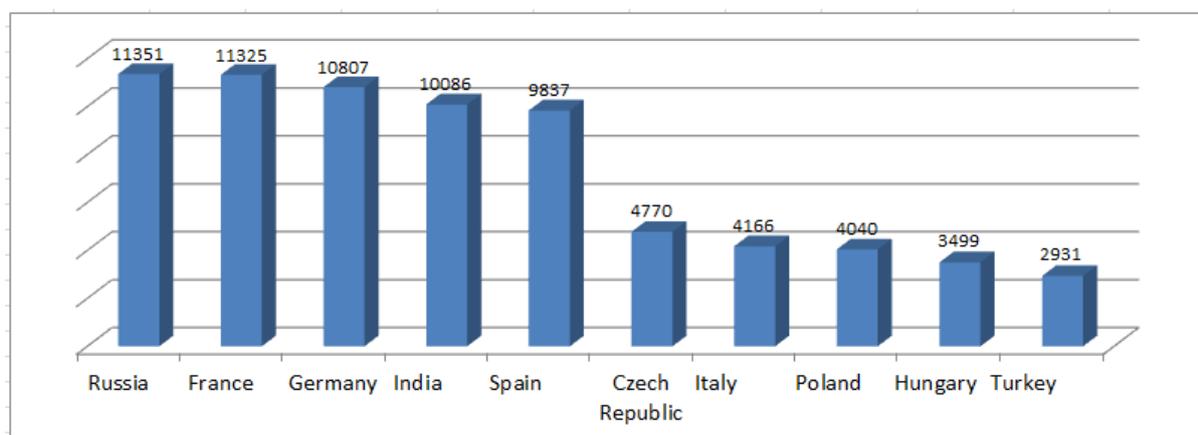


One of the things that fascinate me is statistics. What it reveals, what trends can be discerned and of course what future predictions can be made or offered for discussion. The FIDE Development Commission Meeting came up with a brilliant document in which it analysed a number of aspects. I have studied the document and now discern from there matters which I think my readers may find interesting.

1. FIDE has 189 FIDE members. Of these, 16 do not have any FIDE rated active players. I am of course assuming without knowing that many may be found in Africa. So it may just be that we need to start travelling compatriots!

2. The country with the most FIDE rated active players: let's have a look



So that's the top ten. I didn't realise France was so active and of course China is completely absent in the top ten (and even in the top twenty). In Africa the picture appears to be:

- |                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| 1. Egypt        | 787 |
| 2. South Africa | 388 |
| 3. Algeria      | 242 |
| 4. Tunisia      | 192 |
| 5. Kenya        | 157 |

So Egypt has 400 more FIDE Active players than South Africa; this would explain their depth in strength and the fact that they consistently produce top players winning the African Championships in both men and women. We need to broaden our pool quantitatively and qualitatively.

3. FIDE titled players

The top countries are

- |            |      |
|------------|------|
| 1. Russia  | 2398 |
| 2. Germany | 1282 |
| 3. USA     | 696  |
| 4. Serbia  | 582  |

5. Spain	560
6. Ukraine	528
7. Hungary	450
8. France	397
9. Poland	366
10. The Netherlands	327

The note from FIDE states: "Russia is clearly dominating. Russia and Germany are the only federations having more than 1000 titled players. This category shows the chess tradition and we cannot expect fast and substantial changes". The total number of FIDE titled players is 16 638. In Africa the picture looks like this:

1. South Africa	128
2. Egypt	68
3. Algeria	58
4. Tunisia	39
5. Morocco	32.

Africa has 570 FIDE titled players in total that represents 3% of the FIDE total. So this graph shows something interesting. South Africa has nearly double the number of titled players above Egypt but Egypt is succeeding in making the titles qualitative! We need to debate whether it is in our interest to send players to every international event as the Egyptians tend to skip events or age categories where their players will not be able to challenge for titles and appear to invest in further training and development rather than trying to show a lowly title that will not assist the player or country.

#### 4. FIDE GM Titles

1. Russia	232
2. USA	90
3. Germany	89
4. Ukraine	88
5. Serbia	54
6. Hungary	52
7. France	48
8. Spain	47
9. Israel	41
10. Poland	40

Russia is once again dominating and is the only federation having more than 200 grandmasters. The total number of FIDE grandmasters is 1557 as at 1 September 2016. In Africa the picture is:

1. Egypt	5
2. Algeria	2
3. Tunisia	2
4. Zambia	1

## 5. South Africa 1

101 out of 189 FIDE members have no Grandmaster. Africa has in total only 11 grandmasters. Europe totalling 1189 Grandmasters have a 76% share? Egypt can basically field an all Grandmaster line up if all their players are available. They have a number of talented international masters who are poised to obtain their grandmaster title. We need to start our own conveyor belt in this regard. We have the Daniel Cawdreys and Mohammed Steeles and Watu Kobeses. Can we not push them hard so that they too can get their grandmaster titles?

## 5. WGM titles

Russia. 65  
Ukraine 30  
China. 25  
Georgia. 25  
Germany 18  
USA. 17  
Poland. 16  
Serbia 15  
Hungary 14  
India 14

Russia again dominates and is the only country with more than 20 women grandmasters. The total number of FIDE women grandmasters as at 1 September 2016 is 415. In Africa we have :

Egypt. 2  
Botswana 1  
South Africa 1

Africa has four women grandmasters whilst Europe totalling 313 had 75% of all women grandmasters.

## 6. FIDE Open events

1. Russia	1201
2. France	956
3. Italy	564
4. Spain	526
5. Germany	481
6. Czech Republic	467
7. Poland	402
8. Hungary	370
9. Greece	312
10. Slovakia	295

Europe dominates in all respects in this category. Russia had over 1000 open events in 2015. Europe with over 8543 events represents 79 % of FIDE events. In Africa the situation was:

1. Morocco 26
2. Tunisia 23
3. Kenya 23
4. Egypt 23
5. South Africa 22

So a close race between the various African countries. Of course South Africa has the ability to easily host more but the rand euro exchange is of course a concern. We can however position ourselves to host more FIDE events.

These statistics make revealing reading. We need as a country to review our mission and vision statement and then operationalise the implementation of our vision. Yes we have the highest rated number of FIDE titled players in Africa but it doesn't translate into quality titles such as Grandmasters and International Masters. We need to dig deep to check what we need to do to support our players and chess in general. Europe has it down to a fine art. They have strongly organised events and many events spread across many countries. We also need to ensure that our players can travel easily and thus strengthen chess across the country and continentally.

Regards

Dr Lyndon Bouah