

WOMEN'S DAY

INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S
DAY | MARCH 2 - 8



International Women's Day, also known as IWD for short, grew out of the labour movement to become an annual event recognised by the United Nations.

The seeds were planted in 1908, when 15,000 women marched through New York demanding shorter working hours, better pay and the right to vote. A year later, the Socialist Party of America declared the first National Woman's Day.

It was Clara Zetkin, a communist activist and advocate for women's rights, who suggested the creation of an international day. She put her idea to an International Conference of Working Women in Copenhagen in 1910 - and the 100 women there, from 17 countries, agreed to it unanimously.

International Women's Day has become a date to celebrate how far women have come in society, politics and in economics, while the political roots of the day mean strikes and protests are organised to raise awareness of continued inequality. Clara's idea for an International Women's Day had no fixed date.

Why do we celebrate it on March 8?

It wasn't formalised until a wartime strike in 1917, when Russian women demanded "bread and peace": four days into the strike the tsar was forced to abdicate and the provisional government granted women the right to vote.

The strike began on 8 March and this became the date that International Women's Day is celebrated.

Purple, green and white are the colours of IWD, according to the International Women's Day website.

"Purple signifies justice and dignity. Green symbolises hope. White represents purity. The colours originated from the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in the UK in 1908," they say.



Below another historical event linked to the celebration of women's day:

It was March 25, 1911 and five hundred young girls and women, plus a hundred men were working in a block of flats on Washington Place in New York.

The shirt factory was called the "Triangle Waist Company" and occupied the top three floors of the building.

The women of the "Triangle" worked sixty hours a week but the overtime imposed and poorly paid weren't counted. The entrances were locked to prevent workers from leaving their jobs, even for a few minutes. The union had never joined that company. Zero rights, non-existent security.

It is 4.40 pm on that tragic Friday when the fire spread due to accidental causes, which starting from the eighth floor immediately touched the ninth and then devastated the tenth.

Some women managed to go down the fire escape but soon it collapsed under the weight of so many desperate victims of terror, even the elevator gave way almost immediately. The workers had to go up to the tenth floor but there too the fire came and made its victims. The crowd from below was screaming, "Don't jump!" Wrote The New York Times. "But there were only two alternatives: to jump or burn to death. And the bodies began to fall. Needless to ask what happened to the owners of the "Triangle": all acquitted.

Today the condition of women has definitely changed, but only in the West of the world. How many "Triangle" fires happen in the world every day?



Made by Palma Alessandra

5 GENDER
EQUALITY

