



” Poznan Racetrack.
A historic facility in dispute
with new residential development

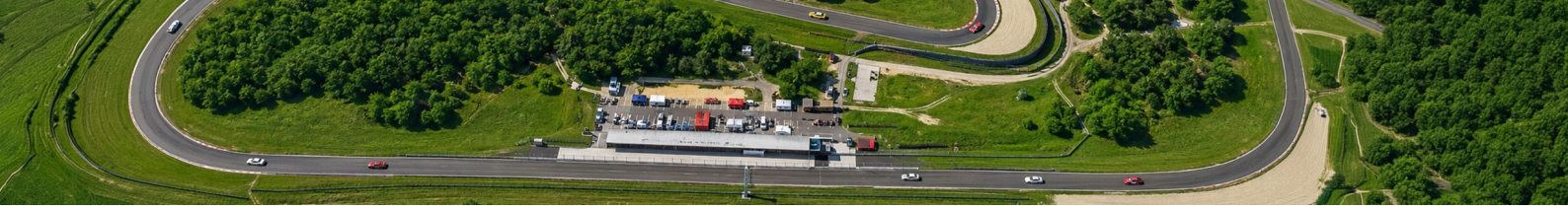
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The Poznan Racetrack case gained publicity following information about a decision upholding an order to suspend the use of installations on the site. This triggered strong opposition from motorsport fans, particularly visible on social media. The facility, however, did not remain out of use for long. The Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection announced that the enforcement of the decision of March 31, 2026 had been suspended until the case is resolved by the Provincial Administrative Court. In practice, this means that Poznan Racetrack may currently operate under the existing conditions. The matter has not, however, been finally concluded and the risk of restrictions on the track's operations remains real.

For many people connected with motorsport, significance of Poznan Racetrack goes beyond the local dimension. For years, it has been associated not only with racing and motorsport, but also with training and other automotive events. At the same time, a dispute has been growing around the track, bringing into conflict arguments concerning residents' right to a comfortable life, applicable environmental standards and the protection of a facility that has operated in this location for almost half a century.

This supra-local importance is well illustrated by the history of Poznan Racetrack. When the facility opened in December 1977, it was the only major racing circuit in Poland and a symbol of sporting ambitions pursued on the eastern side of the Iron Curtain. For decades, it maintained its position as the country's most important permanent racing circuit. Today, the paradox is that almost 50 years later Poland may face the prospect of losing its only homologated circuit of international significance. The Poznan Racetrack remains the only facility in Poland homologated by the FIA, which gives the entire case a dimension extending beyond the vicinity of Przeźmierowo and Poznań.

In this dispute, the historical argument frequently returns. The Poznan Racetrack was built in the 1970s on the site of a former military training ground, exploiting the old, no longer used runways of Poznań-Ławica Airport. The facility was therefore operating long before a large part of the current residential development appeared in its vicinity. The dispute concerns primarily the noise generated by racing cars, but it is worth remembering that cars were already driving there when building plots were being sold in the area and development permits were being issued. This leads to the question of whether the current conflict could have been avoided through appropriate spatial planning and by allowing in the area only such a direction of space development as would have been adequate to the neighbourhood of an existing racing circuit.

The background to this story is the development of Przeźmierowo and the surrounding area. In recent decades, this area has undergone intensive urbanisation as part of the residential hinterland of the Poznań agglomeration. In the case of Poznan Racetrack, the conflict did not appear suddenly, but grew as development in the vicinity of the facility expanded.

An economic argument also appears in the public debate. The proximity of the racing circuit and the airport may have been one of the factors affecting property price levels in this area. Viewed in this way, some buyers may have decided to purchase because of more attractive prices, while at the same time being aware of the specific nature of the location and the lower life comfort associated with it. According to historical data from the AMRON database, in 2003-2004, i.e. in the period preceding the largest increase in the number of Przeźmierowo residents, building plots there cost on average PLN 115 per sqm. Currently, according to up-to-date data from the same database, the average price is PLN 825 per sqm.



On the other hand, residents argue that regardless of when the facility was built or how property values have changed, they have the right to expect compliance with the applicable standards. This is why the dispute today has not only an emotional and economic dimension, but also a formal and administrative one.

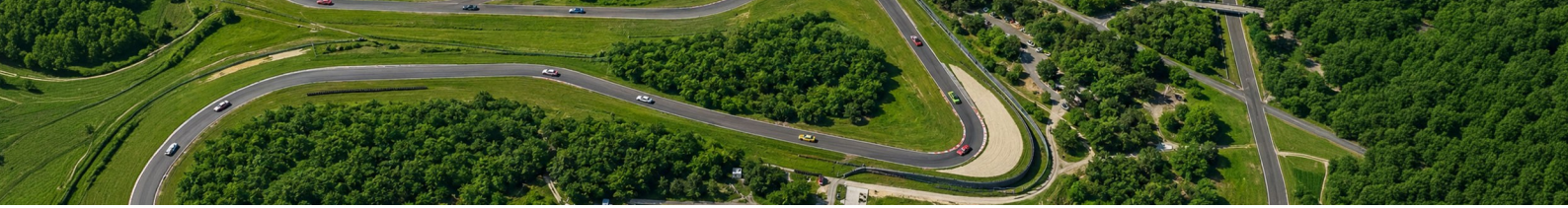
One of the key threads in the Poznan Racetrack case is spatial planning. For years, development in the vicinity of the facility took place in conditions, in which there were no effective tools that would clearly separate the residential function from areas exposed to noise. Until recently, the study of conditions and directions of spatial development, as the main planning document in a municipality, did not have the legal force to prohibit residential development within a specified distance from the circuit. In the absence of local spatial development plans, successive projects could therefore be built on the basis of decisions on development conditions. As a result, residential development began to move closer to the circuit.

Today, the formal situation is different: studies have been replaced by general plans, which have legal force, while local spatial development plans specify their provisions in greater detail. If a similar facility as the Poznan Racetrack was built today, it would be possible to designate a buffer zone around it, intended, for example, for insulating greenery or industrial development, which would separate residential development from the area exposed to excessive noise. The general plan of the Tarnowo Podgórne municipality, the draft of which was subject to public consultation in January 2026, also appears in the background of the case.

Additionally, both technical and legal dimensions of the case also remain important. The basis for the authorities' actions was the identified exceedance of permissible noise levels. The difference between levels of 55 and 50 dB, which to a layman may appear negligible, is often refrained in the public sphere. In administrative proceedings, however, such parameters are highly significant, because they may determine whether a facility is permitted to operate in a specific environment. In practice, the issue is therefore not merely an apparently small numerical difference, but a threshold, on which the legal assessment of the circuit's impact on its surroundings depends.

The operators of the circuit, in turn, emphasise that the facility is taking measures to reduce noise. Residents, meanwhile, argue that regardless of the circuit's tradition, environmental standards must be met. As a result, the dispute is not limited solely to the question of who is right, but concerns a difficult attempt to reconcile two legitimate interests: the protection of residents' living conditions and the preservation of an important sports facility.

The issue of noise around the Poznan Racetrack should also be considered in the broader context of location. The facility operates in the immediate vicinity of Poznań-Ławica Airport, for which a restricted use area has been established due to the airport's acoustic impact. This shows that this part of the agglomeration for years has not been a typical quiet residential area, but rather a space, where residential functions coexist with burdensome transport and sports infrastructure. From this perspective, the dispute over the Poznan Racetrack is not only about the circuit itself, but also about a broader question concerning the future of the entire surrounding area and whether, if the racing facility were eventually closed, the airport would become the next source of conflict.



For now, the most important point remains that the case has not been finally resolved. Enforcement of the decision has been suspended and the further course of events depends on the court and the subsequent actions of the parties to the proceedings. Regardless of the outcome of this specific case, the conflict around the Poznan Racetrack has already become an example of a broader problem: how to reconcile the development of residential housing with the presence of older infrastructure and sports facilities. This question will be important not only for Przeźmierowo and the area around the circuit, but also for many other places, where land-use functions have begun to clash. A very important task for planners remains to resolve existing spatial conflicts and to pursue a wise, long-term spatial policy that



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AMRON Centre

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