

Diversity, equity & inclusion

Inclusion calendar 2024

Dear student,

On an international campus like ours, you are bound to come into contact with cultures that have different customs and traditions from your own. It can be enriching to pay attention to holidays with others, but it is difficult to be aware of every day.

With this Inclusion Calendar, we want to raise awareness around these days and make our campus more inclusive. Therefore, we have created three categories of days that are important for you and your fellow students to be aware of.

Three categories

The first category is Meaningful Days. This pertains to religious holidays and memorial days, as well as the days designated as fixed public holidays according to Dutch law. These days make it easier for people to accommodate each other, ensuring, for example, that a work lunch isn't inadvertently scheduled during Ramadan, or a strategy session during Carnival.

We created a DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) category, which includes days that draw attention to marginalised groups. This encompasses days like World Braille Day, International Women's Day, or Diversity Day. These days can serve as opportunities to initiate discussions or organize activities — whether for your team, department, domain, faculty, or the broader UvA community.

The third category focuses on Issue Days. These are days relevant to the university, educational institutions in general, or can be used as hooks to address specific programs within the UvA and societal issues. For instance, Bike to Work Day can be used to bring attention to initiatives like the [Bike Kitchen](#).

Are you missing an important day?

This calendar is the result of a collaboration between the Central Diversity Office and HRM Administrative Staff. We hope to meet the desire of many colleagues and students for such a calendar. We have tried to take as much into account and be as complete as possible in compiling the calendar. Are you still missing an important day? Please pass on your suggestion to diversity@uva.nl.

* = Meaningful day

= DEI day

& = Issue day

January

* New Year's Day (1 January): The start of the new year is celebrated worldwide with festivities and reflection.

World Braille Day (4 January): Honours the birthday of Louis Braille and promotes awareness about Braille as a means of communication for blind and visually impaired people.

* Orthodox Christmas (7 January): Marks the celebration of the birth of Jesus within the Eastern Orthodox Church.

& Dies Natalis UvA (11 January): Celebration of the founding of the University of Amsterdam.

& World Religion Day (21 January): Promotes global understanding and respect between different religions.

& International Day of Education (24 January): Highlights the importance of education worldwide.

* Mahayana New Year (Buddhist New Year) (25 January): Marks the new year in Mahayana Buddhism.

& Holocaust Remembrance Day (27 January): Commemorates the victims of the Holocaust and stresses the importance of historical awareness.

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February

Black History Month

* Lailat al Miraj (Ascension Day Prophet Muhammad) (7 February): This Islamic celebration commemorates Prophet Muhammad's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and his ascension.

* Lunar New Year (Chinese New Year) (10 February): The Chinese New Year marks the beginning of the Chinese calendar year, celebrated with family gatherings and festivities.

& International Day of Women and Girls in Science (11 February): Highlights women's contributions to science and encourages equal opportunities.

* Carnival (11 - 13 February): This festival, mostly celebrated by Catholics, has different traditions and customs in different regions, but in general it is known as a joyous celebration in which people let loose and enjoy an exuberant atmosphere before Lent begins.

* Ash Wednesday (14 February): The beginning of Lent in the Christian tradition, symbolically marked by applying ashes to the forehead.

* Parinirvana Day (The Death of Buddha) (15 February): A Buddhist commemoration of Gautama Buddha's death and attainment of nirvana.

& World Day of Social Justice (20 February): Highlights the importance of social justice and equal opportunities worldwide.

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March

Women's History Month

Deaf History Month

Queer History Month

Zero Discrimination Day (1 March): Emphasises the pursuit of a world without discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc.

International Wheelchair Day (1 March): Seeks to raise awareness and understanding of the challenges faced by people with disabilities.

International Women's Day (8 March): Celebrates women's achievements and advocates for gender equality and women's rights.

* Maha Shivaratri (The night of Shiva) (8 March): A Hindu festival dedicated to the god Shiva, marked by fasting and prayer.

* Start of Ramadan (11 March): The Islamic month of fasting in which believers fast from sunrise to sunset. The fast begins after a sahur, the meal before the start of the fast, and is broken after sunset with an iftar.

& Working from Home Day (16 March): Highlights the challenges and benefits of working from home.

Week Against Racism (18 - 23 March): A period of awareness and action against racism.

* Nowruz (Persian New Year) (20 March): The Persian New Year and spring festival, symbolising renewal and fresh beginnings.

& International Day of Happiness (20 March): Promotes the pursuit of happiness as a fundamental human goal.

International Day against Racism and Discrimination (21 March): Underlines the need for global efforts to combat racism and discrimination.

* Purim (23 - 24 March): During Purim, it is celebrated that Jewish people were saved from extermination at the hands of Haman, a member of the Persian court, in the 5th century AD.

* Holi (25 March): A Hindu festival that celebrates the arrival of spring. During Holi, people gather to celebrate this festival by throwing coloured powder (gulal) on each other.

* Good Friday (29 March): Commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

* Easter Sunday (31 March): Christian celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from death.

International Transgender Day of Visibility (31 March): Highlights the importance of visibility and recognition of transgender persons.

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April

Autism Acceptance Month

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

* Easter Monday (1 April): Christian celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from death.

World Autism Awareness Day (2 April): Aimed at raising awareness about autism spectrum disorders and promoting inclusion.

* Qingmingfestival (Tomb-Sweeping Day) (4 April): A Chinese festival that pays tribute to ancestors by visiting and cleaning their graves.

* Lailat ul-Qadr (Night of Decision) (6 April): An important night in Islam, also known as the Night of Power, on which the first revelation to Prophet Muhammad took place.

International Asexual Day (6 April): Celebration and awareness of asexuality, a sexual orientation characterised by the absence of sexual attraction.

& World Health Day (7 April): Highlights global health issues and promotes healthy lifestyles.

* Start of Chaitra Navratri (Spring Festival) (9 April): A Hindu festival lasting nine days and dedicated to the goddess Durga.

* Eid-al-Fitr (10 April): The conclusion of Ramadan that spans several days. The end of the fasting period is celebrated with festive meals, often in the company of family, friends and the community.

& National Day Against Bullying (19 April): Promotes awareness and action against bullying.

& World Creativity and Innovation Day (21 April): Encourages creativity and innovation as crucial elements for personal growth and social development.

* Start of Passover (Escape from Slavery) (22 April): A Jewish festival commemorating the exodus from Egypt.

& World Earth Day (22 April): Focuses on environmental awareness and protection.

& World Book Day (23 April): Promotes reading, publishing and authorship worldwide.

Lesbian Visibility Day (26 April): Highlights the importance of visibility and recognition of lesbian women.

* King's Day (The Netherlands) (27 April): Celebrates the birthday of Dutch King Willem-Alexander with festivities and orange outfits.

& World Day for Safety and Health at Work (28 April): Highlights safe working conditions and workplace health worldwide.

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May

Mental Health Awareness Month

& Labour Day (1 May): Globally recognised day celebrating the labour movement and achievements of workers. It is a national holiday in many countries and for many it is a day to reflect on the international connection between workers.

* Remembrance Day (4 May): Dutch commemoration of victims of World War II and subsequent armed conflicts and wars.

* Liberation Day (5 May): Celebration of the official end of the German occupation in the Netherlands and the end of World War II.

* Ascension Day (9 May): Christian festival commemorating the ascension of Jesus Christ.

& Bike to Work Day (16 May): Encourages the use of bicycles as an environmentally friendly and healthy means of transport.

Global Accessibility Awareness Day (16 May): Promotes awareness about digital accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities.

International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (17 May): Combats discrimination and promotes acceptance of the LGBTQA+ community.

* Pentecost (19 May): Christian festival commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit.

* Whit Monday (20 May): Continuation of the feast of Pentecost.

& World Day for Cultural Development (21 May): Encourages awareness of cultural diversity and development.

* Wesak (Buddha Day) (23 May): Buddhist festival celebrating the birth, enlightenment and death of Buddha.

International Pansexual and Panromantic Visibility Day (24 May): Promotes visibility and understanding of pansexual and panromantic identities. Pansexuality means that the respective person can be attracted to the inner self of someone without the limitation of gender expression.

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June

Pride Month

Anniversary of the Arrival of Indian Labourers to Suriname (5 June): commemorates the arrival of Indian labourers in Suriname, an important historical moment.

* Eid al-Adha (Feast of Sacrifice) (16 June): Islamic festival commemorating Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son.

Neurodiversity Pride Day (16 June): Promotes understanding and acceptance of neurodiversity, such as autism, ADHD, high sensitivity and many other forms of neurological diversity.

& Juneteenth (19 June): American celebration of the abolition of slavery in Texas, an important moment in the history of the emancipation of enslaved people.

World Refugee Day (20 June): Highlights solidarity with refugees and calls attention to their situation.

Pink Saturday (22 June): On the night of 28 June 1969, New York police raided the Stonewall Inn, which was known as a gay bar. The raid is commemorated in the Netherlands on Pink Saturday and is now a day when the LGBTQIA+ community celebrates its identity and advocates for equal rights.

Stonewall Riots Anniversary (28 June): The Stonewall Inn, a famous gay bar in New York, was frequently raided by the police. On June 28, 1969, this led to intense riots that lasted for 5 days, marking a turning point for LGBTQIA+ emancipation. This event signifies the start of a prominent fight for equality, with annual commemorations supporting the cause.

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July

Disability Pride Month

* Ketu Koti (1 July): Ketu Koti literally means 'broken chains'. This day marks the abolition of slavery in Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles. Formal abolition was in 1863, but to compensate slave owners for their 'loss of capital', enslaved people were forced to work for slave owners for another 10 years. Therefore, we choose 1873 as the year when slavery ended in the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

* Muharram (Islamic New Year) (7 July): The beginning of the Islamic year, which commemorates Prophet Muhammad's migration from Mecca to Medina.

International Day of Non-binary People (14 July): A day dedicated to celebrating and recognising people who identify as non-binary, outside traditional gender categories.

* Shavuot (Three Pilgrimage Festivals) (23 July): This day marks the end of the Counting of the Omer, a period of seven weeks following Passover (Pesach). It is a time of gratitude, spiritual renewal, and the study of the Torah, with traditions including the consumption of dairy products and the decoration of homes and synagogues with greenery.

Pride Amsterdam (27 July - 4 August): An annual event to promote LGBTQIA+ rights and acceptance, marked by festivities, Canal pride and cultural activities.

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International Transgender Rights Day (7 August): Celebrates the struggle for equal rights and acceptance of transgender individuals worldwide.

International Indigenous Peoples' Day (9 August): Reflects on the rights and culture of indigenous peoples and highlights the need for a decolonial perspective.

& Dia ti Tula (Dia di Lucha pa Libertat or Day of the Fight for Freedom) (17 August): This day, also known as Dia di Lucha pa Libertat, is an important remembrance day for those from Curaçao and surrounding Dutch Caribbean islands. Tula was the leader of the Curaçao slave revolt of 1795. The fight for freedom from slavery and those who died for that freedom are the central focal point of this day, rather than the abolition of slavery by colonial forces.

& International Youth Day (12 August): Stresses the importance of youth civic engagement and participation, both in the global North and South.

* Chung Yuan (Hell Festival) (18 August): A Buddhist and Taoist festival honouring ancestors and assisting spirits on their journey to the afterlife.

& International Day of Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition (23 August): Commemorates the victims of the transatlantic slave trade.

* Krishna Janmashtami (Birth of Shrii Krishna) (26 August): A Hindu festival celebrating the birth of the god Krishna, with prayers, singing and dancing.

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September

Suicide Prevention Month

& Opening of academic year (2 September): A formal start of the academic year at the University of Amsterdam.

& World Suicide Prevention Day (10 September): This day is an awareness day to provide worldwide commitment and action to prevent suicide.

* Start of Pitru Paksha (Fortnight of the Paternal Ancestors) (17 September – 2 October): A two-week period celebrated by Hindus during which ancestors are honoured through rituals and sacrifices.

& Prinsjesdag (17 September): In the Netherlands, this day marks the opening of the parliamentary year. The head of state gives the speech from the throne, in which the government presents its plans.

International Equal Pay Day (18 September): Women worldwide earn on average 23% less than men. International Equal Pay Day indicates how many extra days women have to work until the end of the year to earn what men earn in the same year. Equal Pay Day takes place in the Netherlands on 14 November because here the pay gap is 13%.

& International Day of Peace (21 September): A day dedicated to promoting global peace and reducing conflict.

& International Day of Sign Language (23 September): Highlights the importance of sign languages for deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

Day of Bisexuality (23 September): A day drawing social attention to bisexuality and the history, community and culture of bisexual people.

& Week of Work Happiness (23 - 27 September): A period when organisations pay attention to employee well-being and satisfaction.

& Vitality Week (23 - 29 September): A week aimed at promoting vitality and health in the workplace.

& International Day for Universal Access to Information (28 September): Highlights the importance of access to free flow of information as a fundamental right. This includes freedom of expression, academic freedom and freedom of the press.

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October

Black Achievement Month

AD(H)D Awareness month

Diversity Day (Netherlands) (1 October): A day dedicated to celebrating diversity in the workplace and promoting inclusion.

* Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) (2 October): The Jewish New Year, a time of reflection and celebration of the beginning of the year in the Jewish calendar.

& Weekend of Science (5 - 6 October): An event in the Netherlands where science institutions open their doors to the public to learn about scientific research.

& World Mental Health Day (10 October): Dedicated to raising awareness and understanding of mental health issues and encouraging openness about mental health problems.

& National Coming Out Day (11 October): A day of support for people from the LGBTQIA+ community in their process towards openness about their sexual orientation or gender identity.

* Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) (11 October): This is the holiest day in Judaism, focused on prayer, fasting, and atonement.

& World Menopause Day (18 October): A day to raise awareness on the possible challenges that come from all phases of menopause.

Intersex Awareness Day (26 October): Emphasises awareness and recognition (of experiences) of intersex people.

& Halloween (31 October): A holiday when people often dress up and celebrate the supernatural with costumes and decorations. Its origins lie in ancient Celtic and Christian traditions.

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November

* Diwali (Festival of Lights) (1 November): An important Hindu festival celebrating the victory of light over darkness, with lights, candles and colourful decorations.

& Day of Informal Care (10 November): A day dedicated to recognising and appreciating those who provide unpaid care for a family member or friend with health problems.

* Saint Martin (11 November): A traditional festival celebrated mainly in the Netherlands, in which children pass by doors with lanterns and sing songs in exchange for sweets.

& Week of Work Stress (11 - 15 November): A period focused on awareness and prevention of work-related stress.

Equal Opportunities Week (11 - 17 November): Promotes equal opportunities in various fields such as education and employment.

& Equal Pay Day (14 November): Women earn on average 13% less than men in the Netherlands. Equal Pay Day indicates how many extra days women have to work until the end of the year to earn what men earn in the same year. International Equal Pay Day takes place on September 18 because the global pay gap is 23%.

& International Men's Day (19 November): A day focusing on men and masculinity in the fight for gender equality with a focus on issues such as mental wellbeing, the role of men in society and promoting male role models.

International Transgender Day of Remembrance (20 November): Honours and commemorates transgender persons who have been victims of violence. This day advocates for awareness and acceptance of transgender people's safety and rights.

& International Children's Rights Day (20 November): Highlights the importance of children's rights and raising awareness about child protection worldwide.

& Srefidensi Dey (Surinamese Independence Day) (25 November): Celebrates Suriname's independence from the Netherlands in 1975.

& International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25 November): Marks the beginning of the 16-day "Orange the World" campaign against violence against women. Around 1 in 3 women worldwide experience at least some form of violence, e.g. intimate partner violence, workplace violence, sexual violence etc.

& Orange the World (25 November - 10 December): A global campaign advocating an end to violence against women and girls, symbolically marked by wearing orange.

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December

& World AIDS Day (1 December): Dedicated to global awareness of HIV/AIDS, commemorating those affected and promoting prevention and treatment.

& International Day for the Abolition of Slavery (2 December): Commemorates the global abolition of slavery and highlights the importance of freedom and human rights.

International Day for People with Disabilities (3 December): Promotes awareness about and inclusion of people with disabilities, emphasising equal opportunities and rights.

* St Nicholas (5 December): Sinterklaas is a traditional festival celebrated mainly in the Netherlands and Belgium. It revolves around the figure of Sinterklaas, a saintly man who hands out presents to children.

& International Human Rights Day (10 December): Commemorates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and highlights the protection of fundamental rights worldwide.

Purple Friday (13 December): A day when students and pupils in the Netherlands show their solidarity with the LGBTQIA+ community by wearing purple. The aim is to raise awareness and provide support for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, and to promote an inclusive and safe environment in schools and universities.

International Migrant Day (18 December): Highlights the rights and contributions of migrants and refugees to promote an inclusive society.

* Shab-e-Yalda (Yalda Night) (20 December): An Iranian festival marking the longest night of the year, usually celebrated with family gatherings, traditional food and poetry.

* Christmas Eve (24 December): The night before Christmas, often celebrated with family gatherings, Christmas preparations and, in Catholic circles, a visit to church.

* Christmas Day (25 December): Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, often celebrated with church services and festivities.

* Hanukkah (Festival of Lights) (25 December - 2 January): An eight-day Jewish festival also known as the 'feast of lights'. It marks the commemoration of the liberation of the Jewish holy temple in Jerusalem, which is often celebrated by lighting the Hanukkah.

* Boxing Day (26 December): A day for family gatherings and relaxation in many countries, including the Netherlands and the UK.

* New Year's Eve (31 December): The last day of the year, often celebrated with parties and fireworks to usher in the new year.