



FORCED AND EARLY MARRIAGES AS A CONSEQUENCE AND CAUSE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE

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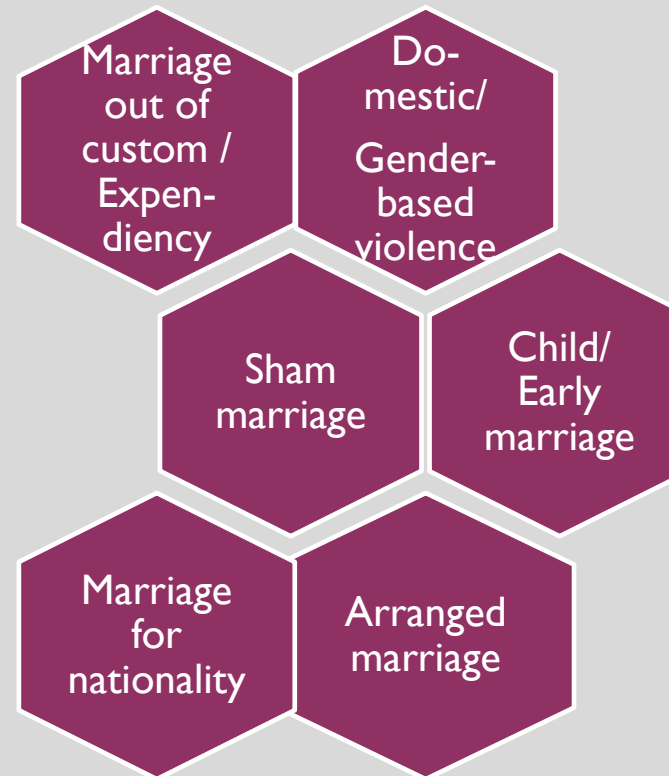


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I. I. BACKGROUND: FORCED MARRIAGE – AN ISSUE OF DEFINITION?



→ Singular, different problems
BUT: Lack of consent is an issue

(cf. Rude-Antoine 2005: 7)



I. I. BACKGROUND: DEFINITION OF FM

- Right to choose spouse in Article 16 of the the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948 (cf. Resolution 217A (III))
- Definition in DG for Internal Policies Forced Marriage and Honour Killings Study 2008 :
“a marriage contracted without the free and valid consent of one or both Partners” (DG 2008: 8)
(In accordance with EU FEM project)
- Project results: Overall consensus in defining FM in accordance with the Istanbul convention as marriage without free consent of at least one party:
“Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the intentional conduct of forcing an adult or a child to enter into a marriage is criminalised“ (Art. 37, Istanbul Convention)
- Survivor Interview:
“You know suddenly everything happens and you can't choose, you have to marry on that day in that time, and after you're married you move to the husband's house“ (sic. S UK3, I.172-173)



I. 2. BACKGROUND: ESTIMATED QUANTITATIVE DATA

- United Nations Population Fund (UNFP) estimates 14.2 million new early marriages annually for this decade (cf. UNFPA 2012: 6)
- No official data on FEM in Europe, only estimations (cf. Anitha/Gill 2015: 1124)
- Difficult to obtain data because of the embedded nature in family bonds, gender roles and reproductive expectations (cf. Women Living under Muslim Law 2013: 10) → Dependent on social change



2. STRUCTURAL SPECIFICS OF FEM

- Embedded nature in family bonds → victims face conflict of loyalty when forced to make statements against family
- Especially strong control of female (and male „deviant“) sexuality because of connection to concepts of honour (cf. Gangoli et al. 2009: 424)
- Rooted in patriarchal family structures (cf. Yerlikaya/Cakir-Ceylan 2011: 208 f.)
- Breach of human rights not just through wedding, but throughout the marriage (cf. Yerlikaya/Cakir-Ceylan 2011: 205)
- Heightened danger of victimisation through domestic violence for victims of FEM, i.e. inner marital rape/ infringement of reproductive rights, physical and psychological abuse (cf. Sabbe et al. 2014: 174 f.)
- In Early Marriages additional increased risk of psychological and psychosocial damage, especially with early pregnancies (cf. Chantler 2012: 181) → double marginalised age/gender



3.1. FACTORS OF VULNERABILITY: GENDER

- Mostly female victims:
 - 80% of cases reported to Forced Marriage Unit in 2015 (FMU) in the UK involved female victims
 - in Germany 2008 94% of reported cases were female (cf. Sabbe et al. 2014: 174)
 - Male victims underrepresented because of lesser degree of control and contradiction of hegemonic masculinity and constructed image of victims (cf. Gangoli et al. 2006: 17)
- FEM also constructed as part of GBV/ patriarchal practice (cf. Gill/ Mitra-Kahn 2012: 108)



3.2. FACTORS OF VULNERABILITY: AGE

- Young girls/women at high risk of being victimised:

| Country/age | <16 | 16-21 | 22-25 | 22-27 | sum |
|-------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| UK (2015) | 14% | 33% | 15% | - | 62% |
| DE (2008) | 7,7% | 62,5% | - | 19,5% | 87,7% |

Sources: FMU 2016: 7, BMFSFJ 2011: 26

- ‘Appropriate’ age of marriage/ end of childhood dependant on socialisation (cf. Roma communities)
- Underage pregnancies involve higher health risks for mothers



3.3. FACTORS OF VULNERABILITY: ETHNICITY

- Constructed as Muslim issue, rooted in traditional culture, despite studies finding 56 countries of origin and different religions in FM cases (cf. Alanen 2015: 228)
- Different (predominant) groups of perceived ‘others’ depending on socio-cultural background and migration flows (cf. Gangoli/ McCarry 2009: 418)
- Often explained as religious/traditional practice by families (cf. UK2, l. 98-104)
- Also stricter immigration laws for subcultural groups as a result of perceived probability of harmful practices



4.1. EU FEM ROADMAP PROJECT: METHODOLOGY

- EU research project involving partners in five EU partner countries (AT, DE, FR, PT, UK)
- 25 expert interviews, 21 survivor interviews (Age: 17-46 y.), all transcribed and analysed with qualitative content analysis based on same principle
- Analysis of existing guidelines/documents
- Objective: create and evaluate Roadmap for frontline professionals on FEM in Europe
 - improve support network for victims and survivors of FEM



4.2. EU FEM ROADMAP PROJECT: RESULTS FROM THE EXPERT AND SURVIVOR INTERVIEWS

- Patriachal Structures/VAWDA



4.2. EU FEM ROADMAP PROJECT: RESULTS FROM THE EXPERT AND SURVIVOR INTERVIEWS

- Domestic violence



4.2. EU FEM ROADMAP PROJECT: RESULTS FROM THE EXPERT AND SURVIVOR INTERVIEWS

- Psychological pressure



5. SUGGESTIONS

- Be attentive and understanding to (potential) victims to make them feel taken seriously
- Sensitise staff and frontline actors
- Spread information through schools/youth centers/GPs/social workers to (potential) victims and communities
- Contact specialised organisations in case of suspected cases of FEM