

Tackling Forced Marriages and Forced Unions

I decide who I marry!

Promised, Engaged, or Married to Someone Against Your Wishes?

Do you live in fear of being engaged or married to someone against your will?
Do you want to get out of your marriage but aren't sure how?
Is a friend under pressure to marry against their will?

Understanding a Forced Marriage & Forced Union

Sometimes, parents, relatives, or acquaintances may try to impose what they think is best for you through pressure or violence. They may accuse you of bringing shame to the family if you resist a marriage or seek to break off an existing union. Nobody asks you what you want, or they do not respect your right to make your own choices. A **forced marriage** is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not give their full and free consent. A **forced union** is when family pressure compels you to remain in a marriage against your will.

In Switzerland, men and women have equal rights.

Each person has the freedom to decide whether and who they marry.

Discovering Paths to Freedom – Get Support

There are **specialist support organisations and counselling centres** that help young people in difficult situations. They can provide support, show the options available to you, and guide you through your next steps.

Staff at the counselling centres are subject to a duty of confidentiality and will not contact anyone without your consent.

If you prefer, you can also seek advice anonymously.

The consultations are usually free of charge.

Counselling and Support Resources

For guidance or to understand your rights, you can contact:

Victim Support Centres in Central Switzerland

Lucerne/Nidwalden https://disg.lu.ch/themen/opferberatung/Opferberatung_inhalt

Obwalden <https://www.ow.ch/fachbereiche/1676>

Uri/Schwyz <https://www.opferberatung-sz-ur.ch>

Zug <https://www.eff-zett.ch/angebot/opferberatung>

Additional Victim Counselling Centres in Switzerland www.opferhilfe-schweiz.ch

Explore further counselling options and consult with specialists at:

Forced Marriage Specialist Support Group www.zwangsheirat.ch

Your Regional Youth Counselling Centre www.no-zoff.ch

School Social Worker at Your School

FABIA Competence Centre for Migration www.fabialuzern.ch

Shelters/facilities, open 24 hours:

Girls' Home Zurich www.maedchenhaus.ch 044 341 49 45, 079 478 46 79

Emergency Shelter for Boys and Girls www.schlupfhuus.ch 043 268 22 66

Women's Shelter Lucerne www.frauenhaus-luzern.ch 041 360 70 00

Women's Hostel Zug www.herberge fuer frauen.ch 041 727 76 86

Crisis hotline for young people www.147.ch 147

In an Emergency: Police Emergency Number 117