



**For further information or a mediatory talk,
contact one of the following advice centers:**

Marrying and marriage in Switzerland Information leaflet for parents

Advice centers that are familiar with both cultures:

- www.zwangsheirat.ch (forced marriage) – initial contact per e-mail
- Ausländerdienst Baselland ald, (foreign services) Tel: 061 827 99 10
- GGG Ausländerberatung (Basel Stadt), – foreign consultant agency, Tel: 061 206 92 22
- Beratungsstelle für binationale Paare und Familien (advisory center for binational couples and families), Tel: 061 271 33 49

Family consulting centers:

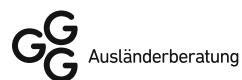
- Kanton Basel-Stadt: Familien-, Paar- und Erziehungsberatung (family and relationship counselling and child guidance services), Tel: 061 686 68 68
- Kanton Basel-Land: You will find the appropriate addresses at www.fejb.ch, or contact Ausländerdienst Baselland ald

In emergencies:

- Police emergency number, Tel: 117
- Opferhilfe beider Basel (victim support), Tel: 061 205 09 10



Are you in a difficult situation and wondering about the future of your child? In the following pages you will find information about marrying and marriage in Switzerland as well as useful contact addresses.



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
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Confederaziun svizra

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English

«What matters most is that our sons one day marry for love:»
(Davide Maniscalco, 45, born in Sicily, living in Switzerland for 17 years,
and Helen Maniscalco-Schwarzentruber, 41, born in Basel)





The legal situation in Switzerland

Marrying is only possible from the age of 18: Only when both partners have reached their eighteenth birthday are they allowed to enter into marriage.

Each and every person can choose their partner freely; nobody can be forced to marry: Marriage is based on the free will of both partners. We speak about forced marriage whenever one or the other of the prospective marriage partners sees no possibility of refusing the marriage.

Equal rights for men and women in all areas: Women are entitled to have the same say as men in all matters, and a woman's opinion has the same weight as a man's.

Each and every woman and man has the right to divorce: A marriage can be dissolved by divorce. If both the marriage partners want a divorce, they can request one together in court. If only one of the parties wants a divorce, he or she can bring an action for divorce in court.

In other cultures there are other laws in part, and the topics of «marrying and marriage» are dealt with differently; nonetheless the above rules apply in Switzerland. As a consequence different cultural ideas regarding marriage and approaching matrimony often clash, even though the parents only want the best for their children.

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*

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

(Şheriban Akyıldız, 36, from Turkey.
Medya, 13, and Arya, 7, were born in Switzerland.)

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

(M. Hassan Rahimifar, 59, came to Switzerland from Iran in 1998.
Elnaz, 21, und Eliza 16, have been living in Switzerland since 2000.)

