

Forced and child marriage

Forced marriage is the practice of two people getting married without the consent of one or both of the people getting married. It can also mean a marriage where both involved people have consented to the marriage, but either are being kept in the marriage without their consent. Forced marriage is often bundled with another human rights violation, child marriage, which is where anyone below the age of 18 gets married. Child marriages drastically damage the independence of those involved in them. Those involved are also more likely to experience domestic violence and have higher maternal mortality rates. Child marriages damage education opportunities and career opportunities. People often run from their homes or commit suicide to avoid these marriages. Child and forced marriages disproportionately affect women and girls. While most prevalent in developing countries, forced and child marriages still occur in developed nations.



According to the UN OHCHR, more than 12 million girls are married annually, more than 650 million women alive right now got married before the age of 18, and 20% of all girls get married when they are children.

In 2023, the minimum age of marriage in England and Wales was (finally) increased to 18, whereas before it was possible to get married at 16 with parental consent. However, in Scotland, it is still possible to get married at 16, without parental consent.

This resolution is effectively a summary of several articles. For more detailed information, read:

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/women/child-and-forced-marriage-including-humanitarian-settings>

<https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-marriage/>