

**Please cite as:** EUAA, '3.9.2. Forced and child marriage' in *Country Guidance: Sudan*, June 2025.

# 3.9.2. Forced and child marriage

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: June 2025

This profile refers to women and girls in Sudan who are subjected to forced and early marriage, whether through coercion by family, community pressure, armed groups, or legal loopholes that allow child marriage.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI reports and query: Country Focus 2024, 2.5.2, 2.5.3.; Country Focus 2025, 2.6. (a) (c) (d); Security 2025, 1.3.1.; COI Update 2025, 4.. Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Forced marriages are legal as per Sudanese law. The Muslim Personal Status Act of 1991 allows girls as young as 10 years old to be married with judicial approval. Also customary law and societal norms pressure families to surrender their daughters into forced marriages, often with much older men?.

## Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

**Forced and child marriage amount to persecution.** These marriages, which are legal as per Sudanese law, often involve coercion, lack of consent, and long-term physical and psychological harm, including domestic violence, marital rape, and denial of education. Abductions and trafficking of women and girls for the purpose of forced marriage and sexual slavery have been documented, with survivors describing being chained, locked in houses, and transported in vehicles for marriage arrangements?. Survivors of forced marriage who escape often face stigma, honour-based violence, or rejection by their families. See also 3.10.2. Child labour and child trafficking.

## Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

**For women and girls in Sudan, a well-founded fear of persecution, in relation to forced and child marriage would in general be substantiated.** Forced/child marriage is not just legal, but the practice of child marriage is widespread due to the belief that by doing so, parents protect their girls from rape and preserve their (perceived) honour. Forced marriages of

girls and women to RSF members are increasing, with cases involving parents surrendering their daughters under threat or in exchange for financial compensation.

### Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Persecution of women and girls in relation to forced and child marriage is likely to be for reasons of **membership of a particular social group**[10]. For example, women and girls who refuse to marry would have a common background which cannot be changed (refusal to marry) and/or a characteristic or belief that is so fundamental to identity or conscience that a person should not be forced to renounce it (the right to choose whom to marry) and have distinct identity in Sudan (stigmatisation by the surrounding society for violating the honour of the family).

For women and girls from RSF controlled areas, **(imputed) political opinion** may also be substantiated due their or their relatives' (perceived) affiliation with the opposing warring party.

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  CJEU, Intervyuirasht organ na Darzhavna agentsia za bezhantsite pri Ministerskia savet v WS, case C-621/21, judgment of 16 January 2024, para. 57.

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