

Istvan Kovacs

HUN

Candidate to the positions of:

- World Boxing Vice President
 - World Boxing Executive Board Member
-

Candidature nomination form - sections 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9

Section 5 –Qualifications and professional background

This section asks about your qualifications and professional background.

Your answers will help Members assess your knowledge, skills and experience and how they support your ability to perform this role.

List your relevant qualifications

Career:

As amateur 297 fights: 282 wins, 1 draw, 14 defeats

1996 – Atlanta Olympic Gold medalist

1993 – Barcelona Olympic Bronze medalist

1991, 1997 – Two times Amateur World Champion

1991, 1996 – Two times Amateur European Champion

1993 – Amateur European Championship Bronze medalist

1990 – World Cup silver medalist

1994 – World Cup bronze medalist

1988 – Junior European Champion

1989-1992 & 1994-1996 – Seven times Hungarian Champion

As professional 23 bouts: 22 wins, 1 defeat

1999 - WBC International Champion

2000 – EBU European Champion

2001 – WBO World Champion

Awards:

- Young sportman of the year – third place (1988)
- Excellent young Sportsman of the year (1988)
- Boxer of the year in Hungary (1990-1991, 1994 -1997) six times
- Sportsman of the year - Hungary (1991, 1996) two times
- Sportsman of the year – Hungary Second place (1997)
- Bronze Cross of Merit of the Republic of Hungary (1992)
- Order of Merit of the Republic of Hungary (1996)
- The World's best amateur boxer (1997)
- Golden Placket by the President of Hungary (1999)
- Boxer of the year by EBU (2000)
- Grand Cross of Merit of the Republic of Hungary (2002)
- Hungarian Olympic Committee Fair Play lifetime award (2015)

Additional information:

- First Hungarian Amateur World Champion.
- First Hungarian Professional World Champion.
- The only Hungarian boxer who collected all titles in professional and amateur boxing.
- 23 times Marathon finisher (New York, Vienna, Madrid, Barcelona, Athens, Berlin, Rome, Budapest, Moscow, Sevilla, St. Tropez and Paris)
- 6 times Ironman finisher (2015-2020 Nagyatád)

Studies:

- Ihász Dániel High School (1984-1988)
- Bachelor of Arts in Business Studies - IBS, International Business School (2005)
- Sports Manager Degree - University of Physical Education of Hungary (2012)
- Coaching Degree - University of Physical Education of Hungary (2020)

Languages:

B1 English business (LCCI 2005), German Advanced level, Hungarian fluent

Business & Public Activities:

- 2002-2010 Owner of Boxutca restaurant
- 2010-present Owner of LaPampa Argentinian Stakehouse
- 2002-present WBO official
- 2004-present WBO European Vice President
- 2004-present Goodwill Ambassador at the Hungarian Interchurch Aid
- 2004-2008 Member of the Hungarian Ski Association
- 2005-present Professional box officials degree – USA license
- 2007-2013 President of honor of the Hungarian Boxing Association
- 2008-2013 President of the professional committee of the Hungarian Boxing Association
- 2008-present Member of the Hungarian Olympic Committee
- 2012 Leader of the preparation committee for the London Olympics
- 2010-2019 Member of the Board for Civil Services advisory board
- 2011-2014 Member of the advisory board for Erzsebet camp (sports camp)

for Hungarian children), coordinator for sport theme activities

- 2017-present Member of the Supervisor Board at the Hungarian Olympic Committee
- 2018-2021 Member of the IOC Olympic Boxing Task Force
- 2021-2022 AIBA – IBA Secretary General
- 2024 President of the Hungarian Boxing Association

Media Career:

- 2002-2006 RTL Klub - commercial TV channel
- 2006-2014 SportKlub – sports TV channel
- 2008-2015 Lánchíd radio
- 2014-2019 Ozon Network – commercial TV channel
- 2014-2020 Presztizs Sport magazine
- 2015-2020 M4 Sport – sports channel

List any governance or board training.

Ihász Dániel High School (1984-1988)

- Bachelor of Arts in Business Studies - IBS, International Business School (2005)
- Sports Manager Degree - University of Physical Education of Hungary (2012)
- Coaching Degree - University of Physical Education of Hungary (2020)

Explain how your background will help you in this role.

For more than forty years I have lived my life within the world of boxing, and for the past twenty-three years I have served our beloved sport as a leader. As an Olympic Champion, I know precisely how important it is to belong to the Olympic Family, and in every position I have ever held, I have worked tirelessly to achieve this goal.

During my tenure as Secretary General of AIBA, later IBA, I did everything in my power to ensure that boxing would remain a full and recognized member of the Olympic family, and the International Olympic Committee has acknowledged my efforts in this regard.

Today, as President of the Hungarian Boxing Association and a Member of the Executive Committee of European Boxing, I see clearly our responsibilities that we must fulfill in order for our sport to regain its rightful place among the most prominent Olympic sports. Should I be granted with your trust I will do my utmost to secure the future of Olympic boxing.

Mr. István "Koko" Kovács

Olympic, World and European Champion Boxer

President of the Hungarian Boxing Association

Section 6 –Boxing and sport experience

This section asks about your experience in boxing and insport. Your answers will help Members assess your knowledge of the sport and how your experience supports your ability to contribute to WorldBoxing.

Your experience in boxing

As amateur 297 fights: 282 wins, 1 draw, 14 defeats

1996 – Atlanta Olympic Gold medalist

1993 – Barcelona Olympic Bronze medalist

1991, 1997 – Two times Amateur World Champion

1991, 1996 – Two times Amateur European Champion

1993 – Amateur European Championship Bronze medalist

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As professional 23 bouts: 22 wins, 1 defeat

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Your experience in sport

Awards:

- Young sportman of the year – third place (1988)
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- Grand Cross of Merit of the Republic of Hungary (2002)
- Hungarian Olympic Committee Fair Play lifetime award (2015)

Your knowledge of international sport.

First Hungarian Amateur World Champion.

- First Hungarian Professional World Champion.
- The only Hungarian boxer who collected all titles in professional and amateur boxing.
- 23 times Marathon finisher (New York, Vienna, Madrid, Barcelona, Athens, Berlin, Rome, Budapest, Moscow, Sevilla, St. Tropez and Paris)
- 6 times Ironman finisher (2015-2020 Nagyatád)

Your experience at events

LOC Chairman

U23 European Boxing Championships

I. Papp Cup Intercontinental Team Competition Europe versus Pan-America

2002-2010 Owner of Boxutca restaurant

- 2010-present Owner of LaPampa Argentinian Stakehouse
- 2002-present WBO official
- 2004-present WBO European Vice President
- 2004-present Goodwill Ambassador at the Hungarian Interchurch Aid
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- 2017-present Member of the Supervisor Board at the Hungarian Olympic Committee
- 2018-2021 Member of the IOC Olympic Boxing Task Force
- 2021-2022 AIBA – IBA Secretary General
- 2024 President of the Hungarian Boxing Association

Explain how this experience helps you in this role.

I will bring all my 40 years of boxing experience, knowledge and professional credit and will offer in the service of World Boxing.

Section 7 –Governance experience and capability

Good governance is important to ensure that World Boxing is well managed, makes sound decisions and acts in the best interests of the sport. The questions below help show your experience and ability to contribute to this.

List your board or committee roles including with World Boxing

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- 2021-2022 AIBA – IBA Secretary General
- 2024 President of the Hungarian Boxing Association

2025 Executive Board Member of the European Boxing

Areas of knowledge or expertise (tick as many as apply or None)

Strategic planning

Finance and budgeting

Stakeholder engagement

Risk management

Operations

Communications

Give examples of your governance work if applicable, including a difficult decision you have had to deal with:

Governance example 1

As President of the Hungarian Boxing Association since my election in 2024 I have been able to successfully secure the operation, legal compliance, transparency, financial stability, competition organizations, national team preparation for the sake and enhancement of our boxing community. Also, as the Chairman of the Local Organizing Committee, with my team, I was able to deliver the U23 European Boxing Championships in 2025 at the highest standards possible for benefit of the European Boxing in general and European National Federations in particular.

Governance vs Operations

The success of boxing, sport in general, and any organization primarily depends upon effective and professional team work. I do truly believe that the highest mountains can be moved and any goals can be achieved, if highly skilled, motivated and properly recognized professionals make a strong team that goes in one single direction and all individuals within the team are able to fulfill their dreams in parallel.

Describe what you think this role involves:

Dedication, openness, hard work and loyalty towards each other and World Boxing.

Section 8 –Motivation for nomination

This section asks why you are seeking this role and whatyou would bring to World Boxing.Your answers will help Members assess your motivation, judgement and ability to contribute to the leadership of World Boxing.

Why do you want this role?

For more than forty years I have lived my life within the world of boxing, and for the past twenty-three years I have served our beloved sport as a leader. As an Olympic Champion, I know precisely how important it is to belong to the Olympic Family, and in every position I have ever held, I have worked tirelessly to achieve this goal.

During my tenure as Secretary General of AIBA, later IBA, I did everything in my power to ensure that boxing would remain a full and recognized member of the Olympic family, and the International Olympic Committee has acknowledged my efforts in this regard.

Today, as President of the Hungarian Boxing Association and a Member of the Executive Committee of European Boxing, I see clearly our responsibilities that we must fulfill in order for our sport to regain its rightful place among the most prominent Olympic sports. Should I be granted with your trust I will do my utmost to secure the future of Olympic boxing.

Mr. István "Koko" Kovács

Olympic, World and European Champion Boxer
President of the Hungarian Boxing Association

What will you contribute?

I will tirelessly work on securing boxing on the Olympic program for the long run and beyond LA 2028 and Brisbane 2032. Also, I will dedicate myself to allow new generations live their Olympic dreams within the framework of World Boxing, and for the benefit of World Boxing directly.

What experience or judgement do you bring

I will bring all my 40 years of boxing experience, knowledge, dedication and professional credit and will offer in the service of World Boxing.

Section 9 –Candidate statement

This is your principal statement in support of your campaign for election. This will be published as you write it. It will not be edited. You are responsible for its content. If you have used AI tools or other external assistance in preparing this statement, you must disclose this so that Members can make an informed assessment of your candidature. Failure to disclose the use of AI tools, or presenting AI-generated content as your own, may constitute a breach of the World Boxing Code of Ethics and may result in action being taken under the World Boxing Rules and Policies.

Candidate statement

For more than forty years I have lived my life within the world of boxing, and for the past twenty-three years I have served our beloved sport as a leader. As an Olympic Champion, I know precisely how important it is to belong to the Olympic Family, and in every position I have ever held, I have worked tirelessly to achieve this goal.

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Mr. István "Koko" Kovács

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