



Afghanistan - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 28 October 2015

Information on arranged marriages including consequences of refusal.

A document published in March 2014 by the *Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Australia* points out that:

“Arranged marriages are traditional in Afghanistan—in many cases these are forced or coerced. Although reliable data is difficult to obtain, up to 80 per cent of marriages in Afghanistan are forced.” (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Australia (26 March 2014) *DFAT Country Report: Afghanistan*)

A report issued in July 2014 by the *United States Institute of Peace* states that:

“According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), 57 percent of marriages in Afghanistan involve girls under sixteen, many if not most of them arranged for the girl.” (United States Institute of Peace (22 July 2014) *Women's Access to Justice in Afghanistan: Individual Versus Community Barriers to Justice*, p.15)

In May 2015 *BBC News* points out that:

“Human rights activists estimate almost 60% of Afghan girls are married by the time they are 16, many by force or through arranged marriages.” (BBC News (13 May 2015) *Afghanistan: Protecting women's rights*)

A document issued in May 2014 by *Stop Violence Against Women* notes that:

“...if a girl tries to flee an arranged marriage, customary law dictates she can be prosecuted for running away and charged with a year of jail time.” (Stop Violence Against Women (5 May 2014) *Afghanistan: Customary Laws Foster High Rates of Violence Against Women*)

A report issued in May 2015 by the *United Nations Human Rights Council* states:

“The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission registered more than 280 women who had been killed by family members during 2011 and 2012. Most of these killings had been carried out on women and girls who had refused to enter into an arranged marriage or had been accused of having a relationship that the family considered to be inappropriate.” (United Nations Human Rights Council (12 May 2015) *Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Addendum: Mission to Afghanistan*, p.6)

References

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

Sources Consulted

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Electronic Immigration Network

European Country of Origin Information Network

Freedom House

Google

Human Rights Watch

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

International Crisis Group

IRIN News

Lexis Nexis

Minority Rights Group International

Online Newspapers

Refugee Documentation Centre E-Library

Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database

Reliefweb

Regional Surveys of the World

Reuters

United Kingdom Home Office
United States Department of State
UNHCR Refworld