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## ECU E-Magazine March and April 2026



### Ukrainian Teenager IM Roman Dehtiarov wins European Individual Chess Championship 2026



*In this edition of the ECU Magazine you may read about Prague Chess Festival 2026, Freestyle FIDE World Chess Championship 2026, Women's Moves, Lively Squares: Chess Unites Greece event, upcoming ECU events and tournaments, ECU General Assembly 2026, and more...*



*Chess Makes You Smarter.*

## In March & April 2026 edition of the ECU E-Magazine you may read about:

- European Individual Chess Championship 2026
- European School Chess Championship 2026
- Mitropa Chess Cup 2026
- Launch of the C.E.S.S. project by Romanian Chess Federation
- Upcoming ECU events
- Activities of the ECU Commissions

European Chess Union has its seat in Switzerland.  
European Chess Union is an independent association founded in 1985 in Graz, Austria. European Chess Union has 54 National federations members, and each year organises more than 20 prestigious events.  
Website: [europechess.org](http://europechess.org)

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### In brief...

**European Individual Chess Championship 2026** took place from 6-20 April in Katowice, Poland. The event broke the participation record with the participation of 501 players from 43 European federations. IM Roman Dehtiarov, 17-year-old Ukrainian player, emerged as the Winner of the event, becoming the first International master ever to clinch the title of European Chess Champion. Dehtiarov scored 9/11 points to become the sole Winner of the event, earned direct GM title, and qualified for the next FIDE World Chess Cup.

**European School Chess Championship 2026** took place from 26 April to 6 May in Trogir, Croatia. The event was played in six age categories: U7, U9, U11, U13, U15, U17, and twelve players clinched the title of European School Open/Girls Chess Champion 2026 for the respective age category.

**Mitropa Chess Cup 2026** took place from 1-10 May in Sankt Veit an der Glan, Austria. Italy and Ukraine won the event which marked 50 years since the competition was established. The competition was dedicated to the memory of Professor Kurt Jungwirth.

# Ukrainian Teenager IM Roman Dehtiarov clinches European Championship 2026

The European Individual Chess Championship 2026 took place from 6-20 April in Katowice, Poland, with the historical result by IM Roman Dehtiarov from Ukraine who stunned the field and emerged as the Winner of the event!

The event gathered 501 players coming from 43 European federations, breaking the participation record which was previously set at European Individual Chess Championship 2023 in Vrnjacka Banja, Serbia.

The tournament was played in 11 rounds, swiss system, with the time control of 90 minutes for 40 moves + 30 minutes until the end of the game, with an increment of 30-second per move, starting from move one.

The total prize fund of the Championship was 100.000 euros, with 20.000 euros reserved for the Winner of the event.

The European Individual Chess Championship 2026 is part of the World Chess Championship cycle, and the top-ranked 20\* players will qualify for the next FIDE World Chess Cup. (\*Under the current FIDE World Cup regulations, FIDE is the only body responsible for the qualification spots)

Detailed information about the tournament format and regulations can be found [here](#).



Photo by ECU/ Rafal Oleksiewicz

# IM Roman Dehtiarov became European Chess Champion 2026

Set to turn 18 years old this year, IM Roman Dehtiarov (UKR, 2452) was the 126th-seed on the starting list of players, but finished the event with impressive score of 9/11 points, with a single loss in the fifth round! He emerged as the sole winner of the event after defeating GM David Anton Guijarro (ESP, 2656) in the final round, and finished the tournament with the outstanding performance of 2782! Clinching the title, Roman Dehtiarov earned a direct Grandmaster title and a seat for the next FIDE World Chess Cup.

Three Azerbaijani Grandmasters who had a co-leadership ahead of the final round, finished the event tying for the second place with the score of 8.5 points each. Having the best tiebreak criteria, GM Aydin Suleymanli (AZE, 2653) won silver medal, GM Nijat Abasov (AZE, 2586) claimed bronze, and GM Mahammad Muradli (AZE, 2605) finished the event in the fourth place.

The best-ranked Junior U20 players in the tournament were awarded with special prizes at the closing ceremony, with IM Roman Dehtiarov (UKR, 2452) emerging as the best-ranked junior player along with the overall win in the tournament, GM Ediz Gurel (TUR, 2635) was second with 8 points, GM Ihor Samunenkov (UKR, 2596) was third with 7.5 points and better tiebreaks than IM Matic Lavrencic (SLO, 2472) and IM Svyatoslav Bazakutsa (UKR, 2477) who had the same score.

GM Vasyl Ivanchuk (UKR, 2621) was the best-ranked senior player in the tournament with the score of 7.5 points, GM Hannes Stefansson (ISL, 2414) was second with 6.5 points, and legendary GM Oleg Romanishin (UKR, 2255) won third prize with the score of 5.5 points.



IM Roman Dehtiarov (UKR, 2452) defeated GM David Anton Guijarro (ESP, 2656) in the final round of the European Individual Chess Championship 2026, to emerge as the sole Winner of the event, and become the first ever International master to clinch the European Champion title.





Six female players finished the championship with 6.5 points each, tying for the prizes for the best-ranked Women players in the tournament. With the best tiebreak criteria, IM Teodora Injac (SRB, 2410) won the top prize, IM Stavroula Tsolakidou (GRE, 2452) was second, IM Nurgyul Salimova (BUL, 2399) came third.

*Photos by ECU and Rafal Oleksiewicz*

Six female players finished the championship with 6.5 points each, tying for the prizes for the best-ranked Women players in the tournament. With the best tiebreak criteria, IM Teodora Injac (SRB, 2410) won the top prize, IM Stavroula Tsolakidou (GRE, 2452) was second, IM Nurgyul Salimova (BUL, 2399) came third, while IM Mai Narva (EST, 2411), IM Aleksandra Maltsevskaya (POL, 2393) and WGM Mariam Mkrtchyan (ARM, 2368) did not climb the podium.

The best-ranked Polish players were GM Jan Malek (POL, 2533), GM Szymon Gumularz (POL, 2590) and GM Jan Klimkowski (POL, 2498), each scoring 7.5 points. According to tiebreaks, Jan Malek won first prize, Szymon Gumularz came second, and Jan Klimkowski took third place in this special category.

The Closing ceremony of the event took place in the playing venue. The ceremony was attended by Vice President of the City of Katowice Mr. Maciej Stachura, ECU Vice Presidents Mr. Alojzije Jankovic and Mr. Gunnar Bjornsson, President of the Polish Chess Federation Mr. Radoslaw Jedynak, FIDE Secretary General Mr. Lukasz Turlej, President of the Silesian Chess Federation Mr. Michal Pazdziora, Ambassador of Georgia to Poland Ms. Diana Zhgenti, Director of the Arena Katowice Mr. Pawel Cebula, Director of the Department of Sports in the city of Katowice Mr. Dawid Kaminski, the Head of Commission of Sport in Katowice Mr. Adam Szymczyk, and other distinguished guests.

Final report and rankings can be found through the [ECU Website](#).





Interview with Roman Dehtiarov can be found [here](#).



# European School Chess Champions 2026 crowned in Trogir, Croatia

The 2026 European School Chess Championship took place from 26 April to 6 May in Trogir, Croatia. Europe crowned 12 School Chess Champions for 2026, in six age categories: U7, U9, U11, U13, U15, and U17, for Open and Girls sections.

In the U7 age category, Sophia Kaliskami (GRE) became an absolute European School Chess Champion with the score of 8.5 points and better tiebreaks than Albert-Tudor Jacota (ROU) who tied in the first place, and as the best ranked boy in the event, clinched title of European School U7 Champion. Finnur Arnason (ISL) came third with 7 points. Sophia Kaliskami was at the same time the best-ranked girl in the tournament, Emilia Karin Arnarsdottir (ISL) was the second-ranked girl, and Mia Stojanovic (CRO) was third.

Deniz Irtes (TUR, 1838) emerged as the sole Winner of the Open U9 section, with the convincing score of 6.5/7 points. Three players tied for silver with 4.5 points each. Teodor-Nicolas Haimana (ROU, 1750) had the best additional tiebreak criteria to win silver medal, Luca-Stefan Cioboata (ROU, 1726) clinched bronze, while David-Christian Talaba (ROU, 1699) came fourth. After nine played rounds in the Girls U9 section, Kayal Vijay (ENG, 1615) and Ela Sirekbasan (TUR, 1501) tied for gold scoring 8 points each, but Kayal Vijay claimed gold medal thanks to better tiebreaks, while Ela Sirekbasan clinched silver medal. With the score of 7 points, Funda Su Seyhanli (TUR) won bronze.

Meric Zeynel Aker (TUR, 1987) and Leonid Ivanovic (SRB, 2181) tied for the top of the U11 age category, scoring 6.5 points. Having better tiebreaks, Meric Zeynel Aker won gold medal, while Leonid Ivanovic clinched silver. Onur Hisir (TUR, 1747) claimed bronze with 6 points and better tiebreaks than Lile Svanadze (GEO, 1645) who finished the

event in the overall fourth place, but won gold as the best-ranked girl in the tournament.

Mariam Rekhviashvili (GEO, 1750) was the second-ranked girl in the championship and won silver, while Varvara Sigacheva (GER, 1580) took bronze.

Denys Farkash (UKR, 2158) emerged as the Winner of the U13 category with the score of 5.5/7 points, while Alexandre Ghonghadze (GEO, 1816) won silver with 5 points. Clio Alessi (ITA, 1904) finished the event in the third place with 4.5 points, at the same time winning gold as the best-ranked girl in the tournament. Tea Rusitashvili (GEO, 1953) had the same score but came fourth and clinched silver as the second best-ranked girl, while Anna Hrckova (CZE, 1778) had 4 points to come fifth, and win bronze in the Girls section.

Georgian players dominated in the U15 age section as Gabriel Gabadadze (GEO, 2012) won gold with impressive 8.5/9 points, Andria Kviriashvili (GEO, 2188) clinched silver with 8 points, and Luka Kuntelia (GEO, 2048) won bronze with 6 points.

Beren Kalyoncu (TUR, 1840) emerged as the best-ranked girl in the tournament with the score of 5.5 points, Lika Chkhartishvili (GEO, 1870) was second, and Renata Hranilovic (CRO, 1622) came third.

Uros Brankovic (SRB, 2072) clinched gold in the U17 age section with the score of 6 points, Ela Mullakutukcu (TUR, 1724) was second with 5.5 points and won gold as the best-ranked girl in the event, while Matija Mimica (CRO, 2161) claimed bronze medal with the score of 5 points. Lilian Schirmbeck (GER, 1879) was the second best-ranked girl in the tournament, while Lila Quinn Field (IRL, 1918) came third in the respective section.



Final rankings, rich photo gallery and detailed information about the event can be found through the [ECU Website](#).



Photo by Croatian Chess Federation

# Italy and Ukraine win Mitropa Chess Cup

The 2026 Mitropa Chess Cup took place from 1-10 May in Sankt Veit an der Glan, Austria. The event was played in two sections: Open and Women, and marked half a century since the competition was established. The competition was dedicated to the memory of Professor Kurt Jungwirth, the tournament's founder, who passed away in May 2025 at the age of 95.

Italy emerged as a convincing winner of the Open tournament, scoring 16 match points, with eight match wins and a single match loss against France in the fifth round of the tournament.

Ukraine emerged as the clear winner of the Women's tournament with the score of 16 match points – seven match wins and two drawn matches against Austria and Slovakia. Ukraine convincingly clinched gold and finished the tournament with a two match points edge over the runner ups.

Scoring 14 match points, the team of Switzerland claimed silver medal in the Women's competition, and Italy won bronze medal with the score of 12 match points.



The Closing ceremony of the event took place with the President of Austrian Chess Federation Mr. Michael Stoettinger, the President of Mitropa Cup Association Mr. Marco Biagoli, and Vice President of Ukrainian Chess Federation Mr. Vladimir Kovalchuk taking part in the Awarding ceremony for the Winners and Medalists.

Final rankings and report can be found [here](#).

*Photos by Austrian Chess Federation*



# Romanian Chess Federation launches C.E.S.S. project

The C.E.S.S. Project – “Competences and Higher Education through Chess” – a groundbreaking EU-funded initiative awarded to the Romanian Chess Federation under the Smart Growth, Digitalization and Financial Instruments Programme 2021-2027 (PoCIDIF), officially launched on May 14th, 2026 in Bucharest, Romania.

With a total investment of 4,5 million euros, this is one of the most significant European funding achievements in the history of chess - a powerful testament to the sport's growing recognition as a tool for education, competitiveness, and digital transformation.

The project sets out to fully digitalize the operations of the Romanian Chess Federation, building a state-of-the-art integrated IT platform to streamline club management, competition organization, player affiliation, and chess education – bringing the federation's services to a new standard of excellence for hundreds of thousands of players and stakeholders.



The launching Conference of the C.E.S.S. project took place on 14th of May, in Bucharest, Romania, with two discussion panels, and special guest - former World Champion Garry Kasparov who emphasized that this is a historical moment for chess in Europe and worldwide.

*Photos by Romanian Chess Federation*

## C.E.S.S. launching Conference



The first panel discussion titled “The Digital Future of Romanian Chess”, featured key institutional leaders: President of National Sport Agency Constantin Bogdan Matei, Director of OIPSI Ana Maria Busoniu, Authority for Romania’s Digitalization – Head of Programs and Projects Department Alina Paralala, Director of the National Mint Octavian Schen, and Special Telecommunication Services representative Claudiu Ghera.

A second panel shifted the focus to global standards, exploring “International Best Practices in Chess Digitalization.” This session brought together prominent European chess leaders, including: the ECU Secretary General Mr. Theodoros Tsohatzoglou, FIDE Management Board Executive Director Mr. Victor Bologan, President of Icelandic Chess Federation Ms. Johanna Bjorg, Secretary General of Slovenian Chess Federation Ms. Nina Rob, and Secretary General of Serbian Chess Federation Ms. Bojana Bejatovic.

Detailed information about the project can be found [here](#).

# Giovanni Longo International Chess Museum opens in Marostica, Italy

The Giovanni Longo International Chess Museum was inaugurated on May 16th, 2026 in Marostica, Italy.

In the presence of around two hundred guests, the Mayor of Marostica Matteo Mozzo, the Undersecretary at the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy Mara Bizzotto, the Regional Assessor for Interregional Cooperation Marco Zecchinato, the President of the Italian Chess Federation Luigi Maggi and the President of Mitropa Chess Association Mr. Marco Biagioli.

The guest of honor was the President of the European Chess Union, Zurab Azmaiparashvili, who congratulated the city and the Italian chess community on this remarkable achievement.

After the ribbon-cutting, the attendees, including many local mayors, Italy Chess Federation executives, and figures from the worlds of culture and chess, were able to admire the exhibition, which truly impressed with the richness, quality, and variety of the items on display, including Enrico Baj's famous chess set.

"In this period of rapid growth for Italian chess, with the Federation reaching record numbers of members and affiliated clubs, we warmly welcome the opening of this Museum. It connects the present of this wonderful sport with its glorious past and gives Italy an exhibition space that highlights the inseparable bond between chess, art, and culture.", said the President of the Italian Chess Federation Mr. Luigi Maggi.



# Javokhir Sindarov and Vaishali R win Candidates Chess Tournament 2026

The FIDE Candidates Tournament 2026 and the FIDE Women's Candidates Tournament 2026 took place from 28 March to 16 April at the Cap St Georges Hotel & Resort, Peyia, Paphos, Cyprus.

Both events were played as eight-player double round-robin tournaments, with 14 rounds in each competition. The total prize fund of the events was 1M euros, with the minimum prize fund of 700,000 euros for the FIDE Candidates Tournament, and the minimum prize pool of 300,000 euros for the FIDE Women's Candidates Tournament. The Winner of the FIDE Candidates Tournament 2026 qualified for the World Chess Championship match against the reigning champion Gukesh D, while the Winner of the FIDE Women's Candidates Tournament 2026 qualified for the Women's World Chess Championship match against Ju Wenjun.

GM Javokhir Sindarov (Uzbekistan) emerged as the winner of the FIDE Candidates Tournament 2026 with the impressive score of 10 points. Sindarov went unbeaten in the tournament, and convincingly clinched the title with a round to spare. GM Anish Giri (Netherlands) came second with 8.5 points, and GM Fabiano Caruana (USA) finished third with the score of 7.5 points.



GM Vaishali Rameshababu (India) won the FIDE Women's Candidates Tournament 2026 with the score of 8.5 points. Vaishali won her last-round game against GM Kateryna Lagno (FIDE), to emerge as the sole Winner of the event, and clinch the title. GM Bibisara Assaubayeva (Kazakhstan) came second with 8 points, and GM Zhu Jiner (China) was third with 7.5 points.

Final rankings and detailed information can be found on [official website](#).

*Photos by FIDE/ Michal Waluszka & Niki Riga*



# ECU Elections 2026

The ECU General Assembly 2026 and elections will take place on Saturday, 18 July 2026, in Bucharest, Romania. By the deadline of 17th April for ECU elections 2026 the following combine tickets have been received by alphabetic order of the Presidential candidate:

## **Ticket Azmaiparashvili, Zurab**

1. President: Mr. Zurab Azmaiparashvili (GEO)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, North Macedonia and Turkey
2. Deputy President: Mr. Vlad Ardeleanu (ROM)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Romania and Moldova
3. Vice President: Mrs. Ingrid Lauterbach (GER)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Germany and Montenegro
4. Vice President: Mr. Lasse Ostebo Lovik (NOR)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Norway and Estonia
5. Secretary General: Mr. Theodoros Tsorbatzoglou (GRE)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Greece and Cyprus
6. Treasurer: Ms. Prabitha Urwyler (SUI)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Switzerland and Liechtenstein

## **Ticket : Kouatly, Bachar**

1. President: Mr. Bachar, Kouatly (FRA)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Latvia, Lithuania and Poland
2. Deputy President: Mr. Radoslaw, Jedynak (POL)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Latvia, Lithuania and Poland
3. Vice President: Mr. Loek van Wely (NED)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Latvia, Lithuania and Poland
4. Vice President: Ms. Maria, Gevorgyan (ARM)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Latvia, Lithuania and Poland
5. Secretary General: Mr. Tom Kalnins (LAT)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Latvia, Lithuania and Poland
6. Treasurer: Mr. Birger, Wenzel (GER)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Latvia, Lithuania and Poland

## **Ticket : Turlej, Lukasz**

1. President: Mr. Lukasz, Turlej (POL)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Finland, Iceland and Slovakia
2. Deputy President: Mr. Roman, Muzik (CZE)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federation of Czech Republic
3. Vice President: Mr. Jonathan O'Connor (IRL)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federation of Ireland
4. Vice President: Mrs. Katrin, Didriksen Apol (FAI)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federation of Faroe Islands
5. Secretary General: Mr. Alojzije, Jankovic (CRO)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federations of Finland, Iceland and Slovakia
6. Treasurer: Mr. Gunnar Bjornsson (ISL)  
Nominated by the National Chess Federation of Iceland

## **Important notes:**

The federation listed next to each candidate's name indicates only their membership. Nominations for each candidate, according to the ECU statutes, are individual and do not constitute endorsement of the whole tickets.

## **Individual Candidates for the 3 ECU Vice Presidents**

Sarkhan, Hashimov (AZE)  
Malcolm, Pein (ENG)  
Jean Michel, Rapaire (MNC)  
Milan, Roman (SVK)  
Antoaneta, Stefanova (BUL)

All the individual candidates have been nominated by their National Chess Federation

Detailed information about the ECU General Assembly 2026 and the ECU Elections 2026 can be found through the [ECU Website](#).

# Invitation

## European Open & Women's Club Cups 2026



*Herceg Novi, Montenegro to host European Open and Women's Chess Club Cups 2026*

European Chess Union (ECU) and Montenegro Chess Federation (MCF) have the honour to invite all the National federations affiliated to ECU to participate in the 41st European Chess Club Cup and the 30th European Chess Club Cup for Women. The events will be held in Herceg Novi, Montenegro, from 16th October (arrival day) to 24th October 2026 (departure day).

The 41st European Chess Club Cup and the 30th European Chess Club Cup for Women will be played in Hotel "Medun" 4+\*, in 7 rounds played according to the swiss system, with the time control of 90

minutes for 40 moves + 30 minutes until the end of the game, with 30-second increment for each move, starting from the move one.

The Open teams shall be composed of six players plus two reserves, with specific rules for the team members which are detailed in the official regulations of the event.

The women teams shall be composed of four players plus one reserve player. There is no restriction on the composition and all female player's license fees are waived for 2026.

The total prize fund of the Championship is 40.000 EUR, with 26.000 EUR prize pool in the Open section, and 14.000 EUR prize pool in the Women's event. The best-ranked three teams in each section will receive trophies and medals, and the best individual players for each board will receive a prize. The top 4 finishers from the European Open Chess Club Cup 2026, will qualify for the new ECU event – European Chess Super league 2027 which will be held from 2-10 February 2027. The highest rated team that is not among the top 4 finishers, will also qualify for the European Chess Super league 2027.



The official hotel and the venue of the event is \*\*\*\*Hotel Medun, located in Herceg Novi.

Every federation that intends to participate, with one or more clubs, must inform the Organizing Committee at the email [info@eccc26.me](mailto:info@eccc26.me) by 1st August, 2026 of its acceptance of the invitation, specifying the exact number of the clubs participating.

Detailed information about the event, official regulations, registration process, can be found through the [ECU Website](#).

# Invitation

## European Youth Chess Championship 2026 – Official invitation

The 2026 European Youth Chess Championship will take place from 2-13 November, 2026 in Hersonissos, Creta, Greece.

The event will be played in six age categories: U8, U10, U12, U14, U16 and U18, open and girls sections separately. Each championship will be played in 9 rounds, swiss system, with the time control of 90 minutes + 30 seconds increment per each move, starting from move one.

Each federation can register one (1) invited player in each of the categories –

under 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 and 18 (open and girls sections), and the maximum number of twelve (12) players (“invited players”). Federations can register unlimited number of extra players. The players placed 1-3 in the European Youth Chess Championship 2025 will have the personal right to participate in the championship in the corresponding age-category or a higher age-category if they fulfil the conditions that they have not reached the age of 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 or 18 years, respectively, by January 1st, 2026.

All players must register through their national federations before 21 August.

The first three players in each group will be awarded medals; the first five players in each group will be awarded cups and valuable prizes. Each participant will receive presents. Diplomas will be sent to the top five players in each group, in electronic format, after the end of the event. The Winners of each section will receive the title of the European Youth Chess Champions 2026 for the respective age category.

Detailed information about the event, registration, and official regulations can be found through the [ECU Website](#).

**EUROPEAN YOUTH CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP 2026**  
2-13 November 2026, Hersonissos, Crete, Greece

*The Championships will be played at \*\*\*\*Royal & Imperial Belvedere Resort in Hersonissos, Crete, which is also the official hotel of the event.*

# Invitation

## European Youth Rapid & Blitz Chess Championship 2026



The European Chess Union (ECU) invites all National Chess Federations of ECU to participate in the European Youth Rapid and Blitz Chess Championship 2026 under 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 and 18 years.

The event will be organised from 6 July (arrivals) to 10 July (departures) at the Podpromie Playing Hall in Rzeszow, Poland.

### European Youth Rapid Chess Championship 2026

- European Youth Rapid Chess Championship 2026 will take place on 7-8 July, 2026.
- The Championship shall be played over 9 rounds, according to the

Swiss system (one game per round).

- Rate of play: 15 minutes + 10 seconds increment per move, starting from move one.
- Categories (12 in total): Open and Girls Under 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 and 18.
- Prizes: The top three (3) players in each category shall receive trophies, medals, and prizes in kind.

### European Youth Blitz Chess Championship 2026

- European Youth Blitz Chess Championship 2026 will take place on July 9th, 2026
- The Championship shall be played over 9 rounds, according to the Swiss system (two games per round).
- Rate of play: 3 minutes + 2 seconds increment per move, starting from move one.
- Categories (12 in total): Open and Girls Under 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 and 18.
- Prizes: The top three (3) players in each category shall receive trophies, medals, and prizes in kind.

The European Youth Rapid and Blitz Chess Championship 2026 is open to all players representing European National Chess Federations and each National Federation has the right to register an unlimited number of players in each age category, provided that all players meet the eligibility criteria.



Detailed information about the registration process, tournament regulations, hotel information and contact information can be found through the [ECU website](#).

The registration deadline is 6th of June 2026.

Rzeszow, Poland



# Invitation

## European Small Nations Individual Chess Championship 2026 – Invitation

The 7th European Small Nations Individual Chess Championship and the 3rd European Small Nations Individual Women's Chess Championship will take place from Saturday, 21st of November (arrival day) to Sunday, 29th of November (departure day) in Monte-Carlo, Monaco.

Both events will have 10 players competing in 9 rounds, round-robin system. The time control of the event is 90 minutes for 40 moves + 30 minutes for the rest of the game + 30 seconds increment from move 1.

The following federations are entitled to delegate one player in each tournament: Andorra, Liechtenstein, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Faroe Islands, Malta, Guernsey, Monaco, Jersey, and San Marino.

The playing venue of the events will be Hotel NOVOTEL, which is also one of the official hotel of the Championship, alongside hotel HERMITAGE.

The Federations should complete the registration form and send it before the registration deadline – 21 September, 2026.

The event is organised with the support of Mrs. Inna Bazhenova, Mrs. Ivelina Mihaleva, Mr. Dmitry Samorukov and Mr. Evren Ucok.

Official invitation for the event, regulations, and detailed information, can be found through the [ECU Website](#).



## Chess in Future Education Conference, 13th April, Katowice (Poland)



Brigitta Peszleg, ECU Education Commission, Secretary



Keti Tsatsalashvili, Chief Growth Officer at ChessGrow and Brigitta

The International Conference brought together a diverse and forward-thinking community and created a valuable platform for dialogue across sectors to explore the role of *Chess in Education*. The



Photo: anastazja\_miketa.fotografia

## Chess in Education as a Future-Ready Competency

Panel discussion about Education, Leadership,  
and the Challenges of the Modern World

programme's quality and smooth delivery reflected the great work behind the scenes. Credit to Marlena Chlost-Warakomska, CEO of Emphie Solutions, Creator of ChessGrow & President of Akademia Szachowa Gliwice and Keti

Tsatsalashvili, Chief Growth Officer at ChessGrow, for making it happen. A well-run event with real opportunities to connect, exchange ideas, meet new people, and understand who is doing what across the field.

# ECU Education Commission

## Chess and Artificial Intelligence and Innovation in Education, 24-26 April 2026, Menorca (Spain)



Mădălina-Maria Lejean-Anuşca,  
ECU Education Commission

### ECU Education Commission members in Menorca

Pep Suárez (right), organiser of the 4th International Conference in Menorca

Mădălina-Maria Lejean-Anuşca



The International Congress on Chess, Education and AI in Menorca 2026 focused on how artificial intelligence is reshaping chess and its role in education. It brought together international experts to explore how AI

is transforming the way chess is taught and used in learning, to explore the evolving relationship between digital innovation and real classroom applications. At its core, the conference was about bridging theory and

practice, how technology and chess can work together to improve education, while still keeping the human, social and cognitive value of chess at the centre.

## Jesper Hall, the driving force behind Schack4an and ChessParty in Stockholm



Schackfyran, 16-17 April  
2026, Stockholm (Sweden)

Each year, around 25,000 fourth-grade students from over 1,000 classes take part, making it one of the largest chess competitions in the world, organised by the Swedish Chess Federation. Since its launch in 1978, it has



Jesper Hall, Chair of the ECU Education Commission

Schackfyran (Chess Four) is a unique and large-scale initiative that combines competition with strong social and educational values.

introduced chess to more than half a million 10-year-olds. What makes Schackfyran stand out is its emphasis on inclusion and collective participation. While the competitive element brings excitement, the real strength of the

project lies in its social dimension: every student contributes to the class result. Participation is encouraged across the whole class, reinforcing the idea that everyone matters & that success is shared.

# ECU Education Commission

## ChessParty, 17-18 April 2026 Stockholm (Sweden)



Caption text

### ECU Education Commission members at ChessParty

Mădălina-Maria Lejean-Anuşca,  
Philippe Vukojevic,  
Alessandro Dominici,  
Brigitta Peszleg

This huge event with around 7/8,000 people was a celebration of chess on every level. We introduced mini-games for players of all ages, including adults and experienced chess enthusiasts. Many of them

had never played mini-games before but enjoyed them, moving from one to another to try to solve each new task. They were fully engaged. We also organised a mini-game tournament, which attracted a large number



### *Introducing mini-games*

of participants, demonstrating that mini-games are not only effective educational tools for children but also provide meaningful challenge and enjoyment for adults and advanced players.

## Chess in Schools in the Czech Republic

Our aim, as the Education Commission of the European Chess Union, is to give visibility to strong and successful Chess in Education projects from different countries and Chess Federations across Europe through our ECU Chess in Education

Ambassador partnership and the ECU Chess in Education Best Practices Award initiative.

The Chess in Schools project from the Czech Republic stands out as an example of good practice. It is clearly well thought through and carefully

structured. Its success comes from a clear vision, taken seriously by the Czech Chess Federation and translated into a complete system that supports schools, teachers and pupils at every level.

[Read more](#)

ŠACHY DO ŠKOL

We proudly recognise the Czech Chess Federation's *Chess in Schools* project as a **Best Practice** example for its outstanding structure, vision and sustainable implementation.

# CONGRATULATIONS

CHESS IN SCHOOLS  
BEST PRACTICE AWARD



## The Conundrum of Running Mega Blitz Tournaments

### 1- Preamble

From all various time control events (classic, rapid, blitz) blitz events are the most challenging to manage. The reason is that in blitz you have a very tight schedule, multiple pairings towards each round so they are the most prone to mistakes. Mistakes in both receiving results and uploading them.

In classical events with one round a day, you upload the results and have plenty of time to be alerted for mistakes. In classical events you have scoresheets with signed results to crosscheck. You have none of it in blitz.

In my career as an arbiter, I ran one or two blitz events, and in this article, I wish to share my insight of formulating a minimal error experience. I'm addressing this article primarily to the Chief Arbiter of any mega blitz event.

### 2- Arbiters

This might not come as a surprise – The more arbiters you have – the better. Arbiters (and of course the Pairings Officer) should be agile. They need to run like the wind between boards. This is not an event for sitting arbiters.

Try and have the top arbiters on the top boards and assign them fewer boards than the arbiters in the lower sections. Many arbiters in a utopia. In most cases as CA you would be assigned fewer arbiters than you would like. This is what you have and with this you need to prevail.



*Text by IA Alon Shulman*  
Councilor of ECU Arbiters Council

Now, Even if your arbiter's team is small, try to have no more than 10 boards per arbiter in each of the top sections. True, all players are created equal but money talks. You try to avoid scandals in the "money games". If there is a scandal on board 978 between two unrated players, not nice but not the end of the world. On the other hand, if Magnus kicks Caruana in the head and no arbiter is present – this is a completely different painful matter.

### 3- Sections

Divide the hall into sections. I like top sections to be consist of around 10 boards each while the lower ones if needed could consist of more boards. If you are really low on arbiters, try and get volunteers to help. Anyone who knows chess can do a great job. I was many times very pleasantly surprised with volunteers (unfortunately sometimes very unhappy. I had volunteers who did great while others kept disappearing).

Another assigning format, one can consider is assigning teams of two. Here an experienced arbiter mentors a young arbiter teaching him the ropes. I often tell my arbiters "doesn't matter what happened, if you saw it – it's 99% solved".

### 4- Kings Result

Instruct the players to place the kings to indicate the result of the game. This little action will be a life saver more than you think.

True, Players are instructed to report their result to their respective arbiter, but many fail to do so. Each player may report but not surprisingly 99% of the players who do report are the winners, but some of them forget. The ability to retrieve the missing results from the kings on the boards obviates the need to track down the delinquent players. As mentioned, it's a life saver.

\*On non-electronic boards, in case of a win there is no need to place both kings in the center. One winner king is sufficient. It also makes it easier to spot the result from a distance.

### 5- Schedule

It would be beneficial for all, that you have a clear schedule in advance for all rounds. In a 3m-2s time control, allow at least 20 minutes for each round. In cases of more than 100 players maybe allow 25 or even 30 minutes between rounds. The schedule would allow players to know in advance when to report for the next round. In that case if a player finishes his game after a minute, he can leave the hall relaxed, knowing when he needs to return.

# Arbiters Corner

## 6- The First Round

Every organizer knows that the 1st round always takes longer compared to the following rounds. The first issue is players coming late. Too many organizers wait. I like to start round 1 on time as advertised. It shows respect for the punctual players and sends a message to the tardy players for future events. The tardy players may join the event on round 2. Another issue is no show players. Players who had registered but did not show up. In mega events you would not do a roll call with 400 players. So, you can apply one of 2 methods. Either allow all default wins to stand, or make an effort to pair opponentless players together.

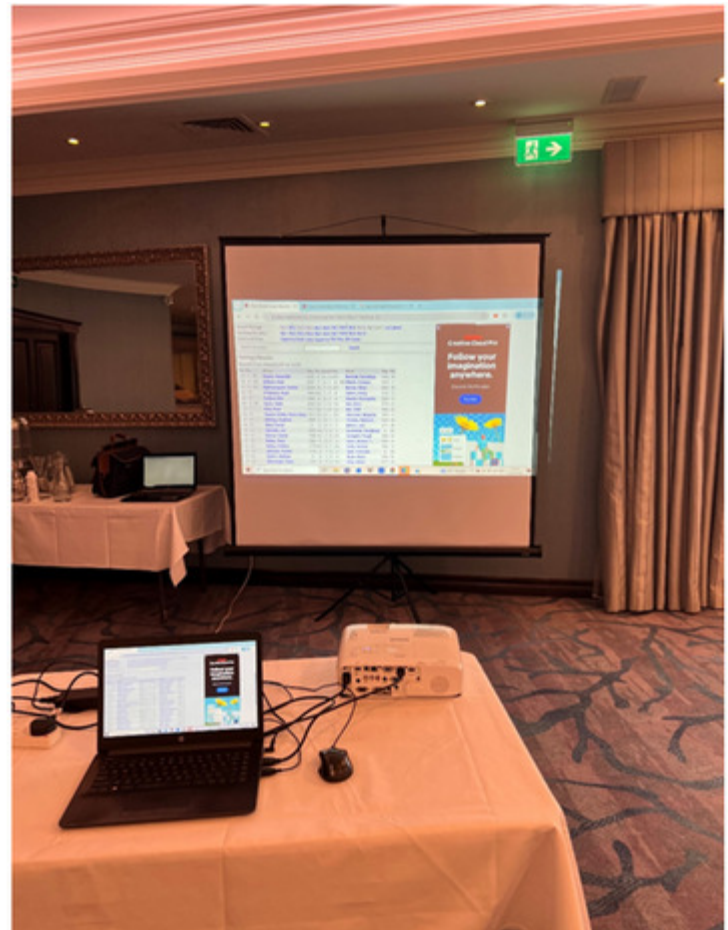
## 7- The Screen Saver

Another safety net is to project the results on a big screen in the playing hall. This would operate as a double purpose action. First, it allows you to be alerted to any result errors before the next round pairing. Secondly, it allows you to swiftly present the next round pairings without wasting time on printing the pairings and hanging them on the wall. Most players will locate their games and seat themselves accordingly. Of course, you would have some the lost sheep who can't find themselves and don't know who they are, where they are and what are they doing here. Have your laptop ready to help locate them (CTRL + G on chess-results) and direct them to their destination board.

## 8- Results online

A way to expedite the event is delivering the results online. In a perfect world it would be an advantage because the pairing officer can upload the results during the round and the process would be completed faster. However, in my opinion there is no clear call for that in blitz. While in rapid it might make sense because the pace is slower, in Blitz I would better have arbiter's eyes on the boards. We need not forget that the arbiter must also write the results on paper. Future Tablets

It would be great if all arbiters could have tablets with software connected to chess-results so they could punch the results on them online, obviating the need for paper and making PO's life easier.



## 9-Conclusion:

In mega blitz events it's close to impossible to have a mistake free event. Wrong results would be uploaded and

pairings based on erroneous results would occur - It's expected. You will have cases of a crying child flanked by a crying parent and a crying trainer complaining about a wrong result which happened 15 rounds ago. Smile, verify, fix the result, appear humble and blame them for everything.

Dear CA. Your duty is to run a smooth event and try and minimize errors as much as possible. Hope this article provides you with tools in achieving that coveted goal.

## Problem Solving Chess

Helpmates and selfmates are the two genres that don't follow the rules of classical chess and for this reason often cause hesitation, fear, or even aversion to OTB players. In this article we will deal with the helpmates. In helpmates, White collaborates with Black to deliver mate to the poor black king, who is defended by no one, not even by himself. It is the only genre where Black plays first, so for example in a helpmate-in-2 problem Black plays the first move, White then plays the first move, afterwards Black plays the second move, and finally White mates Black. In solving tournaments the solver has to write down every move in order for the solution to be complete (remember: in orthodox problems there is the n-1 writing rule, the solver has to write only until the penultimate white move). The collaboration between the two colours and the fact that moves are often multi-purpose (for example, a white move can at the same time cover a black check and pin a black piece) have a multiplicative effect on the position, which transforms drastically very fast. This makes it difficult for solvers to imagine the final position and detect where and how the black king will be mated. As a result, in helpmates the solver has to follow a different route, since the traditional way of thinking doesn't help a lot. Specifically, it isn't very productive to approach the position by examining candidate moves as you often do in chess; it is more effective to consider what the mating position might be and then try to connect the dots as to how to arrive there from the initial position. We will look at some helpmate problems from recent competitions.

On February 14th, in Helsinki, the 47th Finnish Championship took place. Kari Karhunen finished first with an almost perfect score of 59.5/60 to become champion, followed by the 2001 world championship winner Jorma Paavilainen with 51.5/60 and the Lithuanian Martynas Limontas with 48.5/60. A helpmate-in-2 with four solutions follows (Image at the bottom of the page - on the left). Short helpmates, in two or three moves, often have multiple solutions. Sometimes there is a relation between the distinct solutions, other times the solutions are independent of each other.

A week later, the Winton British Chess Solving Championship was held. Traditionally, the British Championship is one of the most prestigious competitions on the calendar; for this reason, it attracts high-class solvers from numerous countries. In the final standings, only four points separated 1st from 6th, which indicates the ferocity of the competition. The somewhat surprising winner was Joost Michielsen (NED) with 54 points out of a maximum of 65. Michielsen is an OTB IM who has recently turned to problem solving and is improving fast. Given his solid chess background and his enthusiasm for solving, more successes lie ahead of him. One point behind him, and British champion for the umpteenth time, was the evergreen three-time world champion John Nunn (in 2004, 2007, and 2010, all of them in Greece!). David Hodge, having only half a point less than Nunn, completed the podium in third place. A helpmate-in-3 from Winton follows (image at the bottom - on the right). The problem has two parts: 1) a white knight is on a2 and 2) the knight is replaced by a bishop.

**A helpmate-in-2 with four solutions from 47th Finnish Championship**



H#2 4 Solutions 4 + 6

**A helpmate-in-3 from Winton British Chess Solving Championship**



H#3 7 + 11

a) Diagram  
b) ♖a2=♗a2

On March 14th, in Nunspeet (where it is usually held), the 31st Dutch Chess Solving Championship took place. The Dutch Championship follows the format of the ISC, with two sets of six problems posed to the solvers. The winner was Eddy Van Beers from Belgium with 56/60 points, thus extending his lead in the overall standings of the World Solving Cup. He was followed by David Hodge (GBR) with 51.5 points and the two-time world champion (in 1988 and 1993) Michael Pfannkuche (GER), who gathered 39.25 points. The first Dutch solver, and this year's national champion, was Joost Michielsen, who overcame Johan de Boer by 1.25 points. You can see a helpmate-in-3 with four solutions from this competition at the bottom of the article (left). White has only two pieces surrounded by the black army but, with a little help from Black, finds four ways to mate the black king. Remember: in helpmates, Black plays first!

The 45th Azerbaijan Championship was held on the weekend of April 4-5 in Sumgait. Apart from the local solvers, there were five participants from Russia, who took five out of the first six positions. Danila Pavlov, the world's number one, dominated the event with a perfect score of 90/90 (this is not news). Junior Anton Nasyrov was second with 83 points, and Azerbaijani Araz Almammadov finished third with 82.5 points, becoming national champion. In chess solving, a solver is considered a junior if they are under 23 (U23). For example, in 2026, juniors are all solvers born in 2003 or later. Juniors can participate in solving and composing tournaments organised specifically for their age group.

We close this article with a helpmate-in-2 with four solutions which is shown on the bottom of the page on the right side. The solutions are shown below.

*Solutions (Black plays first)*

- 1 a) 1.Re3 Kb5 2.Kd3 Be2
  - 2 b) 1.Rf3 Bc4 2.Ke3 Re2
  - 3 c) 1.Ng4 Bc1 2.Ne5 R:f4
  - 4 d) 1.Ne3 Bd1 2.Nhf5 Bf3
- (Valery Kopyl, diagrammes 2010)

2) a) 1.Nb1 Bf2 2.K:f2 Nc3 3.Ke1 R:e2

b) 1.Rg7 Re4 2.K:e4 Bb1 3.Ke5 Bc3  
 (Boris Shorokhov, 1st prize diagrammes 2006) - There is an obvious relation between the two solutions, the piece which delivers mate in one solution is sacrificed in the other. In either case the black king is mated on the initial square of the piece.

3) a) 1.Nc3 Kb4 2.Ke5 Kc4 3.K:e4 Re7

- b) 1.a5 Bc6 2.Kc5 Bd5 3.Kb5 Bc4
- c) 1.K:c7 B:f5 2.Kb7 Ka4 3.Ka6 Bc8
- d) 1.Rg7 Rc8 2.Ke7 Bc6 3.Kf8 R:e8

(Volodimir Lastivka, Honourable mention Y.V. Shevchenko 80 JT, 2019)  
 The black king is mated on e4, b5, a6, and f8 — that is, in every solution, at least two squares away from its initial position!

4) a) 1.Qe2 g8=Q 2.Kf3 Qg2

- b) 1.Be6 g8=N 2.B:f5 N:f6
  - c) 1.K:f5 g8=B 2.Kg6 Bh7
  - d) 1.Kd5 g8=R 2.Qe4 Rd8
- (Kenan Velikhanov, feenschach, 2004)

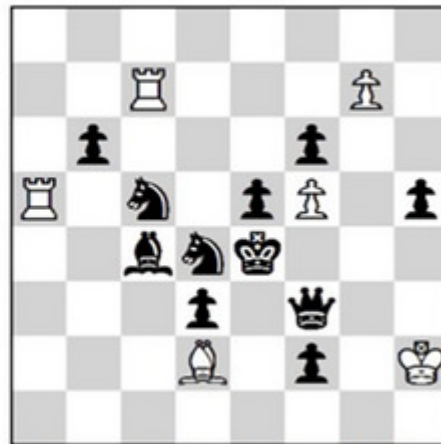
Typical helpmate with a white pawn on the 7th rank. Four variations, one for every possible promoted piece.

**A helpmate-in-3 with four solutions from 31st Dutch Championship**



H#3      4 Solutions      3 + 13

**A helpmate-in-2 with four solutions from 45th Azerbaijan Championship**



H#2      4 Solutions      6 + 11



*"Chess makes you smarter!"*