

This response represents my own position and not any other person or body. In particular, it is not a PAB response nor a THUS plc one.

I am glad to see this consultation appear. Nevertheless, I believe that it has failed to identify at least two significant approaches - not options - to changing the voting rights.

Firstly, the current split between "membership" votes and "domain" votes is 1:3 (that is, 75% of the allocated votes depend on domain registrations). There is no obvious a priori reason for this split, and it could be some other ratio, such as 1:2 or even 1:1. [1] I believe that the best value for this ratio is somewhere between 1:2 and 1:2.

Secondly, the "domain" votes do not have to be allocated in proportion to number of domains held. The allocation could instead be sub-linear: that is, multiplying the number of domains registered by a member by some factor F would multiply their number of domain votes by some number less than F . Such a scheme means that larger members still have more votes than smaller ones, but those with a very large number (the "pile them high sell them cheap" school) do not receive undue influence.

Some mathematical modelling I have carried out suggests that there is only one serious option for consideration: making the number of these votes be the square root of the number of domains held. [2] Using a more generous formula (e.g. $D_m/\log(D_m)$) makes little difference compared with the status quo, while more radical choices (e.g. logarithmic) feel to be too great a change at present.

This change has one small disadvantage: it is more important to determine when members are connected, since it has a greater effect on their voting rights. But it is already necessary to make this check in case the two members' votes total to above the cap, and I do not believe that this outweighs the advantages of a sub-linear approach.

I am not in favour of "one member one vote" for most issues, though PAB elections are a special case for which it is probably more suitable.

I am completely in favour of changing the form of the cap from "votes allocated" to "votes cast". That is, I unequivocally prefer option 2 to option 1. I also agree that the cap should be reduced in size from 10%. I agree that the number of members who can block a 90% vote is a good yardstick. I would argue that, given the change in the form of the cap, 4% (requiring 3 large members) is sufficient and 3% (requiring 4) is overkill, but this is a relatively minor issue.

As a minor point, if two or more members are connected, they should receive votes as if they were a single member, not simply be capped. That is in clause 5.3.3 of Appendix 2, the words "reduced to T" should be changed to "reduced to the total they would have had if they were a single member with the same total number of domains registered", or some equivalent test.

The "concert party" wording seems, at first sight, to be reasonable, but I am concerned as to how widely it can be used. In particular, if a group of members agree among themselves to vote for the same candidate for the board, does that make them a "concert party"? It may be worth tightening up this wording to prevent over-use.

In summary:

- change the split between "membership" votes and "domain" votes (E and W in Appendix 2) to between 1:2 and 1:1 instead of the present 1:3;
- make the "domain" votes be proportional to the square root of the number of domains held by a member;
- make the cap be on votes cast, not votes allocated;
- make the cap 4%;
- change the rules on connected members to treat them as a single member.

[1] Implementing this change in, say, option 2 would involve modifying Appendix 2 as follows: in clauses 5.2.4 and 5.2.5, change "3" to "2" or "1" respectively.

[2] Implementing this change in, say, option 2 would involve modifying Appendix 2 as follows:

- in clauses 5.2.3 and 5.2.5, change " $W = D_m$ " to " $W = \sqrt{D_m}$ ";
- in clauses 5.2.4 and 5.2.5, change " D_{tot} " to " W_{tot} ", where W_{tot} is the sum of the W values for all the members.

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