

# EU FEM ROADMAP

EU Roadmap on Forced/Early  
Marriage (FEM) Referral Pathway  
for Frontline Professionals



With financial support  
from the Rights, Equality  
and Citizenship Programme  
of the European Union



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**Year of publication:** October 2016  
**Graphic design:** Monika Medvey // [www.memodesign.at](http://www.memodesign.at)  
**Cover photos:** istockphoto.com

This document was prepared within the project 'EU Roadmap' for Referral Pathways on Forced/Early Marriage for Frontline Professionals. Partners are APF-Portugal, BAWSO-United Kingdom, Orient Express-Austria, Psytel-France, University of Vechta-Germany, and UNFPA-Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Funded by:



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from the Rights, Equality  
and Citizenship Programme  
of the European Union



This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Daphne Programme of the European Union for the project JUST/2014/RDAP/AG/HARM/. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the project coordinator, University of Vechta, and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.

# EU Roadmap on Forced/Early Marriage (FEM) Referral Pathway for Frontline Professionals

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# 1. Introduction

Forced and early marriage (FEM) is internationally acknowledged as a violation of human rights and as a form of gender-based violence<sup>1</sup>. It is a multi-faceted social-cultural harmful practice that adversely impacts the personal development and future opportunities, health and wellbeing of children, with detrimental consequences on children, women, men, families, communities and nations<sup>2</sup>. Forced marriage constitutes a serious breach of human rights by stripping the victims of their rights to marry, as well as their right to the integrity of the person and deprivation of liberty. Thus it consequently stands in direct opposition to the fundamental principles and essential core values of the European Union (EU). The EU has addressed the issue of forced marriage directly or indirectly in different legislations, such as the 2012 Victims' Directive which lists forced marriage as a form of gender violence, the 2011 Qualification Directive, which deals with the rights and duties of persons who have been victimized through gender violence, and the 2003 Family Reunification Directive that contains counter-measures to the danger of enabling forced marriage through transnational reunification. Article 63.3 of the Treaty establishing the European Community constitutes the appropriate legal basis for EU action.

Research in EU Member States have shown that forced engagements and forced marriages take place in the EU but predominantly abroad and the victims have a broad range of different cultural and national backgrounds – mostly from Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia<sup>1,2</sup>. In light of increased mobility and migration within the EU, the issue of forced marriage has become a pressing issue that calls for more attention. Specifically, victim assistance needs to be improved using a child rights framework and a gender- and cultural-sensitive approach to respond and refer victims and potential victims in a harmonised manner throughout the Member States.

*"I think the most important thing for agencies is good safeguarding. Not to think about it, not to investigate, but to act. To take what someone is saying at face value. If they say they think this is going to happen, they are a better judge than you are. If you see something, that makes you uncomfortable, don't worry about being accused of being racist or not understanding culture, don't worry about offending someone because you saw a problem where there wasn't one, you flag it up and let it be investigated and if there is not a problem somebody will be offended, but if there was a problem somebody will be saved."* — Interview with UK Expert on FEM

## 1.1 How the EU FEM Roadmap can support frontline professionals

Frontline professionals, those working in migration centers, women's/crisis shelters, health and social services, magistrate offices and educational organisations, have a clear mandate to protect victims of FEM and to take steps to promote the prevention of this offence. To assist in this process, an EU FEM Roadmap has been created that is evidence-informed, human-rights-based, victim-focused and culturally-sensitive in order to contribute to strengthen regional and national capacities in this regard.


This report is intended to help frontline professionals support victims and survivors and prevent FEM. The Roadmap includes a referral pathway for all frontline professionals, and then provides specific guidance for school/educational providers, child protection services, health professionals, police and justice professionals and magistrates of civil marriage services.

The EU FEM Roadmap is a compilation of key issues that are needed for appropriate referral and support of cases of FEM, and is meant to compliment existing national guidelines on FEM.

1 United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 69/L.23 on 'Child, Early and Forced Marriage', 17 November 2014. [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/C.3/69/L.23/Rev.1](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/C.3/69/L.23/Rev.1)


2 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. Addressing forced marriage in the EU: legal provisions and promising practices. 2014. Available: [http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-forced-marriage-eu\\_en.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-forced-marriage-eu_en.pdf)

## 1.2 Definition of forced or early marriage

 There is a common misconception that FEM is confined to certain religious groups and cultures, however this is not the case. The practice is not confined to one culture or religious group and can happen regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, age, gender and sexuality.

There are different interpretations of forced marriage at the EU and international level and there is no official internationally agreed upon definition of the term. This Roadmap uses the definition of forced marriage in accordance with the European Union Directorate General for Internal Policies Forced Marriage and Honour Killings Study 2008: ‘a marriage contracted without the free and valid consent of one or both partners, for example due to violence, coercion, threat, marital age and psychosocial disabilities.’

An early marriage is defined as marrying under the age of 18 years. Unfortunately, certain Member States allow marriage at 16 years of age with consent of the parents. In either form, FEM is a negation of human rights and has psychological, emotional, medical, economic and legal consequences.


 There is a distinction and sometimes a fine line between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage, but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement still remains with the prospective spouses.

→ If a family uses violence or coercion to make the son or daughter marry, that victim’s consent has not been given freely and it is therefore considered a forced marriage. Coercion may include: threats of violence, being held against their will, emotional threats and other forms of coercion and harassment, such as not being allowed to go anywhere without being accompanied by someone.

## 1.3 Why forced/early marriage exists and the consequences

FEM, regardless of where it takes place in the EU, is fuelled by gender inequality, poverty, tradition, and financial insecurity. It is not the parents’ country of origin which is important, but rather the history of maltreatment in the family. Furthermore, persons with disabilities or those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) are at increased risk of FEM. A child with a mental disability may not have the ability to fully consent to marriage and parents may seek a person to marry their disabled child in order to act as a carer and assist the parents in the disabled child’s care. Parents of a child who is LGBT may seek an early or forced marriage to hide the sexual orientation of the child.

*“The key to effectively tackling and preventing forced marriage is to integrate a diverse range of activities and measures, such as support services, awareness raising, educational initiatives, training and campaigning. Prevention activities should address the different needs of victims in an accessible manner. They should take an inclusive approach to gender-based violence. Inter-agency cooperation is required to establish and operationalise referral mechanisms and processes. Finally, funding of preventive activities and of those supporting victims must be sustainable.”<sup>3</sup>*

 Victims of FEM may become depressed, and even attempt or commit suicide. Often an early or forced marriage leads to a forced sexual relationship, which may qualify as marital rape, punishable by law. Many victims are not allowed to attend school and become pregnant early, placing the mother and child at risk. Yet the situation is different for male versus female victims and each situation is unique, with respect to family allegiance and respecting a family decision, versus the right to live one’s life and control one’s sexuality.

<sup>3</sup> European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). Addressing forced marriage in the EU: legal provisions and promising practices, page 8. [http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-forced-marriage-eu\\_en.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-forced-marriage-eu_en.pdf)

## 1.4 Statistics on forced/early marriage in Europe

In the EU there are very few statistics on FEM. The Home Office in Britain<sup>4</sup> funds a Forced Marriage Unit which in 2015 assisted in 1,220 possible cases of forced marriage in Britain. These figures do not reflect the full scale of the problem as many victims do not contact the authorities due to fear of potential consequences.

In 2012 a qualitative survey was performed in Saint-Denis, France that consisted of reviewing 28 cases of FEM<sup>5</sup>. The study found that all 28 cases involved female victims, the majority were minors, 2/3 were not in school at the time and 2/3 were forced into marriage overseas; furthermore, all were victims of physical violence (compared to 23 % in the general population) and all victims of psychological violence during their lifetime. Half of the cases were identified by an educational/school provider and in 60% of the cases the victim was at high risk (threatened with a forced marriage in that week, serious violence). For the majority of the cases a person outside of the family intervened on behalf of the victim.

Crime statistics only exist in Germany which documented 56 suspected cases of forced marriage in 2012 and only one conviction but police and judicial statistics show only the tip of the iceberg: a German study showed that in 2008, counselling centres in Germany were approached 3,443 times on forced marriage<sup>3</sup>.

When examining survey data, the Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs estimated that in 2011 there were 8,500 young people who were worried that they would not be allowed to choose whom they wanted to marry and a French survey conducted with migrants and their descendants in 2008 showed that 'non-consensual marriage' was experienced by 4% of immigrant women and 2% of daughters of immigrants<sup>3</sup>.

In summary, very few statistics are available, whether nationally or at the EU level to demonstrate the magnitude of the problem of FEM.

## 1.5 Top 10 myths about forced/early marriage<sup>6</sup>

Despite widespread condemnation of FEM, the practice persists in the EU and around the world, perpetuated by a toxic mix of poverty and patriarchal power structures. Its effects are devastating, yet the issue is often deeply misunderstood. Dispelling these misperceptions is one of the crucial first steps towards ending this harmful practice. Here are ten of the biggest myths about the practice, its causes and its consequences.

### » MYTH 1: FORCED MARRIAGE IS RARE IN EUROPE.

The Forced Marriage Unit in Britain receives approximately 370 calls a month related to forced marriages and provides support to 1,200 cases a year. In Sweden 8,500 young people reported they were worried that they would not be allowed to choose whom they wanted to marry.

### » MYTH 2: ONE HAS TO RESPECT THIS CULTURAL TRADITION.

Forced and early marriage is a crime and an abuse of human rights, a form of violence, and if the victim is under 18, child abuse.

### » MYTH 3: IT ONLY HAPPENS TO GIRLS.

It is true that the vast majority of forced and early marriages involve girls. But boys can be married off, just as girls are. Global estimates from UNICEF suggest that about 18% of those married before age 18 are boys, while about 82% are girls.

4 Statistics on Forced Marriage 2015: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/forced-marriage-unit-statistics-2015>

5 Gabriela Bravo. Enquête sur les mariages forcés et l'accompagnement des victimes en Seine-Saint-Denis Réalisée en Seine-Saint-Denis 2012. Observatoire des violences envers les femmes du Conseil général de Seine-Saint-Denis

6 Adapted from UNFPA Top 10 myths about child marriage available online <http://www.unfpa.org/news/top-10-myths-about-child-marriage> and Frequently Asked Questions from the organisation Against Forced Marriages available online <http://againstforcedmarriages.org/forced-marriage/faqs>

**» MYTH 4: THE BEST PLACE FOR A GIRL IS WITH HER FAMILY AND THE BEST WAY TO SOLVE THE SITUATION IS TO USE FAMILY COUNSELLING, MEDIATION, ARBITRATION AND RECONCILIATION.**

In cases of forced marriage it is important that professionals do NOT initiate, encourage or facilitate family counselling, mediation, arbitration or reconciliation. There have been cases of individuals being murdered by their families during mediation. Mediation can also place the individual at risk of further emotional and physical abuse.

**» MYTH 5: ONLY MONSTERS WOULD ALLOW THEIR DAUGHTERS TO BE MARRIED EARLY OR FORCED INTO MARRIAGE.**

It can be hard to imagine why someone would choose to have their child married off. Parents often believe marriage will secure a daughter's safety and her future. Yet girls forced into marriage are at higher risk of depression, suicide attempts and domestic abuse. Culture, faith and tradition are not the cause of forced marriages. They are the excuses.

**» MYTH 6: THIS IS REALLY A FAMILY MATTER, A CULTURAL MATTER.**

The consequences of forced and early marriage don't stay in the family. They affect whole societies and countries. The victims are more likely to become pregnant before their bodies are mature, increasing the risks of maternal and newborn death. They are also much more likely to drop out of school and to be victims of domestic violence. It is a violation of human rights.

**» MYTH 7: THESE GIRLS MUST BE COMPLETELY HELPLESS.**

Actually, girls can play a huge role in ending forced and early marriage – when they know their rights and have access to the right information and opportunities. These include their right to dignity, their right to education and health, their right to live free of abuse and coercion, and their right to choose, as adults, whether and whom to marry. Access to key information and services, including comprehensive sexuality education and life skills training is imperative. When people begin to see healthy, educated, safe and unmarried adolescent girls as the new normal, it can change perceptions and expectations about forced and early marriage.

**» MYTH 8: ONLY HARSH PENALTIES CAN END THIS PRACTICE.**

Most countries have already enacted strong laws against child marriage. In France and Austria, the maximum penalty in a criminal court for a forced marriage offence is five years imprisonment. While it is true that these laws need better enforcement, laws alone cannot end forced and early marriage.

**» MYTH 9: THE ISSUE OF FORCED AND EARLY MARRIAGE DOESN'T AFFECT ME.**

When the potential of a third of all girls is undermined, everyone is affected. The loss of their collective potential is immeasurably huge, and it touches every economy and workforce in the world.

**» MYTH 10: NOT AGREEING TO THE MARRIAGE IS GOING AGAINST RELIGION.**

All mainstream religions believe that a person has the right to choose to marry. Yet families or communities might use a religious argument to try to force a girl into agreeing to a marriage. The act of forcing someone to marry is in fact an act that is against the practices and teachings of Islam as well as other religions. Therefore, the issue of forced/early marriage is not an issue of religion, but a cultural practice that violates rights as a woman and as a Muslim.

**Forced or early marriage is culturally, ethically, morally, religiously and legally wrong.**

## 1.6 Union-wide challenges and cross-border issues around forced/early marriage

Forced marriage is a **CRIME** as it is an abuse of human rights, a form of violence, and if the victim is under 18, child abuse.

The 2011 Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, also known as the Istanbul Convention, is the core European document in this regard, which considers forced marriage a serious form of violence to which women and girls are exposed (see preamble). According to its Article 37, state parties are under a duty to criminalise “the intentional conduct of forcing an adult or a child to enter into a marriage”. The need for an EU-wide roadmap that is sensitive to national differences is demonstrated by the fact that while all of the Council of Europe Member States have ratified at least two international conventions on forced marriage, only 12 EU Member States have established forced marriage as a criminal offence.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, differing national definitions and responses are used. Therefore, it is essential to prepare an EU Roadmap that allows for national flexibility but facilitates and optimises the work of frontline professionals addressing the problem. To date the United Kingdom is the only Member State that specifically addresses FEM in its current national action plan ‘Ending Violence against Women and Girls: Strategy 2016-2020.’<sup>8</sup>

→ Forced/early marriage should be criminalised in every EU Member State and the issue addressed at the policy level, for example as part of a national violence prevention action plan.

In light of increased mobility and migration within the EU, the issue of FEM has become a pressing issue that calls for more attention. Specifically, victim assistance needs to be improved using a child rights framework and a gender- and cultural-sensitive approach to respond and refer victims and potential victims in a harmonised manner throughout the EU.

For more information about legal provisions on FEM in the EU please read the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights report: Addressing forced marriage in the EU: legal provisions and promising practices. 2014.<sup>9</sup>

7 Psaila et al. Forced marriage from a gender perspective. Directorate General for Internal Policies. European Parliament. 2016. [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/556926/IPOL\\_STU%282016%29556926\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/556926/IPOL_STU%282016%29556926_EN.pdf)

8 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategy-to-end-violence-against-women-and-girls-2016-to-2020>

9 Available online: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/addressing-forced-marriage-eu-legal-provisions-and-promising-practices>



### ■ CASE STUDY 1 – Forced marriage from the perspective of a male victim

This is the case of a 19-year-old boy with an Afghan background. The boy came to an organisation with expertise in cases of forced and early marriage for female victims only—an exception was made as he came with his Austrian girlfriend. His parents were very traditional and didn't allow him any kind of relationship before marriage, let alone with a girl not from Afghanistan. Once he tried to introduce his Austrian girlfriend to his family, the topic of his marriage became much more present and his parents started introducing him to potential brides. He repeatedly refused but his family did not stop and kept building up the pressure. When the young man came to our office, he was desperate and didn't know whether to give in to his parent's demands or not.

We explained to him that such a marriage should be taken seriously because it is a commitment for life. If he didn't want to marry that woman, then he shouldn't push himself into something that wouldn't make anyone happy, neither him nor the future wife. The difficulty with dealing with male cases is that violence isn't always that obvious. The parents didn't beat the young man or threaten to kill him, but they put him under immense pressure and repeatedly threatened to cast him out of the family, should he not consent to the marriage. This psychological terror was unbearable for the young man because he loved his family and didn't want to disappoint them. After a few months of support from frontline professionals, the young man decided to leave his family home and move in with his girlfriend. At that moment the parents cut off all contact to him and forbid other family members any communication with him. It was not an easy step for the young man to take but in this case, he felt it was the only choice he could make. His choice not only led to an isolation from his family but from many other members of the community.

Male cases of forced marriage are not often taken seriously. Some people don't even know that they exist and in some EU countries there is nowhere for boys and young men to go to seek advice if faced with forced marriage. This is a problem because it does not reflect the reality in our society. Many boys are put under a lot of pressure to marry a "chosen" bride and do not fight against it, because they feel that it is their duty to obey. As the case above shows, the consequences for male victims have a heavy impact on their social life and are not just empty threats. In addition, these marriages are built on an obligation rather than on a healthy, romantic relationship. And hence these marriages are often filled with domestic violence and subtle aggressions. Enlightening young men and boys in their rights to choose whom to marry and to live the life they wish, is an important step in preventing forced and early marriage because we tend to forget that there is not only a bride but also a groom and therefore two sides that we should be dealing and working with.

## 2. EU Roadmap on Forced/Early Marriage Referral Pathway

### 2.1 Key issues in supporting victims of forced/early marriage – “one chance rule”

All frontline professionals who may come into contact with victims of FEM have to be aware of the “one chance” rule. That is, a professional may only have one chance to speak to a potential victim and provide specialised assistance. This means that all professionals working need to be aware of the potential warning signs or indicators (see Chart 1 Potential signs or indicators).

The conflict of loyalty to the family is a main barrier facing victims of a forced or early marriage as they are torn between their needs and the family obligations. Victims of forced/early marriage often do not come forward as they fear revenge or isolation from their family environment, as family members are generally involved in coercing the victims. Therefore, most victims will approach a professional for other signs or symptoms of distress.

Yet frontline professionals have a responsibility to improve access for victims of FEM to specialised support services and effective reporting mechanisms should be in place in order to encourage victims of forced marriage to report the offence. These mechanisms should ensure the respect of anonymity and confidentiality of victims as well as prevent further stigmatisation.

*“I think I only dared to take the step (to break free), because I really went to a clinic, otherwise I wouldn't have risked the step.” — Interview with a victim of FEM*

#### Frontline professionals should:

- ✓ Ensure the victim is seen in a safe and private place
- ✓ See the victim alone; if an interpreter is needed, take steps to ensure that the interpreter is not connected with the individual or community
- ✓ Recognise potential warning signs of FEM
- ✓ Risk assess and discuss a safety plan including the need for immediate protection and placement away from the family
  - If the victim is under 18, refer to child safeguarding procedures, e.g. child services
  - If the victim is over 18, refer to adult safeguarding procedures
- ✓ Inform the victim of their right to seek legal advice and representation
- ✓ Identify any potential criminal offences and refer to the police if appropriate
- ✓ Provide information to the victim about their rights and choices and respect their wishes when possible, remembering that in certain instances information may be shared without consent, for example, child protection
- ✓ Establish a safe way of maintaining contact with the victim
- ✓ Make a note of all the information available at the time, including a description of the victim and details of any known or alleged perpetrators and potential immediate risks
- ✓ Record any current contacts with other professionals, health, social services, etc.
- ✓ Suggest a referral to a specialist in forced/early marriage for further advice and support

#### A frontline professional does NOT:

- ✗ Attempt to mediate
- ✗ Send the victim away without having taken appropriate action
- ✗ Approach family members and/or members of the community without an express request from the victim
- ✗ Breach confidentiality or share information inappropriately, unless due to safeguarding concerns for a child or vulnerable adult

## ■ CASE STUDY 2 – Nisha

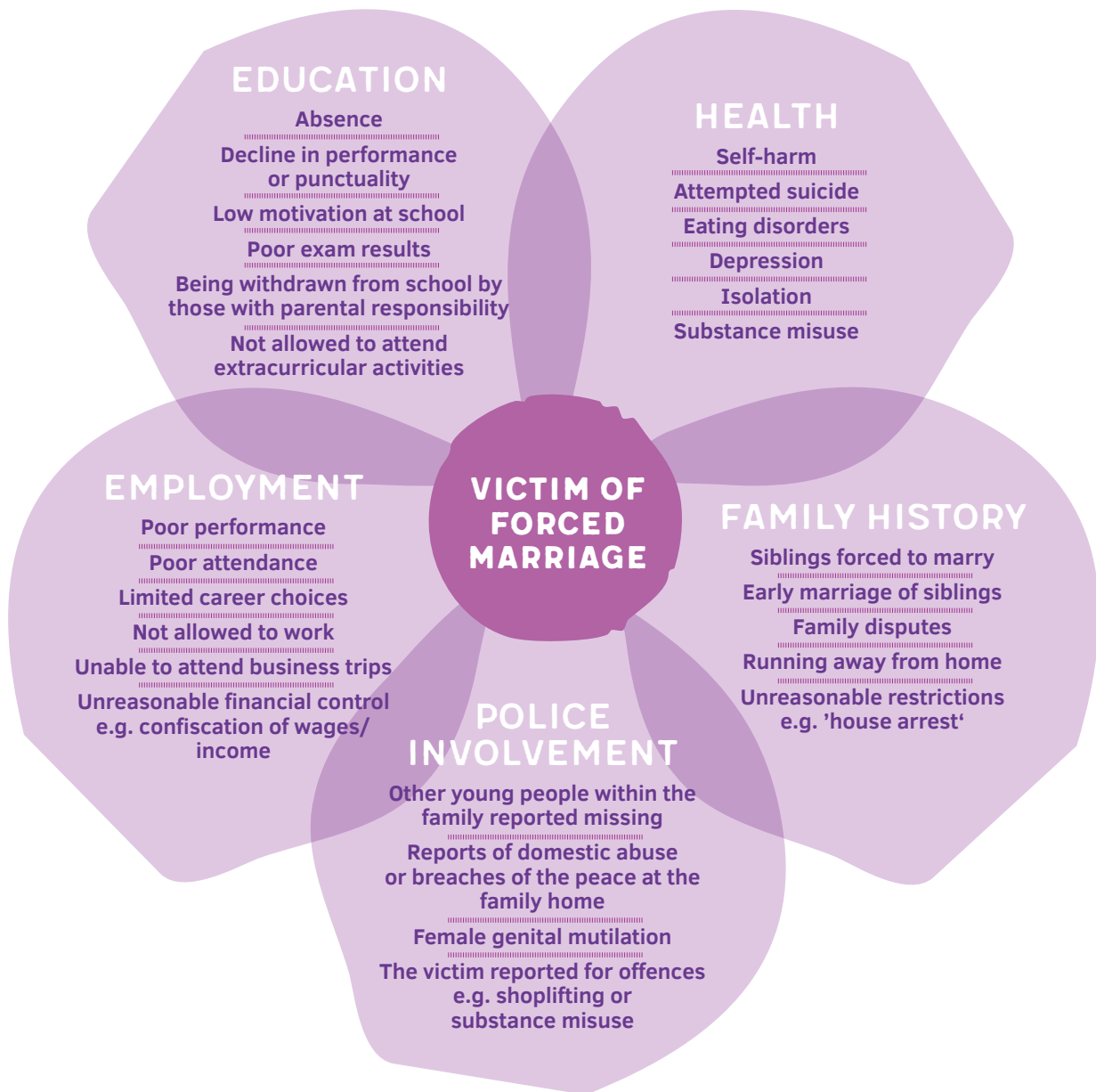
**F**ifteen-year old girl Nisha (pseudonym) was taken back to Bangladeshi on the pretext that the family was going on a holiday. Whilst in Bangladesh she was forced to get married by her parents. She didn't know what was going on, and was instructed what to say during the marriage ceremony. She remained in Bangladesh for several months, but after pleading with her parents she was allowed to come back to the UK to complete her education. Nisha was very unhappy about the marriage and wanted out, but there was nobody to turn to.

When she turned 17 she was advised by her father to get a job to raise money so that her husband could come and join her. Although Nisha was not happy about the marriage she worked really hard to raise money for her husband to travel to the UK; she bought a house and brought him over. She felt duty bound to do what was pleasing to her parents so as not to bring shame on the family. When the husband arrived, in the UK the marriage was formalised through a solicitor with permission from her parents, which Nisha did not object to.

The husband was very abusive towards Nisha, and since she was already unhappy about the marriage she wanted a divorce. She sought support from a victim support organisation that helped her to approach an Imam (religious cleric) for assistance. The Imam reassured Nisha that the marriage was not valid because the consent was ill-gotten. He gave her the Islamic/religious divorce immediately.

After the Islamic divorce Nisha was supported by the victim support organisation to seek a family solicitor who would be able to assist her in obtaining a legal divorce. Nisha was finally able to obtain a divorce and get her freedom back.

Chart 1: Potential warning signs or indicators of forced/early marriage<sup>10</sup>



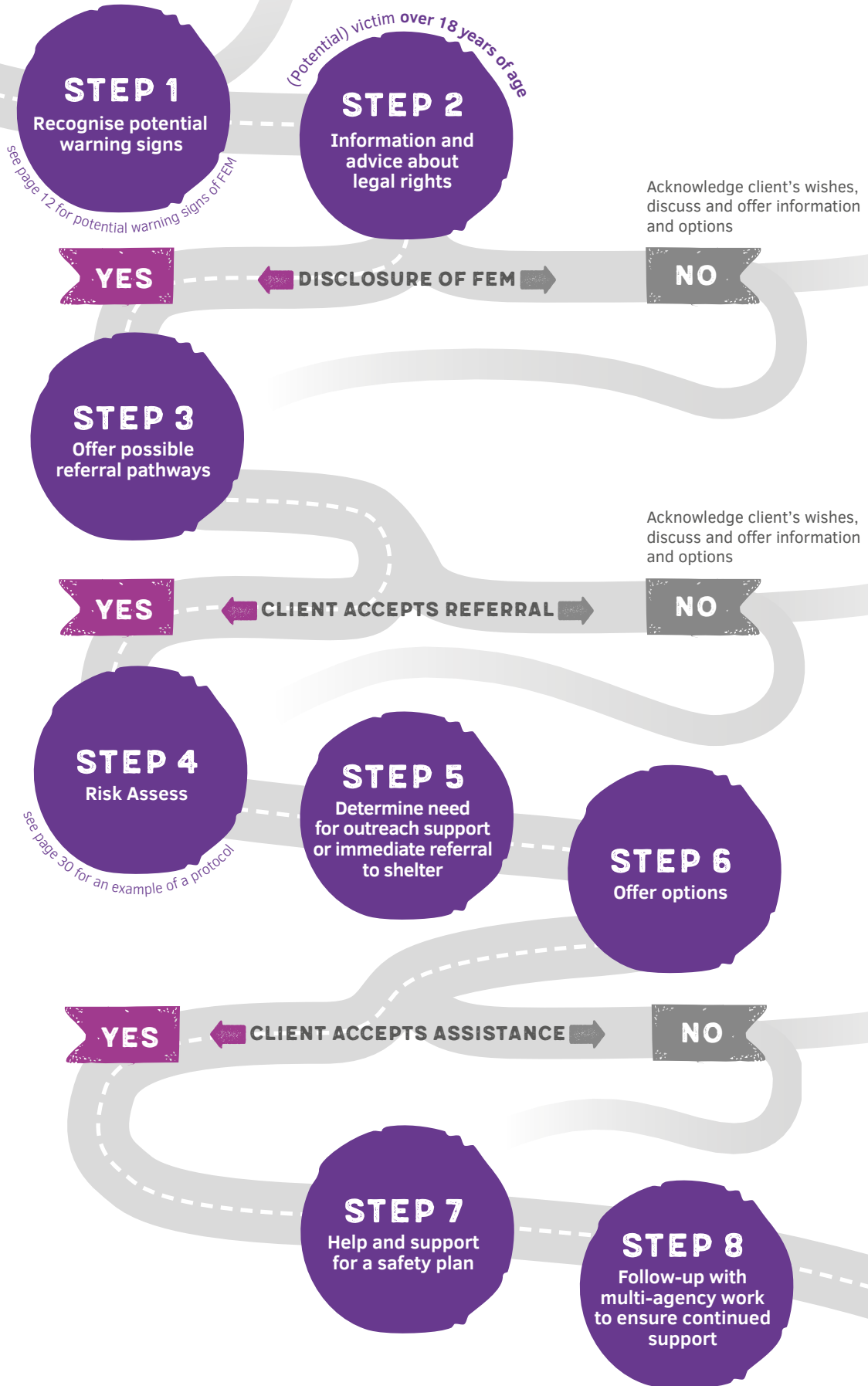
The EU Forced/Early Marriage (FEM) Roadmap on page 13 displays the 8-step process that each frontline professional performs when confronted with a potential case of FEM.

<sup>10</sup> Adapted from HM Government. *Right to Choose. Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage.* June 2014.

Chart 2:

# EU FEM ROADMAP

(Potential) victim under 18 years of age – Obligation to report the case to Child Services and all measures put in place to safeguard the child



See Chart 2 on page 12.

## STEP 1 Recognise potential warning signs

Most young people refrain from seeking out professional help out of family loyalty and they do not want to have to choose between their parents and their right to choose who they will marry. For those who do reach out, victim support professionals such as social workers who work in women's shelters, violence prevention centers, etc. find themselves confronted with victims or potential victims of FEM who are often subjected to other forms of violence and therefore might seek help for these problems. See Chart 1 on page 12 for potential warning signs and indicators.

## STEP 2 Information and advice about legal rights


The frontline professional should aim for a personal conversation with the potential victim, taking the following steps into account:

- Do not contact or attempt any mediation/ reconciliation with family members as this might escalate the situation
- Make sure you are able to see the victim in a secure/private place where the conversation cannot be overheard
- Listen to the victim's complete story. Take it seriously and don't send the victim away
- Give the victim enough support and convey a sense of confidence
- Reassure the victim that confidentiality (i.e. not contacting the family) is priority
- Inform the victim of the right to choose who to marry and to marry after the age of 18 years

### Disclosure of FEM

This can either happen through a report from the victim, a report from a confidant (such as neighbours, teachers, friends etc.), or the frontline professional detects a FEM case whilst working with the potential victim on other problems, since most victims of FEM are subjected to other forms of violence and therefore might seek help for those problems.

## STEP 3 Offer possible referral pathways

If the suspicion of a forced marriage persists after this first meeting, then proceed with following steps in accordance with the victim's age and consent  refer the victim to a specialized counselling centre/organization/professional FEM or to contact child and youth services if the victim is a minor.

## STEP 4 Risk assess

Listen and communicate with the (potential) victim in order to obtain a better picture of the situation and to gather as much information as possible, so that you can correctly assess the case. The following information should be gathered:

- Full contact details (name, address, phone number, email)
- Copies of important documents such as passport, birth certificate, registration of residency, residency permit
- Warn the victim of the risk in taking any family trips to the home country and that if the victim suspects and knows of any such plans, that she/he should inform you beforehand; the danger of being abducted/ taken away to parents' country of origin on pretext of a holiday and being forced into marriage should be made clear and all available address/phone numbers in the home country (also those of relatives, cousins and so on) should be noted; in case of abduction the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should be immediately contacted and will provide support if the victim is a citizen

### Determining the level of risk

Once the frontline professional has collected as much information as possible about the victim and the situation, professional judgement is needed in order to analyse the information gathered and determine the significance of risk and vulnerability factors in the overall presentation of the victim.

The greater the number of risk factors present, the greater the risk to the victim and the likelihood of risk factors re-occurring should also be considered.

There are three levels of risk:

1. Requires immediate protection: the risk factors identified indicate further serious violence or forced marriage is imminent and immediate action is required to prevent this from occurring
2. Elevated risk: there are a number of significant risk factors present that are likely to continue, indicating the need to initiate risk management processes that include safety planning
3. At risk: some risk factors are present but structures are already in place to manage the risk or the risk can be managed through advocacy, victim support and referral

### Risk of abduction, being forced to go overseas<sup>11</sup>

A potential victim's family is taking her on a holiday, but she is scared they're going to force her to get married. There have been cases where families take their child away under the guise of a family holiday but instead they confiscate their passports on arrival and force them into a marriage.

<sup>11</sup> Multi-Agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage 2014, London, UK. Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of Forced Marriage 2014, London, UK. Both available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>

### Victim support professionals may advise the victim to:

- Leave behind an address of where staying, a mobile number on which to be contacted, a copy of passport, flight details, a copy of the plan ticket and a clear photograph
- Take a second mobile phone, topped up and kept hidden from the family
- Write down the address and telephone number of the embassy from the country of residence and keep it hidden and to contact a member of the embassy for help if needed
- Inform the victim that because she/he is dependent on the parents or family, she/he will receive assistance to find a refuge, safe house, and advice
- It is common for families to try using emotional blackmail, guilt and threats to force someone into a marriage
- Remind the victim that it is NOT her/his fault and that she/he can receive advice and assistance
- If the victim fears or is threatened with being disowned by the family, reassure that it is true that young people who refuse a marriage can sometimes be disowned by their families and have to leave; inform that the first few months are usually the hardest, but there are many organizations which can help by providing emotional support, employment training and financial assistance
- If the victim is already in a forced marriage, inform her/him that it is still possible to receive assistance; there is an anonymous helpline or it is possible to seek assistance face-to-face and this will be totally confidential so that the victim can receive a safe intervention without the family or partner's knowledge

### STEP 5 Determine need for outreach support or immediate referral to shelter

This is done based on the risk assessment combined with professional judgement.

### STEP 6 Offer options

Inform the (potential) victim of options, especially the possibility of a crisis accommodation in case the situation at home should escalate.

- Provide the client with names and telephone numbers of specialists they can call if they believe their level of risk has altered
- If the client accepts the assistance, accompany the victim to the proposed services so that the victim is not alone





## STEP 7 Help and support to develop a safety plan

If you believe the victim to be in need of immediate protection and that a crime is likely to be committed, you **can inform the police**. The **victim's consent is not required in this instance**, but you should make every effort to encourage the victim to increase personal safety and help the client understand your role and responsibilities.

### Essential components of a safety plan:

- List contact numbers for a FEM specialist or violence organisation
- List emergency contact numbers
- Identify a safe place for the victim to go if in danger, and how to get there
- Identify a friend, family member who can assist in an emergency, and how to contact them
- Identify a way for the victim to get access to money in an emergency
- Identify a place to store valuables and important documents so that the victim can access them when needed
- Identify any barriers present to implementing the safety plan (for example having mobility or communication difficulties)

A safety plan needs to be tailored to the particular circumstances and needs of the victim and this can change over time.

## STEP 8 Follow-up with multi-agency work to ensure continued support

As the problem of FEM is multifactorial, frontline professionals should utilise multi-agency work to coordinate the prevention and support for victims. This involves working with professionals ranging from nongovernmental organisations with third sector specialist providers to statutory, governmental organisations such as child services, criminal justice, magistrates. The following sections provide specific guidance for professionals from each sector.



## 2.2 FEM Referral Pathway for School/ Educational Professionals

### Role of school/education professionals

School is a key environment where victims or potential victims of forced/early marriage (FEM) may be identified and provided a first support. Educational and school professionals should be skilled at recognising potential warning signs, such as:

- Persistent unexplained absence from school
- Not allowed to attend extra curricular activities
- Close supervision of child by family/carers
- Maltreatment of siblings
- Student starts to act aggressively
- Parents of the students come without notice to verify if the student is at school
- Student starts to wear more traditional clothing and hints that she will not be able to continue school
- Withdrawal of student from school by those with parental responsibility
- Sudden announcement of engagement to a stranger
- Student being prevented from attending higher or higher education
- Request for extended leave or student not returning from an overseas visit
- Surveillance by siblings/cousins/extended family members at school
- Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality, poor exam results – in particular for previously motivated student
- Decline in physical presentation or demeanour

*“It happened like this...I spoke with a few friends from school about the situation, as we were having a girls’ conversation, and one teacher was also there and had the courage to tell the school doctor. Personally, I wouldn’t have had the strength to talk to another person, or to such a higher ranking person.”*

— Interview with a victim of FEM

#### **If an educational or school professional suspects a case of FEM, it is important to:**

- ✓ See them on their own in a private place where the conversation cannot be overheard
- ✓ Take the issue seriously and recognise the potential risk of harm to the victim
- ✓ Gather as much information as possible about the victim – it may be the only opportunity
- ✓ Remind of their rights i.e. that they have the right to enter into marriage with their full and free consent and the right to make decisions about their lives
- ✓ Offer referral to specialised professionals who can offer further support and advice regarding forced marriage
- ✓ If the student is under 18 years of age, inform the student that Child Services have to be contacted

#### **A school or educational professional should NOT:**

- ✗ Send the victim away and dismiss the case of forced or early marriage as a family issue
- ✗ Inform the victim’s family, friends or members of the community that the victim has sought help
- ✗ Attempt to be a mediator
- ✗ Involve an elder from the family, member of the community or member of professional organisation

#### **Managing requests for holidays/extended absence when there is a risk of abduction:**

A teacher may request a meeting with parents to discuss applications for extended leave of absence during term time, and this can provide an opportunity to gather important information:

- The precise location of where the pupil is going
- The purpose of the visit
- The child/children know and corroborate the purpose of the visit
- The return date

In cases of FEM it is important that professionals do NOT actively initiate, encourage or facilitate family counselling, mediation, arbitration or reconciliation – whether offered by community councils, religious or professional groups. There have been cases of victims being murdered by their families during mediation. Mediation can also place someone at risk of further emotional and physical abuse. Child protection services have the expertise to work with the parents and families.

#### **How a school can provide a supportive environment:**

- Display relevant information e.g. details of child and women's helplines and local and national support organisations who have expertise on FEM
- Ensure that a private telephone is made available should students need to seek advice discreetly
- Educate teachers, lecturers and other staff about the issues surrounding FEM and the presenting symptoms – appropriate training should be included in continuing professional development
- Remind educational staff to keep the case confidential and to NOT speak with the parents or other family members about the situation, as this may place the student at more risk

### **■ CASE STUDY 3 – Threat of an imminent forced marriage during a vacation in the home country**

This is the case study of a 19-year-old girl that grew up in a family with a rigid traditional understanding of honour. She knows that she will be introduced to a potential suitor during the next vacation in their home country and fears that she will then be engaged and the forced marriage will be unstoppable as a consequence. She doesn't want to get married, especially to somebody she doesn't know. But she knows that it is a tradition in her family for the parents to choose a candidate and that she may not object. Running away is not an option as she is very close to her mother and little brother and fears that her mother would suffer the consequences of her disappearing.

At school the girl entrusts the teacher with her story, who suggests to involve a support service. In a first meeting with the support service there is an opportunity to get to know each other and the girl is informed on support options as well as risks associated with running away. One of the biggest risks is that the family might hear of the girl's plans to leave the family and thus abduct her earlier. The girl is torn: on the one side she is reluctant to walk out on her family, on the other side she absolutely doesn't want to get married. She wants to finish school and maybe attend university.

In this phase she receives personal and telephone counselling over the course of a few weeks. It is explained to her how her life outside her family would play out and the idea to leave the family ripens. Together with the frontline professionals she plans her escape. Money for a ticket is requested, a chaperone for the way to the central station and a pick-up service in the new town by the shelter is organised. She will leave during the course of the school year, so she can use the school time for an unnoticed escape.

On the day of the escape, the frontline professionals are in constant contact with the girl to support her. During the first days in the new shelter they regularly talk to her on the telephone until she has built a trusting relationship with the new support workers in the shelter. After six months the girl reaches out to the frontline professionals to report proudly that she will soon move into her own apartment in the new city and has settled in nicely in the new town. The fear of being found by her family is now reduced noticeably and she is focusing on her future career. The separation from her brother and mother are still hard on her.

## 2.3 FEM Referral Pathway for Child Protection Professionals

### Role of child services

Often a child protection professional is contacted about a (potential) case of forced/early marriage (FEM) via referral from a number of other professionals or organisations because the (potential) victim is under 18 years of age. It is the responsibility of the child protection professional to follow the organisation's guidelines and these should include performing a risk assessment in order to determine the safety issues (see page 30, Appendix 4.2 Example of a Forced/Early Marriage Risk Assessment Protocol).

**The following questions will be asked to the child or young person:**

- What's been going on?
- How long has this been going on for?
- Can you tell me who is involved?
- Have they ever hurt you physically?
- Have they ever made you do anything sexual that felt bad or frightening?
- Have you separated?
- Can you tell me about the most recent time they were abusive?
- Are you afraid of what might happen next?
- Have you ever left before?
- What would you like to happen next?
- How do you think we can help?

The child protection professional has a duty to protect a minor from any form of abuse, and therefore they have a greater scope of action in FEM cases dealing with victims under 18 years of age. If the child protection professional determines the child or young person is at high risk of violence or FEM, the professional proceeds to ensure safety, which means that they are capable of taking the victim away from the family home and bring the victim to a safe and secret accommodation. Nevertheless, it is important that child and youth services respect the victim's wishes, even if underage, but keep in mind that one can also act against the victim's wishes if there is a high risk of danger.

If the risk is standard or low, the professional may come up with a safety plan in agreement with the child or young person. In both instances follow-up is a key component and child protection professionals determine the next steps to take with the family.

If a victim insists on meeting with the parents, it should only take place in a safe location, supervised by a trained/specialist professional with an authorised accredited interpreter present (not from the same community), as parents will sometimes threaten the individual in their other language.

Professionals are aware that unsupervised contact between the victim and the family may be extremely risky. Families may use the opportunity to subject the victim to extreme physical or mental duress or take them overseas regardless of any protective measures that may be in place.

## 2.4 FEM Referral Pathway for Health Professionals

### Role of health professionals

Those under threat of forced/early marriage (FEM), or already in a forced marriage, present to health professionals in many different ways. Some victims, especially women, do not mention forced marriage but present with signs or symptoms, which, if recognised, may indicate to the health professional that they are in or under threat of one. They may have unexplained injuries, be depressed, anxious, self-harming or be involved in substance misuse. Some individuals attend for a completely different reason and mention in passing that there are “family problems”; and with careful questioning may disclose more.

To prevent this type of abuse it is imperative that health professionals are prepared to use these limited opportunities to openly discuss the issues around FEM. Therefore, health professionals should take a proactive role to establish whether FEM is an issue, during examination and only when the individual is alone, unaccompanied by partner, family or friends. If they require an interpreter, never use family members, friends or individuals who are from the individual’s community.

#### Questioning may include for those already in a forced marriage:

- How is your relationship?
- Does your partner or family let you do what you want, when you want?
- Have you ever been afraid of your partner’s or a family member’s behaviour – are they verbally abusive?
- Do you ever feel unsafe at home?
- Has your spouse/partner or anyone else at home threatened you?

#### Depending on the response a health professional receives, they may go on to ask:

- Have you ever been hurt by your partner or anyone else at home – perhaps slapped, kicked or punched?
- Have you ever been forced to have sex when you didn’t want to?

→ Even if they do not disclose anything the first time FEM is raised, it will show them that you understand the issues and it may give them confidence to disclose in more detail at a later date.

If a health professional does elicit information that suggests an individual is facing a FEM, the professional should use careful questioning to establish the full facts and decide on the level of response required. Health professionals should be mindful if a disclosure is made that this may be the **one and only chance** of helping the patient.

#### Health professionals should:

- ✓ Ensure that they see the victim/potential victim alone; this is relatively easy as health professionals are able to have opportunities where they can be alone with a patient for examination purposes
- ✓ Refrain from using family members, friends or individuals who are from the individual’s community as interpreters
- ✓ Listen and provide information about specialist advice and services (i.e. counselling services or any other support required)
- ✓ Offer a referral to a specialised professional who has expertise in providing support for cases of FEM
- ✓ Inform the individual that if she/he is under 18 years of age and at high risk of harm then the professional must inform child protection services
- ✓ Offer to contact specialised services if the individual talks about family plans to travel abroad
- ✓ Offer a follow-up session and carefully record all information gathered

### Health services can help create friendly and supportive environment by:

- Displaying relevant information e.g. details of free phone National Helplines, and specialised support providers
- Offering appointments during school lunchtimes
- Enabling young people to visit unaccompanied if they wish while already out of their home for other reasons which increase the opportunities they have to discuss or disclose any worries
- Circulating and displaying copies of leaflets and posters against FEM
- Educating health professionals about the issues surrounding forced marriage
- Including FEM within domestic abuse training for health professionals | The training should also include safety planning, risk assessment and risk management

*“I remember looking at the nurse and thinking, why doesn’t she ask more questions so that I tell her I am scared of living here? I didn’t know what to do, and I needed help. And I felt the nurse didn’t do much, I just felt if she had probed a bit more maybe I would have had an opportunity to speak out. I think now that a lot of people know that girls from certain backgrounds are at risk of forced marriage, they need to ask more questions, particularly if they can see that a young girl looks scared of something.” — Interview with a FEM survivor*

## 2.5 FEM Referral Pathway for Criminal Justice Professionals

### Role of criminal justice professionals

The criminal justice (police and justice) system plays a major role in combating forced/early marriage (FEM) in each Member State and abroad. Each component of the system, starting from the law enforcement (police) to the courts, should acknowledge the importance of their role and take on the responsibilities that come along with enforcing these laws. Failure to do so leads to a step backwards in the process of combating FEM.

Due to the fact that every FEM case is unique, there is no definite prescribed course of action. Each case requires a specific approach. But many victims of FEM do not reach out for support until their situation has already become acute because of the ongoing conflict of loyalty towards their families. The suggested course of action for both components of the criminal justice system (police & justice) could be described as follows:

#### Upon receiving information of a FEM case:

This can either happen through a report from the victim, a report from a confidant (such as neighbours, teachers, friends etc.), a report from a social worker or a report from a specialized counselling centre/organization. If the victim seeks help personally then be sure to take the following into account:

- Be sure to provide a comfortable environment for the victim to feel secure and welcome
- Listen to the victim's complete story. Take her/him seriously and do not send the victim away
- If the victim of FEM is referred by another professional it is very important to avoid revictimization
- Do not belittle or insult the family or community of the victims, because this might increase existing conflicts of loyalty
- Check whether the victim or any family members have been reported missing
- Check for reports of domestic violence, breach of the peace at the family home, as well as other signs of maltreatment
- Collect full contact details (name, address, phone number, email, passport number, dual passports) if there is danger of abduction also address/phone numbers in home country
- Explain all options and inform of rights (especially the right to seek legal advice)
- Respect the victim's choices
- Contact a specialized counselling centre/organization for forced marriage
- Reassure the victim that confidentiality (i.e. not contacting the family) is priority
- Ensure that all steps are taken to ensure safety: e.g. risk assessment, immediate referral to shelter if needed, restraining order against family members/husband

Inform the victim that you have to contact **child protective services** if the victim is a minor, under 18 years of age. Offer to inform the **public prosecutor** of a possible case of FEM.

#### Police interview with the victim:

Police need to interview the (potential) victim to decide whether to proceed with the case or not. If the victim is a minor, the police should conduct this interview in cooperation with child protective services, for this is usually a more comfortable situation for the victim. If the victim is a female, female police officers and female interpreters are strongly recommended with female victims, because many victims often do not tell their whole story to -or even in front of- male police officers/interpreters. These interviews should not be conducted in the presence of any family or community members as to prevent any possible pressure on the victim. Therefore, interpreters from outside the victim's community are strongly recommended if the need to translate arises.

#### Investigation work:

After the public prosecution has been contacted, the public prosecutor can order the arrest of the accused person or contact the person for an interrogation. Furthermore, checking records for any past information recorded (cases of domestic violence, threats, and so on) on family members including siblings, could be helpful. It is also important

for police officers to be very careful and sensitised to the matter of FEM. Police should NOT attempt any mediation/reconciliation with family members. Also if there is danger that the victim might be taken abroad and forced into marriage, then police or justice must contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

#### **Court:**

If the case goes to trial the victim will be interrogated. Hereby, if the victim is a female it is important to reach out for female interpreters as to ensure that the victim feels comfortable enough to thoroughly explain her story. Furthermore, the victim should receive the option of giving evidence by video-conferencing or other options of interrogation that allow the victim to be physical absent from the courtroom. These actions can help ensure that the victim agrees to testify and is able to tell the truth. The court may contact specialized organisations/trained social workers in case of any uncertainties regarding a specific case. Regarding the victim, it is very important to ensure that the victim is participating in a victim assistance program or has some kind of legal and psychological support throughout the trial as these trials can be very overwhelming and exhausting for the victim. Cultural/traditional aspects are not to be considered during legal procedures and should never lead to reduced sentences.

#### **Parents report a missing child:**

If the police are contacted by the parents that their daughter or son are “suddenly missing” and file a missing persons report, the police have to perform an interview to elicit information about violence in the family or towards the son/daughter, which the parents are not likely to report. If the police find the son/daughter it is important to ask her/him without the family present the reasons for fleeing the family and to determine if it is a potential case of forced or early marriage. The young person’s location must remain confidential from the family until the case is fully investigated. There are cases of families issuing death threats against young persons. That is the reason why police and justice services have an obligation to place victims in anonymous shelters if the victim is at high risk, as addresses of women’s shelters are known to the family members and do not provide safety for the victim.

#### **■ CASE STUDY 4 – Abduction for forced marriage overseas**

This is the case of a 17-year-old girl of Egyptian background. After spending her summer holidays in Egypt, as her family does every year, her parents returned to Austria and left her behind. After some time, she was introduced to an Egyptian man whom she was to be engaged to. At first, she accepted the offer, because of the prospect of returning to Austria with him. As she slowly came to find out that this was all a lie, she started fighting against the planned wedding. She was repeatedly beaten and eventually the wedding took place. A few months after the wedding, she couldn’t take it any longer and reached out for help.

She initially contacted an organisation with expertise in cases of forced and early marriage, using the organisation’s online counselling platform. After receiving her email, the organisation contacted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and informed them about the case of forced marriage. The main difficulty was determining her address, since she had no knowledge of where she actually lived and barely spoke the language (neither could she read nor write). This was the main information needed, so to be able to organize her trip back to Austria. The organisation did manage to pin down the address as she described her surroundings and was able to organize her trip to a safe transitional accommodation, where she awaited her exit permit so that she could fly back to Austria.

In such cases, especially when there was no contact with the girl before she was abducted, it is important to gather as much information about the girl as possible. Therefore, it is essential to find a way to communicate with the girl regularly. Many girls use the Internet, such as in this case, whilst other girls may use communication tools such as Whatsapp or Facebook. It doesn’t matter how the contact is established, it is vital to find a way to maintain this communication. Furthermore, it is key to cooperate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as they are responsible for the wellbeing of their citizens and therefore have the required authority in foreign countries to authorise exit visas. This was one of the most important aspects of our work on this case, namely the good cooperation with the Ministry. Also important is the follow-up work that is included in this case, once the girl is brought back. Upon her arrival in Austria the girl was brought to our crisis shelter. She stayed there for a few months until she was ready to move to a long-term accommodation.



## 2.6 FEM Referral Pathway for Magistrates of Civil Marriage Services

### Role of magistrates

The role of magistrates who perform the marriage civil ceremonies is absolutely essential in the identification of FEM. This is because a civil marriage must proceed through several stages, giving the opportunity to act. It is the responsibility of the administrative personnel to ensure that: "each person consents to the marriage, freely and fully informed".

To improve the protection and support of victims of FEM, city hall personnel have to become active to train and do awareness raising for all actors involved; this includes magistrates who perform the civil ceremony and the administrative personnel who prepare the documents prior to the ceremony.

→ All civil servants need to have the name and number of a specialised professional who can assist if a potential forced or early marriage case is identified.

If a civil servant considers that either party is acting under duress she/he must defer or stop the proceedings and discuss the case in private with each individual. If the individual is worried for her/his **safety**, the civil servant does NOT allow the individual to leave alone with family or community members and do not allow them to leave the premises alone or with their family.

The civil servant should NOT attempt to mediate between parties or between an individual and their family and NOT rely on family or community members to act as interpreter, advisor or mediator. This may place the victim at risk of harm.

The civil marriage ceremony is usually celebrated in a community in which at least one of the persons in the couple have a link to, either directly or indirectly via a parent. Each of the persons in the couple must provide documentation of her/his identity, nationality, home address, and this documentation for the witnesses as well. The magistrate interviews the couple together. If deemed necessary, the magistrate may ask for **separate interviews and the presence of an official interpreter if necessary**.

The civil marriage ceremony is performed at city hall by the magistrate with the couple and the witnesses present. During the ceremony each person must confirm her/his participation in the marriage and to uphold the marriage laws.

Thus, there are several stages during which there are key moments for administrative personnel to act if there is suspicion of FEM.

#### **Possible signs indicating suspicion of a forced or early marriage:**

Prior to the civil ceremony, administrative personnel and magistrates are to work together to determine if there is an accumulation of signs:

- Intermediaries such as parents of the couple come to city hall instead of the couple
- It is not possible to meet the young girl
- Large difference in age
- Addresses or the witnesses are known to social services (for example when the witnesses are the same from marriage to marriage)
- Country of residence is different for the couple
- Medical certificates are from the same doctors from marriage to marriage

### Questions to consider:

- Is either party showing signs of emotional distress or physical harm?
- Is the bride or groom accompanied by family or community members when filing the marriage?
- When filing for the marriage, is one party doing all the talking or showing reluctance to speak?
- Is one party unable to provide facts about the other person, such as date of birth, occupation, address?

→ **One warning sign is not enough.** But with an accumulation of signs, administrative personnel or the magistrate should request separate interviews.

Administrative personnel or the magistrate can request separate interviews with the couple. Each person is interviewed individually and an interpreter can join if needed.

### The following questions are asked:

- Is the family very present in your lives?
- Does the family speak the same language as you?
- Does the girl know the history of the future husband, his life story, his life experiences, what does she know about him?
- What projects have they planned as a couple?
- Where did they meet? It may be that the girl barely knows him, and that they each have a very different version of the other.

→ It is important that no stigmatisation should occur when dealing with persons from specific countries or cultures. It would be against the Human Rights Convention to target persons because of religious or cultural backgrounds. It is equally not possible to oppose a marriage on the grounds of one individual not having legal status.

### Points at which to intervene:

- Before the civil ceremony, during the shared or individual interview and if necessary to notify the federal prosecutor
- During the civil ceremony, by suspending the ceremony under certain conditions, and if necessary to notify the federal prosecutor
- After the marriage, to obtain a marriage annulment

### Alert a federal prosecutor:

If the suspicions are confirmed, it is necessary to alert a federal prosecutor of a "suspicion of a forced marriage". The federal prosecutor will then start a police investigation.

Police: a police officer trained in harmful practices and violence against women should lead the investigation to determine if the marriage is forced.

**Thus, it is not the administrative personnel who decide to stop the marriage.** This decision is taken by the federal prosecutor upon completion of the police investigation.

### 3. Evaluation of a Forced/Early Marriage Referral Pathway for Frontline Professionals

**I**n order to evaluate the usefulness of the Forced/Early Marriage Referral Pathway, consider documenting the following evaluation indicators through staff:

---

1. How many cases of forced/early marriage did you have in the last 12 months?

---

2. How often did you use the EU FEM Roadmap in the last 12 months?

---

3. How satisfied were you with the Roadmap on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 not at all satisfied and 5 very satisfied)?

---

4. Would you recommend the EU FEM Roadmap to other professionals confronted with potential cases of forced/early marriage?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	highly recommend	somewhat recommend	do not recommend

---

#### Questions to consider as an organisation:

- Have staff in the organisation been made aware of the EU FEM Roadmap?
- Do staff feel they have the skills to recognise the potential warning signs of FEM?
- Do staff feel they have the skills to perform a FEM risk assessment?
- Are staff aware of the importance of NOT contacting the victim's parents or family members and NOT acting as a mediator between the victim and the parents?
- Are staff able to differentiate between breaking confidence (involving the child or young person's family without consent) and sharing information with consent with another appropriate professional to assist the child or young person to access support services?
- Do staff have the contact number of a professional who has expertise in FEM in case of questions or referral?
- Is there a designated staff member who is fully trained to an expert level on the topic of forced and early marriages and is able to provide advice and support to colleagues within the organisation?
- Are there sufficient anonymous shelters available where victims can not be found by parents or family members?
- Is there a working group on forced and early marriage at national level in your country that can provide support?



## 4. Appendices

### 4.1 EU FEM Response, the 4 R's: Recognise – Risk Assess – Respond – Refer

Forced/Early Marriage	
<b>RECOGNISE</b>	<b>POTENTIAL INDICATORS</b>
	Siblings forced to marriage
	Running away
	Appears anxious, depressed, withdrawn
	Persistent school absence
	Sudden engagement announcement
	Sudden travel announcement
	Surveillance by family members
	Negative change in school/work performance
	Prevented from further education
	Sees health professional for unspecific symptoms
	Self Harm/Attempted suicide
	Early/unwanted pregnancy
	Female Genital Mutilation
	Domestic violence in the home
Other siblings reported missing	
Threats to kill/Attempts to kill	
<b>RISK ASSESS</b>  (see Appendix 4.2 for a FEM protocol example)	<b>PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT AND ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL</b>
	It is important that professionals are experienced in performing a risk assessment and otherwise refer to a specialist
	Professionals should NOT initiate, encourage or facilitate family counselling, mediation, arbitration or reconciliation. There have been cases of individuals being murdered by their families during mediation. Mediation can also place the individual at risk of further emotional and physical abuse.
	Develop and agree on a safety plan if needed
	Obtain a recent photograph and any other identifying documents such as a copy of the passport or passports if dual citizenships
	If necessary, record any injuries and arrange a medical examination
	Establish a way of contacting them discreetly in the future that will not put them at risk of harm
	Recognise the risk to other siblings in the household who might also be threatened with, or already in, a forced marriage
	Under no circumstances is it sufficient to protect a child or young person by removing the alleged perpetrator from the household as in the majority of cases the extended family are also involved
	Placing the child or young person with a family member or member of the same community may place the child at risk of significant harm from other family members or individuals acting on the family's behalf
	If the victim is under 18 years of age then the case must be reported to Child Services for safeguarding

Forced/Early Marriage	
<b>RESPOND</b>	<b>VICTIM-CENTRED APPROACH:</b>
	Victims are listened to and they are able to communicate their needs and wishes
	Victims are given accurate information about their rights and choices
	Victims' wishes are respected about the level of intervention they require
	Victims' choices are central to providing support
	Victims may require long term support
	<b>ENSURE CONFIDENTIALITY:</b>
	Professionals have to be able to differentiate between breaking confidence (involving the child or young person's family without consent) and sharing information with consent with another appropriate professional to assist the child or young person to access support services.
	Speak to the child or young person in a secure and private place without friends or family present.
	The victim's confidence should be respected at all times and the professional will NOT approach family, friends or members of the community as this may place the individual at risk of harm.
	All records pertaining to individuals facing forced/early marriage should be kept secure to prevent unauthorised access by those within the broader community who may potentially pass on confidential information to a victim's family. Records should only be available to those directly dealing with the case and the victim's address is not given out.
	If the victim is under 18 years of age the professional has an obligation to inform the victim at the start that the case must be reported to child protection services.
	Establish and agree an effective method of contacting the victim discreetly in the future, possibly using a codeword to confirm identity and text messages rather than phone calls; or get the number of a trustworthy friend or communicate through the school nurse.
	<b>REFER</b>
<b>DO NOT:</b>	
Treat any information disclosed as a 'family issue' or dismiss out of hand the need for immediate protection.	
Decide that it is not your responsibility to follow-up the concern.	
Approach the parents or family as this may place the person in danger.	
Contact the family in advance of any enquiries by the police or child protection service.	
Share information outside information sharing protocols without the express consent of the person unless the victim is under 18 years of age, in which case Child Services have to be contacted.	
Attempt to be a mediator or encourage mediation, reconciliation, arbitration or family counselling.	

## 4.2 Example of a Forced/Early Marriage Risk Assessment Protocol

Forced/Early Marriage Risk Assessment Protocol				
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>				
The purpose of this risk management plan is to fully consider all potential factors that may pose a threat or risk to the victim. This will enable the development of a comprehensive range of support measures to minimize the risk.				
Person completing the Risk Assessment				
Date				
Name of victim				
Age / Date of birth				
Nationality 				
Country of Birth 				
Languages spoken				
Current Address				
Interpreter needed (Y/N)				
Emergency contact				
Passport Number				
<b>1. INCIDENT RESULTING IN THREAT OR FORCED/EARLY MARRIAGE:</b>				
<b>2. ACCOMPANYING FACTORS:</b>	Yes	No	Comments	
Abuse / Violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Threats / Stalking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Intention to remove victim to another country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Self-harm/Suicidal tendency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>2. FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES</b>				
<b>Immediate Family</b>				
Name	Address	DOB/Age	Relationship	Comments

Forced/Early Marriage Risk Assessment Protocol			
Parents subjected to forced/early marriage?			
Are other siblings at risk?			
<b>3. PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES</b>	Yes	No	Comments
Boyfriend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>4. OTHER PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED</b>			
Name	Agency	Contact Details	Comments
<b>RISK ASSESSMENT SCORE:</b>	High	Elevated	At risk
Tick a box	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>ACTION TAKEN (E.G. INFORMATION PROVIDED, REFERRAL MADE, ETC.)</b>			
No.	Actions	Updates	Lead Agency
1.			
2.			
3...			

## 4.3 Country Resource Profiles

In order to help professionals who may become confronted with a case of forced/early marriage, it is important to make available a brief summary of all of the organisations in the country that have expertise in cases of FEM, or of organisations who offer specialised victim support services.

Here are examples from 4 EU countries (Austria, France, Germany, Portugal, UK- England, Wales and Scotland):

### 4.3.1 AUSTRIA FEM Country Resource Profile

#### Vienna

##### **Orient Express**

Beratungs-, Bildungs- und Kulturinitiative für Frauen  
Frauenservicestelle  
Schönngasse 15-17 / Top 2  
A-1020 Wien

#### Lower Austria

##### **Gewaltschutzzentrum NÖ**

Victim protection organisation for victims of domestic violence  
[www.gewaltschutzzentrum.at/noe](http://www.gewaltschutzzentrum.at/noe)

##### **Frauenberatung Wendepunkt**

Women and family counselling centre, also operate a shelter for women, victims of violence.  
<http://www.frauenberatung-wienerneustadt.at>

#### Upper Austria

##### **Gewaltschutzzentrum OÖ**

[www.gewaltschutzzentrum.at/ooe](http://www.gewaltschutzzentrum.at/ooe)

#### Burgenland

##### **Gewaltschutzzentrum Burgenland**

[www.gewaltschutz.at](http://www.gewaltschutz.at)

#### Carinthia

##### **Gewaltschutzzentrum Kärnten**

[www.gsz-ktn.at](http://www.gsz-ktn.at)

#### Styria

##### **Frauenspezifische Beratungsstelle für Migrantinnen – DIVAN**

Offer a range of services for women with a migrant background  
<https://www.caritas-steiermark.at/hilfe-angebote/migrantinnen-fluechtlinge/beratung-betreuung/frauenspezifische-beratungsstelle-fuer-migrantinnen-divan/>

#### Vorarlberg

##### **FEMAIL**

Platform for women  
<http://www.femail.at>

#### Salzburg

##### **Make it- Büro f. Mädchenförderung**

Project for girls set up in the year 2000  
E-Mail: [teresa.lugstein@salzburg.gv.at](mailto:teresa.lugstein@salzburg.gv.at) or [make.it@salzburg.gv.at](mailto:make.it@salzburg.gv.at)

#### Tyrol

##### **Tiroler Frauenhaus f. misshandelte Frauen und Kinder**

Shelter for women  
<http://frauenhaus-tirol.at/>

##### **Autonome Österreichische Frauenhäuser**

Network of all women's shelters in Austria  
[www.aodef.at](http://www.aodef.at)

##### **National Hotline:**

**24- Hour Women's Hotline:** +43 1 71 71 9  
Emergency helpline for girls and women who are victims of violence.



### 4.3.2 FRANCE

#### FEM Country Resource Profile

##### Association voix de femmes

Tél. : 01 30 31 55 76

voixdefemmes.accueil@orange.fr

[www.association-voixdefemmes.fr](http://www.association-voixdefemmes.fr)

##### Groupe pour l'abolition des mutilations sexuelles – GAMS

67, rue des Maraîchers - 75020 Paris

Tél. : 01 43 48 10 87

<http://pagesperso-orange.fr/associationgams>

##### Voix d'elles rebelles

Association spécialisée sur l'accompagnement des victimes de mariages forcés

Place Lautréamont 93 200 Saint-Denis

Tél. : 01 48 22 93 29

[www.voixdelles.org](http://www.voixdelles.org)

##### Réseau jeunes filles confrontées aux violences et aux ruptures familiales

Tél. : 06 75 23 08 19 - Ligne téléphonique : gérée par le Planning familial 34.

Mail : mariageforce@gmail.com

[www.mariageforce.fr](http://www.mariageforce.fr)

#### National helplines and websites:

##### SOS mariage forcé

01 30 31 05 05

numéro géré par Voix de Femmes

3919 for domestic violence

##### SOS Rape

0800 05 95 95

[www.mariageforce.fr](http://www.mariageforce.fr)

[www.stop-violences-femmes.gouv.fr](http://www.stop-violences-femmes.gouv.fr)

### 4.3.3 GERMANY FEM Country Resources

#### Berlin

**LANA – Fachberatungsstelle gegen Zwangsheirat und Gewalt im Namen der Ehre von TERRE DES FEMMES – Menschenrechte für die Frau e.V.**  
Brunnenstraße 128  
13355 Berlin  
Tel.: 030/40 50 46 99 - 30  
E-Mail: [beratung@frauenrechte.de](mailto:beratung@frauenrechte.de)

**Papatya Berlin**  
E-Mail: [info@papatya.org](mailto:info@papatya.org)  
[www.papatya.org](http://www.papatya.org)

**Leben lernen**  
Gutzkowstraße 7  
10827 Berlin-Schöneberg  
Tel.: 0 30/7 84 26 87  
E-Mail: [beratung@lebenlernenberlin.de](mailto:beratung@lebenlernenberlin.de)

#### Duisburg

**SOLWODI**  
Postfach 101150  
47011 Duisburg  
Tel.: 0203/66 31 50  
E-Mail: [duisburg@solwodi.de](mailto:duisburg@solwodi.de)

#### Frankfurt

**FIM e.V.**  
Varrentrappstr. 55  
60486 Frankfurt/Main  
Tel.: 069/97097970  
E-Mail: [info@fim-beratungszentrum.de](mailto:info@fim-beratungszentrum.de)

#### Hamburg

**i.bera**  
Norderreihe 61  
22767 Hamburg  
Tel.: 040/ 350 17 72 26  
E-Mail: [i.bera@verikom.de](mailto:i.bera@verikom.de)

**LÂLE in der IKB e.V.**  
Brahmsallee 35  
20144 Hamburg  
Tel.: 040/30 22 79 78  
Fax: 040/30 22 79 81  
E-Mail: [lale@ikb-integrationszentrum.de](mailto:lale@ikb-integrationszentrum.de)

#### Hannover

**SUANA Beratungsstelle/ kargah e.V.**  
Zur Bettfedernfabrik 3  
30451 Hannover  
Tel.: 0511/12 60 78-18 / -14  
E-Mail: [suana@kargah.de](mailto:suana@kargah.de)

**Niedersächsisches Krisentelefon gegen Zwangsheirat / kargah e.V.**  
Tel.: 0800/0667 888 (free of charge)  
E-Mail: [zwangsheirat@kargah.de](mailto:zwangsheirat@kargah.de)

**KOBRA –Koordinierungs- und Beratungsstelle für Opfer von Menschenhandel und Zwangsverheiratung in Niedersachsen**  
Postfach 4762  
30047 Hannover  
Tel.: 0511/898288-02  
E-Mail: [info@kobra-beratungsstelle.de](mailto:info@kobra-beratungsstelle.de)

#### Köln

**Agisra e.V.**  
Martinstr. 20a  
50667 Köln  
Tel.: 0221/12 40 19  
E-Mail: [info@agisra.org](mailto:info@agisra.org)

**HennaMond**  
Wilhelm-Sollmann Str. 103  
50737 Köln  
Tel.: 0221/16993103  
E-Mail: [info@hennamond-verein.de](mailto:info@hennamond-verein.de)

#### Magdeburg

**VERA – Fachstelle gegen Frauenhandel und Zwangsverheiratung in Sachsen-Anhalt Klausenerstr. 17**  
39112 Magdeburg  
Tel.: 0391/40 15 370; 0170/ 680 94 74;  
0170/3101367  
E-Mail: [vera@AWO-LSA.de](mailto:vera@AWO-LSA.de)

## Munich

### Wüstenrose

Goethestr. 47  
80336 München  
Tel. 089/4521635-0  
E-Mail: wuestenrose@imma.de

### jadwiGa

Schwanthaler Str. 79  
80336 München  
Tel.: 089/38 53 44 55  
E-Mail: muenchen@jadwiga-online.de

## Saarbrücken

### Aldona e.V.

Postfach 101413  
66014 Saarbrücken  
Tel.: 0681/373631; 0173/3065832  
E-Mail: aldona-ev@t-online.de  
Free emergency number: 0800/16 11 11 1

### Mädchenprojekt PEPERONA/DAJC-Verein

Johannisstr. 13  
66111 Saarbrücken  
Tel.: 0681/33275  
E-Mail: peperona@dajc.de

## Stuttgart

### Yasemin

Tel.: 0711/65 86 95 26; 0711/65 86 95 27  
E-Mail: info@eva-yasemin.de

**Free national hotline:** 08000/ 116 016

For a more complete list of all potential support organisations in your area, visit: <http://www.zwangsheirat.de/index.php/beratung/beratungsstellen-vor-ort>

### 4.3.4 PORTUGAL

#### FEM Country Resource Profile

##### Governmental departments

**CIG - Comissão para a Igualdade e Cidadania**

Av. da República, 32, 1º, 1050-193 Lisboa

[cig@cig.gov.pt](mailto:cig@cig.gov.pt)

Tel. (+351) 217 983 000

[www.cig.gov.pt](http://www.cig.gov.pt)

**ACM - Alto Comissariado para as Migrações**

Rua Álvaro Coutinho n.º 14 1150-025 LISBOA

Tel.: (+351) 808 257 257 21 810 61 00

**Conselho Português para os Refugiados**

Quinta do Pombeiro, Casa Senhorial Norte

[geral@cpr.pt](mailto:geral@cpr.pt)

Tel: +351 - 21 831 43 72

[www.cpr.pt](http://www.cpr.pt)

**Comissão Nacional para a Promoção dos Direitos e Proteção de Crianças e Jovens**

Praça de Londres, nº 2 - 2º andar 1049-056 Lisboa

[cnpcjr@seg-social.pt](mailto:cnpcjr@seg-social.pt)

Tel: (+351) 218 441 100 [www.cnpcjr.pt](http://www.cnpcjr.pt)

**Polícia Judiciária**

R. Gomes Freire 174, 1169-007 Lisboa

[direccao.lpc@pj.pt](mailto:direccao.lpc@pj.pt)

Tel: (+351) 211 967 000

[www.pj.pt](http://www.pj.pt)

##### Nongovernmental organisations

**AJPAS**

Praceta Bento de Moura Portugal,

Bairro Girassol, Venda Nova, 2700-109, Amadora

[ajpas.direccao@gmail.com](mailto:ajpas.direccao@gmail.com)

Tel: +351 214 746 048

[www.ajpas.org.pt](http://www.ajpas.org.pt)

**AMUCIP - Associação para o Desenvolvimento das Mulheres Ciganas Portuguesas**

Largo Machado dos Santos, nº8/9 2845-423

Amora

[amucip@gmail.com](mailto:amucip@gmail.com)

Tel: 212 228 134 / 938 506 548

<http://amucip.weebly.com/>

**APF – Associação para o Planeamento da Família**

Rua Eça de Queirós nº13 1º 1050-095 Lisboa

[apfsede@apf.pt](mailto:apfsede@apf.pt)

Tel: (+351) 21 3853993

[www.apf.pt](http://www.apf.pt)

**CESIS**

Av. 5 de Outubro, nº 12 - 4º Esq. 1050-056 Lisboa

[cesis.geral@cesis.org](mailto:cesis.geral@cesis.org)

Tel: +351 213 845 560

[www.cesis.org](http://www.cesis.org)

**IAC - Instituto de Apoio à Criança**

Largo da Memória, 14 LISBOA 1349-045

[iac-sede@iacrianca.pt](mailto:iac-sede@iacrianca.pt)

Tel: +351 213 617 880

[www.iacrianca.pt](http://www.iacrianca.pt)

**Movimento MUSQUEBA-Associação de Promoção e Valorização da Mulher Guineense**

[www.facebook.com/movimentomusqueba](http://www.facebook.com/movimentomusqueba)

**P&D FACTOR**

[info@popdesenvolvimento.org](mailto:info@popdesenvolvimento.org)

<http://popdesenvolvimento.org/>

**REAPN**

Rua de Costa Cabral, 2368

4200-218 Porto

[geral@eapn.pt](mailto:geral@eapn.pt)

Tel: +351 225 420 800

**UMAR - União de Mulheres Alternativa e Resposta**  
Rua da Cozinha Económica, Bloco D, Espaços M e N,  
1300-149 Lisboa  
umar.sede@sapo.pt  
Tel: +351 218 873 005  
[www.umarfeminismos.org](http://www.umarfeminismos.org)

## 4.3.5 UNITED KINGDOM

### FEM Country Resource Profile

#### England and Wales

##### Asha Projects

This South Asian organisation works to end violence against women and girls, including forced marriage.

[www.ashaprojects.org.uk](http://www.ashaprojects.org.uk)

Tel: (+44) 02086960023

##### Ashiana Network

This networks aims to empower black, minority ethnic and refugee women, particularly South Asian, Turkish and Iranian women who are experiencing domestic violence, sexual violence and harmful practices with culturally sensitive advice, support and safe housing.

[www.ashiana.org.uk](http://www.ashiana.org.uk)

Tel: (+44) 020 8539 0427

##### Forced Marriage Unit

Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) is a joint-initiative with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Home Office dedicated to preventing forced marriage. They work with embassy staff overseas to rescue British nationals who may have been/or who are being forced to marry.

[www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage)

Tel: (+44) 0207 008 0151

##### Freedom Charity

Freedom charity was established to raise awareness of the issues of children and young people who are at risk or are subjected to violent crimes, honour-based violence and forced marriages throughout the UK.

[www.freedomcharity.org.uk](http://www.freedomcharity.org.uk)

Tel: (+44) 0845 607 0133

##### Halo Project

This project supports victims of honour based violence and forced marriages in North East of England by providing appropriate advice and support to victims.

<http://www.haloproject.org.uk/>

Tel: (+44) 01642 683 045

##### Henna Foundation

This organisation provides support for victims of forced marriage & 'honour' related violence and aim to mitigate this practice by offering a broad spectrum of mainstream services.

<http://www.hennafoundation.org>

Tel: (+44) 02920496920

##### Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation

IKWRO provides advice, support, advocacy and referral in Arabic, Kurdish, Turkish, Dari and Farsi to women, girls and couples living in Britain, in particular helping women facing domestic violence, forced marriage and 'honour'-based violence.

[Ikwro.org.uk](http://Ikwro.org.uk)

Tel: (+44) 0207 490 0303 (9.30-5.00) or  
07862 733511 (24hrs)

##### Jan Trust

This organisation supports communities on the issue of forced marriage, including a free helpline.

<http://againstforcedmarriages.org>

Tel: (+44) 0800 141 2994

##### Karma Nirvana

is an organisation for Asian men and women which provides a forced marriage helpline staffed by people who have escaped forced marriage and 'honour' based violence.

[www.karmanirvana.org.uk](http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk)

Tel: (+44) 0800 5999 247

##### London Black Women's Project

This organisation provides support and refuge services for women needing to escape from violent situations including women who are fearful they may be forced into marriage. They also have a resource centre with services including legal advice, counselling, support groups.

[www.lbwp.online](http://www.lbwp.online)

##### Southall Black Sisters

This is a resource centre offering information, advice, advocacy, practical help, counselling, and support to black and minority women experiencing domestic abuse. Southall Black Sisters assists in forced marriage particularly in relation to South Asian women.

[www.southallblacksisters.org.uk](http://www.southallblacksisters.org.uk)

Tel: (+44) 020 8571 9595

## Helplines

**Jan Trust** against forced marriages helpline:  
0800 141 2994

**Karma Nirvana** honour crimes and forced marriages  
helpline: 0800 5999 247

**National Domestic Violence Helpline:**  
0808 2000 247

**Muslim Youth Helpline:** 0808 808 2008

**Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation**  
Helpline: 07862 733511

**NSPCC** helpline for child at risk of abuse:  
0808 800 5000 and 0800 056 0566 (text phone)

**Child Line** for any child or young person with a  
problem: 0800 1111

## Scotland

**Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre**  
Works with Muslim women and promotes understanding of their needs.  
[mwrc.org.uk](http://mwrc.org.uk)  
Tel: (+44) 0808 801 0301

**Dundee International Women's Centre**  
Provides a wide range of services for women  
[diwc.co.uk](http://diwc.co.uk)  
Tel: (+44) 01382 462 058

**Men in Mind Edinburgh**  
Provide services for black and minority ethnic men who are experiencing issues that may affect their mental health and well-being.  
[health-in-mind.org.uk](http://health-in-mind.org.uk)

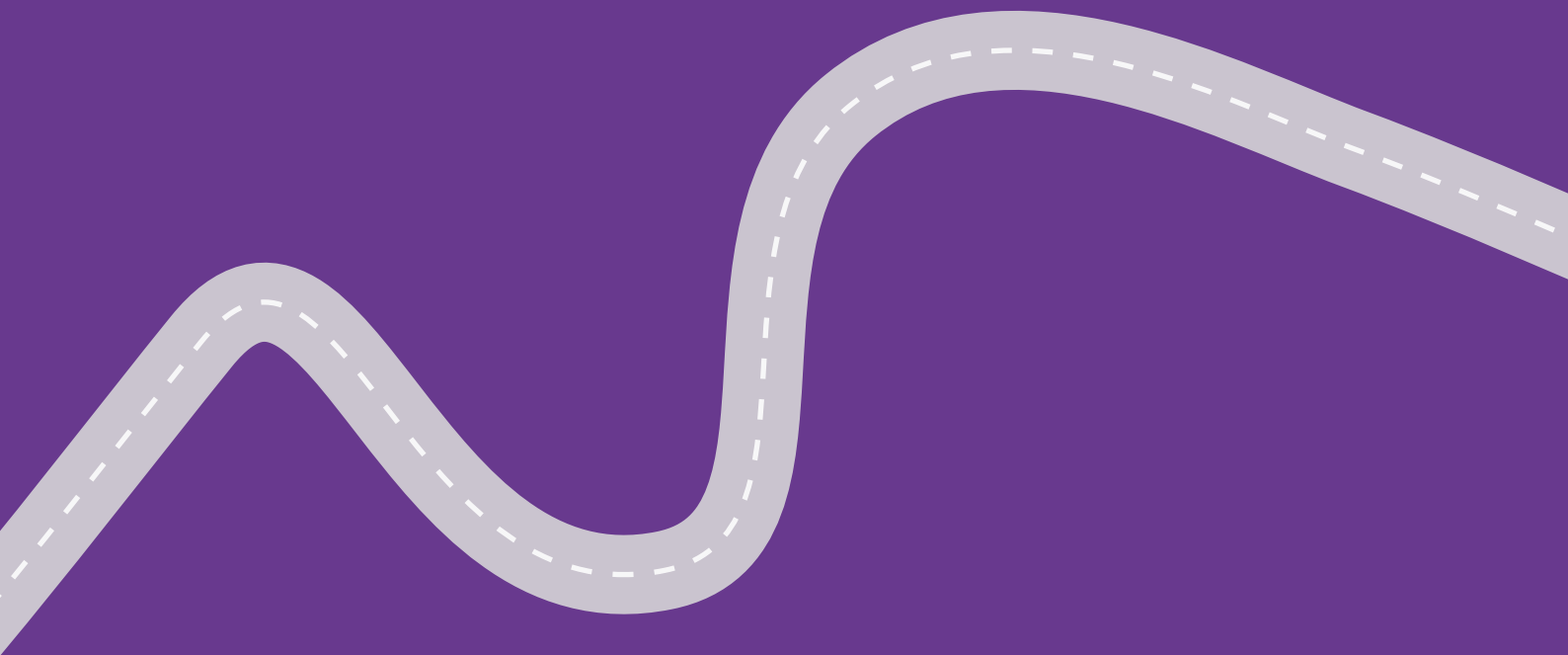
**Saheliya**  
Supports the mental health and well-being of black and minority ethnic women in Edinburgh [saheliya.org](http://saheliya.org)  
Tel: (+44) 0131 556 9302

**Scottish Women's Aid**  
National organisation responding to domestic abuse, with a network of member local groups across Scotland.  
[scottishwomensaid.org.uk](http://scottishwomensaid.org.uk)

**Shakti Women's Aid**  
Provides safe temporary refuge accommodation and outreach services to women, children and young people experiencing domestic abuse or at risk of harm from domestic abuse from their husband, partner and extended family members.  
[shaktiedinburgh.co.uk](http://shaktiedinburgh.co.uk)  
Tel: (+44) 0131 475 2399

**Victim Support Scotland**  
Provides emotional support, practical help and essential information to victims, witnesses and others affected by crime.  
[victimssupportsco.org.uk](http://victimssupportsco.org.uk)  
Tel: (+44) 0845 603 9213

**West Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid**  
Provides safe temporary refuge accommodation and outreach services to women, children and young people experiencing domestic abuse or at risk of harm from domestic abuse from their husband, partner and extended family members.  
[hematgryffe.org.uk](http://hematgryffe.org.uk)  
Tel: (+44) 0141 353 0859



Funded by:



With financial support  
from the Rights, Equality  
and Citizenship Programme  
of the European Union

