



INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA & BIPHOBIA

A Worldwide Celebration of
Sexual and Gender Diversities

MAY 17

SUMMARY REPORT 2017

**THIS REPORT PROVIDES A SELECTION OF INFORMATION ABOUT
THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA AND BIPHOBIA 2017.**

Hundreds of organisations are involved in the activities mentioned in this report. It would be impossible to mention them all. As a matter of fairness, we choose not to mention any individual organisation. Country reports provide all further details of events.

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Editorial

“Love makes a Family”. That was the heart-warming motto of this year’s International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia*, and it was a very natural alliance to team up with International Family Equality Day (IFED, May 7) to organise two full weeks of mobilisation and activism in May.

And indeed, all around the world, organisations of sexual and gender minorities, and their friends and allies celebrated family diversity and the essential role families play in building healthy and safe societies, especially for LGBTQI people.

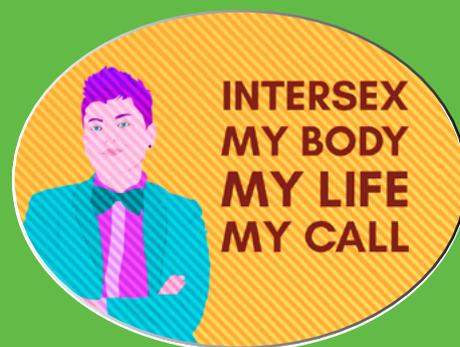


Organisations of families in which at least one member identifies as LGBTQI (Rainbow families) took action in 102 cities in 44 countries. IFED will soon report in detail on this, so watch out for their report.

Organisations of families and friends of LGBTQI people also widely mobilised, with support from many allies, like organisations for children’s rights, youth groups, LGBTI elders, and many more

But other issues also made it to the forefront this year. In particular, many actions focused on the horrible situation in Chechnya, where dozens of LGBT people have been rounded up, tortured, and killed by government forces. Around the world, rallies and protests were organised to denounce the situation and put pressure on leaders to bring it to an end.

This year’s celebrations also saw a strong commitment from progressive movements within churches, who reject the hijacking of their values and beliefs by extremists who seek to foster hate and violence. These groups instead wanted to make it clear that they don’t resign themselves to the appropriation of their religion in support of the persecution of LGBTQI people.



Once again, the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia proved to be an essential and successful tool for these groups to make their voices heard. From Transgender priests celebrating a church service in Cuba to special services of the international “Giornata” project, many prayers were said around the world to mark the Day and remember the victims of hate crimes.

Authorities at every level of government were, once again, actively involved in the celebrations and demonstrations. In Europe, the annual “IDAHO Forum”, held this year in Brussels, provided a platform for civil society, governments, authorities and

other stakeholders to discuss progress on LGBTI rights in the region. Amongst other decisions made at the Forum, Portugal announced the end of unnecessary surgery on intersex babies. An important step in the right direction!

Multiple agencies of the United Nations once again participated in the global action in support of LGBTQI human rights. The UN Free and Equal campaign released three special videos under the umbrella “Culture of Love”, celebrating family, tradition and culture, already viewed by millions of people. The UN also produced a short documentary on homeless LGBTQ youth, while UN Women launched a large poster campaign to celebrate the right to sexual and gender diversities. UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNHCR and UNESCO all marked the day in their own way too.





States and their leaders around the world marked the Day with declarations and events. In Canada, President Justin Trudeau was active in his support on Twitter. Meanwhile, in Chile, the presidential palace was lit up in the colours of the rainbow.

In Australia, the Governor of the State of Victoria hosted an official reception for 1000 LGBTQI activists, while in other cities including Geelong, Melbourne and Brisbane, local councils lit public buildings up in rainbow colors. All over the UK, the rainbow flag could be seen flying on public buildings, from police stations

to London city hall. Berlin, Santiago (Chile), Mexico DF and Paris were among the other capitals whose authorities marked the Day.

While the raising of flags and lighting of buildings and monuments was as popular as ever, **some countries stood out for their creativity**. Cuba, for example, issued their first ever LGBT-themed postage stamps. Meanwhile, in Albania, the now traditional Bike (P)ride took place undisturbed under clear skies. And in the Netherlands, a “Rainbow Dress” was made out of the flags of all the countries that still criminalise same-sex acts.

In 2017 we once again saw several “first time” events, such as pride marches in Bhopal and Lucknow (India), or the first joint action between LGBT groups from Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania, Sudan and Libya. It was also the first time for Vilnius City Hall in Lithuania, to be lit up in rainbow colors. Not to be outdone, it was also the first time pop idol Madonna tweeted support for #IDAHOT to her millions of fans.



As is the case every year, **many events sadly had to face protest and threats from opponents**. Parts of the week-long celebrations of Beirut Pride in Lebanon had to be cancelled, while in Moldova the “No Fear” march was halted by police forces after it faced severe attacks. In the city of Kharkiv in Ukraine, activists were attacked and homophobic thugs burned rainbow flags. In Georgia, the religious opposition cracked down on peaceful celebrations once more. In Paraguay, catholic fundamentalists tried to interrupt a kiss-in, waving bibles at the activists. But by and large organisers resisted the intimidation and violence and managed with incredible courage to carry out at least part of the

activities. In Saint Petersburg (Russia) LGBT groups managed to defiantly hold their first successful public event since the ban of public LGBT events in 2016. A spectacular victory in light of the events in Chechnya.

In the face of all these challenges, **activists around the world continue to reveal their creativity and courage**, to which this report stands witness.

The report highlights a small selection of events that were held in honour of the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia all around the world. More information is available on the country pages of the Day’s [webportal](#) and on its [Twitter feed](#) and [Facebook page](#).

We hope that these snapshots will leave you with the same inspiration and admiration which we felt over the past few weeks and indeed, every day of the year.

Freedom and love are truly unstoppable!

**The Day goes by various acronyms, from the early IDAHO to the more recent IDAHOT and in some places IDAHOTB or IDAHOBIT. There is no central “brand control”.*





The International Family Equality Day was celebrated this year in conjunction with the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. Specific events focusing on families were held in 102 cities in 44 countries.

 **RUSSIA**

This year LGBT activists organized events and flashmobs in Arkhangelsk, Krasnodar, Samara, Yekaterinburg, Tyumen, Voronezh, Moscow, and Vladivostok. Many cities held other events: meetings, walks, picnics, film screenings and round tables.



 **UNITED NATIONS**

The UN Free and Equal campaign released 3 stunning short films. Under the motto “Culture of Love”, each film explores one of the themes of family, tradition and culture and attracted over a million cumulated views.

 **AUSTRALIA**

All over the country, official buildings lit up in Rainbow colors, while Victoria State Governor threw in a reception for 1000 LGBT activists, celebrating their dedication.



 **LEBANON**

While activists have been organising events on May 17 for 10 years, this year was the first week-long “Beirut Pride”, organised in a collaboration between the country’s LGBT organisations and their allies. Even if some events had to be cancelled or moved under pressure from religious extremists, most activities could be carried out and Beirut Pride marked a milestone in the country’s history.

VIP

Madonna gave the visibility of the Day an extra boost when she tweeted this lovely photo as a hymn to love.



INDIA

Several events were held across the Indian sub continent, making it the most visible IDAHOT ever in the region. Lucknow and Bhopal saw their first Pride marches.

CHINA

Shanghai Pride organised a special IDAHOT “pre-Pride” bike ride where 6 teams raced, finally converging to form the rainbow flag.



NETHERLANDS

The Amsterdam Rainbow Dress is made out of the flags of the countries where homosexual acts are still against the law. It was inaugurated at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and will now tour the world to advocate for decriminalisation.

ALBANIA

The 5th Bike (P)ride in the capital city of Tirana proved a huge success, despite threats. A wonderful [music video](#) summarizes the years of struggle.





 GERMANY

The German Anti-discrimination Authority hosted a day long event under the iconic Brandenburg Tor while all through the country Rainbow Flash mobs saw colorful balloons fly with messages of solidarity. Chechnya was on everybody’s mind and in all hearts.

 PARAGUAY

Despite attempts from the Christian fundamentalists to interrupt the action, waving bibles at the participants, the LGBT community gathered in Asuncion for their annual “Besaton” (Kiss-in). Love confronting hatred and bigotry!



ILGA

ILGA released its much awaited annual update of the State-Sponsored Homophobia report while ILGA Europe released the regional annual maps and reports “Knowledge is itself power: it is the power to challenge norms and practices that continue to oppress LGBTIQ people and communities”.

 UN WOMEN

“What we share is love, what we want is Equal Rights” says another poster released by the UN agency as part of a large poster campaign on Facebook to highlight the issues but also the power of LBT women. The agency also edited a short video to celebrate family diversity, already viewed by over 50,000 people.



 HUNGARY

Activists from several organisations joined forces for a “Hand holding Freeze mob” in Budapest, wonderfully captured in a feel-good video clip.

 CUBA

Once again, Mariela Castro led the annual celebrations, which included marches in la Havana. Transgender priests celebrated a special Sunday mass against discrimination and for acceptance.



 PORTUGAL

During the annual “IDAHO Forum” which took place this year in Brussels, Portugal announced that it will ban unnecessary surgery on intersex infants.

 RUSSIA

Today, the unexpected happened! Over 300 LGBT people and allies celebrated in the center of Saint Petersburg, unimpeded and under police protection. This became the first successful LGBT public rally since at least the beginning of 2016, when the situation for LGBT people sharply deteriorated.



NORTH AFRICA

Organisations from Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania, Egypt, Sudan and Morocco launched a joint campaign with the slogan « Our colors are the Crime ». All of these countries have legal restrictions on same-sex acts. In two of them, they can lead to the death penalty.

 AUSTRALIA

More than 800 people in Melbourne joined a candlelight vigil in the city overnight to stand in solidarity with the gay and bisexual men being persecuted in Chechnya.



 EUROPE

The European federation of Transgender organisations published their Index and map, evidencing that 20 countries in Europe still require sterilisation for legal gender recognition.

 CYPRUS

The Northern part of the Island organised their now annual Pride march successfully once again.



 UNITED STATES

Whistleblower Chelsea Manning’s liberation, following ex-President Obama’s pardon after she served 7 years in prison, was chosen to coincide with May 17 in order to particularly highlight the situation of Trans inmates in US prisons.

 UNITED NATIONS

The UN edited and broadcasted a short documentary on LGBT homeless youth and hosted a special event for LGBT youth. The UN Human Rights Office broadcast a special address for the Day on the risks faced by LGBT youth and the importance of families.



 KOREA

Colorful flashmobs get activists and the public together every year in Seoul.

 **GEORGIA**

Even in the face of extreme opposition and violent intimidations, LGBT activists mobilised on the streets of Tbilissi, the Caucasus country's capital.



ANDEAN REGION

Activists of Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador united for an international conference which ended with a march in the streets of La Paz, encouraged by a special address of the city's mayor.



 **CAMBODIA**

This year, the annual celebrations around the Day focused on families in rural areas of Cambodia. The events and conferences gave a platform for the expression of LGBT people in remote areas of the country, bringing attention to voices seldom heard.



 **LEBANON**

Students at the American University in Beirut stand up in favor of diversity. Most of the country's future elite is schooled here, which makes this a very strategic place for activism.



 **MOLDOVA**

Ambassadors of the Kingdom of Sweden and the United States of America, as well as Advisor to the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands delivered speeches at the opening of Moldova Pride 2017.



ASIA-PACIFIC

A key event in the collaboration between International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia and International Family Equality Day, the Asia-Pacific Rainbow Families Forum gathered organisations from many Asian countries to fight for the recognition of all families in the region.



The first LGBT stamps were issued in the country, in a clear message that Homophobia and Transphobia must be stamped out!



Did you know that 33% of LGBT Danes have considered suicide in 2016? A [video released on May 17](#) provided a powerful response from Denmark: You can't judge me!



The Day is foremost a celebration of diversities, freedom and love. Armenian activists knew how to celebrate in style with beautiful [feelgood videos](#).



Do you want everyone to be happy?
Then wish us happiness.



The Presidential palace lit up in all rainbow colors to mark the highlight of the Rainbow campaign which counted with the support of 99 public and private institutions in the country.

Corporations really took to marking the Day this year. Ernst and Young held a global photo contest, Deutsche Bank had agencies around the world wear purple, Rolls Royce had their HQ office logo painted in Rainbow colors. Accenture, Siemens, Qantas, Bloomberg, ING, Barclays, and many more also participated.



GUYANA

A series of video testimonies marked both IDAHOT and IFED under the motto “Express Yourself”.

SOUTH AFRICA

The ‘Love Not Hate’ campaign demanding justice for the unresolved murders of 5 LGT people, marked the IDAHOT week with marches in Cape Town, Durban and East London.



UNITED KINGDOM

Dozens of IDAHOT/IDAHOBIT events took place from North to South, and the British Council broadcast a special video from many of their 110 offices worldwide.

EUROPE

“No matter who you love or who you are, everyone should enjoy the same rights and be protected from discrimination in the same way”. While the European IDAHO Forum gathered many stakeholders from EU institutions and civil society in Brussels, the building of the European Commission was lit up in Rainbow Colors.





 **BRAZIL**

Like every year, events took place in every State of the country, from deep Amazonas to the border of Uruguay. Highlights included a series of hearings and receptions of LGBT activists in the Federal Senate

 **CAMEROON**

It is now traditional for the Day to be marked by a football match between a straight and a gay team, as an expression of peaceful acceptance.



 **URUGUAY**

The city of Montevideo invited “artist” Daniel Arzola to exhibit his work questioning LGBT rights in Latin America.

 **MEXICO**

Several official buildings joined the global rainbow lights illuminations to show their support for sexual and gender diversity.



 **NORWAY**



May 17 is the country’s National Day. This year, the Royal Guards featured a same-sex pair for the traditional street dance “because May 17 is also the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia”. This is State recognition!

FRANCE

Activists rallied for Chechnya under the Eiffel Tower to underline the complaint filed by French organisations against Chechen leaders at the International Criminal Court. While the Rainbow Flag flew on Paris City hall, a TV series on the life of 4 gay friends premiered on public television on May 17.



TAIWAN

A total of 115 celebrities featured on a giant “See Through” wall erected in Taipei City. The event followed the launch of the song “We Are One” by eight female pop stars.

The International IDAHO Committee was established by the founders of the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia in 2005. Its missions is to inspire, support, and document the global mobilisations around May 17.

Since 2005, May 17 has been dedicated to the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOT), marking the day in 1990 when the World Health Organization removed homosexuality from its list of mental disorders.

It constitutes an annual landmark to draw the attention of decision makers, the media, the public, opinion leaders, local authorities, etc. to the alarming situation faced by Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender or Intersex people, and all those who don't conform to majority sexual and gender norms.

The sheer diversity of social, religious, cultural and political contexts in which gender and sexuality are expressed, makes it impossible for the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia to take one specific form or agenda. It is a moment when everyone can take whatever action they wish.

The Day has been given official recognition by many authorities at all levels, from city councils to parliaments and governments. European institutions, UN agencies and many other bodies mark the Day each year with special events.



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contact@dayagainsthomophobia.org



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