

ECF COUNCIL October 2020 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REPORT

The table below summarises the number of ECF members and supporters at the date of preparation of this report compared to the numbers at the same date last year.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL ANALYSIS

Category	<i>19 Sep 19</i> Total	19 Sep 20 Total	19 Sep 20 New
Junior Bronze	29	18	0
Junior Silver (Free)	209	182	182
Junior Silver (paid)	1003	944	15
Junior Gold	574	434	6
Junior Platinum	9	6	0
Total Junior	1824	1584	203
Bronze	1903	1241	58
Silver	1312	815	17
Gold	1544	1134	11
Platinum	67	88	4
Lifetime	34	33	0
Supporter	12	211	66
Total Adult	4872	3522	156
Grand Total	6696	5106	359
Total Paid	6453	4891	177

The following points should be noted:

- The *19 Sep 20 New* column gives an estimate of the number of members included in the *19 Sep 20 Total* column who were not members in 2019-20. This figure is likely to be slightly overstated due to members rejoining with a new membership number rather than renewing on their existing number. Where we become aware of this the records are merged on the membership database, but for technical reasons the count shown above may continue to show them as new.
- Supporter category is not available to juniors, as the silver membership category gives potentially more benefits at a lower cost. This is the probable explanation of the proportionately higher renewal rates in the junior categories.
- The number of Supporters is significantly lower than projected. This could be seen as good news: while it suggests that we have not managed to attract a significant number of purely online players into this category it does suggest that a significant proportion of members playing in online events have rejoined in their existing category rather than taking advantage of the fact that they are only playing online to downgrade.

Unfortunately the figures taken at face value show an unjustifiably optimistic picture. A more detailed analysis shows that new memberships are currently running at around 100 per week, but that the rate is decreasing exponentially with a half-life of around a week. In 2019 the renewal rate during September was steady at around 500 per week. This bears out my prediction that those members who were willing to renew in order to support the Federation despite lack of real benefit would be likely to do so before their existing membership expired, and that once we got into September the number of members was likely to remain static until such time as over-the-board chess resumes. It therefore appears that while over-the-board chess is in abeyance we may well achieve no more than about 5500 members, which is roughly 45% of last year's total.

Dave Thomas
ECF Director of Membership