



Wasa Daily

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24/7

Wasa Daily – Nr 1 – Sunday, January 4, 2026 – Our fourthth Year – ISSN 2965-2456

VAASA

No White Christmas - but a Nice White New Year



Hyvää Uutta Vuotta!



Gott Nytt År!



A Happy New Year!

Image of the week:



After the sstorm

VAASA

Make Your Voice Heard: Nominate the Vaasa Cultural Act of the Year 2025!

The City of Vaasa is calling on its residents to celebrate local creativity. Throughout January, anyone can nominate their favorite cultural achievement for this prestigious annual award.

It is time to shine a light on the people and projects that make Vaasa a vibrant place to live. The "Vaasa

Cultural Act of the Year 2025" award honors an individual, group, or organization that has enriched the city's cultural landscape during the past year. Whether it's an innovative event, a community-building project, or an artistic breakthrough, the city wants to hear your suggestions. The prize is worth 2,000 euros and is open for nominations until January 31, 2026. After the nomination period, a



jury will select finalists for a public vote. Last year, the amateur orchestra Wasa Sinfonietta took home the prize. Could this year's winner be a local festival, a striking art exhibition, or a grassroots initiative? Don't miss your chance to help decide who represents the best of Vaasa's culture in 2025.

<https://link.webropol.com/s/vuoden-vaasalainen-kulttuuriteko-2025>

OSTROBOTHNIA

VAASA

Savimaja: A New Creative Hub for Ceramics Opens in Vaasa



A new ceramic studio, Savimaja, has opened its doors in the heart of Vaasa. It offers a unique space for people of all ages to explore their creativity and experience the therapeutic touch of clay in a relaxed environment.

Savimaja provides a variety of courses ranging from beginner workshops to advanced techniques. Visitors can try their hand at pottery wheel throwing or hand-building during one-off sessions or longer courses. The studio also features an open-access space for independent work. The aim is to foster a community-driven environment where the rush of daily life slows down. Whether you're looking to pick up a new hobby or simply unwind with friends, Savimaja welcomes everyone to discover the joy of ceramics.

<https://savimaja.fi/>

VAASA

Seniors on the move!

The free Go for Healthy Years event, which offers inspiration for walking and well-being, is organised by the City of Vaasa for seniors. The sports event will be held on Friday 16 January 2026 at 13–15.30 on the second floor of Vaasan Sähkö Arena.

Participants can test their balance, participate in gymnastics sessions and get expert advice on how to prevent falls. Local exercise opportunities will also be presented during the day. The aim is to promote both physical health and community among older residents. It's a great opportunity to find new ways to move and be inspired together with others. Welcome!

Source: vaasa.fi

LIDL

Eating Healthy is Now Easy – Fruits and Vegetables Up to 30% Off



Lidl kicks off 2026 with a record-breaking campaign, offering discounts across the entire produce section throughout January.

The New Year often brings resolutions for a healthier lifestyle. To support this change, Lidl is slashing prices on all fruits and vegetables for the duration of January. These discounts are substantial, with some items priced up to 30% lower than usual. The promotion applies to the entire fruit and vegetable department in all Lidl stores across Finland.

Promoting a healthy diet is part of Lidl's broader goal to encourage plant-based eating. In collaboration with WWF Finland, stores have also added guidance to help customers make choices that are better for both their health and the environment. Lower prices make it easier and more affordable to follow national nutritional guidelines, which recommend consuming about 800 grams of fruits and vegetables daily.

VAASA

Fresh Sushi Around the Clock – New Vending Machine Launches in Vaasa



Vaasa is getting a taste of the future of fast food as a new sushi and noodle vending machine launches in the city, offering fresh meals day and night. Located on Hietasaarenkatu, between Kauppapuistikko and Teräksenkuja, the machine brings restaurant-quality convenience to one of Vaasa's busiest areas.

The concept is simple: grab, go, and enjoy. With no queues, no waiting times, and no closing hours, customers can pick up fresh sushi and noodle dishes whenever hunger strikes – whether during a late-night stroll or an early morning commute.

The launch reflects a growing demand for flexible dining solutions and automated food services, already popular in major cities worldwide. For Vaasa, the vending machine adds a modern, urban touch while responding to changing lifestyles and expectations around convenience and availability.

The machine is now open and ready to serve customers 24/7. Reference: K.Achi Sushi, launch information, Vaasa

KORSNÄS

Seabed Surveys Completed – Major Progress for Korsnäs Offshore Wind Project

The extensive seabed surveys at the Korsnäs offshore wind

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EDITORIAL

Wasa Daily, Waasan Päivälehti and Wasa Dagblad celebrate tree years of news, engagement and cultural coverage in our region

It is with great pleasure that we celebrate tree years of news, engagement and cultural coverage for our region through Wasa Dagblad, Waasan Päivälehti and Wasa Daily. Since their inception, these newspapers have become an important part of the local media landscape – and are also almost the only locally owned newspapers in Vaasa.



A unique contribution to the region
Wasa Daily, our English-language pride and one of the only English-language newspapers in Finland, is complemented by the Finnish-language Waasan Päivälehti and the Swedish-language Wasa Dagblad. Wasa Daily also publishes content in Ukrainian. These newspapers distinguish themselves not only through their local ownership but also through their focus on quality, objectivity and strong cultural coverage. Although the newspapers have so far only been published online once a week, we have reached readers through our focus on relevant news, in-depth cultural articles, historical themes and updates on climate issues.

Digital first – but with plans for the future
Our vision for the future is ambitious: we aim for daily publication on the net and a comprehensive paper newspaper every Friday, filled with content for the entire weekend. However, this is a development that requires time and support – especially from our sponsors and advertisers.

Cutting-edge technology
Wasa Daily is also a pioneer in the use of AI technology in journalism. Tools

such as ChatGPT-3, Gemini, Monica and Aria help us with everything from fact-checking and translations to creating news texts that are then carefully reviewed by the editorial staff. AI is only an aid, the journalists are fully responsible for the texts.

History guides us forward
We value history and its lessons – as the American philosopher George Santayana put it: "Those who cannot remember their history are condemned to repeat it." Our readers are regularly offered articles that shed light on the history of our region, which helps us better understand our past, present and future.

Together towards the future
As we now enter our third year of operation, we do so with great excitement and gratitude. We look forward to welcoming more readers and receiving their feedback. With this, we would like to extend a big thank you to all our readers and partners who have been with us during these two years. We wish you all a HAPPY NEW YEAR and look forward to even more news-packed days together.

New Year's Speech by President of the Republic of Finland Alexander Stubb on 1 January 2026



The turn of the year gives us an opportunity to pause. To reflect what we have done or left undone. To look back on where we succeeded and where we could have done better.

In my New Year's speech last year, I noted that we don't need to worry, we are doing fine, and we will build ourselves a good future.

During the past year, I have met a lot of great people around Finland, ranging from children and young people to the elderly. I visited schools, universities, companies, market places, barracks and nursing homes, to name but a few places.

These visits reinforced my belief that we are doing fine. And that, this year, we will do even better.

Each one of us can influence this through our own actions. The contribution of everyone counts. Yours. Mine. Ours.

We have many reasons to feel proud of Finland and our identity. Many see us as an exemplary country. We have an open, democratic and functional society.

Our quality of life is comparatively high. Our education is world-class. Many wish to learn from our security of supply. Our comprehensive security is widely admired. Our authorities are working together efficiently, as we have also seen in recent days. Our defence forces are respected.

All of this rests on our sense of community. Education, justice, equality, freedom and respect for our fellow citizens are integral to what it means to be Finnish. We are reliable and fair.

We Finns are good at setting goals for ourselves and working hard to achieve them. I propose that we set three goals for ourselves this year – peace, growth and caring.

The first goal is peace.

Local and regional conflicts across the globe are on the rise. We Finns are builders of peace. Our contribution is needed.

In this past year, Finland exercised influence well beyond its size.

We held onto our values and interests. We helped shape the transformation taking place in the world. We worked towards international cooperation and peace.

Our goal was to maximise Finland's influence around the world, especially in matters that are important to us, such as justice, democracy and freedom.

The main focus has been on supporting Ukraine, on our allies, and on global partnerships.

For nearly four years now, Russia has been waging a war of aggression in Ukraine. Its actions are illegal and immoral.

As a result of the war, more than one million people have died or been injured.

Over the past year, we have worked tirelessly towards peace together with Ukraine and our allies. Now, we are closer to peace than at any previous point during the war. At the same time, we cannot be certain that Russia is ready for peace.

Peace is often a compromise. We must be prepared to accept that there may be parts of an eventual peace agreement that do not align with our sense of justice.

However, we will do everything in our power to ensure that the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine will be preserved. Ukraine is part of a free and democratic Europe. Now and in the future.

We will continue our support for Ukraine. We will keep looking for a solution. Together with our allies, we will make sure that Russia will never again attack one of its neighbours.

Our relations with Russia have changed permanently. What remains unchanged is that Russia is our neighbour. Both Finland and Europe aim to have functioning and peaceful relations with Russia. But, ultimately, it all depends on Russia's actions.

Foreign policy is never simply black and white; it involves many shades of grey. Finland's interests call on us to see the world as it is, not only as we would like it to be.

This means we have to be honest with ourselves. Finland's diplomacy is not based on moral posturing or identity politics. It is based on values, interests and actions. An active foreign policy and sensible solutions increase Finland's influence.

Finland's and Europe's relations with the United States are in a state of transition. We must get used to this new situation. Cooperation is indispensable to both sides. Examples of this from the past year include the icebreaker deals, defence cooperation and peace talks in Ukraine.

At the same time, we must acknowledge that we do not always see eye to eye with the United States. It is in Finland's and Europe's best interests that we strengthen international rules and institutions, and advance efforts to combat climate change.

Finland's closest friends are in the Nordic countries and Europe. Nordic cooperation must be strengthened. European cooperation further deepened. Why? Because both involve Finland's values and interests. Finland's security is

based on a strong defence and NATO and EU membership.

It is often said that Europe has been overly reliant on Russian energy, American security and the Chinese economy. This statement is not far from the truth.

Europe must take more responsibility for its own future. But at the same time, we must acknowledge that major global challenges will not be solved only between Europeans or like-minded people.

We should see cooperation reaching beyond our traditional partners as an opportunity. Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American countries are the drivers of global growth. The role of Africa is increasingly important.

Like us, many of these countries agree that multilateralism and joint rules provide us with the most effective way to find shared solutions to shared problems. They are ready to defend and develop peaceful solutions and the rules-based international order.

Our second goal is growth.

I am worried about the state of the Finnish economy. Geopolitical uncertainty and Russia's war of aggression appear to be hitting our economy particularly hard.

Responsible finances require continuity beyond any single government. A cycle in which one government cuts and the next spends is unacceptable.

We need a long-term approach. The broad consensus across Parliament on the debt brake stands as an example of responsible decision-making that helps build trust in the economy.

Growth lays the foundation for our entire welfare society. Without growth, there is no welfare. We have all the building blocks we need to ensure sustainable growth. There are many paths forward. All of them are built on competence, research and education. We need to step up our investment in these areas.

Yesterday's growth will not benefit our tomorrow. Growth requires courage and hard work. We must fuel innovation and make sure Finland remains an attractive country for new investments and skilled people. As a NATO member, Finland offers a secure environment for investments – today and in the future.

Advances in technology affect everything. Thankfully, we have expertise in this area. Our strengths include information networks, quantum technology and critical minerals. These lie at the heart of the technological revolution: artificial intelligence.

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project area have now been successfully completed, despite challenging conditions in the Gulf of Bothnia. The data collected over more than seven months is a crucial milestone for planning and environmental assessments of the planned wind farm. Survey teams used sonar, magnetic measurements and ultra-high-resolution seismic mapping to chart the sea floor "stone by stone." In addition, 30 sediment samples were taken to analyze bottom composition and grain size – information vital for designing foundations and cable routes. Although the seabed proved rockier than anticipated, no major obstacles were identified, and the high-quality data gives engineers confidence moving into the next stages of the project. The results will inform foundation design, environmental assessments, and further technical planning. Reference: Metsähallitus, press release

VAASA/KORS HOLM

Liftis Fare Prices Stay the Same Despite VAT Reduction



Although Finland will reduce the value-added tax on public transport from 14% to 13.5% effective January 1, 2026, Liftis ticket prices will not be lowered. The joint public transport committee of the City of Vaasa and Korsholm made this decision on December 18, 2025. Officials explained that the VAT cut is too small to justify adjusting the existing fare structure – rounding changes could cause confusion. Rising overall operating costs for public transport also weighed into the decision. For passengers, this means that despite a modest tax relief on paper, Liftis fares will remain unchanged going into the new year. Source: City of Vaasa / Korsholm press release, 22 December 2025

MALAX

Move a little, feel a lot better – Malax launches fitness challenge

Residents of Malax are being encouraged to get moving with the I form för livet fitness campaign, designed to promote everyday physical activity. The idea is simple: 30 minutes of exercise earns one check on a fitness card.

The campaign runs from December 1, 2025, to May 31, 2026, and will now be held twice a year. Participants return their completed cards to collection boxes placed in local shops. A prize draw will be held in June for everyone who takes part.

The goal is to make exercise accessible and show that regular, moderate movement can make a big difference to long-term health. Source: Malax.fi

MALAX

Träffpunkten Named “Star of the Year” in Malax

In Malax, the psychosocial association Träffpunkten r.f. has been honored as Star of the Year 2025. The award was presented on December 3, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, following a community vote organized by the Council for People with Disabilities. Träffpunkten received 38 percent of the votes, beating other nominees. The association was recognized for its inclusive environment, dedicated staff, and varied programs that support people with disabilities and enhance quality of life. Träffpunkten is described as a welcoming space where participants can be themselves.

The prize was accepted by board member Klaus Wiberg and highlights the value of local volunteer work that strengthens community well-being. Source: Malax kommun, Malax.fi

NIGHT OF SCIENCE

The Night of Science – when will one come to Vaasa?

On 22 January 2026, Helsinki hosts the Night of Science with lectures, workshops, and experiments that make research alive and accessible.

Vaasa, however, still lacks a similar event despite having two universities and many researchers. Science should not stay behind university gates – it should be seen, heard, and experienced by everyone.

When will Vassa take the initiative? When will we have our own Night of Science, a celebration of curiosity, learning, and inspiration?

_ SAS

The airline SAS will increase the range of routes at Vaasa Airport next spring 2026

Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) announces a significant expansion on the route between Vaasa and Stockholm when the summer schedule goes into effect on March

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Photo Supplement

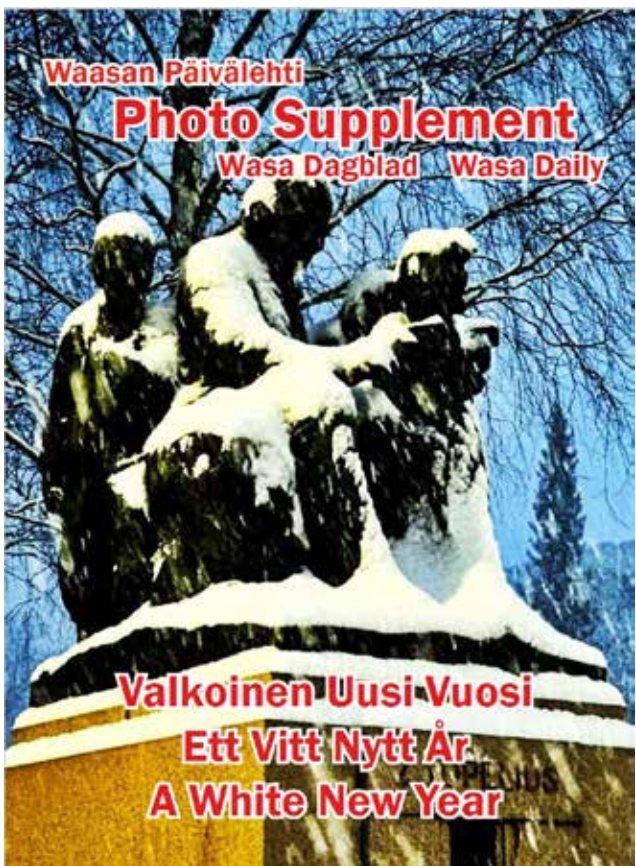


Photo Supplement - bpress.obh

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We must also ensure the conditions for growth in other sectors. We have a high number of excellent startups. We must do everything it takes to make sure these companies stay in Finland.

Exports are among the key drivers of growth in our economy. Geopolitical turmoil affects our economy. Protectionism and tariffs are detrimental to us, but fortunately, we are members of the EU. That brings stability to our economy and helps us manage our strategic dependencies.

When we joined the EU some 30 years ago, the assumption was that markets would drive all development. These days, however, states sometimes need to step in to help open global markets. As the President of the Republic, I will continue to promote Finnish exports around the world.

It is also clear, given our current demographic trend and age structure, that we need more work-based immigration. The key question is how we, as a society, manage to adapt to this new reality.

With the world in turmoil, efforts to combat climate change risk being relegated to the background. This must not happen. Climate change is an existential issue. The countries that take climate change seriously are the ones that will gain a competitive advantage. Finland must keep investing in green growth.

Our third goal is caring.

Amidst all this uncertainty, it is always worth taking a moment to return to the fundamentals. Based on nearly all indicators, Finland remains one of the best countries in the world. We are the happiest nation in the world.

At the same time, we must recognise that not all Finns are doing well.

Often, it is a question of fundamental needs not being met. People are experiencing financial difficulties. Unemployment. Insecurity. Health issues. Domestic violence. Racism. We must do better.

Society has a duty to support those who, for one reason or another, struggle to find their

place in it. As fellow citizens, we have the responsibility to care, to help those who need it.

We care by showing appreciation for our coworkers, our students, our teachers, our loved ones. Being appreciated makes us feel seen, it is something we all need. At times, caring also calls for sacrifices, putting our own needs aside.

At a time when the world around us feels increasingly serious, we must be able to find things that give us joy; otherwise, we will grow cynical and wilt away. Often, we find this joy in friends and coworkers, and in learning new things.

We must balance hard realities with imagination and culture. Many beautiful things and major discoveries first began with the human ability to imagine.

Combining effort and learning with imagination and the joy of creating often proves fruitful. The result is something we could not have anticipated. Such moments of insight are the spice of life. It is all about finding a balance.

Society is an ongoing project. Democracy is something we must uphold every single day. Welfare is not something that happens on its own. We must all work for it, individuals and society alike.

It is true that there are crises around the world and uncertainty also in Europe, but now is not the time for us to turn inward.

We have everything we need to succeed. Finland is the best country in the world to raise children. Let us be proud of our Finnish identity, the fact that we get to live in an independent and free country.

We are a small, resilient, northern nation. We must keep our feet on the ground but hold our heads high, eyes turned towards the beautiful blue Finnish sky.

Together, we will make this the year of peace, growth and caring.

On behalf of myself and Suzanne, I want to wish you all a happy and meaningful New Year.

Thank you and God bless you.

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25, 2026.

With the new timetables, the number of weekly flights will increase from the current six to eleven, and on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays, flights will be operated twice a day. This nearly doubled connection will offer passengers more flexibility and better connections to Scandinavia and more widely to Europe and beyond. The expansion is the result of cooperation between Vaasa Region Development Ltd (VASEK) and SAS, and it is expected to benefit both business and leisure travelers. Peter Källberg, Project Manager at VASEK, says that the additional services will improve the accessibility of the area and strengthen the airport's position as a significant hub. Increasing the number of trunk connections can also further support the region's businesses and international connections.



The new schedules will apply after the Easter holidays, but passengers will soon be able to book their flights for the 2026 season. The situation follows broader growth in the Vaasa airport area, where the aim is to develop air traffic and attract more connections both in Finland and abroad. Photo: Adrian Pingstone, Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain

ALCOHOL-FREE

ALKO: Alcohol-Free Sales Explode: Going "Zero" is the New Trend



Latest statistics from Alko reveal that the demand for alcohol-free beverages has grown at a record-breaking pace. No longer viewed merely

as substitutes, these drinks have become the primary choice for many during both celebrations and everyday life.

Alcohol-free wines and premium mocktail bases, in particular, are seeing unprecedented sales figures. This trend is driven by rising health

consciousness and the evolving drinking habits of younger generations, who prioritize flavor and quality over the effects of alcohol. Alko has responded to this surge by significantly expanding its non-alcoholic portfolio. Choosing alcohol-free options has become a permanent and celebrated part of Finnish drinking culture, with growth projected to remain strong in the coming years.

WELLBEING SERVICES COUNTY

The indoor air problem in the H building is a mystery



The cause of the indoor air symptoms on the sixth floor of the H-building in Vaasa has not yet been found, although the investigations continue, says the Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia.

The Cancer and Blood Diseases Ward will continue to operate in temporary premises in the S building, but staying in other facilities in the H building has not been found to be harmful to health.

Since May, the studies have focused especially on ventilation and air circulation. Previously, it was suspected that carpets cause symptoms, but this has not been confirmed or ruled out. Measurements made at different times have shown variation in fibre concentrations. Next, the researchers will find out where the fibres may come from – ventilation ducts or structures.

The aim is to get the facilities in the H building in order and use as soon as possible, and the causes of the symptoms are being investigated in close cooperation with the Bothnia High 5 alliance, which was responsible for the construction. The Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia emphasises that although the symptoms are still a mystery, further measures are underway to ensure a safe working environment.

FINLAND

UNEMPLOYMENT

Statistics Finland: Unemployment Deepened Towards Year-End

The Finnish labor market has tightened further as the year draws to a close. According to the latest Labour Force Survey by Statistics Finland, the unemployment rate in November was significantly higher than a year ago, while the employment rate trended downwards.

The number of unemployed persons saw a notable increase compared to the previous year, with the downturn particularly visible in the construction and service sectors. Simultaneously, the number of job vacancies has declined, making it harder for seekers to find work. Analysts suggest that economic uncertainty is now impacting the labor market with a delay. There are concerns that unemployment will remain elevated through the early part of next year, highlighting the need for strategic measures to support employment and economic growth.

DEFENCE

Finland Extends Reservist Age to 65 to Boost Defence Capacity

Finland has raised the maximum reservist age to 65, effective January 1, 2026, in a major update to its defence legislation. Previously, enlisted personnel remained in the reserve until age 50 and officers until age 60. The new law standardises the upper age limit at 65 for conscripts across ranks, aiming to strengthen national defence in an increasingly uncertain security environment. According to the Ministry of Defence, the reform will add around 125,000 more reservists to Finland's defence pool. The government's target is to build a reserve force of roughly one million people by 2031, reinforcing the country's mobilization potential. Defence Minister Antti Häkkinen emphasises that the change does not mean automatic mobilisation but expands

the pool of experienced personnel who may be called upon in emergencies. The move reflects Finland's ongoing strategic adaptation to regional threats and the need to maintain robust territorial defence.

Reference: Finnish Ministry of Defence press material.

CULTURE

NETFLIX

Netflix Buys Warner Bros – A Game Changer for Streaming Viewers

Netflix has announced a landmark deal to acquire Warner Bros, including its film and television studios as well as HBO and HBO Max. The acquisition brings together some of the most iconic franchises in entertainment history under a single corporate roof.

The deal includes globally recognized titles such as Harry Potter, Friends, Game of Thrones, the entire DC universe, and classics like Casablanca. These will sit alongside Netflix originals including Stranger Things, Wednesday, Squid Game, and Bridgerton, creating an unprecedented content portfolio.

For now, viewers will not notice immediate changes. Netflix and HBO Max will continue to operate as separate platforms, and existing subscriptions remain valid. The transaction still requires regulatory and shareholder approval. In the long term, however, the merger could reshape how audiences access content, potentially offering broader libraries—while also raising questions about pricing, competition, and consumer choice in the global streaming market.

Reference: Netflix / Warner Bros corporate announcement

MUSIC

RITZ

Boy Band Hits Meet Male Choir – The Hit Show Returns to Ritz!



Get ready for a night of pure nostalgia! Following last year's sold-out success, Wasa Sångargille returns to Ritz in Vaasa on January 9, 2026, with their acclaimed show "Young Men at Ritz." Experience unique male choir arrangements of boy band classics ranging from Jackson 5 to BTS. Featuring soloist Filip Vikström and Mikael Svarvar's orchestra, this high-energy production bridges the gap between choral tradition and pop history. Tickets go fast—don't miss your chance to witness this one-of-a-kind musical fusion! <https://ritz.fi/event/wasa-sangargille-2/>

PRESS

HELSINGIN SANOMAT

How HS uses AI in newsroom work

Artificial intelligence supports journalists at Helsingin Sanomat – but editorial responsibility always remains with people. The newsroom explains how AI is used and why.

Helsingin Sanomat has adopted artificial intelligence as a practical tool in news production, under strict editorial principles. AI is designed to assist journalists, not replace them.

AI is currently used for – translations, with all output reviewed and edited by journalists – drafting news items, for example from press releases – spotting newsworthy topics, by filtering tips and incoming material

- testing story ideas, using reader data and audience research
- text processing, such as refining notes into clearer drafts
- searching large datasets, including reports and databases
- understanding audience needs, by analysing reading habits

A single rule governs all use: humans are always accountable for published content. AI does not make editorial decisions or publish news independently. Helsingin Sanomat commits to transparency and maintains a publicly available, regularly updated statement describing how AI is used in its newsroom. Source: HS 23-12-2025

VASABLADET

170 years of communication: Vasabladet celebrates a historic milestone



The Vaasa-based newspaper Vasabladet is celebrating its 170th anniversary this year. Founded in 1856, the newspaper is the second oldest newspaper still published in Finland, right after Åbo Underrättelser. It has established itself as an important voice for the Swedish-speaking population of Ostrobothnia and as a regional identity builder.

Over the decades, Vasabladet has reported on events in the world and in the local community over three different centuries. The magazine has survived both historical crises and media change, successfully transitioning from the printed word to the digital era as part of HSS Media. A year ago, the Swedish newspaper Bonnier News bought the newspaper. The anniversary year is not only a look at the past, but it highlights the importance of local journalism as a pillar of free information. Vasabladet will continue its work to satisfy the news demand in the region, providing its readers with reliable information and in-depth analysis of local phenomena in the future as well.

The picture shows the first issue of the magazine, which was published on May 7, 1856. The magazine was small. It was about a new shipping company, and an interesting column included a short story about a student who moved to a big city. The newspaper had four pages, was printed at the printing house of A.A. Levon, and on the last page there were advertisements, including a request < Enkefru Bäck would rent a hall with a room and a woodshed. Source: Wikipedia

E-LIBRARY

E-library's (e-kirjasto) Magazine Selection to Diversify in 2026 "Rolling Stones" in English



Digital reading is becoming even more accessible as the national E-library expands its offerings. Starting in 2026, readers can expect an even wider range of popular magazines directly on their tablets or smartphones. The E-library has revolutionized how we stay updated on news and trends. This free service is already available in many Finnish municipalities, such as Vaasa, providing a vast selection of reading material anytime, anywhere. Through the E-library app, browsing magazines is effortless, and the upcoming contract period will bring long-awaited additions to the selection. To use the service, users simply need to complete a strong authentication in the app once. After that, your favorite magazines are always with you – whether you're traveling or relaxing on your sofa. The expand-dig collection ensures that there is engaging content for everyone, completely free of charge.

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Finding Freedom on the Ice in Vasa: The Allure of Tour Skating



Tour skating, also known as adventure skating, is more than just gliding across a frozen lake. It's an exhilarating blend of exploration, physical challenge, and a profound connection with the winter landscape.

And in Vaasa there are a lot of areas to enjoy this kind of skating. Not yet this year though.

Whether you're traversing vast frozen seas, navigating winding rivers, or simply enjoying the serenity of a secluded pond, tour skating offers a unique and unforgettable experience. The Joy of the Open Ice The appeal of tour skating lies in its freedom. Unbound by the confines of a rink, skaters can explore the winter wonderland at their own pace. The feeling of gliding effortlessly across a pristine ice surface is truly magical. The silence, broken only by the gentle rhythm of your own breath and the occasional crunch of ice, is deeply meditative.

Safety First: Essential Precautions

While the allure of the open ice is undeniable, safety must always be paramount.

Never skate alone: Always bring a skating

buddy or join a group.

Check ice conditions thoroughly: Before venturing onto any body of water, carefully assess ice thickness and stability. Use an ice auger or chisel to check at regular intervals. Remember that ice conditions can change rapidly due to factors like temperature fluctuations, currents, and snow cover.

Wear appropriate safety gear: This includes a life jacket or flotation device, a helmet, and ice picks for self-rescue in case of a fall through the ice.

Carry a first-aid kit and a communication device: A cell phone in a waterproof case or a handheld radio can be crucial in case of an emergency.

Plan your route and inform someone of your plans: Let a trusted friend or family member know your intended route and estimated return time.

Be aware of your surroundings: Pay attention to potential hazards such as cracks, thin ice, and open water. Avoid skating near moving water, such as inlets and outlets.

Turn back if conditions deteriorate: Don't hesitate to turn back if the ice becomes unsafe or if you encounter unexpected challenges.

Essential Equipment for Tour Skating

Skates: Sturdy ice skates

with good ankle support are essential. Consider skates specifically designed for off-ice skating, which often have better traction and durability.

Ice cleats: These provide extra traction on slippery surfaces and can help prevent falls.

Life jacket or flotation device: This is crucial safety equipment and should always be worn.

Helmet: A helmet can protect your head in case of a fall.

Ice picks: These are essential for self-rescue if you fall through the ice.

Warm clothing and waterproof outerwear: Dress in layers to stay warm and dry.

Backpack: Pack essentials like snacks, water, a first-aid kit, and a communication device.

Embracing the Adventure

Tour skating is a rewarding experience that offers a unique perspective on the winter landscape. By prioritizing safety and respecting the power of nature, you can enjoy the freedom and exhilaration of exploring the frozen world beneath your feet. Remember, the beauty of tour skating lies not only in the destination but also in the journey itself.

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New magazines 2026
Aftonbladet (Swedish)
Allt om hobby (Swedish)
Eläinten ystävä (Finnish)
Kamera & Bild (Swedish)
Pets (Finnish)
Rolling Stone (English)
Skrolli (Finnish)
Tunne & Miel (Finnish)

LITERATURE

PROJECT RUNEBERG

The Nordic Digital Treasure Trove Expands – Project Runeberg Celebrates a Successful 2025!

While AI dominates the headlines, one of the internet's oldest cultural initiatives has quietly reached new heights this year.

2025 has been a banner year for Project Runeberg, with thousands of newly scanned pages and a surge in volunteer proofreaders. The site continues to be the most vital digital archive for Nordic literature and cultural history.

What is Project Runeberg? Founded in 1992 at Linköping University, Sweden, Project Runeberg is a non-profit initiative inspired by the global Project Gutenberg. Its mission is to digitize and provide free access to classic Nordic literature and art that is no longer protected by copyright. By hosting everything from massive historical encyclopedias to the works of iconic authors like Strindberg and Topelius, the project ensures that our shared heritage remains searchable and accessible to everyone. In 2025, improved search features and high-resolution digital facsimiles have led to record-breaking traffic, proving that classic literature is more relevant than ever.

<https://runeberg.org/>

LITERATURE

Adlibris bestseller 2025: Dan Brown in first place – Finnish authors were strongly in focus

Online bookstore Adlibris published the top lists of best-selling books in 2025, and international suspense author Dan Brown is climbing to the top with his book The Secret of Secrets.

At the same time, Finnish authors Satu Rämö and Finlandia Prize winner Monika Fagerholm have a strong presence among best-selling authors. Brown's work was the best-selling novel in both fiction and total sales, while Rämö's detective novel Tinna and Fagerholm's Finlandia Prize-winning Isolation Mode were both successes at the top of the list.

The wide range of top lists reflects readers' different interests: the categories of fiction, non-fiction, well-being works and children's books are all represented in the most popular books of 2025. The list also included Sauli Niinistö's book on foreign and security policy and a knitting book that combines themes related to crafts and well-being.

This year, readers have been looking for entertaining stories, up-to-date information, and reading experiences related to everyday well-being.

Source: Adlibris Finland Oy press release, 19.12.2025

HEALTH

CRITICAL CARE

THL: Three in Four ICU Patients Survive One Year After Critical Care

A new study by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) finds that about 75 percent of critically ill patients treated in intensive care units (ICUs) are still alive one year after their ICU stay. The research, which included a wide range of patients from multiple hospitals, looked at conditions from post-surgical intensive care to severe infections. The results highlight the effectiveness of modern critical care: while surviving a life-threatening illness can lead to a lengthy recovery, most patients in intensive care make it through the first year. Factors such as age, pre-existing conditions, and timeliness of treatment influence outcomes, but overall survival rates are higher than in previous decades. THL says these findings provide valuable insights for clinicians, patients and health planners alike. Source: THL research publication

COELIAC DISEASE

Disability Support Changes Proposed – Celiac Disease Recognition for 16–17-Year-Olds

The Finnish Government has published a request for comments on proposed reforms to disability benefit rules that would allow 16–17-year-olds with celiac disease to qualify for basic disability support previously limited to younger children or adults. Under current regulations, the right to certain benefits may end when a young person turns 16, even if their condition still results in additional needs and costs, such as a strict gluten-free diet. The proposed amendments also include raising the age limit for special care allowance for parents caring for seriously ill children, ensuring extended eligibility for families facing long-term care responsibilities. Advocates have argued that current age limits create unfair gaps in support for youth whose conditions persist beyond childhood. If approved by Parliament, the measures would

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SPACETRAVEL

Send Your Name Around the Moon with the Artemis Space Ship!

The lunar journey of a lifetime awaits – and you are invited to join.

NASA is preparing to return humanity to the Moon, and you can be part of the adventure without ever leaving Earth. For the upcoming Artemis II mission, scheduled to launch as early as February 2026, the space agency is inviting people worldwide to "board" the Orion spacecraft by submitting their names to be carried around the Moon.

Artemis II is a historic 10-day test flight and the first crewed mission under the Artemis program. While four astronauts—Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover, Christina Koch, and Jeremy Hansen—will be physically inside the capsule, thousands of virtual passengers will join them. All submitted names will be stored on a digital memory card tucked safely inside the spacecraft as it loops around the lunar far side, reaching distances further than any human has traveled in over 50 years.

Participating is free and simple. By visiting NASA's website, you can register your name and receive a personalized digital "boarding pass" to keep as a souvenir. It is a symbolic way to connect people across the globe with the next giant leap in space exploration. Be sure to sign up before the deadline on January 21, 2026!



Reference: NASA - Launch Your Name Around Moon in 2026

Image: Credit NASA

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strengthen social security for affected families and align disability support with real needs. Source: Government request for statements on changes in disability benefit procedures, 2025.

HEALTH Study: Daily Walking Reduces Risk of Heart Attack

10,000 steps a day provides significant health benefitsAn extensive study from the United States confirms the importance of daily exercise for heart health.

Researchers at Boston University analyzed health data from nearly 50,000 adults over a period of ten years. The effect was clear: those who walked at least 10,000 steps a day were 40% less likely to develop cardiovascular disease than those who walked less than 4,000. According to experts, short walks during the day are just as effective as a long run – the most important thing is movement, not effort.

OBESITY New Obesity Drug Outperforms Leading Therapy in Major Trial

A landmark Phase III clinical trial published in The New England Journal of Medicine found that the drug tirzepatide (Mounjaro) produces significantly greater weight loss than semaglutide (Ozempic) in adults with obesity but without diabetes. Over 72 weeks, participants treated with tirzepatide lost about 20.2% of their body weight on average, compared to 13.7% for those on semaglutide.

The study also showed that tirzepatide led to larger reductions in waist circumference, indicating potential cardiovascular benefits. Side effects were mostly mild to moderate, with gastrointestinal symptoms being most common.

These results could influence future obesity treatment guidelines and physician prescribing practices, marking a significant advance in pharmacologic weight management. Source: The New England Journal of Medicine (doi:10.1056/NEJMoa2416394).

TICK DISEASES Tick-borne encephalitis on the rise – more and more people were hospitalised

Tick-borne encephalitis (TBE) has become significantly more common in Finland in 2025, and several of the infections have required hospital care. This is stated in a press release published by HUS on December 3, 2025.

Last year, 195 TBE cases were reported in Finland, but by the end of November 2025, 228 new cases had already been registered. In the HUS area, the number of infections has increased from 91 to 120. The factors are considered to be warmer winters and an expanded tick area, among other things. Three out of four of those infected have insufficient vaccination protection – 69% are completely unvaccinated and 13% have not completed or expired their vaccination series. According to a press release by HUS, up to 14% of patients have needed intensive care or intensive care, and some people recovering from intensive care need long rehabilitation before discharge. The TBE virus is typically transmitted from a tick bite, and the only effective way to protect yourself is vaccination. The vaccine prevents infection in about 90% of those vaccinated.

HEALTH Ozempic can be dangerous for your eyes

Ozempic, which enjoys great popularity as a diabetes medication and weight loss product, and the ingredient semaglutide it contains received an important warning from the European Medicines Agency (EMA). A possible, albeit very rare, side effect of the drug has been identified as the eye disease NAION (non-arteritic atic ischemic neuropathy).

WHAT IS NAION? NAION is a serious but rare eye disease that damages the optic nerve. It originates from a disturbance in the blood supply to the optic nerve and can lead to sudden and permanent loss of vision in one eye. Usually, impaired vision is the only symptom of the disease and is not accompanied by pain. People with diabetes, high blood pressure or elevated blood lipid levels, for example, are

EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

Oulu2026 European Capital of Culture Opening Festival will turn Oulu’s city centre into a lively cultural hub

Oulu is celebrating this January! From January 16 to 18, 2026, the Oulu2026 European Capital of Culture Opening Festival will turn Oulu’s city centre into a lively cultural hub.

The three-day event features nearly 200 activities across more than 20 venues, many of them free and open to everyone, with music, art, performances and local flavours for all ages.

The festival kicks off with the festive moment “On your marks, get set, Oulu!”, officially launching the culture year. Market Square events include ice skating, tastes from Arctic Food Lab and live music, and many performances will be live-streamed online.

At the Valkea shopping centre, visitors can enjoy everything from ballet to circus and young rap artists. At Rotuaari Square, community dance events, DJ sets and visual showcases curated by Frozen People add to



the atmosphere. Photography fans will also have the chance to see an exhibition from Fotografiska Tallinn in Finland for the first time.

The Opening Festival offers a compelling preview of the cultural richness that Oulu and the region will share throughout 2026. Join the celebrations and experien-

ce winter's biggest cultural party in northern Finland.

at the highest risk of developing NAION. There is currently no permanent treatment for the disease.

The decision was taken by the EMA's Pharmacovigilance Committee (PRAC) after reviewing available data, including small studies suggesting an increased risk in patients taking semaglutide. It is important to emphasize that this is still a very rare side effect and that the majority of people who use the drug do not have any risk of it.

What does this mean for patients?

The most important thing is to be aware of the possible symptoms. If you experience a sudden decrease in vision, blurred vision or dark areas in your field of vision, contact your family doctor or ophthalmologist immediately. Always mention to your healthcare professional that you are taking a medicine containing semaglutide.

Finally, it can be said that all medications have possible side effects, and it is important to have regular medical check-ups and be aware of the possible risk factors in your own health. Although NAION is rare, it is essential that patients and doctors are aware of this potential connection in order to be able to act quickly if necessary.

WHO WHO warns of a new wave of antibiotic resistance

According to the World Health Organization, antibiotic-resistant bacteria are spreading faster than before.

According to a recent WHO report, infections caused by antibiotic resistance increased by 15 per cent in Europe over the past three years. Especially in intensive care units, bacterial strains are found against which no known antibiotic is effective. Experts stress that a more prudent use of antibiotics and the development of new drugs are necessary to prevent a "silent pandemic" that could threaten health systems worldwide.

AGING Japan approves first gene therapy for age-related diseases

New treatment can slow down cell agingJapan's Ministry of Health has approved the world's first clinical gene therapy targeting biological aging.

The treatment uses a virus-like vector to activate cell repair mechanisms. The first patients are over 60 years old with early signs of memory impairment. The researchers emphasize that it is not a "rejuvenation vaccine", but a form of treatment that can slow down degeneration and improve quality of life. The results are expected within two years.

CRITICAL CARE THL: Three in Four ICU Patients Survive One Year After Critical Care

A new study by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) finds that about 75 percent of critically ill patients treated in intensive care units (ICUs) are still alive one year after their ICU stay. The research, which included a wide range of patients from multiple hospitals, looked at conditions from post-surgical intensive care to severe infections. The results highlight the effectiveness of modern critical care: while surviving a life-threatening illness can lead to a lengthy recovery, most patients in intensive care make it through the first year. Factors such as age, pre-existing conditions, and timeliness of treatment influence outcomes, but overall survival rates are higher than in previous decades. THL says these findings provide valuable insights for clinicians, patients and health planners alike. Source: THL research publication

OBESITY Sugar-free drinks do not reduce obesity

Extensive meta-analysis surprises nutrition researchersA new international study claims that light soft drinks do not prevent weight gain.

Researchers at Harvard University and Sydney University reviewed 20 years of research and found that consuming sugar-free beverages was just as often linked to weight gain as regular soda consumption. The explanation may lie in the fact that sweeteners increase the craving for sweets and the appetite. The researchers' recommendation is clear: the best drink for both weight management and health

AI

GEMINI 3 Gemini 3 - a large step ahead in AI

Prepare to be amazed! Google has just unveiled the latest iteration of its groundbreaking AI model, Gemini 3, and it's nothing short of revolutionary. This isn't just an update; it's a massive leap forward in artificial intelligence, pushing the boundaries of what we thought was possible.

One of the most astonishing new features is its massively expanded context window. Imagine an AI that can understand and process incredibly long, complex inputs – entire books, hours of video, or vast data-sets – all at once, without losing its grasp on the details. Gemini 3 can do just that, leading to far more coherent, nuanced, and insightful responses than ever before. This is a game-changer for everything from complex coding projects to in-depth research and creative writing. But the innovations don't stop there. Gemini 3 boasts enhanced multimodal capabilities, meaning it doesn't just understand text; it truly comprehends and seamlessly integrates information from images, audio, and video. You can feed it a document, a recording of a meeting, and a relevant image, and it will draw connections and provide summaries that are shockingly accurate and intelligent. This new version is designed to be more intuitive, more powerful, and ultimately, more helpful across a dizzying array of applications. It promises to transform how we interact with AI, making complex tasks simpler and opening doors to entirely new forms of innovation. Get ready, because the future of AI is here, and it's called Gemini 3!

EKONOMY

WORLD ECONOMY A Review of the 2025 Global Economy

The global economy in 2025 has been a story of "tenuous resilience." Despite early-year fears of a significant downturn, global growth remained steady at approximately 3.2%. While the world avoided a broad recession, the year was defined by a shift toward protectionism and the cooling of post-pandemic momentum.

The Three Most Interesting Changes: The Rise of "Front-Loading" Trade: Anticipating a sharp rise in global tariffs and trade barriers, businesses spent the first half of 2025 "front-loading" shipments. This led to a temporary surge in trade volumes and industrial production before activity cooled in the latter half of the year as new protectionist policies took hold.

AI Investment Decouples from Mainstream Tech: While traditional tech spending faced headwinds, investment in Artificial Intelligence reached a fever pitch. NVIDIA and Microsoft both crossed the \$4 trillion market cap threshold this year, signaling that AI has moved from a speculative trend

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LUX HELSINKI

Lux Helsinki 8.-12.1.2025: Illuminating the Darkest Days



As the winter tightens its grip on Helsinki, a radiant counterpoint emerges: Lux Helsinki. This annual light festival, taking place from January 6th to 11th, 2026, transforms the city's familiar landscape into a breathtaking canvas of light art.

Lux Helsinki is more than just a spectacle; it's a celebration of creativity and community. For five magical nights, the heart of Helsinki is

bathed in a kaleidoscope of colors and enchanting installations. Public buildings become luminous sculptures, parks morph into ethereal wonderlands, and streetscapes are imbued with an otherworldly glow.

The festival's strength lies in its diversity. From immersive, interactive experiences to awe-inspiring large-scale projections, Lux Helsinki caters to all artistic tastes. Local and international artists come together to showcase

their innovative visions, pushing the boundaries of light as a medium. Wandering through the illuminated city becomes an adventure, with each corner revealing a new marvel.

Lux Helsinki's impact goes beyond aesthetics. It fosters a sense of connection and shared joy during a time of year often associated with darkness and solitude. The festival encourages exploration, inviting residents and visitors alike to rediscover the city under a new light. It's a

reminder that even in the depths of winter, beauty and wonder can be found

Whether you're a seasoned art enthusiast or simply seeking a magical escape from the cold, Lux Helsinki is an experience not to be missed. So bundle up, embrace the crisp winter air, and immerse yourself in the luminous heart of Helsinki. Let Lux Helsinki illuminate your January and ignite your sense of wonder.

CLIMATE CHANGE

FMI: 2025 Ranked as the Second Warmest Year on Record

Recent statistics from the Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI) confirm that 2025 was exceptionally mild in Finland. It ranks as the second warmest year since records began, surpassed only by the record-breaking warmth of 2020.

The national average temperature reached 4.3°C, which is 1.4°C above the long-term average. The latter half of the year was particularly warm, with several locations setting new monthly high-temperature records. Meteorologists emphasize that this continues a long-term warming trend driven by climate change. Although some brief cold spells occurred during the winter, they were not enough to offset the overall warmth, highlighting the rapid environmental changes occurring in the Nordic region.

www.ilmatieteenlaitos.fi



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to the primary engine of capital expenditure in advanced economies.

Divergent Disinflation: The "great cooling" of prices wasn't universal. While the Eurozone reached its 2% inflation target earlier than expected, the United States struggled with "sticky" inflation due to persistent service costs and the pass-through effects of new trade tariffs, leading to a notable split in how central banks managed interest rates.

Reference: IMF World Economic Outlook (October 2025) and World Bank Economic Blogs.

EUROPE

BRIGITTE BARDOT

B.B. – The Eternal Siren of Saint-Trope



The world bids farewell to Brigitte Bardot, the cinematic icon who redefined freedom and dedicated her life to the voiceless.

Brigitte Bardot, the legendary French actress and symbol of an era, has passed away at the age of 91 at her home, La Madrague. Rising to global fame in 1956 with *And God Created Woman*, "B.B." became the face of a new, unapologetic female independence. Her tousled blonde hair and effortless grace transformed Saint-Tropez from a quiet village into a global destination. At the height of her fame in 1973, she walked away from the silver screen to find her true calling: animal rights. For over five decades, she fought tirelessly through her foundation to protect the vulnerable. While her later years were marked by outspoken political views, her legacy as a pioneer of both sexual liberation and animal welfare remains etched in history. Today, we remember the woman who lived entirely on her own terms.

IMAGE: Brigitte Bardot in 1954 (Stidio Harcourt), 1 January 1954. Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain

RUSSIA

RUSSIA

Russia Dismisses Finland's Wetland Plans as "Fearmongering"

Russia has criticized Finland and Poland over plans to restore wetlands, which Russian media claim are linked to defense against alleged Russian threats. In an interview with *Gazeta*, Russian MP Andrei Kolesnik, a member of the State Duma's defense committee, called the measures pointless and politically motivated. According to Kolesnik, Russia has no intention of attacking either Finland or Poland. He argued that Western governments exaggerate security threats to justify public spending and frighten domestic audiences. The comments reflect Moscow's broader narrative, which routinely downplays NATO-related security concerns in Northern and Eastern Europe.

Source: *Gazeta.ru*

RUSSIA

Lavrov's Lament: Soviet Withdrawal from East Germany a "Mistake"



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has sparked debate by characterizing the Soviet Union's departure from East Germany as a historic betrayal.

In a recent interview on December 15, 2025, Sergey Lavrov claimed that the USSR "betrayed" its allies during its final years. Specifically, he described the unification of Germany as a hostile takeover rather than a merger, lamenting the withdrawal of half a million Soviet troops without compensation. Lavrov argued that the Soviet leadership ignored the opportunity to maintain a military presence in the East, leaving former GDR officials with no future. These remarks signal a continued hardening of Moscow's stance toward the post-Cold War European order.

PHOTO: Wikimedia Commons, US Department of State, Public Domain

RUSSIA

Russian MFA sparks outrage by likening Finnish war hero to war criminals



Russia's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova has triggered strong criticism after comparing Finnish sniper Simo Häyhä to Japanese war criminals of the Second World War. Her comments followed a British newspaper article that portrayed Häyhä as a wartime hero.

Zakharova reacted to a *Daily Telegraph* feature headlined "I killed 500 Russians," accusing Western media of "rewriting history" and diminishing the Soviet Union's role in World War II. She argued that presenting Häyhä as a hero was comparable to how Japanese militarist propaganda once glorified atrocities committed by Imperial Army officers in China. Finnish historians strongly reject the comparison. Häyhä fought exclusively in the Winter War of 1939–1940, defending Finland against a Soviet invasion on Finnish territory. He was a soldier of a democratic state, not linked to Nazism or war crimes, and operated

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PRESS RELEASE 1.1.2026

Wasa Daily, Waasan Päivälehti and Wasa Dagblad Begin Their Fourth Year

The media landscape in Vaasa is undergoing a noteworthy development. Wasa Daily, Waasan Päivälehti and Wasa Dagblad have now completed three years of operation and are entering their fourth year with strengthened content, a clear vision, and growing impact.

In a short time, the publications have evolved from experimental projects into fully fledged news outlets and have become an important part of the local media ecosystem. At the same time, they are among the very few newspapers in the region that are both locally owned and locally produced.

Three Languages – One Local Commitment
The Finnish-language *Waasan Päivälehti* is complemented by the Swedish-language *Wasa Dagblad* and the English-language *Wasa Daily*, which occasionally also publishes content in Ukrainian. Together, the three titles reach a broad and diverse readership, including local residents, businesses, students, and international professionals. All three publications share a strong editorial focus on quality, objectivity, and culture, alongside coverage of local news, history, social issues, and climate-related topics relevant to the region.



Broadsheet Format – More Space for Journalism
In autumn 2025, the newspapers transitioned to the broadsheet format, a classic newspaper size used by many of the world's leading publications but now rare in Finland. The format allows for greater editorial depth, more news per page, and a clearer overview compared to the tabloid format that dominates today's market.

Digital First – With Ambitious Plans Ahead
Currently, the newspapers are published digitally once a week. The long-term goal is ambitious: daily online publishing and, in the future, a comprehensive printed Friday edition offering in-depth reading for the

entire weekend. This development will take place gradually and in close cooperation with advertisers and partners.

Modern Technology in Service of Journalism
Waasan Päivälehti is also at the forefront of using modern technology in journalism. The editorial teams utilize advanced AI tools for tasks such as fact-checking, translation, and research. However, all content is always reviewed and approved by responsible journalists. Technology serves as a support tool – never as a replacement for editorial responsibility.

History as a Guiding Principle
The newspapers place

strong emphasis on historical context. Through regular articles highlighting the region's past, readers are offered perspectives that help them better understand the present and future – echoing philosopher George Santayana's well-known observation that those who do not remember history are bound to repeat it.

Moving Forward Together
As the publications begin their fourth year, they do so with enthusiasm and gratitude. The editorial teams welcome new readers and value ongoing dialogue and feedback. We extend our sincere thanks to all readers and partners who have supported the newspapers so far, and we look forward to continuing to develop strong, independent local journalism in the Vaasa region.

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DRY JANUARY



January Without Any Brandy! What a Month Without Alcohol Really Does to Your Body

The new year often brings resolutions and fresh starts, and for many, it marks the beginning of "Dry January" — a month-long commitment to abstain from alcohol.

While the idea of a January without brandy, wine, beer, or any other alcoholic beverage might seem daunting, the benefits to your body and mind can be transformative. But what exactly happens to your body during this alcohol-free month? Here's a closer look at the science and the potential perks.

Week 1: Detox and Adjustment
The first week of abstaining from alcohol can feel like a challenge, especially if you're used to having a nightly drink. As your body begins to metabolize the residual alcohol in your system, you might experience cravings, irritability, or mild headaches. These symptoms are temporary and are part of your body's natural detoxification process.

During this time, your liver, the body's primary detox organ, starts to recover. Alcohol consumption places significant strain on the liver, so even a short break allows it to repair damaged cells and improve its efficiency. You might also notice that your sleep quality starts to improve. Although alcohol might help you fall asleep initially, it disrupts the REM stage, which is critical for restorative rest. Without alcohol, your sleep cycles normalize, leaving you feeling more refreshed.

Week 2: Clearer Skin and Increased Energy
By the second week, many

people notice visible improvements in their skin. Alcohol dehydrates the body and can exacerbate conditions like redness, puffiness, and acne. Without alcohol, your skin begins to rehydrate and heal, resulting in a clearer and more radiant complexion.

Energy levels also start to increase as your blood sugar stabilizes. Alcohol can cause spikes and crashes in blood glucose levels, leading to fatigue and mood swings. With these fluctuations minimized, you may find it easier to focus and feel more productive throughout the day.

Week 3: Improved Digestion and Mood

The third week often brings noticeable changes to your digestive system. Alcohol can irritate the stomach lining and disrupt gut bacteria balance, leading to bloating and indigestion. A break from alcohol allows your digestive system to reset, reducing discomfort and improving nutrient absorption.

This week also marks significant improvements in mental health. Alcohol is a depressant that can exacerbate feelings of anxiety and sadness. Many participants of Dry January report feeling less anxious and more emotionally stable as their brains adjust to functioning without the influence of alcohol. Increased endorphin production, the body's natural "feel-good" chemicals, further contributes to an uplifted mood.

Week 4: Weight Loss and Lower Blood Pressure

As you approach the end of the month, the cumulative effects of abstaining from alcohol become even more apparent. For many, one of the most significant benefits is weight loss. Alcohol is calorie-dense, and

The Tippy Truth: Why Alcohol Is Not Your Friend

You might think a glass of wine or a beer is harmless, but the truth is, alcohol can be a sneaky saboteur of your health. It's not just about hangovers, it's about long-term damage.

Here's the lowdown:

Your Liver is a Workhorse: Alcohol is processed primarily by your liver, which works overtime to break it down. Over time, excessive alcohol consumption can lead to fatty liver disease, cirrhosis, and even liver cancer.

Brain Drain: Alcohol affects your brain, impacting memory, concentration, and even your emotional control. Chronic alcohol use can lead to dementia and cognitive decline.

Heartbreak: While a little alcohol might seem to help your heart, excessive consumption is a recipe for disaster. It can increase your risk of heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure.

Cancer's Ally: Alcohol is linked to an increased risk of several cancers, including mouth, throat, breast, liver, and colon cancers.

Weight Gain: Alcohol is packed with empty calories, contributing to weight gain and obesity.

It's important to remember:

Moderation is key: If you choose to drink, do so in moderation. For women, that's one drink per day, and for men, two drinks per day.

Know your limits: Everyone has a different tolerance. Pay attention to how alcohol affects you and avoid overindulging.

Don't drink if you're pregnant: Alcohol can have devastating effects on a developing fetus.

The bottom line: Alcohol can be enjoyable in moderation, but it's not worth the risks to your health. So, raise a glass to your health and choose wisely!

its consumption often leads to overeating or unhealthy snacking. Cutting out alcohol eliminates these empty calories and can make it easier to maintain a calorie deficit.

Your heart health also improves. Alcohol raises blood pressure and can contribute to cardiovascular problems. Studies have shown that even a short break can lower blood pressure and reduce levels of harmful cholesterol, promoting better heart function.

Beyond January: Sustained Changes

The end of Dry January doesn't have to mean returning to old habits. Many participants find that the month-long challenge helps them reset their relationship with alcohol, leading to more mindful drinking habits in the future. The insights gained during this period — such as improved energy, better sleep, and enhanced mental clarity — can serve as powerful motivators to continue reducing alcohol consumption.

Is Dry January for Everyone?

While Dry January offers numerous health benefits, it's essential to approach it safely, especially if you're a heavy drinker. Abruptly stopping alcohol after prolonged heavy use can lead to withdrawal symptoms, which may require medical supervision. If you're concerned about your drinking habits, consider consulting a healthcare professional before beginning the challenge.

The Takeaway

January without brandy or other alcoholic drinks is more than just a test of willpower; it's an opportunity to recalibrate your body and mind. From improved liver function to better skin and mood, the benefits of abstaining from alcohol can be profound and long-lasting. So why not give it a try? Your body will thank you, and you might just discover a healthier, happier version of yourself in the process.

UKRAINE PRESIDENT

In 2025, the President Focused His Work With Partners Around the World on Achieving a Dignified Peace and Providing Reliable Security Guarantees for Ukrainer



31 December 2025 - 19:54

In 2025, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy conducted approximately 60 visits abroad, hosted nearly 100 heads of foreign states and governments in Ukraine, held 20 international video calls, over 230 telephone conversations with leaders of states, governments, international organizations, and spiritual leaders, and participated in almost 150 events within Ukraine.

One of the main priorities of the President's diplomatic activity was working closely with the U.S. team to develop a 20-point peace

plan and documents on Ukraine's security guarantees and prosperity.

At the end of the year, the result of this substantive, productive, and constructive work by the Ukrainian and American teams was a leaders-level meeting between Ukraine and the United States on December 29 in Florida, at the Mar-a-Lago residence. Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Donald Trump discussed all aspects of the peace framework and achieved significant results. Some of the documents have already been fully agreed upon, while others are in their final sta-

ges. In addition, the leaders agreed on the sequence of further steps. The President of the United States noted that the teams are approaching the conclusion of the war and will continue to work in a working-group format.

"We agree that security guarantees are the key milestone in achieving lasting peace, and our teams will continue working on all aspects," emphasized the Head of State.

This year, Volodymyr Zelenskyy also focused on securing financial support for Ukraine in the coming years, strengthening military assistance, particularly

in air defense, scaling up drone production, developing joint defense manufacturing, attracting additional contributions and countries to the PURL initiative, and implementing the SAFE instrument.

Thanks to the successful work of the President and his team, 24 countries joined the PURL initiative, which NATO, together with the United States, launched in August this year to enable direct participation of partner states in supporting Ukraine. Of these who joined, 22 are NATO members, and two are Alliance partners: Australia and New Zealand. The total declared funding for the PURL initiative amounts to USD 4.3 billion. Eight packages have already been formed, with the ninth and tenth currently being prepared.

Despite the Christmas and New A meeting at the level of European national security advisors from the Coalition of the Willing countries is already scheduled for January 3, followed by a leaders-level meeting in France on January 6.

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ART EXPERIENCE OF THE WEEK



Alexandra Frosterus-Sältin
6.12.1837, Inkoo - Ingo
29.2.1916, Vaasa
Ung dam, Nuori neito, Young Woman 1858

George Orwell 1984 14

Very likely as many as a dozen people were now working away on rival versions of what Big Brother had actually said. And presently some master brain in the Inner Party would select this version or that, would re-edit it and set in motion the complex processes of cross-referencing that would be required, and then the chosen lie would pass into the permanent records and become truth.

Winston did not know why Withers had been disgraced. Perhaps it was for corruption or incompetence. Perhaps Big Brother was merely getting rid of a too-popular subordinate. Perhaps Withers or someone close to him had been suspected of heretical tendencies. Or perhaps—what was likeliest of all—the thing had simply happened because purges and vaporizations were a necessary part of the mechanics of government. The only real clue lay in the words "refs unpersons", which indicated that Withers was already dead. You could not invariably assume this to be the case when people were arrested. Sometimes they were released and allowed to remain at liberty for as much as a year or two years before being executed. Very occasionally some person whom you had believed dead long since would make a ghostly reappearance at some public trial where he would implicate hundreds of others by his testimony before vanishing, this time for ever. Withers, however, was already an UNPERSON. He did not exist: he had never existed. Winston decided that it would not be enough simply to reverse the tendency of Big Brother's speech. It was better to make it deal with something totally unconnected with its original subject.

He might turn the speech into the usual denunciation of traitors and thought-criminals, but that was a little too obvious, while to invent a



victory at the front, or some triumph of over-production in the Ninth Three-Year Plan, might complicate the records too much. What was needed was a piece of pure fantasy. Suddenly there sprang into his mind, ready made as it were, the image of a certain Comrade Ogilvy, who had recently died in battle, in heroic circumstances. There were occasions when Big Brother devoted his Order for the Day to commemorating some humble, rank-and-file Party member whose life and death he held up as an example worthy to be followed. Today he should commemorate Comrade Ogilvy. It was true that there was no such person as Comrade Ogilvy, but a few lines of print and a couple of faked photographs would soon bring him into existence.

Winston thought for a moment, then pulled the speakwrite towards him and began dictating in Big Brother's familiar style: a style at once military and pedantic, and, because of a trick of asking questions and then promptly answering them ("What lessons do we learn from this fact, comrades? The lesson—which is also one of the fundamental principles of Ingsoe—that, etc., etc."), easy to imitate.

At the age of three Comrade Ogilvy had refused all toys except a drum, a sub-machine gun, and a model helicopter. At six—a year early, by a special relaxation of the rules—he had joined the Spies, at nine he had been a troop leader. At eleven he had denounced his uncle to the Thought Police after overhearing a conversation which appeared to him to have criminal tendencies. At seventeen he had been a district organizer of the Junior Anti-Sex League. At nineteen he had designed a hand-grenade which had been adopted by the Ministry of Peace and which, at its first trial, had killed thirty-one Eurasian prisoners in one burst. At twenty-three he had perished in action. Pursued by enemy jet planes while flying over the Indian Ocean with important despatches, he had weighted his body with his machine gun and leapt out of the helicopter into deep water, despatches and all—an end, said Big Brother, which it was impossible to contemplate without feelings of envy. Big Brother added a few remarks on the purity and single-mindedness of Comrade Ogilvy's life. He was a total abstainer and a nonsmoker, had no recreations except a daily hour in the gymnasium, and had taken a vow of celibacy, believing marriage and the care of a family to be incompatible with a twenty-four-hour-a-day devotion to duty. He had no subjects of conversation except the principles of Ingsoe, and no aim in life except the defeat of the Eurasian enemy and the hunting-down of spies, saboteurs, thought-criminals, and traitors generally.

Winston debated with himself whether to award Comrade Ogilvy the Order of Conspicuous Merit: in the end he decided against it because of the unnecessary cross-referencing that it would entail.

Once again he glanced at his rival in the opposite cubicle. Something seemed to tell him with certainty that Tillotson was busy on the same job as himself. There was no way of knowing whose job would finally be adopted, but he felt a profound conviction that it would be his own. Comrade Ogilvy,

unimagined an hour ago, was now a fact. It struck him as curious that you could create dead men but not living ones. Comrade Ogilvy, who had never existed in the present, now existed in the past, and when once the act of forgery was forgotten, he would exist just as authentically, and upon the same evidence, as Charlemagne or Julius Caesar.

Chapter 5

In the low-ceilinged canteen, deep underground, the lunch queue jerked slowly forward. The room was already very full and deafeningly noisy. From the grille at the counter the steam of stew came pouring forth, with a sour metallic smell which did not quite overcome the fumes of Victory Gin. On the far side of the room there was a small bar, a mere hole in the wall, where gin could be bought at ten cents the large nip.

'Just the man I was looking for,' said a voice at Winston's back.

He turned round. It was his friend Syme, who worked in the Research Department. Perhaps 'friend' was not exactly the right word. You did not have friends nowadays, you had comrades: but there were some comrades whose society was pleasanter than that of others. Syme was a philologist, a specialist in Newspeak. Indeed, he was one of the enormous team of experts now engaged in compiling the Eleventh Edition of the Newspeak Dictionary. He was a tiny creature, smaller than Winston, with dark hair and large, protuberant eyes, at once mournful and derisive, which seemed to search your face closely while he was speaking to you.

'I wanted to ask you whether you'd got any razor blades,' he said.

'Not one!' said Winston with a sort of guilty haste. 'I've tried all over the place. They don't exist any longer.'

HUMOUR ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

FISHING LUCK

— Well, what did you do this summer?
— We’ve been fishing, you know. And when we fish, we always have on liter 96% with us, and for every fish we take a sip, ; and if we get a lot of fish, we go home and take another liter

TWO STREETS LAMP

On the streets of Kemi city, there are two lamps on the same pole.
— Why do you have to be two?
— Well, you see, one must illuminate the other.

APPENDIX

— That doctor must have sent a rudely large bill. But it will probably be the last time he gets to operate on my appendix.

COMMUNISM

— If you had two houses, would you give one to me?
— Yes.
— If you had two horses, would you give one to me?
- Of course!
— You have a liter of alcohol at home. Give me half a liter!
— You crazy, human! Never!

In the best families

“You see, Mrs. Eriksson, the best family is a family in which there was no such thing as occurred even in the best families.”

Difficult to choose maid

— Dear friend, you speak of the difficult maidservant question, yes, I am very unhappy. If I take an old and ugly one, my husband is never at home and if I take a young and beautiful one, I dare not go out myself

T COMPLAIN TO A NEWS-PAPER

The editor: — And this joke you say must be new? My grandmother already told me that when she was a little girl.

CHILD MAIDEN

— My miss, how can you read your novel when the child screams so terribly.
The nanny: — Bad, my lord, and since you’re also bothering me, I cannot read at all.

IN COURT

— Mr. Judge, my husband called me “you old cow”, and then he threw me out. I request that he be punished.
— Good, Mrs. H. We judge him to take you in again.

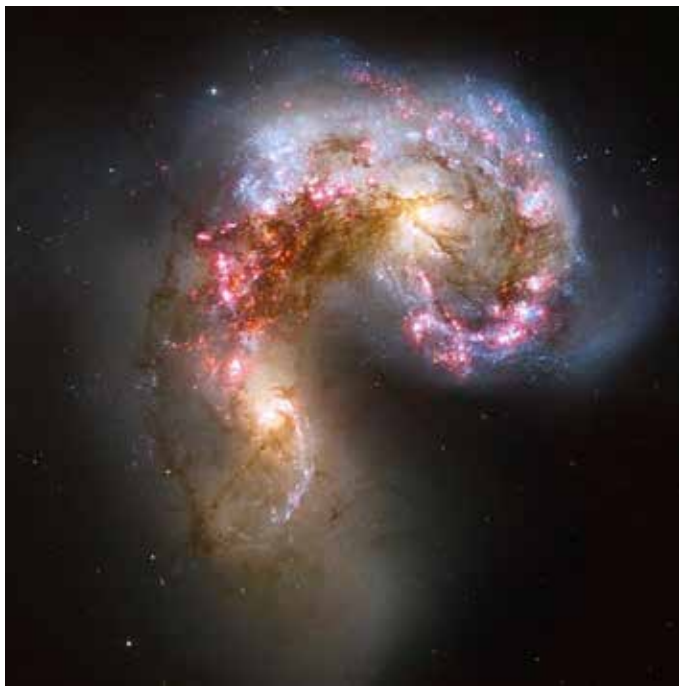
IN CUSTOMS

Band dealer Pettersson comes from abroad and is offended by the customs officer’s thoroughness during the inspection. When asked: — Have you now shown everything, tape dealer Pettersson replies angrily.
— No, you have not yet been able to see the vocal cords.

WEDDING

Old witty master Grundman was invited to a wedding and asked as an old family friend to say a few words to the bride, young, beautiful and blushing:
— To me, who has followed the fates of Lisa and her parents for the last 19 years, it seems that she inherited her wisdom from her father
The he did not know what to say, received a flashing look from his wife, regained his composure and ability to speak, and said:
— Because look, her mother still has hers left.

Astronomic picture of the week:

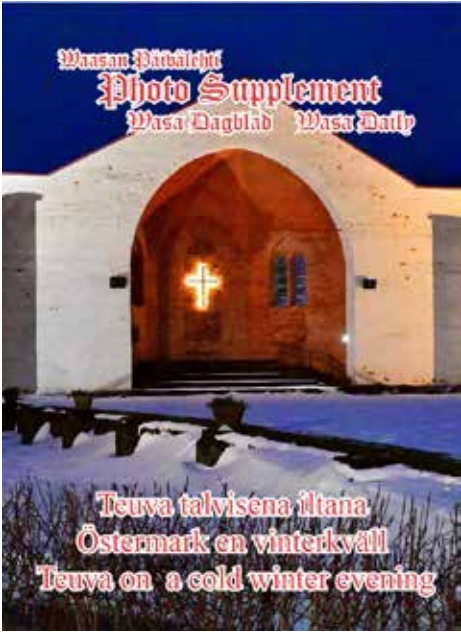


Antennae galaxies

This NASA Hubble Space Telescope image of the Antennae galaxies (NGC 4038 & 4039) is the sharpest yet of this merging pair of galaxies. During the course of the collision, billions of stars will be formed. The brightest and most compact of these star birth regions are called super star clusters. The two spiral galaxies started to interact a few hundred million years ago.

Credit:
NASA, ESA, and the Hubble Heritage Team (STScI/AURA)-ESA/Hubble Collaboration
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Next week:



BLOG WRITERS

Join Wasa Daily as a Blog Writer!

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

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

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

Interested? Send us your blog pitch or a short sample, and let’s get your words published! Join us in making Wasa Daily a platform for meaningful conversations and inspiring stories. Contact us at wasadagblad@gmail.com for more details. We can’t wait to hear from you!

Wasa Daily

A modern newspaper with a layout with features of the press of the 1870s. Back then, newspapers had only 4-8 pages. Lots of text, but no images at all, so there’s a lot to read on a few pages. Our paper is one of the very few newspapers in English serving English-speaking inhabitants in the Ostrobothnia 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, Toineen 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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Cont from page 6

under the laws of war of his time. The remarks are widely seen as part of Russia’s broader effort to reinterpret 20th-century history for present-day political purposes. Reference: Russian Foreign Ministry statements
Image: Wikimedia Commons, U.S. Department of State from United States Public domain

WORLD

CHINA

China’s Maglev-train Shashes Records at 700 km/h



China has reached a new frontier in transportation, successfully testing a maglev vehicle that hits staggering speeds

In a record-breaking test conducted in late December 2025, a superconducting magnetic levitation (maglev) vehicle accelerated to 700 km/h in just two seconds. Developed by the National University of Defense Technology, the test took place on a specialized 400-meter track. This “ground-based flight” technology uses powerful magnets to eliminate friction, allowing the craft to glide above the rails. While currently in the experimental phase, this breakthrough paves the way for future “hyperloop” systems that could eventually surpass the speed of commercial aircraft. <https://www.chinadailyhk.com/hk/article/626058>

Kuva: Hermann Luyken, Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain

SPACE

3I/ATLAS

What Do We Know About the Interstellar Comet 3I/ATLAS?



An icy visitor from another star system is currently passing through our solar system. The object, designated 3I/ATLAS, is only the third confirmed interstellar object observed by astronomers. It was discovered on July 1, 2025, by the NASA-funded ATLAS telescope in Chile and follows a hyperbolic trajectory, meaning it will not orbit the Sun but continue outward into interstellar space. Astronomers estimate the comet’s nucleus to be between about 440 meters and 5.6 kilometers across, and it reached its closest point to the Sun on October 30, 2025. At its nearest approach to Earth on December 19, 2025, it remained about 170 million miles away — far too distant to pose any danger. Scientists are closely observing 3I/ATLAS with telescopes such as Hubble and Webb to learn more about its composition and origin. Because it formed around another star, this rare visitor offers a valuable glimpse into the material makeup of distant planetary systems. Reference: NASA Science: 3I/ATLAS Facts and FAQs.
Image NASA, ESA, STScI, D. Jewitt (UCLA), M.-T. Hui (Shanghai Astronomical Observatory). Image Processing: J. DePasquale (STScI)
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SPACETRAVEL

Humanity’s Giant Leap Back to the Moon



NASA’s Artemis II mission is set to make history as the first crewed flight to the lunar vicinity in over 50 years.

Scheduled for 2026, the mission will carry four astronauts—Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover, Christina Koch, and Jeremy Hansen—on a high-stakes journey around the Moon. During the 10-day mission, the crew will test the Orion spacecraft’s life-support systems and navigation capabilities. While they won’t land on the surface this time, the flight serves as a critical bridge toward future permanent lunar bases. This mission marks a new era of exploration, proving that humanity is ready to venture further into deep space than ever before.

Reference: NASA - Artemis II Mission

CLIMATE CHANGE

CLIMATE CHANGE

2025 Set to Become One of Earth’s Warmest Years



New data reveals that 2025 is on track to be the joint second-warmest year ever recorded, following a record-breaking November.

According to the Copernicus Climate Change Service, 2025 has seen consistently high temperatures, with November ranking as the third-warmest November in history. Scientists report that the global average temperature for the year is nearly 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, a critical threshold in international climate goals. This warming trend is driven by the continued rise in greenhouse gas emissions and the lingering effects of oceanic warming.

The high temperatures have contributed to extreme weather events worldwide, including intense storms and shifting precipitation patterns. Experts emphasize that while 2024 remains the hottest year on record, 2025 confirms a persistent and alarming warming trend. These findings serve as a stark reminder of the urgent need for global climate action to mitigate the long-term impacts of a heating planet.

Reference: Copernicus: 2025 on course to be joint second-warmest year

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