

1 In which century did most of the events related to International Women's Day take place? Read the text to find out. Then, complete the crossword below with words from the text.



A Short History of INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

International Women's Day – an annual celebration of women's rights, pioneering female figures and ordinary women around the world – is officially over 100 years old. However, the history of this special day is even longer. Let's take a look at the main events that led to this popular worldwide celebration.

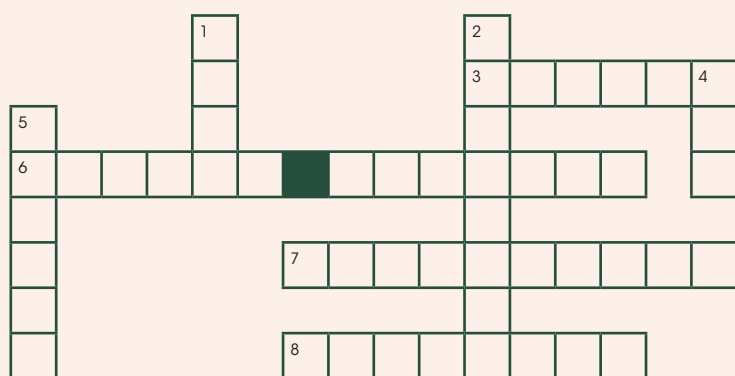
In the 19th century, women didn't have the same rights as men. They couldn't vote or be politicians and, when they got married, all their property and the control of their money passed to their husband. In protest of these laws, two women called Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton organised the first Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York, USA in July 1848. 200 women attended, and 40 men who supported their cause.

The USA was also the place where the first National Women's Day was held, on 28th February, 1909. The Socialist Party of America declared this as a day to remember the women who had gone on strike against poor working conditions in factories the previous year. However, the idea of an international women's day, for women around the world, wasn't proposed until the following year. In August 1910, a group of women from 17 countries met in Copenhagen, Denmark, to discuss women's rights. A German activist, Clara Zetkin, suggested they should organise an International Women's Day. The first one was held on 19th March, 1911 and was observed in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland. On this day, women marched in the streets to demand the right to vote.

In 1913, the decision was made to celebrate International Women's Day on 8th March. Four years later, on 8th March 1917, women in Russia used this day to start a strike to protest against war and poor working conditions, and to demand the right to vote. The strike lasted four days, at the end of which the ruler of Russia stepped down from his position of power. The new government passed a law allowing women to vote.

The United Nations officially declared their support for International Women's Day in 1975 – they even called 1975 'International Women's Year!' The UN has been involved in organising the celebration ever since. These days, they announce a theme each year, send out activity packs, and hold events with important speakers from all over the world.

International Women's Day is now observed in nearly every country in the world. In some countries, it is celebrated as an official national holiday to show respect for the role women have in society, but in others the fight still goes on to achieve equality between men and women.



ACROSS

- 3** which happens every year
- 6** Its initials are U.N.
- 7** It's the capital of Denmark.
- 8** people's right to receive the same treatment

DOWN

- 1** to express your choice of a particular person in an election
- 2** relates to a whole country
- 4** a rule usually made by a government
- 5** Moscow is this country's capital.

2 Use the information in the text to say what happened in the years in the timeline.



3 **ICT** In groups, find information about other important dates in the history of women's rights and what happened. Present the information to the class.