



## Let's sing together against discrimination!

**Saturday 27 June 2026,  
join the largest choir ever seen in Brussels, at the  
European Various Voices festival!**

### 1) What is Various Voices?

[Various Voices](#) is the European festival of LGBTQI+ choirs. Organised every four years in a different European city by a local choir, it will take place in Brussels from 24 to 28 June 2026. [Sing Out Brussels!](#) is in charge of organising the event. Various Voices is an opportunity to celebrate our fiercé and make our voices and c(h)oeurs heard as the LGBTQI+ community. The festival will bring together around 120 LGBTQI+ choirs and 4,000 choristers from some 20 countries.

Through the event on 27 June, we want to open up the festival to choirs and choristers from outside the LGBTQI+ community, afin order to unite against discrimination.

### 2) The anthem "Let Your Heart Be Heard".

The festival slogan invites participants to make their voices heard from the capital of the European Union, afin order to demand a more open society for LGBTQI+ people, particularly in countries where their rights are under threat.

It's also the title of the festival anthem. This positive, fun and liberating choral piece will not only bring our choirs together physically, but will symbolise the joy of singing together and our shared dreams. The original song was written by Brussels-based songwriter Simon Finn, and will be arranged for four voices (SATB) by Philippe Maniez. The two artists have already collaborated on the song [In these Heels](#), created by Sing Out Brussels!

### 3) Take part in the "Let Your Heart Be Heard" event

On Saturday 27 June 2026, the "Let Your Heart Be Heard" show will take place on the Place de l'Albertine (Mont des Arts), in the open air in Brussels. The climax of this concert, which will see a host of choirs and artists take to the stage, will be the performance of the anthem by all the festival-goers. Our aim is to create the biggest choir ever to perform in Brussels, by inviting all Belgian choir members to sing with us! How many choristers will we manage to bring together? 4000 ? 5000 ? 6000 ? It all depends on you!

Your participation allows us to open up the festival to the Belgian choral community and to involve you in our demands, which are universal.

By singing together, we'll also be showing that Belgium is an open and inclusive country!

#### **4) How do I learn the song?**

If you register for this event, the festival team will provide you with the SATB score and recordings (tutti and separate voices) in September 2025. You can learn the song on your own or rehearse it with the choir of which you are a member.

We would like to organise joint rehearsals during the 2025-2026 season in Brussels, but this remains to be confirmed. In any case, a rehearsal will take place on Saturday 27 June 2026 in the afternoon, before the evening concert.

#### **5) Registration and participation fees**

Registration is individual. Even if your entire choir is taking part, each member must register individually. You can register [using this form](#).

By taking part in this event, you agree to abide by the festival's [code of conduct](#).

Various Voices is a non-profit, entirely self-financing event. Each choir and chorister pays a registration fee. We therefore invite you to support the project by paying an amount of 15 to 20 euros (to be confirmed, no later than September 2025). Your ticket will give you access to the concert and to the rehearsal on 27 June, as well as to the material needed to learn the song.

**6) Is it possible to take part in other events during the festival?** Several concerts and events will be open to the public. Subscribe to our [newsletter](#) to receive information on the opening of sales.

We are also looking for volunteers to welcome and accompany the choirs backstage during the festival. People living in the Brussels region can also offer to act as host families. This is a unique opportunity to experience the festival from the inside and to profit from the event! You can already register your interest [using this form](#). Further information will be provided shortly (list of tasks, timetable, compensation).

The aim of Various Voices is to give visibility to LGBTQI+ choirs that are members of the Legato and Gala Choruses Federations. We are therefore unable to offer your choir a concert during the festival.

**Would you like more information? Contact us: [info@various-voices.be](mailto:info@various-voices.be).**



## Why LGBTQI+ choirs?

The first LGBTQI+ choirs were formed in the 1970s, at a time when the visibility and acceptance of LGBTQI+ people was limited. Not only did they bring together people who shared the same life experiences, they also used music as a means of raising awareness and making demands. In the 1980s, with the HIV/AIDS crisis, these choirs also played a crucial role in providing emotional support and raising funds for research and care. LGBTQI+ choirs exist today for artistic, social and political reasons. Their role goes far beyond the simple pleasure of singing. Here are the main reasons why they exist and why they remain important:

### 1. Creating a safe and inclusive space

LGBTQI+ choirs provide an environment where people can express themselves without fear of discrimination or judgement. For many LGBTQI+ people, society can sometimes be hostile or unwelcoming. These choirs create a space where members can be themselves, share their experiences and feel accepted. It is a place of refuge for many, especially those who may have experienced isolation or marginalisation because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

### 2. Visibility and representation

LGBTQI+ choirs give a voice to a community that is often under-represented or stigmatised. By singing in public places, they contribute to the visibility of the LGBTQI+ community, helping to raise public awareness of its realities and issues. This visibility helps to combat prejudice and promote acceptance and inclusion. What's more, seeing LGBTQI+ choirs on stage can be inspiring for those who don't yet feel ready to fully embrace their identity.

### 3. Activism through art

Historically, music and art in general have been powerful means of promoting social change and getting messages across. LGBTQI+ choirs don't just sing; they often use their music to convey messages of tolerance, equality and social justice. By taking part in human rights events or performing politically committed songs, they play an active role in the fight for the rights of LGBTQI+ people.

#### **4. Strengthening the community**

These choirs help to create and strengthen community links within LGBTQI+ populations. They enable members to meet, support each other, share common experiences and build a sense of belonging. In societies where some LGBTQI+ people may still be marginalised, choirs offer a way to find support and friendships, reducing the isolation some may feel.

#### **5. Combating homophobia and transphobia**

By singing at festivals, cultural events and even at celebrations of LGBTQI+ fierté (such as Pride), LGBTQI+ choirs directly confront stereotypes and prejudices by demonstrating fierté and positive visibility. They help to change attitudes by showing the diversity and cultural richness of the LGBTQI+ community.

#### **6. Celebrating LGBTQI+ identity and culture**

Music is often a way of celebrating and sharing culture. LGBTQI+ choirs often celebrate aspects of LGBTQI+ culture, whether by singing songs written by LGBTQI+ artists, addressing themes relevant to the community or participating in community events. These choirs help to preserve and pass on the history and stories of the LGBTQI+ community.

#### **Why are they still important today?**

Despite advances in LGBTQI+ rights in many countries, discrimination persists, whether in legislation, in society or in more personal situations (family, work, etc.). LGBTQI+ choirs continue to play a crucial role in :

- **Combating marginalisation and exclusion**, particularly in regions where LGBTQI+ rights are still limited or in decline.
- **Create solidarity networks**, where people can support each other in their personal struggles.
- **Promoting a discourse of inclusion**, celebrating the diversity of sexual and gender identities and orientations.

As such, they remain essential to advancing equality and tolerance, while celebrating the diversity and resilience of the LGBTQI+ community.

#### **And in your choir?**

Your participation in the festival can be an opportunity to start a reflexion within your choir itself. What can you do to ensure that the activities are open to a wider audience?

You can find some useful documentation here: <https://galachoruses.org/resource/a-new-harmony-equity-access-and-belonging/>