

Southwest Finland – For You?

Deliberative Citizen Panel 30.9.2025

What should you know before the discussion?



Basic Information

- The deliberative citizen panel is organized by the Regional Council of Southwest Finland and the Sivis Study Centre. Our experts will join and guide you in the discussion.
- The panel is part of the preparation of the Southwest Finland Strategy 2040+ and will produce an advisory statement to support the strategy process.
- The panel consists of background materials and a discussion session on September 30.
 - The aim of the background material is to inform you what the discussion is connected to and why it is organized. It may also spark some thoughts: what makes Southwest Finland unique and a suitable place to live and/or work for you? Do you agree or disagree with the strategy's objectives?
- Participants in the citizen panel will receive a €50 gift card as a token of appreciation.
- The final Southwest Finland Strategy 2040+ will be completed in early December 2025.

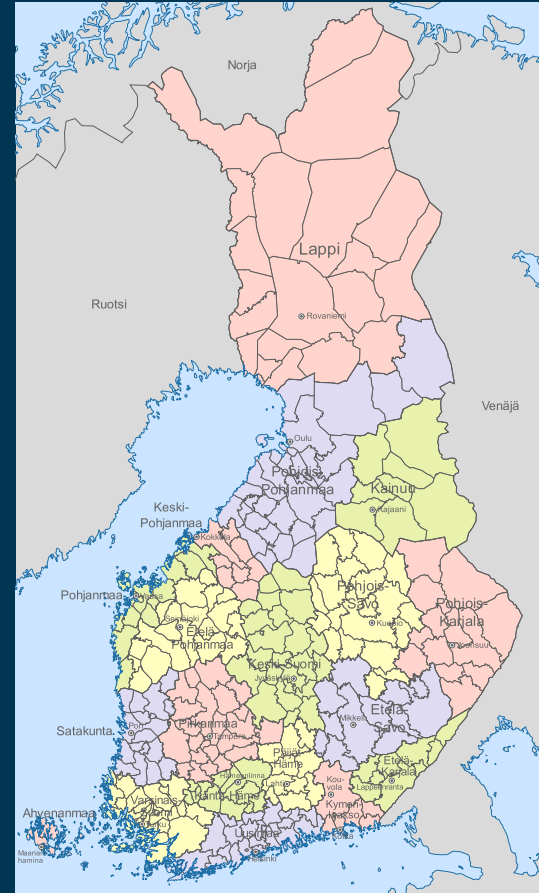


Regional Council of Southwest Finland



Regional Councils

- Finland is divided into 18 regions, each with its own regional council (+ Åland).
- Regional councils are joint municipal authorities formed by member municipalities. They act as regional development authorities and are responsible for general development and regional land use planning in their area. Every municipality in Finland must belong to a regional council.





Regional Council of Southwest Finland

- The council's mission is **to develop the region, coordinate land use and spatial planning, and promote the region's interests.**
- Our main tools are:
 - The regional strategy
 - The regional land use plan
 - Advocacy work
 - Project funding



Regional Council of Southwest Finland and Regional Strategy

- The council's mission is **to develop the region, coordinate land use and spatial planning, and promote the region's interests.**
- Our main tools are:
 - **The regional strategy =**
 - The regional land use plan
 - Advocacy work
 - Project funding

a regional development document that guides the work of regional authorities and the types of projects that receive funding. It outlines the region's characteristics, strengths, and risks, and defines what we aim to achieve in the future.

A new strategy is created every four years — right now!



Democratic Governance Body

- **Regional Assembly:** 106 members, convenes twice a year
- **Regional Board:** 19 members, meets monthly

Members are elected every four years following municipal elections. The composition is formed from elected municipal representatives.

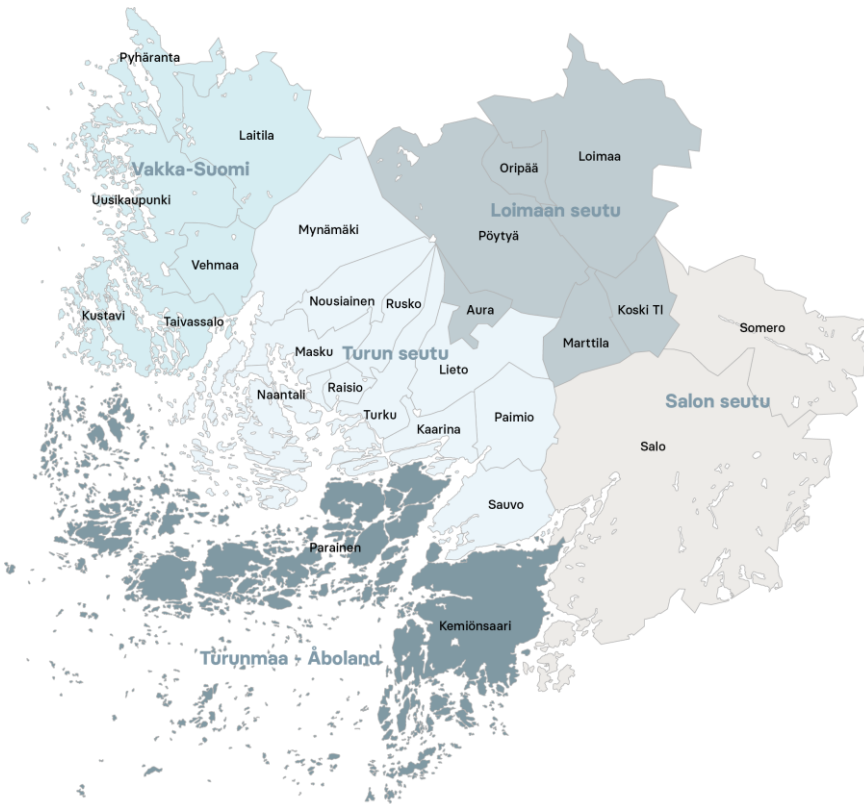


Southwest Finland



Southwest Finland – Diverse and Strong Region

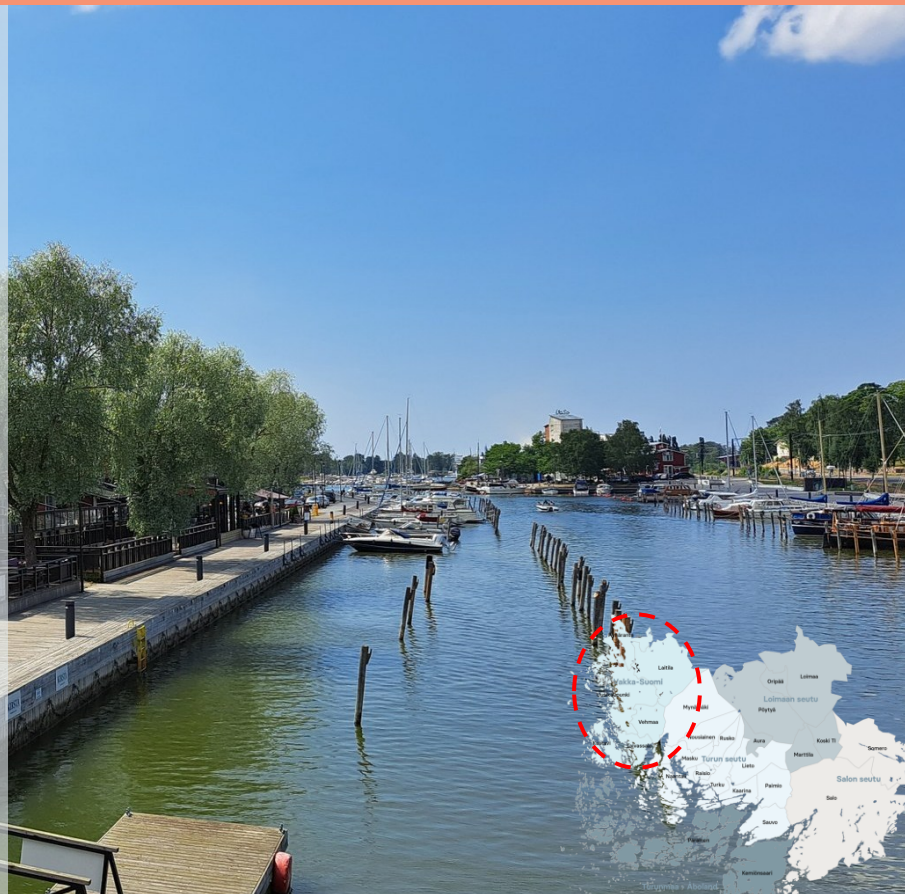
- 27 municipalities
- 500,000 residents: the third most populous region in Finland — and still growing
- Bilingual area





Vakka-Suomi subregion

- The proximity to the sea and strong industrial base make this area strategically important.
- Automotive industry (Valmet Automotive), boat building, and the food industry.





Loimaa subregion

- Strongly rural and known for food production and mechanical engineering.
- Agriculture, especially livestock and grain production, as well as machine and metal industries.





Salo subregion

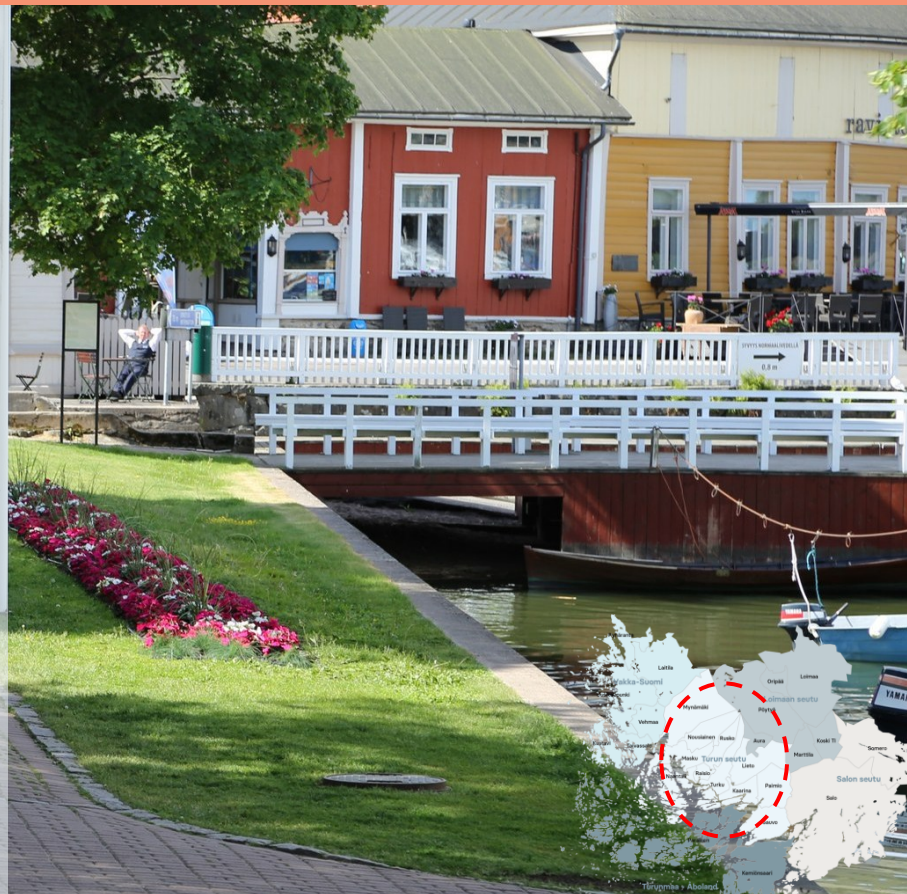
- **Technology industry, bioeconomy, agriculture, and increasingly also renewable energy solutions.**





Turku subregion

- The largest and most populous subregion in Southwest Finland.
- A diverse economy – maritime cluster, ICT, higher education, and health and welfare technology.
- Several universities and research institutions.





Turunmaa - Åboland

- A bilingual archipelago region with a strong identity rooted in maritime life and cultural heritage.
- Archipelago tourism, fishing, small entrepreneurship, stone and construction industries.





Southwest Finland Strategy 2040+



Southwest Finland Strategy 2040+

A shared vision and direction for the future.

Guides the allocation of funding and the work of public authorities.

- **A statutory document** under the Finnish Regional Development Act and the EU's regional and structural policy implementation (Section 25).
- **Developed together with local actors in Southwest Finland:** municipalities, universities and educational institutions, authorities, NGOs, development organizations, and businesses.
- The Regional Council of Southwest Finland leads and coordinates the process.



Southwest Finland is a builder of connections, anchoring Finland to the West.





Goal:
**Sustainably Vibrant
Southwest Finland**

Growth-oriented business activity

- Increase in business investments and internationalization
- Growth in product development

Advanced transition technologies

- Business leadership in data-driven solutions
- Development of defense and dual-use technologies

Sustainable food and resource economy

- Launch of green and clean transition projects
- Transition to a circular economy, emissions reduction
- Sustainable food production and increased processing value



Goal:
**Uniquely Attractive
Southwest Finland**

Entrepreneur- and talent-friendly atmosphere

- Good conditions for businesses and investments
- Employment opportunities that attract talent
- Attractive universities and vocational institutions

Functional and competitive transport connections

- At the core of international transport and supply security
 - Western transport chains
 - Meeting the needs of logistics, business, and housing
 - Western railway line
 - TEN-T network update and fixed connection

Distinctive experiences and cultural activities

- Positive regional image
- Appealing archipelago, nature, and cultural site



Goal: Southwest Finland – For You

Skilled and active citizenship

- A region of education, where lifelong learning is valued
- Graduates stay and are employed in the region

Well-being and good quality of life

- Strong preparedness and mutual trust
- Living environments that support a good life
- Commuter rail as the foundation of transport chains

Diverse nature and shared cultural environment

- Improved state of the Archipelago Sea
- Nature's intrinsic value is recognized, biodiversity is strengthened
- Top-quality cultural services and cultural environments



Who Implements the Strategy, and How?

Southwest Finland Developer Forum, together:

- More than 20 regional networks including municipalities, universities, businesses, authorities, NGOs, and development organizations.
- Joint advocacy, allocation of resources, and collaboration.

Regional organizations independently and in various formations:

- Events, information dissemination, facilitation
- Projects and initiatives

During the years 2026–2029



Why Is the Citizen Panel Convened?



The Citizen Panel adds Valuable Insight

- The draft strategy is based on expert discussions. Citizens may have different perspectives – personal views and knowledge related to various situations or locations.
- With the citizen panel, we aim to:
 - Involve more people in the preparation
 - Increase transparency
 - Enrich public decision-making
 - Strengthen democracy and mutual trust in the region
- The panel will produce an important advisory statement for decision-makers.



What Happens Next?

- The comment and feedback round on the draft strategy will continue until October 20, 2025. During this time, regional organizations will submit their opinions. The statement from the citizen panel is part of this process. The draft will be revised after the feedback round.
 - Panel participants will be informed about the process.
- The strategy proposal will be discussed in the Regional Board and approved in the Regional Assembly on December 8.
 - Participants will receive the final strategy by email.



First, We'll Meet at the Citizen Panel on September 30!

- You will receive a link to the online event via email in advance. Please ensure that you have access to a device (computer/tablet/phone) with functioning audio (microphone and speakers) and a camera.
- The event will take place from 16:30 to 20:00. You can join starting at 16:15 to test your audio and video connection.
- You don't need anything special – just an open and conversational mindset. Your thoughts and views are valuable!
- After the panel, we will send a form where you can indicate your choice of gift card and the address where it should be sent.

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of connections, anchoring
Finland to the West.**

Welcome to the discussion!