

WASA DAILY

Nr 39 Sunday, September 28, 2025

ISSN 2965-2456

Tikanoja autumn

Onkilahti Traffic park still open

Elderly week celebrated in Laihia

Why do women get heart attacks?

Vaasa inhabitants satisfied

Aspirin and bowel cancer

WASA DAILY



**HERE WE ARE:
vpress.ovh**

Tikanoja Autumn

TODAY

Art Brings Vaasa to Life – Tikanoja Art Home at the Heart of Culture



VASA MAY BE KNOWN as Finland's energy capital, but its true power also lies in its vibrant cultural life. Art is not merely decoration—it's a mirror reflecting society, stirring emotions, and inviting dialogue. Vasa's art scene is dynamic, diverse, and constantly evolving, thanks to its outstanding institutions like the *Tikanoja Art Home*.

Tikanoja is more than a mu-

seum—it's a sanctuary for art, history, and contemporary expression. This autumn, two exhibitions open: *Stillness and Glowing Colours* and *I Am Not Afraid* – Contemporary Finnish Illustrators. Together, they show how art can preserve heritage while boldly engaging with today's most pressing themes.

Frithjof Tikanoja's collection, featuring works by Henri Matisse and Paul Gauguin, brings international modernism into the heart of Vasa. Alongside these, Finnish masters like Tyko Salminen and Eemu Myntti remind us that art belongs everywhere—not just in big cities or elite circles.

Upstairs, *I Am Not Afraid* showcases the power of contemporary illustration. Through themes like fear, bullying, gender identity, and death, artists such as Satu Kettunen, Jenny Lucander, and Riina Tanskanen explore the emotional landscapes of children and youth. These works prove that illustration can be just as impactful as painting or sculpture.

Vasa's museums play a vital role in making art accessible. Workshops, artist talks, and inclusive programming foster community and lower the barriers to engagement. Tikanoja is not just a place to view art—it's a space to live with it.

Art is essential to Vasa. It fuels imagination, deepens empathy, and strengthens identity. Supporting Tikanoja and other cultural institutions is not just an investment in beauty—it's an investment in the city's soul and future.

Art doesn't just decorate Vasa. It makes the city truly alive.

Photo Supplement

Waasan Päivälehti
Photo Supplement
 Wasa Dagblad Wasa Daily

Keltainen - keltaisempi - keltaisin
 Gult - gulare - gulast
 Yellow - yellower - yellowest

Photo Supplement - vpress.ovh



Residents of Vaasa record highest satisfaction with local services

RESIDENTS OF VAASA are more satisfied than ever with the city's technical services. According to this year's citizen survey, which annually assesses public perception of streets, parks, and water and waste management, these services received an average rating of 3.7 on a 1–5 scale – the highest result since the surveys began in 2004.

The greatest improvements were seen in winter maintenance: snow removal and anti-slip measures on pedestrian and cycling paths received significantly higher ratings (+0.47). Traffic light management also saw an improvement (+0.19). “Our investments are clearly reflected in the results. Last winter we intensified maintenance on main walking and cycling routes, and we are currently updating traffic lights with new technology to improve traffic flow,” says Jukka Talvi, head of the Technical Department.

The highest ratings went to the city center's street lighting (4.34) and downtown parks (4.27). Vaasa's green area management has consistently ranked among the best in the country, so it is no surprise that residents are satisfied. “The

city's beautiful green areas are a source of pride, and it's great to see residents appreciate the work we do,” says head gardener Kaj-Erik Grandell.

Satisfaction with stormwater management, however, dropped slightly (-0.25), likely due to heavy rains during the survey period. The stormwater network is maintained, renovated, and expanded annually to reduce flooding.

Residential streets received the lowest score (2.98). Based on a street condition survey and a renovation program, the city plans to improve these streets in the coming years, aiming to renovate five neighborhood streets annually. “We use citizen-friendly methods, mobile games, and AI-based image recognition to map street conditions. In addition, snowbanks are removed from driveways during plowing,” explains planning manager Jyri Mursula.

The survey provides the city with valuable insight into everyday convenience and areas for improvement. “The voice of residents is extremely important for developing our services,” says Jukka Talvi.

Source: City of Vaasa, press release, 26 September 2025
IMAGE: City of Vaasa / Christoffer Björklund

NEWS

YOU CAN READ THIS NEWSPAPER ANYWHERE



You can read this paper wherever You are. Like here in Palo-
saari

BLOG WRITERS

Join Wasa Daily as a Blog Writer!

Are you passionate about sharing your thoughts, stories, or expertise with the community? *Wasa Daily* is looking for enthusiastic blog writers to contribute engaging content for our readers.

Whether you love writing about local events, culture, lifestyle, business, or personal experiences, we welcome your voice!

Writing for Wasa Daily is a great opportunity to reach a wider audience, connect with fellow locals, and showcase your creativity. No prior experience is needed—just bring your ideas and enthusiasm! We value diverse perspectives and fresh voices that reflect the vibrant spirit of our community.

Interested? Send us your blog pitch or a short sample, and let's get your words published! Join us in making *Wasa Daily* a platform for meaningful conversations and inspiring stories.



Contact us at wasadagblad@gmail.com for more details. We can't wait to hear from you!

UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment in Our Region Fell in Late Summer and Remains Among the Lowest in Finland

ACCORDING to the City of Vaasa, the employment situation in the Ostrobothnia region showed positive development in August. The unemployment rate stood at 7.2 percent, one of the lowest figures in the country. By comparison, the national average was significantly higher at 11.5 percent.

Although the unemployment rate rose by 0.7 percentage points compared to last

year, it decreased by 1.1 percentage points from July. At the end of August, there were a total of 8,865 jobseekers in the Ostrobothnia employment area, of whom 4,498 were unemployed. Compared to July, the number of unemployed decreased by 690 people (-13.3%).

Regionally, the number of unemployed fell in Kaskinen, Korsnäs, Maalahti and Nykarleby compared to a year earlier. The largest increase, however, was recorded in Vaasa, where the number of unemployed rose by 501 (+18%). The steepest relative growth was seen in

Vörå, where unemployment increased by 19 percent. The unemployment rate varied considerably within the region: in Maalahti it was only 3.1 percent, while in Kaskinen it rose to 11.8 percent. In Vaasa, the unemployment rate stood at 9.5 percent.

The number of full-time furloughed workers was 139 in August, which is 76 fewer than a year earlier (-35.4%). Nationwide, the number of unemployed was on average 11.3 percent higher than in August last year.

A point of concern, however, is the continued rise in

long-term unemployment. At the end of August, there were 1,510 people in the Ostrobothnia employment area who had been unemployed for at least 12 consecutive months. This is 444 more than a year ago (+41.6%), although the figure decreased slightly from July.

According to the City of Vaasa, the figures show that while the region remains strong in many respects, tackling long-term unemployment must remain a priority going forward.

TIKANOJA

Tikanoja autumn – several exhibitions and illustrations in the art museum



THE TIKANOJA ART MUSEUM opens its autumn with a spectacular programme: the museum presents two new exhibitions that combine illustrations of contemporary art and gems from Tikanoja's own collection. The press conference will be held on Friday 26 September from 10 a.m., and the exhibitions will be opened to the public on the same day with the evening opening. (Source: City of Vaasa / STT Info)

The colour brilliance of the collec-

tion and the power of illustration

The first exhibition, *Quiet Life, Glowing Colours*, opens on the first floor of the Tikanoja Art Museum. It presents part of the collection of Frithjof Tikanoja (1877–1964), a commercial counsellor from Vaasa, which includes more than a thousand works, books and antiques. The collection highlights works by both domestic and foreign modernists – including Matisse, Gauguin and Maurice de Vlaminck, among others. STT Info

The second exhibition, *I Am Not Afraid* – Finnish Contemporary Illustrators, delves into the worlds of children and young people through the means of illustration. The exhibition

features works by six illustrators: Satu Kettunen, Juliana Hyrri, Saara Obele, Janna Lindfors, Riina Tanskanen and Jenny Lucander. The curator of the Vaasa Museums is Noora Lehtovuori.

The illustrators themselves will participate in a press conference where they will talk about their works and inspiration.

Schedule and presentations

The press conference will begin at 10 a.m. on the first floor with two parts: first, the opening of the collection exhibition at 10–10.30 a.m., after which the illustrators will present the exhibition *I Am Not Afraid* at 10.30–11.00 a.m. STT Info

The exhibitions will be held openly at the evening opening from 5 pm to 8 pm. *Quiet Life, Glowing Colours* will open to the public from 27.9.2025 until further notice, while *I Am Not Afraid* will be on display from 27.9.2025 to 23.5.2026.

Why you should visit Tikanoja

The Tikanoja Collection offers a rare combination of Finnish cultural history and international modernism. In addition, the illustration exhibition highlights the versatility of illustrators – from comic art to installations and from digital collage to animation.

During the summer of 2025, the art home has undergone a major façade and roof renovation as well as a renovation of the interior. Now the building will open in its new glory, ready for the autumn public.

Tikanoja autumn promises visual experiences, illustrations, gems of art history and discussion. Visitors are offered the opportunity to step into both the past and the present – to see how art and illustration speak to us today.

Image: Sophie Jobert: Juhlan merkeissä, Feststämning, Spirit of Festivity, 1857.

ONKILAHTI TRAFFIC PARK

Onkilahti popular traffic park is still open for a week

The children's traffic park located in the Onkilahti activity park and the adjacent pump track have aroused great interest and attracted many visitors since the opening in August. The opening ceremony was celebrated on 29 August, and now the traffic park is open for another week, offering the opportunity to experience Vaasa in miniature and roll on the pump track before winter sets in.

In the traffic park, you can move around by go-karts, bicycles or on foot on the 640-metre-long track, along which there are 12 carefully made scale models of well-known Vaasa buildings, such as the City Hall, water tower and railway station. The Market Square, roundabouts, traffic lights and level crossings have also been built into the park, creating an authentic urban experience on a small scale. – “Onkilahti traffic park is like Vaasa in miniature, and it offers both children and adults a wonderful environment for learning traffic and having fun,” says Jarmo Latvala, Service Manager.

There are 36 go-karts, bicycles and even a scale model of the Lifti bus available in the park. The adjacent 1000 m² pump track invites you to skate BMX bikes, scooters and skateboards. The peculiarity of the track is its rolling terrain, where movement is carried out by “pumping” with the help of the body.

The traffic park is open from 1.9.-5.10.2025: Wed-Fri 12.00-18.00 Sat-Sun 12.00-16.00
--





NEWS

WEEK FOR THE OLD

Elderly Day and Elderly Week Celebrated in Laihia



FROM MONDAY October 6 to Sunday, October 12, 2025, *Elderly Week* (Vanhusten viikko) will be celebrated in Laihia and across Finland. This year's theme, "Happiness grows in community", emphasizes older people's right to social engagement, dignity, and active participation. The week is organized by the Central Union for the

Welfare of the Aged (Vanhustyön keskusliitto).

The week formally begins with the national Elderly Day celebration on Sunday, October 5 in Pukkila. During the week, various events across Finland highlight the everyday life of older adults as well as society's responsibility in supporting senior citizens.

Program in Laihia

In Laihia, Elderly Week features a

diverse program, mostly free of charge, aimed primarily at older residents but also open to all interested participants. The theme "Happiness grows in community" is reflected in lectures, group singing sessions, and wellness exercises.

Monday, October 6, 14:00–15:00 – Lecture on promoting brain health at Laihia Library, with Anne Hietanen from Pohjanmaan Muistiluotsi (Memory Pilot of Ostrobothnia).

Wednesday, October 8, 10:00–10:45 – Lecture on maintaining balance, followed by simple outdoor balance exercises, weather permitting. Location: Maintenance building, Pururata, Ampujantie 30.

Friday, October 10, 13:00–14:00 – Group singing event "Sing with us" led by conductor and pianist Jari Puhakka. Coffee will be served for a small fee. Location: Laihia Youth Association, Alkiontie 6.

Community and Participation

The Laihia program also emphasizes the voice of older residents. Seniors are invited to complete a short survey on local welfare services. The first 50 respondents will receive non-slip shoe covers (sizes M or L), reflecting the municipality's appreciation for seniors' opinions and safety.

Elderly Week in Laihia offers a wide variety of opportunities for learning, exercise, and social connection. Older adults can engage in activities that promote well-being, participate in communal singing, and enjoy social interaction – while the whole community can show support and appreciation for its senior residents.

Note: Program details may be subject to change.

NEWS

HEALTH IN SCHOOLS

THL: The use of nicotine pouches is increasing



A HISTORIC TURN HAS TAKEN PLACE among young students: the use of alcohol and tobacco is rapidly declining, but nicotine pouches are making an unprecedented breakthrough. The new results of the National Institute for Health and Welfare's (THL) survey on health in schools show a worrying trend – nicotine pouches have become a new popular product among young people.

Nine per cent of boys in grades 8 and 9 in comprehensive school use nicotine pouches daily, and 4–5 per cent of girls. For students in vocational schools, the figures have exploded: almost one in four boys (24 percent) and 15 percent of girls state that they use portion tobacco daily. The corresponding figures were clearly lower one year ago.

"The increase in the daily use of

nicotine pouches among young people is alarming. The situation requires urgent action. The age limit for the sale of tobacco and nicotine products should be raised to 20 years, says Hanna Ollila, Senior Specialist at the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare.

At the same time, alcohol consumption among young people has decreased dramatically. Almost three-quarters of secondary school students already state that they do not drink alcohol at all. The use of traditional tobacco and snus is also marginal. But nicotine pouches, with their attractive flavors and high nicotine content, have taken over everyday life for young people.

Another new feature is that schools and educational institutions will have better opportunities to intervene in the phenomenon from August onwards. The change in the law prohibited the possession of tobacco substitutes

– such as nicotine pouches and e-cigarettes – for people under the age of 18.

"Nicotine products are always harmful to young people. They are addictive, affect brain development and open the door to nicotine addiction, Ollila points out.

The use of e-cigarettes, on the other hand, has remained almost unchanged compared to the previous year, and only among girls completing a vocational qualification continues to increase. The youngest experiments can be seen as early as primary school: two per cent of boys and one per cent of girls in grades four and five have tried nicotine pouches.

The rise of nicotine pouches paints a bleak picture of young people's health. At the same time as traditional intoxicants are giving way, new nicotine products are gaining ground – and creating a whole new threat to public health.

NEWS

HEALTH

New research: Aspirin protects against bowel cancer recurrence



A SWEDISH RESEARCH GROUP has shown in a groundbreaking randomized study that a low daily dose of aspirin – a medicine that is now found in most homes – can halve the risk of recurrence in patients who have undergone surgery for colon or rectal cancer. The study, led by researchers at Karolinska Institutet, was recently published after following over 3,500 patients in the Nordic countries.

Study design and results

The patients were recruited from 33 hospitals in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland. Approximately 40% had tumors with a specific genetic change in the PIK3 signaling pathway – a mutation that the researchers suspected could make them particularly susceptible to aspirin treatment. After

surgery, these patients were randomized to either receive 160 mg of aspirin daily or placebo for three years. Among those with the mutations, the treatment showed a marked effect: the risk of recurrence was reduced by 55% compared with the placebo group. The effect is believed to be due to aspirin reducing inflammation, inhibiting platelet activity and slowing tumor growth – a combination that makes the environment less favorable for cancer.

Significance and possible impact

The fact that aspirin is a well-known and inexpensive medicine makes the results particularly interesting. The researchers believe that this type of treatment has the potential to change guidelines for additional treatment of bowel cancer. The study – called ALASCCA – has already been awarded awards for its scientific quality. According to the researchers, the study clearly shows that it is possible to use the genetic profile of patients' tumors (precision ion medicine) to determine who may benefit most from additional treatment with aspirin.

Reservations and further studies

Despite the promising results, the researchers call for some caution. The effect was observed mainly in patients with mutations in the PIK3 pathway – not necessarily in all bowel cancer patients. Long-term studies are needed to clarify the risks, including possible bleeding, and to determine optimal doses and duration of treatment. In addition, an evaluation is needed of which patient groups benefit most from the treatment and how best to implement this clinically.

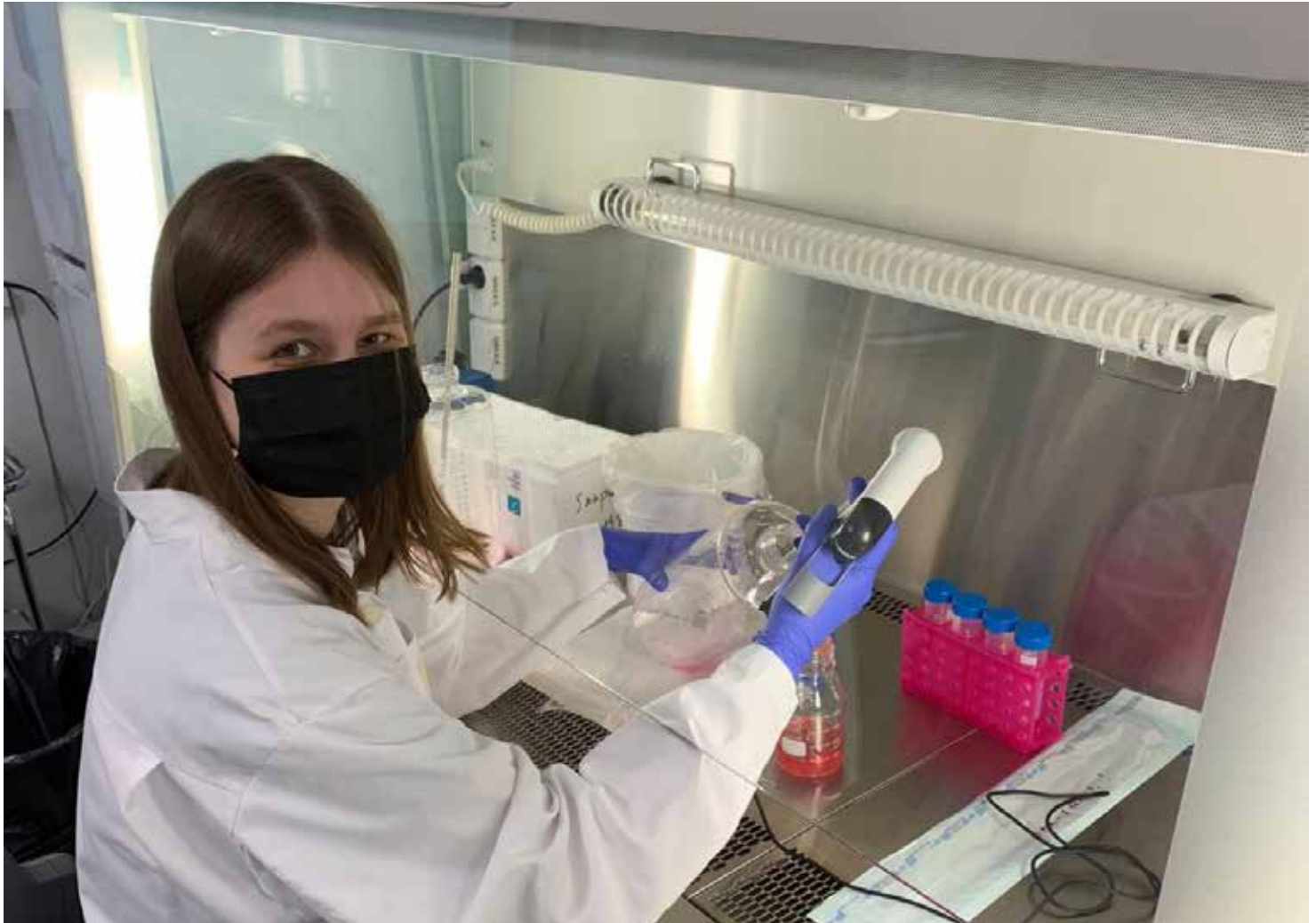
The new study shows that a simple, cheap and well-established medicine such as aspirin could have a central role in the fight against bowel cancer. For patients with the right genetic profile, routine addition of low-dose aspirin could be the difference between relapse and lifelong cancer-free life. The scientific community is holding its breath – this could be a paradigm shift in cancer treatment.

Source: Karolinska Institutet / KI new

NEWS

CANCER TREATMENT

New Herpesvirus-Based Vaccine Could Revolutionize Cancer Treatment



Researchers at Åbo Akademi University have developed a promising experimental cancer vaccine based on herpesvirus. According to the study, the vaccine can destroy tumors without causing side effects to healthy tissue. The findings were presented in **Fanny Frejborg**'s doctoral thesis Decorin-expressing oncolytic herpes simplex virus vector for novel cancer therapy.

The research team modified the herpes simplex virus by removing the gene responsible for its disease-causing ability and inserting a gene that produces the proteoglycan decorin. Decorin plays an essential role in tissue repair and blood vessel formation. However, in many cancer types, decorin is missing even though it is normally present in healthy tissue.

Laboratory tests showed several encouraging results:

In lung cancer cells, decorin enhanced the vaccine's ability to kill cancer cells.

In mice, intranasal administration directly targeting the lungs proved effective.

In a liver cancer model using chicken

embryos, blood vessel formation in tumors decreased by about 40 percent. The structure of blood vessels also normalized, even when they had already developed before treatment began.

One of the most significant findings was that the vaccine did not cause side effects in the chicken embryo model. This suggests that the treatment acts selectively on tumors while sparing healthy tissue.

According to Frejborg, the results open up new possibilities for developing cancer vaccines that not only destroy tumors but also improve the effectiveness of other treatments. When tumor blood vessels normalize, drug delivery to the tumor improves significantly.

UKRAINE

UKRAINE PRESIDENT

Putin Lies to the Leaders Who Still Talk to Him When He Says That the Occupying Forces Are Achieving Some Kind of Their Goals – Address by the President



I wish you good health, fellow Ukrainians!

TODAY HAS BEEN packed with military matters. I received reports from the Commander-in-Chief and the Chief of the General Staff. I also spoke with the Minister of Defense of Ukraine. I thank everyone. I thank all our warriors, primarily in the Dobropillia, Pokrovsk, and Kupyansk areas.

It's extremely important that you are delivering results and defeating the occupiers. In just our Dobropillia counteroffensive operation, Russian overall losses have already exceeded 3,000, most of them irrecoverable. This was the area where the Russians aimed to achieve one of the major breakthroughs on the front, but our forces are neutralizing them. And that is important. Putin lies to the leaders who still talk to him when he says that the occupying forces

are achieving some kind of their goals. For years now, they have been forced to come up with new and new reasons why the deadlines set for them keep being pushed back. And it is telling that despite everything the world says to Russia, they still respond only with new attempts at assaults and new strikes on Ukrainian cities and our infrastructure. They are truly sick with war – and whether they can be cured is an open question. The only thing that can force this Russian virus of war to stop is strength: strong decisions and strong assistance.

We discussed this in New York with many of our close partners, and, of course, we discussed it with President Trump. President Trump is very well informed about the situation on the front, what the Russians are doing, and how they are trying to deceive everyone. We are discussing with the U.S. specific measures that can stop this war. The solutions exist. It is crucial that the agreements we have reached be implemented. These past few days, the Russians continued to inflict heavy strikes on our cities: Chernihiv, Kharkiv and the region, Odesa and Dnipro regions. They constantly strike the Donetsk region. Kherson is

under severe artillery fire and bombing. Russians must be held accountable for all of this. Without a doubt. Today, there were also reports on deep strikes carried out by our forces. Efficiency, drone production and missile production – we will increase output volumes.

The critical point is not to ease pressure on Russia for this war. Sanctions, restrictions on trade with Russia, restrictions on the schemes they exploit and profit from – all of this will work. We expect the approval of the 19th EU sanctions package. We expect steps from the United States. We value President Trump's stance toward those in Europe who still buy Russian oil and continue a policy of dependence on Russian schemes. We hope Hungary listens to a key NATO ally and respects the President of the United States – right now, no one in Europe sees such respect from Hungary. America is ready to fill the European market with energy resources so that no one will even need to look in Russia's direction. The Middle East is ready to work with Europe. Every nation in Europe can become stronger – without Russia.

There was also a report from our mi-

litary on, frankly, very unusual events along the Ukraine–Hungary border. Our forces spotted drones, and those were reconnaissance drones. I instructed the military to conduct a full check, and if such drones appear again, to respond appropriately for the defense of our state. Ukrainians are currently the best in Europe at defending against any drones. We are ready to share our experience with other nations that need reliable protection against drone threats. Negotiations are underway with dozens of countries in Europe and the Middle East, and we have proposed a strong deal to the United States – one of the most promising.

Glory to Ukraine!

COPYRIGHT: The Presidential Office of Ukraine. All materials featured on this site are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International. The use of any materials posted on the website is permitted provided you link to www.president.gov.ua regardless of full or partial use of materials.

NEWS

RUSSIA

Russia's growing isolation from the West



BANS, SURVEILLANCE and closed borders are shaping a new reality for Russian citizens

A new Iron Curtain is emerging

In recent years, Russia has taken steps towards an increasingly isolated existence in relation to the West. This is done digitally, culturally and physically. The coun-

try's leadership has introduced a series of measures to limit citizens' contacts with Western ideas, communication tools and travel opportunities. The goal is to strengthen control over the flow of information and thus also over the population.

Ban on Western social media

Among the most high-profile

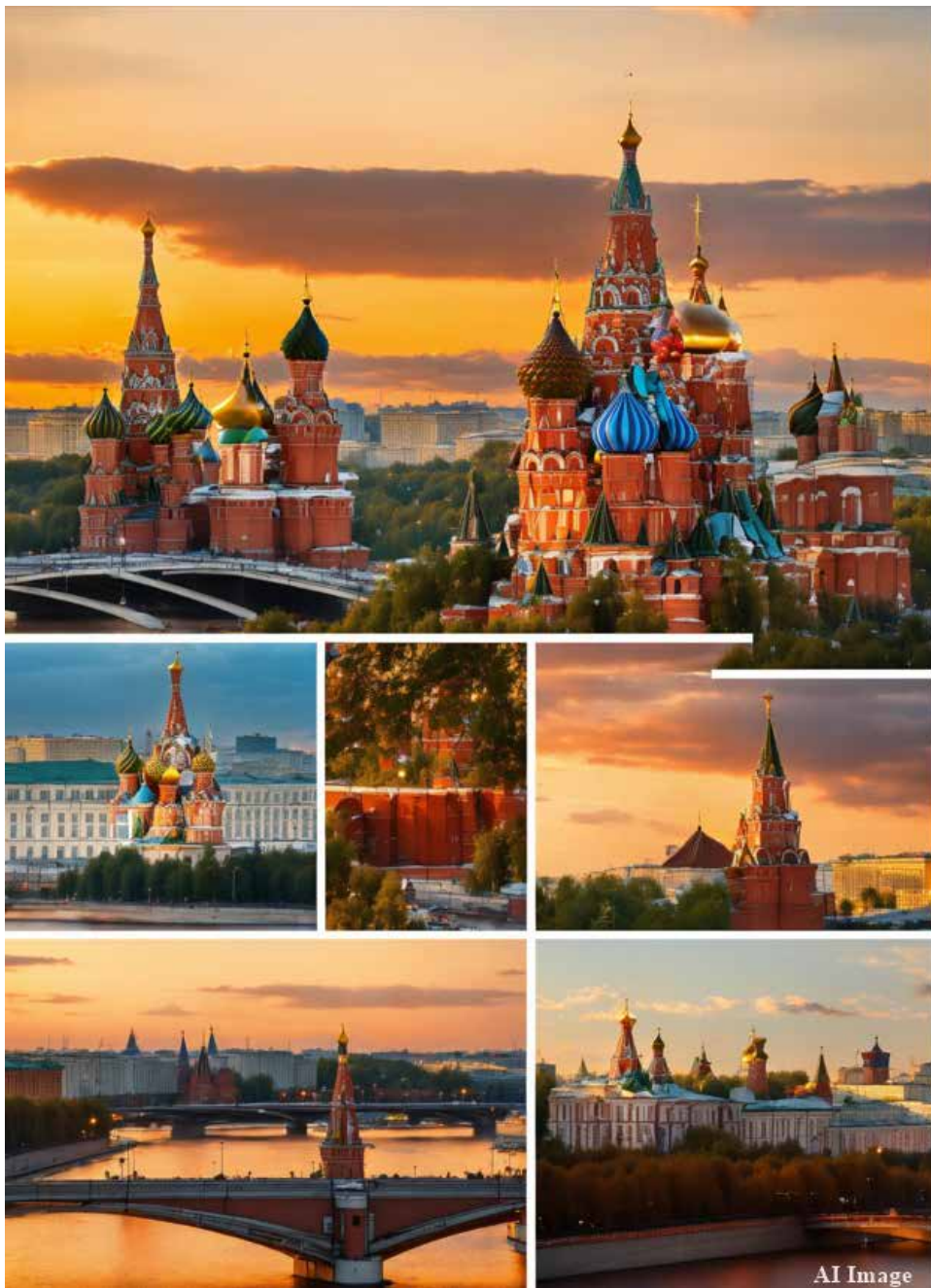
measures is the ban on popular platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp. These services, which were previously important channels for both private and public communication, have been blocked by Russian authorities on the grounds of national security and protection against "harmful influence from abroad". YouTube is also under pressure, with authorities repeatedly trying to block or restrict access to the service. As a result, many Russians now lack access to the world's largest video platform and thus an important channel for independent information.

MAX: State-supervised alternative

As part of replacing WhatsApp, the Russian state has introduced the MAX app, which is marketed as a secure and domestic alternative, but critics say it allows for extensive monitoring of users' communications. Experts warn that MAX is designed to give authorities visibility into messages, calls, and user behavior. This means that private communication can in practice be controlled by the state, which further reduces the scope for free conversation and critical voices.

Education policy: Reduced English teaching

The government has also proposed to reduce the teaching of English and other Western languages in schools and universities.



Western countries have closed their borders to Russian citizens. Tourist visas are denied, and the opportunity to travel west has effectively disappeared. President Vladimir Putin has expressed that this is a development he welcomes, as it prevents Russian citizens from leaving the country, especially in times of mobilization or political unrest.

Impact on citizens

This development affects the everyday lives of millions of Russians. The opportunity to travel, study and work abroad is severely limited. At the same time, the digital barriers and surveillance have led to a more closed and controlled information environment. Many young Russians worry about the future, as they risk being cut off from global trends, educational opportunities and international contacts. For those who want to leave the country for political or personal reasons, the doors have effectively been closed.

Prospects

Russia's policy of isolation has had profound consequences for both society and individuals. With bans on Western apps, restrictions on education and plans for a separate internet, a new Iron Curtain is being formed – this time digitally and culturally. The borders with the West are closed, and that is something that suits the country's leadership. The future of Russian citizens is uncertain, and the question remains whether the country will ever be reintegrated into the global community.

The aim is to counteract "cultural infiltration" and strengthen the Russian language and identity. However, critics believe that this risks further isolating young Russians and making future international contacts more difficult, both in education and working life.

Digital isolation: Plans for a dedicated Internet

One of the most far-reaching ambitions is the plans to create a so-called "sovereign Internet" – a system where Russia can disconnect from the global network and

instead use its own, state-controlled network. Comparisons are often made with North Korea, where the inhabitants are completely cut off from the outside world's internet content. If fully implemented, this would mean that Russian citizens would only have access to information approved by the state.

International Relations: Closed Borders and Putin's View

In addition to digital and cultural measures, Russia has also been hit by physical limitations. After the invasion of Ukraine, many

ART EXPERIENCE OF THE WEEK



Salomon Andersson

16.2.1785, Växjö, Sweden

15.2.1855, Växjö, Sweden

Maria Magdalena, 1805

EVENTS

Las Vegas

2.10.2025 at 6 pm

Vaasa City Orchestra

cond. Antti Rissanen

sol. Juki Välipakka & Chiara Orlandi

Come Fly With Me, Fly Me to the Moon, My Way, I want to be Loved by You.... <https://www.vaasa.fi/koe-ja-nae/kulttuuria-vaasassa-ja-seudulla/vaasan-kaupunginorkesteri/las-vegas/>



MUSTASAARI CHURCH

DIANDRA

17.10.25 at 6 pm

Mustasaari Finnish Parish

VAASA CITY THEATRE

UNNECESSARY PEOPLE

Premiere 23.10.2025 AT 7 PM

Juliet Hall

One of the most influential dramas in Finnish playwriting.

<https://www.netticket.fi/tarpeetto-mia-ihmisia-vaasa>

HELSINKI BOOK FAIR

23.-26.10.2025

in Helsinki Exhibition Hall.

The Helsinki Book Fair was founded 25 years ago at the request of the book industry – now the event is bigger than ever. This year, the Helsinki Book Fair is being held for the 25th time, and last year it had almost 98,000 visitors.

This is the most important cultural event of the autumn,

The theme of the Book Fair 2025 is Education and Joy!

At the same time, with the same ticket: Wine & Food event

<https://kirjamessut.messukeskus.com/>

VAASA CITY THEATRE

FOREVER YOUNG

Premiere 31.10.2025 AT 7 PM

Romeo Hall

"Forever Young is a joyful musical comedy full of vibrant joy. As we get older, do we get old? Or are we always forever young?"

<https://www.netticket.fi/ikuisesti-nuori-vaasa>

VAASA LITTFEST 2025

13.-15.11.2025.

Vaasa LittFest is a bilingual literary festival that has been held in Vaasa since 2001. The festival offers in-depth discussions that open up important themes and ideas. This year's theme is Border(s), in-depth days of literature have been promised!

[vaasa.fi/littfesT](https://www.vaasa.fi/littfesT)

KÅLKÅBRA Kokkola Opera Festival

14-16.11.25

"From people to people and opera for opera's sake"

www.kpkamariooppera.fi

RUSK

18-22.11.2025

Chamber music at Jakbostad

Artistic Director

Anna-Maria Helsing

Composer of the Year

Dobrikna Tabakova

www.ruskfestival.fi

BEATLES GOES KOKKOLA

Snellman Hall, Kokkola

21.11.2025 at 6 pm

Vaasa City Orchestra

cond. Jussi Lampela

Markku Veijalainen, presenter

"The Vaasa City Orchestra will visit Kokkola with its popular Beatles programme together with Markku Veijalainen, who knows everything about 1960s pop culture. During the evening, we will hear great stories and, above all, rich arrangements of the songbook of Liverpool's Fab Four."

<https://www.vaasa.fi/koe-ja-nae/kulttuuria-vaasassa-ja-seudulla/vaasan-kaupunginorkesteri/beatles-goes-kokkola/>

CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

19.12.2025 at 6 pm

Vaasa City Orchestra

cond. Tomas Djupsjöbacka

sol. Kathrin Lorenzen, soprano

Jingjing Xu, alto

Juan de Dios Mateos, tenor

Aksel Daveyan, bass guitar

Chamber Choir Canticum Maris

Johann Sebastian Bach:

Christmas Oratorio, cantatas 1–3

Is there anything more festive Christmas music than Johann Sebastian Bach's Christmas Oratorio, which with its extensive line-up of performers, arias and choir numbers is a cornucopia by any standards?

<https://www.vaasa.fi/koe-ja-nae/kulttuuria-vaasassa-ja-seudulla/vaasan-kau>

VAASA BAROQUE

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BAROQUE CHRISTMAS CAROLS

20.12.25 at 18.00 Karjasilta Church in Oulu

21.12.25 at 10.00 Kaustinen Church
Kl 18.00 Schaumansalen,

Jakobstad

22.12.25 at 19.00 Brändö church

vaasabaroque.com

SONG AND MUSIC FESTIVAL 2026

11-14.6.2026

Helsinki

"Every five years, thousands of choir singers and instrumentalists gather for a huge party in the name of song and music, in Swedish. The great Finland-Swedish song and music festival has been organised since 1891. In 2026, the festival will be held in Helsinki. There will be a mass music festival for four days between 11 and 14 June, with large mass choirs, wind and string orchestras, choral singing in the city, evening party, song festival parade and more."

<https://2026.sangfesten.fi/start/om/punginorkesteri/jouluoratorio/>

ZINK CRAFT BEER & STREET FOOD FESTIVAL 2026,

17-18-7.2026 VAASA MARKET SQUARE

An international festival for craft beer lovers and food lovers.

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

THEATRE

THEATRE

Aleksis Kivi on Stage – Red Nose Company Touring Ostrobothnia



THIS OCTOBER, Red Nose Company brings its acclaimed production *Aleksis Kivi* to Ostrobothnia. The performances take place at Vaasa City Theatre on October 9, Ylivieska's Cultural Centre Akustika on October 10, and Kokkola City Theatre on October 11.

The tour is part of the theatre company's 20th anniversary celebrations. *Aleksis Kivi* premiered at the Finnish National Theatre's Main Stage in 2022 and has since been praised by audiences and critics alike across Finland.

Actors Timo Ruuskanen and Tuukka Vasama perform alongside accordionist Niko Kumpuvaara. In Vaasa, the ensemble will be joined by a string duo from the Avanti! Chamber Orchestra, offering a spe-

cial version of the show.

The performance is a warm and witty journey through the life and works of Aleksis Kivi, Finland's national author. On stage appear the famous Seven Brothers as well as Esko from *The Cobblers on the Heath*. The play also highlights Kivi's strong female characters, including Lea – the protagonist of the play whose 1869 premiere is considered the birth of Finnish theatre.

"Touring is tremendous fun, but it also requires flexibility and new solutions. Each stage is different, and the production has to adapt. Dialects are another fascinating aspect for us, since in Kivi's time there was fierce debate about whether the Finnish written language should be based on eastern or western dialects," says actor Timo Ruuskanen.

Known for blending physical theatre, music, and clowning, Red Nose

Company once again combines humor with cultural reflection. Aleksis Kivi entertains while exploring themes central to Finnish identity, language, and history.

Performances in Ostrobothnia:

- October 9, 19:00 – Vaasa City Theatre (with Avanti! string duo)
- October 10, 18:00 – Cultural Centre Akustika, Ylivieska
- October 11, 14:00 – Kokkola City Theatre

Tickets are available via each theatre's ticketing service.

PHOTO: In the foreground are actors Tuukka Vasama (Mike) and Timo Ruuskanen (Zin) and in the background is musician Niko Kumpuvaara. Cata Portin. No publication restrictions.

YOUTH HEALTH

THL

THL: Only a Small Fraction of Young People Get Enough Sleep, Exercise, and Eat Breakfast Daily, Reveals School Health Survey



AI Image

A NEW SCHOOL HEALTH SURVEY has uncovered concerning trends in the daily habits of Finnish youth. Just a small fraction of schoolchildren's daily routines include all three key pillars of a healthy lifestyle: sufficient sleep, regular physical activity, and daily breakfast.

According to the spring 2025 survey, only 17% of 8th and 9th grade boys and a mere 9% of girls reported meeting all three healthy habit benchmarks: at least one hour of daily

physical activity, at least eight hours of sleep on weeknights, and eating breakfast every weekday morning.

Particularly concerning is the finding that only about one in four adolescents engages in at least one hour of physical activity per day. Daily breakfast consumption is a regular habit for just half of lower secondary school students. On a more positive note, sleep habits appear slightly better – approximately two-thirds of young people report getting enough sleep.

Among primary school students (4th and 5th graders), healthy habits are somewhat more established.

About one-third of these younger students eat breakfast, get enough physical activity, and feel they sleep sufficiently.

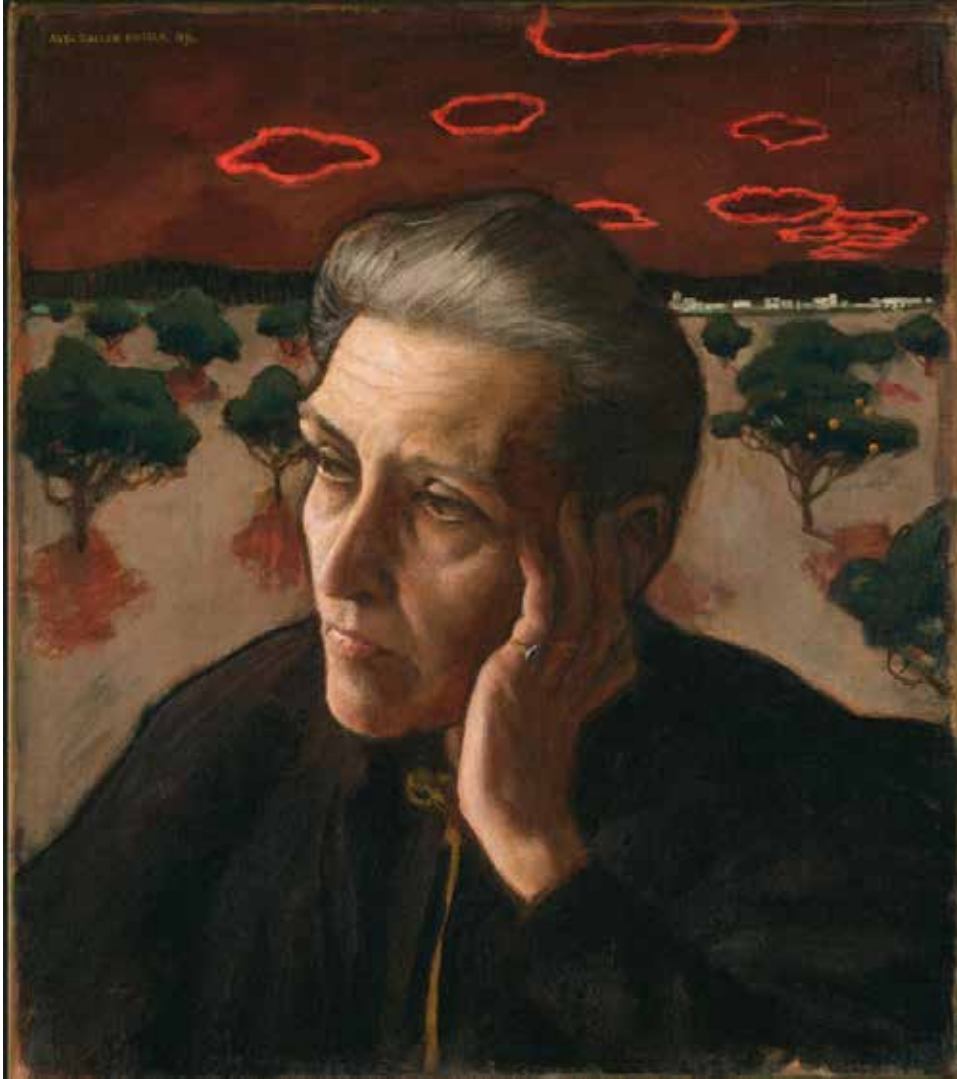
Chief Physician Terhi Aalto-Setälä emphasizes that young people need adult support to maintain healthy routines:

"Children and adolescents need support from adults to adopt healthy lifestyle habits and maintain regular daily rhythms. Sufficient sleep, physical activity, and nutrition are fundamental pillars of wellbeing. Their importance for mental health cannot be overstated."

ART

ATENEUM

Ateneum's Spectacular Exhibition Brings You to Vienna's Artistic Epicenter



IN THE AUTUMN OF 2025, the Ateneum Art Museum will open a unique exhibition that promises to be an art historical delight for both art enthusiasts and the newly curious. The "Gallen-Kallela, Klimt & Vienna" exhibition will transport us to Vienna at the turn of the 20th century—a city pulsing with new ideas and creative imagination.

The exhibition presents the international artists with whom the Finnish

master Akseli Gallen-Kallela collaborated and in whose shows he participated. The Vienna Secession, led by Gustav Klimt, was a radical break from conservative art ideals—a passionate striving towards a freer and more modern understanding of art.

One of the most fascinating themes of the exhibition is the dialogue between different art forms. The Secessionists' goal was equality among all artistic disciplines, and this is showcased in a multifaceted way: painting is complemented by design, jewellery, and everyday ob-

jects. Akseli Gallen-Kallela shared his colleagues' interest in the Gesamtkunstwerk (total work of art), where different art forms unite into a harmonious whole.

The exhibition highlights the significant role of women as innovators in art. Although women could not become official members of the Secession group, their work was crucially important. In the Wiener Werkstätte (Vienna Workshops), women were active as artists and designers. Particularly interesting is Emilie Flöge's revolutionary reform dress, which liberated women from the shackles of the corset and created a new, functional language of fashion.

This exhibition offers a unique opportunity to follow Gallen-Kallela's artistic journey within international movements. He participated in Secessionist exhibitions in several European cities, and his interaction with international modernists significantly influenced his art.

This show is more than just an art exhibition—it's an immersion into a time when art revolutionized society and society revolutionized art. Visit the Ateneum in the autumn of 2025 and immerse yourself in the creative energy of fin-de-siècle Vienna!

Gallen-Kallela, Klimt & Vienna
Ateneum Art Museum
26 September 2025 – 1 February 2026

IMAGE: Akseli Gallen-Kallela
The Artist's Mother
Stockholm National Museum
1896

Akseli Gallen-Kallela: Kevät, esityö Juséliuksen mausoleumin freskoa varten (1903), Sigrid Juséliuksen säätiö, talletus, Kansalliskansallisen kokoelman / Ateneumin taidemuseo. Kuva: Kansallisgalleria / Jenni Nurminen



Akseli Gallen-Kallela: Järvimaisema (1901), Kansalliskallerian kokoelma / Ateneumin taidemuseo. Kuva: Kansalliskalleria / Hannu Pakarinen

ART

HELSINKI RAILWAY STATION

The Landscape from Koli Painting is Back in its Rightful Place – And Will Remain There for the Next 100 Years



The iconic *Landscape from Koli* painting at Helsinki Central Station has been restored to its former glory following extensive conservation work. Created in 1911 through the collaboration of Eero Järnefelt, A. W. Finch, and Ilmari Aalto, it is one of the largest paintings on canvas in Finland.

The artwork has adorned the station's restaurant hall for over a hundred years, and its preservation in its original location is safeguarded by the station's protection regulations. Before becoming part of Eliel Saarinen's architectural masterpiece, the painting was exhibited at the Berlin Tourism Exhibition, where it represented Finland.

Jani Jääskeläinen, Project Manager at VR Group, highlighted the significance of the work:

"Järnefelt's painting is an essential part of the cultural and historical identity of Helsinki Central Station. Restoring it to its original splendour underscores the station's role not only as a transport hub but also as a centre for culture."

The extensive conservation efforts ensure that the painting will remain in its historic setting for at least the next hundred years, preserved for future generations to enjoy.

WOMENS HEALTH

HEALTH

Why do women without any risk factors get heart attacks?



A NEW STUDY has uncovered a key reason why many seemingly healthy women suffer heart attacks and strokes, even when they don't smoke or have high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or diabetes. The answer, researchers say, lies in inflammation.

For years, doctors have been puzzled by the fact that up to half of all heart attacks occur in people without these "standard modifiable risk factors" (often called SMuRFs). A team from Mass General Brigham has now found that a simple blood test for inflammation can identify many of these at-risk women who are missed by current health screenings.

The research focused on a marker in the blood called high-sensitivity C-reactive protein, or hsCRP, which

measures inflammation in the body. The study followed over 12,500 initially healthy women for 30 years. Those with high levels of hsCRP had a dramatically higher lifetime risk of heart disease and stroke, even though they had no traditional risk factors.

"Women who suffer from heart attacks and strokes yet have no standard risk factors are not identified by the risk equations doctors use in daily practice," explained Dr. Paul Ridker, the study's lead author and a preventive cardiologist. "Yet our data clearly show that apparently healthy women who are inflamed are at substantial lifetime risk."

The researchers have introduced a new term for this group: "SMuRF-Less but Inflamed."

The good news is that this risk can be significantly reduced. The study also showed that treating these wo-

men with statins, common cholesterol-lowering drugs, lowered their risk of heart attack and stroke by 38%.

Doctors hope this discovery will change how women are screened for heart disease, encouraging the use of inflammation testing, especially for those in their 40s and 50s. This would allow for earlier prevention through lifestyle changes and, if needed, medication, long before heart disease becomes a serious threat.

The findings were presented at the European Society of Cardiology Congress and published in The European Heart Journal.

Source: <https://www.mass-generalbrigham.org/en/about/newsroom/press-releases/inflammation-may-explain-womens-heart-attacks-strokes>

HEALTH

HEALTH

Gut Bacteria Influence Our Metabolism Far More Than Previously Thought



A NEW STUDY published in *Nature Communications* reveals that the bacteria in our colon have a significantly greater impact on our metabolism than scientists previously believed. The findings show that the gut flora is not only involved in digestion but is also directly linked to how the body processes nutrients, regulates energy balance, and even influences the risk of metabolic diseases.

The study, conducted by an international research team, mapped how microbial metabolic pathways in the gut interact with the host organism's metabolic processes. By analyzing thousands of samples from both humans and model organisms, re-

searchers were able to identify how specific bacterial species and their metabolites—small molecules formed during metabolism—govern processes such as fat storage, blood sugar levels, and in-flammation.

One of the most prominent discoveries is that gut bacteria produce bioactive compounds that directly affect our cells' function. These compounds can either promote healthy metabolic pathways or contribute to the development of conditions such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, and insulin resistance.

"We have long known that gut flora plays a role in metabolism, but the extent of its influence is much greater than we understood," says one of the researchers involved in the study. "It turns out that these microbes act as a dynamic part of our metabolic machinery."

The study underscores the im-

portance of a healthy gut flora for maintaining balanced metabolism. Dietary choices, probiotics, and lifestyle factors such as exercise and sleep can directly influence the composition of these bacteria and thus our metabolic health.

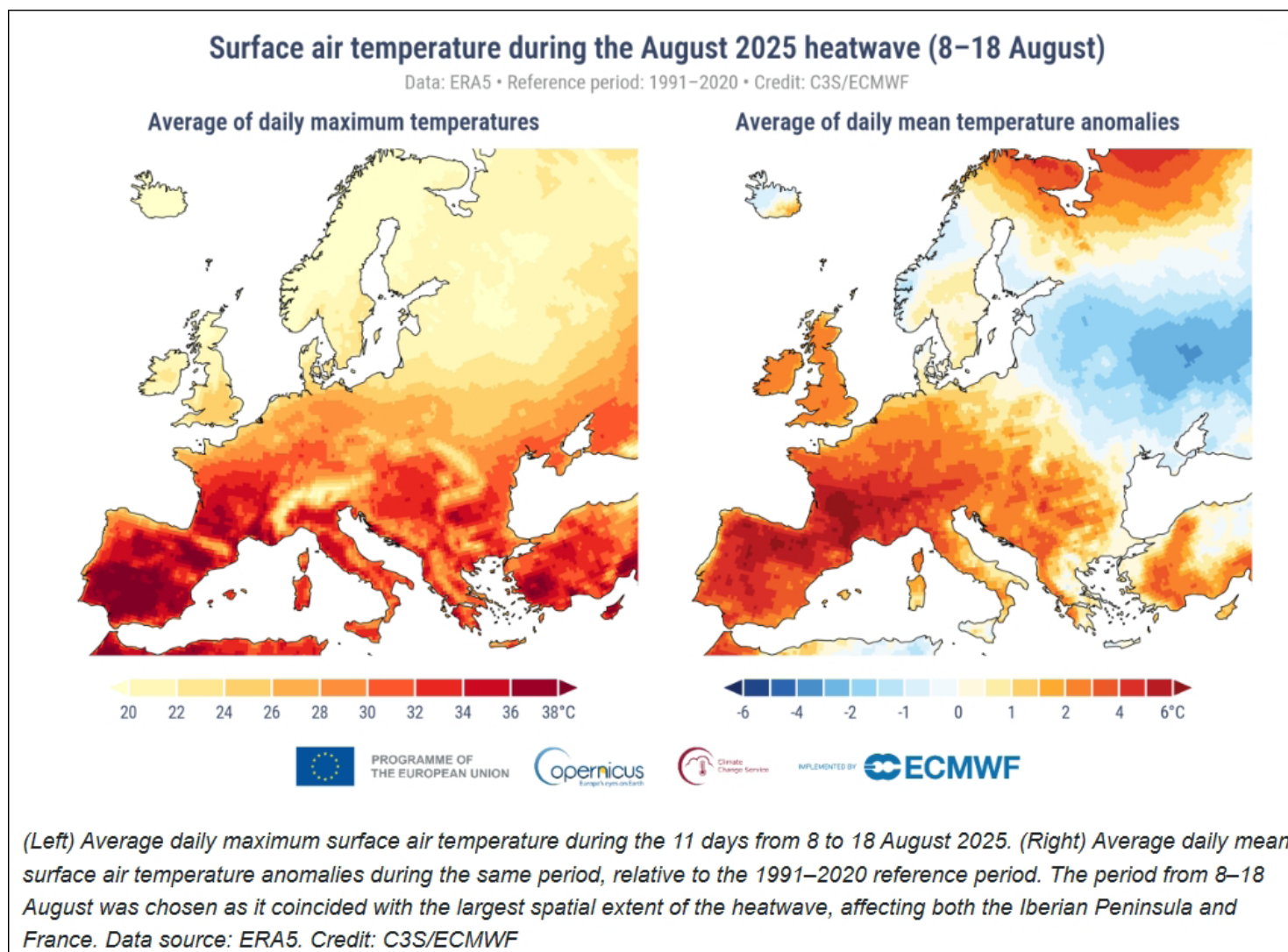
The new insights also open doors for future treatments of metabolic diseases. By targeting specific bacterial species or their metabolites, it may be possible to develop more tailored therapies for patients with metabolic disorders in the future.

This research marks an important step in understanding how humans and our microbial inhabitants interact to maintain health—and how this balance can be disrupted in disease.

CLIMATE CHANGE

CLIMATE CHANGE

Extreme Heat in Southwestern Europe in August



LAST MONTH, large parts of southwestern Europe endured an intense and dangerous heatwave, with scientists confirming it was part of the third-hottest August ever re-corded globally.

According to data from the Copernicus Climate Change Service, countries including Spain, France, and Italy experienced temperatures far above the seasonal average. The peak of the heat occurred between August 22nd and 24th, when many areas saw thermometers reach well over 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit). This se-vere

“heat stress” was made even more intense by high humidity levels in coastal regions.

The impact on daily life was significant. Local authorities issued health warnings, ur-ging people, especially the elderly and vulnerable, to stay indoors and hydrated. The scorching temperatures also increased the risk of wildfires, putting a strain on emer-gency services across the Mediterranean region.

Globally, August 2025 was marked as the third-warmest such month on record. The average global temperature was nearly 0.7°C higher than the average for August between 1991 and 2020. The only warmer August months were in 2016 and 2019.

Scientists at Copernicus directly link these extreme weather events to human-caused climate change. They explain that the burning of fossil fuels releases greenhouse gases that trap heat in the atmosphere, making heatwaves more frequent, longer, and more intense. The record-breaking sea surface temperatures, a key factor in warming the planet, also played a major role.

This summer’s intense heat serves as a clear reminder that climate change is not a future problem but a current reality, with tangible consequences for people’s health, safety, and environment.

CAUSERIE

BILINGUALISM

Bilingualism: The brain's secret superpower – and the excuse to avoid cleaning



WELL. The researchers have come up with something again. It is not enough that bilingualism allows us to easily order coffee in two languages or find a better price on a holiday trip. Now it's claimed that it's also the brain's antidote to everything that will ever come – dementia, stroke, and apparently even bad luck in the lottery.

Imagine: when we speak Finnish and Swedish (or any language pair), our brains don't just sit passively in an armchair with a dictionary in hand. They are engaged in a constant mental martial art. There is a little inner game going on in our prefrontal lobes: "No, Pekka, now we speak Swedish, and don't speak Finnish

then!" and "I argue, but 'reindeer herding' is a better word than 'reindeer herding'!"

This constant battle between the strings is like going to the gym – but without sweat and moving parts. And just like going to the gym, it gets stronger. Scientists call this "cognitive reserve," which sounds like something a banker would suggest, but it's actually the brain's resistance to going crazy as you get older.

The best part is that this benefit of bilingualism is like a free brain insurance. You don't have to do anything special – you don't have to solve crosswords or memorize sequences – it's enough to speak two languages. And if you complain that

"I don't know the other language properly," studies show that it doesn't matter that much either. The brain appreciates the attempt, even if it involves confusion and strange grammatical errors.

The conclusion is clear: bilingualism is the brain's secret superpower. That's why you can explain to your parents that you don't clean your room because your brain is busy fighting between languages – and that's much more important than taking out the garbage. And who knows, maybe it will also protect you from getting hit by a car or losing the lottery. Or well, at least it gives you an excuse to refuse to clean in two languages.

CHILDREN CULTURE

VAASA

Children's Culture Weeks "Puddle" Return to Vaasa in October



AFTER A BREAK, the Children's Culture Weeks, known as Puddle, are back in October. The events are designed for children, schools, and families. Most activities are free of charge. The program includes workshops, art exhibitions, concerts, storytelling sessions, playhouses, autumn festivals, and much more.

Opening Day: Music and Play

PÖL opens on Tuesday, October 1, from 5:00–8:00 p.m. in the Drama Hall of the Main Library. The children's music orchestra Orffit will perform at 6:00 p.m. Visitors can also enjoy various activities indoors and in the library yard, such as TaiKon's community art project Drops of Joy, the board game PÖL, or a Moomin-themed treasure hunt. Outdoor games and the PÖL polka will also be featured.

Before the official opening, a pre-party will be held, led by the Museum Hermelin. Visitors can join plush toy tours at the Ostrobothnian Museum at 2:00 p.m. in Swedish and at 3:00 p.m. in Finnish.

Studio PUDDLE– Create and Explore

In the Matilda space at the Main Library, Studio PÖL opens. The exhibition showcases works and decorations created by students from Onkilahden Yhtenäiskoulu, Vaasa Christian School, and summer artists from the youth services. Studio PÖL also offers children the opportunity to create their own art.

A highlight of PUDDLE is Konstplask – curated cultural experiences for families. All events are free. This year, children can take part in The Goldfish in PÖL, a crafting and

painting event organized by Vaasa 4H on Saturday, October 4, from 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. in the Drama Hall.

On Saturday, October 11, from 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m., the orchestra Ylimääräiset Asemamiehet will perform, followed by dance workshops led by Kipinä Dance School, suitable for children of all ages.

Full Program Online

The full program is available on the City of Vaasa's cultural services website: vasa.fi/pol

PÖL offers a playful way for children and families to experience art, music, and creativity up close. It is an opportunity to explore new forms of expression and enjoy fun activities together across the city.

Image: Vaasa City

COMMUNICATIONS

VAASA - HELSINKI

FlixBus Partners INGSVA, Expanding Affordable Travel Options



IN A SIGNIFICANT move to strengthen its footprint in the Nordic market, the European travel giant FlixBus has announced its first-ever Finnish partnership with Ostrobothnian-based transport company INGSVA. This collaboration marks a new chapter for inter-city bus travel in Finland, promising more choice and competitive pricing for passengers.

The partnership signifies a major milestone for FlixBus, which has until now operated in Finland with its own branded buses. Teaming up with INGSVA, a well-established operator in Western Finland known for its public bus and charter services, allows FlixBus to le-

verage local expertise and infrastructure.

As a result of this deal, INGSVA will now operate the FlixBus route connecting Vaasa to Helsinki via Pori and Turku with a daily service. The buses will be branded in FlixBus's distinctive green livery but will be driven by INGSVA's Finnish drivers, ensuring a familiar and reliable service for passengers.

"This partnership with INGSVA is a key strategic step for us," a FlixBus spokesperson commented. "It allows us to combine our global network and brand with a trusted local partner's operational excellence, ultimately providing more value and options for Finnish travelers."

The collaboration is driven by a shared goal of growth. For INGSVA, the partnership provides access to FlixBus's vast international network and booking platform. For FlixBus, it means a stronger, more integrated presence on Finnish roads.

Passengers can already book tickets for the route, which offers five daily departures. Fiercely competitive pricing remains a cornerstone of the FlixBus model, with tickets on the Vaasa-Helsinki route starting from just €12.50.

This expansion is seen as a direct boost to regional connectivity, offering a cost-effective and comfortable travel alternative for students, commuters, and tourists along Finland's west coast.

BLUE ZONES

BLUE ZONES

Ostrobothnia - A Blue Zone?



CAN AN AREA IN Western Finland become the next blue zone? New research suggests that Swedish-speaking Ostrobothnia could join the ranks of the world's famous longevity hotspots.

What are blue zones?

Blue zones are special places where people regularly live to age 90 and older while staying remarkably healthy. These regions are known for an unusually large number of people who live to their 90s and beyond, often in good health. Well-known examples are Okinawa in Japan, Ikaria in Greece and parts of Italy.

Discovery in Finland

Researchers from Åbo Akademi University studied three regions in western Finland with different life expectancies: Swedish-speaking Ostrobothnia, Åland and Finnish-speaking southern Ostrobothnia. They used national statistics and survey data from more than 12,000 older adults born between 1930 and 1955. Why Ostrobothnia stands out Swedish-speaking Ostrobothnia distinguished itself by having both strong health and the one that most closely followed the

"blue zone" lifestyle. This means that the inhabitants there practice the healthy habits that people in the Blue Zone are known for:

Eat nutritious, local food

Staying physically active in daily life (not just at the gym)

Having strong family and community ties

Living with purpose and meaning

Surprising results from other regions

The study revealed some unexpected results. Åland had the highest life expectancy and the best health outcomes, but did not align with many of the lifestyle principles commonly seen in the Blue Zones. This suggests that other factors such as access to healthcare or economic conditions may explain their longevity.

Even more puzzling was South Ostrobothnia.

Residents there reported that they followed healthy lifestyles similar to those in Swedish-speaking Finland, but they showed the worst health and the lowest life expectancy of the three groups. This shows that lifestyle alone does not guarantee a longer life.

What makes the difference?

The relationship between longevity, health,

and lifestyle is shaped by cultural, social, political, and economic contexts. It's not just about individual choices – the entire community environment is important. In Swedish-speaking Ostrobothnia, this seems to go together in a special way. The region combines the traditional lifestyle habits of the Blue Zone with a supportive cultural environment that helps people maintain these practices throughout their lives.

What's next?

The researchers suggest that Swedish-speaking Ostrobothnia could be considered a potential new blue zone, although further demographic studies are needed to confirm the extraordinary life expectancy reported in this group.

"Blue Zones in the Nordic Region" that will run until 2026. The results can provide valuable lessons not only for Finland, but for aging populations all over the world who want to learn the secrets of a healthy and long life.

For the time being, Ostrobothnia looks promising as Finland's answer to the world's blue zones – a place where good health and a long life are not just luck, but way of life.

HEALTH

THL

THL invites 16,000 Finns to a health survey – provides a broad picture of lifestyles, functional capacity and obesity



THIS AUTUMN the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) will launch a comprehensive national health survey by inviting approximately 16,000 randomly selected people living in Finland and at least 15 years old to respond to a survey. The aim is to collect reliable information on key factors in public health: lifestyle, functional capacity, obesity and experiences of health services.

The survey is part of the European Union's joint European Health Interview Survey (EHIS), which produces comparable statistics between the Member States. According to THL, the rapid rise in obesity is particularly worrying: around 30 per cent of adults in Finland are obese, and severe obesity has increased significantly, especially among 20–44-year-olds.

Key themes of the survey

The questions include:

Lifestyle: how often people eat fruit, vegetables or whole grains, how their diet has changed over time and the amount of everyday exercise.

Functional capacity: how well people feel that they can cope with everyday tasks and how physical and social functional capacity is affected by various factors.

Obesity: both prevalence in the population and the development of severe obesity in younger age groups.

Health and welfare services: experiences of accessibility, information and the possibility of receiving treatment at the right time.

Practical information for participants

Invitations will be sent by post during September. The survey can be answered either online or on a paper form, and is available in Finnish, Swedish and English. Participation takes an estimated 15 minutes.

For THL and decision-makers, the survey provides a valuable knowledge base for better planning health and wellbeing policy. The results can be used, for example, to target obesity prevention, support functional capacity and improve the quality of services.

Why this is important

Obesity and reduced functional capacity are not only individual health problems, but also societal challenges that burden healthcare and increase costs. By knowing more about the lifestyle and well-being of Finns, we can create more effective measures – promoting healthy food choices, physical activity and sleep, and building environments that support better everyday decisions. THL's invitation thus affects thousands of people, but the results can contribute to the well-being of the entire country. Participation is therefore a concrete way of influencing.

WÄRTSILÄ

Wärtsilä Powers Danish Ferry Operator with Fully Electric High-Speed Vessels



FINNISH TECHNOLOGY GROUP Wärtsilä has been chosen to equip two groundbreaking high-speed catamaran ferries for Danish operator Molslinjen with a fully integrated battery-electric propulsion system and advanced waterjets. The ferries, under construction at the Incat Tasmania shipyard in Australia, mark a significant step towards decarbonising ferry transport in northern Europe.

Wärtsilä's delivery package includes an integrated electric propulsion system, DC power conversion, energy management and automation systems, eight electric propulsion motors, waterjets, and the Wärtsilä ProTouch control system for smooth

and efficient operations.

The two vessels will serve the busy Kattegat route, linking Jutland and Zealand. Measuring 129 meters long and 30.5 meters wide, each ferry will carry up to 1,483 passengers and 500 cars, increasing Molslinjen's capacity by more than 25 percent.

"With these electric ferries, we aim to remove thousands of tons of CO₂ emissions from Denmark's climate footprint each year," said Kristian Durhuus, CEO of Molslinjen.

Wärtsilä highlights that ship electrification is central to meeting global climate targets. The company has already contributed to more than 150 hybrid-electric ships, and sees this project as a milestone in its long-term sustainability strategy.

"Our partnership with Molslinjen and Incat accelerates the industry's path to net-zero emissions," noted Roger Holm, President of Wärtsilä

Marine.

Incat Tasmania, renowned for pioneering lightweight and energy-efficient designs, emphasized the wider implications of the project.

"We're not just building ships – we are building the future," said Stephen Casey, CEO of Incat Tasmania.

The vessels' eight waterjet configuration promises low weight, shallow draft operation, high efficiency, and excellent manoeuvrability, combining sustainability with performance. Wärtsilä will begin deliveries to the shipyard in 2026, with the ferries expected to enter Danish service in 2027 and 2028.

Image caption: Wärtsilä will deliver a fully integrated electric propulsion system with waterjets for two new high-speed catamaran ferries being built by Incat Tasmania for Danish ferry operator Molslinjen
© Incat Tasmania

MUSIC

MUSIC

Édit Piaf, now on at the Vaasa City Theatre

IMAGINE A VOICE that could tear the velvet off a cabaret chair, a sound that was less about perfect pitch and more about raw, unfiltered truth. That voice belonged to Édith Giovanna Gassion, who the world would come to know as La Môme Piaf—the Little Sparrow. Her life wasn't just a series of events; it was a three-act tragedy sung in a minor key, with brief, dazzling intervals of glorious light.

Her story begins not on a stage, but in the dim, perfume-and-disinfectant-scented halls of a Normandy brothel. Abandoned by her mother, a café singer, and her father, a contortionist, young Édith was raised by her grandmother, the madam. Her first friends were the prostitutes—not societal pillars, but they were her pillars. They were the women who doted on her, nursed her through childhood blindness (reportedly cured by their pooled funds for a pilgrimage), and gave her a warped but very real sense of family. It was here she learned her first lessons in love, loss, and survival in the shadows. The humor is dark, but it's there: where else does a child learn the alphabet and the art of negotiation simultaneously?

Discovered singing on the streets for francs by nightclub owner Louis Leplée, she was groomed, dressed in a simple black dress (a genius branding move that would become her uniform), and christened "La Môme Piaf." Paris fell for this tiny, haunted-looking girl with the gargantuan



voice. But tragedy was her constant companion. Leplée was murdered, and Piaf, though innocent, was tarred by scandal. She sang on.

Then came the war. And here's the chapter that adds a layer of dangerous, complicated glamour to her myth. Piaf performed for German officers in occupied Paris. She was photographed with them, flirted with them. The gossip columns dripped with venom. But the full story, as it often is with Piaf, was messier. She was also working for the Resistance. Using her fame as a shield, she smuggled compasses and maps insi-

de her costume cases to help POWs escape. She posed for pictures with German officers, all the while secretly having their portraits cropped into fake IDs for French prisoners. She was playing the most dangerous game of her life, and she did it with a smirk, turning her own notoriety into a weapon.

After the war, her star exploded globally. She became France's greatest export, a symbol of resilience. She sang anthems of love and despair like "La Vie en rose," "Hymne à l'amour," and "Non, je ne regrette rien." But the spotlight burned.



Her personal life was a carousel of self-destruction: a ruinous addiction to morphine and alcohol following a series of devastating car crashes, and a relentless, desperate pursuit of love with a series of men who could never quite handle the hurricane that was Piaf.

Yet, within this tempest was a generational talent scout. She had an infallible ear. She heard a young, lumbering Italian delivery boy sing and declared, "You will be a star." She forced him on stage, taught him presence, and launched the career of Yves Montand. She heard a shy, nervous Armenian-French composer and lyricist and insisted he perform his own songs. She gave him his first big break, championing the man who would become the legen-

dary Charles Aznavour. She built up the men in her life, even as her own foundations crumbled.

By the end, the Sparrow was frail, addicted, and aged decades beyond her years, but she never stopped performing. She was carried to the stage, a wisp of a woman in a black dress, and then... that voice would erupt. It was the voice of every heartbreak, every joy, every regret, and every triumph. It was utterly, devastatingly human.

So why are we, nearly a century later, still writing books, making movies (the brilliant *La Vie en Rose*), and staging plays about her?

Because Piaf is the ultimate paradox. She was both a victim and a

saviour, a collaborator and a resistance hero, a vulnerable child and a ferocious diva. Her life screams that a person cannot be neatly categorized. She was flawed, gloriously so. In our era of curated perfection and sanitized celebrity, Piaf's raw, unvarnished, and messy humanity is a shock to the system. She didn't just sing about pain, joy, and regret; she was pain, joy, and regret. She reminds us that great art isn't born from comfort, but from the beautiful, terrible wreckage of a life fully, recklessly lived. And we can't look away.

Images: Studio Harcourt, 1939
Public Domain

PIAF, En kadu mitään, Vaasa Cithy theatre

THEATRE

VAASA CITY THEATRE

Édith Piaf's Fascinating Life as a Musical Play. Premiere at the City Theatre on 11 September 2025



KNOWN AS THE “Little Sparrow of Paris,” Édith Piaf’s life was marked by extremes: poverty and sudden success, deep love and devastating sorrow. Born into hardship, she grew up in the slums of Paris, at one point losing her sight as a child—only to recover in what many considered a miracle.

She endured tragedy early, including the loss of her own child. Yet from singing in small cafés she rose to become the queen of French chanson. Piaf’s voice carried the passion of her tumultuous romances and the grief of losing her great love, boxer Marcel Cerdan, in a plane crash. Her later years were clouded by illness and addiction, but her songs—*La Vie en Rose* and *Non, je ne regrette rien*—remain timeless echoes of her triumphs and sorrows. Piaf did not simply live life; she let life carry her.

The Play: “Piaf – I Regret Nothing” in Vaasa

Vaasa City Theatre opens its autumn season with a journey into Piaf’s dramatic world in the musical play “Piaf – I Regret Nothing,” premiering on Thursday, 11 September 2025, on the Romeo Stage (sttinfi.fi).

The play, written by British playwright Pam Gems, blends fact and fiction while bringing Piaf’s greatest hits to life: *Non, je ne regrette rien*, *La Vie en Rose*, and *Hymne à l’amour*.

The production is directed by Maiju Sallas, returning to Vaasa with renewed passion. “I have admired Édith Piaf since my youth... she never compromised her unique style,” Sallas explains. Sonja Halla-aho takes on the demanding lead role, donning Piaf’s iconic black dress and channeling the singer’s intensity—her joys, loves, sorrows, and beauty. The artistic team includes conductor Sauli Perälä, choreographer Antton Laine, set designer Mika Haaranen, costume designer Emilia Eriksson, and sound designer Jouni Ilari Tapio.

The play runs about 2 hours and 30 minutes including an intermission, with Swedish subtitles, and is recommended for audiences over 12 years of age (sttinfi.fi).

The ensemble cast features Anna Lemmetti-Vieri, Mari Hirvi, Oiva Nuojua, Toni Ikola, Ville Härkönen, Jorma Tommila / Panu Valo, Konsta Reuter, Timo Luoma, and Miika Alatupa, alongside new company members Milla Kangas and Anni-Maija Koskinen, and guest actors Anna Arola and Olli Tulkki from Tampere University of Applied Sciences.

In summary: Piaf – I Regret Nothing promises an intense cultural experience, where Édith Piaf’s passion, tragedy, and musical legacy are reborn on stage in a visually striking performance. The premiere on 11 September at Vaasa City Theatre’s Romeo Stage will be a highlight of the autumn theatre season—a chance to feel Piaf’s spirit once more, as only chanson can deliver.

IMAGE: Piaf – en kadu mitään (2025). Sonja Halla-aho. PHOTO: Kasper Dalkarl

ASTRONOMY

ASTRONOMY

Vera Rubin: A Trailblazer in Cosmic Exploration



The Vera C. Rubin Observatory is shown here amidst a colorful display of clouds around sunrise.

Credit: Vera C. Rubin Observatory/NOIRLab/AURA/NSF/J. Fuentes

Vera Florence Cooper Rubin (1928–2016) was an American astronomer whose observations in the 1970s revolutionized our understanding of the universe. By studying the rotation rates of galaxies, Rubin and her colleague Kent Ford discovered that stars at the outer edges of galaxies orbited at similar speeds to those near the center—evidence for an invisible gravitational force. This finding provided some of the first compelling proof of dark matter, an unseen substance that makes up about 85% of the universe’s matter. Rubin’s groundbreaking work helped reshape cosmology and paved the way for the Vera C. Rubin

Observatory, which was named in her honor in 2019.

The Observatory’s Ambitious Vision

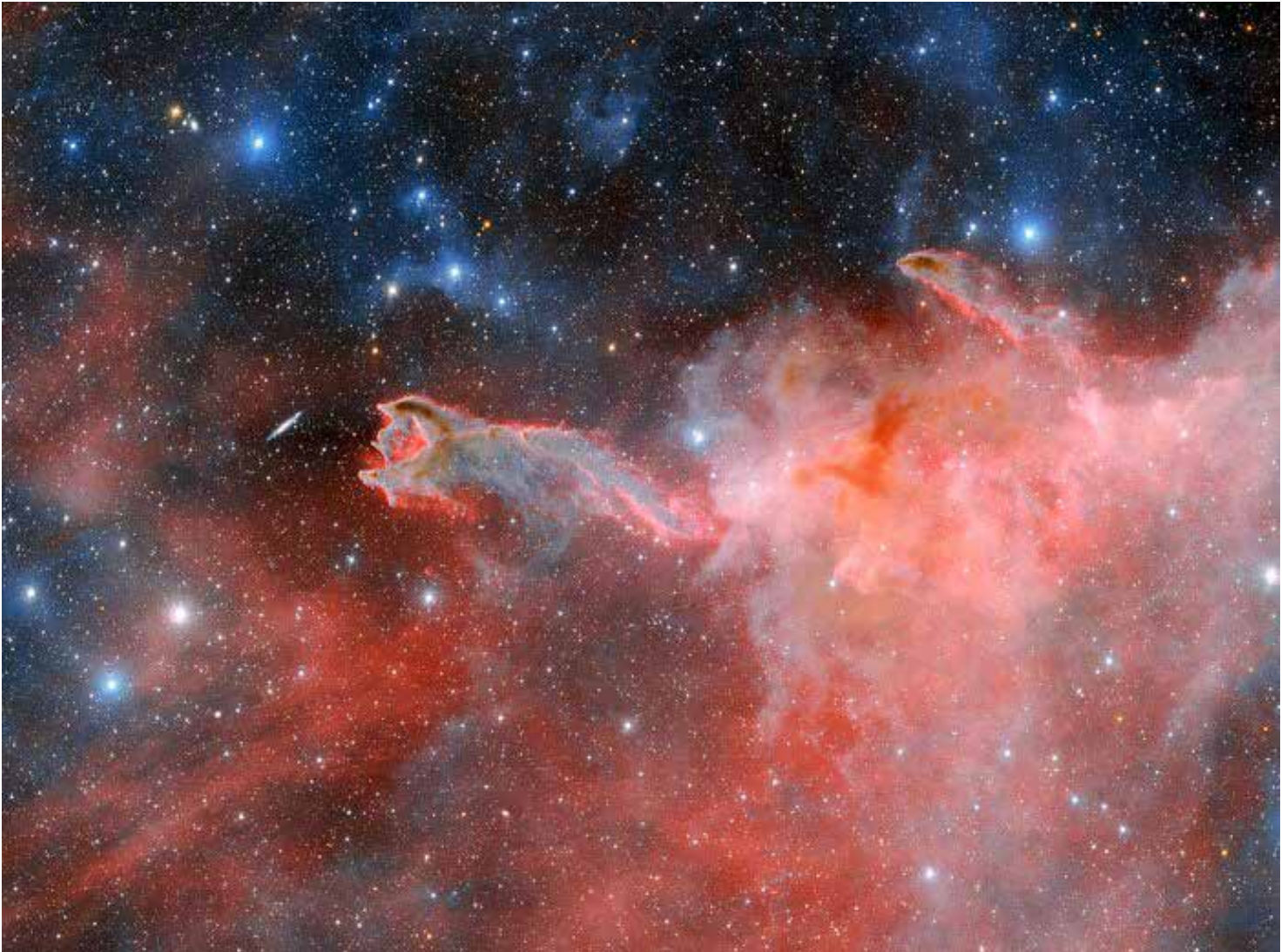
Situated atop Cerro Pachón in Chile at an elevation of about 2,682 m, the Vera C. Rubin Observatory houses the 8.4-meter Simonyi Survey Telescope and the largest digital camera ever built for astronomy—a 3.2-gigapixel marvel comprising 189 CCD sensors integrated into 21 rafts.

The observatory will conduct the Legacy Survey of Space and Time (LSST)—a ten-year, ultra-wide-field

survey imaging the southern sky every few nights. With a novel three-mirror design enabling a 3.5-degree field of view, this facility will capture roughly 800 visits per sky location over a decade, generating an unprecedented flood of data, including a complete time-lapse “movie” of the cosmos.

Its scientific goals span four frontiers:

- Dark matter & dark energy: probing their nature via weak gravitational lensing, supernovae, and cosmic structure
- Solar System inventory: detecting millions of asteroids and other small bodies
- Transient phenomena: cap-



This cloudy, ominous structure is CG 4, a cometary globule nicknamed 'God's Hand'. CG 4 is one of many cometary globules present within the Milky Way, and how these objects get their distinct form is still a matter of debate among astronomers. This image was captured by the Department of Energy-fabricated Dark Energy Camera on the U.S. National Science Foundation Víctor M. Blanco 4-meter Telescope at Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory, a Program of NSF NOIRLab. In it, the features that classify CG 4 as a cometary globule are hard to miss. Its dusty head and long, faint tail vaguely resemble the appearance of a comet, though they have nothing in common. Astronomers theorize that cometary globules get their structure from the stellar winds of nearby hot, massive stars.

Credit: CTIO/NOIRLab/DOE/NSF/AURA

Image Processing: T.A. Rector (University of Alaska Anchorage/NSF NOIRLab), D. de Martin & M. Zamani (NSF NOIRLab)

turing supernovae, variable stars, and shifting cosmic events in real time

- Milky Way history: mapping its structure and formation via its stellar populations

The observatory will produce around 20 terabytes of data per night, culminating in a catalog database spanning 15 to 500 petabytes over its lifetime

Milestone Achievements During Early Operations

On June 23, 2025, the public was treated to stunning first-light images from Rubin. These early captures included breathtaking views of distant galaxies,

stellar nurseries like the Trifid and Lagoon Nebulae, and dense regions such as the Virgo Cluster

By using image composites (e.g., 678 exposures over seven hours), the observatory revealed fine details of stellar birthplaces, along with a colorful tapestry of galaxies that had previously appeared as dark voids

Within just 10 hours of operations, Rubin identified 2,104 previously unknown asteroids, including seven near-Earth objects (NEOs)—none pose an immediate threat. Projections suggest the observatory will catalog over 5 million asteroids and around 100,000

NEOs during its first decade—vastly exceeding existing inventories. These breakthroughs underscore Rubin's unprecedented data volume—expected to surpass all previous ground- and space-based optical telescopes combined in its first year alone

Why It Matters

- Technological Frontier: Combining rapid sky coverage, the world's largest CCD camera, and powerful data pipelines capable of issuing alerts within 60 seconds, Rubin delivers a scale and responsiveness previously unimagined in astronomy



The spiral galaxy NGC 925 reveals cosmic pyrotechnics in its spiral arms where bursts of star formation are taking place in the red, glowing clouds scattered throughout it.

Credit: KPNO/NOIRLab/NSF/AURA Acknowledgements:

PI: M T. Patterson (New Mexico State University)

Image processing: Travis Rector (University of Alaska Anchorage), Mahdi Zamani & Davide de Martin

- **Scientific Discovery:** From quantifying dark energy and dark matter to uncovering millions of small solar system objects and transient cosmic events, the observatory stands to spark a new wave of discovery—some expected, some unforeseen
- **Global Engagement:** Data and alerts will be broadly accessible—first to U.S. and Chilean scientists, then globally—empowering both professionals and the public. Education platforms and tools for citizen scientists amplify its outreach ambition
- **Perspective on Our Place in the Cosmos:** The image nicknamed “Cosmic Treasure Chest” captures millions of galaxies in a single frame—a humbling reminder of our tiny place in the vast universe, yet a celebration of human curiosity and collective endeavor.

In essence, the Vera C. Rubin Observatory fulfills the visionary legacy of

Vera Rubin herself: opening our eyes to what is unseen. With each snapshot and alert, it is not just unveiling the sky—it is narrating the cosmic story of existence in motion.

Images license: Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

References

Energy Department. 2025. “Ever-Changing Universe Revealed in First Imagery from NSF-DOE Vera C. Rubin Observatory.” U.S. Department of Energy, June 23, 2025.

Harvard University Gazette. 2025. “Shining Light on Scientific Superstar Vera Rubin.” Harvard Gazette, June 20, 2025.

National Science Foundation. 2025. “NSF-DOE Vera C. Rubin Observatory.” NSF.gov, June 23, 2025.

Rubin Observatory. 2025a. “Ever-Changing Universe Revealed in First Imagery from NSF-DOE Vera C. Rubin Observatory.” Rubin Observatory News, June 23, 2025.

Rubin Observatory. 2025b. “A Swarm of New Asteroids.” Rubin Observatory News, June 23, 2025.

Scholarly Authors (e.g., Jacob A. Kurlander et al.).

2025. “Predictions of the LSST Solar System Yield: Near-Earth Objects, Main Belt Asteroids, Jupiter Trojans, and Trans-Neptunian Objects.” arXiv, June 3, 2025.

Wikipedia contributors. 2025. “Vera C. Rubin Observatory.” Wikipedia, last modified 2 days ago.

Wikipedia contributors. 2025. “Vera Rubin.” Wikipedia, last modified 6 days ago.

Vox. 2025. “How the Largest Digital Camera Ever Made Is Revolutionizing Our View of Space.” Vox, June 2025.

Washington Post. 2025. “Vera Rubin Telescope Is Pointing the World’s Biggest Camera at Cosmos.” The Washington Post, June 22, 2025.

Guardian. 2025. “First Images of Distant Galaxies Captured by ‘Ultimate’ Telescope.” The Guardian, June 23, 2025.

RUSSIA

RUSSIA

A Critical Analysis of Russian Government Narratives on Ukraine

THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT's attempts to justify its February 2022 invasion of Ukraine represent a masterclass in historical revisionism, deflection, and the weaponization of legitimate geopolitical concerns to mask imperial ambitions. The standard Russian narrative, consistently promoted through official channels, relies on several interconnected falsehoods that deserve systematic debunking.

The NATO Expansion Myth

Perhaps the most persistent Russian claim is that NATO expansion "forced" Russia's hand. This argument fundamentally misrepresents both the nature of NATO membership and Russia's own role in driving Eastern European nations toward the alliance. NATO membership is voluntary and requires extensive democratic reforms—qualities that made these nations safer and more prosperous. The suggestion that Russia has a legitimate sphere of influence over sovereign neighbors is a throwback to 19th-century imperial thinking that has no place in modern international law.

Moreover, Ukraine was never on a fast track to NATO membership. The 2008 Bucharest Summit offered only vague future possibilities, not concrete membership plans. If NATO expansion truly concerned Russia, invading Ukraine—thereby guaranteeing permanent NATO reinforcement on Russia's borders—

represents spectacularly counterproductive strategy.

The "Denazification" Fabrication

Russia's claim that Ukraine needed "denazification" is particularly cynical given that Ukraine elected a Jewish president in 2019 with 73% of the vote. While far-right elements exist in every society, Ukraine's far-right parties consistently receive minimal electoral support—often less than 2%. This contrasts sharply with Russia's own Wagner Group, which openly used Nazi symbols and recruited from extremist networks.

The historical irony is profound:

Russia invokes the memory of fighting fascism while conducting a war of aggression that mirrors fascist tactics—targeting civilians, forcibly relocating children, and attempting to erase Ukrainian national identity. Historical Distortion and Imperial Nostalgia

Russian narratives consistently portray Ukraine as an artificial construct rather than recognizing its millennium-long distinct cultural and political development. The claim that Russians and Ukrainians are "one people" who were artificially separated ignores centuries of Ukrainian resistance to Russian rule, from Cossack uprisings to the independence movements of the 20th century. This historical revisionism serves to legitimize territorial conquest by denying Ukrainian agency and statehood—a classic imperial tactic used throughout history to justify absorption of neighboring territories.

The Western Provocation Excuse

Perhaps most fundamentally flawed

is the argument that Western actions "provoked" the invasion. This narrative strips Ukrainians of agency in their own democratic choices while portraying Russia as a passive victim rather than an aggressive actor. The timeline alone undermines this claim: Russia began its aggression in 2014, not in response to any immediate NATO action, but following Ukraine's democratic revolution that threatened Putin's own authoritarian model.

The Reality Behind the Rhetoric

The evidence overwhelmingly suggests that Russia's invasion stems not from legitimate security concerns but from Putin's determination to restore imperial control and prevent the success of democracy on Russia's borders. Internal Russian documents and statements reveal goals of regime change, territorial partition, and cultural elimination—objectives that have nothing to do with NATO or Western "provocation."

The tragedy is that these false narratives not only justify devastating aggression but also trap Russia in a conflict that serves no genuine Russian interest. By promoting these myths, the Russian government ensures continued international isolation, economic damage, and military losses—all while Ukrainian resistance continues to demonstrate the bankruptcy of imperial dreams in the 21st century.

True security for Russia would come from peaceful coexistence with prosperous democratic neighbors, not from the impossible task of maintaining unwilling imperial subjects through force.

CULTURE

VAASA LITTFEST

Vaasa LittFest in November – A Cultural Festival to Look Forward To



Pajtim Statovci. Foto: Ano Kurki / Otava

As November's darkness settles over the city, Vasa will once again light up—through literature, culture, and engaging dialogue. Vasa LittFest, taking place from November 13 to 15, 2025, brings together literature enthusiasts, renowned authors, and timely themes for a unique and thought-provoking festival weekend.

The theme of the 2025 festival is Border(s), inviting reflection on physical, cultural, linguistic, and mental boundaries—and the ways literature helps us cross them. Literature, by its nature, constantly moves beyond borders, opening windows into other realities.

Among the first confirmed

guests are a number of celebrated Finnish and Nordic authors. *Pajtim Statovci*, twice awarded the Finlandia Prize, will present his latest novel *Lehmä synnyttää yöllä* (2024), which has become an international literary sensation. Translation rights have already been sold to publishers in the U.S., Germany, Italy, and beyond. Statovci's previous works, including *My Cat Yugoslavia* and *Bolla*, have earned critical acclaim at home and abroad.

From Sweden, *Mikael Niemi* will join the festival. He is best known for his August Prize-winning novel *Popular Music from Vittula* (2000). Niemi's storytelling explores life in Tornedalen, where three cultures intersect. His latest novel, *Sten i siden* (2025), is a multigeneratio-

nal family saga set in the far north.

The festival will also feature multi-talented artist *Laura Malmivaara*, who performs with the Vaasa City Orchestra and composer-percussionist Arttu Takalo. Together, they will present excerpts from Malmivaara's recent novel *Iltatähti* through a unique combination of literature and live music—a rare treat for festival audiences.

Among the featured Finnish authors is folklorist and novelist Mikko Kamula, known for his popular *Metsän kansa* series. Kamula delves into the historical borders of Finland through richly detailed novels rooted in 15th-century Finnish folk beliefs.

Science journalist and author *Marcus Rosenlund* will explore the planet's natural boundaries. His works traverse the realms of meteorology, outer space, and microorganisms. His latest book takes a closer look at the underground world—the life and systems that exist beneath our feet.

But the tone isn't all serious. Beloved dialect poet and author *Heli Laaksonen* will bring laughter and warmth to the stage at Vaasa City Theatre. Known for her witty and nature-themed verse, Laaksonen rose to fame with her debut *Pulu uis* (2000) and has since written both

poetry and nonfiction about the Finnish landscape and environment.

One of the festival's most unique events is a late-night session that explores folklore and true crime. Author duo *Tiina and Marko Hautala* will host an evening with religious studies scholar Tuomas Äystö, whose new book *Paholaisen perilliset* (2025) dives into the history of Satanic Panic. The evening will also feature a panel on mythology and magic, with folklorist and author *Jenna Kostet*, Finland's most famous modern witch Kuparikettu, and writer-crafter Riina Peltonen, who has studied magical sites in Ostrobothnia.

— The festival program offers a chance to explore identity, politics, history, and society from both personal and global perspectives. We aim to inspire dialogue not only about literature but also about contemporary issues, says cultural producer Ilkka Nyqvist.

Vasa LittFest is more than just a literary event—it is a space for encounters that transcend generations, languages, and borders.

Vasa LittFest 2025 – a festival that crosses borders and connects people through the power of stories.

VAASA UNIVERSITY

VAASA UNIVERSITY AND VAMK

University of Vaasa and VAMK - Stronger and More Competitive Together



The University of Vaasa and Vaasa University of Applied Sciences (VAMK) have taken a significant step toward a shared future - a new higher education consortium has now been officially established.

This historic merger is strengthened by the university's 70% ownership stake in VAMK, while the City of Vaasa retains 30%. Both institutions will keep their

names, but the consortium's new name will be announced this fall.

This strategic initiative creates a strong, internationally competitive higher education community in Ostrobothnia that addresses workforce skill gaps and enhances research impact. The collaboration isn't new - the institutions have long worked closely together, particularly in engineering education through Technobothnia's laboratories and the Tritonia Academic Library.

"Our goal is to create an internationally significant higher education unit that offers students flexible study paths and high-quality learning environments all the way up to doctoral education," says Minna Martikainen, Rector of the University of Vaasa.

The new consortium aims for regional, national and international influence. Resources will be used more efficiently, research groups will be strengthened, and cooperation with businesses will intensify. "We're developing research infrastructure, which will also strengthen Finland's export potential," empha-

sizes Hannu Vahtera, Managing Director of VAMK.

This merger isn't just an administrative change - it's a strategic investment in a future where education, research and working life interact even more effectively. The combined strengths of these institutions will create new opportunities for students, researchers and businesses throughout the region and beyond.

Image: Vaasa University. The image can be freely used.

ONLINE COURSES

AI-COURSE

VAMK and University of Vaasa Offer AI Course for Entrepreneurs and Professionals – Free Online Course Explores AI's Business Potential



Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming businesses at an unprecedented pace, enabling automation, improved customer service, and even entirely new business models.

But how can small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurs harness AI in practice? Vaasa University of Applied Sciences (VAMK) and the University of Vaasa now offer a solution: a free online course to help identify AI opportunities in business.

AI Isn't the Future—It's Here Now

The new AI2Business online course is designed for SMEs, entrepreneurs, and professionals who want to learn how AI can enhance business growth. The course provides practical knowledge without requiring deep technical expertise.

"Companies need concrete

guidance on AI implementation. Our goal is to accelerate AI competence building," says Sanna Peltonen, project manager of AI2Business at VAMK.

The self-paced course is available in English, making it ideal for busy professionals.

How AI is Reshaping Business

While many see AI as just a tool for automation, its impact is far broader. "AI doesn't just streamline processes—it changes business logic," emphasizes Marko Kohtamäki, professor at the University of Vaasa.

The course covers AI from three perspectives:

Business – How can AI create competitive advantages?

Technology – What applications exist?

Design – How to develop user-friendly AI solutions?

"AI adoption isn't just about technology. If a solution doesn't serve users, it remains disconnected," Peltonen notes.

Real-World Examples: How Businesses Use AI Today

The course features three company-driven AI experiments demonstrating practical applications:

Document processing – Automated data extraction and report generation.

Price prediction – Dynamic pricing models based on market conditions.

Production quality control – Machine learning detects defects in real time.

"These experiments are based on real business needs, showing how AI can be applied across industries," says Jani Boutellier, assistant professor at the University of Vaasa.

How to Join the Free Course?
Currently in pilot phase,

the course is free and ideal for SMEs, managers, and anyone interested in AI.

Participation is simple:

Register on the AI2Business Moodle platform: <https://moodle.muovadigital.net/mod/page/view.php?id=680>

Study at your own pace – 24/7 access.

Receive a certificate upon completion.

As part of the EU-funded AI2Business project, participants are encouraged to join the project's monitoring system to help measure AI training impact in Finland.

"No need to worry about details—we guide you every step of the way," assures Peltonen.

AI is the Future—Start Learning Now

AI offers vast potential for businesses, but leveraging it requires understanding how it fits into operations. This course helps companies take their first steps into AI without major investments.

Ready to future-proof your business? Enroll now!

AI2Business is an EU-funded project promoting AI skills for SMEs. Learn more: VAMK website.

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

WASA
DAILY

Wasa Daily



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

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

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

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

AI

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

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



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

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

The Emergence of AI-Generated Podcasts

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

invitation)

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

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

Wasa Daily

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

The magazine contains quotations from old daily newspapers taken from the National Archives (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!

Editorial office: Wasa Daily, Koulukatu 37 B 7, 65100 Vaasa, tel. +358-40-5462455.

Helsinki editorial office: Wasa Daily, Toinen linja 9 B 36, 00530 Helsinki. Phone +358-40-5462455.

Email: wasadagblad@gmail.com



HOROSCOPE FOR SEPTEMBER 2025

September Horoscope for the Gluten-Free Stars ☐ ☐

Aries (March 21–April 19)
You'll boldly march into September – straight past the bread basket. Friends admire your willpower, even if the garlic bread flirts with you.

Taurus (April 20–May 20)
Comfort food calls, but your inner gourmet finds joy in new gluten-free recipes. September's motto: brownies can still be life-changing.

Gemini (May 21–June 20)
You'll be double-booked socially – luckily, you've mastered the art of discreetly asking waiters about cross-contamination. Your charm smooths every menu question.

Cancer (June 21–July 22)
Your sensitive stomach meets your sensitive soul. Good news: the stars show an abundance of gluten-free snacks arriving just when you need them most.

Leo (July 23–August 22)
Spotlight's on you at the dinner table. With confidence, you show others that gluten-free isn't a restriction – it's a culinary adventure. Applause guaranteed.

Virgo (August 23–September 22)
This is your month! Organization shines: you label your flours, conquer the kitchen, and become a gluten-free wizard. Friends beg for your recipes.

Libra (September 23–October 22)
You'll weigh your options between oat milk and almond milk – balance is everything. Don't worry, both go beautifully with your cookies.

Scorpio (October 23–November 21)
Passion is your theme – and it even applies to gluten-free pasta. September brings intensity, but remember: not every debate about pizza bases needs stings.

Sagittarius (November 22–December 21)
Adventures await! You'll discover a new gluten-free café or a recipe that makes travel less risky. Your optimism is more infectious than sourdough starter.

Capricorn (December 22–January 19)
Practical as always, you plan ahead: snacks in your bag, gluten-free crackers in the car. September rewards your foresight with stress-free outings.

Aquarius (January 20–February 18)
Innovation rules your diet this month. Chickpea flour pancakes? Cauliflower crust pizza? The stars applaud your bold experiments. Even skeptics will ask for seconds.

Pisces (February 19–March 20)
Dreamy September brings comfort in soups and safe bread alternatives. Trust your intuition – it will guide you toward the coziest gluten-free gatherings.

☐ **September is proof: you don't need gluten to sparkle.**



HUMOUR ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

HE WEATHER GAME.

The Sensitive Lady:

— I always feel it when it rains, in my legs and back.

The sensitive gentleman:

— I also feel all the changes in the weather. The other night I woke up to the barometer falling'

— They're not possible!

— Well, you see, it fell to the floor.

WIDOW

The teacher asked: — can one of you explain to me what "widow" means.. — A widow, answered little Anna, is a wife who lived with her husband for so long that he died.

SWIMMING COMPETITION.

Little Karl was with his mother at a swimming competition. Now follows - said the mother - 100 meter breaststroke for ladies.

Little Karl: — Mother — is it forbidden to use the arms?

EINSTEIN

— Has the lady read Einstein's theory of relativity?

— Well, yes, I'll wait until it comes out as a film.

SEEN WITH YOUR OWN FEET

— I have a good friend who usually says that you never know anything about anything until you have seen with your own feet where the shoe pinches.

Mail man

"Where have you been, my little darling?" asked little Albert's mother, when he came home after being gone for a couple of hours. "Yes, we were out with Kalle and Olle playing postman," answered the darling. "Oh really! How did it happen then?"

»Well, we went around to all the houses around here

and put letters in all the boxes.»

"But were they really real letters?"

»Yes then!»

»Where did you get them from then?»

»Yes, yes, find them in mother's desk drawer. It was open, and they were so beautiful and there was a whole bunch of them tied with red silk ribbons».

BEAUTIFUL BEGINNING.

Colonel: I feel sorry for you, Lieutenant Möller, because there are still complaints about you not paying your debts.

Aren't you going to sort out your financial situation soon?

The lieutenant; Well, Colonel, just yesterday I bought a ticket in the class lottery.

Astronomic picture of the week:

Dueling Dust Dragons (in Space!)



The Fighting Dragons of Ara, formally designated NGC 6188, is an emission nebula located about 4000 light-years away near the edge of a large molecular cloud in the constellation Ara (the Altar). The nebula was given its name for its resemblance to two 'dragons' emerging from within the ominous dark dust clouds to face off with one another. This image is of their 'profiles' pointed squarely at each other, captured by the DOE-built Dark Energy Camera (DECam) mounted on the Víctor M. Blanco 4-meter Telescope at the U.S. National Science Foundation Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory, a Program of NSF NOIRLab. The reddish glow of the dragons' backs is ionized hydrogen, 'lit up' by light from the bright young stars — only a few million years old — in the nebula. Of these young stars, 27 form the beaming open cluster NGC 6193 (in the upper left quadrant of the image, left of the image's centerline), which gives a background glow that further defines the outline of the dragons. These young stars have also been blowing off intense stellar winds since they ignited, sculpting and shaping the gas and dust into the mythical 'duel' that we see today.

Credit: Dark Energy Survey/DOE/FNAL/DECam/CTIO/NOIRLab/NSF/AURAImage processing: R. Colombari and M. Zamani (NSF's NOIRLab) Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

Next week:

Wassan Päivälehti
Photo Supplement
Wasa Dagblad Wasa Daily



**The History of
Coeliac Disease**

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

Advertise in Wasa Daily

Being among the first to advertise in this historic and hyper-modern daily may have some PR value.

Send ads to
wasadagblad@gmail.com

WASA DAILY
wasadagblad@gmail.com
.com