Electronic meetings with most secret voting?

How to adapt to law changes to electronic meetings passed in parliament during two weeks in May

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Law changes allowing full electronic meetings

- Were passed super quickly in less than month (May 4th in parliament, in effect from May 25th)
- Allow two types of electronic decisions in all of Estonian legal entities
 - FULL: electronic meetings with real time audio/video (strong copresence requirements)
 - LIMITED: decisions without meeting during at least a week (in reproducible form)
- Delegations still complicated (need digital or paper signature)
- Rest of it is quite simple now except
 - You need to have real time video/audio for FULL electronic meeting
 - By law you cannot really have secret voting for LIMITED meetings
 - And no one really knows how to have them at FULL electronic meetings
- Zoom? Teams? Hangouts? Jitsi? BigBlueButton? Actually conducting one is not that simple though!



Case of Wikimedia Eesti

- Wikipedians are plain text loving, pseudonymous, privacy aware self-hosting nerds with passion for independent research (not allowed on Wikipedia)
- Special skills involve editing plain text with MediaWiki markdown in large groups and not messing it up most of the time
- 49 members, maximum half of them present
- Delegations need to be formulated before the meeting

No solution for proper secret voting cheaper than 1000 euros a year... As reported by other Wikimedia chapters around Europe.

Challenge accepted!

Building a custom system that follows the new law?

- Wikimedia Foundation hosted independent Jitsi instance (up to ~30 people)
- Simple client JavaScript to log and announce everything on Jitsi via API
- Thorough rules for electronic meetings (host, minutes taker, facilitator)
- Plans for errors and fallbacks, explaining the procedure for members
- Secret voting with pseudonyms delivered by <u>Python 100-liner on live Ubuntu</u>
- Votes cast at public bulletin board: Wikimedia Foundation hosted <u>rather</u> <u>independent Etherpad</u> (collaborative online text editor with edit history)
- It took at least about a week to prepare everything needed (we also had full test run couple of days before)
- https://github.com/infoaed/uduloor

tramm@nikunai:~/Kood/uduloor\$./uduloor.py
There are 4 voters in upcoming election:

tramm@infoaed.ee boamaod@gmail.com tramm@p6drad-teel.net tramm@wikimedia.ee

Distributing pseudonyms...

- * ranunculus
- * tulipa
- * syringa
- * melampyrum

Delivered 4 pseudonyms.

Write 'end' to close voting and publish audit information.

> end

Cryptonyms:

- * ranunculus377
- * tulipa863
- * syringa469
- * melampyrum418

Thanks for taking digital democracy seriously! tramm@nikunai:~/Kood/uduloor\$



Why is it interesting?

- Auditable and secret electronic voting is magic for most of the people
- Yet the concept is easy to explain to every member PewDiePie's army of 9-year olds (remember ROT13?)
- Use the model of paper sheets in a hat and extend step by step
- Start from digital citizens that understand some of the background, have interest and need for it
- First create it for fun as 15-minute Python script, use it in action and be convinced that world is better place with it
- Make it usable for everybody a) as an educational tool, b) small scale practical tool and c) entry for understanding full electronic elections

Geneerilised valimised

✓Vaikimisi pseudonüümid

🗹 Kuiv trenn e-kirju saatmata

From: Uduloor <pseudo@infoaed.ee> To: %s Subject: Vabariigi presidendi valimine

Your pseudonym for voting at the upcoming election is:

* %5

Voting takes place at:

* https://kybaratrikk.infoaed.ee/jbbtlpfdluvh

Guidelines in nutshell:

Jaga pseudonüümid välja!

-Serveri vastus-

Voters: 4

uduloor714: narcissus, papaver, hibiscus uduloor714: narcissus, papaver, hibiscus mysepudo111: papaver, hibiscus anotherpseudo334: tulipa, papaver

anotherpseudo334

tulipa, papaver

Annan oma hääle!

Taking digital democracy seriously

- Keep It Simple & Stupid aka KISS **//** -- relying on technology which people are used to, minimize magic involved
- Get the work done -- digital nomads use platforms, tools and protocols for specific purpose and dump them after use without hesitation
- Agile perfection -- smartly contain your system, expect problems and prepare fallbacks, solve problems when they occur, improve for next iteration
- Everything open and modular integration with video conference platforms, independent running of different channels/functions, adding assurances or cryptographic complications wherever needed without need to build the system from start

What next?

- Around 250 000 legal bodies in Estonia and having 150 000 meetings a year
- Government institutions don't know what to do (and politicians are not even sure what did they agree as a law)
- ...
- \$\$\$

Some links:

- https://pseudovote.net/
- https://github.com/infoaed/uduloor
- https://wikimedia.ee/haaleta-nagu-vikipedist/
- https://gafgaf.infoaed.ee/en/posts/pseudonymous-voting-in-wikimedia/
- https://heakodanik.ee/uudised/puust-ja-punaseks-kuidas-edaspidi-uldkoosolekuid-korraldada/
- https://www.rik.ee/et/news/algas-ettevotjate-koosolekute-korraldamise-lihtsustamiseks-moeldud-platvormi-tehniline-dialoog