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BULLFIGHTING IN THE TIME OF COVID-19. WITH AN INTERNATIONAL VIDEO-INVESTIGATION, THE ITALIAN ANIMAL RIGHTS NGO LAV (LAV.IT/EN) REVEALS UNACCEPTABLE EVIDENCES: EVEN THOUGH CORRIDA IMPLIES SERIOUS HAZARD FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, THESE BLOODY SHOWS ARE FINANCED WITH 130 MILLION EUROS € EU SUBSIDIES FROM CAP!

LAV: EU CITIZENS AND THE MAJORITY OF MEPs ARE AGAINST BULLFIGHTING, WE ASK EU COMMISSION TO STOP “FINANCING” CORRIDA WITH PUBLIC MONEY. #EUBULLFIGHTINGSCANDAL, #NONCOMEPRIMA, LET’S NOT COME BACK AS BEFORE: <https://bit.ly/3fNTjwk>

In collaboration with



With a recent international video-investigation carried out by its investigative unit, the Italian animal rights NGO, LAV (lav.it/en) reveals new shocking background of bullfighting, unveiling public health hazard implied by these bloody shows, that incredibly receive European public funding!

“It’s unacceptable that corrida – a show that should be banned for obscenity and violence against the bulls, and that cannot be considered a tradition to be defended - is financed with public funds!”, LAV says.

Between the end of September and the beginning of October 2019, LAV has gathered information and filmed three shows: in Algeciras, Seville and Madrid. Investigators have interviewed several witnesses who confirmed to receive subsidies from the EU with specific “expedients” together with funds from local government (EU funds for cows, for activities not directly related to the breeding of bulls for bullfights).

- The *matador* hits the bull with an *estoque* (a typical bullfighting sword) which is 80 cm long. The *estoque* is inserted into the thorax of the animal. It produces an intense haemorrhage since it cuts veins, arteries, and lungs. The consequence is that the animal suffers an intense suffocation due to blood flooding his thoracic cavity.
- Once on the ground, the bull resting on his folded legs, is hit with a *puntilla* (special 10 cm long knife) always used by a *subalterno* (subordinate assistant) of the bullfighter. The consequence is the death of the animal, but that does not occur immediately; it can take between one and four minutes for the animal to die.
- There are many cases, documented through filming, in which these animals have their ears cut off or they are dragged by the mules out of the bullring, when they are still alive.
- On some occasions, dead bulls are moved outside the ring and put openly on a scraper bucket, close to really young kids and people in general.
- The meat from the bulls killed in the bullfights is sold in some butcher shops and local restaurants. In some cases that same meat is transported out of the arena without any hygienic-sanitary criteria and in front of people, even kids.

- Two of the filmed shows concern the main Spanish arenas (Seville and Madrid), with animals killed violently, tortured and executed after a long agony. Others are seriously injured from stress as soon as they enter the arena. In several cases even the life of the public is put at serious risk by the shows performed, as well as the whole town. As an example, Algemesi is a very important and particular "plaza" where the bulls are beaten before the show, through the streets of the town (practice of the encierro).
- The bulls in Algemesi are sent to death very young (no more than 3 years of age): for this reason those who kill them are called "novilleros", or aspiring bullfighters.

*“Bullfighting is an unacceptable show, contested for years because it is contrary to ethics and the protection of animals, non-educational offered to children, even though 84% of young Spaniards disapprove of this show - **Roberto Bennati, LAV General Manager says - Today more than ever, in the Covid-19 emergency, ignoring the health risks of arenas where the blood of these animals is sown, slaughtered on the spot in the same building and with dubious standards of health safety, it is an irresponsible act!**”*

BULLFIGHTING, EU AND LOCAL PUBLIC SUBSIDIES, AND CAP

Bullfighting benefits from European public subsidies despite the contrary will of the EU Parliament: at the end of October 2015, in fact, the European Parliament (with 438 yes, 199 no and 50 abstentions) approved an amendment to the 2016 budget which provides no use of “*CAP funds (common agricultural policy) or any other European funding line to economically support bullfighting activities involving the death of the bull*”.

Bullfighting receives support funds from:

- **National government;**
- **Regional governments;**
- **Provincial Councils (Diputaciones);**
- **Municipalities, whose municipalities cover the costs of traditional, popular celebrations**

CAP grants make up to 31,6% of the income for farms intended for bullfighting, without which they would be unlikely to ensure economic sustainability. These funds are managed and distributed by the autonomous communities.

“At this crucial moment of review of the CAP, it is necessary to introduce a measure that provides for the interruption of public finding to farms that allocate their bulls for Bullfighting”, LAV claims

- **571 million euros:** funds for bullfighting allocated by different Spanish authorities
- **about 130 million euros:** the subsidies allocated by the European Union to bullfighting, essentially through the CAP

These data are the result of an in-depth report drawn up in 2013 by some members of the European Parliament, *“Toros & Taxes - funding in Spain and the European Union for bullfights and bull farms”*. The same authoritative sources that drafted the report say that these data are underestimated especially given the serious lack of transparency in the management of the funds.

There is no tracking of the funds given to individual breeders. The sources are approximate data provided by the European Union and by the breeders themselves.

EU subsidy	240 € per hectare
Total hectares	540.000
TOTAL	129.600.000 €

CORRIDA IS UNDERGOING A SERIOUS CRISIS: SHOWS FALL BY -63.4%

On June 1, 2020, the Spanish Ministry of Culture published new statistical data on bullfighting which confirm its now ongoing phase of crisis. The shows in the arenas in 2019 decreased by 63.4% compared to 2007. Despite this data, what emerges from the report is that since 2007 bull farms destined for bullfighting have increased from 1327 to 1339. This is a further evidence of how 31.6% of revenue from CAP funds is invested, together with the additional funds received nationally. In addition to this, in 2019 there were 9,993 people registered as professionals in the Bullfighting sector, compared to 7,907 in 2017. How is it possible that a sector in decline and in difficulty increases in such a way the presence of professionals in the sector, of which 991 are older than 65 years?

84% OF SPANISH YOUNG PEOPLE DISAPPROVES CORRIDA (Ipsos Mori, 2015)

This is a consolidated trend over time: in 2008 a survey reported that over 67% of people interviewed showed no interest in this show, against the great support of a small 9% and 21% who expressed moderate interest. In 2015, an Ipsos Mori survey found that over 84% of young Spaniards are not in favour of bullfighting. More recently, in 2020, a poll from Electomania confirms that 81% of the general Spanish population state “not to be in favor” of bullfighting.

*“How can the European Union finance this cruelty? It is time to say “no”: we urge the Commission and the EU Parliament to immediately stop subsidizing Corrida with public funds (CAP) intended for agriculture and not for torture - **Bennati says** - the unveiling, and broadcasting, of videos and information on the real situation of bullfights, fraudulent CAP public funds reception, and animal suffering documented by LAV Investigative Unit is carried out in collaboration with Animal Guardians and AVATMA Veterinary Association for the abolition of bullfighting and animal abuse - which LAV thanks for completing and enriching this investigative work — we hope that these images will help the Spanish associations to continue their battle of civilization against this unacceptable show made of suffering and cruelty on animals”.*

ATTACHMENTS:

- **Full investigative Report**
- **Summary of the situation of bullfighting in Spain**

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