

Beyond the Doorstep

Project no. 101093772.
Call Erasmus Youth-
2022- CB

Our goal

Among young people, specifically teenagers, in Japan, and recently also in Western countries, we are witnessing an increasing number of people who voluntarily decide to withdraw from society, severing their ties and social interests, a phenomenon known internationally as Hikikomori (from the Japanese 'self-isolation'). An analysis of the needs and level of awareness of this phenomenon among countries pointed to several problems, from a lack of research to a misrepresentation in the media, which often equates the phenomenon to a simple addiction to the Internet and video games. The project "Beyond the Doorstep" aims to raise awareness and work on the prevention of the Hikikomori phenomenon in the four countries involved (Italy, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and Turkey). Interested groups, associations and institutions working on this issue will enrich the discussion and present case studies and good practices, which will be collected in a publicly available handbook and OER (Operational Education Resource), translated into all languages of the countries involved.

Specifically, the partnership will work to achieve the following goals:

- Raising awareness among young people, families, youth associations, schools and institutions about the Hikikomori phenomenon, conveying an accurate narrative about the phenomenon, its possible causes and dynamics;
- Training of youth workers, educators and teachers to work on prevention and identification of signs of social withdrawal, provision of knowledge, techniques and materials for their local activities;
- Create a network at the local and international level to promote the recognition of Hikikomori and its integration into local and national priorities;
- Contribute to the implementation of the strategy of EU goals for youth and support the development of youth work, especially in partner countries.

Our results

Beyond the Doorstep intends, with foreseen actions and results, to initiate discussion and reflection on the subject of Hikikomori in the countries involved, enabling the exchange of methods, knowledge, real cases and best practices of countries that are more aware of this phenomenon, and other countries where they are still it is not recognized and has not been adequately studied. There is still no consistent literature on the phenomenon as it appears outside the Japanese context, and it is essential to encourage prevention and awareness-raising action on this topic, so that it begins to be recognized as a phenomenon in its own right, separate from NEET or less opportunity, or from other mental states and pathologies arising from different dynamics. The conversation about the phenomenon of hikikomori is fundamental, both among educators, teachers and youth workers who work with children and young people, as well as among young people who might recognize the characteristics of hikikomori among their peers or in themselves. Through informal methods in international workshops, local laboratories with students and domestic Training of Trainers with educators, teachers, youth workers and experts, the Consortium aims to work on prevention and awareness raising and on the correct presentation and narrative of the Hikikomori phenomenon.

What happened then?

We are pleased to share with you the latest developments and activities of our project 'Beyond the Doorstep'. Our project aims to raise awareness about the hikikomori phenomenon and we have taken important steps towards this goal together with our partners in coordinator YouNet APS (Italy) (YouNet), Turkiye (IFSS), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Menssana) and Albania (People in Focus). **Our Toolkit**, an important production of our project, has been published. You can access it from our website. It contains up-to-date and useful content on hikikomori.

Training of Trainers: We organized trainings in the countries involved in the project, so that teachers, educators, mental health professionals and youth workers working in the youth field could be informed about hikikomori. During the trainings, we focused on the following topics:

- What is Hikikomori: Comprehensive information was given about the definition, symptoms and causes of the hikikomori phenomenon.
- Our Role in Education: Educators were informed to recognize the symptoms of hikikomori in students and provide appropriate interventions.
- Active Participation: The trainings were enriched with interactive sessions and group work, enabling participants to take an active part.



Sarajevo, 11th March 2024



Istanbul, 28th February 2024

Local Workshops: In order to raise awareness of young people about hikikomori, we organised various local workshops with our project partners. These workshops, which enabled the project to meet young people, were held in a format that encouraged active participation of young people and allowed them to share their own experiences. The following activities took place during the workshops:

- Hikikomori Narratives: Sharing the stories of individuals living with Hikikomori and raising awareness to understand this condition.
- Group Workshops: Participants worked in small groups to develop strategies for coping with hikikomori.
- Creative Activities: Exploring the topic of hikikomori in depth using creative methods such as art and drama.



Italy, 7th February 2024



Albania, 13th March 2024

What is next?

- Multiplier Events

Project partners



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