



STRÖMSTAD AKADEMI

Nordiskt institut för avancerade studier

Newsletter August 2022, international edition

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Editors corner

Editor's corner, Anders Gustavsson

Surgeon and Chairman of the Board Peter Fritzell informs about current events in Strömstad Surgeon and Chairman of the Board Peter Fritzell informs about current events in Strömstad Academy.

Vice-Chancellor and Information System Scientist Per Flensburg informs about current events in Strömstad Academy. He also writes about the upcoming strategy for Strömstad Academy with regard to administration and how the Academy can become known to the outside world, primarily in the research community.

Museum curator Mariana Back wrote a column in Strömstad's on 30 July Tidning with advice on the use and reuse of plastic for future generations.

Educator Åsa Morberg discusses the problems with the Swedish shortage of teachers. She highlights the importance of school children learning to read with the help of textbooks.

Pediatrician Gudmund Bergqvist calls for support for Ukraine in their defensive war against Russia.

Psychiatrist Lennart Wetterberg, pediatrician Gudmund Bergqvist, pharmacologist Marylou Wadenberg and chemist Ulf Berg make a call about fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS).

In the fall of 2022, Strömstad Academy will organize a lecture series at Bohuslän's museum in Uddevalla in collaboration with the Folkuniversitetet and Bohuslän's museum. Project manager has been **historian Bode Janzon**.

I want to urge a previous call for all members to verify and complete their personal information on the Academy website. Also try to recruit new members to the Academy, not least young scholars. Please, send suggestions to

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Vice-Chancellor Per Flensburg
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I wish new contributions to the September issue of the Newsletter sent to my e-mail address with deadline on 26 September 2022: anders.gustavsson@ikos.uio.no. Send short articles, opinion articles and/or reviews of new scientific literature. Swedish contributions should have an English translation. Texts should be in Word- or OpenOffice format!

Please, also send contributions to the Academy's publication series Acta Academia Strömsta-diensis, AAS, and the video series SAV to the e-mail address: gudmundbergqvist@hotmail.com

Chairman's report

Colleagues in Strömstad Academy

Summer is slowly slipping into fall here in Sweden, and there have been many reports about the climate as usual, not least in southern Europe, with alarms about heat, drought and fires. What has been less talked about is that the Great Barrier Reef appears to be recovering; <https://www.nyteknik.se/miljo/stora-barriarrevet-aterhamtar-sig-i-vissa-delar-7036059>, and that the Greenland ice sheet is spreading; <https://www.lindelof.nu/gronlandisen-vaxer-nu-sedan-ett-par-ar-tillbaka/>. Of course, nobody knows today what this means in the long run. But it is something different from what we are "fed with" in the media every day.

It feels important that we stay up-to-date and objective in all matters relating to science in a world that is today very much governed by alarmism. The Internet makes us both very accessible and vulnerable to messages that can be both true and false. This about "fake news" is something that is hotly debated, and why we humans increasingly tend not to care much, even when we know that what is being said is not true. An explanation presented is, for example, that "it could be true", or "that it will be true". Much research indicate that we humans react in this "unscientific" faith-based way. I am attaching both the link to an article "The Age of Lies" published in Fokus 220824; <https://etidning.fokus.se/p/fokus/nr-33/r/13/24-25/3205/565695>, as well as the article itself because a link is not enough for those of you who do not subscribe.

Here, the research community has something to bite into. I also think that one reason is that we researchers, as part of our methodology, emphasize that the results we present can also be questioned, and should be questioned! It is only when everything has been done to, without success, try to show that what we have arrived at is actually not true, or only true under certain conditions, that we can feel as safe as possible, and can lean on the results in our efforts to move forward.

There is also today an intense debate about ethics and ethical review within the research community. Many alarming articles show how bureaucratic methods, for example an "overuse" of ethics committees in order to prevent data from being used in research with reference to the fact that, for example, a patient could be traced in some complicated way via collected data. Sweden has so far been a world leader in, for example, registry research, where I am the registry holder for the Swedish Spine Registry Swespine; www.4s.nu, and I have my own experience of how bad this can threaten the business. In Sweden, lawyers and bureaucrats from the regions' CPUA (centrally responsible for personal data) are increasingly involved in the ethics reviews, which not infrequently, for reasons that are ignored in other countries (in Denmark, they take a different stance, and place the responsibility for register research on the business), puts an end to important and socially useful research. An ongoing example is a case in West Sweden where the Ethics Review Authority (EPM) to which a research application was sent, announced that an ethics application was not needed, it was just a matter of getting star-

ted. Then the CPUA in the relevant region announces that the applicants (!) must appeal against the EPM's decision and state that it was not valid.

In that context, it feels good that the ethics committee we discuss in Strömstad Academy should be advisory and not decision-making. No one feels bad about advice, quite the opposite!

So, colleagues, there is a lot going on of importance in today's society that takes its origin in the scientific world. We researchers therefore have a great responsibility to keep ourselves humble in front of each other and not indulge in the feeling that everyone can believe what they want because the researchers argue and say completely different things so they cannot be trusted.... A disdain for researchers is slowly starting to spread?

Otherwise, it feels exciting that we are now entering a new active fall season, where we will hopefully see the Local Chapters take new steps under the leadership of Bode Janzon. In Falun we had a meeting with Folkuniversitetet the other day and a big meeting for the general public will be held in December.

And I ask you all to think about practical commitments in terms of applying for funding. We need a stronger economy than the one that is maintained through members' annual fees alone. We have talked about this for many years and groups have discussed applications. My hope now is that the new management takes this seriously and also identifies potential grantees, as well as submits applications. Courses for universities are also discussed and this sounds exciting if only we can mobilize lecturers and make the schools interested.

Before every new project, I recommend a relevant impact analysis. Both the project and the impact analysis must be published at a suitable place on the website where Per has control.

With hope for a beautiful fall for all of us here in the Nordics, and beautiful seasons for all of you who are in other places on the planet.

All the best, Peter Fritzell

Vice-Chancellor's report

In this report I want to tell you about our membership register. There is such a thing and I am the main person responsible. On the website there is a list of members in the various categories. Name, title, date of appointment and possible position within the Academy are stated here. The page is in English to avoid unwarranted criticism regarding our titles. In addition to this information, the following information is available in the membership register:

- Swedish title
- Street address
- Postal no
- Postal address
- Country
- date of birth
- Telephone number, both landline and mobile
- Email address (3 pieces)
- Paid for year
- Note

The "Paid for year" field is updated by the treasurer while other information is updated by me. The treasurer and I have a shared Dropbox folder where we create a new version of the registry for each update. The registry is in open office database format but I'm experimenting with Filemaker Pro from Claris to see if it's easier to deal with tht program. So far, that doesn't seem to be the case.

Many members want access to the register and some have received a copy of it as it appeared at the time of the request. But the general rule has been that the registry is not available to everyone. At the last AU meeting we discussed this and came to the conclusion that the register should be made available. The matter will come up at the next board meeting. If the board agrees, I will post a membership table on the internal pages. Then everyone can check their information and have it corrected if necessary.

Another worrying thing is that so few are paying the membership fee. At a recent inspection it was noted that 47 individuals have paid their membership fee for this year. In addition, there are 15 honorary professors. So since I became Vice-Chancellor, about 2/3 of the members have left the Academy! How should this be interpreted?

One interpretation is that members die. We just recently received a tragic message in this matter. Per Sigurd Agrell died on August 14 in Bayonne, France. He was elected on 14 October 2009 as associate professor in informatics. Agrell was given the title associate professor because he held a position at FOU equivalent to Associate Professorat.

Our website says the following about him:

Per Sigurd Agrell is Associate Professor in Informatics at Strömstad Academy. He got his Masters degree at the University of Gothenburg with a major in Mathematical Statistics. His doctor's degree was awarded in 1991 by Stockholm University (Sweden) in Systems Science and a Professor's degree in Management in 1996 by the University of Lincoln, UK. The professional experience has been mainly with the Swedish defense but also with civilian public sector management consultancy in several countries. Present interests are public sector decision making, personnel management and the concept of competence.



Agrell has participated in the following Academic Festivals:

- 2010 Per-Sigurd Agrell installed 18/6 as associate professor in informatics 14/10-9
- 2011 Per Sigurd Agrell: Coastal exploitation - who pays?
- 2016 Per Sigurd Agrell: Isn't it a crisis now? Impressions from COP21 in Paris and expectations for COP22 in Morocco.

Strömstad Academy regrets the loss.

Per Flensburg

Per Flensburg: Strategic considerations

Strategic considerations

Per Flensburg

This is a proposal I came up with during the summer's musings. Pretty obvious actually. We have two main problems:

1. Administration
2. To be known and recognized

I elaborate on this further below.

Administration

As far as administration is concerned, it is a section of activities that is on the one hand absolutely necessary for the Academy to function and on the other hand something that very few want to be engaged in on a non-profit basis for a long time. In order to remedy this, you can do three things: 1) Reduce the administration as much as possible. 2) Hire an someone to do the job. 3) Remunerate those members currently burdened with administration so that they can continue doing the job. This mainly concerns AU I would think. The best thing, of course, is to do all three things.

The best way to reduce administration is through autonomy and delegation. This is partly contrary to traditional academic practice, where collegial decision-making involves the agreement of the members of the governing bodies. The collegial decision-making does not reduce the administration, on the contrary, more people become involved and have to spend time on long and sometimes exhausting discussions. Delegating decision-making and creating self-governing groups means that the management loses some control, but is relieved at the same time. But it is required that everyone knows what they are expected to do and also does it. Delegation lists and job descriptions are the tools you have for this. This may initially be perceived as complicated administration, but in the long run it turns out to be the opposite. Many can act independently within known frameworks.

Hiring an administrator can facilitate some routine tasks such as meeting notes and simple financial transactions. But you must be clear that all administration requires information and this information must be provided by the business. The more efficient the administration, the more information it needs and, paradoxically, the greater the burden on the business. The tasks this administrator must perform must be properly described and everyone must be clear about what it means. It mainly concerns meeting notes and documentation of decisions made.

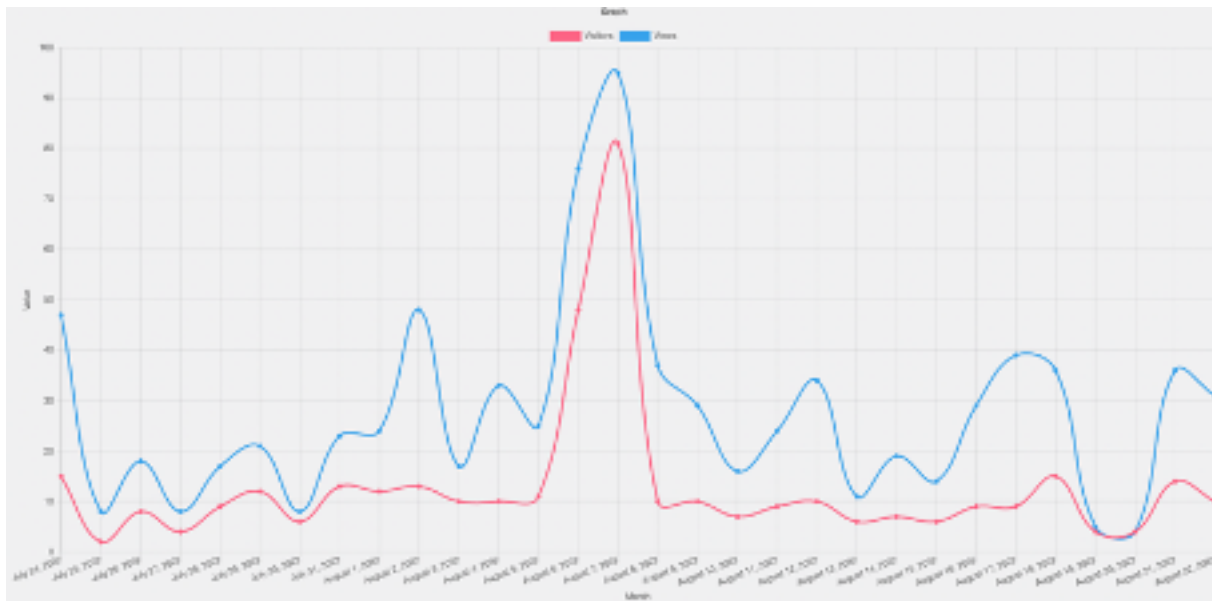
All of this requires financial resources and this leads to the crux: How are we going to get money? A group has been formed (John Fletcher, Åsa Morberg, Sveza Dacheva, Thage Thagdae and the undersigned) to write an application for money to finance this administration. This work is ongoing, but a prerequisite for making correct calculations is that the activities in the Academy and its administrative needs are properly mapped. What makes matters even more complicated is that we need funds for operations, while almost all organizations that grant money do so for specific projects to develop the applicant's business. Research funds cannot provide money for this activity other than as an administrative charge on granted research funds. However, this is not a fixed income, which we need.

Another way to get funded for administrative purposes is that we pay it ourselves via the membership fee. This means that we can cut down on other expenses such as printing, travel

allowances and ensure that our conferences run with some profit. If we can recruit more members, we also get access to more money. This requires other measures, which are discussed below. As a last resort, we may have to raise the membership fee.

To become well known

The other big problem we have is that we are not well known. We have tried to market ourselves but the problem is that we are not reaching out. We can hire a marketing agency, but that costs a lot of money. MyNewsdesk e.g. would want about 20,000 for us to be able to spread our press releases. The website has about 10 visits per day but slightly more views. Statistics for the last month can be seen here:



In total, we have had 10,334 unique visits and 35,151 views. That may sound like a lot but is at least a power of 10 too little to make any major impression.

When it comes to marketing Strömstad Academy, there are three target groups:

1. The general public
2. The scientific community
3. Recruitment of new members

These groups require different efforts. The most significant is group 2, the research community. A good reputation there, leads to better recruitment of new members which affects the economy positively. So how do we become better known within the research community? There are a few different ways:

1. Get people to publish in our publications
2. Make our publication series known and attractive
3. Write interesting, attention-grabbing and timely publications with high quality
4. Be recognized e.g. on the Norwegian list and corresponding international lists

As I see it, point 4 is the critical point. It leads to the other three. I have already written to the Norwegian institution that maintains the list and asked them to put our publisher on the list, but have not received a response. The easiest way to get recognized is to start a journal with high quality articles. If we look at the AAS series, with some encouragement it should be enough for an interdisciplinary journal with publication twice a year. I have argued for this

before. I propose that Jens, Gudmund, myself and Anders be assigned the task of investigating the conditions for starting an interdisciplinary journal under the auspices of Strömstad Academy.

For information, I can say that on July, 2022, we had 138 members who paid their membership fees for 2020 and forward. The breakdown is shown below:

År	Assistant professor	Associate professor	Research fellow	Research assistant	Professor	Support member	Tot.
2022	16	7	12	2	4	6	47
2021	25	16	8	1	7	2	59
2020	7	4	4	1	3	0	19
no paid	9	2	4	2	3	0	20

If all 138 people pay their membership fee, the total will be SEK 76,000. But if we look at those who have paid for 2022, there will only be 47 members, which gives SEK 28,200 in revenue. One can hope that my figures are incorrect. They originate from the month of June. If this number is correct, we have big problems! The question is whether it is possible to continue.

In any case, this completely overturns my reasoning above. The absolutely most important activity is to recruit new members to the Academy.

Recruitment

The reason why Strömstad Academy was formed was the forced retirement at the age of 67 (now 68). However, many remain as visiting researchers, hourly employees or in other temporary positions. This applies to the leading researchers, those who receive grants from the science councils and whom the universities see as an asset. I'm guessing the vast majority are professors. But we have a large group who mostly devoted themselves to teaching, but in connection with their seniority lost their examination right and which the universities and colleges are not particularly interested in keeping. Giving them the opportunity to do research and to publish in a peer-reviewed journal should be attractive. Associate professors, lecturers and assistant professors aged 68 are thus an important target group.

I think a large proportion of those listed in our membership register are too old, ill or even deceased. We can probably consider it impossible to resurrect them as members of the Academy. That leaves the target group above. But how do we reach them? One way could be personal contact with colleagues or former doctoral students, who are now approaching the senior age. But the knowledge of Strömstad Academy and what it can offer must be spread to all university and college-employed teachers and researchers who are approaching compulsory retirement.

Åsa Morberg: Shortage of teachers

Now we have a shortage of teachers again - a recurring problem before the start of school every year

By Åsa Morberg, Docent/Ass Prof

Now admission round number two has arrived for prospective students. As usual, students prefer to become doctors, lawyers, civil engineers, criminologists, etc. Not enough people want to be teachers. This year, the teacher training programs are not receiving the number of applicants needed to remedy the teacher shortage. We have a teacher shortage that worsens before the start of school every fall. Not so long ago there was a troublesome surplus of teachers.

I am critical of both the Government's dimensioning and the Government's localization of teacher education. It cannot be an insurmountably difficult task to plan for a better balance in supply and demand. We have access to good statistics and we know a lot about teachers' propensity to serve. I argue again (with the tenacity of a fool) in this article for better and safer bases for sizing and siting decisions. I also reflect on the possibility of simply letting go of all government control over teacher education. I have received criticism for this proposal in the past, but I still review the argument in my approach.

With today's levels of the number of beginners and the percentage who graduate, it is estimated that approximately 141,000 teachers and preschool teachers will be examined during the period. There will thus be a shortage of around 12,000 qualified teachers and pre-school teachers in 2035, according to the National Education Agency's forecast (2021). The teacher shortage is currently considered to be high, and the situation is always taken very seriously before the start of school every fall. The teacher shortage is likely to be greater than previously thought, according to new figures that we have seen (SCB and the Teachers' Union). By 2025, it was recently believed that there will be a shortage of over 65,000 qualified teachers in schools. There are different numbers reported in different studies. Statistics (SCB) also showed that it has become more difficult to recruit teachers, which reflects in the low number of applicants for teacher training, especially in certain subjects for a long time. According to many experts, it is difficult to increase the dimensioning due to the low level of competence that applicants for teacher training show. Here one should compare with other university educations. How does it look? Is it only aspiring teachers who have low scores?

At the same time, we know that many student teachers drop out during the course of their education. There is nothing strange about that, although it usually causes an outcry, especially in the fall before school starts. You simply choose the wrong vocational training or fail. Swedish pre-schools and schools stand and fall with the availability of competent and qualified teachers and therefore a national effort is needed, the Swedish Education Agency wrote in a situation report.

The National Board of Education then also proposed that the government should investigate more and faster routes into the teaching profession. We have had many different rapid training courses for unqualified teachers over the years and of course you can start such projects. These 'oex' trainings produced good teachers, who actually stayed in the profession. They were admitted with experience in the profession. Another proposal, as stated by the Swedish School Administration, is to make Lärarlyftet permanent, specially designed courses for teachers who need to broaden their qualifications. It depends on what competence the principals have in long-term planning, how they succeed in broadening or deepening competence and authority.

Some teachers do not receive correct advice from their principals, and then the skills development is not the right one.

The background to these proposals from the National Education Agency was that every fifth person who works as a teacher does not have an adequate and relevant teaching qualification. Every third teacher in primary and secondary school lacks credentials and authorization in the subjects they teach. There are big local differences in our country. That would also advocate for local decisions on sizing and siting.

At the same time that many teachers are retiring, there is still a low application pressure for several of the teacher training programs. All in all, this creates a shaky situation in terms of teacher supply and demand. This also shows overall, according to my analysis and assessment, that the state is unable to manage teacher education. It has been known since at least the fifties.

The supply and demand statistics have looked like an alpine landscape, with high mountains and deep valleys, for about sixty years. There have also been quick jerks. Catastrophic shortages can, for example, change in less than a decade into a problematically large surplus. I am sure that soon we will have a troublesome teacher surplus again!

When I look back (after a long professional life as a teacher trainer and responsible manager within the university) all attempts at correct dimensioning have failed. Different government agencies have also given different pictures of reality, which creates confusion for the principals. In order for the universities and municipalities to be able to make use of the authorities' analyses, it is important that there is reasonable agreement in the description of reality. This doesn't exist today.

Therefore release all restrictions in terms of dimensioning and location. Leave it to the local institutions of higher education to decide completely on the dimensioning of teacher education. There are wise teacher trainers, local statisticians, local strategists and many interested municipalities around the institutions of higher education. It is not that difficult to closely follow the need for teachers in the vicinity of the universities.

It can hardly get worse than it is today, right?

Åsa Morberg: Being able to read

Being able to read is of utmost importance, using audio books in school does the children a disservice

by Åsa Morberg, Docent/Ass Prof

In an editorial in Expressen, questions are raised about the importance of textbooks and critical views are presented on audiobooks. These are important aspects of teaching at school. I share the leader's views and continue to critically review audio books and discuss developing support for textbooks. This is not about using audio books as a supplement, which is important to point out.

Some students have difficulty with reading. It is important to make lightning-fast efforts and it is important to practice and re-practice decoding. Not necessarily via special education teachers, in my view. Every teacher should take part in the students' reading training and have development in reading learning. What happens is that dyslexic students "can't read the books" and instead have to listen to audio books and watch movies. It is quite clear that audio

books and movies can help in the long run, but it is absolutely no solution to the reading problem.

Listening is not the same process as reading. Anyone who has listened to audiobooks knows that it is difficult to maintain concentration and memorize what you have heard, if you compare it to reading in a regular book.

"Still, the researchers' surprise was great when a new study showed that even children find it difficult to focus when listening to audio books: "We thought that the audio book is part of a greater digital competence that you feel the children have", explained Maria Engberg at Malmö University in Kulturnytt (1/8). She is one of the researchers who has investigated how Danish schoolchildren experience digital tools (Jerneck, Expressen)".

Not being able to read and write intelligibly is a very difficult handicap. When learning to read, the memory is used for the decoding itself. If you sound your way through a text, you have time to forget what was at the beginning of the sentence. When reading begins to flow and decoding becomes routine, you remember more of the content. It is possible to understand the idea of connecting audio books and films, because then the student can focus on the subject or content. But it is not certain that the audio books will stick in the memory and then teachers who use audio books need to think again. All teachers need to understand that reading training is their joint responsibility.

"However, that does not seem to be the conclusion of the Malmö researchers: "In the school context, it is important that you do not in any way stigmatize or make reading in a certain type of medium negative, because it is still the reading and the text and the story that should be in focus ", says Maria Engberg. Stigmatize? Really (Jerneck, Expressen)?

Is there something as disabling in our society as not being able to read and write comprehensibly. It is not only the so-called self-proclaimed language police sighing over the poor reading skills of the youth.

Every other college teacher stated in a 2020 Novus survey that their students express themselves poorly in writing. It is not only criticism of the school's operations, but it is also criticism of university teaching. How many college teachers see it as their job to help students with reading and writing? Reading and writing support is available today via so-called language workshops. The school must really do everything to ensure that every single student can read books fluently. And don't just listen with your ears.

But written teaching materials ie. textbooks cost money. Few municipalities spend large sums on purchasing teaching materials. On average, 0.65 percent of the total cost per student goes to the purchase of learning materials - which can be compared to 1.5 percent in Finland, writes Skolvärlden (29/6) (Jerneck, Expressen).

There are students who have such severe disabilities that learning materials are the only solution. But for the vast majority, including dyslexics, it is possible to reach a good level of reading comprehension. However, it requires both early support and a lot of training. It is not only special teachers who must be responsible for reading training, but it is the responsibility of all teachers. Parents also have a responsibility to support their children's reading.

How we can miss teaching students to read is difficult for me to understand as a parent, primary school teacher and didactics, but audiobooks and movies are absolutely not the solution to the problem.

Referens

Linda Jernek,(22-08-02) ledare i Expressen, Man kan inte läsa med bara öronen!

Gudmund Bergqvist: Support Ukraine and defend democracy

Support Ukraine and defend democracy

Gudmund Bergqvist

It is now 6 months since Ukraine was attacked by Russian forces of 200000 men. The attack of a dictatorship on a peaceful democratic neighbor is a threat to its current world order and towards democracy throughout the world. What happened next is known: Ukrainian army has with great determination succeeded in slowing down the Russian attack and causing the Russian army heavy losses of what is estimated at 75000 dead and wounded as well as a great exclusion of material, The advance of the Russian army has been characterized by indiscriminate destruction of entire areas, which were shot to "gravel"

The West has supported Ukraine with weapons, financial contributions, intelligence equipment, moral support and uniquely received the many millions of refugees.

At the same time, a series of sanctions have been directed against the Russian economy and the country's leading classes. More are likely to come. NATO has stepped up its presence at the borders but has always worked to avoid direct armed confrontation with Russia, which could lead to a world war.

The war has now since a couple of months become a war of attrition, but it is possible that Ukraine will launch an offensive to liberate the Kherson province.

Russia is using its 'gas weapon' against the EU, which is dependent on Russian natural gas. The reaction has been that the EU is trying in every way to reduce its dependence on Russian energy. The Russian attack has led to rising prices on food and energy, which will be a burden on our societies. As time goes on, new crises are appearing in the world and the Ukraine issue risks ending up in the backwaters.

But it is important to hold on and persevere for the future of democracy! It cannot be accepted that Russia wins the war. This would entail a great risk that the regime will start new wars driven by its desire for expansion - It may primarily affect the Baltic States. It is a question of standing firm and supporting Ukraine in various ways possible.

Finally, like Cato, I would also like to say:

Praeterea censeo Kaliningradum esse demilitari

