

3/2019



# fOCUS



Eleven years to go:  
**Agenda 2030**

Photo: European Environment Agency





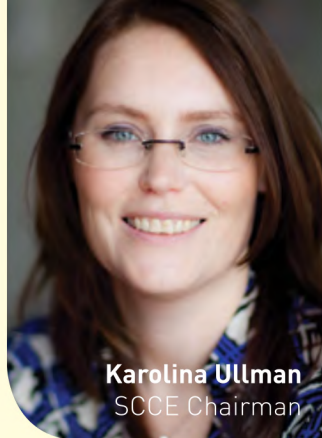
# DRIVING THE SHIFT

To us at Scania, it is evident that innovation, profitability and sustainability should go hand in hand. On our journey towards becoming the leading provider of sustainable transport systems, we focus on Energy efficiency, Alternative fuels and Electrification, as well as Smart and safe transport. These factors must work in parallel with each other, because it is only in combination that these will create a truly sustainable transport system.

We believe in the strength of cooperation and are convinced that partnership equals leadership. Together with our customers, and their customers, we are determined to accelerate change in the shift towards a future of sustainable transport solutions.

**Scania NXT**, the vehicle on picture, is a new battery electric self-driving urban concept for 2030 and beyond. It is designed with the flexibility to shift from ferrying commuters to and from work in mornings and evenings, delivering goods during the day and collecting refuse at night.





## Dear Reader,

This time I will not write about politics. It's just an ongoing soap opera, not only here in Estonia. Let's focus on business development instead.

I attended the very interesting breakfast seminar at the end of October where Telia Eesti, SEB Eesti and Tallink elaborated on their companies' strategies for tackling climate change and environmental protection.



I feel very optimistic as Estonian companies are taking these issues seriously and put resources into acting in a sustainable way although there are not much regulations or political pressure in this area in Estonia yet. I think this is an excellent opportunity for Swedish owned companies to be in the forefront and show good examples.

At the seminar I also took the opportunity to ask the participating companies if there was any company present who does not actively work with their CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility). Luckily only one company stated that they do not but they on the other hand have many international customers, so they are very aware of the importance of their suppliers' CSR work.

At the seminar, it was many times stated that Swedish companies and Swedish consumers are more aware of sustainability issues than Estonian and they ask more specific questions that sometimes leave the Estonian



companies in difficulties when there is no reliable statistics to present, for example on the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by Estonian transport companies. One thing is for sure, the pressure of consumers and customers will make all Estonian companies move forward in this area.

As one more business year is coming to an end, use the opportunity to see what has been done during the year and what can be improved for the upcoming year. In case your company has not yet started with your own CSR work, I recommend contacting Vastutustundliku Ettevõtluse Foorum which is an Estonian non-profit organisation assisting companies in the CSR awareness and development. You can find them here: [www.csr.ee](http://www.csr.ee).

I hope to see you all at our Christmas party and I wish for a successful end of your business year!

Karolina Ullman

Chairman of the Swedish Chamber  
of Commerce in Estonia



Royal Members:



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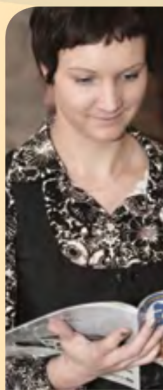
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Please contact SCCE's Ombudsman Kristiina Brodén for further information: [kristiina@swedishchamber.ee](mailto:kristiina@swedishchamber.ee)

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## The Swedish Chamber of Commerce in Estonia

The Swedish Chamber of Commerce in Estonia, SCCE, is a non-profit association registered in Estonia. Since its start, the SCCE has grown considerably and today the Chamber unite more than 130 member companies and organizations headquartered in Estonia, Sweden, as well as other countries.

SCCE is in many ways a mirror of the intensity in Swedish-Estonian commerce, trade and investments. Sweden is the biggest foreign direct investor in Estonia, and Sweden is also a major export market for Estonia.

A main task of SCCE is to create an environment for networking and exchange of information. The Chamber acts as a meeting place by arranging seminars, business lunches, company visits, meeting business delegations, as well as arranging social events for the members.

Following a SCCE initiative, FICE – Foreign Investors' Council in Estonia was founded in August 2008. FICE is a lobby group acting through contacts with the Estonian Government and Estonia's Governmental bodies. Together, the nine countries represented in FICE account for an impressive 80% share of the foreign direct investments in Estonia.

Special and unique SCCE member benefits include opportunities to further market their businesses in the News from Members section of the Chamber's website, as well as taking advantage of a steady flow of Member Bonuses.

The fee for Basic Membership in the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in Estonia is 449€ consisting of: a) Basic fee 200€, b) Service fee 249€ + VAT. The fee for Royal Membership is 1.349 € consisting of: a) Basic fee 200€, b) Royal Members' extended service package: 1.149€ + VAT. Membership is only granted to legal entities.

For more information about SCCE, please visit [www.swedishchamber.ee](http://www.swedishchamber.ee). You are also welcome to take a direct contact with SCCE's Ombudsman Kristiina Brodén: [kristiina@swedishchamber.ee](mailto:kristiina@swedishchamber.ee), tel: (+372) 501 9813.

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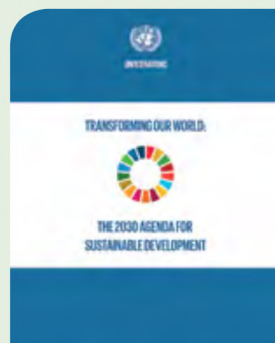


# Eleven years to go: Agenda 2030

Four years ago, on 25 September 2015, 193 countries of the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Agenda 2030. This global resolution recognizes that strategies for tackling climate change and environmental protection must go hand in hand with building economic growth, as well as addressing a range of social needs including education, health, social protection and job opportunities.

Titled "*Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*", the Agenda includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) aiming to promote prosperity, while at the same time protecting the planet:

1. No Poverty
2. Zero Hunger
3. Good Health and Well-being
4. Quality Education
5. Gender Equality
6. Clean Water and Sanitation
7. Affordable and Clean Energy
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth
9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
10. Reducing Inequality
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
12. Responsible Consumption and Production
13. Climate Action
14. Life Below Water
15. Life On Land
16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
17. Partnerships for the Goals



The Agenda 2030 is universal and broad-based, and not only applying to governments and parliaments, but also to companies, organizations and associations all over the world.



With that as a background, members of the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in Estonia together with participants invited by the Embassy of Sweden, met at the Ambassador's Residence in Tallinn for an end of October Breakfast Seminar.

Introduced by Ambassador Mikael Eriksson, Robert Pajos – CEO at Telia Estonia, Peeter Koppel – Private Banking Strategist at SEB Estonia, and Katri Link – Communications Director and CSR Programme Manager at Tallink Grupp, ►►►

## Background

In 1968, Sweden put forward the idea to arrange a UN conference, focusing on '*human interactions with the environment*', to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

ECOSOC supported the idea and decided to convene a conference on the topic in 1972. Preparations for the conference were extensive; lasting for 4 years and demanding cooperation and consensus between 115 governments all over the world.



Stockholm 1972

Named *The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment*, the Conference was held in Stockholm June 5–16, 1972, and is today regarded as a first multinational step towards Agenda 2030.

However, the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact nations boycotted the Stockholm Conference due to the lack of inclusion of East Germany as it was not a full member of the UN.

Headlined *The Stockholm Declaration*, the Conference agreed upon 26 principles concerning the environment and development. In a speech, the then Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, brought forward the connection between ecological management and poverty alleviation and that emerged as one of the major issues from the Conference.

Through the years, the 1972 Stockholm Conference has been followed by a number of international conferences on ►►►





▶▶▶ shared their companies' point of view and actions taken connected to the Agenda 2030's Sustainable Development Goals.



Katri Link – Tallink, Peeter Koppel – SEB, Ambassador Mikael Eriksson and Robert Pajos – Telia



- At Telia we have set ourselves two daring goals for 2030: Zero CO<sub>2</sub> and Zero Waste. As for carbon dioxide, the zero goal also includes our suppliers and their suppliers; we demand that they also leave a zero CO<sub>2</sub> footprint by 2030. We are now asking them to start working on their own plans, and by the end of 2022 all our suppliers shall have a plan in place on how to reach zero CO<sub>2</sub>.

- We have gone beyond physical waste with our Zero Waste goal and have included digital waste as well. 70+ companies joined at the Digital Cleanup Day and the outcome was that in a few days, 1 Petabyte digital trash was cleaned. An example from France demonstrates the impact of digital cleaning; If each and every French citizen would erase 50 emails on their computers, the resulting energy savings corresponds to keeping the Eiffel Tower lights on for 42 years.

- I am happy to note that this autumn, 32 technology companies in Estonia joined us and signed the Green Pledge as founders. Thus, we promise to take our operations to a completely sustainable basis by 2030, concluded Robert Pajos.

- Agenda 2030 is a truly global resolution and it is a bit of an irony of fate that in terms of international trade, we are now living in an era of protectionism. The rush toward globalization that followed the breakup of the Soviet Union and the entry of China into the global trading system is in retreat. The globalization gear has been shifted to reverse, said Peeter Koppel.



▶▶▶ the environment, eradicating poverty, reducing unemployment, strengthen gender equality, and promote societies to shift into a more sustainable development.

In January 2013, a UN General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals was established to identify the specific goals for the SDGs, now forming the basis of Agenda 2030. In 2014, the Open Working Group submitted their proposal of 17 SDGs and 169 targets to the UN General Assembly.



United Nations, New York 2015

**Negotiations on the proposal went on from January to August 2015, and at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015, the Agenda 2030 was finally adopted.**

- Consumers are increasingly worried about their future and that of the planet. They know that the window of opportunity to create a sustainable world is narrowing. However, 88% of the consumers think it's difficult to know what choices are the most sustainable, and prefer brands to lead the way and help them, said Robert Pajos.

- The possible reduction of fossil-fuel emissions by 2030 is 15% by the digital sector alone. Indirectly, this sector could also support a further reduction of 35% across the economy through influence of consumer and business decisions and system transformations.



- The climate change is one of humanity's greatest challenges and it is also a bankable trend as the financing needed to mitigate climate change represents an opportunity for investors. Green bonds and sustainability-linked debt instruments are more widespread than ever.

- Markets are probably still under pricing climate-related risks because the effects only materialize gradually and in the long term – exceeding most investors' investment horizon.

- Investors, such as pension funds, insurers, wealth managers, and endowments need to be responsive to the threat posed by climate change. They typically have multi-decade time horizons, with portfolio exposure across the global economy.

- Determining which firms or sectors will either win or lose the "green race" will be of the utmost importance to investors. Businesses are still navigating the financial and operational implications of climate change. To some extent, this can already be assessed based on the readiness of firms and sectors to adapt to a green economy – looking at the number of environmental technology patent applications, for example.

- In this world, the optimists have it, not because they are always right, but because they are positive. Even when wrong, they are positive, and that is the way of achievement, correction, improvement, and success. Educated, eyes-open optimism pays; pessimism can only offer the empty consolation of being right, concluded Peeter Koppel his presentation, quoting the late David S. Landes who was a professor of economics and of history at Harvard University.

- Our CSR work has four focus areas: Looking after the seas; Looking after climate; Looking after resources; and Looking after people – our customers, staff and communities. With these 4 focus areas, we match 8 of the Agenda 2030's Sustainable Development Goals.

- Among all our actions taken, and constantly ongoing, reducing fuel consumption and thus reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is of the utmost importance. There are technical solutions currently available for considerable energy improvements, for example shore power. This system supplies the vessels with shore electricity, thus reducing emissions otherwise created by the ships' engines for producing the electricity needed when docked in port. As for our Tallinn–Stockholm route, we have used shore power since some time in Stockholm and just recently, it was launched and made available for our cruise ferries in Tallinn's Old City Harbor.



- Digital solutions, like our Fuel Monitoring System, help us to make more accurate measurements, analyze the data, observe changes and trends quicker, and to react swiftly against any undesired developments. Looking at our total fleet, fuel per passenger has been reduced with 44,7% since 2009, and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per passenger dropped with 44,5% during the same period.

- Furthermore, we have increased our focus on recycling and reuse of materials. No single-use plastic is used in our restaurants and cafés onboard since last year, and currently we are working with replacing plastic bags with paper bags in our onboard shops, concluded Katri Link.



- At Tallink, we are taking a wide view on Agenda 2030, said Katri Link.



It has been a long journey before Agenda 2030 got adopted in 2015. Four years have passed since then, and eleven remain before the Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals should be implemented. The United Nations' then Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, put it very straightforward as Agenda 2030 was presented in 2015: "We don't have any plan B, because there is no planet B."





# CLOSER TO YOUR CLOSE ONES

TAKE SOME TIME OFF DURING THE HOLIDAYS  
TO GET CLOSER TO YOUR CLOSE ONES



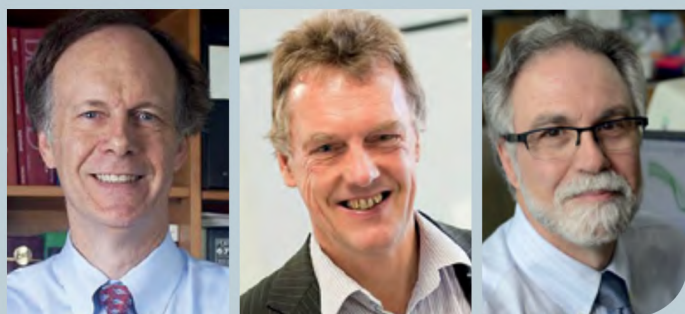
# The Nobel Prize Laureates 2019

As the tradition calls for, this year's Nobel Prize Laureates were announced during the first workdays of October:



## Physiology or Medicine

**The seminal discoveries by this year's Nobel Laureates in Physiology or Medicine – William G. Kaelin, Jr., Sir Peter J. Ratcliffe and Gregg L. Semenza – revealed the mechanism for one of life's most essential adaptive processes; *how cells sense and adapt to oxygen availability.***



William G. Kaelin, Jr., Sir Peter J. Ratcliffe and Gregg L. Semenza

The fundamental importance of oxygen has been understood for centuries, but how cells adapt to changes in levels of oxygen has long been unknown.

The Laureates established the basis for our understanding of how oxygen levels affect cellular metabolism and physiological function. Their discoveries have paved the way for promising new strategies to fight anemia, cancer and many other diseases.

## Physics

**The Nobel Prize in Physics is awarded with one half to James Peebles “for theoretical discoveries**



James Peebles, Didier Queloz and Michel Mayor

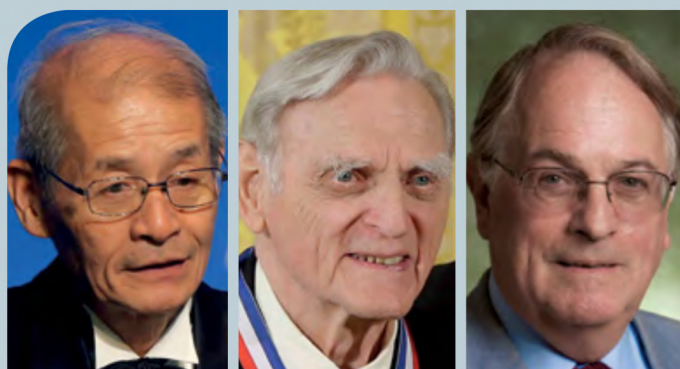
***in physical cosmology”, and the other half jointly to Didier Queloz and Michel Mayor “for the discovery of an exoplanet orbiting a solar-type star”.***

This year's Laureates have transformed our ideas about the cosmos and contributed to our understanding of the evolution of the universe and Earth's place in the cosmos.

While James Peebles' theoretical discoveries contributed to our understanding of how the universe evolved after the Big Bang, Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz explored our cosmic neighborhoods on the hunt for unknown planets. Their discoveries have forever changed our conceptions of the world.

## Chemistry

**The Nobel Prize in Chemistry is awarded to Akira Yoshino, John B. Goodenough and M. Stanley Whittingham “for the development of lithium-ion batteries”.**



Akira Yoshino, John B. Goodenough and M. Stanley Whittingham

Lithium-ion batteries are used globally to power the portable electronics that we use to communicate, work, study, listen to music and search for knowledge. Lithium-ion batteries have also enabled the development of long-range electric cars and the storage of energy from renewable sources, such as solar and wind power.

The foundation of the lithium-ion batteries was laid >>>



▶▶▶ during the oil crisis in the 1970's and they have revolutionized our lives since they first entered the market in 1991. They have laid the foundation of a wireless, fossil fuel-free society, and are of the greatest benefit to humankind.

## Literature

***"The Swedish Academy intends to decide on and announce the Nobel Prize in Literature for 2018 in parallel with the naming of the 2019 Laureate. The Academy needs time to regain its full complement, engage a larger number of active members and regain confidence in its work, before the next Literature Prize winner is declared," said a press release published in the spring last year from the Academy, an independent cultural institution founded in 1786 by King Gustaf III and having awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature since 1901.***



Olga Tokarczuk

Thus, the Nobel Prize in Literature for 2018 is awarded to the Polish author Olga Tokarczuk *"for a narrative imagination that with encyclopedic passion represents the crossing of boundaries as a form of life."*



Peter Handke

"And, the Nobel Prize in Literature for 2019 is awarded to the Austrian author Peter Handke *"for an influential work that with linguistic ingenuity has explored the periphery and the specificity of human experience."*

## Peace



Abiy Ahmed Ali

***The Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to the Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali "for his efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation, and in particular for his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with neighboring Eritrea."***

When Abiy Ahmed became Prime Minister in April 2018, and in close cooperation with Isaias Afwerki, the President of Eritrea, Abiy Ahmed quickly worked out the principles of a peace agreement to end the long "no

peace, no war" stalemate between the two countries. The Norwegian Nobel Peace Prize Committee hopes the agreement will help to bring about positive change for the entire populations of Ethiopia and Eritrea.

In Ethiopia, even if much work remains, Abiy Ahmed has initiated important reforms that give many citizens hope for a better life and a brighter future. He spent his first 100 days as Prime Minister lifting the country's state of emergency, granting amnesty to thousands of political prisoners, discontinuing media censorship, legalizing outlawed opposition groups, dismissing military and civilian leaders who were suspected of corruption, and significantly increasing the influence of women in Ethiopian political and community life. He has also pledged to strengthen democracy by holding free and fair elections.

## Economic Sciences

***The Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel is awarded to Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer, "for their experimental approach to alleviating global poverty".***



Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer

The research conducted by this year's Laureates has considerably improved our ability to fight global poverty. In just two decades, their new experiment-based approach has transformed development economics, which is now a flourishing field of research.

In the Economy section in this issue of **focus**, Karsten Staehr – Professor of International and Public Finance at Tallinn University of Technology, and also a part-time Research Supervisor at Eesti Pank – comments on the Laureates' findings.



# focus

on legalities

## Eight things to think about before 2020 arrives

By Triin Kaurson, Associate at NJORD Law Firm



Another year is ending, and it is important to always keep documentation and information regarding the company up to date. This will ensure that the looks of the company is accurate and true for third persons and that the paperwork is kept nice and clean.

Usually everybody is very busy during the holiday season and things might pile up around that time. Below we will set out check list of eight things that every company should think about before the Christmas holidays.

### 1. Do you have employment contracts with all the employees?

Make sure that you have written contracts in order to avoid any possible future disputes. Do not forget to register the employees in the employee register.

### 2. Termination of access rights

If there are employees or management board members whose contracts have been terminated during the year,

check whether all the permissions/accesses have been terminated for them as well (with bank, post, Tax and Customs board etc.).

### 3. Management board member information in the Commercial Register

Check the term of office for your management board members and/or supervisory board members. The information in Commercial Register is only informative, but in order to keep your record nice and up to date, please ensure that the term of office has not expired and renew them on time. Tip: it's good to have a calendar reminder regarding renewing the term of office of board members.

### 4. Correct contact information in the Commercial Register

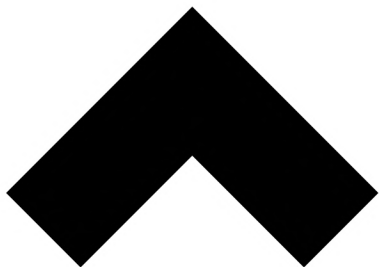
Review the company's contact information available in Commercial Register and company website to ensure that the address and all other contact information is still accurate.

### 5. UBO is registered in the Commercial Register

Ensure that you have registered information regarding the ultimate beneficial owners, UBO, of the company in the Commercial Register. It is mandatory to register >>>







Created by Marita Liivak

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►►► the UBOs as of 31 October 2018. The Commercial Register is already sending out notifications to non-compliant companies and the authority has the right to fine the companies who do not fulfill this obligation.

## 6. Review matters influencing company cash flow



a. Claim debts or make agreements for payments in installments.

b. Make sure that you do not have any tax debts to avoid interest claims. This will also help to keep your credit score positive.

c. Check your balance sheet and make sure that the requirements for net assets set by the law are met.

## 7. IP issues are solved

If there are licenses acquired for your company's activities or some cooperation agreements signed, make sure that the authority/business partner have accurate information and that the term of the contract/possible license will not expire soon. Make sure that fees for IP registrations are duly and timely paid.

## 8. Preplan your last-minute notary appointments

Any transactions that you would like to do within this calendar year that requires a visit to a notary public's office? Make your appointment on time, at least 1-2 weeks before. Notaries are also very busy at the end of the year because people often realize in December that there are many things that cannot wait until the next year. So, it can be mission impossible to get an appointment with a very short notice. In addition, notaries must comply with heavy AML regulations, so be prepared to provide extra documentation in regard of UBO's, funds, corporate structure etc.

**In addition to the above, the end of the year is the last moment to make plans for new year, think through your strategy, set goals and draft a budget. After completing the checklist above you are all set to celebrate the achievements for the ending year and enjoy the upcoming holidays.**



**Triin Kaurson**

Associate, NJORD Law Firm






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## PLANNING A GOLF TRIP? GET IN-LOVE WITH PÄRNU BAY GOLF LINKS

A classic links golf course, with wide fairways lined by natural areas of fescue and sandy terrain. Tall, ancient pine trees towering over the tee boxes. A stunning finishing stretch alongside a beautiful bay.

You may think I'm describing the next course on The Open Championship rota, but I'm actually talking about the stunning Pärnu Bay Golf Links in Estonia.

Pärnu Bay Golf Links is the only links course in the Baltic region. It made its debut to wide acclaim in 2015 and proceeded to claim "Best Golf Course In Estonia" honors in 2016 and 2017. This beautiful design from Lassi Pekka Tilander and the lead shaper, Mick McShane clearly takes inspiration from the great links courses of Scotland and the naturalist approaches of designers like Coore/Crenshaw and Tom Doak.

Estonia is a country located just across the Gulf of Finland from Helsinki, occupying the northern part of the Baltic peninsula. As you might expect in a country with a long, beautiful coastline, it's lively with watersports and fishing adventures. The local cuisine focuses heavily on the changing of the seasons, ranging from cold plates of rosolje, a beetroot-based salad, to luscious pork and seafood entrees always accompanied by black rye bread.

With Pärnu Bay Golf Links, Estonia suddenly positions itself as a legitimate golf destination. This is a world-class golf course that features a stunning stretch of finishing holes with the beautiful Pärnu Bay on the right side and dense forests hugging the left.

*About the author of the article: "Jordan Fuller is a golf mentor and coach who loves to travel around the world and play to the most interesting golf holes. He is also a writer who published articles, tips, and advice on his golf publication site, [www.golfinfluence.com](http://www.golfinfluence.com)."*

The huge greens put a major focus on finding the proper angles from the wide fairways, as the pin position of the day can completely change the timbre of a hole. A birdie hole one day may be a tough par the next. So bring your best golf club for an incredible tee time.

The clubhouse is a thing of beauty unto itself, boasting 360-degree views of the sea, expansive forests, and the golf course. It's a modern building built on the highest point on the golf course and features the Golf Restaurant EAGLE, a perfect place to cap off your day (or grab lunch before playing another round to improve) and survey the beautiful acreage of the site.

A 5-hole par 3 practice course is a perfect place to warm up or to settle bets after the round. The large driving range and practice area demonstrate that they really spared no expense.

Pärnu Bay Golf Links offers package deals with the best hotels and spas in Pärnu and they are all in Pärnu City center, about 10 km from the golf course. The helpful caddie masters will happily guide you to some of the area's other local treasures like kayaking, fishing trips, yacht tours, and stand-up paddleboarding.

Pärnu Bay Golf Links made its way onto Golf World Magazine's Top 100 Courses in Continental Europe list in 2019 getting a spot on 30th as its reputation only continues to grow.



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# focus on the **ECONOMY**

## The Business Climate

- Despite trade war headlines in major international media, several new free trade pacts have been reached in 2019, for example tying the European Union closer to Asia and South America, says SEB on the global business climate in their autumn issue of Nordic Outlook.



- But US trade policy is unpredictable with heightened uncertainty about both existing and expected agreements. White House tactics have helped disrupt the tech sector's global supply chains and portions of the auto industry.

- To summarize the global business climate, we predict that world trade will recover slightly in 2020-2021 after weakening in 2019, but growth rate will still be far below the average of recent decades.

a rare exception. We now expect GDP to expand by 3% in 2019, mainly due to a strong start in Q1 when the growth accelerated to 4,5% due to a surge in capital spending and strong exports.

- But the second half of 2019 as well as 2020 and 2021, will see much lower growth figures as the economy faces decelerating demand, both in export markets and domestically.

## Estonia



- So far, the Estonian, as well as the Latvian and Lithuanian, economies have been resilient to the global economic slowdown and have shown comparatively healthy growth. However, this autumn and next year, their expansion will cool significantly as exports weaken and capital spending appetite fades amid uncertainty about the future, continues Nordic Outlook.

- While economic headwinds have forced many countries to lower their growth forecasts, Estonia has stood out as



- Estonia's luck is about to turn in the second half of the year. Exports dropped 10% in June and industrial confidence has quickly dropped to its lowest level since 2010.

- The large wood production sector is experiencing headwinds due to shrinking demand and oversupply. However, problems in manufacturing are not only cyclical and confined to few sectors, but also stem from the very high wage growth of recent years, which is forcing manufacturers to reduce their labor dependency and aim for higher value-added products.

- Another concern is the future level of public sector investments.



# focus on the ECONOMY

►►► - The current budget period for the European Union's structural funds is ending in 2020. In the next round, Estonia will receive significantly less EU money. This will definitely depress public investments, which have thus far been mostly financed using EU funds.



- Private consumption growth will again exceed 3% in 2019. This year, consumers are also benefiting from slower inflation.

- Lower energy prices have been one of the key factors behind this, but the new government's decision to lower excise duties on alcohol has also had an impact. The cooling economic climate will nevertheless put a limit on the increases in household spending, and in 2020 and 2021 private consumption will grow by only around 2,5% yearly.



- The first cracks are now appearing in the previously solid Estonian labor market.

- Registered unemployment as recorded by the Unemployment Insurance Fund in July was the

highest since 2013. Layoffs in the energy sector and manufacturing have had an impact and are expected to continue in the second half of 2019. Consumer polls also show higher unemployment expectations. The upturn will nevertheless be limited, and the unemployment rate should average 5,4% in 2019 and only rise to 6,4 per cent in 2021.

## Sweden

- The Swedish economy is entering a phase of slower GDP growth. Manufacturers are resilient, helped by a weak krona, but export growth is slowing due to weak international



**demand. In spite of a decent purchasing power trend, households will remain cautious and unemployment will climb, says Nordic Outlook.**



- Manufacturing activity has remained strong, diverging from the gloomy trend elsewhere. Pharmaceuticals were the fastest-growing export category but the upturn was broad-based, including good growth in vehicle exports despite the weak global market. Service exports also accelerated after a period of weaker



growth. The krona exchange rate will continue to provide support, but future exports will probably be hampered by weak demand from the European markets that buy 70% of Swedish merchandise exports.

- Although exports have held up, manufacturers have been cautious about capital spending. Residential investments are also falling and are down nearly 15% since the peak in early 2018, and the number of housing starts has dropped by about 30% since 2017.

- Swedish household consumption growth has been very weak, almost completely stagnating so far this year despite rising incomes.

- An increase in purchasing power suggests that consumption will recover this autumn, but due to shaky economic conditions and rising unemployment, households will remain cautious. Looking ahead, the purchasing power upturn will slow as job growth slows, but lower inflation and slightly higher wages will provide support. Overall, we expect Swedish consumption to increase by around 1,5% yearly in 2020 and 2021.



- In an international perspective, Swedish public finances show continued strength, though surpluses will fall in the next couple of years.

- Deciding between cutting the government debt further or letting the debt ratio rise, we are likely to see more reforms than would be compatible with the surplus target (1/3% of the GDP).



# focus on the **ECONOMY**



**Magdalena Andersson**, Sweden's Minister for Finance, with the spring 2019 budget proposal

- Meanwhile the parliamentary political situation may reduce this expansiveness. The January Agreement with the Centre and Liberals guarantees the red-green government of Social Democrats and Greens a majority for its budget, but there are still tensions. The Agreement, largely a list of Centre and Liberal demands,

absorbs a lot of the funding that is available for reforms.

- When the economy slows, it will be harder for the government to find room for its own political agenda. The Centre and especially the Liberals whose new leadership has shown no great enthusiasm for budget collaboration will react negatively if government reforms are too ambitious.

- So far in 2019, the Swedish krona has again been the weakest of the G10 currencies (US dollar, Euro, Pound sterling, Japanese yen, Australian dollar, New Zealand dollar, Canadian dollar, Swiss franc, Norwegian krone and Swedish krona).



- An uncertain international environment, including risks of worsening trade conflicts, is not helping the krona, but although other small currencies also have lost ground, the Swedish Riksbank's monetary policy has contributed. We believe that the EUR/SEK exchange rate will move towards 11.00 by late 2019. The krona is undervalued, which suggests some appreciation further ahead and SEB predicts a modest appreciation, with the EUR/SEK rate reaching 10.00 by the end of 2021.

The Riksbank's monetary policy is disputed and in an October article in the Swedish magazine *Svensk Tidskrift*, Andreas Vedung wrote:

"The Riksbank's dominant goal should be stable monetary value. The Riksbank's most important contribution to Sweden is to provide generally accepted means of payment, i.e. money. A prerequisite for the payment method's general acceptance is that its transaction value is predictable and stable. Nothing but the predictability and permanence of the payment method legitimizes the Riksbank. In a modern, rational and efficient industrial country like Sweden, this should not be controversial."

Research: Megazine, Tallinn



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## **ABB. On the pulse** of digital revolution





# NOBEL PRICE in ECONOMY

## Experimental Research into Ways to Alleviate Global Poverty

**Karsten Staehr**  
on this year's Nobel Prize in Economics

This year the prize committee in Stockholm awarded the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel to Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer “for their experimental approach to alleviating global poverty”.



### Abhijit Banerjee



Abhijit Banerjee was born in 1961 in India.

He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1988. He first worked as an assistant professor at Harvard University and Princeton University, but moved to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1993, where he has been working since, from 1996 as a full time professor.

The main contribution of Banerjee, Duflo and Kremer is that they introduced research methodologies from natural and medical sciences into economics.

The key challenge in empirical economics is to establish cause and effect. We may for instance observe that poor people eat food that is not nutritious, but this information is only of limited value if the goal is to introduce measures to alleviate poverty. To achieve that we need to establish whether it is bad nutrition that causes poverty or poverty that causes bad nutrition. In the first case better nutrition may help reduce poverty, in the second case better nutrition is unlikely to help.

A large number of statistical methods have been developed in economics to help identify the cause and effect in various situations. The methods are typically complicated and often leave some doubt about the results. The three Nobel Prize winners suggested that instead of using increasingly complex statistical methods, economics could learn from the methods used in the natural and medical sciences, above all the randomised controlled trial.

The randomised controlled trial requires that some of the research objects be chosen at random to receive a given treatment while others do not receive the treatment. This is the standard method used in medical experiments to assess the effectiveness of new medicines, but it is also used

### Esther Duflo



Esther Duflo was born in 1972 in France.

She received her Ph.D. from MIT in 1999 and has worked at MIT since then. First as an assistant professor, then as an associate professor, and since 2004 as a full time professor. Esther Duflo is the youngest person to receive a Nobel Prize in economics and only the second woman.



widely in natural science experiments. If the number of research objects is large and the choice of treated and non-treated objects is random, the effects of the treatment can be found by simply comparing the ensuing condition of those who received the treatment with that of those who did not receive it.

**The Nobel Prize winners introduced the idea of the randomised controlled trial into development economics and showed that it was feasible to use the method in practice.**



Kremer pioneered the use of the method in trials in Kenya while Banerjee and Duflo have mainly worked in India. All three have conducted large-scale and randomised

### Michael Kremer



Michael Kremer was born in 1964 in the USA.

He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1992 and then moved on to MIT, where he worked from 1993 to 1999. He has been a professor at Harvard since 1999.

controlled trials where some individuals or some villages receive a given policy intervention while others do not receive it. The treatment might be free nutritional supplements, vaccination or some form of training. Some of the trials are very large and have thousands or tens of thousands of participants, and it is then possible to assess the effectiveness of the treatment by comparing the outcome of those who receive it with that of those who do not receive it. The work by Banerjee, Duflo and Kremer has opened for new insights into which specific policies may help alleviate poverty and, equally importantly, which policies are without effect.

**The randomised controlled trials have become one of the cornerstones of development economics, and large-**

**scale randomised trials are now routinely carried out in various developing countries. Several trials have shown that preventive healthcare and improved education lead to reduced poverty and better economic outcomes.**

The idea of using randomised trials is however not limited to studies in developing countries. Randomised trials are now routinely carried out in other countries to assess how effective different education programmes or labour market training options are. When Finland experimented with universal basic income, the recipients were chosen at random with the aim of making it easier to work out how consumption and employment were affected.

It is clear that randomised controlled trials cannot provide answers to all the questions in economics. Such trials are difficult and expensive to conduct. Large and complex studies mean that it is not always feasible to choose the research objects entirely at random as pointed out by, among others, Angus Deaton, another Nobel Prize winner. Finally, it is not clear how easy it is to transfer the results obtained for villages in India to other developing countries or for that matter to a high income country such as Estonia.

**The Nobel Prize recipients have not only carried out academic research for publication in academic journals. All three have in different ways sought to devise practical methods for reducing poverty and its many negative consequences.**

Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo and others founded the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab in 2003, which seeks to make the results of academic development research broadly available for policy making. Michael Kremer has sought to make vaccines more widely available to poor people, and he has worked with the US development agency USAID to devise new solutions to the world's poverty and development challenges. They have all written widely-read books on poverty, development and economic policies.

**The topics for which the Nobel Prize in economics has been awarded this year have not received a lot of attention in the academic economics community in Estonia. Research on economic development and poverty is still limited.**

Economists have typically been interested in transition and structural change, including innovation and labour market trends. The modest academic interest in global poverty is also reflecting that development aid from Estonia is largely channelled to post-communist countries and not the very poorest countries in Africa and Asia.

**Several economists in Estonia have nevertheless worked on issues related to the work of the 2019 Nobel Prize winners.**





# NOBEL PRICE in ECONOMY

## Readings

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►►► Several researchers at the Department of Economics and Finance at Tallinn University of Technology (TalTech) are studying the conditions for economic development in East Asia and focusing in particular on the institutional conditions for knowledge-intensive development. The idea of randomised trials has also been used by the Estonian Tax and Customs Board. In one such experiment, carried out jointly with the think tank Praxis, the taxpayers who were urged or nudged to comply with the tax reporting requirements were chosen at random, again with the aim of making it easier to assess how effective different measures were.

**The work by Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer has changed how economists carry out empirical research and examine how different policies affect the well-being of individuals or communities.**

Economics has moved from a science with the emphasis on theoretical and mathematical modelling to a science that is increasingly empirical and practical. This shift in emphasis has strengthened economics as a science and perhaps also improved the world a bit.



**Karsten Staehr**  
Tallinn University of Technology  
Eesti Pank

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## THE COLORFUL WORLD OF TASTES





## Spine surgeons at East-Tallinn Central Hospital present their new robot



In September, spine surgeons at East Tallinn Central Hospital started performing surgeries using a new robot, which helps surgeons place implants and navigate the spine. The robot is the first of its kind in Northern Europe.

- It will completely and permanently transform the way spine surgeries are performed, says Dr Taavi Toomela.

“We performed our first surgery with the robot on the same day as India,” says Dr Taavi Toomela, Head of the Centre of Spine Surgery of East-Tallinn Central Hospital. “There is no similar robot in Northern Europe or Russia.

In fact, there are only five such machines in Europe. It will completely and permanently transform the way spine surgeries are performed,” He adds that there have been 12 robotic-assisted surgeries at the centre. ▶▶▶



The robot, officially launched in the US at the end of last year, is called Excelsius GPS. It helps surgeons place implants and navigate the spine and, according to Toomela, is a huge step forward for spine surgery. "Improving implants in spine surgery is a small step, but the fact that surgeries can be done so quickly, so efficiently and with so little risk is a huge step forward."

"A model of the patient's spine is displayed on the screen, allowing me to plan the surgery and screw placement," explains Dr Toomela. "And then, with the

help of the robot, implants are placed accurately in exact locations. The surgeon plans and fixes the screws, the robot assists."

According to Toomela, all common back surgeries can be done in a minimally invasive manner with the help of the robot, which means much less harm to the patient. For the patient, this means shorter surgery time and faster recovery. "It involves much less trauma for the patient. The robot makes minimally invasive surgeries much safer and more efficient. Similar surgeries were

"The robot is a huge step forward for spine surgery"







possible before, but surgeons had to take hundreds of x-ray images or be very experienced and know exactly how to operate through small incisions and deliver an implant to a precise location. Now the robot will assist you and show you the right location in the spine to place the implant."

"Before, we relied on multiple x-ray images to guide us along the patient's spine. With the new imaging systems, patients are exposed to less radiation as well. Despite the lower radiation exposure, however, image quality is still good enough. Now we are able to send this image to the robot which, based on specific markers, can accurately determine the position of the spine and where the implant should be placed. The robot eliminates the need for multiple investigations. We just upload the images to a computer and rely on them."

According to Toomela, 90% of spinal cord injuries in Estonia are mild and can now be managed with an hour-long surgery. 10% of the injuries are more complex. "It usually takes an hour to get to the spine and close the wound, plus place the screws," says Toomela. "In addition, the robot can be used to stabilise inflammatory

processes or treat certain degenerative conditions of the spine, such as spinal instability and disc herniation. And that is what we have now started doing."

The new robot can also help patients who could not undergo surgery before. "We can operate on high-risk patients who require minimally invasive and fast surgery. For these patients, open surgery was previously not an option. Thanks to new opportunities and with the help of an experienced team of critical care doctors and anaesthesiologists, we are now able to do it."

"Having these opportunities is one thing; developing new technologies to the point where surgical treatment will lead to an improvement in the quality of life and faster recovery is another."

According to Toomela, the robot represents another step forward. "The number of open spine surgeries will now begin to decline. Today we are the first in the Nordic countries to have a centre of spine surgery with such opportunities. However, in five years, there will be a robot in every hospital where spine surgeries are performed."



East-Tallinn Central Hospital has been investing in the Centre of Spine Surgery for years and the centre has developed rapidly. "There is now so much necessary equipment that we are starting to run out of space. Modern operating rooms are much larger to accommodate all the modern and necessary equipment. We have come a long way and now need another operating room. In light of this, the creation of the Tallinn Hospital is absolutely vital."

Text and photos: East-Tallinn Central Hospital



# Through the Years

focus has taken a look at some of this year's Estonian anniversaries.

Last year, Estonia celebrated its Centennial Jubilee and this year has been filled with a long row of additional anniversaries. Some of them well worth to celebrate, while others represent tragic mementos of war, occupation, oppression and disaster.

## 800 years ago:

### - The Church on Vormsi

According to an oral tradition, a church was founded on the island of Vormsi (Swe: Ormsö) in 1219. This particular year coincides quite well with the arrival of the first Swedes settling down on the island during the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Eventually, the church got its name, St. Olof's Church, after Olof the Holy (Olof den Helige, c. 995 – 29 July 1030), and the oral tradition of its founding was written down during a church visitation in 1596.



St. Olof's Church

As is the case with so many other churches in Estonia, the Soviet occupation forced the church to close down and the last ringing in of the Sabbath could be heard on late Saturday afternoon, 15 July 1944.

However, in 1988, and under the pretense that it would become a public gathering place, the communist authorities gave permission to a restoration of the church. Two years later, on the St. Olof's Day 29 July 1990, the church could be reopened. Close to 2.000 persons, previous Estonian-Swedish Vormsi inhabitants, their descendants, together with a lot of other people from Estonia, Sweden and Finland, participated.

This year's 800th anniversary of the St. Olof's Church was celebrated on the St. Olof's Day 29 July, with, among many others, Patrik Göransson, priest in the Swedish St. Michael's congregation in Tallinn, Sweden's Ambassador Mikael Eriksson, and Prime Minister Jüri Ratas participating.



Among the participants at the anniversary: Patrik Göransson, priest in the Swedish St. Michael's congregation in Tallinn, Sweden's Ambassador Mikael Eriksson, and Prime Minister Jüri Ratas

## 150 years ago:

### - The First Song Festival

Initiated by the Estonian newspaper publisher Johann Voldemar Jannsen, the first Song Festival, or maybe rather Song Event, was held in Tartu in 1869. 878 male singers and brass musicians performed on stage.



The Johann Voldemar Jannsen memorial in Tartu



# THE FIRST 101 YEARS

During the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a national awakening started to develop in Estonia ultimately leading to the 24 February 1918 Declaration of Independence. The Song Festivals following the 1869 premiere were at the core of this national awakening movement.

Through the years, the Song Festivals have been held every fifth year and have grown in size, both in terms of number of singers and audience. A significant peak was reached towards the end of the Soviet occupation. In the summer of 1988, several hundred thousand people gathered at the Tallinn Song Festival Grounds and sang for freedom. Known as *The Singing Revolution*, it became an important part of Estonia's peaceful struggle for restored independence.

This year's festival in July was the 27<sup>th</sup> Song Festival and almost 100.000 spectators could listen and look at 1.020 choirs including more than 35.000 singers.



There are several interpretations of the meaning of the flag's colors. According to one widespread version, blue represents the reflection of the sky in the lakes and the sea symbolizing endurance, black stands for the earth feeding its people, while white marks an aspiration towards light and purity.

The very first flag was handmade in the spring of 1884 by Paula Hermann in hers and her husband's, Dr Karl August Hermann who was a honorary member of the Students' Society, kitchen in Tartu. On 4 June 1884, the Students' Society adopted blue, black and white as the colors of their student fraternity and on 21 November 1918, the provisional government of the Republic of Estonia declared the blue-black-white tricolor the official Estonian National Flag. It was raised for the first time as a national symbol at the Pikk Hermann tower in Tallinn on 12 December 1918.

Following the Soviet occupation in 1940, Estonia's national symbols were forcibly replaced by Soviet ones. The raising of the Estonian Flag, or even the possession of the tricolor, was considered a criminal offence by the occupant.

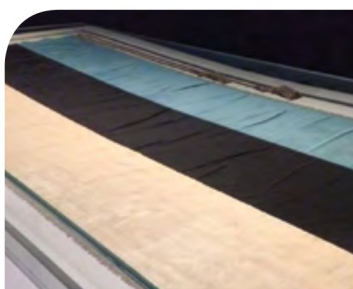
During the Soviet Perestroika and culminating in 1988, the Estonian Flag was waved again at massive open-air meetings and concerts. On 24 February 1989, it was raised on top of the Pikk Hermann tower – 71 years after Estonia's Declaration of Independence and a bit more than two years ahead of Estonia's restored independence 20 August 1991.



## 135 years ago:

### - The Estonian Flag

The history of Sini-Must-Valge (Blue-Black-White), the Estonian Flag, goes back to the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the academic and national awakening movement within the Vironia society at the University of Tartu (now *Eesti Üliõpilaste Selts*, Estonian Students' Society).



The very first flag was handmade in the spring of 1884 by Paula Hermann in hers and her husband's kitchen in Tartu



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## 100 years ago:

### - The founding of Riigikogu – the Estonian Parliament

On 23 April 1919, the Estonian Constituent Assembly, the forerunner to Riigikogu and the first representative body of the newly independent Estonia, convened in the Estonia Theatre in Tallinn for the first time. The Assembly was essentially Estonia's first parliament and its decisions formed the foundation of the Republic of Estonia.



Since 1922, the sessions of the Riigikogu have taken place in the Toompea castle, where a new expressionist styled building was built during 1920 – 1922.

During the periods of Soviet occupation (1940–41), German occupation (1941–44) and the second Soviet occupation (1944 – 1991) the Riigikogu was disbanded. The castle and the building of the Riigikogu were used by the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic (25 August 1940 – 7 May 1990), and the Supreme Council of the Republic of Estonia (8 May 1990 – October 5, 1992).



Riigikogu and Toompea Castle in 1937

The present Riigikogu was elected on 3 March 2019. The Reform Party remained the largest party, gaining 4 seats for a total of 34 and EKRE - the Conservative People's Party had the largest gain overall, increasing their seat count by 12 to a total of 19 seats.

In a move, which sparked both surprise and criticism in the society, Jüri Ratas of the Centre Party turned down an offer by Kaja Kallas of the winning Reform Party to form a joint coalition, and instead formed a coalition between the Centre Party, EKRE, and Pro Patria. This became Jüri Ratas' second cabinet.

On 23 April this year, the newly elected Riigikogu convened for a special sitting marking the Parliament's centennial jubilee. In her speech to the members of the Parliament, President Kersti Kaljulaid said:



"There shall be no public rights and veto rights that are dependent on birth, belief, gender, status or nationality," said President Kersti Kaljulaid

"Among other things, the composition of each Parliament is responsible for all our freedoms and human rights. This has been the case since the Constituent Assembly was founded. Here, I recall the chapter on the fundamental rights of the first citizens of Estonia, adopted by the Assembly which formulated very clearly our position; There shall be no public rights and veto rights that are dependent on birth, belief, gender, status or nationality."

## 80 years ago:

### - The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact

On 23 August this year, the Foreign Ministers of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania signed a joint statement to mark that 80 years have passed since the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was signed:

"23 August 2019 marks the 80th anniversary of the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany that sparked the Second World War and doomed half of Europe to decades of misery. The Pact contained the secret protocol, which



Riigikogu got its proper sign in 1992

In September 1992, a year after Estonia's restored independence, elections to the Riigikogu took place according to the Constitution of Estonia, adopted in the summer the same year. According to the 1992 Constitution, the Riigikogu has 101 members and Parliament elections are held every fourth year.



# THE FIRST 101 YEARS

effectively carved up Eastern Europe into spheres of influence."

"This is why, on this day proclaimed by the European Parliament as a European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Totalitarian Regimes, we remember all those whose deaths and broken lives were a consequence of the crimes perpetrated under the ideology of Nazism and Stalinism."

"Our countries have been reborn as free and democratic nations after decades of totalitarian rule. Thirty years ago, our nations started the democratic transformations that eventually made us equal and vigorous members of the European Union. Our countries are determined to continue working with our partners in Europe and around the world so that the horrors of the past never re-emerge," concludes the Foreign Ministers' joint statement.



Joachim von Ribbentrop, Joseph Stalin and Vyacheslav Molotov

titled *The Great Escape to the West*.

"One of the questions the audio-visual exhibition poses is whether to stay or to go when fate takes a darker turn. If you go, where will you go and for how long? Will it be easy to abandon your loved ones and your homeland? What will become of Estonia? Those were the questions eating away at the hearts of thousands of Estonians in the late summer and early autumn of war-filled 1944. Nobody would have guessed they would be away from home for half a century.



Travelling to an unknown place was terrifying, but the memories of 1940 and 1941, the first Soviet occupation, were even more gruesome. Nobody anticipated that many of them would never return to their homeland," writes the museum in the introduction to the exhibition.

## 75 years ago:

### - The Great Escape to the West



The number of Estonians and Estonian-Swedes who managed to escape war, occupation and oppression reached a significant peak

during the late summer and early autumn of 1944. At this time, the Red Army advanced rapidly into Estonia and it is estimated that totally, before and after the refugee peak, about 70.000 to 80.000 people managed to flee from Estonia. Around 27.000 of them are estimated to have reached Sweden, the majority of them coming from the Estonian west coast, the islands, and larger cities.

This autumn, several memorial meetings have taken place, both in Sweden and Estonia. And in August, the Seaplane Harbour Maritime Museum in Tallinn opened an exhibition



Ambassador Mikael Eriksson speaking at the Seaplane Harbour Maritime Museum's exhibition

## 30 years ago:

### - The Baltic Way

On 23 August 1989, approximately two million people in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania joined hands and formed a human chain from Tallinn via Riga to Vilnius. The manifestation commemorated and condemned the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact, signed by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, on the day 50 years earlier.



It was a powerful manifestation arranged to strengthen the struggle for regaining the independence of the Baltic States and it made front page news in international major media. In 2009, UNESCO included the Baltic Way in its Memory of the World Register.

"Thirty years ago this month, a series of peaceful demonstrations in Eastern Europe set off a chain of events that culminated in the collapse of the Soviet Union. Looking back, it is now clear that Europe experienced a miracle in 1989; the story could have had a much darker and bloodier ending. Today, we should honor not only those who fought for change, but also those who refused to send out the tanks," wrote Carl Bildt, Sweden's former Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, in an August 2019 article.





## - A First Step Towards Restored Diplomatic Relations



Office localities of the Swedish Consulate General in St. Petersburg, in 1989 still known as Leningrad

"When it was obvious that the Soviet occupation was coming to an end and it was getting possible to travel and launch cooperation projects, a branch office of the Swedish Consulate General in Leningrad was opened in Tallinn in December 1989," wrote Sweden's then Ambassador to Estonia,

Dag Hartelius, in an article 12 years ago in the very first issue of *focus* (Nr 1/2007, available online at [www.swedishchamber.ee/focus](http://www.swedishchamber.ee/focus)).

In a text headlined *Sweden and the re-emergence of Baltic independence in 1989–91*, Mart Kuldkepp, an Associate Professor of Scandinavian History and Politics at the Department of Scandinavian Studies/European and International Social and Political Studies at University College London, comments on the branch office:



Dag Ahlander and Lars Fredén



"As far as Swedish attitudes towards the new Baltic independence were concerned, it was diplomats like Dag Ahlander and Lars Fredén who were the first important policy

innovators. In September 1989, when Ahlander was appointed the Swedish general consul in Leningrad, he was also tasked with acting as a point of contact with the Baltic independence movements and thus became a very frequent, nearly weekly visitor to the Baltic capitals. When Lars Fredén was appointed as the second consul in October the same year, the work could intensify and more or less permanent 'Swedish offices' were established in Tallinn and Riga as 'departments' of the general consulate in Leningrad. All this amounted to a Swedish diplomatic presence from very early on, even if the political activities were concealed under the pretense of taking care of consular affairs. Thereby, Baltic hopes of making their voices heard and interests recognized were again closely connected to Sweden, even if the situation was very different from 1918–20."

In his 2007 article in *focus*, headlined *From Assistance to Partnership – the Swedish Embassy in Tallinn*, Dag Hartelius continues:

"In August 1991 the status of this [branch] office was changed. As the first foreign country Sweden re/opened its Embassy after 51 years. Three years later we moved into the beautiful von Rosen palace in Pikk 28 which had then been thoroughly refurbished after having functioned as a Soviet train engineer school."

"In some ways the work and priorities of the Swedish Embassy in Tallinn reflects the development in Estonia. Over the last years the focus of the Embassy has shifted almost as much as Estonia has changed since regaining independence. Then, in 1991, a large part of the work consisted in issuing visas to Estonians who wanted to travel to Sweden; the queues in front of the office at Endla 4 and later Pikk 28 were sometimes almost endless. Another major task of the Embassy was to channel Swedish assistance to the Estonian reform processes. Almost overnight Estonia had become one of the key target countries of Swedish overseas assistance."



The Embassy of Sweden at Pikk 28 in the heart of Tallinn's Old Town

"When Estonia reached its prime goal after the end of occupation, the accession to the European Union and NATO in 2004, this also marked a crucial shift for the Embassy. Assistance projects were being phased out and instead much attention has since been given to finding areas of partnership between Sweden and Estonia as equal partners in the EU," wrote Dag Hartelius.



Dag Hartelius

## 25 years ago:

### - MS Estonia

The MS Estonia disaster occurred on Wednesday, 28 September 1994, between 00:55 and 01:50 as the ship was en route in stormy weather from Tallinn to Stockholm.

The first sign of trouble occurred when a metallic bang was heard onboard, caused by heavy waves hitting the bow visor. At about 01:15, the visor in the ship's bow door opened, and MS Estonia immediately took on a heavy starboard list. At 1:50 the list was 90 degrees and the ship sank.





## THE FIRST 101 YEARS

MS Estonia was carrying 989 people; 803 passengers and 186 crew. Only 137 people managed to survive the disaster while 852 perished, 501 of them from Sweden and 285 from Estonia. It remains the single deadliest shipwreck disaster in peacetime to have occurred in the Baltic Sea.

Several memorial monuments have been erected in both Estonia and Sweden. Commemorating that 25 years have passed since the disaster, memorial ceremonies were held at many of these monuments on 28 September.



On 28 September this year, memorial ceremonies for the victims of the MS Estonia disaster were held in Stockholm, with Crown Princess Victoria and Prince Daniel being present, and...



...in Tallinn, with President Kersti Kaljulaid and Ambassador Mikael Eriksson among the many participants

### - Troops Withdrawal from Estonia



President Lennart Meri and President Boris Yeltsin confirming the deadline for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Estonia

**After tense negotiations a treaty, signed on 26 July 1994 in Moscow by Russia's President Boris Yeltsin and Estonia's President Lennart Meri, put 31 August 1994 as the deadline for withdrawal of Russian troops from Estonian soil.**

The last Russian troops

did indeed leave on 31 August 1994, with the exception of the Paldiski nuclear submarine site which was fully handed over to Estonia on 30 September 1995. The Soviet occupation, which started in June 1940, had finally ended for good and Estonia's path to stable development and accession to NATO and the European Union had opened.

As Estonia declared restored Independence on 20 August 1991, it is estimated that the Soviet Army managed over 570 military sites and some 35.000 military personnel in Estonia. Negotiations about the troop's withdrawal started in September 1991, and lasted until December 1991 when the Soviet Union ceased to exist and the troops requalified as the Russian Army. Negotiations continued in April 1992, now with representatives of the Russian Federation.

The negotiations were not easy. In 1992, the Russian side offered 2002 as a possible deadline. As there was no way Estonia could agree to this, the meetings and consultations continued and the Russians finally promised to leave by 1997. However, it was extremely important to Estonia to achieve the withdrawal of Russian troops at the same time as they departed many other places, primarily Germany, where the deadline for departure was 31 August 1994.

Estonia's timing approach received strong international support and many Western countries took diplomatic steps to convince Russia; the United States of America and Sweden in particular, but many other countries were active in this as well. Estonia also gained support from several international organisations like the United Nations, the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Council of Europe.

As a result of the negotiations and treaties, Russian troops were withdrawn from Estonia by 31 August 1994. The entire process attracted a great deal of international attention and was completed

peacefully. It also became the first major cooperative achievement with Western allies for Estonia, and Estonia was now free in its choices for the future and an important partner in a situation where NATO and the European Union were expanding eastwards.

Estonia became a member of both the EU and NATO in 2004, and an article about this 15<sup>th</sup> years anniversary was published in the summer issue of **focus** this year, available online at [www.swedishchamber.ee/focus](http://www.swedishchamber.ee/focus).

Research: Megazine, Tallinn





# Winter Wines



The time has come to put on the wool socks, the winter coat, and some days also make use of the snow shovel. But, there is always an option just to let it snow and instead enjoy winter with family and friends, or just to relax by ourselves in front of a fire together with a good book and a nice glass of wine.

**focus** has turned to Kristi Kruger, Priit Parts and Annamari Nikkel to get their recommendations on wines chasing away the winter chills.



- Winter is the perfect time of the year for rich, full-bodied, hearty wines offering complexity and depth. Wines that keep us warm, being wonderful for an evening with your favourite movie, and holding up to the rich dishes that come with the season, says Kristi Kruger, CEO at the family-owned company Veinipood – WineShop.



Kristi Kruger

- The best wines to drink when it's cold outside are big, bold and spicy reds; creamy, toasty, full-bodied whites; warming fortified wines; or lush, celebratory sparkling wines, continues Kristi.

## Which Reds are best during the Winter?



### - Northern Italian Wines – Nebbiolo and Valpolicella.

While completely different styles of wine, both have their place on the dinner table during the winter. With its powerful tannins and high acidity, wines made from Nebbiolo grape are perfect with fatty, rich winter foods. Wines made with the Nebbiolo grape include Barolo, "The King of Wines and the Wine of Kings", Barbaresco, and wines labeled as the varietal. Rich and full-bodied Valpolicella Ripasso wines can be served with a number of dishes such as risotto, hearty pasta dishes, aged cheeses and roasted or barbecued meats.

- From France's Rhône region, **Chateauneuf du Pape** and his little brother **Gigondas** are spicy nuanced hearty

wines that pair well with winter foods. The predominate grape in the blend is Grenache, and it also includes Syrah and Mourvedre which give the deep, meaty, spicy and smoky flavours.

- **Bordeaux Blends.** The bold red wines of the Bordeaux Left bank (which are usually Cabernet Sauvignon dominant) pair beautifully with grilled and roasted meats, lamb, game birds, foods with heavy sauces and aged cheeses. The warm and well-rounded wines of the Right Bank (the major grape variety is Merlot) are an incredible pairing with wild game, as well as with roasted meats, lamb, duck, pork, mushrooms and mushroom sauces.

- **Brunello di Montalcino.** This is a traditional Tuscan version of 100% Sangiovese. The dark and earthy wine with notes of fig, tobacco and plum can stand up to rich foods and rich flavours. Pair it with roasted meats, mushrooms and truffles.

## What Whites can stand up to the Cold Weather?

- White wine can be just as bold and noteworthy as red wine, making it an ideal winter drink. Acidity is important in the winter white. As cold-weather foods tend to be on the heavier side, acid helps to cut through all that richness. Thus, full-bodied wines that are unoaked but have bright acidity, or even lighter-bodied wines that instead have a lot of texture, are excellent options, continues Kristi.



- **Riesling.** The German-born white grape is by far the most popular white wine for winter. The wines range from dry to very sweet, so you can pair them with different types of food. A Riesling that is made in an off-dry or slightly sweeter style can give the impression of having more body and a fuller mouth feeling; perfect for the cooler months. Pairing ideas: Fried or baked ►►



## Winter Wines

▶▶▶ fish, simple seafood dishes, cream sauces, butter sauces, roasted chicken, grilled pork, and charcuterie.

- **Pinot Gris [It. Pinot Grigio]**. Indeed, with its appealing notes of ripe pear, apple, stone-fruit and spice, round mouth-feel and often rich texture, it may be the ultimate winter white. Pinot Gris tastes brilliant with meat stews, white or red meat such as pork or veal roast, duck and game, sausages, sweet and sour dishes, as well as foie gras.

- **Gewürztraminer** is a rich, full-bodied wine that is generally high in alcohol, which gives the wine something of an oily texture and a perceptible sweetness. Two of the best places for winter-friendly expressions of Gewürztraminer are France's Alsace region and Italy's Alto Adige. Wines from these areas give off intoxicating aromas of roses and lychee with an underlying hint of spiciness, perfect for Asian food, and any food using a combination of oil and spice when preparing it.

- **Champagne and its sparkling wine counterparts** can add a decadent sparkle to a cold and grey winter days. Sparkling wine goes well with almost every dish. The acidity in the wine, fairly low alcohol levels and the bubbles complement a wide range of flavours and textures including some pretty rich foods. And of course, there's the celebratory feel that sparkling wines add to any occasion.



\*\*\*

- These winter wines are available at our shops in the Järve and Viimsi Shopping Centers in the Tallinn area, and they will keep you in a good and relaxed mood as the leaves and temperatures drop and snow starts to fall, concludes Kristi Kruger.



Priit Parts

**at Savoy Boutique Hotel's Restaurant MEKK in Tallinn's Old Town.**

- With an eye on Christmas and New Year, I have selected three alternatives from Restaurant MEKK's wine list. A red from Chile, a white from Italy, and a classic French Champagne, says Priit Parts, Restaurant Manager and Sommelier

- As its full name implies, 'Cabernet Sauvignon / Carmenere / Syrah, Evolucion, Manutara', the Chilean red wine Manutara, is made of a mix of three different grapes.



- The grapes are hand-picked and aged for 14 months in oak barrels, giving the wine a purple color and an aroma of black currant, blueberry, anise and lavender.

- The taste is dominated by black cherry, leather, and truffle with an elegant aftertaste. Manutara is an excellent pairing with grilled beef and pork.

- Despite its name, Monte Carbonare (Coal Mountain) is a white wine from the Soave region in Italy. The vineyard, covering a 28 hectare area and producing 30.000 bottles of Monte Carbonare per year, is located





## Winter Wines

on black volcanic soil which gave the inspiration to the name of the wine.

- The aroma is a mix of yellow flowers, tropical ripe fruits, white peaches, a little smokiness, and even a nuance of peat.
- Thanks to the vineyard's high location and soil with old trees, the taste is very mineral and fresh, with herbs, almonds and a pleasant restrained acidity. The aftertaste is long lasting and very dry.
- Served at 11-13 degrees, Monte Carbonare is perfect for all fish dishes, vegetables and truffles with risotto.



◀ - The Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label champagne has a perfect harmony of delicacy and vigor. The dominance of Pinot Noir grapes give a structure being typical for Veuve Clicquot, and the Pinot Meunier grapes add roundness and Chardonnay elegance.

- The color is clear and golden yellow, with a balanced fruity aroma from the grape varieties and a bit roasted feeling from the maturing of the champagne in the bottles.

- The taste is fresh and fruity and a true harmony between delicacy and vigor.

- Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label is a perfect aperitif, and also a perfect champagne for the Christmas and New Year's meals. And, as the time gets close to midnight on New Year's Eve, the vintage Veuve Clicquot Reserva 2008 is an excellent choice for greeting year 2020, concludes Priit Parts.



Annamari Nikkel

- Prosecco has become the world's most loved sparkling wine and has even out-raced Champagne in terms of sales volumes, says Annamari Nikkel, Category Manager of Wines at Tallink.

- Britain was formerly known as the biggest Champagne market, but nowadays Prosecco has taken over that position. Actually, the Brits are consuming almost one third of the whole Prosecco production, which was around 500 million bottles in 2018, a figure still growing,

- At the very beginning of the Prosecco era, this sparkling wine was actually made with low-alcohol, tiny bubbles and often in a semi-sweet style. However, improvements in the vineyards and in the wine production helped to raise the quality; the bubbles became more intense and finer, the style of the wine more dryer, and the aroma and taste more refined.

- Prosecco is mainly made from the local Glera grape, and the Prosecco vineyards are found in the area between Veneto and Friuli-Venezia-Giulia. As from 2009, only sparkling wines from this specific area can by law be labeled as Prosecco, which is nowadays also the name of the region, just as Champagne is a region in France.



The Glera grape

- After these quality improvements, a new life for Prosecco began. We have a Prosecco boom going on, and this easy-drinking, super-fruity sparkling wine has conquered the world.

- There are some good-to-know items about Prosecco, for example the level of sweetness which is a bit confusing. When it says Extra Dry on a sparkling





## Winter Wines

wine label it usually refers to a very low sugar content, but with Prosecco it is vice versa; extra residual sugar is added! If you want a dry Prosecco, then you need to look up the word “Brut” on the label and the complete Prosecco sweetness chart looks like this:

- \* *Brut* – up to 12 g of sugar per liter
- \* *Extra Dry* – 12-17 g of sugar per liter
- \* *Dry* – 17-32 g of sugar per liter

- Further good-to-know items concern some words and terms often found on the Prosecco labels:

- \* *Frizzante* – semi-sparkling wine, the lightest style of Prosecco with less intense bubbles and lower alcohol and labeled vino *frizzante*.
- \* *Spumante* – so-called “real” sparkling wine, but with reference to Prosecco, not often marked on the label.
- \* *Treviso* – a province in the Prosecco area.
- \* *Conegliano Valdobbiadene* – villages in the Prosecco region where the highest quality Proseccos are produced. On the label, both or only one of the villages may be marked.



Some of the Proseccos available in Tallink's onboard shops; Superiore from Conegliano Valdobbiadene; vintage Millesimato; and sweetness from Brut to Dry

- \* *Millesimato* – vintage Prosecco, made from grapes harvested in one exceptional year. In general, Proseccos, like other sparkling wines and Champagnes, are a blend of different vintages. But in exceptional years and from the best grapes, Millesimato Prosecco is made – higher in price, more intense bubbles and more complex taste.

\*\*\*

- A glass of Prosecco is never wrong, especially this time of the year with Christmas and New Year coming up and Tallink has wide range of Proseccos available in our onboard shops, concludes Annamari Nikkel.

Texts: Kristi Kruger, Priit Parts, and Annamari Nikkel  
Editing: Megazine, Tallinn





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# newsflashes



The first vessels connected to the shore power system are Tallink's cruise ferries operating on the Tallinn-Stockholm route, to be followed by vessels operating between Tallinn and Helsinki.

- We are already using shore power in Stockholm and according to our calculations, a ship that

uses green shore power for at least 7 hours per day while docked in port, will generate 230 tonnes less CO<sub>2</sub> per month, says Captain Tarvi-Carlos Tuulik, Tallink Grupp's Chief Captain and Head of Ship Management.

## Being Converted to a Hybrid Vessel

The ferry Tõll, operating between the Estonian mainland and Muhu/ Saaremaa, will be converted to a hybrid vessel during this winter.



A battery bank will be installed in the ferry to reduce the consumption of diesel and cut exhaust gas emissions by replacing fossil fuel with electricity stored in the battery bank.

- We believe that on shorter ferry routes, environmentally friendly electric-powered ships are the future, both in Estonia and elsewhere, especially considering the global climate targets for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. If the Tõll project is successful, the technology will be installed in all our four new ferries, says Jaak Kaabel, CEO at the ferry operator TS Laevad.

The conversion work to began in mid-October and is planned to be ready in February 2020. The work will largely be carried out with the ferry still in operation.



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## Green Pledge

Several of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals listed by the United Nations in the Agenda 2030, concern the Human Environment.



This autumn, 33 technology companies in Estonia, among them Telia, signed a founding Green Pledge promising to take their operations to a completely environmentally sustainable basis by 2030.

- The companies have taken this step after considering the scale of global environmental challenges, and are willing to express their shared desire to find innovative solutions to these problems, a statement said. With the Green Pledge, the technology sector is prioritizing the environment as an integral part of their business. All like-minded tech companies are invited to join the initiative, said a statement from the Green Pledge organization.

More information about the Green Pledge is available online at [techgreenpledge.org](http://techgreenpledge.org).

## newsflashes

It is the first comprehensive and thorough renovation that has been made since Östermalmshallen, by many Stockholmers called a temple of food, first opened 131 years ago. Among all the works that have been done, the original star-shaped floor plan from 1888 in the food mall has been recreated.

- With the renovated Östermalmshallen, we hope to attract Stockholmers as well as tourists and visitors from all over the world. Among many other improvements, the restaurants are now located facing the adjacent streets and the square, and they will be open well into the evenings, says Ulf Elmqvist, chairman of the Association of Merchants in Östermalmshallen.

## Estonia's new Ambassador to Sweden



In the beginning of October, Margus Kolga, Estonia's new Ambassador to Sweden, presented his credentials to King Carl XVI Gustaf.

- Sweden is an important partner for Estonia both in Northern Europe, the European Union, and internationally. Our common interests in security policy, our good and strong economic relations and ever-growing cultural exchanges provide a positive basis for further steps and new joint activities, said Margus Kolga following the presentation of his credentials and a talk with HM The King.

## Reopening

Early 2020, and following an extensive total renovation that started in 2016, Östermalmshallen in Stockholm will reopen.





# newsflashes

Margus Kolga joined the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2007 as Director-General of the Political Department. In 2010, he was appointed Ambassador at the Permanent Representation of Estonia to the United Nations in New York and in 2015, he joined the State Chancellery to coordinate the drafting of the new Security Policy Strategy. In 2016, he returned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and took up the position as Head of the Campaign Task Force for Estonia's upcoming (2020-2021) seat as a non-permanent member of the United Nations' Security Council.

## Strong Innovators

Sweden is the 2019 EU innovation leader and Estonia enters the strong European innovators' ranking for the first time, reports the European Commission.



- Despite its carefully cultivated reputation of being a digital wonderland, Estonia has lagged behind European averages for years when it comes to innovation and investments in R&D – Research and Development. But now, for the first time, we see the country as one of Europe's strong innovators, says the European Commission.

"As for the European Union as a whole, the Commission's 2019 European Innovation Scoreboard shows that the EU's performance in the innovation area has improved for four years in a row, now outperforming the results

of the United States for the first time. However, the EU has also continued to lose ground to Japan and South Korea, and China is catching up quickly as well," the Commission wrote in a press release.

- Lack of R&D investments from the private sector in Estonia remains a serious issue. A sustainable goal for R&D investments here should be 3% of our GDP, with 2% coming from the private sector. Those 2% are the real pain point, comments Tarmo Soomere, president of the Estonian Academy of Sciences.

## More Countries Joining

Australia, Canada, Croatia, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Slovenia and Switzerland, altogether nine countries, intend to join the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defense Center of Excellence – CCDCOE in Tallinn.



- The importance of cyber security has grown dramatically during the last three years. Real steps forward have been taken in the way countries understand and work with cyber security, and the international cooperation in this important area has indeed intensified, comments CCDCOE.

Opened in 2008, CCDCOE brings together researchers, analysts and educators from the military, governments, the academic world as well as industries. Estonia is a founding member nation and Sweden joined CCDCOE in May 2017 as a Contributing Participant, a membership status eligible for non-NATO nations.



# On Top



Estonia ranks 1<sup>st</sup> out of 68 countries when it comes to the best countries for living a connected digital life, reports InterNations, the largest global network and information

site for people who live and work abroad.

- Being featured in our Expat Insider Survey for the first time, Estonia is rated best in the world for both unrestricted access to online services (e.g. social media) and the availability of administrative or government services online, comments InterNations.

Sweden ends up on 11<sup>th</sup> place in InterNations' survey.

- While Sweden narrowly misses out on a spot in the top 10 countries for digital life, the country gets top marks for being a cashless society. Expats in Sweden are also happy with the easy access to high-speed internet and the availability of government or administrative services online. However, getting a local mobile phone number seems to be a weak area of Sweden's digital life, says InterNations.

# newsflashes

## Regional Security on the Agenda

The Parliament Speakers from the five Nordic and three Baltic countries have met for their annual conference, this autumn held at the Arvo Pärt Center in Laulasmaa, west of Tallinn.



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# newsflashes

Regional security, the Eastern Partnership, relations with Russia, and the fight against misinformation and influence were on top of the agenda.

- We have chosen different paths in developing our defence policies and mechanisms, but our cooperation in security and defence is more active today than ever before, said the conference host, Henn Põlluaas, Speaker of Riigikogu/the Estonian Parliament.

The Nordic and Baltic Parliament Speakers' conferences are held within the framework of Nordic-Baltic 8 (NB8), a regional co-operation platform, formed in 1992. Iceland holds the current NB8 Presidency and Estonia will take over the Presidency in 2020.

## In the Heart of Scandinavia's Largest Alpine Ski Area

The opening of a brand new airport in Sweden is not a frequently occurring event. However, on 22 December this year, the first commercial flight will land at the new Scandinavian Mountains Airport.



Located next to the Norwegian border, the new airport will serve the Sälen alpine ski area on the Swedish side and the Trysil area on the Norwegian side of the border. Together they form Scandinavia's Largest Alpine Ski Area and Scandinavian Mountains Airport has been initiated and is owned by the local business community.

The commercial air traffic to the airport will mainly be winter seasonal with flights from Malmö, Gothenburg, Stockholm-Bromma, Växjö and Ängelholm in Sweden; Aalborg and Copenhagen in Denmark; and London in England.

## Will Continue to Grow

Swedbank's Chairman Göran Persson, together with the bank's incoming CEO Jens Henriksson and acting CEO Anders Karlsson, visited Tallinn in the beginning of October.



- Swedbank has four home markets; Sweden, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. We will stay here and continue to grow, just as Estonia's economy, said Göran Persson.

His and the Swedbank team's program in Tallinn included meetings with the President of the Bank of Estonia Ardo Hansson, Estonia's Minister of Finance Martin Helme, the Head of the Estonian Financial Supervision Authority Kilvar Kessler, and Prime Minister Jüri Ratas.

Göran Persson was appointed Chairman of Swedbank in June 2019. From 1994 to 1996, he served as Sweden's Minister for Finance and from 1996 to 2006 as Sweden's Prime Minister.





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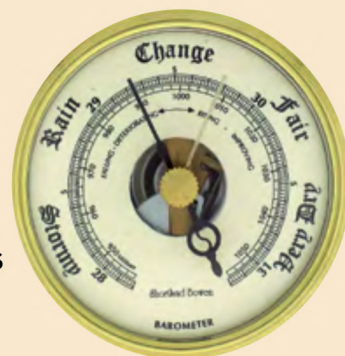
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- The trends that have persisted in the global economy in 2019 are clearly not the ones that export-dependent Estonia was hoping for, said a SEB economist in Tallinn as I was preparing an end of November SCCE Business Breakfast presenting the bank's Nordic-Baltic outlook on the current business climate.



As for Sweden, SEB's autumn Nordic Outlook writes: "The Swedish economy is entering a phase of slower GDP growth. Manufacturers are resilient, helped by a weak krona, but export growth is slowing due to weak international demand."

The economy section in this issue of **focus** takes a closer look on what SEB's latest Nordic Outlook says about the coming Estonian and Swedish business climate.

Economic growth and social needs, in tune with human environmental interactions, are issues being on top of the contemporary international agenda.



Also included in the **focus** economy section, Karsten Staehr – Research Supervisor at Bank of Estonia and Professor in public and international finance at Tallinn University

of Technology, comments on this year's Nobel Prize in Economics. The three Laureates, Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer, were awarded the Nobel Prize for "their experimental approach to alleviating global poverty".

"The work by the three Laureates has changed how economists carry out empirical research and examine how different policies affect the well-being of individuals or communities. Economics has moved from a science with the emphasis on theoretical and mathematical modelling to a science that is increasingly empirical and practical. This shift in emphasis has strengthened economics as a science and perhaps also improved the world a bit," writes Karsten.



Alleviating global poverty is closely connected to several of the Sustainable Development Goals included in the United Nations Agenda 2030.



Adopted by 193 countries, it is a global resolution recognizing that strategies for tackling climate change and environmental protection must go hand in hand with building economic growth, as well as addressing a range of social needs including education, health, social protection and job opportunities.

At an end of October Breakfast Seminar in the Ambassador's Residence at the Embassy of Sweden in Tallinn, SCCE got an overview of Agenda 2030.

Additionally, and introduced by Ambassador Mikael Eriksson, we could listen to Robert Pajos – CEO at Telia Estonia, Peeter Koppel – Private Banking Strategist at SEB Estonia, and Katri Link – Communications Director and CSR Programme Manager at Tallink Grupp. They all shared their companies' point of view and actions taken connected to the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals.



A report from the Breakfast Seminar together with a closer look at Agenda 2030 is included in this issue of **focus**.



St. Olof is still guarding his 800 years old church on Vormsi

A long row of anniversaries has occurred in Estonia this year. Some of them well worth to celebrate, while others represent tragic mementos of war, occupation, oppression and disaster.

Beginning with an 800 years anniversary on Vormsi (Swe: Ormsö), **focus** has taken a look at some of the anniversaries during this year.

As **focus** goes to print, preparations for SCCE's Christmas Party, the start of the Festive Season, are ongoing.

As usual, Swedish Christmas specialities like Julskinka, Julkorv, Julmust, Julknäcke, Vörtlimpa and much more will be brought from Sweden. Lucia and her Procession are rehearsing, and SCCE members are signing up for this classic event.

We have a couple of cold and dark months ahead of us. For upcoming cozy winter evenings together with family and friends or just by ourselves, Kristi Kruger, Priit Parts and Annamari Nikkel recommend some of their favorite Winter Wines in the La Cave section of our **focus** magazine.



I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and hope you enjoy reading this winter issue of **focus**. As usual, latest news on SCCE events to come and reports on events passed are always found at [www.swedishchamber.ee](http://www.swedishchamber.ee).



Sincerely,  
Kristiina Brodén  
SCCE Ombudsman

Contributions to **focus** from the members of SCCE, both in terms of editorial content and advertising, are welcomed.

If you haven't already done it, please do put us on the mailing list for press releases, articles, as well as your point-of-view on issues of general interest for the commerce, trade and investments between Estonia and Sweden.

As for advertising opportunities in **focus** and on our website [www.swedishchamber.ee](http://www.swedishchamber.ee), I will be happy to provide information on sizes, prices and technical requirements. Welcome to contact me at: [kristiina@swedishchamber.ee](mailto:kristiina@swedishchamber.ee) or by phone: (+372) 501 9813.

Latest news on SCCE events to come and fresh reports on events passed are always found at [www.swedishchamber.ee](http://www.swedishchamber.ee), and you can reach me for further information on email: [kristiina@swedishchamber.ee](mailto:kristiina@swedishchamber.ee) or by phone: (+372) 501 9813.





A woman with her hair in a bun, wearing a blue business suit, is sitting in a meditative lotus position on a grey textured mat on a wooden floor. She is barefoot and has her eyes closed, with her hands resting in her lap in a mudra. In front of her is an open silver laptop. To her right, a smartphone lies on the floor. Behind her is a white adjustable desk with various office supplies on it, including a stapler, a stack of papers, and a small black device. The background shows a modern office environment with white cabinets and a dark rug.

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