



Forced marriage and female cutting (circumcision)

Forced marriage and female cutting (circumcision) are prohibited in Switzerland. In addition to specialised agencies, victim support advice centres (Opferhilfe-Beratungsstellen) also provide support.

What is forced marriage?

If a person marries another under pressure from the family and against the person's own will, this is called forced marriage. The marriage may be declared invalid. People also have the freedom to choose whether they want to stay in a marriage or separate. If a person stays in a marriage against that person's will, it is also called a forced marriage.

Examples of forcing are: threats, blackmail, psychological pressure or physical violence.

Forced marriages are prohibited in Switzerland.

Help

The national specialist unit zwangsheirat.ch provides confidential advice free of charge to victims and professionals: helpline on 0800 800 007 or email info@zwangsheirat.ch

What is female cutting (circumcision)?

In female cutting (circumcision), the female genitals are cut. There are different forms and practices. Circumcised girls and women often suffer health and psychological consequences of circumcision.

Female cutting (circumcision) is prohibited. Parents are also liable to prosecution if they organise the cutting (circumcision) of their child outside Switzerland.

Help

The Network against Female Genital Cutting (Netzwerk gegen Mädchenbeschneidung) provides information and networks with key persons. Caritas Switzerland advises affected families free of charge and confidentially: 042 419 23 55 / beratung@maedchenbeschneidung.ch

Victim support advice centres (Opferhilfe-Beratungsstellen) can also provide support.



What is human trafficking

Human trafficking involves the targeted recruitment, restriction of freedom and exploitation of a person.

Examples of exploitation are

- Sexual exploitation, for example, forced prostitution
- Exploitation of workers and being forced to work under inhumane conditions, for example, in the domestic, care, agricultural, construction or hospitality sectors
- Coercion to commit criminal and other offences, for example, theft, begging or organ donation

Women, men, adults and children can be victims of human trafficking. Most of those affected originally come from another country. They are lured to Switzerland with false promises. So-called 'loverboys' also pretend to love young women and pamper them. They then systematically make the young women dependent, isolating them and forcing them to commit sexual or criminal offences. Regardless of whether a person is in Switzerland legally or illegally, they have the right to counselling and support.

Help

FIZ Advocacy and Support for Migrant Women and Victims of Trafficking (FIZ Fachstelle Frauenhandel und Frauenmigration) specialises in human trafficking. The centre offers comprehensive support and shelter to trafficked persons – regardless of whether they cooperate with the authorities or not. Women, men and trans people can seek advice: 044 436 90 00 / WhatsApp 076 596 15 63 / contact@fiz-info.ch

Victim support counselling centres can also help. Counselling is confidential and free of charge. Translation may be possible.

To report an incident to the police: Tel. 112 or your nearest police station.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-bern.ch/en/haeusliche-gewalt/zwangsheirat-und-maedchenbeschneidung