

WASA DAILY

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Vaasa Maritime Museum

Korsholm cheapest in Finland

Prostate Cancer

Ostrobothnia Welfare Region

A new era in weight loss

A New Dwarf Plandet

WASA DAILY



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HERE WE ARE:

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68 pages

TODAY

Responsibility Starts at the Dinner Plate: How We Can Shrink Our Ecological Footprint!

Finland's nature is disappearing – but did you know that the keys to saving it largely lie in our own hands, on every dinner plate and in our life-style choices?

A recent study by Sitra reveals startling figures: food consumption accounts for the lion's share, a staggering 42 percent, of the average Finn's total ecological footprint. Of this, the vast majority comes from meat and dairy products. It's time to look in the mirror and ask: are we ready for change?

Nature loss is accelerating at a rapid pace, and its consequences are global. Yet, the discussion often focuses solely on the carbon footprint, overshadowing the equally critical dimension – the ecological footprint. The information we've now received, however, gives us a new, concrete tool to make an impact.

The Weight of Your Plate: Meat and Dairy as Environmental Burdens

Sitra's study is a wake-up call. With transport (23%), other consumption (21%), and residential energy (14%) clearly lagging behind, it's evident that our food choices have an enormous impact. Meat and dairy products alone account for 61 percent of the ecological footprint from food consumption, which translates to a whopping 27 percent of the average Finn's total environmental burden. These figures are undeniable.

And what makes this even more complex: almost all of this environmental damage occurs outside Finland's borders. Only two percent of the ecological footprint from food and other consumption is directed towards Finland; the remaining 98 percent leave their mark on the other side of the globe. We may not see this impact in our own forests



or lakes, but it is real and devastating for the Amazon rainforests, land use in Southeast Asia, and marine ecosystems. While calculation methods are evolving and figures may become more precise, the main trend is clear.

Everyone Can Make a Difference – Meaningful Choices in Everyday Life

Fortunately, there is hope. And that hope is surprisingly easy to realize. Since food consumption has the largest ecological footprint, we can also make the most significant impact there. The report clearly shows: by shifting to a more plant-based diet, we can significantly reduce our ecological footprint. Just swapping half or a quarter of your meals to plant-based or vegan options already has a tangible effect. Shifting completely to a vegan diet, in turn, reduces the ecological footprint by as much as 22 percent.

But the changes are not limited to the dinner table. Other lifestyle choices also hold power:

Acquiring used goods: -9%
Halving other consumption: -9%
Giving up a car: -9%
Stopping flying: -7%
Changing heating methods to a more environmentally friendly option (e.g., heat pump or ground-source heat): -5%
These figures show that individual

decisions have a cumulative effect. Ecological and carbon footprints often go hand in hand, and many sustainable choices reduce both. We, as citizens, have significant power to influence through our consumption habits.

Sharing Responsibility and Building the Future

Knowledge is power. When we know how our choices impact the environment, we can also demand responsibility from companies and decision-makers. However, it must be emphasized: the responsibility for combating nature loss cannot solely fall on the shoulders of individual citizens. Political decision-makers and businesses must create frameworks that enable

sustainable choices easily and socially equitably. More nature-friendly products and services must be brought to the market, and the transition to a more sustainable society must be supported.

As seen in the Finlandia exhibition, we have a wonderful country and a rich history. To leave the same legacy for future generations, we must act now. Every plant-based patty, every secondhand item acquired, and every conscious consumption choice moves us toward a more sustainable future. The information has been provided, the actions await.

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NEWS

VAASA MARITIME MUSEUM

The Seamen's Mission's 150th Anniversary Exhibition at Vaasa Maritime Museum Summer 2025



Vaasa, a city that breathes the sea and its history, has the honor of hosting the Finnish Seamen's Mission's 150th-anniversary exhibition this summer.

The Maritime Museum in Palo-saari Sound offers a perfect and atmospheric setting for this unique dive into the past, showcasing the lives of seafarers and the church's significance as their support. The exhibition opened its doors in late May and will be open to the public throughout the summer, inviting everyone interested in maritime history to explore this fascinating heritage.

Vaasa was once a significant center for shipping and maritime trade, with traditions that still live on strongly. The Maritime Museum's permanent exhibition is itself a tribute to local maritime heritage, comprehensively presenting everything from 19th-century shipbuilding to today's cruise liners. Fascinating artifacts, detailed models, shipwreck finds, and old photographs offer a glimpse into the daily lives and adventures

of seafarers of yesteryear. The Seamen's Mission's anniversary exhibition fits perfectly into this environment – it's like two historical currents meeting and reinforcing each other.

The Seamen's Mission's Incredible Journey – 150 Years of Support and Hope

The history of the Finnish Seamen's Mission is a story of dedication and adaptation. Founded in 1875, the association was born out of a concrete need: to help Finnish seafarers abroad, who were often without language skills, financially struggling, and socially isolated. Early on, the Seamen's Mission's services were also used by immigrants and other travelers, whose challenges were similar.

The exhibition offers a peek into the Seamen's Mission's early years and the motivations behind its founding. How did the appeals of Johan Cordt Harmens Storjohann, a Norwegian seamen's pastor, lead to the association's creation? How did the first Finnish seamen's pastor, Elis Bergroth, begin his work

in distant Grimsby in 1880, laying the foundation for extensive international operations? The exhibition answers these questions and sheds light on how the Seamen's Mission established its activities with ship visits, hospital and prison calls, cafeteria services, and reading rooms – providing Finns with a place where language, culture, and faith felt familiar far from home.

A Story of Development and Adaptation

The Seamen's Mission's history is also a narrative of continuous change. As seafaring transformed from the 1960s onwards – ships grew larger, crews smaller, and ports moved away from city centers – the Seamen's Mission adapted. Staff began visiting ships more frequently, ensuring that help and support reached seafarers where they needed it. Later, with Finland's EU membership, operations expanded to non-port cities, such as Brussels, demonstrating the Seamen's Mission's ability to identify new needs and serve all Finns on the move.

Today, the Seamen's Mission is a versatile cultural center and a multi-functional hub promoting social well-being. The Vaasa exhibition shows how the association has evolved from "The Association for Providing Pastoral Care to Finnish Seamen in Foreign Ports" (its original name) to its current form, "The Finnish Seamen's Mission ry." It's a story of an organization that has always been present, adapted, and served Finns at sea and around the world for a century and a half.

A Unique Summer Experience in Vaasa

The Seamen's Mission's 150th-anniversary exhibition at the Vaasa Maritime Museum is open all summer, from June 2 to August 29, 2025, Monday to Friday from 1 PM to 6 PM. It's an excellent opportunity to delve deeper into the Seamen's Mission's significant work and simultaneously experience Vaasa's rich maritime history. Don't miss this unique opportunity – it's a journey that illuminates the grand story of a small nation from the perspective of its seafarers and their supporters.

NEWS

YOU CAN READ THIS NEWSPAPER ANYWHERE



You can read this paper wherever You are. Like here in the bell tower of Kallio Church in Helsinki

BLOG WRITERS

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BIRDS

Administrative Court Rules: Sparrow Song Not a Health Hazard



In a case that reads like a modern urban fable, a resident's battle against the cheerful chirping of sparrows nesting under a neighbour's eaves has concluded in the administrative courts. The Helsinki Administrative Court has determined that the birds' song does not constitute a health hazard requiring official intervention.

Helsingin Sanomat was the first to write about this.

The complainant, disturbed by the persistent sparrow song, initially sought action

from the housing association's property manager to remove the nests. When this did not yield the desired result, he escalated the matter to city authorities, citing the birdsong as a health threat. Unsatisfied with the city's response, he took the case to the Helsinki Administrative Court.
ground.news

The court concluded that the natural sounds produced by the sparrows do not pose a health risk that would necessitate action from the authorities. As a result, the complainant is responsible for his own legal costs but retains the right to seek leave

to appeal to the Supreme Administrative Court.

This case highlights the complexities of urban living, where the sounds of nature intersect with human perceptions of comfort and health. While some may find solace in birdsong, others may perceive it as a nuisance. However, the court's decision underscores the importance of coexisting with urban wildlife and recognizing the role of natural sounds in our environment.

SFP

Motions during the Swedish People's Party Day in Vaasa



Here is a selection of some interesting motions that will be discussed at the Swedish People's Party Day this weekend:

Perpetual Identity Card for Seniors

The motion proposes that people over the age of 70 should be granted an identity card that is valid for the rest of their lives. Today, the identity card has to be renewed every five years, which can be difficult for older people with limited mobility or weak digital skills. The renewal process requires both a visit to the police station and a separate photograph visit, which can be a major challenge for many seniors.

In her report to Parliament, Ombudsman for the Elderly Päivi Topo has highlighted the problems and suggested improvements, such as reminders that the card is about to expire and a paid service where the police visit elderly people at home to collect the necessary information. Despite this, the problems remain for many. In some EU countries, identi-

ty cards are valid for life after a certain age, and the motion suggests that Finland should introduce a similar solution. A perpetual identity card after the age of 70 would make everyday life easier for the elderly, reduce the burden on relatives and at the same time make the work of the authorities more efficient.

Ticks

The motion highlights the health risks that tick-borne diseases such as Lyme disease and TBE pose to humans. The diseases are difficult to detect and treat, especially since ticks are often small and difficult to detect in time. Many people move around in nature at work or in their free time, and the risk of ticks restricts mobility and safety in the open air.

The motioner points out that an effective and natural way to reduce the occurrence of ticks is to limit the number of host animals, especially roe deer and white-tailed deer. These animals act as the main hosts for ticks and their increase has been exacerbated by milder winters. In addition, white-tailed deer cause many traffic accidents and economic damage to horticulturists.

The motion therefore proposes that the populations of roe deer and white-tailed deer be greatly reduced in order to combat the tick problem and the consequences it has for public health and natural use.

Protect the victims, not the perpetrators!

The motion emphasizes the need for a change in legal policy where the rights and well-being of victims are put in the forefront of sexual crimes. The current criminal practice in Finland is considered too lenient, often with short prison sentences or suspended sentences, which risks weakening trust in the judicial system and creating a sense of injustice.

The motion, Svensk Ungdom, proposes stricter minimum sentences for sexual crimes, especially in serious cases, to show that society takes these crimes seriously. Tougher punishments would serve as a clear signal against offenders, have a deterrent effect and reduce the risk of recidivism. At the same time, the motion calls for better support for victims of crime and a legal system that focuses more clearly on their rights.

The motion calls for fair and proportionate criminal practices and for Finland to follow the example of other European countries by tightening the legislation on sexual offences.

Introduce income limit for jobs during parental leave

The motion, proposed by Cecilia Achrén (SFP Korpo), wants to reform the framework for work during parental leave and how earned income affects parental benefit. At present, a parent who receives parental benefit can work unlimited on Sundays and public holidays without the benefit being affected. On the other hand, a single shift from Monday to Saturday is enough for Kela to reduce the daily allowance to the minimum amount of €31.99 per day – regardless of the extent of the work.

This system disadvantages parents who can only work weekdays, or who want to work a few hours a day rather than a full day, such as small business owners, who need to take care of administrative tasks, customer contact or orders on weekdays. The current model leads to un-



fair incentives: those who can work on Sundays benefit, while others are punished financially for short work on weekdays.

The motion's proposal is to introduce a clear income limit during parental leave – instead of today's schematic day, week and day-based rules – so that parents can work flexibly every day of the week without losing benefits, provided that the income is kept below a set limit. This would allow for greater freedom and fairness, while preserving the role of parental benefit as a support for childcare.

AI must start to be used in healthcare, preferably yesterday

The motion highlights the urgent need to integrate artificial intelligence (AI), especially language models, into healthcare. While AI is already being used in several industries – such as law – public healthcare is lagging behind, despite the growing reliability of the technology.

At a time when healthcare is facing major savings, AI is being proposed as an alternative to costly purchasing services. By using tools such

as Microsoft Copilot with access to patient data, healthcare could streamline diagnostics, referrals and prescription renewals. The motioner points out that doctors today also use digital search tools in their diagnostic work, and that modern AI is in principle a more advanced version of these.

To make this a reality, rapid legislative reform is needed. Jens Antus, the motion's sponsor, proposes that the Swedish People's Party work to update the legislation so that the wellbeing services counties have the opportunity to introduce AI as an effective tool in the everyday routines of healthcare. The aim is to save resources without compromising the quality of care.

Save the Baltic Sea from the shadow fleet

The motion from Swedish Youth warns of the growing threat that the Russian shadow fleet poses in the Baltic Sea. These ships transport oil by circumventing sanctions and obscuring their positioning systems, posing serious risks to both the environment and regional security.

Shadow fleet vessels are often tech-

nically inferior and increase the risk of oil spills in an already vulnerable sea area. At the same time, some of the ships are suspected of being involved in hybrid influence and sabotage, including against underwater cables and other important infrastructure in the Baltic Sea region. Several incidents have already been linked to Russian ships.

The motion demands that Finland take a leading role in the EU and in cooperation around the Baltic Sea in order to counteract this illegitimate activity. Swedish Youth proposes three concrete measures: that Finland works to stop the shadow fleet's activities, that surveillance is tightened and that the protection of critical infrastructure is improved. The goal is to secure both the Baltic Sea environment and the safety of the entire region.

Cultural growth brings prosperous individuals and communities

The motion by the Swedish People's Party in Southwest Helsinki highlights the role of culture as an engine for both socio-economic growth and individual well-being. In the public debate, culture is often

seen as a cost item that can easily be cut, but the motion shows the opposite: investments in culture create jobs, strengthen the attractiveness of regions and generate many times the returns.

International and national reports support this: according to UNICEF and the World Bank, an average of 1.7 new jobs are created for every cultural workplace, and according to Taloustutkimus, every euro in cultural grants yields a return of 14 euros. Nevertheless, the share of creative industries in Finland's GDP (3.1%) is well below the EU average (4.4%).

The motion proposes that the public sector actively promote cultural growth, not only through visible flagship projects, but also by supporting grassroots initiatives. The state and municipalities should offer facilities, advice, networking opportunities and simplified bureaucracy for cultural operators.

The Swedish People's Party is therefore encouraged to work at national and local level for key initiatives that strengthen infrastructure, collaboration between sectors and better utilisation of existing forms of support.

NEWS

WELFARE REGION

How Customers Can Avoid Queues and Prevent Long Wait Times in Healthcare



Ostrobothnia Welfare Region implements new strategies to tackle overloaded phone lines and reduce patient waiting times

Healthcare phone lines across Finland's Ostrobothnia Welfare Region have experienced significant congestion during the early months of 2025, with approximately 92% of calls being answered on the same day compared to 97.5% during the same period last year. The region, which serves around 176,000 residents with over 8,000 employees, is now implementing comprehensive measures to address these delays while encouraging patients to adopt smarter approaches to accessing care.

The healthcare needs assessment phone line (06 218 9000) remains the most familiar contact method for patients, but new digital channels are expanding options for different situations. Peak congestion occurs between 8-9 AM and 11 AM-12 PM, with early weekdays experiencing heavier traffic than later in the week.

Strategic Patient Guidance

Healthcare officials are urging patients to consider their role in reducing queue formation by avoiding peak times and choosing alternative contact methods when appropriate. "We hope that each customer contacts us through only one channel," explains Ward Manager Erja Lahti. "For example, queuing both by phone and chat means the queue gets longer in

both channels. Similarly, we hope that people leave only one callback request."

The region has developed specific guidelines for patients to optimize their healthcare access:

For Non-Urgent Matters: Patients should contact healthcare services in the afternoon rather than during morning rush hours. Non-urgent issues include long-standing musculoskeletal problems, vaccinations, chronic disease follow-up visits, or requests for medical certificates. **For Urgent Matters:** Immediate morning contact is recommended for pressing health concerns such as urinary tract symptoms, ear pain, eye infections, wounds or bruises, flu symptoms, fever lasting over a week, or persistent abdominal pain.

Digital Healthcare Innovation

The region is piloting digital healthcare solutions to distribute patient load more effectively. Test group participants can now access nurse chat services, enabling direct communication with healthcare professionals who can schedule appointments or arrange remote doctor consultations as needed. A significant development is the integration of the Omaolo.fi digital symptom assessment platform, available 24/7. Patients complete symptom evaluations online and receive either self-care instructions or direct contact from healthcare staff through Omaolo messaging. This system operates continuously, providing round-the-clock access to initial healthcare guidance. During evenings and weekends, patients can access healthcare needs assessment through the emergency

assistance number 116 117. This service is particularly important for those considering emergency department visits, offering self-care guidance, emergency department referrals when necessary, or remote doctor consultations.

Short-term Solutions

Regional authorities presented a comprehensive situation analysis to the new regional board on June 9, outlining immediate interventions to address current challenges. Digital healthcare reception services have been introduced for half the population as a trial program, while additional staff recruitment through project funding is underway. Healthcare stations and community health centers are increasing their support for callback services, with ongoing treatment calls being directed to appropriate reception desks. Staff guidelines are being simplified to improve efficiency and reduce processing times.

Long-term Healthcare Transformation

The region's strategic vision includes several innovative approaches to healthcare delivery. Direct contact with personal care teams for long-term treatment relationships is being developed, while artificial intelligence integration for healthcare needs assessment support is under consideration.

Reception service procedures are being refined specifically for healthcare needs assessment, with staff participating in queue-free service training programs currently in progress. Management teams have conducted on-site evaluations at facilities in Mustasaari, Vaasa, and

Pietarsaari, gathering improvement suggestions directly from frontline staff.

Systemic Challenges and Solutions Sector Manager Pia-Maria Sjöström attributes the spring queuing issues primarily to the implementation of new patient information systems and associated learning curves. "Resolving the situation requires more unified operating methods, but above all, cooperation between our services," she explains. "We hope to soon handle all callbacks within the same day and reduce waiting times."

The welfare region's leadership monitors the situation daily, demonstrating commitment to rapid resolution of current challenges. The comprehensive approach combines technological innovation, process optimization, and strategic resource allocation to create a more efficient healthcare system.

This transformation represents a broader shift toward patient-centered healthcare delivery, where technology and traditional services work together to provide accessible, timely care. By encouraging patient participation in queue reduction strategies while simultaneously improving service infrastructure, the region aims to create a sustainable model for healthcare access that benefits both patients and healthcare providers.

The success of these initiatives will likely influence healthcare delivery models across Finland, as regions seek to balance increasing demand with available resources while maintaining high-quality patient care standards.

NEWS

KORSHOLM

The Finnish Home Owners' Association: Korsholm Offers Finland's Cheapest Cottage Living



Cottage owners in Finland face widely varying municipal fees depending on location. A comparison by The Finnish Home Owners' Association (Suomen Omakotiliitto) reveals that Korsholm is the most affordable place for summer cottages, while Savonlinna remains the most expensive.

The Finnish Home Owners' Association has released its annual comparison of cottage-related municipal fees, examining property taxes, electricity transmission, and waste charges in

the 25 largest cottage municipalities. The results show that costs for owners can vary by as much as double depending on the location.

Savonlinna Most Expensive, Korsholm Cheapest

In Savonlinna, property taxes, electricity, and waste fees for a holiday home and plot total €1,279 per year. Kuopio, Kangasala, and Mikkeli follow as the most expensive locations.

Meanwhile, Korsholm in Ostrobothnia offers Finland's most affordable cottage living—with the same fees adding up to just €634 per year. Other budget-friendly options include

Oulu, Pori, and Rovaniemi. On average, cottage-related municipal fees amount to €964 annually.

Puumala Added to This Year's Comparison

This year, Puumala was included as a new location in the study, allowing cottage owners to make even broader cost comparisons. The 25 municipalities in the survey have a combined total of around 149,000 summer cottages, representing roughly 30% of Finland's cottages.

Better Information for Better Choices

"We want to highlight the costs faced by cottage owners, which

vary significantly between municipalities," says Marju Silander, Executive Director of the Finnish Detached Houses Federation. "With this data, owners can better assess their expenses and explore ways to influence them."

One goal of the comparison is to encourage municipalities to compete for cottage owners by offering reasonable fees. Mustasaari's cost-effective conditions could make it an increasingly attractive destination for summer vacations.

(Source: The Finnish Home Owners' Association)

NEWS

VAASA AS A STUDENT CITY

Vaasa's big secrets are revealed: The city rises to fourth place on the Finnish student map!



studentum.fi has spoken. And the message is clear: Vaasa is no longer just a peaceful coastal town.

It has grown from the dark depths of Finland's best student cities and has risen to fourth place in the comparison in 2025. What is the real cost of this increase? An annual, mysteriously conducted studentum.fi survey hides a mystery. How has Vaasa managed to get into the top five among 27 university cities and surpassed Tampere and Oulu, among others? Is it a coincidence, or is there something darker and more attractive in Vaasa that attracts students? The results of the survey, which is based on 1156 responses collected during October–

December 2024, make frightening reading. Helsinki, Rauma and Turku still consider their top positions to be the gloomy guardians of the Finnish student field.

TOP 10 student cities 2025

**Helsinki
Rauma
Turku
Vaasa
Tampere
Espoo
Oulu
Lappeenranta
Jyväskylä
Mikkeli**

But Vaasa, this unexpected challenger, is now hot on their heels. What is it that makes Vaasa so dangerously att-

ractive? Studentum.fi Krista Kalaja reveals a secret: "Vaasa constantly scores in the survey with several different parameters."

Even? Or is it a well-thought-out strategy? The city stands out especially in terms of indicators measuring student life, opportunities for further studies and working life. But what is the truth behind this shiny picture? Kalaja continues, perhaps a little trembling in her voice: "The work situation is challenging for highly educated people throughout the country, especially among recent graduates. However, unemployment in Vaasa is lower than in the rest of Finland, which is also reflected in the survey conducted by studentum.fi. Vaasa is in second place in the comparison of career opportuni-

ties." Is Vaasa the savior in distress or is there something that binds them closer together than they think? Three deadly features In the survey, the respondents highlighted the three most important qualities of a good student city. They are: High-quality teaching (62.20%): Is the teaching in Vaasa really superior, or is it a hypnotic illusion? Affordable housing (54.50%): What is the real price of this affordability? And why does it attract so many? Good career prospects (47.75%): These opportunities are like enticing siren songs that draw students to their destiny.

Other parameters, such as good opportunities for further studies and a lively student life, strengthen Vaasa's position.

Source: Studentum.fi

NEWS

HEALTH

University of Jyväskylä: Waist obesity increases urinary incontinence



A recent study shows a clear link between waist fat and stress urinary incontinence in middle-aged women.

In particular, fat that accumulates around the internal organs and in the abdominal area increases the risk of pelvic floor dysfunction. An extensive study conducted at the University of Jyväskylä reveals a worrying link between women's body composition and pelvic floor dysfunction. The study, led by doctoral researcher Mari Kuutti, followed 376 healthy women in Jyväskylä for four years and shows that waist obesity significantly increases the risk of urinary incontinence.

More than half of women have pelvic floor problems

An alarming finding in the

study was that already at the beginning of the study, more than half of the participants had some kind of pelvic floor dysfunction. The most common of these was stress urinary incontinence, which manifests itself as involuntary urinary incontinence when coughing, sneezing or moving, for example. The study focused on women who were between 47 and 55 years old at the beginning of the study. "The connection between body composition and the symptoms of pelvic floor dysfunction has been studied mainly by using only body mass index and waist circumference," Mari Kuutti explains the background of the study.

Waist fat as a special risk factor

The study revealed that fat accumulates especially in the waist area and around the internal organs increases the risk

of stress urinary incontinence. Significant risk factors included a higher total fat content, waist circumference and body mass index. "The results showed that a higher total body fat content and a higher fat content in the abdomen, waist and torso area and around the internal organs were associated with the symptoms of stress urinary incontinence," Kuutti explains. The study used more accurate measurement methods, such as bioimpedance and dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry, which allowed for a detailed analysis of body composition.

Lifestyle affects pelvic floor health

Pelvic floor dysfunction naturally becomes more common as a woman approaches menopause. Oestrogen deficiency and the aging of connective tissue weaken the functioning of the pelvic floor structures. Pregnancy,

childbirth and other factors that increase the pressure in the abdominal cavity also affect the development of the problem. However, the study emphasizes that lifestyle matters. Eating behaviour and physical activity affect body composition, which in turn is linked to the development of pelvic floor dysfunction. "Body composition is partly shaped by lifestyle, so measuring it can help identify the risk of dysfunction," the researchers note.

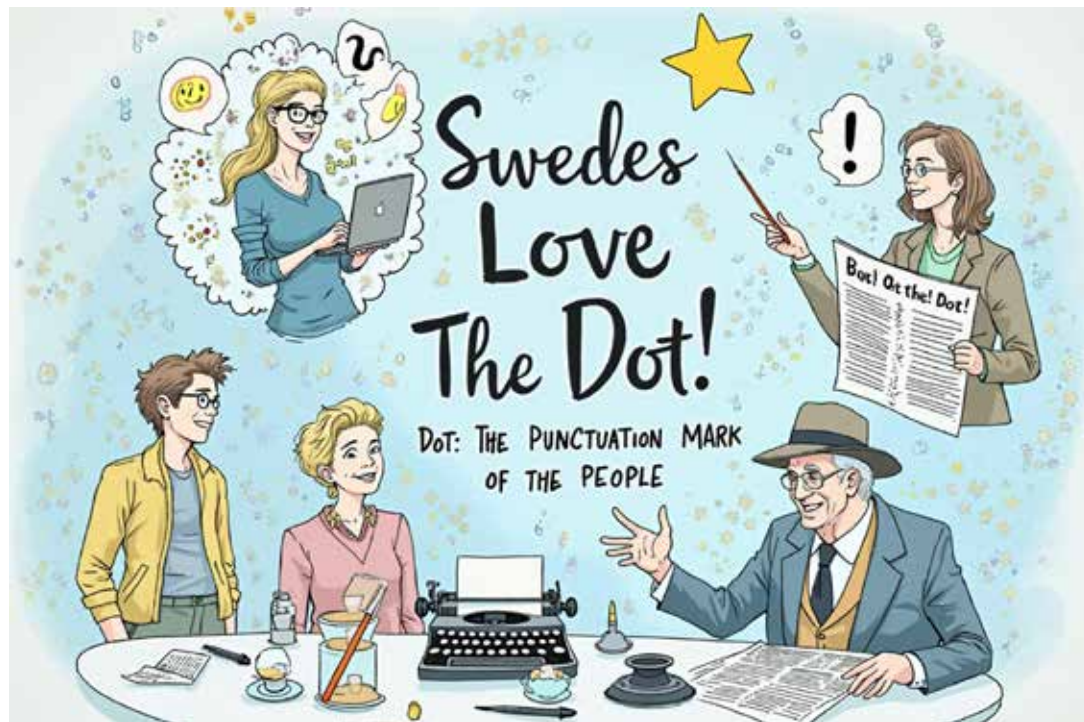
Prevention is the key to managing the problem

The results of the study give hope that pelvic floor dysfunction can be prevented by lifestyle changes. Healthy eating and regular exercise, which help manage weight, and especially waist obesity, can reduce the risk of urinary incontinence.

NEWS

PUNCTUATION MARKS

Dot and exclamation mark are favorites



A new survey reveals which punctuation marks Swedes love the most – and the results show clear generational differences in our relationship to punctuation.

The Swedes have spoken, and the winner is a given: the dot reigns supreme as the most beloved punctuation mark in the country. But closely followed by the exclamation mark, which creates an interesting dynamic between the practical and the emotional in our writing.

The extensive survey, which was conducted by Novus on behalf of Språktidningen in March, shows that 18 percent of Swedes choose the dot as their favorite punctuation mark. The exclamation mark comes in a strong second place with 17 percent of the votes, while the comma takes bronze with 15 percent.

Anders Svensson, editor-in-chief of Språktidningen, sees the result as natural. The point is simply indispensable in our

written language, which explains its popularity. At the same time, the high position of the exclamation mark reflects our longing to express emotions and commitment in the text.

But the survey also reveals fascinating generation gaps. Among young adults between the ages of 18 and 34, only 12 percent choose the point as their favorite – a marked difference from the older population. This phenomenon is explained by the impact of digitalization on our written language. In the culture of texting and chat conversations, the point has taken on a whole new meaning: it is often perceived as aggressive or angry by younger users.

"It's no surprise that younger generations are skeptical about the point," Svensson explains. "In informal digital contexts, the point has become charged with negative emotions – something that affects its popularity among young people."

Another remarkable discovery is the special position of the semicolon in academic circles.

While only 7 percent of the population generally prefers this sophisticated punctuation, the figure rises dramatically to 19 percent among students. Even people with a university education show a marked preference for semicolons, with 9 percent choosing it as a favorite.

These punctuation marks are most popular in Sweden:

1. Dot: 18%
2. Exclamation mark: 17 percent
3. Commas: 15 percent
4. Three points: 9 percent
5. Semicolon: 7 percent
6. Dash: 5 percent
7. Question mark: 3 percent
8. Brackets: 2 percent
9. Colon: 2 percent
- Don't know: 32 percent

According to Svensson, semicolons function as a kind of linguistic sta-

tus marker. The complex regulations surrounding its use make it a tool for linguistic connoisseurs – a kind of intellectual accessory in the written language. The fact that it is so warmly embraced by highly educated and students confirms its role as a certificate of education.

The survey included a total of 1,043 people and is representative of the Swedish people between the ages of 18 and 84. The result reflects not only our linguistic preferences, but also how digital communication is reshaping our relationship with traditional punctuation.

Interestingly, as many as 32 percent of respondents answered "don't know" to the question about favorite punctuation marks, suggesting that many have not reflected on their relationship to these everyday but important linguistic tools.

The list is supplemented by three points (9 percent), dashes (5 percent), question marks (3 percent), and parentheses and colons, both of which received 2 percent of the votes. The result provides a unique insight into the linguistic soul of Swedes and shows how our writing habits continue to evolve in line with technology.

AI-NEWS

CLAUDE OPUS 4 , a review



Revolutionary AI Model Claude Opus 4 Raises the Bar for Artificial Intelligence

A new generation of AI arrives with unprecedented capabilities in coding, creative writing, and autonomous task completion. Anthropic has unveiled Claude Opus 4, marking what many experts consider a significant leap forward in artificial intelligence technology. The latest addition to the Claude 4 family promises to transform how we interact with AI, offering capabilities that extend far beyond simple question-and-answer exchanges.

Breaking New Ground in AI Performance

Claude Opus 4's most remarkable feature is its ability to maintain autonomous coding sessions lasting up to seven hours, representing a dramatic improvement in AI attention span and persistence. This advancement allows the model to tackle complex programming challenges without constant human supervision, effectively functioning as a digital collaborator rather than

just a quick-response tool.

The model has achieved record-breaking performance on industry benchmarks, particularly in software engineering tasks. Claude Opus 4 scored an unprecedented 72.5% on the SWE-bench coding evaluation, significantly outperforming previous AI models including OpenAI's GPT-4.1.

What Makes Opus 4 Different?

Unlike earlier AI systems that provided rapid but shallow responses, Claude Opus 4 employs what Anthropic calls "hybrid thinking." The model switches from lightning response speed for simple tasks to extended thinking for deeper reasoning on complex problems. This adaptive approach allows it to provide quick answers when appropriate while dedicating substantial computational resources to challenging tasks that require careful analysis.

The model excels across multiple domains. It outperforms previous Claude models on creative writing, in addition to exceptional visual taste, making it particularly suited for artistic and literary endeavors. According to Anthropic, the model "can analyze thousands of data sources, execute long-running tasks, write human-quality content, and perform complex actions".

A Writer's New Companion

For aspiring novelists and professional writers, Claude Opus 4 represents a powerful creative partner. The model's enhanced capabilities in creative writing, combined with its ability to maintain context over extended periods, make it well-suited for long-form writing projects like novels. Writers can collaborate with the AI on plot development, character creation, dialogue refinement, and even complete chapter drafts while maintaining narrative consistency throughout lengthy works.

The model's 200,000-token context window means it can keep track of complex storylines, character relationships, and thematic elements across an entire book-length manuscript, providing coherent suggestions and maintaining stylistic consistency from beginning to end.

Internet Access and Real-Time Information

Claude Opus 4 does have access to current information through web search capabilities, allowing it to incorporate up-to-date facts, recent events, and contemporary references into its responses. This internet connectivity sets it apart from earlier AI models that were limited to their training data, enabling more relevant and timely assistance

across various tasks.

The Coding Revolution

Perhaps most impressive is Opus 4's programming prowess. Both Claude Opus 4 and Sonnet 4 were specifically tuned to perform well on programming tasks, making them invaluable tools for software developers. The model can handle everything from debugging existing code to developing complex applications from scratch, working autonomously for hours without losing focus or context.

Looking Forward

The release of Claude Opus 4 signals a new phase in AI development, where artificial intelligence systems can serve as genuine collaborators on complex, time-intensive projects. Whether you're writing the next great American novel, developing software applications, or analyzing complex datasets, Opus 4 offers capabilities that were unimaginable just a few years ago. As AI continues to evolve at this rapid pace, Claude Opus 4 sets a new standard for what we can expect from artificial intelligence partners in our professional and creative endeavors. The age of AI as a mere answering machine appears to be giving way to something far more sophisticated: true digital collaboration.

NEWS

CLIMATE CHANGE

Spring 2025 Climate Report



The latest climate bulletin from the Copernicus Climate Change Service reveals a story of dramatic contrasts and concerning trends across Europe and globally during spring 2025.

While May marked the second-warmest globally on record, parts of northwestern Europe experienced their driest spring conditions since monitoring began.

Global Temperature Milestones

May 2025 achieved the distinction of being the second-warmest May ever recorded globally, with an average surface air temperature of 15.79°C—0.53°C above the 1991-2020 baseline. This places it just 0.12°C cooler than the record-breaking May 2024. More significantly, May's global temperature sat 1.40°C above pre-industrial levels (1850-1900), momentarily interrupting an unprecedented streak of 21 out of 22 months where global temperatures exceeded the critical 1.5°C threshold above pre-industrial baselines.

According to Carlo Buontempo, director of the Copernicus Climate Change Service, this brief dip below 1.5°C offers only temporary

respite. "We do expect the 1.5°C threshold to be exceeded again in the near future due to the continued warming of the climate system," he warned. The 12-month period from June 2024 to May 2025 averaged 1.57°C above pre-industrial levels, underscoring the persistent warming trend.

Spring 2025 as a whole (March through May) ranked as the second-warmest on record globally, trailing only spring 2024. The most pronounced warming occurred across west central Asia, northeastern Russia, Greenland, and western Antarctica, while cooler-than-average conditions affected Hudson Bay, southern and northeast Africa, India, northern Australia, and eastern Antarctica.

Europe's Tale of Two Climates

Europe presented a stark geographical divide during spring 2025. While the continent's average May temperature of 12.98°C fell 0.29°C below the recent baseline, this masked dramatic regional variations. Eastern Europe, stretching from eastern Italy and the Balkans to Finland, experienced below-average temperatures, while western Europe saw warmer-than-normal conditions.

The most alarming story emerged from northwestern Europe's hydrological crisis. Parts of this region

recorded their lowest precipitation and soil moisture levels since records began in 1979, creating what Copernicus describes as "exceptionally dry" conditions. The drought's severity extended beyond surface conditions—river flows across Europe dropped to their lowest spring levels since monitoring started in 1992, indicating the depth and persistence of the dry spell.

Ocean and Sea Ice Dynamics

The world's oceans continued their warming trend, with May 2025 sea surface temperatures averaging 20.79°C across the 60°S–60°N range—the second-highest May reading on record, falling just 0.14°C short of May 2024's peak. The northeastern North Atlantic experienced a notable marine heatwave, with some areas recording their highest May sea surface temperatures ever documented.

Arctic sea ice extent in May sat 2% below average, marking the ninth-lowest May extent in 47 years of satellite monitoring. Most concerning ice loss occurred along northern Eurasia's coast, particularly in the Barents and Laptev Seas.

Global Precipitation Patterns

Beyond Europe's drought, the global precipitation story revealed widespread dry conditions affecting multiple continents. Western North

America, the Horn of Africa, central Asia, China, and southern Australia all experienced drier-than-average spring conditions. Conversely, eastern North America, Alaska, Russia, southern Africa, and northern Australia saw increased precipitation.

These patterns reflect the complex interplay of global climate systems, with some regions experiencing intensified wet conditions while others face severe drought—a hallmark of climate change impacts on the global water cycle.

The Copernicus data, compiled from billions of measurements from satellites, ships, aircraft, and weather stations worldwide, provides crucial insights into our changing climate. While May 2025's brief drop below the 1.5°C warming threshold might seem encouraging, climate scientists emphasize this represents a temporary fluctuation rather than a reversal of long-term warming trends.

The combination of record-breaking global temperatures, extreme regional droughts, and continued ocean warming underscores the urgent need for comprehensive climate action. As northwestern Europe grapples with its driest spring in decades and global temperatures continue their relentless climb, the data serves as both a warning and a call to action for policymakers and citizens alike.

NEWS

ASTRONOMY

The Stone That Screams From Space



Friday the 13th, April 2029. The date burns in every astronomer's mind like a brand.

A monster named Apophis hurls through the void toward Earth. 335 meters wide, shaped like a peanut, this chunk of ancient rock carries the destructive power of thousands of nuclear bombs. In just over four years, it will pass less than 20,000 miles from our planet's surface — closer than many satellites in geosynchronous orbit.

To put that in perspective: the Moon sits 240,000 miles away. Apophis will streak past at one-twelfth that distance. Ten times closer than the Moon.

The Destroyer's Resume

When scientists first spotted Apophis in 2004, it was identified as one of the most hazardous asteroids that could impact Earth. The name fits. Apophis — Egyptian god of chaos and destruction, the serpent that devours the sun.

Size matters in the asteroid business. At 1,100 feet across, Apophis packs serious weight. Not quite city-killer status, but

close enough. Millions could still die if an Apophis-sized asteroid struck a major metropolitan area. The Tunguska event of 1908 flattened 770 square miles of Siberian forest. That rock was maybe half Apophis's size. This kind of stone has already killed once. Sixty-five million years ago, its larger cousin ended the dinosaurs.

The Physics of Fear

Approaching Earth, Apophis will be moving at 6.0 kilometers per second. Earth's gravity will accelerate it to 7.4 km/s at closest approach. That's 16,500 miles per hour — fast enough to cross the United States in twelve minutes.

But here's where it gets interesting. Earth's mighty gravity will significantly affect the passing space rock, altering its path. The question that keeps scientists awake: altered how? Earth's gravity will slightly deflect the trajectory, but deflection works both ways.

Could Earth's gravitational field capture Apophis? Turn humanity's destroyer into humanity's second moon?

The math says no. Apophis moves too fast, carries too much

momentum. Earth's gravity will bend its path like light through a lens, but won't trap it. The rock will whip around our planet in a gravitational slingshot and rocket back into deep space.

Radar observations during the asteroid's flyby in March 2021 ruled out an impact for at least the next 100 years. The scientists sound confident. They've run the numbers, tracked the orbit, eliminated the variables.

The Show Must Go On

During the 2029 close approach, Apophis will be visible to observers on the ground in the Eastern Hemisphere without telescopes. A wandering star crossing the night sky, bright as a satellite. Over the course of about a day, Apophis will move northwest from Centaurus to Perseus and then southwest to Pisces, an arc of 205 degrees.

Tourists will book flights to see it. News crews will broadcast live. Children will point at the sky while their parents remember when they thought the world might end.

But the real show happens on the rock itself. Apophis' gravity is about 250,000 times smaller than Earth's, so events of much

smaller magnitude could shake things up on its surface. Earth's tidal forces will twist and squeeze the asteroid like a stress ball. Approximately 12,000 particles from the original ensemble will escape from the gravitational field of Apophis — cosmic debris torn from its surface.

The Uncertainty Principle

Scientists track Apophis with radar and optical telescopes. The uncertainty in the 2029 approach distance has been reduced from hundreds of kilometers to now just a couple of kilometers. Two kilometers. In cosmic terms, that's threading a needle. This will be the closest approach to Earth by an asteroid of this size known about in advance. We've never seen anything like it. Never had time to prepare, to watch, to wonder.

The experts call it safe. The calculations prove it. The models show a clean miss.

But models can be wrong. Calculations can miss variables. And in the cold mathematics of orbital mechanics, the 2029 flyby amplifies the uncertainty in its orbit and in possible future impacts.

What if there's something they don't know? Some small gravitational nudge from a passing comet, some outgassing from the asteroid's surface, some microscopic course correction that changes everything?

Friday the 13th, April 2029. Mark your calendar.

The stone that screams from space is coming to visit. And after it passes, after Earth's gravity bends its path into the unknown, we'll discover if we're watching a cosmic close call — or the opening act of a much longer story.

ART EXPERIENCE OF THE WEEK



Akseli Gallen-Kallela

26.4.1865, Björneborg

7.3.1931, Stockholm

Förtvivlad, förarbete till fresken Vid Tuonela älv i Juséliuska gravkapellet, 1903

EVENTS

UMEÅ WOMEN'S HISTORY MUSEUM

IN THE SECRET SERVICE OF THE KINGDOM

4.5 - 20.8.2025

Meet the women in the Swedish intelligence service during World War II. Hotel cleaners, cleaners and secretaries are recruited to the Swedish intelligence service. They secretly act as informants, couriers, or infiltrators. Others are employees of the Postal Service, the Telephone Control, or the Defense Staff's cryptography department to write, decipher, translate, and search through letters and calls about suspicious things."

<https://www.kvinnohistoriskt.se/>

ILMAJOKI MUSIC FESTIVAL

"BIG Wrath 1713-1721"

6.-15.6.2025

"This powerful and topical opera brings the years of hatred and the fates of our ancestors back to the banks of the Kyrönjoki River.

Big Wrath is a shaking and nourishing story about family ties, maternal love, perseverance, and the power of cooperation during a time, when Russia's brutal war of aggression against Finland burned Ostrobothnia to black soil."

www.musiikkijuhlat.fi

EVENING MUSIC

In Vaasa Church – enjoy the atmosphere of a classic summer evening

Feel the atmosphere of summer evenings with high-quality music in Vaasa Church. The Evangelical Lutheran parishes are once again offering free classical music concerts, which have already established themselves as the pearls of the city's summer programme over the years.

Classical evening music on Wednesdays from 4.6.25 at 19.30

18.6. Monica Heikius, sopraano ja Karolin Wargh, urut.

25.6. Jonna Pirttijoki-Helander, harmonikka, laulu ja Sau-

li Perälä, piano, laulu.

2.7. Erica Nygård, huili ja Niels Burgmann, urut.

9.7. Loviisa Tuomisto ja Valtteri Tuomisto, urut, piano ja laulu.

16.7. Jenny Sandelin, sopraano ja Anton Ylikallio, piano. tiistai 22.7. kello 18.30 Pétur Sakari, urut. Yhteistyössä Korsholman Musiikkijuhlien kanssa.

6.8. Inka Pärssinen, trumpet ja Hanna Koljonen, urut.

13.8. Noora Karhuluoma, sopraano ja Marco Bonacci, sem-balo.

PROVINSSI 2025

26.-28.6.2025

Provinssi Festival celebrated in Seinäjoki

Provinssi is celebrated annually in the last week of June and is one of Northern Europe's most traditional and largest festivals. The People's Festival, which has been organised since 1979 in the scenic surroundings of Törnävänsaari in Seinäjoki, always presents an up-to-date and comprehensive selection from all sides of the music field, without forgetting surprises.

<https://www.provinssi.fi/>

STUNDARS

Sommarsången inleds / Kesäsesonki alkaa / The Summer Season begins

23.6.2025 at 11

During the summer season, we have guided tours every day at various fixed times. There will be tours with different themes in the museum village, as well as special tours for children and tours around the animal park a few times each week. If the weather allows, there will be a chance to try your hand at washing clothes the old-fashioned way, or to do some baking at the Smith's Cottage. In the authentic atmosphere of Stundars, children can imagine they are part of old-fashioned country life. In the Play Barn, our wooden animals need to be fed and cared for by small farmhands. In the Children's Country Shop, young visitors

can have fun weighing, measuring, buying, and selling goods.

<https://stundars.fi/>

DREAM FESTIVAL

5.7.2025

Yliopistonranta 5

Vasa

The summer's dreamiest festival, a mix of love, joy and community, with the music we all love!

<https://www.drommenfestival.fi/>

KASKINEN'S SUMMER OF MUSIC

9-12.7.25

A classical music festival in Finland's smallest town.

"The proximity of the sea, the history of the city of Kaskinen, bilingualism, the beautiful wooden house environment"

Artistic directors Anna-mari and Samuli Peltonen

Seinäjoki Tango Market

9.-13.7.2025

<https://tangomarkkinat.fi/>

BIG DAY SUMMER FESTIVAL

Vaasa

11.7.-12.7.2025

<https://www.bigdayfestival.fi/>

LOHTAJA CHURCH MUSIC FESTIVAL

22-27.7.25

Church music from thousand-year-old traditions

www.kirkkomusiikkijuhlat.fi

NÄRPES THEATRE

"Maskinisterna (The Machinists)", a Swedish-language play about the Wickström Brothers and their engine factory, with a script and direction by Erik Kiviniemi.

World premiere 28.6.25 klo 19

Other events:

1-.7 at 7 pm

3.7. at 7 pm

7.7. at 7 pm

8.7. klo 19

10.7 at 7 pm

13.7. at 5 pm

15.7. at 19

16.7. at 19

17.7. at 19

19.7. at 19

KORSHOLM MUSIC FESTIVAL

23.7.-30.7.2025

"Korsholm Music Festival 2024 and Tove Teuvalla Opera

are over and autumn is approaching. Now we are already working on the Summer 2025 Music Festival. However, we want to return to the warm days and festival atmosphere of July and August."



A greeting from festival director Viktor Nygård: "I am very much looking forward to working with the Korsholm Music Festival and I have many exciting ideas for how we can continue to develop the festival. I can already promise that next year it will be a fantastic festival with something for everyone."

RITZ

25.7.25 at 7 pm

MARI PALO – TANGO

One of Finland's most sought-after sopranos dives into the world of tang.

Korsholm Music Festival

VAASA CITY HALL

27.7.25

CONCERT ROYAL

Amélie goes to Belgrade with her friends

Korsholm Music Festival

VAASA FESTIVAL 2025

31.7.-2.8.2025

Music, food and wine

In Vaasa's inner harbour

<https://vaasafestival.fi/>

WASA FUTURE FESTIVAL

11-16.8.2025

The Wasa Future Festival 2026 is set to take place from 11th to 16th August.

This event gathers knowledgeable and motivated individuals from the business world, universities, regional decision-making bodies.

WALKING

VAASA

Walking for Healthy Years in Vaasa



Kuva: Vaasan kaupunki/Mikael Matikainen

City launches summer walking challenge for seniors – weekly walking group begins June 4

The City of Vaasa is encouraging local seniors to take steps—literally—toward better health with its new “Walk for Healthy Years” challenge. Starting June 4 and continuing through early 2026, the initiative combines physical activity, community engagement, and a chance to win gift cards by using a special walking logbook.

Walking is one of the simplest and most effective ways to improve health. Research consistently shows that regular walking can significantly reduce the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, and cognitive decline. It strengthens muscles and bones, improves balance, and boosts mental well-being.

Group walks in the park

A free and open walking group will

meet every Wednesday from June 4 to July 2, between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. at Hietalahti Park. The starting point is the parking area at the Brage Open Air Museum. Everyone is warmly welcome to join—no registration is required, and participants can join as often as they like. Walking poles can be brought if desired.

The group walks provide a low-threshold way to add more movement into daily life and meet new people in a relaxed environment.

— “The walking group is a great opportunity for everyone, especially older people, to build regular exercise into their routines,” says Hanna-Mari Joutsen, the city’s health promotion coordinator.

Walking log encourages and rewards

Participants are invited to track their movement with a walking logbook, which includes a 12-week walking calendar with practical tips—like choosing stairs over elevators or walking to run errands.

Each completed walk can be marked in the log, and those who return filled-in logbooks will be entered into a draw to win Shopping Vaasa gift cards, usable at over 50 shops in the city center.

Logbooks will be available starting June 4 at the walking group meetups, as well as at Citizen Info, the service point in Vähäkyrö, the swimming hall, the library, and at Vuorikoti.

Walking is an investment in health

As we age, regular physical activity becomes even more crucial for maintaining strength, mobility, and balance. The WHO recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate activity per week for people over 65—and walking is an excellent way to meet that goal.

Beyond physical health, walking also supports mental well-being. Being outdoors helps reduce stress and calm the mind. Group walking can also alleviate loneliness and foster social connections—both of

which are key to healthy aging.

Challenge continues into 2026
The Walk for Healthy Years challenge runs until early 2026. In autumn, the program will expand to include Walking Coach activities, where volunteers help motivate and support others to become more active. An introduction session for the Walking Coach program will take place on August 28 at 3:30 p.m. in Vuorikoti’s banquet hall.

The challenge will culminate in a community walking event in January 2026. Further information on events and updates will be shared via the city’s communication channels and the challenge’s dedicated website.

Every step counts

The City of Vaasa reminds residents that even small increases in daily movement can make a big difference. Whether walking alone or in a group, now is the perfect time to lace up your shoes and take steps toward more healthy years.

More information: www.vaasa.fi

WASA DAILY
Nr 23 Sunday, June 8, 2025
ISSN 2965-2456
The year of the City Theatre
Korsholm cheapest in Finland
Prostate Cancer
Inkeri Julkunen
A new era in weight loss
A New Dwarf Planet

WASA
DAILY

Wasa Daily



Welcome to a new era of newspapers! Say hello to **Wasa Daily** - the smart news source that you can read anywhere and that keeps you well-orientated.

So, what exactly is **Wasa Daily**? Well, it's your weekly dose of news, information, laughter, insight and everything else that makes life a little wiser, and more fun. And the best of all? Its free! Exactly, you read that right. No hidden fees, no subscriptions. We believe news should be accessible to everyone, whether you're on a beach in Thailand or in your favorite cafe around the corner. So how does it work? Easy! Just download our **Wasa Daily** to your tablet, and you have the whole world in your hand.

We at **Wasa Daily** know that Finns love their coffee. Every Sunday morning you can enjoy your favorite coffee and at the same time update yourself on world events. So take out the coffee cup, sit comfortably and read the **Wasa Daily**.

In a world full of boring news, someone like us is needed to spice things up. Welcome to **Wasa Daily** - we make news easier to swallow!

ICECREAM

ICECREAM

Italian Gelato Flavours in the Inner Harbour



Authentic gelato offers the tastiest summer break

This summer's most delicious attraction has arrived in the Inner Harbour: authentic Italian gelato served in a variety of tempting flavours. But this is no ordinary ice cream – it's hand-crafted Italian quality rooted in centuries of tradition.

What makes gelato so special?

Italian ice cream, known as gelato, differs from regular ice cream in several important ways. The secret lies in both the ingredients and the method of preparation.

1. Artisanal production:

Gelato is typically made in small batches using traditional techniques. This allows for careful attention to detail and ensures each flavour is rich, smooth, and true to its origins.

2. Lower fat – more flavour:

Gelato usually contains only 6–9% butterfat, compared to 10–20% in standard ice cream. The lower fat content allows the natural flavours to shine through more intensely.

3. Creamier texture:

Gelato contains less air than regular ice cream, making it denser and giving it a silkier, more luxurious mouthfeel. A spoonful of gelato is a

richer experience.

4. Fresh, natural ingredients:

Gelato is made with high-quality, often locally sourced ingredients – real strawberries, pistachios, lemons, and dark chocolate. Artificial flavours are kept to a minimum, letting the real taste of the ingredients take centre stage.

5. A wide range of flavours:

The gelato kiosk in the Inner Harbour features both classics like vanilla, chocolate, and stracciatella, and creative, seasonal options such as lemon-basil, salted caramel, and wild forest berries. There's something for every taste and mood.

More than dessert – a cultural experience

In Italy, gelato isn't just a dessert – it's part of daily life. It's a reason to pause, enjoy the moment, and connect with others. Now that same spirit can be experienced here in the Inner Harbour. Bring a friend, grab a cup of gelato, and enjoy the sunshine, the water, and a little taste of Italian summer.

Come and try for yourself

Whether you love chocolate, fruity flavours or something completely new, the gelato stand in the Inner Harbour has something to surprise and delight you. Come and discover why Italian gelato is considered the best in the world – and why it's this summer's sweetest sensation.



PRESS

PRESS

Åbo Underrättelser almost entirely digital – the paper newspaper will only be published once a week



Åbo Underrättelser is the oldest daily newspaper in Finland. Its first issue appeared on 3 January 1824

Finland's oldest newspaper, Åbo Underrättelser, is significantly reducing the number of printed newspapers.

From October onwards, the magazine will be delivered on paper only once a week, whereas it is currently published five days a week. However, digital publishing will continue five times a week. The first to report on the change was Turun Sanomat.

The decision is based on rising production costs. In particular, the increase in postage and the price of paper has forced the newspaper to consider the cost-effectiveness of distribution and printing.

"I know that changes evoke emotions. But by reducing the number of publication days and investing in

a carefully produced printed magazine once a week, instead of paying distribution and printing costs for five publication days a week, we can preserve what is most important: reliable, local and unique Swedish-language journalism that lives on the terms of its time," says Susanna Landor, CEO and Publisher of ÅU Media, according to Turun Sanomat.

Founded in 1824, Åbo Underrättelser (ÅU) is the oldest newspaper still published in Finland. The magazine is in Swedish and its circulation area covers the whole of Southwest Finland, especially the regions of Turku, Pargas, Kaarina and Kimitoön.

ÅU is distributed several times a year as a blanket distribution to all bilingual households in Southwest Finland, to all households and busi-

ÅBO UNDERRÄTTELSE

Freitag den 1 December 1939

116 Lagen - Nr. 325 (27.722)

Freitag den 1 December 1939

SOVIET HAR UTAN KRIGSFÖRKLARING BRUTALT ANGRIPT VART LAND.
Bombanfall mot Helsingfors, Viborg, Lahtis, Kotka, Hangö m. fl. orter.

FINLAND FÖRKARAT I KRIGSTILLSTAND.

REPUBLICENS PRESIDENT UTTARADE
I CAR. FÖRÄNDE. PROKLAMATION OM
KRIGSTILLSTAND.
FÖR TRYGGHETEN AV RIKETS FÖRSVAR
OCH SÄKERHETEN AV RIKETS FÖRSVAR
LAND I KRIGSTILLSTAND.
Helsingfors den 30 november 1939.
KVIST KALLIO.
Republiken president.
J. H. NIKKANEN.
Finlandsminister.

**Anfaller är en direkt
utmaning mot Amerika.**

Efter krigets utbrott har ingen kändis
i så hög grad upprättat den allmänna
opinionen i USA som uppgjort på Finland.

"Allt Finland utgör en betydande diplomatisk
faktorisering för Moskva."

WASHINGTON, 30 nov. (U.S.A.) President Roosevelts
ord är ett stort stöd för Finland. Han har uttalat att
Finland är ett land som har varit ett föredöme för
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föredöme för världen. Han har uttalat att Finland
är ett land som har varit ett föredöme för världen.

**Första stegen erbjuder sina
barn att fly.**

WASHINGTON, 30 nov. (U.S.A.) President Roosevelts
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**Ärvt USA sina diplomatiska
hinder mot Sovjet?**

WASHINGTON, 30 nov. (U.S.A.) President Roosevelts
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är ett land som har varit ett föredöme för världen.

Ryska trupper överskred gränsen på flere ställen.

Flygbombardemangen riktades helt
mot den civila befolkningen.

**Antalet dödsfall, mest kvinnor
och barn, är stort och en mängd
förödande eldsvårar anstiftades.**

Det som icke blott Finland utan en hel världslig
och allmänhet har varit ett föredöme för världen.
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och allmänhet har varit ett föredöme för världen.**

MANNERHEIM högsta befälhavare för försvarsmakten.



REPUBLICENS PRESIDENT HAR I CAR.
FÖRÄNDE. PROKLAMATION OM
KRIGSTILLSTAND.

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The front page of Åbo Underrättelser on 1.12.1939. The Soviet Union had attacked Finland the day before, and that was the beginning of the Winter War

nesses in the centre of Turku and in the archipelago areas. According to Wikipedia, the circulation of blanket distribution is about 60,000 copies at a time.

At the moment, ÅU is published from Tuesday to Saturday, but the exact day of the week when the paper version will be published in the future has not yet been announced.

The magazine is published by ÅU Media Ab, which rose to an exceptional position in the Finnish press after the Swedish media company Bonnier acquired the majority of other Swedish-language newspapers in Finland. In 2023, Bonnier acquired a majority stake in KSF Media (e.g. *Hufvudstadsbladet*, *Västra Nyland*, *Östnyland*) and in 2024 the entire HSS Media (e.g. *Vasabladet*, *Syd-Österbotten*), which will as a result be layout-

ed in Sundsvall, Sweden). In this way, ÅU Media became the only Swedish-language media house in mainland Finland that is fully Finnish-owned.

The Swedish-language press is undergoing a transformation in other ways as well. For example, *Vasabladet* is published only digitally on Mondays, and the other main newspaper in Vaasa, *Ilkka-Pohjalainen*, is published in print six days a week. Vaasa's newest newspaper, *Vaasa-Pohjanmaa*, is mainly digital, but is also published a few times a year as a paper newspaper – usually free of charge. And perhaps we can mention our own newspaper, *Wasa Daily*, one of the very few newspapers in English in Finland. This magazine is also part of a new trend: it is published digitally on Sundays.

E-CIGARETTES

NICOTINE

THL: E-cigarette and Nicotine Pouch Use Has Tripled in Finland

A insidious threat is spreading among Finnish youth. New figures from THL reveal a grim reality: the use of e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches has exploded.

Particularly among girls, even those who have never smoked tobacco, the willingness to experiment has increased alarmingly. Is this new wave of nicotine threatening to undo decades of work in preventing youth smoking?

Finnish ninth-graders have fallen victim to a new, invisible enemy. In 2024, e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches became the most commonly used tobacco and nicotine products. The use of e-cigarettes has tripled in just five years: from seven percent in 2019 to a staggering 21 percent last year. The situation is critical, and its consequences could be devastating.

Alarming Rise Among Girls – Have Boys Taken a Step Back?

The darkest twist lies in the fact that experimenting with e-cigarettes has increased particularly among girls who have never touched tobacco. In 2024, a startling 18 percent of non-smoking girls had tried e-cigarettes – a 13 percentage point increase since 2019. This is a direct blow to decades of preventive work. What is driving young girls to these dangerous products?

Ironically, at the same time, experimenting with e-cigarettes among non-smoking boys has decreased from 21 percent to 14 percent. Have the roles shifted? And what is the invisible force

that draws young girls into a new, nicotine-addictive darkness? Nearly half of the young people who tried e-cigarettes had never smoked tobacco. This is proof that new nicotine products are creating an entirely new generation of addicts.

Nicotine pouches have also found their way into young people's daily lives. In the past 30 days, they had been used by 20 percent of boys and 10 percent of girls. The numbers are cold, but behind them lie thousands of young lives at risk.

"Nicotine Product Use Is Always Harmful to Young People"

THL's special expert Hanna Ollila warns: "The results show that new nicotine products also attract young people who do not smoke. Nicotine product use is always harmful to young people because lung and brain development is still ongoing." This is not just a warning; it is a cry for help. Nicotine affects young brains differently than adult brains, leaving behind permanent damage.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that simultaneous use of different tobacco and nicotine products is common, especially among boys. Over half of boys who used nicotine products resorted to two or three different products. A shocking 21 percent used all four – cigarettes, snus, e-cigarettes, and nicotine pouches. Among girls, the use of one (45%) or two (31%) products was most common. This creates a dark web of dependencies from which it is increasingly difficult to escape.



Cannabis and Raising the Age Limit – The Future at Stake

And the dark side of e-cigarettes? They can practically contain any liquid substance. Shockingly, one in ten boys who used e-cigarettes had used cannabis concentrate in them. This is a new, dangerous dimension that demands immediate action.

THL's special expert Otto Ruokolainen calls for further measures: "The entry of new nicotine products into the market challenges the good progress in preventing smoking among young people. Raising the age limit to 20 for all tobacco and nicotine products

should be implemented as soon as possible, as it also reduces the social availability of the products when intermediaries must also be older." Is this the only way to stop this dangerous development?

Smoking among Finnish youth has decreased more than the European average, but this positive trend is now seriously threatened. In 2024, 18 percent of European youth aged 15–16 had smoked in the past 30 days, while the corresponding proportion among Finnish youth was 12 percent. But can we maintain this lead when new, enticing nicotine products creep into young people's lives like thieves in the night?



FINLANDIA- NÄYTTELY

Koe elämäntyyliäsi matkalla
Asiojen laajuuden ja laadun ja
suomalaisuuden ympärillä.

www.finlandia.fi
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Finlandia Exhibition – A new permanent Finnish exhibition opens the doors to history and architecture



Finlandia Hall, designed by Alvar Aalto, is an architectural masterpiece in its own right, and now it serves as the perfect stage for this celebration of both Aalto's life's work and Finland's independent path. The exhibition is constantly open, making it an accessible destination for both local and international visitors. Its scale and visual execution make it a

One of the most impressive parts of the exhibition is the room dedicated to the 1975 CSCE meeting. It was in this building that the "Helsinki Spirit" was created, an attempt at détente and cooperation during the years of the Cold War. Although the zeitgeist may not be as relevant in today's world, the historical weight of the moment is palpable. It is impressive to see how world leaders such as Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev and US President



In Finland, the Finlandia exhibition has the potential to become a regular event on school trips. It offers a wonderful overview of Finland, its history and significant

The Finlandia exhibition is a true tribute to the unique life's work and creativity of Aino, Elissa and Alvar Aalto. It is at the same time a dive into the core of Finnishness and a journey that leaves a mark on every visitor's mind. Don't miss out on this new national treasure!



CHURCH

KORSHOLM

From Royal Court to Spiritual Sanctuary: The Unique History of Korsholm Church

In Old Vaasa, where time seems to have stood still since the great fire of 1852, stands a building that carries a story rich in history, transformation, and endurance:

Korsholm Church. This stately brick edifice, located at Adelcrantzgränden 1, is much more than just a regular parish church for the Swedish-speaking congregation of Korsholm. Its origin as one of Finland's most prominent Gustavian buildings – a court of appeals – makes it a rare and fascinating monument to a bygone era and a testament to society's ability to adapt and preserve its cultural heritage.

The building, designed by the eminent architect Carl Fredrik Adelcrantz, was constructed between 1776 and 1786. Adelcrantz, one of his era's most influential architects in Sweden and Finland, created a structure that was not only functional but also an architectural gem. The Gustavian style, characterized by its austere elegance, classical proportions, and restrained ornamentation, is here represented in a masterful way. Originally, the building, with its strict lines and imposing facade, was intended to serve as the seat of the Vaasa Court of Appeals – a place of jurisprudence and the exercise of power. The fact that it today is a place of spiritual solace and community gives its history a special depth.

The turning point in the building's destiny came with the devastating Vaasa city fire in 1852. The conflagration left large parts of the city in ruins, and it was decided that the

city would be moved closer to the coast. Miraculously, the old court of appeals building escaped the fire, remaining as a lone witness to the destroyed city. Since Vaasa received a new church and the court of appeals also moved to a newly constructed building, the magnificent edifice in Old Vaasa stood unused.

It was then that the rural municipality, which had lost its medieval gray stone church of Saint Mary from the 1300s in the fire, found itself without a gathering place for its congregation. The Emperor made the royal decision to transfer the former court of appeals building to the congregation to serve as their new church. This transformation was no easy task. The reconstruction was planned by Vaasa's then-provincial architect Carl Axel Setterberg, a central figure in the rebuilding of Vaasa after the fire. Between 1862 and 1863, the building underwent an extensive transformation. The facade was preserved – a wise decision that honors Adelcrantz's original design – but internally, walls were demolished, and the grand court space was converted into a church hall. The church was provided with interior vaults, creating a more traditional ecclesiastical architecture, and most remarkably: the bell tower was built from bricks sourced from the vaults of the medieval church. This is a beautiful example of repurposing and a direct link to the congregation's older history. One of the church bells was also cast from metal from the old church bells, further connecting past and present.

Despite the ravages of the fire, several valuable artifacts from the destroyed medieval church were successfully salvaged. The altarpiece, depicting Jesus in Gethsemane, found a new place in the reconstructed church. Also, 18th-century chandeliers, communion silver, and a medieval



chasuble were rescued and are still in use today, enriching the church's interior with centuries of spiritual tradition.

Over the years, Korsholm Church has also undergone changes in its musical soul. The first organ, built by Th. Buchert from Valkjärvi, had 21 stops. It was renewed in 1914 to one with 25 stops. The current organ, which was put into use in 1972, has a total of 34 stops and was built by Grönlunds Orgelbyggeri in Sweden. Notably, the organ's facade is Buchert's original, preserving a piece of the church's early musical history. The church underwent a major restoration in 1987, ensuring its condition for future generations.

With its approximately 900 seats, Korsholm Church remains a vibrant and active place for worship, community, and culture today. It stands as a symbol of endurance and adaptation, a building that has survived fire and change, and through its unique history continues to enrich the local community and tell the story of the Gustavian heritage's significance in Finland.

The church is open for services, high masses and concerts. During the summer (until 31.8) the church is open weekdays from 9 am to 2 pm.



HEALTH

HEALTH

Landmark Finnish Study: Midlife Weight Loss Leads to Longer, Healthier Lives



Image: HFiF-bild

May 27, 2025 – A groundbreaking 35-year study from the University of Helsinki reveals that sustained weight loss achieved through lifestyle changes in midlife can significantly extend lifespan and reduce chronic disease risk. The research followed 23,000 Finnish and British participants over decades, offering unprecedented insights into long-term health outcomes.

Key Findings: Modest Weight Loss, Major Benefits

The study, led by Professor Emeritus **Timo Strandberg**, demonstrates that:

- 6.5% weight reduction maintained from midlife (ages 30-50)
- 12-35 years of sustained results
- 27-38% lower risk of developing diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, respiratory conditions, and cancers

"This research finally provides the missing evidence," explains Strandberg. "We've long suspected lifestyle-induced weight loss protects health beyond diabetes prevention, but proving other benefits required this unprecedented long-term data."

Why This Study Matters

The research addresses critical gaps in obesity science:

- First large-scale study tracking decades of weight maintenance
- Confirms BMI <25 as optimal lifelong health benchmark

□ Provides timely insights as global obesity rates now exceed 1980s levels by 300%

The Science of Sustainable Weight Loss

Strandberg emphasizes three pillars for lasting success:

Gradual reduction - Aim for 0.5-1kg weekly loss

Lifestyle integration - Permanent dietary and activity changes

Early intervention - Greatest benefits seen when starting at BMI 27-35

"People shouldn't chase dramatic transformations," Strandberg advises. "Our data shows maintaining even modest weight loss from middle age adds years to life and life to years."

Clinical and Policy Implications

Published in JAMA Network Open, the study:

- Supports non-surgical approaches for Class I obesity
- Reinforces midlife as critical prevention window
- Provides evidence for workplace wellness programs

Access the full study:

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2834426>

Source

University of Helsinki Communications Study Snapshot

- Participants: 23,000 (Finland/UK)
- Timeframe: 1985-2025
- Key Metric: 6.5% weight loss maintained
- Optimal BMI: Sustained <25

ART

ART EXHIBITION

Naivist Inkeri Julkunen Featured in Vaasa from June 7, 2025

The Ostrobothnia Museum is opening its doors to a unique exhibition that delves deep into the heart of Finnish Naivism.

The "Inkeri Julkunen and other Naivists" exhibition, opening on June 7, focuses on the Vaasa-based self-taught artist Inkeri Julkunen (1935–2017). Her works offer a warm-hearted glimpse into everyday life and the surrounding environment. This exhibition marks the first comprehensive presentation of Naivism as an artistic movement in Vaasa's museums.

Inkeri Julkunen began painting in the early 1970s, and Naivism immediately captivated her. The art style appealed to her and felt like the most natural way to express herself. Naivism is a multifaceted art form with varying themes, styles, and techniques, and Julkunen's work provides an excellent window into it. The exhibition will feature the artist's oil and acrylic paintings, as well as some sculptures, dating from the 1970s up to the 1990s.

A Journey into the Heart of Finnish Naivism

The exhibition is not limited to Julkunen's own work but also offers a broader view of the richness of Finnish Naivism. It showcases paintings by leading Finnish Naivists such as **Martti Innanen** (1931–2014), **Aliice Kaira** (1913–2006), **Lea Kauppi** (1917–1999), **Pirkko Lepistö** (1922–2005), and **Tuomas Mäntynen** (1932–2024). Their works represent the era when Naivism gained a foot-

hold in the Finnish art scene.

The works of Naivist artists often share a human, warm, and sometimes melancholic approach to life. Naivism can be both playful and socially critical at the same time, and depictions of everyday life are typical of the style. Houses and homes also frequently recur as themes in their works.

Inkeri Julkunen, the Chronicler of Everyday Life Born in Vaasa in 1935, Inkeri Julkunen spent most of her life in Karperö, Vaasa, with her photographer husband Mikko Julkunen. She began painting as a self-taught artist at around 30 years old. She found the subjects for her works in her immediate surroundings – familiar cityscapes of Vaasa and Karperö, daily chores, friends, neighbors, and sometimes unknown passersby.

Julkunen's ability to capture a bygone era is evident, for example, in her work "Lähikauppa" (Village Shop, 1977), for which the artist received much praise at the time. The piece depicts Ann-Mari Lammio's colonial goods store in Vaasa and is a gem of Naivist realism. Animals were also important in Julkunen's life and feature in her works, such as "Musta lammas" (Black Sheep, 1988) and "Mirre" (1986), which attest to her love for animals and keen observation of details.

Between Art and Reality

Inkeri Julkunen participated in numerous group exhibitions in Finland starting from 1972 and held her first solo exhibition in 1977. She also took part in the Naivists in Iittala exhibitions from 1989–1993



Inkeri Julkunen Horses, 1989 acrylic on canvas, Suomen Gallupin Säätiö photo: Noora Lehtovuori

and showcased her works in group exhibitions in Sweden, including Malmö, Sundsvall, and Örnsköldsvik. She was a member of several art associations, such as the Vaasa Artists' Association and the Finnish Painters' Union.

Julkunen's earlier works feature a slightly more subdued color palette, while her 1980s works are more vibrant and rich in contrasting colors. The artist was clearly fascinated by the varying light conditions and colors of the sky. She described her paintings as "half truth and half fairy tale," seeking her own path in the boundary between art and reality. Her own phrase, "I am a Naivist, and that's probably why I'll remain one," aptly describes her relationship with her art.

Information on Works Still Sought

Naivism as an artistic movement has not previously been presented so extensively in Vaasa museums. In 2024, the museums began mapping Inkeri Julkunen's production, which led to the discovery of a significant number of works in addition to the eight already in the museum's collections. It is likely that more undiscovered works exist. The Ostrobothnian Museum is still eager to receive information about Inkeri Julkunen's works. Please direct inquiries to Curator Janna Sirén at janna.siren@vasa.fi.

The exhibition will be open from June 7 to October 19, 2025, at the Ostrobothnia Museum.

Source: Ostrobothnia Museum.

UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF VAASA

Hanna Smith Appointed as Vasa University's New Professor of Practice: "Information Overload Challenges Resilience and Preparedness"



Vaasan yliopiston työelämäprofessori Hanna Smith. Kuva: Vaasan yliopisto / Riikka Kalmi. Kuva vapaasti käytettävissä.

The University of Vaasa has appointed Dr. Hanna Smith as Professor of Practice in resilience research.

Smith, an internationally respected expert on hybrid threats and security policy, will continue her role as Senior Strategic Adviser at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) alongside her new academic appointment.

— “There’s a reason why resilience has become such a relevant theme — it’s not just a buzzword,” says Smith. “Our security environment has changed so dramatically that we must reassess preparedness and resilience from new perspectives — nationally, internationally, and regionally.”

Information Overload: A Modern Threat

One of the biggest challenges today, according to Smith, is the overwhelming volume and speed of information, which makes it difficult to build an accurate situational picture and act accordingly.

— “There’s just so much happening at once. The danger is in reacting to every small signal without understanding whether it leads to something larger. We need clarity and the ability to identify root causes — not be misled by noise or rush to misjudgments,” she emphasizes.

Smith points out that deliberate misinformation is increasingly a part of today’s security landscape, making it even more critical to analyze, wait, and think strategically before taking

action.

Supporting the University’s New Resilience Research Platform

Smith, who started her position in May, is based in the School of Management at the University of Vaasa. Her work is closely connected to the university’s new Resilience Research Platform, launched earlier this year. The multidisciplinary initiative brings together scholars across fields to advance research on societal and economic resilience, comprehensive security, and crisis preparedness.

— “I hope to contribute international strategic thinking — how to look ahead, how to challenge existing frameworks, and how to build more robust societies. That’s the essence of resilience,” Smith explains.

As Professor of Practice, Smith may serve as an expert in research projects, supervise doctoral dissertations, conduct her own research, help acquire funding, and contribute thought leadership through blogs or public commentary.

A Leading Voice on Hybrid Threats and Geopolitics

At the University of Vaasa, Professors of Practice are appointed based on a doctoral degree or exceptional achievements in leadership within public or private sectors. High-profile international influencers may also be invited to take on the role. Appointments are fixed-term and by invitation only.

Smith holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Helsinki’s Department of World Politics and an MA from University College London. She has also studied Russian, international relations, and East European studies at the universities of Stockholm and Uppsala.

She is widely recognized for her expertise on hybrid threats, Russia, geopolitics, and international affairs. Before joining OSCE, she was Director of Research at the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (Hybrid CoE) from 2017 to 2022, where she played a key role in establishing the institution. Prior to that, she worked at the Aleksanteri Institute at the University of Helsinki.

Smith’s appointment bridges academic research and high-level international policy, strengthening the university’s profile in resilience and security studies.

Source: University of Vaasa

DIGITAL HEALTHCARE

HEALTH

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health Launches Groundbreaking Randomized Trial on Digital Healthcare Services in Ostrobothnia



Image: HFiF

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has initiated a pioneering randomized controlled trial in the Ostrobothnia welfare region to evaluate the impact of digital healthcare services. The study, involving over 170,000 residents, is set to provide crucial evidence for healthcare policy decisions both in Finland and internationally.

A First-of-its-Kind Digital Healthcare Experiment

The trial randomly divides Ostrobothnia's population into two groups:

Control group: Continues using existing healthcare services as usual

Intervention group: Gains access to a new AI-assisted chat service connecting patients with nurses and, when needed, physicians for nine months

This rigorous methodology addresses a critical evidence gap – while digital health services are rapidly expanding globally, there remains limited high-quality research on their effects on healthcare demand, efficiency, and equity.

Why This Matters

"Digital transformation shouldn't outpace evidence," states Minister of Social Affairs

and Health [Name]. "This trial will show whether chat services reduce pressure on phone lines and in-person clinics, while maintaining care quality across different population groups."

Key questions the study will examine:

How does digital access affect healthcare utilization patterns?

Does it improve efficiency without compromising care quality?

Are there differences in adoption across age, gender, or income levels?

National Implications

The findings will directly inform:

- Finland's national digital health strategy
- Resource allocation across welfare regions
- Potential expansion of the chat service nationwide

The research consortium So-teDataLab (led by THL, Aalto University, and University of Turku) will conduct rigorous analysis throughout 2025-2026.

The Digital Healthcare Revolution in Finland

Since 2019, Finland has seen:

- 4.3 million residents now have access to public healthcare chat services
- Digital visits account for [X]% of primary care contacts
- Most used by [demographic breakdown]

"Digital services complement traditional care," explains [Researcher Name] from THL. "They're ideal for many – but not all – health concerns, and can improve access in underserved areas."

Expected Benefits

For patients:

- 24/7 access to care
- Reduced wait times
- Convenience of remote consultations

For the healthcare system:

- Better workforce allocation
- Potential cost efficiencies
- Data-driven service optimization

The Ministry will release preliminary findings in Q1 2026. This trial represents Finland's continued leadership in evidence-based digital health innovation.

ASTRONOMY

PLANETS

BREAKING NEWS: "2017 OF201" – A New Dwarf Planet Discovered That Could Rewrite Solar System History



Astronomers have identified a distant and mysterious world, 2017 OF201, a dwarf planet candidate lurking in the outer reaches of our Solar System. This discovery could challenge long-held theories about the existence of undiscovered planets beyond Neptune, including the controversial "Planet Nine."*

A Giant in the Darkness

2017 OF201 is an extreme trans-Neptunian object (ET-

NO)—a rare class of icy bodies orbiting far beyond Neptune. With an estimated diameter of at least 550 km (340 miles), it is one of the largest known objects in the Solar System without a directly measured size. Its brightness suggests it could be even bigger, possibly qualifying it as a new dwarf planet.

Currently located 90.5 astronomical units (AU) from the Sun (about 13.5 billion kilometers), it takes this frozen world a staggering 25,000 years to complete a single orbit. Its last close approach to the Sun was in 1930, meaning it has been drifting outward ever since.

A Threat to the Planet Nine Hypothesis?

The discovery of 2017 OF201 has sent shockwaves through the astronomical community because its orbit does not align with the predicted influence of Planet Nine—a hypothetical gi-

ant planet thought to shape the orbits of distant objects.

Most ETNOs cluster in a way that suggests an unseen planet's gravitational pull.

But 2017 OF201 is one of the few (alongside 2013 FT28 and 2015 KG163) that is anti-aligned, moving in the opposite direction to what Planet Nine's influence would predict.

Computer simulations indicate that if Planet Nine existed, it should have ejected 2017 OF201 from its current orbit within the last 100 million years. The fact that this object still exists raises two possibilities:

Planet Nine does not exist, and the clustering of other ETNOs is a statistical fluke.

2017 OF201 is in a temporary orbit, soon to be flung out of the Solar System.

What's Next?

Further observations will refine its size, composition, and exact orbit. If confirmed as a dwarf planet, it will join the ranks of Pluto, Eris, and Haumea in the distant Kuiper Belt and scattered disk.

"This discovery forces us to rethink the dynamics of the outer Solar System," says Dr. Samantha Lawler, an astronomer specializing in trans-Neptunian objects. "Either we're missing something fundamental about planetary formation, or we need a new explanation for why some of these extreme objects behave the way they do."

Key Facts About 2017 OF201
Diameter: ≥ 550 km (dwarf planet candidate)

Distance from Sun: 90.5 AU (as of 2025)

Orbital period: $\sim 25,000$ years

Last perihelion: ~ 1930

Significance: Challenges Planet Nine hypothesis

This finding opens a new chapter in Solar System exploration—one that may rewrite our understanding of its outermost frontiers.

Sources:

Wikipedia (Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 License)

HEALTH

LIFESTYLE AND HEALTH

An Optimal Lifestyle Adds 10-14 Extra Years

Living an optimal lifestyle can extend your lifespan by 10-14 years compared to those with less healthy habits.

Research shows that diet, exercise, stress management, sleep, and avoiding harmful behaviors like smoking and excessive alcohol consumption dramatically impact longevity. A recent multicohort study of 116,043 participants confirms that certain combinations of healthy habits not only prolong life but also add more years free from chronic diseases (Nyberg et al. 2020). This article explores the key factors contributing to a longer, healthier life and the scientific evidence supporting these findings.

What Does an Optimal Lifestyle Include?

An optimal lifestyle is built on several key factors that together improve health and extend lifespan. Large-scale studies like the Nurses' Health Study and Health Professionals Follow-up Study show that the following five habits can add up to 12–14 extra years for women and 10–13 for men (Li et al. 2018).

The Most Effective Combinations for a Di-



sease-Free Life

A European multicohort study (Nyberg et al. 2020) analyzed 16 different lifestyle profiles and found that the four most beneficial all included:

BMI under 25 (normal weight)

At least two of the following three factors:

Never smoking

Regular physical activity

Moderate alcohol consumption

These combinations provided up to 9.9 extra disease-free years for men and 9.4 for women between ages 40 and 75. Participants with these healthy habits reached 70.3–71.4 years without chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, stroke, cancer, or lung disease.

Scientific Evidence for Longevity

1. The Role of Diet

The Mediterranean diet and similar eating patterns reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and certain cancers. A study in *The New England Journal of Medicine* found that high-quality diets could extend lifespan by several years (Estruch et al. 2018).

2. Physical Activity

Regular exercise improves circulation, strengthens immunity, and reduces inflammation. A BMJ me-

ta-analysis showed that people who exercised at least 150 minutes weekly had a 30–40% lower risk of premature death (Warburton & Bredin 2017).

3. Weight Management

Obesity increases the risk of life-threatening diseases. The *Lancet* reported that a BMI over 30 could shorten lifespan by up to 10 years (Global BMI Mortality Collaboration 2016). The multicohort study (Nyberg et al. 2020) confirms that a BMI under 25 is crucial for avoiding chronic disease.

4. Alcohol and Smoking

Smoking is a leading cause of early death. JAMA found quitting smoking adds an average of 10 years to life (Jha et al. 2013). Moderate alcohol consumption may offer some benefits, but excessive use raises risks of liver disease and cancer. Nyberg's study (2020) shows that moderate drinking combined with other healthy habits can add disease-free years.

5. Sleep and Stress Management

Chronic stress and poor sleep elevate cortisol, leading to inflammation and heart problems. Research in *Sleep* linked sleeping under 6 hours per night with higher mortality (Cappuccio et al. 2010).

How to Adopt an Optimal Lifestyle

You don't need drastic changes—small, sustainable adjustments yield sig-

nificant results over time:

Add one extra serving of vegetables daily.

Walk 30 minutes several times a week.

Sleep 7–9 hours nightly.

Avoid smoking and limit alcohol.

Manage stress through meditation or mindfulness.

An optimal lifestyle can extend your life by 10–14 years while reducing chronic disease risk. A healthy diet, regular exercise, normal weight, avoiding harmful habits, and good sleep form the foundation for a longer, more vibrant life. The latest research shows that a BMI under 25 plus at least two of the following—never smoking, regular exercise, or moderate drinking—can add nearly 10 extra disease-free years (Nyberg et al. 2020).

By aligning your lifestyle with these evidence-based principles, you can not only live longer but also enjoy your extra years to the fullest.

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DISEASES

GUILLAIN-BARRÉ

The Invisible Stranglehold: A Story of Guillain-Barré and the Fight to Reclaim Life

The rain in Vaasa was cold, a persistent drizzle that had soaked JH to the bone. He'd been walking for hours, a restless energy that usually kept him sharp now feeling... dull.

It started in his feet, a faint tingling, like pins and needles after a long flight, but it didn't fade. He ignored it, of course. He didn't get sick. He got hit, sometimes, but he didn't get sick.

By morning, the tingling had crept up his calves. He tried to walk it off, but his legs felt heavy, like wading through thick mud. He'd found a diner, ordered coffee, black, and tried to ignore the growing numbness in his fingertips as he wrapped them around the warm mug. This wasn't right. His senses, usually a finely tuned instrument, were blurring at the edges.

The next day, it was worse. He woke up at home. When he tried to push himself up, his arms felt weak, unresponsive. He managed to swing his legs over the side of the bed, but they crumpled beneath him. He hit the floor with a thud. No pain. Just a chilling lack of control.

Panic wasn't a familiar emotion for JH, but a cold dread began to curl in his gut. His muscles, usually steel cables, felt like wet ropes. Breathing was a conscious effort, his chest tight. He managed to drag himself to the door, fumbling with the lock with clumsy fingers. He called an ambulance.

The medics moved him with practiced ease, their questions blurring into an unintelligible hum. He tried to tell them what was happening, but his voice was a thin rasp. The world was

shrinking, his body a prisoner. The last thing he saw before the ambulance doors closed was the grey Vaasa sky, a mirror to the fear now settling deep within him. He was losing control, bit by agonizing bit, and he didn't know why.

Guillain-Barré Syndrome: Understanding the Sudden Loss of Control

JH's fictional struggle vividly illustrates the terrifying onset of Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS), a rare but serious autoimmune disorder that attacks the peripheral nervous system. In essence, the body's own immune system mistakenly targets and damages the myelin sheath – the fatty insulation around nerve fibers – or even the nerve fibers themselves. This damage disrupts the nerves' ability to transmit signals to the brain and muscles, leading to the rapid onset of weakness, numbness, and in severe cases, paralysis.

The exact cause of GBS remains unknown, but it often follows a preceding infection, such as a respiratory illness, gastrointestinal infection (like *Campylobacter jejuni*, a common trigger), or even a vaccination. The prevailing theory is that the immune system, in its fight against the infection, mistakenly identifies components of nerve cells as foreign invaders, launching an attack on healthy tissue. This is why the symptoms often appear days or weeks after the initial illness has subsided.

Symptoms and Progression: GBS typically manifests with symmetrical weakness, often starting in the legs and progressing upwards to the arms and facial muscles. The initial sensations are frequently tingling, numbness, or a crawling feeling

(paresthesia) in the hands and feet, as experienced by JH. As the syndrome advances, muscle weakness can become profound, leading to difficulty walking, climbing stairs, and even performing simple tasks like holding objects. In about 25-30% of cases, the respiratory muscles can be affected, necessitating mechanical ventilation and intensive care. Facial weakness can lead to difficulty speaking, swallowing, and even blinking. Pain is also a common symptom, often described as deep, aching, or burning.

Most people with GBS make a full or near-full recovery

The progression of GBS can be rapid, reaching its peak severity within two to four weeks. This rapid deterioration is what makes the condition so frightening and requires immediate medical attention.

Diagnosis and Treatment:

Diagnosing GBS involves a combination of clinical evaluation, nerve conduction studies (NCS), and electromyography (EMG) to assess nerve and muscle function. A lumbar puncture (spinal tap) may also be performed to analyze cerebrospinal fluid, which often shows elevated protein levels without an increase in white blood cells.

While there is no cure for GBS, treatments aim to lessen the severity of the illness, speed recovery, and manage complications. The two primary treatments are:

- Intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG): This in-

volves administering healthy antibodies from donated blood directly into the bloodstream. These antibodies can help neutralize the harmful antibodies attacking the nerves.

- Plasma exchange (plasmapheresis): This procedure involves removing a patient's blood, separating the plasma (the liquid part of the blood containing harmful antibodies), and then returning the blood cells to the body.

Supportive care is crucial, especially for those with severe symptoms. This includes respiratory support, pain management, physical therapy, and occupational therapy to help regain strength and function.

Recovery and Long-Term Outlook: Recovery from GBS can be a long and challenging process, varying greatly among individuals. While most people with GBS make a full or near-full recovery, some may experience residual weakness, fatigue, or numbness. Rehabilitation plays a vital role in recovery, helping patients regain muscle strength, coordination, and independence. The recovery period can range from several weeks to a few years.

Guillain-Barré Syndrome, as depicted in JH's sudden incapacitation, underscores the delicate complexity of the human nervous system and the profound impact when it is compromised. While rare, understanding its symptoms and the importance of prompt medical intervention is crucial for improving outcomes and helping individuals, like our fictional protagonist, reclaim their lives from its invisible stranglehold.

DISEASES

ACHALASIA

Achalasia Cardiae: Unraveling the Mystery of the Esophagus

Achalasia cardiae, often simply referred to as achalasia, is a rare and chronic disorder affecting the esophagus – the muscular tube that carries food from your mouth to your stomach.

It's a condition where the normal function of the esophagus goes awry, leading to difficulty swallowing and a range of uncomfortable symptoms. Despite its rarity, understanding achalasia is crucial for timely diagnosis and effective management, as it significantly impacts a patient's quality of life.

How Common Is It?

Achalasia is considered a rare disease, with an estimated annual incidence of about one in 100,000 to one in 200,000 people. The prevalence, or the total number of people living with the condition at a given time, is higher, estimated to be around 1 in 10,000. It affects men and women equally and typically manifests between 30 and 60 years of age, though it can occur at any age, including in children. While not extremely common, it's a condition that gastroenterologists encounter regularly.

What Are the Symptoms?

The hallmark symptom of achalasia is dysphagia, or difficulty swallowing, which typically worsens over time, affecting both solids and liquids. This happens because the lower esophageal sphincter (LES), a ring of muscle at the bottom of the esophagus, fails to relax properly, preventing food from entering the stomach. Additionally, the muscles of the esophagus itself don't contract correctly to push food downwards.

Other common symptoms include:

- Regurgitation of undigested food or saliva: This can happen especially at night, leading to coughing, choking, and even aspiration pneumonia if food or liquid enters the lungs.

- Chest pain: Often described as a "cardiospasm" or non-cardiac chest pain, it can be severe and mistaken for a heart attack. This pain may occur when the esophagus is minimally dilated in earlier stages.

- Heartburn: Despite food not entering the stomach easily, some patients experience heartburn-like symptoms.

- Weight loss: Gradual but significant weight loss is common due to difficulty eating and nutrient intake.

- Belching.
- Coughing at night.
- Drooling of vomit or saliva.

Symptoms often begin gradually and worsen over months or years.

Any Clue About Etiology?

The exact cause of achalasia remains largely unknown, leading to the term "idiopathic achalasia" for most cases. However, research points to a complex interplay of factors, primarily involving the degeneration or loss of nerve cells (ganglion cells) in the myenteric plexus, a network of nerves in the esophageal wall. These inhibitory neurons are responsible for relaxing the LES and coordinating esophageal muscle contractions. Their destruction leads to the characteristic features of achalasia: an unrelaxing LES and absent or abnormal peristalsis (wave-like contractions).

Several theories regarding the underlying causes have been proposed:

- Autoimmune mechanisms: It is thought that in genetically predisposed individuals, an autoimmune response, possibly triggered by a viral infection (such as herpes simplex virus or measles), leads to the destruction of these nerve cells.

- Genetic predisposition: While not a strictly inherited disease, there are reports of achalasia occurring in families, including identical twins, siblings, and other first-degree relatives, suggesting a genetic component.

- Neurological factors: Damage to the vagus nerve, which plays a crucial role in esophageal

function, has also been implicated.

- Infections: Chagas disease, caused by the parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi*, can mimic achalasia, but it is not typically considered a cause of primary achalasia in non-endemic areas.

Diagnostics?

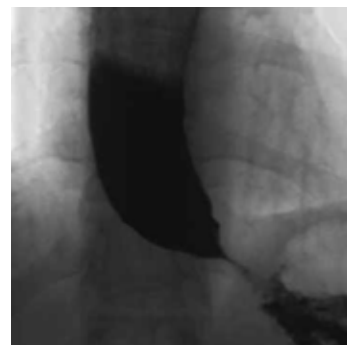
Diagnosing achalasia can sometimes be delayed due to its symptoms overlapping with other digestive disorders, such as gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). A comprehensive diagnostic workup is essential and typically involves:

1. Esophageal Manometry (High-Resolution Manometry - HRM): This is the most definitive test for diagnosing achalasia. It involves inserting a thin, flexible tube with pressure sensors into the esophagus to measure the muscle contractions during swallowing and assess the LES's relaxation. HRM can classify achalasia into subtypes (Type I, II, or III), which can have implications for treatment choices and prognosis.

2. Barium Swallow (Esophagram): The patient swallows a barium-containing liquid, and X-rays are taken to visualize the esophagus. In achalasia, the barium often shows a characteristic "bird's beak" or "rat's tail" appearance at the LES due to its narrowing. The esophagus above the LES may be dilated, and food and liquid may be retained. A "timed barium swallow" can be used to objectively measure the esophageal emptying and response to treatment.

3. Upper Endoscopy: A flexible tube with a camera is inserted into the esophagus to visualize its lining and rule out other conditions like tumors or strictures that can mimic achalasia (this is called "pseudoachalasia"). While the esophagus typically appears normal in achalasia, food debris may be present, and the endoscope might encounter resistance when passing through the non-relaxing LES.

4. Functional Luminal Imaging Probe (FLIP) technology: This newer technique provides complementary information by assessing the distensibility (stretchiness) of



A broad oesophagus seen in an x-ray examination in a patient with achalasia

the LES, especially useful in ambiguous cases where manometry results are inconclusive.

Treatment Options?

Unfortunately, there is no cure for achalasia, as the nerve damage is irreversible. However, treatments aim to relieve symptoms, improve esophageal emptying, and prevent complications. The primary goal is to reduce the pressure in the LES, allowing food to pass into the stomach more easily.

Treatment options include:

- Medications (limited use): Oral medications like calcium channel blockers (e.g., nifedipine) or nitrates (e.g., nitroglycerin) can temporarily relax the LES. However, their effect is often short-lived, they can have significant side effects (like headaches), and they are generally used for mild symptoms or as a bridge to more definitive treatments.

- Botulinum Toxin (Botox) Injections: Botox can be injected endoscopically into the LES to temporarily paralyze the muscles, causing them to relax. This provides symptom relief for about 6-12 months and may need to be repeated. It's often used for elderly patients or those with other significant health issues who are not candidates for more invasive procedures.

- Pneumatic Dilation (PD): This endoscopic procedure involves inserting a balloon into the LES and inflating it to stretch and tear the muscle fibers. It's often performed in stages with increasingly larger balloons. PD has a good success rate (around 78%) but may require

repeated sessions. There is a small risk of esophageal perforation, which requires immediate surgical repair.

- **Laparoscopic Heller Myotomy with Partial Fundoplication:** This is a surgical procedure where the muscle fibers of the LES are cut (myotomy) to relieve the obstruction. It's typically performed laparoscopically (minimally invasive). A partial fundoplication (wrapping a part of the stomach around the esophagus) is often added to prevent post-operative acid reflux, a common side effect. Heller myotomy has a high success rate (around 87%).

- **Peroral Endoscopic Myotomy (POEM):** A newer, minimally invasive endoscopic procedure where an endoscope is inserted through the mouth, and an incision is made in the inner lining of the esophagus. The surgeon then cuts the LES muscle from within the esophageal wall. POEM offers excellent outcomes with a shorter recovery time and less pain than traditional surgery. It is gaining popularity as a preferred treatment option, especially for Type III achalasia.

- **Esophagectomy:** In very severe or end-stage achalasia (megaesophagus) where other treatments have failed, surgical removal of part or all of the esophagus may be necessary. This is a major surgery with significant risks.

The choice of treatment depends on various factors, including the patient's age, overall health, severity of symptoms, and achalasia subtype.

What Follow-Up Is Needed?

Achalasia is a chronic condition requiring lifelong management. Even after successful treatment, symptoms may recur or worsen over time. Therefore, regular follow-up is crucial.

Follow-up may include:

- **Clinical evaluation:** Regular assessment of symptoms (e.g., using a scoring system like the Eckhardt score) and weight.

- **Timed Barium Swallow:** This can be repeated periodically (e.g., every year or two) to monitor esophageal emptying and assess the effectiveness of treatment.

- **Endoscopy:** Some physicians recommend periodic endoscopy to check for complications like reflux damage, Barrett's esophagus (a precancerous condition), or the development of esophageal cancer, especially in long-standing cases. pH testing may also be done to monitor for reflux.

- **Lifestyle modifications:**

Patients are often advised to eat meals slowly, chew food thoroughly, drink water with meals, avoid eating shortly before bedtime, and elevate the head of the bed to promote gravity-assisted emptying. Avoiding foods that aggravate reflux (e.g., citrus, chocolate, mint, alcohol, caffeine) is also recommended.

Prognosis?

The prognosis for achalasia patients to return to near-normal swallowing is generally good with effective treatment. While the disease cannot be cured, symptoms can be substantially palliated, allowing most patients to resume a more or less normal diet, maintain their weight, and avoid progressive esophageal dilation.

However, the disease is rarely "cured" with a single procedure, and intermittent "touch-up" procedures or repeat interventions may be required over time. The overall life expectancy of patients with achalasia typically does not differ from that of the general population.

Risk of Cancer?

Yes, there is an increased risk of esophageal cancer associated with long-standing achalasia, primarily due to the chronic irritation and inflammation of the esophageal lining caused by food and saliva stasis.

- **Type of cancer:** The most common type is esophageal squamous cell carcinoma (SCC). Esophageal adenocarcinoma has also been observed, particularly in cases where post-treatment reflux has occurred.

- **Increased risk:** Studies and meta-analyses have shown that the incidence of esophageal cancer in achalasia patients is significantly higher than in the general population, with some estimates suggesting a risk more than 10 times higher. This is not so bad as it looks as oesophageal cancer is quite rare. The risk of cancer in an achalasia-patient may be as low as 3 % in a lifetime. The risk starts about 25 years after the symptoms of achalasia began, (Clin Exp Gastroenterol. 2018 Sep 6;11:309–316. doi: 10.2147/CEG.S141642). And we have all a risk to get cancer. If we consider a group of 100 people About 50 men are expected to develop cancer during their lifetime. And about 33 women are expected to develop cancer during their lifetime. So a 3% risk of cancer in Achalasia is not that bad, and a cancer in this disease should usually be found during follow up in a stage possible to treat,

- **Other risk factors include** a sigmoid-shaped (severely dilated

and tortuous) esophagus, very long symptom duration (e.g., over 280 months), esophageal diameter greater than 71 mm at diagnosis, advanced age, and male sex.

- **Surveillance:** Due to this elevated risk, some medical societies and clinicians recommend periodic endoscopic surveillance for long-standing achalasia patients, especially those with additional risk factors, to detect precancerous changes or early-stage cancer. However, the exact frequency and efficacy of screening remain areas of ongoing research and debate. Early detection through surveillance can lead to successful endoscopic treatment of superficial cancers.

If You is found to have achalasia, should the disease be treated right away or first after You have severe symptoms, including weight loss?

If you are diagnosed with achalasia, it's generally recommended to pursue treatment sooner rather than later, even if your symptoms are not yet severe. Waiting until symptoms become severe, including significant weight loss, can lead to several disadvantages and potential complications:

Why early treatment is generally preferred:

- **Progressive Nature of the Disease:** Achalasia is a progressive disease. While symptoms may start mild, they almost always worsen over time. Waiting allows the esophagus to become more dilated and potentially damaged (megaesophagus), which can make treatment more challenging and potentially less effective in the long run.

- **Preventing Malnutrition and Weight Loss:** Significant weight loss is a serious consequence of achalasia. It can lead to malnutrition, weakness, and a general decline in health, making any subsequent treatments more difficult and recovery longer. Addressing the swallowing difficulty promptly helps maintain adequate nutrition.

- **Reducing Complications:**
 - **Aspiration Pneumonia:** Regurgitation, especially at night, increases the risk of aspirating food or liquid into the lungs, leading to recurrent pneumonia. Early treatment can reduce this risk.

- **Esophagitis and Ulceration:** Stasis of food and saliva in the esophagus can lead to chronic inflammation (esophagitis) and even ulceration, which can be painful and contribute to further damage.

- **Increased Cancer Risk:** As mentioned previously, long-standing achalasia carries an increased risk of esophageal squa-

mous cell carcinoma due to chronic irritation. While treatment doesn't eliminate this risk entirely, it's hypothesized that reducing stasis may help.

- **Improved Quality of Life:** Even if symptoms aren't "severe" initially, achalasia can significantly impact quality of life, leading to anxiety around eating, social isolation, and constant discomfort. Early intervention aims to restore more normal swallowing function and improve daily living.

- **Better Treatment Outcomes:** Studies often show that patients with less advanced disease (less esophageal dilation, shorter symptom duration) tend to have better outcomes with treatments like pneumatic dilation or myotomy. The esophagus is less "stretched out" and the muscles may respond better to interventions.

- **Avoiding "End-Stage" Achalasia:** If left untreated for too long, the esophagus can become extremely dilated and lose all its muscle tone, leading to "end-stage achalasia" or megaesophagus. At this point, the treatment options become more limited and drastic, potentially requiring an esophagectomy (surgical removal of the esophagus), which is a major and complex procedure.

When "severe symptoms" might already be too late for optimal outcomes:

By the time you experience severe symptoms, particularly significant weight loss, it often indicates that the disease has progressed considerably. While treatment is still possible and necessary, the chances of complete symptom resolution or avoiding further complications might be diminished compared to earlier intervention.

In summary:

While the choice of treatment depends on individual factors (age, overall health, achalasia subtype, patient preference), the general consensus among medical professionals is to diagnose and treat achalasia proactively. The goal is to alleviate symptoms, prevent progression of the disease, and maintain the best possible esophageal function, rather than waiting for severe complications to develop.

Achalasia cardiae is a challenging but manageable condition. While no cure exists, a range of diagnostic tools and therapeutic options allow for significant symptom relief and improved quality of life. Long-term follow-up and awareness of the increased cancer risk are vital for optimal patient care.

MEDICATION

KELA

The use of antidepressants among young adults has doubled in ten years

In the shadow of the silent crisis, a worrying trend has formed in Finland.

The use of antidepressants among young adults has doubled in just ten years, and the increase is shockingly faster than in neighbouring Sweden. This is a reality that many people turn a blind eye to, but which now demands our attention.

A recent statistical compilation from Kela shows that the use of antidepressants among young adults aged 18–29 has increased dramatically. In 2014, 8 per cent of young women and 5 per cent of young men bought antidepressants at least once. However, by 2024, these figures had risen to almost 18% for women and 8% for men. A shocking reality that raises questions about how our society is doing.

But that's not all. The use of ADHD drugs among children of primary school age has also increased. In 2024, almost 11 per cent of boys and just under 4 per cent of girls used ADHD medication. This development is a cause for concern and requires a deeper analysis.

"The increased use of ADHD drugs has been discussed in public, but the use of antidepressants has received less attention," says Kati Sarnola, Senior Researcher at Kela. Although the increase seems to have slowed down, almost a fifth of all young women use drugs.

A shocking breakup

In Finland, the increase in antidepressants and ADHD drugs has been stronger than in Sweden. In 2016, the use of

antidepressants among young people was about as common in Finland as in Sweden. But by 2024, the gap among young women had increased by almost five percentage points.

The use of ADHD drugs in children, especially young boys, has also increased faster in Finland. Last year, nearly 6 per cent of Finnish boys aged 5–9 used ADHD medication, while the corresponding figure in Sweden was just over 2 per cent.

"The increase in these drugs has been strong in Finland, not only compared to Sweden, but also in Norway and Denmark," says Kela's Senior Researcher Miika Vuori.

Complex reality

There are several factors behind the increased use of antidepressants and ADHD medications. The identification of mental illnesses and neuropsychiatric disabilities and seeking treatment have increased significantly. According to studies, mood and anxiety symptoms have become more common, especially among young girls and women. Diagnoses such as depression, anxiety and sleep disorders are increasingly visible among young women's visits to health care.

However, the development of ADHD symptoms is different from mood and anxiety symptoms. There is no clear evidence that ADHD symptoms in children have become more common, but the number of diagnoses has increased significantly. Many experts in Finland are concerned about misdiagnoses and medication of boys.

The need for change



The researchers emphasise the need for a deeper understanding of why more and more children and adolescents use medicines and what the major differences in comparison countries are due to. Information on antidepressants and ADHD medications as part of overall treatment is also inadequate.

"The use of psychotropic drugs is more common among young people whose families belong to low-income groups. However, further research is needed on how the use of antidepressants and ADHD medication has increased among young people from different backgrounds in recent years," says Heta Moustgaard, Senior Researcher at Kela.

Kela's experts also emphasise the importance of developing population monitoring with regard to the use of antidepressants and ADHD medication. In the coming weeks, Kela will publish a data application that presents the population shares of those who use these medicines by age and gender both nationally and regionally.

A future in the shadows

The dramatic increase in antidepressants in young adults in Finland is a warning sign. It's time to take this issue seriously and start discussing the reasons behind this scary trend. Because in the shadow of these figures lies a reality that we can no longer ignore.

Source: KELA

ROAD CHURCHES

Finding Refuge on the Road

Finding Refuge on the Road: A Look at Europe's Road Churches

For centuries, churches have served as places of solace and spiritual renewal for communities. But in modern Europe, a unique concept has emerged: road churches. These are churches specifically designed or adapted to welcome travelers, offering a haven for prayer, reflection, or simply a peaceful break from the journey.

Germany: The Pioneering Nation

Germany is credited with birthing the road church concept. The first one is believed to have opened decades ago in Baden-Baden, offering a pit-stop for weary travelers on the Autobahn. These Autobahn chapels, as they're sometimes called, often boast distinctive architecture, creating a visually striking landmark alongside the highway.

Finland's Extensive Network

Finland has embraced the road church concept with remarkable enthusiasm. Boasting over 200 road churches scattered across the country, they provide a haven for travelers, particularly during the summer months. While some close during the winter, a dedicated few remain open year-round, offering a warm and welcoming space for all.

Beyond Borders: The Spread of Road Churches

While Germany and Finland have the most well-established networks, the concept of road churches is gradually gaining traction in other European countries. Austria, Hungary, and the Netherlands are just a few examples where you can find these traveler-friendly places of worship.

Are There Road Churches in the USA?
Currently, the concept of dedicated road churches isn't as widespread in



the United States. However, there are examples of churches along major highways that offer similar hospitality to travelers. Some have designated rest areas or open their doors for prayer and contemplation. Additionally, truck stops often have chapels or designated quiet spaces that cater to travelers on the road.

A Beacon for the Modern Traveler

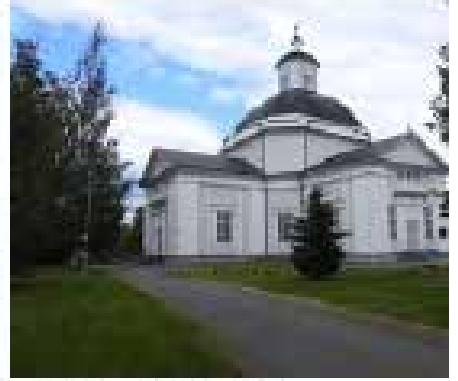
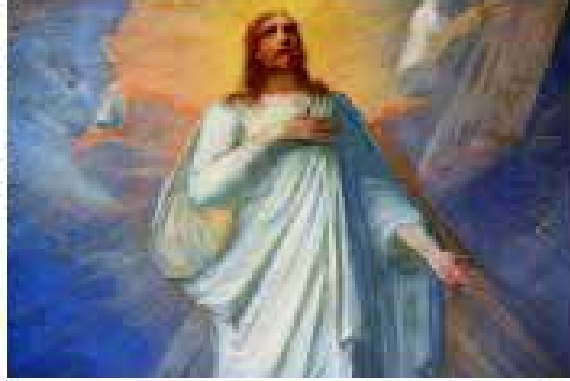
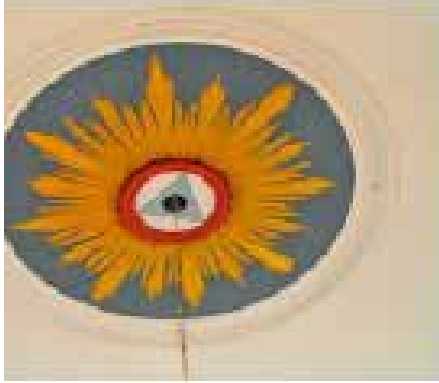
In an age of fast-paced travel, road churches offer a valuable service. They provide a place for weary travelers to find a moment of peace, re-connect with their faith, or simply appreciate a beautiful space. The unique architecture and welcoming atmosphere make them more than just rest stops; they're cultural landmarks and testaments to the enduring power of spiritual connection.

Here's how to find the Road Churches!

In Finland, more than 260 Road Churches open their doors to visitors in the summer. Many of these churches are easily accessible by following the white Road Church signs along the road-side. Before your trip, however, you should take a look at the Tiekirkot.

fi website, where you can find detailed information about road churches.

- You can search for Road Churches using the map search and selecting your own summer vacation route to see which churches fall along the way.
- You can also browse the list of Road Churches and search for churches by location or church type (wooden, concrete and stone churches). Church opening hours vary, so always check our website on the church's own page. Most churches are open from 5.6.–20.8. from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., but some Road Churches serve visitors all year round. Churches may offer worship services as well as other events such as concerts and meditation. Finland's first Road Churches opened in the early 1990s, initially in a few churches in Northern Finland. The idea of open-door churches, which originated in Germany, has since become widespread. Both Evangelical Lutheran and Orthodox churches are involved, and new churches join every year. In addition, you can find information about Road Churches on Facebook and Instagram on account @tiekirkot. Follow Road Churches on social media and admire people's church spotting with the hashtag #tiekirkko. A road church awaits you along the way—stop and enjoy a different resting place.



Lähialueemme tiekirkkoja

ROAD CHURCH



St. Nicholas Church (Vaasa)

St. Nicholas Church in Vaasa is a stunning example of English Gothic architecture, designed by architect Carl Axel Setterberg. The church was consecrated on September 9, 1866 (according to the old calendar) in honor of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker.

Interior and Furnishings

The church's interior and furnishings are mainly donations from merchant Lisizin and church items acquired from St. Petersburg. The iconostasis was constructed based on drawings by Professor G. Solnzev of the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts. The chandelier in the church hall is a gift from the Valamo Monastery after our recent wars.

Open

Open: June 25 - August 2, 2024, Mon-Fri 11:00-16:00

Services

Tue, August 6, 2024, 10:00: Liturgy. Transfiguration of Christ. Welcome to the service!

Address

Nikolainkuja 1, 65100 Vaasa

Other Events

Mon, July 29, 2024: Korsholm Music Festival: Papa Bach and Father Mozart

Welcome to visit St. Nicholas Church and enjoy its peaceful atmosphere and beautiful architecture!



ROAD CHURCH



Oravais Church - A Historical Gem

The Oravais Church, built between 1796-97, stands as a timeless testament to Finland's rich church-building tradition. The design of the church is based on a proposal by the renowned church builder Jacob Rijf from Nykarleby, giving the building its unique architectural charm. The church underwent extensive renovations most recently from 2002-2004, helping to preserve its historical beauty for future generations.

The church's organ, delivered by B.A. Thulé, has played a central role in the church's musical life since September 1879. It was last enhanced and expanded in 1969 by Hans Heinrich from Maxmo and now features 21 stops, making it an impressive element of the church's interior.

The pulpit, crafted by master builder Natanael Rönnblad from Pörtom in 1816, and the altarpiece from 1820, painted by Johan Erik Lind from Kokkola, both add to the church's aesthetic and spiritual atmosphere. The two-part altarpiece, depicting "The Institution of the Eucharist" and "The Crucifixion," provides a strong backdrop for the congregation's most important ceremony, the Holy Communion.

The church is open to visitors from July 3rd to July 21st, 2023, Monday to Friday from 12 PM to 4 PM. Current service times, held at 10 AM, 12 PM, or 6 PM, can be found on the parish's website. The church's address is Kimovägen 19, 66800 Oravais.

In addition to regular services, the church also hosts other events. Evening music in Vörå Parish takes place on Wednesdays at 7 PM from May 31st to August 16th. More information about these events can be found on the parish's website.

The Oravais Church, a wooden church designed by Jakob Rijf, continues to serve as a central place for worship and community in the Vörå parish. Visitors are always welcome to experience its rich history and partake in the life of the church.



ROAD CHURCH



Church of the Holy Cross (Hattula Old Church)

This historic church has stood on Vanajaveden beach since the late 15th century and welcomes visitors who want to immerse themselves in its medieval history, admire the vibrant murals from the 1510s, or simply seek tranquility.

The church has been an important international pilgrimage destination since the Middle Ages. It is likely that already at the beginning of the 15th century there was a wooden church on the site, and perhaps several generations of wooden churches before the current brick church was built. Although Hattula is not directly on Hämeen Härkätie, one of the old trade routes, the church could be reached via its eastern route.

Several of the church's characteristics make it unique. One of these is the unusual building material for the Middle Ages, brick, which connects the church to Hämeen linna. Brick construction at Hämeen linna probably began in the 14th century and continued until the 16th century. One of the brick sites for Hämeen linna was in Herniäinen, near Pyhän Ristin kirkko.

Opening hours and guided tours

Pyhän Ristin kirkko is open daily from May 11 to August 18, 2024, at 11–17. The church is closed during the Midsummer weekend (21–22 June 2024) and during church ceremonies. Admission is free.

Guided tours in Finnish are held daily at 11:00, 12:30, 14:00 and 15:30. The cost of a guided tour is €4 per adult and each tour holds 30 people. Advance booking is not possible, and the tours are not available for groups. Check the current times for church ceremonies on the parish website, as guided tours are not held during these times.

Church services

Mass/service is held in the church every Sunday from June 30 to August 25, 2024 at 10:00. Because of this, the first guided tour is held these days at 12:30 p.m.



ROAD CHURCH



Historic Laihia Church: An Architectural Gem of Early Neoclassicism

The Laihia Church, an architectural treasure located in Laihia east of Vaasa, stands as a remarkable example of early neoclassicism in Finland. The church, designed and built between 1803 and 1805, reflects the vision of Herman Höckert, a councilman from Vaasa, and the plans approved by the Office of the Superintendent in Stockholm in 1797.

Architectural Highlights

The church's layout features an equal-armed cross, a classic design element of neoclassical architecture. Extending from the western arm of the cross is a tall, rectangular tower. A unique feature of the Laihia Church is the small roof lantern rising from the center of the cross. Notably, this church is one of approximately twenty in Finland where the tower is adorned with a rooster.

The walls of the church are unadorned, showcasing beautifully carved logs that add a rustic charm to its interior. The church features a hipped roof with a rounded wooden vault ceiling. With seating capacity for 1,200 people, it serves as a significant gathering place for the community.

Accessibility

The Laihia Church is committed to accessibility. There is a lift located at the southern end of the church, ensuring easy entry for all visitors during events. An induction loop system is installed to assist those with hearing aids, enhancing their auditory experience during services.

For wheelchair users, the central aisle provides the best seating, offering a clear view and excellent acoustics. Additionally, chairs are available along the central aisle for those using walkers. While the main entrance houses non-accessible restrooms, accessible facilities are available at the parish hall nearby.

Visiting Information

The Laihia Church welcomes visitors during the summer from June 10 to August 2, 2024, Monday to Friday from 12 PM to 4 PM. Regular services are held every Sunday at 10 AM, providing an opportunity to experience the spiritual and historical ambiance of this distinguished wooden church.

Contact and Location



CHURCH



Views from the Tower of Kallio Church

Kallio Church, located in the Kallio district of Helsinki, is an impressive granite building. It serves as the main church for the Kallio parish (the other church being Alppila Church). Designed by architect Lars Sonck, the church exemplifies the national romantic style combined with international Art Nouveau influences. This style is characterized by the use of traditional Finnish materials, robust architectural forms, and nature-inspired motifs and colors.

This summer, the public has a unique opportunity to visit the 65-meter-high tower of Kallio Church, offering breathtaking views over all of Helsinki. On a clear day, it is even possible to see as far as Estonia, although this was not the case during our visit today.

Visits to Kallio Church's tower are available from Wednesday to Friday through a booking system, and on Saturdays by queuing between 11:00 and 17:00. The tour costs 10 euros. Access to the tower requires visitors to be at least 18 years old and not easily winded by climbing stairs.

This unique experience offers both locals and tourists the chance to see Helsinki from a new perspective and enjoy the beauty of the city from above.







CLIMATE CHANGE

Urban Heat Islands: A Growing Threat Exacerbated by Climate Change



Cities, particularly large ones, are becoming increasingly hotter than their surrounding rural areas. This phenomenon, known as the "urban heat island effect," means that the temperature in urban environments can be significantly higher than in the countryside.

The consequences are serious and can negatively impact human health, increasing the risk of cardiovascular and respiratory problems, heatstroke, and other health issues. With climate change threatening our planet, the urban heat island issue is becoming increasingly acute.

The reason behind the heat island effect is the artificial infrastructure and human activities that characterize cities. Compared to rural areas, which are often covered in grass, crops, shrubs, or forests, urban areas have a significantly higher propor-

tion of paved surfaces. Vegetation helps to cool the air, while asphalt and concrete, on the other hand, absorb heat, leading to temperature increases. Additionally, buildings and narrow streets contribute to trapping heat by restricting airflow. Human activities, such as heating buildings and driving cars, also add heat to the urban environment.

Overall, all of these factors lead to the urban heat island effect, which is most pronounced at night. Then, the temperature in cities can be up to 10°C higher than in rural areas. This is because the heat stored in buildings and roads during the day is released at night.

The effect is particularly evident in larger cities. For example, temperatures in central London and Paris are regularly recorded to be around 4°C higher than in the surrounding countryside at night. Both of these cities, as well as many others around Europe and the

world, experience heat stress that leads to public health problems.

To address this growing problem, urban planners and local governments are working to develop strategies to reduce heat stress in cities. Solutions may include increasing the amount of so-called green-blue infrastructure. Examples of this include increased vegetation cover, such as through green roofs, and more water surfaces. However, to implement these changes, they first need to get a detailed picture of how temperature varies within the urban environments they are responsible for.

Managing urban heat islands is an important part of making cities more sustainable and livable, especially in light of future climate change. By reducing heat stress, we can create a better quality of life for residents while also contributing to a more sustainable future.

(Source: C3S)



Where would You like to live?



HEALTH

A SHORT STORY

"A New Era in Weight Loss "



Image: HFIF-bild

He walked into the clinic like he'd walked into a hundred dangerous places before — head high, eyes scanning, shoulders relaxed but coiled like a spring. Nobody noticed him. That was the idea.

But he noticed everything. The overweight man slumped in a plastic chair. The nurse tapping on a screen. The glossy ad on the wall: "A New Era in Weight Loss — Tirzepatide." He paused. Read it twice.

A miracle drug, they said. Better than anything before. Not some fake fat-burning pill. Not a starvation diet. Not the endless guilt of gym memberships and celery sticks. Tirzepatide worked.

And that made it dangerous.

He knew what people were saying. That this drug, this once-a-week shot, could melt away the pounds. That it was changing lives. That it could

end the obesity epidemic. People who had struggled for decades were now dropping fifty, even a hundred pounds. Fast.

But he also knew something else: when something sounds too good to be true, it usually is. Unless it comes with a price.

He sat in the waiting room and listened. The nurse called a name. A woman stood up — maybe late forties, carrying too much weight, but you could see hope in her eyes. She didn't walk. She floated. "Tirzepatide?" she asked.

The nurse nodded. "Weekly injection. You'll feel full faster. Eat less. Lose more. But we monitor closely. Nausea, constipation, even risk of pancreatitis. You need to check in weekly."

The woman didn't flinch. She'd heard it all before. What's a little nausea when you've been judged every day of your life?

He sat back and closed his eyes. Thought about what he'd read. Tirzepatide was

originally for type 2 diabetes. A GLP-1 and GIP receptor agonist. Complicated words. Simple result: it mimics the hormones your body releases after eating, so you feel full. But this drug went further. Clinical trials had shown people lost up to 22 percent of their body weight. Better than anything before it. Even better than semaglutide.

A game-changer. Which meant billions were on the table.

He opened his eyes. The woman was gone. A new poster caught his attention. "One shot. Once a week. Real results."

He stood up. Walked to the front desk. Asked for the brochure.

The receptionist looked up. "Thinking about trying it?"

He nodded slowly. "Just curious."

She smiled. "It's not just about looking better. It's about staying alive."

He didn't answer. He already knew. Obesity killed. Quietly. Heart disease, diabe-

FACTS;

Tirzepatide (sold under names like Mounjaro) is an in Finland approved medication originally developed for type 2 diabetes. It has now shown significant effectiveness in weight loss and is revolutionizing obesity treatment — but it also raises complex questions about access, cost, and medical ethics.

tes, joint failure. Tirzepatide was a weapon. A scalpel, not a hammer. And the world had been waiting.

But there were cracks in the miracle.

The cost — thousands per year. The supply — already strained. The ethics — still debated. Should healthy people use it to slim down? Should celebrities jump the line? And what happens when the weight comes back if they stop?

He walked out of the clinic and into the wind. Thought about the woman, and the hope in her eyes. About the millions waiting for salvation in a syringe. About the pharmaceutical execs who were already counting profits.

He thought about justice.

Then he turned up his collar and disappeared into the city.

Because something big was coming.

And he'd be ready.

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RUSSIA SHADOW FLEET

EU

EU Adopts 17th Sanctions Package with Strong Focus on Russia's Shadow Fleet



The European Union has approved its 17th package of sanctions against Russia, introducing robust measures targeting Moscow's shadow fleet while continuing to respond to its war of aggression against Ukraine, destabilizing activities against EU and third countries, and deteriorating human rights situation domestically.

Key Components of New Sanctions

The comprehensive package introduces measures across four critical areas:

Individual Sanctions

Targets 27 new individuals in-

cluding Russian military officials, political figures, propagandists, and business leaders supporting the regime

Includes Russia's Surgutneftegaz oil company and several Chinese entities

Freezes assets and imposes travel bans

Sectoral Measures

Sanctions extended to 342 vessels in Russia's shadow fleet, including the Eagle-S tanker

Expanded export ban list covering goods supporting Russia's military-industrial complex

New restrictions on companies circumventing existing sanctions

Hybrid Threat Response

Additional listings targeting actors undermining EU and member state security

Updated criteria to address evolving Russian hybrid tactics

Human Rights Sanctions

New designations for perpetrators of systematic human rights abuses in Russia

Extended sanctions framework for chemical weapons use in Ukraine

Sanctions regime prolonged for one year

Notable Focus on Shadow Fleet

The package delivers the EU's most significant action yet against Russia's shadow fleet, which has been instrumental in evading oil

price caps. The 342 newly listed vessels represent approximately 45% of Russia's sanctioned shadow fleet operations.

"These measures strike at the heart of Russia's sanctions evasion networks while maintaining pressure on its war machine," stated an EU spokesperson.

Chemical Weapons Designations

Three Russian military entities involved in chemical weapons development and deployment in Ukraine face new restrictions under the EU's chemical weapons sanctions framework.

Next Steps:

The legal acts will be published in the EU Official Journal on 21 May 2025, with measures taking immediate effect.

Source: Ministry for Foreign Affairs

ART

Ostrobothnia Classics: Nelimarkka, Myntti and Vionoja as Kokkola's Summer Highlight



*Eemu Myntti
Self portrait 1931*

perception of the Ostrobothnian soulcape.

Eemu Myntti exploded the boundaries of Ostrobothnian expression with color and passion. In his paintings, Laihia glows as brightly as the Riviera – perhaps even brighter. Myntti was the flâneur of his time, enjoying southern life while carrying an Ostrobothnian temperament.

Women Through Three Artists' Eyes

The exhibition also shows how these three distinct artists portrayed women. Vionoja's solemn Laestadian women, Nelimarkka's tender maternal figures and Myntti's exotic madonnas together narrate the story of woman as both earthy and iconic.

Summer Events

On the opening day, June 14, 2025, the museum courtyard will host Summer Opening events with curator Anne-Maj Salin's guided tours in Swedish and Finnish. The exhibition runs May 23-August 24, 2025 at Rosendal House, with texts in Finnish, Swedish and English.

"The handsome always prevail" – and now their art prevails at the museum. Welcome to experience the classics of Ostrobothnia!

K.H.Renlund Museum, Rosendal House
Pitkäsillankatu 39, Kokkola
May 23-August 24, 2025
More info: www.kokkolan-museot.fi

"The handsome always prevail" – this old Ostrobothnian saying reflects an unshakable belief in one's own abilities.

This timeless wisdom now takes on new dimensions at K.H.Renlund Museum's summer exhibition, featuring three masters from Pohjanmaa: Eero Nelimarkka, Eemu Myntti and Veikko Vionoja. Their works don't just depict Ostrobothnia – they embody the very essence of Ostrobothnian character: resilient, atmospheric and profoundly original.

Three Masters, One Ostrobothnian Soul

The exhibition "The Skilled Always Prevail" at Rosendal House presents three artists from different generations – Nelimarkka (1891-1977), Myntti (1890-1943) and Vionoja (1909-2001) – engaging in dialogue with each other and with contemporary times. Their works blend international influences with Ostrobothnian roots, nature's raw beauty with human tenderness.

This marks the first time Kokkola's own pride, Veikko Vionoja's works, are exhibited extensively alongside Eero Nelimarkka's and Eemu Myntti's pieces. A total of 54 paintings, drawings and prints tell the story of art deeply rooted in the pla-

ins yet carrying international sensibility.

Landscapes Transformed into Art

"One can only depict what the heart is completely attached to," said Veikko Vionoja. His works present Ostrobothnian landscapes and interiors as melancholic memories where time seems to have stood still, while simultaneously expressing profound modernist thought through abstract lines and classical composition.

Eero Nelimarkka gave the Ostrobothnian landscape its identity. His window interiors, wintry fields and flowing rivers have become timeless classics that still define our

CLIMATE CHANGE

CLIMATE

WMO: Global climate predictions show temperatures expected to remain at or near record levels in coming 5 years



Press Release
28 May 2025

The global climate will likely continue its unprecedented warming trend over the next five years, according to a new report released today by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Temperatures are expected to remain at or near record highs between 2025 and 2029, with serious implications for societies, economies, and sustainable development worldwide.

The report outlines a sobering forecast: there is an 80% chance that at least one of the next five years will surpass 2024 as the warmest year ever recorded. Moreover, there is an 86% likelihood that at least one year in this period will exceed 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels (1850–1900 average).

While this does not mean that the 1.5°C limit set in the Paris Agreement has been permanently breached—as it refers to long-term

averages—the increasing frequency of these temporary spikes signals the accelerating pace of climate change. The five-year average warming for 2025–2029 is now predicted to have a 70% chance of exceeding 1.5°C, up significantly from 47% in the previous year's report.

WMO Deputy Secretary-General Ko Barrett warned that the findings should be taken as a clear signal for action: “We have just experienced the ten warmest years on record. Unfortunately, this WMO report provides no sign of respite over the coming years, and this means there will be a growing negative impact on our economies, our daily lives, our ecosystems and our planet.”

According to the report, the annual global mean near-surface temperature for each year between 2025 and 2029 is forecast to be between 1.2°C and 1.9°C higher than the 1850–1900 baseline. This intensification of warming will likely bring more extreme weather events, including heatwaves, heavy rainfall, droughts, sea-level rise, and ice melt.

The Arctic is expected to continue warming significantly faster than the global average. For the November-to-March period, Arctic

temperatures are predicted to be 2.4°C above the 1991–2020 average—more than three and a half times the global mean increase. Sea-ice coverage in key Arctic regions such as the Barents Sea and Bering Sea is also projected to decline further.

Regional precipitation patterns are likely to shift as well. Wetter-than-average conditions are forecast for the Sahel, northern Europe, Alaska, and northern Siberia during the May to September season, while drier conditions are expected over the Amazon basin. South Asia is projected to remain wetter than average, continuing recent trends, although seasonal variation will still occur.

The forecasts are produced by the UK Met Office as the WMO Lead Centre for Annual to Decadal Climate Prediction, incorporating analyses from a wide array of global modelling centres. These predictions are part of a broader suite of climate services designed to support planning and adaptation.

Barrett emphasized the need for robust and continued climate monitoring: “Continued climate monitoring and prediction is essential to provide decision-makers with sci-

ence-based tools and information to help us adapt.”

The findings come ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP30), where countries will present updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)—the action plans critical to achieving the Paris Agreement goals.

The WMO's State of the Global Climate 2024 report, released in March, confirmed that 2024 was likely the first year to breach the 1.5°C threshold for a full calendar year, with a global mean temperature 1.55°C above the pre-industrial average.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) defines global warming levels in terms of 20-year averages. The WMO now estimates that the central value of global warming for the 2015–2034 period will reach 1.44°C, with a 90% confidence range of 1.22–1.54°C. These figures illustrate the narrowing window for keeping warming within safe limits.

As temporary exceedances become more common, experts stress that every fraction of a degree matters. The urgency for coordinated global action has never been greater.

LEISURE

VAASA

"Great way to try rowing without ownership – perfect recreational opportunity!"



Vaasa to Introduce Borrowable Rowboats – Citizens' Budgeting Project Chooses Nautical Initiative

Vaasa residents have voted – the winning idea in this year's participatory budgeting initiative is borrowable rowboats. The project received 404 votes, nearly 20% of all votes cast. The boats will arrive in Vaasa's waters this summer, offering residents and visitors a new way to enjoy the archipelago.

From Citizen Suggestion to Implementation

The rowboat idea emerged as one of the most popular

among 258 proposals collected in February-March. In the final vote, it outpaced runner-up outdoor gym equipment (321 votes) and third-place 3 vs. 3 basketball court (282 votes).

"We received excellent proposals, and the voting clearly engaged Vaasa residents. Rowboats are a wonderful addition to our outdoor recreation options," said Suvi Aho, Strategic Development Manager at the City of Vaasa.

The city has allocated €15,000 for the project, which will cover boats and life jackets. Borrowing stations are planned for Ukkokari, Onkilahti, and Vähäkyrö, where local businesses will manage rentals during their

operating hours.

A Coastal City for All

Voters highlighted multiple benefits of the rowboat scheme:

"Vaasa is a seaside city, but not everyone has access to boats."

"Great way to try rowing without ownership – perfect recreational opportunity!"

"Would make the archipelago accessible to low-income residents and tourists."

"Rowing is great exercise and provides access to better fishing spots."

Next Projects Coming in 2026

The participatory budgeting initiative empowers residents to shape their environment. Previous editions have brought Vaasa its cherry tree park, wildflower meadows, winter swimming spots, and additional benches along waterfront trails.

The rowboat service will launch in early summer, with details announced on the city website and social media. The next budgeting cycle begins in early 2026.

Source: Vaasa.fi

ASTRONOMY

ASTRONOMY

Cambridge University: There Can Be Life Out There

James Webb Telescope detects strongest signs yet of possible life beyond Earth

In a discovery that could change our understanding of the cosmos, astronomers from the University of Cambridge have detected what may be the clearest sign of life ever observed beyond our solar system.

Using the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), the researchers have found the chemical fingerprints of dimethyl sulfide (DMS) and dimethyl disulfide (DMDS) in the atmosphere of exoplanet K2-18b — a world 124 light years from Earth that lies in the habitable zone of its star. On Earth, these molecules are produced solely by life, primarily marine microorganisms like plankton.

“If these signals are confirmed, it would mark the first time in human history we’ve detected a potential biosignature on a planet outside our solar system,” said Professor Nikku Madhusudhan,



who led the research.

The detection is statistically significant at the “three-sigma” level — meaning there’s only a 0.3% chance the signals occurred randomly. But scientists are cautious: to confirm a discovery, five-sigma certainty is required. A few more hours of telescope time could tip the balance.

The findings build on earlier JWST obser-

vations of K2-18b that identified methane and carbon dioxide in its hydrogen-rich atmosphere — indicators of a so-called “Hycean” planet, a water-covered world potentially capable of supporting life.

“This could be a tipping point,” said Madhusudhan. “The moment we began to glimpse the living universe.”

A cautious excitement

now grips the astronomical community. With further observations, we may be on the brink of answering one of humanity’s oldest questions: Are we alone?

<https://www.cam.ac.uk/stories/strongest-hints-of-biological-activity>

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CANCER

What You Need to Know About Prostate Cancer

Former U.S. President Joe Biden announced last Friday that he has been found to have prostate cancer, an aggressive one, that has spread to his bones. But according to newspaper reports, his cancer is hormone-sensitive and can therefore be effectively treated.

In 1981, French President Francois Mitterand was told that he had prostate cancer, which had also spread to his bones. He had just begun his presidential term, which he then carried out successfully. He died of his illness, but not until 15 years later, in 1996.

What, then, is this disease that seems to afflict presidents? Why is it that the disease in these two people was not found until it has spread to the bones?

Prostate cancer is one of the most common types of cancer affecting men today. While a cancer diagnosis can be frightening, not all prostate cancers are life-threatening, and many men with the disease live long, healthy lives. Understanding the risks, symptoms, diagnostic methods, and treatment options is essential, especially for men over the age of 50. This article answers some of the most common questions and provides guidance to help you or your loved ones make informed decisions.

How Common Is Prostate Cancer?

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer among men

after skin cancer. Globally, it affects more than 1.4 million men every year, and in many developed countries, 1 in 8 men will be diagnosed with it during their lifetime.

The risk increases with age. It is rare in men under 50, but very common in men over 70. In fact, autopsy studies have shown that many older men who die of unrelated causes have evidence of undiagnosed, slow-growing prostate cancer. This highlights that while the disease is common, it is often not aggressive.

What Is the Prostate, and Why Does It Matter?

The prostate is a small gland about the size of a walnut, located just below the bladder in men. It produces part of the fluid in semen, which helps nourish and transport sperm. The prostate surrounds the urethra (the tube that carries urine from the bladder out of the body), so when it becomes enlarged due to cancer or other conditions, it can affect urination.

What Are the Symptoms of Prostate Cancer?

In its early stages, prostate cancer usually causes no symptoms at all. This is why screening plays such an important role.

When symptoms do occur, they may include:

- Difficulty starting or stopping urination
- Weak or interrupted urine flow
- Frequent urination, especially at night
- Pain or burning during urination or ejaculation
- Blood in the urine or semen
- Pain in the back, hips, or pelvis (especially if the cancer has spread)

However, these symptoms can



Joe Biden talking to Lucy Coffey, who at 108 is America's oldest woman veteran.

Photo David Lieneman, the White House, Wikimedia Commons-

also be caused by non-cancerous conditions such as benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) or infections.

How Is Prostate Cancer Diagnosed?

Diagnosis usually begins with two common tests:

- PSA test (Prostate-Specific Antigen)
- Digital Rectal Exam (DRE)

The PSA test is a blood test that measures the level of a protein produced by prostate tissue. A high PSA level can be a sign of prostate cancer, but it can also be elevated due to infection, age, or BPH.

The digital rectal exam allows the doctor to feel for lumps or abnormalities in the prostate.

If either test suggests a problem, the next step may involve MRI imaging and a prostate biopsy—a procedure where

small samples of prostate tissue are removed and analyzed for cancer cells.

What's the Value of PSA Testing?

PSA testing is controversial because:

It can detect cancers early, before they cause symptoms.

But it can also lead to overdiagnosis—finding slow-growing cancers that would never have caused harm.

This sometimes leads to overtreatment, with side effects like incontinence or sexual dysfunction.

Many health organizations now recommend individualized decisions about PSA testing, based on age, personal and family history, and overall health.

Should Men Over 70 Get PSA

Tested Without Symptoms?
This is a key question. For healthy men over 70, PSA testing may still be considered—but the benefits are less clear than for younger men.

Why?

Prostate cancer in older men is often slow-growing.

Many older men die with prostate cancer, not because of it.

If life expectancy is less than 10–15 years, finding and treating prostate cancer may not improve survival and could reduce quality of life.

However, if you're over 70 and in good health, and especially if you have a family history of prostate cancer, talk with your doctor about whether continued PSA screening is right for you.

Does Prostate Cancer Spread (Metastasize)?

Yes, it can. Prostate cancer typically spreads to:

Lymph nodes
Bones (especially hips, spine, and pelvis)
Less commonly to liver or lungs

Metastatic prostate cancer is more difficult to treat, but there are still effective treatment options that can prolong life and relieve symptoms.

What Are the Treatment Options?

Treatment depends on several factors:

The stage and grade of the cancer
PSA level

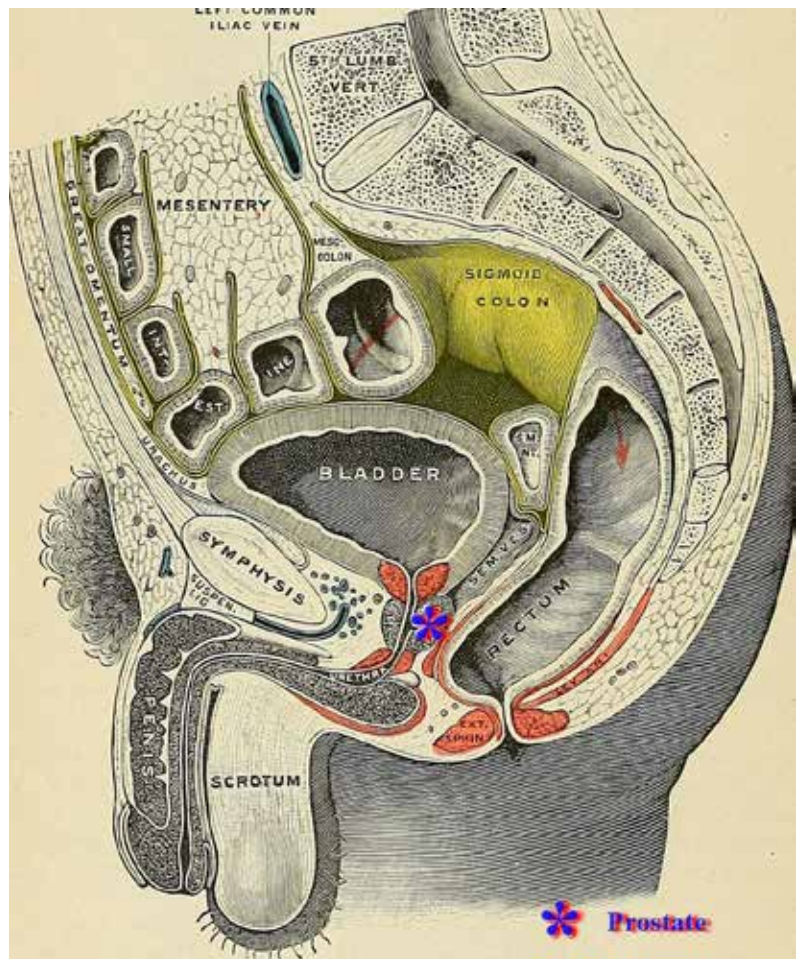
Age and general health
Personal preferences

Active Surveillance or Watchful Waiting

For low-risk, slow-growing prostate cancers, especially in older men, no immediate treatment may be needed. Instead, doctors monitor the cancer with regular PSA tests, exams, and occasional biopsies.

This avoids side effects from

Urogenital organs in Gray's Anatomy from 1913



surgery or radiation, which may not be necessary for a cancer that may never grow or spread.

2. Surgery (Prostatectomy)
Removal of the prostate gland is an option for healthy men with localized cancer. It carries risks of urinary incontinence and erectile dysfunction, but for many men, the benefits outweigh the risks.

3. Radiation Therapy
Radiation uses high-energy rays to destroy cancer cells. It can be external (from outside the body) or internal (brachytherapy, where radioactive seeds are placed in the prostate). Side effects are similar to surgery.

4. Hormone Therapy
If the cancer has spread or comes back, hormone therapy can slow its growth by reducing testosterone, which fuels prostate cancer.

5. Chemotherapy and Newer Therapies
Advanced cancers may be treated with chemotherapy, immunotherapy, or targeted

therapies, especially if hormone therapy stops working.

Why Is Prostate Cancer Becoming More Common?

There are several reasons:

Aging population – The risk increases with age.

Better awareness and more frequent PSA testing – Leads to more diagnoses.

Improved diagnostic tools – MRI and advanced biopsies catch cancers earlier.

Lifestyle factors – Obesity and diet may play a role.

But while more cases are being diagnosed, the good news is that prostate cancer death rates are declining, thanks to early detection and better treatments.

Conclusion: Know Your Risk, Talk to Your Doctor

Prostate cancer is common but often not dangerous. Knowing your risk factors and discussing PSA screening with your doctor can help you make the best

choice for your age and health.

Key takeaways:

If you're over 50, talk to your doctor about PSA testing.

If you're over 70 and healthy, testing may still be worthwhile—especially if you're at high risk.

Not all prostate cancers need treatment—some just need careful watching.

Treatment options are effective, and many men live long, full lives after a diagnosis.

Early detection can make all the difference.

Your health is personal—don't hesitate to ask questions and advocate for yourself. With the right information and medical support, prostate cancer can be managed effectively.

RUSSIA

PRESS FREEDOM

Freedom of the press in Russia Of course it exists!

In the Telegram channels, an outspoken dramatic debate is taking place where those responsible for the attack on Ukraine really get to hear what they are made of.

How safe it is for ordinary Russians to read these texts, we do not know. At least they can't convey any of what they've read.

Here are some quotes from typical texts in recent weeks:

"But the figure of 110 thousand in itself is a nightmare. These people died for nothing. This is a whole regional center that Russia lost in 3 years solely because of the stupidity, incompetence and obsession of an old man, who himself will soon lie in the grave. And he drags hundreds of thousands of his citizens with him. Killing his country's future."

"A sign of Putin's time is children's obituaries on social networks. Born under Putin, raised under Putin, killed under Putin because of Putin. And the 70-year-old cannibals, out of their minds, cling to life and power. And children must die in order for them to rule and live on."

"It is no longer possible to continue this mass slaughter when, strategically, nothing will change." A break is needed!" Military blogger Maxim Kalashnikov recorded an interview with a Russian officer on the front line in the Kursk region. The officer stated that the only

correct decision now is to simply stop the war, because what is happening is a mindless grinding of people without reason."

"The price of potatoes has almost tripled in one year. Because of the shortage, Russia is forced to import potatoes from Pakistan and Egypt. There is no time for potatoes now, we urgently need to conquer more ruins.

Director of SVR Naryshkin said that Russia has already achieved practically all of SVO's goals. Yes, yes, it turns out that the real goals of the "SVO" were the destruction of half of the Donbas, the murder of thousands of residents of Mariupol, Bakhmut, Severodonetsk and Avdiievka, the death of hundreds of thousands of Russian citizens, and the pumping of Ukraine with Western planes and missiles. This disgrace will eventually be declared a "victory in the Northern Military District." And the most important thing is that the Z-nerds will swallow all this and enthusiastically retell each other how Putin has outplayed everyone again."

"G***** whines that in 3 years the people have understood why the mad grandfather started the war and destroyed hundreds of thousands of lives. They say that neither children nor teachers can understand and repeat the message of the nonsense that propagandists feed them."

"At the end of the third year of the war, weak-minded Z-bloggers began to guess that no one benefited from it, and almost all Russian business just lost. Now it may come to the point that the elite will simply remove Putin from power for these arts, just



as they once forced Khrushchev to leave the Soviet Union.

"Only one thing is unclear. Why do the Z-patriots themselves continue to support this bloody idiocy if they themselves admit that all sectors of the Russian economy are only in the red."

Z blogger M***** said that the Russian military is registering masses of missing people as deserters and reporting that they left its unit without permission (SOCH) in order to underestimate the level of losses

and not pay compensation. Yes, Putin's army has no bottom. Any nasty thing they can do to their own soldiers, they will surely do."

"Wounded Russian soldiers from a hospital in the Krasnodar region are sent directly to the front line untreated. When the wounded rebelled against lawlessness and refused to die, they were handcuffed and are now taken by force. As usual, the most inhumane and animalistic attitude towards Russian soldiers is shown by their own state."

РОСІЯ

СВОБОДА ПРЕСИ

Свобода преси в Росії
Звичайно існує!

У телеграм-каналах точаться відверті драматичні дебати, де відповідальні за напад на Україну справді можуть почути, з чого вони зроблені.

Наскільки безпечно пересічним росіянам читати ці тексти, ми не знаємо. Принаймні вони не можуть передати нічого з того, що прочитали.

Ось кілька цитат з типових текстів останніх тижнів:

Але цифра в 110 тисяч сама по собі є кошмаром. Ці люди загинули ні за що. Це цілий обласний центр, який Росія втратила за 3 роки виключно через дурість, некомпетентність і нав'язливість старого, який сам скоро ляже в могилу. І він тягне за собою сотні тисяч своїх громадян. Вбиваючи майбутнє своєї країни».

”Ознака часів Путіна — дитячі некрологи у соцмережах. Народився під Путіним, виріс під Путіним, загинув під Путіним через Путіна. А 70-річні людижери, з глузду з'їхавши, чіпляються за життя і владу. І діти повинні померти, щоб вони правили і жили далі».

«Більше неможливо продовжувати цю масову бійню, коли стратегічно нічого не зміниться». Потрібна перерва””Військовий блогер Максим Калашников записав інтерв'ю з російським офіцером на передовій у Курській області. Офіцер заявив, що єдине правильне рішення зараз — просто зупинити війну, адже те, що відбувається — це бездумне шліфування людей без причини”.

«Ціна на картоплю за рік зросла майже втричі. Через дефіцит Росія змушена імпортувати картоплю з Пакистану та Єгипту. Часу на картоплю зараз немає, нам терміново потрібно підкорювати нові руїни.

Директор СЗР Наришкін заявив, що Росія вже досягла практично всіх цілей СВО. Так-так, виявляється, справжніми цілями «СВО» були знищення половини Донбасу, вбивство тисяч жителів Маріуполя, Бахмута, Северодонецька та Авдіївки, загибель сотень тисяч громадян Росії, накачування України західними літаками та ракетами. Це неподобство врешті-решт буде оголошено ”перемогою в Північному військовому окрузі”. І найголовніше, що Z-ботаники все це проковтнуть і з ентузіазмом перекажуть один одному, як Путін знову всіх переграє”.

Г***** ние, що за 3 роки народ зрозумів, чому божевільний дідусь почав війну і зруйнував сотні тисяч життів. Вони кажуть, що ні діти, ні вчителі не можуть зрозуміти і повторити той меседж тієї нісенітничі, якою їх годують пропагандисти”.

”Наприкінці третього року війни слабодухі Z-блогери почали здогадуватися, що від цього ніхто не виграв, і майже весь російський бізнес просто програв. Зараз може дійти до того, що еліта просто усуне Путіна від влади за ці мистецтва, так само, як свого часу змусила Хрущова піти з Радянського Союзу.

Незрозуміло лише одне.



Якого біса самі Z-патріоти продовжують підтримувати цей кривавий ідіотизм, якщо вони самі визнають, що всі сектори російської економіки тільки в мінусі”.

Z-блогер М***** заявив, що російська армія масово реєструє зниклих безвісти як дезертирів і заявляє, що вони самовільно покинули свій підрозділ, щоб занизити рівень втрат і не виплатити компенсації. Так, в армії Путіна немає дна. Всі гидоти, які вони можуть вчинити проти власних солдатів, вони

обов'язково зроблять”.

”Пораних російських військових з госпіталю в Краснодарському краї, без лікування, відправляють безпосередньо на фронт. Коли поранені повстали проти беззаконня і відмовилися йти на смерть, на них надягали наручники і тепер їх заберуть силою. Як завжди, найбільш нелюдське та звіряче ставлення до російських солдатів демонструє власна держава”.

RUSSIA'S STRANGE DIPLOMATIC LANGUAGE

The Kremlin mocks its opponents

When tensions between the two countries increase – as in recent years between Russia and Ukraine – it is common for the aggressor to ridicule its counterpart. We have seen examples of this. Russian state television is doing its best to spoil Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and the Ukrainian leadership. According to the Kremlin, Zelensky is a Nazi, a drug addict, a clown, a liar, a traitor, a criminal, a psychopath.

It is important to note that these attacks are false and unjustified. Zelenskyy is a democratically elected leader who has shown great courage and determination in the face of Russian aggression. He is overwhelmingly supported by the Ukrainian people and widely respected by world leaders. That he is a Nazi is not of this world, Zelensky is Jewish and one of the pillars of Nazism is hatred of Jews. But Russia thinks anyone who opposes Russia's aggression is a Nazi.

The Kremlin's use of derogatory adjectives against Zelensky is a sign of despair and weakness. They cannot defeat Ze-

lenskyy on the battlefield, so they resort to personal attacks in an attempt to discredit him. However, these attacks only hook and further strengthen Zelenskyy's determination and the unity of the Ukrainian people.

Then there is reason enough to say that the President of Ukraine is not the only one exposed to derogatory and mocking adjectives. The German leader is a "sausage maker" and the leader of the USA is a senile dementia elderly.

This is not a new phenomenon. In particular, the word clown seems to be popular in the Kremlin when someone dares to oppose plans to conquer Russia. On 26.11.1939, a few days before the start of the Winter War, Pravda published the following sensational article about Finnish Prime Minister Aimo Kaarlo Cajander:

"Finland's government fears appearing before the country's parliament. Instead, Prime Minister Cajander, on November 23, happily performed at a concert. The music played, the prime minister gave a speech. Finland's citizens must be entertained in their current sad situation. Cajander tried



Aimo Kaarlo Cajander

to entertain the audience as best he could. He displayed clownish talent. Cajander turned the concert venue into a simple circus arena. Like Pelle Jöns, he somersaulted, spoke non-sense, stood on his head, walked around the arena on his hands.

First, he dragged out several portraits of Russian tsars onto the arena and bowed down to these images. These humble bows he performed with the ingrained subservience of a born servant. He spoke of 'the policy beneficial to Finland, followed by Alexander I and Alex-

ander II and approved by all the people of Finland.' Then Pelle Jöns stood on his head and threatened the Soviet Union with one of his feet because Moscow was thinking of threatening Finland's independence. It was truly a majestic attitude!

It is known that the Russian tsars, whether named Alexander or Nikolai, suppressed all attempts by the Finnish people to gain independence in every way. The tsarist policy, which aimed to oppress, subjugate, and paralyze the people, was only accepted by the reactionary-minded,

corrupt Finnish bourgeoisie. Cajander et consortes served the Russian tsars as faithful lackeys and court jesters. When tsarism was overthrown by the people's fatal blow, the temporary go-vernment refused to grant Finland independence. For this independence, the Bolsheviks Lenin and Stalin fought in cooperation with the Finnish people. From the Soviet government, the Fin-nish people have received their independence, which Finland's bourgeoisie always displays and still sells as a commodity on the market of imperialism. Such are the facts.

Cajander believes that when he makes his somersaults, the world goes off the rails. A ridiculous illusion! Pelle Jöns makes his somersaults, but the facts stand unyieldingly where they stand. This whole pathetic comedy is played out only to avoid answering the Finnish people's question to its ridiculous, intrigue-ridden government: why have Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania concluded treaties with the Soviet government guaranteeing their independence, peace, and secure work, while the Finnish government has interrupted negotiations and caused anxiety and worry for the Finnish people? Here one cannot avoid the issue by just dodging. Cajander makes so-mersaults, crows like a rooster, suddenly bursts into tears. He cries, moans, tears his clothes to pieces, strikes around with the words of a circus clown, scatters ashes.

Not on his own head, but on the heads of the ministers of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Through tears, Cajander cries out: '...These three vigorous Baltic states,



*Hufvudstadsbladet den
27.11.1939*

which had a brilliant future ahead of them, have suddenly been transformed from independent states into realms more or less dependent on the Soviet Union. D

This has made a crushing impression on us Finns." Cajander weeps for the political leaders of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. They have turned out, you see, to be very shortsighted. But Pelle Jöns in the role of prime minister, behold, he is farsighted. He is a politician who has been schooled by the far-sighted Beck, by the clear-sighted Moscicki. May he experience how they feel, these Polish Pelle Jöns, who have forever lost their commitment. Soon enough, Cajander may have the opportunity to realize that it is not the Finnish government's puppets who are foresighted, but Estonia's, Latvia's, and Lithuania's current leaders, who have concluded agree-ments with the Soviet Union guaranteeing the independence of these states.

But Cajander and his cronies cannot avoid giving the Finnish people the answer they increasingly demand.

Why have you, gentlemen Cajander and your associates, interrupted the negotiations? The people have not demanded this of you. Who has demanded that the negotiations be interrupted? Finland's prime minister wriggles like an eel, he cries and snivels and wipes the tears from his dirty face: "As much as we have tried to find a common basis for our negotiations, they have nevertheless been temporarily interrupted.

This must be regretted all the more as Finland sincerely wishes to maintain good relations with all its neighbors." Cajander "regrets"! Cajander "has temporarily" interrupted the negotiations! Cajander sheds crocodile tears. Crocodile tears are said to be the most deceitful, the most vile, the most disgusting in the whole world. But even more repulsive, even more vile, even more deceitful are the tears shed by Pelle Jöns as he imitates the crocodile. It is a perversion of a reptile that lacks sharp teeth, that lacks strength, but is full of the cunning and voracity of a little predator.

And yet Cajander and his henchmen will not escape answering the question that the Finnish people increasingly threateningly pose to them, as they see the country being drawn into a shameful and dangerous game by provocateurs. Why have you, Cajander and your gang, interrupted the negotiations? You are "independent" (?) only of the Finnish people, who in fact seek the friendship of the Soviet people. Who, then, are you dependent on? Whose will do you fulfill, whose instructions do you follow? And Pelle Jöns in the prime minister's office runs anxiously,

cowardly around, letting his faded eyes wander in all directions and swearing to God: "Finland has not been in need and has not received instructions from other states. By God, it has not received any!" A clown's oath, invoking God!

The receipt for "foreign states' instructions" having been fulfilled has been published. It is found in the English imperialist press's approval of Cajander's speech. The Daily Herald pats its Finnish Pelle Jöns friendly on the shoulder: "you have done well, dear brother".

Can one then be surprised that Cajander and his entourage have not found "a common basis" with the Soviet government? Pelle Jöns performs his somersaults on the warlike imperialism's "general platform," lets the jazz orchestra clang, lets the saxophone jam, lets the circus director's whip whistle.

Will this political circus continue for a long time? We must hope: not too long. We must hope that the Finnish people will not allow puppets like Cajander and his associates to steer Finland's ship of state further towards the brink of destruction, where Beck and Moscicki have suffered shipwreck."

This text's Swedish translation was published in Hufvudstadsbladet on November 27, 1939. In Pravda, it was published on November 26, incidentally the same day as the shots in Maimila were fired, evidently by the Russian side.

AI

AI-Generated Podcasts: A New Era of Audio Content with NotebookLM

20 Everyday Abbreviations You Need to Know (and Maybe a Few You Don't)



**Podcast in English:
Russian disinformation**
<https://vpress.ovh/podcasts.htm>

In the rapidly evolving landscape of digital media, artificial intelligence continues to push boundaries, reshaping industries and redefining creative processes. One of the most groundbreaking developments is Google's NotebookLM, an advanced language model with the potential to revolutionize the podcasting world. With its ability to generate human-quality audio content, NotebookLM is paving the way for a new era of AI-driven storytelling, education, and entertainment.

The Emergence of AI-Generated Podcasts

As the podcasting industry continues to grow at an unprecedented rate, content creators and media companies are always on the lookout for innovative tools to streamline production and enhance creativity. NotebookLM, initially celebrated for its ability to generate high-quality written content, has now ventured into the realm of audio. This cutting-edge

technology is capable of producing podcasts that are nearly indistinguishable from those created by human hosts, opening up exciting possibilities for the future of digital content.

The appeal of NotebookLM-generated podcasts lies in several key features that set them apart from traditional podcasts:

Natural-Sounding Voice: NotebookLM can produce audio content with a voice that mimics the natural cadence and tone of human speech. This makes it difficult for listeners to discern that the podcast is AI-generated, offering a seamless listening experience.

Diverse Range of Topics: Whether it's breaking news, current events, or light-hearted storytelling, NotebookLM can tackle a wide array of subjects. Its versatility makes it an ideal tool for content creators looking to explore different genres without the constraints of time and labor-intensive production.



Abbreviations are everywhere these days. From texting acronyms to technical jargon, those handy 3-letter (and sometimes longer) combos can be confusing if you're not in the know. But fear not, fellow abbreviation adventurer! This article will equip you with the knowledge to decipher 20 of the most common abbreviations you'll encounter in everyday life.

1. **LOL:** Laughing Out Loud (This one might already be a classic for many!)
2. **BRB:** Be Right Back (Perfect for a quick bathroom break during a chat)
3. **OMG:** Oh My God (Expresses surprise or strong emotion)
4. **IMHO:** In My Humble Opinion (A way to preface your opinion politely)
5. **** ASAP:** As Soon As Possible (Lights a fire under someone... nicely)
6. **FYI:** For Your Information (A heads-up for someone)
7. **ETA:** Estimated Time of Arrival (Lets you know when to expect someone)
8. **RSVP:** Please Reply (Formal request for a response to an

- invitation)
9. **PDF:** Portable Document Format (A common file format for documents)
10. **JPG:** Joint Photographic Experts Group (A popular image file format)
11. **GIF:** Graphics Interchange Format (Another image format, known for animations)
12. **TIFF:** Tagged Image File Format (Used for high-quality images)
13. **WWW:** World Wide Web (The foundation of the internet we know)
14. **HTTP:** Hypertext Transfer Protocol (The language webpages use to talk)
15. **GPS:** Global Positioning System (Helps you navigate the world)
16. **ATM:** Automated Teller Machine (Your friendly neighborhood cash dispenser)
17. **DIY:** Do It Yourself (For the handy folks out there)
18. **VIP:** Very Important Person (Someone who gets special treatment)
19. **TBA:** To Be Announced (Stay tuned for more information)
20. **TBD:** To Be Determined (We're still figuring things out)

This is just a taste of the abbreviation world, but with these 20 under your belt, you'll be well on your way to deciphering the everyday lingo, from casual texts to technical documents. So, the next time you see an abbreviation that leaves you scratching your head, remember this list and keep on exploring the wonderful world of shorthand communication!

Wasa Daily

A modern newspaper with a layout with features of the press of the 1870s. Back then, newspapers had only 4-8 pages. Lots of text, but no images at all, so there's a lot to read on a few pages. Our paper is one of the very few newspapers in English serving English-speaking inhabitants in the Osthrobotnia region

The magazine contains quotations from old daily newspapers taken from the National Archives (digikansalliskirjasto.fi). GPT3, Gemini, Aria and Monica do some of the routine editing work, such as translation, corrector reading, and short notice writing. All texts have been checked by journalists and the editorial staff is responsible for all the content of the texts.

Wasa Daily is a daily newspaper type publication, so far it is published on Sunday mornings. But our goal is for it to come out every morning in the future.

The magazine is available online for free.

Editor-in-chief Hans Björknäs.

Readers' writings are welcome!

The magazine is locally owned and will remain so. For ever!

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HOROSCOPE FOR JUNE 2025

June Horoscope – The Stars Are Mumbling (And Maybe Making Some Sense)

Aries (March 21 – April 19)
You're ready to conquer the world – just remember to put on real pants first. June brings you adventure (or at least a new brand of toothpaste). Romance is on the horizon, possibly involving someone who thinks your sweaty gym look is “natural and compelling.”

Taurus (April 20 – May 20)
You crave stability, snacks, and soft blankets – and not necessarily in that order. In June, you may feel a strong urge to impulse-buy a cactus. Do it. Financially, you're fine as long as you don't walk past any store that sells vintage mugs.

Gemini (May 21 – June 20)
This month your mouth works faster than your brain. Great for party banter, less great for job interviews. Love is playful and possibly confusing. Is it flirting, or just a shared obsession with crosswords? Time will tell. Or not.

Cancer (June 21 – July 22)
Home is where your heart – and probably your laundry – is. In June, feelings run deep. You may cry at an ad for breakfast cereal. That's okay. Your emotional radar is

strong; use it to sniff out both love and passive-aggressive neighbors.

Leo (July 23 – August 22)
June puts you center stage, even if the audience is just your cat. You radiate charm. Someone falls for you this month – possibly a barista who accidentally writes your name right. Fortune favors the bold, so dare to try karaoke again.

Virgo (August 23 – September 22)
You've got lists for your lists, and that's great – until you accidentally alphabetize your sock drawer. This month urges you to loosen up. Take a walk without counting steps. Eat a cookie without Googling the ingredients. You might enjoy the chaos.

Libra (September 23 – October 22)
Balance is your thing, but June throws in a few wobbly surprises. You'll face a dilemma involving brunch and loyalty to your favorite café. Love could blossom – or at least send you a weird emoji. Watch for signs. Or just interpret all signs creatively.

Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)
Mysterious? Always. Brooding? Maybe. Overthinking a five-word text? Definitely. June turns up the heat, romantically and otherwise. Let people in – not everyone wants to steal your secrets. Some just want to know your Wi-Fi password.

Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)
You're itching to travel – even if it's just to the fancy supermarket across town. A spontaneous decision this month could lead to greatness. Or minor confusion. Either way, exciting! Love may come from a foreign land. Or a friend-of-a-friend's dog walker.

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)
You work hard, dream big, and sometimes forget to blink. This month, remember: even empires need coffee breaks. Someone sees your potential – probably someone in HR. Love's possible if you stop trying to impress people with Excel spreadsheets.

Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)
You're five steps ahead, which explains why no one knows what you're talking about. In June, weird is your superpower. Embrace it. Someone special may finally “get” you. Or at least pretend convincingly. That counts.

Pisces (February 19 – March 20)
You're dreaming of far-off lands and deep conversations with your houseplants. June is rich in imagination, slightly short on practicality. That's okay. Channel your magic into a new hobby – interpretive dance, perhaps? The universe approves.



HUMOUR ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

DRINKING

— Why do you close your eyes while drinking? — The doctor has forbidden me to look too deeply into the glass.

IN THE CHURCH

Healthy advice. The priest notices that most of the audience is sleeping and that one of them has started snoring heavily, which is why he raises his voice and says: — Wouldn't someone be so good as to wake up that snoring brother of ours so that the others could sleep in peace.

MAD LOVE

Love. Young man: — I love you madly! Miss: — Then it is best that you turn to my father. He is a doctor for the mentally ill.

CARAMEL

Lill-Jan has received one large caramel, which he immediately puts in his mouth. Immediately afterwards, he cancels his best scream, because his mouth is closed, the caramel is gone. "What's wrong with Lill-Jan," asks mother. — Kajamel-len, boohää, hää hää! . . . — Have you lost the caramel? — Yes. — And mother and all the aunts start looking for it. — Where did you drop it then... — Buhää, hää — in the stomach.

MARRIED 6 DAYS

— Now we've been married for 6 days, and you don't love me anymore. — But dear Cecilia, of course I love you, but God the Father also rested on the seventh day.

FREE TELEGRAM

Mac Carty from Aberdeen is visiting the U.S.A. One day he

has to send a telegram to a relative. When he asks about the price at the telegraph office, he is told that the sender's name costs nothing.

— Magnificent, says the scout. I am descended from an Indian chief and my name is Iwillarri-vetomorrow.

SLOW AS THE EVENING SKY.

— Yes, feel free to kiss you, Cissi.
— Hmm.
— Are you going to be terribly angry with me if I give you a kiss, Cissi?
— Mnah
— Can I give you a kiss, Cissi?
— I say int
— Do they mean yes or no?
— They say yes, Affe!
— Why don't you want to say them then? Can I kiss you or not?
— Think about it then!
— Yes, I can't give you a kiss!

Astronomic picture of the week:



The spectacular star-forming Carina Nebula has been captured in great detail by the VLT Survey Telescope at ESO's Paranal Observatory. This picture was taken with the help of Sebastián Piñera, President of Chile, during his visit to the observatory on 5 June 2012 and released on the occasion of the new telescope's inauguration in Naples on 6 December 2012.

Credit:

ESO. Acknowledgement: VPHAS+ Consortium/Cambridge Astronomical Survey Unit
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Next week:



From our readers

We very much welcome submissions from our readers. Comments, stories, memories, debate, news from home. Probably this will be the most important part of this spring paper. But space is limited, so please write as short as possible! So please send posts to:
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