. According to his research, after
the trading has begun with a given volume, the trade gains in-
crease along with decreasing specialization.

A research on the manufacturing specialization of Bulga-
ria, Estonia, Hungary, Romania and Slovenia, conducted by I.
Traistaru, P. Nijkamp and S. Longhi (2002), made it possible
to conclude the following: specialization has a positive impact
on GDP per unit of capital; it has no effect on wages; it has a
negative impact on employment by increasing unemployment.

E. van der Marel (2011) points out that international trade
in services differs from trade in goods. Firstly, services are more
sensitive to excess of the labour factor, its high and me-
dium level qualification of specialists; secondly, credibility to
the extent that some key role in thirdly, the liberalization of trade
between the countries is a significant factor in the quality of regu-
lation. J. Stefiaki-Kopoboru and J. Kuczewska (2016) exploring
the specialization in services made significant assumptions
that distinguish services from goods, namely a trade model
reflected in changes and differing of exchange
prices; trade emerges between countries as a result of diffe-
rences in endowments of economic resources, not as result of
differences in technologies.

In scientific literature, there exist controversial provisions
regarding the mechanism of determining the index of speciali-
zation of the country.

A. Amri (1997), A. Krenz (2014a, b), J. Stefiaki-Kopo-
boru and J. Kuczewska (2016) use share of employment in
industry and the Balassa index when calculating specialization
of countries. If the Balassa index is higher than one, the
country’s specialization is high.

Analysing technological specialization of countries, D. Ar-
chibugi and M. Pianta (1992) used chi square values to veri-
fy the specialization index, calculated based on the share of
exports in the global industry volume. If the country’s share is
equal to the global share, the value of the index is zero and the
country has no specialization, whereas the more the deviation
from the global share, the more specialization we observe.

Their methodology is unclear, which is why it is not possible
to repeat their analysis of specialization.

To analyse the international trade of the EU, I. Frias, A. Iglé-
sias and I. Neira (2000) chose the Grubel-Lloyd index. The re-
searchers concluded that trade between countries depends on
the existing similarities and differences between countries, in-
tra-industry trade will dominate between similar economies, and
intersectoral trade will dominate between different economies.

When analysing specialization, they were guided by the theo-
ry of comparative advantage and used the calculation of the ra-
tio of net exports sector amounts to half of total exports plus to-
tal imports (net exports to ½ (total exports + total imports)).

The problem of their methodology is that the Grubel-Lloyd index
was calculated by trade between adjacent countries without explai-
nin the results of research, and the calculations were made by
using the factors of production without specifying the methodo-
logy, which also makes it impossible to repeat their calculations.

I. Traistaru, P. Nijkamp and S. Longhi (2002) calculated spe-
cialization by the part of industry in total GDP and the amount
of employment in this industry with the help of the Krugman1 in-
dex. N. Palan and S. Schmiedeberg (2008) used a modified
Krugman2 index based on the employment rate.

In the research by K. Aiginger (2000), specialization of a
certain industry in the country is related to additional cost.

The sign of high specialization is provision of a high level of
production (export) by a small number of sectors. Depending
on the selected index, specialization is differentiated by prod-

duct, trade and the country’s export. However, their findings
are not supported by a clear calculation methodology, which
does not allow using their research.

Herzog and Unal (2011a, b) used the index CSC (the CEPII’s
indicator of contribution to the trade balance)3, which determines
the level of the comparative advantages of the country when
calculating specialization of countries in international trade.

C. D. Guardia and J. Molero (2003) did not conduct any re-
search on specialization indexes and took a ratio of the share
of exports of relevant services in the total exports of services
relates to a certain country to the share of world exports of re-

dovant services in the total exports of services (the Balassa in-

dex for exports).

A research on specialization indices in France, Germany,
the UK and Greece in the EU market of financial services in
2005 has shown that only Germany and the United Kingdom
had such a specialization with the Balassa index values at 1.1
and 1.14 respectively (Krenz, 2014b). Another study by Krenz
(2014a) adds Ireland to those countries. According to the re-

search, Finland, Portugal and Sweden were among the coun-
tries with minimum performance in terms of the Balassa index.

No country of the Visegrad Group (Stefiaki-Kopoboru and
Kuczewska, 2016) had any specialization in financial services
in 2009-2013, with the exception of Poland. Poland was the
high.

According to the research conducted by Herzog and
Unal (2011a, b), financial services is one of the five main
branches in which countries specialize, with the first position
for the EU 27 with their CSC index of 7 and the fourth posi-
tion for the United States of America with its CSCI index of 15.

However, financial services were not accounted for in the
index by specialization in Brazil, Japan, India and China in

Among EU countries, the UK, the Economic Union of Bel-

\[ x_{ij} = \sum_{k=1}^{n} x_{ik} - x_{ij}^2 \]

where \( m \) and \( n^2 \) are parts of employment in the indu-


1. \[ x_{ij} = \sum_{k=1}^{n} x_{ik} - x_{ij}^2 \] where \( x_{ij} \) is part of employment in the industry \( i \) of the coun-
try \( j \); \( x_{ij}^2 \) is an average employment in the group of industry.

2. \[ x_{ij} = \sum_{k=1}^{n} x_{ik} - x_{ij}^2 \] where \( x_{ij} \) are export and import of the indus-


3. \[ x_{ij} = \sum_{k=1}^{n} x_{ik} - x_{ij}^2 \] where \( x_{ij} \) are employment in the industry \( i \) and product \( s \)
gum and Luxembourg, Cyprus and Malta specialized in financial services in 2006-2008 (Herzog and Unal, 2011a).

The research by C. D. Guardia and J. Molero (2003) on OECD countries shows that a growth of specialization in financial services was observed in several areas against a background of moderate growth in international trade in the relevant countries by 8–13%, with a fourfold increase in Korea in the period from 1992 to 1999, a 60–80% increase in countries such as Germany, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and the US and an increase of 20% in New Zealand and the UK. All these countries were in the matrix of specialization in the segment of «rising stars» (growth of specialization in financial services with increasing demand for them in the international market) and improved their competitiveness in the international market during the period in question. At the same time, France, Canada, Greece, Italy and Spain reduced their specialization and competitiveness, being therefore located in the segment of «missed opportunities» losing potential revenue in the global development of this segment.

Investigating the specialization of European countries in services in 2005 and comparing it with the year 1970, N. Palan and C. Schmiedeberg (2008) concluded that there were similar specialization characteristics relevant to the three groups of countries (Central, South and North European countries), with only Central European countries specializing in financial services. They found that sectoral specialization persists through small countries, while large countries are more likely to be scattered by sector. Special attention was paid to the intensity in financial intermediation in the national economy, the explanation of which scientists find in a low level of financial regulation combined with favourable taxation for foreign investors and multinational companies, which attracts many foreign banks and raises employment from the lowest level to the highest level within this group of countries. Other countries also initially increased employment, which stopped and even decreased in some countries later. Generally, the growth of specialization in financial services leads to higher employment.

3. Purpose

A comprehensive study of theoretical provisions determining specialization of countries in the global market of services shows that there is very little information on the subject covering a small number of countries. Also, we have noted that no special studies of the relevant issues have been conducted.

This allows us to take the first step in conducting a comprehensive analysis of specialization of countries in the global market of financial services.

Despite the fact that most scientists emphasise that limitations in their studies are related to the lack of data, we hope that more data are available today. We will try to analyse all the indices of specialization in terms of financial services and choose the one that most accurately reflects the real situation in the global market.

4. Results

To achieve the goal of the research and to calculate the specialization index we will consider the following figures for the period from 2005 to 2015:

1. Countries’ and world’s exports (imports) of financial services (UNCTADSTAT, 2016b).
2. The share of countries’ and world’s exports (imports) of financial services in the total exports (imports) of services (UNCTADSTAT, 2016b) and the total exports (UNCTADSTAT, 2016a).
3. The employment rate in the sector of financial services (OECDSTAT, 2017) and all services (ILOSTAT, 2017).

Among all the countries (groups of countries) under research, we select those that have no export performance of financial services within the specified period. These are American Samoa, Anguilla, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Bahrain, British Virgin Islands, Brunei, Gabon, Haiti, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Gibraltar, Grenada, Greenland, Guam, Djibouti, Dominica, Yemen, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Zambia, Jordan, Cayman Islands, Qatar, Korea, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Libya, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia, Montserrat, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, Niue, UAE, Oman, St. Helena, Cook Islands, Palau, Palestine, Northern Mariana Islands, Samoa, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, Somalia, Tokelau, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkmenistan, Turks and Caicos, Uzbekistan, Falkland Islands, Holy See, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile. The total number of such countries is 66. If there are no exports, the countries have no specialization in financial services. Conventionally, this group of countries can be called zero exporters of financial services.

The situation is much complicated with Finland. From the general database we have learned that the country exports financial services, yet it has no exports of financial services. However, according to other sources, the situation appears to be either the opposite or quantitatively different. Therefore, the calculation of the specialization index for Finland will be conducted based on the figures of exports and imports provided by Statistics Finland (2017).

Let us count the index of specialization in financial services focusing first on those calculations which are based only on the performance of exports and imports, and then using employment rates. We will build the ranking with regard to the latest evident yearly indicators. As the first index of specialization in the market of financial services, we will take the CSC index. When calculating the index, there appeared two countries (Malawi and East Timor), for which there are no data relevant to the same year either in exports or imports of financial services, and therefore it is not possible to calculate the index. The top ten leading countries with the highest index value were the United Kingdom, Kiribati, Switzerland, Hong Kong, Singapore, Afghanistan, the United States of America, Bermuda, Burkina Faso and Cyprus (Table 1-3).

We take the Balassa index for export as our second index of specialization. Among the countries leading in specialization in decreasing order, there are Luxembourg, Kiribati, Malta, Cyprus, UK, Switzerland, Hong Kong, Burkina Faso, Singapore and Lebanon (Table 1-3). As can be seen, the two indices mentioned above have a different range of countries with the maximum value, although most countries coincide. The same situation is evident with regard to all other countries. If we interpret the second index keeping in mind that the country should specialize in the index value greater than 1 when compared to the first index, we can exclude countries such as Algeria, Liberia, Sweden and South Africa, which were included in the top twenty countries by the value of the CSC index with more than 15 units. Conversely, we can include Malta with its CSC index equal to (8).

The next step is to calculate indices that use the labour factor. We have data for a limited number of countries in terms of the employment in the segment of financial services. We will calculate the total labour resources with regard to financial services by summarising data by country. However, if data for a country for a particular year is unavailable, we will take the data for the previous year.

In 2015, among the countries that specialize in financial services with the corresponding Balassa index in employment being more than 1, which are sorted in ascending order, there were South Africa, Luxembourg, Switzerland, the USA, Ireland, Australia, Britain, Israel, Korea, New Zealand and Austria (Tables 1-5).

When calculating the Krugman index, we considered the average value of the share in the segment of financial services taking into account those countries, the index of which was greater than zero, which shows that their level of export is higher than the average world level. Among such countries, there are South Africa, Luxembourg, Switzerland, the USA, Ireland, Australia, Britain, Israel, Korea, New Zealand and Austria, as can be seen, the distribution of countries by the Balassa index regarding employment and the Krugman index is the same.

If we compare the results for all the four indices of specialization of countries in the global market of financial services, we can distinguish the following groups of countries:

1. Countries with absolute specialization, which have their specialization in all four indices. These are South Africa, Luxembourg, Switzerland, the USA, Ireland, Australia and the United Kingdom (Table 1).
2. Countries with factor-export specialization, the specialization in financial services of which is reflected in two of the indices calculated basing on the employment factor and the CSC index of exports. Such countries include South Africa and Australia (Table 1).

Voinova, E. / Economic Annals-XXI (2017), 168(11-12), 9-13
3. Countries with factor specialization, where specialization is shown only in the calculation of indices based on employment data. Israel, Korea, New Zealand, and Austria are among them (Table 1).

4. Countries with export specialization with obvious signs of specialization in both export indices. Kiribati, Hong Kong, Singapore, Afghanistan, Bermuda, Burkina Faso, Cyprus, Lebanon, Germany, Latvia belong to this group (Table 2).

5. Countries with partial export specialization, in which only one export specialization index is shown. These include Malta, Algeria, Liberia, Sweden, Benin, Guyana, Japan, Norway, and France (Table 2).

6. Countries without explicit specialization with specialization index figures which are lower than the required value - 123 countries altogether (Table 3).

The availability of data allowed us to analyse the specialization at the global market of financial services. A comparison of calculations of the four indices of specialization in financial services does not allow us to single out the most credible one. At the same time, it is possible not to calculate both the Krugman index and the Balassa index on employment because they show relatively similar results.

5. Conclusions

1. The analysis of scientific sources relating to the assessment of the level of specialization of countries in the global market, including services, has shown that the Balassa index, the Krugman index and the CSC index are most commonly used in the research practice.

2. The calculations of the abovementioned indices on the example of specialization in the global financial market have shown that the Krugman and Balassa indices on employment suggest equivalent results of specialization, which however have different interpretation. The Balassa index and the CSC index of export specialization of countries reflect the results in a different way. At the same time, it is impossible to define a single reliable index of specialization from a scientific point of view. Therefore, we have calculated and combined all the indices of specialization in the market of global financial services for all the countries as of 2015 and combined the groups of countries with similar parameters.

3. We can identify seven groups of countries by specialization in the global market of financial services worldwide. They are countries with absolute specialization, countries with factor-export specialization, countries with export specialization, countries with partial export specialization, countries without explicit specialization, and zero exporters of financial services.

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## Tab. 3: Indices of specialization of countries in 2015 with the countries’ rating positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>CSC</th>
<th>Balassa (export)</th>
<th>Balassa (employment)</th>
<th>Krugman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Countries without explicit specialization</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>-0.57</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>147</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
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<td>117</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>145</td>
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<td>Argentina</td>
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<td>105</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>146</td>
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<td>129</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>114</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>150</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>-19.93</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>107</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cote d’Ivoire</td>
<td>9.18</td>
<td>27</td>
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<td>46</td>
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<td>129</td>
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<td>Denmark</td>
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<td>45</td>
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<td>Zimbabwe</td>
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**Notes:**

1. Index - P - rating position

**Source:** Calculated by the author based on data of UNCTADSTAT (2016a, b), ILOSTAT (2017), OECDSTAT (2017)