

A little History

by [Scum Grrrls](#)

What is the origin of the 8th of March and Who had the idea to create the International Women's Day ? Rather than to look for a precise origin, it's more accurate to say that the International Women's Day was born further to women's movements that occurred in several parts of the world, more or less, at the same time.

The first feminist demands for a Women's day would be due to the absence of a speaker in Chicago during a meeting of the Socialist Party of America. Two women, Gertrude Breslau-Hunt and May Wood-Simons took the floor instead of the absent male speaker and used the opportunity to denounce the exploitation of women workers who were under-paid and deprived of their most elementary rights.



But the first real official demonstration, called Woman's Day, was organized in New York on 28th of February 1909 by the national Committee of Women of the Socialist Party of America in favour of voting rights for women. Following the demonstration, American Women decided to organize every year a National Women's Day across the United States that would take place the last Sunday of February.

In Europe, under the initiative of the German woman Clara Zetkin, head of the international socialist women's movement, the second Socialist international - gathered in Copenhagen in August 1910 – took the resolution to make the Woman's Day the International Women's Day. The objective of that day was to achieve voting rights for women. The next year, on the 19th of March, the movement had grown and mobilised more than one million of women and men in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland. They were fighting for women's right of vote, right to hold a public office, right to work, and for an end to discrimination at work, etc.

The last Sunday of February in 1913, Russian Women celebrated for the first time the International Women and worker's Day by a demonstration for peace. The year after, the movement was followed elsewhere in Europe between the end of February and the 8th of March. In 1917, Russian Women again demonstrated for "bread and peace" on the 23d of February. This day from the Russian calendar matched with the 8th of March of our calendar. In 1975, the UN adopted a resolution inviting Governments to celebrate women's rights and peace in the world. For many countries, the 8th of March was the appropriate day for this celebration. Nowadays, the International Women's Day is an opportunity to reiterate demands for the achievement of women's right and their active participation in the economic and political process. It is also an opportunity to celebrate all women who played or are playing a great role for women's rights struggles.

Source : EWL, www.womenlobby.org