Economic activity of Estonia is mainly concentrated in three counties

According to Statistics Estonia, the economic activity of Estonia is concentrated in Harju, Tartu and Ida-Viru counties, which create nearly three quarters of the gross domestic product (GDP) of Estonia.

In 2008, the share of Harju, Tartu and Ida-Viru counties was 78% in the total GDP of Estonia. The share of these three counties in overall GDP of Estonia has grown year by year, because yet 12 years ago, in 1996, their share was only 72%. Over a half of overall GDP is still created in Harju county, 60% in 2008. However, the share of Harju county has been declining gradually during the last three years on account of the rise of Ida-Viru and Tartu counties. In 2008, the share of the GDP in Ida-Viru county rose mainly due to strong industrial sector. The growth in the share of GDP in Tartu county was influenced by the increase in the proportion of service sector. In 2008, 10% of Estonian GDP was created in Tartu county and 8% in Ida-Viru county.

Proportion of counties in the total GDP of Estonia, 2008 (percentage)

In every county except for Ida-Viru county the service sector is holding the biggest share. Over the years it can be observed that the share of the primary sector in counties is decreasing in favour of industrial and service sectors. Ida-Viru county, which belongs to the three counties with the highest GDP, however, has created over a half of the value added in industrial sector. The share of industrial sector in general has increased in Ida-Viru county since 1996. This reflects the significant role of mining and quarrying, electricity and manufacturing in the county’s economic activity.

Regional GDP (RGDP) characterizes first and foremost the economic development of a county but it does not directly function as the indicator of wealth. RGDP does not reflect the population’s income and expenditures, the access to education and health care, etc. However, regional GDP allows evaluating the distribution of wealth between regions and it is a suitable indicator for setting the regional policy-related targets and for determining the efficiency of their achievement.

Primary sector covers agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing. Industrial sector or secondary sector includes mining and quarrying, manufacturing, electricity, gas and water supply, construction. Service sector or tertiary sector — wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants, transport, storage and communication, financial intermediation, real estate, renting and business activities, public administration and defence; compulsory social security, education, health and social work, other community, social and personal service activities.

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More detailed data have been published in the Statistical Database (http://www.stat.ee/database).