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TODAY

EDITORIAL

Vaasa at 420 – and its future is only beginning

On October 2, Vaasa celebrates its 420th birthday. That is an impressive age for any city. Yet Vaasa has a remarkable quality: despite its long history, it increasingly feels like a city looking firmly towards the future.

There are many reasons why Vaasa is a good place to live. The sea is close, nature is never far away, distances are manageable and the city offers an active cultural life. It is large enough to provide opportunities, but small enough for everyday life to remain convenient and personal.

But perhaps Vaasa's greatest strength for the future is knowledge.

Vaasa is one of Finland's important university cities. More than 14,300 higher-education students and around 4,000 vocational students give the city a youthful and international atmosphere. Six universities and universities of applied sciences offer education in Finnish, Swedish and English.

At the same time, Vaasa has become an international centre for energy technology. Energy-Vaasa brings together more than 180 companies employing around 13,000 people. The cluster generates more than six billion euros in annual turnover, while planned investments in energy-technology infrastructure in the region amount to around €1.9 billion by 2030.

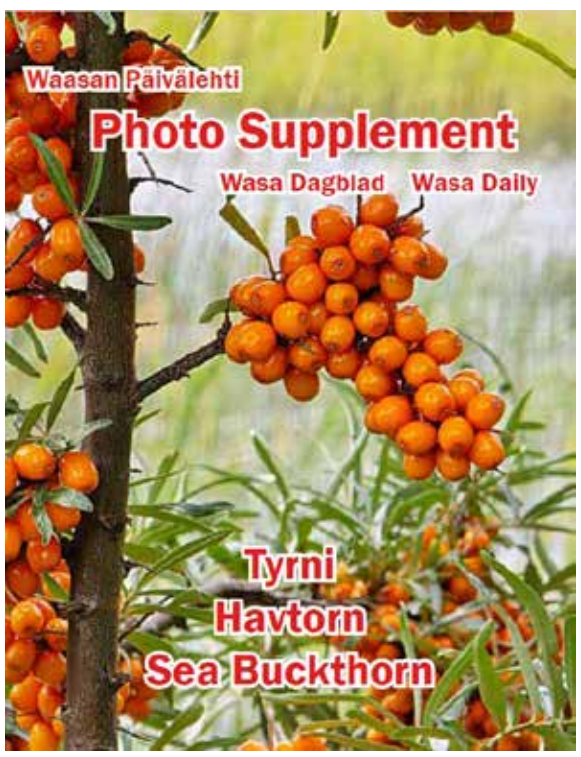
That combination is unusually powerful: education, research, international business and the development of tomorrow's energy solutions – all in a city where the sea, nature and a human-scale everyday life remain close at hand.

Vaasa therefore does not have to choose between being a pleasant city in which to live and a city where tomorrow's jobs are created. It can be both.

That may be the most appropriate way to celebrate 420 years: to respect the past while keeping our eyes firmly on what comes next.

Vaasa is 420 years old. But its future has only just begun.

Photo Supplement



NEWS

VAASA 420

Vaasa turns 420 – the whole city is invited to the party



A 420th birthday is worth celebrating. And when Vaasa reaches the milestone on 2 October, the entire city is invited. The anniversary programme brings together history, culture, music, exercise and activities for children and seniors – with many events completely free of charge.

The celebrations begin already on Thursday, 1 October, at Ritz. From 5 to 6.45 pm, a film about Vaasa's history and development as an energy city will be shown. Mayor Tomas Häyry opens the event, followed by happiness researcher Säde Stenlund, who will speak about the power of happiness. Stenlund, a physician and researcher who recently moved back to Vaasa, works at Harvard University and the University of Turku. Admission is free.

That same evening, music takes over Vaasa City Hall. Pepe Willberg celebrates his 80th anniversary with the concert Elämältä kaiken sain, looking back at a career that began in the 1960s and continues today.

Doors open across the city
On Friday, 2 October, the birthday itself, the public can explore Cultural House Fanny and the newly renovated Brändö and Gustavsborg day-care centres.

Art lovers have reason to celebrate too. Kuntsi Museum of Modern Art and the Old Vaasa Museum offer free admission from 10 am to 5 pm. Kuntsi presents Marja Pirilä's Camera Obscura, while the Old Vaasa Museum marks the 250th anniversary of the Vaasa Court of Appeal.

At the main library, everyone can join the workshop "Valfabetet – Vaasa's own alphabet" from 2 to 4.30 pm. Participants will explore what creates Vaasa's identity and help build an alphabet for the city through writing and drawing.

Something for everyone
Seniors can join a free chair-exercise session at Vaasa Senior Centre from 11 to 11.45 am. At the swimming hall, a special Happy Hour runs from noon to 2 pm, with admission costing just four euros.



Children can head to the Traffic Park in Metviken Activity Park from noon to 6 pm, where they can drive pedal cars and discover a miniature version of Vaasa, complete with models of landmarks such as the City Hall, railway station and water tower.

The celebrations continue on Saturday, 3
October, when Vaasa City Theatre offers tickets to Tinakenkätyttö at a special anniversary price of 42 euros for the 1 pm and 6 pm performances.

A new oak tree will also be planted in Old Vaasa as a living memorial to the 420th anniversary.

Residents are invited to share their own stories of the city through the Minun Vaasa – Min Vasa - My Vaasa project, while TaiKon students bring Vaasa's history and landmarks to life through animations accessible by QR codes.

Vaasa is turning 420. And this time, the whole city gets to blow out the candles.
Reference: City of Vaasa, 14 September 2026.

WELLBEING AREAS

OSTROBOTHNIA WELFARE AREA

THE PILL MACHINE THAT CAN SEE YOU BREATHE - Finland Tests Game-Changing Home Care Tech

Your medicine dispenser just became a life-saver.

In Ostrobothnia, Finland, the welfare area is launching a six-month trial this autumn that could change home care forever. They will test remote monitoring of vital signs built directly into the familiar medicine dispenser.

The tech is Finnish Evondos' medicine robot combined with computer vision. Through a video connection, the add-on function can measure breathing rate, pulse, pulse interval and changes in oxygen saturation - without touching the client at all.

The idea is pure preventive care. Instead of routine rounds, nurses can allocate resources to the clients who need the most support, right when their health starts to slip.

Medicine dispensers already help thousands live safely at home, reminding them to take the right dose at the right time.

It is good to have many different functions in one and the same package. That way you don't need to bring several different devices to the client and handling the devices doesn't become too cumbersome for the workers, says Paula Olin, head of home care and in charge of the pilot.
Evondos is a Finnish success story, used in over 300 municipalities across the Nordics to keep elderly at home longer.
Source: Press release from Ostrobothnia Welfare Area

OSTROBOTHNIA WELFARE AREA

MIRACLE IN OSTROBOTHNIA: Dental Queues Wiped Out – 800,000 Euro Fine Cancelled!

From threatened mega-fine to model region in eight months.

The Ostrobothnia Welfare Area in Finland has fixed access to non-urgent oral health care – and avoided a massive penalty. The Finnish Licensing and Supervision Authority confirms that the conditional fine of 800,000 euros will not be imposed.

On 10 December 2025, the Regional State Administrative Agency for Western and Inner Finland ordered Ostrobothnia to bring primary oral health care in line with the Health Care Act. The deadline was 10 August 2026, eight months later, with an 800,000-euro fine attached. The welfare area also had to report its corrective actions to the Licensing and Supervision Authority by 31 August 2026.

It worked. According to the report received by the authority, on 10 August 2026 there was not a single patient in the entire welfare area who had waited more than six months for non-urgent oral health care. The queues have been completely dismantled. Since May 2026, the care guarantee – access within six months from needs assessment – has been met everywhere.

The authority will continue to monitor the situation using THL follow-up data.

In Finland, the oral health care guarantee is six months, one of the longest in primary care, but it is legally binding.

BOWEL CANCER

New cancer treatment could help patients avoid surgery and a permanent stoma

A powerful dose of radiation delivered directly to a tumour could offer a new option for people with rectal cancer. Tampere University Hospital Tays has become the first hospital in Finland to introduce the new treatment method. The goal is ambitious: to help more patients avoid major surgery – and potentially a permanent stoma.

The technique is called high-dose-rate brachytherapy, or HDR brachytherapy. At Tays, it is also referred to as local "tykköhoito". A treatment device is inserted through the rectum and delivers a high dose of radiation directly next to the tumour. The radiation source used is iridium-192.

The major advantage is precision. The tumour receives a high radiation dose, while surrounding healthy tissues receive considerably less radiation.

Around 1,500 new cases of rectal cancer are diagnosed in Finland every year. Surgery is often an effective treatment, but removing part or all of the rectum can result in a permanent stoma and long-term problems affecting bowel function, urination and sexual function.

The new treatment is not suitable for everyone. Patients are assessed individually by a multidisciplinary team including cancer surgeons, oncologists, radiation oncologists and radiologists. One particularly important potential group is older and frail patients for whom major rectal surgery may be especially demanding or risky. More than 100 such patients in Finland could potentially be candidates for the new local treatment each year.

A new way of thinking about surgery
Treatment of rectal cancer has changed considerably in recent years. International research has shown that some tumours disappear completely following radiation and drug treatment. In selected patients, doctors can then consider a carefully monitored "watch and wait" strategy instead of immediate surgery.

Tays and Tampere University are also leading the NORPPA research programme, which focuses on organ-preserving treatments for rectal cancer. A new NORPPA-2 study is scheduled to begin in 2027, examining how effectively HDR brachytherapy can destroy tumours and how many patients might consequently avoid major surgery.

Researchers will also investigate whether some patients could potentially be treated without chemotherapy if the local radiation treatment proves sufficiently effective.

The philosophy is simple: the aim is not to treat cancer less aggressively, but to treat it more precisely.
Reference: Wellbeing Services County of Pirkanmaa/ Tays, 11 September 2026.

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NEWS

WÄRTSILÄ

Finnish Giant Wärtsilä Makes Power Move to Keep Japan Online



Image caption: Technology group Wärtsilä and Tokyo Gas Engineering Solutions Co., Ltd. (TGES) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to jointly evaluate power supply solutions for data centres in Japan. © Wärtsilä

Japan's AI revolution is booming – so fast the power grid can't keep up. Now a Finnish giant is stepping in.

Technology group Wärtsilä and Tokyo Gas Engineering Solutions Co., Ltd. (TGES) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to jointly evaluate power solutions for data centres across Japan. The MoU was signed in Helsinki in August 2026 and announced in a press release on 17 September at 08:00 UTC+2.

The driver is explosive. Fueled by AI and cloud computing, demand for new data centre capacity in Japan is accelerating at record speed. But grid constraints and lengthy power procurement timelines mean developers face years of waiting for a connection – a serious bottleneck for the digital economy.

The answer, the companies say, is to bring the power plant to the data centre.

Under the MoU, Wärtsilä and TGES will develop initial technical concepts and feasibility assessments for on-site and off-grid power generation based on gas- or dual-fuel engines for selected data centre projects TGES is developing.

It's a proven model. Unlike traditional gas turbines, Wärtsilä's engines use significantly less water and fuel, offer rapid ramp-up – critical to keep AI servers running 24/7 – and are modular, so capacity can be scaled up as power demand grows.

"As AI adoption accelerates, delivering reliable power quickly is becoming a critical factor. By combining our strengths, we can evaluate solutions that provide the flexibility, scalability and speed required," said Anders Lindberg, President of Wärtsilä Energy.

TGES, a subsidiary of Tokyo Gas – Japan's largest city gas provider – contributes deep local market and project development expertise. The company is already working with CBRE to

NEWS

TRAFFIC PARK

Onkilahti popular traffic park is still open for three weeks

The children's traffic park located in the Onkilahti activity park and the adjacent pump track have aroused great interest and attracted many visitors. Now the traffic park is open for another three weeks, 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.

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 until 20.10.2026:
Wed-Fri 12.00-18.00
Sat-Sun 12.00-16.00



deploy gas cogeneration to shorten data centre development times.

Wärtsilä is listed on Nasdaq Helsinki, with 17,900 employees in 78 countries and EUR 6.2 billion in net sales in 2025. Its Energy division has delivered 81 GW of power plant capacity worldwide.

Source: Wärtsilä Corporation, press release 17-09-2026

JOAKIM STRAND

Minister's Cost-of-Living Shock Warning: „Government MUST Act – Everyday Life Is Too Expensive!"



The final budget marathon is over – but the price shock for ordinary Finns is not. Now one of the government's own ministers is sounding the alarm.

European Affairs and Ownership Steering Minister Joakim Strand (Swedish People's Party, RKP/SFP) says the Orpo government must urgently find new ways to curb citizens' everyday costs.

Strand's demand came right after the government closed its last budget session for 2027, a budget he otherwise praises for boosting growth and competitiveness.

According to Strand, Finland's strong welfare society is built on work and entrepreneurship, but it collapses if people cannot afford groceries, housing and energy. While headline inflation has eased from over 8% in 2022, Finnish food prices are still up by a quarter since 2021, mortgage rates remain painful, and electricity price spikes hit households hard in winter.

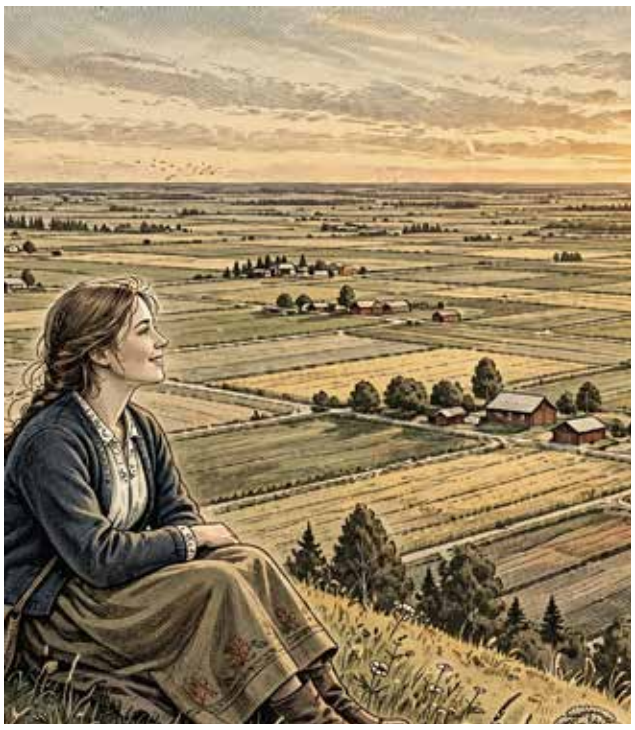
The 2027 budget does contain wins that Strand fought for: 1.1 million euros in stable funding for the Client and Patient Safety Centre in Ostrobothnia, 1 million for the University of Vaasa's research infrastructure, 1 million for Vaasa region infrastructure projects, and a 19 million euro authorization to widen Highway 8 between Bäckliden and Brännbacken. Village shop support is also increased by 200,000 euros.

Strand, 43, is an economist and lawyer from Turku, MP for Vaasa since 2015, former chair of the Committee for the Future (2019-2023), and minister since July 2024.

NEWS

HAPPINESS

Are People in Seinäjoki Happier Than in Vaasa?



Finland has topped the UN World Happiness Report for nine years straight. Now we finally know where inside Finland people are happiest.

It's the question everyone thought they knew the answer to – until now.

For the first time ever, municipal financier Kuntarahoitus has mapped happiness by region. The study, conducted by Norstat in July-August 2026 among 2,038 Finns in all 18 mainland regions, used the same life-satisfaction question as the UN: How satisfied are you with your life on a scale of 1 to 10?

The national average: 7.51. Almost two-thirds gave an 8, 9 or 10.

The winner? South Ostrobothnia – with Seinäjoki as its capital – scoring 7.67, the highest in the country. It's followed by North Savo at 7.63 and Pirkanmaa at 7.60.

At the bottom: Satakunta, with just 6.94 – by far the lowest.

The happiest share is even more telling. In Lapland, a stunning 71% gave 8-10, in North Savo 70% and in South Savo 69%. The most negative ratings (1-3) were in Satakunta (9%), Central Finland (8%) and North Karelia (7%).

So what makes Finns happy? It's not what you think. Top of the list: freedom to make your own choices, health, and a sense of security. Almost everyone rated them as very or fairly important. Nature is massive too – 93% say it's important for their happiness.

"Finland has been number one for nine years, but the international comparison hasn't revealed how happiness is distributed inside Finland," says happiness researcher Jennifer De Paola.

And why does Finland win globally? More than half of Finns believe it's because Finns are content with little. A third think things are just exceptionally good in Finland. Some even question the UN study itself.

The happiness is meant to be shared. Kuntarahoitus's Happiness Fund hands out 100,000 euros every year to a project boosting community happiness. The first winner in February was Kouvola, which bought a mobile Onni Stage to bring community events to everyone.

A new call is open now: 15 September – 27 November 2026. Proposals are judged by a Happiness Panel including psychotherapist and author Maaret Kallio, creative director Jani Halme and innovation expert Jayla Tammiharju. Criteria: ingenuity, communality, inclusion, impact, safety and sustainability – with extra weight on ingenuity this year.

Eligible applicants are municipalities, joint municipal authorities, wellbeing services counties and their companies.

Source: Kuntarahoitus.fi / Happiness Fund study, 2,038 respondents, updated 21.9.2026

EURONOTES

10 Million People Just Decided The Future Of Our Money!

Europe is obsessed with cash – again!

The European Central Bank says its survey on new euro banknotes has received ten million responses – a record!

Ten design proposals made the shortlist, based on two themes: "European culture" and "Rivers and birds". Over 1,200 designers applied, 25 were chosen to draft ideas.

New notes will get stronger security, better accessibility and greener materials. Final decision expected by end of 2026.

Source: Bank of Finland



NEWS

His message is both dramatic and optimistic: responsible finances and help for everyday life are not opposites. The next step is to turn the cost-of-living promise into concrete tools in parliament this autumn.
Source: SFP

CLIMATE

EL NIÑO

Super-El Niño Alert: Planet Heading into 'Uncharted Waters' as Extreme Weather Threat Looms for 2027

Brace for impact. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has issued a stark warning that a very strong El Niño is firmly established and rapidly intensifying, bringing mounting risks of extreme weather well into February 2027.
Fueled by exceptionally warm ocean conditions across the tropical Pacific—with sub-surface temperatures soaring more than 8°C above average in places—scientists say the likelihood of El Niño persisting is close to 100 percent.



António Guterres
European Commission (Christophe Licoppe)
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UN Secretary-General António Guterres warns that the planet is in "uncharted waters" and heading straight into a danger zone of climate extremes. WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo notes that the organization is launching a historic mobilization alongside national meteorological services to safeguard lives and livelihoods from looming droughts and floods.
While El Niño is a natural climate pattern and not caused by climate change, its in-ten-sity dramatically alters global rainfall and temperature trends. Governments world-wide are now racing to scale up early warnings and disaster preparedness.
Reference: World Meteorological Organization (WMO) / wmo.int (September 2026).

MOTHER'S DAY MEDALS

Do you know a mother who should get a medal?

FINLAND. It's time to start thinking about the mothers who have done something special. Nominations for the 2027 Mother's Day medals must be submitted by 2 November 2026. The medal is awarded to women who have

NEWS

NEW MAP OF THE WORLD

The World Looks Different Now: UN Backs a New Map That Finally Shows Africa's True Size



For generations, millions of schoolchildren have stared at the same familiar world map. Europe looks prominent, Greenland appears enormous – and Africa seems surprisingly small.

Now, that picture is changing.

On 4 September 2026, the United Nations General Assembly in New York overwhel-mingly endorsed a resolution promoting a new approach to depicting the world: the Equal Earth projection. The vote was striking – 164 countries supported the resolution, six abstained and only the United States voted against it.

Africa gets its true proportions

The problem is not that the old map is simply "wrong". It is a consequence of trying to flatten our spherical planet onto a sheet of paper.

The famous Mercator projection, created by Flemish cartographer Gerardus Mercator in 1569, was designed primarily for navigation. It has an important advantage: directions useful to sailors can be represented in a practical way.

But there is a dramatic side effect. Land areas become increasingly exaggerated to-wards the poles.

The result can be astonishing. Africa is about 14 times larger than Greenland, although on a traditional Mercator map the two can look surprisingly similar in size.

The Equal Earth projection, developed in 2018 by cartographers Tom Patterson, Bojan Šavrič and Bernhard Jenny, is designed to preserve the relative areas of continents much more accurately. Africa therefore suddenly appears much more imposing, while Europe, North America and Russia lose some of their familiar visual dominance.

More than just a map

Supporters argue that maps influence how people understand the world. A distorted image, repeated in classrooms and media for decades, can unconsciously influence our



perception of the importance and size of different regions.

Togo led the UN initiative, supported by the African Union. Togo has said it plans to introduce the new projection into school geography materials before the end of 2026.

But there is an important catch: the UN resolution is not legally binding. Mercator will not suddenly disappear, and it remains useful for navigation.

Still, something significant has happened in New York on 4 September 2026. The world has officially been encouraged to look at itself differently.

And perhaps the biggest surprise is this: Africa was never small. Our map simply made it look that way.

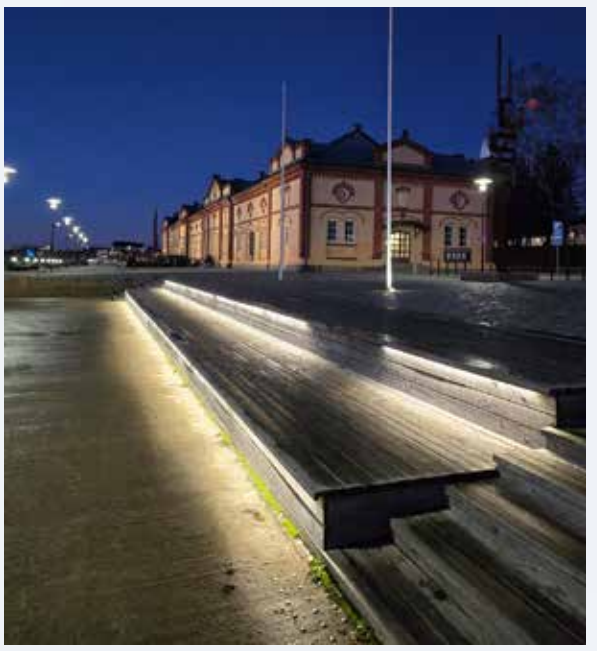
MAPS: Tom Patterson, Equal Earth. Wikipedia Commons, Public Domain

NEWS

distinguished themselves by exemplary work for children and young people, as well as for family life and parenthood. Contributions to child welfare, youth and sports organisations, for example, can also be considered. The candidate must be at least 40 years old. Biological and non-biological children can also propose a mother, while other relatives and acquaintances can take the initiative through an organisation or authority. The medal will be awarded by the President of the Republic on Mother's Day, 9 May 2027.
Last day for proposals: 2.11.2026. Reference: National Supervisory Authority.

KUNTSI

Magical Worlds of Light Open in Vaasa – Marja Pirilä's Camera Obscura Captivates



As autumn darkness settles over Vaasa, a special kind of light magic comes alive at Kuntsi Museum of Modern Art. From 19 September 2026 to 9 January 2027, the extensive exhibition Marja Pirilä – Camera Obscura invites visitors into poetic, multi-layered visual worlds.
Marja Pirilä (born 1957 in Rovaniemi) is one of Finland's leading photographic artists.
For more than 30 years she has explored the ancient camera obscura technique, creating refined images where light and dark, interior and exterior, nature and city meet. The show features her long-running Interior/Exterior series (since 1996), In Strindberg's Rooms from a residency in France, Milavida from an empty palace in Tampere, and Talking House, along with three-dimensional works made with Petri Nuutinen.
Tapani Rinne's soundscapes complement the photographs, and the exhibition has been selected for the national Art Testers programme.
Tickets: €15/9/0.
A captivating journey into the secret interplay of light and shadow – not to be missed.
Source: Vaasa.fi / Kuntsi Museum of Modern Art

FINLAND

ALEXANDER STUBB

Statement by the President of the Republic of Finland, Alexander Stubb in UN on 22 September 2026



23.9.2026

Mr President, Mr Secretary-General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Former Secretary-General Kofi Annan once said: “Whatever our differences, [...] we stand or fall together.”

When we forget this wisdom, disorder is what happens.

Last year, from this very podium, I stated that foreign policy is based on three pillars: values, interests, and power.

This year, I come with something much simpler. A choice between co-operation or conflict.

In today’s world, co-operation is undermined by a lack of trust, disregard for rules, and the weakening of institutions.

Conflicts are spreading, bringing suffering, violence, and injustice.

According to some accounts, there are currently 65 active armed conflicts – more than at any time since the end of the Cold War.

Competition will always be there. Nations compete now harder than they did a generation ago. That doesn’t worry me. What does, is that more and more of them now compete against the rules on which the international order rests.

So, this speech defends these rules. And it calls for co-operation. Small nations need it to survive. Large nations need it to stay great.

Upholding the most basic rules, values and institutions is our best option to ensure that competition does not escalate into conflict. And that co-operation gains ground.

Now, I want to begin by analysing how the world is changing today. And as a pragmatic Finn, I will always try to deal with the world as it is, because it often helps in building a world that I wish we would have. In other words, a world which we can build together.

I will then make a few suggestions about what we should do next.

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We should all be steadfast defenders of multilateralism. As Strobe Talbott reportedly remarked, multilateralism is hell, and can be a real pain in the neck. But it is the best option for humanity as a whole.

We need multilateralism in order to address our shared agenda, ranging from armed conflicts and climate change to sustainable development and artificial intelligence.

Currently, however, we seem to be going the other way: towards a non-cooperative multipolar world order.

This order, as it turns out, is based on zero-sum deals, transactions, and unrestrained power. This is a short-sighted approach.

Tempting as it may be for some, such a multipolar order will ultimately lead to conflict. It will turn against us, whether you represent a great power, a middle power, or a small state, like Finland.

Between these two approaches, there is of course a third option: plurilateralism. It means building ad hoc coalitions when global co-operation is unattainable.

And this is my first observation today: the emergence of flexible forms of co-operation around different themes and interests. Be it in the economy, climate, defence, or technology.

Coalition-building can be a force for good. But with one condition: it should not challenge multilateralism, but build on it. It should support the UN system, not substitute it.

The Coalition of the Willing for Ukraine is particularly close to my heart. It is a group of countries working to end Russia’s war of aggression. The war is unlawful, unjustified and unprovoked. Its solution will have far-reaching consequences for Ukraine and beyond.

The Coalition works for a just and lasting peace in Ukraine in accordance with the UN Charter. It seeks to uphold the basic tenets of the international order.

My second observation is that everywhere I travel around the world, I hear the word ‘realignment’.

Whether it is in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, or the Americas, nations are seeking new alliances and partnerships.

This is a logical consequence in times of uncertainty and transformation. You seek security where you can get it.

We are seeing an intensification of regional integration akin to what we saw in the immediate aftermath of World War II.

Regional organizations like the African Union, Gulf Cooperation Council, Mercosur, ASEAN or the EU build trust.

When integration is not feasible, other forms of co-operation can prove essential. We Finns are happy to point to the historic signing of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975. It brought together 35 nations in the midst of the Cold War and laid the foundations for what would later become the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

There was no trust. There were deep disagreements. And outright hostility. Yet there was room for a process that reduced tensions and built common ground.

I believe regions, such as the Middle East, where conflicts are raging today, may consider something similar.

Even in the face of conflict and grievance, a region may be able to agree on principles that foster co-operation and prevent further conflict.

My third observation is that a new economic world order is taking shape.

Instruments once used for economic integration – including trade, technology, energy, investment, and supply chains – have become instruments of geopolitical competition.

There was perhaps, at times, a naïve belief that interdependence would bring about stability and peace. Now, the focus on opportunities has been replaced by the focus on threats.

We have entered a world of coercion, where dependencies are vulnerabilities. Countries seek chokepoints that can be weaponized to pressure others.

But dependencies are complex. No nation, not even the biggest ones, can go it alone. All coercive actions come at a cost.

And even if a mightier state dominates in one domain, a smaller state can respond in another.

In the new geopolitical environment, the economic order of the post-World War II era is seeking new forms.

The new order must be based on a realistic understanding of the power balance in the world.

We in the West must acknowledge that the Global South and East are an expanding economic and political force.

Many nations around the world have made remarkable advances in competence and know-how. We should put this collective expertise to work for the global common good.

Countries are right to be wary of dangerous dependencies. But our focus on threats should not lead us to abandon co-operation.

We should strive for an economic world

FINLAND

order built on institutions and agreements. Multilateralism is also needed in the global economy.

***

It is all well and good to diagnose the problem: too many nations now compete at the expense of basic rules, and that is why the world has slipped into disorder.

But it matters more to find a prescription which would bring us back to order, stability and co-operation.

Thus, I will offer you three remedies for a world in disorder. To begin with, we need to go back to the basics of international law.

On my recent visit to India, I came across a quote from Mahatma Gandhi: “The breach of one rule inevitably leads to the breach of other rules”. These words resonate all too strongly today.

We have moved back to a world defined by raw power and narrow self-interest.

Rules and values seem to be taking a back seat. Some are ready to throw in the towel, prepared to accept the defeat of the international rules-based order.

That is an exaggeration. International law has been questioned and challenged before. It has never been a perfect system.

But we must admit that we are at a critical juncture. Fundamental norms are being questioned in a way that erodes confidence in the entire multilateral system.

Therefore, the first remedy for a world in disorder is rule of law.

Today, international norms are often presented as an obstacle to the pursuit of national interests. This is both wrong and dangerous.

International law has never been merely an effort to achieve universal justice, but neither can it be reduced to a mere instrument of domination.

It is not only about values, nor only about interests, but about both.

Despite the rhetoric, no major power is likely to give up its ability to shape the rules.

Even when actors claim to abandon rules, they rather seek to replace existing rules with ones more to their liking.

Therefore, we will not face a world without rules. But we could be facing a world with less predictability, less restraint – a world based on rules that are more permissive for the powerful.

For the collective benefit of the nations in this Hall, we should continue to defend the rule of law and uphold its most fundamental principles. They include the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of nations; freedom of navigation at sea; and accountability for the most serious international crimes.

The second remedy is about humanitarian principles.

The world today has an unprecedented capacity to meet humanity’s most pressing needs.

Since the establishment of the United Nations, poverty has declined, access to basic education has expanded, literacy has increased, and child mortality has fallen.

Yet, we are witnessing tyranny, disregard for the vulnerable, and violence against civilians in many parts of the world. Poverty and distress are still widespread.

For example, Sudan is devastated by war. Millions have been displaced, and many face famine.

Gaza continues to be one of the world’s most acute humanitarian emergencies, marked by mass displacement, the destruction of infrastructure and a lack of essential services.

Haiti struggles with armed violence and extreme weather events, causing a displacement crisis, a hunger crisis, and a health crisis.

We must not grow indifferent to wars and human suffering, but instead channel our efforts into preventing conflicts, upholding human rights, and strengthening sustainable economies.

Our growing material prosperity should not come at the expense of our ethical responsibilities.

The third remedy is about language and the way we treat each other.

Unfortunately, there is no shortage of examples of those who use dismissive language to describe others and entire groups of people.

Too often, those with the most provocative rhetoric receive the greatest visibility.

Provocation is rewarded with attention. Excess is misinterpreted as courage. Exaggeration as the truth.

Language can foster co-operation, but it can also break trust and turn competition into conflict.

The recipe is simple, but necessary: avoid polarization, strengthen trust, and listen to others.

We need dignified foreign policy. And that starts here, at the United Nations.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank Secretary-General Guterres for his service and his dedication to reforming and rationalising the UN system. This work must continue.

Every Secretary-General is shaped both by their era and by their own actions.

I was reminded of this recently when reading the biographies of former Secretaries-General U-Thant and Kofi Annan, both highly influential leaders who navigated an era of great-power tensions.

Let me put forward a few suggestions for the new Secretary-General’s consideration, whoever she may be, and for the international community at large.

Since my first speech here two years ago, I have consistently called for a reformed Security Council. The world has changed, so should the UN.

There should be, at least, two new permanent seats for Africa, two for Asia-Pacific and one for Latin America.

No single state should have veto power. And, if a member of the Security Council violates the UN Charter, its voting rights should be suspended.

The world needs a functioning UN Security Council. To move forward, we need to break the impasse and be open for creative solutions.

The need for reform also extends to the global economic architecture. It, too, must be updated to reflect today’s power balance.

We have to make sure international economic co-operation continues to be rules-based, legitimate, and representative. Multilateral solutions are needed in an increasingly multipolar world.

We must also bring the United Nations back to peace mediation. The Secretary-General, as Mediator-In-Chief, will have a key role.

The UN’s legitimacy as a mediator is unique. Together, the UN and its Member States can accomplish what neither can achieve alone.

The UN needs to be at the centre of rule-making and institution-building. Regional integration and thematic coalitions can and should support it.

Now let me finish by saying that artificial intelligence is the most consequential technology in the history of mankind. It will impact science, the economy, politics, security, and the very essence of our humanity.

Humans can and should be in the driver’s seat. We have a choice: we can compete, co-operate or slow down. For me, co-operation is the best way forward.

This is why Norway and Finland have, together with leaders from nations around the world, launched a call for companies, governments, regional organisations and the UN to develop mechanisms to control frontier models of AI. I would really like for as many UN member states as possible to join this initiative.

My country, Finland, wants the United Nations to succeed and will remain strongly engaged in its work. Therefore, we are standing for election to the Security Council from 2029 to 2030.

We are motivated by our belief in the UN Charter and the values it stands for. We will prioritize peace, people, and partnerships.

We are willing to take on the responsibility of the Council membership at a time that calls for more peace. We want people and nations to thrive. We believe in dialogue and co-operation.

Finally, let me make a procedural proposal. The foundations of the United Nations were built in San Francisco over 80 years ago.

Today, we must restore balance to the world order. We must recommit to the fundamental principles of the international order. And we must embrace co-operation over conflict.

What the world needs now, is a new San Francisco moment. A moment where world leaders come together to chart the way forward. A process to achieve this should start with the new Secretary-General.

Thank you.

Photo: UN Photo/Laura Jarriel

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

TRUMP ON RUSSIA'S ATTACK ON UKRAINE

"I WILL END THE WAR IN ONE DAY - IF EUROPE STOPS BUYING RUSSIAN OIL"



23.9.2026
President Donald Trump attacked both Moscow and his own allies when he spoke about Ukraine at the UN.

The war would never have started if I had been president," Trump said, reiterating that between 5,000 and 7,000 young soldiers are killed every week. According to Trump, everyone thought Russia would win in three days - now the war has been going on for three and a half years and made Russia "look bad".
The solution? Tough tariffs against Russia. But the condition is that Europe must stop all imports of Russian oil and gas immediately.
You are financing the war against yourselves. Who has ever heard of such a thing?" Trump said in front of the assembly.
He stated that today he will have one-on-one talks with European leaders to bring about a common tariff package that, according to him, can quickly force peace.
Photo: UN Loey Felipe

The announcement comes at the same time as he praised the NATO countries' pledge to increase defense spending to 5 percent of GDP

TRUMP ON IRAN

"I CAN WIPE OUT IRAN - TOTALLY" - THE THREAT THAT SILENCED THE HALL

23.9.2026
The most dramatic moment came when Trump spoke about Iran - with the Iranian delegation in place in the hall.
The president defended Operation Midnight Hammer in June, when, according to him, seven U.S. B-2 bombers dropped fourteen 13-ton bombs on Iran's nuclear facilities, "totally wiping out everything."
No other country on earth could have done what we did," Trump said.
He described Iran as the world's largest sponsor of terrorism and said that the regime's military leaders "are no longer with us. They are dead." Then came the threat: if Iran does not agree to a deal, the United States will "wipe out" the country. The statement was immediately spread in the international media and was condemned by Tehran as a violation of the UN Charter.
Trump, meanwhile, claimed that the attack made possible the end of what he called the Twelve-Day War between Israel and Iran.

TRUMP ON GREENLAND

"THE U.S. TAKES OVER GREENLAND'S DEFENSE - TWO NEW GIANT BASES IN THE ARCTIC"

23.9.2026
Greenland was one of the big surprises in Trump's UN speech.
Just days after the White House announced a new security deal with Denmark and Greenland, Trump confirmed from the podium that the United States will now build two large military bases on the island.
The agreement gives the United States "full opportunity to do whatever it takes to defend the American continent, and also Europe," the president said. According to sources to American media, it is a tripartite agreement that gives the United States permanent control over Greenland's security.
Trump linked the bases directly to the threat from Russia and China in the Arctic.

TRUMP ON CUBA

"CUBA'S COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP IS COLLAPSING - FREEDOM IS COMING"

23.9.2026
Cuba became the target of Trump's harshest ideological attack.
My administration is seeking a fundamental change in Cuba, where the communist regime is under more pressure than ever. It is an absolutely failed state," Trump said.
According to the president, Foreign Minister Marco Rubio is leading negotiations that will lead to regime change. When Trump continued with accusations that Havana collaborates with "left-wing radicals", the Cuban delegation, led by Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez, demonstratively left the hall.
Communism will never come to America, but freedom will come to Cuba," Trump concluded to applause from parts of the assembly.
The statement is seen as the sharpest U.S. statement against Cuba since the Cold War and raises questions about what "fundamental change" means in practice.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UKRAINE PRESIDENT IN UN ON SEPT 23

"WE DIDN'T CHOOSE THIS WAR - WE CHOOSE NOT TO DIE"

24.9.2026

It became the most quoted sentence of the speech. When President Volodymyr Zelensky stepped up to the UN rostrum, he summarized Ukraine's line in a single line. Ukrainians did not choose this war. We choose not to die, not to lose our country, our families, our independence," Zelensky said.

After 55 months of full-scale invasion, he described how Russia has fired over 2,100 missiles, of which more than 950 are ballistic, as well as tens of thousands of Shahed drones - jet-powered drones that he says are fired every hour to hit schools and the economy.

He warned that even a partial victory is not enough for Vladimir Putin. Russia is not satisfied with the Donbas, but is aiming for more cities. The winter will be hard for Ukraine, but the answer will be to make it painful for Russia as well, he said.



Credit: UN Photo Loey Felipe

VOLODOMYR ZELENSKY IN UN

"STRANGLE THE MONEY - THEN THE WAR DIES" - ZELENSKY'S FRONTAL DEMAND AGAINST THE WEST

24.9.26

Zelensky launched a frontal attack on the countries' trade with Moscow.

Our goal is not Russia's oil industry per se. Our goal is Russia's ability to finance this war," he said.

The message at the UN was crystal clear: every deal that gives Russia money gives the war more time. He demanded tighter sanctions, a stop to energy purchases and a total strangulation of the war coffers.

According to Zelensky, Russia has lost nearly 249,000 soldiers killed or seriously wounded in the first eight months of the year alone, for very small territorial gains. It's madness. But they continue anyway," he said, pointing to China and India as major buyers of Russian oil. He also reiterated his proposal from the side talks on a ceasefire in the energy sector and a maritime ceasefire in the Black Sea.

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VOLODOMYR ZELENSKY IN UN

'THE WAR IS SPREADING - NORTH KOREA, MOLDOVA AND THE BALTICS NEXT

24.9.26

Zelensky warned at the UN that the war is no longer a Ukrainian war.

A war that was not prevented in time, was not stopped in time, and where Russia was not punished in time, continues to spread and spreads evil with it," the president said.

As evidence, he highlighted that North Korean units are now fighting side by side with Russian forces and suffering heavy losses, while Pyongyang in exchange receives better missile and drone technology.

He also pointed to Moldova, Poland, the Baltic States, the South Caucasus and Central Asia as the next target if Putin is given continued freedom to act.

The more freedom Putin is given to act, the more dangerous the world becomes for everyone else," Zelensky said. He called Putin "patient zero" and demanded that the UN institutions, which he described as "too weak," must be replaced with a broader security coalition.

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VOLODOMYR ZELENSKY IN UN

"THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE ARMS RACE EVER" - THE AI WAR IS HERE

The most forward-looking Zelensky warned that humanity is facing a new kind of warfare.

The world is in the most destructive arms race in human history, he said, referring to artificial intelligence on the battlefield.

He urged the world to end the current war before AI starts making decisions about who should die. To meet the threat, he presented Ukraine's new air defense initiative "Freya" together with European partners, as well as a massive investment in its own interceptor drones.

Ukraine, Zelensky said, has gone from begging for air defense to becoming a country that exports drone technology and integrated defense systems.

Our vision is peace through protection," he concluded. He appealed: Don't be the last to join those who defend life. Be the first to say "we guarantee security."

UNIVERSITIES

VAASA UNIVERSITY

Double Doctor! Top Health Boss Marina Kinnunen Does It Again – Reveals Why Finland's Huge Health Reform Still Isn't Working



She already had one doctorate. Now she‘s taking another – in the middle of running an entire health region.

Marina Kinnunen, CEO of the Ostrobothnia Well-being Services County in Finland, is defending her second doctoral thesis at the University of Vaasa.

And her message is explosive.

Her new dissertation in Health and Social Management examines what really happened when Finland pushed through its historic sote-uudistus – the massive health, social services and rescue services reform.

Her finding: The reform didn‘t fix fragmentation. It exposed it.

„The sote reform made the need for collaboration in a fragmented system visible – systemic collaboration still needs to be built,“ the thesis summary states.

Kinnunen knows the chaos from the inside. A registered nurse by training, she earned her first doctorate in Economics in 2010 with the thesis Learning from Errors in Hospital Organizations and was a pioneer in patient safety – bringing the HaiPro reporting system to Vaasa Central Hospital as early as 2007. She led the Vaasa Hospital District until it was dissolved on 31 December 2022 due to the reform, and now leads the new wellbeing county.

Her research shows that while the law now obliges professionals to identify clients needing multidisciplinary collaboration, real integration needs more than paragraphs. It needs trust, leadership, shared premises, training and working IT systems that talk to each other. Without it, collaboration remains a buzzword.

The study was conducted as a qualitative case study alongside her full-time executive job – a collaboration she herself started in 2021 with Prof. Harri Jalonen and Prof. Emerita Pirkko Vartiainen.

A boss who researches her own battlefield.

Reference: STT Info / University of Vaasa, dissertation press release 17.09.2026.

VAASA UNIVERSITY

Vaasa University Rector: Knowledge Could Hold the Key to Finland’s Growth



Minna Martikainen, Rector of the University of Vaasa. Photo: University of Vaasa. Image freely available.

Finland’s most important growth resource may not be found underground or in a factory – but in the skills and knowledge of its people.

That was the strong message from Minna Martikainen, Rector of the University of Vaasa, as the university opened its new academic year on September 7.

Martikainen argued that high-quality research and education create new knowledge and innovation, improve productivity and strengthen the ability of companies and society to adapt.

She also warned that Finland’s economic growth must not be held back by a lack of skilled people.

Finland is facing difficult decisions over public finances, but Martikainen stressed that balancing the budget should not undermine the foundations needed for long-term growth. Stable university funding is therefore essential, she said.

There is some encouraging news. The government’s proposed budget for next year includes €3.4 billion for research and development, an increase of €230 million from this year. The University of Vaasa is also set to receive €1 million to strengthen its research infrastructure.

Vaasa University is now the country’s largest provider of business education for the third consecutive year. Its new EQUIS accreditation places its business school among the top three percent of business schools worldwide.
Source: University of Vaasa

ÅBO AKADEMI

AI Research Gets a Boost – Johan Pensar Appointed Associate Professor

Artificial intelligence is advancing at extraordinary speed. Now Åbo Akademi University is strengthening its AI research with Johan Pensar, who has been appointed Associate Professor of Artificial Intelligence.

Pensar joins Åbo Akademi’s Information Technology research community. His position is part of the university’s tenure-track system, signalling a long-term investment in his academic career and research.

His background includes statistics, probabilistic modelling and machine learning. His published research has included Bayesian decision-support models and graphical models – approaches that can help analyse complex relationships and deal with uncertainty in data.



JohanPensar has been appointed PSFellow, ELLIS PI and assistant professor of artificial intelligence at Åbo Akademi. He is stationed in Vaasa. Photo: Åbo Akademi/ Catrin Sandvik

A bigger Finnish AI push

The appointment is part of a wider expansion of AI research at Åbo Akademi. The university has recruited several internationally recognised AI researchers and is involved in ELLIS Institute Finland, a national research centre dedicated to artificial intelligence and machine learning.

AI is already transforming fields ranging from medicine and industry to language technology and decision-making. As the technology becomes more powerful, the need for researchers who can understand its mathematical foundations – and its limitations – is growing just as quickly.

Johan Pensar’s appointment strengthens that expertise at Åbo Akademi and contributes to Finland’s broader effort to remain competitive in one of the world’s fastest-moving technologies.
Source: Åbo Akademi University.

VAASA UNIVERSITY

When the crisis hits, Finland may need its volunteers – Vaasa leads major study



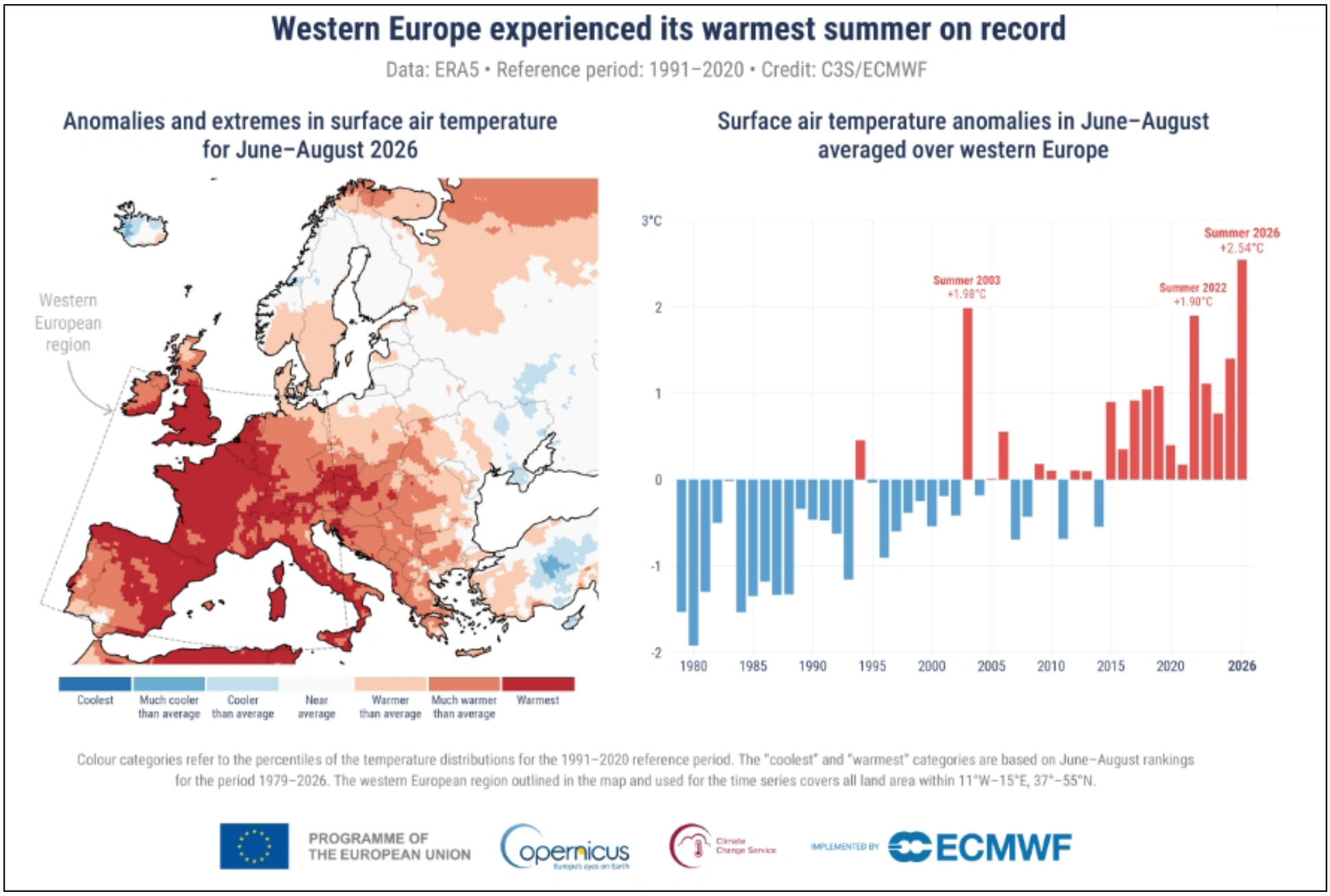
What happens when society is shaken by a serious crisis? Then it is not only the authorities that must be ready. Thousands of volunteers and associations can become a crucial resource.

Now their significance will be investigated in a new national research initiative led by the University of Vaasa. The KAMUT project has been commissioned by the Prime Minister’s Office and will analyse how non-governmental organisations can contribute to Finland’s comprehensive security and crisis preparedness.

CLIMATE CHANGE

EUROPE

COPERNICUS: EUROPE JUST LIVED ITS MOST BRUTAL SUMMER EVER – RIVERS RUN DRY



(Left) Anomalies and extremes in surface air temperature in June–August 2026. Colour categories refer to the percentiles of the temperature distributions for the 1991–2020 reference period. The "coolest" and "warmest" categories identify areas where temperatures were the lowest or highest for June–August during 1979–2026. (Right) Average June–August surface air temperature anomalies for western Europe (11°W–15°E, 37°–55°N). Anomalies are relative to the June–August average for the 1991-2020 period. Data source: ERA5. Credit: C3S/ECMWF.

The summer that wouldn't end has made history – for all the wrong reasons.

Western Europe has just recorded its hottest summer ever, smashing the infamous re-cord from 2003, the year a heatwave killed more than 70,000 people across the conti-nent.

The confirmation comes from the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service, C3S, Europe's gold standard for climate data.

The numbers are stark. The average surface air temperature over European land in August 2026 was 20.26°C – 1.10°C above the 1991-2020 average – making it the fourth-warmest August on record.

For the full summer season, June to August, Europe as a whole had its third warmest summer ever, behind only 2024 and 2022. But zoom in on Western Europe and the story gets darker: Summer 2026 was the warmest on record, beating 2003.

Heat that started in May

This was not one heatwave. It was a relentless chain of exceptionally early, persistent and intense heatwaves that began in May and kept returning, with further punishing waves in August.

And heat brought drought. Conditions were much drier than average across western and central Europe, southern Scandinavia and southeastern Europe. The deficit was most pronounced in the west in June, then progressively shifted eastward as summer went on.

The impacts were severe: widespread exceptional drought, wildfire activity and related emissions hitting record levels.

France, the UK, Hungary, Romania and Serbia reported severe drought conditions. Europe's great rivers are at historic lows. From west to east – the Rhine, Danube, Sout-hern Bug and Dnieper – flows were exceptionally low in August. Across the whole sea-son, large stretches of the Seine, Rhône, Loire and Norway's Glomma saw their lowest seasonal flows since records began in 1992, with record-low conditions along the entire length of the Danube, Vistula and Rhine.

It wasn't dry everywhere. Western Iberia, southern Greece, southern Türkiye and Cyprus, as well as northeastern Europe, were actually wetter than average – the only relief on a parched continent.

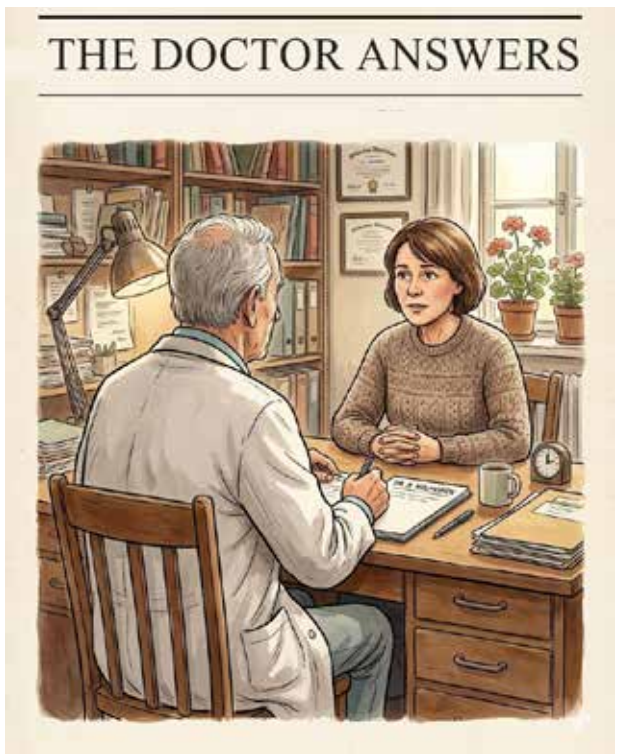
C3S bases its data on ERA5 reanalysis, which blends billions of observations from satel-lites and weather stations. Scientists say Europe is warming almost twice as fast as the global average.

If 2003 was once-in-a-lifetime, 2026 proves that lifetime is getting shorter.

Reference: Copernicus Climate Change Service C3S, Surface air temperature and hydro-logical bulletin August / Summer 2026

THE DOCTOR ANSWERS

Five factors in your 40s can affect life at 80



Question: *According to newspapers, there is a Finnish medical study that shows that it is possible to assess how a man will feel 40 years later and how likely he is to live to the age of 90 based on risk factors in a 40-year-old man. Can you tell us more about this study, and what conclusions we humans should draw from it?*

Answer: Can you already get an idea of how you will feel when you are older, that is the question that this Finlind study wants to answer. And it gives a very clear – but not fateful – answer.

The researchers have followed almost 2,700 men for more than 50 years and found a strong correlation between good cardiovascular values in middle age and both longer life and better health in old age.

The study, which was published in the European Journal of Preventive Cardiology in August 2026, is based on the long-running Helsinki Businessmen Study. The men were on average 42 years old when the first health examinations were carried out in the 1960s and 1970s. The researchers looked at five factors: smoking, body weight, blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar.

The results are striking. Among men who had all five favourable factors, 41.9 per cent reached the age of 90. Among those who did not have any of the five favourable factors, the corresponding proportion was 6.8 per cent. In between, the proportion increased gradually the more favourable factors the men had.

But perhaps most interestingly, the study also examined how the men felt, not just when they died. In 2007, when the survivors were 79 years old on average, the group with five favorable factors had significantly less frailty. Only 2.2 percent were rated as frail, compared to 24.5 percent among the men without any of the favorable factors. They also had better quality of life and mental well-being.

What should we conclude? Above all, that the risk factors in middle age play a role. Quitting smoking, normal weight, control of blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar can be investments not only in a longer life but also in more healthy years.

But the study cannot predict the future of an individual person. It shows correlations at the group level, and the participants were men born between 1919 and 1934. Genetics, diseases, lifestyle and many other factors also affect ageing.

The message is therefore not that the 40-year-old can have his or her future predetermined. Rather, it is the opposite: a large part of the health of the future is worth influencing already in middle age.

Source: Strandberg, T.E. et al. (2026), Low cardiovascular risk in early midlife and quality of life in old age: a life-long follow-up study in men, European Journal of Preventive Cardiology, 27 August 2026

HEALTH

DOG and HEALTH

HEADLINE: YOUR DOG'S DIRT IS YOUR BABY'S BEST DEFENSE – SCIENTISTS FIND THE BACTERIA THAT BEAT FEVER



Want a healthier baby? Get a dog – and don't vacuum too well.

A groundbreaking Finnish study has finally cracked why children growing up with dogs have fewer infections. The secret isn't love. It's dust.

Researchers from the University of Eastern Finland analyzed two birth cohorts, LU-KAS1 and LUKAS2 – 442 children born between September 2002 and May 2005. Parents kept weekly health diaries from week 9 to 12 months. After exclusions, the team had data on 368 infants and 15,686 diary weeks. 32% of those weeks were spent in homes with a dog.

They confirmed what they saw in 2012: dog babies had significantly more healthy weeks, fewer weeks with fever, fewer weeks with otitis (ear infection), and needed fewer antibiotics.

But for the first time, they asked: does the house dust itself do the protecting?

They vacuumed living room floors when the baby was 2 months old, sieved the dust and sequenced it with Illumina MiSeq. They already knew from a 2020 paper in the same cohort, replicated in the German LISA cohort, that dog homes are microbially diffe-rent: 12 bacterial genera and 2 fungal genera were significantly higher, bacterial rich-ness was higher, Gram-negative bacteria were higher, and human-sourced bacteria were lower.

Now they did mediation analysis – how much of the dog's protective effect disappears when you adjust for those microbes?

Up to one fifth, and in some models up to one quarter.

Meet the heroes: Collinsella and Pasteurella

Of the 14 dog-associated genera, Clostridium and Fusobacterium were the most abun-dant. Eight genera each explained 10-23% of at least one health outcome.

Collinsella was the most consistent good guy – linked to more healthy weeks and less otitis, independent of dog ownership. Pasteurella, a Gram-negative coccobacillus that lives in dogs' mouths and rarely in humans, was the strongest mediator – it alone ex-plained 23% of the reduction in fever and antibiotic use. After adjusting for Pasteurella or Sutterella, the dog-antibiotic link was no longer statistically significant.

Combinations were even stronger: the sum of 7 genera (Clostridium, Collinsella, Eubacterium group, Helicobacter, Megamonas, Pasteurella, Ruminococcus) explained 21% of healthy weeks. Two genera explained 17% of antibiotic use, and four genera explained 15% of fever weeks. Total bacterial load or overall fungal richness did NOT explain the effect – it was about who, not how many.

Sensitivity checks ruled out psychological pathways (maternal depression/stress) and allergens (Fel d1, Der f1, Der p1).

Why does this matter? Early respiratory infections increase asthma risk. Previous studies show dog exposure in early life cuts risk of wheezy bronchitis, asthma, atopic der-matitis, and even childhood leukemia and schizophrenia, possibly via the gut-brain-immune axis. This study provides the missing link: dog microbes train the infant im-mune system when it is most plastic.

It also fits the bigger picture: we know gut genera like Ruminococcus and Collinsella protect against obesity and severe CO-VID-19 in adults.

Bottom line: a sterile home is not a healthy home. A dog-tracked-in, microbe-rich dust mat may be the oldest vaccine we forgot.

Reference: Mäki et al., The role of dog keeping in the home microbiota and its impact on children's health, Pediatric Allergy and Immunology, 2026. https://doi.org/10.1111/pai.70408

SHORT STORY



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.

EVENTS

TODAY

ART CENTER TORNI

Colour Storm Hits Vaasa – Kimmo Laitinen Takes Over Torni!



VArt lovers, take note! Art Center Torni at Pitkäkatu 66, Vaasa, is buzzing as Kimmo Laitinen's stunning paintings take centre stage. The exhibition runs from 15th September to 4th October 2026 and admission is free. Open Tuesday to Friday 12–18 and Sunday 12–16, it's the perfect city break. You can catch it today, Sundayb 20th September, from 12:00 to 16:00. Expect bold colours, big emotions and an atmosphere you won't forget!

METEORIIHI

When space struck Earth – Meteorian open today at 12-16



Dive into the story of a crater formed over 520 million years ago – from the meteorite impact to today's farmland and Natura 2000 area.Explore rare meteorites, old farming machinery, an astronomical observatory, and a bird tower in one of Finland's most important crane resting sites.A solar system model and crater scale model bring the cosmos down to earth. Don't miss this journey through deep time!
Source: http://www.meteoria.fi

SEPTEMBER

KUNTSI

Marja Pirilä's Camera Obscura opens at 19.9.2026



As autumn darkness settles over Vaasa, a special kind of light magic comes alive at Kuntsi Museum of Modern Art. From 19 September 2026 to 9 January 2027, the extensive exhibition Marja Pirilä – Camera Obscura invites visitors into poetic, multi-layered visual worlds.

STREETDANCE 24.9.2026

Baroque music meets street dance – young dancers give new energy to the classics

Baroque music will have a whole new expression when Vaasa Baroque invites you to Breaking Baroque on Thursday 24 September at 19.15 at the Ritz in Vaasa. Together with dancers from Tanssikoulu Kipinä, works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Antonio Vivaldi and Jean-Philippe Rameau, among others, will be interpreted in street dance, hip hop and show dance. Choreographer Jenna Linnolahti has created the movements together with the young dancers Micaella Cornelio, Alissa Haataja, Susanne Hienonen, Kalle Lorenz, Fiona Puska and Benjamin Svahn. Jazz singer Kaisa Sainio performs baroque songs and the Vasa Baroque Ensemble plays under the direction of violinist Anthony Marini. The artistic design is by Kajsa Dahlbäck.
The performance lasts about 45 minutes, is suitable for all ages and is followed by an artist discussion. The secondary schools in Vaasa, Närpiö and Teuva are offered to see it during school hours.
Tickets: netticket.fi/vaasa-baroque-syksy-host-26 Source: vaasabaroque.com

OCTOBER

VAASA 420

VAASA TURNS 420 – THE WHOLE CITY IS INVITED!



Vaasa is celebrating its 420th birthday – and everyone is invited! From October 1–3, the city comes alive with music, museums, family activities, history and surprises. Enjoy Pepe Willberg, free museum visits, children's traffic adventures, workshops and special theatre tickets. There's something for every generation. Come celebrate Vaasa – 420 years young!

CITY ORCHESTRA

Pepe Willberg 80 – a legend in Finnish music – comes to Vaasa on Oct 1, 2026



Motopark, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0

Pepe Willberg turns 80 this year, and the anniversary will also be celebrated in Vaasa. On Thursday 1 October 2026 at 18:00, the anniversary concert "I got everything from life" will be held at Vaasa City Hall.Willberg's career began back in the 1960s, so it will be quite a journey back in time to Finland's popular music history on stage. The Vaasa Philharmonic Orchestra will be conducted by Satu Simola, and Willberg will be joined by Pete Nikkinen, Ako Kiiski, Leevi Leppänen and Lauri Schreck.The program will feature well-known music from the decades, and the evening will also include stories about the stages of a long career. 80 years and more than six decades of music – it already has such a repertoire that there should be no shortage of songs to sing right away.
Location: Vaasa City Hall, Senaatinkatu 1, Vaasa.Time: 1.10.2026 at 18.00.

RITZ

Michael Bleu and Emma Darling warm up the Ritz with soul 2.10.26



Vaasa's own soul voice Michael Bleu (Mikko Kananoja) returns home and brings an evening full of iconic soul classics and American hits to the Ritz stage. The evening will also be supported by Emma Darling.
Bleu's warm retro-soul style and stage charisma promise an immersive experience. Local roots and a strong performance make the evening an easy choice for those who crave soulful music. The atmospheric hall of the Ritz is perfect for a gig like this.
References: ritz.fi

VAASA CITY THEATRE

Näytelmä joka menee pieleen

A show that goes wrong
Directed by Sari Siikander, this physical comedy guarantees surprising situations and precise timing. If you haven't seen when a theater performance goes completely wrong, now is your chance.
Premiere Oct 8, 2026

HELSINKI BOOK FAIR

22.-25.10.2026

Words take centre stage at Helsinki Book Fair



Language will be in the spotlight when Helsinki Book Fair returns this autumn. From 22–25 October 2026, Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre will host authors, books and discussions, with almost 1,000 programme events planned.

The 2026 theme is Kieli / Språk / Language, exploring the power and development of language, the future of Finnish, multilingual literature, translation and world literature. Language minorities will also have a stronger voice.

The Nordic region's largest literary event attracted more than 100,000 visitors in 2025, setting a new attendance record.

Time: 22–25 October 2026. Thu–Sat 10am–8pm, Sun 10am–6pm.
Location: Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre.
Source: Messukeskus / Helsinki Book Fair

RITZ

Krista and Mark celebrate Finland-Swedish life at the Ritz on 29 and 30.10.26

Krista Siegfrids and Mark Levengood bring the show "How Lovely the Song Sounds" to the Ritz stage. The performances are on Thursday 29 October and Friday 30 October 2026 at 7 pm. Tickets 49,90 euros.
The show is Finlandssvensk fest on stage: Lucia crowns, crayfish parties, dialects, songs, laughter and maybe a little tear in the corner of your eye. The duo celebrates their roots, nostalgia and everything that Finland-Swedes living abroad miss. The evening will be a warm-hearted and humorous experience, where mosquitoes are not needed, but schnapps can be part of the thing. Reference information: netticket.fi.

RUSSIA

HISTORICAL DOCUMENT

”Ukraine has returned to Russia” in Russian newspapers on Feb 26, 2022

Here are parts of an article published by Ria Novosti (a Russian news agency surely never publishing anything without Kremls permission”) on February 26, 2022, two days after the start of the Russian military operation in Ukraine.

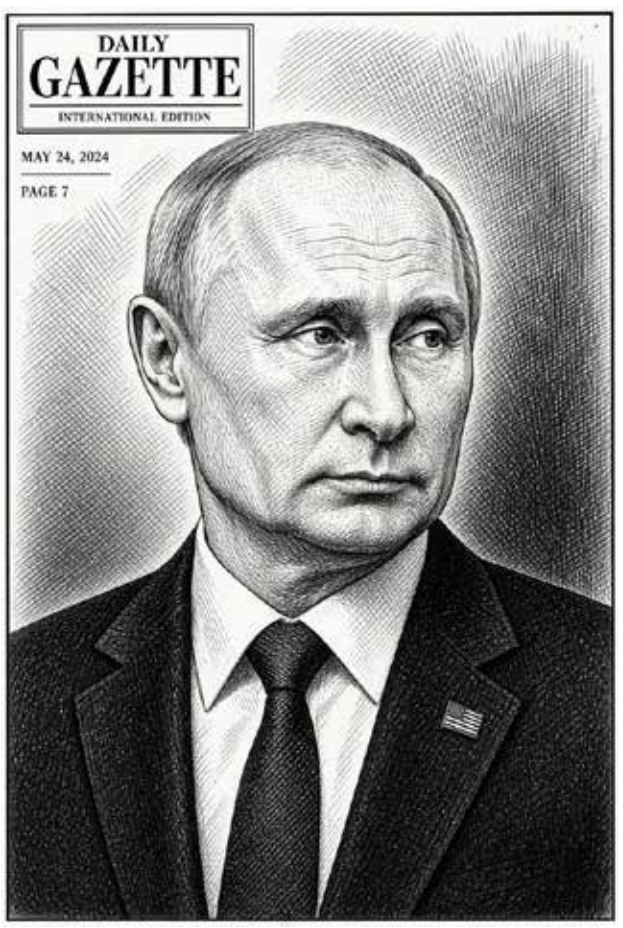
Two days after the start of the war - and Ria Novosti is declaring the victory over Ukraine. ”Now this problem is gone - Ukraine has returned to Russia.”
This article is also proof that the goal of Russia’s war of aggression was to conquer all of Ukraine, incorporate it into Russia, and recreate the former Soviet Union.”Russia is restoring its unity - the tragedy of 1991, this terrible catastrophe of our history, its unnatural dislocation, has been overcome.”

”A new world is being born before our eyes. Russia’s military operation in Ukraine has opened a new era - in three dimensions at once. And of course, in the fourth, domestic Russian one. Here a new period begins both in ideology and in the very model of our socio-economic system - but this is worth discussing separately a little later.

Russia is restoring its unity - the tragedy of 1991, this terrible catastrophe of our his-tory, its unnatural dislocation, has been overcome. Yes, at a great cost, yes, through the tragic events of a de facto civil war, because now brothers, divided by their belonging to the Russian and Ukrainian armies, are still shooting at each other - but Ukraine as anti-Russia will no longer exist. Russia is restoring its historical completeness, gathe-ring the Russian world, the Russian people together - in all its totality of Great Russi-ans, Belarusians and Little Russians. If we had refused this, had allowed the temporary division to become entrenched for centuries, then we would not only have betrayed the memory of our ancestors, but would also have been cursed by our descendants - for al-lowing the disintegration of the Russian land.

Vladimir Putin has taken upon himself - without a drop of exaggeration - historical responsibility, deciding not to leave the solution of the Ukrainian question to future generations. After all, the need to solve it would always remain the main problem for Russia - for two key reasons. And the issue of national security, that is, the creation of an anti-Russia and an outpost for the West to put pressure on us from Ukraine, is only the second most important of them.

The first would always remain the complex of a divided people, the complex of national humiliation - when the Russian house first lost part of its foundation (Kyiv), and then was forced to come to terms with the existence of two states, not one, but two peoples. That is, either to renounce its history, agreeing with the crazy versions that ”only Ukraine is the real Rus’”, or helplessly gnash its teeth, remembering the times when ”we lost Ukraine”. Returning Ukraine, that is, turning it back to Russia, would be more and more difficult with each decade - the recoding, de-Russification of Russians and setting Little Russians-Ukrainians against Russians would gain momentum. And in the case of the consolidation of complete geopolitical and military control of the West over Ukraine, its return to Russia would become completely impossible - it would be ne-cessary to fight for it with the Atlantic bloc.



Now this problem is gone - Ukraine has returned to Russia. This does not mean that its statehood will be liquidated, but it will be restructured, re-established and returned to its natural state of being part of the Russian world. Within what borders, in what form will the union with Russia be secured (through the CSTO and the Eurasian Union or the Union State of Russia and Belarus)? This will be decided after the period in the history of Ukraine as anti-Russia is put to rest. In any case, the period of the split of the Russian people is ending.

And here begins the second dimension of the coming new era - it concerns relations between Russia and the West. Not even Russia, but the Russian world, that is, three states, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, acting in geopolitical terms as a single whole. These relations have entered a new stage - the West sees Russia returning to its historical borders in Europe . And it loudly resents this, although deep down it must admit to itself that it could not have been otherwise.

Did anyone in the old European capitals, in Paris and Berlin , seriously believe that Moscow would abandon Kiev ? That the Russians would forever be a divided people? And at the same time, when Europe is uniting, when the German and French elites are trying to wrest control over European integration from the Anglo-Saxons and assemble a united Europe? Forgetting that the unification of Europe became possible only thanks to the unification of Germany , which happened by Russian good will (even if not very smart). To then set their sights on Russian lands is the height of not even ingratitude, but geopolitical stupidity. The West as a whole, and even more so Europe separately, did not have the strength to keep Ukraine in its sphere of influence, much less take it for itself. Not to understand this, one would have to be a geopolitical fool.

More precisely, there was only one option: to bet on the further collapse of Russia, that is, the Russian Federation. But the fact that it did not work should have become clear twenty years ago. And already fifteen years ago, after Putin’s Munich speech, even the deaf could hear - Russia is returning.”

UKRAINE PRESIDENT

The Countries of the Carpathian Region Have Significant Potential for Cooperation in Defense, Energy, and Transport – The President at Carpathian Economic Forum



19 September 2026 - 00:35

The countries of the Carpathian region have significant potential for cooperation in defense, energy, and transport, which can deliver real economic growth, investment, and jobs. President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy said this during the first Carpathian Economic Forum, which he attended together with President of Romania Nicușor Dan.

The forum brought together nearly 1,400 participants from 25 countries around the world, including all the countries participating in the Carpathian Initiative. Among them were more than 800 representatives of central governments, regional administrations, and local authorities. Nearly 400 companies from all countries of the Carpathian Eight (C8) represented the business community. The forum's investment portfolio includes 95 projects worth more than €42.5 billion in energy, industry and manufacturing, innovative technologies, transport and logistics, infrastructure and real estate, the agri-food sector, healthcare, and construction materials. Of these, 55 projects worth €8 billion are from Ukraine's Carpathian region.

According to Volodymyr Zelenskyy, this is the first summit of this scale for the region.

"This region has changed a lot during the years of war. What was once seen mainly as a border region has really become an important base for logistics, energy and industry," the President emphasized..

Read more: https://www.president.gov.ua/en

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ART EXPERIENCE OF THE WEEK



Lucas Cranach vanhempi / den äldre / the Elder
1472, Kronach 16.10.1553, Weimar
Portrait of a Young Woman, 1525
Finnish National Gallery Collection / Sinebrychoff Art Museum, O. W. Klinckowström Fine Arts Collection
Photo: Finnish National Gallery / Hannu Aaltonen

George Orwell
1984
Part 46



Until now he had been too much ashamed of his pale and meagre body, with
the varicose veins standing out on his calves and the discoloured patch
over his ankle. There were no sheets, but the blanket they lay on was
threadbare and smooth, and the size and springiness of the bed astonished
both of them. 'It's sure to be full of bugs, but who cares?' said Julia.
One never saw a double bed nowadays, except in the homes of the proles.
Winston had occasionally slept in one in his boyhood: Julia had never been
in one before, so far as she could remember.

He turned round, and for a second almost failed to recognize her. What he had actually expected was to see her naked. But she was not naked. The transformation that had happened was much more surprising than that. She had painted her face.

She must have slipped into some shop in the proletarian quarters and bought herself a complete set of make-up materials. Her lips were deeply reddened, her cheeks rouged, her nose powdered; there was even a touch of something under the eyes to make them brighter. It was not very skilfully done, but Winston's standards in such matters were not high. He had never before seen or imagined a woman of the Party with cosmetics on her face. The improvement in her appearance was startling. With just a few dabs of colour in the right places she had become not only very much prettier, but, above all, far more feminine. Her short hair and boyish overalls merely added to the effect. As he took her in his arms a wave of synthetic violets flooded his nostrils. He remembered the half-darkness of a basement kitchen, and a woman's cavernous mouth. It was the very same scent that she had used; but at the moment it did not seem to matter.

'Scent too!' he said.

'Yes, dear, scent too. And do you know what I'm going to do next? I'm going to get hold of a real woman's frock from somewhere and wear it instead of these bloody trousers. I'll wear silk stockings and high-heeled shoes! In this room I'm going to be a woman, not a Party comrade.'

They flung their clothes off and climbed into the huge mahogany bed. It was the first time that he had stripped himself naked in her presence.

Presently they fell asleep for a little while. When Winston woke up the hands of the clock had crept round to nearly nine. He did not stir, because Julia was sleeping with her head in the crook of his arm. Most of her make-up had transferred itself to his own face or the bolster, but a light stain of rouge still brought out the beauty of her cheekbone. A yellow ray from the sinking sun fell across the foot of the bed and lighted up the fireplace, where the water in the pan was boiling fast. Down in the yard the woman had stopped singing, but the faint shouts of children floated in from the street. He wondered vaguely whether in the abolished past it had been a normal experience to lie in bed like this, in the cool of a summer evening, a man and a woman with no clothes on, making love when they chose, talking of what they chose, not feeling any compulsion to get up, simply lying there and listening to peaceful sounds outside. Surely there could never have been a time when that seemed ordinary? Julia woke up, rubbed her eyes, and raised herself on her elbow to look at the oilstove.

'Half that water's boiled away,' she said. 'I'll get up and make some coffee in another moment. We've got an hour. What time do they cut the lights off at your flats?'

'Twenty-three thirty.'

'It's twenty-three at the hostel. But you have to get in earlier than that, because--Hi! Get out, you filthy brute!'

She suddenly twisted herself over in the bed, seized a shoe from the floor, and sent it hurtling into the corner with a boyish jerk of her arm, exactly as he had seen her fling the dictionary at Goldstein, that morning during the Two Minutes Hate.

'What was it?' he said in surprise.

'A rat. I saw him stick his beastly nose out of the wainscoting. There's a hole down there. I gave him a good fright, anyway.'

'Rats!' murmured Winston. 'In this room!'

'They're all over the place,' said Julia indifferently as she lay down again. 'We've even got them in the kitchen at the hostel. Some parts of London are swarming with them. Did you know they attack children? Yes, they do. In some of these streets a woman daren't leave a baby alone for two minutes. It's the great huge brown ones that do it. And the nasty thing is that the brutes always----'

'DON'T GO ON!' said Winston, with his eyes tightly shut.

'Dearest! You've gone quite pale. What's the matter? Do they make you feel sick?'

'Of all horrors in the world--a rat!'

She pressed herself against him and wound her limbs round him, as though to reassure him with the warmth of her body. He did not reopen his eyes immediately. For several moments he had had the feeling of being back in a nightmare which had recurred from time to time throughout his life. It was always very much the same. He was standing in front of a wall of darkness, and on the other side of it there was something unendurable, something too dreadful to be faced. In the dream his deepest feeling was always one of self-deception, because he did in fact know what was behind the wall of darkness. With a deadly effort, like wrenching a piece out of his own brain, he could even have dragged the thing into the open. He always woke up without discovering what it was: but somehow it was connected with what Julia had been saying when he cut her short.

HUMOUR ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO



I AM A DOG
Patient: ”Doctor, you must help me! I think I’m a dog.”
Doctor: ”How long have you felt this way?”
Patient: ”Ever since I was a puppy.”



CURIOSITY.
Father: What are you doing, Fredrik?
Fredrik: I’m standing here in front of the mirror, Dad. I really wanted to know what I would look like if I were a twin.

A MISTAKE.
Neighbor: You really ought to keep your curtains drawn in the evenings, Mr. Täplä. Last night, I saw you kissing your wife.
Täplä: Hahaha! A mistake! I wasn’t home last night.

HENPECKED HUSBAND ON THE PHONE.
— Emma, the doctor is asking how I’m doing. W^hat should I say?

FEW WORDS.
Mistress (to the new maid): I am not a woman of many words. When I point my finger, it means ”come here.” Maid: And when I shake my head, it means ”I don’t have time.”

DISSATISFIED PAINTER.
— People are strange. If you tell them there are 233,489,563,202,431 stars in the sky, they believe it immediately. But if I paint a bench and put up a sign saying ”Wet Paint,” they won’t believe it until they touch it with their fingertips and leave ugly marks.

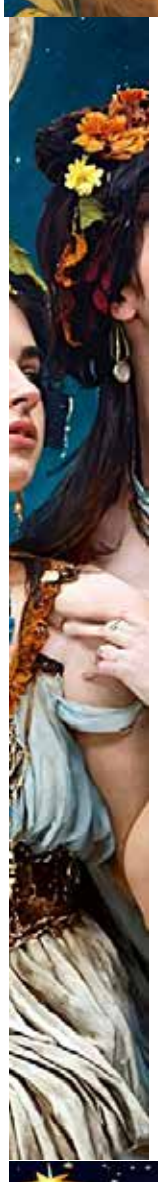
Astronomic picture of the week:



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.
Credit: Dark Energy Survey/DOE/FNAL/DECam/CTIO/NOIRLab/NSF/AURAImage processing: R. Colombari and M. Zamani (NSF’s NOIRLab)
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HOROSCOPE FOR SEPTEMBER 2026



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.

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!

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!
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FROM OUR READERS

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

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