Participa City

A simulation game to learn about discrimination

Game material for the scenario “Playground“



https://participa-city.eu

Co-funded by the European Union

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PARTICIPA CITY – Scenario “Playground”

General information for the trainer

You find in this file all necessary material for playing the scenario “Playground”. Before you start playing please read the trainer manual carefully.

- The station overview is for your information and shows you the characters in the scenario and if additional material is needed (one page).
- The description of the scenario is for your information and describes the initial situation before playing and the perspectives that are established in the scenario (one page).
- You find then a plan of how to arrange the scenario in the room and a big sign to indicate where the scenario is played in the room (two pages).
- Depending on the number of tables needed for the scenario, you find the different table displays.
- The next page shows the name tags for the players in this scenario – cut them out.

The following pages show the material for the participants:

- “Welcome to Participa City” is handed out to all players, but only at the beginning of the game before the first scenario is played since it is a general introduction to the game and the city. You find this information copied according to the number of players. If “playground” is not the first scenario played, you can ignore these pages.
- Each player gets another two papers: one with the role card, the second with information about the initial situation and the role that the player should play.
- Some players might get additional information. The person(s) concerned is/are indicated on the additional material and on the station overview.
- Depending on the size of your group, you will play two scenarios at the same time (parallel). Then, you can’t play the scenario “playground” at the same time as “school” or “Employment Agency” because some roles appear in both scenarios. It is important that each character in the game is played only by one player in all scenarios.
- If you play only one scenario at the same time and different scenarios subsequently, you can play any scenario without constraints. You have to keep in mind that there are role changes in this case and at the same time, some characters might stay in their role depending on the following station.
- It might be useful to use carton paper for printing.

SIMULATION GAME

PARTICIPA CITY – Playground station overview



Characters

a. Mrs. Elke Dehning

b. Mrs. Razan Ahmed

c. Mrs. Zahra Habibi

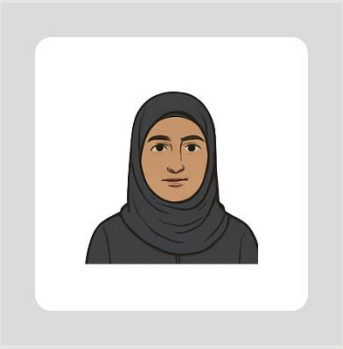
d. Additional material

i. Myths and Truths on Muslim Women (Mrs. Ahmed)

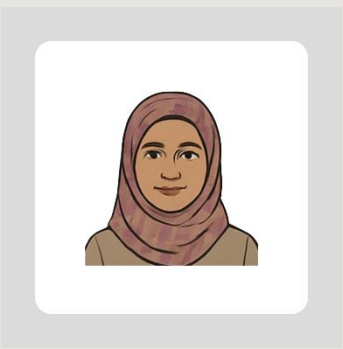
ii. The Marwa Al-Sherbini Case (Mrs. Habibi)



MRS. ELKE DEHNING



MRS. RAZAN AHMED



MRS. ZAHRA HABIBI

SIMULATION GAME

Material for the trainer

PARTICIPA CITY – Description of the scenario



Initial situation

It's afternoon at a **playground** in Participa City. An eight-year-old child is sitting on a swing, with his mother **Mrs. Dehning** on the swing next to him. After a while, **Mrs. Habibi** speaks to her. She asks Mrs. Dehning if she can free up the swing for her child. She reluctantly makes room and sits down on a nearby bench. There, she talks loudly on the phone to a friend. During the conversation, she comments on Mrs. Habibi's **headscarf**. She hints that she could be a radical **Islamist**. Further accusations follow. When **Mrs. Ahmed**, who is sitting nearby, asks her about this, Mrs. Dehning is annoyed and waves her phone call off. She then turns to Mrs. Ahmed and claims that this kind of **disrespect**, such as simply talking into her phone call, is **typical of people with headscarves**. Mrs. Ahmed **waves Mrs. Habibi over** and asks her to sit with them. When she complies with the request, Mrs. Ahmed explains what she has heard from Mrs. Dehning. Then she begins to reply.

Depending on your plan, members of the Anti-Discrimination Advisory Board (ADB) might join the scenario

Perspectives established in the station

- **Two Muslim women,** Mrs. Ahmed and Mrs. Habibi, who wear headscarves and defend themselves against prejudices. They are used to negative attitudes but deal with them differently.
- **A Christian woman,** Mrs. Dehning, who is not affected by racism and who moves in a circle of Islamophobic acquaintances. She feels confirmed in her prejudices by media reports.

Material for the trainer

PARTICIPA CITY – Description of the scenario



Game procedure

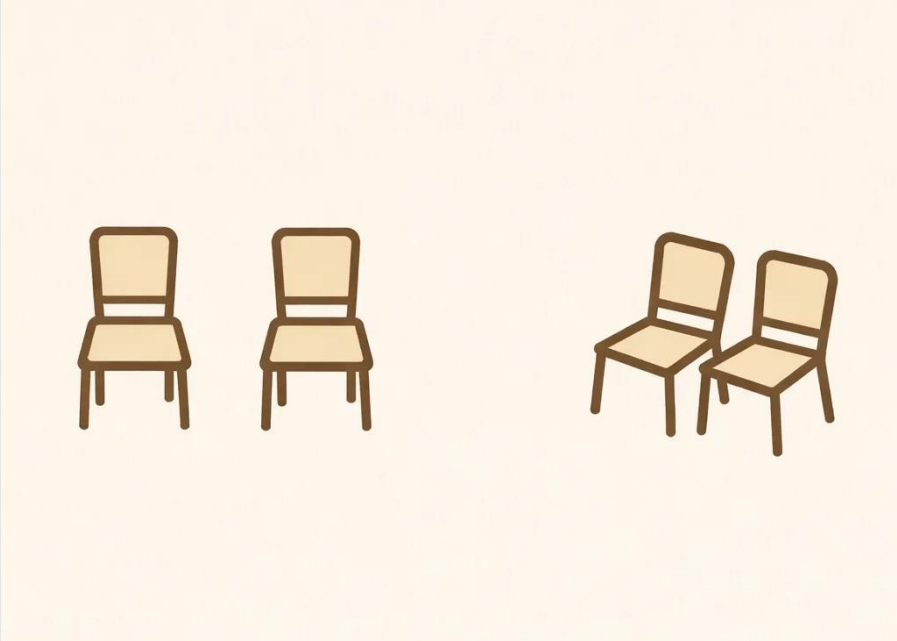
- You hand out the indicated material to the participants.
- First, there is a reading phase (approx. 10 minutes).
- Then, you give an acoustic signal, and Mrs. Ahmed begins her response to Mrs. Dehning, which leads to a conversation between the three women (approx. 20 minutes).
- During the conversation, Mrs. Ahmed and Mrs. Habibi take out their additional material that can be included in their discussion.
- With the next acoustic signal, you end the conversation and ask the players to join the debriefing.

Material for the participants

- Mrs. Dehning: biography card + game instructions
- Mrs. Ahmed: biography card + game instructions + additional material “Myths and Truths on Muslim Women”
- Mrs. Habibi: biography card + game instructions + additional material “The Marwa Al-Sherbini Case”

PARTICIPA CITY – Exemplified station setup





Everyone sits at the playground.

Additional chairs for ADB representatives might be necessary.



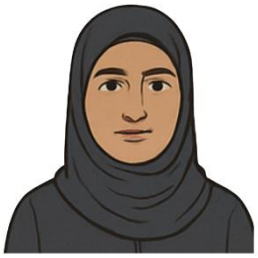
SIMULATION GAME

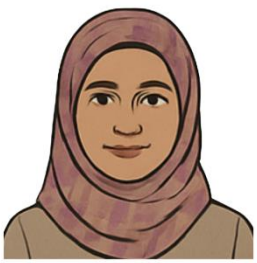


(fold here)

Playground
Mrs. Elke Dehning, Mrs. Razan Ahmed and Mrs. Zahra Habibi







At the beginning, Mrs. Dehning, Mrs. Ahmed and Mrs. Habibi are sitting here on different benches at the playground. After Mrs. Dehning is disturbed in her phone call by Mrs. Ahmed, Mrs. Dehning approaches her and Mrs. Habibi also comes over.

PARTICIPA CITY – Scenario Playground – Name Tags



MRS. ELKE DEHNING



MRS. RAZAN AHMED



MRS. ZAHRA HABIBI

Material for participants

Welcome to PARTICIPA CITY

Introduction for all players

Participa City is a medium-sized town in Europe with approximately 100,000 residents. It is hardly different from other cities of this size. All types of schools are represented, as well as a University of Applied Sciences specializing in economics. The largest employer in the area is a metal processing company. Additionally, the town has ten sports clubs, a police headquarters, and two fire stations. There is also a neighbourhood considered a so-called “social hotspot”. This town district hosts institutions providing counselling services. Moreover, there are active **neo-Nazi structures**, whose members are primarily active in the surrounding areas but also occasionally make appearances in the city. For this reason, a round **table against right-wing tendencies** has been initiated and campaigns for more diversity are held regularly. According to studies conducted by the local University of Applied Sciences, approximately every second resident tends to hold prejudiced views against asylum seekers. And in 2019, an EU-wide Eurobarometer survey found that over half of Europeans believe racial or ethnic discrimination to be widespread in their country (Eurobarometer Discrimination in the EU 2019).

But something is different in this city:

After repeated attacks on local mosques, the situation escalated last year. Islamophobic slogans were repeatedly spray-painted on the walls of the city's largest Muslim place of worship. In response, the mosque's board decided to station a guard. Just a few days later, the guard was attacked and seriously injured. The perpetrators managed to escape and have been unsuccessfully sought ever since.

This incident sparked a broad debate on the issue of racism. The city council decided that the city should become **free of racism**. As a first symbolic step, the city was renamed Participa City. During the renaming ceremony, Mayor Calan stated: "Every person in this city should know that Participa City aspires to become a place free of discrimination!”. In Participa City, there are several political groups and initiatives. One of them gained significant attention by writing an open letter to the city council. In the letter, they called for a critical examination of the situation in Participa City regarding racism. At the following city council meeting, the issue was addressed as a top priority. The council members decided to establish an **Anti-Discrimination Advisory Board (ADB)**. Its members are selected randomly from among all residents. The board's findings are intended to help combat racism in the city.

We now want to visit places in the city where people from diverse backgrounds interact daily: for example, at schools, the employment agency, the train station, or sports and playgrounds. These encounters will allow us to identify the stumbling blocks on the path to a racism-free society. None of the participants should fear criticism of their behavior during the game: we are all here to learn how to recognize racism and discriminatory behavior in everyday life and develop strategies to counteract them. Unfortunately, in some instances, it will be necessary to reproduce racism to facilitate this learning process.

Have fun with the game!

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Have fun with the game!



MRS. ELKE DEHNING

You are 46 years old and have been working as a trained case manager at the Participa City **employment agency for ten years**. You are proud of the fact that you have often been praised by your superiors for your exemplary work over the years.

You are **uncomfortable dealing with women who wear headscarves**: you have had a few nice encounters at the office and in your private life. However, you often hear **reservations about Muslims** from your circle of acquaintances. You always wonder whether there is any truth in your friends' warnings. For example, they tell you that there are potentially radical Islamists sitting opposite of you. You also wonder what they think of the clearly visible Christian cross that you always wear around your neck.

As a mother of two, you are very concerned about the safety of your children. From your point of view, the neighbourhood is becoming more and more **threatening**, partly due to the **increased influx of "foreigners"**. You are not affected by racism – just like almost everyone around you.



PARTICIPA CITY – Game instructions
“Playground” for Mrs. Elke Dehning

Game procedure

- Identify yourself with the person from the biography card and these game instructions here to get familiar with the game situation.
- First, there is a reading phase to prepare yourself (approx. 10 minutes). You start your phone call.
- After an acoustic signal, you hang up and the woman begins to respond to your accusations, followed by a conversation between you and the two women (approx. 20 minutes).
- After another acoustic signal, the conversation ends and the trainer will ask you to join the debriefing.

The initial situation

It's afternoon at a **playground** in Participa City. Your eight-year-old **child** sits on a **swing**, and **you sit on the swing next to it**. You are approached by a woman wearing a headscarf and asked if you could free up the swing for her child. Reluctantly, you make room and sit down on a nearby bench. You take out your mobile phone and make a call to a friend. During the conversation, you comment on the **headscarf**: the woman might be a radical Islamist. You also complain that her child is swinging wildly while standing up. You see this as further confirmation that **children from immigrant families** simply **don't follow the rules** and **don't treat things with care** that others want to use.

At some point you are approached by another woman with a headscarf. You hang up. Meanwhile, she invites the woman with the swinging child to join you.

It is possible that members of the Anti-Discrimination Advisory Board (ADB) will join you.





PARTICIPA CITY – Game instructions
“Playground” for Mrs. Elke Dehning

Your role in the situation

You find it **disrespectful** that the woman simply talks into your phone call: Typical of people with headscarves! It's similar with their **poor German language skills**: many immigrants simply don't put enough effort into learning it.

Islam and Muslim people are often criticised in your circle of acquaintances. Some of these comments make you feel uncomfortable, as **charity** is very important to you **as a Christian**. Nevertheless, you have the impression that many judgements are confirmed by media reports and your own experiences.

You believe that **achievements in Europe** should not be **destroyed** again by people “from outside”. This is why you are concerned about the influx of refugees. You are not prepared to accept this in silence and **“allow your mouth to be shut”**.

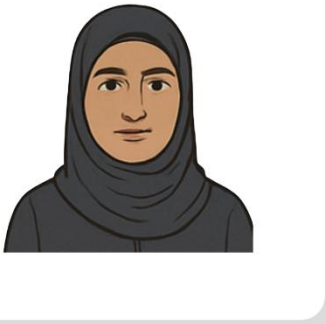
You consider **yourself not to be racist** and for example regularly donate to needy children all over the world around Christmas. In your view, ‘real’ racism is only found in a **tiny proportion of the population**.

Your knowledge of Islam is quite limited. It comes more from stories told by non-Muslim acquaintances than from Muslims themselves. You are therefore generally open and willing to find out more.





PARTICIPA CITY – Biography card



MRS. RAZAN AHMED

You are 44 years old and the **mother of four children**. **Five years ago**, you and your family **fled to Germany from Syria**. The youngest children are three and six years old, the eldest son Salim is ten and the eldest daughter is twelve.

Settling in Germany is proving more difficult than expected: you initially lived in an initial reception centre for a long time, where there were no language courses, and the children had very little schooling. Now, you live in a (too small) apartment in the middle of Participa City.

You are a **midwife** by profession and worked part-time in a city hospital in Syria for six years. Unfortunately, despite your best efforts, you are **unemployed** now because your Syrian qualification as a midwife is not recognized in Germany.

You have successfully completed an **entry-level language course**. You would like to attend further courses. However, with four children it is difficult for you to attend another course.

You are very involved in your circle of friends and relatives, which consists mainly of Syrian women. There, you talk a lot about experiences of discrimination and support each other. You have the feeling that there are many **prejudices** about you because you wear a headscarf.



PARTICIPA CITY – Game instructions
“Playground” for Mrs. Razan Ahmed

Game procedure

- Identify yourself with the person from the biography card and these game instructions here as well as with the additional material to get familiar with the game situation.
- First, there is a reading phase to prepare yourself (approx. 10 minutes).
- After an acoustic signal, you begin your response to the accusations, followed by a conversation between you and the two other women (approx. 20 minutes).
- After another acoustic signal, the conversation ends and the trainer will ask you to join the debriefing.

The initial situation

It's afternoon at a **playground** in Participa City. Your children are playing in the sandpit. An eight-year-old child is sitting on a swing, his mother on the swing next to him. The mother is approached by a woman who asks if she can free up the swing for her child. She reluctantly makes room and sits down on a nearby bench. She takes out her mobile phone and makes a loud phone call to a friend. During the conversation, she comments on the **headscarf** of the woman who talked to her: she might be a **radical Islamist**. She also complains that the child is swinging wildly while standing up. She sees this as further confirmation that **children from immigrant families** simply **don't follow the rules** and don't treat things with care that others want to use.

At some point, it becomes too much for you and you **speak to the woman**. She reacts unfriendly and you ask the third woman to join you.

It is possible that members of the Anti-Discrimination Advisory Board (ADB) will join you.





PARTICIPA CITY – Game instructions
“Playground” for Mrs. Razan Ahmed

Your role in the situation

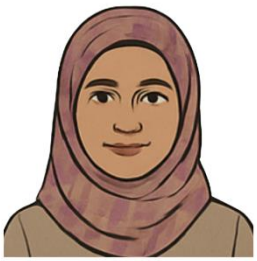
Accusations like the one made by the woman at the mobile are nothing new to you. You have had to listen to similar **prejudices** ever since you arrived in Germany. Many of your female friends also tell you about similar situations. You regularly discuss with them how you can deal with it. You are convinced that many of the clichéd images in people's minds arise from a **lack of knowledge and contact** with those affected. Changing this is a task that you are happy to take on. Your aim is to enter **dialogue** with people and thus **break down prejudices**.

As your German language skills are still improving, you are not always able to express everything as clearly as you would like to. That's why you always have some **information material** with you. You like to show it around and discuss it (see your additional material).

It is important to you to emphasise that headscarves are by no means an expression of radicalism or particular religiosity. You also want to make it clear that you and many other members of immigrant families make a special effort to abide by the rules. However, for you, integration also means being **patient and tolerant** with one another. Getting to know each other takes time. You also believe that **respect** is an important value that should be practised by everyone - especially by the host society.







MRS. ZAHRA HABIBI

You are 37 years old, **born in Cologne** and a **single mother** of a seven-year-old son. You are a qualified **office administrator** but are currently **looking for work**. At the moment, you are only entitled to the low unemployment benefit II (“Hartz IV”) – and not the higher unemployment benefit I as you had hoped.

You are a **Muslim**, wear a headscarf and try to keep to the five daily prayers. You often feel **“between worlds”**: although you were born and raised in Germany, you are constantly perceived as a foreigner. Your circle of friends and acquaintances consists of people from diverse backgrounds. You therefore have a lot of experience in mediating between people with and without experiences of racism.



PARTICIPA CITY – Game instructions
“Playground” for Mrs. Zahra Habibi

Game procedure

- Identify yourself with the person from the biography card and these game instructions here as well as with the additional material to get familiar with the game situation.
- First, there is a reading phase to prepare yourself (approx. 10 minutes).
- After an acoustic signal, the woman begins to respond to the accusations, followed by a conversation between you and the two women (approx. 20 minutes).
- After another acoustic signal, the conversation ends and the trainer will ask you to join the debriefing.

The initial situation

It's afternoon at a **playground** in Participa City. An eight-year-old child is sitting on a swing, his mother on the swing next to him. You ask her if she could **free up the swing for your child**. She reluctantly makes room and sits down on a nearby bench. She takes out her mobile phone and makes a loud call to a friend. During the conversation, she comments on your headscarf: you might be a radical Islamist. She also complains that your child is swinging wildly while standing up. She sees this as further confirmation that **children from immigrant families** simply **don't stick to the rules** and don't treat things with care that others want to use.

At some point, she is approached by **another woman wearing a headscarf**. She reacts unfriendly but hangs up. You are then asked to join the conversation.

It is possible that members of the Anti-Discrimination Advisory Board (ADB) will join you.





PARTICIPA CITY – Game instructions
“Playground” for Mrs. Zahra Habibi

Your role in the situation

Accusations like the ones made today are nothing new to you. You have had to listen to similar **prejudices** since you were born. Many of your friends also report similar situations. For a long time, you tried to deal with it calmly. However, you are now convinced that a friendly approach is often useless. You think that **clear words need to be spoken** sometimes: racism is not just an “opinion”! You also find it annoying that racism supposedly only ever occurs among neo-Nazis. Racism can be found in all parts of society!

You are also fed up with the fact that **racism** is so often **downplayed**. It is important to you to point out that racism has serious consequences for those affected - even to the point of death. In particular, incidents such as the **murder of Marwa el-Sherbini** for racist reasons (see your additional material) should receive more attention.

You believe that **everyone** has a **duty** to confront their own prejudices. Christians should simply inform themselves about why Muslim women wear headscarves. You are also annoyed by the constantly repeated demand that all immigrants should speak perfect German as quickly as possible: there is often a lack of suitable programmes so that mothers, for example, can’t take part in language courses.

In your view, many demands for ‘integration’ are often more like demands for assimilation: everyone should adapt to existing rules and norms and submit to them. In your view, however, **societies must also be willing** to change if their composition changes.







ADDITIONAL MATERIAL PLAYGROUND
MRS. AHMED



Myths and Truths on Muslim Women

Myth #1 – Muslim women are oppressed and submissive

Muslim women, just as any other women, can be oppressed by the patriarchy. In fact, many Muslim women in Europe are empowered and leading active lives.

Muslim women in Europe have to face the patriarchy both within and outside their communities – so why focus only on the first? To say there is an Islamic specificity regarding sexism, or that Muslim women are more oppressed than other women, is groundless. Just as any other religious, social or political frame, Islam can be used by men to impose a system of power that will preserve their privileges.

…

Myth #2 – Muslim women are conservative

Muslim women are as diverse as women in general and as the rest of society. They are not a monolithic bloc. They can be highly educated or not, be from the working, middle or upper class, have a variety of life experiences, be socialist, centrist or liberal, etc. Ultimately, as in any other set of ideologies and values, they will have different interpretations of Islam, and have conservative views as much as liberal ones.

…

Myth #3 – Muslim women are forced to wear the headscarf

Although some Muslim women are forced to wear the headscarf or other religious clothes, others choose to wear the headscarf. One can’t systematically dismiss free choice just because one assumes that this choice is an internalisation of patriarchy. We can question how patriarchy made it possible for the headscarf to become a symbol of modesty for women, but we could equally question a lot of decisions made by women. The issue of choice is also important for feminists as each woman's agency and right to choose, but we also must see that choice happens within an overall system of patriarchy which oppresses women.

…

Whatever one may think about the headscarf’s meaning, in no circumstances should it justify exclusion, discrimination and hate crime against a woman who wears the headscarf.

…



ADDITIONAL MATERIAL PLAYGROUND
MRS. AHMED



Myth #4 – Muslim women are uneducated and dependent

Muslim women in Europe are enrolled in the school system just as anyone else and are in fact outperforming boys in schools and universities in some countries. In the United Kingdom, more young Muslim women have been gaining degrees at British universities than Muslim men, even though they have been under-represented for decades. So much for being uneducated.

The truth is uglier. Once on the job market, many Muslim women face intersectional discrimination, preventing them from accessing jobs in line with their actual skills and diplomas. Likewise, discrimination in education can result in Muslim women choosing a specific field of study by anticipating and thus internalising the discrimination process – for example choosing to study nursing when they can become a surgeon

…

Myth #5 – Muslim women are subject to domestic violence

Sadly, many women in Europe experience domestic violence, including Muslim women.

Almost 1 in 2 (42%) of all women in Europe have experienced a form of physical violence by a partner (current and/or previous) since the age of 15. Violence against women happens everywhere in society (from the upper to the working classes, by the educated and non-educated, majority and minorities…). Muslim men are no more violent than any other men. Pointing fingers at men from minorities and wrongly inferring that Muslim men are inherently violent only shuts down any criticism of a systemic and structural patriarchy in our societies and silences non-Muslim victims' experiences of violence.

…

Myth #6 – Muslim women employees wearing the headscarf cannot be neutral

Wearing the headscarf or any specific religious garment doesn't have any effect on the ability of a woman to perform her tasks in a neutral way. Neutrality should be required for the tasks you perform as an employee, not for the clothes you wear. Trying to remove unwanted visible differences in areas of society is not neutral. It is grounded in racial discrimination.

A recent decision by the Court of Justice of the European Union allows companies to prohibit religious signs in order to pursue a policy of neutrality under certain conditions. However, a rule which bans religious clothing is not neutral: it is biased against employees who hold a religious belief expressed through what they wear.

…

Source: European Network Against Racism (2016): DEBUNKING MYTHS ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS, MUSLIM WOMEN, FEMINISM AND ISLAMOPHOBIA IN EUROPE
https://www.enar-eu.org/wp-content/uploads/debunkingmyths_lr_final.pdf



ADDITIONAL MATERIAL PLAYGROUND
MRS. HABIBI



The Marwa Al-Sherbini Case
Investigators Believe Killer 'Hated Non-Europeans' and Muslims

Two months after the brutal murder of an Egyptian woman in a courtroom in Dresden, investigators believe the German-Russian immigrant who killed Marwa al-Sherbini was motivated by xenophobia.

The incident began on a playground in Dresden. Marwa al-Sherbini, a young Egyptian woman, asked Alexander W., who sat on a swing with his niece, to let her son use the second swing. W. reportedly said he didn't want his niece to see Islamists, cursed loudly, called her a terrorist, and her son one "in time". Witnesses called the police, and al-Sherbini filed charges for slander. Alexander W. was fined, appealed, railed against the headscarf, wrote of "that woman," and felt victimized.

In court, W. spoke of Muslims as monsters, asked why Germany hadn't deported them after Sept. 11, and said he didn't want Germans to mingle with foreigners. He regretted that the NPD wasn't in the Saxony government. Al-Sherbini testified calmly; she confirmed he called her a terrorist. From two meters away, W. asked why she was in Germany at all. The judge rejected his questions.

When formalities were completed, al-Sherbini stood with her son and husband. Suddenly W. leapt toward her with an 18-centimeter kitchen knife he had smuggled in. He attacked the three-months-pregnant woman. Her husband tried to stop him; the public defender threw chairs. A police officer rushed in and shot al-Sherbini's husband in the thigh, confusing him with the attacker. W. was arrested.

Sherbini died at 11:07 a.m. The coroner found 16 knife wounds; her trachea, esophagus, lungs, liver, spleen, and heart had been perforated. Her husband suffered multiple injuries; their three-year-old son was also hurt.

W. has been held in custody. A preliminary assessment concluded he was fully criminally liable. His history was unremarkable, but he almost always carried a knife. Born in 1980 in Perm, he came to Germany in 2003. He was remembered as lazy and stubborn, but not a right-wing extremist. Investigators believe the act was premeditated and driven by "pure hatred of non-Europeans" and Muslims.

Source: Spiegel International by Steffen Winter 02.09.2009 (Shortened version)
https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/the-marwa-al-sherbini-case-investigators-believe-killer-hated-non-europeans-and-muslims-a-646292.html

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Project N°: 2024-1-DE02-KA220-ADU-000255284

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Co-funded by the European Union

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