



# Online Olympiad 2020

for People with Disabilities



Lausanne, November 11, 2020

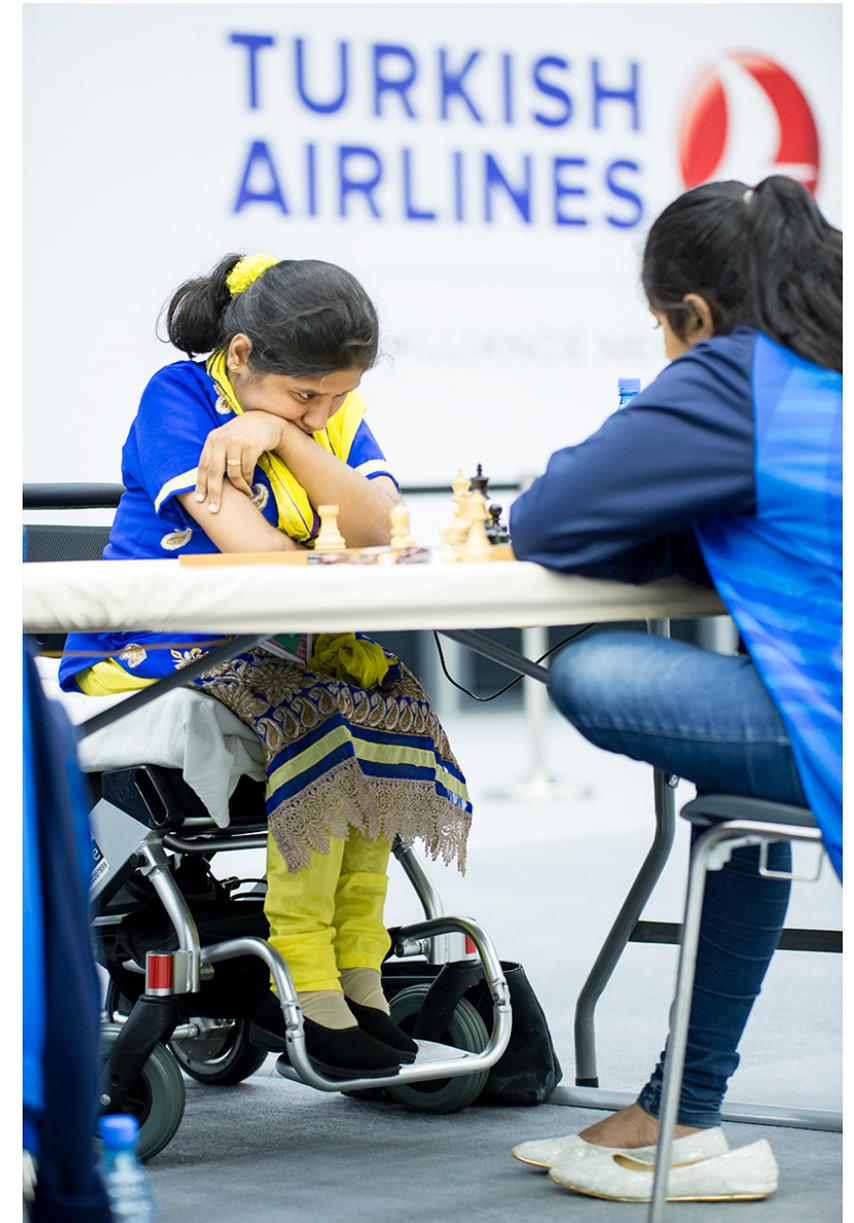
## The International Chess Federation launches the First Online Olympiad for People with Disabilities

61 teams from 45 different countries will take part in the first Online Chess Olympiad for People with Disabilities, organized by the International Chess Federation (FIDE). The event will take place from Nov 20 to Dec 3.

The final will be played on December 3, recognized by the United Nations as the International Day of of Persons with Disabilities.

The competition will gather 400 players from all over the world (including reserves). Among them, there are two participants with the Grandmaster title, the highest distinction in chess.

Poland, Germany, the Philippines, Israel, and Cuba are the favorites according to the initial rating, followed by other traditional "chess superpowers" like Russia and Ukraine.





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## Chess, a tool for inclusion

In chess, all that counts is how strong your ideas are.

Physical differences due to age and sex are not an impediment to battle over the board, and of course, this has huge implications in the case of people with physical impairments.

"I don't let my disability define who I am. I let my mind, and what I can do, define who I am", explained to CNN [Anna Miller](#), an 11-year old participant in the 2019 FIDE World Junior Championship for People with Disabilities. "Just spread the word around: chess is for anybody. Anyone can play chess: girls, boys, people with disability".

"The potential of chess is quite big, not only in terms of leisure but also in terms of meeting the need for communication, cognitive development, and expanding communication capabilities of people with impairments", explains [Irina Mikhaylova](#), an Associate Professor at the Russian State Social University in Moscow.





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“It is way to develop self-esteem and earn recognition”

Grandmaster Thomas Luther is a three-time German Champion (1993, 2002, 2006), who reached the top 100 in the world ranking. Thomas became a world-class figure in a extremely competitive field despite the added challenge of being born with a physical disability.

“Learning chess at an early age was key for me to succeed in life. The Chess Olympiad for People with Disabilities will give a voice to disadvantaged people and will also help them to develop self esteem and earn recognition. Chess is the only all-inclusive sport”, explains Thomas.

“In these events, there are people who are facing challenges in life, and they will have the opportunity to meet other people facing similar chances. So there is a lot of communication, and friendships develop among the players. The social aspects are very important.”





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## “Chess taught me to be more patient”

Taking up chess has been life-changing for many people with physical impediments: "I was more vulnerable before I started playing chess. But then I took up chess and the game made me stronger. Soon I learned to not give up after defeats, and this is one of the defining characteristics of my personality", says [Handenur Şahin](#), the Turkish Women's Champion in 2018.

Handenur, who was born with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), will defend the first board of the Turkish team at the upcoming Olympiad. "Chess also taught me to be more patient. Due to my disability, this feature of being more determined about my goals is crucial. Most things are more difficult to achieve for me and it is so important to know not to give up when you encounter any obstacle which comes from physical problems, or from other people's prejudices."





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## The first-ever inclusive sport

Chess became the first-ever inclusive sport in 1848 when, for the first time in history, a chess set was specially adapted to enable visually impaired players to recognize the position of the pieces by touching them. Theodore Tylor was among England's leading players in the 1930s, and despite being nearly blind he managed to score a draw against Alekhine and Capablanca, two of the best players in the first half of the XX century.

Currently, there are three international associations for blind players (IBCA), for physically impaired players (IPCA), and for deaf players (ICCD). Each one of them is affiliated to FIDE and, traditionally, each one of these three organizations would have a team representing them at the World Chess Olympiad.

Now, FIDE has materialized the ambitious project of organizing a dedicated Chess Olympiad exclusively for people with disabilities, to be held every two years. This event will give more players with disabilities the opportunity to compete at an international event, representing their country.



## REGISTERED TEAMS BY INITIAL RANKING

1	 Poland	21	 Spain	41	 Panama
2	 Germany	22	 Colombia	42	 Turkey 2
3	 Philippines	23	 Philippines 2	43	 India 3
4	 Israel	24	 Brazil	44	 India 4
5	 Cuba	25	 Argentina	45	 Ecuador
6	 Russia	26	 Russia 3	46	 Vietnam
7	 Ukraine	27	 Turkey	47	 Turkey 4
8	 India	28	 Belarus	48	 Zimbabwe
9	 Russia 2	29	 France	49	 Zambia
10	 North Macedonia	30	 Romania 2	50	 Malaysia
11	 Croatia	31	 Bangladesh	51	 Costa Rica
12	 Ukraine 2	32	 Turkmenistan	52	 Malaysia 2
13	 Ukraine 3	33	 Canada	53	 Mongolia
14	 Venezuela	34	 India 2	54	 Georgia
15	 Poland 3	35	 Colombia 2	55	 Nicaragua
16	 Kazakhstan	36	 Kyrgyzstan	56	 Uganda
17	 Poland 2	37	 Armenia	57	 Kenya
18	 Chile	38	 Azerbaijan	58	 El Salvador
19	 Romania	39	 United States of America	59	 Libya
20	 Hungary	40	 Turkey 3	60	 Mali
				61	 Rwanda



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## Format, facts, and figures

This is a team competition, played on four boards, where at least one of the players has to be a woman.

The event consists of two stages. The first one is a 7 round Swiss System, from which the best 4 teams will qualify to play a double-round semifinal (November 29-30). The two best teams will advance to the finals, while the two others will compete for third prize. The time control in all stages is 25 minutes + 10 seconds.

61 teams, totalling 396 players (including reserve players)

45 countries represented: 21 teams from Asia, 20 from Europe, 13 from the Americas, and 7 from Africa.

Youngest player: Nguyen Tran, from the USA, born in 2011.

Oldest player: Alfric Gomez, from France, born in 1941.



Top players:

GM Marcin Tazbir (Poland, 2513)

Alexey Smirnov (Russia, 2436)

IM Igor Yarmonov (Ukraine, 2391)

FM Stanislav Babarykin (Russia, 2387)



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With the aim of popularizing chess education, promoting chess culture, and exploring chess talents, Pengcheng chess club is one of the leading chess club in China since 2005. Sponsoring the competition is not only to give back to the chess community, but also to enhance the friendship with other countries and expand the influence of Shenzhen.



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<https://dis.fide.com>

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