Adjusting Electronic Polls to a Hybrid Workflow

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1 Abstract

The Electronic Poll process was set by [1](P2195R2: Electronic Straw Polls) to allow progress during the pandemic. As described in P2195, electronic polls can be used for forwarding papers to LWG, but also for "resend" polls (which are taken in the case that a paper was sent back from LWG to get LEWG's design resolution).

We believe that as WG21 is now working in hybrid mode, there's room for adjusting the process. There's also the fact that we are nearing the end of the C++26 cycle, which requires faster resolutions for papers and issues to avoid delay in progress.

2 Motivation

We acknowledge that the Electronic Poll process is useful for confirming teleconference decisions (there were a few times in which information was gained, making changes in decisions), and so we don't propose removing it from the teleconferences (excluding in certain cases where such electronic poll will hold back process, left to the discretion of the chair, more on this in the following section).

3 Proposed Resolution

3.1 Skipping electronic poll for polls taken during the in-person meetings

We propose removing the electronic poll process from decisions made in in-person (hybrid) meetings, as well as from decisions on which the electronic poll may hold back the process (left to the discretion of the chair). In any case of bypassing the electronic poll, the chair will need to make sure that there were no reasons to avoid such bypassing which are widely supported in the room, and that the poll results express consensus for the result of the poll.

The reasons are listed below:

1. As the pre-pandemic in-person meetings did not include electronic polls, we believe this makes sense.
2. The in-person (hybrid) meetings today are even more accessible than the ones pre-pandemic, as they are available online as well. As a result, we expect that whoever cares about a paper should be able, with a reasonable effort, to participate in the voting on it.
3. As we're reaching the end of the cycle, we want to minimize the chances of fixes and improvements not being applied due to procedural delay.
4. Papers and issues seen by design groups are likely to be seen by wording groups during the same week. So far, we've bypassed the need for electronic polls by careful planning, and by (when needed) taking a poll that explicitly states skipping the electronic poll for the specific decision.
5. We would like to formalize the chair's discretion to skip the electronic poll. This should, of course, be done when the chair evaluates the risk of missing issues (which could be found at the electronic poll) as minimal.

3.2 Avoiding skipping polls for teleconferences

Reading the section above, one might ask why we don't propose skipping electronic polls for telecons.

There are a few reasons for this:

1. We believe that telecons, which unlike full meetings are scheduled at specific times (which aims to maximize the overlap of time zones) might present bigger difficulty to participating on a regular basis.
2. Even though expressing objections in comments of an electronic poll cannot by themselves stop the forwarding of the paper (only poll results can), they still provide useful feedback to chairs, which, naturally, have the discretion to send back / re-discuss decisions if new information comes up in such comments. We have seen, on multiple occasions, design decisions re-considered and modified as a result of such informative technical comments.
3. As electronic polls are taken for a group of papers, they allow re-read and additional examination, and, in some cases, additional information to be discovered between the meeting on which the paper was forwarded and the time the poll is taken. We believe that the additional feedback has helped correct or improve features on multiple occasions.

4 Data

4.1 In Person Meetings

Paper	Voters Room	Voters EP	Overlap	% overlap in Room	% overlap in EP
P0843	32	21	6	18.8	28.6
P2819	23	20	6	26.1	30.0
P2905	17	16	2	11.8	12.5
P0876	35	16	2	17.1	37.5
P0447	18	21	6	33.3	28.6
P2643	24	16	5	20.8	31.3
P2663	23	13	3	13.0	23.1
P2809	28	20	3	10.7	15.0

4.2 Remote Meetings

Paper	Voters Room	Voters EP	Overlap	% overlap in Room	% overlap in EP
P1068	15	15	6	40.0	40.0
P2447	19	21	10	52.6	47.6
P2591	20	22	10	50.0	45.5
P2821	22	22	8	36.4	36.4
P2833	19	18	11	57.9	61.1
P2836	15	15	6	40.0	40.0
P2909	19	19	13	68.4	68.4
P2810	21	21	11	52.4	52.4

5 Change log

5.1 Revision 0

This Revision

6 References

[1] P2195R2: Electronic Straw Polls
https://wg21.link/P2195R2

[2] P2972R0: 2023-09 Library Evolution Polls
https://wg21.link/P2972R0

[3] P3053R0: 2023-12 Library Evolution Polls
https://wg21.link/P3053R0

[4] P3123R0: 2024-02 Library Evolution Polls
https://wg21.link/P2775R0