

An Post stamp set up electoral breakthrough

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An history making General Election that saw the electoral breakthrough for national self-determination and the rights of women is celebrated this week in a new stamp set issued by An Post.

The set, under the joint theme 'Popular Democracy', celebrates the two ground-breaking aspects of the 1918 Irish General Election and were designed by leading Dublin-based designer Ger Garland.

The stamps depict Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington and Éamon de Valera with the colours of the suffragette movement and Irish national flag. Both stamps also feature an "X" signifying the election ballot paper which citizens used to cast their vote. An accompanying First Day Cover (FDC) envelope portrays a black and white photograph of the 1st meeting of Dáil Éireann held in the Mansion House, January 21st, 1919 (Photo courtesy of the National Library). The stamps are available from Thursday 18th October at main post offices, from the stamp counters at Dublin's GPO or online at irishstamps.ie. They were unveiled this week at an exhibition in Dáil Éireann marking the 100th anniversary of the parliamentary vote for women in Ireland. Present was Senator Ivana Bacik who chaired 'Votail 100' the body set up by Houses of the

Oireachtas to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the parliamentary vote for women in Ireland.

The 1918 General Election saw the defeat of the moderate nationalist Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) by Sinn Féin. The IPP dominated the Irish political landscape since the 1880s. However, the popular vote had changed by 1918, with Sinn Féin candidates winning 73 out of 105 seats. The election set in motion events including the first Irish Parliament 'Dáil Éireann,' (1919) and the international recognition of an independent Irish state, the Irish Free State, in 1922. The election marked the first time many Irish women could participate in the national vote. Votes for women was part of 19th century societal change, including industrialisation, the advent of WWI and growing support for the suffrage movement. In 1918 legislative change in the UK Parliament was adopted by Ireland, granting women of property over the age of 30 the same voting rights as men.

Source: [An Post](#)