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EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

in co-operation with

THE PERMANENT ELECTORAL AUTHORITY OF ROMANIA

2nd SCIENTIFIC ELECTORAL EXPERTS DEBATES

EQUAL SUFFRAGE

Thursday and Friday, 3-4 May 2018

**Sinaia, Romania
International Sinaia Hotel**

SYNOPSIS

The Venice Commission of the Council of Europe organised in co-operation with the **Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania** the **Second Scientific Electoral Experts Debates** in Sinaia, Romania, on 3 and 4 May 2018.

The **Scientific Electoral Experts Debates** are intended to become a regular event involving specialists of electoral law from various fields, including academia and electoral management bodies, to discuss issues having both a theoretical and a practical scope. The reports presented during the debates will be published in the only European review dedicated to electoral law, the **Romanian Journal of Electoral Studies** (formerly “Expert Electoral”).

The topic of the Conference was “**Equal suffrage**”. **Equal suffrage** includes a number of aspects which have been developed in the [Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters](#) drafted by the Venice Commission, the reference document of the Council of Europe in the field: equal voting rights, equal voting power, equality of opportunity, gender equality, and one of the main issues is to know whether it should involve equal means or equal results

The participants discussed more specifically the following issues:

- **The various aspects of the principle of equality and their implications in the electoral field;**
- **Equal voting power and allocation of seats to constituencies;**
- **Equality and parity of the sexes;**
- **Equality in a changing environment.**

Daniel Barbu, President of the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania, Pierre Garrone, Head of the Division of Elections and Political Parties, Venice Commission and Csaba-Tiberiu Kovacs, former Secretary General of the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania, opened the conference.

More than 100 participants, mostly from Europe, but also from Africa, America and Asia attended the Conference, representing academia, national electoral management bodies and other bodies involved in electoral processes, but also international governmental and non-government organisations, such as the Association of European Officials (ACEEEO), the A-WEB (the Association of World Election Bodies), the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS), the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), International IDEA, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the OSCE (OSCE/ODIHR) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The conclusions of the 2nd Scientific Electoral Experts Debates were drawn by Mr Oliver Kask, President of the Council for Democratic Elections, and Mr Daniel Barbu, President of the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania.