

# INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES



# MAY 15

## 2021 Theme: Families and New Technologies

The year 1994 was proclaimed as the International Year of Families by the United Nations. This was a response to changing social and economic structures, which have affected and still affect the structure and stability of family units in many regions of the globe. The International Day of Families, on May 15, is an occasion to reflect on the work started during 1994 and to celebrate the importance of families, people, societies and cultures around the world. It has been held every year since 1995.

*Although families all over the world have transformed greatly over the past decades in terms of their structure and as a result of global trends and demographic changes, the United Nations still recognizes the family as the basic unit of society. The International Day of Families provides an opportunity to promote awareness of issues relating to families and to increase knowledge of the social, economic and demographic processes affecting them. It has inspired a series of awareness-raising events, including national family days. In many countries, this day is an opportunity to highlight different areas of interest and importance to families. The International Day of Families is observed on the 15th of May every year.*

Families have a unique role in ensuring health and well-being of children. Parents can improve children's health outcomes by providing emotional support, ensuring preventive and sick healthcare visits, including timely immunizations and proper treatment in times of illness.

Following up on the theme of the 59th session of the Commission for Social Development: "Socially just transition towards sustainable development: the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all" the 2021 observance of the International Day of Families focuses on the impacts of new technologies on the well-being of families.

Megatrends, including new technologies, demographic shifts, rapid urbanization, and migration trends, as well as climate change, have been dramatically shaping our world.

The prolonged COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of digital technologies for work, education and communication. The pandemic has accelerated technological changes that had already been under way both in society and at work, including the expanded use of digital platforms and related technological innovations like cloud computing and the use of big data and algorithms.

In preparation for the Thirtieth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, 2024 (IYF+30) the United Nations aims to raise awareness of megatrends noted above and responsive family-oriented policies to tackle their effects.

**"Families are the compass that guides us. They are the inspiration to reach great heights, and our comfort when we occasionally falter." — BRAD HENRY**

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Maternity leave, which was offered in 89% of countries in 1995, was available in 96% of countries by 2015.
- Only 57% of women, who are married, or in a domestic union, are able to make decisions about sexual relations and the use of contraceptives and reproductive health services.
- Family homelessness is on the rise. In some European countries, it has been consistently above 20% of the total homeless population.

**Family** forms an integral part of our lives. Despite the hectic lifestyle, the family continues to be the soul of any individual.



#### Nuclear family

It consists of two parents and children.



#### Single parents

A mother or father alone raises a child



#### Extended family

It comprising of uncles, aunts, nieces, and nephews is becoming common.



#### Childless family

The one that chooses to not have children



#### Grandparent family

Sometimes grave situations force grandparents to raise their grandchildren



#### Stepfamily

Many divorced, separated or single form new relationships



**Source: International Day of Families. (n.d.). Retrieved May 10, 2021, from <https://www.un.org/en/observances/international-day-of-families>**