

Programme of events for Belgian National Day 2017

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On the occasion of Belgian National Day, on 20 and 21 July the FPS Chancery of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Defence, the FPS Home Affairs and the federal and local police, in close cooperation with the Association for the Advancement and Promotion of Brussels, are organising a host of activities for the general public in Brussels. National Day is intended to be a large-scale popular event, offering our fellow citizens the chance to celebrate in the heart of our capital.

Just like the federal campaign “Belgium, uniquely phenomenal”, the festivities of 21 July contribute to promoting a positive image of Belgium.

Below you will find an overview of the activities that are being organised or co-organised by the federal government:

Thursday 20 July 2017

From 7 p.m. on - Bal national - Vossenplein/Place du Jeu de Balle

This year too, the Bal national is taking over Vossenplein/Place du Jeu de Balle. This popular event in the Marolles kicks off at 7 p.m. Belgium’s biggest popular ball begins with a beginner’s introduction to dance, followed by a series of free concerts. This year, the acts include Le Grand Jojo/Lange Jojo, Sttella and The Magical Flying Thunderbirds. More information on the Bal national website: www.balnational.be

8 p.m. - Concert: a prelude to National Day - BOZAR

This classical music concert is being organised by the International Queen Elisabeth Competition, together with the National Orchestra of Belgium and Bozar, thanks to the support of the FPS Chancery of the Prime Minister and the Belgian National Lottery. The event’s location is the magnificent Henry Le Boeuf Hall of the Brussels Centre for Fine Arts, which is among the five best concert halls in the world in terms of acoustics. The King and the Queen will attend the concert.

This year, Ji Young Lim, the first prize winner at the 2015 violin competition, will be performing Mendelssohn’s concerto. She will be accompanied by the National Orchestra of Belgium, conducted by Josep Vicent. The National Orchestra is also playing an overture by Dmitri Shostakovich, an overture by Belgian composer Jacques Leduc and fragments from Suite no. 1 and Suite no. 2 by Manuel de Falla. More information on [the Bozar website](#)

Friday 21 July 2017

10 a.m. - Te Deum - Cathedral of St. Michael and St. Gudula

The Te Deum mass of 21 July is being celebrated in the presence of the King and Queen and the high officials in the Cathedral of St. Michael and St. Gudula at 10 a.m., presided over by Cardinal Jozef De Kesel.

From 10 a.m. on - Party at Brussels Park - Brussels Park/Regentschapsstraat/Rue de la Régence and surrounding area

From 10 a.m. to 11 p.m., it’s party time between the Palace of Justice and the Paleis der Natie/Palace of the Nation (federal parliament) and more specifically on Regentschapsstraat/Rue de la Régence, at the Zavel/Sablon, on Koningsplein/Place Royale and in Brussels Park. The programme includes a multitude of free, fun and folklore-inspired happenings. Museums and churches are open to the public in this area. Brussels Park and the Zavel/Sablon will feature the sound of music all day long.

The FPS Home Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the federal and local police, the European institutions and various different federal public services will all take part in the celebrations.

The police village on Poelaertplein/Place Poelaert has been split up into two large zones: a “demo zone” and a “children’s zone”. Both zones offer a world of discovery for little ones and adults alike.

In the Regenschapsstraat/Rue de la Régence you will find the Federal Truck parked up - the Federal Government's information truck which will be welcoming visitors all day. This year the truck is wearing the colours of the "Belgium, uniquely phenomenal" campaign (www.uniquelyphenomenal.be). You can discover (or rediscover) the 99 reasons to love Belgium and participate in 100% Belgian, "uniquely phenomenal" activities. For example, you can take a panoramic selfie in the company of a gigantic Manneken Pis. Nearby, Belgian Customs will be holding demonstrations with sniffer dogs and presenting the Scanvan (luggage scanner). Finally, we can't possibly fail to mention the BEL-Europa stand of the federal government and the representatives in Belgium of the European Commission and the European Parliament, which is offering a raft of entertainment on Koningsplein/Place Royale.

The Safety Village of Home Affairs at the Zavel/Sablon is rolling out the red carpet! On the programme: demonstrations (intro to diving, dog handlers, freeing people from vehicles, resuscitation), games ("virtual reality", Kids-ID puzzle, water games, football) and information (BE-Alert, theft and fire prevention, etc.).

The Defence village extends from the Kleine Zavel/Petit Sablon over Regenschapsstraat/Rue de la Régence and Koningsplein/Place Royale down to the Coudenberg. Military personnel will be demonstrating their equipment and missions. In various places it will be possible to participate in adventurous activities like a real soldier: climbing towers, an obstacle path, a death ride, etc.

4:00 p.m. - Military and civilian parade

The traditional military and civilian parade will take place on Paleizenplein/Place des Palais starting at 4 p.m. This year, the theme is "proud to serve".

11 p.m. - Fireworks - Paleizenplein/Place des Palais

To conclude this National Day, the FPS Chancery of the Prime Minister and the Association for the Advancement and Promotion of Brussels are organising a grand musical firework display, which is being set off from the gardens and roof of the Academy Palace. The public can admire the fireworks free of charge from Paleizenplein/Place des Palais.

More information is available on the website www.2107.be

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