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EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

DRAFT DECLARATION
ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN ELECTIONS

on the basis of contributions by

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Item I.2.5 of the Code of the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters provides as follows:

« Legal rules requiring a minimum percentage of persons of each gender among candidates should not be considered as contrary to the principle of equal suffrage if they have a constitutional basis ».

The following may complete this principle :

- “a. Implementation of the parity principle leads to admit:
1. Elections by a list system
 - The obligation to ensure a composition of the candidates' lists alternating men and women
 - The refusal to register lists which do not respect such an alternating composition
 2. Elections in single-member constituencies
 - The obligation to ensure a balanced percentage of women and men amongst candidates of the same party
 - Dissuasive financial sanctions in case of non-respect of this obligation
- b. Suffrage should be individual and secret, which excludes any delegation of the vote, be it formal or informal, to the head of the household (male), depending on the number of people (minor or having reached majority) belonging to the family (family vote). Should a family vote be proved, the vote may be considered invalid.