

Summary of the situation of bullfighting in Spain

June, 2020



22 JUNE 2020

Animal Guardians

Created by:

Marta Esteban Miñano



Introduction

The best help for families living from bullfighting is a **Conversion Plan**.

In view of the data published here, it is a fact that bullfighting is going to disappear, therefore **the injection of public money in this sector is a waste of public funds when they are most needed**.

Every year **both social support and bullfighting activity fall**, and with them the employment, already precarious and endogamous, related to this activity.

"Bullfights have fallen by 63.4% since 2007 in Spain (Ministry of Culture, 2020). 81.4% of voters say they are not in favor of bullfighting. (Electomania, 2020) "

The **little social support** is generational, being practically nil among young people. **84% of young people are not proud of living in a country where bullfighting is a tradition** (Ipsos Mori, 2015).

All bullfighting festivities fall, including popular festivities since 2017.

The public funds that go to bullfighting come from Europe (PAC, ERDF, Creative Europe Program) Spanish Ministries (Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Promotion), Autonomous Communities, Provincial Councils and Municipalities.

As the sector itself claims, **the bullfighting business is bankrupt and bullfighting activity is sustained exclusively by subsidies**, without which it would have disappeared. **Still, it continues to fall** each year, proving that its chances of recovery are nil.

For all these reasons, avoiding the waste of public money towards bullfighting is the obligation of any responsible government. The best help for families who live from bullfighting is a Reconversion Plan towards activities that do not involve the mistreatment and death of animals as a public spectacle, strongly rejected by the vast

majority of the Spanish population.

Fall of the Bullfighting Activity

Bullfights have fallen 63.4% since 2007 in Spain. There were a total of 349 bullfights in 2019

All bullfighting events drop by 61% (only mixed bullfighting runs increased from 13 to 51)

Even the **popular (street) bullfighting events fall from 2017-2019 in 1,005 celebrations.** Currently there are 16,915.

77.5% of bullfighting celebrations are concentrated in only 4 Autonomous Communities: Andalusia, Castilla y León, Castilla-La Mancha and Comunidad de Madrid concentrate 77.5 percent of bullfighting celebrations held in 2019. The one with the most Madrid.

Source: AVATMA over 2019 statistic data provided by the Ministry of Culture: [Mº de Cultura](#)

Social Support

General Population:

78% are against bullfighting subsidies (YouGov, 2018).

84% of young people are not proud of living in a country where bullfighting is a tradition (Ipsos Mori, 2015).

Voter data (Electomania, 2020):

81.4% of Spanish voters are not in favor of bullfighting. But only 46.7% would ban it (from left-wing).

52.4% of voters under 35 years of age would ban bullfighting (once again, it is a generational issue)

"66.5% of the voters of the PSOE and 81.8% of the voters of Podemos, would ban bullfighting. (Electomania, 2020)".

66.5% PSOE voters would ban it, 81.8% of Podemos would too (Both left-wing parties, currently governing in coalition)

With regards to **the PP and Vox** (right and extreme-right party, respectively) it is worth noticing that their voters state **not to be in favor of bullfighting**.

Among the **PP** voters 45.4% is not in favor but 43.4% would not ban them, 11.4% would ban.

Vox: 42.2% are not in favor but 58.8% would not prohibit them, 3.8% would prohibit them.

64.1% of **Ciudadanos** (liberals) voters are not in favor, 22.9% would prohibit them and 13% would not prohibit them.

Among the voters of the rest of the political forces, 70.7% would prohibit them, 25.9% are not in favor and 3.4% would not prohibit them.

Cultural Habits

Only 5.9% of the population attended a traditional bullfight, novillada or horse bullfights. 7.9% if we consider all the bullfighting celebrations, such as those carried out on the street, where it is very difficult to know if those who were there did it adhoc or simply passed by.

This low percentage stands out compared to the percentage of the population that has consumed other cultural expressions: 87.2% music, 57.8% cinema, 50% museums, 46.7% galleries and exhibitions, 26.8% libraries.

Employment

Bullfighting Professionals

Bullfighting activity falls by 61%, the number of registered employees increases.

Despite the general decline of all bullfighting celebrations by 61%, the number of registered bullfighting professionals increases. The only possible explanation for this is that they hope to live on aid and subsidies.

Registered in 2012: 7,907; Registered in 2019: 9,993, of which 991 are over 65 years old. Increases by 21%.

However, if we see to the number of bullfighting professionals with a valid license, the number drops, proof that they have not been able to exercise their "profession".

With a valid card in 2012: 6,709; With valid card in 2019: 5,357.

It should be noted that in addition, having a valid card does not mean constant employment, since they may have only worked in one bullfight a year.

Source: AVATMA over 2019 statistic data provided by the Ministry of Culture: [Mº de Cultura](#)

"Despite the fall of 61% of all bullfighting events, the number of registered bullfighting professionals and the number of bullfighting ranches increase, proof that they have to be supported by subsidies or other economic activities. However, the number of professionals with valid licenses, that is to say, who have really worked,

Bullfighting ranches:

The number of ranches where bullfighting bulls are bred increased by 12 (there are 1,339) despite the 63.4% drop in bullfights. This is explained considering that **almost a third of income (31.6%) of these ranches comes from the Common Agricultural Program (CAP) of the European Union**, according to a study by Joan Enrich, an agricultural engineer at the Public University of Navarra in 2013 and entitled "Economic

technical efficiency of bullfighting bull ranches”, where he analyzes 18 bullfighting ranches.

However, only 30% of the farms manage to sell animals for traditional bullfighting in a bullring, the main source of income: 7 Miura bulls for bullfights cost at least 80,000 euros. Animals destined for popular celebrations outside a ring cost a much lower figure.

As for the employment they generate, it is more than precarious: the costs in average wages of these farms are 5,246 euros per month (maximum: 17,529 euros/month; minimum: 450 euros/month).

Source: AVATMA.com

Subsidies to bullfighting

The total number of public subsidies is very difficult to find out as they come from many areas, both **directly** through European institutions, ministries, autonomous communities, county councils and municipalities and **indirectly**, by paying for the services surrounding the festivities (veterinarians, doctors, infrastructure), reduction of administrative costs, free tickets, promotion in public media, reduced or non-existent bullring-use fees for bullfighting entrepreneurs, ... And in most cases the information in this regard is opaque, despite the citizen's insistence for it to be revealed.

There are studies that calculate **public subsidies for bullfighting at around 500 million euros a year in total¹, from Europe and Spain**. Now, with the excuse of the Covid-19, the sector wants to receive even more public money. **It is unacceptable that in a time of great need such as the one we live in, public money is injected into a bankrupt business**, whose social acceptance falls every year and that there is no doubt that it will disappear, even among the bullfighting sector. **Investing in bullfighting is like investing in typewriters.**

Interestingly, and despite the fact that the total number of celebrations has decreased, the budgeted amounts for 2020 are higher.

¹ https://es.slideshare.net/MartaEstebanMiano/las-subsidencias-pblicas-a-la-tauromaquia?qid=322700b7-ef2b-48bb-8f35-5a14be3d310d&v=&b=&from_search=1

Source:

https://elpais.com/cultura/2020/06/11/el_toro_por_los_cuernos/1591852018_581112.html

***"Citizen opposition to public subsidies for bullfighting increases every year, the most recent being 78%"
(YouGov, 2018).***

Europe

Livestock farms live in 31.6% of the CAP (Common Agrarian Program). There are also numerous bullrings built or remodeled with the contribution of the ERDF funds. In other words, Europeans and Europeans also maintain bullfighting with their taxes. It is for this reason that it is so important that the common agricultural policy of the European Union is modified and that control over the ERDF funds is implemented so that this does not happen again.

The use of these European funds for bullfighting violates the objective of the CAP and the objective of the ERDF funds.

The CAP aims to provide quality food to Europeans. To do this, it provides funds per suckler cow. However, many of those funds go to suckler cows that do not provide quality food. On the contrary, these cows produce animals that end in bullfights, whose meat is not only very far from being of quality, but also has a very high risk of bacterial contamination as a result of the injuries that the animals suffer during bullfights.

The fact that CAP funds support suckler cows whose calves end up in bullfights violates the main objective of the program: to provide quality food. Bullfighting meat is of a very low quality and has a high risk of bacterial contamination.

The meat of bullfighting bulls is a by-product of the bullfight with conditional use, limited as food and by its poor preservation. **Bull meat is dark, hard, dry and contaminated, due to the stress of transport and the fight, emotional change, intense muscular work and wounds.** The meat that is used after the fight is of a very secondary interest and always subject to its fundamental purpose. The meat of the bull that has been dealt with is therefore a by-product. Its dark color, the hardness, the dryness and the bad conservation are the negative characteristics that determine it; **therefore it is not accepted as normal meat in distribution chains.**

Source: AVATMA

In addition to the CAP, bullfighting receives money from Europe through **ERDF funds** to build or remodel bullrings. This could be considered **embezzlement**, considering that **this fund aims to strengthen socio-economic cohesion within the European Union by correcting imbalances between its regions, not financing bankrupt infrastructures of a business that is bankrupt and suffers great social rejection.**

A quick search on the internet can promote numerous examples of which we will name one: La Plaza de Aranjuez

**The scandalous waste of public money for
the Bullring of Aranjuez:**

- **113,249.73 euros, from the Spanish Ministry of Development, which contributed 68.06 percent of the cost through 1.5% cultural,**
- **the ERDF funds of the European Union, which contributed 21.94 percent (36,507 euros), and by the**
 - **Aranjuez City Council, which financed 10 percent.**

Something similar has happened in numerous bullrings in Spain.

Source: <https://www.lasrepublicas.com/2019/05/21/el-ministerio-de-fomento-y-los-fondos-europeos-para-regiones-deprimidas-ERDF-se-utilizan-para-una-plaza-de-toros-a-la-que-va-el-rey-emerito/>

Creative Europe: Europe finances the commission for the opening of CREA soft loans, announced by the Minister of Culture through the Creative Europe program.

Let us recall the rejection by the vast majority of MEPs to European funds to be used to support bullfighting, expressed in the [vote in 2015](#), with 438 votes in favor of eliminating them, 199 against and 50 abstentions.

Aid announced from the Ministry of Culture

- Unemployment aid. Eg one that has traded 120 days in 2019 can charge between € 738.9 and € 2031.94
- CREA financing program for cultural projects. they are soft loans. Europe subsidizes the opening commission. Total 780 million, 40 million per line. We do not know if the bulls will be considered a line by themselves and therefore will have access to 40 million or if they will have to distribute them with other disciplines. So far 717 applications have been submitted for a total of 49 million across all disciplines.
- ICO loans to healthy companies (which is not usually done by farms).

Other grants previously made from the Ministry of Culture:

National Bullfighting Prize 30,000 euros and an **aid to the Fundación Toro de Lidia of 30,000 euros** from culture that we do not know if they will do this year.

Other Ministries

Apart from the one mentioned above from the **Ministry of Public Works** for the reconstruction of bullrings, it is worth mentioning, for example, the subsidy to breeders of fighting bulls from the **Ministry of Agriculture**, which in 2011 was **7.5 million euros**.

Autonomous Communities, Provincial Councils and Municipalities

Several million euros are allocated from the governments of the Autonomous Communities to bullfighting, which due to their opacity are difficult to define exactly.

The governments of 8 autonomous communities and nine provincial councils have budgeted in 2020 for bullfighting at least the amount of 10,864,678 euros.

Source: https://elpais.com/cultura/2020/06/11/el_toro_por_los_cuernos/1591852018_581112.html
y https://elpais.com/cultura/2020/06/11/el_toro_por_los_cuernos/1591852018_581112.html

Some Examples

Comunidad de Madrid

In Madrid, where **490,000 people suffer severe social exclusion and 900,000 live in a very precarious situation** (Foessa Report, 2020), the Community government has budgeted **4,163,826 million euros** for bullfighting, including a bullfighter as director general of bullfighting affairs with a salary of 75,084 euros per year.

The community government, supposedly, has a royalty of 2,800,000 euros for the Las Ventas bullring, but the reality, told by one of its managers, is that the management of the bullring is only profitable thanks to the rest of non-bullfighting activities (concerts, sporting events, etc.) so it cannot be said that this amount is provided by bullfights, which hardly leave a profit, since they are only full when the most famous bullfighters come but their fees are so high that it is very hard for the bullring management to make a profit.

In addition, the Madrid City Council subsidizes the bullfighting school with at least 60,000 euros.

Extremadura

With **37.6% of its population (404,000) at risk of poverty** (Source: "State of poverty 2019"), in this autonomous community at least **1,036,000 million euros** have been budgeted for 2020 to help bullfighting (Source: the Country).

950,000 euros are allocated to the bullfighting school, where children learn to mistreat and kill cattle, being able to do it with live cattle from the age of 14, against the guidelines of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (see below: Children and Bullfighting).

Castilla y León

With a rebound in the risk of poverty in Castilla y León, which affects more than 468,000 people (EAPN, 2019), the autonomous government has allocated 1,500,000 euros to mitigate the damage of the pandemic in bullfighting. In addition, the

Salamanca deputation allocates 200,000 euros to the bullfighting school and that of Palencia, 84,323 for its bullfighting school. Total, **1,784,323 euros**, that we may know.

Castilla La Mancha:

More than 678,000 people are at risk of poverty and social exclusion in Castilla-La Mancha (EAPN, 2019), but the community government covers up funding for bullfighting by dedicating 1,300,000 euros to the dissemination of bullfights. bulls through its autonomous TV, CMME. In addition, the Albacete deputation allocates 75,000 euros to the bullfighting school and that of Guadalajara, 8,000 euros to the promotion of bullfighting. **Total: 1,383,000 euros**, that we may know.

Andalucía

With **3.2 million inhabitants at risk of poverty** and social exclusion, the Junta de Andalucía allocated **1,400,000 million to promote bullfighting in 2019**.

Source: https://www.elplural.com/autonomias/andalucia/la-junta-gastara-1-4-millones-de-euros-en-fomentar-los-toros_226445102

In addition, this year we know that **350,000 euros** have been allocated for 29 bullfighting schools and a grant for the Toro de Lidia Foundation. For its part, the deputation of Malaga has allocated **108,174 to the bullfighting school**.

Comunidad Valenciana

One in three Valencians is at high risk of poverty and 22,794 families are in extreme poverty (INE, 2019). However, the Valencia deputation has dedicated **1,000,000 euros** to bullfighting, and the **Castellón provincial council, the poorest province in the Community, dedicates 241,000 euros to the bullfighting school**.

Murcia

With **32% of the Murcian population, almost one from a house of three people, at risk of poverty**, this community allocates **1,500,000 euros** to finance the bullfighting school and promote bullfighting, among other things.

These are just some of the examples, since other communities, such as Navarra, La Rioja, Aragón, also sponsor bullfighting, as well as other councils and municipalities throughout the Spanish geography.

It should be noted, in addition to those mentioned above, some of the **extra aid announced as a result of the Covid-19 crisis**

Castilla La Mancha: elimination 100% fees for one year

Andalusia: reduces costs for 2nd and 3rd places

Navarra: € 90 max / animal (there are 7624 animals, so we can think of an expense of around 500,000 euros)

Castilla y León: 1.1 million (maximum 5000 per livestock)

Community of Madrid: the reduction of VAT to 4% is requested from bullfighting companies.

Bullfighting and the Environment

El toro is often said to be the guardian of the dehesas (meadows), unique spaces in the world that safeguard this ecosystem.

But the reality is that **the occupation of pastures for the breeding of bullfighting bulls is barely from 4.8% to 9.3%.**

Source: http://faada.org/userfiles/file/Contraargumentos_medioambientales_tauromaquia_2%281%29.pdf

Extinction of the Bullfighting Bull

The bull is a **variety of cattle**, a species is considered extinct when there is no living individual left anywhere in the world. Currently there are approximately between 1,300,000 and 2,400,000 million bovines in the world.

Fighting bulls cannot be extinguished because **only species can go extinct, never a variety.**

Therefore, it is a fallacy to claim that bullfighting bulls can become extinct.

Children and bullfighting

It is important to note that on February 2, 2018, the **United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child** published concluding observations on the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Spain (CRC/C/ESP/CO/5-6).

In Section 25 of Section E Violence against children - Bullfighting, it states that:

"To avoid the harmful effects of bullfighting on children, the Committee recommends that the State party prohibit the participation of children under the age of 18 as bullfighters and spectators in bullfights."

Clearly, this recommendation from the main world authority on the rights of the child is not respected in Spain, where there is numerous graphic evidence, some collected by Animal Guardians, of boys and girls not only attending bullfights, but torturing and killing young calves:

See: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1esa-fo9pNqrB9nSg0R5vSQKWim39j1lu?usp=sharing>

Furthermore, bullfighting schools, where they learn to carry out these terrible actions, are largely **sponsored by public money**. Example: Badajoz Provincial Council: 950,000 euros to the bullfighting school, Madrid: 60,000 euros, Salamanca: 200,000 euros, Albacete: 75,000 euros, Andalusia: 200,000 euros, Murcia: 60,000 euros, among others.

As if that were not enough, there is a strong indoctrination of schoolchildren and young people by taking them for free to bullfights and teaching them about bullfighting in the hope of awakening the hobby in them.



The Spanish Constitution, in its article 39, point 4 establishes that *“Children shall enjoy the protection provided in international agreements that safeguard their rights”* and in its article 20 on fundamental rights and public liberties, point 4 states that *“These freedoms have their limit in the respect for the rights recognized in this Title, in the precepts of the laws that develop it and, especially, in the right to honor, privacy, self-image and the protection of youth and of childhood.”*

According to the Spanish Constitution, the protection of children is based on international agreements (such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that Spain ratified in 1990) and the protection of children and youth is conceived as a limit to other rights, such as the right to academic freedom, freedom of expression and artistic production.

In other words, our own Constitution obliges us to follow the guidelines of those international bodies that ensure the protection of children whose treaties the state has ratified, and to **place the best interests of the child above any other interest.**

Clearly, this is currently included in the Spanish state, where the defense of bullfighting is positioned above the best interests of the child.

Conclusions

- The defense of bullfighting by Europe, the central government of Spain, the autonomous and provincial governments escapes all logic, leading to suspicion of hidden interests.
- Being an activity that is widely rejected by the majority of Spanish citizens, clearly in bankrupt and generating precarious employment, each year it is subsidized more and promoted more.
- The allocation of money from the CAP and ERDF funds from Europe to bullfighting is a blatant violation of the objectives for which they were created.
- Despite the proven harmful effects on childhood and adolescence, boys and girls are exposed to bullfights where, not only their natural empathy towards animals is canceled, but they are also exposed to their torture and the possibility of seeing the bullfighter die or see how the bull him causes very serious injuries, live, giving priority to bullfighting over the best interests of the minor.
- Social support for bullfighting falls exponentially each year, showing enormous rejection among the younger generations.
- Even among the most conservative voters, the vast majority are not in favor of bullfighting, and among those under 35, the majority would ban them.
- Despite it being heavily subsidized, the bullfighting business and activity fall irretrievably each year, it being evident that its disappearance is a matter of a few years.
- The Covid-19 crisis will require a very efficient investment of public resources. If, according to the UN rapporteur, before the crisis, there was 26.1% of the Spanish population at risk of social exclusion, 29.5% children, this is even more pressing after the pandemic. And that is why Brussels [has alerted Spain asking for a greater investment in families and the health system.](#)

-
- For all these reasons, investing public funds in bullfighting is squandering the money of all Spaniards, a money that must be invested in other sectors of great social need such as health, education, and the fight against inequality.
 - The best help for families who live from bullfighting is a Bullfighting Reconversion Plan to other activities in which animals are not mistreated or killed as a public spectacle.
 - Europe must put in place the necessary mechanisms so that funds from the CAP, Creative Europe and ERDF are not fraudulently squandered on bullfighting.



Marta Esteban Miñano

Animal Guardians

La Tortura No Es Cultura

Marta Esteban Miñano has been fighting for the end of bullfighting for 10 years in Spain, from the Platform Torture is Not Culture, as well as in Mexico, Peru, Ecuador, France, Portugal, Colombia, with the fundamental support of Animal Guardians.

Marta has played a fundamental role in promoting national anti-bullfighting coalitions in each of these countries as well as globally, promoting strategic union and coordination for a greater impact.

During this time it has been possible to build a very strong anti-bullfighting movement that collaborates and coordinates internationally, having made important progress towards the end of bullfighting in all the countries where it is still legal. A work carried out by volunteers who do so during their free time, with little money and without subsidies.

For some years there have been sponsors who have helped, especially Animal Guardians, but at this time, there is no financial aid. Instead, we face a very powerful bullfighting lobby, because many bullfighting owners are major entrepreneurs in the energy, communications or banking sector, who invest a lot of money in public relations agencies and put governments under pressure to defend their dark interests, often known as Tauromafia.

Currently, the campaign is focused on preventing more public money from being dedicated to the bullfighting sector. A letter has been sent to the Spanish government with the support of 877 entities from 15 countries. See letter: <https://bit.ly/2WtOe4j>

Under the threat of Covid-19, social media campaigns are being carried out, putting pressure on the government in this regard, becoming Trending Topic on numerous occasions.

The achievements during all these years are evident, not only in the constant decline in bullfighting and social support that it receives, but also in the matter of subsidies: never has a Spanish government been so hesitant or reluctant to show its support explicit to

bullfighting, and everything indicates that aid from the central government will be much less than that of other governments.

But the work must continue. They are currently working with the Italian organization LAV to eliminate subsidies from Europe.

It is important to make clear that bullfighting is not an exclusive problem for Spaniards, since all Europeans are contributing with their taxes to its continued existence.

Similarly, there are numerous tourists who go to a bullfight out of curiosity, and then leave in disgust, but with their entry they have already contributed to the continuation of the bullfight.

For this reason, all European tourists are requested to never attend a bullfight.

Marta Esteban is also an activist for children's rights, being a member of the Board of Directors of the Independent Council for Child Protection (CIPI), among other organizations.