



**Report of the ECU Arbiters' Council (ECU AC)
to the ECU General Assembly (September, 2024)**

This report presents the activities of the ECU Arbiters' Council (ECU AC) since November 2023.

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.
Frank Jaeger (GER) as member.
Marco Biagioli (ITA) as ad-hoc member.

Mr. Frank Jaeger was appointed by the ECU Board as a member of the council at the beginning of this year.

2. Proposal concerning the appointment of foreign arbiters for ECU events by ECU AC.

The ECU general assembly of 2019 in Batumi approved the change of ECU TR B.10.2.2. by which the ECU Arbiters Council was able to appoint 20% of foreign arbiters during the ECU competitions.

ECU Arbiters Council could reasonably believe that all the appointed arbiters were excellent arbiters, some of them with huge experience.

Every arbiter who was appointed by the ECU Arbiters Council proved to be an added value to the arbiters team of the competition.

Therefor the ECU AC proposed to appoint **30%** of the foreign arbiters which will give us the opportunity to allow more and more qualified arbiters to gift their capabilities for the benefit of ECU events.

See annex.

3. Annex 6 of ECU Rulebook: List of arbiters to be appointed: proposal.

During all world and European chess events, fair play has become very important. Therefore, for every major ECU event at least one fair play arbiter will be appointed. The fair play arbiter will be not be included in the number of match arbiters during the tournament.

4. Call of Interest 2024 – Appointments of arbiters. (three lists).

As every year, at the end of 2023, we launched the Call of Interest for the arbiters who wish to be appointed as match arbiters in European events.

We received 173 applications, out of which **168** were confirmed .

Since last 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.

Until now we appointed the following number of arbiters for the ECU Championships since November last year:

- **European Rapid&Blitz CC (Croatia 2023): 2**
- **European Women’s Rapid&Blitz CC (Monaco): No one**
- **European Women’s CC (Rhodes, Greece): 1**
- **European Senior Team CC (Slovenia): 1**
- **European School CC (Ireland): 2**
- **European Youth Team CC (Rhodes): 1**
- **European Youth Rapid&Blitz CC (Czech Republic): 2**
- **European Youth CC (Czech Republic): 6**
- **European Amateurs CC (Croatia): No one**

5. 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.

After consulting the general secretary of ECU, we agreed to allow 10-15% of National Arbiters during ECU championships.

6. Supervisor.

Based on the experience off FIDE ARB during the Olympiad 2022 in Chennai in and after consultation with IA Takis Nikolopoulos, who was one of the supervisors during this Olympiad, ECU AC decided to send a supervisor to ECU championships when we thought it could be appropriate.

Our goal is to help and support organizers; help and support the appointed arbiters; improving supervision of arbiters of all levels including principals; and as a whole presenting the council with an unbiased outlook of ECU championship and the performance of arbiters.

7. 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.

Since last 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 too general and unspecified remarks, such as “everything went well”, “the arbiter is very good” etc..

8. Seminars and workshops (online, physical).

- Tania Karali, secretary of the ECU AC, organized a two days seminar about the use of the Swiss Manager pairing programme.
This seminar was organized during the EYCC in Prague.

The first was for beginners who had no experience with the pairing programme.
The second day was for advanced users.

It is our goal to organize another seminar before the end of this year.

- Geert Bailleul, chairman of the ECU AC, was invited by the Kenian Chess Federation, to give a workshop for all the Kenian arbiters.
21 arbiters attended physically, another 26 attended online.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. 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 a proposal with a list of European arbiters who would be appointed as match arbiter during the Olympiad in Budapest.

We made a list of 18 arbiters based on the Call of Interest-list.

The proposed arbiters were informed that they would not be invited anymore as arbiter during an ECU Championship if they accepted to go to the Olympiad.

ECU AC was also asked to propose one sector arbiter.

From the list of 18 arbiters, 15 arbiters were appointed as match arbiters.

Unfortunately, the proposed sector arbiter was not accepted.

FIDE ARB gave no official reason why they rejected the sector arbiter proposed by ECU AC.

12. Proposal to amend the Tournament Rules regarding the definition of the tie-break "Direct encounter"

ECU needs to align with the definition given by FIDE. The reason for this need is that the FIDE endorsed pairing programs have already been updated to match the definition as described in the FIDE Handbook.

13. 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.

ECU AC is exercising a constant scrutiny process in order to optimize all activities and operations. ECU AC plans to continue with same activities, strengthening cooperation with organizers and attempting to increase number of appointments of ECU arbiters in ECU events, in order to allow more and more qualified arbiters to gift their capabilities for the benefit of ECU events.

On behalf of the ECU Arbiters Council

Geert Bailleul
Chairman.

Tania Karali
Secretary.