

# I have the right to decide

Engagement, marriage, divorce



**I decide.**

## In what situations might I experience force or pressure?

You may come under pressure in various situations in a relationship; young men and women may feel pressured by their families before and during marriage. At such times young people may come under pressure to conclude a marriage they don't want, or to give up a partner they love.

## What is a forced marriage?

A forced marriage occurs when one or both parties are forced to marry against their will. Forced marriage is usually associated with psychological, sometimes also physical abuse and is therefore a form of domestic violence.

Forced marriage is a violation of human rights and is a crime in Switzerland under civil and criminal law.

## Other aspects of forced marriage

People are said to be in a forced marriage when they feel forced to stay in a married relationship against their will because of sanctions or pressure from people around them, especially their families.

People who are not allowed to separate are living in a forced marriage, even if they originally married voluntarily.

People may not marry in Switzerland if either party is a minor. Marriages concluded with minors outside Switzerland are not recognised in Switzerland.

**Both men and women may experience a forced marriage.**

# Where can you or someone else get help?

## Regional advice centres and refuges

Victim Support SG-AR-AI | 071 227 11 00 | [info@ohsg.ch](mailto:info@ohsg.ch) | [www.ohsg.ch](http://www.ohsg.ch)

Family Advice Centre | 071 228 09 80  
[info@familienberatung-sg.ch](mailto:info@familienberatung-sg.ch) | [www.familienberatung-sg.ch](http://www.familienberatung-sg.ch)

Child Protection Centre InVia | 071 243 78 02  
[invia@kszsg.ch](mailto:invia@kszsg.ch) | [www.kszsg.ch](http://www.kszsg.ch)

Women's Refuge | 071 250 03 45 | [info@frauenhaus-stgallen.ch](mailto:info@frauenhaus-stgallen.ch)  
[www.frauenhaus-stgallen.ch](http://www.frauenhaus-stgallen.ch) | 24 h

Cantonal Police | 071 343 66 66 | [Info.KAPO@ar.ch](mailto:Info.KAPO@ar.ch) | 24 h



## Sources of information and expert advice

Expert advice platform | [www.zwangsheirat.ch](http://www.zwangsheirat.ch)

Centre of Expertise for Intercultural Conflicts | [www.tikk.ch](http://www.tikk.ch)



## Network and Coordination

The Appenzell Ausserrhoden Network against Forced Marriage - ZARTwerk is a project run as part of the Swiss State Secretariat for Migration SEM federal programme to combat forced marriages, in cooperation with the Federal Office for the Equality of Men and Women.

**Appenzell Ausserrhoden Network against Forced Marriage ZARTwerk. Visit [www.ar.ch/zartwerk](http://www.ar.ch/zartwerk) for more information**

**Federal Programme to Combat Forced Marriage**  
Information is available in various languages from [www.gegen-zwangsheirat.ch](http://www.gegen-zwangsheirat.ch)

## What can I do about forced marriage?

Do you know or suspect that someone you know is being pressured to marry someone they do not wish to marry?

Ask yourself what you would do if someone told you that the marriage is troubled, or even violent, but the person is being forced to stay in the marriage.

## This is the best way to help someone who is being, or has been forced into an unwanted marriage.

Don't act rashly. First seek advice from an expert source. Anything you tell them is treated in confidence and even people who are actually in a forced marriage are dealt with anonymously.

Do not act until you have spoken to the person concerned and assured them that you will be discreet.

If there is acute danger then it may be appropriate for accommodation to be found in a women's refuge, or in a children's centre for adolescents. Also, the local police can help.

Take the potentially risky situations before the holidays seriously.

At work or school: let the person concerned make telephone calls from work or school. Give them the time off they need for an appointment at an advice centre.

Very important: only involve specialist services, not relatives or people who know the person(s) concerned.



**Appenzell Ausserrhodens**

Netzwerk gegen Zwangsheirat | [www.ar.ch/zartwerk](http://www.ar.ch/zartwerk)



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