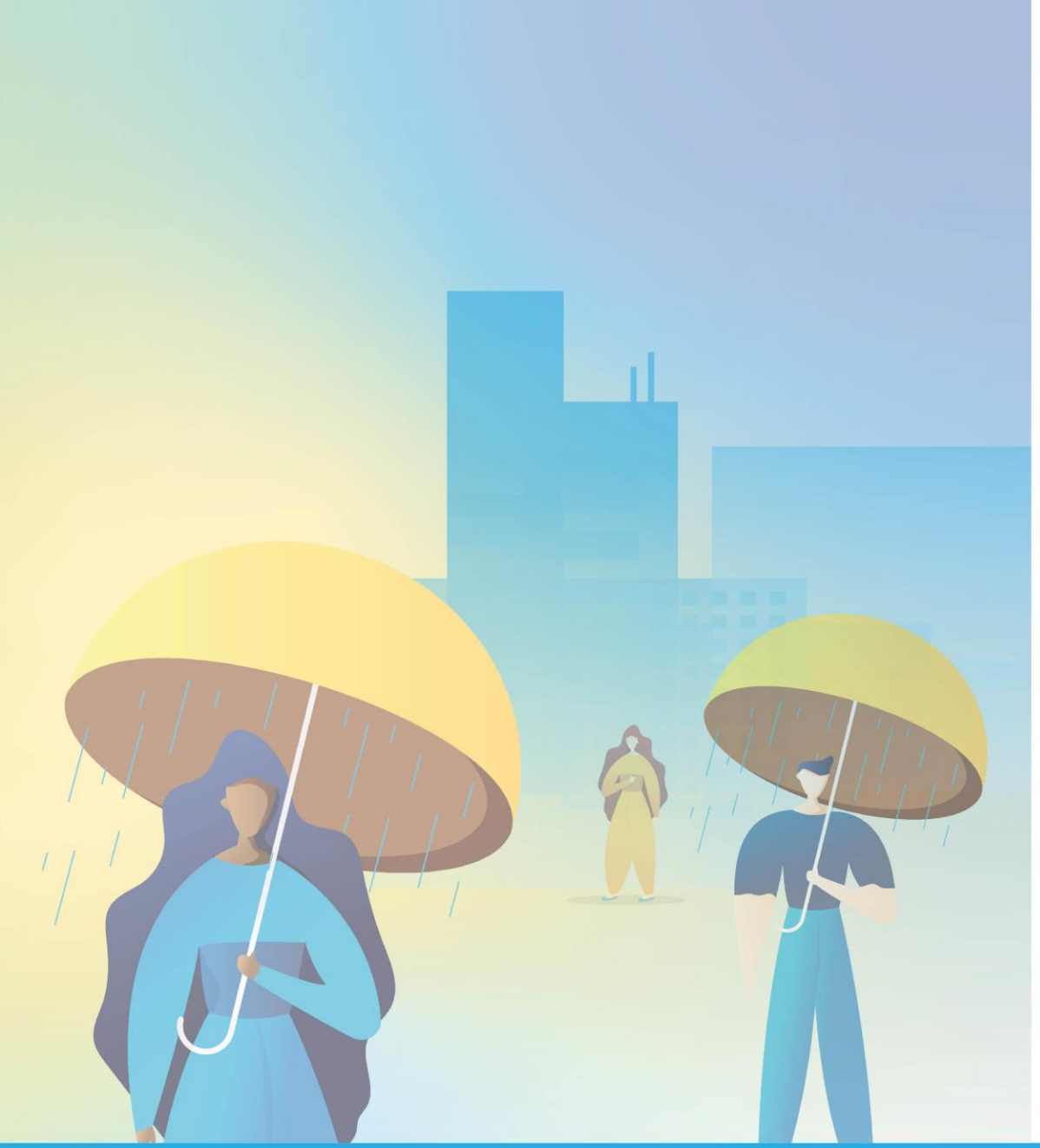
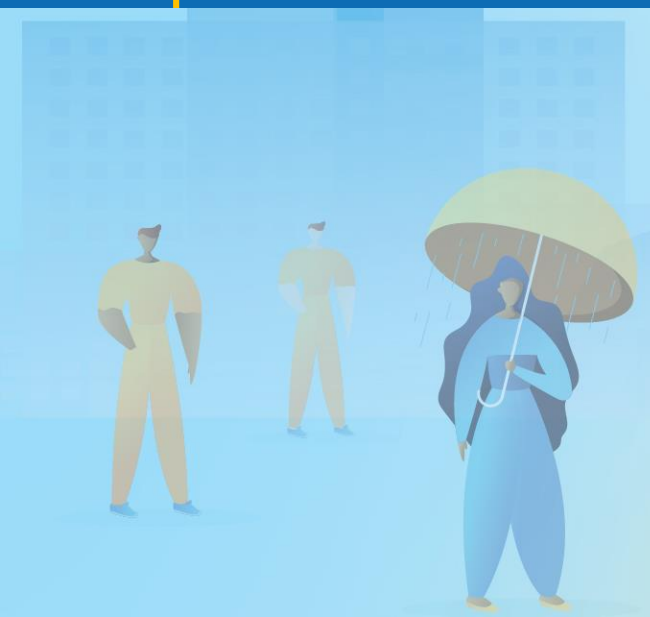


Presentation of the findings on Policy interventions, effectiveness and challenges

Ms Elisabeth Casabianca

Joint Research Centre
Socio-Economic Analyst
Quantitative Policy Analyst on Social Issues

Policy interventions, effectiveness and challenges



Loneliness in the European Union: Policies at work
Brussels, 6th June 2023

Survey Methods and Analysis Centre
Science for Modelling, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit
Innovation in Science and Policymaking Directorate
European Commission, Joint Research Centre

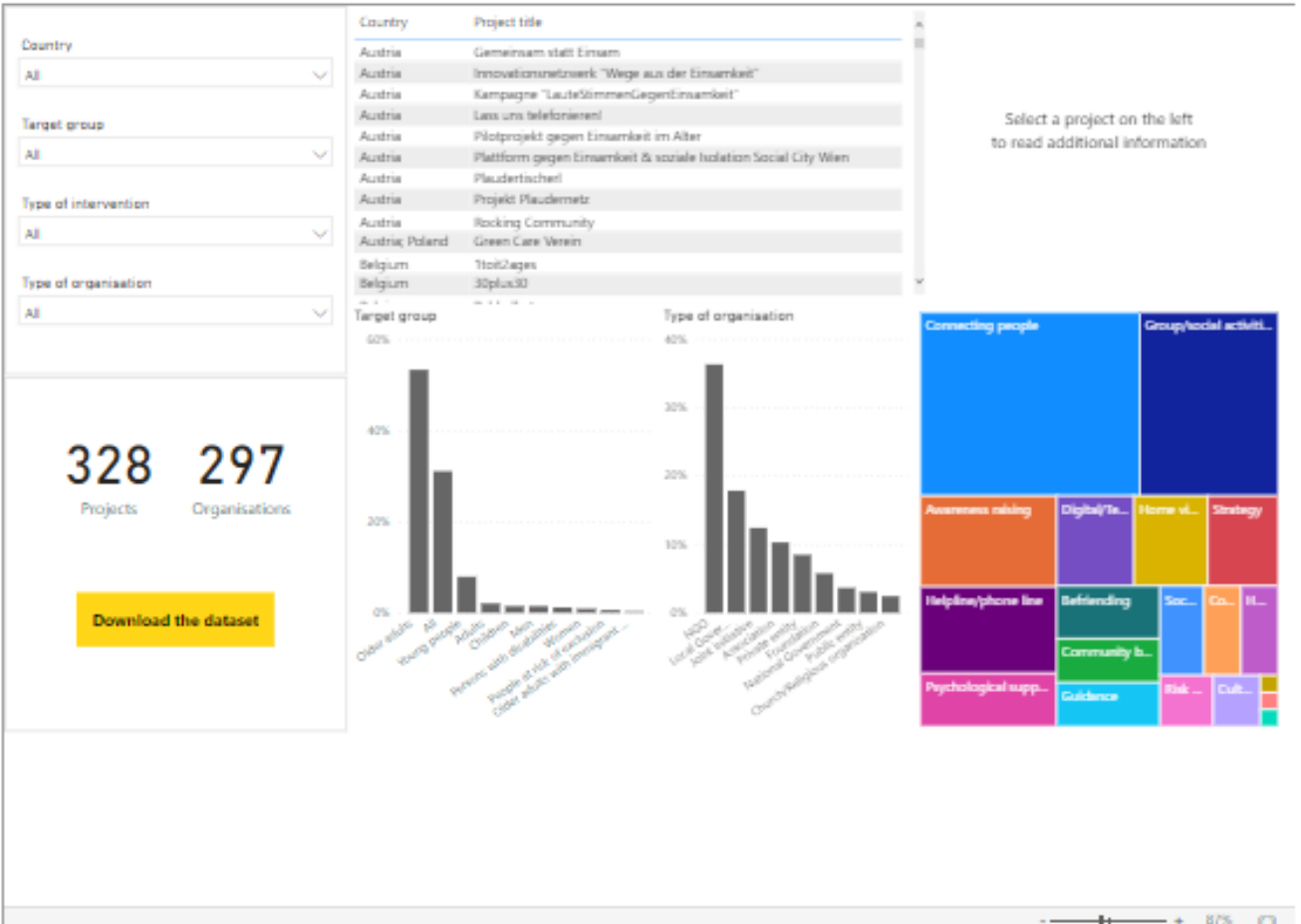
Mapping of Loneliness Interventions

European Commission

Mapping of loneliness interventions

An online repository based on a mapping of loneliness interventions in the EU-27.

Please note that the repository is not an exhaustive list of loneliness interventions in the EU-27.
To learn more about the Loneliness project, please see Loneliness project page.



https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/loneliness/mapping-loneliness-interventions_en

Not exhaustive list

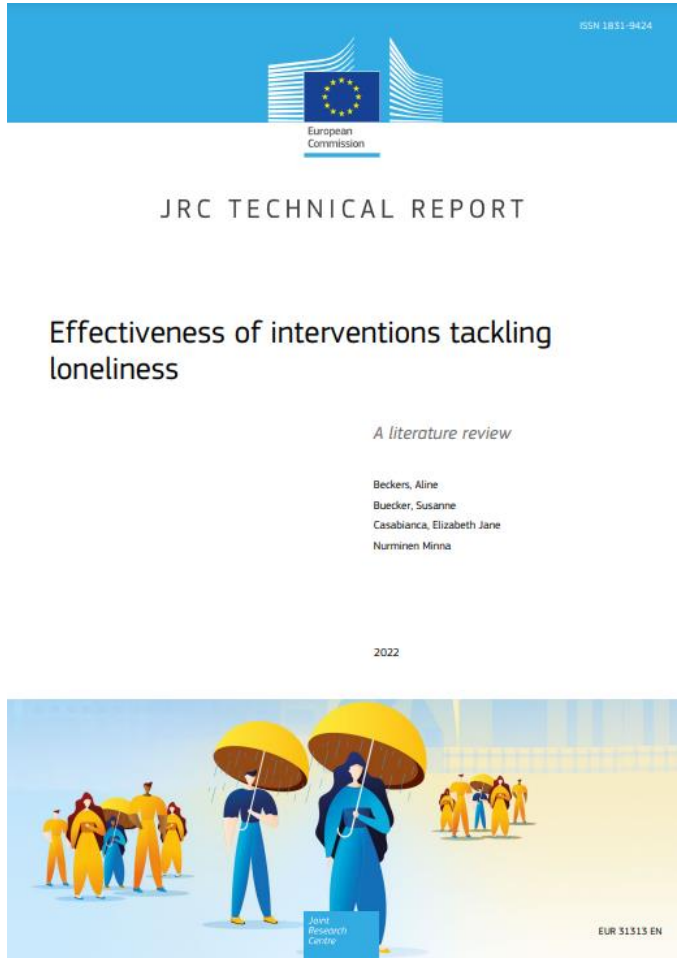
European Commission

Umbrella review on the effectiveness of loneliness interventions

European Commission

Take-aways from the umbrella review

- Several types of interventions can work – not possible to identify one superior type
- The methodological quality of evaluation studies is insufficient
- Psychological (e.g. social cognitive training) and social support interventions (i.e. regular contacts, care or companionship) are promising approaches
- There is a need for targeted, long-term and low-threshold approaches to fit needs of different target groups, also youth
- Support for systematic evaluation of interventions is key



European Commission

Expert interviews with practitioners

European Commission

Factors that make interventions effective - examples

Theme	Illustrative quote
Connection	*"But from what I understand, what was most effective was creating a sense of belonging in the group."* Expert, Spain
Self-work	*"But I think a basic step that people take before they come to our treatment or how do you, service, is that they recognize they are feeling lonely and it's a big step, like, accepting the loneliness. And that's what we are also trying to do."* Expert, Finland

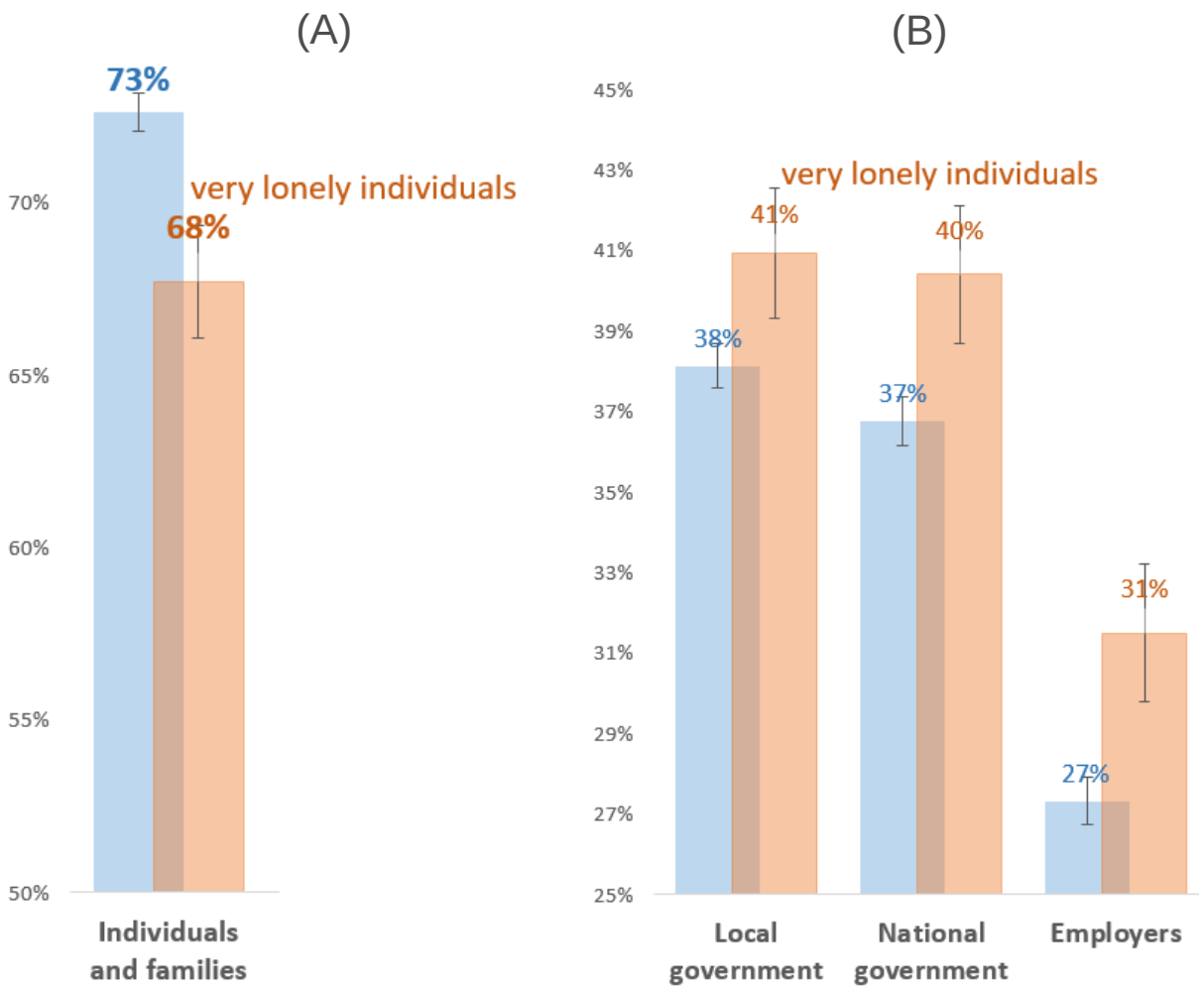
Challenges for intervention effectiveness - examples

Theme	Illustrative quote
Reaching lonely people to participate in interventions	*"Yeah, yeah, and we try and one of the difficulty is to find more isolated people because we say that the more isolated the people are, the more invisible they are and so, it hard to find them, but we try to find…"* Expert, France
Resources	*"There are a lot [challenges]. One is resources and being an NGO, resources, resources."* Expert, Denmark

European Commission

EU Loneliness Survey – Results on Interventions

Role of different actors and impact of loneliness



- High expectation that families and individuals should support lonely people
- Lonely individuals also most often turn to their close networks for support
- A concerning share of very lonely people did not know what to do to reduce feelings of loneliness
- 43% of respondents report being aware of loneliness interventions offered in their country

European Commission

Pillars for effective solutions

- More systematic and better quality evaluations of interventions needed in the EU!
- Increased research and policy focus on interventions for youth and other risk groups
- Both quantitative and qualitative insights from existing interventions key to scale up what works
- Effective interventions should consider cultural contexts, the level of loneliness, stigma and different preferences for activities

Thank you

© European Union 2023

Unless otherwise noted the reuse of this presentation is authorised under the CC BY 4.0 license. For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the EU, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective right holders.

Slide 2: hands-puzzles-pieces-together, source: © Alphaspirit – Stock.Adobe.com; Slide 6: Colleagues having a video call to respect social distance work's rule; Slide 10: Black marking on checklist box with pencil close up; Slide 11: Woman-Hand-yellowLef-TreesBackground, source: © Wirestock – Stock.Adobe.com

European Commission

Interested to know more?

- Visit our page on loneliness on EU Science HUB
- Get in touch: jrc-smac-loneliness@ec.europa.eu

Slides prepared by Minna Nurminen and Elizabeth Casabianca

European Commission