

## **Ukrainian world chess champ again says no to competition in Saudi Arabia Sports**

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### **Anna Muzychuk demonstrates again that Ukrainian women are strong and will not compete where women's rights are violated**

By Aleksandr Gostev and [Farangis Najibullah](#) for RFE/RL, Dec 28, 2017 To Anna Muzychuk, passing up the opportunity to defend her dual titles at the world speed-chess championships this week in Saudi Arabia was difficult. But ultimately, the 27-year-old Ukrainian grand master concluded, she didn't want to compete in a country where "women's rights are violated." "It's been an extremely difficult decision not to attend the tournament," Muzychuk told RFE/RL Russian Service in an exclusive interview on December 27. "After all, this is the world championship...and I am the reigning champion." But Muzychuk stood by her earlier announcement that she would not travel to Riyadh, at the cost of losing her world speed-chess titles in both the disciplines of rapid and blitz, and is sitting out the competition taking place in the Saudi capital from December 26-30. "I'm principally not attending the tournament because of what's been going in the country, where human rights, especially women's rights, are violated," Muzychuk said. Muzychuk first announced her decision in a Facebook post in November, writing that she was bowing out in order "not to play by someone's rules, not to wear abaya, not to be accompanied getting outside, and altogether not to feel myself a secondary creature." [⋮] <https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-chess-...mens-rights/28944162.html>