



## ARTS & CULTURE

# France Considers a Ban on Bullfighting

November 28, 2022

Supporters and opponents of bullfighting recently marched on the streets of several cities in southern France.

Earlier this month, an opinion study said about 75 percent of the French public want to ban bullfighting. But a small group of supporters say it is a tradition that should continue.

Baptiste is a 16-year-old boy training to be a bullfighter in southern France. He lives in Arles, a town close to the Mediterranean Sea.

Baptiste says the people who want to ban bullfighting do not understand Corrida, another name for bullfighting.

“Corrida is a tradition, an art, a dance with the bull,” Baptiste said. He is one of about 12 students in Arles learning how to fight bulls.

The people in France who do not like bullfighting wonder how it can be called an “art” when an innocent animal is killed at the end.

During a recent protest march, one sign read: “Corrida is not a fight, it’s the execution of a tortured innocent.”

Aymeric Caron is a French lawmaker who sent a bill to parliament that would ban bullfighting. It is currently being debated.

He said some parts of France permit bullfighting as long as fewer than 1,000 bulls are killed each year. Just because it is a tradition, he said, does not “morally justify a **practice.**”

Other lawmakers in Caron's party are not supporting his bill, so it is not likely to pass. But the news of the anti-bullfighting proposal started a discussion in France.

Frederic Pastor oversees the bullfights in the city of Nimes. He said the bull is "**glorified**" during the fight although it is killed.

Nimes is home to 14 bullfighting shows each year. They bring in over \$60 million to the city, which is just northwest of Arles.

Tiphanie Senmartin Laurent is one of the protesters. She said most people are against bullfighting. "Torture is not a show," she said.

Spain is considered the place where bullfighting began. People there are also questioning the practice. Bullfighting was banned in the Spanish province of Catalonia in 2010 but later brought back. A major court in Spain called the practice a "cultural asset." That means it is considered a tradition that has value. A new proposal on animal safety in Spain does not discuss bulls.

Yves Lebas runs the bullfighting school in Arles. He said some have wanted to ban bullfighting forever. "But they never **managed**, because people said 'no.'"

I'm Dan Friedell.

*Dan Friedell adapted this story for VOA Learning English based on a report by Reuters.*

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## Words in This Story

**practice** -*n.* an activity that is done again and again

**glorify** -*v.* to make something seem better or very important

**manage** -*v.* to succeed in doing something

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