

Regional Profiles 2016

MDI published the Regional Profiles 2016 last August. This heavyweight study (200 pages, weighting about 2 pounds) includes information about regional development trends from mid-1990s to 2016. The Regional Profiles consists of an analysis of national development according to different regional types, as well as the regional and sub-regional statistical package.

Mainland Finland consists of 18 regions and 67 sub-regions. We calculated regional development indicators and formulated grades for the sub-regions (see Appendix tables). Furthermore, we ranked the regional development winners and losers from 2008 to 2016. The grade or score consists of three variables: structural variables (which weight 70 % of total score), dynamic development 2008-2013 (weight 10 %) and quick variables 2014-2016 (weight 20 %).

In the last two decades the regional development logic in Finland has changed: in 1990s the five biggest urban regions were the five “winners” of regional development. Now in Finland there are about dozen winners, as the largest regional engines have joined the podium of good development figures. Today, the Greater Helsinki region, and a wide range of other urban regions with a university constitute the engines of development - the best figures were from the urban regions of Vaasa and Helsinki. Compared to the recent years, the urban regions of Turku, Oulu and Jyväskylä have improved their positions. In the Eastern Finland, Kuopio has fared best. But on the contrary – and somewhat surprisingly, a number of structurally strong urban areas gained only mediocre figures for development in the past few years. From the national point of view, it is good that each major area (i.e. Northern, Eastern, Western and Southern Finland) has at least one strong and a few other urban regions that are developing well.

On the other hand, in the rural areas the more densely populated and tourism-oriented regions have highest scores. However, the best marks are in Ylivieska sub-region, where the basis of economy is in strong food production and industry. The weakest scores – not surprisingly – are in sparsely populated areas with poor accessibility, particularly in Eastern and Central Finland. In the rural areas the correlation the structural and dynamic variables is stronger than in urban regions. This means that in the rural regions the structurally strong regions have fared fairly well also in dynamic variables.

The Regional Profiles 2016 information is freely available for experts, decision makers and media in both regional and national level. In Finland, the Regional Profiles 2016 got great media attention in national media (including an editorial in the main newspaper, Helsingin Sanomat) and in regional printed and social media in August 2016.

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Regional Profiles are available in Finnish at MDI's website www.mdi.fi/alueprofiilit

Table 1. Regional development score for 2008-2016

Ranking	Regional development score 2008-2016 (highest 10 – lowest: 4)	Urban Region	Typology	Structural Ranking	Dynamic development 08-13 Ranking	Quick development 14-16 Ranking
1	9,6	Vaasa	B	1	3	13
2	9,5	Helsinki	A	1	5	13
3	9,1	Turku	B	3	5	4
4	9,0	Kuopio	B	3	3	13
5	8,8	Porvoo	A2	3	23	4
6	8,8	Tampere	B	3	16	13
7	8,7	Hämeenlinna	A2	3	23	13
7	8,7	Seinäjoki	B	8	1	4
9	8,5	Oulu	B	8	16	1
9	8,5	Kokkola	C	8	5	4
11	8,3	Lappeenranta	C	8	5	13
11	8,3	Rauma	C	8	5	13
13	7,9	Jyväskylä	B	13	16	1
13	7,9	Joensuu	B	13	1	13
15	7,8	Lahti	B	13	13	4
16	7,7	Pietarsaari	D	13	13	13
17	7,6	Pori	B	13	5	26
18	7,5	Rovaniemi	C	18	5	1
19	6,8	Kouvola	C	18	16	26
20	6,6	Riihimäki	A2	20	16	4
20	6,6	Kajaani	C	20	16	4
22	6,4	Mikkeli	C	20	5	26
23	6,3	Kemi-Tornio	D	20	23	13
24	5,8	Etelä-Pirkanmaa	E	25	27	4
25	5,8	Uusikaupunki	E	25	30	4
25	5,8	Raasepori	E	20	35	33
27	5,6	Kotka-Hamina	C	25	23	26
27	5,6	Iisalmi	D	25	13	33
29	5,2	Jämsä	E	25	35	33
30	5,1	Forssa	E	30	27	13
31	5,0	Äänekoski	E	30	30	13
31	5,0	Raahe	E	30	30	13
33	4,8	Salo	D	30	30	26
34	4,8	Imatra	D	30	27	33
35	4,5	Savonlinna	D	35	16	26
36	4,3	Varkaus	D	35	30	26

Typology for urban regions:

A Metropolitan area

A2 Greater Metropolitan area regions

B Diversified higher education regions

C Regional engines

D 2nd and 3rd tier regional cities

E Small cities

In this comparison Finland has 36 urban regions. The Selection and Typology are based on Urban Network Study that was published in November 2015 (www.mdi.fi/kaupunkiverkko). Those urban regions that were part of Urban network in 1995 were included to typology E. Other regions were classified as rural regions. Åland Island was not included to comparison.

Table 2. Regional development scores 2008-2016 for rural regions

Ranking	Regional development score 2008-2016 (highest 10 – lowest: 4)	Rural Region	Typology	Structural Ranking	Dynamic development 08-13 Ranking	Quick development 14-16 Ranking
1	9,6	Ylivieska	M1	1	1	1
2	9,4	Åboland-Turunmaa	M1	1	4	1
3	9,3	Sydösterbotten	M2	1	4	5
4	9,0	Loimaa	M2	1	4	9
4	9,0	Loviisa	M1	1	4	9
6	8,4	Tunturi-Lappi	M2	6	1	1
6	8,4	Pohjois-Lappi	M1	6	1	1
8	7,5	Lounais-Pirkanmaa	M1	6	8	17
8	7,5	Pohjois-Satakunta	M2	6	8	17
10	6,8	Nivala-Haapajärvi	M2	10	8	9
11	6,7	Pieksämäki	M1	10	13	9
12	6,3	Koillismaa	M1	12	19	5
13	6,2	Luoteis-Pirkanmaa	M2	12	8	9
14	6,1	Kyrönmaa	M1	12	13	9
15	6,0	Kuusiokunnat	M2	12	8	17
16	6,0	Suupohja	M1	12	25	9
17	5,9	Kaustinen	M2	12	13	17
18	5,9	Ylä-Pirkanmaa	M1	12	19	17
19	5,7	Järviseuutu	M2	12	19	28
20	5,5	Pielisen Karjala	M1	20	13	17
20	5,5	Keuruu	M1	20	13	17
22	5,3	Oulunkaari	M1	22	19	7
23	5,3	Itä-Lappi	M2	22	25	7
24	5,1	Kehys-Kainuu	M1	22	27	9
25	5,0	Haapavesi-Siikalatva	M2	22	19	17
26	4,9	Saarijärvi-Viitasaari	M2	22	27	17
27	4,7	Sisä-Savo	M2	27	13	17
28	4,6	Keski-Karjala	M2	27	27	17
29	4,3	Joutsa	M2	27	27	30
30	4,3	Torniolaakso	M2	30	19	28
31	4,0	Koillis-Savo	M2	30	27	30

Typology

M1 Densely populated rural regions

M2 Sparsely populated rural regions

Ranking method

Urban regions and rural sub-regions were compared in two different leagues (36 urban regions and 31 rural sub-regions). In each category the regions were ranked to three groups: the best third received one point, second third two points and last third three points. Weighted scores were translated into Finnish school grades, where 10 is the highest and 4 the lowest grade.

Structural indicators (in 2013)

- Population, unemployment rate, GDP per capita, share of highly educated population

Dynamic indicators from 2008-2013

- Change in population, jobs, GDP and R&D-investments

Quick indicators 2014-2016

- Change in population and in unemployment rate (from March 2014 to March 2016)
- In rural areas the capacity of tourism (hotel beds) was included to quick indicators, too

Weight of each type in comparison

- Structural 70 %, Dynamic 10 %, Quick 20 %