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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
    - A composition of the candidates’ lists alternating men and women
    - [- The refusal to register lists which do not respect such an alternating composition]<sup>1</sup>
  2. Elections in single-member constituencies
    - A minimal percentage of members of each gender amongst candidates
    - A possible reduction of subsidies to be granted to political forces which do not respect this minimal percentage
- b. “Family voting”, i.e. the situation where a man (a male family member) collects ballot papers belonging to one or more family members (principally women) and completes those papers as he sees fit, is a serious violation of electoral rights going against the equality of sexes. In the situation where “family voting” in its various forms is a “mass phenomenon” in a given polling station, votes in this polling station must be considered invalid.”

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<sup>1</sup>*Point to be discussed.*