

**Division into Regions Act**  
(1159/1997)

Section 1

For regional development and land use planning, the country is divided into regions. An area to be named as a region is composed of municipalities which form together, functionally and economically as well as for the purposes of the planning of the area, an appropriate whole.

The number as well as the areas and names of the regions is decided by the Government after hearing the Regional Councils and the municipalities concerned. A matter shall, prior to its presentation to the Government, be submitted to the ministry responsible for land use planning for comment.

The State regional administration authorities' areas of competence shall, unless there are special reasons to the contrary, be based on the division into regions in a way permitting them to exercise competence within one or more regions. The Government gives, as appropriate, further provisions on the harmonisation of the State regional administration authorities' areas of competence.

Section 2

The provisions on the area of the Region of Åland are laid down by section 2 of the Act on the Autonomy of Åland (1144/1991).

Section 3

This Act enters into force on 1 March 1998.

The division decided upon for regional planning under section 18(3) of the Building Act (370/1958) constitutes the division into regions under this Act until the Government decides otherwise under section 1(2).

Measures necessary for the implementation of this Act may be undertaken before the Act's entry into force.