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Hundreds of thousands of people turned out June 26 for Berlin's Gay Pride parade, led by gay Mayor Klaus Wowereit. The procession, which snaked from trendy Kurfürstendamm boulevard to the landmark Victory Column, featured 53 floats.

Some 700,000 people turned out for Paris' parade the same day. Marchers stepped off from the Left Bank and proceeded to the Bastille site, declaring "Enough Hypocrisy, Equality Now." Gay Mayor Bertrand Delanoë led the procession, which featured 60 floats. France is in the midst of a fierce same-sex marriage debate following Bègles Mayor Noël Mamère's decision to officiate at the wedding of a male couple June 5. He was suspended for a month for his allegedly illegal action. Polls indicate two-thirds of French people approve of same-sex marriage.

Under heavy police protection, about 300 people marched June 19 during the third Gay Pride parade in Zagreb, Croatia. They demanded access to marriage and adoption. Two years ago, 15 marchers were beaten up after the parade by right-wing protesters who had heckled, jeered and thrown tear gas at them during the parade.

About 90,000 people attended Tel Aviv's seventh Pride parade June 26 along Ibn Gvirol Street. The theme was "Proud Families." They were addressed by Mayor Ron Huldai and Justice Minister Yosef Lapid, who promised to open civil marriage to same-sex couples.

Mexico City's June 26 Pride parade was 10 blocks long and four traffic lanes wide. It began at the Angel of Independence monument and ended at the Zócalo, the nation's central plaza. Gay parents were at the front of the march.

About 300 people marched June 27 in Calcutta, India, despite laws that criminalize gay sex. "We are just a small bunch of the city's largely invisible [gay] people, many of whom are unwilling to come out of the closet," co-organizer Rafiqueel Haque Dowjah told the French Press Agency wire service. "The aim of the parade is to create an awareness that homosexuals are not sex workers; they are as productive and normal as others."

About 3,500 people marched June 26 during the National Pride Parade in Lisbon, Portugal. Marchers were divided into six main groups each with its own color and theme, correspondent João Paulo said.

Half a million turned out June 28 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for the Gay Pride march from Copacabana Beach to Ipanema Beach. They demanded, among other things, passage of a national civil union law.

In Colombia, more than 10,000 people took part in Bogotá's Gay Pride parade, marching 30 blocks from downtown's Bolívar Plaza to the National Park. Police apprehended several neo-Nazis who attempted to protest the parade despite having been denied a permit to do so. Bogotá Mayor Luis Eduardo Garzón addressed ralliers, the first time a mayor had done so. Gays also marched in the cities of Medellín, Cali, Cúcuta and Santa Marta.

A cool million people turned out for Toronto's 24th Gay Pride parade June 27. The theme: "Bursting with Fruit Flavors."

The European Council voted June 18 in favor of a new European Constitution that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Alleged violators would face the European Court of Justice. The constitution, which must first be ratified by the 25 European Union member nations, would enter into force in 2007.

Riccardo Gottardi said the International Lesbian and Gay Association "was a little surprised but pleased with the outcome of this council. The text offers more guarantees for the protection of human rights and equality for LGBT people. It is a first important step to build a union...that guarantees the basic rights of every citizen."

EU law is made chiefly by the Council of Ministers. It receives instructions from the European Council, which is composed of the EU member nations' heads of state or government.

INDIA

Zealots from the Shiv Sena party trashed movie theaters in Mumbai (Bombay), Delhi, Indore, Jabalpur, Varanasi and other cities in mid-June to halt screenings of the new lesbian-themed Indian film *Girlfriend*.

They broke windows, destroyed posters and burned effigies, reports said. Gay activists noted the film is hardly pro-lesbian because it treats homosexuality as an illness.

"*Girlfriend* reinforces all the negative stereotypes about lesbian and bisexual women," India's Organized Lesbian Alliance for Visibility and Action told the Web site Sify.com. "Not only is it a cheap and titillation-oriented film masquerading as one that's liberal, but it portrays the minority community in a negative light."

CANADA

Statistics Canada's recent attempt to determine the percentage of Canadians who are gay or bisexual failed in its task, activists said.

Figures from the Canadian Community Health Survey indicate 1.3 percent of men and 0.7 percent of women identify as gay. Another 0.6 percent of men and 0.9 percent of women said they are bisexual.

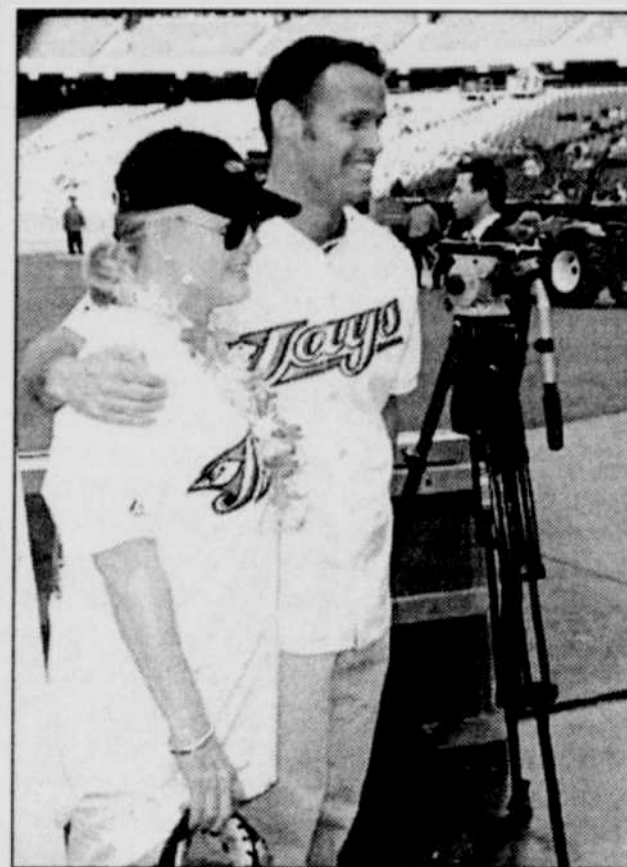
A spokesperson for the national gay lobby group Egale said that between 5 percent and 10 percent of people are actually gay but that the majority choose not to out themselves to the government.

The survey questioned 83,729 Canadians between ages 18 and 59. It found that younger people are more likely to own up to their sexuality than older folks. About 2 percent of people between 18 and 34 came out to questioners as



Toronto Pride was "Bursting with Fruit Flavors"

gay or bisexual compared with 1.9 percent of those 35 to 44 years old and 1.2 percent of people 45 to 59 years old.



Queer as Folk star Sharon Gless and gay Olympic gold medalist Mark Tewksbury celebrate Pride Community Day with the Toronto Blue Jays

The Toronto Blue Jays major league baseball team celebrated gay Pride Community Day on June 25.

Queer as Folk star Sharon Gless threw out the first pitch, and gay Olympic gold medalist Mark Tewksbury presented a check on behalf of the team to Pride Toronto. The national anthems were sung by Simone Denny, the voice behind the *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* theme, "All Things (Just Keep Getting Better)."

The Skydome reserved a special section for gays at field level along the baselines and offered a 30 percent discount to gay groups of 10 or more.

The newest Ontario Men's Survey found that 27 percent of gay men who thought they were probably HIV-negative tested positive via saliva samples taken when they were questioned. The survey quizzed more than 5,000 men across the Canadian province.

Other findings included: About 25 percent of those surveyed engaged in unprotected anal sex with a casual male partner at least once in the previous three months; the percentage of gay men who acknowledged barebacking at least once has doubled since a similar survey was conducted in 1991; and 45 percent of those questioned never discuss their HIV status with casual sex partners. About 14 percent of those questioned said they've had condoms slip off, and an equal number said they've had condoms break.

AUSTRALIA

Hundreds of gays and lesbians demonstrated June 26 at Sydney Town Hall Square to protest Prime Minister John Howard's proposed bans on same-sex marriage and adoption by same-

