



2015 CHAPTER 2

PART 2

OTHER EXPLOITATION OFFENCES

Offence of forced marriage

Offence of forced marriage

16.—(1) A person commits an offence if he or she—

- (a) uses violence, threats or any other form of coercion for the purpose of causing another person to enter into a marriage, and
- (b) believes, or ought reasonably to believe, that the conduct may cause the other person to enter into the marriage without free and full consent.

(2) It is irrelevant whether the conduct mentioned in paragraph (a) of subsection (1) is directed at the victim of the offence under that subsection or another person.

(3) In relation to a victim who is incapable of consenting by reason of mental disorder, the offence under subsection (1) is capable of being committed by any conduct carried out for the purpose of causing the victim to enter into a marriage (whether or not the conduct amounts to violence, threats or any other form of coercion).

(4) In this section—

“marriage” means any religious or civil ceremony of marriage (whether or not legally binding);

“mental disorder” has the meaning given by the Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

Changes to legislation: *Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015, Cross Heading: Offence of forced marriage is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 30 September 2023. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

- (5) A person commits an offence if he or she—
- (a) practises any form of deception with the intention of causing another person to leave the United Kingdom, and
 - (b) intends the other person to be subjected to conduct outside the United Kingdom that is an offence under subsection (1) or would be an offence under that subsection if the victim were in Northern Ireland.
- (6) A person commits an offence under subsection (1) or (5) only if, at the time of the conduct or deception—
- (a) the person or the victim or both of them are in Northern Ireland,
 - (b) neither the person nor the victim is in Northern Ireland but at least one of them is habitually resident in Northern Ireland, or
 - (c) neither the person nor the victim is in the United Kingdom but at least one of them is a UK national.
- (7) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable—
- (a) on summary conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum, or both;
 - (b) on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 7 years.

Changes to legislation:

Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015, Cross Heading: Offence of forced marriage is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 30 September 2023. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 18(10A) inserted by [2023 c. 37 s. 28\(5\)](#)