



Summary

Central Ostrobothnia

REGIONAL STRATEGY 2040 and REGIONAL PROGRAMME 2022–2025

Regional Board 15 November 2021 | Regional Assembly 29 November 2021



Our vision is that in 2040, Central Ostrobothnia is a **PROSPEROUS REGION OF SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

Our vision for the future is built on the following preconditions:

- ✓ The success of the Central Ostrobothnia Region is based on securing and further developing the preconditions for sustainable growth, well-being and vitality.
- ✓ The green transition supports Central Ostrobothnia's competitive business sector, enterprise and industry, as well as agriculture and forestry, in building a carbon-neutral region.
- ✓ Our competence and research and development activities based on smart specialisation accelerate Central Ostrobothnia's development into a leading region of bio, hydrogen and circular economy, high-value products and emissions-free energy systems.
- ✓ Digitalisation becomes an integral part of Central Ostrobothnia's regional economy in public and private services and the operations of businesses and industry, while increasing the productivity and cost efficiency of the region. Everyday services are accessible to all residents of the region.
- ✓ Central Ostrobothnia's growth is accelerated by a high-quality education system, high employment rate, availability of workforce and competence. Continuous learning, customer-oriented employment services and labour immigration support the success and operation of livelihoods and public administration.
- ✓ The well-being and inclusion of the region's residents strengthen the renewal and identity of the region.
- ✓ The attractive Central Ostrobothnia Region is known for its high-quality living and cultural environment, work and leisure, diverse enterprise, rich culture and sense of community.

Central Ostrobothnia's regional vision is supported and strengthened by the following values and principles guiding our operations:

In Central Ostrobothnia, everyone has the right to a safe and meaningful life, well-being and health, culture and art, work and inclusion as well as a sustainable and clean environment.

Development in Central Ostrobothnia is guided by:

- ✓ Courage – Central Ostrobothnians are brave, entrepreneurial and renewable developers
- ✓ Sense of community – Central Ostrobothnia is a region of prosperous people and a strong sense of community
- ✓ Cooperation – Central Ostrobothnia is a region of national and international cooperation

Central Ostrobothnia Regional Programme 2022–2025

According to the vision described in our Regional Strategy, Central Ostrobothnia wants to be a prosperous region of sustainable growth. This vision can be achieved through the three development themes of our Regional Programme – competence, competitiveness and accessibility – and the related development measures. Cross-cutting objectives strengthen the implementation of the vision and development measures within each of the three development themes. These cross-cutting objectives are: strong countryside, climate and environment, well-being and community, attraction and retention, and internationality.

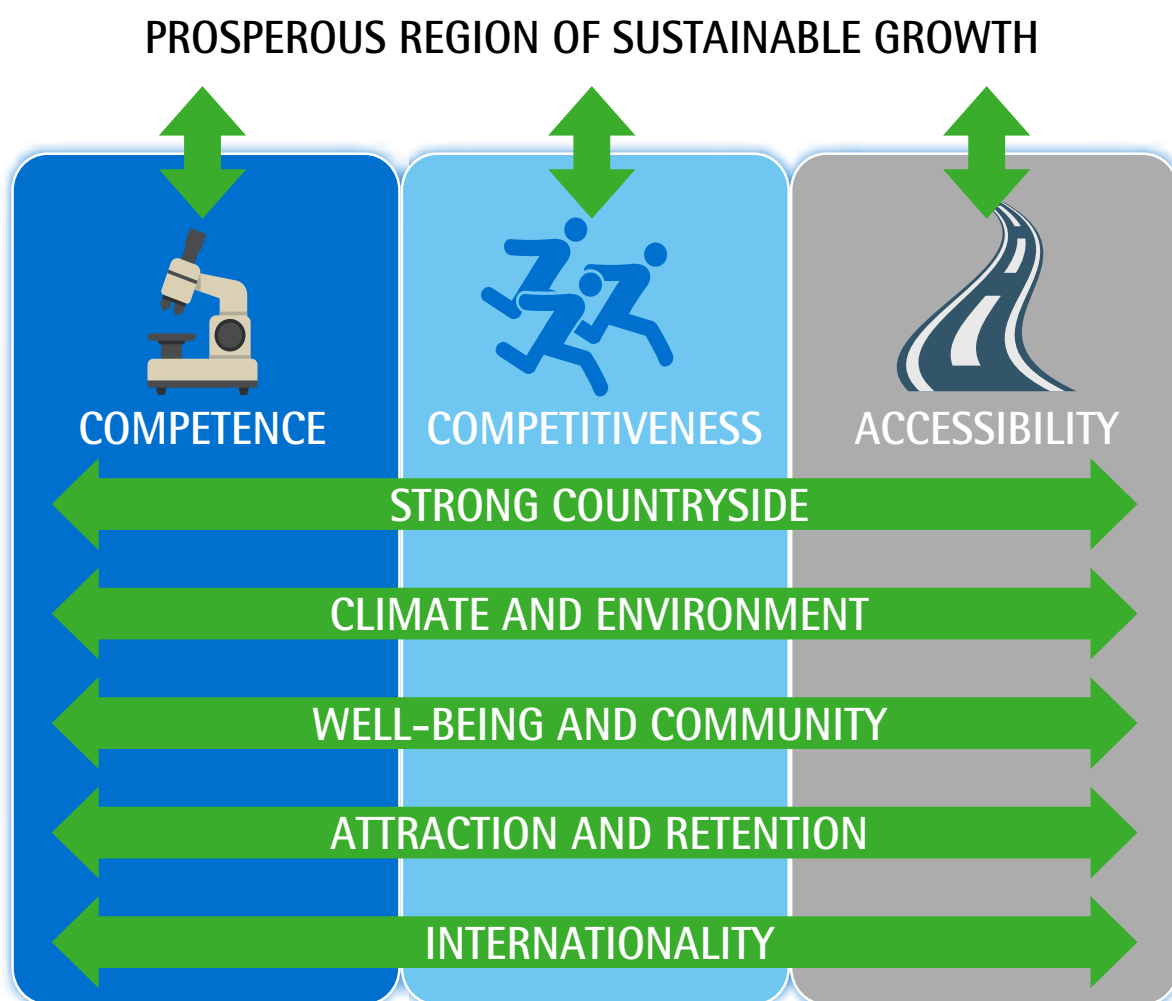


Image. Development themes and cross-cutting objectives of the Central Ostrobothnia Regional Programme 2022–2025.



Competence

Competence is among the key preconditions for the sustainable growth, competitiveness and well-being of Central Ostrobothnia. Competence development also strengthens the region's internationalisation, attraction and retention. Strengthening competence and raising skill levels require:

- ✓ Diverse and continuous strengthening of the population's competence as well as a proactive and need-based development of learning environments and the regional education system.
- ✓ Structured long-term development of the region's innovation environments and research, development and innovation activities, in addition to technology transfers to companies.

Competence development objectives and measures in 2022–2025

The competence development objectives of the Central Ostrobothnia Regional Programme for 2022–2025:

- ✓ Developing the education system and promoting continuous learning in order to strengthen a skilled workforce and high employment and to increase well-being
- ✓ Developing learning environments to support competence development, flexible study paths and the attraction of education, both nationally and internationally
- ✓ Predicting competence and education needs and strengthening working life cooperation
- ✓ Strengthening regional, national and international cooperation and clusters within research and education
- ✓ Developing research and innovation environments and innovation ecosystems to support an increase in RDI
- ✓ Piloting and converting research findings and innovations into new competence and business
- ✓ Strengthening cooperation and partnership between research, education, businesses and the third sector
- ✓ Enabling innovation in green development and digitalisation by developing and steering competence, education and RDI, and by increasing cooperation between different operators

Competitiveness

Central Ostrobothnia's competitiveness is formed through the success of businesses, strong employment, developing the regional economy and internationalisation. It is also linked to factors related to competence and accessibility. Attraction, retention and well-being are essential factors creating and strengthening competitiveness. The strengthening of competitiveness requires:

- ✓ Diverse development of livelihoods as well as renewing and diversifying the regional economy, in addition to the processing and sustainable use of natural resources.
- ✓ Strengthening employment and skilled labour through cross-sectoral cooperation and competence development.
- ✓ Developing attraction, retention and well-being in extensive cooperation with different operators.

Competitiveness development objectives and measures in 2022–2025

The competitiveness development objectives of the Central Ostrobothnia Regional Programme for 2022–2025:

- ✓ Supporting the growth, networking and renewal of SMEs and developing their business, automation and productivity
- ✓ Enabling the competitiveness and growth of large-scale industry and the Port, in addition to securing and further developing their operational preconditions in accordance with the principles of circular economy
- ✓ Strengthening agriculture and forestry, increasing the degree of processing and improving productivity in a climate-sustainable manner
- ✓ Developing the battery and mining cluster and securing its operational preconditions
- ✓ Developing business in the cultural, travel and creative sectors and using creative competence in developing new business
- ✓ Strengthening business related to natural resources and the bio, hydrogen and circular economy by utilising and commercialising new innovation
- ✓ Strengthening digitalisation by developing electronic private and public services as well as the business and production processes of businesses and industry
- ✓ Strengthening export and internationalisation, promoting international investments and new businesses locating to the region
- ✓ Promoting the availability of a skilled workforce by strengthening employment, competence as well as labour and education immigration
- ✓ Strengthening employment by developing employment and recruitment services and training, and by promoting the employment of hard-to-employ groups
- ✓ Promoting labour and education immigration and integration in order to meet the need for a qualified workforce
- ✓ Developing well-being at work and the opportunities for location-independent work to support employment and increase attraction and retention
- ✓ Strengthening and renewing the region's identity and recognition, as well as developing regional marketing and recruitment cooperation in order to attract a skilled workforce and increase inward migration as well as attraction and retention.
- ✓ Strengthening and utilising cross-regional cooperation in the development of the region's attractiveness, competitiveness and interest representation
- ✓ Developing well-being, sense of community and high-quality everyday services by strengthening partnership and cooperation between the public, private and third sectors
- ✓ Developing culture, sports and well-being services and strengthening civic participation in order to increase attraction, well-being and a sense of community, as well as to create new business



Accessibility

The comprehensive development of Central Ostrobothnia's accessibility covers the development of the operational and living environment of businesses and residents as well as the development of physical and digital accessibility and our transport system. Accessibility has a significant impact on the attraction and retention of the region, as well as on our well-being and competitiveness. The strengthening of accessibility requires:

- ✓ The development of the business sector's physical and digital infrastructure and the region's transport system.
- ✓ The sustainable development of the living environment of residents, while taking health, attractiveness and safety into account.

Accessibility development objectives and measures in 2022–2025

The accessibility development objectives of the Central Ostrobothnia Regional Programme for 2022–2025:

- ✓ Developing a sustainable transport system as a part of national and international transport links and corridors
- ✓ Developing and implementing low-carbon and digital transport and logistics solutions
- ✓ Securing smooth everyday life and services by developing travel chains and flexible forms of transport
- ✓ Securing the operations of Kokkola-Pietarsaari Airport
- ✓ Developing rail traffic connections and main roads to secure the operations of the business sector and smooth passenger transport
- ✓ Developing and securing the preconditions of Kokkola Industrial Park and Port capacity, transport connections and freight traffic
- ✓ Developing and planning land use in a climate-sustainable manner supporting businesses, industry, agriculture and forestry
- ✓ Maintaining and improving the secondary road network to serve the sparsely populated countryside and business activities
- ✓ Building comprehensive and effective telecommunications connections to the entire region by using fixed broadband connections and wireless solutions
- ✓ Developing accessible electronic private and public services
- ✓ Planning and developing a safe, balanced and functional living environment and community structure, taking into account biodiversity, countryside and urban areas and the opportunities of multilocality