

Kymenlaakso in a nutshell

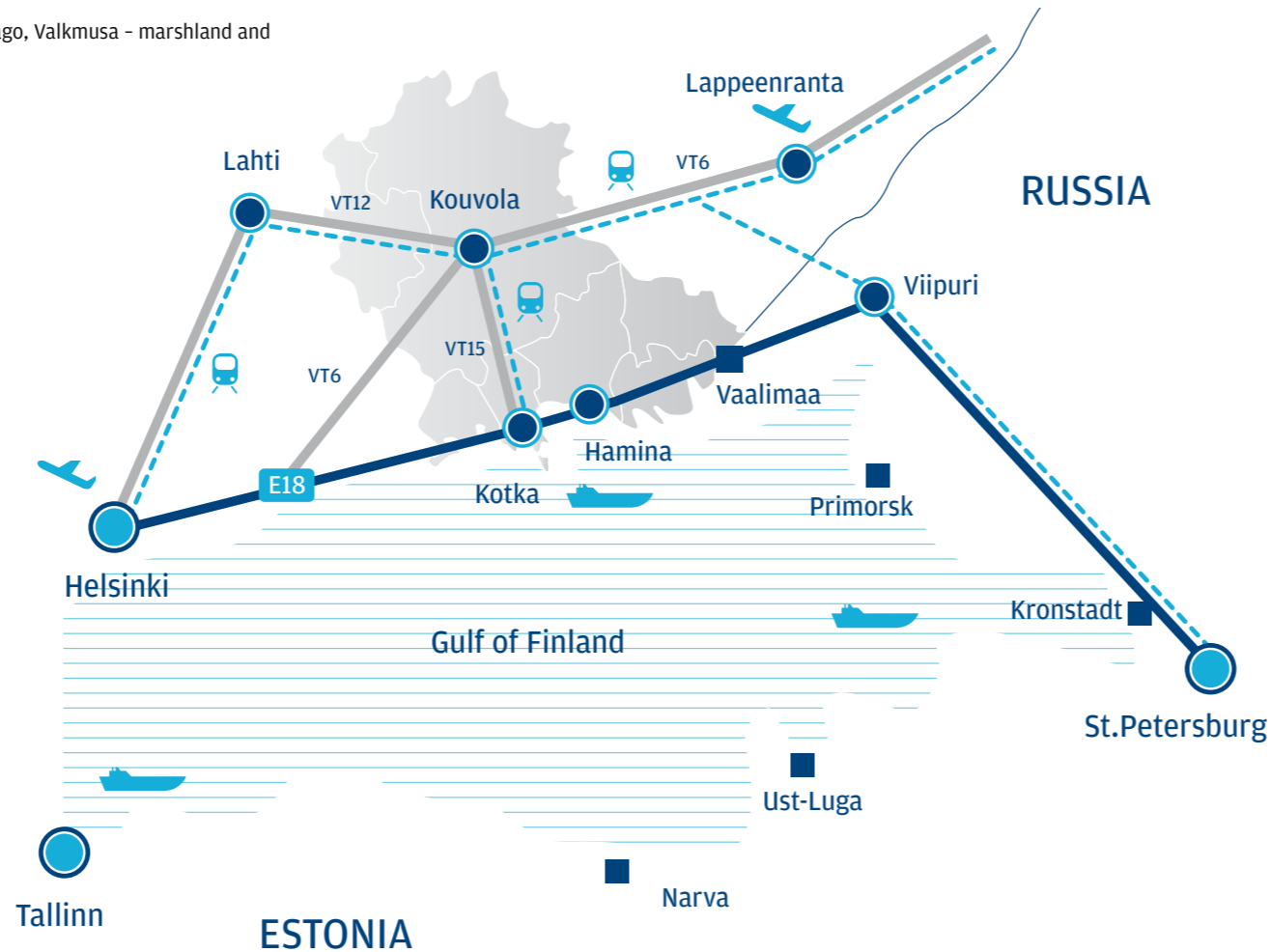
- ▶ Approximately 180 000 inhabitants
- ▶ One of the most significant forest industry clusters in Europe
- ▶ International hub of logistics and logistics related business & knowhow in the Baltic Sea region; Finland's largest export and transshipment port, Port of HaminaKotka, Highway E18 and Finland's largest railway hub Kouvola.
- ▶ Primary border crossing point between European Union and Russia; Vaalimaa
- ▶ Finland's most significant garrisons
- ▶ Three national parks; Eastern Gulf of Finland - outer archipelago, Valkmusa - marshland and Repovesi - forest and lakes
- ▶ Lively region of culture and sports
- ▶ Versatile district for vocational education and competence

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Symbols

- ▶ Fish: Pike perch
- ▶ Flower: Yellow iris (Iris pseudacorus)
- ▶ Bird: Bullfinch
- ▶ Stone: Rapakivi
- ▶ Mammal: European otter (Lutra lutra)
- ▶ Tree: European alder



Tandem Graphics 2014. Photos: Timo Vesterinen, Tuuli Koivisto. Printing: PunaMusta.

Regional Council of Kymenlaakso



The Regional Council of Kymenlaakso is a statutory joint municipal authority responsible for regional development, regional spatial planning and regional interest promotion. Kymenlaakso region consists of Kouvola- and Kotka-Hamina subregions and it is located in South-East Finland.

The Regional Council is responsible for the elaboration of the Regional Program and co-ordination of the programming process. The Regional Program is a document which defines the main priorities for regional development. Different stakeholders carry out projects which aim at achieving the defined goals. The Regional Council is able to co-fund these projects via European Union Structural Fund Programs. The Regional Program is a guideline for all authorities dealing with regional development funding.

Regional Spatial Planning takes into account national land use guidelines and foster their application at a regional level. The Regional Plan acts as a guideline for land use plans on the municipal level as well as for bigger individual land use projects.

Regional Council, together with other regional stakeholders, promotes the interests of the region in the national decision making. Interest promotion on the European Union level is carried out in co-operation with the Helsinki EU Office in Brussels and within an international organization, the Conference of Maritime Peripheral Regions (CPMR).

International co-operation of Kymenlaakso region focuses on the Baltic Sea Region. Neighboring regions, St. Petersburg and Leningrad region in Russia, as well as North-East Estonian regions are the closest partners for Kymenlaakso. Important tools for the co-operation are the various EU funding programs.

Kymenlaakso Summer University is a part of the Regional Council. It operates throughout the year providing adult education services. The Summer University offers Open University education and many other forms of continuing education. It organizes various regional and cultural seminars and lecture series.

Tasks

According to the Finnish Regional Development Act the Regional Council is responsible for the strategic and general development of the region and for improving the business environment. The Regional Council also co-ordinates the traffic and transport system planning in the region.

According to the Finnish Land Use and Building Act, the Regional Council is responsible for drafting, updating and approving of the Regional Plan.

The regional development authorities both on municipal and state level are based on the same geographical areas. The Regional Councils (municipalities) form 9 co-operation districts and there are 9 Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (state). Kymenlaakso and South Karelia regions form a co-operation district in South East Finland with approximately 315 000 inhabitants.

- ▶ Regional Development
- ▶ Regional Spatial and Environmental Planning
- ▶ Interest promotion
- ▶ International Affairs
- ▶ Kymenlaakso Summer University

Development Priorities

- ▶ Innovative services
- ▶ Smart use of natural resources and related technologies
- ▶ New openings in ICT sector
- ▶ Increasing the attractiveness of Kymenlaakso region

Decision making

The supreme decision making body of the Regional Council is the Assembly which consists of members from all member municipalities. The Board is in charge of administration, economy, project funding as well as for preparation and execution of the decisions taken by the Assembly.

According to the Regional Development Act every region shall have a Regional Management Committee, which consists of representatives of municipalities, Regional State authorities and Regional Trade Unions and Business. Its main task is to coordinate plans, conventions and the execution of national and EU co-funded programs which have an effect on the regional development.

The preparation work is carried out in the Regional Council's Office led by the Region Mayor.

The Kymenlaakso Summer University is led by a board.