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E-004803/2025

Answer given by Mr Micallef
on behalf of the European Commission
(3.2.2026)

Improving young people's wellbeing is key priority for the Commission. While there is currently no hikikomori-specific monitoring system at EU level, the Commission tracks youth mental health and social exclusion through the Youth Wiki and the EU–Council of Europe Youth Partnership. The 2022 Joint Research Centre EU Loneliness Survey¹ provided comparable data on loneliness impacts on mental health and civic disengagement.

The Commission addresses these challenges within the framework of the EU Youth Strategy² placing inclusion and diversity at its core, and through EU programmes such as Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, which support prevention and outreach initiatives, including those targeting the most isolated young people

Through a comprehensive approach supported by almost EUR 1.3 billion and 20 flagship initiatives, the Commission is strengthening prevention, early intervention and cross-sectoral cooperation, with a strong focus on children and young people, including a prevention toolkit developed with UNICEF.

The Commission also promotes collaboration across education systems. Wellbeing and mental health at school are central to preventing isolation, as reflected in the 2022 Council Recommendation on Pathways to School Success³ and the accompanying guidance for policymakers and educators.

Finally, we actively support the use of culture and sport as tools for inclusion and recovery. The Culture Compass for Europe⁴ and the Creative Europe programme highlight the contribution of culture to mental health, while Erasmus+ 'Sport for Inclusion' projects and the #BeActive EU Sport Awards demonstrate how sport can rebuild self-esteem, foster social bonds and support the reintegration of isolated young people.

¹ https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/projects-and-activities/survey-methods-and-analysis-centre/loneliness/eu-loneliness-survey_en.

² https://youth.europa.eu/strategy_en.

³ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=oj:JOC_2022_469_R_0001.

⁴ <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/policies/culture-compass>.