

WASA DAILY

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Happiest in the World - Finland

And we are happy in Vaasa too

Roman quotes

Microplastics

Wärtsilä area

Election coming

WASA DAILY



HERE WE ARE:

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44 pages

Microplastics: The Invisible Enemy Creeping Under Your Skin



They call it microplastics. Tiny, invisible particles of plastic, infiltrating everything. The oceans, the soil, the food we eat. And now, according to the latest research, even our bodies. It's like a silent invasion, a creeping enemy we can't even see.

I was at a seminar recently, one of those places where white-coated scientists mumble about nanotechnology and toxicity. They showed images, diagrams, numbers that made your jaw drop. We're not talking about plastic bags choking whales anymore. This is something else, something far more subtle and far more terrifying.

Microplastics are everywhere. In the water we drink, the fish we eat, even the air we breathe. It's like an invisible net surrounding us, seeping into our lungs, our bloodstreams, our organs. And nobody really knows what it's doing to us.

The scientists are starting to get a sense of it. They talk about cell toxicity, oxidative stress, inflammatory reactions. They talk about how these tiny particles can disrupt our gut microbiota, our immune systems, even our brains. And they talk about the tens of thousands of chemicals contained in plastic, chemicals that might be even more dangerous than the plastic itself.

I think about it when I walk down the street, when I take a sip of water, when I eat a piece of fish. I think about my kids, my friends, everyone living in this silent invasion. We're all lab rats in a massive experiment, an experiment none of us asked for.

But there's hope. The scientists are starting to understand. They're developing new methods to detect and measure microplastics. They're looking for ways to break it down, to stop it from spreading. And they're beginning to realize we can't

solve this problem with a quick fix. We need a systemic change, a shift towards a more sustainable lifestyle, a reduction in our plastic consumption.

It's a fight, a fight against an invisible enemy, a fight

for our health, for our future. But we're not helpless. We have the knowledge, we have the technology, we have the will. We just have to act. We have to do it now, before it's too late.

I'm reminded of a scene from an old movie, a scene where a lone hero stands against an overwhelming enemy. He knows the odds are stacked against him, but he doesn't give up. He fights, he pushes back, he refuses to yield. That's how we have to be. We have to be the heroes of our own story. We have to stand against microplastics, against this invisible enemy, and we have to win.

Hans Björknäs

Photo Supplement



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UNIVERSITY

University of Vaasa Beckons Students to the City – Record Number of Applicants Enticed by Promises of the Future

The University of Vaasa has achieved record-breaking popularity in the spring's second joint application period, heralding a vibrant future for the student city. The university garnered a remarkable 10,689 applications, a clear indication that Vaasa is attracting future talent from across Finland. Master's programs, in particular, saw a significant surge in popularity, reflecting students' confidence in the high-quality education offered by the university.

"The year-on-year increase in applicant numbers demonstrates the attractiveness of

our education and that more and more people see the education offered by the university as a valuable investment in the future," states Minna Martikainen, Rector of the University of Vaasa.

The most popular application targets were programs in business and administrative sciences, especially the master's programs in human resource management and marketing management. The master's program in economics also attracted a record number of applicants. Bachelor's programs were not left behind, also seeing a record number of applications.

The University of Vaasa strongly invests in students' futures by offering high-quality projects, research and innovation-oriented studies, and ample internship and summer job opportunities within the region's numerous export companies. The university educates experts and leaders who can address the societal challenges of today and tomorrow.

"We teach skills that enable students to develop the operations of companies and organizations in an economically, socially, and environmentally responsible manner when they enter the workforce," says

Vice Rector Tanja Risikko.

In addition to the joint application, 148 students applied for degree studies through the open university pathway. Furthermore, applications for the new English-language Bachelor's program in Business Administration are open until April 10th. This internationally oriented program provides students with a solid foundation for an international career.

Entrance examinations will be held in May-June, and the university is participating in the national reform of entrance examinations, which allows applicants to apply

NEWS

WITH A TABLET YOU CAN READ THIS PAPER ANYWHERE:



Like here on the Molpehällorna Island

to multiple fields and universities with a single exam. The University of Vaasa will organize the entrance examinations in Vaasa in collaboration with Åbo Akademi.

The University of Vaasa has clearly succeeded in creating an attractive educational environment that draws students from all over Finland. The record-breaking number of applicants clearly demonstrates that the University of Vaasa is a strong player in the higher education field and a significant factor in the region's development.

Source: University of Vaasa

VAASA

We in Vaasa are Happy. Truly Happy!

Vasa has reason to celebrate, as the results of the city's latest happiness survey are nothing short of spectacular! The average happiness score among Vasaites has reached a record high of 74.7 points on a scale of 0 to 100. This is a remarkable achievement that speaks to the positive outlook on life and the ability to enjoy the small joys of everyday life among the city's residents.

Rising from Dark Times to a Brighter Future

The year 2022 was exceptionally challenging for Vasaites. Russia's invasion of Ukraine created feelings of insecurity and economic uncertainty, which were reflected in the happiness scores. However, now, just three years later, Vasaites have demonstrated incredible resilience and the ability to rediscover happiness.



"This is a significant testament to the strong community spirit and the ability to overcome difficulties among Vasaites," says a city representative. "We are proud that Vasaites feel they are living a happy and fulfilling life."

The Secrets of Happiness Revealed

A record number of Vasaites, a total of 2,306 people, participated in the survey, making the results particularly significant. The study revealed several key factors that contribute to the happiness of Vasaites:

Personal Attitude Matters: Nearly half of the respondents believe that happiness is largely up to oneself. **Optimism Pays Off:** Vasaites look to the future with confidence, with five times more optimists than pessimists. **Community and Activity Bring Joy:** Volunteering and physical activity are linked to a higher level of happiness. **The Power of Small Moments:** The ability to find joy in the small things of everyday life is the most important source of happiness. **Even with Happiness Thieves, People Adapt** The survey also identified

"happiness thieves," or factors that diminish happiness. The most common were pains and aches, excessive sensitivity, financial difficulties, and efficiency pressures. However, it is encouraging that people are able to adapt to their problems. Happiness only decreases when there are five or more thieves.

Vasa – A Model City for Happiness

The happiness scores of Vasaites are consistent with the other studies by Emeritus Professor Markku Ojanen, which confirms the reliability of the results. Vasa can proudly call itself a model city for happiness, where residents know how to appreciate the good things in life.

"This survey is a valuable tool for us to develop the city into an even better place to live," says a city representative. "We want to continue to invest in the well-being of our residents and create the conditions for a happy life."

SUMMER VACATION School Summer Holidays Should Start at Midsummer and End in Late August – Boost to Economy, But What About Children and Teachers?

The sun blazes in the July heat, and Finland quiets down. Schools have been closed for a month, and families are enjoying traditional summer holidays. But what if this traditional summer holiday rhythm changed?

What if school summer holidays started only at Midsummer and continued until the end of August? Such a change has sparked lively debate, with proponents promising significant economic benefits.

Both tourism and restaurant businesses, along with a large portion of the public, support shifting school summer holidays. Recent surveys indicate that as many as 57 percent of citizens favor the change when informed of its positive economic impacts. A striking 75 percent of tourism businesses see the change as positive. A study

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by Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences suggests that shifting summer holidays would increase tourism and restaurant industry revenue by 336 million euros annually and create thousands of new jobs.

“School summer holidays are scheduled differently in Finland than in other European countries. Elsewhere, August is the primary holiday month. In Finland, family holidays practically end when schools start in early August,” states Timo Lappi, CEO of MaRa. This difference creates challenges for the tourism sector, which suffers from a lack of domestic customers and workforce in late summer.

Shifting summer holidays wouldn't just benefit the tourism industry. It would also bring significant advantages to other sectors, such as agriculture and wholesale trade. Additionally, it would create new jobs, especially for young people seeking summer employment. Annika Rönni-Sällinen, chair of PAM, emphasizes that the change could increase the number of permanent and year-round jobs, which would be positive for both employees and regional economies.

“The companies' estimates of revenue and employment growth surprised us with their magnitude,” says Rönni-Sällinen.

But how would the change affect children and teachers? Shifting school summer holidays would require adjustments to school schedules and entrance exams for educational institutions. Teachers' work stamina and students' learning could also be negatively impacted if summer holidays were moved later. Furthermore, the weather in August can be more unstable than in early June.

Experts suggest that shifting summer holidays would require a comprehensive study that considers all potential impacts. The government should launch a thorough investigation, hearing from teachers, students, parents, and representatives from

the tourism industry. Only in this way can we ensure that the change would be positive overall.

The debate about shifting summer holidays has stirred strong emotions. Some see it as an opportunity to boost the economy and create new jobs, while others fear it would harm the well-being of children and teachers. It's clear that the decision to shift summer holidays is complex and requires careful consideration.

It's crucial to find a balance between economic benefits and the well-being of schoolchildren and teachers. Only through open discussion and thorough investigation can we ensure that we make the right decision for future generations.

ELECTION

Advance Voting Begins on April 2 – Here's How to Vote in Advance



Advance voting in Finland takes place from April 2 to April 8. All eligible voters can cast their vote in advance at any general advance polling station in the country, regardless of their municipality of residence. Each municipality has at least one advance polling station, and a complete list is available at www.valfinland.fi.

It is also possible to vote in advance at designated polling stations abroad. Addresses and further details about these locations can be found on the same website.

When voting, you must present a valid photo ID, such as a passport, identity card, or driver's license. The voting rights notification is not required.

UNEMPLOYMENT Concerning Employment Figures in Ostrobothnia

The latest employment review from the Ostrobothnia ELY Centre for February reveals a dual picture of the region's labor market. While the unemployment rate remains the lowest in Mainland Finland (7.6%), the overall image is not rosy. The number of unemployed job seekers has increased compared to the previous year, and certain regions and age groups are particularly affected.

Regional Disparities Highlighted

It's noteworthy that the increase in unemployment has not been evenly distributed. For example, the Jakobstad region has seen a significant rise in unemployment, while the situation in the South Ostrobothnia region has remained stable. This indicates that regional economic factors and industry structures have a considerable impact on the employment situation.

It's therefore crucial that local decision-makers and the business community collaborate closely to develop targeted solutions for the specific needs of the regions. Age Groups and Education Levels – Challenges on Multiple Fronts

Particularly concerning is the increase in unemployment among young people (25-29 years) and older individuals (60-64 years). This underscores the need to

invest in supporting youth employment and promoting the retention of older workers. There are also disparities between different education levels, and the increase in unemployment among specialists raises questions about the matching of supply and demand for skilled labor.

Here, the importance of lifelong learning emerges. In a rapidly changing work environment, it's essential that people can update their skills and meet the needs of the labor market. The Employment Area Reform – Opportunity or Threat?

The employment area reform, which came into effect at the beginning of 2025 and involves the transfer of public employment services to municipalities, brings both opportunities and challenges. It will be interesting to see how local actors succeed in responding to the new responsibility and developing effective employment services.

This emphasizes cooperation between municipalities and the sharing of best practices. It's crucial that the reform leads to genuinely better results and does not cause administrative confusion. The Decrease in Layoffs – A Glimmer of Hope in a Gloomy Atmosphere?

While the overall picture is concerning, the decrease in full-time layoffs is a positive sign. It may indicate that companies have faith in the future and are trying to retain skilled labor.

This is important, as the availability of skilled labor is a key factor in the region's vitality. Overall, the employment situation in Ostrobothnia requires close monitoring and active measures. It's essential that the region's actors collaborate and develop targeted solutions to address the region's specific needs and promote employment across all age groups and education levels.

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ENERGY

Scotland's Giant Battery Goes Live: A Milestone for Renewable Energy



A monumental leap in renewable energy integration has been achieved as Wärtsilä's groundbreaking 200MW/400MWh battery energy storage system, installed at Zenobē's Blackhillock site, is now fully operational. This facility, the largest of its kind in Europe, marks a pivotal moment in the UK's journey towards a net-zero power grid, setting a new global standard for grid stability.

The Blackhillock project, a key component of the National Grid Electricity System Operator's (NESO) Stability Pathfinder programme, is the first to deliver crucial stability services, including short-circuit level and true synthetic inertia, to the UK's national grid. These services are vital for maintaining grid stability as traditional fossil fuel power plants are phased out, ensuring that the increasing reliance on intermittent renewable sources like wind doesn't compromise power reliability.

"Our batteries at Blackhillock are the first to use advanced power electronics to enable a much higher uptake of renewable power on the grid," stated James Basden, Founder and Director of Zenobē. "This dramatically reduces costs to consumers and increases reliability. Zenobē is the first to deliver this capability at scale and we are helping the UK to become more competitive through increasing the availability of clean, affordable power."

The strategic location of the Blackhillock site allows it to efficiently integrate power from three major North Sea offshore wind farms, effectively mitigating grid congestion. Zenobē estimates that the project will save consumers over £170 million over the next 15 years and prevent approximately 2.6 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions, directly contributing to the UK's 2030 net-zero target.

Wärtsilä's Quantum battery energy storage system, coupled with the sophisticated GEMS Digital Energy Platform, enables remote monitoring and operation, optimizing energy flow and participation in lucrative electricity markets. "Blackhillock sets a new standard and plays a pivotal role in balancing the grid and supporting the UK's path to 100% renewables," said Andrew

Tang, Vice President of Wärtsilä Energy Storage & Optimisation.

Adding to the momentum, Wärtsilä is also constructing a 300MW/600MWh storage system at Zenobē's Kilmarnock South site, expected to be operational by the end of 2025, further solidifying Scotland's position as a leader in grid-scale energy storage.

This news highlights a significant shift in how we manage renewable energy integration. The Blackhillock project is not just a large battery; it's a demonstration of how advanced technology can solve the inherent challenges of intermittent renewable sources. The use of synthetic inertia, a critical feature, is a game-changer, as it mimics the stabilizing effect of traditional power plants, ensuring grid stability even with high penetrations of wind and solar.

The projected savings for consumers and the substantial reduction in CO₂ emissions are compelling arguments for investing in such infrastructure. Moreover, the fact that this is the first of its kind under the NOA Stability Pathfinder programme underscores the UK's commitment to innovation in grid stabilization.

The simultaneous development of the Kilmarnock South project further emphasizes the scale of this transformation. As more projects like these come online, we can expect a more reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy future. The integration of advanced software like Wärtsilä's GEMS is also a key factor, showing how digital solutions are essential to maximizing the value and efficiency of large-scale energy storage. This is more than just a battery; it's a critical piece of the puzzle in building a robust and resilient renewable energy ecosystem. PHOTO: Wärtsilä

NIGHT OF THE ARTS

Vaasa's Night of the Arts to Fill the City in August – Registration Now Open

Vaasa's beloved cultural celebration, the Night of the Arts, will once again take over the city's streets and squares on August 14, 2025. Registration for the event's diverse program is now open, and contributions are welcomed from music, art, and various associations and clubs. The registration period runs until May 31.

The Night of the Arts is known for its vibrant and lively atmosphere, and this year will feature the traditional Night of the Arts parade. As a new addition, an Art Village will be set up in Vaasa Market Square, providing a stage and exhibition space for various art forms.

Separate registration forms are available on the City of Vaasa's website for music performances, other performances, and the parade. Dance groups, associations, and other performers can easily register via the online forms.

"The Night of the Arts is a communal celebration for the city's residents, and we hope to include art and culture in its various forms in the program," encourages cultural producer Geir Byrkjeland from the City of Vaasa's Culture and Library Services.

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VAASA CITY THEATRE

A Season of Ecstasy: Piaf and Forever Young Take Over Vaasa City Theatre This Autumn

Vaasa City Theatre is preparing for an autumn filled with music, emotion, and ecstasy. Under the direction of theatre director Seppo Välinen, the upcoming season's theme has been chosen as "ecstasy," promising audiences unforgettable moments of art and entertainment. The season will feature stories that captivate, provoke thought, and reveal the world in a new light.

In September, the Romeo stage will be dominated by Pam Gems' musical play "Piaf – No Regrets," which tells the unique life story of Édith Piaf, who rose from the streets of Paris to global fame. Directed by Maiju Sallas, the production blends fact and fiction, bringing Piaf's most famous songs, such as "Non, je ne regrette rien" and "La vie en rose," to the stage. Sonja Halla-aho shines in the lead role, with musical direction by conductor Sauli Perälä.

At the end of October, Erik Gedeon's joyous musical comedy "Forever Young" will take the stage. Directed by Pentti Kotkaniemi, the play transports audiences to the 1980s, where Vaasa City Theatre has been transformed into an actors' retirement home. Expect humor, nostalgia, and beloved hits from past decades, including "I Love Rock'n Roll" and "Forever Young." The cast includes Toni Ikola, Timo Luoma, and new addition Anni-Maija Koskinen.

"The 'ecstasy' themed season offers a multifaceted experience, exploring how ecstasy, enchantment, and intoxication manifest in our time and society," explains theatre director Seppo Välinen.

Vaasa City Theatre invites everyone to experience a season of ecstasy in autumn 2025. Prepare for theatrical experiences that leave a lasting impression and allow audiences to feel the full spectrum of life.

CHILD ABUSE

Money Trails Unmask Child Sexual Abuse Networks: International Report Issues Stark Warning

An alarming report released by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an international body combating money laundering and terrorist financing, has revealed the dark and extensive reach of online child sexual abuse. The report indicates that a staggering 300 million children worldwide are victimized by this crime annually, highlighting the critical role of tracking financial transactions in uncovering and disrupting these networks.

The report focuses on two primary forms of exploitation: live online broadcasts of child sexual abuse and financial extortion through the use of compromising material. FATF emphasizes that early intervention, made possible by monitoring money flows, is vital for saving lives and bringing perpetrators to justice.

"International cooperation among authorities and the involvement of the private sector, particularly banks and other financial institutions, are essential to combat this crime," the report states. Financial entities can play a crucial role in identifying suspicious transactions and supporting law enforcement operations.

The report includes concrete examples of cases where tracking financial flows has led to arrests and the rescue of victims in countries such as Norway, the United Kingdom, and Australia. These instances underscore the effectiveness of financial monitoring as a tool in the fight against online child sexual abuse.

This report serves as a stark reminder that online child sexual abuse is a global crisis requiring

immediate and coordinated action. It also highlights the critical responsibility of financial institutions in preventing these crimes and protecting children.

CHANCELLOR OF JUSTICE

Seven Candidates Seek Finland's Chancellor of Justice Position

The application period for the Chancellor of Justice position in Finland closed on March 21, 2025, with seven individuals vying for the prestigious role. The position will become vacant on August 1, 2025, following the departure of the current Chancellor, Tuomas Pöysti, who is set to take on new responsibilities.

The Ministry of Justice has announced the following applicants:

- Marks Peter
- Ronkainen Pasi
- Kolehmainen Jouni
- Lindroos-Hovinheimo Susanna
- Hinkkanen Ville
- Salminen Janne
- Heiskanen Heta-Elena

The Chancellor of Justice, alongside the Parliamentary Ombudsman, holds the position of the highest legal supervisor in Finland. Their primary responsibility is to ensure that authorities adhere to the law and fulfill their duties when carrying out public functions. They also oversee the protection of fundamental and human rights.

The Office of the Chancellor of Justice, led by the Chancellor, is an independent agency affiliated with the Council of State. This role is crucial in upholding the rule of law and ensuring the proper functioning of Finland's legal system.

ART EXPERIENCE OF THE WEEK



Alexander Lauréus
4.1.1783, Turku
20.10.1823, Rooma, Italia
Colosseum, 1820

EVENTS

TIKANOJA

THE ART EVENT OF THE YEAR!



The exhibition covering the entire career of the masterful nature and portrait photographer Eero Järnefelt (1863–1937) will be on display until 25.5.2025 at the Tikanoja Art Museum - so there is still plenty of time.

Järnefelt is connected to Vaasa in that his father Alexander served as the governor of the province of Vaasa from 1888 to 1894. Alexander lived on Rantakatu and the family rented Tottesund Manor in Maksamaa for the summers of 1891–1892. Eero Järnefelt's sister Aino married Jean Sibelius there. The exhibition has been curated by Timo Huusko, Chief Curator of the Ateneum, and the exhibition at the Tikanoja Art Museum has been produced by the Ateneum Art Museum / Finnish National Gallery in cooperation with the Vaasa Museums.

ATENEUM

When the Ateneum opens the doors to the *Crossing Borders* exhibition on 7 March 2025, visitors will be invited on a fascinating journey through time and space.

For the first time, the works of the brave women who, despite the limitations of their time, crossed geographical and social boundaries to create art are collected. Among the prominent names are two artists from Vaasa – the bold landscape painter Fanny Churberg and the skilled portrait and genre painter Alexandra Frosterus-Såltin.

Vaasa-Vasa Baroque

Sat / Sat 22.3 at / kl. 16.00

Music in Veturitalli

Symphonies for one violin – Sonatas and Letters by Stradella Symfonier för en violin – Stradellas sonater och brev Pirkanmaa Baroque & Aira Maria Lehtipuu

This concert is free of charge! Open house in Veturitalli all day, come and explore the Wärtsilä area.

<https://vaasabaroque.com/>

VAASA humour FESTIVAL 2025

2-4.4.2025

Sov. Finland-Swedish cultural development

The churches' sounding week:

During the Sounding Week of Churches, you can listen to almost all the choirs and orchestras of the Vaasa Evangelical Lutheran congregations. Admission to



Miss Concordiae on Friday 28.3 at 7 pm in the Trinity Church. Sing the Joy, conducted by Sini Usmi.

Children's party on Saturday 29.3 at 3 pm in Vähäkyrö church. The parish's children's choirs.

Canticum Maris a cappella Sunday 30.3 at 7 pm in the Trinity Church. Conductor Tarja Viitanen.

The church choirs and cantors on Wednesday 2.4 at 7 pm in the Trinity Church.

The Merina Youth Choir on Thursday 3.4 at 7 pm in Brändö church. Conductor Tarja Viitanen.

Vaasa-Vasa Baroque

Sun / Sö 27.4 at / kl. 17.00
City Hall Ballroom / Stadshuset's festsal

Handel and Roman in London – Handel möter Roman i London

Kajsa Dahlbäck, soprano / sopran Drottningholms barockensemble (SWE)

<https://vaasabaroque.com/>

VAASA CHOIR FESTIVAL XXXI 22-24.5.2025

Vaasa Choir Festival is a significant international choral music event. The joyful and social closing celebration of the singing season is open to all choirs.

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

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

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 direc-

tion 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."

Korsholm Music Festival will be held next summer 23.–30.7.2025.

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

WASA FUTURE FESTIVAL

11-16.8.2025

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

ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

MICROPLASTICS

Microplastics: An Invisible Threat to Environme-

Microplastics, solid plastic particles less than five millimeters in size, have emerged as a significant environmental and health concern in recent years. The THL seminar on March 25, 2025, provided a comprehensive overview of the current state of microplastic research, revealing the scope and severity of this complex issue. The information presented at the seminar, combined with my own observations, paints an alarming picture of the impact of microplastics on our environment and potentially our health.

Microplastics are solid plastic particles composed of mixtures of functional additives. They have been detected almost everywhere in the environment, from the deep seas to high mountains. Due to their small size, they are easily transported by water and air, eventually entering the food chain.

The seminar emphasized that microplastic research is multidisciplinary, involving researchers from fields such as technical physics, environmental and life sciences, photonics, pharmacy, clinical nutrition, and even law. This multidisciplinary approach reflects the complexity of microplastics and their broad impact on various aspects of life.

The explosive growth in research volume in recent years underscores the urgency of microplastics and the growing concern among researchers. The seminar highlighted that the number of studies has increased twenty-fold in five years. This development is positive, but it also emphasizes the need for uniform research methods and comparable results. Currently, there are up to 17 different methods used in Europe



for identifying microplastics, which hinders the comparison of results and the formation of a comprehensive picture.

One of the seminar's central themes was the presence of microplastics in water bodies. In Finland, the occurrence of microplastics in surface water, sediment, lakes, stormwater, ice, and even fish has been studied. The results are concerning: microplastics have been found in about one in four of the fish examined (fish from Lake Kallavesi). This shows that microplastics are already widely dispersed in Finnish waters and have entered the food chain.

The seminar revealed that we ingest an amount of microplastics equivalent to the size of a bank card weekly through food. The long-term health effects of this are still largely unknown, but the potential risks are alarming. Microplastics have been found to cause cell toxicity, oxidative stress, inflammatory

reactions, and even genotoxicity. Additionally, the over 10,000 different additives in plastics can pose additional risks.

Particularly concerning is the potential interaction of microplastics with the gut microbiota. The gut microbiota is crucial for the immune system and overall health. The effects of microplastics on this delicate ecosystem are still largely unknown, but research is ongoing. Furthermore, it has been observed that nanoplastics can cross the blood-brain barrier, raising concerns about their potential effects on brain function.

My own concern focuses particularly on the potential effects of microplastics on cardiovascular health. Although a direct link between microplastics and coronary artery disease has not yet been established, there are several mechanisms through which microplastics could potentially affect cardiovascular health. For example, the inflammatory reac-

tion caused by microplastics can promote atherosclerosis, or hardening of the arteries. Additionally, the chemicals contained in microplastics can affect blood pressure and blood clotting. The ability of nanoplastics to cross the blood-brain barrier also raises questions about their potential effects on the regulation of heart function.

The seminar highlighted several challenges and opportunities in combating microplastics. A key challenge is the inability of people to live completely "plastic-free" in today's society. Plastic is present in almost all areas of life, and completely replacing it is a huge challenge. Another major concern is the entry of microplastics into the soil, which can affect global food production.

The seminar mentioned the Single-Use Plastics Directive as an example of how political decisions can influence the spread of microplastics. Additionally, the possibility of using plastic-degrading microbes to combat microplastics was discussed.

This is a promising area of research that may offer new solutions to this global problem.

In summary, microplastics are a serious threat to the environment and potentially to health. We need more research on the effects of microplastics, uniform research methods, and effective measures to prevent the entry of microplastics into the environment. It is also important to raise awareness of the harms of microplastics and promote more sustainable alternatives to plastic.

ANCIENT ROME

ROMAN QUOTES

Indeed, the Romans Were Wise!

Yes, they were. These quotes, used if not daily, then very frequently, all originated in the Roman Empire.

Introduction

The Roman Empire was a cradle of wisdom and intellect. Many of the proverbs and quotes coined during this period have survived the centuries and continue to inspire and provide us with insights today. In this article, we will explore some of the most memorable Latin quotes and their meanings.

Memorable Latin Quotes

- "Carpe diem"
 - o Meaning: Seize the day.
 - o Explanation: This famous quote by the poet Horace urges us to make the most of every moment and enjoy life to the fullest.
- "Veni, vidi, vici"
 - o Meaning: I came, I saw, I conquered.
 - o Explanation: These words were uttered by Julius Caesar after a swift victory in war. They symbolize efficiency and determination.
- "Alea iacta est"
 - o Meaning: The die is cast.
 - o Explanation: Also from Julius Caesar, this quote was said when he crossed the Rubicon River with his army, thus starting a civil war.
- "Errare humanum est"
 - o Meaning: To err is human.
 - o Explanation: This proverb reminds us that no one is perfect and that we all make mistakes.
- "Dum spiro, spero"
 - o Meaning: While I breathe, I hope.
 - o Explanation: This



- quote expresses a sense of unwavering hope and perseverance in the face of adversity.
- "Ad astra per aspera"
 - o Meaning: To the stars through difficulties.
 - o Explanation: This quote, often used as a motto, emphasizes that success requires effort and overcoming obstacles.
- "Memento mori"
 - o Meaning: Remember that you must die.
 - o Explanation: This quote is a reminder of the transience of life and the importance of living in the present.
- "Si vis pacem, para bellum"
 - o Meaning: If you want peace, prepare for war.
 - o Explanation: This quote, often attributed to Publius Flavius Vegetius Renatus, suggests that military strength may be necessary to maintain peace.

- "O tempora, o mores!"
 - o Meaning: Oh times, oh customs!
 - o Explanation: This expression by Cicero is used to express concern or dissatisfaction with the prevailing situation.
- "Festina lente"
 - o Meaning: Make haste slowly.
 - o Explanation: This quote, attributed to Emperor Augustus, urges a balanced approach that combines speed with accuracy.
- "Vox populi, vox Dei"
 - o Meaning: The voice of the people, the voice of God.
 - o Explanation: This quote expresses the idea that public opinion has a certain authority or validity.
- "Amor vincit omnia"
 - o Meaning: Love conquers all.
 - o Explanation: This

- quote by Virgil celebrates the power of love and its ability to overcome obstacles.
 - "Audere est facere"
 - o Meaning: To dare is to do.
 - o Explanation: This quote emphasizes the importance of taking risks and acting to achieve one's goals.
 - "De gustibus non est disputandum"
 - o Meaning: There is no disputing about tastes.
 - o Explanation: This quote reminds us that taste is subjective and that arguing about it is pointless.
- The Latin quotes above are just a small selection of the wisdom that the Roman Empire has given us. These proverbs and quotes continue to be relevant today and provide us with valuable insights into life, love, success, and much more.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

TUBERCULOSIS

THL: Tuberculosis Still Exists – Increased International Workforce in Finland Requires Preparedness

Tuberculosis, a pulmonary disease that caused significant devastation in Finland just a few decades ago, remains a reality. Although the disease has been well controlled in Finland, it is still one of the most common infectious diseases worldwide. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), over 10.6 million people contracted tuberculosis in 2023, and the disease claimed the lives of 1.3 million people.

Tuberculosis was a common and feared disease in Finland for a long time. Even before the wars, tens of thousands of people were suffering from this difficult-to-treat and often fatal disease, which claimed about 7,000 lives every year. Hygiene improvements became part of everyday life – there were signs on the walls of train carriages with the admonition "Do not spit on the floor", and other measures were taken to reduce the spread of infection. Tuberculosis has taught Finns hygiene,

Sanatoriums were established in Finland's pine forests, which was built to provide care and rest for the sick. Today, many of these buildings are devoid of function, which we are grateful to note. Finland's first pulmonary sanatorium was established in 1889 in Halila on the Karelian Isthmus. In the 1930s, twelve large sanatoriums owned by municipalities were built, with a total of 2,527 beds.



Kinkomaa sanatorium

There was a sanatorium in Vörå until 1934, and in Jakobstad, tuberculosis patients were treated at the Öst-anlid Hospital from 1941 to 1970. As tuberculosis decreased, the hospital was used for a time to treat other lung diseases, such as asthma. Högåsen Sanatorium was located in Kristinestad from 1925 to 1964.

The magnificent sanatorium in Kinkomaa, Muurame, near Jyväskylä, was completed in 1930. Since the closure of operations in 1971, it has been difficult to find a new use for the building – and this winter it was finally demolished.

The last sanatorium built in Finland was the Åland Central Sanatorium. During the wars, tuberculosis patients in sanatoriums had to make

a tragic contribution to the good of the fatherland – they were sent home, where they often soon met certain death when wounded soldiers took over their beds.

But then came the breakthrough. Three new drugs – streptomycin, PAS and isoniazid – changed the situation in an instant. Over time, additional medications were added, and tuberculosis was largely overcome. The disease that once terrified the population is now a thing of the past for many people, but it has not disappeared. Not entirely.

Approximately 200 cases of tuberculosis are reported in Finland every year, most of which occur in patients with a foreign background. This is partly due to the fact that tuberculosis is more

common in many countries from which people move to Finland. Finland's growing international workforce requires that the healthcare system is prepared for the early detection and effective treatment of tuberculosis.

Tuberculosis – A Sneaky Disease

Tuberculosis is transmitted through the respiratory tract, and infection usually requires prolonged or repeated exposure. The disease can remain in a latent form and activate years after infection. This makes it challenging to identify the disease, as symptoms can be vague or completely absent.

"The typical tuberculosis patient in Finland is either an elderly Finnish-born individual who contracted the infection in their youth, or



Children in a sanatorium in the 30s. Photo: The Finnish Museum of Photography/Wikimedia Commons.

a young or working-age immigrant,” says Hanna Soini, leading expert at THL.

Preparedness and Effective Treatment Are Crucial

Tuberculosis is a generally dangerous infectious disease, and its treatment and control measures are governed by the Communicable Diseases Act. The disease is treated with a combination of several medications, and treatment lasts for several months. Tuberculosis examinations and treatment are free of charge for those examined and those who have contracted the disease.

To prevent the spread of tuberculosis in Finland, it is crucial that the healthcare system identifies the disease at an early stage and initiates effective treatment. It is particularly important to pay attention to risk groups, such

as immigrants and individuals who have been in contact with someone suffering from tuberculosis.

International Cooperation Is Essential

Combating tuberculosis requires international cooperation, as the disease knows no borders. Finland must be an active player in the international effort against tuberculosis to bring the disease under global control.

Although tuberculosis is a rare disease in Finland, its existence is still a reminder that infectious diseases have not disappeared. The increasing international workforce in Finland requires that the healthcare system is prepared for the early identification and effective treatment of tuberculosis.



Tuberculosis in the right upper lobe

EXHIBITION

On The Radio Waves - an interesting exhibition in Tampere Vapriikki-museo



A 15 W FM-transmitter used in pirate radio in Tampere in the 80ies



Commodore, the first computer for everyone in Finland

“On the crest of the radio wave – From crystal machine to podcast” opens up Finnish radio history from the 1920s to the present day

The Tampere Vapriikki Museum opens a fascinating exhibition that delves into the roots of Finnish radio history. “Riding the radio waves – From crystal machine to podcast” takes the visitor on an enchanting journey into the multifaceted history of radio. The exhibition delves into what has made radio enchanting for creators, listeners and enthusiasts for decades, and why this magical device has maintained its position in the age of the internet and digital communication.

Although radio may seem like a transitory format in today’s media storms, it is still a globally significant means of communication. Internet access, mobile networks, electricity and access to digital information are not available everywhere in the world. Radio is also proving to be a valuable communication channel in crisis situations, as its network is designed to withstand longer power outages compared to, for example, mobile phone networks.

Radio amateurs, in particular, appear to be critical pillars of communication and communication in crisis situations. The exhibition invites the visitor to think about the magic that a device hidden on the radio manages to create, from everyday listening to necessary crisis connections. This unique exhibition offers an opportunity to delve into the history of radio and understand its continued importance as a versatile and sustainable means of communication. en jatkuvan merkityksen monipuolisena ja kestäväenä viestintävälineenä.

ECONOMY

"Shrinkflation" and "Cheapflation" in the Age of Inflation

Paying More for Less: Decoding "Shrinkflation" and "Cheapflation" in the Age of Inflation

While inflation pinches wallets at the checkout stand, consumers are facing a double whammy: a phenomenon known as "shrinkflation" and its stealthier cousin, "cheapflation."

Shrinkflation: A Familiar Foe

Shrinkflation, a portmanteau of "shrink" and "inflation," is a well-documented practice where manufacturers subtly reduce the quantity of a product while maintaining, or even raising, the price. This means you're essentially paying more for less of the same product.

For instance, your favorite chocolate bar might have shrunk slightly in size, or your cereal box might now hold a few fewer flakes. While the change may seem insignificant at first glance, it can add up significantly over time, especially for budget-conscious consumers.

Enter Cheapflation: A Sneaky Strategy

Cheapflation takes this strategy a step further. Here, manufacturers not only reduce the quantity but also tweak the recipe itself, replacing higher-quality ingredients with cheaper alternatives. This can go unnoticed by consumers relying solely on brand recognition.

Foodwatch, a Belgian consumer protection organization, recently



exposed this practice. They identified instances where products like surimi sticks contained less fish, mayonnaise had a lower egg yolk content, and chocolates skimmed on cocoa. Disturbingly, these changes often coincided with price increases, leaving consumers feeling doubly deceived.

The Manufacturers' Defense

Manufacturers often cite rising raw material costs as justification for these practices. While inflation does put pressure on production, critics argue that the lack of transparency surrounding recipe changes and price hikes is unacceptable.

The Fight for Fairness

Foodwatch's investigation highlights the need for increased transparency from manufacturers. Consumers deserve to know exactly what they're paying for, especially when faced with rising

food costs. Regulatory bodies also have a role to play in ensuring fair practices and protecting consumer rights.

So, what can you do?

Become a label detective: Read ingredient lists carefully and compare product sizes and prices across brands.

Choose value brands: You might be surprised by the quality of store-brand alternatives.

Embrace bulk buying: If you have the storage space, buying in bulk can offer better value for staple items.

Advocate for transparency: Support organizations like Foodwatch that promote consumer rights and fight for fair practices.

By staying informed and making informed choices, we can navigate the complexities of inflation and ensure we're getting the best bang for our buck.

ART

Eero Järnefelt: Finland's eminent nature and portrait painter

Eero Järnefelt (1863–1937) was a prominent figure in Finnish art, known for his captivating landscapes and insightful portraits. Born into a prominent family of artists, Järnefelt was surrounded by creativity from a young age.

His father was a general and his mother was a baroness with artistic interests. His sister Aino married the acclaimed composer Jean Sibelius. The artistic milieu undoubtedly approached Järnefelt's own artistic talents. Järnefelt's artistic journey began in Paris, where he studied under the tutelage of famous French artists such as Fernand Cormon. He absorbed the

influences of naturalism and impressionism, which is evident in his use of light and focus on capturing fleeting moments.

After returning to Finland, Järnefelt was captivated by the natural beauty of his homeland, especially the majestic landscapes around Koli National Park. His paintings captured the stillness and grandeur of these landscapes, often with a muted colour palette and an emphasis on the vastness of the Finnish wilderness. These Koli-themed paintings remain some of his most recognizable works. Järnefelt was also a gifted portrait painter. He painted prominent figures in Finnish society, capturing their personali-

ties and expressions with remarkable detail. His portraits were known for their psychological depth and ability to convey the inner world of their subjects. In addition to his artistic endeavours, Järnefelt played a significant role in shaping Finnish art education. He worked as a professor at the University of Helsinki's drawing studio for more than two decades, inspiring generations of aspiring artists. Key features of Eero Järnefelt's art:

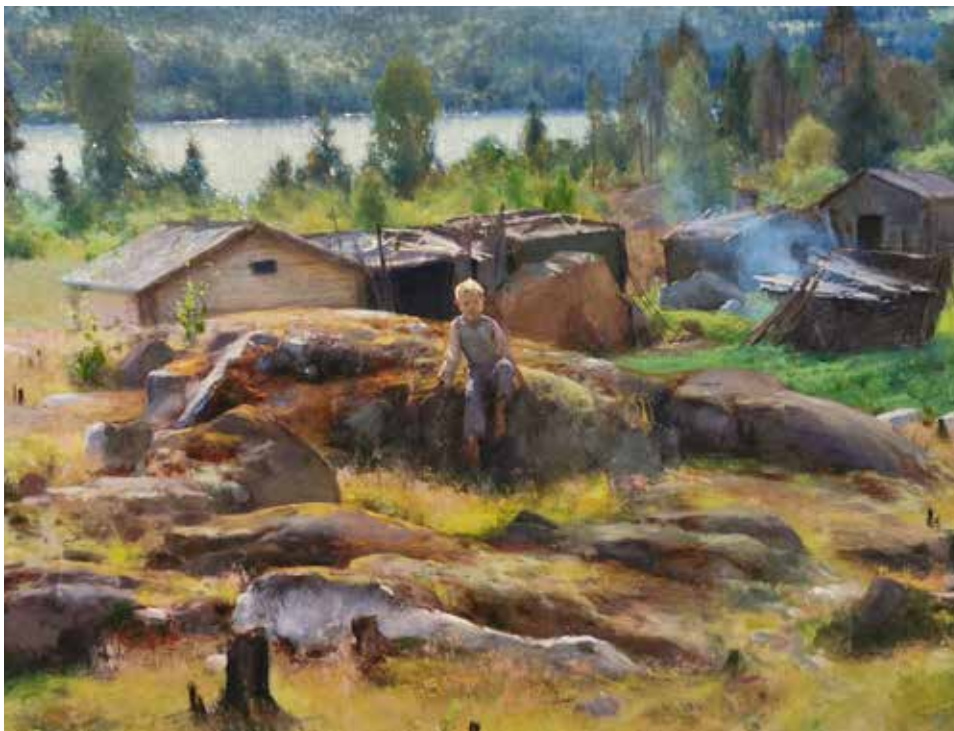
Landscapes: Focus on capturing the beauty of the Finnish wilderness, especially Koli National Park. Use of muted colors and emphasis on vastness.

Portrait: Psychological depth and





J K Paasikivi's portrait



ability to depict the inner world of subjects.

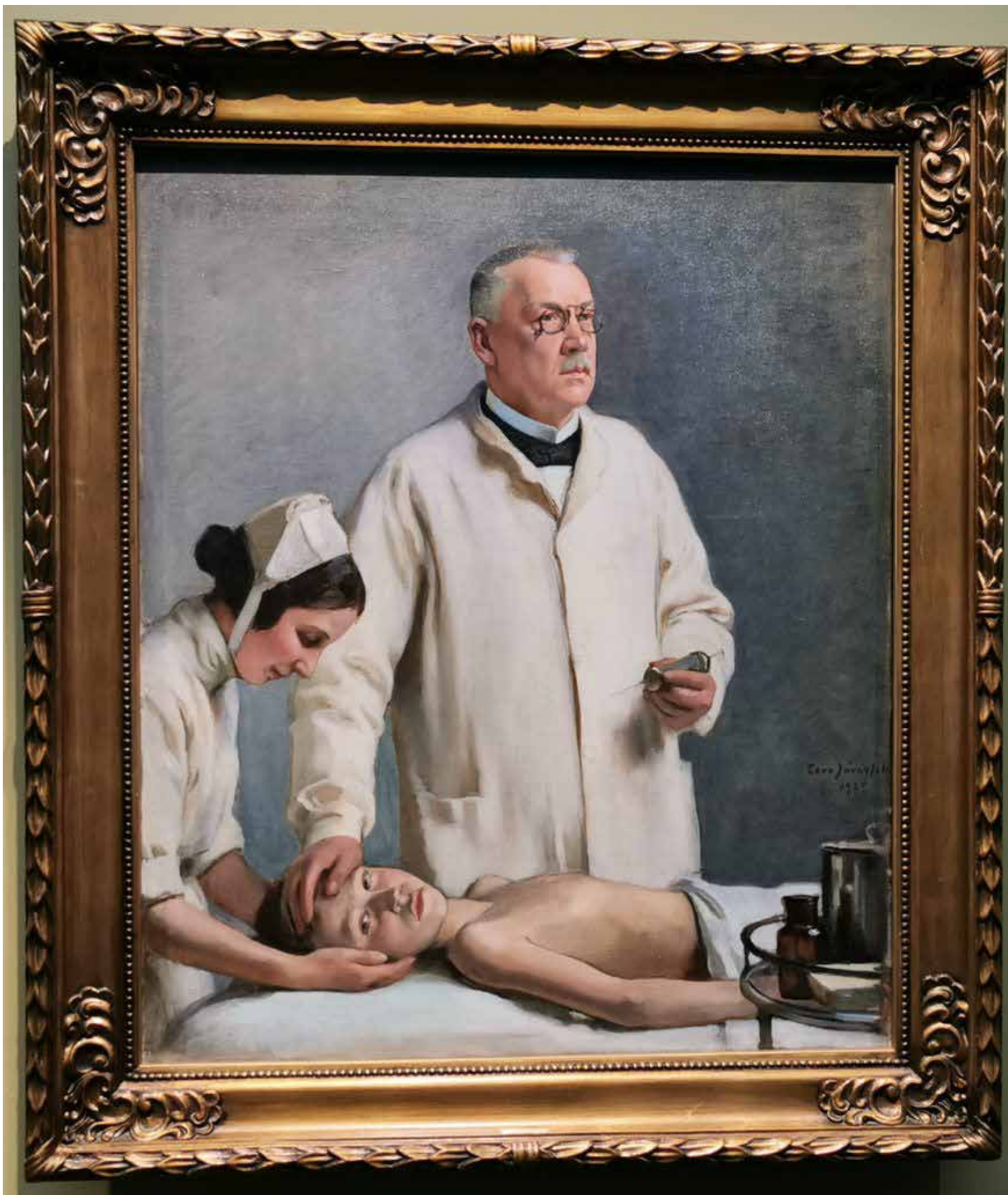
Influences: Naturalism and impressionism evident in his use of light and focus on capturing fleeting moments. Legacy: Eero Järnefelt is regarded as one of the leading figures in the Golden Age of Finnish art. His paintings continue to be admired for their beauty, technical skill, and ability to capture the essence of Finland's landscape and people.

Some of Järnefelt's paintings:

"Under the Yoke" (1893): This is widely considered to be Järnefelt's most iconic work and a milestone in Finnish art. It depicts a group of weary farmers who clear land by burning rice. The painting is a powerful social commentary and highlights the harsh realities of rural life in Finland at the time. The figures are stoic and silhouetted against a smoke-filled sky, conveying a sense of hardship and resilience.

"Saimi in the Meadow" (1892): This portrait shows Järnefelt's wife, Saimi, sitting gracefully in a sunlit meadow. The painting is known for its idyllic atmosphere and the soft light that seeps through the trees. Järnefelt's skill in capturing light and shadow is evident, as is his tenderness in portraying his wife. The use of a muted color palette with hints of vivid green and yellow creates a harmonious and peaceful composition.

"Koli" (1935): Painted later in Järnefelt's career, this landscape represents his long-standing fascination with the magnificent nature of Koli National Park. The vastness of the lake and the rolling hills dominate the foreground, while the distant mountains rise majestically in the background. The use of a cool blue and green color scheme conveys the serenity of the Finnish wilderness. This painting exemplifies Järnefelt's ability to translate the grandeur of nature into canvas



Frans Ali Krogius' porträtt

with a sense of calm and awe.

Most of Eero Järnefelt's paintings are in public collections in Finland, especially those focusing on Finnish art. Here are some prominent places where you can find his work:

Ateneum Art Museum, Helsinki: This is Finland's National Gallery and houses the largest collection of Järnefelt's paintings, including iconic works such as "Under the Whip (Burning Rice)" and "Saimi in the Meadow".

Järvenpää Art Museum: Located in Järvenpää, a city with a rich artistic history, this museum has a significant collection of Järnefelt's works and offers a more focused exploration of his artistic journey.

Other Finnish Museums: Many museums across Finland feature Järnefelt's paintings, including regional art museums and those with broader collections of Finnish art. Some examples include:

HAM Helsinki Art Museum

Turku Art Museum

Sara Hildén Art Museum, Tampere

The collections of various university museums

Private collections: While most of Järnefelt's works are in public museums, a smaller portion can be found in private collections.

An exhibition of 80 paintings by Eero Järnefelt is still open in Tikanoja, Vaasa.



HAPPINESS

HAPPINESS

The Geography of Happiness – A Chronicle from Finland and Vaasa

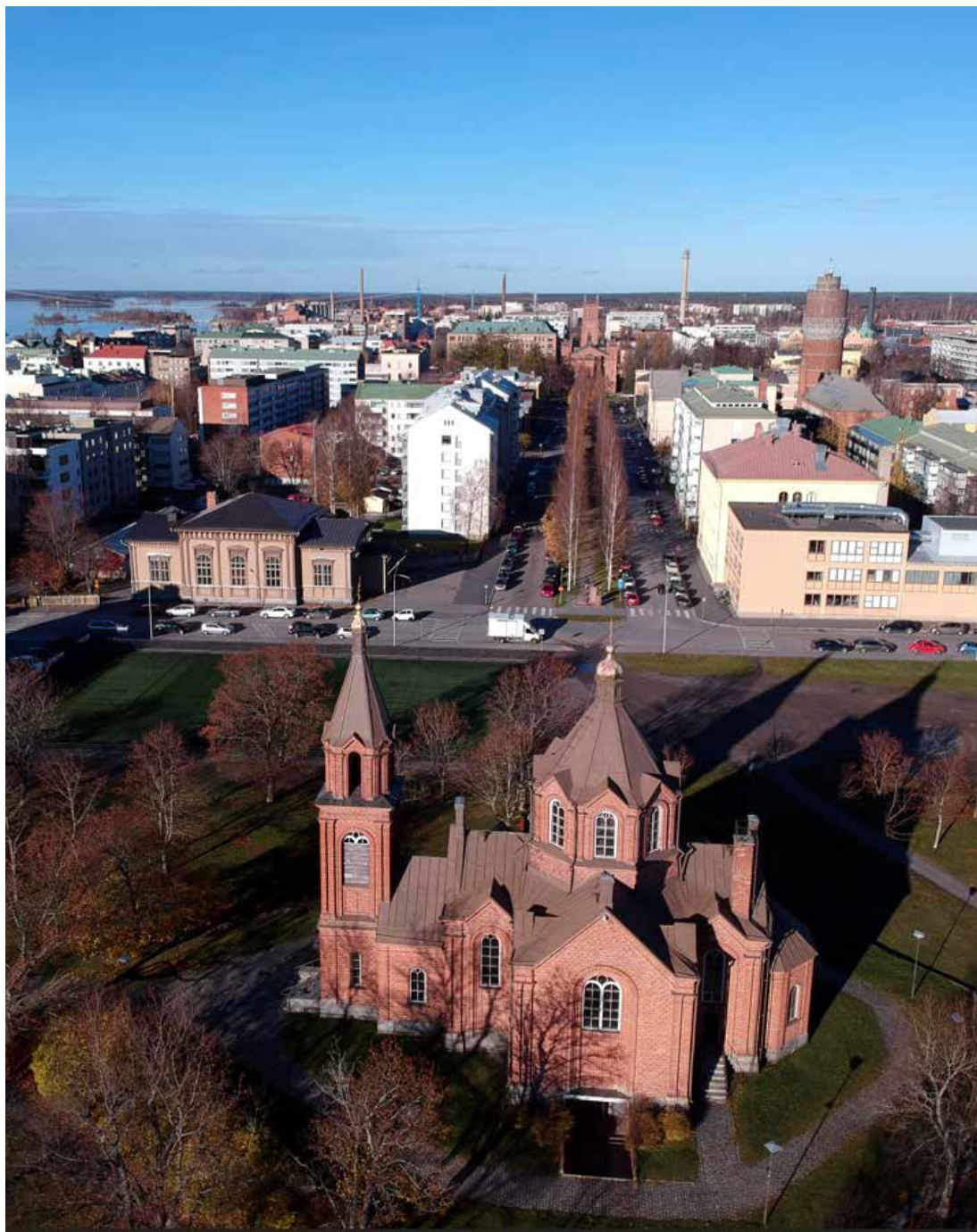
Eight years in a row! It's like an Olympic gold medal in a marathon, but in happiness. Finland, this northern country with thousands of lakes and even more mosquitoes, has once again been crowned the happiest country in the world. The World Happiness Report 2025 is here and Finland is once again at the top.

One may wonder what is in Finnish waters? Or maybe it's fresh air, long summer evenings or a licorice-scented sauna? Or maybe, just maybe, is it the quiet, yet so warm Finnish folk soul?

When you look at the list, you will see a clear pattern. The Nordic countries dominate Denmark, Iceland and Sweden close behind. Then comes the Netherlands and Costa Rica as an exotic surprise. But at the bottom of the list are countries such as Malawi, Lebanon, Sierra Leone and last but not least Afghanistan.

The contrasts are striking. From a safe and prosperous Finland to war-torn and poor countries at the bottom. It makes you think about what happiness really is. Is it material wealth or something else? Something more intangible, such as security, community and trust?

And then there is Vaasa, the city that is said to be the happiest in Finland. If Finland is the happiest country in the world, then surely Vaasa must be the happiest city in the world? I imagine happy Vaasa residents walking along the promenade, eating ice cream and laughing with seagulls. Or they can sit in peace and quiet in the park, enjoying the sun and feeling an inner peace that only a Vaasa resident



can feel.

Those who have not been to Vaasa probably feel a strong longing to someday visit this happy city. They want to see with their own eyes this Mecca of happiness. They want to breathe the happy air, taste the happy water and maybe, just maybe, get a little glimpse of the Finnish happiness that everyone is talking about.

But whether it's Vaasa, Helsinki or elsewhere in Finland, it's clear that there's something special going on in this country. Perhaps it is not a single factor, but a combination of many. Perhaps it is precisely the Finnish *sisu*, a mixture of stubbornness and perseverance, that gives Finns the opportunity to survive both dark winters and difficult neighbours. Not to

mention bada bada bastu.

Whatever the secret, we can all learn something from Finland. Maybe it's about appreciating the little things in life, being grateful for what you have and taking care of each other.

Or maybe it's just a good sauna and enough licorice and crispbread.

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES



STARVATION IN AFRICA

The Consequences of the USA Stopping All Aid to Africa: A Looming Humanitarian Crisis

The Consequences of the USA Stopping All Aid to Africa: A Looming Humanitarian Crisis

The United States has long been one of the largest donors of foreign aid to Africa, providing billions of dollars annually to support health initiatives, food security, education, and economic development. If the USA were to abruptly halt all aid to the continent, the consequences would be catastrophic, exacerbating existing crises and creating new ones. From the potential explosion of the HIV epidemic to the rise of drug-resistant HIV strains and increased starvation, the ripple effects would be felt across Africa and beyond.

The HIV Epidemic: A Ticking Time Bomb

One of the most immediate and devastating consequences of cutting aid would be the impact on HIV treatment and prevention programs. The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), launched in 2003, has been a cornerstone of the global response to HIV/AIDS. PEPFAR has provided life-saving antiretroviral therapy (ART) to millions of people, supported prevention programs, and strengthened healthcare systems in Africa.

If U.S. aid were stopped, the supply of antiretroviral drugs would be

severely disrupted. Millions of people who rely on these medications to manage HIV and prevent the progression to AIDS would be left without treatment. This could lead to a sharp increase in AIDS-related deaths, reversing years of progress. According to UNAIDS, approximately 25.6 million people in sub-Saharan Africa are living with HIV, and many depend on PEPFAR-funded programs for their survival.

Moreover, interrupted treatment could lead to the development of drug-resistant HIV strains. When patients do not take their medication consistently, the virus can mutate and become resistant to the drugs, making it harder to treat. This would not only jeopardize individual health but also pose a significant public health risk, as drug-resistant HIV could spread rapidly, undermining global efforts to control the epidemic.

Starvation and Food Insecurity: A Deepening Crisis

U.S. aid plays a critical role in addressing food insecurity in Africa. Programs funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and other organizations provide emergency food assistance, support agricultural development, and improve nutrition for millions of people. If this aid

were cut, countries already facing severe food shortages would be pushed to the brink.

Countries like Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen (though not in Africa, heavily reliant on U.S. aid) would be particularly vulnerable. These nations are already grappling with conflict, climate change, and economic instability, which have left millions on the verge of starvation. Without U.S. aid, the World Food Programme (WFP) and other organizations would struggle to provide sufficient food assistance, leading to increased malnutrition, starvation, and potentially famine. Children would be among the hardest hit. Malnutrition in early childhood can cause stunting, impair cognitive development, and increase susceptibility to diseases. The long-term consequences of widespread malnutrition would be profound, affecting not only individual lives but also the economic and social development of entire nations.

Collapse of Healthcare Systems

U.S. aid has been instrumental in strengthening healthcare systems across Africa. In addition to HIV/AIDS programs, U.S. funding supports maternal and child health, immunization campaigns, and the fight against infectious diseases like

malaria and tuberculosis. Cutting aid would leave many healthcare systems underfunded and ill-equipped to meet the needs of their populations.

The COVID-19 pandemic has already strained healthcare systems worldwide, and the loss of U.S. aid would further weaken their capacity to respond to health crises. This could lead to outbreaks of preventable diseases, increased maternal and child mortality, and a general decline in public health.

Economic and Political Instability

The withdrawal of U.S. aid could also have significant economic and political consequences. Many African countries rely on foreign aid to supplement their budgets and fund development projects. A sudden cut in aid could lead to economic instability, reduced public services, and increased unemployment.

Political instability could also rise as governments struggle to meet the needs of their populations. In some cases, this could lead to social unrest, conflict, and mass migration. The resulting instability would not only affect Africa but could also have global implications, including increased refugee flows and heightened security concerns.

MINNA CANTH

MINNA CANTH

"The women's question is a question of humanity"

Minna Canth's Day 19 March

Why is there so much violence against women in the happiest country in the world?

On 19 March, Finland celebrates Minna Canth Day, which is dedicated to one of Finland's most significant writers and social influencers. Minna Canth (1844–1897) was a pioneer of her time, highlighting women's rights and social injustice in her works and speeches. Her well-known phrase, "The women's question is not just a woman's question, it is a question of humanity", describes well her view that improving the status of women is not only in women's own interest, but it benefits the whole society. This idea is still relevant, especially when we look at today's challenges, such as the violent treatment of women.

Minna Canth: Life and Legacy

Minna Canth was born in Tampere in 1844 and grew up in a family that valued education. She studied to become a teacher at the Jyväskylä Seminary, which was a rare opportunity for a woman at the time. After getting married, he moved to Kuopio, where he began his career as a writer and became one of Finland's best-known authors. Canth made a rigorous social critique in her works, dealing with topics such as women's rights, poverty and the role of religion in society. Her play "The Worker's Wife" (1885) is one of the most famous works dealing with the position of women in marriage and society.

Canth did not only write about women's rights, but she herself was active in social debate. She was one of the first Finnish women to use a public platform to demand social change. Her ideas about women's equality and



Minna Canth-statue in Kuopio

social justice remain relevant to this day.

Happiness and Conflict

Finland has often been awarded as the happiest country in the world, and it is known for its high standard of living, welfare society and equality. In global comparisons, Finland is also one of the safest countries. However, even though Finland is an exemplary society in many respects, the rate of violent treatment of women is alarmingly high. According to statistics, Finland is the country with the second highest level of violence against women in the European Union. This contradiction raises questions about why this is the case and how it can be address-

tion of humanity" is more relevant today than ever. Violence against women is not just a women's problem, it is a problem for society as a whole. It reflects deeper structural problems, such as the use of power and control, gender inequality, and cultural norms that allow violence to become normalized.

A multifaceted approach is needed to prevent violence. Education and information are key to better understanding the causes and consequences of violence. It is also important to support victims and provide them with asylum and assistance. Society should also intervene in discriminatory structures and promote equality in all areas of life.

Minna Canth's legacy reminds us that women's rights are a key part of the development of society. When the position of women improves, the whole society benefits from it. Finland has come a long way in the field of equality, but Minna Canth's message is still relevant: the women's issue is a question for humanity, and solving it requires everyone's contribution.

Minna Canth's thoughts and work have inspired generations, and her legacy lives on. Her phrase "The women's question is not just a women's issue, it is a question of humanity" serves as a reminder that promoting equality and justice is everyone's responsibility. Finland has made significant progress, but the high level of violent treatment of women shows that there is still work to be done. Faithful to the spirit of Minna Canth, we should continue to fight for a society where everyone can live safely and equally.

One explanation may be that Finland has made significant progress in the field of gender equality, which may have led to more active intervention and reporting of violence against women than in some other countries. On the other hand, this does not take away the fact that violence is still a significant problem. Violence against women is often hidden and deeply rooted in the structures and attitudes of our society.

The women's question is a question of humanity

Minna Canth's sentence "The women's question is not just a woman's question, it is a ques-

HEALTH



ADHD

Up to 19% of Boys on ADHD Medication – Is Overdiagnosis to Blame? Explosive Rise in ADHD Diagnoses Raises Concerns Among Experts.

The number of ADHD diagnoses among children and adolescents in Finland continues its worrying upward trend, according to the latest data from the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL). Particularly alarming is the prevalence of ADHD medication use among boys, which in some welfare regions has risen to as high as 19 percent among elementary school-aged boys. This raises serious questions about whether this reflects a genuine increase in neurodevelopmental disorders or potentially, overdiagnosis.

The statistics paint a stark picture: in 2023, approximately 11 percent of elementary school-aged boys had an ADHD diagnosis, and among 13-17-year-old boys,

the corresponding figure was about 10 percent. While diagnoses among girls have also increased, the rate among boys remains significantly higher. Especially in Eastern Finland, ADHD diagnoses and medication use are most common, whereas they are rarer in Ostrobothnia and Eastern Uusimaa.

THL's Chief Physician Terhi Aalto-Setälä acknowledges that ADHD symptoms are now well-recognized, and more people are seeking assessments. However, she emphasizes that symptoms can be explained by many factors other than ADHD, requiring thorough evaluations. "This is a significant challenge, especially for school and student healthcare, where the burden of these evaluations is increasingly concentrated," Aalto-Setälä states.

Kela's Special Researcher Miiika Vuori echoes these con-

cerns. He points out that the significant regional variations in diagnoses and medication suggest substantial regional differences in assessment and treatment practices. "This needs more attention than it currently receives," Vuori stresses.

Experts are concerned that ADHD treatment practices and potential misdiagnosis have raised concerns not only in Finland but also in other countries, such as Iceland and Sweden. In Iceland, ADHD medication use among children and adolescents is even more prevalent than in Finland.

It is clear that ADHD in children and adolescents is also a societal issue. Overdiagnosis can lead to children and adolescents receiving medication they may not need, potentially causing harmful side effects. Conversely, untreated ADHD can lead to serious problems, such as diffi-

culties in school, social issues, and mental health problems.

According to THL and Kela experts, the annual prevalence of ADHD diagnoses among elementary school-aged boys in Finland is expected to rise to about 15 percent, and among 13-17-year-old girls to about 8-10 percent, before the growth plateaus. This means that more and more children and adolescents are receiving an ADHD diagnosis and medication.

Therefore, it is crucial that ADHD diagnosis and treatment are based on thorough evaluations and that the individual needs of the child or adolescent are considered. Furthermore, more research is needed on the factors contributing to the increased prevalence of ADHD and how overdiagnosis can be prevented.

CLIMATE CHANGE

February 2025: A Whispered Warning in Warmth



February 2025 etched another concerning mark in the climate record, solidifying the relentless trend of escalating global temperatures. Copernicus, through its ERA5 dataset, revealed it as the third warmest February ever recorded, with a global average surface air temperature of 13.36°C . While only a sliver (0.03°C) separated it from the fourth warmest in 2020, the broader narrative is one of persistent, alarming heat.

The numbers paint a stark picture: February 2025 soared 1.59°C above the pre-industrial baseline (1850-1900), a critical threshold highlighting the accelerating pace of global warming. Notably, 19 of the last 20 months have breached this 1.5°C mark, a statistic that, while potentially varying

slightly across datasets, underscores the gravity of our current climate trajectory.

The boreal winter (December 2024 to February 2025) mirrored this trend, registering as the second warmest on record, just shy of the previous year's peak. Furthermore, the 12-month period from March 2024 to February 2025 also clocked in at 1.59°C above pre-industrial levels, reinforcing the long-term warming trend.

»February 2025 continues the streak of record or near-record temperatures observed throughout the last two years,« stated Samantha Burgess, Strategic Lead for Climate at ECMWF. This persistent warmth isn't merely a statistic; it translates to tangible consequences, most notably the unprecedented melting of sea ice. The

»record or near-record low sea ice cover at both poles« has driven global sea ice cover to an all-time minimum, a chilling testament to the planet's rapid transformation.

Europe, while experiencing pockets of intense warmth, presented a nuanced picture. The continent's average February temperature was above the 1991-2020 average, but not among the top ten warmest. Northern Fennoscandia, Iceland, and the Alps sweltered, while Eastern Europe experienced cooler than average temperatures. This regional variability underscores the complex interplay of climate patterns.

Beyond land temperatures, the oceans are also heating up. The average sea surface temperature (SST) for February 2025 was the second highest on record,

reaching 20.88°C . While slightly cooler than the record-breaking February 2024, SSTs remained alarmingly high in many ocean basins, with the Gulf of Mexico and the Mediterranean Sea witnessing expanding record-breaking areas.

This press release from Copernicus is more than just a collection of numbers. It's a stark reminder that the planet's climate is in flux, and the consequences are becoming increasingly visible. The persistent breach of the 1.5°C threshold, the unprecedented sea ice loss, and the record-breaking ocean temperatures are all symptoms of a warming world. They serve as a call to action, urging us to accelerate efforts to mitigate climate change before the whispers of warning become a deafening roar.

WORLD POPULATION

A FINNISH STUDY

We Are Many More Than We Thought: World Population Revised in a Finnish Study

The global population has long been a subject of fascination, debate, and concern. For decades, official figures have suggested that the world is home to approximately 8 billion people. However, a groundbreaking study published in *Nature Communications* on March 18, 2025, challenges these estimates, revealing that the global population—particularly in rural areas—may be significantly higher than previously thought. Titled *Global Gridded Population Datasets Systematically Underrepresent Rural Population*, the study, led by Finnish researchers Josias Láng-Ritter, Marko Keskinen, and Henrikki Tenkanen, uncovers startling discrepancies in global population datasets, raising questions about the accuracy of our understanding of the world's population.

The Study: A Systematic Validation of Population Data

The study focuses on global gridded population datasets, which are widely used by governments, NGOs, and researchers to inform policies related to sustainable development, resource allocation, and disaster response. These datasets, such as WorldPop, GWP, GRUMP, LandScan, and GHS-POP, are typically calibrated using urban population data, as urban areas are easier to monitor and measure. However, the accuracy of these datasets in rural areas has remained largely unexplored—until now.

The Finnish research team conducted a systematic validation of these datasets by comparing them to reported human resettlement figures from 307 large dam construction projects across 35 countries. These projects, which often involve the displacement of rural populations, provided a unique opportunity to assess the accuracy of population estimates in rural areas. The results were striking: all the datasets examined showed significant negative biases, underestimating rural populations by margins ranging from -53% to -84%. Even the most accurate dataset, WorldPop, underestimated rural populations by half. Implications of the Findings



The implications of these findings are profound. If rural populations are being underestimated by such large margins, it suggests that the global population may be significantly higher than the official figure of 8 billion. While the study does not provide a revised global population estimate, it raises the possibility that the true number could be billions higher, especially considering that rural areas account for a substantial portion of the world's population.

This underestimation has far-reaching consequences.

Rural communities are often marginalized in terms of access to services, resources, and representation in policymaking. If their popula-

tions are being systematically undercounted, it exacerbates existing inequalities and undermines efforts to achieve sustainable development goals. For example, undercounting rural populations could lead to insufficient allocation of resources for healthcare, education, and infrastructure, perpetuating cycles of poverty and underdevelopment.

Why Are Rural Populations Being Undercounted?

The study identifies several reasons for the underrepresentation of rural populations in global datasets. First, urban areas are easier to monitor due to their higher population density and better infrastructure, making them the default focus for data collection. Second, rural areas often lack the administrative

capacity to conduct accurate population censuses, leading to gaps in data. Third, the models used to create gridded population datasets are typically calibrated using urban data, which may not be applicable to rural contexts.

The researchers argue that improving the accuracy of population datasets in rural areas will require a multifaceted approach. This includes strengthening population censuses, exploring alternative methods of population counting (such as satellite imagery and mobile phone data), and recalibrating population models to better reflect rural realities.

A Broader Question: What Is the True World Population?

The findings of this study invite us to reconsider what we know—or think we know—about the world’s population. If rural populations are being underestimated by such large margins, it raises the question: how many people are actually living on this planet? While the study does not provide a definitive answer, it suggests that the true global population could be significantly higher than the official estimates.

This possibility has important implications for global challenges such as climate change, food security, and resource management. A larger population would mean greater demand for resources, increased pressure on ecosystems, and heightened competition for land and water. It would also necessitate a reevaluation of global policies and strategies to ensure that they are based on accurate data.

Moving Forward: A Call for Action

The Finnish study serves as a wake-up call for the global community. It highlights the urgent need to improve the accuracy of population data, particularly in rural areas, and to ensure that this data is used to inform equitable and sustainable policies. As the researchers emphasize, “past and future applications of the datasets must undergo a critical discussion in light of the identified biases.”

In practical terms, this means investing in better data collection methods, prioritizing the inclusion of rural populations in global datasets, and recalibrating models to reflect the realities of rural life. It also means recognizing the diversity and complexity of rural communities, which are often overlooked in global narratives.

Ultimately, the study reminds us that data is not just a collection of numbers—it is a reflection of people’s lives, needs, and aspirations. By ensuring that our data is accurate and inclusive, we can create a world that is more just, equitable, and sustainable for all.

Rethinking Our Understanding of the World

The Finnish study challenges us to rethink our understanding of the world’s population. It reveals that we may be many more than we thought, particularly in rural areas that have long been marginalized and undercounted. This revelation has profound implications for global policy, resource allocation, and



sustainable development. As we move forward, it is essential to address the biases in our data and to ensure that rural populations are accurately represented. Only then can we create policies and strategies that truly serve the needs of all people, regardless of where they live. The world may be more populous than we realized, but with accurate data and inclusive policies, we can rise to the challenge and build a better future for everyone.

Reference: Láng-Ritter, J., Keskinen, M. & Tenkanen, H. Global gridded population datasets systematically underrepresent rural population. *Nat Commun* 16, 2170 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-025-56906-7>

HEALTH

Processed Meat and Dementia: New Evidence Highlights a Troubling Link



Recent research has intensified concerns about the health risks of processed meats, particularly their potential impact on brain health. A study presented at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference has added to the growing body of evidence suggesting that a diet high in processed red meat may be linked to an increased risk of dementia.

The Study and Its Findings

The study, which monitored over 460,000 adults for more than four decades, found that individuals who consumed at least two servings of processed red meat per week had a 14% higher risk of developing dementia compared to those who consumed fewer than three servings per month. Processed red meats, such as bacon, sausages, and deli meats, are often laden with preservatives like nitrites and high levels of sodium, which are thought to contribute to cognitive decline.

Interestingly, the study also

highlighted that each additional daily serving of processed red meat was linked to an equivalent of 1.6 years of cognitive aging. This aging effect was particularly evident in areas of the brain responsible for language and executive function, which are crucial for decision-making and behavior control.

Processed vs. Unprocessed Meat: A Key Distinction

It's important to note that unprocessed red meat, like fresh beef or lamb, was not associated with the same cognitive risks. In fact, moderate consumption of unprocessed meat might even have a protective effect on brain health, though this area requires further research. The distinction between processed and unprocessed meat is critical, as it suggests that the harmful effects are likely due to the additives and preservation methods used in processed meats rather than the meat itself.

Broader Health Implications

This research aligns with ear-

lier studies that have linked processed meats to a range of health issues, including heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. The high levels of saturated fats, sodium, and chemical preservatives in processed meats are known to contribute to these conditions, which are also risk factors for dementia.

Dietary Recommendations for Brain Health

Given these findings, health experts recommend reducing the intake of processed red meats and replacing them with healthier alternatives. Incorporating more plant-based foods like nuts, beans, and vegetables into your diet not only reduces the risk of dementia but also supports overall well-being. For those with limited access to fresh produce, options like canned beans (with reduced sodium) and frozen vegetables can be practical and nutritious substitutes.

The Bigger Picture

While the study's findings are compelling, it's essential to

remember that diet is just one piece of the puzzle when it comes to dementia prevention. A holistic approach to brain health also includes regular physical activity, adequate sleep, social engagement, and mental stimulation.

As we continue to live longer, the choices we make today about what we eat can have long-lasting impacts on our cognitive health. Reducing processed meat consumption could be a simple yet significant step towards preserving brain function and reducing the risk of dementia as we age.

In conclusion, the growing evidence against processed meats underscores the importance of dietary choices in maintaining brain health. While the case isn't closed, the current research strongly suggests that when it comes to processed meats, less is more – not just for our hearts, but for our minds as well.

HEALTH

It is Possible to Cure Type II Diabetes – Not Easily Though

Type 2 diabetes has long been considered a chronic, incurable condition. However, recent research and real-world interventions are challenging this notion. A groundbreaking study, the NHS Type 2 Diabetes Path to Remission (T2DR) program, has shown promising results in reversing the disease.

The T2DR program is a 12-month behavioral intervention focused on weight loss, with an initial intensive phase involving total diet replacement (TDR). This approach, while demanding, has proven effective in inducing remission in a significant number of participants.

Remission in this context means achieving normal blood sugar levels without the need for diabetes medication for at least three months. The study found that around 27% of participants who started the program and had two HbA1c measurements achieved remission. This number increased to 32% among those who completed the entire 12-month program.

These results are particularly encouraging as they were obtained in a real-world setting, rather than the controlled environment of a clinical trial. It demonstrates that remission is achievable for a substantial proportion of people with type 2 diabetes through a structured, supported weight loss program.

However, it's essential to acknowledge the challenges involved. Not everyone who starts the program completes it, and weight loss, while crucial, is not guaranteed. The study also highlights the difficulty of collecting comprehensive data in a real-world setting compared to a clinical trial.

Despite these limitations, the T2DR program offers hope for

millions of people living with type 2 diabetes. It underscores the importance of lifestyle interventions, particularly weight loss, in managing and potentially reversing the disease.

While not a magic cure, the program represents a significant step forward in diabetes care. It emphasizes the need for continued research, improved access to support services, and personalized treatment plans to maximize the benefits of weight loss interventions for people with type 2 diabetes.

Ultimately, the T2DR program's success story is a testament to the power of human resilience and the potential of lifestyle changes in combating chronic diseases.

The T2DR Program:

A Deep Dive into Interventions
The NHS Type 2 Diabetes Path to Remission (T2DR) program is a comprehensive approach to diabetes management that focuses on weight loss as a primary driver of remission. To achieve this, the program employs a multi-faceted strategy involving:

Initial Intensive Phase:

Total Diet Replacement (TDR)
The program begins with a three-month period of total diet replacement (TDR), where participants consume meal replacement products exclusively. These products are formulated to provide balanced nutrition while significantly reducing calorie intake. This phase is crucial for rapid weight loss and improvement in blood sugar control.

Behavioral Support and Education
Alongside TDR, participants receive intensive behavioral support and education. This includes:

One-to-one support: Dedicated healthcare professionals provide personalized guidance and encour-



agement throughout the program.
Group sessions: Participants attend group sessions to share experiences, learn from others, and build a support network.
Education on healthy eating: Participants receive comprehensive education on healthy eating habits, portion control, and meal planning.
Physical activity: The program emphasizes the importance of physical activity and provides guidance on incorporating exercise into daily life.
Psychological support: Addressing emotional and psychological factors related to weight management is crucial.
Transition to Sustained Weight Loss
After the initial three-month TDR phase, participants transition to a sustained weight loss phase. This involves gradually reintroducing regular food while maintaining the healthy ea-

ting habits learned during the program. Continued behavioral support is essential during this phase to prevent weight regain.

Long-Term Management
The T2DR program aims to equip participants with the tools and knowledge necessary for long-term weight management and diabetes control. This includes ongoing support, regular monitoring, and strategies for managing potential challenges.

It's important to note that the success of the T2DR program is dependent on a combination of factors, including participant motivation, adherence to the program, and access to appropriate support services. While the program has shown promising results, it's not a one-size-fits-all solution and individual needs and circumstances should be considered.

HEALTH

Tooth inflammation causes stroke in young people, according to a Finnish study



Prevention of stroke!

A new Finnish study has linked periodontitis, a serious form of gum disease, to an increased risk of stroke in young adults. The research, published in the *Journal of Dental Research*, found that people aged 18 to 49 with periodontitis were significantly more likely to suffer cryptogenic ischemic stroke (CIS), a type of stroke with unknown cause. The study also found a link between recent invasive dental procedures and an increased risk of stroke, especially in people with a heart defect called patent foramen ovale (PFO). Researchers believe that the inflammation caused by periodontitis may play a role in the development of blood clots, which can lead to stroke. Additionally, dental procedures can introduce

bacteria into the bloodstream, potentially increasing the risk of stroke in susceptible individuals. The study emphasized the importance of good oral health, especially for young people. Regular dental check-ups and proper oral hygiene can help prevent periodontitis and its associated health risks.

The new Alzheimer's drug will arrive in Finland next year?

Alzheimer's disease is a devastating disease that gradually takes away memory and thinking ability. Although there is no perfect cure yet, there is light at the end of the tunnel on the horizon. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved a new

Alzheimer's drug, Lecanemab, for the early treatment of the disease.

Lecanemab is a so-called disease-modifying drug that removes plaque from the brain, so-called beta-amyloid. These plaques have been linked to the development of Alzheimer's disease. Although the drug has not yet been shown to prolong the life of patients or cure the disease, it has shown promising results by slowing the progression of the disease.

Lecanemab has been shown in clinical trials to significantly reduce amyloid plaques in the brain. This is an important step forward, as previous studies have suggested that amyloid plaques are a key factor in the pathology of Alzheimer's disease. While Leca-

nemab is a promising drug, it's important to remember that it's not yet widely available. The safety and efficacy of the medicine still need to be studied in more detail. Additionally, the price may be high at first, which may limit its availability.

In Finland, lecanemab is expected to arrive next year if it is approved by the Finnish Medicines Agency Fimea, but the introduction of the drug will require careful evaluation and a clear selection of patients.

It is important to emphasize that research into Alzheimer's disease is ongoing and that new treatments are being developed all the time. Lecanemab is one of the promising alternatives, but it is not yet the solution to all problems for people with Alzheimer's disease. More research and development is needed to defeat Alzheimer's once and for all.

However, there is reason to hope that in the future there will be opportunities for more effective treatments and even prevention of the disease.

NB:

This article does not replace the information provided by the doctor. People with Alzheimer's disease should discuss their treatments with their own doctor.

TRAMS



Tampere tramways – A modern investment with historical roots

Tampere trams are a relatively new addition to the Finnish public transport system, but have quickly become an important part of the city's infrastructure. Despite its young age, the tramway system has an interesting history that stretches back over a century.

A dream that came true

Plans to introduce trams in Tampere have been in place since the early 1900s. Despite several initiatives and studies, it took until 2021 before the first tram rolled in the city. There are many reasons for

the long wait, but one important factor was the economic situation in Finland during much of the 20th century.

It was only when the City of Tampere began to experience rapid growth in the 2000s and when awareness of sustainable transport increased that the tramway project was given new life. The decision to invest in a modern tramway system proved to be wise, as the trams quickly became popular among residents and helped to reduce car traffic in the city centre.

A growing network

Today, the Tampere tram network consists of two lines that connect important parts of the city, such as the city

centre, the university and residential areas. The network is under constant development and there are plans to expand it further in the future. Ylöjärvi, northwest of Tampere, is expected to have tram traffic within a few years.

Tampere trams are an impressive example of modern tram technology and design. They are designed to meet the high demands placed on a public transport system in a growing city.

Low floor level: One of the most prominent features of Tampere trams is the low floor level, which makes it easy for all passengers to get on and off, whether they are using a wheelchair or have a stroller. Spacious spaces: The carri-

ages are spacious and offer plenty of space for both seated and standing passengers. There are also designated spaces for wheelchairs and strollers. Modern technology: Tampere trams are equipped with the latest technology in information systems, safety systems and energy-saving solutions, among other things. For example, passengers can follow their journey on digital screens and get information about the next stop.

Durable design: The carts are made with sustainability in mind. Material selection and energy solutions are optimized to minimize environmental impact.

Where are the vans manufactured?

The Tampere trams are manufactured by the Finnish company Transtech, which has its factory in Otanmäki. Transtech is a leading manufacturer of trams and buses in the Nordic region and has delivered trams to several cities in Finland and Sweden.

Some of the advantages of trams in Tampere:

Environmentally friendly: Trams are usually powered by electricity from renewable energy sources and therefore emit significantly less carbon dioxide than buses or cars.

Efficient: Trams have a high capacity and can transport many passengers at once. In addition, they are less sensitive to traffic jams than buses.

Comfort: Trams offer a comfortable and quiet journey, which is appreciated by many passengers.

Urban planning: Tramways can contribute to more sustainable urban development by stimulating growth along the tramway lines and creating attractive residential areas.



The future of Tampere tramways

It is clear that trams have a bright future in Tampere. The city continues to grow and the need for an efficient and sustainable public transport system will only increase. By investing in tramways, Tampere shows that it takes responsibility for future generations and contributes to a more sustainable world.

Tampere tramways are an excellent example of how a city can address challenges such as climate change and urbanization by investing in modern infrastructure. It is also proof that the residents of Tampere value sustainability and convenience.

It is exciting to follow the development of the tram network in Tampere and see how it will contribute to shaping the city in the future. It is certain that the trams will continue to be an important part of Tampere's identity and that they will inspire other cities, such as Turku, to make similar investments.



GOOD AND HEALTHY



Sea buckthorn – The healthiest berry in the world

Sea buckthorn, that thorny shrub growing on the barren shores of the North, is a true superfood of nature's own. Although it is not as popular as many other domestic berries, it is a real vitamin bomb with amazing health benefits.

The history of sea buckthorn dates back far to Asia, where it has long been considered a valuable medicinal plant. Although sea buckthorn is not eaten in large quantities in Finland, it has slo-

wly established itself as one of the healthiest berries in the world.

Prickly but useful

Sea buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides*) is native to Asia and has been an important part of traditional medicine in China and Russia. In Finland, sea buckthorn grows wild mainly on the coasts of the Gulf of Bothnia, where it thrives in rocky and sunny areas. Sea buckthorn is a dioecious plant, that is, the male and female flowers are located in different specimens, which means that there must be fruit bushes near the bushes producing berries for pollination to be successful.

Sea buckthorn is hardy and requires plenty of light to grow, but it is not demanding on nutrients.

The bacteria that live in its root buds bind nitrogen from the air, which helps the bush survive in harsh conditions. This makes sea buckthorn an excellent plant for tying soil on erosion-prone slopes, among other things.

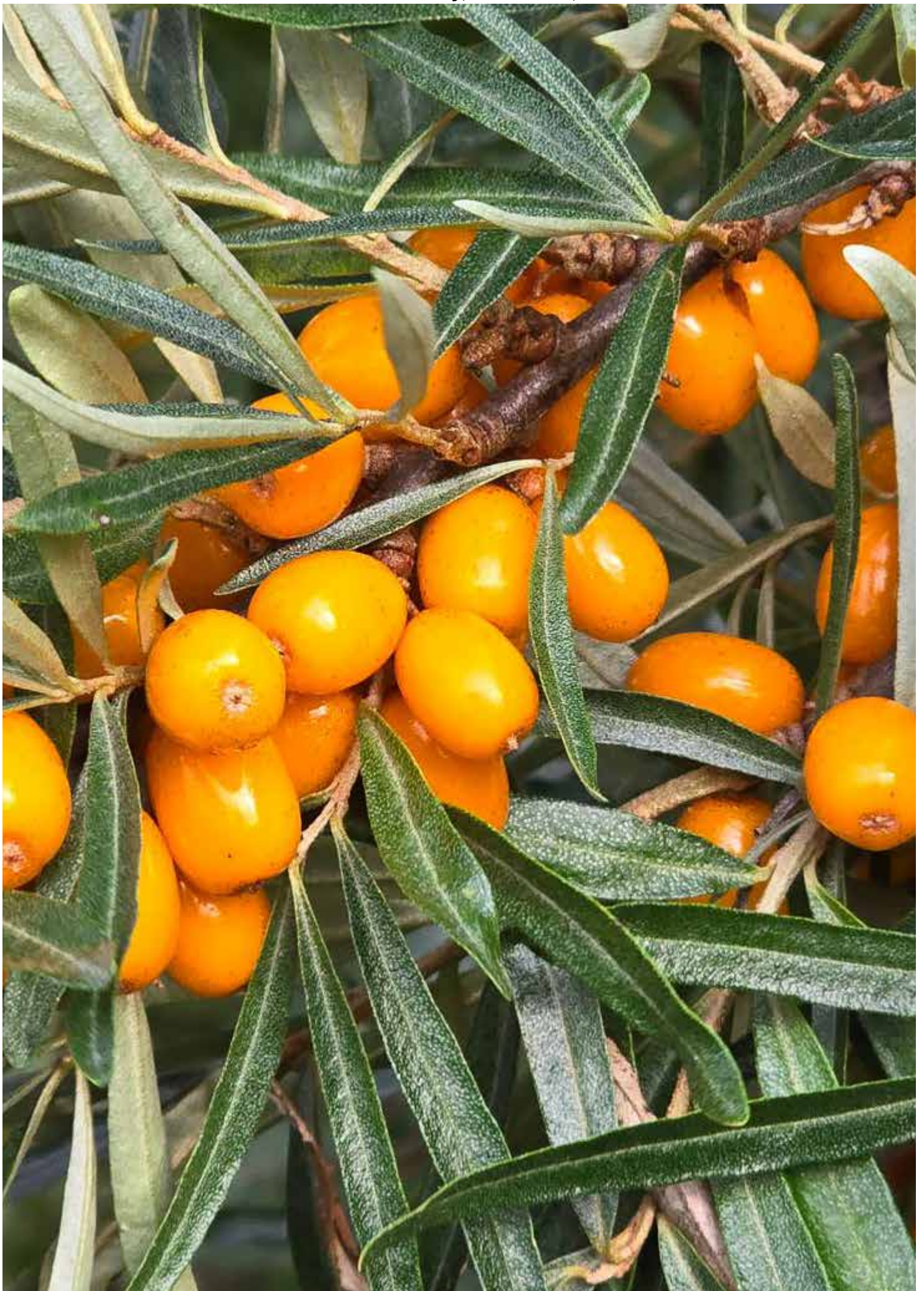
Nutritional values of sea buckthorn – a real health bomb

Sea buckthorn is known for its particularly high vitamin C content. One hundred grams of sea buckthorn provides up to 10-20 oranges of vitamin C, which makes it one of the most effective sources of vitamin C. However, the health benefits of sea buckthorn are not limited to this; It is also rich in polyunsaturated fatty acids, which are vital for cardiovascular health.

Sea buckthorn oil, which is obtained from the seeds and husks of the berry, is especially nutritious. It is rich in vitamin E, which is an important antioxidant. Sea buckthorn oil has been found to lower both total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol, making it a good addition to a diet that promotes heart health. In addition, sea buckthorn has a diverse range of vitamins, including vitamins of groups A and B, as well as minerals such as potassium, magnesium and iron.

Sea buckthorn at the dinner table – Versatile uses

Although sea buckthorn berries are known for their health benefits, their use in the home kitchen



is still quite limited. The tangy taste of sea buckthorn can be challenging for many, but when handled correctly, it makes a versatile ingredient for both sweet and savory dishes. The most traditional way to use sea buckthorn is to squeeze juice from it, but you should also use the husks and seeds. The husks contain a lot of fiber, and the remaining part after juicing can be mixed, for example, with bread dough or porridge.

The tangy taste of sea buckthorn pairs perfectly with sweet fruits such as apple or peach. It can be used to make jams and marmalades, or mixed into smoothies for an extra boost. In addition, sea buckthorn powder is easy to add to snacks, yoghurts or milkshakes to provide nutrients throughout the day. Especially with game dishes, sea buckthorn is an excellent taste cup, and its strong aroma complements the rich flavors well.

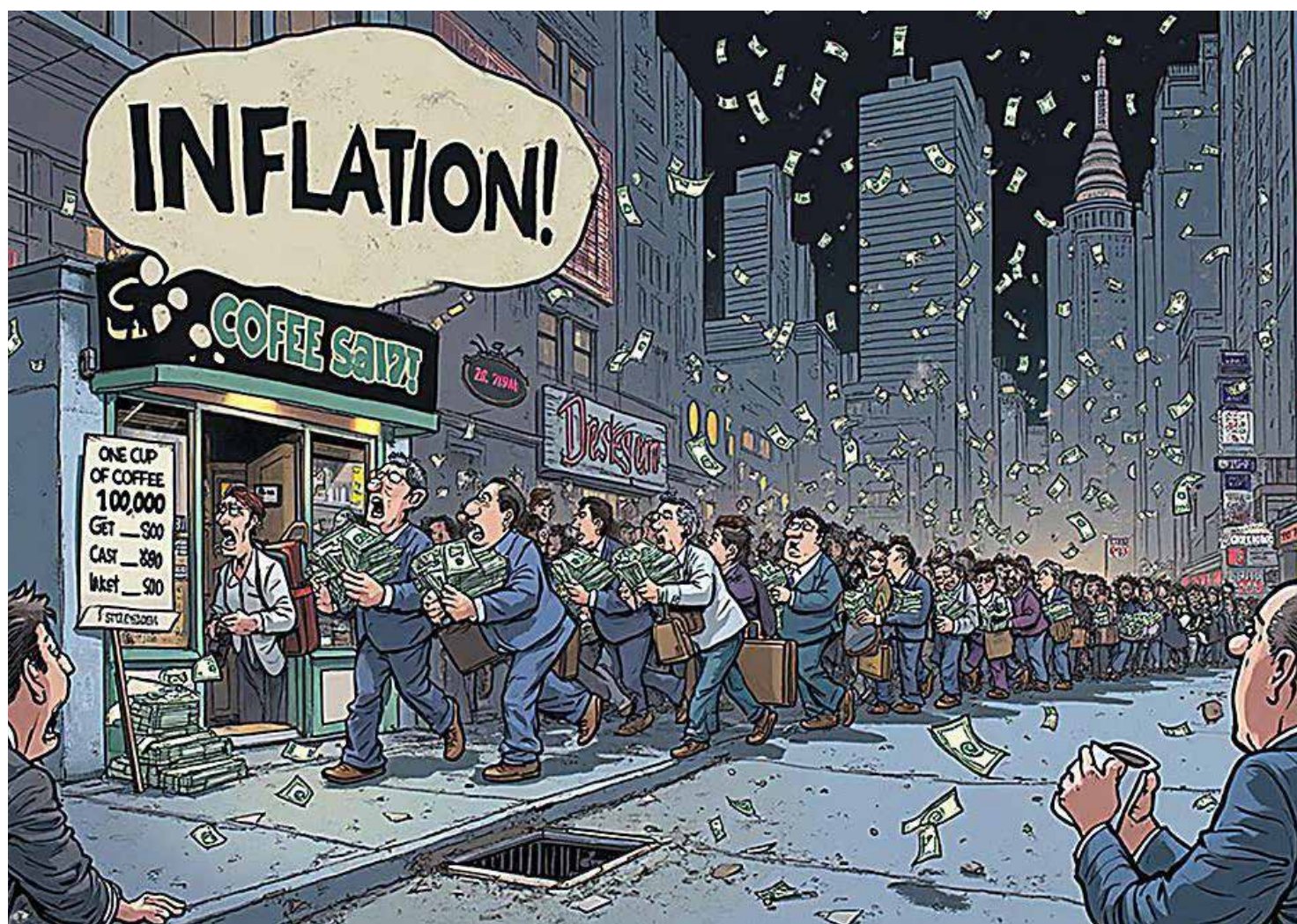
The uniqueness of sea buckthorn

Although sea buckthorn is not eaten in large quantities, its impact on health is significant. Nutrients in sea buckthorn berries develop during a long growing season, which makes them especially valuable. The content of vitamin C and antioxidants in sea buckthorn make it a berry that is not only a delicious addition to the diet, but also a real health bomb. The healthiest berry in the world – a title that sea buckthorn deserves.

Although picking and using sea buckthorn may require a little more effort than other berries, its benefits are worth the effort. It's a berry that offers much more than just a mouthful – it's nature's own pharmacy, full of strength and vitality that helps maintain health and well-being. Whether it's part of breakfast, snack or dinner, sea buckthorn is a berry that deserves a place at your dinner table.



ECONOMY



Pirouettes of inflation: A wheelbarrow with money for the store and the crazy price of coffee

One Saturday morning, with the sun shining gently through the curtains, I decide to buy a cup of coffee at the local café. I'm not a coffee connoisseur, but something about the aroma of freshly ground coffee is hard to resist. With my hand in my pocket, I reach for my wallet, but instead of just grabbing for a couple of bills, I find a thumbtacked map of the residential area. On the map, I've drawn a route that takes me from home, past the bank to pick up a wheelbarrow full of money, and on to the café.

It's easy to marvel at how the world is changing, but just

this morning, inflation has taken hold of me. I look out the window and see the neighbors struggling to drive their own wheelbarrows to the convenience store. It's a sight that could belong in an absurdist play, but it's reality.

A cup of coffee for the price of a month's salary?

We've all heard stories about how much a cup of coffee costs in some high-end places. But it's not exotic coffee beans from the Andes or gold flakes on top that are driving up the price. No, it is simply money that loses its value faster than an ice cream melts in

the sun. I remember a conversation I had with a friend who was visiting Zimbabwe during their inflation peaks. He told me about how he paid several billion Zimbabwean dollars for a single cup of coffee. It's like asking someone to trade with Monopoly money – even though those notes were actually real money, and the craving for coffee was very real.

Hungary in the 40s: An inflation record

But nothing beats inflation in Hungary during the 1940s. At that time, people lived in a time where numbers on banknotes began to look like phone numbers rather than money. In 1946, in

the midst of the chaos of World War II, prices rose so quickly that it became almost impossible to keep track of them. The prices of all goods doubled every 14 hours. If you bought a cup of coffee in the morning and waited until the afternoon to drink it, the price could have doubled. And no, I'm not exaggerating. In fact, they finally launched a banknote, 100 quadrillion money, as a desperate measure to deal with the situation.

Try to estimate how high inflation was in Hungary at this time. 100%? 1000%? Even higher? Ok, let me tell you! In July, 1946, the inflation rate was 41,900,000,000,000,000%

Imagine walking into a store and handing over a note with so many zeros that you can barely count them, to buy a loaf of bread. It's almost comical, but for those who lived in it, it was a nightmare. The value of money became so devalued that people had to put their faith in something else. In Hungary, the use of the pengő was finally stopped and the forints were switched to, and with that the economy stabilized.

What is actually driving inflation?

But what is it that drives inflation? Why are we going from buying coffee for a couple of coins to needing wheelbarrows to shop for basic goods? There are several factors, but perhaps the most common culprit is an excessive amount of money in circulation. When central banks print more money than is needed in the economy, this money loses its value. Imagine you're in a market where everyone has a thousand apples to sell, but there's only one buyer. What happens to the price of apples? They fall, because there are too many of them. The same thing happens with money – when there is too much of it, its value drops.

Another reason is cost-driven inflation, where it becomes more expensive to produce goods and services. When commodity prices, wages, and other production costs rise, these costs are passed on to the consumer, driving up prices. And as we all know, when prices go up, and wages don't keep up at the same rate, we all start to feel it in our wallets.

Wheelbarrow logistics and everyday life

Now I'm back at my door, ready to go out for that cup

of coffee. The wheelbarrow is ready, filled with money that is almost worthless if I wait too long. I think back to the stories of Germany in the 1920s, where children played with bundles of money as if they were Lego. Or how families lit fire in their stoves with banknotes because firewood was more expensive than money.

But what exactly is value? It may not be the coffee or the money, but the ability to trust that one's money still has the same value tomorrow as it has today. And therein, my dear readers, lies perhaps the greatest challenge for all economies – maintaining confidence in the currency. Because when it's lost, we're all standing there with our wheelbarrows, ready to shop – but with wallets that feel emptier than ever.

So, with this in mind, I'm going to trudge down to the café. And while I enjoy my cup of coffee, I will reflect on the value of money, both historically and in my own life. Because no matter how much inflation rises, there's one thing that always retains its value – a great story to share with friends, maybe over a cup of coffee, or two, if I can afford it.



The image above shows banknotes with a total value of \$150,010,850,000. If you would have these and if it were US dollars, well, I would be a rich man! But unfortunately, these dollars are from Zimbabwe.



The banknote with the largest face value ever, a Hungarian banknote from 1946, with a face value of 100.000.000.000.000.000 zeros pengő. Image from Wikipedia Commons, public domain.

BOOK

Rediscovered classic offers new insight into today's society

Wasa Dagblad has translated "1984"

into Swedish and the book can be read on the newspaper's website: www.vpress.ovh. The English version is also ready-

In an era marked by digital surveillance and the influence of social media, George Orwell's novel "1984" has gained new relevance. Although the book was written in 1948, long before the internet and smartphones, its depiction of a totalitarian society is frighteningly relevant.

The novel, which takes place in a dystopian future, describes a society where the state controls every aspect of citizens' lives. Through advanced surveillance and manipulation of information, the regime maintains its power and creates an atmosphere of fear and suspicion.

"It is fascinating how pinpoint-accurate Orwell was in his description of a surveillance society," says a well-known literary critic. "Although technology has developed enormously since 1948, the

underlying mechanisms for control and manipulation are still the same."

In "1984," the state uses "telescreens" to monitor citizens 24/7. In today's society, we have surveillance cameras, internet tracking, and facial recognition. Although these technologies are often justified on security grounds, they raise questions about privacy and civil liberties.

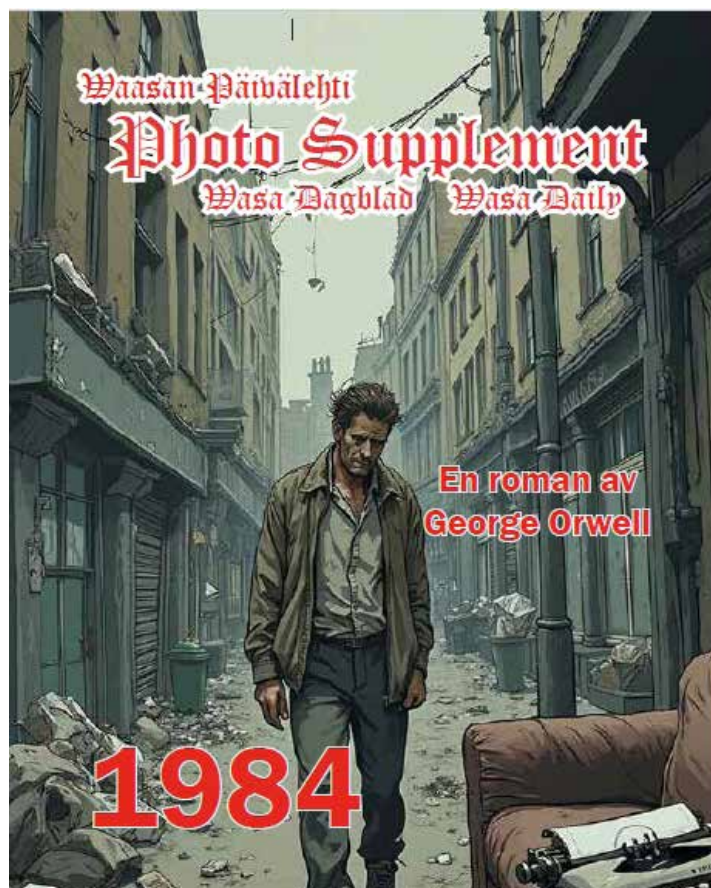
Orwell also depicts how the state uses "newspeak" to limit citizens' ability to think and control their perception of reality. By eliminating words that express opposition and criticism, the regime creates a language that makes it impossible to think "non-authoritarian" thoughts.

"It is a frightening thought that language can be used as a tool of control. In today's society, we see how politicians and the media use 'spin' and 'fake news' to manipulate public opinion. Orwell's newspeak may not be so far from our own reality."

"1984" is not only a warning against totalitarianism, but also a reminder of the impor-



George Orwell (1903 - 1950). Wikimedia Commons



tance of safeguarding freedom of expression, privacy, and critical thinking. In a time when these values are being challenged, Orwell's novel is more relevant

than ever.

'1984' can be recommended to everyone. It is a book that makes you think about our own time and the challenges we face.

LOVE

LOVE

There Are Four Types of Romantic Love



A groundbreaking study published in *Personality and Individual Differences* has unveiled a sensational truth: romantic love isn't a monolithic experience. Instead, it manifests in four distinct, and sometimes wildly contrasting, forms. Researchers, utilizing data from the 2022 Romantic Love Survey, meticulously analyzed 809 partnered young adults, revealing a startling landscape of love characterized by varying degrees of intensity, obsession, commitment, and sexual frequency.

The Mild Romantics: This group, comprising 20% of participants, represents the quietest expression of love. They exhibit the lowest levels of intensity, obsession, commitment, and sexual activity. Often male and heterosexual, they are frequently dating but not cohabiting.

Their love stories are marked by a higher number of past relationships, shorter durations of current love, and a lower perception of reciprocated affection. Intriguingly, they report the lowest health and functioning, and the highest rates of ASD diagnoses, suggesting a potential link between neurodiversity and a less intense experience of romantic love. They're also prone to risk-taking behaviors like reckless driving and substance use.

The Moderate Romantics: The largest group, representing 41% of participants, these individuals are defined by their "unremarkable" experience of love. They display average levels of intensity and obsession, with relatively high commitment and moderate sexual activity. Primarily male, they are the least likely to have children and are characterized by their self-confidence and lack of reported emotional extremes.

They are the "everyday" lovers, content and balanced.

The Libidinous Romantics: This passionate, yet small, group (10%) is defined by an insatiable sexual appetite, averaging an astonishing 10 sexual encounters per week. They experience high intensity, obsession, and commitment, coupled with a remarkable level of openness and reported well-being. They are often in committed relationships, but not cohabiting, and report the highest use of SSRIs. Their lives are marked by high energy, a desire for travel, and a penchant for spending. This group embodies the "love as pure fire" archetype.

The Intense Romantics: This group, making up 29% of participants, represents the pinnacle of romantic love. They exhibit the highest intensity, obsession, and commitment, with a high, though not extreme, frequency of sex. Predominantly female, they report the highest relationship satisfaction and the lowest

rates of ASD. Their love stories often begin before the relationship itself, and they display the greatest disparity between their perceived self and partner mate value. These individuals are highly agreeable, conscientious, and report a range of positive psychological traits, including sociability, planning, and a generally elevated mood. They are the true "love addicts," immersed in the exhilarating highs of romantic connection.

This study shatters the illusion of a singular romantic experience, revealing a spectrum of love that varies dramatically based on individual characteristics and relationship dynamics. It provides a fascinating glimpse into the diverse ways humans experience one of the most powerful emotions, offering a rich tapestry of love stories and a profound understanding of the human heart.

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RUSSIAN WAR AGAINST UKRAINE

Sanctions Must Stay In Place for as Long as the Aggression and Occupation Continue – Speech by the President



27 March, 2025

Dear friends!

I'm glad to see you all and grateful for your support of Ukraine and Ukrainians. Emmanuel, thanks again for hosting us here in France – and more broadly, for your commitment to this working format. Keir, I also want to thank you

personally for your dedication and for the important meetings you've led in the UK – your support really matters.

First – let's talk about the situation right now.

As you all can see, the war is still going – and it's only happening because of Russia. Their position

is simple – keep the war going, keep attacking, and delay diplomacy. Right now, there are U.S. proposals on the table – including one for a full and unconditional ceasefire. We agreed to it. But of course, Russia rejected it and threw in a bunch of nonsense conditions nobody asked for.

Same with the idea of a ceasefire in the Black Sea – Russia is trying to push their own conditions onto our partners, but those conditions are unrealistic. Lifting sanctions on Russia right now would be a disaster for diplomacy.

Sanctions are one of the few real tools the world has to pressure Russia into serious talks. What else is out there, apart from sanctions? If sanctions are weakened and Russia breaks the deal, bringing sanctions back will be incredibly slow and difficult. And by then, many will simply stop believing that sanctions actually work.

Russia breaks its promises way too often – we can't take steps toward them unless they really change. Sanctions must stay in place for as long as the aggression and occupation continue. I'm asking all of you to stay firm and to work with our other partners to keep the pressure on Russia.

At the same time, we need continued support for our defense and resilience. That's why all concrete decisions to support Ukraine are so important – both at the national level, like your national support



packages, and through joint defense and financial initiatives especially at the EU level. Please continue backing these efforts, in line with our shared interests.

Every single day in Ukraine means Russian bombs, drones, constant missile threats. The situation on the front line is still very tough. Stabilization on the front is a solid base for diplomacy. We've managed to make things more stable in the Donetsk region, and we're continuing operations in Russia's Kursk region to protect our eastern areas. According to our intelligence, Russia is getting ready for new offensives against the Sumy, Kharkiv, and Zaporizhzhia regions. They're dragging out the talks and trying to get the U.S. stuck in endless, pointless discussions about fake "conditions" just to buy time and then try to grab more land. Putin wants to negotiate over

territory from a stronger position. He's thinking only about war. So our job – all of us – is defense in the broadest sense of the word. That means keeping military aid going, but also, we need investments, more joint projects, more co-production, more localization, all aimed at scaling up and developing our defense production – from shells to drones and missiles. Europe needs everything it can to defend itself. Let's talk today about which defense directions in terms of support and production are the most useful. It's 5 billion euros for artillery shells to ensure our defense this year. And this funding must be found now. Also, air defense systems and missiles. Next is our domestic production. There are things you can produce in your countries, and there are things we can localize in Ukraine. In Ukraine, our defense industry is underfunded by around 20 billion euros.

We believe this gap can be closed using Russian assets. And it must be done.

Second point.

We need clear, operational decisions – and a shared vision for the future security system. It's obvious that the strength and size of the Ukrainian army will always be a key guarantee of our security. So we need to build everything around that – our Defense Forces, their equipment, their technology, their effectiveness – this is the foundation. And on top of that, we need to figure out how our partners' forces will operate on Ukrainian land, in our skies, and at sea. Our coalition of willing and capable partners is already working – politically and militarily. I'm thankful to France, the UK, and everyone involved for their sincere commitment to helping us build lasting security. And now – during this meeting

– in the upcoming military talks, and in all our discussions here in Europe and with other partners including the U.S. we need to answer some very specific questions:

Which countries will be involved on the ground, in the sky, and at sea in Ukraine?

Where exactly will these forces be located?

What will the numbers and structure of these forces look like?

What will their response procedures look like if there's a threat?

And when will our coalition actually deploy forces in Ukraine – when a cease-fire begins or once the war is fully over and a settlement is reached?

We need one clear plan – one that we all agree on and start implementing, based on the options and plans that have already been discussed with you and are available to you. We want to invite a small group of people – your representatives – to Ukraine to develop this plan together.

Thanks again to all of you for your support.

Glory to Ukraine!

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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)



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

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 Ostrobotnia region

The magazine contains quotations from old daily newspapers taken from the National Archives (digi.kansalliskirjasto.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 APRIL 2025

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

□ Aries (March 21 – April 19)
You're full of energy and initiative, but don't pick a fight with the coffee machine – it always wins.

□ Taurus (April 20 – May 20)
Your patience will be tested this April. Maybe it's time to accept that sighing loudly won't make the check-out line move faster.

□ Gemini (May 21 – June 20)
You have a thousand ideas and zero time to execute them. Try finishing one thing before jumping to the next – or just embrace the chaos!

□ Cancer (June 21 – July 22)
April might be an emotional month, but remember: no one expects you to save the world... just to deal

with your own stuff.

□ Leo (July 23 – August 22)
You love being the center of attention, but maybe let someone else tell the joke at the coffee break – just once.

□ Virgo (August 23 – September 22)
You have a plan, a backup plan, and a backup plan for the backup plan. Breathe – the worst that could happen is... well, not much, really.

□ Libra (September 23 – October 22)
Decisions are tough. If you're spending over an hour choosing what to eat, maybe that's a sign you should just cook something yourself. Or not.

□ Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)
Your magnetism is at its peak. Use it wisely – or you'll once again find yourself at a party you don't know how to leave.

□ Sagittarius (Novem-

ber 22 – December 21)
Your adventurous spirit is soaring, but maybe start small? Like taking a different route to work before booking a one-way ticket to Mongolia.

□ Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)
Your hard work is finally paying off! Soon, you can reward yourself with something big – like an overpriced coffee, guilt-free.

□ Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)
Your ideas are brilliant, but not everyone is ready for them yet. Maybe wait a bit before suggesting that all meetings should be replaced by memes.

□ Pisces (February 19 – March 20)
You're daydreaming more than ever. That's adorable – as long as you remember to get off at the right bus stop.

□ The stars whisper – but you do whatever you want anyway! □



HUMOUR ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

DANGEROUS

A.: »Is dyeing the hair as dangerous as the doctors say?"
 B.: »Yes, it is even more dangerous! One my old uncle once tried to dye his hair and less than in three months he was married to a widow with 7 children.

DEEP PARTICIPATION

The mother is at an art exhibition with her children.
 Kalle: Mother, what does that picture show? Mother: Persecution of Christians in Rome. There is an arena, and tigers pounce on the Christians, to tear them to pieces. Kalle: Oh, mother, Look at that tiger cub in the corner of the picture, which is completely without a Christian.

FROM A SMALL CHILDREN'S SCHOOL IN VYBORG

The children had been given the task of drawing figures that would illustrate what the children intended to be when they grew up. Thus one boy had designed a sailing ship, so he wanted to be a sailor, another an automobile, he was to be a driver, etc.
 Little Elsa had not drawn at all. When the teacher asked why she had not made any drawings, the girl replied "I'm going to get married, but I don't know how it's drawn.

IN PRISON

Prison Director: What, you're here again! I thought your last visit here would have improved you? Prisoner: It did, sir, but I want to be even better.

THEFT ON THE WAY

Movie actress: I beg you to write in your newspaper about the theft of my jewels!
 Reporter: When did it take place?
 Film actor: Next Monday.

EXPENSIVE DRESS

Wife: I want a new dress.
 Doctor-man: Oh yes, then I have to look through my patient list, maybe someone still has their appendix.

TO COUNT CORRECTLY. AND WRONG.

Teacher: Why do you always add wrong?
 Student: I don't know.
 Teacher: Is someone helping you?
 Student: Yes, my dad.
 Teacher: What is he then?
 Student: Waiter.

The astronomic picture of the week:



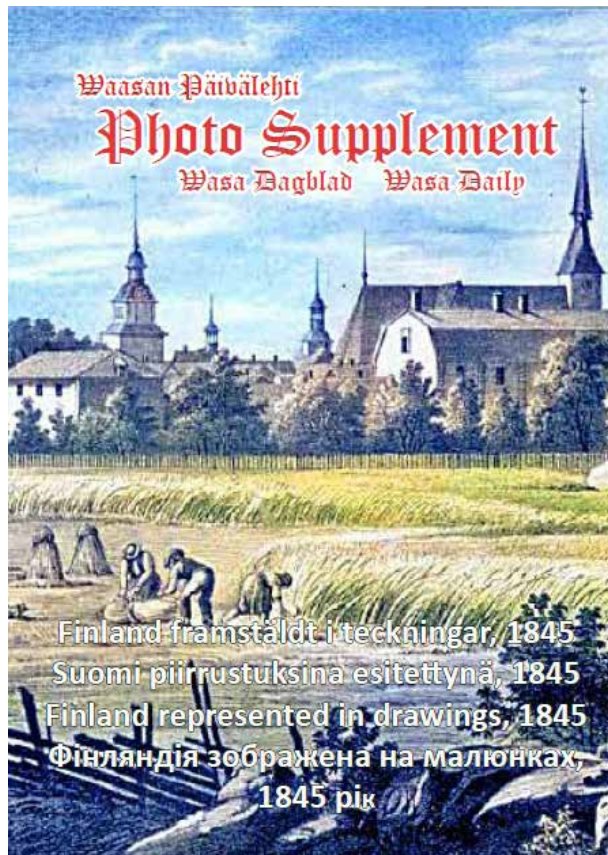
Euclid's view of the Horsehead Nebula ESA25170866.jpg

Euclid shows us a spectacularly panoramic and detailed view of the Horsehead Nebula, also known as Barnard 33 and part of the constellation Orion. At approximately 1375 light-years away, the Horsehead – visible as a dark cloud shaped like a horse's head – is the closest giant star-forming region to Earth. It sits just to the south of star Alnilak, the easternmost of Orion's famous three-star belt, and is part of the vast Orion molecular cloud. Many other telescopes have taken images of the Horsehead Nebula, but none of them are able to create such a sharp and wide view as Euclid can with just one observation. Euclid captured this image of the Horsehead in about one hour, which showcases the mission's ability to very quickly image an unprecedented area of the sky in high detail.

ESA/Euclid/Euclid Consortium/NASA image processing by J.-C. Cillandre (CEA Paris-Saclay) G. Anselmi

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Next week:



Finland framställt i teckningar, 1845
 Suomi piirrustuksina esitettynä, 1845
 Finland represented in drawings, 1845
 Финляндія зображена на малюнках, 1845 рік

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: wasadagblad@gmail-com

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 Send ads to wasadagblad@gmail.com

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