

WASA DAILY



LOCAL NEWS

BRAGE

Coffee Party at Brage Open-Air Museum Today – Seven Kinds of Cookies and Free Coffee!

Today on July 19 at 12 - 17 is the most anticipated coffee moment of the year in Ostrobothnia! Brage Open-Air Museum in Sandviken fills with the aroma of freshly brewed coffee and homemade pastries as the association hosts a traditional coffee party to celebrate "Fruktimmersveckan" – the Women's Week.

The museum, founded back in 1933 and beautifully located just a couple of kilometers from Vaasa city center, opens its gates from 12 PM to 5 PM. The 23 culturally and historically significant buildings on the site – from the main farmhouse to the maidens' loft with its colorful textiles – form an authentic Ostrobothnian peasant environment that takes visitors on a journey back to 19th-century rural life.

And the highlight? Seven kinds of cookies, of course! The coffee party is a cherished Swedish tradition where togetherness, coffee, and baked goods take center stage. This year, the celebration honors those who have their name days during the Women's Week – and anyone celebrating a name day on July 19 gets their coffee for free!

– We want to highlight this wonderful week when almost every day bears a women's name. It's the perfect opportunity to gather, enjoy good company, and celebrate all the Saras, Margaretas, Johannes, Magdalenas, Emmas, and Kristinas out there. Tarja Ket-tunen will demonstrate how to cure... well, what? Visitors will have to come and find out!

The red-ochre buildings glow in the summer sun, and guided tours are available in Swedish, Finnish, and English.

Missed today's coffee party? Don't worry – Brage Open-Air Museum is open throughout the summer until August 9, with guided tours and café service. But today's seven-cookie coffee party is something truly special. A tradition dating back to the 1870s – and an experience that tastes like history!

Source: Brage Open-Air Museum

BERGÖ

Sing-Along at Bergö Church



Axel Ahman to Littfest,
Page 4

TO: Mattias Blomgren
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Horse Head Nebula
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EDITORIAL

Building the green revolution in Ostrobothnia

It is easy to talk about the green transition. It is much more difficult to actually implement it. In Ostrobothnia, it is already happening – every day.

In recent years, the region around Vaasa has developed into one of the Nordic region's most interesting centres for energy technology. Investments are being made in battery technology, energy storage, electrification and renewable energy, while companies, universities and public actors are collaborating in a way that arouses international interest.

This is not a temporary trend. It is the result of decades of technical know-how, entrepreneurship and purposeful efforts. Companies with world-leading expertise in energy have created an ecosystem where innovation and exports go hand in hand. At the same time, the region will attract new investments that will strengthen both employment and Finland's competitiveness.

But success must not be taken for granted.

Investments in industry are estimated in billions of euros and are planned for decades ahead. For companies to

dare to invest, long-term and predictable rules of the game are required. Permitting processes must be efficient without compromising environmental requirements. Electricity grids need to be expanded in line with demand, and the education system must ensure that there are enough engineers, technicians and skilled employees. Equally important is that the political course is stable. Constantly changing rules risk causing investments to seek out other countries.

The green transition is not just about the climate. It is about jobs, exports, innovations and faith in the future. Finland has an opportunity to become one of Europe's leading industrial nations in clean energy, but this opportunity must be managed with wise decisions.

Ostrobothnia is already showing that the transition can combine economic growth with reduced emissions. This is a development that the whole country has reason to support. When the world is looking for sustainable energy solutions, much of the answer is already here – on the west coast of Finland.

The industry of the future is not being built despite the green transition, but thanks to it.

ch – Summer Evening with Saxophone



On Wednesday evening, 22 July, Bergö Church transforms into a Nordic song festival. From 18.00 to 19.30, Catrin Sjögren, Tom Håkans, Yngve Lithén and Fred Berg invite everyone to a sing-along evening featuring the best ballads and sing-along songs from the Nordic countries. For those who need a break from singing, there will also be saxophone solos to enjoy.

Organiser TMD Music promises a beautiful high-summer evening in the stunning church setting. Admission is 20 euros, but children under ten get in for free. Tickets are sold at the door – cash or card accepted. Bring your neighbour, your mother-in-law or that friend who always sings out of tune – everyone is welcome!

Bergö Church, Wednesday 22 July 2026, 18.00–19.30. Admission €20, children under 10 free. Source: events.osterbotten.fi

VAASA

Rents rose in Vaasa – while Helsinki residents save

Vaasa tenants saw their rents skyrocket by 1.3 percent in the second quarter of the year – the second most in the whole country. At the same time, rents in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area continue to fall, according to recent statistics from Statistics Finland.

Rovaniemi tops the list with a rent increase of as much as 2.0 percent, closely followed by Vaasa (1.3%) and Joensuu (1.1%). At the other end of the scale, we find Porvoo (-1.9%), Kerava (-1.6%) and Vantaa (-1.2%). Helsinki residents can breathe a sigh of relief – here rents fell by 0.2 per cent. Oulu also recorded the same negative figure.



"In the rental market, right now it's about supply and demand, not about the size of the city or promises for the future," says Eemeli Karlsson, economist at the Finnish Landlords' Association. While tenants in the Helsinki metropolitan area can pick and choose from dozens of options, there

is fierce competition for good housing in several other cities – especially now during the hottest moving season of the summer. Karlsson also reminds students to take the opportunity: the best apartments in the study areas are already rented.

"The same cities are peaking quarter after quarter. It's not about chance," says Karlsson.

Facts: Statistics Finland's rental statistics for the second quarter of 2026. Vaasa recorded the second highest rent increase in the country at +1.3 per cent, while Helsinki's rents fell by 0.2 per cent. Source: Suomen Vuokranantajat ry

HUNTING

More moose may be shot this autumn – hunting licences increase in Coastal Ostrobothnia



This autumn's moose hunt looks set to be more intense than last year. The Finnish Wildlife Agency has granted 2,398 moose hunting licences, an increase of about 12 per cent compared to the previous hunting season. The number of licenses for white-tailed deer is also increased – to 310 licenses, which corresponds to an increase of about 20 percent

The decision is based on the latest estimates of cervid populations and the goals set by the Regional Wildlife Council. The ambition is to keep the populations viable while limiting damage to forests, agriculture and traffic.

During the last hunting season, 2,235 moose and 157 white-tailed deer were killed in Coastal Ostrobothnia. A hunting licence usually entitles you to kill one adult animal or two calves. The hunting season will begin with guard hunting on 1 September 2026, when thousands of hunters are expected to venture into the forests from Kokkola in the north to Kristinestad in the south.

For motorists, it also means a reminder to pay extra attention to the roads during the autumn dawns and dusks – as we know, moose do not read traffic rules.

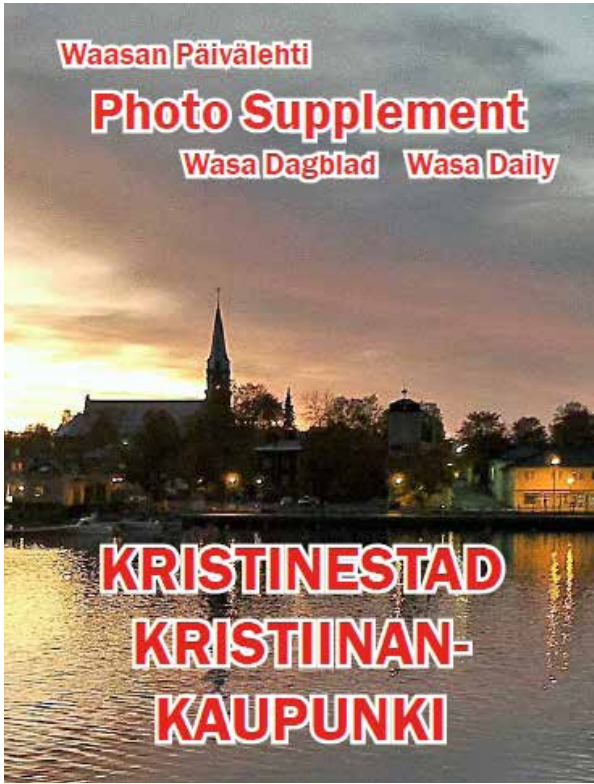
Reference: Finnish Wildlife Agency, Coastal Ostrobothnia

KORSNÄS

The World Heritage Site celebrates 20 years – all week long in Korsnäs

This summer, we celebrate the Kvarken archipelago – and with good reason. When the UNESCO World Heritage Site turns 20

Photo Supplement



WELLBEING AREAS

WELLBEING SERVICES COUNTY OF OSTROBOTHNIA

Patient records found in garbage container – outside the hospital

"Oh, what if someone sees!" That was probably not what a passer-by was thinking when he discovered piles of paper in a waste container outside Malmska Hospital in Jakobstad on Thursday evening. The problem? The papers contained real patient information.

The wellbeing services county quickly collected the documents and is now investigating how they ended up there. After all, there are clear instructions for how confidential information should be destroyed. Administrative Director Linda Jakobsson-Pada promises that the data protection officers will contact the affected persons next week if necessary.

"We have an eye on the situation, but we will find out how this could happen," she says.

Tip for healthcare: maybe it's time to invest in a proper shredder?

Source: Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia, 10.7.2026

SCAM MESSAGES

Scam text message: "You have an appointment – and a fee to pay"

Just when you thought that the queues for healthcare were the worst – now the scams are coming too.

The Western Uusimaa Wellbeing Services County warns against fraudulent messages sent in their name via text messages, e-mails and possibly also via Suomi.fi. The messages claim everything from booked appointments to fictitious child welfare reports. In some cases, the recipient is asked to pay a fee for a service. The real goal? Online banking codes and personal data. The scams have reached both residents of Western Uusimaa and elsewhere in Finland.

Remember: authorities never ask for your online banking credentials via text, WhatsApp or email. Have you accidentally clicked? Call the bank immediately and file a police report.

And delete the message. It is the only "toll-free" option.

Source: Western Uusimaa Wellbeing Services County, July 2026

LANGUAGE IN HEALTHCARE

Ostrobothnia has the country's most bilingual healthcare staff – and is proud of it

Is there hope for the Finnish-speaking patient who meets Swedish-speaking staff in Ostrobothnia? Absolutely, according to the Chairman of the Communist Party's group Kim Yli-Pelkola. In the council, he stated that the area has "the most bilingual staff in the whole country".

And the complaints? Few," he says. Those who come are distributed fairly evenly between the languages. Johanna Holmäng (RKP), a midwife with experience from several hospitals, testifies to a work culture where the staff change language as soon as the patient is in the room – even in

the break room.

"It makes new employees feel welcome regardless of their mother tongue," she says.

And the future? Digitalisation helps – AI is used as an interpreter in pilot projects, and staff can practise technical language on the hoitokieli.fi platform.

Bilingualism as wealth, not contradiction. What refreshing news!

THE WELLBEING SERVICES

Fewer sexually transmitted diseases in Ostrobothnia – at the same time more people dare to talk about sex



There is good news from the Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia. The number of cases of multiple sexually transmitted infections has decreased, while residents are increasingly seeking advice and help on sexual health.

According to the wellbeing services county, a good sex life is not only about preventing diseases, but also about well-being, relationships and quality of life. That is why health care is investing in easily accessible advice, testing and information for people of all ages.

Experts emphasize that regular testing is still important in the case of unprotected sex or changing partners. The condom is still one of the most effective protection against sexually transmitted diseases.

The message is simple: a better sex life starts with knowledge, openness and consideration – and sometimes with a visit to the health centre.

Source: Wellbeing Services

NEWS

years old, Korsnäs will be in full swing in week 32, 3–9 August. The program offers everything from art to sea winds. On Monday evening, Jon Gredmark's library mural (Silverbergsvägen 9, at 17.00) will be unveiled. On Thursday, Harri Ahonen will give a lecture on Finland's coastal routes – 220 destinations from the Sea of Bothnia to Satakunta. On Saturday, there will be a party at Molpe pavilion with children's entertainment, music, speeches and the World Heritage Site's very own anniversary cake. On Sunday, it all ends with a guided hike along Waterloo-Lisasgrynnan with a nature guide – new works of art along the trail and a maximum of 30 places. Registration for the hike via the Malax-Korsnäs Adult Education Centre. Fee 15 euros. The rest? Just show up – and enjoy.

Source: Korsnäs municipality, July 2026

PHOTO CONTEST

Capture the World Heritage Site – win €500!



Do you have a mobile full of pictures from the archipelago? Now they can be worth money. The Kvarken World Heritage Site celebrates 20 years with a photo competition where everyone can participate. Take your best shot – whether it's sunset over the archipelago, a seal looking up or just that perfect archipelago atmosphere – and send it in. The winner takes home 500 euros. The exact rules and deadline for submission can be found on the website of the City of Vaasa. But one thing is certain: here you have to recharge – both the camera and the imagination. Send the photos by 31.8.2026. More information here: <https://www.vaasa.fi/sv/se-och-upplev/kvarkens-skargard/kvarken-20/fototavling-20/> And for those who don't win? At least you get an excuse to spend a day out in the World Heritage Site. That's a win too.

Source: City of Vaasa / Kvarken 20, July 2026

HEALTH

DIABETES

New diabetes studies at Tays – aiming to slow onset and progression of the disease

WASA DAILY

Nearly everything You need to know on 12 pages

vpress.fi

LITTFEST

Star-Studded Lineup Announced for LittFest 2026 in Vaasa



Axel Åhman Foto: Mattias Blomgren
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The bilingual literature festival LittFest returns to Vaasa on 12–14 November 2026 – and the first guest authors have now been revealed. This year's lineup is nothing short of spectacular: Monika Fagerholm, Kjell Westö, Kirsti Manninen (writing as Enni Mustonen), Axel Åhman, Emmi Itäranta, Jessikka Aro and Tuomas Enbuske.

Monika Fagerholm, who recently won the Finlandia Prize for her novel *Dead Region/Women in Revolt*, is one of the festival's international stars. Kjell Westö, one of Finland's most acclaimed contemporary authors, is known for his historical novels set in Helsinki – his new generational novel *Coda* will be published this autumn. Kirsti Manninen, writing under the name Enni Mustonen, is one of Finland's most widely read authors, with over one million copies of her novels sold. Her new series *Kytösavun tarinoita* is set in the Ostrobothnian landscape of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Axel Åhman, from Vörå and known from the group KAJ, now lives in Vaasa and has published a short

story collection, a children's book and the novel *Eldsjäl* – which has also been released in Finnish this year. Emmi Itäranta, an award-winning fantasy and science fiction author, is internationally known for *The Memory of Water* (*Teemestarin kirja*). Her latest fantasy novel *Lumenlaulaja*, which retells the Kalevala story from Louhi's perspective, was nominated for the Runeberg Prize in 2026. Jessikka Aro, an investigative journalist and non-fiction author, has written about Russia's information warfare in books such as *Putin's Trolls* and *Putin's World War*. Tuomas Enbuske, a journalist, author and media personality, is known for his socially engaged non-fiction books and columns.

This year's theme is *Reflection* – an invitation to pause and think. Even before the festival, on 24 September, 15 October and 5 November, book circles will be held at the main library's Venny space, featuring works by Kirsti Manninen, Kjell Westö and Ville Mäkipelto. Registration opens in August.

The literary autumn celebration in Vaasa!

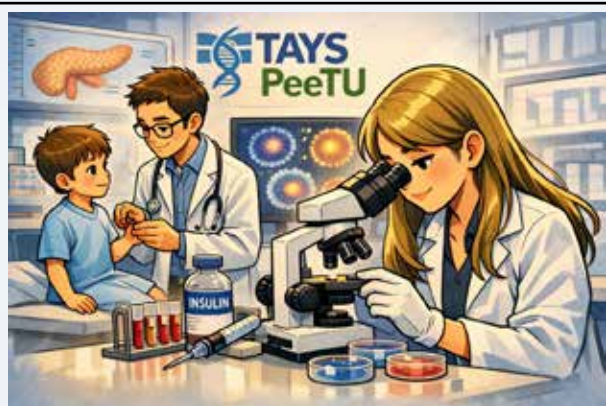
Source: City of Vaasa press release



Monika Fagerholm. FOTO: Bengt Oberger
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Kjell Westö. Foto: Mattias Blomgren
Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0



Two new clinical trials are about to begin at the PeeTU paediatric research centre at Tays (Tampere University Hospital), offering new hope for the future treatment of type 1 diabetes. The studies aim to delay the onset of the disease and preserve the body's own insulin production in those who have recently been diagnosed.

One study is targeting individuals in the prediabetes stage (stage 2) – people aged 1–36 who have an impaired glucose metabolism but do not yet have symptomatic diabetes. Researchers want to find out whether drug treatment can delay or even prevent the disease from developing. The other study is aimed at those who have recently been diagnosed with type 1 diabetes (stage 3), with the diagnosis made within the last hundred days. Here, the goal is to see whether the medication can protect the pancreas's beta cells and maintain the body's own insulin secretion. Both studies are testing the same drug, baricitinib, which is taken as a daily tablet – no injections required. The drug is already used to treat rheumatoid arthritis, alopecia areata and severe atopic dermatitis. It works by dampening inflammatory responses, and researchers believe it could also help control the inflammation that destroys insulin-producing cells in the pancreas in type 1 diabetes.

"This is a relief, especially for paediatric patients," says Chief Physician Sauli Palmu from PeeTU.

Although insulin remains the only treatment available, the researchers are optimistic about future breakthroughs. "If ever, now is the time when we are close to being able to influence the course of the disease with medication," says research physician Salla Kuusela. Source: Pirkanmaa Wellbeing Services County press release

SAUNA

Steam increases strain – humid sauna raises heart rate

A new study from the University of Jyväskylä shows that humidity in the sauna has a significant impact on how the body responds to sauna bathing. The more humid the sauna, the more pronounced the rise in heart rate and body temperature.

The study was conducted by the University of Jyväskylä and the KIHU Research Institute for Olympic Sports in collaboration with sauna manufacturer Harvia, with data collection funded by Toyota Motor Corporation. Fifty healthy adults participated in four sauna sessions each, during which heart rate and body temperature were measured.

After ten minutes of sauna bathing, the average heart rate rose from 79 to 121 beats per minute – an increase of over 40 beats. Both temperature and humidity contributed to the heart rate elevation. "Although temperature remains the most significant factor, steam (löyly) also has a clear effect on heart rate and body temperature,"

AI

Claude Science: Anthropic's New AI Tool That Could Transform Scientific Research



Launched on June 30, 2026, Claude Science is Anthropic's most ambitious product since Claude Code – and it could change how drugs are discovered and science gets done.

Anthropic unveiled Claude Science at a San Francisco event packed with pharmaceutical executives, biotech founders, and university researchers. The announcement is significant: Anthropic is placing AI-driven science on the same strategic level as coding and workplace productivity.

What Exactly Is Claude Science? Claude Science is not a new AI model. It runs the same Claude models already available to everyone today, including Claude Opus 4.8, with no special access and no gating. What makes it powerful is what surrounds the model: Claude Science

is pre-configured for genomics, single-cell analysis, proteomics, and cheminformatics, backed by more than 60 scientific databases. When you ask Claude Science a question in plain language, specialist agents query and synthesize across all of these sources so you don't have to navigate them individually.

Think of it as giving a scientist a single cockpit instead of thirty separate instruments.

How Is It Different from Simply Using Opus? The difference is workflow, not raw intelligence. A coordinating agent hands tasks to specialist sub-agents, while a separate reviewer agent checks every citation and calculation and fixes errors as it goes. Results are fully reproducible – every figure comes with the exact code, environment details, and creation history that produced it.

That matters enormously in science, where reproducibility is everything.

Before Claude Science, it could take a research team as many as two years to write a comprehensive review. Scientists using the platform have now produced around ten reviews, many more than 100 pages, with citations checked by reviewer agents.

Drug Development: A Potential Game-Changer One researcher estimates Claude Science could reduce drug development from the current 10 to 15 years on average to two to five years – though he stresses it is "not a shortcut to discovery, it's a co-pilot that requires a skilled pilot." Anthropic itself plans to use Claude Science in its own drug development programs, focused on neglected diseases that traditional pharma ignores. Major organisa-

tions including Novo Nordisk and the Allen Institute are already testing it.

Who Can Use It – and What Does It Cost?

Claude Science is available in beta on macOS and Linux for Pro, Max, Team, and Enterprise plans. If you already pay for Claude Pro (around \$20 per month), you have access. Anthropic is offering discounted Team seats for active labs at universities and nonprofit research groups, and will back up to 50 research projects with as much as \$30,000 in compute credits each. Applications stay open through July 15, 2026.

For students and the general public, the message is simple: if you have a paid Claude subscription, Claude Science is already there waiting – no upgrade needed, no extra fee. Sources: Anthropic, MIT Technology Review, TechCrunch, STAT News,

says Iida Laatikainen-Raussi from the Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences at the University of Jyväskylä. Core body temperature rose modestly from 37.4 to 37.8 degrees Celsius – an increase of 0.4 degrees. High humidity prevents sweat from evaporating efficiently from the skin, weakening the body's primary cooling mechanism. This increases the heat load and forces the cardiovascular system to work harder to maintain body temperature. According to the researchers, the importance of steam may have been underestimated in previous studies, as humidity variations have generally not been taken into account with sufficient precision. "In future sauna research and in practical sauna bathing, more attention should be paid to humidity and to a more detailed examination of sauna conditions," Laatikainen-Raussi comments. The findings confirm that the effects of the traditional Finnish sauna are not solely due to heat – the moisture from the steam is an equally essential part of the experience. Source: University of Jyväskylä press release

INFECTIONS

The salmonella epidemic

In the spring of 2026, a total of 64 people were affected by a salmonella epidemic that is now traced to an unexpected food – sprouts that were eaten raw. The Finnish Food Authority and the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) have investigated the outbreak of the bacterium *Salmonella Bovismorbificans*. After careful analyses, including whole genome sequencing, everything points to the fact that the uncooked sprouts were the likely culprit. The suspected sprouts are long gone from the market, according to the authorities. The same strain of salmonella has also caused cases of disease in several other European countries during the first half of the year. Salmonella usually spreads through food contaminated by the feces of infected people or animals. The good news: heating kills the bacteria. So the next time you throw in a fresh sprouted mix – maybe you should consider stir-frying them instead? The most common symptoms were diarrhoea and fever. The number of salmonella cases in Finland has decreased sharply over the past decade – in 2025, 712 cases were reported, of which only four were caused by this particular strain of bacteria. Facts: The outbreak occurred in the spring of 2026. The Finnish Food Authority and THL published the results of the investigation on 13 July 2026. Source: Finnish Food Authority / THL

ÅLAND

ÅLAND

Music, freedom and Pippi – The Katrina Festival offers a total experience in Åland 5–8 August 2026.

During four intense August days, Åland will once again be transformed into a musical centre when the Katrina Chamber Music Festival opens its doors.

STATISTICS

More and more families speak foreign languages – Ukrainian families approaching 7,000



An increasing number of families in Finland have a mother tongue other than Finnish or Swedish. According to Statistics Finland, in 2025, eight per cent of all families were those where the only parent or both spouses were foreign-language speakers. The proportion has remained the same as the previous year, but over the long term the growth has been brisk: in 1995, only one per cent of all families were foreign-lang-

uage speaking

The share of Swedish-speaking families has remained at 4 per cent, while Sami-speaking families account for less than one per cent. The proportion of Finnish-speaking families has decreased by 10 percentage points over 30 years – last year, 81 per cent of families had a Finnish-speaking sole parent or both spouses. In five per cent of families, one spouse speaks a domestic language and the other a foreign language.

Among families with children, the share of foreign-language speakers is significantly higher: 14 per cent of all families with children in 2025, compared with 1 per cent in 1995 and 7 per cent in 2015.

The fastest growth is seen in Ukrainian families. In 2025, there were 6,764 families in Finland where both spouses or the only parent were Ukrainian citizens – an increase of 1,577 families from the previous year. The number of Ukrainian families with children

has skyrocketed: from just 890 in 2022 to 3,644 in 2025. The actual figure is likely higher, as there are data deficiencies in the population information system for those under temporary protection.

The most common languages in foreign-language families are Russian, Estonian, Arabic, Ukrainian and Farsi. Among families with children, the most common languages are Russian, Arabic, Estonian, Somali and Ukrainian.

Source: Statistics Finland press release

STATISTICS

Number of under-18s falls below one million for the first time

For the first time in Finland's history as an independent nation, the number of people under 18 years of age has fallen below one million. At the end of April, there were 999,232 minors in Finland, according to preliminary data from Statistics Finland. The country's total population at the same time was 5,650,152. During the first four months of the year, the population decreased by 2,729 persons

Of the minors, 51 per cent were boys and 49 per cent girls. In terms of language, 86 per cent (857,156) spoke a domestic language – Finnish, Swedish or Sami – while 14 per cent (142,076) had a foreign mother tongue.

The number of under-18s was at its highest in the early 1960s, when nearly 1.6 million minors lived in Finland – about one in three people. As late as the early 1980s, a quarter of the population were aged 0–17, but by the end of April that share had fallen

to just under 18 per cent.

The decline is mainly due to falling birth rates. Immigration has increased the number of minors to some extent, but it is not enough to compensate for the decrease caused by lower fertility.

During January–April, 15,423 children were born, which is 844 more than in the same period the previous year. Deaths numbered 20,794, an increase of 356 compared with the same period in 2025. Im-

migration to Finland totalled 13,018 persons, while emigration from Finland was 10,402 persons. Immigration decreased by 1,454 persons, while emigration increased by 5,968 persons compared with the previous year. Emigration to Estonia in particular increased markedly, which is explained by an agreement between Finland and Estonia on the exchange of population register data.

Source: Statistics Finland press release



This year's theme, "TOTAL FESTIVAL!", draws inspiration from the philosopher Hannah Arendt's thoughts on freedom, power and totalitarianism – but the audience can also look forward to everything from classical masterpieces to jazz, children's performances and conversations about the importance of art.

The festival is led by the internationally acclaimed violinist Cecilia Ziliacus, who has brought together some of the Nordic region's foremost musicians. The concerts are held at several locations in Mariehamn, including Alandica Cultural Centre, S Göran's Church, Åland Art Museum and Bagarstugan Café & Vin. The program offers music by Haydn, Shostakovich, Weinberg and Arvo Pärt, among others, but also improvisations, jazz and newly written music. For the youngest visitors, a children's concert awaits where Pippi Longstocking makes an unexpected guest appearance – a playful element that symbolizes freedom and imagination in contrast to the festival's more serious theme. Several events have free admission, including the popular morning concerts "Breakfast Quarter", while the festival ends with a brunch concert on Saturday 8 August.

Over the course of more than two decades, the Katrina Festival has developed into one of Åland's most appreciated cultural events and attracts visitors from all over the Nordic region every year. For those who want to combine a late summer holiday with world-class music, Mariehamn in early August can be a destination that is hard to beat – and perhaps the only place where both Haydn and Pippi Longstocking share the same stage. References: Katrina Chamber Music Festival 2026, Kulturföreningen Katrina and Visit Åland.

AI

GPT Live
The Voice of the Future:
OpenAI Unveils GPT-Live

Communication is undergoing a radical transformation. OpenAI has officially launched "GPT-Live," a conversational AI capable of true full-duplex interaction. Unlike previous chatbots that required a "ping-pong" style of back-and-forth, this system listens, reasons, and speaks simultaneously. With integrated live translation and intelligent task delegation, the tool is designed to act more like a human collaborator than a software program. Early testers suggest this is the final hurdle in making AI assistants feel truly present, potentially ending the era of awkward pauses in digital conversations.

MUSIC

KORSHOLM MUSIC FESTIVAL

Korsholm Music Festival – A Classical Music Celebration in the Heart of Ostrobothnia, 22–29 July 2026



Few places combine world-class music, Nordic summer light and breathtaking coastal scenery quite like the Korsholm Music Festival. From 22 to 29 July 2026, the festival once again transforms Vaasa and Korsholm into one of Finland’s leading destinations for classical music.

This year’s theme, “Across the Atlantic,” takes audiences on a musical journey linking Europe with North and South America. From Baroque masterpieces and chamber music to contemporary works, jazz, soul and family performances, the programme offers something for experienced concertgoers and curious newcomers alike.

More than one hundred musicians from Finland and abroad will perform in nearly thirty concerts held in churches, museums, concert halls and unique historical venues across the region. One of the highlights is the official opening concert, “From the New World,” on 23 July at 7 p.m. in Korsholm Church, featuring the Vaasa City Orchestra, conductor Johannes Gustavsson and artistic director Jan-Erik Gustafsson. The programme includes Antonín Dvořák’s famous Ninth Symphony alongside a world premiere by Vladimir Agopov.

Visitors can also enjoy free lunchtime concerts, family performances, masterclasses and innovative collaborations that bring classical music to new audiences. Since its founding in 1983, the festival has earned an international reputation for artistic excellence while maintaining an intimate atmosphere where audiences and performers meet face to face.

Add the magical Nordic summer evenings, the beautiful Ostrobothnian coastline and the warm hospitality of the region, and it becomes easy to understand why so many visitors return year after year.

This is more than a music festival—it is a celebration of culture, creativity and unforgettable summer memories.

Source: Korsholm Music Festival, www.kmf.fi.
Photos from the festival 2024.



NEWS

The shift signals a move toward AI that doesn’t just process data—it engages in the fluid rhythm of human thought.

DRIVING

EU Road Safety: AI Eyes on the Driver

Starting this week, the European Union has mandated that all newly registered vehicles must be equipped with AI-powered driver distraction detection systems. The technology continuously analyzes head movements and gaze patterns to identify signs of fatigue or inattention. Officials emphasize that the system is designed strictly for safety: it provides alerts but does not record or transmit footage to authorities, addressing long-standing privacy concerns. As vehicle automation increases, regulators are moving faster to ensure that “human-in-the-loop” systems remain reliable. For commuters, the change means your car is now officially watching out for your focus, marking a new chapter in smart automotive security.

OPENAI

Apple Takes Legal Aim at OpenAI

The rivalry between Silicon Valley giants has reached a courtroom climax. Apple has filed a major lawsuit against OpenAI, alleging the theft of proprietary trade secrets. The suit claims that OpenAI’s rapid development cycle relied on unauthorized access to internal Apple research regarding on-device AI efficiency. Industry analysts view the case as a watershed moment that will define how intellectual property is handled in the age of generative models. With billions in infrastructure spending on the line, the legal battle highlights the cutthroat nature of the current “AI arms race” as companies scramble to secure a technological edge over their competitors.

Reference: Global Tech Law Review, July 2026

AI AGENTS

The New “Agents”: Beyond the Chatbot

The buzzword of the month is no longer “chatbot”—it’s “agent.” Experts note that 2026 marks the year AI moved from simply answering questions to autonomously executing complex, multi-step projects. From researching market trends to scheduling meetings and logging data in CRM systems, these agents are now being deployed in enterprise environments with minimal human oversight. While the productivity gains are immense, businesses are being cautioned to maintain “human-in-the-loop” approval for high-risk actions. The transition from passive assistance to active execution is rewriting job descriptions across every sector, forcing companies to rethink their workflows and their reliance on human-AI collaboration.

GOOGLE

Google Brings AI Innovation to Accra

Google has officially opened the “Africa Applied AI Lab” in Accra, Ghana. This new initiative aims to support local entrepreneurs and researchers by providing early access to cutting-edge AI technologies. The program is specifically designed to tackle unique regional challenges, from agricultural optimization to local-language communication tools. By fostering home-grown solutions rather than relying on imported tech, the lab hopes to turn the continent into a hub for global AI innovation. The move is a significant step toward decentralizing the AI landscape, ensuring that the next generation of intelligent tools reflects the diverse needs and creativity of the global community.

HEALTH

THE DOCTOR ANSWERS

Vole fever (Nephropathia epidemica) is spreading – but what exactly is the disease?



The newspapers know that vole fever has been more common this summer than before, especially in South Ostrobothnia. What exactly is vole fever? What is the reason? How can you protect yourself? How is vole fever treated?

More cases than usual have been reported this summer, and many are wondering if there is reason to worry. Vole fever may sound like a harmless cold, but the disease can in some cases lead to several weeks of severe illness.

Vole fever is caused by Puumalavirus, a hantavirus that is mainly spread by the forest vole. The virus is found in the vole's urine, feces and saliva. People are usually infected by inhaling dust containing virus particles, for example when sweeping outbuildings, woodsheds, summer cottages or other spaces where voles have been staying. However, the disease is not normally transmitted between people.

The disease often begins suddenly with a high fever, severe headache, muscle aches and nausea. Many describe intense fatigue and pain behind the eyes. After a few days, the kidneys can be affected, leading to back pain, decreased urine output, and sometimes swelling. Most people recover completely, but recovery can take several weeks.

There is no specific medication for vole fever. The treatment therefore consists of rest, plenty of fluids and fever-reducing medication. In more severe cases, hospitalization may be needed to monitor kidney function and treat fluid balance. The mortality rate is very low, but older people and patients with other diseases can become more seriously ill.

The best protection is to avoid inhaling dust from spaces where voles may have left droppings. Moisten floors and surfaces before cleaning instead of dry sweeping, preferably wear gloves and a respirator in heavily soiled areas and wash your hands thoroughly afterwards. Also store food so that rodents cannot access it and try to keep homes and storage rooms free of voles.

Vole fever occurs mainly in Finland and northern Sweden, where the number of cases often follows the natural population fluctuations of the forest vole. After years with many voles, the risk of humans being infected also increases. Therefore, the health authorities urge caution, especially among people who spend a lot of time in the woods and fields or open summer cottages after winter.

*References: National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), Public Health Agency of Sweden, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

EXHIBITIONS

ÖVERMARK

Echoes in an Abandoned Home: "The Hidden Spots"



In the quiet village of Övermark, art has taken over a century-old, derelict house. The site-specific exhibition, The Hidden Spots, invites visitors to wander through rooms where time seems to have frozen. Created by the artist duo Black Box Genesis, the installation blends soundscapes, poetry, and physical relics to explore memory and transience. As part of a multidisciplinary regional project, this evocative showcase encourages guests to interact directly with the layers of history hidden within the walls of a forgotten home. Regional Art Exhibition 4.7.-2.8.2026. Address: Dermossvägen 20, 64610 Ylimarkku. Opening hours: Wednesday–Thursday 12–17 Friday–Sunday 12–18 Image: Bekim Hasaj and Valentina Gelain

VAASA

Street Art Takes Over: Wasa Graffitilandia

Vaasa's most vibrant summer tradition is back in full force. Wasa Graffitilandia has transformed over 3,000 square meters into a sprawling, colorful maze of street art and urban culture. Now in its sixth year, this summer edition showcases a massive collection of works from local and international artists. The exhibition serves as a dynamic contrast to the region's traditional museum offerings, providing a gritty, energetic space for creative expression that continues to push the boundaries of what is considered "gallery art" in Ostrobothnia.

STUNDARS

Historic Charm: Stundars Open Air Museum



The Stundars Open Air Museum in Mustasaari has launched a pair of compelling exhibitions that dive deep into the region's heritage. With Paint and Bricks explores the traditional decorative painting and fireplace artistry found throughout Ostrobothnia. Running alongside this are curated displays in the historic Hemmer's House and the local Stone Mason's Cottage, offering a glimpse into the craftsmanship that defined the area centuries ago. These exhibitions provide a peaceful, educational retreat for those looking to connect with the authentic roots of the coastal landscape.

VAASA

400 Years of Vaasa

The Ostrobothnian Museum's permanent exhibition, Vaasa 400 – Tales of a City, offers a captivating journey through the city's four-century history. From its founding in 1606 and 17th-century witch hunts to the devastating fire of 1852 and the rise of shipping and industry, the exhibition weaves together events that shaped society, education, and everyday life. Highlights include Ostrobothnian folk art, painted furniture, and reconstructed interiors of a burgher's home and a factory worker's dwelling. Old publicity films and scale models of the city's changing town plan complete this rich historical tapestry. Ostrobothnian Museum, Museokatu 3, Vaasa. Open Wed–Sun 10–17. Admission 15/9/0€. – Reference: museot.fi

VAASA

The Scavengers' Garden

Insects and invertebrates take centre stage at the Ostrobothnian Museum this summer. The nabbteeri artists' collective presents The Scavengers' GardenOstrobothnian Museum, Museokatu 3, Vaasa. Open 9 May – 20 September 2026. Wed–Sun 10–17. – Reference: vaasa.fi

VANHA VAASA

250 Years of Justice



The Old Vaasa Museum marks a significant anniversary with its exhibition on the Vaasa Court of Appeal, established in 1775 by King Gustav III. Running until 29 August, the exhibition sheds light on the court's early years, its activities, and its profound impact on the lives of people across historical Ostrobothnia. Through miniature models, visual material, and stories of officials and their families, visitors gain insight into the ceremonies, power, and everyday life of one of Finland's oldest judicial institutions. History buffs will find this a fascinating journey into the region's legal heritage. Museum of Old Vaasa, Wasastjernen kauppiastalo, Kauppiaankatu 10, Vaasa. Open 1 June – 29 August 2026. Wed–Sat 10–17. Free admission. – Reference: museot.fi

KRISTINESTAD.

The Splendid Villa's Dramatic Fall

Carlsro Museum in Kristinestad presents the gripping tale of Alfred Carlström, once the richest man in Ostrobothnia. The Splendid Villa exhibition recounts the opulent villa era and its dramatic collapse when an embezzler drove the ship-owning family into bankruptcy in 1910. Visitors can glimpse elegant celebrations, peacocks wandering freely, and the idyll that shattered, bringing an entire town to its knees. This summer's exhibition honours the villa's anniversary year and tells the full story of what became of Carlsro and its family. A captivating tale of wealth, betrayal, and ruin.

Carlsro, Carlsrovägen 181, 64100 Kristiinankaupunki. Open 1 June – 31 August 2026, daily 11–17. Closed Midsummer 23–25 June. Admission 8/2/0€. – Reference: museot.fi

KRISTINESTAD

A Coastal Journey Through Art: Galleri Gottorp

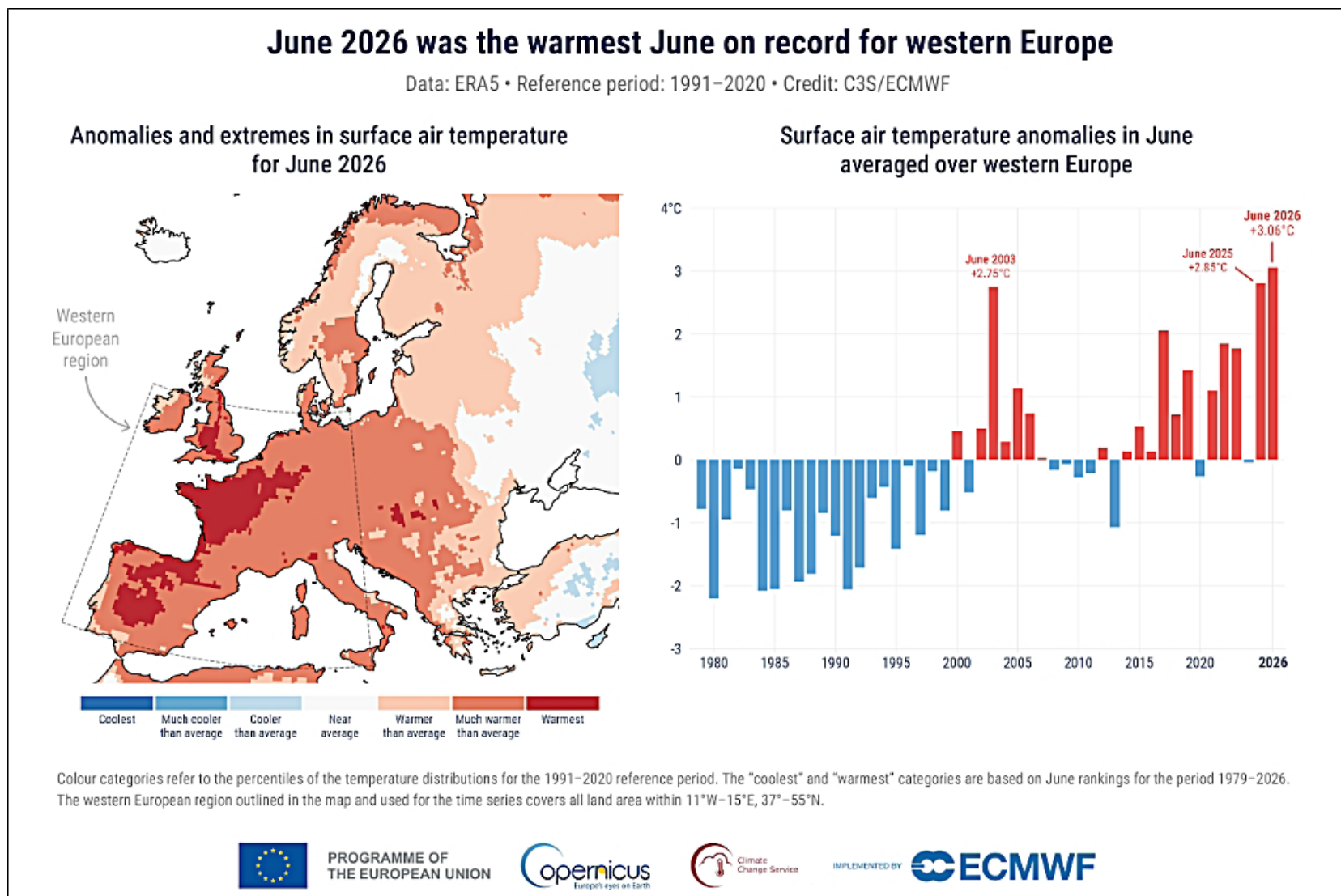
In the picturesque town of Kristinestad, Galleri Gottorp is currently hosting a multifaceted art experience. Artist Stina Engvall displays her unique paintings in oil and reverse glass, capturing the atmospheric light of the Finnish coast. Beyond the canvas, the gallery also presents insightful exhibitions covering 17th-century local history, including the stories of "Women Pioneers" and the realities of the witch persecutions of the era. It is a must-visit for those who enjoy intimate settings where contemporary artistic vision meets the heavy, storied past of the Ostrobothnian coast. Galleri Gottorp is open Thursday-Saturday 12-4pm from 2.7 to 1.8.2026.

JAKOBSTAD

A Journey Through Craftsmanship

The Ostrobothnian Rooms exhibition at Jakobstad's TEMPUS museum is a stunning celebration of local heritage. Featuring handcrafted works from over 20 regional designers alongside traditional folk-art treasures, the exhibition is a spatial journey through textile, wood, and ceramic crafts. The display demonstrates how craftsmanship evolves while preserving our connection to roots.

CLIMATE CHANGE



(Left) Map showing anomalies and extremes in surface air temperature for June 2026. Colour categories refer to the percentiles of the temperature distributions for the 1991–2020 reference period. The extreme ("coolest" and "warmest") categories are based on June rankings for the period 1979–2026. (Right) Bar chart showing monthly surface air temperature anomalies in June averaged over western Europe (11°W–15°E, 37°–55°N). Anomalies are relative to the June average for the 1991–2020 period. Data source: ERA5. Credit: C3S/ECMWF.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change: Over 10,000 victims in Europe already in June

The real heat hasn't even begun – and thousands have already died.

When the month of June is now summed up by the EU's climate monitoring Copernicus, it is clear that Western Europe experienced its warmest June ever. The average temperature landed at 20.74 degrees – a full 3.05 degrees above the normal value for the period 1991–2020. Globally, June was the second warmest ever recorded. At the same time, sea temperatures outside the polar regions reached their highest June record.

But the numbers that should really make us stop aren't about degrees – they're about lives.

According to data from the EuroMOMO network, which is supported by the WHO and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, over 10,000 more deaths than normal were recorded in the single week of June 22–28, when the heat wave was at its worst in France, Spain and the United Kingdom. Of these, over 9,000 were 65 years or older. In France, about

1,000 more deaths than expected were recorded in just four days. In Spain, at least 1,028 people have died as a result of the heat wave in June – more than twice as many as in the same period last year. The World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed as early as June 28 that over 1,300 excess mortality cases had been registered since June 21. WHO Europe Director Hans Kluge recently pointed out that heat has claimed over 200,000 lives in Europe in just the last four years – and that almost all of these deaths have been entirely preventable. "Unusual. Really high," says Lasse Vestergaard, chief medical officer at Denmark's Statens Serum Institut, which hosts EuroMOMO, about the excess mortality. "It is difficult to explain this high excess mortality with anything other than extreme heat."

What are the consequences for us humans, then, when the temperature continues to rise?

Extreme heat is not an "innocent" summer guest. It kills through heat stroke, but above all by aggravating cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. The elderly, people living alone and children are particularly vulnerable. When electricity grids fail, schools close and healthcare capacity is exceeded, entire communities are affected.

And remember: the really hot summer

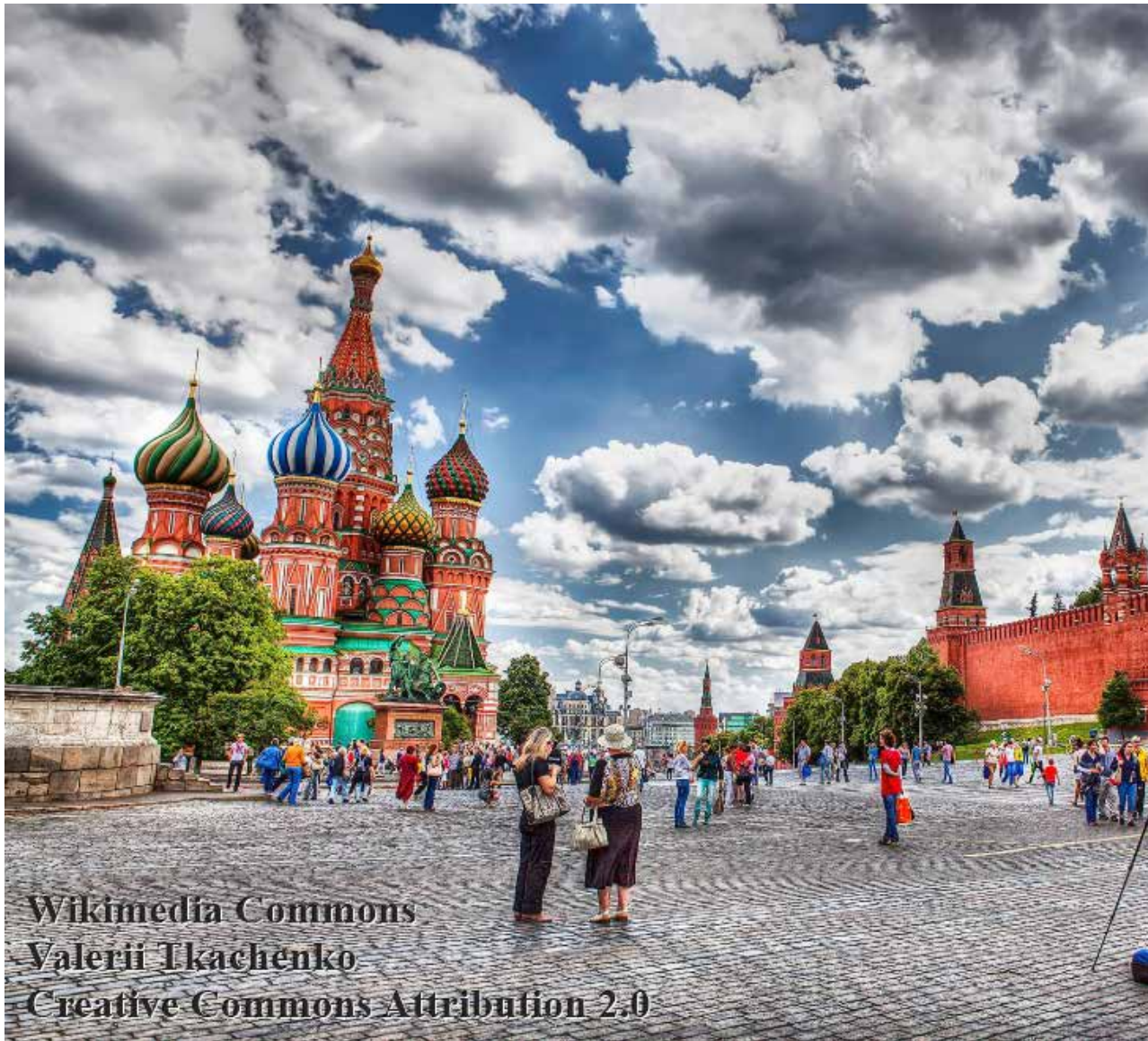
hasn't even begun.

The heat wave in June was just a foretaste. At the beginning of July, the next heat wave was already sweeping across Europe. Scientists state that the June heat would have been "virtually impossible without human-caused climate change". Europe is warming twice as fast as the average in the rest of the world. What is required then? The WHO is calling for heat-specific action plans – everything from cooling green spaces and shade to safety visits to the elderly and flexible working hours to avoid the midday sun. These measures are practical, within reach, and can be scaled up. The goal is zero heat-related deaths. But time is short. Each new heat wave means new victims. And the next one is already here.

Sources:

Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S): Record heatwave brings hottest June for western Europe, 9 juli 2026
European Environment Agency (EEA): Monitoring heat impacts on health in Europe, 2026
World Health Organization (WHO): Statement by Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge – Europe lost 200 000 people to heat in 4 years, 11 juni 2026
World Health Organization (WHO): More than 1,300 excess deaths recorded in Europe heatwave, 28 juni 2026
EuroMOMO: Excess mortality data, week 22–28 juni 2026
SVT: Värmebölja och åskoväder – så slår extremvädret mot Europa, 28 juni 2026

RUSSIA



RUSSIA

"We can blow up half of Finland"

Russian MP Alexei Zurelyov has threatened that Russia has enough military equipment to "blow up half of Finland". This move is part of a rhetorical escalation from the Russian side after Finland has joined NATO and decided on increased defense cooperation.

The statement came in connection with Finland's announcement of plans to build a maintenance center for rocket artillery systems in Tampere in cooperation with the American Lockheed Martin. From the Russian side, this has been heavily criticized, and statements about "blowing up" parts of the country have been used as threatening rhetoric. Russian representatives have also warned that Finland will turn into a "second Ukraine" through its NATO membership.

However, experts and analysts have downplayed the threats and believe that they are diplomatic jargon and political rhetoric. Analysts surveyed by Finnish media say that there is no reason to believe that the Russian nuclear arsenal or military will be directed against Finland, and that there is no need to take panic measures such as building shelters

RUSSIA

"50 percent of Ukraine's population is to be exterminated"

Russian State Duma member Alexei Zhuravyov has become known for extremely aggressive statements about Ukraine. In a July 2026 interview, he claimed that the percentage of "Nazis" in Ukraine has grown sharply and suggested that up to half of the country's population must be expelled or executed in the fight against this ideology.

Alexei Zhuravlyov, who leads the ultranationalist party Rodina, has distinguished himself as one

of the most vocal advocates of Russia's full-scale invasion. His statements have included the following:

Massive extermination: Zhuravyov has stated in conversations that he considers it acceptable to exterminate up to 50 percent of Ukraine's population in order to put an end to what he calls Ukrainian Nazism.

Dehumanization: He has formulated criteria for violence, where he believes that a Ukrainian who carries weapons should be eliminated on the spot. Those who do not change their views, according to him, should either be banished or destroyed. [

Rhetorical backing of the war: Portraying Ukraine as a Nazi state has been a central part of the Kremlin's propaganda to justify the war. However, experts and historians, including staff from the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, condemn this historiography and dismiss Putin's regime's claims that Ukraine is a neo-fascist state.

But in Russia, apparently anyone who does not approve of the war against Ukraine is considered a Nazi.

Zhuravlyov's statements have also been directed at other neighboring countries.

KREMLIN

Kremlin insider: "Economic crisis is expected by October"

According to information from the Kremlin, which the channel Kremlin Secrets has accessed, Russia expects a serious economic crisis this autumn. A source in the Kremlin states that the crisis could reach its peak in October and last for several months to come. The central bank has now officially warned that growth may come to a complete halt by the end of the year.

The head of the central bank, Elvira Nabiullina, has officially demanded that the war against Ukraine must end very soon, in order to avoid a

catastrophe.

At the same time, US President Donald Trump is preparing new sanctions against Russia, something that a Kremlin source describes as "a painful, but necessary sacrifice". Despite the warnings, the Kremlin downplays the seriousness: "Everything will be fine, even if it sometimes feels the opposite."

Source: Telegram

POPULARITY OF PUTIN

Numbers plummet – Putin's popularity at a new low

President Vladimir Putin's popularity has dropped dramatically, according to secret reports published by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Telegram. The documents, which were originally intended for the highest levels of the Russian government, show that dissatisfaction with Putin is growing steadily. The forecast for the parliamentary elections in September 2026 shows that only 55 percent of Russians appreciate Putin's efforts, while as many as 33 percent express open dissatisfaction. Experts estimate that the regime will need "significantly more election falsifications" than before to stay in power. But he still wins the election in September.

Source: Telegram

PETROL CRISIS

Chaos at the petrol pumps – the black market is booming

Russia is experiencing its worst fuel crisis in decades. Ukrainian drone attacks on oil refineries have created chaos, and kilometer-long queues at gas stations are reported from Irkutsk to Sverdlovsk. In Crimea, the governor has imposed a state of emergency and is now prioritizing only public bodies. At the same time, an alternative black market is flourishing – gasoline is sold in 20-liter canisters via Telegram, and deliveries are made along secret routes from Krasnodar to Moscow. The government's attempt to dismiss the crisis as "increased demand" is met with mockery on social media.

Also How much does petrol cost? Up to five euros per litre, if that is available at all.

Farmers lack diesel – which makes it possible to sow and sow.

Those who suffer most from Russia's war against Ukraine are poor Africans, whose bread is mainly baked from Russian wheat.

Source: Telegram

TELEGRAM

War bloggers in revolt – Telegram blockade threatens the front

The Kremlin's decision to block Telegram has sparked outrage among the regime's own war bloggers and military analysts. The blockade, which was gradually introduced in the spring of 2026, is hitting Russian forces in Ukraine hard – where Telegram is used as a central operational tool to coordinate troops and share intelligence. Several pro-regime milbloggers describe the situation at the front as "shocking" and openly express their anger at Putin. Ironically, the attempt to shut down the platform could lead to the wave of protests the Kremlin is trying to avoid.

Source: Telegram

EVENTS

TODAY

KORPHOLMEN

The leper colony opens its gates – a rare glimpse into a forgotten chapter of history



This Sunday, Korpholmen leprosy hospital in Kronoby opens to the public from 1 to 5 PM. Visitors can explore the hospital buildings, the church, and an exhibition hall featuring summer art by Auli-Maritta Ruuskanen. The event is free and organised by the Kronoby local history society. Don't miss this chance to step into one of Ostrobothnia's most evocative historical sites – where patients once lived out their lives in isolation.
Source: <http://kronoby.hembygd.fi>

METEORIIHI

When space struck Earth – Meteorian open today



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.meteorio.fi>

JULY

EVENING MUSIC

50 years of free evening music in Vaasa – stars take over Vaasa Church



June – 14 August 2026
– Every Wednesday at 7.30 pm, completely free. The evening music at the Trinity Church has been a summer classic for 50 years. And This year it is being celebrated in earnest. The organ has its place, of course – it is, after all, one of the finest churches in Finland. But the singing, violin, piano, clarinet and cello also shine. The artists? Well-known Finnish musicians and international guest performers. High-quality, free and open to all. So simple, so good. Bring a friend and enjoy the bright June evenings until mid-August.
Source: Bothnia Classic

KORSHOLM MUSIC FESTIVAL

Korsholm Music Festival turns 40+ – stars take over the clear nights of the west coast

22–31 July 2026

Warm summer evenings. Clear nights. And top-notch music. Since 1983, Korsholm Music Festival has been a chamber music festival unlike any other. The founder, cellist Seppo Kimanen, would be proud. Since 2023, cellist Jan-Erik Gustafs-son has led the festival, which attracts the cream of Finnish and international art musicians. Experience the unique surroundings of the west coast as dusk falls. Bring a picnic basket – and a handkerchief. It can be so beautiful that it hurts.
Source: Bothnia Classic

KAAOS FESTIVAL

The metal storm returns to Vaasa – Kaaos Festival gears up for a new invasion

After last year's success, Kaaos Festival is making a comeback in Vaasa – and the organizers promise even heavier names and a larger audience in the summer of 2026. The festival will be held in Vaskiluoto on 24–25 July 2026 in the old Wasalandia area, which will be transformed into a massive festival area for hard rock and metal fans from all over the Nordic region. Last year's debut attracted audiences far beyond Ostrobothnia and brought Vaasa international attention in the metal scene. Now the organizers are hoping for an even greater impact. The festival is marketed as one of the most intense metal experiences of the summer in Finland, with both international and Finnish bands on the program.

Hotel bookings in Vaasa are already expected to increase ahead of the festival weekend.
Source: Kaaos Festival – <https://kaaosfestival.fi/>

UUSIKAUPUNKI

Crusell Week blows in with

French elegance. The Vaasa Philharmonic Orchestra participates

Uusikaupunki will be transformed into the capital of music from 27 July to 2 August 2026 when Crusell Week takes over the city's squares, churches and auditoriums. The festival opens with Avajaispuhallus on the square (27.7 at 12 noon), and the week offers everything from the children's concert Freija to the grand Grand Concert Festif in the New Church (30.7 at 6 pm) with the Vaasa Philharmonic Orchestra and Helena Juntunen as soloist. The evenings end with lantern concerts and French tunes under the stars. Source: crusell.fi/konsertit-2026

VASA FESTIVAL

A star-studded party by the water

Vaasa Festival opens its doors for the eleventh year in a row – and offers a cavalcade of artists that will make your mouth water. We have already seen names like Robin Packalen, Isac Elliot and Nordman. Three days of music, food and a great atmosphere in the inner harbor. Remember that the VIP area has its own entrance, toilets and the best view of the stage. Age limit 18 years.
• When: July 30 – August 1, 2026
• Where: Vaasa city center, inner harbora

AUGUST

VAASAN MARSSI 7-9.8.2026

42 kilometres, sea views and no stopwatch – Vaasa prepares for massive walking event

The city of Vaasa will once again become a hub for endurance walkers when the international Vaasan Marssi takes place from 7 to 9 August 2026. The three-day event begins daily from Market Square at Hovioikeudenpuistikko 15a and attracts participants from across Finland and abroad.

Walkers can choose routes ranging from 10 kilometres to a demanding 42-kilometre challenge. The event features scenic routes through Strömsö, Old Vaasa and the UNESCO World Heritage archipelago area. Organisers stress that the event is not a race – there is no timekeeping – but the physical challenge is still significant, especially for those attempting several days in a row. Vaasan Marssi is also Finland's only IML-recognised walking event.

VASA FUTURE FESTIVAL

The future is here – and it is the New Nordic



Vaasa will once again become a center for future optimists when the Wasa Future Festival kicks off. For ten days, companies, decision-makers, researchers and artists will gather to build a better tomorrow under the theme "New Nordic". You will come here to network, be inspired and make a real difference. Expect both serious and crazy ideas – all on the same stage.
• When: 10–15 August 2026
• Where: Wasa Innovation Center & Bock's Village, Vaasa

NIGHT OF ART AUG 13

Night of Art: The whole of Vaasa becomes a big stage



Want to be part of creating the biggest cultural night in the region? Now is your chance! The program of the Night of Art is created together with the people of Vaasa – both small and large projects are welcome to participate. Imagine the streets filled with music, dance and unexpected art experiences. But be quick! The registration period ends on 31 May 2026. Don't miss the opportunity to brighten up the autumn darkness.
• When: August 13, 2026
• Where: The entire city center of Vaasa
• Reference: vaasa.fi

KARLEBY

Karleby Autumn Chambers: Young virtuosos take over – from baroque to modern in three days

KARLEBY August 21–23, 2026
The festival is only eight years old, but the artists are some of the most successful musicians in the country. Kokkola Autumn Chambers was founded in 2018 by cellist Antto Tunkkari and double bassist Pauli Pappinen, who still lead the program. – We bring together young virtuosos in the intimate world of chamber music. The result is unique. The program varies from baroque to contemporary music. What about the milieu? August in Kokkola – fresh, beautiful and full of melodies. Three days are enough. Don't miss it.
Source: Bothnia Classic

SYYSKUU

LAPPO

Lappo Kansainvälinen Urkufestivaali: Suomen suurimmat urut saavat maailmantähtiä

LAPPO, 14. syyskuuta 2025
Noin joka toinen vuosi. Lapon tuomiokirkossa. Suomen suurimman kirkkourkun kanssa. Sitten se tapahtuu: Lappo Kan-

UKRAINE PRESIDENT

Address by the President of Ukraine on Ukrainian Statehood Day and the Day of the Baptism of Kyivan Rus–Ukraine



Glory to Ukraine!

Dear Ukrainians, ladies and gentlemen!

We have just heard our national anthem. Written more than 150 years ago, it continues to inspire millions today.

We are standing now in the heart of our free Ukrainian Kyiv. Beside us is St. Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery. This magnificent landmark was founded nine centuries ago.

All of this is taking place on a very important day – the Day of the Baptism of Kyivan Rus–Ukraine – an event of historic importance for Christianity and for all of Europe. It happened here, in our city, on these hills

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of ours, more than a thousand years ago, in the time of our Volodymyr the Great. And it is his symbol – the trident – that is our national coat of arms. It is also displayed on the patches of our warriors who are here today and who are defending Ukraine. Thank you to our warriors!

All of this – and hundreds of other examples of such continuity – is more than a set of beau-

tiful parallels. And it is certainly not a coincidence, but a natural connection between all generations of Ukrainians. An energy that has flowed for centuries through the unbroken history of our spirit, our state, and Europe, among all Ukrainians who have lived on this land of ours, who live on this land today, and who will live on this land in the future. That is what this important day is about. The

Day of the Baptism of Rus–Ukraine. The day of our statehood.

Dear attendees, dear citizens, all our warriors, medics, first responders, clergy, government officials, and members of parliament!

Read more: <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/zvernennya-prezidenta-ukrayini-z-nagodi-dnya-ukrayinskoyi-de-105437>

ART EXPERIENCE OF THE WEEK



Ferdinand von Wright
19.3.1822, Haminalahti
31.7.1906, Haminalahti
Old White-Tailed Sea Eagle, 1871
Finnish National Gallery Collection / Ateneum Art Museum
Photo: Finnish National Gallery / Hannu Aaltonen

George Orwell

1984

Part 36

'Nineteen hours.'

'All right.'

Ampleforth failed to see Winston and sat down at another table. They did not speak again, and, so far as it was possible for two people sitting on opposite sides of the same table, they did not look at one another. The girl finished her lunch quickly and made off, while Winston stayed to smoke a cigarette.

Winston was in Victory Square before the appointed time. He wandered round the base of the enormous fluted column, at the top of which Big Brother's statue gazed southward towards the skies where he had vanquished the Eurasian aeroplanes (the Eastasian aeroplanes, it had been, a few years ago) in the Battle of Airstrip One. In the street in front of it there was a statue of a man on horseback which was supposed to represent Oliver Cromwell. At five minutes past the hour the girl had still not appeared. Again the terrible fear seized upon Winston. She was not coming, she had changed her mind! He walked slowly up to the north side of the square and got a sort of pale-coloured pleasure from identifying St Martin's Church, whose bells, when it had bells, had chimed 'You owe me three farthings.' Then he saw the girl standing at the base of the monument, reading or pretending to read a poster which ran spirally up the column. It was not safe to go near her until some more people had accumulated. There

were telescreens all round the pediment. But at this moment there was a din of shouting and a zoom of heavy vehicles from somewhere to the left. Suddenly everyone seemed to be running across the square. The girl nipped nimbly round the lions at the base of the monument and joined in the rush. Winston followed. As he ran, he gathered from some shouted remarks that a convoy of Eurasian prisoners was passing.

Already a dense mass of people was blocking the south side of the square. Winston, at normal times the kind of person who gravitates to the outer edge of any kind of scrimmage, shoved, butted, squirmed his way forward into the heart of the crowd. Soon he was within arm's length of the girl, but the way was blocked by an enormous prole and an almost equally enormous woman, presumably his wife, who seemed to form an impenetrable wall of flesh. Winston wriggled himself sideways, and with a violent lunge managed to drive his shoulder between them. For a moment it felt as though his entrails were being ground to pulp between the two muscular hips, then he had broken through, sweating a little. He was next to the girl. They were shoulder to shoulder, both staring fixedly in front of them.

A long line of trucks, with wooden-faced guards armed with sub-machine guns standing upright in each corner, was passing slowly down the street. In the trucks little yellow men in shabby greenish uniforms were



squatting, jammed close together. Their sad, Mongolian faces gazed out over the sides of the trucks utterly incurious. Occasionally when a truck jolted there was a clank-clank of metal: all the prisoners were wearing leg-irons. Truck-load after truck-load of the sad faces passed. Winston knew they were there but he saw them only intermittently. The girl's shoulder, and her arm right down to the elbow, were pressed against his. Her cheek was almost near enough for him to feel its warmth. She had immediately taken charge of the situation, just as she had done in the canteen. She began speaking in the same expressionless voice as before, with lips barely moving, a mere murmur easily drowned by the din of voices and the rumbling of the trucks.

'Can you hear me?'

'Yes.'

'Can you get Sunday afternoon off?'

'Yes.'

'Then listen carefully. You'll have to remember this. Go to Paddington Station---'

With a sort of military precision that astonished him, she outlined the route that he was to follow. A half-hour railway journey; turn left outside the station; two kilometres along the road; a gate with the top bar missing; a path across a field; a grass-grown lane; a track between bushes; a dead tree with moss on it. It was as though she had a map inside her head. 'Can you remember all that?' she murmured finally.

'Yes.'

'You turn left, then right, then left again. And the gate's got no top bar.'

'Yes. What time?'

HUMOUR ONE HUND- RED YEARS AGO

FREE TELEGRAM
Mac Carty from Aberdeen is visiting the U.S.A. One day he has to send a telegram to a relative. When he asks about the price at the telegraph office, he is told that the sender's name costs nothing.

DANGER
Husband: "Don't, dear Ruusastiina, hit me with that frying pan, because it might break!"

DREAMS OF LUXURY.
PätÄ: What would you do if you were a millionaire? Sam: I would buy an alarm clock, stop it from ringing at five in the morning and sleep late like the other millionaires.

TOLERANT.
The old maid, after getting into the streetcar, pretends to notice that one of the men is a little drunk. She then asks the carriage attendant whether drunk people are tolerated in the streetcar?
"You may be, miss, provided you are quiet," he replies kindly.

TAKES CARE OF HIS WORD.
The priest (to his servant): I saw last night that the driver was in the kitchen.
The servant: He was my brother.
The priest: But you said you didn't have are brothers.
Servant: I said last week, but the pastor explained in his sermon on Sunday that we are all sisters and brothers.

BAD RUN
Mother: -- Are you going to marry our Meer? Your 30 dollar salary can't even buy Meer enough handkerchiefs.
Suitor: Sooh,! I didn't know Meer had such a bad runny nose.

PRACTICAL LANGUAGE.
You said you couldn't swim. So how did you get to shore from a sinking ship?
We Italians have a habit of signing when we speak, and we started discussing how to save ourselves and soon found that we had made it to shore.

THE TRICK OF FATE
Shoplifter: It's kind of shameless that after

you've kept me in jail for three months for stealing an umbrella, you're now pushing me out into the rain like this.

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

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

Astronomic picture of the week:



Horse-head nebula
A reproduction of a composite colour image of the Horsehead Nebula and its immediate surroundings. It is based on three exposures in the visual part of the spectrum with the FORS2 multi-mode instrument at the 8.2-m KUEYEN telescope, part of ESO's Very Large Telescope, at Paranal. It was produced from three images, obtained on February 1, 2000, with the FORS2 multi-mode instrument at the 8.2-m KUEYEN Unit Telescope and extracted from the VLT Science Archive Facility . The frames were obtained in the B-band (600 sec exposure; wavelength 429 nm; FWHM 88 nm; here rendered as blue), V-band (300 sec; 554 nm; 112 nm; green) and R-band (120 sec; 655 nm; 165 nm; red). The original pixel size is 0.2 arcsec. The photo shows the full field recorded in all three colours, approximately 6.5 x 6.7 arcmin 2 . The seeing was about 0.75 arcsec. Credit: ESO Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License



HOROSCOPE FOR JULY 2026

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

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

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

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

Cancer (June 21 – July 22)
Home is where your heart – and probably your laundry – is. In June, feelings run deep. You may cry at an

ad for breakfast cereal. That's okay. Your emotional radar is strong; use it to sniff out both love and passive-aggressive neighbors.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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