



**SOUTH
KARELIA**

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Fresh and courageous.

Vigorous and amazing.

Easygoing and international.

This is South Karelia.

I LAKE SAIMAA



1 534 km²
of water

7 631 km
of shoreline

The extensive South Karelian shoreline enchants both residents and visitors. Join the cheerful and courageous Karelian people and enjoy our easygoing atmosphere, forests, and lakes, and of course the great Lake Saimaa.

Life on the international university campus, the buzz of innovative forest industry as well as the new rise of spa culture all reflect South Karelian attitude. Novel initiatives are fearlessly welcomed in South Karelia – while others are still planning, we are already in action!

Municipalities and Cities

Lappeenranta, the biggest city of South Karelia, is located on the southern shore of Lake Saimaa.

Imatra, the other city in the region, is known for its industries and the wonderful Imatra Rapids, Finland's oldest tourist attraction.

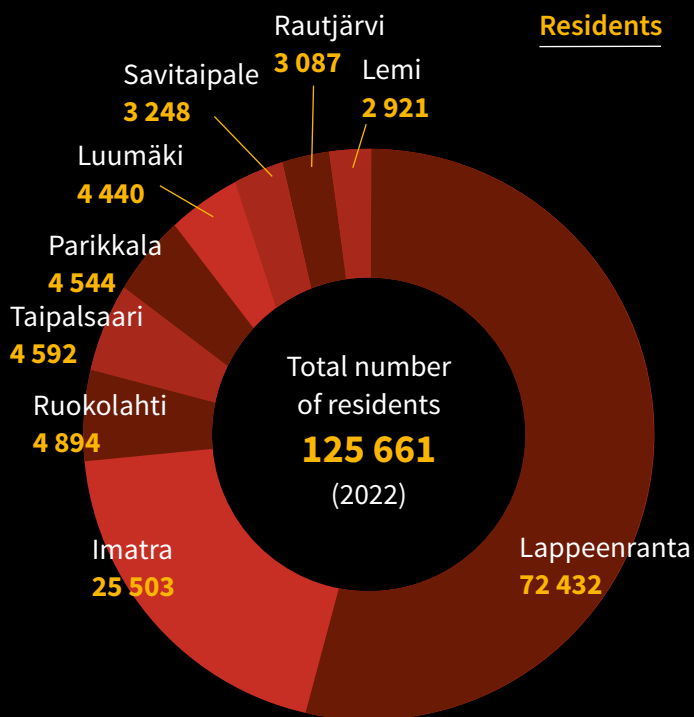
In addition to Lappeenranta and Imatra, South Karelia also includes seven smaller municipalities.



THE GREAT LAKE SAIMAA



The heart of the region is Lake Saimaa, a Finnish national treasure, which is among the most beautiful lakes in the world.



Nature tourism

Thanks to its location and abundant selection of services, South Karelia is a popular tourist destination.

The beauty of Lake Saimaa, the endangered Saimaa ringed seal, and numerous wonderful attractions truly enchant all visitors. Finland's first Wilderness and Nature Culture Museum is to be built in Imatra, by the Vuoksi river.

The Hiitolanjoki river is a unique salmon river, whose distinctiveness is formed by the visible interaction between humans and nature.



LIFE BY THE BORDER THROUGH THE AGES



South Karelia is a region for innovative thinkers, and it is populated by courageous future-oriented creators.

The region's location on the border has brought opportunities and cultural prosperity as well as wars and losses.

1323

The Treaty of Nöteborg separated western Sweden and eastern Novgorod principalities and transformed South Karelia into a border region.

1703

The city of St. Petersburg was founded, and its impact has been felt in the current South Karelia region ever since.

1856

The Saimaa Canal was opened. The Canal connects both Lake Saimaa and The Vuoksi waterways to the Baltic Sea.

1917

The border was closed after Finland gained independence. In 1944, Finland lost Vyborg, the centre of Karelia, and South Karelia established its current borders.

1991

After the fall of the Soviet Union, many partners and tourists came from St. Petersburg – just as they did in the 1800s.

2000

The 21st century has brought new changes to neighbouring relations.



Work and Livelihood

South Karelia's strengths are expertise in the forest industry, the bio-economy, tourism and services as well as engineering, energy and environmental sectors.

Green transition and developing hydrogen economy technologies are strongly supported in South Karelia. The LUT University is one of the pioneers in finding solutions for building a carbon neutral world.

South-eastern Finland is Europe's most important forest industry cluster, and two large Finnish paper industry companies UPM and Stora Enso have centralized their research institutes there. The new bio-economy products are also thriving: biomaterials, wood products, innovative packing cardboard, and bio-oil made from pine oil.

The world's first biorefinery operates in Lappeenranta.

The six largest employers in South Karelia

- South Karelia Social and Health Care District (Eksote)
- City of Lappeenranta
- Stora Enso Oyj
- Etelä-Karjalan Osuuskauppa
- LUT University
- Saimaan Tukipalvelut Oy



THE PIONEER OF GREEN TRANSITION

The South Karelia region is strong in exports based on its thriving forest industry.





Cooperation

Quick and cooperative Karelians have always been trendsetters in societal development work.

In South Karelia, social and health care were already united, while other regions were still discussing their plans.

LUT University and LAB University of Applied Sciences form an international high-quality experimental and energetic higher education institution with campuses both in Lappeenranta and in Lahti.

LUT University's strategy aims at solving the world's most difficult problems: How to guarantee clean water supply to all? How to guarantee sufficient energy supply? Are we drowning in waste? The strengths of the university include new sustainable development business models, green growth enterprises, supporting the growth of small and medium-sized companies, and know-how in environmental and energy matters.

Studies

South Karelia welcomes students with the cheerful Karelian spirit. Survey results show that the satisfaction of students here is among the highest in Finland.

Students graduated from LUT University in Lappeenranta warmly reminisce about the unique community spirit of the campus by Lake Saimaa for years and even decades after their graduation.

The educational institutions in the region, including the university and the university of applied sciences as well as the Saimaa Vocational College Sampo and the Army Academy, have a total of over ten thousand students. All our higher education institutions are among Finland's most cosmopolitan educational establishments. In several international university surveys, LUT University is ranked at top positions! Our new faculty of social sciences will diversify the region's studying opportunities even further.



HOME TO SOUTH KARELIA



Housing

Easygoing atmosphere, forests, lakes, interesting jobs, and a broad array of services... Life is good in South Karelia.

Diversity is among the region's greatest strengths. You can find a home whether you are seeking the peace of a rural setting or the lively atmosphere of an international university city. Various housing options are available for all new residents.

Fast train connections make travelling easy and comfortable in Finland, and you can reach Central Europe directly from Lappeenranta airport.

Read more about South Karelia's housing opportunities, in Finnish, at

kotiin.ekarjala.fi.

Nature and Sports

The best leisure time in South Karelia is spent by Lake Saimaa and the other lakes in the region.

Although spending time at a cabin, hiking, boating, and lakeside beaches are popular especially in summertime, Lake Saimaa offers many interesting activities throughout the year. Thousands of satisfied holiday residents have already proved this. Many excursion harbours with their saunas at Lake Saimaa are available for all visitors.

Furthermore, the opportunities for sports in the region are excellent. The sports cluster at the boundary of Imatra and Lappeenranta offer opportunities for summer and winter sports. All the sports fields, indoor sports facilities, climbing walls, golf courses, curling rinks, skiing tracks, beaches, and canoeing and cycling routes in the region are at your service.

OH MY KARELIA!



The traditions of Karelian culture are strongly present in South Karelia. All visitors are welcomed with a versatile selection of culture, food, and entertainment.

The art exhibitions in South Karelia enliven the history of Finnish art. It is no wonder that Akseli Gallen-Kallela and other Karelians enjoyed painting by the Imatra Rapids.

Their heritage is cherished by the top-level training in visual arts at the Saimaa University of Applied Sciences as well as the numerous South Karelian art schools.

Lappeenranta and Imatra are traditional cities of music and theatre, and their new theatres offer a grand setting for unforgettable experiences.

The region's cultural offerings will diversify even further with the Wilderness and Nature Culture Museum soon to be built in Imatra.