

When does racism start?

People who see themselves directly as well as indirectly higher than other people because of their ethnic background are racists. They judge other people according to their skin colour/hair colour or origin. But doesn't racism already start when you feel separated from them by statements or questions, although it doesn't discriminate against your origin or skin colour?

You can separate racism into two categories: the direct and the indirect one. In direct racism, you are usually insulted because of your skin colour/origin. You are also disadvantaged in everyday life or work/school. A fitting incident is the champions league match between Paris St. Germain and Istanbul Basaksehir. The referee wanted to send the assistant coach Pierre Webo from Istanbul Basaksehir to the grandstand for unsportsmanlike conduct and mentioned the n-word. The n-word was formerly used for dark-skinned people who were enslaved by white people, so this word shouldn't be used by white people. The referee feels superior to the assistant coach by using a word which was used by people who treated others worse because of the colour of their skin. Therefore they feel stronger and like they are worth more. In 2018, 1176 people in Germany turned to the authorities because they had been insulted like the assistant coach or because of their origin.

In indirect racism, statements are made or questions are asked, which at first do not sound racist. I often have experienced such situations. Questions like "Since when have you lived in Germany?", "Wow, how did you learn German so well?", "Where are you originally from?", "Do you have to wear a headscarf at some point?" etc, are raised to people with a "non-German" look. Many people think that this is not considered as racist, but for me it all starts there. I have lived my whole life in Germany, so why do people ask me these kinds of questions? Just because I have a different hair colour or name than the "standard" German person? I don't know how to answer in such moments because the person opposite me doesn't realize how racist it sounds to me. When you approach the topic, they don't even see it as racist but for me racism is valid from the moment when people see others as different from themselves.

What I want to make clear is that racism starts faster than you think. People should pay attention to what they say and stay away from racism, also from racist statements/questions. They have to consider more carefully what effect their words have because it is a serious topic which affects the whole world.