

Keeping new and less experienced players “active”

(Data as of 31 July 2026)

We have a way to distinguish relatively new or at least less experienced players from others on the server: using unfixed ratings (that is, ratings based on < 30 rated games).

Historically, we know many of these players stop their ICCF participation prior to obtaining fixed ratings. To assess if different MFs are successful in maintaining these players' participation, I investigated the complete set of active* players with unfixed ratings. The question posed was “**How many of these players have been playing within the past 6 months?**” My quest was to find which MFs are doing something particularly well for the rest of us to emulate.

[* Active means the person has either not made a move for 2 consecutive calendar years - a time ranging from 2 to 3 years – or the person is recorded to have died.]

FINDINGS

Key: > 20 players with > 80%-71% retention rate (column E) [GER & NED: Our best!]

Key: > 20 players with > 49%-43% retention rate (column E) [BRA & FRA & ESP]

	COLUMN A TOTAL # ACTIVE WITH UNFIXED RATING	COLUMN B MADE A MOVE WITHIN THE PAST 6 MONTHS	COLUMN C LAST MOVE WAS MORE THAN 6 MONTHS AGO	COLUMN D PLAYED ONLY POSTAL (P) OR HAS NEVER MADE A MOVE (N)**	COLUMN E COMPARISON OF COLUMN B VERSUS COLUMNS B+C (Retention rate for server players)
ARG	2	2	0	0	100%
AUS	19	6	8	5 P	32%
AUT	5	3	2	0	60%
BEL	8	3	5	0	38%
BRA	41	19	20	2 N	49%
BUL	3	1	2	0	33%
CAN	15	5	9	1 N	36%
CHI	5	1	4	0	20%
CRO	3	1	2	0	33%
CUB	18	7	11	0	39%
CZE	8	1	5	1 P + 1 N	17%
DEN	1	1	0	0	100%
ECU	1	1	0	0	100%
ENG	45	8	34	1 P + 2 N	19%
ESP	24	10	13	1 N	43%
EST	1	0	1	0	0%

FIN	9	2	6	1 N	25%
FRA	25	10	12	3 N	45%
GER	101	75	19	5 P + 2 N	80%
GRE	16	4	12	0	25%
GUA	0	0	0	0	----
HUN	6	1	4	1 N	20%
ISL	0	0	0	0	----
IND	29	5	15	10 N	25%
INA	4	2	2	0	50%
IRL	4	3	1	0	75%
ISR	4	1	3	0	25%
ITA	66	19	47	0	29%
JAP	1	1	0	0	100%
LAT	1	0	1	0	0%
LTU	5	2	3	0	40%
LUX	3	2	1	0	67%
MEX	39	9	26	1P +3 N	26%
NED	22	15	6	1 N	71%
NZL	3	1	2	0	33%
NIC	2	0	1	1 N	0%
NOR	2	2	0	0	100%
PAN	0	0	0	0	----
PER	1	0	1	0	0%
PHI	36	8	25	3 N	24%
POL	62	21	40	1 N	34%
POR	8	0	5	3 N	0%
ROU	5	0	5	0	0%
SCO	3	0	2	1 P	0%
SVK	2	2	0	0	100%
SLO	2	0	2	0	0%
RSA	1	0	1	0	0%
SWE	7	3	4	0	43%
SUI	7	2	4	1 N	33%
TUR	6	1	5	0	17%
USA	402	148	231	2P+21 N	39%
UKR	8	4	3	1 N	57%
WLS	12	1	9	1 P + 1 N	10%

** The postal (P) numbers seemed too small (16 in total) to combine with server numbers meaningfully. The designation of “never” (N) included numerous FIDE players who gained access to our game database without ever intending to play in the ICCF. Including these numbers in the analysis would therefore be misleading.