



**Report of the ECU Arbiters' Council (ECU AC)
to the ECU General Assembly (November 19th, 2023)**

This report presents the activities of the ECU Arbiters' Council since October 2022.

1. Composition

Following the elections of the ECU Board in July 2022, a new ECU Arbiters' Council was appointed with the following composition:

Geert Bailleul (BEL) as Chairman
Tania Karali (GRE) as Secretary
Aleksander Sokolski (POL) as member
Alon Shulman (ISR) as member
Tamas Gyomber (HUN) as member
Marco Biagioli (ITA) as ad-hoc member

2. Call of Interest – Appointments of arbiters (three lists)

As every year, at the end of 2022, we launched the Call of Interest for the arbiters who wish to be appointed as match arbiters in European events. We received 229 applications, out of which 208 were legit.

This year, we made radical changes with the ultimate goal of increasing the number of female arbiters and inviting arbiters who have never before worked in a European or World event.

20 arbiters have been appointed so far (the invitations for the ER&B and the EWR&B are not complete) :

European Individual Chess Championship:

IA Jan Sikora (CZE), IA Marika Japaridze (GEO), IA Brigitte Grosse-Honebrink (GER)

European Women's Individual Chess Championship:

IA Aleksandra Dimitrijevic (ITA), IA Margit Brokko (EST)

European Senior Chess Championship:

IA Sergii Larkin (UKR)

European Senior Team Chess Championship:

IA Shohreh Bayat (ENG)

European Youth Team Chess Championship:

IA Carlos Gimenez Canadas (ESP)

European Youth Chess Championship:

IA Tomas Danada (SVK), IA Oleg Tovchyga (UKR), IA Sandra Schmidt (GER), IA Narcisa Mihevc Mohr (SLO), IA Stefan Ewert (GER)

European Youth R&B Chess Championship:

IA Dominique Dervieux (FRA)

European Club Cup:

IA Arild Rimestad (DEN), IA Andra Cimina (LAT), IA Gregor Johann (GER)

European Team Chess Championship:

IA Gerhard Bertagnolli (ITA), IA Ilaria Olivo (ITA)

European Rapid&Blitz Chess Championship:

IA Stefano Ganci (ITA)

3. Communication with Organisers - Approving arbiters' lists in tournaments

A few months before the scheduled time of each tournament, we contacted the organisers to inform them about the Call of Interest regulations, according to which the ECU Arbiters' Council is entitled to appoint 20% of the match arbiters in each European event (decision of ECU GA, Batumi 2019). Additionally, we informed them of the required ratio of female and foreign arbiters and asked to be sent the list of the arbiters who would be invited to ensure that it fulfils the aforementioned conditions.

In general, the communication with the organisers has been quite satisfactory. However, we need to underline that there have been cases where we received the list very late to suggest any changes (once or twice the list was sent to us indirectly), thus the level of the arbiters of specific events was not compliant with the regulations. The deviations that we noticed concerned a small number of arbiters compared to the number of participants and several appointments of National Arbiters (the regulations that are in effect by FIDE do not allow the appointment of National Arbiters in Continental events in any position).

4. Improved evaluation of arbiters

After each European event has been completed, the Chief Arbiter is required to send a tournament report, describing the conditions of the event and noting any significant incidents, and to send an individual evaluation for each Deputy Chief Arbiter, Pairings Officer, Sector Arbiter, Match Arbiter and Anti-Cheating Arbiter under their supervision. Everyone is also encouraged to send an evaluation for the Chief Arbiter.

This year, we changed the format of the evaluation form for Match Arbiters, asking the Chief Arbiters to provide specific comments on the knowledge/skills/behaviour of arbiters and to avoid generic remarks, such as “everything went well”, “the arbiter is very good” etc..

5. Seminars (online, physical)

Two FA Seminars were organised in 2023, according to the FIDE Regulations for the training of the arbiters:

- Online, in May, with Jirina Prokopova (CZE) as Lecturer and Alex Holowczak (ENG) as Assistant Lecturer (the seminar was an initiative of the ECU Women's Commission)
- Physical, in September, with Stephane Escafre (FRA) as Lecturer and Tania Karali (GRE) as Assistant Lecturer

A portion of both seminars was dedicated to presenting ECU Tournament Regulations and information on the ECU Arbiters' Council.

In total, 31 arbiters participated and 18 out of them passed the exam.

6. ECU Magazine Arbiters' Corner

As in the previous years, the members of the ECU Arbiters' Council contribute with an article named “Arbiters Corner” in the ECU Magazine. The featured articles present changes in the regulations, experience gained from prestigious events, clarification of obscure points in the Laws of Chess etc.

7. Monthly meetings

We have established a nearly monthly online communication with the exception of periods that have been very busy with various events. In general, we consider our meetings to have been fruitful, with new ideas, as a result of the new composition in the direction of improving the level of the European arbiters and encouraging the participation of female arbiters and arbiters who have not been appointed in the past in major events.

8. Communication with FIDE Arbiters' Commission

The FIDE Arbiters' Commission (ARB) organised an online meeting in March, where they invited the Chairman and the Secretary of all Continental Arbiters' Councils/Commissions. As a part of the communication between the ARB and the ECU AC, we were asked to send suggestions for the division in Panels of the European arbiters for the years 2024 – 2025, which we submitted in August.

9. Conclusion

Our activities for the past year reflect the experience of the previous terms of our Council, following the work that had started and, at the same time, finding ways to evolve and improve. All suggestions and comments are welcome.