*Diversity, equity & inclusion*

**Inclusion Calendar 2025 - 2026**

Dear students and colleagues,

Each of us is part of the UvA community of 50,000 students and staff, and we all contribute to its diversity. Everyone brings a unique mix of characteristics, such as our background, language, religion, gender, mental and physical health, and so on. This diversity also includes a mix of knowledge, skills, and experiences. It is precisely this diversity that allows us to learn from each other and thus develop new solutions to the problems of our time. This helps us to keep developing – as scholars, as citizens, and as members of society. Celebrating our differences strengthens this process, which is why we as a university recognise and value our diversity

For this reason, I wholeheartedly recommend this Inclusion Calendar as a tool to bring us together. In these times, it is important to continue to foster mutual exchanges, regardless of the different perspectives we bring. It is enriching to get to know each other's best moments and experience them together. (Employees can also exchange an existing day off for a different holiday.) So, use this calendar to inspire conversations about each other’s traditions, and to find opportunities to celebrate together!

Peter-Paul Verbeek

Rector Magnificus of the Executive Board

Dear colleagues and students,

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 colleagues, 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 team 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.** This category 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.](https://student.uva.nl/en/topics/repair-your-bike-at-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](mailto:diversity@uva.nl).

**Organise an event?**

Do you want to organise something around one of these days? Contact [diversity@uva.nl](mailto:diversity@uva.nl) and inquire about the possibilities for financial support through Campus Connections Support. As an employee or student of the UvA you can receive up to €1,500.00 to make your idea possible!

**Want to organise something?**

Would you like to organise something for this day or another? Contact [diversity@uva.nl](mailto:diversity@uva.nl) to enquire about the possibilities for financial support through [Campus Connections Support](https://www.uva.nl/en/about-the-uva/about-the-university/diversity-and-inclusion/central-diversity-office/initiatives-and-events/campus-connections-fund.html). As a UvA student or staff member, you can receive up to €1,500 to help bring your idea to life!

**September**

*Suicide Prevention Month*

1 September – Opening Academic Year (meaningful day): A formal start of the academic year at the University of Amsterdam.

7 – 21 September – Pitru Paksha (Fortnight of the Paternal Ancestors) (meaningful day): A two-week period celebrated by Hindus during which ancestors are honoured through rituals and sacrifices, especially through food offerings.

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

16 September – Prinsjesdag (meaningful day): 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.

18 September – International Equal Pay Day (issue day): Women earn an average of 23% less than men worldwide. Starting on International Equal Pay Day, women are effectively no longer paid for the work they do the rest of the year, assuming equal pay. In the Netherlands, where women still earn 13% less than men, Equal Pay Day falls on 14 November.

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

22 – 24 September – Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) (meaningful day): The Jewish New Year, a time of reflection and celebration of the beginning of the year in the Jewish calendar. Work is prohibited during this time.

22 – 26 September – Week of Work Happiness (DEI day): A period when organisations pay attention to employee well-being and satisfaction.

22 – 28 September – Vitality Week (DEI day): A week aimed at promoting vitality and health in the workplace.

23 September – International Day of Sign Languages (DEI day): Highlights the importance of sign languages to improve the communication between hearing people and deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

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

27 September – The International Day of the Deaf (DEI day): This day has several goals, namely, to raise awareness of deafness and sign language, to advocate for the rights and interests of deaf people, to disseminate information and to encourage social networking for the deaf community.

28 September – International Day for Universal Access to Information (DEI day): 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.

**Highlighted day: International Day of Sign Languages on 23 September**

**What is it?**

23 September has been the International Day of Sign Languages since 2018. This day highlights the importance of sign languages and the right of people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing to use their own language. Worldwide, there are more than 72 million deaf people who together use over 300 different sign languages. For them, sign language is the language through which they learn, communicate, express themselves, and connect with others. This day shows how vital these languages are for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals to fully participate in society.

**What celebrations are part of it?**

On this day, there are workshops, lectures, and cultural events. Media and online campaigns also draw attention by highlighting the experiences of deaf people and the importance of communicating in your own language. These initiatives aim to raise awareness about sign languages, Deaf culture, and the challenges that deaf and hard-of-hearing people face.

**What can we, as the UvA and as individuals, do to acknowledge this day and support the people who celebrate it?**

The UvA has [SignLab](https://www.signlab-amsterdam.nl/), a research group where deaf and hearing staff work together to explore how technology can make the world more accessible for deaf and hard-of-hearing people. You can also study Sign Linguistics at the UvA! More information can be found here: [Sign Linguistics - University of Amsterdam](https://www.uva.nl/en/discipline/sign-linguistics/home.html)

You can also follow online Dutch Sign Language (Nederlandse Gebarentaal, NGT) lessons via [TYD](https://ngt.tyd.nl/online), and there are many free videos available online to help you learn NGT vocabulary.

Important: We explicitly refer to Dutch Sign Language and Dutch Sign Language interpreters, not to ‘deaf language, ‘deaf interpreters’, or similar terms. If a deaf person and a hearing person need an interpreter to communicate, the interpreter supports both parties, not just the deaf person. That is why the term Dutch Sign Language (interpreter) is the most neutral way to describe this service.

**Want to organise something?**

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**October**

Black Achievement Month   
ADHD Awareness month

1 – 2 October – Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) (meaningful day): This is the holiest day in Judaism, focused on prayer, fasting, and atonement. Work is prohibited during this time.

4 October – World Animal Day (issue day): In 1929, animal protectors thought it high time to institute a day of attention to animal welfare. They declared 4 October, the anniversary of the death of Francis of Assisi, Animal Day. The first official Animal Day was in 1930.

4 – 5 October – Weekend of Science (meaningful day): An event in the Netherlands where science institutions open their doors to the public to learn about scientific research.

6 – 12 October – Accessibility Week (DEI day): This theme week pays extra attention on making workplaces accessible for everyone with a disability, illness or chronic condition. The week is organised by Ieder(in), a Dutch umbrella organisation and national network of people with a disability or chronic illness.

October 6 – 15 – Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) (Significant Day): During Sukkot, Jewish families eat in a Sukkah, a small house made of branches, for seven days. Every fall, they commemorate the forty years of the Jewish people’s journey through the desert without a permanent place to live. On the first and last two days of Sukkot, work is prohibited.

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

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

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

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

20 October – World Statistics Day (issue day): Emphasizes the importance of reliable and timely statistical information for making policy.

21 October – Diwali (Festival of Lights) (meaningful day): An important Hindu festival celebrating the victory of light over darkness, with lights, candles, and colourful decorations.

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

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

31 October – Reformation Day (meaningful day): The story goes that theologian Martin Luther nailed 95 theses to the front door of the All Saints’ church in Wittenberg (Germany) on October 31, 1517. Whether this story is factually correct is unclear. What is certain, is that with these theses he denounced the abuses in the Roman Catholic Church. This moment is seen as the beginning of the Reformation and the origin of the Protestant Church.

**Highlighted day: World Menopause Day on 18 October**

**What is it?**

World Menopause Day draws global attention to menopause and the impact it has on the health, well-being, and quality of life of people in this stage of life. Menopause is the period when menstruation stops, usually between the ages of 45 and 55. During this phase, people often experience physical and mental changes, such as hot flushes, sleep disturbances, concentration difficulties, and mood swings. Such symptoms can interfere with daily life. Awareness and access to reliable information are essential to support health and well-being.

**What celebrations are part of it?**

On this day, (health)organisations often launch campaigns to inform people about menopause and its impact. There are also events, workshops, and lectures to raise awareness about menopause, its symptoms, and the available treatment options. Websites, blogs, and social media are used to share information and provide support online.

**What can we, as the UvA and as individuals, do to acknowledge this day and support the people for whom it holds great meaning?**

Menopause affects the health and well-being of many, yet it is still rarely discussed. That is why open conversation is strongly encouraged to help break the taboo and offer support. Do you know someone going through or who has gone through menopause? What would you like to learn from them or better understand? Imagine for a moment what it might be like to experience menopausal symptoms while studying or working. By acknowledging menopause, we contribute to an inclusive university where health and well-being are topics everyone can discuss.

**Want to organise something?**

Would you like to organise something for this day or another? Contact [diversity@uva.nl](mailto:diversity@uva.nl) to enquire about the possibilities for financial support through [Campus Connections Support](https://www.uva.nl/en/about-the-uva/about-the-university/diversity-and-inclusion/central-diversity-office/initiatives-and-events/campus-connections-fund.html). As a UvA student or staff member, you can receive up to €1,500 to help bring your idea to life!

**November**

1 November – All Saint’s Day (meaningful day): A Catholic commemoration festival remembering saints and martyrs.

1 – 2 November – Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) (meaningful day): During Día de los Muertos, people in various Latin American countries remember their loved ones who have passed away and celebrate their lives. The graves of deceased loved ones are carefully cleaned. Music, dance, food, drinks, flowers and conviviality are important elements of this celebration.

2 November – All Souls’ Day (meaningful day): A Catholic day of remembrance in which the deceased are remembered through cemetery visits and gatherings. Traditionally, prayers were said on this day for all the souls who have not yet gone to heaven but are still in purgatory (to shorten the process).

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

10 – 14 November – Week of Work Stress (DEI day): A period focused on awareness and prevention of work-related stress.

10 – 16 November – Equal Opportunities Week (DEI day): Promotes equal opportunities in various fields such as education and employment.

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

14 November – Equal Pay Day (DEI day): Women earn an average of 13% less than men in the Netherlands. Starting on Equal Pay Day, women are effectively no longer paid for the work they do the rest of the year, assuming equal pay. International Equal Pay Day falls on 18 September, because globally, women still earn 23% less than men.

17 November – International Student's Day (meaningful day): This day originally commemorates the death and capture of students at Czech universities, which were stormed by Nazis in 1939. Now it is seen as a nonpolitical celebration of the multiculturalism of (international) students.

19 November – International Men's Day (DEI day): 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.

20 November – International Transgender Day of Remembrance (DEI day): 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.

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

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

25 November – International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEI day): 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.

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

**Highlighted day: Día de los Muertos on 12 November**

**What is it?**

Día de los Muertos, or the Day of the Dead, is a holiday where remembering those who have passed and celebrating life come together. It is an ancient tradition that combines Catholic and pre-Columbian religious customs.

This holiday is especially prominent in Mexico but is also celebrated in other Latin American countries, the Philippines, and certain regions of the United States. During these two days, the lives of deceased family members, friends, and even pets are remembered and celebrated. It is a time for reflection, connection, and honouring the bond with loved ones, even after death.

**What celebrations are part of it?**

It is believed that during this celebration, the souls of departed loved ones temporarily return. Families and friends often gather at cemeteries to welcome them. They clean the graves and decorate them with flowers, candles, photographs, and personal items. Colourful altars (ofrendas) are also created at home, where offerings are placed, often including food, drinks, and flowers.

During Día de los Muertos, life is celebrated. People eat, drink, sing, dance, and share memories together. Fireworks, parades, and symbols such as skulls (calaveras) are also part of the celebration.

**What can we, as the UvA and as individuals, do to reflect on these days and the people who celebrate them?**

Día de los Muertos is about cherishing memories and visibly honouring those who came before us. Everyone copes with loss and remembrance in their own way. Do you know someone who celebrates Día de los Muertos? What would you like to learn from them or better understand? And how can we, as the UvA, create more space, understanding, and respect for grief, remembrance, and cultural traditions surrounding death? Engage in conversation, show interest, and learn from each other’s perspectives.

**Want to organise something?**

Would you like to organise something for this day or another? Contact [diversity@uva.nl](mailto:diversity@uva.nl) to enquire about the possibilities for financial support through [Campus Connections Support](https://www.uva.nl/en/about-the-uva/about-the-university/diversity-and-inclusion/central-diversity-office/initiatives-and-events/campus-connections-fund.html). As a UvA student or staff member, you can receive up to €1,500 to help bring your idea to life!

**December**

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

1 – 5 December – Campus Core Week (issue day): Discover all the possibilities of student associations at the UvA! From sports and culture to studying and socializing – there's always an association that suits you. But how do you find the right one? During this week, you can get acquainted, participate, and try out what tickles your fancy. Find your perfect match and make your student life unforgettable! Campus Core Week is organized by Student Services. Interested in organizing something? Contact project leader Jasmijn Ritmeester at [j.ritmeester@uva.nl](mailto:j.ritmeester@uva.nl).

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

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

5 December – St Nicholas (meaningful day): 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.

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

12 December – Purple Friday (meaningful day): 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.

14 – 22 December – Hanukkah (Festival of Lights) (meaningful day): 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 Hanukkiah.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Highlighted day: Hanukkah from 14 until 22 December**

**What is it?**

Hanukkah, also known as the Festival of Lights or the Feast of Dedication, is an important eight-day Jewish holiday. It commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem by the Maccabees after their victory over the Greeks. According to tradition, the Maccabees found only a single jar of kosher oil, normally enough to keep the Menorah burning for one day, but miraculously, the flame lasted for eight days. This miracle is central to Hanukkah. At the same time, the holiday is also a reminder and celebration of the victory over oppression and the preservation of Jewish faith and identity.

**What celebrations are part of it?**

The most important tradition during Hanukkah is lighting the candles on the Hanukkiah, a nine-branched candelabrum. Every evening, an additional candle is lit with the help of the shamash (the helper candle in the centre). This ritual takes place both at home and in the synagogue, accompanied by Hebrew blessings.

Hanukkah is a true family celebration, where people come together each evening to eat, sing, exchange gifts, and play games. Children often play with a dreidel, a special spinning top marked with Hebrew letters, and in Amsterdam, the board game Ganzenbord is a popular tradition. Fried foods are typical for Hanukkah, such as latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganiyot (jam-filled doughnuts).

**What can we, as the UvA and as individuals, do to reflect on this holiday and the people who celebrate it?**

Hanukkah is an important Jewish festival of light, joy, and connection. Do you know someone who celebrates Hanukkah? What would you like to learn from them or better understand? Let’s work together at the UvA to create more visibility, space, and respect for all our students and staff. Start the conversation, ask questions, and listen to each other’s stories. In doing so, we help build an inclusive and understanding community where everyone feels welcome.

**Want to organise something?**

Would you like to organise something for this day or another? Contact [diversity@uva.nl](mailto:diversity@uva.nl) to enquire about the possibilities for financial support through [Campus Connections Support](https://www.uva.nl/en/about-the-uva/about-the-university/diversity-and-inclusion/central-diversity-office/initiatives-and-events/campus-connections-fund.html). As a UvA student or staff member, you can receive up to €1,500 to help bring your idea to life!

**January**

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

3 January – Mahayana New Year (Buddhist New Year) (meaningful day): Marks the new year in Mahayana Buddhism.

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

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

15 January – Dies Natalis UvA (issue day): Celebration of the founding of the University of Amsterdam.

16 January – Lailat al Miraj (Ascension Day Prophet Muhammad) (meaningful day): This Islamic celebration commemorates Prophet Muhammad's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and his ascension.

18 January – World Religion Day (issue day): Promotes global understanding and respect between different religions.

19 January – Martin Luther King Day (issue day): Every third Monday of January, we reflect on the life, death, and impact of Martin Luther King Jr. He was one of the most prominent voices in the American Civil Rights Movement (1954 – 1968), which fought against segregation, discrimination, and disenfranchisement of Black Americans.

24 January – International Day of Education (issue day): Highlights the importance of education worldwide.

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

**Highlighted day: Dies Natalis UvA on 15 January**

**What is it?**

Dies Natalis (UvA) is the birthday of the University of Amsterdam and one of the university’s most important annual traditions. On this day, we reflect on the history, achievements, and future of the institution. It is a moment of pride and connection for students, lecturers, alumni, and everyone involved with the university.

Originally, the celebration took place on 8 January, commemorating the founding of the Athenaeum Illustre in 1632, the predecessor of the UvA. Since 2025, Dies Natalis has been celebrated on the third Thursday of January to allow more people to attend and to provide additional time for preparations.

**What celebrations are part of it?**

Dies Natalis is a festive day filled with tradition, academic ceremony, and recognition. During the celebration, professors appear in academic gowns, the rector delivers a speech, and representatives from other universities, alumni, and students are present. The day often includes performances and other celebratory activities.

A key part of the celebration is the presentation of the Teacher of the Year award. Honorary doctorates are also awarded to individuals who have made an exceptional scientific contribution without having completed a traditional doctoral dissertation.

**What can we, as the UvA and as individuals, do to reflect on this celebration and those who take part in it?**

Dies Natalis is more than just an academic tradition, it is a moment to look back and to look ahead. How does your study, research, or commitment contribute to the university and to society? What do science and education mean to you? Whether you are a staff member, student, alumnus, or guest, Dies Natalis is an opportunity to reflect on who we are as an academic community and how we can continue building the future of the UvA together.

**Want to organise something?**

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**February**

*Black History Month*

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

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

15 February – Maha Shivaratri (The Night of Shiva) (meaningful day): A Hindu festival dedicated to the god Shiva, marked by fasting and prayer.

15 – 17 February – Carnival (meaningful day): 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.

17 February – Lunar New Year (Chinese New Year) (meaningful day): The Chinese New Year marks the beginning of the Chinese calendar year, celebrated with family gatherings and festivities.

17 February – 19 March – Ramadan (meaningful day): 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.

18 February – Ash Wednesday (meaningful day): The beginning of Lent in the Christian tradition, symbolically marked by applying ashes to the forehead. Lent ends on the Saturday before Easter.

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

25 February – Remembrance of the February strike (meaningful day): The February Strike took place on 25 and 26 February 1941. It was the only mass and open protest against the persecution of Jews in occupied Europe. The strike started in Amsterdam and that is why there still is a large commemoration in the city every year.

**Highlighted day: Ramadan from 17 February until 19 March**

**What is it?**

Ramadan is a period focused on reflection, connection, and deepening one’s faith. It is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar and, according to tradition, the month in which the Qur'an was first revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. To celebrate and commemorate this, people fast throughout the month from sunrise to sunset. But Ramadan is about more than fasting, it is also a time for self-reflection, self-discipline, solidarity, generosity, and gratitude.

**What celebrations are part of it?**

During Ramadan, people fast from sunrise to sunset. Before sunrise, the pre-fast meal is eaten, known as Suhur. The daytime offers space for rest and reflection. In the evening, people gather together. After sunset, the fast is traditionally broken with Iftar, a special meal often shared with family and friends, which begins with water and dates.

Throughout the month, there is an emphasis on prayer, reading the Qur'an, and giving to those in need. Ramadan is festively concluded with Eid al-Fitr. This is a celebration of joy, gratitude, and togetherness, where families and friends come together, wear new clothes, enjoy special meals, and exchange gifts.

**What can we, as the UvA and as individuals, do to reflect on this period and support those who participate in Ramadan?**

Ramadan is an important period for many. Do you know someone participating in Ramadan? What would you like to learn from them or better understand? Let’s work together at the UvA to create greater visibility, space, and respect. Start conversations, ask questions, and listen to each other’s stories. Together, we build an inclusive and understanding community where everyone feels at home.

**Want to organise something?**

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**March**

*Women’s History Month*  
*Deaf History Month (13 March – 15 April)*  
*Queer History Month (initiated by* [*IHLIA)*](https://www.queergeschiedenismaand.nl/#:~:text=De%20Queer%20Geschiedenismaand%20is%20een%20initiatief%20van%20IHLIA,en%20andere%20culturele%20instellingen%20hun%20object%20al%20aanmelden.)

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

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

1 March – World Compliment Day (issue day): Take a moment to appreciate the good work your colleagues or fellow students are doing and give them a compliment! That makes everyone happy.

2 – 3 March – Purim (meaningful day): During Purim, Jewish people celebrate that they were saved from extermination at the hands of Haman, a member of the Persian court, in the 5th century AD.

2 – 8 March – National Week without Meat and Dairy (issue day): A week in which meat, fish and dairy are replaced by vegetarian and plant-based alternatives to promote a flexitarian diet.

4 March – Holi (meaningful day): 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.

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

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

16 March – Lailat ul-Qadr (Night of Decision) (meaningful day): An important night in Islam, also known as the Night of Power, on which the first revelation to Prophet Muhammad took place.

16 – 21 March – Week Against Racism (DEI day): A period of awareness and action against racism.

19 March – Eid-al-Fitr (meaningful day): 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.

19 - 27 March – Chaitra Navratri (Spring Festival) (meaningful day): A Hindu festival lasting nine days and dedicated to the goddess Durga.

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

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

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

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

**Highlighted day: Holi on 4 March**

**What is it?**

Holi, also known as the Festival of Colours, is a joyful and vibrant Hindu celebration that marks the end of winter and the beginning of spring. For many, Holi also signals the start of the new year. The festival is celebrated on the day after the full moon in the Hindu month of Phalgun, usually falling in February or March.

Holi refers to the ancient story of Prahlad, a young boy who stayed true to his devotion to Vishnu and survived the flames. His enemies, Holika and Hiranyakashipu, who symbolised evil, were ultimately defeated. The festival serves as a reminder that good ultimately triumphs and that each new season offers space for hope and connection.

**What celebrations are part of it?**

The day before Holi is called Holika Dahan, during which a bonfire is lit as a symbol of the victory of good over evil (Holika). The next day, the famous Festival of Colours takes place. People throw brightly coloured powder and water at one another as a symbol of equality and togetherness.

Holi is a celebration of joy, unity, and life. Families and friends gather to sing, dance, and enjoy traditional treats such as Gujiya, a sweet pastry filled with nuts, fruit, and cardamom. Religious rituals also take place, including the offering of puja.

**What can we, as the UvA and as individuals, do to reflect on this holiday and the people who celebrate it?**

Holi is a lively Hindu spring festival filled with colour, joy, and the celebration of good. Do you know someone who celebrates Holi? What would you like to learn from them or better understand? Let’s work together at the UvA to create greater visibility, space, and respect for all our students and staff. Engage in conversation, ask questions, and listen to each other’s stories. Together, we can build an inclusive and understanding community where everyone feels welcome.

**Want to organise something?**

Would you like to organise something for this day or another? Contact [diversity@uva.nl](mailto:diversity@uva.nl) to enquire about the possibilities for financial support through [Campus Connections Support](https://www.uva.nl/en/about-the-uva/about-the-university/diversity-and-inclusion/central-diversity-office/initiatives-and-events/campus-connections-fund.html). As a UvA student or staff member, you can receive up to €1,500 to help bring your idea to life!

**April**

*Autism Acceptance Month*  
*Sexual Assault Awareness Month*

1 – 9 April – Passover (Escape from Slavery) (meaningful day): A Jewish festival commemorating the exodus from Egypt. On the first two and last two days of Passover, people are not allowed to work.

2 April – World Autism Awareness Day (DEI day): On this day, we pay extra attention to the different forms autism can take, in order to raise awareness about this form of neurodivergence.

3 April – Good Friday (meaningful day): Commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

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

5 April – Easter Sunday (meaningful day): Christian celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from death.

6 April – Easter Monday (meaningful day): Christian celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from death.

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

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

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

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

22 April – World Earth Day (issue day): Focuses on environmental awareness and protection.

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

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

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

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

**Highlighted day: Easter on 5 and 6 April**

**What is it?**

Easter is one of the most important celebrations in Christianity. It commemorates and celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday, following his crucifixion on Good Friday. For Christians, this symbolises God's forgiveness.

In the Netherlands and many other Western countries, Easter falls on the Sunday and Monday after the first full moon of spring. Easter Sunday also marks the end of the forty-day period of Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday.

**What celebrations are part of it?**

The Sunday before Easter is known as Palm Sunday. In some parts of the Netherlands, this is celebrated with a procession of children carrying decorated Palm Pasen sticks, which traditionally feature a bread figure shaped like a cockerel.

In Protestant churches, Easter begins with a special sunrise service. In Catholic tradition, a Paaswake (Easter Vigil) is held on the night of Easter Saturday. Orthodox Christians usually celebrate Easter thirteen days later, as they follow a different calendar.

In addition to religious celebrations, Easter is also a time for gatherings and traditions. In the Netherlands, it is often celebrated with an Easter breakfast or brunch, often with family and friends. Eating eggs and hunting for (chocolate) Easter eggs are popular customs.

**What can we, as the UvA and as individuals, do to reflect on this day and the people who celebrate it?**

Easter is an important celebration for many Christians, rich with traditions and personal meaning. Do you know someone who celebrates Easter? What would you like to learn from them or better understand? Let’s work together at the UvA to create greater visibility, space, and respect for all our students and staff. Start the conversation, ask questions, and listen to each other's stories. Together, we can build an inclusive and understanding community where everyone feels welcome.

**Want to organise something?**

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**May**

*Mental Health Awareness Month*

1 May – Labour Day (issue day): 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.

2 May – Wesak (Buddha Day) (meaningful day): Buddhist festival celebrating the birth, enlightenment and death of Buddha.

3 May - National Commemoration of Dutch Colonial Past (issue day): Foundation May 3 – a loving request foundation holds an inclusive commemoration with two minutes of silence. They reflect on the suffering that Dutch ancestors inflicted on other people and countries (53 in total) during the colonial period. This would be a gesture of recognition and this can contribute to collective healing, recovery and solidarity in the Netherlands. This day is seen as an addition to May 4 and 5.

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

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

14 May – Ascension Day (meaningful day): Christian festival commemorating the ascension of Jesus Christ.

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

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

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

21 May – Bike to Work Day (issue day): Encourages the use of bicycles as an environmentally friendly and healthy means of transport.

21 – 23 May – Shavuot (Three Pilgrimage Festivals) (meaningful day): 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. Work is prohibited during this celebration.

24 May – International Pansexual and Panromantic Visibility Day (DEI day): 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.

24 May – Pentecost (meaningful day): Christian festival commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit.

25 May – Whit Monday (meaningful day): Continuation of the feast of Pentecost.

27 May – Eid al-Adha (Feast of Sacrifice) (meaningful day): Islamic festival commemorating Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son.

**Highlighted day: Wesak on 2 May**

**What is it?**

Wesak, also known as Buddha Day, is one of the three most important Buddhist festivals. On this day, the birth, enlightenment, and passing of Gautama Buddha are commemorated. It is seen as a moment for reflection, gratitude, and renewing one’s commitment to the teachings of the Buddha, which focus on compassion, peace, and wisdom. The festival takes place annually on the last day of the month of Vaishakha in the Hindu calendar.

**What celebrations are part of it?**

Wesak is widely celebrated in many Southeast Asian countries and is often a public holiday there. People visit temples, meditate, and make offerings such as flowers, candles, and incense. A well-known ritual is the ‘Bathing of the Buddha’, during which water is poured over a Buddha statue as a symbol of purification and new beginnings. Many people also eat vegetarian meals on this day as a tribute to all living beings. In addition, there are processions, parades, and charity events, although traditions vary by country and community.

**What can we, as the UvA and as individuals, do to reflect on this day and the people who celebrate it?**

Wesak is about compassion, enlightenment, and connection. How can we, as the UvA and as individuals, contribute to creating more space and recognition for this holiday? Perhaps you know someone who celebrates Wesak. What would you like to learn about their tradition or experience? By being curious, engaging in conversation, and showing respect, we demonstrate that spiritual diversity matters. Together, we create space for meaningful moments such as Wesak.

**Want to organise something?**

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**June**

*Pride Month*

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

16 June – Muharram (Islamic New Year) (meaningful day): The beginning of the Islamic year, which commemorates Prophet Muhammad's migration from Mecca to Medina.

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

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

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

27 June – Pink Saturday (DEI day): 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.

28 June – Stonewall Riots Anniversary (DEI day): 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.

**Highlighted day: Neurodiversity Pride Day on 16 June**

**What is it?**

On 16 June, we celebrate Neurodiversity Pride Day, a day that highlights the unique talents and perspectives of neurodivergent people. Neurodiversity refers to the natural variation in how people think, learn, and process information, for example, in the context of autism, ADHD, dyslexia, or giftedness. Neurodiversity Pride Day is a global movement that celebrates these differences, raises awareness, and promotes acceptance. This day reminds us that neurodiversity is not a limitation but a valuable source of creativity, innovation, and strength. Differences in the brain do not make our society weaker, they make it richer and more resilient.

**What celebrations are part of it?**

Neurodiversity Pride Day is celebrated in many ways, both in person and online. Events are organised to raise awareness about neurodiversity and to challenge stereotypes. As the diversity within the neurodivergent community is celebrated, festive activities such as social gatherings, dance events, and local celebrations also take place. These activities aim to be accessible to all neurodivergent individuals and their allies, with a strong focus on creating safe and inclusive spaces.

**What can we, as the UvA and as individuals, do to reflect on this day and the people who celebrate it?**

Neurodiversity Pride Day reminds us that thinking differently can be a strength, as long as there is space and understanding for it. How do we, at the UvA, support different ways of thinking, learning, and working? What can you do to help create an environment where neurodivergent students and staff feel seen, valued, and respected? Start the conversation, show interest, and help build an inclusive university where everyone’s unique perspective matters.

Want to show your support? Wave the Neurodiversity Pride flag. This purple and cyan flag with a white kite symbolises pride, solidarity, and connection.

**Want to organise something?**

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**July**

*Disability Pride Month*

1 July – Keti Koti (meaningful day): Keti 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.

13 July – World ADHD Awareness Day (DEI day): Raises awareness on the struggles and benefits of ADHD as a form of neurodiversity.

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

18 July – Nelson Mandela Day (issue day): Nelson Mandela's birthday. On this day, we remember his fight for the freedom of South Africans from the racist system of apartheid, and as the first black head of state of South Africa.

25 July – 8 August – WorldPride Amsterdam (DEI day): Pride Amsterdam is an annual event to promote LGBTQIA+ rights and acceptance, marked by festivities, Canal pride and cultural activities. In 2026, Pride Amsterdam becomes WorldPride Amsterdam. This is a global event that promotes visibility and awareness of LGBTQIA+ issues internationally. This is the first time WorldPride is hosted in Amsterdam.

**Highlighted day: WorldPride Amsterdam from 25 July until 8 August**

**What is it?**

Every year, freedom and diversity in love are celebrated in Amsterdam with Pride Amsterdam. This year, the celebration will be even bigger, as WorldPride is coming to our city for the very first time. WorldPride is the largest international event that promotes visibility and awareness of LGBTQIA+ issues. People from all over the world come together to celebrate who they are and to show that everyone should be able to be themselves, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

This year also marks the 25th anniversary of the legalisation of same-sex marriage, through which the Netherlands made global history in 2001. According to the organisers, this silver anniversary is a powerful moment to inspire and connect the world once again, and to reflect on the progress made and the road still ahead.

**What celebrations are part of it?**

During WorldPride, numerous events and activities take place across Amsterdam, including parades, marches, festivals, and conferences. One of the most famous elements is the Canal Parade, a large and colourful boat parade through the canals. There are also performances, arts and culture programmes, debates, parties, and gatherings all focused on connection, visibility, and the celebration of love, freedom, and diversity.

**What can we, as the UvA and as individuals, do to reflect on this day and the people who celebrate it?**

WorldPride reminds us that being yourself is still not a given everywhere. How visible, safe, and inclusive is the UvA for LGBTQIA+ students, staff, and guests? What do freedom, love, and equality mean to you in your studies, work, or daily life? Do you know someone involved in Pride or committed to LGBTQIA+ rights? What would you like to learn from them or better understand? Start the conversation, show interest, and celebrate in a way that creates space for everyone.

**Want to organise something?**

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**August**

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

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

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

17 August – Dia ti Tula (Dia di Lucha pa Libertat or Day of the Fight for Freedom) (issue day): 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.

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

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

\* Krishna Janmashtami (birth of Shrii Krishna) (meaningful day) on 4 September has fallen off this calendar, due to the switch from calendar year to academic year. This Hindu festival celebrates the birth of the god Krishna, with prayers, singing and dancing.

**Highlighted day: Dia di Tula on 17 August**

**What is it?**

Dia di Tula, also known as the Day of the Battle for Freedom (*Dia di Lucha pa Libertat*), is celebrated on 17 August. This day honours the 1795 slave revolt on Curaçao, led by Tula, the Curaçaoan freedom fighter who is seen as a national hero and symbol of resistance. It is a moment to reflect on his courageous fight for freedom, as well as the broader history of slavery and oppression. Dia di Tula was established, in part, out of a desire to give greater visibility to Tula's resistance and bravery, as many feel these stories receive too little attention during the official commemoration of the abolition of slavery on 1 July.

**What celebrations are part of it?**

Dia di Tula focuses on remembrance, culture, and community. In both Curaçao and the Netherlands, ceremonies, lectures, and gatherings are organised to create space for reflection. Curaçaoan culture plays a central role, with Tambú, the traditional music and dance form that expresses emotion, resistance, and pride, being especially significant. There are also workshops, performances, dance, and markets with Caribbean food, such as the Tula Market in Tilburg.

**What can we, as the UvA and as individuals, do to reflect on this day and the people who celebrate it?**

Dia di Tula draws attention to the history of slavery, as well as the stories of resistance, courage, and perseverance that are part of that history. What do you know about Tula and the Curaçaoan slave revolt? How can we create space within the UvA for greater knowledge, recognition, and visibility? Do you know someone who celebrates Dia di Tula? What would you like to learn from them or better understand? Engage in conversation, show respect, and learn from one another's perspectives.

**Want to organise something?**

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