



Vlada Crne Gore  
Ministarstvo za ljudska i manjinska prava



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **IPA Gender Programme: The Council for political participation established and its first decision made**

**Podgorica, 11 July 2011** – The Ministry for Human and Minority Rights of the Government of Montenegro, the Delegation of the European Union to Montenegro and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Montenegro, in the framework of the IPA Gender Programme, have constituted today a Council for political participation that will support and assist the process of the Programme implementation in the domain of political empowerment of women in Montenegro. The Council gathers representatives of parliamentary political parties, non-governmental organizations, trade unions and international organizations in Montenegro.

Participants in the first session of the Council for political participation within the Gender Equality Programme, agreed that the Law on election of counsellors and members of parliament has to contain an affirmative action for the less represented sex, in order for Montenegro to get closer to the best practices of the European Union countries, as well as to fulfil the standards accepted through ratification of the United Nations Conventions.

The affirmative action in this sense means that the Election Law should contain clear regulations obliging political parties to:

1. nominate not less than 30% of persons of less represented sex for election lists;
2. structure the sequence of candidates on election lists in the following way: at least one in three candidates on the list should be from the less represented sex, starting from the first candidate up to the third one, from the fourth up to the sixth candidate, etc.; and to
3. get the election Commission to reject the announcement of lists which are not in accordance with the above listed norms.

Also, on the occasion of eventual replacement of mandates, i. e. filling a deputy/councillor vacancy, political party will take account of the affirmative action and a certain percentage regarding participation of the less represented sex.

Around thirty participants of the international conference „Women in politics“ have already appealed to the Speaker of the Montenegro's Parliament's Collegium for Developing of the Election Law for introducing quotas for the less represented sex. This request has been followed by the support of around 30 eminent and publicly well-known NGOs. It should especially be emphasized that 242 members of the Montenegrin Academia (University of Montenegro, Mediteran University, Donja Gorica University) supported this initiative and underlined the necessity for introducing the affirmative action for 30% women equally represented on the list, including a sanction in the form of announcing the list invalid in case of disrespect of this request. All ten Parliamentarians who represent more than half of Montenegrin population publicly addressed the Speaker of the Parliament and the Collegium for Developing of the Election Law on 5th July with the same requests.



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Introducing quotas for the less represented sex into the new election law should at the same time mean harmonizing of the Election law with Articles 8 and 18 of the Constitution of Montenegro.

Achieving equality between men and women is not an end in itself. It is a prerequisite for the realization of human rights, human development and the overall EU objectives related to growth, employment and social cohesion. Status of women in all democratic societies is reflected in the personal integrity, economic prosperity and political representation. The Gender Programme IPA 2010 sets a goal of improving the conditions for implementing the National Action Plan for achieving gender equality through a strengthened capacity and improved institutional mechanisms, as well as improved policies in the areas of domestic violence and political and economic empowerment of women.

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