



# VARIOUS VOICES BRUSSELS 2026!

Wednesday 24 June  
to Sunday 28 June

BOZAR  
European Quarter  
SQUARE

## LET YOUR HEART BE HEARD



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# LET YOUR HEART BE HEARD



When you hear “Brussels”, what kind of images come to your mind? Belgian chocolate, good beer and Belgian fries for sure! Comics and Art Nouveau maybe? For Sing Out Brussels!, Brussels represents first of all the capital of 500 million Europeans.

All Various Voices participants have **something in common**, besides a love of singing. We are **Europeans** for whom Brussels is **a home**. At the **crossroads** of Nordic and Latin cultures, our vibrant city shows traces of this in its culture. But what really makes the city rich is the dramatic **diversity and openness** of the people who call it home. Ever-conscious of living in a small country and an intimate city, the people of Brussels have turned this into a strength. They will surprise you with their irresistible **friendliness**, their non-judgemental **openness**, their frank and casual manner, their **simplicity**, and their quirky self-mockery. Everyone feels welcome here, and it’s no coincidence that multilingual Brussels is **one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world**, with 185 nationalities and 105 languages spoken. Our choir, which itself reflects this diversity, is convinced that Brussels is **better positioned than ever** to host Various Voices, bringing together choirs and singers from the whole European continent and beyond!

Brussels is an open-minded city, in a country that has always been at the forefront of LGBTQ+ rights. Belgium was the second country in the world to adopt marriage equality and is ranked second in the Rainbow Index 2021, ILGA-Europe’s ranking of European countries according to state laws and policies impacting LGBTQ+ people. Recently, Deputy Prime Minister Petra De Sutter became the first transgender minister to join a government in Europe.

Various Voices Brussels 2026 will be a **joyful** festival, with plenty of time for **leisure and sharing**. But why should we wait until 2026 to have fun with our friends or make new ones? As soon as Various Voices Bologna 2023 is over, we’ll start **involving all Legato choir members** in the creative process of the 2026 festival, by **twinning** choirs (for online rehearsals or live collaborations) and by **creating together** the main shows of the festival (virtual meetings to select repertoire, share scores, compose or write scripts). Two shows will play with Belgian culture and stereotypes in a fun way: “**Kings & Queens of Belgium**” (Belgium is one of Europe’s kingdoms, but we also want to make it a Queerdom) and “**The Treachery of Images**” (let’s look beyond appearances, like in the Belgian surrealist painter Magritte’s artwork). The **culmination of the festival** will be the “**Let Your Heart Be Heard**” night, outdoors **near the European Parliament**. This concert will illustrate **our history and the fight for our rights**. At the end, we will together perform a **giant LGBTQ+ choral work composed especially for the festival**.

Our collective work will make the festival an event that **opens minds**, raises **awareness** and reaches our goal: to **question norms** and gender identities, with **fun**, feelings and **emotions**, according to the pure tradition of Various Voices! And what better way is to make friends and spread our message than mixing choirs?



Various Voices Brussels 2026 will be a sustainable festival committed to the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. Each chapter of this bid is linked to a number of these goals.

Brussels is a human-sized city and is recognised as one of the greenest cities in Europe! With two official languages (French and Dutch) and one unofficial language (English is spoken everywhere), anyone can feel at home here. Must-see sights in Brussels include the Grand Place, the royal district, the Sablon and its antique dealers, the Atomium, the Dansaert district with its fashion and design shops as well as the richness of Art Nouveau and Art Déco architecture.



Various Voices is about celebrating our pride and letting our voices and hearts **be heard** as one LGBTQ+ community. Locating this festival in Brussels will make it a **political megaphone**. One of the objectives of the “Let Your Heart Be Heard” night will be to **raise funds** to support the parts of our community that need it most. Furthermore, Various Voices Brussels 2026 will **support LGBTQ+** choirs that already exist in countries where our rights are at risk, by helping them travel to Brussels. We will also help local associations to build **LGBTQ+ choirs in countries where they do not yet exist**. By singing together in Brussels as European choirs, we’ll deliver a **powerful message** and a strong signal aimed at countries where our community faces repeated attacks, including Balkan countries, Poland and Hungary. Finally, the festival will **engage with our city**, not only through economic impacts, but more importantly by showcasing Europe’s talent in our venues and public spaces, to the **citizens of Brussels** and local choirs and schools. Furthermore, we will touch hearts and open minds beyond Belgium and beyond Europe through live-streaming, making a long lasting impact going beyond our community.

Brussels is an LGBTQ+ friendly city. The Saint-Jacques district, home of the LGBTQ+ community, is a stone’s throw away from the festival site and is full of buzzing bars and mouth-watering restaurants. Large-scale LGBTQ+ events are supported by public authorities. The Pride welcomes around 100,000 people, 40% of whom come from abroad. The night scene is eclectic and creative, and offers parties for all the spectrum of LGBTQ+ people.

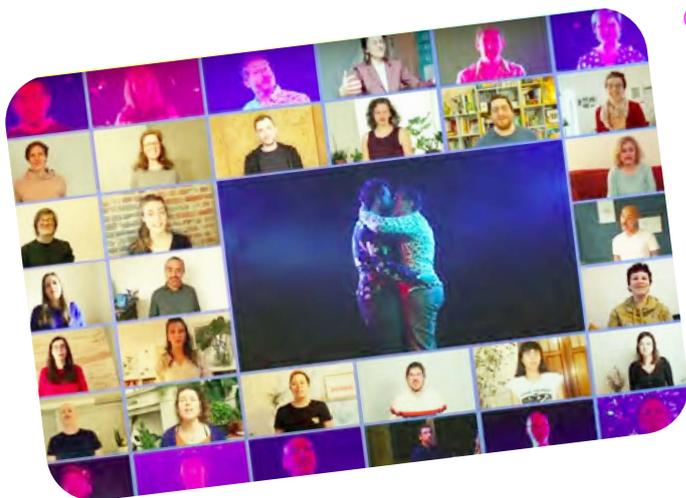


So, where is the best place for the next festival? In Brussels, of course! Let’s work together to create the most amazing festival ever! Sing Out Brussels! (The Fabulous Queer Choir) cannot wait to welcome you to the vibrant, quirky heart of Europe, and help you discover the fabulous welcome and warmth of its residents!

# BE OUR GUESTS



Sing Out Brussels (The Fabulous Queer Choir) embodies Brussels' diversity. The choir brings together 60 singers, twenty nationalities and thirteen different (mother-tongue) languages. One of the primary objectives of our choir is leading internationally scaled projects, as an ambassador for Brussels. In 2019, we hosted the General Assembly of Legato (with a concert of the Zauberflöten from Cologne and the Homonics from Dublin), and we organized a joint concert with London's Pink Singers (bringing together the oldest and youngest LGBTQ+ choirs in Europe).



## Coordinators

Marina Belotti (she/her) & Christophe Cordier (he/him) met years ago at Tapalanote, a LGBTQ+ choir of the Brussels Gay Sports association, where they learned a lot about choir management, event planning and fundraising. In 2018, both co-founded Sing Out Brussels!, with the organisation of Various Voices 2026 in Brussels already in mind. Through his job in political communication, Christophe has a large network in Brussels and has experience in managing such large projects. He has been involved in the LGBTQ+ community for 20 years. Marina is a feminist and queer activist, with a strong interest in education, who works inside the EU 'bubble'. She will connect our team with the European institutions and take care of our budget.

## Artistic director

Sébastien Jurczys (he/him) will be directing our fabulous festival shows, conducting the LGBTQ+ pop orchestra we'll create for the festival, and compose the musical piece "Let Your Heart Be Heard", to be performed by all the participants. Sébastien is a pianist, musical director, arranger and conductor. He specializes in music for theatre and created his first musical shows in 2011. Sébastien has arranged a number of songs for Sing Out Brussels! and performed with the choir as the pianist for a show with LaDiva Live, drag singer and godmother of the choir.

## Brussels tourism board - [visit.brussels](https://www.visit.brussels)

Margaux Huvelle (she/her) works for the Convention Bureau as a Business Development Expert and Frédéric Boutry (he/him) is in charge of the LGBTQ+ tourism strategy.

## Professional Congress Organizer (PCO) - [MCI](https://www.mci.be)

Dorothee Flament (she/her) will manage the attendees' registration and check-in, and assist our team with financial services (preparing a detailed budget, producing financial reports, negotiating best contracts with providers and hotels, allowing immediate cost savings for attendees and organizers).



Partnerships for the goals



## Bidding team members

**Robbie Blake (he/him)** is the coordinator of our choir's Creative Team, and a master in brainstorming and engaging volunteers. He will work on the artistic side of the festival, especially the collective work with Legato choir members.

**Emily Allison (she/her)** is a jazz musician and composer. Conductor of Sing Out Brussels!, she recently released her album "Songs of old", with her own band. Emily will work closely with Sébastien on the artistic projects of the festival.

**Simon Finn (he/him)** is an award-winning songwriter and composer. He wrote the song "In These Heels", which will be performed during the festival. Simon will work with our artistic director to write an original musical piece for Various Voices Brussels 2026.

**Marie Delaby (she/her)** is Product Manager at Universal Music Belgium. She previously worked in concert productions and festivals. Her experience in management, event production, artistic direction, marketing and media will clearly benefit the festival.

**Walid Aissaoui (he/him)** will work on planning the festival parties. Where there's a party, you will be sure to find him, who likes to enjoy friendly and queer spaces. As an experienced Brussels tour guide, he will help everyone discover its most surprising corners.

**Julie Loriaux (she/her)** will be our link with Brussels' LGBTQ+ nightlife. In Brussels she's famous for the "Cuir as folk" parties where she performs as a drag king - she knows how to wake up an audience! Julie is a former Legato board member.

**Valeria Ciccarello (she/her)** obtained her master in cultural management in Brussels. She works as news media and archives coordinator for the Queen Elisabeth Competition and coordinates communications in our choir.

**Damien Safie (he/him)** is an independent graphic designer as well as teacher of graphic design in Brussels. Damien created the graphic identity and visual materials for our choir. For this bid, he created the festival logo, slogan and graphic identity.

**Julie Janssens (she/her)** is a professional filmmaker. In our choir, she produces teasers and videos telling our stories. For this bid, she wrote the script of the presentation video of the festival.

**Rubén Avila (they/them)** is our choreographer but is above all an expert in queer activism, specialising in European advocacy work and research focused on LGBTQ+ youth and inclusive education.

**Kelci Wilford (she/her)** is a Board member of our choir, and she leads the project "Listen, care and share", to improve the inclusivity of our group and to implement non-violent communication.

**Pedro Gras (he/him)** teaches Spanish Language and Linguistics at Antwerp University. In our choir, he is mainly known for writing scripts for our shows. Pedro is also a queer activist and for Various Voices 2026, he will work on diversity and openness.

**Joan Lanfranco Pari (he/him)** has 10 years of experience working in European Union communications. Besides his fascination for cats, he is also a Board member of Sing Out Brussels! and an environmental activist.

**Josephine Landgraf (she/her)** has a background in marketing and project management, but after recent life changes, she decided to join the team to build a more inclusive and sustainable festival.

**Thomas Vilquin (he/him)** is a teacher at the Architecture Faculty La Cambre-Horta ULB and, in this context, works for sustainability. In his free time, Thomas is a scriptwriter (having collaborated on "la theorie du Y", a queer Belgian webseries).



# BE HEARD

For the festival, we plan on making the most of Belgian culture and clichés, mixing them with our LGBTQ+ culture, all the while ensuring the widest possible dissemination of our message by taking advantage of being in the EU capital. We have many surprises in store, including huge open-air events, that will mix choirs and bring tears of joy and emotion.

In addition to the 30-minute concert presented by each choir in one of our six halls, we'll suggest that your choir registers to perform during some of the six main events we plan. They will be built around the outcome of the virtual choir meetings attended by all the volunteering choirs involved in the creative process from 2024 to 2026. Will you watch them from the audience or will you perform on stage? It's up to you!



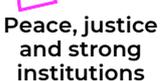
SQUARE - Brussels Convention Center and Palais des Beaux-Arts (BOZAR), the main festival venues, are located in downtown Brussels and connected via an underground corridor. Square will be the place to register, eat, meet, rehearse and party. We have enough halls to host 120 participating choirs. Bozar - Salle H. Leboeuf: 2100 seats/Salle M: 480 seats/Studio: 210 seats- Square -Gold Hall: 1200 seats/Copper Hall: 500 seats/Silver Hall: 300 seats.



**1. The Opening Ceremony** (Wednesday: BOZAR) will introduce the festival and its goals in a fun way. We'll celebrate the joy of being together again. You'll discover **Belgian culture**, Belgian artists and Belgian LGBTQ+ choirs. The ceremony will be the "first time on stage" for the **LGBTQ+ pop orchestra** we intend to set up for the festival.

The main indoor events of the festival will take place at BOZAR - Brussels' premier concert hall - in the Henry Le Boeuf Hall, designed by the famous Belgian architect Victor Horta and regarded as one of the five best concert halls in the world for its acoustic qualities. These events will be live-streamed in the Gold Hall of SQUARE to allow the largest audience possible.

**2. Kings and Queens of Belgium.** (Thursday: Brussels Grand Place) Victor Hugo said it's the most beautiful square in the world - this UNESCO World Heritage site will host our first outdoor event. Belgium is a kingdom, but we also want to make it a Queerdom. Let's hit the stage and wake up our inner (drag) kings and queens to create a royal show! We will work together with the team of Cabaret Mademoiselle (a Brussels cabaret where you can meet freaks, queens, creatures and fatal beauties) in association with Genres Pluriels which will organize Drag King and Drag Queen workshops. After the show, Various Voices will make Brussels sing during a **giant LGBTQ+ friendly karaoke!**

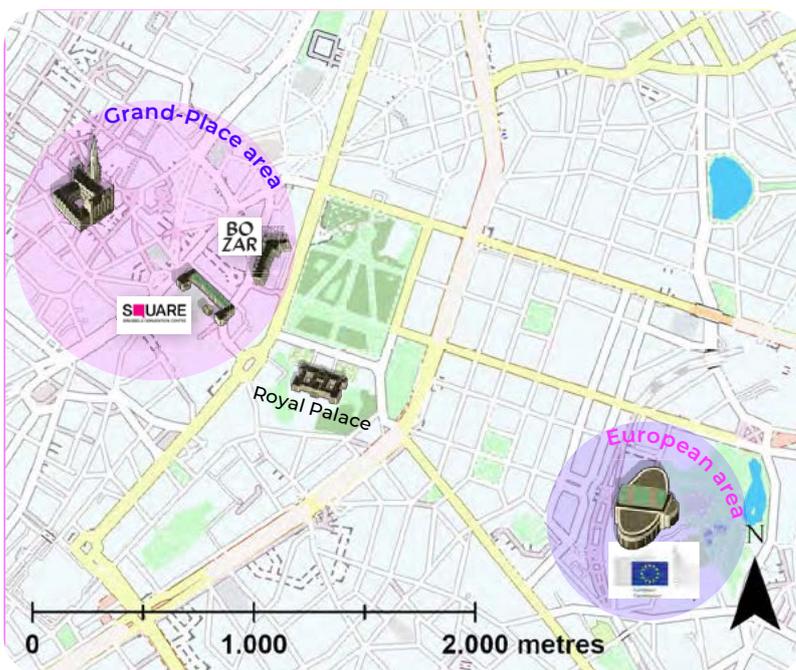


Partnerships for the goals

3. **“The Treachery of Images”** (Friday: BOZAR) is the title of a famous painting by Belgian surrealist artist René Magritte (of “ceci n’est pas un pipe” fame: it looks like a pipe, but it’s not actually a pipe). This is a surrealist painting, and, trust us, Belgium is a surreal country! During this event, built around the visual identity of Magritte (bowler hats, apples, chess pieces...), choirs will perform songs inviting the audience to see beyond appearances.

Parties will take place every evening at Square: Welcome party (Wednesday), Kings and Queens Party (Thursday), Surrealist party (Friday), Various Voices Brussels 2026 Main Party (Saturday). This last party will be open to the public (not only the festival participants).

4. **“Let Your Heart Be Heard”** (European Quarter - Saturday) will combine political activism, fundraising and choral singing:



- A **giant concert** organized in front of the European Parliament to illustrate our history and the fight for our rights by honoring our LGBTQ+ choirs together with artists from different backgrounds.
- **“Let Your Heart Be Heard” world premiere.** Written and composed by Sébastien Jurczys and Simon Finn, this lively, fun and empowering choral work will not only bring us all together physically, but will embody the joy of singing together and our shared dreams.
- **“In These Heels”** - Ten years after the shooting in an Orlando LGBTQ+ nightclub, we’ll pay tribute to the victims with this song written in response by Simon Finn, which will be sung by all the festival participants (Listen to the song, performed by Sing Out Brussels and LaDiva Live).
- A **political event** focused on education, organized in collaboration LGBTQ+ Intergroup of the European Parliament.

Thematic and unusual tours of Brussels will be organised everyday (Chocolate Tour, Art Nouveau Tour, Comics Tour, Street Art Tour, Green Tour, Beer tour, European tour, Rainbow tour and more)



5. **“Various Voices & the city”** (free street concerts - Everyday) will make our choirs sing on different stages in Brussels’ city center and public parks, in order to spread our message to the population of Brussels. Concerts will also be organized for school audiences, as well as workshops open to the public involving the conductors of our choirs.

6. **The Closing Ceremony** (Sunday: BOZAR) to say goodbye and to pass the baton to the choir organizing the Various Voices 2030 festival.

# BE STRONGER

Some of the festival main goals are European progress, awareness-raising, advocacy and openness. We have chosen four strong partners based on their skills to help us reach each of these goals.

## European institutions – European progress partners

To ensure we make the festival a **political megaphone**, we will **collaborate with the European institutions**. Of course, they cannot support the bid of one European city over another. However we had meetings with potential European stakeholders to get information about possible support.

**Charles Michel: European Council president:** “The President is **enthusiastic** about your candidacy (...) Brussels would be a very suitable venue for the festival, given its **international and dynamic character**. And as a Belgian, Charles Michel is proud to see his country’s unwavering commitment to LGBTQ+ rights. He would be open to some participation in your events if your application is accepted”. [Read his complete message.](#)

**Ana-Maria Huth: project manager** on behalf of the **European Parliament:** “Parliament’s administration cannot commit itself for a city over another one in a situation of a competition (...) However, once the selection has been decided favouring Brussels, we are **happy to support you**, so please keep us informed about the results”. The help could comprise financial support, support in communications, the co-organisation of parts of the event or a logistical back-up. [Read her complete message.](#)

**Miguel Chambel: coordinator of the LGBTI Intergroup, European Parliament,** monitors LGBTQ+ rights in EU Member States and beyond, and works with **civil society groups** to relay their concerns at the **European level**. “I would be the right person to ask if the Bidding Team is seeking cooperation with any of the Members of the intergroup actively engaged in key reports relating to LGBTQ+ issues, as well as put you in touch with local LGBTQ+ organisations. I would be **more than happy to establish the links** when the time comes”. [Read the email exchange.](#)

## Singing Brussels (BOZAR) - awareness-raising partner

Singing Brussels works with **Brussels schools** to involve children, helps them discover the **joy of singing** and intends to build a more inclusive society, **breaking down the walls** that prevent certain audiences from accessing culture.

**Jérôme Giersé, music director at BOZAR** wrote : “Just like we do, Various Voices Brussels 2026 will work on the topics of education and inclusivity, regarding music and diversity. Our Singing Brussels Team will **share their experience** regarding the kind of events Various Voices will purpose. We are also able to **connect them with other choirs** in Brussels and Belgium, and will help them to **build pedagogic projects** with schools. The Bidding team wants to involve the citizens of Brussels in the festival, not only as spectators, but also as actors, and this is totally in line with our mission.” [Read the full support letter.](#)



Quality Education



Gender Equality



Reduced Inequalities



Sustainable cities and communities



Peace, justice and strong institutions



Partnerships for the goals



## IGLYO - advocacy partner

Based in Brussels, IGLYO (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex Youth & Student Organisation) is the largest LGBTQ+ youth and student network globally, with over 110 members in 41 countries. IGLYO strives to ensure the voices and experiences of LGBTQ+ young people are present and heard by decision makers at European and international levels; and builds the confidence, skills and experience of LGBTQ+ youth.

Euan Platt, Executive Director of IGLYO, wrote: “We believe activism, art and culture are a perfect match. Therefore, we are convinced that Various Voices and its philosophy (activism, inclusivity and sharing through music and singing) could help make the world a better place for all the LGBTQ+ young people with whom we work”. Read the full support letter.



### IGLYO would be delighted to help the bidding team of Various Voices by:

- Connecting them with other LGBTQ+ associations in the Council of Europe countries, as the bidding team plans to support new choirs in some of these countries.
- Help the bidding team to select the associations they will support by collecting funds during a fundraising event planned during the festival.
- Putting the bidding team in touch with European Institutions and other key European partners and organisations to plan a political event during the festival.

## Brussels RainbowHouse - openness partner

The Brussels RainbowHouse provides a home to some sixty French- and Dutch-speaking LGBTQ+ organizations, from culture, sports and social endeavours: “Sing Out Brussels!, as one of our member organisations, demonstrates that advocacy and campaigning can take place through various channels. Indeed, culture remains a very efficient manner of propagation. Engaging with society through welcoming networks and playful activities enables us to break the isolation of individuals. The reinforcement of identities by means of the valorization of LGBTQ+ art and culture results in an awakening of the public at large”. Read the support letter.

### The Brussels RainbowHouse will help us:

- By engaging up to 150 volunteers for the festival, coming from the LGBTQ+ associations network in Brussels, and by training these volunteers regarding our inclusivity priority.
- By finding homestay accommodation in their LGBTQ+ network for festival attendees.
- By providing their resources and advising us on how to make the festival inclusive.



# BE TOGETHER

Community spirit is a part of the Sing Out Brussels! values. That's why we are committed to make Various Voices Brussels 2026 financially accessible. To reach this goal, we will maximise our revenues from sponsorship and public grants. Indeed, since our foundation, all the projects of Sing Out Brussels! have been financially supported by public authorities who know and trust us. Grants and sponsorship will contribute to our strong Support Programme for choirs facing economic or LGBTQ+ rights struggles in their countries.

## Public grants

**European Union** funds publishes annual calls for projects. We are capable of applying their rigorous financial rules to make the best out of them, targeting both the “Creative Europe” funds, related to cultural projects and the equality policy funds. In our vision, the EU could support the European highlight “Let your heart be heard” and fund the participation and travel of choirs from countries with a low Rainbow & HDI Index. In addition, and out of budget, the EU could also support the twinning of Legato choirs before the festival, to promote the festival visibility through fundraising concerts in favor of the “Support Program”.

**Equal.brussels**, the regional department in charge of equality affairs, is a steady supporter of Sing Out Brussels!. Since the festival involves Brussels citizens in all their diversity, **Nawal Ben Hamou, Secretary of State in charge of Equality**, supports our bid: “Hosting in Brussels more than 3500 singers coming from a lot of different European countries would be an honour and a time for a political statement to demonstrate the openness of the Brussels-Capital Region, promote inclusivity and make the Brussels citizens come together to share music and love, regardless of sexual orientation or gender”. Read here the full support letter

**The Francophone and the Dutch Communities in Brussels**, steady funders of Sing Out Brussels!, publish every year calls for proposals to allocate grants to support Culture (especially music and festivals) and Equality.

**The Wallonie-Brussels Federation**, grants subsidies for projects devoted

to Culture and Brussels promotion.

**Brussels' Municipality** supports our bid. Grants are available within the framework of equality, culture and citizen participation.

**Ixelles Municipality (European Quarter)** issues grants within the framework of citizen participation, through its equal opportunities policy.

**Image de Bruxelles** grants subsidies to events that contribute to the promotion of the national and international image of the Brussels-Capital Region.

**The Brussels Tourism Office, visit.brussels** supports our project through its **“Support programme”** that allowed us a budget used to finalize this bid. As an Ambassador for Brussels, this support will allow us to obtain various advantages.

**The Loterie Nationale** is certainly the institution with the largest cash-flow capacity. We are planning to develop a strong partnership with this institution and discuss with them all options: from grants to sponsorship, and from advertising to donations.

**The Fondation Roi Baudouin** will be involved as the festival patron or as funder. This actor for change and innovation serves the public interest and increases social cohesion in Belgium and Europe through different programmes (education, culture, non-discrimination or social engagement).



Gender Equality



Reduced Inequalities



Sustainable cities and communities



Responsible consumption and production



## Support program

We plan to be able to **fully support up to 180 choristers**, equivalent to 5% of total participants, catering for more than three times the number of free participants supported in 2018. This provision should allow the festival to host new choirs from disadvantaged countries which could emerge in the next 5 years.

The support program will be **based on the tier system** set by the Legato Board

- Tier 1: Countries in Legato Group 1 without financial support
- Tier 2: Countries in Legato Group 2 with light support = no choir fee + reduced participant fee + lodging
- Tier 3: Countries in Legato Group 3 with full support = no fees + full travel board + lodging + daily subsistence allowance.

Finally, as part of the preparation for the festival, **the Bidding Team will share good practices** with the member choirs of Legato in order to encourage them to set up financial support mechanisms for their members.

Since its creation, Sing Out Brussels! has been a **financially inclusive choir**. Our offer in terms of annual subscription thus allows choristers to benefit from a reduction of 50% upon request. We have also set up a “Fab Fund” funded by various revenues (sale of drinks and pastries during concerts, sales of greeting cards, fundraising operations, etc.). The purpose of this fund is to reduce the travel costs of choir singers who have limited means to attend the Various Voices festival. As part of our participation in the World Choir Games 2021, the choir also intervened financially to reduce the participation costs of all the singers.



## Our sponsors

MUSIC CITY

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visit.brussels

# BE BRUSSELS

Brussels is a city of congresses, industry fairs and lobby events linked to international institutions, and also a city of intense tourism activity. As a way out of the pandemic crisis, local economic operators are expecting from the Brussels tourism Board, [visit.brussels](http://visit.brussels), investments in attracting more international and diverse events. Various Voices 2026 is therefore a unique opportunity to enlarge Brussels' touristic identity by welcoming diversity and engaging for equality.

**Philippe Close, Brussels city mayor,** wrote: "Brussels would be honoured to host the festival. I'm very proud of Brussels' dynamic LGBTQ+ community that greatly contributes to the city centre's prosperity with numerous bars, restaurants, shops and cultural events. The city is always very keen to support the community's projects. For instance, our city hall and Grand-Place, the most beautiful square in the world, always display rainbow flags during Pride". [Read the support letter](#)

**Rudi Vervoort, Brussels' Region minister-president** wrote: "Brussels is a city where things are decided. Brussels is a city of influence. Ideas move forward and projects become reality here. Bringing the Various Voices Festival to our capital therefore spreads the message of diversity and respect to all EU member states and beyond. My government is very committed to equal rights. As an example, we proudly support the Belgian Pride each year as well as more than 50 LGBTQ+ associations, including Sing Out Brussels!" [Read the support letter](#)

## Quantitative economic impact

The festival economic impact to the Brussels region has been calculated with [visit.brussels](http://visit.brussels) through [Event Impact Calculator](#), a software powered by Destinations International in partnership with [European Cities Marketing](#) that measures the economic value of an event and calculates its return on investment to local taxes. The software's parameters are based on data coming from the international events hosted by European cities during the last ten years in the sector of performing arts. The detailed calculation is shown [here](#).

This model estimates the **direct economic impact** at **3.4 million euro** with 2 additional million of indirect/induced sales. The jobs supported by the festival, direct and induced, are estimated at 800 persons or 30 annual FTE. Although the economic impact is not the festival's primary objective, it is a tangible advantage for Brussels. This festival will **bring to the city** an overall **injection of cash flow worth 5.4 million euro**, about **4 times** the festival's budget!

<b>Total Business sales</b>	<b>€ 5 374 306</b>
<b>Total Jobs supported</b>	<b>798</b>
<b>Total Tax Return on investment</b>	<b>€ 970 089</b>
<b>Total Visitor days</b>	<b>15 147</b>



Gender Equality



Decent work and economic growth



Reduced Inequalities



Sustainable cities and communities



Responsible consumption and production



Climate action



Brussels LGBTQ+ economic operators will benefit from the festival, as we will work with [Syndigay](#), [Brussels LGBTQ+ business association](#), who [support this bid](#): “We will work closely with the Bidding Team in different ways that will be further defined once the winning city is announced: sponsoring, advertising on the festival communication supports and onsite, advertising about the festival in our bar and restaurants, collaboration for parties and events, gifts or special offers for the festival-goers etc”. [Read the full support letter](#).

For the [local administrations](#), the estimated return on investment to taxes is worth almost [1 million euros](#). This information allows us to be better prepared to make the case to policymakers to [justify public funds](#)



by citing the economic benefits this festival has for the whole community.



### Qualitative economic impact

The festival will be an opportunity to [promote local artists and community workers](#), on stage or behind the scenes. For example, Various Voices will set up the first ever Brussels LGBTQ+ pop orchestra. It will encourage local LGBTQ+ talents and artistic entrepreneurs to emerge.

The festival will promote Brussels as [an international hub for cultural and artistic entertainment](#), activating the potential of attracting more diverse visitors and festival organizers.

Various Voices will also highlight Brussels' commitment to [equality](#), and position the city on the international scene as one of the more [LGBTQ+-friendly tourism destinations](#).



Finally, the inclusion of Brussels-based choirs in the festival preparation and highlights will be a further step forward in the fight for equality, marking a significant change in the way Brussels citizens see themselves and are encouraged to develop [inclusive attitudes](#).

Promoting local talent and entrepreneurs; increasing international cultural entertainment; raising awareness of diversity; they are all crucial innovation factors, leading to [attracting financial investments](#) and [ensuring economic sustainability](#) for the city in the long term.



# BE ROBUST

We have developed an effective, realistic, robust, and agile budget over 5 scenarios based on the number of choirs and singers registering to the festival: from 95 choirs and 2.700 singers to 130 choirs and 4.200 singers. For the purposes of presenting this bid, our reference budget is the one based on the participation of 120 choirs and 3.900 singers. You will find [here a complete budget](#) (Excel worksheet) and in this chapter a general overview.

VARIOUS VOICES BRUSSELS 2026		
<b>budget- estimate</b>		
Number of participants		3 900
Number of choirs		120
Number of fully funded choirs		18
Number of fully funded participants		180
<b>revenue</b>		
Choir & Participants fees	49%	€ 757 218
Festival sales to choirs & participants	9%	€ 146 910
Advertising	2%	€ 29 600
Sponsors & Patrons	13%	€ 200 000
Grants (local, regional, EU)	24%	€ 370 000
Legato loan & visit.brussels Support Program	3%	€ 40 000
Donations & Fund-Raising	1%	€ 17 500
<b>Total revenue</b>		<b>€ 1 561 228</b>
<b>expenditure</b>		
Concerts venues rental	19%	€ 263 000
Concert venue additional costs	10%	€ 144 250
Other events/cultural activities	13%	€ 185 000
Guests & Artist	8%	€ 116 000
City tours & activities	1%	€ 8 775
Registration & Events Management tools costs	8%	€ 106 107
Choir support program	16%	€ 225 000
Backoffice/Administration	11%	€ 149 900
Marketing	10%	€ 137 370
Legato licence/loan & volunteers party	4%	€ 57 000
<b>total</b>		
<b>Total net expenses</b>		<b>€ 1 392 402</b>
<b>Overall contingency 12%</b>		<b>€ 167 088</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES inc CONTINGENCY</b>		<b>€ 1 559 490</b>
<b>Balance (revenue-expenditure)</b>		<b>€ 1 738</b>

**Various Voices Brussels 2026** will offer sustainable fees adjusted to the reservation date of festival-goers (190 to 250 euros) and choirs (130 to 630 euro for early birds; and 170 to 770 euro for regular), established after the application of an average annual 1,4% inflation rate to the 2018 fees. The festival package includes all the activities planned in the official festival program as well as a whole series of advantages (public transport, accommodation bookings).

This budget is effective in achieving the goal of offering the most sensational Various Voices experience yet. We present a budget worth €1,5 million to offer extraordinary venues, multiple opportunities to hang out, just one step away from affordable accommodation, fabulous parties and entertaining shows.

This budget is realistic in taking a cautious approach to risk management. To address the risk of cancellation of the festival following a catastrophe, or a pandemic, we will set reasonable limits to the personal liability of the legal entity managing the festival. We will insert specific clauses into our suppliers' contracts to protect us from undue payments. The festival fees will include insurance coverage granting a full refund to choirs and participants.

We are comfortable with the risk of major incidents occurring during the festival and impacting the programme because we have decided to associate with:

**The Brussels Tourism Office visit.brussels.** We will make the most of their resources, network and capacity to organise large congresses and to deal with incidents.

**A Professional Congress Organizer (PCO).** It will multiply our ability to design contingency plans in order to minimise the potential effects of major incidents. Our PCO will manage financial services including the preparation of a detailed budget, which will be monitored and constantly updated, managing dedicated bank accounts, processing payments and producing financial

reports, including the final one, three months after the festival ending. Our budget is presented without VAT because the PCO will handle VAT refunds and prepare fiscal plans to minimize tax implications. Through their purchasing department they will negotiate best contracts on the market with vendors and realise immediate upfront cost savings by procuring items, services, and contracts at the best price available. The PCO will act as a consultant on fiscal and legal implications. They will manage the invoice and payments checking.

Should our grant applications be insufficient, we will be notified enough in advance to activate alternative solutions, like the increase of sponsors & patrons income combined with the decrease of the guests budget, and the increase of fundraising activities through the Choirs twinning project.

**This budget is robust about securing funding and setting priority expenditure.** Sing Out Brussels! will carry out promotional and awareness campaigns to encourage all member choirs of Legato to register for the festival, like the out-of-budget “Choirs twinning project”. The more of us there are, the more impact the festival will have, and the more robust its budget will be! The guaranteed revenue (from singers and choirs’ fees; from the Legato loan; and from the visit.brussels support) alone accounts for 52% of total revenue. In addition, the reasonable revenue estimation from public grants accounts for 24% and is expected to be confirmed sufficiently in advance for expenses to be paid. This means that 76% of total revenue is reasonably secured.

Regarding expenditure, our priority goes to the venues, from rental to equipment, and to the guest artists. In addition, a comfortable 12% of contingency on total expenditure will provide a solid guarantee in case of need. Moreover, the budget has been developed with the target of achieving a positive balance between profit and loss.

**This budget is agile because it provides high flexibility to adapt to market changes and technological evolutions.** The budget has been purposely developed over 5 scenarios in order to train ourselves in taking thoughtful decisions to fit diverse circumstances. We see this budget as a “rolling forecast” and will keep reviewing market opportunities and technological evolutions to see if the budget warrants any changes and if it needs altered forecasting to keep the positive balance and get improved results. In a nutshell, this budget can be easily adapted to new situations with only minor modification. If the festival should go totally online in case the pandemic is not over or a new one happens, a bigger adaptation would be required and discussed with Legato, at least six months before the festival dates.



Sustainable cities and communities



Responsible consumption and production



Peace, justice and strong institutions



Partnerships for the goals

# BE EFFECTIVE

Our ambition is to host all the Legato choir members in our city, with a never-before-seen number of singers, to improve the visibility of our LGBTQ+ community and its talents. For the first time in Various Voices' history, the host city of the next festival will be known almost 2 years before the previous one in Bologna. It means we'll have more time to plan our event, and also more time to anticipate the participation of Legato choir members. In order to suit this 5-year perspective, we present a complete Marketing Plan through a planner in pdf here. Here's an overview of our marketing plan and project management.

## Marketing

## Project management

Dec. 2021

The winning city is announced by the Legato Board.

January 2022 → May 2023

Thanks to our partnership with visit.brussels we get a budget to finalise our communication tools. Logo, baseline and graphic chart are ready to be used. We'll start to design offline the festival's website and social media. We'll start drawing up the strategic communication plan for the participants and stakeholders. We'll work closely with our artistic director to start to make concrete our artistic and musical vision. We'll start applying for local authorities' grants to cover the payment of the first instalment for venues; draw up the strategic fundraising plan of activities to take place through 2026, activate contacts with sponsors and patrons and at year-end, apply to EU funds wfor the out-of-budget "Choirs twinning project".

We will provide the backbone of the festival project management through the creation of a new legal entity and the recruitment of the project team. We will set up the project management tools needed for goals setting, progress monitoring, risk management, performance evaluation and budget planning which will provide reliable support for decision-making. We will sign the contract with the PCO; start market prospecting to select the accountancy firm and the registration platform and digital-app; sign the contracts for the venues and pay an annual instalment every year through 2026; and finalize drafting the choirs support program.

June 2023

Various Voices Bologna 2023- The 2026 hosting city will be announced.

July 2023 → December 2023

Various Voices Brussels 2026 website, app and social media will be online to capitalize on the good vibes accumulated during the Bologna Festival. Our communication plan will be ready to regularly provide new contents and arouse the participation of future attendees. We'll implement this plan with media, influencers or advertisers through 2026. With our artistic director, we'll set up the festival pop orchestra. With IGLYO we'll start working closely with countries where we intend to support the creation of new choirs and do so until 2026.

We will finalise the designation of the project team; select and sign the contract with the accountancy firm and the registration platform and digital-app; draft the festival terms and conditions; set the key registration dates; kick-off and implement the project management and evaluation reporting through 2026; set up the merchandising plan (t-shirt, backpacks, etc.) including negotiation with suppliers and agreement on prices.



July 2023 → December 2023

We will start implementing fundraising activities to provide regular income; go on with the search for sponsors & patrons and receive the relevant income; apply for grants to the local, regional and federal authorities and implement them; at year-end, sign the EU grant for the “Choirs twinning project” and receive the pre-financing amount.

We will revise the budget to ensure a realistic cash-flow plan. We'll start searching for host accommodation supported by the Rainbowhouse and go on through 2026; negotiate prices with hotels and hostels through 2025.

2024

We'll involve through 2026 the Legato choir members in the artistic decision-making and plan virtual meetings with chairs and conductors to brainstorm about show topics, repertoire or scripts. We'll identify possible collaborations with Brussels choirs and schools with our partner Singing Brussels. We'll kick-off and implement the communication festival plan addressed to festival-goers (media, app, etc.) and implement it through 2026. We will receive the Legato loan of 30.000€; open the choirs and participants registration and receive the relevant income through 2026; open the festival webshop and receive the relevant income through 2026.

We will monitor the recruitment of volunteers; get the registration platform and the digital-app ready; review the assignments to project team members to cater for the opening of registration; set final fees for participants and choirs; implement the Festival sales plan; finalise the contracts with artists and outdoors venues.

2025

Through 2026, with the Legato choir members and recently created choirs, we'll choose the most relevant songs, share scores, and plan collaborative work between choirs, which will make easier the connection between the singers during the festival. We will finalize the festival program based on the registered choirs. We'll start to involve Brussels choirs and schools. We will receive the fundraising income for the choirs support program and submit the financial report to receive payment of the balance; at year-end, sign the EU grant for the Choirs support program and receive the pre-financing amount.

We will set up the house hosting register and the relevant procedures; sign contracts/agreements with hotels and hostels based on negotiated room-rates; sign agreements and contracts with staff and volunteers, including the volunteer charter through 2026; sign contracts with artists, suppliers, local venues through 2026; set up the relevant agreements for city public transport.

2026

We will run the last fundraising activities and receive the relevant income from sponsors, patrons and ad sales; submit to the EU the financial report of the Choirs Support program to receive payment of the balance amount. Finally, we will deliver the most vibrant, funny and unforgettable Various Voices festival ever!

We'll reimburse to Legato the loan before the festival, and pay the License-fee part-one after the festival; pay the suppliers invoices; pay the remaining balance to the venues; prepare the closure of activities, of festival accounts and the final evaluation report to be delivered by end-2026, together with the payment of the license-fee part-two; activate the dissolution of the legal entity; close the bank account.

# BE COMFORTABLE



After a long day of singing, watching shows or walking in the city (or after a night partying!), everyone will deserve some rest. Luckily, more than **6,000 rooms** are available for attendees **within 15 min walking distance** of our festival venues. More than 20,000 hotel rooms are available in a larger area, all connected through the dense public transport network.

The cost of accommodation can put a strain on the budget of some participants and that's why, with its network and member organizations, Rainbowhouse Brussels will help find **homestay accommodation solutions**, which can also promote cultural connections.

Brussels offers a huge variety of options, including **youth hostels or rental apartments to share**:

	Establishments	Rooms	Capacity
Aparthotels	22	1 151	3 089
Youth/Social Hostels	7	380	1 101
Tourist Residences	96	133	450

## Some ideas

Auberge de jeunesse Jacques Brel - Rue de la Sablonnière 30 - 1000 Bruxelles

Meininger Hotel Gare du Midi - Rue Bara 101 1070 Bruxelles

Meininger Hotel City Center - Quai du Hainaut 33 1080 Bruxelles

In terms of **hotels**, Brussels offers wide choice **to suit all budgets**



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Gender Equality



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Reduced Inequalities



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Sustainable cities and communities



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Responsible consumption and production

Ranking (stars)	Hotels	% Hotels	Capacity (beds)	% Capacity
*	9	4,33%	628	1,63%
**	32	15,38%	2 026	5,26%
***	78	37,50%	11 154	28,93%
****	57	27,40%	18 760	48,67%
*****	12	5,77%	3 898	10,11%
non-ranked	20	9,62%	2 081	5,40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>38 544</b>	<b>100%</b>

Here are some examples of hotels we recommend: they are **close to the Festival venues**, they give top **priority to welcoming LGBTQ+ people**, have **easy access** for people with disabilities, **are inexpensive** and offer **high standards** in terms of **sustainability**.

Jam Hotel – 132 Chaussée de Charleroi – 1060 Brussels (88 rooms)

The Hygge – Rue des Drapiers 31-33 1050 Ixelles – Belgium (50 rooms)

Qbic Brussels – Rue Paul Spaak 15 1000 Brussel (148 rooms)

Hotel Zoom – rue de la Concorde 59 – 1000 Brussels (37 rooms)

Hotel Le Berger – Rue du Berger 1050 Brussels (66 rooms)

Hotel Aqua – Rue de Stassart, 43 – 1050 Brussels (97 rooms)

Hotel Le Jardin Secret – 24 rue du Berger – 1050 Brussels (35 rooms)

NH Brussels Bloom – Rue Royale, 250 - 1210 Bruxelles (305 rooms)



### Best rates and conditions for the festival attendees

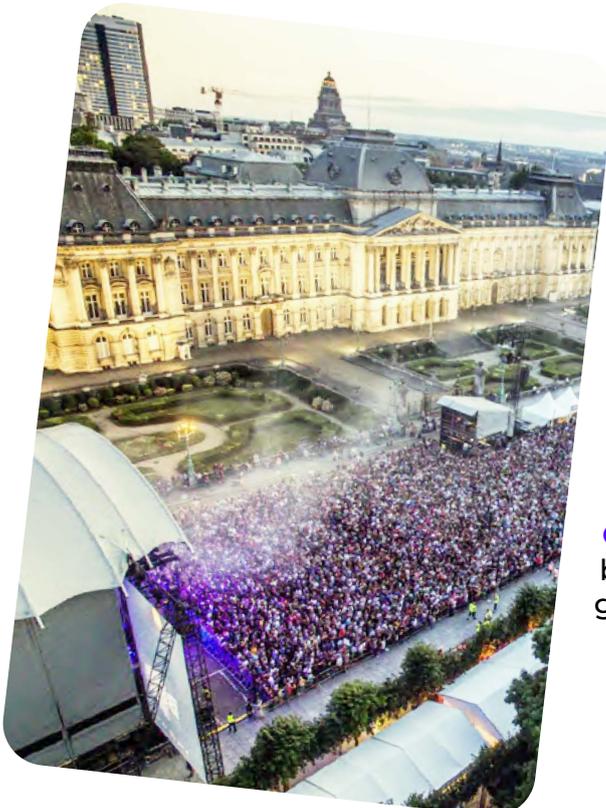
**Our PCO**, through their very close cooperation with major hotel chains, will negotiate competitive and attractive room rates for all our delegates. This will give us the **best rates and conditions**, generate additional income and stimulate early bookings, **without any financial risk**.

She will coordinate the allocation of hotel rooms to individual participants and/or groups, the payments, the management of confirmations and any modifications:

**Individual bookings:** homestay accommodation/hotel registration and travel arrangements for individuals will be offered on the Various Voices Brussels 2026 website, together with the festival registration. A participant can check availability and choose a preferred hotel, select the room type and set arrival and departure dates. The system will also show costs and any reservations fees. Rooms will be allocated on a “first come, first served” basis according to availability.

**Group bookings:** a single booking for at least 5 rooms reserved together for the same booking period, whether payment for the booking is to be made in one payment or each booked guest intends to pay separately. If choirs require this type of block booking, our PCO will secure the amount of required rooms by sending a Hotel Booking Contract.

**On-site support:** a dedicated accommodation desk will be set up at the event and our PCO team will support the guests.



# BE SUSTAINABLE

When you join the festival, you will be one amazing voice among almost 4 000! We welcome everyone but recognise the environmental impact of this and aim to keep it to a minimum. The event will be as sustainable as possible, which means the festival will have a positive impact on people, planet and profit, including our LGBTQ+ community.

Various Voices Brussels 2026 will positively impact **people, planet and profit** through :

**Sustainability:** efficient waste management, use of biodegradable materials, an effort to limit paper use, partnership with public transportation companies.

**Inclusivity:** we'll create an inclusive and accessible setting for all and will enhance everyone's experience, including those with particular needs.

**Social legacy:** by delivering strong political messages, the effects of which will be monitored, by changing the mindsets of Brussels' citizens, by creating new LGBTQ+ choirs or by creating a forum for the exchange of ideas and best practices.

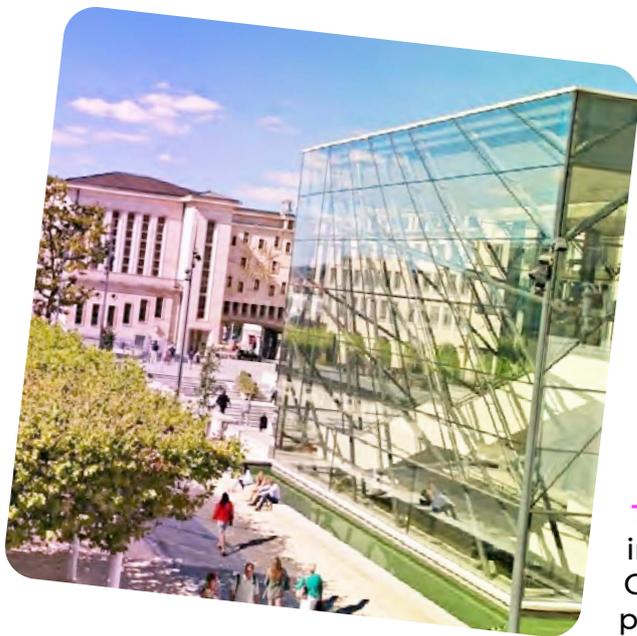
## Goal 1: To reduce the festival environmental impact:

**Our main venue SQUARE** is certified ISO 20121, an industry standard for sustainable events management and was awarded with an Ecodynamic Label. This includes:

- Optimising consumption with sustainable energy (Use of green electricity from sustainable sources, smart building, reduce digital energy consumption)
- Waste management (reducing, sorting and recycling of waste, aiming for zero single-use plastic and waste)
- Reduction of water consumption (Investing in infrastructure to reduce water consumption, using rainwater for green areas)
- Contributing to preserving biodiversity (Use of ecological cleaning products, avoiding chemicals, limiting the amount of cleaning products and water, installed beehives on the roof).

**The Various Voices Brussels 2026 Village** will be located in Mont des Arts Park, where the entrance to the SQUARE Convention Center is located. During the festival, the park will host food trucks selling sustainable food (vegan, organic, Belgian-sourced), all offering festival-goers a varied choice.

**The Festival Welcome Pack:** We will provide festival-goers with sustainable, ethical and fair-trade eco-gadgets upon pre-order only, like fabulous T-shirts or bags, at fair prices. We will offer local products (chocolates, cookies, beer, made by Brussels artisans), vouchers for local and LGBTQ+ friendly businesses and a glass flask that they can fill at the water fountains scattered around the festival site.



Reduced Inequalities



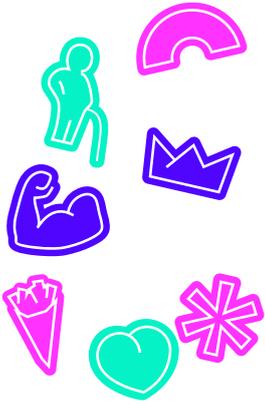
Sustainable cities and communities



Responsible consumption and production



Climate action



**Festival Communications:** In order to limit paper production, we will make maximum use of digital tools. A mobile application made available to festival-goers will concentrate all useful information. Registering will also be done digitally. Tickets and concert programs will also be available in digital format. Communication media (sponsorship banners for example) will be made from renewable materials.

**The festival parties:** we will use reusable cups. We will offer festival-goers a choice of locally produced drinks.

**Outdoor events:** on all outdoor sites, an equivalent sustainability policy will be set. We also will distribute noise-canceling headphones and earplugs.

## Goal 2: To offset the festival carbon footprint:

- We will carry out **an audit to quantify the festival emissions** to be offset, including energy consumption, catering or equipment like paper, carpet, advertising banners, technical equipment. Through 2026 the audit will be carried out internally by visit.brussels. Currently they collaborate with companies like [www.21solutions.eu](http://www.21solutions.eu) or [www.co2logic.com](http://www.co2logic.com).

- visit.brussels will assist us in **choosing the projects to finance**. These could be environmental projects in southern countries or in the Brussels Region (eg: solar panels on schools, development of green spaces, etc.). At this stage we have **a preference for Brussels projects** as this reinforces the economic impact of the festival on the city and that it allows us to **engage more with the city**.

- We will focus on **awareness and engagement of festival-goers** by encouraging them to reduce and offset their own travel emissions, and by offering them to pay a supplement **to offset the festival emissions**. If necessary, the festival budget will provide additional support. Given the constant evolution of these compensation methods, it is difficult to budget for this now but we will do so if our application is successful.



# BE PART OF IT

Access to Brussels is very easy given its position in the heart of Europe. Did you know that for distances of less than 700 km, the train is faster than the plane, while emitting less than half the amount of carbon?

## High speed train

An extensive **high speed train network** is available to reach Brussels:

- More than **60 million** Europeans can reach Brussels in less than 2 hours
- **Thalys** (Paris, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Cologne,...) / **Eurostar** (Amsterdam, London) / **Deutsche Bahn** Intercity and Eurocity Trains (ICE): Cologne, Frankfurt (direct); Berlin, Hamburg, Munich, Amsterdam, Zurich...) / **SNCF TGV** (south of France, Barcelona)
- By 2026, Brussels will be at the center of an extensive network of European **night trains**.
- The main point of arrival for high speed trains is Bruxelles Midi Station, 2 kms away from **Bruxelles Central Station**. Trains connect Bruxelles Midi with Bruxelles Central every 5 minutes (3 minute walk from SQUARE, main location of the festival)



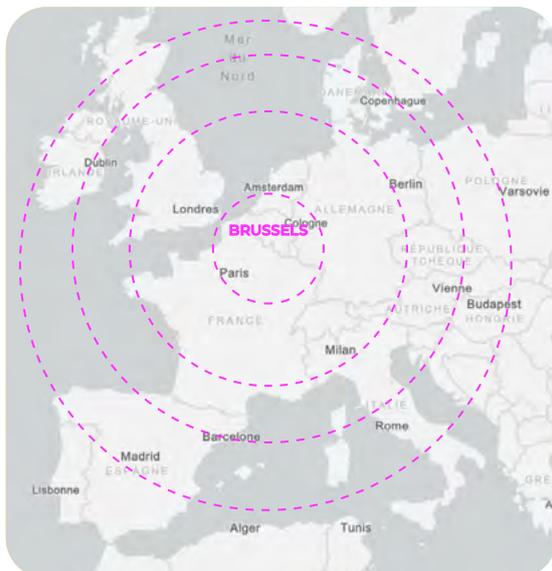
## Intercity buses

Buses are also an **inexpensive and accessible** option, e.g Flixbus (Paris, Strasbourg, Amsterdam, Cologne, Karlsruhe, Munich...). If you're coming from a close country, **car sharing** options will be available on the registration festival website.

## Only if you have no other solutions than travelling by air

We recommend **Brussels Airlines**, the Belgian national company, rather than a low cost company.

- Brussels Airlines contributes to the **economic development of Belgium**.
- Mieke Desbonnets, Head of Corporate Sales Belgium, wrote : "Brussels Airlines will be delighted to serve as an official carrier and extend **special discounted rates** to the delegates and guests". Read the [Brussels Airlines support letter](#).
- **Brussels Airlines offers 54 European destinations**, including all the European capitals and main cities (Madrid, Bologne, Krakow, Lisbon, Edinburgh...), and some US destinations (New York, Washington, Atlanta...).
- Brussels Airport is located 14 km from the city center, which can be reached by train (15 min to Brussels Central), bus or taxi.



Gender Equality



Reduced Inequalities



Sustainable cities and communities



Climate action



## Moving around the city is also really easy.

- **Brussels is a walkable city.** Our venues SQUARE and BOZAR, and our outdoors events, are located in the historical center, well served by public transport.
- **Brussels public transport company (STIB)** offers suitable prices for everyone (trip ticket, 5 days tickets, 10 trips ticket) and a big network (metro, train, tram and bus). A Festival Pass will be available at a special price giving unlimited access to the entire network.
- **Villo / Billy Bike / Lime** : Shared bicycle services

## Accessibility is not only about transportation.

Our team will work on **inclusivity**, which means creating an inclusive and accessible setting for all and working to enhance everyone's experience, no matter their gender, language, age, disability or family life . That's why:

- The participating choirs and singers will sign a **charter** including guidelines to ensure **a safe, friendly and comfortable environment** during the festival.
- Our communication tools (website, registration documents, festival program...) will use **at least 7 languages**: German, English, Dutch, French, Spanish, Italian and Polish. Audio translations will be used during the main shows. Communication tools will be available in braille onsite.
- The festival will be **gender neutral**. We will not ask festival-goers to indicate their gender when registering, but, if they wish, they can communicate which pronouns they would like us to address them by. These pronouns will be indicated on their identification badge. The venues will be made gender neutral (toilets, etc.).
- Our stakeholders, workers and volunteers, including security guards, will be trained to welcome and inform people onsite in a **LGBTQ+-friendly way**.
- All rooms of our main venue SQUARE are **accessible**. The BOZAR building is easily accessible from SQUARE via the underground corridor. As an historic listed building, it offers fewer facilities for people with reduced mobility to get around, but elevators are available and festival volunteers will do their utmost to accompany people with reduced mobility on their travels, on stage or behind the scenes. Special attention will be paid to **easy access to sites and stages** of decentralized events
- We will offer **services for families** (nursery for festival-goers who come with their children, free access to the festival for children under 12, rest areas)
- The attendees' **health is our priority**. Our team and venues will maintain protective and hygiene measures in case the pandemic is not over or another one happens.
- To keep people **safe**, we will hire trained security personnel, ensure lighting around the festival site, and install clear signage.
- Moments of conviviality and discussion will be organized for our **sub-communities**, in order to offer them a more intimate, calm and secure meeting space.
- For those who can't attend the festival in real life, **live-streaming** will be available.

# BE HEARD ON AND ON

We all know in advance that Various Voices is a fabulous experience. But each edition is so frustrating because it lasts only 5 days and time flies by when we have fun! When Various Voices Brussels 2026 is over, its spirit will continue to shine for a long time by:

**Delivering a strong political message, the effects of which will be monitored.** Various Voices Brussels 2026 will be a political megaphone. Our goal is to deliver a message made up of several demands in terms of LGBTQ+ rights and inclusive education. After the festival, we'll work to ensure our hearts have been heard and followed by concrete decisions.

**Building strong links between our choirs.** All the work that will be carried out before the festival (twinning of choirs, collaborative work to prepare the shows) will make it possible to build solid links between the participating choirs. These links will be a solid basis for the next editions of the festival and are intended to continue into the future.

**Creating new LGBTQ+ choirs.** Our team will support the creation of new LGBTQ+ choirs in countries where our rights are challenged. As the "godparent" of these choirs, we will continue to follow their work after the festival. We'll work with the Various Voices 2030's team to make sure these choirs will be able to participate in the following festival.

**Changing the mindsets of Brussels citizens.** The festival will encourage volunteer and citizen engagement through fundraising events, calls and training for volunteers, music and singing collaborations with local choirs and schools, promotion campaigns, media and openness to the public audience. Our goal is to act in an educative way to change attitudes. Various Voices Brussels 2026 will live on through all this educational work and these collaborations which will be consolidated after the festival. Our fundraising during the festival will support international and local educational projects.

**Increasing the level of inclusivity standards.** Brussels tourism policies are well-tailored to welcoming LGBTQ+ visitors. But during the last months working on this bid, we noticed some improvements are still possible to include all the communities within the "LGBTQ+" acronym and to take more account of intersectionality. Our work for this bid and during the next 5 years will impact all our stakeholders and will inspire participant choirs and singers in their own personal lives.

**Creating a forum for the exchange of ideas and best practices** in the field of festival planning and management. We'll work closely with the bidding Teams of future Various Voices festivals to provide support and advice to ensure that our legacy is that the Various Voices festival goes from strength to strength.

**Impacting positively on our city :** an economic impact in terms of quantity (including supporting local commerce) and quality (promoting local talents and artistic entrepreneurs; increasing international cultural and artistic animations...), and an environmental impact, through our carbon offset program and the support it will bring to local environmental projects.



## Sharing

During the pandemic we all discovered the **opportunities of new technologies** to bring our singers together and develop new choir projects online, for example to produce videos. Technology is now affordable and present in every area of our lives. It will help us to prepare the 2026 edition with all the Legato choir members. We are now used to virtual meetings and it has never been so easy to meet even if we are separated by long distances. Creating the festival together will increase the good vibes we'll keep from our Various Voices experience.

Technologies will also help us to **share** our Various Voices Brussels 2026 life, and to **spread** our message. Of course Various Voices is an experience to live in real life, but we want to make our festival visible to everyone in Belgium, in Europe and worldwide. Various Voices Brussels 2026 will be a hybrid event. **The whole festival will be visible online**. Choir concerts and main shows will be live-streamed on the Festival website. To ensure the cost-effectiveness of the festival, this live-streaming will be paid. Thanks to our communication volunteers, **the festival website and social media will reflect the festival's life, day to day**. Reports, pictures, videos, backstage interviews and news will be available from all around the world during and after the festival.

**Professional recordings of all concerts and main shows** will be available for download at a fair fee for the participant choirs, which will be allowed to use them on their own website or social media, bringing this souvenir from Various Voices Brussels 2026 to their audiences. A few weeks after Various Voices Brussels 2026, we'll broadcast the **official aftermovie**, which will stay online on YouTube and on the festival website.

**NB :** Various Voices is about sharing in real life but in case the pandemic is not over or another one happens, we could plan an exclusively online event. It would be a shorter festival, with the same goals, whose content would depend on what we are allowed to produce by our government. In that scenario, we'll need at least 6 months before the festival to adapt the program to this reality.

## Festival Evaluation

**The Rolling Festival Evaluation Plan Management Tool** will be included by the Festival Organisation setup, allowing continuous review of planning and stock-taking of decision-making and funding actions, with the aim of ensuring delivery of the Festival Evaluation Report within 6 months after the festival. The Rolling Evaluation Plan management tool will run from December 2021, when the winning team will be named, until the festival ends and the accounts are closed, thus keeping track of potentially everything occurring during this 5-year period. The Festival Evaluation Report will **provide a comprehensive account of the festival preparation and delivery**, including planning and budgeting, management, participation, outreach, media-coverage, legacy, etc.



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