

WASA DAILY



CASPIAN SEA Shadow War Spills into the Caspian Sea



Tensions between two distant conflicts, edged closer this summer when Ukraine's drone strikes hit Iran's oil refineries, and a pipeline linking to Russia across the Caspian Sea. One Iranian commercial ship was hit, killing a sailor, according to Tehran, while Iran claimed the ship carried equipment destined for the Russian war effort. Diplomats quickly intervened to prevent open retaliation, but the incident highlighted how close Iran and Azerbaijan's sharing between Moscow and Tehran are during the Ukraine and Iran wars over overlapping Red Sea. Analysts were that further strikes in this landlocked waterway could force major powers into direct confrontation spanning Europe. For an ongoing paper, the dispute underscores the growing risk that regional wars no longer stay contained.

Based on reports from international diplomats and security sources, July-September 2026.

Iraqi heavy truck columns of the line, injuring several people. The pipeline is a key alternative route that bypasses the congested Strait of Hormuz, making the closure especially sensitive amid the ongoing U.S.-Iran campaign against Iran. Simultaneously, Israeli Houthi forces seized a strategic island controlling approaches to the Gulf of Oman Strait, tightening their grip on another vital shipping artery. Energy markets reacted with sharp price spikes as traders feared cascading disruptions to crude and refined products. Fearing markets watching fuel costs will see that these twin developments place their price wars on global supply chains already strained by months of conflict.

Driven from energy ministry statements and regional security updates, September 2026.



VLADIMIR PUTIN
Putin Doubles Down on Ukraine and Support Tehran

GAZETTE



Laihia 450
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LOCAL NEWS

FINNISH MUNICIPALITIES

Ostrobothnia shines – Pedersöre tops Finland's municipal statistics

Pedersöre takes first place in Finland, Malax is third, and Vaasa leads among medium-si-

EDITORIAL

Speaking two languages may be good for your health

Speaking two languages may do more than make communication easier – it could also help keep the aging brain healthier. New research suggests that people who regularly use more than one language may show fewer signs of accelerated biological aging.

Researchers analyzed data from more than 86,000 healthy people aged 51 to 91 in 27 European countries. The result was striking: people who regularly used multiple languages were about half as likely to show signs of accelerated biological aging as people who spoke only one language.

Why might this happen? Researchers believe that switching between languages keeps the brain working. Choosing the right words, suppressing another language and adapting to different speakers and situations constantly exercises networks involved in attention, memory and executive functions.

The key may be regular use, rather than simply knowing another language. Speaking with friends, neighbours or family, working in another language, or participating in another linguistic and cultural community may all provide useful mental stimulation.

And there is encouraging

news for adults who think they are too old to learn. Experts say it is never too late to begin learning another language. You do not have to become perfectly bilingual. Even relatively short periods of learning may bring benefits, while the advantages can accumulate over years of use.

Language also has an important social dimension. As people age, social networks can become smaller, increasing the risk of loneliness and isolation. Using another language can encourage communication, curiosity and contact with other people and cultures.

There is, however, an important qualification. The research does not prove that bilingualism prevents Alzheimer's disease or dementia. It shows an association, and scientists still need to understand how fluency, frequency of use, language switching and social environment influence the brain.

Still, the message is remarkably positive: learning another language may be one of the most accessible forms of brain exercise – and you can start at 7 or 70.

Reference: National Geographic, December 9, 2025; Nature Aging.

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 Sade 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 *Tinakenkäyttö* at a special anniversary price of 42 euros for the 1 pm and 6 pm performances.

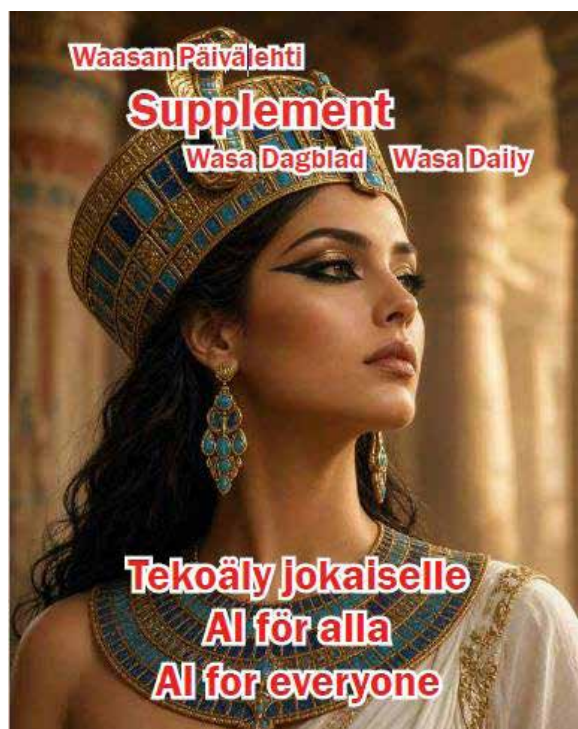
A new oak tree will also be planted in Old Vaasa as a living memorial to the 420th anniversary.

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.

Photo Supplement



WELLBEING AREAS

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 “tyköhoito”. 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.

OSTROBOTHNIA

Can the Crime Cycle Be Broken? Young People Get a Second Chance

A crime may already have been committed – but that does not mean a young person’s future has to be defined by crime. In Ostrobothnia, a new approach is bringing help directly to young people.

The Kåppi project, run by the Wellbeing Services County

of Ostrobothnia, is looking for new ways to intervene in serious youth crime and prevent young people from becoming trapped in a continuing cycle of offending.

The service is aimed at people under 30 who are suspected of, or have been convicted of, repeated or serious offences, including violent, drug-related and sexual offences.

The key idea is simple: the young person does not have to find the service alone. Kåppi workers meet clients in their everyday surroundings and make it easier to accept help. Support can also begin soon after an arrest, rather than waiting for a potentially lengthy legal process to reach its conclusion.

77 young people already involved

The project began in August 2024 and has so far worked with 77 clients, almost one third of whom are minors. Most are boys or young men, and some have experienced anxiety or trauma.

The results are still developing, but there are encouraging signs. Several young people have started new hobbies or accepted other forms of support and services.

Kåppi works closely with police, child welfare services and organisations. If contact with a young person is lost, the workers actively try to reconnect.

The project has received additional funding from Finland’s Ministry of Justice and will continue until the end of 2027.

The ambition is clear: help young people leave crime behind before it becomes their future – and give them a realistic opportunity to build a different life. Source: Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia

OSTROBOTHNIA



Your own doctor is coming back – Ostrobothnia expands care-team model

Could the days of explaining your medical history to a different doctor every time be coming to an end? Finland’s Ostrobothnia Wellbeing Services County is expanding its model of personal care teams and family doctors.

The aim is to give patients who regularly need healthcare a more continuous relationship with a familiar team. The model has already been operating for some time at the health centre in Vaasa. Preparations will begin in September in Korsholm and Pietarsaari, with pilot operations scheduled to start in January 2027.

WASA DAILY
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NEWS

zed cities.



Pedersöre Church

There is good news from western Finland. In MDI’s latest assessment of municipal development, Pedersöre rises to the top of the Finnish ranking. Malax takes an impressive third place, while Vaasa ranks highest among medium-sized cities.

The result puts three municipalities from Ostrobothnia prominently on the national map.

What makes a municipality successful? MDI’s analyses do not rely on a single figure. Instead, they use a broader set of statistical indicators to examine factors connected with regional development, vitality and attractiveness. MDI has previously stressed that there are many possible ways of measuring regional development and that municipalities can follow very different paths.

Ostrobothnia has several structural advantages. The Vaasa region has a diversified economy, strong employment and internationally active companies. Vaasa itself is an important regional centre for jobs, education, trade and public and private services.

Smaller municipalities can also benefit from being close to a strong urban centre. Malax, for example, combines rural and archipelago living with easy access to Vaasa. According to the municipality, Vaasa is only about 15 minutes away. Malax is a bilingual municipality with roughly 5,400 residents.

The figures should nevertheless be viewed in context. Finland is facing major demographic changes, including an ageing population and a decline in the working-age population. Earlier MDI population analyses have shown that demographic development can vary considerably between Finnish municipalities.

For the moment, however, the mood in Ostrobothnia can be decidedly upbeat.

Pedersöre is at the top, Malax is third, and Vaasa leads its city category. For the Vaasa region, it is a remarkably positive statistical snapshot. Source: MDI, Aluekehityksen nopea tilannekuva.

NEWS

VINTERAGENT

There's Still Time to Become Vaasa's Winter Agent! Today!



How easy is it really to walk or cycle in Vaasa when snow and ice arrive? The city is now recruiting enthusiastic residents to become “winter agents”, helping assess the quality and accessibility of winter maintenance on the main walking and cycling routes.

Winter agents observe the condition of the routes and report their findings. Their feedback will be used to improve winter maintenance and make everyday travel safer and more accessible. No special trips are required: ordinary journeys to work, shopping, leisure activities, walks and cycling trips are enough.

This winter, Vaasa particularly wants to broaden the range of experiences represented in the project. In addition to pedestrians and cyclists, the city is looking for people who use walkers or wheelchairs and people travelling with prams. Their experiences can reveal accessibility problems that might otherwise go unnoticed.

The winter-agent project is already well established. Agents have assessed winter maintenance in Vaasa for two seasons, and during the 2025–2026 season, 180 pedestrians and cyclists took part.

Participants will receive training explaining which routes they should assess and the criteria they should use. Reporting is designed to be quick and straightforward.

The initiative is part of Vaasa's Cycling Alliance. GRK is responsible for the contract for enhanced winter maintenance, while Sitowise measures customer satisfaction using feedback from the winter agents. Vaasa City organises the training sessions and possible meetings.

Applications must be submitted by 20 September 2026. Active winter agents will also have a chance to win gift cards in monthly draws.

Reference: Vaasa City



LAIHIA 450

Laihia turns 450 – historic celebration takes over the municipality on Sunday



Church bells, music, speeches and a proud look back at history: on Sunday, Laihia celebrates 450 years of its historic parish.

Sunday, September 20, will be a special day in Laihia. The municipality and parish are marking the 450th anniversary of the establishment of Laihia as an independent parish with a full day of celebrations.

The day begins at 10 a.m. with a special anniversary service at Laihia Church, at Laihiantie 37. The service will also include the installation of Tiina Keinänen, Master of Theology and pastor, as the new parish vicar.

After the service, the celebrations continue at Laihia's Monitoimitalo community centre, Länsitie 62. The event runs from noon until 3 p.m., with the main ceremonial programme beginning at 1:30 p.m.

The programme combines speeches, music and literature. Teemu Knuutti, chair of the municipal executive board, will give the opening remarks. Laihian Mieslaulajat will perform, including Laihian laulu. The main anniversary speech will be delivered by Mari-Leena Talvitie, Finland's Minister of Science and Culture.

The programme also features music by Veikko Siponkoski and young musicians from the Kuula Institute, as well as a literary performance by author Paula Nivukoski. Bishop Matti Salomäki will give a speech, followed by Finlandia. The event will be hosted by Jarmo Kajaala.

A traditional soup meal organised by local reservists will be served in the Monitoimitalo courtyard and at the central school dining hall. Admission to the celebration is free. People who own a Finnish national costume are encouraged to wear it.

Laihia became an independent parish on September 15, 1576, when it was separated from Kyrö and Korsholm. In 1606, Laihia also became a separate administrative parish.

Four and a half centuries later, Laihia is ready for a celebration worthy of its remarkable history. Source: Laihia 450, Laihian seurakunta and Laihian kunta.

VAASA

Political evening in Vaasa – six parliamentary parties take the stage

The role of the Nordic countries in the EU will be discussed when representatives of six Finnish parliamentary parties meet the public in Vaasa on Monday.

GALLERY WEEK

Art comes close – national Gallery Week opens doors to 72 galleries A gallery from Vaasa involved



Audiogalleria_Galleriaviikko2025 Photo Vesa Ranta

n September, something unusual happens in Finland. You don't have to travel to a museum or buy a ticket for art – the doors of galleries open all over the country.

Finnish visual arts will have its own theme week in September, when the national Gallery Week will be held from 21 to 27 September 2026. This year, the event, which will be held for the second time, will spread to as many as 23 localities and 72 art galleries.

The goal is ambitious but easy to understand: the aim is to bring art closer to ordinary Finns.

The organisers of Gallery Week remind us that entering a gallery does not require knowledge of art history, fancy terms or a ready-made opinion. It is enough to be curious.

"You can come and see, experience and interpret art from your own starting point," the event organisers say.

In addition to exhibitions, there will be surprises

During the week, in addition to exhibitions, the galleries will organise artist meetings, workshops, performances, concerts, openings and guided tours, among

other things. The event calendar includes, for example, a lecture by curator Anna Kortelainen in Järvenpää and an experimental workshop in Kemi focusing on biomaterial made from eggshells.

Attention has also been paid to accessibility. In Lahti, Gallery Uusi Kipinä will organise a sign-language exhibition tour on Saturday, 26 September at 1 pm.

One of the interesting aspects of Gallery Week is its versatility. During the same week, you can stop by traditional painting, participate in a workshop or get to know experimental contemporary art.

And best of all: as a rule, admission to art exhibitions and events is free.

Gallery Week was created for the first time in 2025. At that time, more than 70 galleries participated in the event, and the programme included more than a hundred exhibitions and numerous other events.

The 2026 event is coordinated by Muu, the Association of Finnish Sculptors, the Finnish Printmakers' Association, the Finnish Painters' Union and the Finnish Association of Photographic Artists. The Gallery Week is organised with the support of the Arts and Culture Department.

So, in the last week of

September, you should take a little test: enter the gallery even if you don't consider yourself an art person.

You may be surprised by what you find on the wall – and even more so by what the work evokes in your own mind.

Time: 21.–27.9.2026
Location: 23 locations in Finland, 72 galleries
Entrance fee: free admission to exhibitions and events

Source: Gallery Week

Vaasa's art scene gets its own spotlight – Fringe opens its doors during Gallery Week

It is worth heading to Sepäнкyläntie in Vaasa at the end of September. The Fringe Gallery participates in the national Gallery Week and offers a glimpse into the more experimental world of contemporary art.

When the national Gallery Week starts on 21 September 2026, the Vaasa-based Fringe will also be present. The gallery is one of the more than 70 participants of the Finnish Gallery Week and brings its own, strongly experimental perspective to the event.

The Fringe is located at Sepäнкyläntie 2, Vaasa, and operates in conjunction with Filmverkstaden. The gallery's focus is on contemporary art, especially experimental film, alternative

photography, moving image, and installations.

So it's not just an ordinary gallery.

Fringe describes itself as an artist-led gallery that boldly seeks the periphery of art and new ways to combine photography, film, light and material, for example. In addition to exhibitions, the gallery also hosts film screenings, sound art, live film performances, artist speeches and lectures.

On Saturday, let's take a peek behind the scenes

The Vaasa programme of the Gallery Week includes one particularly interesting event.

On Saturday, 26 September from 2 pm to 2.45 pm, the Fringe invites the public to take a short tour behind the scenes of the gallery. The tour will include a solo exhibition by visual artist and experimental filmmaker Paola Guzmán Figueroa.

The idea of the event is to offer the audience a closer glimpse into what is happening in the gallery – and what kind of art is created and presented within its walls.

The Fringe's activities fit well with the idea of the Gallery Week: you can come to the gallery without prior knowledge and let the works surprise you.

Source: Fringe

A major political discussion will take place at the University of Vaasa on Monday, September 21, when the Advisory Board for Defence Information (PFI/MTS) holds an open public event.

The evening begins with coffee at 4:15 p.m. At 5 p.m., the event opens with remarks from PFI chair and Member of Parliament Jarno Linnell, participating remotely, together with Vaasa Mayor Tomas Häyry and University of Vaasa Dean Raine Hermans.

At 5:30 p.m., Minister for European Affairs and Ownership Steering Joakim Strand will speak about the strengthening role of the Nordic countries in the European Union.

The main political panel starts at 6:15 p.m. It brings together six MPs representing parliamentary parties from the Vaasa electoral district: Juha Mäenpää (Finns Party), Joakim Strand (Swedish People's Party), Mikko Savola (Centre Party), Matias Mäkynen (Social Democratic Party), Janne Jukkola (National Coalition Party) and Peter Östman (Christian Democrats).

The discussion will be moderated by Joonas Kuikka, journalist at Ilkka-Pohjalainen.

The bilingual event takes place at the Wolff Auditorium in the main building of the University of Vaasa, Wolffskavägen 32, and will end before 7:30 p.m.

Registration is not compulsory for attending in person, although the organisers recommend it. Registration is required for those wishing to watch the livestream. Source: City of Vaasa / PFI.

HOUSING COSTS

Good news for homeowners: Ostrobothnia dominates Finland's low-cost list



Kokkola remains Finland's cheapest municipality in the comparison, while Jakobstad and Korsholm also make the top five.

There is encouraging news for housing costs in western Finland. According to the Finnish Real Estate Federation's latest Index House 2026 comparison, Kokkola remains the most affordable municipality for locally determined property costs.

Jakobstad ranks third and Korsholm fourth. Three municipalities from Ostrobothnia and Central Ostrobothnia therefore make the national top five for low costs. Rauma is second and Kempele fifth.

In Kokkola, the compared property costs amount to €2.88 per square metre per month. In Helsinki, at the opposite end of the ranking, the figure is €4.30. For a 90-square-metre apartment, the difference adds up to more than €1,500 a year.

The comparison includes costs such as energy, waste management and property taxes. Overall, these costs increased by about 2 percent from the previous year, compared with an average increase of 3.5 percent a year earlier.

NEWS

ALZHEIMER

Tomorrow is World Alzheimer's Day – why memory deserves our attention



Tomorrow, September 21, the world turns its attention to Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.

Alzheimer's Day is not only about disease and loss. It is also about research, hope, early diagnosis, support – and making sure that people affected by memory disorders do not have to face them alone.

World Alzheimer's Day has been observed since 1994. The international campaign aims to raise awareness and challenge the stigma surrounding Alzheimer's and other dementias. The Alzheimer's Association says more than 55 million people worldwide are affected by Alzheimer's disease.

When does ordinary forgetfulness become a warning sign?

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive brain disorder and the most common progressive memory disorder. One of its earliest and most important symptoms is declining memory, particularly difficulty remembering recent events and learning new information. As the disease progresses, language, orientation, problem-solving and everyday abilities can also become affected.

But forgetting a name occasionally or misplacing your keys does not automatically mean Alzheimer's. Memory problems can have many causes. If changes become persistent, noticeable and begin interfering with everyday life, however, medical assessment is worthwhile.

There is also reason for

hope. An early diagnosis can provide access to treatment, rehabilitation and support while a person is still able to participate actively in decisions about their future. Medicines can relieve symptoms and, in some cases, slow the progression of the disease.

Malax puts memory in the spotlight

In Malax, Ostrobothnia, an information event will be held tomorrow, September 21, at Övermalax parish hall from 10 am to noon, in Swedish. The event, organised by the municipality together with several local partners, will focus on brain health and lifestyle, living with a memory disorder, support for patients and relatives, and the help available through the memory clinic. The morning ends with a joint question ses-

sion followed by coffee and informal discussion.

In Finland, Memory Week runs from September 21 to 27. The Finnish Memory Association, Muistiliitto, uses the week to increase awareness of memory disorders and to highlight the right of people with dementia and their loved ones to a good life on their own terms. On September 21, an open online lecture will take place from 4 to 5.30 pm, featuring Professor Eino Solje, a leading Finnish researcher in memory disorders.

The message is simple: memory problems deserve attention, not shame. The sooner concerns are discussed, the sooner help can begin. References: Alzheimer's Association, Terveystieteiden tutkimuskeskus, Municipality of Malax and Muistiliitto.

NEWS

The study covers 59 Finnish cities and municipalities. It uses a standardized apartment building as its model, with average energy, water and waste consumption. The costs included in the comparison represent, on average, slightly more than half of the total maintenance expenses of housing companies. Source: Finnish Real Estate Federation, Index House 2026

MALAX and SUNDOM

Food robots are rolling in – Sundom is next



Small and friendly food-delivery robots are becoming an increasingly familiar sight in Ostrobothnia. The little robots are already operating in Malax, and next week they will begin rolling through Sundom.

Looking rather like small bears on wheels, the robots move carefully along the roads and follow traffic rules with remarkable precision. Their mission is simple: to deliver groceries directly to families at home.

In Sundom, the robots will be able to travel up to three kilometres along the area's winding roads. For customers, the service offers a convenient way to receive their groceries without having to make a trip to the shop themselves.

The service is not free, however. Customers pay a delivery fee, while staff collect the items on the shopping list and prepare the order for the robot to transport.

The little robots are another sign of how everyday services are changing. In the future, the family's groceries may well arrive at the front door quietly rolling along the road – on four small wheels.

MALAX

Memory at the centre of Malax's information day

What happens when memory starts to fail – and where is the help? These are questions that are at the centre of Maalahti International Alzheimer's Day on Monday 21 September. An information day will be organised at the Övermalax parish hall from 10 am to 12 noon. The programme includes brain health, lifestyle, support for people with memory disorders and their families, and information about the services of the Memory Outpatient Clinic. There will also be a joint Q&A session and the opportunity to meet others. Above all, the organisers want to convey knowledge, hope and community. No one should have to stand alone when their memory changes.

Time and place: Monday 21.9 at 10–12, Övermalax

NEWS

THE PUDDLE

The programme for The Puddle is ready: magic, adventure, music and octopuses are promised



The Puddle - Children's Culture Weeks, produced by the City of Vaasa's Culture and Library Services, will once again offer many activities and experiences for families with children throughout October.

Pölen, Lätäkko. the Puddle - Culture Weeks for children will be held 1-31.10.2026.

Pölen is filled with workshops, children's art, concerts, dance and singing, story times and museum tours. Pölen's programme is organised for families with children, early childhood education and grades 1-6 in different parts of the city. Most of the programme is free of charge.

Magical opening on 1.10 at 5-7.30 pm at the Main Library

The pool starts on 1.10 in the morning with the opening tour of the Magician Karis for the students of Suvilahden koulu and the children of Teeriniemen päiväkoti. The tour is offered by cultural services. At the pre-events of the Vaasa Museums, daycare centres and schools can participate in art workshops.

At the opening event for the whole family on 1.10 at 17.00-19.30 at the Main Library, Kari the Magician will perform at 18.00. The opening programme also includes dancing, the opening of Studio Pölen, the

escape game In the Eye of the Storm and many other pleasant programmes.

During the inauguration, TaiKon's community artwork will be presented, and you can participate in it throughout the Puddle. The children's section of the Main Library celebrates Winnie the Pooh's 100th anniversary in many different ways. The A Little Rhymes writing campaign, which is part of the activities organised by the Welfare Unit, invites you to make rhymes. A good mood provides various task points in the library's yard, and you can also leave a message in a bottle to the library.

Naming contest for the sea monster and Valfabetet - Vaasa's own alphabet

Last year, the students of Kristillinen koulu made a nice mascot for Pölen, a sea monster that was five meters high. The naming competition for the sea monster opens on 1.10 and it ends on 15.10. Book prizes will be raffled off between the participants.

The Mervy Monster's name day celebration will be celebrated at an event for the whole family on Saturday 17 October at 10.30-13.00 in the Drama Hall of the Main Library in the form of storytelling and sea adventures both indoors and outdoors.

When Vaasa turns 420, it is time to create its own alphabet for Vaasa. Therefore,

on 2.10 at 14.00-16.30, an election fabet will be put together in the Drama Hall of the Main Library.

The whole family enjoys Studio Pölen

During the month of October, you can paint on your own in Studio Pölen (in the Matilda room), which is open during the library's opening hours. The works and decorations of summer artists from the Hampuis-to and Lilla Kasen daycare centres and youth services are displayed there. In Studio Pula, you can also create art on your own or play the Pölen board game, developed by the students of Hieta-lahden koulu. You can also solve the escape game In the Eye of the Storm, which was designed by class 6 A of the Länsimetsän koulu.

Singing in the Puel: sing-along evening with children's songs

Pölen also invites you to sing children's songs together. Accordionist Aila Ala-Aho will lead the sing-along during the autumn holidays on 15 October at 6-7.30 pm in the Drama Hall at the City Library. Rhythm instruments will also be made together, so it is a good idea to bring your own small jar.

Art splash - Saturdays for families with children at the main library

The Art Splash offers unforgettable cultural experiences for families with children.

On 3.10 at 10.30-13.00, we will get acquainted with the autumn forest and its animals and plants together with the shrew, Vips. At the Kvarken Nature School's task points, there are activities inside and outside.

At 10.10 at 10.30 and at 12.00 during the concerts Rhythms of the Pool, participants will be introduced to special instruments and ways of playing under the direction of multi-instrumentalist Julius Rantala: at 10.30 the concert will be presented in Finnish and Swedish and at 12 in English. In a workshop, you can have fun with water painting.

The goal of Pölen is to offer children and families an opportunity to create and experience art. An extensive network of actors involved in activities for children and families is involved in the planning and implementation of the programme. In addition, early childhood education and schools are involved in the implementation of Pölen, and they are also targeted at programme offerings. Greetings and wishes can be submitted for future Pua's Wish Pools Studio Pula.

The entire programme will be published on the City of Vaasa's Cultural Services website: vasa.fi/pol.

City of Vaasa | Press release 28.8.26

NEWS

parish home. Registration no later than 16.9. Reference: Malax municipality.

MALAX

Go for a quiz walk - and maybe go home as a winner

Can you exercise, learn about the right of public access and also win prizes? In Malax, the answer is yes. The Family on the Move project invites you to a quiz along Major's nature trail. The 1.2-kilometre-long trail contains eight questions that test your knowledge of the right of public access. Just bring your family and head out on the trail. The concept is simple: a little exercise, a little brain teaser and a chance to win. Hopefully, no major muscle soreness will have to come home with you - but one or two new knowledge certainly does.

Location: Majors naturtrail, Malax. Reference: Malax municipality.

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 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

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 school-children 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 overwhelmingly 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 towards 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

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

WÄRTSILÄ

The hospital that sails to those in need – Wärtsilä strengthens Mercy Ships’ lifeline



When healthcare cannot reach patients, the hospital itself can set sail. Wärtsilä is now helping ensure that two Mercy Ships hospital vessels remain ready to deliver vital medical care.

The Finnish technology company has signed new long-term service agreements with Mercy Ships International. The deal includes a five-year renewal covering the Global Mercy, the world’s largest purpose-built civilian hospital ship, and a three-year service agreement for the organisation’s new Africa Mercy II. Both vessels are equipped with Wärtsilä engines.

For Mercy Ships, reliable machinery is not simply a technical matter. A vessel that cannot operate cannot reach patients who may have little or no access to advanced surgical care.

The agreements cover spare parts, field services, crew training and Wärtsilä’s Expert Insight digital predictive-maintenance system. By combining advanced analytics, artificial intelligence and engineering expertise, the system is designed to identify potential problems before they develop into disruptive failures.

The Global Mercy has six operating rooms and around 200 patient beds. Mercy Ships provides free surgery and medical training, primarily in underserved communities in Africa.

The mission is ultimately simple: keep the hospital moving, keep the operating rooms running and bring treatment to people who need it most.

Reference: Wärtsilä press release, 3 September 2026

Image caption: Global Mercy™, prototype for the Africa Mercy II, recently arrived in Ghana West Africa © Mercy Ships

SOCIAL MEDIA

EU launches historic proposal: Social media banned for children under 13

Ursula von der Leyen presents the "EU Kids Act"



Tensions between two distant conflicts edged closer this summer when Ukrainian forces struck vessels linked to Iranian military supplies heading to Russia across the Caspian Sea. One Iranian commercial ship was hit, killing a sailor, according to Tehran, while Kyiv claimed the cargo included equipment destined for the Russian war effort. Diplo-mats quickly intervened to prevent open retaliation, but the incident highlighted how arms flows and intelligence sharing between Moscow and Tehran are drawing the Ukraine and Iran wars into overlapping flashpoints. Analysts warn that further strikes in this landlocked waterway could force major powers into direct confrontation spanning Eurasia. For an evening paper, the episode underscores the growing risk that regional wars no longer stay contained.

Based on reports from international diplomatic and security sources, July–September 2026. Image: EU, Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence

EU AND CANADA

EU opens the door to Canada – Trump threatens Europe with tariffs

A striking proposal from Brussels has triggered a sharp response from Washington. Canada could become the EU's first associate member, while Donald Trump warns Europe of possible economic retaliation.

European Commission President Ursula

first associate member.

The idea would not mean full EU membership. Instead, it would create a new and unusually close form of partnership with a country outside the EU. Possible areas of cooperation include defence, energy, critical minerals, artificial intelligence and advanced technology.



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney attended von der Leyen's address and welcomed the initiative. On Thursday, September 17, he addressed the European Parliament, thanking Europe for the invitation and highlighting the many connections between Canada and Europe – from shared democratic values and history to growing economic and security

cooperation.

Then came the reaction from Washington.

US President Donald Trump warned that the proposed arrangement could be a “hostile act”. He said the United States could respond with very heavy tariffs on Europe or potentially stop trading with Europe in some areas if he judged the move to be hostile.

The EU and Canada already have a major economic framework through the CETA free-trade agreement. The new proposal would take the relationship well beyond trade and towards a broader strategic partnership.

For now, the exact meaning and legal structure of “associate membership” still have to be worked out.

Canada is moving closer to Europe – while Washington watches the development closely.

Source: European Commission, Prime Minister of Canada

Image: EU, Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence

SAUDI ARABIA

Pipeline Blackout Rattles Global Oil Routes



Saudi Arabia abruptly shut its East-West pipeline after drones launched from Iraqi territory struck sections of the line, injuring several people. The pipeline is a key alternative route that bypasses the contested Strait of Hormuz, making the closure especially sensitive amid the ongoing US-Israeli campaign against Iran. Simultaneously, Yemen's Houthi forces seized a strategic island controlling approaches to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, tightening their grip on another vital shipping artery. Energy markets reacted with sharp price spikes as traders feared cascading disruptions to crude and refined

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

products. Eve-ning readers watching fuel costs will note that these twin developments place fresh press-ure on global supply chains already strained by months of conflict. Drawn from energy ministry statements and regional security updates, September 2026.

DONALD J TRUMP

Trump Eyes Midterm Finish Line for Iran Conflict



US President Donald Trump has floated a new timeline for the war against Iran, sug-gesting hostilities could wind down after the November midterm elections. He accused Tehran of trying to influence the American vote while warning against activity at a hea-vily fortified underground nuclear site. The conflict, now in its seventh month, has seen renewed exchanges of strikes on naval forces and oil tankers, with Washington enforcing a blockade and Iran responding with ballistic missiles. Domestic inflation and higher fuel prices have complicated the political picture. For evening audiences, the remarks signal that electoral calculations may increasingly shape battlefield decisions in the Middle East.

Compiled from presidential comments and official briefings, early September 2026.

RUSSIAN SO CALLED "ELECTION"

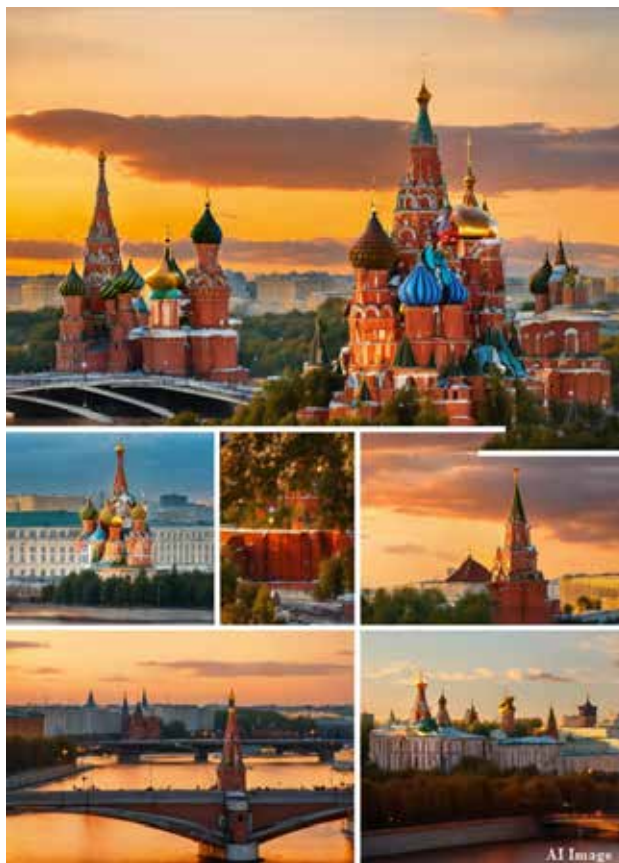
Russia votes – but where is the real opposition?

The final day of Russia's three-day parliamentary election arrives under tight Kremlin control. Critics of the war in Ukraine are urging a symbolic protest at noon.

Today, Sunday, September 20, is the final day of Russia's parliamentary elections. Voters are choosing a new 450-member State Duma, with half the seats elected through party lists and half in individual constituencies. Regional elections are also being held.

But the election takes place in a political environment radically different from a competitive European democracy. The liberal Yabloko party, the only registered party openly opposing Russia's war in Ukraine, was removed from the nationwide ballot by the Supreme Court in August. Yabloko candidates can still contest some individual constituencies, but the party cannot compete nationally.

Other parties on the ballot include the Communist Party, LDPR and other so-called "systemic opposition" parties. They are permitted to operate within Russia's political system but generally support President Vladimir Putin's policies on the major issues, including the war. United Russia, the Kremlin's main political vehicle, currently controls about two-thirds of the Duma.



That leaves opponents of the war with very limited ways to express themselves through the ballot box.

Noon could bring the queues

One of the most visible protest initiatives is "Noon for Peace", promoted by exiled opposition politician Ilya Yashin. He is calling on people who oppose the war and the Kremlin to arrive at polling stations at 12 noon today. The idea is

deliberately simple: if large numbers arrive simultaneously, queues could make dissent visible.

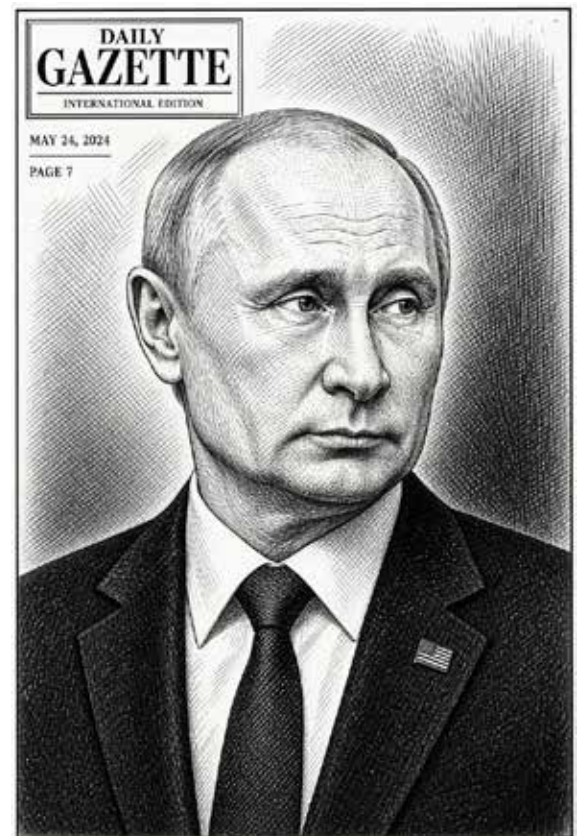
Yashin has urged voters to use the ballot to vote against United Russia, although other opposition groups recommend different tactics, including spoiling ballots or supporting individual anti-Kremlin candidates.

The noon action is therefore both a political protest and a visual test of how many Russians are prepared to publicly signal dissatisfaction.

In a tightly controlled election, even a long queue can become a political message.

VLADIMIR PUTIN

Putin Doubles Down on Ukraine and Support Tehran



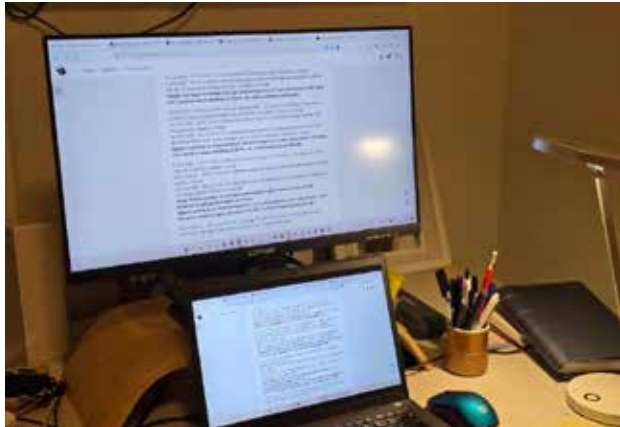
Russian President Vladimir Putin used a regional summit appearance to reaffirm intensified strikes on Ukraine and continued backing for Iran.

Meeting Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, he praised Iranian resilience and pledged practical assistance amid the US-Israeli campaign. On the Ukrainian front, Moscow faces Ukrainian drone attacks on energy infrastructure and shipping, while Russian forces press ahead with ballistic missile barrages that have left cities rotating power. Putin dismissed talk of a new domestic draft after upcoming elections (and very many in Russia do not believe him). The dual commitments illustrate how the two wars reinforce each other, complicating any quick diplomatic off-ramp. From Kremlin statements and summit coverage, September 2026.

UNIVERSITIES

TURKU UNIVERSITY

The Home Office Trap: More Sleep, But Up to 45 Minutes More Sitting



Working from bed sounds like a dream come true, and science proves you really do sleep more on remote work-days. However, that extra rest comes with a lazy trade-off: significantly less movement.

A brand-new study from the University of Turku reveals that while remote workers enjoy extra snooze time, they pay for it with their physical activity. The walking and cycling commutes that naturally occur on office days tend to vanish, replaced instead by sitting, lying down, and extra resting.

Published in the International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity, the research shows that remote work can rack up to 45 minutes of extra sedentary time per day. Fortunately, the research team offers five smart tips to keep remote workers moving: switch up your working postures during the day, combine sitting breaks with meaningful activities, take longer active pauses, establish team rules for breaks with your colleagues, and boost your leisure-time exercise.

Enjoy the morning sleep – just remember to stretch those legs! Reference: University of Turku

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.



Johan Pensar 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.

The research consortium includes the University of Vaasa, Laurea University of Applied Sciences, VTT, Pellervo Economic Research Institute PTT and the University of Lapland.

Among other things, the researchers want to find out when the organisations can help the authorities, how their preparedness works and what resources are actually available when the crisis comes. The financial value of the organisations' efforts must also be assessed.

An important question is also the law: what opportunities and limits does the Constitution set for the participation of NGOs?

The project combines document studies, interviews, surveys and workshops. The results can be used when Finland develops its preparedness for future disruptions and crises.

The project started in June 2026 and will run until June 2027. The work is led by Research Director Petri Uusikylä at the University of Vaasa.

Time and place: The research project will run nationally from June 2026 to June 2027, with the University of Vaasa as the coordinating university. Source: University of Vaasa

VAASA UNIVERSITY

Can a game help Finland cope with the next crisis? Yes – at least that's the idea behind a new collaboration between the University of Vaasa and the National Defence University

On 12 August, the rectors of the universities signed a cooperation agreement in Vaasa. The goal is long-

CLIMATE CHANGE

STATE OF THE UNION

Ursula van der Leyen about Climate Changes in her Speech on Sept 16



On climate change, this summer was the summer of truth. Almost no part of our continent was spared. In Belgium's High Fens, a peatland formed over centuries burned into a wasteland of ash.

Flames roared from the mountains of Ireland to the islands of Greece and Croatia. In the Alps, ancient glaciers retreat further every day. The impact of all of this is simply devastating: 660 000 hectares burnt to the ground. Some 12 million tonnes of crops lost.

Key rivers like the Danube, der Rhein and La Garonne are disappearing before our eyes.

More than 35 000 additional deaths during the heatwaves. Care homes and hospitals dangerously overheated. And all of this is a mere preview.

These were the hottest summer months ever – but probably the coolest of the years to come.

Science is clear. Europe is warming at double the global rate. Of course, the transition is complex. And we will need to adjust and learn along the way.

But there is no doubt: Europe can, must and will stay the course on its climate

targets.

This is not about mitigation or adaptation. We need both. And they need to strengthen each other. This is the only way to reach climate resilience. But we need to step up dramatically on preparedness.

We will present a new framework for climate resilience next month. We will identify 100 of the most vulnerable territories in Europe. And we will assess the risks – and at which level they should be managed.

This will give us a whole of society approach – all the way through to the local level where adaptation matters most. And it will aim to make Europe the champion in adaptation technologies – a huge emerging market.

Whether drought-resistant crops, flood prevention or energy-efficient cooling, Europe is already a leader. And we must capture this market.

Today, only around 25 % of catastrophe losses in Europe are covered by private insurance. This means that, far too often, national budgets become the insurer of last resort.

We need to take action to close this gap. This is why the Commission will set up a

Climate Insurance Alliance.

There can be no repeat of this summer. This is why we will also soon present a European Heatwave Plan. We need better early warning systems and better health preparedness. We need urban adaptation and cooling. And we need to support the most vulnerable.

The second point is on water and food security.

We know the risks of water scarcity for our farmers, energy and supply chains. Yet, European pipes lose almost one in every four litres Mostly through leakage. What a waste. So we will put forward a new European Water initiative. Because water is precious. For our industry – and for our food security.

Crops need water to grow, while livestock need it to survive. Entire harvests depend on it. This is why we will make proposals to improve risk management and address the insurance gap.

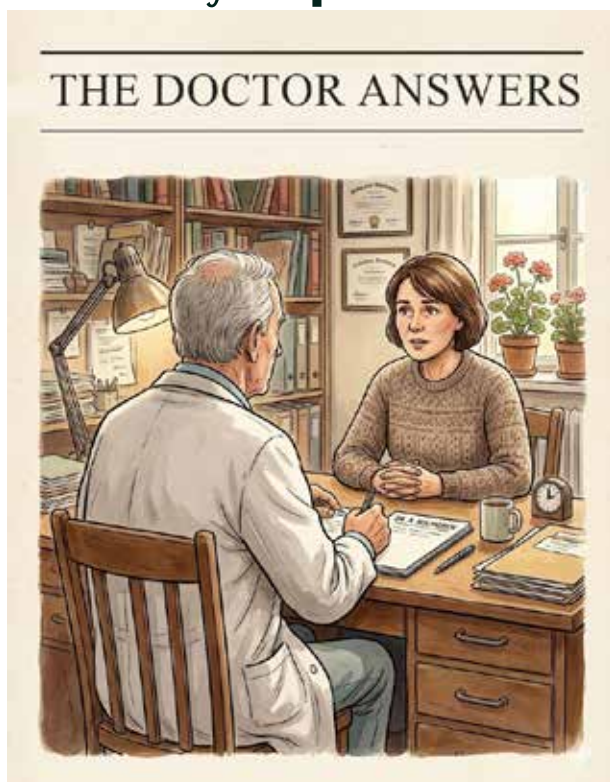
Once again, Europe's farmers have risen to the challenge of this never-ending summer

Image: EU, Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence

HEALTH

THE DOCTOR ANSWERS

How many steps ...



Question: Everyone knows that exercise is important for health, and walking is perhaps the easiest form of exercise. But how many steps do you really need to walk every day to get the best possible health effect? Can you even walk too much?

Answer: Walking is really one of the best medications – and they have the great advantage that they don't require a prescription or gym membership.

There has long been a myth that 10,000 steps a day would be the magic limit. This is not the case. Ten thousand steps became popular primarily through a Japanese pedometer that was launched before the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo. So it was not a medically determined goal from the beginning.

Instead, research shows that the health benefits begin with significantly fewer steps. The risk of cardiovascular disease and premature death, among other things, decreases with more walking, at least up to around 7,000–8,000 steps per day. But even 5,000 steps can go a long way. For many, 5,000–8,000 steps is therefore a very good and realistic goal. But there is no exact number that fits

everyone.

The pace is also important. A brisk walk where the heart rate rises slightly has a greater cardio effect than slowly strolling around. At the same time, leisurely walks are also valuable – especially for those who are older, unaccustomed to exercise or have some illness.

And can you walk too much? For the vast majority of people, it is very difficult to walk to a dangerous amount. But if you suddenly increase the amount sharply, you can get overuse problems, for example in the feet, knees or hips. The body needs time to get used to it.

Therefore, my advice is simple: forget about the pursuit of the perfect number. Today, if you walk 3,000 steps, maybe try to get up to 4,000. Then you can increase gradually.

And remember: every step counts. A walk to the store, the stairs instead of the elevator and an evening walk with the dog are also exercises.

5,000 steps is better than 0 – and 10,000 is not a requirement for a healthy life.

HEALTH

EATING HABITS

THL: The food alarm among Finnish teenagers – and why there is hope



Too little fruit and vegetables – and far too much meat. A new nationwide study by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, THL, shows that Finnish young people's diets remain a long way from the goals of a healthy and sustainable diet.

The findings are striking. Young people eat too little vegetables, berries, fruit, whole grains, legumes and fish. At the same time, their consumption of red meat and processed meat is high.

Finnish nutrition recommendations call for 500–800 grams of vegetables, berries and fruit every day. Among young people, average consumption is only about half that amount. Just five per cent eat vegetables, berries and fruit in line with the recommendations.

The picture changes dramatically when it comes to red meat and processed meat. For health reasons, the recommended maximum is 350 grams per week. Among girls, 34 per cent consume more than recommended. Among boys, the figure is a remarkable 89 per cent.

A clear difference between girls and boys

The study also reveals significant differences between the sexes. Relative to energy intake, girls eat more vegetables,

berries, fruit and whole grains. Boys consume more animal-based products, including meat and dairy.

Education also appears to matter. Young people studying at vocational institutions eat fewer berries and fruit, but more meat and processed meat products than students in lower and upper secondary schools. They also consume more energy drinks.

But THL stresses that this is not simply a story about young people making “bad choices”. The food environment itself influences what people choose.

The institute therefore calls for broader measures, including restrictions on marketing unhealthy foods to children and young people, health-based food taxation, regulation of how unhealthy products are placed in shops and a ban on selling energy drinks to people under 18.

Schools have an important role as well. School meals should follow nutrition recommendations, while food education should give young people practical skills in cooking, shopping and understanding healthy nutrition.

Regular meals and a varied diet support young people's energy levels, growth and development. THL also points out that risk factors for disease, including overweight and chronic inflammation, can begin to develop during childhood and adolescence.

Finland gets its first national picture

The Youth Nutrition Survey is the first national study in Finland to examine young people's food consumption and nutrient intake. THL conducted it during the 2024–2025 academic year in 22 municipalities, involving 12–20-year-olds. A total of 1,975 young people took part in dietary interviews, while 1,839 completed a background questionnaire.

The good news is that eating habits can change. Better nutrition does not require perfection. More vegetables, berries, whole grains and legumes – and somewhat less meat – can be small changes with a very large long-term impact.

Reference: Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), Youth Nutrition Survey, 26 August 2026.

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 com-

plain 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

LAIHIA 450

Laihia turns 450 – historic celebration takes over the municipality on Sunday



Church bells, music, speeches and a proud look back at history: on Sunday, Laihia celebrates 450 years of its historic parish.

Sunday, September 20, will be a special day in Laihia. The municipality and parish are marking the 450th anniversary of the establishment of Laihia as an independent parish with a full day of celebrations.

The day begins at 10 a.m. with a special anniversary service at Laihia Church, at Laihiantie 37. The service will also include the installation of Tiina Keinänen, Master of Theology and pastor, as the new parish vicar.

After the service, the celebrations continue at Laihia's Monitoimitalo community centre, Länsitie 62. The event runs from noon until 3 p.m., with the main ceremonial programme beginning at 1:30 p.m.

The programme combines speeches, music and literature. Teemu Knuutti, chair of the municipal executive board, will give the opening remarks. Laihian Mieslaulajat will perform, including Laihian laulu. The main anniversary speech will be delivered by Mari-Leena Talvitie, Finland's Minister of Science and Culture.

ART CENTER TORNI

Colour Storm Hits Vaasa – Kimmo Laitinen Takes Over Torni!



VArt lovers, take note! Art Center Torni at Pitkätie 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.meteoriihi.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

USA

DONALD J TRUMP

Trump makes sensational announcement: The Iran war could end – right after the election



Donald Trump has now pointed out a very precise moment for the end of the U.S. war with Iran: just after the midterm elections in November.

At the Republican National Convention in Dallas on September 9, 2026, Trump claimed that the war will end after the election. At the same time, he accused Iran of trying to influence the US election.

The move comes after months of increasingly fierce fighting. The conflict has already been going on for about six months and has had major economic consequences. The strategically important Strait of Hormuz is a central part of the conflict, as about a fifth of the world's oil and gas shipments pass through the area.

The latest escalation has caused

oil prices to rise above \$100 per barrel. Iran has claimed to have attacked ships in the area after US strikes on Iranian oil tankers. The US, meanwhile, has continued to defend its military operations.

Trump says that economic pressure will eventually force Iran to give in and that the situation can then be calmed down.

But there is no peace agreement yet.

That makes his timetable exactly what it is: a political promise, not a confirmed peace plan.

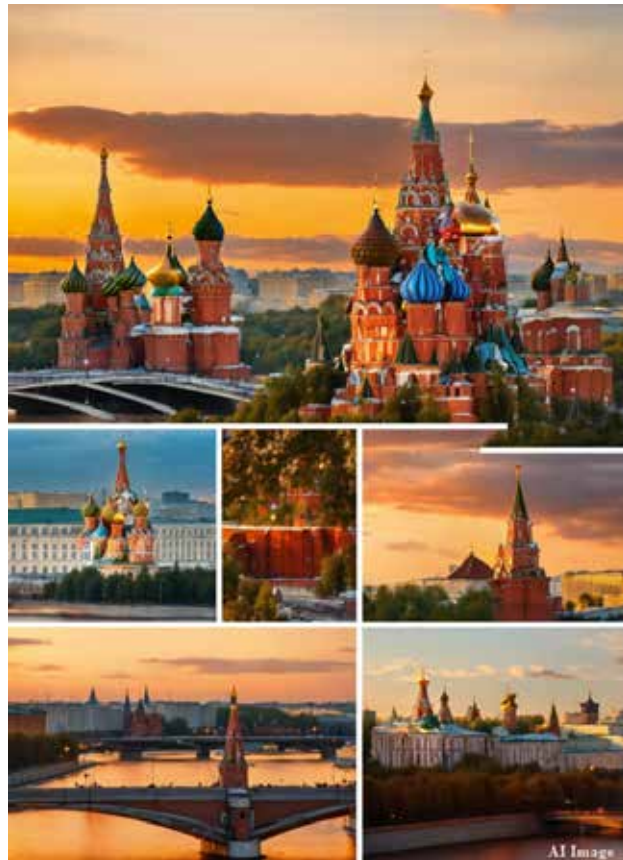
And when American voters go to the polls on November 3, 2026, both the war and the price of oil could become crucial issues.

Source: Truth Social

RUSSIA

RUSSIA

Russia's growing isolation from the West



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

International Relations: Closed Borders and Putin's View

In addition to digital and cultural measures, Russia has also been hit by physical limitations. After the invasion of Ukraine, many Western countries have closed their borders to Russian citizens. Tourist visas are denied, and the opportunity to travel west has effectively disappeared. President Vladimir Putin has expressed that this is a development he welcomes, as it prevents Russian citizens from leaving the country, especially in times of mobilization or political unrest.

Impact on citizens

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

Prospects

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

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

A new Iron Curtain is emerging
In recent years, Russia has taken steps towards an increasingly isolated existence in relation to the West. This is done digitally, culturally and physically. The country's leadership has introduced a series of measures to limit citizens' contacts with Western ideas, communication tools and travel opportunities. The goal is to strengthen control over the flow of information and thus also over the population.

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

MAX: State-supervised alternative

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

Education policy: Reduced English teaching

The government has also proposed to reduce the teaching of English and other Western languages in schools and universities. The aim is to counteract "cultural infiltration" and strengthen the Russian language and identity. However, critics believe that this risks further isolating young Russians and making future international contacts more difficult, both in education and working life.

Digital isolation: Plans for a dedicated Internet

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

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 materi-

als. 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



Maria Martinau
22.6.1847, Novomirgorod, Venäjä
10.2.1914, Helsinki
Portrait of a Woman, circa 1880 - 1899
Finnish National Gallery Collection / Ateneum Art Museum, Yrjö and Nanny Kaunisto Collection
Photo: Finnish National Gallery / Hannu Pakarinen

George Orwell

1984

Part 45

For a moment he was violently angry. During the month that he had known her the nature of his desire for her had changed. At the beginning there had been little true sensuality in it. Their first love-making had been simply an act of the will. But after the second time it was different. The smell of her hair, the taste of her mouth, the feeling of her skin seemed to have got inside him, or into the air all round him. She had become a physical necessity, something that he not only wanted but felt that he had a right to. When she said that she could not come, he had the feeling that she was cheating him. But just at this moment the crowd pressed them together and their hands accidentally met. She gave the tips of his fingers a quick squeeze that seemed to invite not desire but affection. It struck him that when one lived with a woman this particular disappointment must be a normal, recurring event; and a deep tenderness, such as he had not felt for her before, suddenly took hold of him. He wished that they were a married couple of ten years’ standing. He wished that he were walking through the streets with her just as they were doing now but openly and without fear, talking of trivialities and buying odds and ends for the household. He wished above all that they had some place where they could be alone together without feeling the obligation to make love every time they met. It was not actually at that moment, but at some time on the following day, that the idea of renting Mr Charrington’s room had occurred to him. When he suggested it to Julia she had agreed with unexpected readiness. Both of them knew that it was lunacy. It was as though they were intentionally stepping nearer to their graves. As he sat waiting on the edge of the bed he thought again of the cellars of the Ministry of Love. It was curious how that predestined horror moved in and out of one’s consciousness. There it lay, fixed in future times, preceding death as surely as 99 precedes 100. One could not avoid it, but one could perhaps postpone it: and yet instead, every now and again, by a conscious, wilful act, one chose to shorten the interval before it happened.

At this moment there was a quick step on the stairs. Julia burst into the room. She was carrying a tool-bag of coarse brown canvas, such as he had sometimes seen her carrying to and fro at the Ministry. He started forward to take her in his arms, but she disengaged herself rather hurriedly, partly because she was still holding the tool-bag.

‘Half a second,’ she said. ‘Just let me show you what I’ve brought. Did you bring some of that filthy Victory Coffee? I thought you would. You can chuck it away again, because we shan’t be needing it. Look here.’

She fell on her knees, threw open the bag, and tumbled out some spanners and a screwdriver that filled the top part of it. Underneath were a number of neat paper packets. The first packet that she passed to Winston had a strange and yet vaguely familiar feeling. It was filled with some kind of heavy, sand-like stuff which yielded wherever you touched it.

‘It isn’t sugar?’ he said.

‘Real sugar. Not saccharine, sugar. And here’s a loaf of bread—proper white bread, not our bloody stuff—and a little pot of jam. And here’s a tin of milk—but look! This is the one I’m really proud of. I had to wrap a bit of sacking round it, because—’

But she did not need to tell him why she had wrapped it up. The smell was already filling the room, a rich hot smell which seemed like an emanation from his early childhood, but which one did occasionally meet with even now, blowing down a passage-way before a door slammed, or diffusing itself mysteriously in a crowded street, sniffed for an instant and then lost again.

‘It’s coffee,’ he murmured, ‘real coffee.’

‘It’s Inner Party coffee. There’s a whole kilo here,’ she said.



‘How did you manage to get hold of all these things?’

‘It’s all Inner Party stuff. There’s nothing those swine don’t have, nothing. But of course waiters and servants and people pinch things, and—look, I got a little packet of tea as well.’

Winston had squatted down beside her. He tore open a corner of the packet.

‘It’s real tea. Not blackberry leaves.’

‘There’s been a lot of tea about lately. They’ve captured India, or something,’ she said vaguely. ‘But listen, dear. I want you to turn your back on me for three minutes. Go and sit on the other side of the bed. Don’t go too near the window. And don’t turn round till I tell you.’

Winston gazed abstractedly through the muslin curtain. Down in the yard the red-armed woman was still marching to and fro between the washtub and the line. She took two more pegs out of her mouth and sang with deep feeling:

They sye that time ’eals all things,
They sye you can always forget;
But the smiles an’ the tears across the years
They twist my ’eart-strings yet!

She knew the whole drivelling song by heart, it seemed. Her voice floated upward with the sweet summer air, very tuneful, charged with a sort of happy melancholy. One had the feeling that she would have been perfectly content, if the June evening had been endless and the supply of clothes inexhaustible, to remain there for a thousand years, pegging out diapers and singing rubbish. It struck him as a curious fact that he had never heard a member of the Party singing alone and spontaneously. It would even have seemed slightly unorthodox, a dangerous eccentricity, like talking to oneself. Perhaps it was only when people were somewhere near the starvation level that they had anything to sing about.

‘You can turn round now,’ said Julia.

HUMOUR ONE HUND- RED YEARS AGO

Old joke of the week:



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."

IN SCHOOL

- Was it you, Hans, who wrote on the board: "The teacher is a donkey".
- Yes it was.
- Well, it pleases me in any case that you stick to the truth.

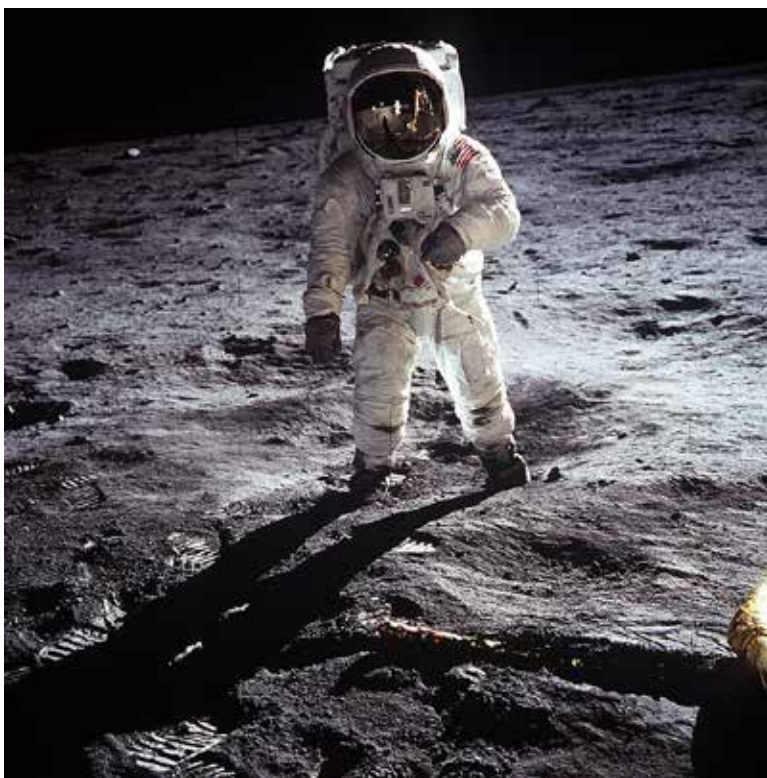
— I always feel it when it rains, in my legs and back. The sensitive gentleman:
— I also feel all the changes in the weather. The other night I woke up to the barometer falling'
— They're not possible!

TWO ANECDOTES ABOUT KANT

Two anecdotes about Kant, which prove his great presence of mind, are reported by Otto Schöndörffer in the "Philosophischer Almanach" dedicated to Kant's memory. Kant once followed his habit of equanimity and strolled on the so-called Philosopherdamm near Pregel, lost in deep thought. Then suddenly a man rushed up to him with a large butcher's knife in his hand and shouted: I must butcher you! Kant saw at once that he was dealing with an insane butcher's flock. He therefore calmly and firmly said to him: "You are mistaken, dear friend!" Today is not slaughter day. It's Wednesday, because slaughter day is on Friday. Namely, there were specific days of the week established for butchers to slaughter on. The madman started and laughed confusedly; You're right. He let the already menacingly raised arm drop and slowly withdrew. Another time the philosopher was walking through a narrow and crooked street in the old Königsberg, when suddenly two galloping horses rushed towards him. Kant did not have time to turn away, which was otherwise impossible on the narrow street. Now he had once read that horses never touched people who were lying on the ground, but that even during the fastest race they did not touch them. He therefore threw himself hastily down on the ground, and indeed the two horses dashed away over him without injuring him in the least.

THE WEATHER GAME. The Sensitive Lady:

Astronomic picture of the week:



Astronaut Buzz Aldrin on the Moon in Dec 1972

Full description: Astronaut Buzz Aldrin, Lunar Module pilot, walks on the surface of the Moon near the leg of the Lunar Module (LM) "Eagle" during the Apollo 11 extravehicular activity (EVA). Astronaut Neil A. Armstrong, commander, took this photograph with a 70mm lunar surface camera.
Phto: Neil A. Armstrong Public domain

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WASA DAILY

A modern newspaper with a layout with features of the press of the 1870s. Back then, newspapers had only 4-8 pages. Lots of text, but no images at all, so there's a lot to read on a few pages. Our paper is one of the very few newspapers in English serving English-speaking inhabitants in the Osthrobotnia region. The magazine contains quotations from old daily newspapers taken from the National Archives (digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi). GPT3, Gemini, Aria and Monica do some of the routine editing work, such as translation, corrector reading, and short notice writing. All texts have been checked by journalists and the editorial staff is responsible for all the content of the texts. Wasa Daily is a daily newspaper type publication, so far it is published on Sunday mornings. But our goal is for it to come out every morning in the future. The magazine is available online for free. Editor-in-chief Hans Björknäs. Readers' writings are welcome! The magazine is locally owned and will remain so. For ever! Editorial office: Wasa Daily, Koulukatu 37 B 7, 65100 Vaasa, tel. +358-40-5462455. Helsinki editorial office: Wasa Daily, Toinen linja 9 B 36, 00530 Helsinki. Phone +358-40-5462455. Email: wasadagblad@gmail.com

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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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 will-power, 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.

