

Yearly Plan for Youth 2023: Ambition and Intended Impact

Inter Alia has been active in the field of youth since its establishment in March 2023, and for almost 10 years has been providing educational and other skills-related services, building and developing a strong and at the same time ever growing community of like-minded individuals and organisations. All three streams of our work (Roots School of Critical and Explorative Learning, Heart Point of Civic Intervention and Bloom Space for Culture and Arts) promote active engagement and participation, which is a self-reinforcing circle of activities and impact, where each of the two elements is both a prerequisite and an outcome of the other.

All proposed activities fall under at least one of the streams of work, designed and based on the same methodology of interchanging and reinforcing action and impact.

Our work plan promotes small actual changes and thought provocation, activating deeper processes of change in the longer term. It focuses on different target groups and will be implemented with diverse stakeholders, aiming at having an effect on all involved parties. Foreseen activities aspire to broaden and deepen engagement and knowledge and will affect young participants on several levels:

- **Personal:** Participation is a need and an attitude as much as a means for the attainment of goals. Through the work plan we aim at developing personal ownership (through the course on Community Organising) and awareness (curriculum on Critical Thinking) over community affairs as well as skills related to community building and volunteering along with the passion and willingness to promote change.
- **Group:** In the aftermath of their involvement, young participants will act as multipliers of the results, spreading them further to their direct environment, friends and networks. After enhancing their connection to the civil society sector and becoming more aware of the associated opportunities and encouraged by partners, it will be easier for them to generate their own ideas and implement new projects, namely in the context of European Solidarity Projects and Youth Participation initiatives.
- **Societal:** After taking part in activities, networks and connections between youth, youth organisations and stakeholders across partner countries will be strengthened. Involvement of new populations, not previously active in civil society organisations, will provide new resources

in social processes. Inclusion of remote communities and marginal populations will increase the awareness on EU policies, their importance and potential channels for action. Besides, new ideas and recommendations will be provided for policy makers and decision makers aiming to an inclusive reform process at the EU level.

Need analysis & intended impact on participants

Youth is a core target group of Inter Alia. Active citizenship of youth, as it was proved in the EP elections in 2019, has the potential to revitalise the European demos, improve democracy and make the voices of youth heard. This is consistent with increasing trust in EU institutions indicated by recent Eurobarometer findings (standard Eurobarometer 95, 96, 97). Still, the results of the EP elections in 2019 also highlighted growing polarisation and the formation of a stronger than ever political bloc clearly rejecting the EU.

The momentum is (potentially) positive, as there has been a surge in cross-country organisation and (youth) movements on environmental issues, taxation, inequality and anti-racism. While such movements are often perceived as friendly to the EU, they also constitute a crucial mass of people who need to be consistently won over. This will be achieved through inclusive policy-making processes. Deliberative democracy, which is upheld by the recent EU citizenship report, needs to be enhanced and diversified in order to include groups that are harder to reach and to maintain interest of citizens, especially youth.

Participating youngsters will be empowered to articulate their demands and defending their rights. The work programme seeks the engagement of youth based on: a. the potential impact that the activities could have on persons and communities, and b. their power, seen as the capacity or potential of mobilising persons or resources for initiating or enhancing transformational processes. Both aims will be pursued through Inter Alia's under RSCEL (WP2) and the Heart Point of Civic Intervention (WP3).

The Action Plan for EP elections 2024 includes a minimum of 40 activities across network countries aiming at: a. offering knowledge about the stakes of the EP Elections on key contemporary issues and b. the creation of spaces of interactions between candidate MEPs, stakeholders and citizens. The RSCEL curriculum will be adapted to the upcoming elections aiming to discuss youth participation. It will support participants in positioning themselves on contemporary political debates. Roots Winter School 2023 will emphasise on different means of participation and will discuss the importance of formal

processes, including voting. The Youth Pool will also provide tools for youth to make their voices heard. Born in EU project foresees a large-scale pan-European campaign to promote voting in the elections aiming to reach out to over 2.5 million citizens – primarily youth given the profile of partners organisations.

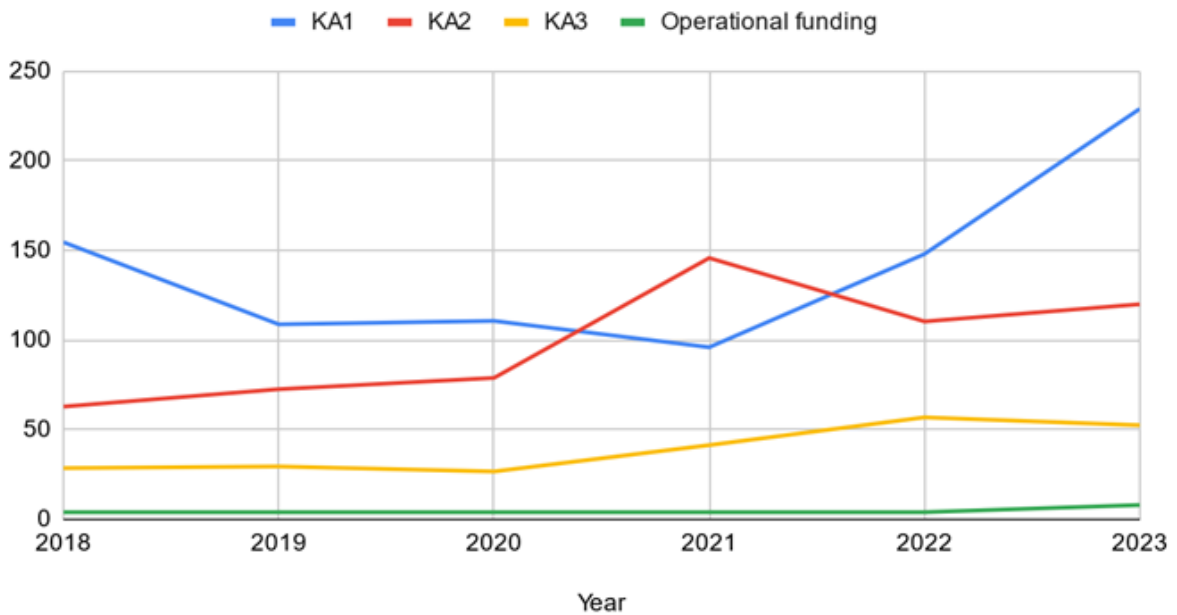
Need Analysis & Intended Policy Impact

CSOs active in the field of youth are developing fast as service providers to a transnational audience in both quality and quantity (Erasmus+, Annual Reports). However, they are lagging behind as actors in the field of policy and in mainstreaming youth work and reaching out to youth with fewer opportunities. We view that funding channels play a key role in this. Resources available under “Mobility” and “Cooperation” actions are invested, almost exclusively, directly to CSOs leading to a significant improvement in the level of services provided. On the contrary, accessible funds under the “Policy” key action is a small fragment to the overall budget, leading to modest policy inputs by organisation to decision making (see Chart 2).

Concerning channels of allocation, over 97% of the available funds are allocated to CSOs through projects while less than 3% is directed to supporting the operation of organisations (see chart 1). Project-based funding reflects the need for measurable results and tangible progress and is indeed in line with fast-changing circumstances in the realities of youngsters. When it comes to reaching out and maintaining commitment by persons with fewer opportunities and policy work, however, reliance to projects creates uncertainty when specialisation and continuity are required. As a result, Erasmus+ does not include marginalised youth to the extent needed for tackling inequalities and fostering equal access to services and resources. In addition, the involvement and policy input of organisations in decision-making is scarce and not systematic. This is why we emphasise our advocacy/policy efforts in promoting: a) more balance between operational and project-based funding to youth organisations and b) more evidence as to the effectiveness of different funding channels.

Chart 1

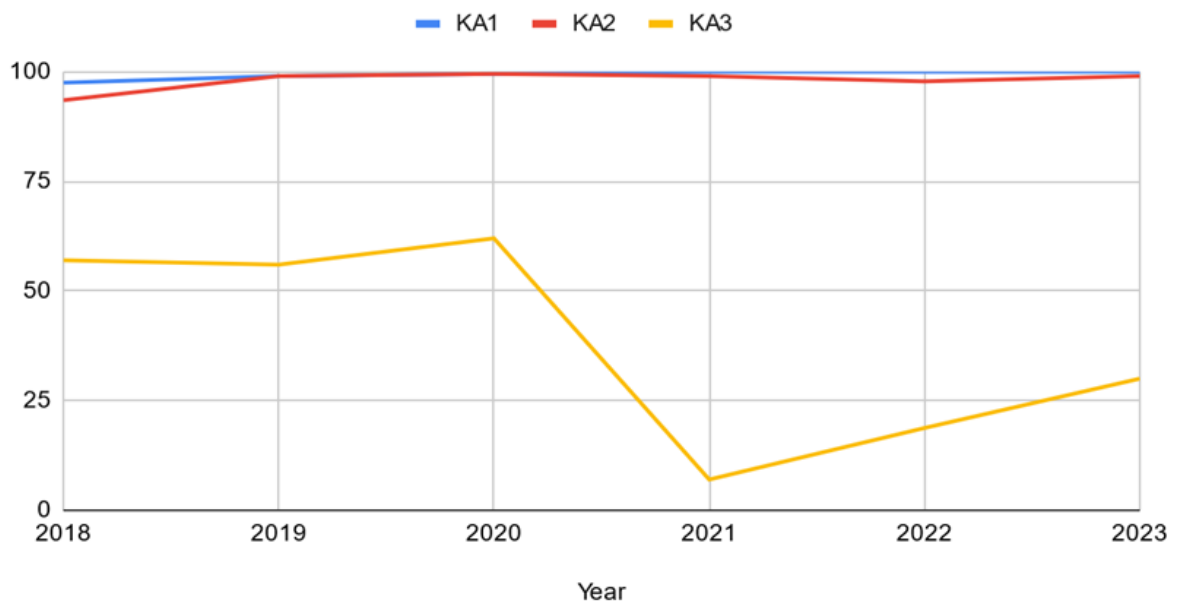
Budget for KA1, KA2, KA3 and Operational funding in million €



Charts created by Inter Alia based on the analysis of the annual work programmes of Erasmus+

Chart 2

% of budget accessible to CSO per KA



Charts created by Inter Alia based on the analysis of the annual work programmes of Erasmus+

So far, the efforts of Inter Alia (and several other civil society actors) for increasing operational funding to youth organisations have been partially successful: as of 2023, operational funding doubled, while the accreditation for CSOs active in the field of Mobility is a step in the right direction. Still, the percentage of budget accessible to CSOs under KA3 has reduced significantly in the latest three annual programmes in comparison to the previous MFF (2014-2020 – see charts below). The increase of 2023 is modest as percentage of part of the overall KA3 budget and should be extended. At the same time, our request for data indicating the relevant impact of operational funding in comparison to project-based funding has not been satisfied, although a parliamentary question by an MEP raised the issue in a question to the EC.

Using our existing contacts from the field of policy and decision-making in Brussels as well as our civil society networks, we will claim for evidence regarding the prevalence of project-based funding in comparison to operational funding. At the same time, we will push for the increase of operational funding under existing calls while claiming an increase of accessible funds for CSOs under KA3.

Chart 3

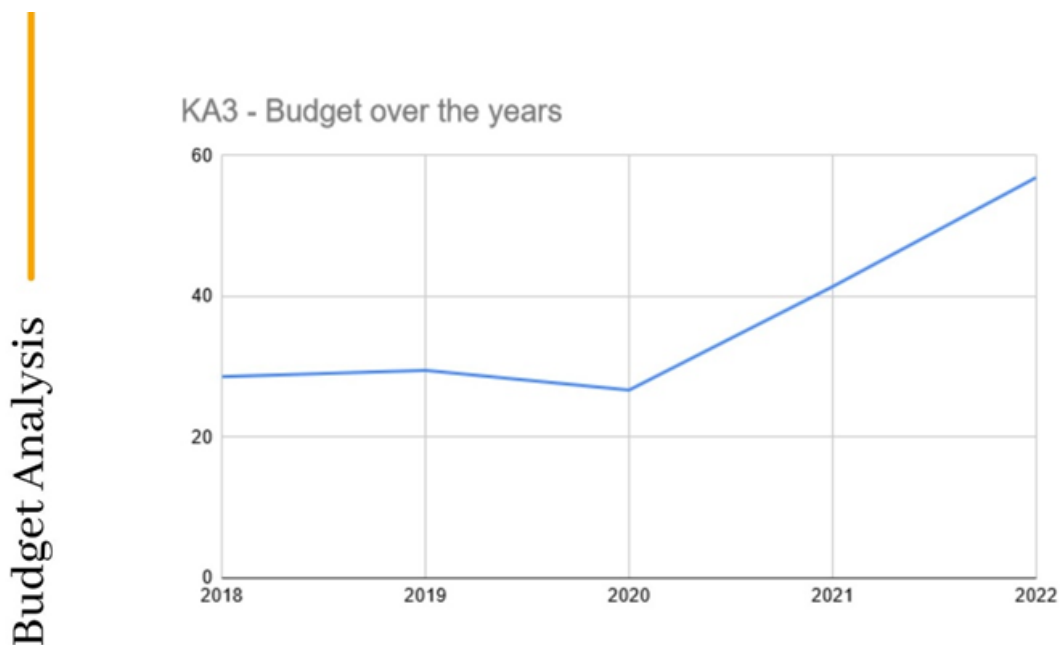
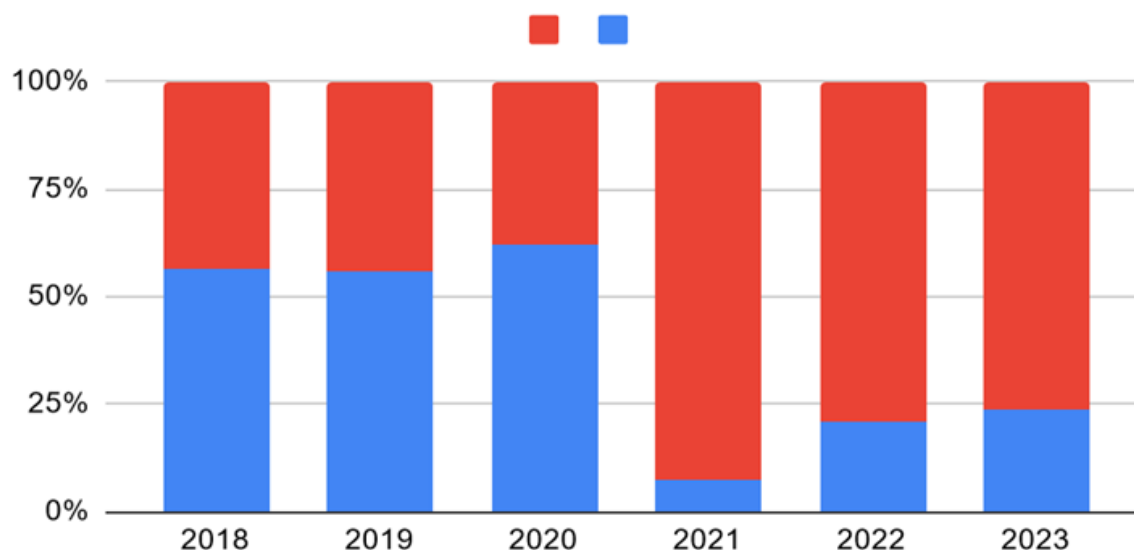


Chart 4

KA3 Available funding to organisations (%)



Charts created by Inter Alia based on the analysis of the annual work programmes of Erasmus+

Target Groups

Inter Alia counts hundreds of projects and activities involving youth and leads a network of 65+ members of collaborators. In 2020, 140 organisations, networks and unions active in the field of youth endorsed a pan-European campaign related to the Erasmus+ allocation carried out by members of the network while approximately 1000 youth CSOs were formally informed about the campaign. These partnerships will be utilised and cultivated with a view to increase the outreach to a crucial age group for the future of the EU's political community. The organisations will acquire practical skills and will get feedback on ideas and projects they can later apply in their own communities. In more detail, we shall target:

- Organised civil society in the field of youth: Individual civil society organisations as well as networks and unions of actors and stakeholders of the third sector active at local, national and European level will participate in capacity building activities, be informed about and invited to contribute in policy related actions and our advocacy agenda (see section 4), will be shared the deliverables and asked for feedback. The aim is to create a secondary, wider but looser network, with similar priorities, perceptual and methodological approach in the areas covered by the Operational Grant and to promote mobilisation and advocacy. This network will contribute to the visibility and broadening the audiences of

the RSCEL and of Inter Alia's EU funded projects. They will benefit from new capacities in the field of advocacy cultivated through targeted educational activities and practice (by engaging with Inter Alia's campaigns) as well as from the replicable, open-source intellectual materials produced for peers and their beneficiaries.

- Non-organised civil society active in the field of youth: The EU funding programmes (e.g. Erasmus+, CERV) duly identify grassroots actors as key for upholding European values and guaranteeing the quality of democracy. In the context of its Council of Members, Inter Alia's working groups will be supported (with knowhow and financing) in organising small-scale actions and will be offered workshops in community organising, the European political terrain and tools for CSOs as part of the Membership curriculum (under RSCEL). Inter Alia will connect with, promote actions of grassroots organisations, and disseminate their work and agenda through its networks while offering its knowhow and contacts to decision makers.
- Policy makers: State and EU institutions exist to elaborate and implement policies. Inter Alia will be involved in the crucial in-between process of receiving feedback by citizens and the civil society for the optimisation of policies. Inter Alia will promote deliberative democracy by pushing policy makers for opening processes to the public and facilitating citizens' involvement and through the intense involvement in the Conference on the Future of Europe (6 activities in 2021 and another 4 planned by the closing of the deliberation in April). In this way, it will enable policy makers to produce better targeted more effective policies and responsive to the needs of citizens.
- Decision makers: The connection of the civil society to national MEPs and to EP committees is of utmost importance for the future of representation of the EU. Inter Alia will utilise and extend existing channels of communication with policy and decision makers at the EU level (CULT EP committee, EAC). Moreover, through targeted training and learning by doing, peers from Inter Alia's network will be supported in stepping up their own interaction with decision makers. A similar process will be applied to national MPs. Open channels of interaction between decision makers to citizens and the civil society enables wise decision making that promotes social peace and integration.
- Groups of youngsters suffering discrimination due to intersections of identities they carry: Intersectionality is an adopted approach by Inter Alia, applying to all processes and activities. Enhancing democracy starts from empowering the least represented groups to articulate their

needs in the public sphere and be heard. Groups carrying intersecting identities are usually the least represented in the public discourse while their traumatic life experiences discourage them to claim their rights publicly. Activities and events organised in view of the EP elections will bring together candidate MEPs to discuss issues connected to discrimination and inclusion. Thus, we will offer the ground and the circumstances for these individuals and groups to express their needs and inform communities and policy-making institutions with their perspectives and press for them been taken into account. Moreover, groups with intersecting identities will be targeted by training activities. Roma, disabled, LGBTQI+, asylum seekers, refugees and migrants are targeted both individually, through specialised activities, and collectively, as groups that suffer oppression in the context of the existing power structure. Our network of partners in this application includes specialised organisations in each of these areas and enables access to the beneficiaries. They will acquire practical skills and will get feedback on ideas and projects they can later apply in their own communities (for instance, as part of the Super FEM project – European Youth Together 2022 – 2024). Besides, all texts published by Inter Alia use gender-sensitive language while a working group on gender is created as part of Inter Alia's council of Members.

- Local communities: Youth from small and remote communities across Europe are involved in cultural activities, awareness and advocacy campaigns given that their sense of belonging to Europe is the lowest. Through special screenings, art exhibitions, training and open debates, participants will experience Europe as something less remote from their reality. In this way, their perspectives and needs will be articulated and brought to the policy level while their engagement in EU affairs will be increased.

Participants' involvement

Given the aim of the work plan that is to Engage, Connect and Empower youth, the overall success relies on the engagement of participants that, in turn, depends on their understanding of the aim and the benefits from it. Thus, participants in learning activities will go through the RSCEL basics presentation; in a shorter version in case of ad hoc activities and in a separate workshop in the case of attendants of the curriculum (see details in part 4). In this way, they will be inspired and attracted for taking part in other activities and will act as multipliers of the work plan.

The plan will abide by the following principles:

- The harder to reach and involve a person, group or community, the more resources will be invested in engaging participants as not all EU citizens are equally knowledgeable about EU processes, and the path towards equality of participation passes through mutuality. Women will make up a minimum of 50% of participants (according to Inter Alia's social media metrics, women 18-34 make up approximately 40% of our usual audience) while participation of other genders will be practically sought through prioritising their inclusion in local and international working groups and activities. Mothers will be explicitly encouraged to participate with their children in local and international activities. If needed, childcare support will be provided by the respective partner to enable their participation. Activities will be organised in spaces that are accessible for persons with movement difficulties. Project partners will seek additional resources for offering access to open events to individuals with impaired sight or hearing.
- The more specific the target group (as to identities or experiences) the more responsibilities ascribed to the project teams. This principle is applied for two main reasons: first, the experiences of a person belonging to a specific target group cannot be assumed; they need to be articulated by the persons themselves. This requires a safe space and time. Second, because individuals belonging to target groups facing challenges are the ones in most need of emancipation and agency. Giving them room to experiment and grow is the only way to acquire ownership of a project and thereof of themselves as citizens.
- The more remote a community, the more intense the deliberation prior to the actions. Smaller and more remote communities tend to need more time to open up and share thoughts and ideas and also they have their own ways and habits. In order to organize successful ventures, respecting these and by-passing difficulties is crucial.
- The more specialised the venture and the deliverable, the more intense the involvement of participants and the less the engagement of the general public and individuals not previously involved in civic projects.

Impact assessment

Inter Alia is among the top-5 organisations in Greece in its main fields of action with regards to its effectiveness (social and economic impact), organisation and transparency as measured by Thalys II, the only thorough and extensive research of the third sector in the country. While important as a point of reference for the

organisation's impact, external assessments use generic indicators that have certain limitations when it comes to a deep evaluation in line with statutory documents, strategies and plans. Inter Alia has campaigned for the importance of financing impact assessment as a continuous process for civil society organisations and has advocated in front of EU funding structures to foresee and provide specific impact oriented tools and resources. This grant will be an opportunity to train and educate our team as to what and how we need to measure in the short, medium and long-term.

Outreach effectiveness

As mentioned also above, since its establishment our organisation has been growing not only in numbers, but also in outreach and this has been one of our success measures. So far, Inter Alia's outreach can be viewed as a system of concentric circles, where the ones closer to the core are smaller and associated with stronger ties, while opening out the circles become bigger, loosening the ties among members and with the core. This sense of belonging is directly reflected in our logo, the artichoke which has a number of layers, and a heart.

Looking into the activities more concretely, and in accordance with our stakeholders' analysis, all target groups will be approached differently, using specialised channels and communication instruments. There will be a differentiated approach among those that are closer to the organisation (Council of Members) or our partners and thus easier to reach, and those institutions, groups or persons that are harder to reach, necessitate more time and energy but will bring added value to our work, thus increasing even further our outreach.