

RONALDO SENTENCED FOR 23 MONTHS OF PRISON

Dark clouds gathered above the world's best football player, Cristiano Ronaldo. First a transfer to Juventus broke the hearts of his fans from Madrid, later he was accused of rape and now he was sentenced for 23 months of prison and a fine of EUR 18.8 million for not paying enough tax. Relax, you will see CR7 in the next match. In the final of the tax **trial** (which lasted only 50 minutes) Ronaldo admitted to not paying his taxes and agreed to accept the punishment. As a result he got a **suspended sentence** which means he will not go to prison if he does not brake the conditions set by the court. If he hadn't accepted the court's proposition he could have got a much more severe penalty, that is to say EUR 28 million in financial **compensation** and 3.5 years in prison (this time actual prison). According to Spanish tax authorities in the years when he played for Real Madrid (2009-2018) he did not pay EUR 5.7 million of tax, so now he ended up having to take over 3 times more out of his pocket.

POLISH GOVERNMENT ACCEPTS "MAMA 4+" PROJECT

After 500+ (a **benefit** for each child in the family counting from child number 2) and 300+ (a benefit enabling families to pay for textbooks), the government of Law and Justice has accepted another project titled "Mama 4+". As the name suggests this solution is addressed to mothers who have **raised** four children or more and have reached retirement age (60 years old). The fact is that to receive a **pension** you do not only have to turn 60, but also you need to have worked for 20 years until that time. Now mothers who spent a lot of time taking care of their children will not have to meet the 20 years requirement and will "qualify" for a minimum pension at the age of 60. They will receive PLN 1,100 if they have no job or money to live on or - if they do receive a pension lower than PLN 1,100 - it will be topped to that level (that solution resembles recent ideas of Italian citizens' wage). "Mama 4+" programme will impact some 65,000 people who are not yet retired and 20,800 people whose pension is lower than the minimum. In some cases, fathers after 65 will also be able to apply for the benefit.

NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTEAD OF COAL

There is a decision most countries will need to make in the near future: how to produce energy? For a long time majority relied on **fossil fuels** like coal, now with challenges ecology (and just the future of humanity) imposes a different path needs to be selected. Realistically, there are two options: renewable energy sources such as solar panels, wind turbines and water plants or nuclear power stations. Polish Ministry of Energy has just announced they want to build two nuclear power stations by 2043. They are supposed to be located in the north as well as in the centre of the country. According to the presented plan the first block offering 1-1.5GW of power should be fully operational as early as 2033 and the other 5 blocks capable of producing 6-9 GW will open ten years later. Krzysztof Tchórzewski, the Minister of Energy, says it will be impossible for Poland to meet the climatic requirements proposed by the EU without nuclear energy and therefore we need to invest in it. The cost? Difficult to **estimate** precisely, but probably between PLN 100 and 135 billion.

AND THE THREE OSCAR NOMINATIONS GO TO...

Polish filmmaking hasn't seen such prosperous year(s) in decades, most certainly not since Andrzej Wajda and Roman Polański's **heyday** in the 1960's. But even then three nominations to world's most prestigious film awards for a Polish film were unrealistic, **to say the least**. This year Paweł Pawlikowski's "Cold War" [Zimna Wojna] **is in the running** for "Best Foreign Film", "Best Director" and "Best Cinematography" Oscars. And if that weren't enough, many international film critics are surprised that Joanna Kulig hasn't received a nomination in the "Best Actress" category for what is widely regarded as her "sensational **breakout** performance". The film is a remarkable love story partly inspired by Pawlikowski's parents, set in Poland, Berlin, Paris and the former Yugoslavia. Don't be **put off** by Pawlikowski's clearly very ambitious, not action-heavy filmmaking style. Apparently this one has a "sense of creeping suspense worthy of Hitchcock **at his most chilling** and crafty." As Washington Post's film critic Ann Hornaday puts it: "Cold War is a near-perfect film, an artfully crafted, **flawlessly** acted meditation on love, memory and invented history that's both deeply personal and politically attuned." It is worth noting that Pawlikowski has already won a "Best Director" award for this film last year at the Cannes Film Festival and an Oscar in the "Best Foreign Film" category for his low budget "Ida" in 2015. In the US "Cold War" is distributed by Amazon Studios (well done, Jeffrey P. Bezos) and has made nearly USD 15 million worldwide since its international release.



FOR&AGAINST

A common citizen would certainly go to prison if he did not pay a few million dollars of tax.

(Do you think people who don't pay tax should go to prison? Do you think there should be an option of just paying more and not going to prison? Do you think Ronaldo got special treatment in this case?)

Time spent at home raising children should count as time when you worked.

(How does raising a child help society? Does having children influence your ability to be active professionally? Would such a rule encourage people to stay at home for a longer period of time?)

It is not a good idea to invest into nuclear energy nowadays.

(Do nuclear power plants produce energy efficiently? Is nuclear energy cheap? What are the dangers coming from the use of this kind of energy?)

Polish media are preoccupied with negative content.

(Aren't all media preoccupied with negativity? We are more likely to hear about murders and petty crimes than monumental successes. Is it true that negative information sells better?)

VOCABULARY:

trial - proces

suspended sentence - wyrok w zawieszeniu

compensation - rekompensata

benefit - zasiłek

to raise a child - wychować dziecko

pension - emerytura

fossil fuels - paliwa kopalne

estimate - oszacować

heyday - dni świetności

to say the least - delikatnie mówiąc

to be in the running for - być w grze, mieć szanse

breakout - przełomowy

to be put off - zrazić się

flawless - bez skazy; perfekcyjny

at one's best - w najlepszej formie

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What did Cristiano Ronaldo get a punishment of EUR 18.8 million for?
2. Did Cristiano Ronaldo have to go to prison?
3. Who will the "Mama 4+" programme help?
4. Is the retirement age in Poland the same for men and women?
5. What kind of power plants does Poland want to build by 2043?
6. Which Polish film won an Oscar in 2015?

SOURCES BOX

polskieradio24, an article from January 22, 2019 about Cristiano Ronaldo's sentence

polskieradio24.pl, an article from January 22, 2019 about Mama 4+ programme

businessinsider.com.pl, an article from January 22, 2019 about nuclear power stations in Poland

washingtonpost.com, a film review from January 16, 2019 about Paweł Pawlikowski's "Cold War"