

Marrying and marriage in Switzerland

Information leaflet for parents



Are you thinking about your child's future?
About whom your child will found a family with?

- You will find information here on marrying and marriage in Switzerland.

The legal situation in Switzerland

Parents have different ideas about how the lives of their children should be. At the same time Swiss laws must be complied with. They stipulate the following:

- Each person has the right to decide for herself or himself if, whom and when she or he marries.
- A marriage must be concluded on the basis of one's own free will, otherwise it will be annulled.
- Nobody may be forced into marriage. Otherwise, there is a threat of a prison sentence of up to five years.
- Marriages with minors are not tolerated, even if they were entered into abroad.
- In the cases of a forced marriage or a marriage of minors, admission of family dependents into Switzerland is not possible.
- The same laws apply for women and men in all areas.
- Each woman and each man has the right to get a divorce.

«What matters most is that our sons one day marry for love.»

(Davide, 45, Sicily)

«I'm not against tradition. But against forced marriage.»

(Şehriban, 36, Turkey)

Dear Parents,

It is extremely difficult for me after such a long time to write this letter. Our separation makes me very sad and brings me many sleepless nights. It is clear to me that you also think about me everyday: maybe in anger or disappointment and also I'm sure with concern. I know that you want the best for me and I love you so much, but I can't and won't marry a man I don't love.

Please don't be angry with me! You have accompanied me throughout my childhood and youth, now I have to find my own way in life. This way is perhaps incomprehensible to you, but one day you will be proud of me, I promise you. My dearest wish is that we can meet once again without resentment, and with joy. If I could choose, I would want you to be my parents again.

Love,
Your daughter

«My daughters make their own choices. That is important to me.»

(Hassan, 59, Iran)

Consultation

For further information or a mediating conversation, contact one of the following drop-in centres:

Advice centres

- www.zwangsheirat.ch, Tel: 021 540 00 00
info@zwangsheirat.ch
- Basel-Stadt: GGG Ausländerberatung
Tel: 061 206 92 22, www.ggg-ab.ch
- Baselland: Ausländerdienst / ald
Tel: 061 827 99 00, www.ald-bl.ch
- Beratungsstelle für binationale Paare und Familien
Tel: 061 271 33 49, www.binational-bs.ch
- Opferhilfe beider Basel, Tel: 061 205 09 10
www.opferhilfe-beiderbasel.ch

Family advice centres

- Basel-Stadt: Familien- Paar- und Erziehungsberatung
Tel: 061 686 68 68, www.fabe.ch
- Baselland: The addresses can be found under www.fejb.ch

In emergencies

- Police emergency number: 117, www.polizei.ch