CHESS - FDC – CATALOGUE 2026

MANUAL FOR THE 2ND EDITION



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The illustrations in this catalogue are used exclusively for documentary and philatelic purposes.

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Chess Philately Catalogue FDCs

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2. FOREWORD/PERMISSION FOR USE

With this second edition of the Chess FDC Catalogue, this free reference guide (User Handbook) is offered to every collector. It is recommended to read this manual before using the catalogue.

The catalogue is NOT intended to provide the collector with a complete list of all philatelic items featuring a chess stamp and a matching date stamp. In particular, items containing neither an illustration nor a chess-themed postmark have—with a few historical exceptions—not been included in the catalogue.

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3. INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILATELIC FIELD OF FIRST DAY COVERS

3.1. WHAT CHARACTERIZES A CHESS FIRST DAY COVER?

A First Day Cover (FDC) ideally consists of three components:

1. A chess stamp (an absolute must!)
2. A postmark dated the day of the chess stamp's issuance (an absolute must!)
3. An illustration on the envelope, ideally featuring a reference to the occasion of the chess stamp(s) issuance.

Note:

Other chess-related philatelic items with a postmark date that does not correspond to the issue date of the stamp in question are not listed in this catalogue, but rather in the chess postmark catalogue.

3.2. ADDITIONAL NOTES

3.2.1. GENERAL

The aforementioned components are present on all "good" First Day Covers (FDCs)—but certainly not on all of them. This occasional significant discrepancy has raised the question of which FDCs should be included in this Catalogue and which should not. It is often difficult to determine whether FDCs are of an official nature or are privately produced.

Is the Catalogue complete? Certainly not! Given the sheer volume of material, it is virtually impossible to register every single FDC. However, the present Catalogue has been coordinated with experienced collectors and is based—among other things—on a nearly daily review of all listings available on the internet.

3.2.2. STAMPS

It does not always make sense to display every issued stamp on a First Day Cover (FDC). If the same stamp exists in both perforated and imperforate versions on otherwise identical envelopes, listing both would amount to a waste of catalogue space. Wherever possible, this practice was avoided; instead, a note was added indicating that FDCs featuring both types of the stamp exist.

Then there are issues where multiple stamps were released side-by-side (e.g.,



Laos, April 13, 1984). In such cases, it makes no sense to depict each stamp individually on a separate, identical envelope; instead, this feature is highlighted by showing all the stamps belonging to the set.

However, there are certainly issues where such "duplicate" illustrations help the collector navigate the maze of issued First Day Sheets (ETBs).

In this context, mention must also be made of so-called "agent stamps," which are rightly regarded as "semi-official" and "abusive." Their representation in the catalogue is limited.

3.2.3. POSTAL STATIONERY (PS)

Chess postal stationery items meet the criteria for inclusion in the catalogue on the same basis. The imprinted stamps are treated as equivalent to adhesive stamps, as they also possess a specific postage value.

However, one rule does not apply in every instance: since the date of issue for a postal stationery item cannot always be determined precisely, a (slight) discrepancy with the postmark may occur.

3.2.4. MAXIMUM CARDS (MAX)

Even from a historical perspective, MAXs are not "genuine" FDCs. The majority are issued privately and without official oversight.

According to our research, most of the items produced do not meet the necessary criteria to be considered MAXs at all.

Sources:

“SPECIAL REGULATIONS FOR THE EVALUATION OF MAXIMAPHILY EXHIBITS AT FIP EXHIBITIONS” (August 28, 2019).

“Arbeitsgemeinschaft Maximaphilie & Philokratie (AMPh) im Bund Deutscher Philatelisten e. V.” http://www.maximaphilie.de/

However, so as not to leave the interested collector entirely on their own, we have included those maximum cards as "FDCs" that meet all the criteria for a high-quality maximum card.

How did we make our selection?

In maximaphily, a maximum card must meet specific criteria. We distilled these rather complex requirements into 10 facts that a maximum card must satisfy to qualify for inclusion in the catalogue. All 10 conditions must be met.

1.1. The card must feature an official chess-themed postage stamp recognized by the Universal Postal Union.

1.2. The stamp must be affixed to the picture side of the card.

1.3. Only a single stamp may be affixed.

2.1. The card must feature an illustration that thematically reflects the image on the stamp.

2.2. The card may contain only one illustration.

2.3. The standard format for maximum cards must be adhered to.

3.1. The postmark must be official.

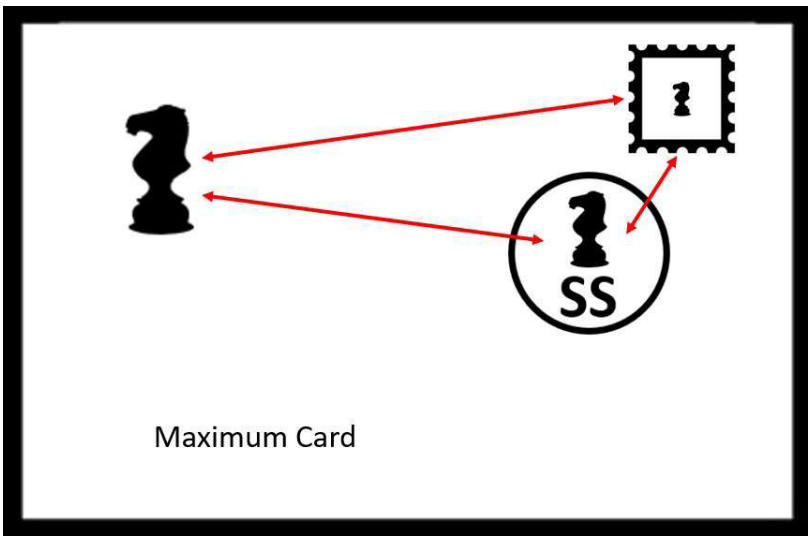
3.2. The postmark must feature a chess motif.

3.3. The postmark must be temporally close to the occasion of the stamp's issue.

3.4. There may be only one postmark on the card.

Out of 244 collectible items, only 58 met these 10 criteria. Consequently, nearly 200 items marketed as maximum cards were listed as postcards in the catalogue.

Maximum cards are accompanied in the catalog by the following logo:



Maximum Card

3.2.5. COUNTERFEITS

Forgeries are a vexing issue. We classify as such any FDCs that were privately produced after the stamp's date of issue. Whenever we are aware of such items, they are not listed in our Catalogue.

An exception to this rule involves FDCs from Bulgaria dated September 29, 1947. It is a known fact that no official FDCs were issued on that date; consequently, all such FDCs currently on the market are of a private nature—and were often produced years later. In the case of these specific "FDCs," we explicitly draw attention to this circumstance in order to protect collectors from making erroneous purchases.

3.2.6. POSTMARKS

Featured here are:

(1) special postmarks containing references to the specific chess-related occasion of the issue;

(2) special postmarks relating to other occasions, but bearing the corresponding issue date of the stamp(s); and

(3) standard daily postmarks. These are listed only when, in conjunction with an illustration, they serve a specific philatelic purpose. In other words: A cover bearing a chess stamp and a (non-chess) daily postmark dated on the day of issue—but lacking any additional illustration—is not catalogued.

Chess daily postmarks are presented in the Catalogue in two ways:

- As images derived from First Day Covers; or
- As images created using "artificial intelligence" (AI) based on the aforementioned models. In the Catalogue, these generated images are identified by the designation "AI" located in the bottom right corner of the postmark image.
- Images marked with "AI" are clean drawings created based on original impressions, with the assistance of artificial intelligence. They serve to enhance the legibility of the postmark motifs and do not replace the documentation of the original impressions.
- Their creation was based on existing original images, subject to philatelic verification and correction. In this process, texts, dates, place names, and graphic details were verified against the original source material—and corrected where necessary—to the greatest extent possible.
- The "AI" designation serves the purpose of transparency, enabling the reader to distinguish between original images and reconstructed clean drawings.

Since an AI cannot do everything, you may notice occasional deviations from the original stamp. In this context, it should also be noted that—for instance—graphically generated Arabic, Indian, or Asian characters could not be verified for plausibility. These texts therefore truly represent AI-generated final artwork or graphics.

3.2.7. ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustrations do not always relate to the specific occasion for which a chess stamp was issued. It is frequently the case that, instead, they provide only a general reference to chess - e.g., through a chess symbol. However, entirely non-chess-related motifs also find their way into the Catalogue, as covers featuring chess motifs are often simply unavailable. This occurs quite frequently when chess stamps have been issued in the context of a non-chess-related event.

First Day Covers (FDCs) that bear nothing more than the stamp itself and the date stamp from the day of issue—and consequently lack any illustration—can be produced by anyone; for this reason, whenever possible or appropriate, we refrain from cataloguing these minimalist FDCs.

3.3. HISTORICAL ASPECTS

Source: Wikipedia

The first "First Day Cover" appeared in the United States of America around the 1920s; for at least a decade thereafter, collectors wishing to obtain a cancellation on the first day of a stamp's issue became accustomed to receiving an illustration—often featuring one or more colours—on the left side of the envelope.

Noting the unexpected proliferation of this new form of collecting—and the substantial financial revenue it generated—the U.S. postal administration prepared an innovation designed to offer interested parties a service that would better address their specific requests and needs.

By providing collectors with an annual schedule of new postal issues, the postal service also announced the specific location designated for special cancellations on the occasion of each new release—or, at the very least, the location where postal items could be postmarked with the date of the issue day. In addition, first-day cancellations were also performed in Washington, D.C., the capital of the United States.

The selection of this specific post office for the first-day cancellation was determined by the postal administration based on the theme of the new postal

issue or the associated historical, social, or other significant event. This approach allowed for the release of the new stamp to take place within the context of a commemorative ceremony. Furthermore, this strategy enabled the postal ministry to engage with local authorities as well as philanthropic, cultural, and sports organizations.

This new type of envelope—embellished with a commemorative stamp or a special postmark on the first day of issue at a location designated by the postal authorities—came to be known as a "First Day Cover," or alternatively by the initials F.D.C.

The designation of a specific city for the first day of issue subsequently introduced no further innovations regarding the official components of the envelope; that is to say, the stamp and the special postmark remained unchanged.

The distinctive format of these envelopes resulted from the fact that they were manufactured using sheets of paper whose dimensions had been calculated according to imperial measurements.

The format of these white envelopes was designated the "American Standard Size"—corresponding roughly to 9.5 x 16.5 centimetres—and has since become the classic format for First Day Covers.

From 1932 to 1935, this new form of collecting crossed the ocean and reached Europe, where the first collectors were Britains and Scandinavians.

Thanks to extensive exchange with collectors in the New World, First Day Covers gained prominence and spread rapidly—even among the philatelic commercial players of the Old World, who saw in them a new opportunity to expand their sphere of commercial activity.

In the period leading up to the Second World War, the practice of collecting First Day Covers had gained worldwide significance among thousands of enthusiasts.

Following the rapid spread of this form of collecting, several companies emerged on the American market—though it remains unclear which was the first—that commissioned renowned artists to create sketches designed to relate as closely as possible to the themes of the new stamp issues. These designs were intended to be printed directly onto the envelopes—a practice

inspired by the example of numerous collectors who personally decorated their envelopes by hand.

These same envelope publishers subsequently affixed the new postage stamps to the covers and arranged for them to be officially postmarked on the first day of issue—either with the First Day of Issue cancellation from the city of origin or with the Washington, D.C. cancellation—before making them available to their customers.

This approach—which spared collectors the waste of both time and risk—immediately fulfilled a useful function and quickly established itself as the "First Day City Cover Service," as it ensured the secure delivery of valuable First Day Covers to collectors.

These same publishers also sold the plain illustrated envelopes (i.e., without the service) to those who preferred to arrange the First Day cancellation personally.

With the inception of the F.D.C. Service, First Day Covers appear to have completed their evolutionary process; indeed, following this latest innovation, it can be said that—alongside their distinct philatelic and historical postal significance—the value of their artistic and typographic presentation must now also be taken into account.

At the conclusion of this brief historical overview regarding the origin and development of the First Day Cover, two key points can be noted:

- The First Day Cover first appeared in the United States, where the subsequent phases of its refinement also took place.

- Ideally, the classic First Day Cover should be produced on a white, illustrated envelope of American standard size and bear the First Day of Issue postmark from locations designated by the postal administration.

3.4. ADDITIONS TO THE FDC HISTORY

3.4.1. NETHERLANDS

In the Netherlands, the term "First Day Covers" generally refers to the special envelopes that have been issued since 1950 by the Dutch Association of Stamp Dealers (NVPH). In addition to the new stamp, these envelopes are elaborately decorated with a corresponding design or illustration, as well as a postmark imprint created exclusively for that specific occasion.

In this context, two requirements apply for an envelope to qualify as an official First Day Cover:

- The postmark must bear the inscription "First Day of Issue," and
- the postmark must be applied to every stamp affixed to the envelope.

However, because such an envelope is produced for every new stamp issue, many philatelists no longer participate; keeping up with all the new releases requires a significant financial investment. Furthermore, these envelopes are not purely philatelic in nature, as they are "manufactured" by the trade. They can no longer be sent through the mail as actual letters. Yet, as examples of philatelic craftsmanship, some people find them beautiful and worthy of collection.

In the past, they were sometimes referred to as "First Day Letters." However, starting in the 1960s, First Day envelopes were increasingly purchased through the stamp trade—specifically to obtain blank envelopes. And an envelope without an address is simply not a letter. In most countries, including the Netherlands, however, the generally accepted English term "First Day Cover"—abbreviated as FDC—is now used with increasing frequency.

In the past, it was possible to address First Day envelopes and have them delivered via the postal service. In the 1990s, the Dutch PTT—the postal authority at the time—discontinued this practice.

3.4.2. SPAIN

A "Sobre Primer Día" (SPD) is an envelope bearing stamps that have been cancelled on their first day of issue. Depending on the policies of the country issuing the stamp, an official "First Day of Issue" postmark may be applied to envelopes weeks or months after the indicated date.

An unofficial first-day cancellation is deemed to have occurred when a stamp collector purchases the stamps in question from a post office in the city of issue on the first day of release and then (on the same day) takes them to a post

office of their choice—even in a different city—to have them cancelled; or when the stamps are affixed to envelopes that are entered into the mail stream on the first day of issue and receive a standard postmark.

Postal authorities may hold a release ceremony to promote a new issue, during which postal officials unveil the stamp in the presence of individuals associated with the subject—such as descendants of the person depicted on the stamp—and special guests. The ceremony may also take place at a location connected to the stamp's theme, such as a birthplace, or as part of a philatelic exhibition.

3.4.3. FRANCE

In light of trends in stamp collecting, postal administrations have organized promotional events where stamps can be cancelled using a special postmark. The post office offering this cancellation service is frequently located in a city associated with the stamp's theme.

In France, this event most commonly takes place on the Saturday and Sunday preceding the stamp's official release in post offices.

Example of a "First Day" cancellation

Postal administrations and philatelic publishers produce First Day Covers. These feature:

- the new postage stamp, which has been cancelled by
- the (special) First Day cancellation—which often bears a design related to that of the stamp itself—and
- on the left side of the envelope, a printed or embroidered illustration reflecting the theme of the cancellation.

In their sales Catalogues, some dealers refer to these envelopes using the English abbreviation: FDC, standing for First Day Cover.

Based on this same concept, postcards are also sold as "Maximum Cards," in which the card itself, the postmark, and the illustration all share a common theme. Depending on the postal administration, philatelic notices and documents—cancelled with a First Day of Issue postmark—may also be offered for sale.

During First Day of Issue events, collectors have the opportunity to create their own mailings; the postal service then handles the envelopes, cancelling them with the official First Day of Issue postmark.

Occasionally, new stamps have been used prior to their official First Day of Issue—either because they were sold prematurely by inattentive postal clerks or, in some instances, because they were stolen. Such stamps bearing a legible date cancellation are, naturally, in high demand—provided it can be verified that a specific post office issued them in advance of the official release date.

4. INTRODUCTION TO THE SECRETS OF THE CATALOGUE

With the second edition of this Catalogue, an expanded registry of chess FDCs is presented. In total, it comprises just over 1,700 collectible items—approximately 500 more than in the first edition. The discovery of these "new" items took place over a period of five years and was possible on this scale only thanks to the selfless assistance of several fellow collectors, who sent me numerous images from their extensive collections.

In contrast to the first edition, the determination of comparative values is now carried out in an updated format.

This project is undertaken with the hope that the Catalogue will reach a wide audience, and that anyone who reviews it and discovers errors will draw my attention to such shortcomings and be willing to help fill any gaps. The latter can be done quite simply by sending me a high-quality image file. To do so, please send an email with a JPG attachment to:

info@chessstamps.com

Chess Philately Catalogue FDCs

The Catalogue is kept as up-to-date as possible; even the First Day Covers (FDCs) released in February 2026 have already been included.

4.1. CATALOGUE FILES

The Catalogue is referred to as an "ebook" (electronic book) and consists of numerous files in PDF format.

The filenames of the lists provide indications of their content and sorting:

- A LONG list contains nearly all available information, but is consequently very extensive (1 FDC per page).
- A SHORT list contains only specific information, but allows for a quick overview.
- VALUATION lists display partial information regarding the valuation of an FDC.
- ILLUSTRATION lists focus on the images depicted on the FDCs.

Chess Philately Catalogue FDCs

CHESS PHILATELY CATALOGUE "FDCs"	Pages	File Size Kb
110_GB_FDCs_byCountry_Date_SHORT_V2.00	620	38.720
120_GB_FDCs_byCountry_Date_EXTRA_SHORT_V2.00	208	52.839
130_GB_FDCs_byDate_SHORT_V2.00	620	39.068
140_GB_FDCs_byCountry_Date_Agents_SHORT_V2.00	21	5.207
150_GB_FDC_PostCards_byCountry_Date_SHORT_V2.00	45	11.350
160_GB_FDC_PostCards_byDate_SHORT_V2.00	45	11.350
210_GB_FDCs_byCountry_Date_LONG_V2.00	1.861	80.950
220_GB_FDCs_byDate_LONG_V2.00	1.861	80.950
310_GB_FDCs_AlbumPages_DIN_A4_V2.00	1.853	56.610
320_GB_FDCs_CHECK_YOUR_GAPS_byCountry_Date_V2.00	125	69.704
330_GB_FDCs_CHECK_YOUR_GAPS_byDate_V2.00	125	69.704
340_GB_PostCards_CHECK_YOUR_GAPS_byCountry_Date_V2.00	18	8.185
410_GB_Evaluation_byCountry_Date_SHORT_V2.00	99	1.167
420_GB_Evaluation_byCountry_Date_LONG_V2.00	308	28.000
430_GB_Evaluation_byComparisonValue_V2.00	99	1.192
440_GB_Estimation_byMarketValue_V2.00	99	1.184
900_GB_Illustrations_ALL_byCountry_Date_V2.00	208	41.868
901_GB_Illustrations_Yugoslavia_19500820_V2.00	1	501
902_GB_Illustrations_Neth. Antilles_19620502_V2.00	3	276
903_GB_Illustrations_SanMarino_19650828_V2.00	1	522
904_GB_Illustrations_Iceland_19720702_V2.00	2	350
905_GB_Illustrations_Berlin_19721005_V2.00	1	487
906_GB_Illustrations_Germany_19721005_V2.00	2	753
907_GB_Illustrations_France_19740806_V2.00	2	502
908_GB_Illustrations_GB_19760929_V2.00	1	688
909_GB_Illustrations_Malta_19801120_V2.00	1	208
910_GB_Illustrations_Italy_19810504_V2.00	1	378
911_GB_Illustrations_GB_19890516_V2.00	2	239
912_GB_Illustrations_GB_19930202_V2.00	1	237
913_GB_Illustrations_Algeria_20040720_V2.00	1	273
901-913_GB_Illustrations_Summary_V2.00	20	5.400
1000_GB_FDCs_Catalogue_Manual_V2.00	66	4.185
	8.320	**608.862**

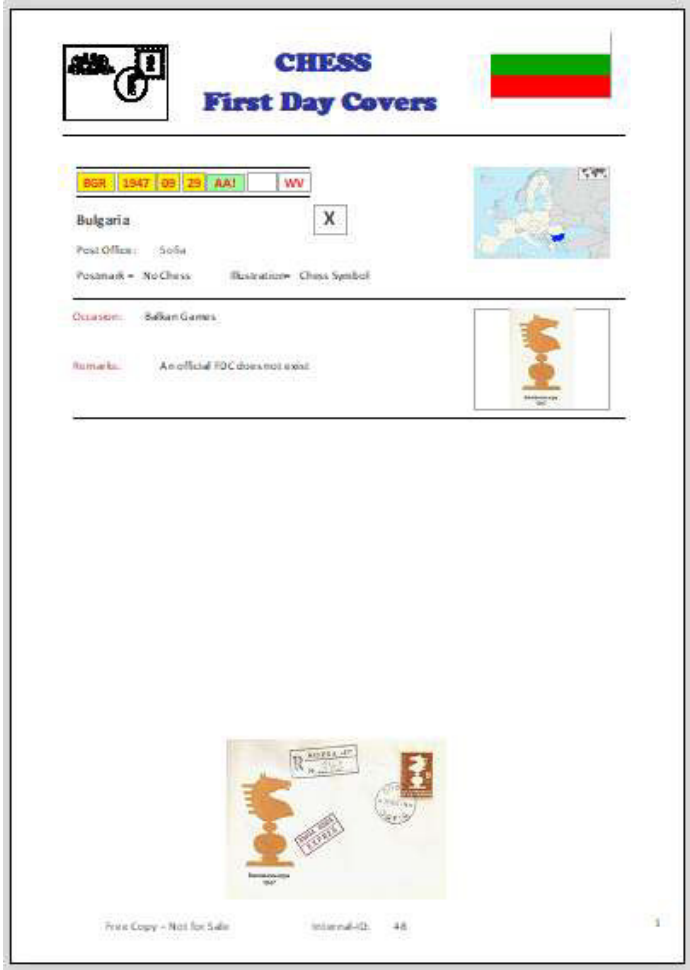
4.2. EXTENSIVE ISSUES

The database underlying this Catalogue contains just over 1,830 FDCs. The following overview (comprising the first 12 of a total of 436 aggregated records) clearly demonstrates that, in some cases, there is a very large number of FDCs associated with a single issue (as of Sep, 30 2026):

Land	Country	Issue	Number
Großbritannien	Great Britain	29.09.1976	68
Malta	Malta	20.11.1980	64
Deutschland	Germany FRG*	05.10.1972	64
Großbritannien	Great Britain	16.05.1989	61
Algerien	Algeria	20.07.2004	53
San Marino	San Marino	28.08.1965	50
Jugoslawien	Yugoslavia*	20.08.1950	42
Island	Iceland	02.07.1972	34
Italien	Berlin*	04.05.1981	27
Berlin	Italy	05.10.1972	27
Frankreich	France	08.06.1974	26
Großbritannien	Great Britain	02.02.1993	23
Niederländ. Antillen	Netherlands Antilles	02.05.1962	21

This gives rise to the need to provide a brief overview of the most extensive issues, in order to showcase the variety of illustrations. To this end, we have presented these 13 issues separately. You will find these lists under numbers 901–913.

4.3. ALBUM PAGES

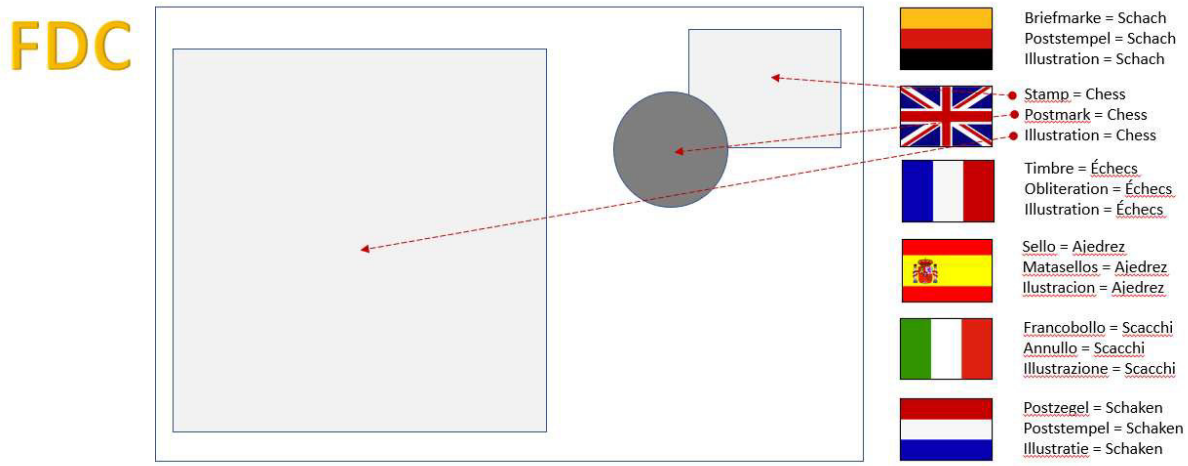


We also wish to offer support to those collectors who do not (yet) possess suitable album pages for their FDC collection. The Catalogue lists include an option to print a dedicated Catalogue page for each individual FDC. This page (DIN A4 format) can be inserted into a plastic sleeve. A blank space is provided in the lower section of the sheet specifically for the FDC. In this way, the plastic sleeves can be utilized for double-sided display.

5. FDC DEFINITIONS

Some of the terms used in this Catalogue may, in certain instances, not be entirely familiar. Specifically, for the pictorial component of an FDC, the term "illustration" has been used consistently; this is because the term is readily applicable and understood across all languages, and because there appears to be no generally accepted international standard term for it.

The following illustration speaks louder than words:



All other details on a first-day cover have no significance for its cataloguing.

5.1. CONDITIONS

Inclusion in the Catalogue is subject to the rules described below. However, it should be noted—thanks to the occasional slip-up—that the Catalogue may well contain erroneous classifications and valuations that do not comply with these rules. I ask all users of the Catalogue to draw my attention to any errors so that they may be corrected as quickly as possible.

For the sake of simplicity, First Day Covers are abbreviated as "FDC," in accordance with international practice. ALL items in this Catalogue are

categorized based on the occasion of the issuance of a new chess-themed postage stamp.

5.1.1. CONDITIONS FOR FIRST DAY COVERS (FDC)

The following conditions and exclusions apply to inclusion in the Catalogue:

MUST	Only legal chess stamps (including in the form of miniature sheets and souvenir sheets)
MUST	The postmark date must correspond to the stamp's issue date
MUST	FDC must be an envelope or a postal stationary
SHOULD	FDC should include an illustration, unless an FDC with illustration does not exist
SHOULD	Only with perforated stamps, unless they exist solely in imperforate form
SHOULD	The illustration on the cover is intended to reflect the stamp's theme
CAN	The post office should be recognizable on the stamp
NEVER	• Personalized stamps due to their private nature • "Agent stamps" deemed not collectible and abusive (UPU), although they are “semi-official”

5.1.2. FIP BAN

There are several references to this topic, particularly within the “GSM-Mitteilungen”:

Issues: 3/1969, 96/1986, 146/1997, 148/1997, 160/2000, 231/2021, and 234/2022.

These articles outline the evolution of the FIP ban. Since the UPU’s FIP ban was (a) not always regarded as sensible, and (b) was gradually relaxed over time, and (c) has by now disappeared entirely, we have decided to nonetheless list and value First Day Covers (FDCs) featuring stamps that were subject to the FIP ban at the time. A textual note on the Catalogue pages alerts the collector to the fact that an FIP ban had previously been in effect.

5.1.3. CONDITIONS FOR POSTAL STATIONERY (PST)

A postal stationery item must fulfil the following requirements to be included in the catalogue:

MUST	Only pre-printed, legal individual chess stamps
MUST	The postmark date must correspond to the stationery's issue date
MUST	An FDC must be a postal stationery item (envelope or card)
SHOULD	The postcard image should reflect the stamp's theme
CAN	The post office should be recognizable on the stamp
Never	Privately issued Objects

Postal stationery items—even from a historical perspective—are not "true" FDCs, yet they can certainly be regarded as an alternative to the issuance of a single postage stamp.

5.1.4. LIMITS

Given the vast number of collectible items, it is not always possible to definitively distinguish between official, private, unauthorized, or forged pieces.

The catalog provides information on this subject to the extent that the authors were able to ascertain it.

5.1.5. CONDITIONS SUMMARY

	FDC	PST
Only legal chess stamps (including in the form of miniature sheets and souvenir sheets [blocks])	MUST	MUST
The postmark date must correspond to the stamp's issue date	MUST	MUST
FDC must be an envelope	MUST	-
An FDC must be a postal stationery item (envelope or card)	-	MUST
Only with perforated stamps, unless they exist solely in imperforate form	SHOULD	-
Only imperforated chess stamps	-	MUST
The postcard image should reflect the stamp's theme	SHOULD	SHOULD
The post office should be recognizable on the stamp	CAN	CAN
• Personalized stamps due to their private nature • "Agent stamps" deemed not collectible and abusive (UPU) • Privately issued objects	NEVER	NEVER

5.2. REFERENCE SYSTEM

The Catalogue uses two different reference systems to distinguish between the objects.

5.2.1. SHORT REFERENCE

The reference number always begins with the year of issue, followed by an "F" (to distinguish it from postal stationery [where it is "P"] or Maximum Cards ["M"]). It ends with a sequential number assigned chronologically within a given year.

Examples:

					TYPE	REF	PM	ILL
1953-F-1	HUN	1953	04	04	F	A		
1956-F-1	POL	1956	02	09	F	A	EVT	EVT
1956-F-2	POL	1956	02	09	F	B	EVT	
1958-F-1	BUL	1958	02	18	F	AA	EVT	

The short reference can be seen here in the left-hand column. This illustration can also be used to facilitate a better understanding of the long reference number (shown above in red).

5.2.2. LONG REFERENCE

1956 02 09 POL F A ANL ANL

The long reference number is intended to enable the collector to glean the essential information regarding an FDC from it.

- Year of Issue 1956
- Month of Issue 02
- Day of Issue 09
- Country (3 letters, ISO 3166-3 code) POL
  (an appended asterisk * indicates: This country currently has a different name or no longer exists)
- Type (FDC="**F**", PS="**P**", MAX="**M**", INFO="**I**") F
- Reference for the illustration A
- Chess postmark indicates event of issue EVT
  (blank if no chess postmark)
- Chess illustration indicates event of issue EVT
  (blank if no chess illustration)

The example above: The first Polish FDC, dated February 9, 1956, featuring a chess postmark ("EVT") and a chess illustration ("EVT").

Another example:

2007 11 07 EGY F A NoC NoC

Issue Date: 07.11.2007

Country: Egypt

Type:	F = FDC
Illustration:	A
Postmark:	NoC = No Chess
Illustration:	NoC = No Chess

5.2.3. TECHNICAL ID

The "Technical ID" does not constitute a reference in the sense described above. It is a reference number that is automatically and uniquely assigned to each record in our database. If noted down, this ID can be used to directly retrieve a specific FDC from the catalogue lists.

5.3. ILLUSTRATION

At this point, we will examine in somewhat greater detail the significance of the illustration as a reference point. Fortunately, for any given stamp issue, there is rarely just a single First Day Cover (FDC). Were that the case, this specific reference would be unnecessary. FDCs are distinguished not by their stamps or First Day cancels—which are typically identical—but primarily by their illustrations. To differentiate these miniature works of art, catalogued FDCs are assigned a sequential alphabetical designation in the form of capital letters, commencing with "A." This alphanumeric sequence resets to "A" with each new stamp issue, consequently, per date of issue.

Furthermore, however, there are also FDCs which—despite featuring an identical illustration—were:

(a) postmarked at different post offices; and/or

(b) affixed with different stamps.

To distinguish these as well, a second letter was appended to the capital letter: thus, A became AA and AB, and so on.

The German FDCs issued on October 5, 1972, provide an excellent example of the need for comprehensive referencing. Not only is there a refreshingly large number of FDCs, but there are also variations in the postmarks (post offices) despite the illustrations being otherwise identical. To assign a unique reference

to each of these items, the post offices were also incorporated into the alphanumeric numbering scheme alongside the illustrations.

Consequently, for the illustration shown below, the code "A" appears three separate times (because the illustrations are identical), accompanied by distinct code suffixes to indicate that they were postmarked at three different post offices.



A BN = Bonn

A HH = Hamburg

A FR = Freiburg im Breisgau

This alphanumeric reference therefore serves solely to distinguish the illustration

Glossy Print Normal Print



20 of the German FDCs issued on October 5, 1972, possess an additional distinctive feature, which is reflected in a supplementary coding system. The illustrations are produced either using standard printing (“N”) or a glossy finish (“L”). This distinction is indicated in the coding by the addition of an “N” or an “L”.

Furthermore, there are envelopes printed either with or without text on the back flap. The colour of this printing is also incorporated into the coding:

Dark Grey Text Colour	gr
Brown Text Colour	br
Red Text Colour	r
Without Text	(-)



In this way, the following additions to the FDC reference numbers arise for these German FDCs:

Postamt/Post Office	Illustration	Druck/Print	Text	ILL	D/P	P/O	T
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Turm/Rook	Normal	kein/no text	B	N	BN, FR, B	
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Turm/Rook	Normal	braun/brown	B	N	BN, FR, B	br
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Turm/Rook	Normal	grau/grey	B	N	BN, FR, B	gr
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Turm/Rook	Normal	rot/red	B	N	BN, FR, B	r
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Springer/Knight	Normal	kein/no text	C	N	BN, FR, B	
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Springer/Knight	Normal	braun/brown	C	N	BN, FR, B	br
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Springer/Knight	Normal	grau/grey	C	N	BN, FR, B	gr
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Springer/Knight	Normal	rot/red	C	N	BN, FR, B	r
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Turm/Rook	Lack/Varnish	kein/no text	B	L	BN, FR, B	
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Turm/Rook	Lack/Varnish	braun/brown	B	L	BN, FR, B	br
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Turm/Rook	Lack/Varnish	grau/grey	B	L	BN, FR, B	gr
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Turm/Rook	Lack/Varnish	rot/red	B	L	BN, FR, B	r
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Springer/Knight	Lack/Varnish	kein/no text	C	L	BN, FR, B	
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Springer/Knight	Lack/Varnish	braun/brown	C	L	BN, FR, B	br
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Springer/Knight	Lack/Varnish	grau/grey	C	L	BN, FR, B	gr
Bonn, Freiburg, Berlin	Springer/Knight	Lack/Varnish	rot/red	C	L	BN, FR, B	r

As you can see, the same system was also applied to the FDCs from Berlin 1972.

6. EXPLANATORY NOTES ON THE DETERMINATION OF COMPARATIVE VALUES

With the advent of the internet and its vast array of offerings, prices for collectibles have declined. Platforms like Delcampe and eBay have made this possible. Anyone with enough patience can snag quite a few bargains. However, nowadays one also typically pays a high additional postage for shipping (due to the requirement for registered mail)—a cost that did not arise in the past, prior to the emergence of international sellers. This applies of course to the market for FDCs (First Day Covers).

Anyone browsing the internet will, of course, quickly notice the enormous discrepancies in pricing. This naturally raises the question of what constitutes the "correct" and "fair" price. When attempting to unravel this mystery, Catalogue values provided by "professionals" are of little real help, as they fail to answer the fundamental question: "How was this price calculated?" What, then, is one to do about FDCs that never change hands at major auctions—and thus leave no pricing trail in the professional Catalogues?

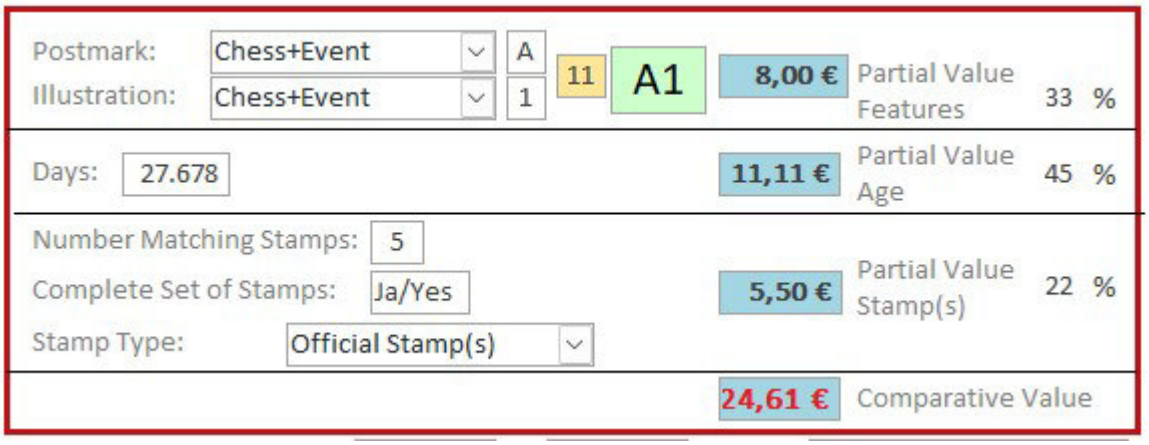
This question provided the motivation to attempt the task personally and to determine a "comparative exchange value" (reference price/RP)—other terms for which might include guideline value, benchmark price, etc. Naturally, this cannot be achieved through logic alone. The calculation model must evolve through prolonged observation, experience, and a careful weighing of the various constituent factors against one another. Read on to discover the results of this endeavour. The determination of a comparative exchange value for FDCs is grounded in the following principles.

This is the only Catalogue in the world that publishes FDC valuations—along with the methodology used to derive them—with an unprecedented level of transparency. Naturally, the valuation system is open to improvement; the extent to which this is necessary will be revealed in the future through practical experience with the calculated values. Every collector is invited to offer constructive criticism and feedback, thereby contributing to the further refinement of the calculation model.

It is crucial to understand that the Comparative Value ("CV") is NOT, strictly speaking, an absolute monetary figure. A CV of €20.00 signifies neither a purchase price nor a selling price. Rather, the Comparative Value primarily indicates how a specific FDC is rated in direct comparison with all other FDCs.

Should a collector feel that a particular valuation component does not align with their own expectations, they are, of course, free to adjust it and apply their own individual sub-values.

The comparative exchange value is composed of three distinct components ("sub-values"):



Stamp + Age + Condition = Comparative Value

6.1. PARTIAL VALUE OF THE STAMP

The "Stamp Partial Value" is an integral part of a First Day Cover (FDC). Since, for understandable reasons, an objective valuation cannot be established, the following approach has been adopted:

A value of EUR 2.00 is assigned to any chess-themed stamp affixed to an FDC.

For example, if an FDC bears five chess stamps (e.g., Dubrovnik 1950), the calculated component value consequently amounts to EUR 10.00. Furthermore, as these five chess stamps constitute a complete set, an additional value (a "bonus") of 10% is applied.

Chess Philately Catalogue FDCs



This results in...

Dubrovnik 1950	= 5 Chess Stamps	= 5 * 2,00	= 10,00
	= complete set of issued stamps	= +10%	= 1,00
	Share of the comparative value		= 11,00

Another example:



DDR 1960	= 2 Chess Stamps = 2 * 2,00	= 4,00
	Not the complete stamp issue	= 0,00
	Share of the comparative value	= 4,00

Unfortunately, there is currently no transparent method for valuing chess-themed postage stamps. While this topic will be addressed in detail—including a novel valuation proposal—in the next edition of the stamp Catalogue, it cannot yet be the subject of discussion here in the context of FDCs. We ask for your understanding in this regard.

For this reason, we must, for the time being, limit ourselves to stating that an arbitrary value has been assigned to the stamp component; however, this value is based on a comparative calculation method similar to that used for FDCs and is not entirely arbitrary. We invite you to judge for yourself whether or not the stated comparative values appear reasonably plausible.

6.2. PARTIAL VALUE FOR THE AGE

It is assumed that the value of an FDC increases with its age. To reflect this, a surcharge of €0.0004 is calculated for every day that has elapsed since its date of issue. In this way, FDCs of the same age are assigned an identical valuation within this surcharge segment.

If one calculates the average of all FDCs with respect to this age-based component value, the result—representing a 29% share of an FDC's total comparative price—proves to be a not entirely unreasonable figure.

The age-based component value of an FDC increases day by day. For the oldest known FDC (dated September 29, 1947), this value currently stands at €11.50 and is determined as follows:

The time difference between September 30, 2026 (the Catalogue's reference date) and the oldest FDC (September 29, 1947) amounts to 28,849 days. This yields a value of

28,849 × €0.0004 = €11.54, representing the maximum value at the time of the catalogue's publication.

6.3. PARTIAL VALUE OF THE EQUIPMENT

Ideally, the illustration provides a clear reference to the specific occasion for which the stamp was issued. In such cases, this feature is assigned a maximum value of €4.00. If the illustration merely promotes chess in a general sense—or features only a chess symbol—the value of this component is reduced to €2.00. If the illustration displays no reference to chess whatsoever, no additional premium is assigned for this component.

The same applies, mutatis mutandis, to the postmark on the FDC.

Since both the postmark and the illustration are jointly subjected to a "chess-related" assessment, the following overview outlines the implications:

If both components provide an indication of the specific occasion for the stamp issue, they receive a higher rating than if they merely depict chess in a general

sense (e.g., a chess symbol). No additional credit is awarded if the item makes no reference to chess whatsoever.

The rating scheme is structured as follows:

A	B	C			Evaluation		
Chess Stamp	Postmark of Issue Date	Illustration			Total	B	C
ST	= Event	= Event	A	1	8,00 €	4,00 €	4,00 €
ST	= Event	= Chess	A	2	6,00 €	4,00 €	2,00 €
ST	= Event	≠ Chess	A	3	4,00 €	4,00 €	0,00 €
ST	= Chess	= Event	B	1	6,00 €	2,00 €	4,00 €
ST	= Chess	= Chess	B	2	4,00 €	2,00 €	2,00 €
ST	= Chess	≠ Chess	B	3	2,00 €	2,00 €	0,00 €
ST	≠ Chess	= Event	C	1	4,00 €	0,00 €	4,00 €
ST	≠ Chess	= Chess	C	2	2,00 €	0,00 €	2,00 €
ST	≠ Chess	≠ Chess	C	3	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €
ST	= Event	no ILL	D	1	4,00 €	4,00 €	0,00 €
ST	= Chess	no ILL	D	2	2,00 €	2,00 €	0,00 €
ST	≠ Chess	no ILL	D	3	0,00 €	0,00 €	0,00 €

6.4. COMPARATIVE VALUE (A GUIDELINE)

Based on the components described above, a total price can now be determined. See also the graphic preceding Chapter 5.1.



Naturally, one wonders what influence the individual components have on the overall comparison price. Specifically, for the Dubrovnik 1950 FDC pictured on the left, the following detailed values apply:

Equipment	Age	Stamp(s)	Sum = Comparative Value
8,00 €	8,65 €	11,00 €	27,65 €
29%	31%	40%	100%

6.5. ESTIMATED MARKET PRICE (A PERSONAL ESTIMATE BASED ON EXPERIENCE)

New to this Catalogue is the inclusion of an estimated market price. This figure is the result of the personal experience of one of the world's foremost collectors of First Day Covers (FDCs). He has drawn upon his extensive, years-long experience to establish a value range—for instance, "EUR 1.00 – EUR 2.00." In this context, the first value (the "from" figure) represents the buyer's perspective, while the second value (the "to" figure) reflects the seller's perspective.

An example:

Market price range:	€15.00 – €20.00
Buyer wishes to spend at most:	€15.00
Seller wishes to obtain at least:	€20.00

The specific point at which the buyer and seller ultimately meet to conclude a deal will vary in each individual case.

7. ROUNDTRIP THROUGH A CATALOGUE PAGE

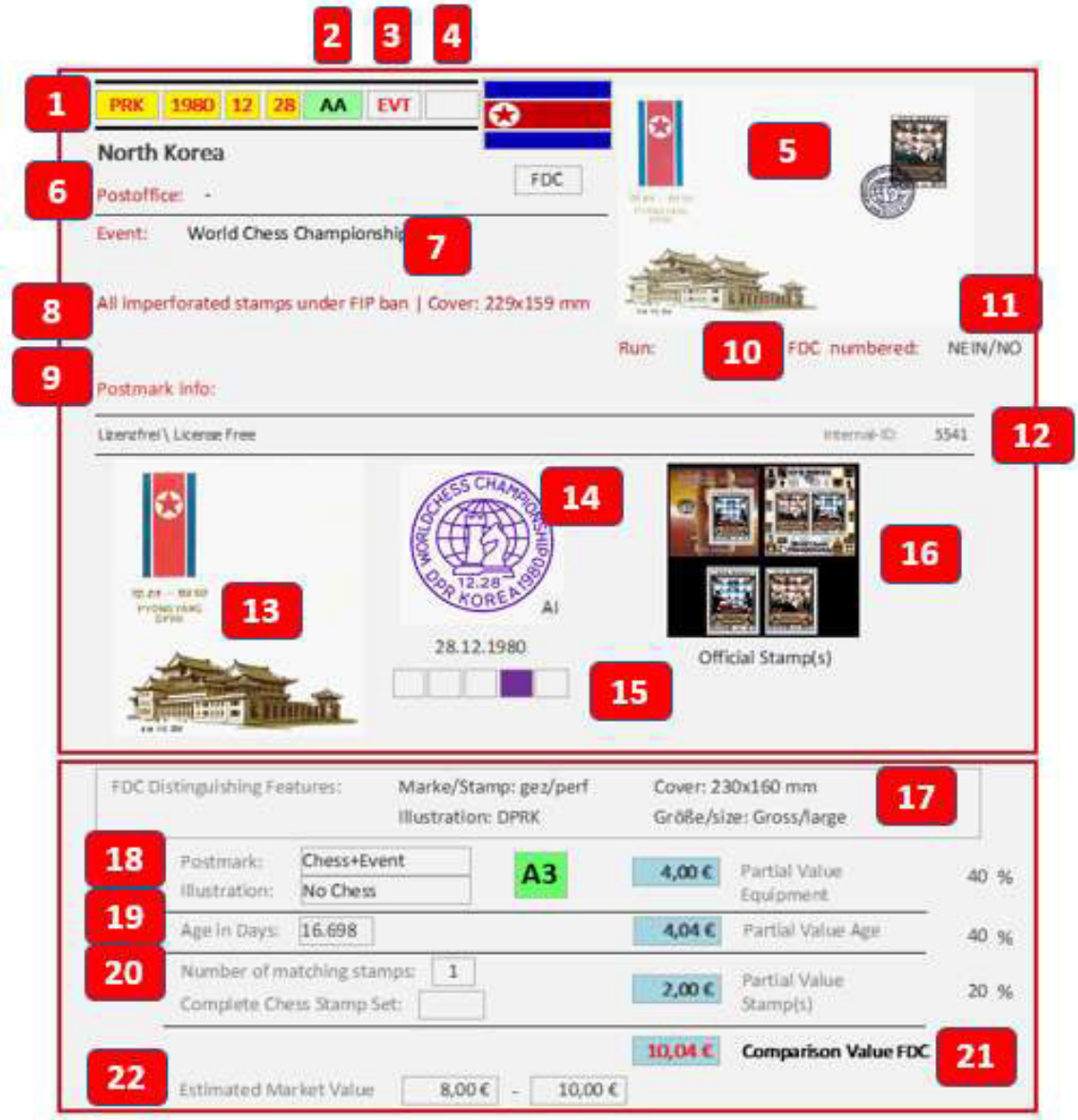


Fig.: An exemplary Catalogue page. The indicated numbers refer to the following subchapters.

7.1. REFERENCE SECTION „COUNTRY AND DATE“

The long reference number was explained in detail in subchapter 5.2.2.

7.2. REFERENCE SECTION „ILLUSTRATION“

Referential distinction of the illustrations per FDC. See the detailed description in Chapter 5.2.2. for further details.

7.3. REFERENCE SECTION „CHESS STAMP“

This field refers solely to the postmark.

NoC = No chess-related indication in the postmark

EVT = Postmark indicates the occasion/event of the stamp issue

SYM = Postmark displays only a chess symbol

Empty field = Unrated

7.4. REFERENCE SECTION „CHESS-ILLUSTRATION“

This field refers solely to the illustration.

NoC = No chess reference in the illustration

EVT = Illustration indicates the occasion/event of the stamp issue

SYM = Illustration displays only a chess symbol

Empty field = Unrated

7.5. FDC IMAGE

This field displays an image of the front of the FDC

7.6. CANCELLING POST OFFICE

The post office indicated on the postmark is noted in this field.

7.7. EVENT OF THE ISSUE

The occasion for the issuance of the chess stamp is described in this field.

7.8. REMARKS

If additional information regarding this FDC is available, it is listed in this field.

7.9. POSTMARK INFORMATION

If additional information regarding the postmark is available, it is noted in this field.

7.10. PRINT RUN

Provided that the print run is known, the number of printed FDCs is listed here.

7.11. FDC NUMBERED YES/NO

This field indicates whether the FDC was issued with or without a serial number.

7.12. TECHNICAL ID

This technical ID enables the author to easily locate a Catalogue entry in their database in the event of inquiries.

7.13. ILLUSTRATION IMAGE

If the FDC features a chess illustration, it is displayed separately here.

7.14. ISSUE DATE AND CHESS POSTMARK IMAGE

If the FDC bears a chess-themed postmark, it is displayed here along with the date of issue.

7.15. DISPLAY OF POSTMARK COLOURS

Displayed here are the ink colours in which a chess postmark was issued as a First Day cancel.

7.16. CHESS STAMP IMAGE

Since an FDC often contains only a single chess stamp of an issue, all chess stamps in the series ("family") are displayed here.

7.17. FDC DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

Sometimes, differences between FDCs are barely discernible. This field provides up to four indications of existing differences. An example of such distinguishing features can be seen in the graphic above.

7.18. COMPARATIVE VALUE: PARTIAL VALUE OF FEATURES

The values encoded within the long reference number are presented here in text format. Following these descriptions, the valuation (in the green field) is displayed, along with the resulting component value used to determine the comparison price. For informational purposes only, the percentage contribution of the equipment to the comparison price is shown at the end of the line.

7.19. COMPARATIVE VALUE: PARTIAL VALUE OF AGE

The "Age" sub-component of the FDC comparative price is displayed in this field. Its determination is described in detail in Chapter 6.2.

7.20. COMPARATIVE VALUE: PARTIAL VALUE OF STAMP(S)

The "Stamp(s)" sub-component of the FDC reference price is displayed in this field. Its calculation is described in detail in Chapter 6.1.

7.21. COMPARATIVE VALUE FDC

The result of the FDC comparison price determination is displayed in this field. Its determination is described in detail in Chapter 6.

7.22. ESTIMATED MARKET PRICE

The two fields display the price spread between buying and selling. See the explanations in Chapter 6.5. for details.

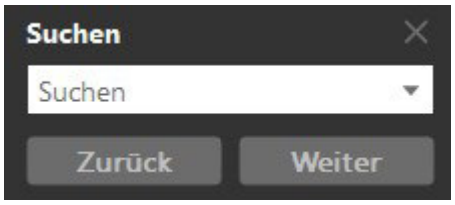
8. SEARCH FUNCTIONS

No one wants to leaf through an entire Catalogue from start to finish just to find a specific FDC. To help you locate a particular FDC more quickly, I have provided some tips and pointers here on how to do so. Thanks to the search function built into Adobe Reader, you can find anything in no time. However, please bear in mind that you can only search for information that is actually visible on a given Catalogue page. Therefore, if you are looking for—say—the issue occasion of an FDC within a "short list," you will not be able to find that information there, as it is not included in the short lists.

Search Example:

You have opened the Catalogue and wish to search for an FDC with the issue date "07.10.2009".

Press the key combination Ctrl + F, and the following window will appear:



Enter your search term into the white search field:



You will likely not even need to press the Enter key, as the program has already located and displayed the corresponding value—or retrieved the relevant record. The found value is highlighted by a coloured background.

Please bear in mind that your search criterion may match more than one record. However, the program will always display the “first” value found that

matches your search criterion. To determine whether additional matches exist, click the "Next" button within the search window.

Only when no further records matching your specified search criterion can be found will you be notified via the following window and message:

"Document searched by Adobe Acrobat Reader. No further matches."

If no data matching your search criterion is found at all, the following window will appear immediately:

"Document searched by Adobe Acrobat Reader. No matches."

Please note that when using the PDF lists, you can only search for information that is actually available within those lists.

Since the PDF software does not support displaying multiple search results simultaneously, the Catalogue is provided as a set of distinct, individual lists. These lists are pre-sorted, allowing for rapid searching once you have selected the appropriate list—assuming a search is even necessary.

The "Internal ID" also serves as a search criterion that should not be underestimated, as each of these numbers appears only once throughout the entire Catalogue.

If you locate an entry in a "Short List" for which you would like to view more detailed information, you can use the provided ID to search within the "Long Lists."

9. ADDITIONAL TIPS

9.1. ONLINE AUCTION PLATFORMS

9.1.1. DELCAMPE

www.delcampe.net

Founded in 2000 as a website by the Belgian Sébastien Delcampe, this platform has evolved into a market leader. For collectors of philatelic items, there is scarcely a better site for searching for specific pieces.

Delcampe's major advantage lies in the fact that it deals exclusively with collectibles, ensuring that no other types of items get in the way. Its multilingual nature also undoubtedly contributes to the large number of sellers active on the platform. On December 31, 2020, for instance—focusing on the subject of chess—one could find a staggering 92,286 listings for the search term "Schach" within the "All Categories" section. This figure does not take into account combined searches utilizing multiple terms from the list provided below; consequently, the overall totals are slightly lower.

Search Criterion	31.12.2020	31.05.2026
Chess	48.637	28.159
Èchecs	18.766	28.844
Schach	10.455	5.684
Ajedrez	9.057	5.875
Scacchi	4.038	2.515
Schaken	1.333	2.768
	92.286	73.845

At Delcampe, the existing option to report listings of illegal items and forgeries—using pre-set text templates—is open to criticism because users receive neither any feedback nor any subsequent indication that the reported listings have been removed. Consequently, nothing changes.

The platform, after all, profits from the fact that illegal items are offered for sale. This situation might be different if all serious collectors were to consistently report illegal listings and forgeries to Delcampe online.

9.1.2. EBAY

www.ebay.de / www.ebay.com

The enormous variety of listings on ebay inevitably leads collectors to feel that it is not the ideal environment for them. Everything there tends to be geared toward mass-market goods. Consequently, it comes as no surprise that while one can indeed find a great many items there, they consist almost exclusively of the commonplace, with hardly anything truly special. The number of chess-philatelic items available is likewise limited.

Furthermore—based on my own observations—an alarming number of illicit items are being offered for sale on ebay. While the option to officially report such incidents on the site does exist on ebay.com, it is extremely well hidden. While it is technically possible to report forgeries and illicit items via the national eBay sites, such reports—to be perfectly honest—fall on deaf ears at ebay.

The platform, after all, profits from the fact that illegal transactions take place. This might be a different story if all serious collectors were to consistently report illegal listings and counterfeits to ebay.

On ebay, one actually should access the individual national platforms separately in order to conduct a global search. If you visit the ebay.com homepage, you will find "ebay Sites" listed in the bottom right corner, featuring a list of 49 countries. However, upon clicking on many of these, you are simply redirected back to the ebay.com site! It is all a bit—shall we say—"embellished."

Anyone conducting a serious search—and wishing to gain a comprehensive overview of the entire market situation on ebay—has no choice but to examine all of the following sites:

Website	Country	Search Criterion	Category	Hits
Ebay.com	USA+World	Chess	Stamps	7.600+
Ebay.de	Germany	Schach	Briefmarken	3.600+
Ebay.co.uk	United Kingdom	Chess	Stamps	914
Ebay.es	Spain	Ajedrez	Sellos	1.100+
Ebay.it	Italy	Scacchi	Francobolli	1.700+
Ebay.fr	France	Èchecs	Timbres	1.300+
Ebay.pl	Poland	Szachy	Znaczki	145
Ebay.au	Australia	Chess	Stamps	150
Ebay.nl	Netherlands	Schaken	Postzegels	68
Ebay.at	Austria	Schach	Briefmarken	69
Ebay.ch	Switzerland	Schach	Briefmarken	98
Ebay.ca	Canada	Chess	Stamps	442
befr.ebay.be	Belgium	Èchecs	Timbres	1.800+

Status as of: 25.09.2026

These figures are not truly meaningful, as eBay frequently bundles listings from various countries onto a single page. Naturally, the ebay.com site includes numerous listings that can also be found on the national sites.

9.1.3. YOU ARE SEARCHING

As a collector searching for collectibles, you will find yourself amply supplied with offers—of varying degrees of interest—on both platforms. The challenge, therefore, lies not in finding offers at all, but rather in configuring your search on these platforms in such a way that you locate precisely what you are specifically looking for.

An example will serve to illustrate what is meant by this.

Suppose you are looking for a specific First Day Cover (FDC) from Yugoslavia, dated August 20, 1950. This FDC commemorates the Chess Olympiad held in Dubrovnik.

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Anyone searching using the keyword "Schach" will mostly find German-language listings—an approach that is unlikely to be effective for an international FDC. If one searches using "Chess" instead, the initial results yield a significantly higher number of hits:

Delcampe: 28,159 results

Ebay.com: 7,300+ results

Upon reviewing these results, it quickly becomes apparent that this method will not lead to the desired outcome, as there are far too many listings that have NO connection to a Dubrovnik 1950 FDC. Therefore, the search is refined:

Search Criteria ->	*CHESS Dubrovnik*	*CHESS 1950*	*CHESS Dubrovnik 1950*
Platform↓	Hits	Hits	Hits
Delcampe	156	239	149
Ebay.com	16	53	16

While this result may seem a bit surprising at first, you can certainly count on the search being manageable.

The following experiment is also interesting: If we search using only the term "Dubrovnik," Delcampe returns 2,168 items. By contrast, a search for "Dubrovnik 1950" yields only 353 items. Even with this search, you stand a good chance of finding something interesting—even without including the term "Chess."

What accounts for this? I believe it is because there are numerous sellers who are not particularly knowledgeable about chess and often do not fully realize what they are offering.

As you can see:

1. Ideally, search using the English term "CHESS."
2. Add a further search term that is more specific to the object you are looking for.

3. Try searching without the term "Chess" as well; you might encounter some surprises there, too.

9.1.4. YOU ARE OFFERING

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the search process revealed that including effective search terms significantly increases the likelihood of a sale. For (English-speaking) chess collectors, it is, of course, absolutely essential to include the term "Chess" in the title line of a listing.

If sufficient space remains in the title line, one can certainly add the terms "Schach," "Ajedrez," and "Échecs" as well, thereby ensuring that searchers who speak other languages also take notice of the listing.

Additional search terms are also required. To this end, here is a brief list—based on personal experience—of terms that have consistently proven helpful in drawing the attention of a broader range of searchers to one's listings:

Search Criterion 1	Search Criterion 2	Search Criterion 3	Search Criterion 4	Search Criterion 5
Stamp (ST)	Country	Issue Date	Catalogue-Ref.	Event
Postmark (PM)	Country	Date of Postmark	Catalogue-Ref.	Ort/Postamt
Postal Stationery (PS)	Country	Issue Date	Catalogue-Ref.	Event
FDC	Country	Issue Date (of stamp)	Catalogue-Ref.	Event

The more of these search terms you incorporate, the more likely it is that your offer will be found.

9.2. CHECK YOUR GAPS



Sooner or later, any serious collector of First Day Covers will reach the point where they lose track of the gaps in their collection. In this regard, I would like to take up an idea from a fellow collector and offer you a recommendation for keeping track of your collection gaps.

1

Print out the PDF-file "Check Your Gaps" on DIN A4 paper. It currently consists of 115 pages.

2

Punch holes in the sheets so that they fit easily into a binder.





3

Use a black highlighter to cross out the items you already own.

This way, only the ones you are missing remain visible.

With each new acquisition, cross out the FDCs you have received.

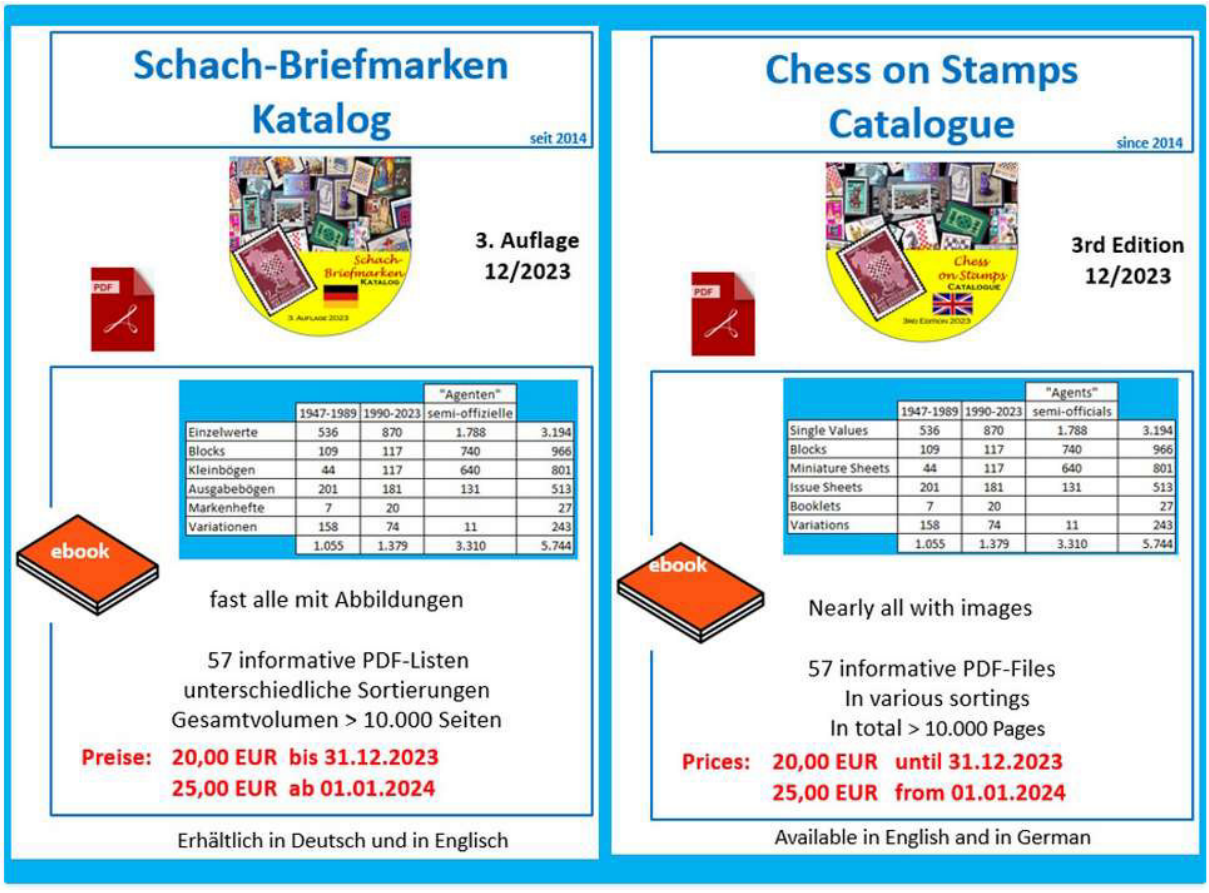
10. CURRENT CATALOGUE PROGRAM

Status as of: 30.09.2026

CHESSSTAMPS.COM

Each Catalogue available in German and English language

Catalogue	Edition	Status	Objects
Chess Stamps Link: http://chessstamps.com/?page_id=643	3	12/2023	5.744
Chess Postmarks Link: http://chessstamps.com/?page_id=645	3	05/2022	5.076
Chess Postal Stationery http://chessstamps.com/?page_id=1718	1	01/2020	225



	1947-1989	1990-2023	"Agenten" semi-offizielle	
Einzelwerte	536	870	1.788	3.194
Blocks	109	117	740	966
Kleinbögen	44	117	640	801
Ausgabebögen	201	181	131	513
Markenhefte	7	20		27
Variationen	158	74	11	243
	1.055	1.379	3.310	5.744

	1947-1989	1990-2023	"Agents" semi-officials	
Single Values	536	870	1.788	3.194
Blocks	109	117	740	966
Miniature Sheets	44	117	640	801
Issue Sheets	201	181	131	513
Booklets	7	20		27
Variations	158	74	11	243
	1.055	1.379	3.310	5.744

Chess Philately Catalogue FDCs

Schach-Stempel Katalog

Beinhaltet 15,00 EUR Spende für Krieg Ukraine

30,00 EUR



3. Auflage 05/2022

The Ukrainian Edition

3.158	Sonderstempel
217	Maschinenwerbestempel
319	Ersttagsstempel
748	Private Stempel
94	Werbestempel
540	Absenderfreistempel

ebook

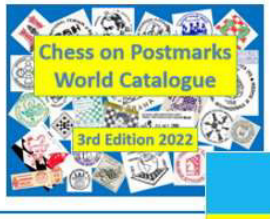
fast alle mit Abbildungen

22 informative PDF-Listen
Vergleichspreise & Belege
ausführliches PDF-Handbuch

Chess on Cancels Catalogue

Including 15,00 EUR Donation for Ukrainian War

30,00 EUR



3rd Edition 05/2022

The Ukrainian Edition

3.158	Special Cancels
217	Machine Slogan Cancels
319	First Day Cancels
748	Private Cancels
94	Slogan Cancels
540	Meter Slogan Cancels

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Nearly all with images

22 informative PDF-files
Comparison Prices & Covers
Detailed PDF-handbook

Schach auf Ganzsachen Katalog

12,00 EUR



1. Auflage 01/2020

225 Offizielle Ganzsachen

Zahlreiche Details
Originaltexte mit Übersetzungen

Transparente Preisbewertung

alle mit Abbildungen
informative PDF-Dateien
unterschiedliche Sortierungen
ausführliches PDF-Handbuch

Chess on Postal Stationery Catalogue

12,00 EUR



1st Edition 01/2020

225 Official Postal Stationery

Numerous Details
Original texts with translations

Transparent Price Evaluation

All with images
Informative PDF-files
Various sortings
Detailed PDF-Handbook

11. ATTACHMENT

11.1. GAPS

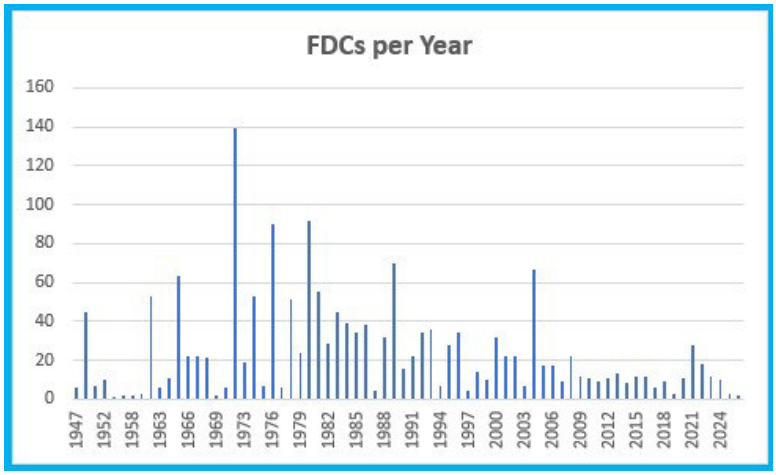
Despite every effort to provide a comprehensive overview of all chess FDCs, some unsatisfactory gaps inevitably remain. I ask all owners of this Catalogue to cross-reference it with their own collections and to inform me if they possess any FDCs that are not listed here. Only in this way can the Catalogue remain a valuable resource for everyone in the long run.

If you are able to offer your assistance in these areas, please contact me at info@chessstamps.com.

11.2. STATISTICS

All the following statistics are current as of September 30, 2026.

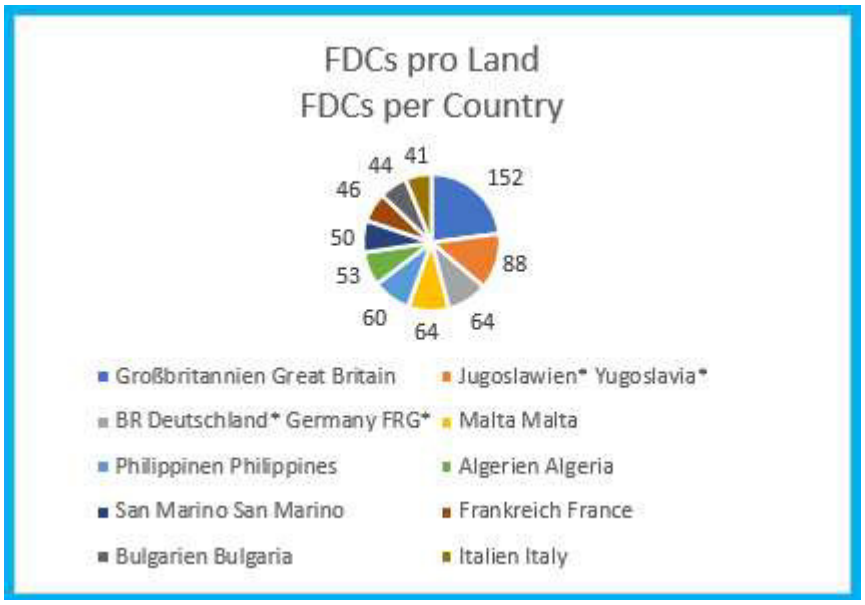
11.2.1. ISSUED FDCS PER YEAR



Chess Philately Catalogue FDCs

Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number
1947	6	1979	24	2003	7
1950	45	1980	92	2004	67
1951	7	1981	55	2005	17
1952	10	1982	29	2006	17
1953	1	1983	45	2007	9
1956	2	1984	39	2008	22
1958	2	1985	34	2009	12
1960	3	1986	38	2010	11
1962	53	1987	4	2011	9
1963	6	1988	32	2012	11
1964	11	1989	70	2013	13
1965	63	1990	16	2014	8
1966	22	1991	22	2015	12
1967	22	1992	34	2016	12
1968	21	1993	36	2017	6
1969	2	1994	7	2018	9
1971	6	1995	28	2019	3
1972	139	1996	34	2020	11
1973	19	1997	4	2021	28
1974	53	1998	14	2022	18
1975	7	1999	10	2023	12
1976	90	2000	32	2024	10
1977	6	2001	22	2025	3
1978	51	2002	22	2026	2

11.2.2. ISSUED FDCS PER COUNTRY



	Land	Country	#
1	Großbritannien	Great Britain	152
2	Jugoslawien*	Yugoslavia*	88
3	BR Deutschland*	Germany FRG*	64
4	Malta	Malta	64
5	Philippinen	Philippines	60
6	Algerien	Algeria	53
7	San Marino	San Marino	50
8	Frankreich	France	46
9	Bulgarien	Bulgaria	44
10	Italien	Italy	41
11	Kuba	Cuba	37
12	Deutschland	Germany	36
13	Island	Iceland	35
14	Mali	Mali	32
15	Niederlande	Netherlands	32
16	Sowjetunion*	Soviet Union/USSR*	28
17	Armenien	Armenia	27
18	Berlin*	Berlin*	27
19	Israel	Israel	27
20	Rumänien	Romania	27
21	Färöer Inseln	Faroe Islands	24
22	Niederländ. Antillen	Netherlands Antilles	22
23	Ungarn	Hungary	21
24	Libanon	Lebanon	19

25	Schweiz	Switzerland	18
26	Spanien	Spain	18
27	Surinam	Suriname	18
28	Russland	Russia	17
29	USA	USA	17
30	Guinea	Guinea	16
31	Monaco	Monaco	16
32	Nordkorea	North Korea	16
33	Argentinien	Argentina	15
34	Libyen	Libya	15
35	Paraguay	Paraguay	15
36	Belgien	Belgium	14
37	Kambodscha	Cambodia	14
38	Zentralafrika	Central African Republic	13
39	Aserbaidschan	Azerbaijan	12
40	Österreich	Austria	12
41	DDR	GDR*	11
42	Djibouti	Djibouti	11
43	Brasilien	Brazil	10
44	Dominikanische Rep.	Dominican Republic	10
45	Finnland	Finland	10
46	Nicaragua	Nicaragua	10
47	Tschad	Chad	10
48	Uruguay	Uruguay	10
49	Hongkong	Hongkong	9
50	Madagaskar	Madagascar	9
51	Mongolei	Mongolia	9
52	Polen	Poland	9
53	Syrien	Syria	9
54	VAE	United Arab Emirates (UAE)	9
55	Guyana	Guyana	8
56	Luxemburg	Luxemburg	8
57	Andorra	Andorra	7
58	Bosnien-Herzegowina	Bosnia-Herzegovina	7
59	Fujeira	Fujairah	7
60	Guinea Bissau	Guinea Bissau	7
61	Kirgisistan	Kyrgystan	7
62	Komoren	Comores	7
63	Kongo (Zaire)	Congo (Zaire)	7
64	Sint Maarten	Sint Maarten	7
65	Ukraine	Ukraine	7
66	Jersey	Jersey	6
67	Mexico	Mexico	6
68	Moldawien	Moldova	6

69	Niger	Niger	6
70	Vietnam	Vietnam	6
71	Ekuador	Ecuador	5
72	Iran	Iran	5
73	Lettland	Latvia	5
74	Sao Tome + Principe	Saint Thomas + Prince	5
75	Serbien	Serbia	5
76	Slowenien	Slovenia	5
77	Somalia	Somalia	5
78	Guinea Äquatorial	Guinea Equatorial	4
79	Indonesien	Indonesia	4
80	Jemen	Yemen	4
81	Jungferninseln	Virgin Islands	4
82	Mauretanien	Mauritania	4
83	Tansania	Tanzania	4
84	Tunesien	Tunisia	4
85	Wallis + Futuna	Wallis and Futuna	4
86	Aruba	Aruba	3
87	Arzach Republik*	Artsakh*, Republic of	3
88	Berg Karabach*	Nagorno-Karabakh*	3
89	China	China	3
90	Georgien	Georgia	3
91	Gibraltar	Gibraltar	3
92	Kasachstan	Kazakhstan	3
93	Kenia	Kenya	3
94	Laos	Laos	3
95	Liechtenstein	Liechtenstein	3
96	Macau	Macao	3
97	Saint Vincent/Grenadinen	Saint Vincent/Grenadines	3
98	Slowakei	Slovakia	3
99	Tuvalu	Tuvalu	3
100	Albanien	Albania	2
101	Belarus	Belarus	2
102	Benin	Benin	2
103	Bolivien	Bolivia	2
104	Dahomey*	Dahomey*	2
105	El Salvador	El Salvador	2
106	Estland	Estonia	2
107	Grenada/Grenadines	Grenada/Grenadines	2
108	Indien	India	2
109	Jordanien	Jordan	2
110	Kroatien	Croatia	2
111	Litauen	Lithuania	2
112	Marokko	Morocco	2

113	Nordmazedonien	North Macedonia	2
114	Norwegen	Norway	2
115	Obervolta*	Upper Volta*	2
116	Peru	Peru	2
117	Serbien + Montenegro	Serbia and Montenegro	2
118	Tadjikistan	Tajikistan	2
119	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	1
120	Ägypten	Egypt	1
121	Angola	Angola	1
122	Anguilla	Anguilla	1
123	Antigua und Barbuda	Antigua and Barbuda	1
124	Barbados	Barbados	1
125	Guernsey	Guernsey	1
126	Isle of Man	Isle of Man (UK)	1
127	Kamerun	Cameroon	1
128	Kosovo	Kosovo	1
129	Malawi	Malawi	1
130	Montenegro	Montenegro	1
131	Mosambik	Mozambique	1
132	Neuseeland	New Zealand	1
133	Niuafo'ou	Niuafo'ou	1
134	Palau	Palau	1
135	Portugal	Portugal	1
136	Schweden	Sweden	1
137	Senegal	Senegal	1
138	Südgeorgien	South Georgia	1
139	Tonga	Tonga, Kingdom of	1
140	Trinidad + Tobago	Trinidad + Tobago	1
141	Tschechien	Czechia	1
142	Tschechoslowakei*	Czechoslovakia*	1
143	Uganda	Uganda	1
			1719

11.2.3. EVALUATION OF CATALOGUED FDCS

FDC	#
A1	674
A2	86
A3	87
B1	135
B2	41
B3	36
C1	151
C2	147
C3	447
D/X	46
	1.850

GS/PST	#
A1	28
A2	1
B3	2
C1	5
C2	2
C3	1
	39

For details see chapter 4.4.

11.3. OVERVIEW/SUMMARIES

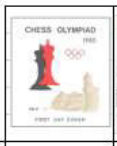
Not all details can be presented in the catalogue in a space-saving manner. In particular, informative overviews such as the following cannot be built in with the desired level of detail or size. Wherever possible, brief overviews—accompanied by the following logo—were inserted directly into the catalogue:



Some issues are so diverse that it is easy to lose track. To help the collector maintain that overview, a few summaries are presented here.

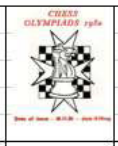
11.3.1. MALTA 1980

The graph shows how the 64 first-day covers are distributed among the cities.









	Post Office	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	64
1	Birkirkara	AC		CC	DF						3
2	Birzebbuga				DD						1
3	Cospicua			CD	DG						2
4	Gzira	AB		CE	DH						3
5	Hamrun			CF	DI						2
6	Luqa Airport			CG	DJ						2
7	Mellieha			CB	DL						2
8	Mgarr - Gozo			CI	DM						2
9	Mosta			CH	DN						2
10	Nadur - Gozo			CK	DO						2
11	Paola			CL	DP						2
12	Qormi			CM	DQ						2
13	Rabat	AD		CN	DR						3
14	San Gwann			CO	DS						2
15	Sliema			CP	DT	EA		GC			4
16	St. Julian's		BA	CQ	DU						3
17	St. Paul's Bay			CR	DV						2
18	Valletta	AA	BB	CA	DB	EB	F	GB	H		8
19	Valletta BPO			CS	DC						2
20	Valletta MALTA				DA						1
21	Valletta MCC			CJ	DK					I	3
22	Victoria - Gozo			CT	DW			GA			3
23	Xaghra - Gozo				DE						1
24	Zabbar			CU	DX						2
25	Zejtun		BC	CV	DY						3
26	Zurrieq			CW	DZ						2
		4	3	23	26	2	1	3	1	1	64

11.3.2. NORTH KOREA 28.12.1980

				Cover/Illustration				REF
	Issue Date	Type	Perforation	ILL	Size Envelope			CAT
1	28.12.1980	Value	perf	Temple	229x159	large		AA
2		Value	imp	Temple	209x141		FIP ban	AB
3		M/S	perf	Arch	202x132	small		BA
4		M/S	imp	Arch	202x132	small	FIP ban	BB
5		M/S	perf	Temple	250x174	large		CA
6		M/S	imp	Temple	250x174	large	FIP ban	CB
7		M/S	perf	Temple	202x132	small		DA
8		M/S	imp	Temple	202x132	small	FIP ban	DB
9		M/S	perf	Temple DPR Korea				EA
10		M/S	imp	Temple DPR Korea			FIP ban	EB
11		M/S	perf	Temple + Horse				FA
12		M/S	imp	Temple + Horse			FIP ban	FB

11.3.3. NORTH KOREA 2001

NOT OVERPRINTED				Cover/Illustration				REF
	Issue Date	Type	Perforation			# stamps		CAT
1	05.01.2001	Value	perf	6v	W C	6		AA
2		Value	imp	6v	W C	6	FIP ban	AB
3		M/S	perf	6v	Drache/Dragon	6		BA
4		M/S	imp	6v	Drache/Dragon	6	FIP ban	BB
5		Block	perf	Steinitz	W C			AC
6		Block	imp	Steinitz	W C		FIP ban	AD

WC = World Champions

OVERPRINTED				Cover/Illustration				REF
	Issue Date	Type	Perforation			# stamps		CAT
1	20.04.2001	Value	perf	6v		6		AA
2		Value	imp	6v		6	FIP ban	AB
3		Block	perf	Steinitz				AC
4		Block	imp	Steinitz			FIP ban	AD
5		M/S	perf	6v		6		AE
6		M/S	imp	6v		6	FIP ban	AF

11.4.4 SAO TOMÉ

The FDC for this stamp issue are somewhat "unconventional"; classifying them within the reference number system proved difficult and is explained in detail here.

(1) There are three distinct types of illustrations, with reference numbers beginning—as is customary—with the letters "A", "B", and "C".

(2) The FDCs appear in two stamp configurations: single stamps ("V") and souvenir sheets ("B").

(3) The next distinguishing feature is whether the stamps are perforated or imperforate. Printed perforation = "P"; imperforate = "I".

(4) The colour of the souvenir sheets serves as the fourth criterion: green = "g", brown = "br", and blue = "bl".

(5) Since three miniature sheets are affixed to each of the FDCs featuring images of chess players ("brown sheets"), a final distinction had to be

made: FDCs bearing the sheets of Andersen, Chigorin, and Steinitz are designated "1," while those bearing the sheets of Philidor, Staunton, and Morphy are designated "2." For the time being, we are proceeding on the assumption that no other combinations of these six sheets were used on the FDCs.

The result may not be particularly elegant, but a clear distinction between the FDCs had to be established.

Ausgabe Issue Date	Illustration	Typ Type	Perforation	Farbe BM Stamp Colour	Spieler Players	KAT REF CAT REF
28.11.1981	U D T green	Single Value(s)	perforated			A V P
		Block	perforated	green		A B P g
		Block(s)	perforated	brown	AND-TCH-STE	A B P br 1
		Block(s)	perforated	brown	PHI-STA-MOR	A B P br 2
		Block	perforated	blue		A B P bl
		Single Value(s)	imperforated			A V I
		Block(s)	imperforated	brown	AND-TCH-STE	A B I br 1
		Block(s)	imperforated	brown	PHI-STA-MOR	A B I br 2
		Block	imperforated	blue		A B I bl
	U D T black	Block	imperforated	green		B B I g
			imperforated	blue		B B I bl
	without ILL	Block	perforated	blue		C B P bl
			imperforated	blue		C B I bl

Illustration:
UDT = Unidade Disciplina Trabalho

11.4.5 YUGOSLAVIA (DUBROVNIK) 1950

11.4.5.1 INTRODUCTION

During the research for this Catalogue, it became apparent—specifically regarding the 1950 Dubrovnik Chess Olympiad—that this event represents something truly unique within the realm of First Day Covers (FDCs). On the one hand, the chess stamps issued to mark this occasion on August 20, 1950, are arguably the most artistically significant examples of their kind in existence.

Furthermore, an unusually large number of FDCs were issued for this event; yet, this issuance remained strictly within a defined framework—and, if the expression may be permitted, there was no "unbridled proliferation" of privately produced First Day Covers. It is well worth taking a closer look at this particular event.

The article "The 9th Chess Olympic Games in Dubrovnik from 20-31 August, 1950: A Study on Philatelic Items" by Prof. Dr. Dragoslav Djukanovic (Serbia) appeared in the American Chess Stamp Review (July–September 2001, pp. 92–104); CSR editor Jon Edwards also published it online at https://queensac.com/jugotable.html. Also integrated into this page is the follow-up article, "9th Chess Olympic Games in Dubrovnik (Yugoslavia) 1950 – New Philatelic Discoveries" (CSR, December 2003).

On this website, the authors publish a table—resembling a chessboard—that displays all previously known combinations of the Dubrovnik 1950 FDCs. In doing so, the authors distinguish between types a through d for the text variants and types 1 through 7 for the Dubrovnik illustrations. Since this alone does not convey much information, the Dubrovnik FDCs—of which 34 distinct varieties exist—are examined in greater detail in the following text, and the authors' table is updated (both textually and visually) to reflect the latest findings.

11.4.5.2 HOW DO THE DUBROVNIK FDCS DIFFER?



Let us begin with the text representations on the covers. Five different representations are known, two of which (A and E) were used on covers only once each.

Type	Text Alignment	Text Lengths	Print Feature
A	Horizontal		
B	Vertikal	9/9	5
C	Vertikal	11/9	BROJ 5
D	Vertikal	11/11	BROJ 5
E	Vertikal	9,3/9	Br. 5

Versions B, C, and D appear on envelopes significantly more frequently (see below). This typology corresponds to the "type a" mentioned above by the authors.

Type "C" may serve as a model for the text layouts categorized here, as the individual distinguishing features are clearly visible on it. The text is arranged vertically, and the black text is longer (11 cm) than the orange text (9 cm). The distinguishing feature "BROJ 5"—located at the top of the black text—is also clearly discernible.

Let us turn to the photographic depictions of the city of Dubrovnik. There are seven distinct images showing city views or panoramas. Five of them bear a strong resemblance to one another, as they were taken from similar vantage points. To distinguish between them, specific areas of the photographs are utilized—features that do not appear in the other images. In the photograph shown below, this distinguishing feature (the columns, which are not visible in the other photos) is circled in red.



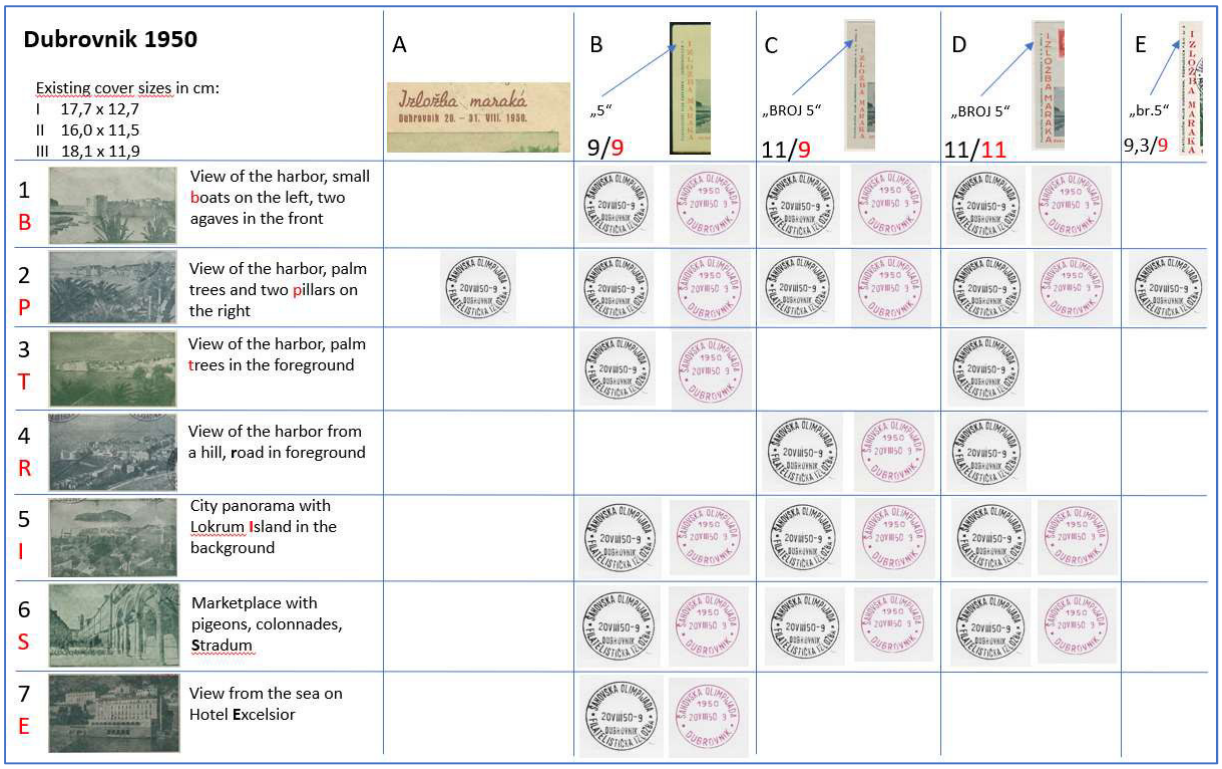
The following list results from this:

Typ	Abbildung zeigt
1	Harbour view with boats
2	Harbour view with columns
3	Harbour view with palm trees
4	Harbour view with street
5	City panorama with Lokrum Island
6	Old town street „Stradun“
7	Hotel Excelsior

The envelopes are marked with either a black stamp ("S") or a red stamp ("R"). These stamp colours can be easily incorporated into the tabular scheme using their initial letters. This results in a finite grid encompassing all known FDCs.

		A	B	C	D	E	
1	Boats		S R	S R	S R		6
2	Columns	S	S R	S R	S R	S	8
3	Palm trees		S R		S		3
4	Street			S R	S		3
5	Island		S R	S R	S R		6
6	Stradun		S R	S R	S R		6
7	Excelsior		S R				2
		1	12	10	10	1	34

When all these details are summarized in a single graphic, the result is the following overview of all known FDC variations (empty fields indicate that no FDC with this configuration is currently known):



Consequently, the configurations of the FDCs are distinguished by the following components:

- "Illustrations" (seven different photographic depictions of the city of Dubrovnik; see the first column on the left),
- "Texts" (five different textual descriptions of the occasion; see the top row). The

- "Postmark Colours"—indicated at the top of the graphic—specify whether a given combination exists with a red or a black postmark (or indeed both). Empty fields indicate that this combination was not issued.

Subsequently, a total of 34 different FDC versions were issued. But that is not all.

For the Olympiad, the postal administration had prudently prepared in advance, printing numerous FDCs and affixing the set of chess stamps to them. However, demand from the very start of the Olympiad was so high that the prepared envelopes quickly sold out—a situation that likely gave rise to a certain amount of organizational chaos. To satisfy the continuing demand on-site, the organizers found themselves compelled to substitute the unavailable chess stamps with other, non-chess-related stamps. At least they limited themselves to three specific alternative stamp sets: Marshal Tito, the Air Show in Ruma, and the Belgrade–Zagreb Highway. Consequently, collectors should be prepared to encounter certain FDCs that, while bearing the chess postmark and a chess-themed illustration, are actually affixed with stamps that have absolutely nothing to do with chess.

But that is not all. The postmarking, too, suffered under the enormous demand. Consequently, there are indeed envelopes that bear both red and black postmarks. Collectors must also exercise a degree of caution regarding the postmark dates; quite a few envelopes bear dates subsequent to the issue date of August 20, 1950.

Since the chess stamp constitutes the indispensable starting point for cataloguing, these "substitute envelopes" technically should not be listed in the Catalogue. However, given that their existence is entirely plausible, they have been included in the Catalogue (albeit without illustrations).

It is also worth noting that specialized literature exists on this subject: The Serbian Professor Zdenko Kristafor has published a book on the 1950 Chess Olympiad (unfortunately available only in Serbian), in which his research into this philatelic topic is described in detail.

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12. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

	Abkürzungsverzeichnis			List of Abbreviations	
	Deutsch		Deutsch + English	English	
1	BM	Briefmarke		ST	stamp
2	GS	Ganzsache		PS	postal stationery
3	PS	Poststempel		PM	postmark
4	POPS	privat überdruckte Ganzsachen	POPS	POPS	privately overprinted postal stationery
5	SST	Sonderstempel		SPM	special postmark
6	ANL	Anlass		EVT	event
7	SYM	Schachsymbol	SYM	SYM	chess symbol
8	KS	Kein Schach		NoC	no chess
9	OI	Ohne Illustration		WI	without illustration
10	ILL	Illustration	ILL	ILL	illustration/cachet
11	OB	Ohne Bewertung		WE	without evaluation
12	perf	gezähnt	perf	perf	perforated
13	imp	ungezähnt	imp	imp	imperforated
14	KB	Kleinbogen		M/S	miniature sheet
15	PST	Ganzsache	PST	PST	postal stationery
16	MAX	Maximum Karte		MAX	maximum card
17	INFO	Information	INFO	INFO	information
18	KI	Künstliche Intelligenz		AI	artificial intelligence
19	EMV	geschätzter Marktpreis	EVM	EMV	estimated market value
20	BN	Bonn		BN	Bonn
21	FR	Freiburg		FR	Freiburg
22	HH	Hamburg		HH	Hamburg
23	B	Berlin		B	Berlin
24	L	Lackdruck		G	glossy finish
25	N	Normaldruck		N	normal print
26	gr	grau	gr	gr	grey
27	br	braun	br	br	brown
28	r	rot	r	r	red
29	FDC	Ersttagsbrief	FDC	FDC	first day cover
30	ETB	Ersttagsbrief			

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