

## Press release

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### Programme of events for Belgian National Day 2019

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

The theme of 21 July 2019 is:

- the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Belgium (World War II).

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

### ***Saturday 20 July 2019***

#### **From 7:30 p.m. on - Bal national - Vossenplein/Place du Jeu de Balle**

This year too, the Bal national is taking over Vossenplein/Place du Jeu de Balle. This popular event in the Marolles kicks off at 7:30 p.m. Belgium's biggest popular ball begins with a beginner's introduction to dancing, followed by a series of free concerts. This year, the acts include Le Grand Jojo and Les Snuls-DJ Set.

More information on the Bal national website: [www.balnational.be](http://www.balnational.be)

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

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

This year, the guest musician is American pianist **Henry Kremer**, winner of the Queen Elisabeth Competition in 2016. He will be accompanied by the **Belgian National Orchestra** and will interpret the *Piano Concerto no. 4* by Ludwig van Beethoven. The Belgian National Orchestra, under **Hugh Wolff**, will also play *Egmont, Overture* by Ludwig van Beethoven and *Dances of Galánta* by Zoltán Kodály.

More information on [the Bozar website](#)

## ***Sunday 21 July 2019***

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

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

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

From 10 a.m. to 11 p.m., time to party between the Palace of Justice and the Paleis der Natie/Palais de la Nation (Federal parliament) and more specifically in the Regentschapsstraat/Rue de la Régence, at the Zavel/Sablon, on Koningsplein/Place Royale and in Brussels Park. The programme includes a multitude of **free, fun and folklore-inspired events**. The museums, places of worship and numerous institutions will be open that day: the Federal Parliament, the Great Synagogue of Belgium, the churches, the Belgian Court of Auditors, the Palace of Justice, the museums, and the Protestant Chapel. There are many activities for children in Brussels Park and there will be music all day long. From 5 p.m. onwards, the Sablon will host numerous concerts as part of the “Nostalgia Live Tour”, including a performance by Cock Robin.

The FPS Home Affairs, the Fire Brigade, the Ministry of Defence, the Federal and Local Police, the European institutions and various federal government agencies will all take part in the celebrations.

The **Police Village** on the Poelaertplein/Place Poelaert offers, once more, a varied programme that focuses on the theme of innovation. Members of the Local and Federal police will welcome visitors on a route divided into four “boroughs” : reception, prevention, intervention and investigation. This route will introduce them to police missions and resources, including technologies such as the Livescan (to take fingerprints), the sonar, the cameras for automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) and a virtual laboratory. There’s also a large quiz where one can win great prizes and even a visit to the Directorate for Air Support !

Young and old can be photographed in the Federal Police helicopter, in the company of police dogs, with some equipment from the Technical and Scientific Police, law enforcement agencies, motorbike riders or security officers. Attention is also paid to the recruitment of police and civilian personnel (the police force is also looking for specialised profiles such as doctors or engineers !). Future candidates for a job within the police force can already practice on the functional track.

Folkloric groups will parade all day long between Place Poelaert and Place Royale. The public can meet the shrimp fishermen of Oostduinkerke, the Royal Stiltwalkers of Merchtem, the Gilles du Centre and many others.

In the Regentschapsstraat/Rue de la Régence, the Federal Truck – the Federal Government's information truck – will welcome visitors all day long. The truck bears the colours of the campaign entitled “Belgium, uniquely phenomenal” ([www.uniquelyphenomenal.be](http://www.uniquelyphenomenal.be)). You can (re)discover the 99 reasons to love Belgium, test your knowledge of our largely flat country, take a picture in the photo box and ‘win’ various uniquely phenomenal prizes.

Nearby, the Belgian **Customs** will demonstrate how to use bleeding simulators and present the Scanvan (luggage scanner).

The public is invited to relive the Liberation by the presence of the vehicles of the 101 Airborn – 326 ENG as well as the vehicles of the Old *Gendamerie*, a selection of 70 vehicles from the Belgian Federation of Old Vehicles, and a bivouac with actors in historical outfits from 1940-1945.

The **BEL-Europe stand** of the Representations of the European Commission in Belgium, the Office of the European Parliament in Belgium and the Chancery of the Prime Minister, will allow you to discover Europe in a fun way on Place Royale. The public will be invited to go on the air at the BRFM radio station, which will broadcast live from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the Bel-Europe stand. At the Mont des Arts, “Kortrijk Drumt” will play to the beat of international hits. These exceptional performances will unite 140 drummers, including the Mayor of Kortrijk/Courtrai.

The **Safety Village of Home Affairs** welcomes you at the Grote Zavel/Grand Sablon, with many activities for young and old. Try to get out from our *Escape Room* and have a cool picture taken in the photo booth. Attend instructive demonstrations (rescue dogs, reanimation) and let the kids play a game (puzzles, petanque, a game of skittles, soccer, sports course). Or ask information on how to become a firefighter or how to register for BE-Alert. Because your safety is our priority !

The **Defence village** extends from the Kleine Zavel/Petit Sablon over Regentschapsstraat/Rue de la Régence and Koningsplein/Place Royale down to the Coudenberg. Soldiers will display their military equipment and explain their assignments. At several locations, it will be possible to participate as a real soldier in adventurous activities : climbing towers, obstacle courses, death rides, etc.

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

The traditional military and civilian parade will take place on Paleizenplein/Place des Palais starting at 4 p.m. This year, the theme is ‘*Together for freedom and safety for all.*’

On the occasion of the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Belgium, the parade will include a historical dimension (clothing and vehicles from the 1940s). Foreign delegations will also take part in this, thus demonstrating their partnership with Belgium.

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

To end this National Day, beautiful fireworks will be set off from the gardens of the Academy Palace, thanks to the support of the Chancery of the Prime Minister. The public can admire these fireworks from the Paleizenplein/Place des Palais. (Free) access only through the Koningsplein/Place Royale and the Koningsstraat/Rue Royale.

The website [www.2107.be](http://www.2107.be) provides all the information: the festive programme in detail (activities, parade), a plan of the festive zone, mobility information, a presentation of the organising partners with pictures and video clips.

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