1- Marriage contracts for Qatari females under the age of 20 reached 15.3%, and the number of marriage contracts for Qatari males of the same age group reached 2.1%.

As for non-Qataris, Marriage contracts reached 10.4% under the age of 20, and for the same age group for males reached 0.5%.[[1]](#footnote-1)

2- The National Human Rights Committee recommended the publication of information on the number of marriage contracts for girls under the age of 16 and for boys under the age of 18 to identify early marriages.

3- The law stipulates that “Males are not allowed to enter into marriage contracts before the age of eighteen (18). Females are not allowed to enter into marriage contracts before the age of sixteen (16). All marriages of males and females over the age of eighteen (18) and sixteen (16) respectively shall only be allowed after the approval of the guardian, verification of the consent from both parties to the contract and the permission of a competent Judge”.

The National Human Rights Committee recommended that the law should be amended to achieve gender equality in the age of marriage and to set the minimum age to 18 years, in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

4- The percentage of consanguineous marriages reached 42% of total marriages in 2016. On the other hand, the lowest divorce rate was recorded in the age group (under 20 years), reaching 0.8%.

One of the most important lessons learned is to examine the relationship between early marriage and consanguineous marriages, and to promote greater awareness and education on both topics.

5- Despite the change in the pattern of social relations, but the extended family still represents the value sought by the contemporary family for its status and legitimacy. The effects of the marriage of girls under the age of 18 and 16 have not yet been studied. Many studies have been conducted on the phenomenon of the delayed marriage of girls. Early marriage is not considered a phenomenon in Qatari society, although it is preferred by some individuals.

6-A- There is no exacerbating factors of early marriage, where the average income per capita in the State of Qatar of the highest incomes globally. A study by Dr. Kaltham Al-Ghanim "On Qatari youth attitudes towards marriage issues 2010" showed that 57% of the sample believe that early marriage is an obstacle to completing their education.[[2]](#footnote-2)

7- Measures undertaken to enhance the agency and autonomy of girls and women in humanitarian settings including their participation and consultation of women and girls in the design, implementation, and evaluation of measures and initiatives that affect the enjoyment of their rights:

- As fore women participation in key decision making positions:

* Qatari women hold several leadership positions. The past year saw an important positive step in the appointment of four females for the first time to the Shura Council, which was established in the early 1970s;
* In terms of ministerial portfolios, the first female Minister of Education was appointed in 2003 for 6 years, where the first female Minister of Health was appointed in 2008 for a year. In addition, a female Minister of Communications and Information Technology was appointed in the same year. Females also held so many important positions including the President of the Supreme Council for Family affairs, Vice President of the Supreme Council of Education, and President of Qatar University …etc.
* The first Qatari female was appointed as a judge in 2010, and it is considered as a precedent among Gulf states. There are currently two females judges and three females holding posts in the Public Prosecutor's Office. In 2007, the number of female lawyers reached 27 out of 152.

- Participation in civil society:

The civil society organizations in the State of Qatar operate under the umbrella of the Qatar Foundation for Social Work. It is a private institution of public interest, with a legal personality and independent budget. The Foundation generally aims to develop civil society institutions, activate their role in society, and develop strategies, policies and programs.

Women communicate their vision for the enjoyment of their rights through institutions including the Social Protection and Rehabilitation Foundation, the Family Counseling Center and the Social Development Center.

8- The National Human Rights Committee conducts activities to ensure that all organs of the Government are aware of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, including campaigns, seminars and workshops for law enforcement officials. There is an annual program of mosque preachers on basic human rights standards and relevant international conventions, and similar programs for educators and students.

To review the activities of the Committee referred to in its annual reports, kindly visit: [www.nhrc.org.qa](http://www.nhrc.org.qa)

9- Protection and Social Rehabilitation Centre (AMAN) is concerned with the protection and rehabilitation of women and child victims of violence and their reintegration into society through providing care through visits and at the Center's shelter. Civil society organizations contribute to reducing violence, including the Family Counseling Center (WIFAQ) which has its branches opened in the Capital security Department of the Ministry of Interior, Hamad Medical Corporation and the Public Prosecution.

According to a report of the Ministry of Development, Planning and Statistics in 2014; the reporting cases of domestic violence are not acceptable socially or culturally, and domestic violence victims do not aware a lot of their legal rights and the available support services. Victims and their families also fear social, legal and political implications for the victims and their families. On the other hand training for the detection of violations is not mandatory, and thus there is a lack of training causes targeting officials at medical and educational fields and public safety result in low detection levels in the primary healthcare centers, schools and nursery, so the real level of violence can be hidden[[3]](#footnote-3).

It is worth noting that there a health-system response to violence against women and children is developed in Hamad Medical Corporation to report:

- Sexual harassment
- Sexual abuse
- Illegal pregnancy
- Violence against vulnerable groups
- Violence against domestic workers
- Violence against pregnant women

The National Human Rights Committee has recommended that a database on violence be compiled and circulated to identify the number and nature of cases, and amounts and nature of compensation granted by the judiciary.

10. As mentioned previously, Early marriage is not considered a phenomenon in the state of Qatar, however. However, “spinsterhood is considered a phenomenon in the local media with prevalence rate estimated at 35%, where the media and social researchers dealt with this phenomenon while not paying any attention to the cases of early marriage to educate the society about it .

It should be noted that the NHRC conducted a survey of women's rights in 2013, to ascertain the views about setting the minimum age of marriage to match the age of majority (18 years), upon which 56% of the respondents agreed.

1. Marriage and divorce in the state of Qatar report, 2016. Ministry of development planning and statistics [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://issuu.com/shuracouncil/docs/study_77> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP_AR/knowledge_center_ar/Tab2/HDR%201%20June%202015.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)