



Statement from
the Swiss Confederation
**opposing female
genital cutting**

www.stop-fgm.admin.ch



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

The Federal Council



Dear family member
Dear Sir/Madam

We are writing to remind you that female genital mutilation is illegal in Switzerland. Those who perform it as well as parents and relatives who have committed such an act, or assisted in it, should expect to face serious legal consequences.

This is also the case if the genital mutilation took place abroad and the perpetrator is in Switzerland. Please respect the law and for the sake of your daughter and the whole family, say no to female genital mutilation. This document provides more information on the topic.

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Female genital cutting is illegal

Female genital cutting is against the law in Switzerland, as in most other countries.

Art. 124 Swiss Criminal Code (SCC): Female genital mutilation

¹ Any person who mutilates the genitals of a female person, impairs their natural function seriously and permanently or damages them in some other way shall be liable to a custodial sentence from six months to ten years.

² Any person who has committed the offence abroad but is now in Switzerland and is not extradited shall be liable to the foregoing penalties. [...]

Female genital cutting is a punishable offence in Switzerland...

... even if it was carried out abroad.

... even if it was performed in a "clinic" and/or by a healthcare professional.

... even if it was performed or arranged before the girl first arrived in Switzerland. In other words, even if the girl was cut with a view to leaving her country of origin.

What is female genital cutting?

Female genital cutting involves the partial or total removal of the external genitalia. It also includes procedures that are sometimes considered minor, such as incision/nicking of the female genitalia.

Female genital cutting is a punishable offence

Who faces prosecution?

- It is not only the individuals carrying out the procedure who face prosecution, but also the parents or relatives who allowed the girl to be cut.
- The mother and father (or other guardians if applicable) are responsible for protecting their daughter. If they fail to protect a girl from female genital cutting, they may also face prosecution.
- People who are not resident in Switzerland may also be prosecuted and face a penalty if they are in Switzerland and are not extradited (e.g. visiting or passing through).

What is the penalty?

- The penalty is a custodial sentence of between six months and ten years (Art. 124 para. 1 SCC).
- Perpetrators who are foreign nationals may be expelled from Switzerland for a period of five to 15 years if they are convicted (Art. 66a para. 1 let. b SCC).

Why female genital cutting is illegal

Female genital cutting can have a devastating and life-long physical, mental and social impact on those affected. For example, many women and girls subsequently suffer from pain, infections, infertility and childbirth problems. In addition, performing female genital cutting can lead to death due to blood loss or infections.



It's important to remember that female genital cutting is a crime and a serious violation of human and children's rights. It is a form of violence against women and girls.

More information

Federal Office of Public Health
www.stop-fgm.admin.ch

Counselling and advice

If you have any questions or need advice, please contact the Network against female genital cutting Switzerland.

Network against female genital cutting
Switzerland
www.female-genital-cutting.ch
email: advice@female-genital-cutting.ch
Phone: +41 41 419 23 55

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Additional information on the official

Swiss statement opposing female genital cutting

Protect your daughter from female genital cutting

Important information for parents or guardians who fear that their daughter may undergo female genital cutting abroad.

In collaboration with



Before travelling:

- Talk to family, friends and professionals: Contact the Network against female genital cutting Switzerland to talk about how you can best protect your daughter from being cut. You can also talk to a trusted doctor (e.g. paediatrician, gynaecologist or family doctor).
- Avoid or postpone family visits: If you have relatives who want your daughter to undergo female genital cutting, avoid going to see those people where possible or don't take your daughter with you.
- Educate and inform your daughter: Talk to her (in an age-appropriate way) about her health and the risk of female genital cutting, why you want to protect her from it and what she should do.

When abroad:

- You should always carry the statement with you when you travel abroad. Keep it with your travel documents.
- Stay close to your daughter and don't leave her alone in the care of your relatives for long periods.
- Involve your husband/wife, partner or other people close to you who can help you protect your daughter.
- You can also contact the Network against female genital cutting Switzerland if you are already abroad.

Important!

A girl who has been or is due to undergo female genital cutting is not in any way guilty and does not face prosecution. The girls and women affected have a right to protection and support.

Do you have questions or need support?

National contact point of the Network against female genital cutting Switzerland

Phone: +41 41 419 23 55

Email: advice@female-genital-cutting.ch

www.female-genital-cutting.ch

Facebook Messenger:

www.facebook.com/femalegenitalcutting

Counselling is free. Advice can also be provided anonymously and through an interpreter.

In an emergency: call the police on 117 (from Switzerland) or 112 (from elsewhere in Europe).