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## **Children's and Youths' Geographies in Municipal Policy**

Ulrika Fridh

Department of Human Geography

SGEM08

Spring 2024

Examiner: Josephine Rekers

Supervisor: Nicklas Guldåker

## **Abstract**

The overall theme for this thesis is Children and Youth Geography and it uses the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* as point of departure. By conducting both a self-administrative questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, this thesis explores in what ways the *Local follow up of youth policy* (lokal uppföljning av ungdomspolitiken, LUPP) can contribute to developing children's and youths' influence and participation in decision-making in Swedish municipalities. It also explores if voter turnout, economic standards or the acquaintance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child can explain geographical differences in children's and youths' desire and experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy. This is done by analyzing secondary data. The study reveals that LUPP can be considered as one of many appropriate methods and as a data source for including children and youths in decision-making. It also reveals that voter turnout and economic standards have more effects on children's and youths' will and experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy than their acquaintance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### *Key words*

Children Geography, Youth Geography, citizen participation, children participation, municipal policy, LUPP

### *Word count*

19 733

## **Acknowledgements**

Firstly, Marie, Martin and Annette deserve my sincere thanks for welcoming me to Halmstad municipality and for always being supportive and helpful. Thank you for sharing your LUPP-data with me, for always encouraging me and helping me and for introducing me to your work. I would also say thanks everyone else whose paths I have crossed in Halmstad this semester. It has been a true pleasure, and I am very thankful for your warm welcoming and help as well.

Thanks to all municipal representatives who have offered their time to take part in this research. I appreciate your kindness and I hope this thesis can spark further discussions in your municipalities on children's geographies.

Thanks to my supervisor, Nicklas Guldåker, for always encouraging me and for your valuable feedback.

Lastly, thanks to all my friends and family for your unconditional support in everything I do.

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## **Abbreviations**

### **EDA**

Exploratory Spatial Data Analysis

### **FME**

Feature Manipulation Engine

### **GIS**

Geographical Information Systems

### **ISCWeB**

International Children's Worlds Study

### **LUPP**

Lokal uppföljning av ungdomspolitiken

Local follow up of youth policy

### **MAUP**

Modifiable Area Unit Problem

### **MUCF**

Myndigheten för ungdoms- och civilsamhällefrågor

Agency for Youth and Civil Society

### **SWB**

Subjective well-being



# 1 Introduction

The Convention on the Rights of the Child aims at securing children's well-being and rights. It constitutes a legal basis as a means for countries to foster and protect children's rights. One of the many principles in the convention is that have the right to express their opinions, and their opinions should be respected. Another principle is that what is best for the child should always be prioritized, and should be considered in all decision-making (UN, n.d a.). Sweden ratified the Convention in 1990 which means it has constituted a legal basis since then. It became a part of the Swedish law in 2020. By making it law, one hoped the convention would have even more impact when it comes to decision-making (WCP, 2020). Interestingly, Geography has historically (in the 90's) been criticized for traditionally not including children's experiences, neither in research nor in public policy (Yantzi, 2018). Even in more recent research (Helleman et al., 2023) it is argued that urban planning decisions are based on adults' perceptions on children's behavior, focusing mostly on their formal plays rather than their informal socializing. Recent research (Cele – van der Burgt, 2015) has also shown that children are excluded from planning processes, partly due to planners' lack of competence and ability to recognize children as social citizens who are able to contribute to the development. Cele and van der Burgt (2015) concludes that the principles of citizen participation and user influence on the one hand not always is applied in the actual planning processes.

One Swedish agency working in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child is the Agency for Youth and Civil Society (*Myndigheten för ungdoms- och civilsamhällefrågor*, MUCF) (MUCF, n.d. a.). The task of the agency is to produce knowledge on children's, youths' and young adults' living conditions (MUCF, n.d b.). This, they do partly by annually offering a youth survey called Local follow up of youth policy (*Lokal uppföljning av ungdomspolitiken*, LUPP) to the Swedish municipalities.

Taking into account both the fact that the geographical science historically, and to some extent currently, has been accused of neglecting children and youths in its research and in planning processes (James, 1990; Yantzi, 2018; Cele – van der Burgt, 2015) and the fact that MUCF seems to provide a useful method for Swedish municipalities to investigate how children and youths perceive their living conditions - this master's thesis investigates two things. Firstly, it explores in what ways LUPP

can contribute to developing children's and youths' influences on participation in decision-making-processes. Secondly, by conducting a case study on Halmstad municipality the thesis explores what characteristics can be used to explain geographical differences in children's and youths' own perceptions on their citizen participation.

## **1.1 Aim and Research Questions**

The thesis has two aims. First and overall, it aims to explore what role Swedish municipalities perceive LUPP plays in terms of increasing citizen (more specifically children and youth) participation. The second aim is to investigate what characteristics can be used to explain geographical differences on citizen participation in general and children's and youths' will and opportunities to participate in particular.

Based on these aims, the research questions are as follows:

*In what ways does LUPP contribute to developing children's and youths' influence and participation in decision-making processes?*

*What characteristics could be used to explain geographical differences between children's and youths' will and experienced possibilities to influence and participate in decision-making processes?*

The first research question is researched by conducting a self-administered questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, with Swedish municipal representatives as participants. The second research question is related to a case study on Halmstad municipality and will be explored by looking at three different questions which are all included in LUPP. These are: 1) Do you want to influence decision-making in your municipality? and 2) What possibilities do you have to express your opinions to the decision-makers in your municipality?. The characteristics compared with these two questions are their acquaintance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, voter turnout and low economic standards (see 4.3.1.1). These characteristics are chosen because one can argue that being acquainted on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (and thus know one's rights) is a basic prerequisite in a democracy, and according to the author it should be of interest to investigate if knowing one's rights influences the will to use them. Further, having voter turnout as another characteristic

is relevant because although it is already known that voter turnout varies between different groups in society (Lindström, 2021), it surely is relevant to see if adults indirectly influence children's and youths' aspirations to use their rights as valid citizens members as well, only by voting or not voting. Economic standard is one condition which affects voter turnout (Lindström, 2021) which motivates having this as the third characteristic. The reason for not including more characteristics is the time limit of this thesis. This research question will be analyzed using secondary data and Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

## **1.2 Outline**

Chapter 2 (literature review) provides a background to the field of children's and youths' geographies. The following subsection defines children and youths as and includes an introduction to the Swedish youth policy. The literature review ends with a presentation of previous research on citizen participation. Chapter 3 (conceptual and theoretical framework) the conceptual and theoretical frameworks which will be used to analyze the results are presented. Three different frameworks are presented. The first one concerns citizen participation. The second framework concerns different ways to develop children's and youths' participation in decision-making processes. The last framework concerns different theories which explain geographical differences in children's and youths' will and experienced possibilities to influence public policy. The methodologies and methods used in this research are further outlined, explained and critically discussed in Chapter 4. That chapter provides detailed information on how all data was sampled, collected and analyzed. The results and analysis of the results are presented in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 provides a discussion on the results, for instance by looking at LUPP in a wider context and discussing why children and youths often are perceived to be overlooked. That chapter also includes a discussion on neogeography as well as a discussion on when participation can turn into segregation. Chapter 6 ends with an evaluation of alternative methods. The last chapter, Chapter 7, concludes the master's thesis and suggests further research.

## 2 Literature review

### 2.1 Background

In this section I first present the point of departure for the thesis, namely the fact that children and youths should be considered equal citizens and that it is beneficial to include them in science. Second, the definitions of children and youths are discussed and problematized. Lastly, the Swedish youth policy and Local follow up of youth policy (*Lokal uppföljning av ungdomspolitiken*, LUPP) is presented more thoroughly.

#### 2.1.1 Including Children and Youths in Research

Firstly, including children in research is in alignment with the Convention of the Rights of the Child which the UN adopted in 1989 (Soffer – Ben Arie, 2014). However, arguments for letting children participate in urban planning began already in the 1970's. Roger A. Hart believed that children could contribute to urban planning and asked for concern for children's needs as well as involving them in evaluating the already existing environments and letting them participate in future planning (Chawla 2015). More recent literature also provides several arguments for letting children participate in geographical research which concerns their well-being and daily life. Heinrich and Million (2016) argue that youth participation and its processes have several potential benefits: 1) it fosters social and democratic learning, 2) it improves communication and understanding between older and younger citizens given that there is an intergenerational exchange, 3) it gives young people opportunities to present their ideas and themselves as equals which in turn could have positive effects on negative prejudices they often face, 4) it enables the possibility to create environments which are suited for all citizens and 5) it fosters integration in and identification with neighborhoods (Heinrich – Million, 2016). One could also argue that including them is a way of showing respect towards them, and acknowledging their needs and wishes. Research on children opens a great forum for children to be heard and listened to. Lastly, children are undoubtedly the best source for adults to gain knowledge on their lives (Soffer – Ben Arie, 2014).

There are several methods for conducting research on children and how they experience the built environment. Suggested methods are structured open-ended questionnaires, non-participant observations, ethnography, participant observation, interviews, focus groups and so-called child-friendly techniques such as sentence

completion and art and play therapy methods. Child-friendly techniques are both praised and criticized (Soffer – Ben Arie, 2014). As for all research, ethical dilemmas must be considered when doing research with children as participants. The two main issues concern informed consent and confidentiality. Valid consent builds on volunteering, capacity, and comprehension. Depending on the age of the child, all three of these could be questioned. Regarding confidentiality, children's privacy must be protected especially when using qualitative methods because of the risk of the child not being able to withhold personal information. To be confidential could be the most important when the research concerns safety, well-being and of course abuse in any form (Soffer – Ben Arie, 2014).

### *2.1.2 Separating Children and Youths*

Historically, the geographical science has been criticized for overlooking children and youths. Knowledge on children's lives and how their experiences, attitudes and opportunities are structured, both socially and spatially have been scarce. In the 70's and 80's research on inequality in terms of class, income, gender, and race increased although the youngest people in society still were overlooked (James, 1990). Also, when conducting research, instead of having the children as participants, adults have often been the participants, answering on the behalf of children and youths. However, this began to change in the 1990s, with researchers starting to argue that children's experiences are diverse and depend on several aspects such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity, gender and ability (Yantzi, 2018). Since then, the subfield within Human Geography called Children's Geography has grown, even resulting in the launch of a journal specifically called Children's Geography. It has also been concluded that when children participate in planning, the contribution is designed top-down and often led of adults, and the topics discussed decided by adults beforehand (Rodela – Norss, 2023).

Although the subfield Children's Geography was much longed-for, the field is still being criticized. It seems that children and young people both have been included in Children's Geography, with the terms used interchangeably. Bethan Evans (2008) suggests that youths and children experience space differently, and hence should be separated in the science as well. Youths are often defined as people within the age range of sixteen to twenty-five years old. However, within this age range the youths become legally responsible for their actions, often take their first part-time job, are

allowed to get married with the consent of their parents often earlier than they are allowed to vote or drink alcohol. This illustrates how complex the situation is (Weller, 2006; Evans, 2008). The development of Youth Geography also began in the late 90's with the publication of *Cool Places* (Skelton – Valentine, 1998). However, “youth” can still be an ambiguous term, still often included in Children's Geography or in “adult geography”. The result of Youth Geographies struggling to separate from Children's Geographies has led to Youth Geography often being included in Children's Geography, ultimately meaning that youths have been overlooked or even marginalized. Further, Youth Geography has historically characterized youths as being problematic. The notion has been rather negative, focusing on their rights and responsibilities. For instance, in debates concerning street violence, alcohol and drugs, and graffiti with the overall assumption of youths being irresponsible or degraded to the result of poor parenting. However, more recently there have been a shift in the sub-field of Youth Geography to a more understanding approach, being interested in generational inequalities and the underlying structural problems (Valentine, 2019).

#### 2.1.2.1 *Defining Children and Youths*

The Swedish government defines youths (*unga*) as citizens aged between 13 and 25 (Regeringskansliet, n.d). Although no information on the government's definition of a child can be found, one can assume that their definition is a person below the age of 13. This is almost in alignment with the United Nations' (UN) definition (UN, n.d b.). In their definition people below the age of 15 are children, and people from 15 up to 24 years are youths. However, the UN also problematizes their definition, mostly because in the Convention on the Rights of the Child the definition of a child is a person up to the age of 18. When agreeing on the convention, it was decided to define everyone below the age of 18 as a child in the hopes that the convention would protect as many people as possible. Nonetheless, the same problem of definition would be applicable in the Swedish context as well, as the Convention on the Rights of the Child is law in the country.

In this thesis, data for children and youths aged between 13 to 19 is used. Hence the research will concern both children and youths regardless of what definition is used because none of the definitions presented here define people at the age of 19 as children. Since the point of departure for this thesis is the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the same definition will be used for this thesis.

### 2.1.3 Swedish Youth Policy

In Sweden, one of the government's aims in the youth policy (Regeringskansliet, n.d) is that youths should have influence in the development of society. One measure for fulfilling this goal is done by the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (*Myndigheten för ungdoms- och civilsamhällesfrågor*, MUCF). Every year, MUCF provides a youth survey called Local follow up of youth policy (*Lokal uppföljning av ungdomspolitiken*, LUPP) to the Swedish municipalities. The survey is divided into three different categories based on age: thirteen to sixteen, sixteen to nineteen and nineteen to twenty-five. The surveys aimed for each age group are very similar, all with the aim of receiving a better understanding of youths' perceptions of leisure time, school, family, health, safety, work, society and democracy and the future (MUCF, n.d c.). It is not mandatory for the municipalities to participate in the survey, instead it can be seen as a service provided for the Swedish municipalities to include children and youths in the municipal work. In 2023, 36 out of 290 municipalities participated in LUPP (MUCF, n.d c). More than 200 Swedish municipalities have at least once conducted a LUPP survey (Nyberg, 2024). About 100 municipalities conduct the survey repeatedly (MUCF, 2023a).

#### 2.1.3.1 Local Follow-Up of Youth Policy

There are currently 1.6 million people in the age between thirteen and twenty-five years old, defined as children, youths and young adults in Sweden (MUCF, 2022). In a debate article, the director-general for MUCF, Lena Nyberg (2024), argues that only youths themselves know exactly how it is to be a youth today. Hence, Nyberg argues that they also should be included and involved in decision-making, not only because they are the experts of being youths, but also because they are the future democratic foundation. Involving youths is vital for the survival of democracy, Nyberg argues. This is the reason that MUCF has provided the Swedish municipalities the annual youth survey for twenty years; Local Follow-Up of Youth Policy LUPP (Nyberg, 2024).

In the debate article, Nyberg also stresses the importance of youths and politicians working together in the analysis of LUPP. A common way of doing so, according to Nyberg, is for municipalities to engage young municipal developers (*unga kommunutvecklare*) whose task is to work on the results from LUPP together with the municipal representatives. Hopefully, this master's thesis can help shed light

on this important issue from a research perspective. MUCF has recently (2023) done an investigation whose results show that 97 percent of the municipalities using LUPP argue that the survey makes youths more involved in decision-making. In about 50 percent of the municipalities, the results from the survey have been the foundation for actual changes in their youth policies (Nyberg, 2024).

## **2.2 Children and Youths as Equal Citizens**

In this section I present previous research connected to the geography of children and youths. The studies presented could work as evidence that children and youths are not *constantly* overlooked as some research argue they have been in the past (Yantzi, 2018). At the same time, they prove that they do not have as natural place in public space as adults do, and that they perceive public space as contested. This in turn could indicate that their experiences and prerequisites still not is taken into consideration.

In 2009, Stella Hart (2009) advocated for a redefined definition of citizenship to better, and more fairly, include young people in the definition with the ambition of empowering the generation instead of sparking alienation towards them. Doing so, Hart argues, would contribute to increased respect for their opinions. Focusing on the UK context, where local communities had implemented policies to manage anti-social behavior with anti-social behavior orders, curfews and parenting orders, Hart researched how young people articulate citizenship. Hart did so by conducting interviews and focus groups with 83 children aged between 14 and 16 in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. The results from the study show that citizenship was not only relevant for the children, but something about which they were concerned. The participants of the study also expressed concerns about being wrongly stereotyped based on the young people socializing on the streets, causing trouble. Most of the young people said they had been discriminated by age, based on the negative stereotype that young people are troublemakers, untrustworthy and disrespectful. This type of discrimination was experienced by the agencies of law, in shops, on public transportation and on the streets. The children were also in general skeptical towards the increased individualism in society and the lack of community spirit. It was revealed that there were small opportunities to engage in community activities such as music, computers and sport although they clearly stated this was something they were interested in doing.



One of the participants had visited a community meeting to put forward a case. The experience there however only confirmed his already existing belief that children's wishes are not taken into consideration. Most of the children who took part in the research had not thought about trying to engage in the issue of them being excluded. The research lastly concludes that the children's negative experiences of being discriminated and disrespected has led to them having difficulties with developing a positive sense of them being equal citizens. To receive a sense of belonging, Hart (2009) concludes that the most important aspects are them being recognized, respected and listened to. Lastly, Hart emphasizes the importance of acknowledging that young people is a heterogenous group, just like adults. This, despite the fact that the research reveals that there is discrimination against young people regardless of gender, class and ethnicity.

In her unpublished doctoral research project with preliminary results, Susie Weller's (2006) reaches a similar conclusion as Stella Hart. The data analyzed in the research is based on a doctoral research project made in the United Kingdom which examined young teenagers' experiences with exclusion and inclusion from spaces of citizenship within their certain communities. 600 teenagers, all aged between thirteen and sixteen participated in the unpublished study. The collected data consisted of two different questionnaires, diaries, photographs, interviews, web dialogues and phone-in discussions on local radio. The research firstly reveals teenagers wish for being defined, and referred to, as teenagers. More importantly, the study also reveals that the participants wanted to be treated with respect and valued members of society. They also expressed wishes for being considered by policymakers to easily implement teenaged-centered services such as recreation centers and accessible and affordable public transport. Another result from the study was that seemingly banal things, were the "big issues" for the teenagers participating in the study. For instance, some participants felt that what sweets they take into the cinema, are object of exclusion and negative stereotyping because they have other preferences than the adults.

Having these conclusions as point of departure for the rest of thesis, the following subsections will present literature researching children's place in public space and an international survey aimed for children which have many similarities to LUPP.

### 2.2.1 *Children's Place in Public Space*

In a study, Faith Tucker and Hugh Matthews (2001) discuss the notion that rural areas often provide idyll-like conditions for childhood, where children can play and have contact with nature. Their study is based on in depth-discussions with girls aged between ten and fourteen years living in Northamptonshire in the United Kingdom. Based on their research, they conclude that girls' rural childhoods necessarily are not as idyllic as often believed. More specifically, they identify three different contexts where girl's public spaces seem to be contested in rural recreational spaces: 1) through conflict with adults, 2) through conflict between rival groups of young people and 3) through conflict between girls and boys where girls frequently are disadvantaged at the expense of the boys. With conflict between rival groups Tucker and Matthews mean that rivalry is often based on age differences (i.e., the younger children being excluded). Further, children often are exposed to the "adult gaze" where adults perceive the girls' use of recreational space as a problem with the children making, according to the adults, too much noise or just simply making the adults aware of their presence. As a result of this, there are few places where girls can socialize. This in turn results in rivalry regarding the places between different groups of children. The study concludes that the rural landscape is gendered in a way which affects specifically girls negative because they must stay "outside" of the "boys' places". In the article, examples of girls' strategies to avoid areas where boys spend time together are presented, for instance avoiding going to the shop because the girl knows the boys usually socialize there. Another girl says she always plan her route based on where the boys are, so she can avoid them.

Hugh Matthews et al. (1997) argued that geographers were lacking behind other fields of science such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology regarding the knowledge of teenager's lives and living conditions and their relationships with the physical and built environment. To counteract this, they conducted a study on 27 children aged thirteen who all lived in a certain suburban area of Midland England. They used two different methods for data collection. Firstly, they employed a questionnaire focusing on the youths' experiences of their local area. Additionally, ten of the participants also took part in in-depth interviews. By conducting this research, the researchers could distinguish four different themes. The first one is *worlds apart*. This theme relates to the fact that turning 13 comes with new possibilities in terms of spatial autonomy. At the age of 13 teenagers often are allowed to spend time outside

of their homes, with their friends away from the “adult gaze”. This, they perceive as a new, and important, step towards becoming independent. Also worth mentioning is the fact that they enjoyed hanging out in places they sometimes were not allowed to do, for instance in the forest. The second theme is *emblems of difference*. This theme refers to microcultures which are created among the teenagers. For instance, a shared language or certain clothing style. The different consumptions and lifestyles generate both social and geographical boundaries for the children. The third theme identified is *special places*. The researchers could identify four different types of special places: 1) places away from authority (outdoors, fields etc.) 2) places to be with friends (woods, parks, local shops etc.) 3) places for adventure (woods, local lake, streets etc.) and 4) places for solitude (woods, bedroom, backyard etc.). The last theme is *landscapes of powerlessness*. For this theme, the researchers conclude that the teenagers are concerned with the fact that places change without them having any possibility express their opinions about the change, meaning that the process is beyond their control. This, they perceive as a threat to them in two different ways. Firstly, they believed it threatens their newly won independence to spend time with friends outside of their homes and school. Secondly, they believe it threatens their sense of a place ownership. These feelings result in them trying to reclaim spaces and showing their discontent, sometimes by vandalism and doing graffiti.

### 2.2.2 Surveys Targeted for Children

In a study from 2014, Gwyther Rees and Tamar Dinisman (2015) compare the result from the international Children’s Worlds Study (ISCWeB) which studies children’s subjective well-being (SWB). In the article, SWB is defined as “a person’s cognitive and affective evaluation of his/her life, both overall and in terms of certain aspects” (Rees – Dinisman, 2015). The countries included in the study are Algeria, Brazil, Chile, England, Israel, Romania, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Uganda and the USA, and is limited to only include the answers from the children aged twelve. The questionnaire included about 100 questions and was the same for all countries. The questions were categorized into 1) home and people lived with 2) money and possessions 3) relationships with friends and other people 4) the local area 5) school 6) health 7) time use 8) self 9) life in general and 10) the future. The final sample consisted of 16,903 answers. For eight of the eleven countries, more than 1000 children answered the survey which was the original aim. Not all the results from the study

(Rees – Dinisman, 2015) are presented in this review. Instead, the results from the category called the local area (4) will be presented because it is most relevant for this thesis. The children were asked if there are enough places to play in, or to have a good time. The highest shares of participants agreeing to this statement were found in Spain (73 percent) and Israel (71 percent). The share of participants agreeing vary between 38 percent (South Korea) and Spain (73 percent). In Chile, 43 percent disagreed to the statement. The children were also asked if they feel safe when they walk in the area they live in. Again, Spain (76 percent and Israel (76 percent) had the highest share of children agreeing to the statement and the lowest score was in South Korea (33 percent). In Uganda, 29 percent disagreed to the statement. One of the questions asked was “the town council asks children and young people their opinion about things that are important to them”. This question had high levels of non-responses which resulted in it not being included in the results.

### **3 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework**

In this chapter, I present frameworks that will be applied to the results and contribute to understanding them. The first framework concerns citizen participation in planning and two concepts using ladders as metaphors for different levels of citizen participation are presented. In the context of this thesis, the framework will help understand and analyze the degree of which LUPP can contribute to developing children's and youths' influence and participation in decision-making processes (question one). Second, different ways of including children in decision-making processes are presented which is also connected to question one. Lastly different characteristics which are believed to influence children's and youths' will and experienced possibilities to influence and participate in decision-making processes (question two) are presented.

#### **3.1 Citizen Participation**

This section first presents Sherry R. Arnstein's (1969) metaphor for explaining citizen participation: the ladder of citizen participation. The second subsection presents a development of this concept, which specifically aims at conceptualizing children and youth participation.

##### *3.1.1 The Ladder of Citizen Participation*

In 1969, Sherry R. Arnstein suggested a division of citizen participation into eight different levels. The so-called ladder of citizen participation. The different rungs on the ladder represents different degrees on to what extent citizens have the power to determining the product. The different levels are then divided into three subcategories: non-participation, degrees of tokenism and degrees of citizen power (Arnstein, 1969). Tokenism is symbolic measures, which at first glance seems to be based on democratic principles, but are not (NE, nd.). Starting at the bottom, manipulation and therapy are considered as non-participation. Informing, consultation and placation are included in degrees of tokenism. At the top end of the ladder are partnership, delegated power and citizen control. These are all considered to be different degrees of citizen power. The ladder is presented in Figure 1.

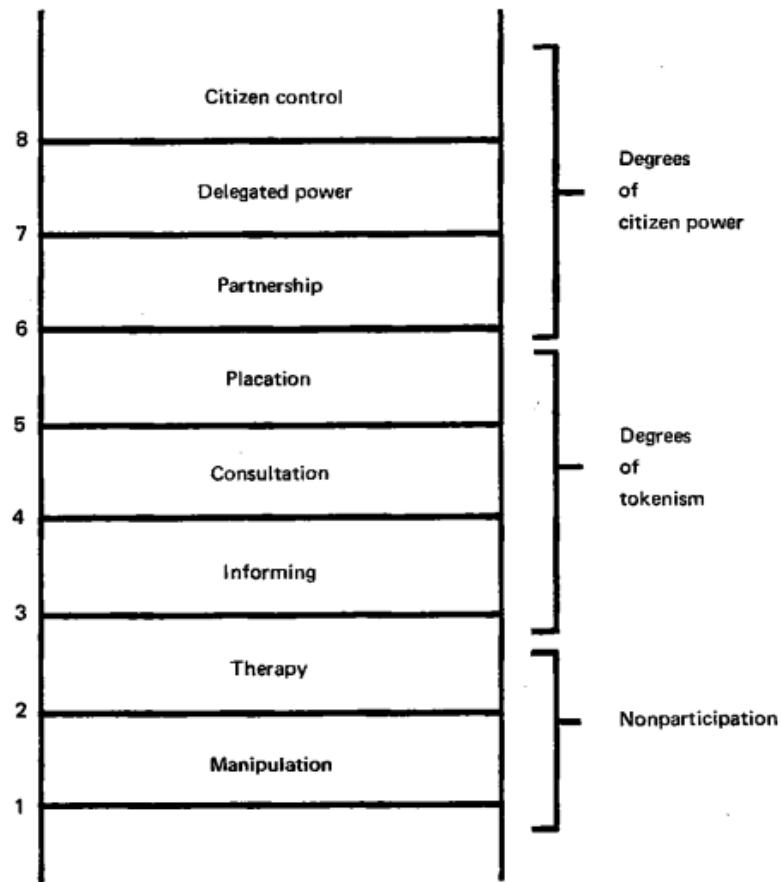


Figure 1. Eight Rungs on a Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969).

Focusing on the middle and top rungs of the ladder, *informing* (3) citizens about their rights, responsibilities and options and *consulting* (4) them often are the first step for legitimate citizen participation. However, Arnstein (1969) argues that the informing often only flows one way: from officials to the citizens, giving citizens no possibilities for feedback or for negotiation. Examples of consulting are attitude surveys, neighborhood meetings and public hearings. For them to be successful, they must be combined with other measures. Reaching to *placation* (5) some actual influence can be apparent, although some tokenism also is. In this case, placation means that the citizens are invited to advise, for instance in boards, the decision-makers but without the final right to take part in decision-making. At the top end of the ladder, *partnership* (6) is the very first rung where power is redistributed between citizens and powerholders through negotiations. The power is shared through for instance policy boards and planning committees. Arnstein (1969) points out that usually, when power is shared it is because the right to do has been taken by citizens, not given by the

powerholders. Examples of *delegated power* (7) are model city boards (a federal program in the U.S. to develop new forms of municipal development) where citizens have a clear majority of the seats. Although old examples, this type of dominant decision-making became successful in some cities participating in the Model City programme. Decision-making that could be categorized as delegated power (7) were shown in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Oakland, California. Lastly, at the very top of the ladder are *citizen control* (8), where citizens have the full managerial power.

### 3.1.2 The Ladder of Participation of Children

The ladder of participation of children was introduced by Roger A. Hart in 1980. Hart was inspired by Arnstein (1969) and wanted to use the ladder metaphor for his own thinking of children's participation. The ladder addresses different ways that most children participate in their communities worldwide. The ladder focuses on programs and projects and not informal ways which they can participate (Hart, 2008). The ladder is presented in Figure 2.

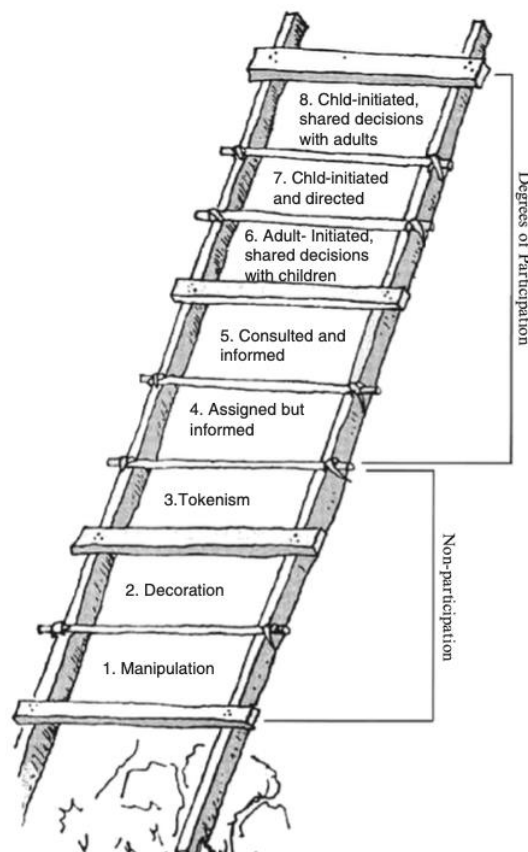


Figure 2. Ladder of participation of children in projects (Hart 2008).

Starting from the bottom at the ladder, *manipulation* (1) is when adults believe that the end justifies the means, when children do not understand the issue and thus do not understand their actions are encouraged by adults. Consulting children but not giving them feedback is also considered manipulation. The second stage is *decoration* (2) is when adults use children to bolster their cause and being clear about it in contrast to manipulation. *Tokenism* (3) is when adults purposively select a group of children to represent themselves as well as their friends but are given no information on how they were selected and which children's perspective they represent. To be categorized as *assigned but informed participation* (4), there are four requirements: 1) The children understand the intentions of the project, 2) They know who made the decisions concerning their involvement and why, 3) They have a meaningful (compare with decorative) role and 4) They volunteer for the project after the project was made clear to them. The fifth stage at the ladder, *consulted and informed* (5) is when children and youths work as consultants for adults who run the project, but where the children understand the process and their opinions are treated in a serious way. At the sixth stage, *Adult initiated, shared decisions with children* (6) the decision-making is shared between the adults and the children although the adults still initiate the projects. *Child-Initiated and Directed participation* (7) is when children and/or youths work together and oversee the projects themselves. They might be assisted by adults, but the adults have no managerial role. At the very top of the ladder is *Child-Initiated, shared decisions with adults* (8) which is when children and adults share both the decision-making, the power as well as manages the project together. This is rare according to Hart (1992).

### **3.2 Ways to Develop Children's and Youths' Participation in Decision-Making Processes**

In their article, Anna Juliane Heinrich and Angela Million (2016) discuss three forms of youth participation at different planning levels: 1) state-led participation, 2) youth advocate-led participation and 3) youth-led participation. State-led participation is defined as "the involvement of citizens in formal and informal planning processes whereby the process is led by a state agency" (Heinrich – Miller 2014, p. 68). This type of participation is said to facilitate consideration and implementation of ideas and projects. However, it has sometimes appeared to be a blueprint for adult participation.



Youth-led participation is defined as “any form of activity and commitment of you people, which somehow develops a meaning or relevance for the urban environment and its citizens” (Heinrich – Million, 2014, p. 68). On the contrary, youth advocate-led participation is facilitated by already existing contacts between the youths and the advocates as well as their experience. One positive aspect with youth advocate-led participation is exactly that: the closeness to the children and youths. It is also beneficial in the sense that the advocates are familiar and aware of official procedures and requirements which often is an obstacle when adopting youth-led participation. On the other hand, this type of participation usually has weaker connection to official planning processes. It has been concluded that a combination of youth-led and state-led participation is optimal because it is argued that only this combination can create a sustainable culture of participation.

### **3.3 Characteristics Which Could Explain Geographical Differences on Perceptions on Citizen Participation**

This section contains three subsections whereas the first two regards approaches for explaining voter turnouts. The last one shortly presents an evaluation of the effects of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

#### *3.3.1 The Relative Power Approach and the Redistributive Thesis*

The relative power approach is a framework used to study voter turnout as something which changes due to social, political, and economic circumstances. The point of the departure for the model is that citizens perceive political participation as rational actions. In the 1970's Carole Pateman suggested that low rates of political participation correctly can be linked to “ordinary citizens” reasoning that there is no value for them in voting. Robert Goodin and John Dryzek (1980) confirm this statement and conclude that citizens with relatively many resources have higher chances of winning and thus more incentives to participate in the voting. Citizens with few political resources, and therefore lower chances of winning, on the other hand, should in theory if they are rational, save their resources for another time or market where the returns are more likely to be better. In other words, the citizens who are likely to win, where the victory is important, or the costs of participating are low have better reasons for participating compared to the “ordinary citizens” whose costs of participating could be high or have low chances of winning. Poor citizens learn that the system is biased against them and

give up on participating. This model was once again confirmed in 2019 by Armin Schäfer and Hanna Schwander.

By contrast, the redistributive thesis believes that a widening income gap between rich and poor should give the poor citizens incentives to use their voting power to “soak the rich” (Shapiro, 2002). At the same time, the incentives for the rich to go to the polls is to prevent this from happening (Schäfer – Schwander, 2019). This model relies on the work of Meltzer and Richard (1981) which ultimately concludes that the rational thing to do if the stakes are high would be to participate.

### *3.3.2 The Social Learning Theory and Status Transmission Theory*

The social learning theory argues that parents act as models for their children, and that the children will imitate their parent’s behavior. The modeling can be both live actions such as children being influenced by seeing a parent go voting and verbal instructions, for instance being told by the parent that citizens have a civic duty to vote (Bandura, 1977).

On the contrary, the status transmission theory explains unequal voter turnout with differences in parent’s socioeconomic status and specifically their educational level. Parental education provides children with a politically rich environment helping children become well-educated themselves. Behind this statement are two different mechanisms. The first one is that children with well-educated parents are more likely to be exposed to politics in the home environment. There is research showing that citizens who remembers their parents discussing politics and/or engaging in political activities are more likely to do so themselves. However, the second mechanism is perceived to be more influential than the first one, and it is the fact that well-educated parents often pass their socioeconomic advantage on to their children. The socioeconomic advantage in turn results in political advantage. Education itself sparks interest in politics, political knowledge and a sense of political efficacy (Brady et al., 2015).

### *3.3.3 The Complexity of the Effects of Convention on the Rights of the Child*

Although not expressed literally, when reading about the Convention on the Rights of the Child it becomes clear that the responsibility for implementing the conventions lies at authorities and decision-makers at all levels and not the children themselves. It has been concluded that despite constituting a legal basis since 1990 in Sweden, children’s rights have not always been secured. UNICEF concludes that making it a law has

resulted in the Convention having a stronger position in Sweden. In Norway the Convention on the Rights of the Child was incorporated in Norwegian law in 2003. In 2009 the Norwegian law and praxis was investigated, and the investigation concluded that the convention had contributed positively to children's legal position and improved their legal status. An investigation on Sweden concluded that there have been deficiencies in the legislation and practice regarding the convention which were believed to be improved once it constituted legal basis in terms of specifically improving their legal status. It has been shown that children have not been given the possibility to express themselves in for instance asylum processes and custody disputes. Making the convention a legal basis is believed to be an efficient way of changing this, although UNICEF acknowledges that the changes will not come overnight but rather is a new way of perceiving things and that giving the convention a stronger position truly is a long-term mission (UNICEF, 2020).

## 4 Methodologies and Methods

As this chapter will reveal, the research for this thesis contains both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Grix, 2002). As for the first aim and research question, a mixed-method (Watkins – Gioia, 2015) approach has been adopted because both quantitative and qualitative research have been done to answer this question. Namely, a self-administered questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. I followed Alan Bryman’s (2016) suggestions on how to proceed with these methods. As for the second aim and research question, a quantitative approach has been adopted analyzing secondary data. For this, I have followed both Bryman’s suggestions (Bryman 2016) as well as Juliana Maantay and John Ziegler (2006)

In the following sections I will present the methods used for answering the research questions. The chapter is divided into three subcategories, one for each method used. Table 1 is an overview of how the aim and research questions are connected with the methodologies, methods and material used.

*Table 1. Overview of aim, research questions, methodologies, methods and material.*

	<b>First Aim</b>	<b>Second Aim</b>
	Explore what role Swedish municipalities perceive LUPP plays in terms of increasing children and youth participation.	Investigate what characteristics can be used to explain geographical differences on citizen participation in general and children’s and youths’ will and opportunities to participate in particular.
<b>Research Question</b>	In what ways does LUPP contribute to developing children’s and youths’ influence and participation in decision-making processes?	What characteristics could be used to explain geographical differences between children’s and youths’ will and experienced possibilities to influence and participate in decision-making processes?
<b>Methodologies</b>	Mixed method	Quantitative

<b>Method(s)</b>	Self-administered questionnaire Semi-structured interviews	Secondary data analysis
<b>Material</b>	Answers from questionnaire Transcription from interviews	Results from LUPP (local follow-up of youth policy). For further presentation see 4.3.1.1 Economic standards Voter turnout

## 4.1 Self-Administered Questionnaire

Conducting an external analysis was a natural first step in the field work to explore the chosen area of topic. The method has been used to investigate how different Swedish municipalities perceive LUPP contributes to increasing children and youth participation. It also provided valuable information on routines for conducting, analyzing and visualizing the LUPP results.

### 4.1.1 Sampling and Selection

For the questionnaire, a purposive sampling method was used which means that sampling has been done with reference to certain criteria that allow for the research questions to be answered. For this case, the criteria is municipalities having conducted LUPP. More specifically, the sampling was a generic purposive sampling because the aim of the research has not been to generate a theoretical understanding which usually characterizes theoretical sampling (Bryman, 2016). As previously stated, more than 200 Swedish municipalities have conducted LUPP at least once (Nyberg, 2024). Due to the limiting time frame of this thesis, the final selection for the questionnaire was the 36 municipalities which conducted the LUPP in 2023. Those municipalities were listed on MUCF's webpage (MUCF, n.d c) and are shown in Appendix 1. Of the 36 municipalities, 20 participated in the research.

### 4.1.2 Data Collection

The questionnaire was created on Google Forms and included both open-ended, closed-ended, and intermediate questions. None of the questions are considered to concern sensitive personal data (for instance personal data, political and/or religious

beliefs) (Lund University, 2023), although the survey gathered information on which municipality they represent. Also, none of the questions concerning the municipal work with the results were mandatory to answer. The questionnaire is presented in Appendix 2.

The questionnaire was sent via email or, in one case, an online contact form to the 36 municipalities in late January 2024. Reminders were sent two times. Contact information for each municipality was found on its respective webpage. The questionnaire closed in the middle of February.

#### *4.1.3 Data Analysis*

In order to analyze the data collected, a univariate analysis for the closed-ended questions, which means focusing on one variable at a time, was conducted. Although not presented in this thesis, Google Forms' autogenerated statistical presentation of the results have been the basis for analyzing the data.

Regarding the open-ended questions, a qualitative data analysis approach was adopted, more specifically a thematic analysis, using the framework approach (this was done automatically by Google Forms). Before searching for themes, the data was coded. The coding process was as followed: 1) reading the answers, 2) reading the answers again when taking notes simultaneously (i.e. coding), 3) reviewing the codes. Afterwards, when searching for themes, most of the attention was put to find similarities and differences, theory-related material, and missing data. The results of the analysis were later combined with the results from the analysis of the semi-structured interviews.

## **4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews**

Conducting semi-structured interviews was a natural second step to investigate how Swedish municipalities perceive LUPP plays in terms of increasing children and youth participation. The interviews allowed to receive a good comprehension on the opportunities and challenges LUPP provides in terms of including children in decision-making. Semi-structured interviews were considered more suitable compared to unstructured or structured interviews considering the aim of the interviews.

### *4.2.1 Sampling and Selection*

The selection for the interviewees constituted of a generic purposive sampling, based on the answers in the questionnaire. This means that the interviewees were not

randomly selected. Using this type of selection method allowed for me to secure that the chosen interviewees had relevant experiences and knowledge for participating the interviews in a valuable way. The findings from the questionnaire were used as the basis for the selection of the purposive sampling. The purpose of the interviews was for them to provide in depth information to this thesis on their views how LUPP can contribute to citizen participation. The final selection consisted of three municipalities. The time limit for this thesis had the most influence on the sampling size. The final sample consisted of three participants. Everyone who was initially contacted agreed to participate.

#### *4.2.2 Data Collection*

For the semi-structured interviews, all participants were contacted via email. The interviews were held online on the 21st and 22nd of March 2024 and were based on interview guides which are presented in Appendix 3. When creating the interview guide the following aspects was considered: 1) the order of the questions, 2) formulating the questions so that they contribute to answering the research question, 3) avoiding leading questions as Bryman (2016) suggests. The interview guide was sent to the participants in beforehand together with a consent form. The consent form is presented in Appendix 4. The interviews started with me presenting myself and the research, then the interviewees had the opportunity to present themselves and ask questions. The interviewees were also informed they were purposively sampled and what this implies. All interviews were recorded using Microsoft Teams recording function. Out of respect for the interviewees combined with the small sample, the participants will not be presented further but instead their anonymity will be kept.

#### *4.2.3 Data Analysis*

For the analysis of the interviews, grounded theory has been adopted as framework in the sense that data collection and analysis have proceeded in tandem, repeatedly referring back to each other (Bryman, 2016). Tools often used in grounded theory are theoretical sampling and coding. These have been used for this analysis as well. Thus, the interviews were transcribed shortly after they were held. The transcription was done manually, and was literal including pauses etc. For the coding, an open coding approach has been adopted which is defined as “the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data” (Bryman 2016, p. 574) and is part of the grounded theory. When doing open coding the concepts found

through the coding are grouped and turned into categories. As Bryman (2016) suggests, the categories are related to the research literature. More specifically the coding was conducted by first reading through the transcripts without taking any notes, and then doing it again while also taking notes. When having reviewed the codes, they were related to the theoretical and conceptual framework. The results of the analysis were combined with the results from the analysis of the self-administered questionnaire, searching for similarities and further developed discussions.

### **4.3 Secondary Data Analysis and Geographical Patterns**

A secondary data analysis was conducted to investigate if certain characteristics can explain geographical differences on children's and youths' will and experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy within Halmstad. The characteristics used are their acquaintance on the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Halmstad, voter turnout and economic standard. The comparisons have been done using a Geographical Information System (GIS), more specifically QGIS. In this subsection, GIS as a method is first presented, before presenting the methods for data collection and analysis.

#### *4.3.1 GIS as Method*

Geographical Information Systems (GIS) is used to store, analyze and visualize geographical information, which usage began in the 1980's. Using GIS to analyze data can be done in several ways. In the context for this thesis, an exploratory spatial data analysis (EDA) approach has been adopted (Griffiths, 2011). One definition of EDA is "a collection of techniques for summarizing data properties (descriptive statistics) but also for detecting patterns in data, identifying unusual or interesting features in data, detecting data errors, distinguishing accidental from important features in a data set, formulating hypotheses from data" (Haining, 2003 p. 181).

#### *4.3.2 Data Collection*

The data presented here, apart from Swedish municipalities' perceptions on LUPP, has been provided by Halmstad municipality. The data on Swedish municipalities' perceptions was collected from MUCF (2023b). An overview of the data is shown in Table 2.



Table 2. Presentation of data collection.

<b>Data</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Source</b>
Children's and youths' acquaintance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child	2021	LUPP
Children's and youths' will to influence public policy	2018, 2021	LUPP
Children's and youths' experienced possibilities to influence decision-makers	2018, 2021	LUPP
Swedish municipalities' perceptions on LUPP	2023	MUCF (MUCF, 2023b)
Voter turnout in Halmstad municipal election	2018	Halmstad municipality
Economic standards in Halmstad municipality	2021	Halmstad municipality
Geographical data of Halmstad	N/A	The Land Survey

The data collected will now be presented alternately.

The LUPP-results have been collected from MUCF's internal portal for municipalities which have conducted LUPP. The following questions and answer options are the foundation of the data collection where LUPP is the source. Translations of the questions and possible answers are done by the author. The first question used from LUPP is "*Do you know what rights you have according to the Convention of the Rights of the Child?*" The answer alternatives are a) No, I am not acquainted with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, b) No, but I am aware of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, c) Yes, partly, but I do not know what the rights imply in reality and d) Yes, and I know what the rights imply in reality. For this question, answer alternative d) has been included in the analysis. Naturally, the result could vary depending on how many answer alternatives are included in the research. It is the authors opinion though that in this case only the last alternative fully implies that the children and youths know what rights they have according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, to make the research more transparent and

reliable, one could specify the ratio between the two different answer alternatives. Table 3 presents the number of respondents for this question per year and age group.

*Table 3. Presentation of the number of respondents per age group and year answering the question on their acquaintance with the convention on the rights of the child.*

<b>Year / Age Group</b>	<b>13 - 16</b>	<b>16 – 19</b>
<b>2021</b>	995 (1030)	1057 (1094)

The second question used is “*Do you want to influence decision-making in your municipality?*” where the answer alternatives are a) Yes and b) No. For this question, naturally answer alternative a) has been included in the analysis. Table 4 presents the number of respondents for this question per year and age group.

*Table 4. Presentation of number of respondents per age group and year answering the question on their will to influence municipal policy.*

<b>Year / Age Group</b>	<b>13 - 16</b>	<b>16 – 19</b>
<b>2018</b>	929 (932)	836 (846)
<b>2021</b>	1017 (1030)	1065 (1094)

The third and last question used from LUPP is “*What possibilities do you have to express your opinions to the decision-makers in your municipality?*” Here, the possible answers are a) Great possibilities, b) Quite great possibilities, c) Quite small possibilities, d) Very small possibilities/no possibilities and e) Do not know. For this question, both answer alternative a and b have been used because it is believed that *quite great possibilities* also are evidence that the children and youths are given opportunities to express their opinions. However, to make the research more transparent and reliable, one could specify the ratio between the two different answer alternatives. Table 5 presents the number of respondents for this question per year and age group.

*Table 5. Presentation of number of respondents per age group answering the question on their experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy.*

<b>Year / Age Group</b>	<b>13 - 16</b>	<b>16 - 19</b>
<b>2018</b>	927 (932)	830 (846)
<b>2021</b>	1022 (1030)	1070 (1094)

The data presented so far in this subsection was manually put together in Excel sheets for each geographical area and year. The Excel sheets with the data were then processed using Feature Manipulation Engine (FME). FME is a platform where you can integrate and process different data sets in different formats (FME, 2024). In FME operations for converting the data into percentage have been used, as well as merging the statistics for each data with the geographical areas.

Moving on to the data collected from MUCF, this collection regards their investigation on how municipalities implement the results from LUPP (MUCF, 2023b). The aim of their work was to reproduce the municipalities' experiences which were revealed in their study. They used a questionnaire and conducted interviews with a total of fifteen municipalities. Those fifteen municipalities have all many years of experience of, and well-established methods for working with LUPP. Both larger and smaller municipalities in terms of population participated, from all over the country. The questionnaire survey was sent to one hundred municipalities, and MUCF received sixty-four responses (64 percent). These results are also part of the analysis for this thesis.

The data on voter turnout was provided by Halmstad municipality and regards their municipal election in 2018. Data from 2022 are available, however since both LUPP and the municipal elections coincide in 2018 it is my judgement that data from 2018 is the most relevant. Likewise, the data on the percentage of citizen in Halmstad having low economic standards was also provided by Halmstad municipality. Low economic standard is defined as living with less than 60 percent of the median value for the country (Halmstad, 2023). I consider Halmstad municipality to be reliable source for data collection, and the data has been presented and gone through with me by the statistician responsible for the data, to avoid misunderstandings and secure that the data has been understood correctly by me.

The last dataset used concerns geographical data of Halmstad which is offered by the Land Survey (*Lantmäteriet*) and provided by Halmstad municipality. The coordinate system for this dataset is EPSG:3008 SWEREF 99 1330 and the format is vector. Because the Land Survey is a Swedish authority, I consider it to be a reliable source and thus no further discussion of the resource will be discussed.

#### *4.3.3 Data Analysis*

To compare areas within Halmstad municipality choropleth maps have been created. Choropleth maps are a type of thematic maps. Thematic maps are characterized by including a geographic basemap and an overlay over thematic data. The thematic data used include both qualitative and quantitative data. Choropleth maps are suitable for presenting rates and percentages which are the case for this thesis, thus the results are presented in choropleth maps. Choropleth maps are in turn characterized by geographic units (for this thesis, different living areas in Halmstad municipality), which are assigned a certain color representing the value in the value range most accurate for the certain area. In terms of map coloring of the choropleth maps, conventional color design and map design have been considered and used. This means having suitable colors and color schemes (Maantay – Ziegler 2006). The maps will be presented in following chapters of the thesis.

The data has been classified into equal interval, except for Map 13 showing voter turnout. This data is classified into quantiles. In terms of map design, conventional map design has been considered and used. This includes having essential main map elements such as legends, scale bar and north arrow (Maantay – Ziegler, 2006). When analyzing the data, the ten election districts with the highest respectively the lowest voter turnouts have been included and compared with the data from LUPP. Regarding the analysis on economic standard, the five areas with the highest respectively the lowest standards have been included and compared with the data from LUPP.

## **4.4 Discussion of Methods**

In this section the chosen methods are critically discussed and evaluated.

### *4.4.1 Self-administered Questionnaire and Semi-Structured Interviews*

Considering the self-administered questionnaire the sampling method is worth problematizing. There is no guarantee that the final selection (only municipalities which conducted the survey in 2023) are generalizable to all municipalities conducting

LUPP recurrently. However, as the results will show, there is a spread in how often the participants conduct LUPP, and both larger and smaller municipalities have answered the questionnaire and are thus included in the research. The sample method for the semi-structured interviews could also be questioned, since the final selection is even smaller and the fact that the purposive sampling method based on the participants doing LUPP in 2023 in itself guarantees no variation in terms of for instance experiences of working with LUPP nor municipal size.

Considering the relatively small sample for the semi-structured interviews, compared to how many municipalities there are in Sweden (3 participants out of 290 municipalities (SKR, 2022)), the question of external validity (Bryman, 2016) becomes relevant. To reach external validity is one common challenge for qualitative research because this type of research often consists of case studies and small samples, as is the case also for this thesis. Thus, one should be careful generalizing based on this research because one cannot conclude that the results of this thesis represent other settings as well. However, one should remember that qualitative research seeks to generalize to theory rather than to individuals (Bryman, 2016) which is the case in for this thesis as well. Although one cannot truly confirm theories with such small sample as for this thesis, the results could give indications on what theories are relevant. Another weakness of the chosen sample for the interviews is the fact that only municipalities who conduct LUPP have been included in the research. Of course, one can assume that the results would be different if municipalities who do not conduct LUPP were included as well since they probably have other ways of working with children participation.

#### *4.4.2 Secondary Data Analysis*

The most common limitations of secondary data analysis are lack of familiarity with data, complexity of data and lack of control of data quality (Bryman, 2016). In the context for this thesis, these limitations are not considered to have negative effects on the results. As already written, the data has been presented and gone through with me by a statistician responsible for the data, to avoid misunderstandings and secure that the data has been understood correctly by me. Instead, in this subsection, the lack of statistical analysis, ecological fallacy and lack of comparisons are critically discussed.

When investigating what characteristics (knowledge on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, voter turnout and economic standards) could influence children's

and youths' will and experienced possibilities to influence municipal, it would be beneficial to a complete statistical analysis to investigate if there are correlations between the variables (Bryman, 2016). However, it was judged too complex to conduct because different geographical areas are used for the different variables making it difficult to merge them. For instance, in LUPP Nyatorp is included in the same area as Linehed among others (8) (see Map 1). For the data on economic standard, Nyatorp is considered to belong with Centrum (4).

Ecological fallacy occurs when an individual member of a certain group is assigned the characteristics of that specific group. It means that incorrect assumptions are made about that individual, based on the characteristics the group the individual belongs to, have (Rae, 2023). An example of ecological fallacy is assuming that the increase in hate crime against immigrants in UK areas where many citizens voted for leaving the EU are executed by the people who voted for leaving the EU (Ballas, 2018). This could be related to the discussion on correlation and causality (Bryman, 2016) which of course is relevant for this thesis which seeks to find explanations for geographical differences between children's and youths' will and experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy. To avoid an ecological fallacy, this thesis explores if there are indications that children's and youths' will and experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy are connected to their acquaintance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, voter turnout and/or economic standard on the other. The thesis does not include any correlation analysis and does not explore if there is a causality between the different variables. If a mathematical correlation analysis would be made, the chosen geographical area and data would probably still be too small to statistically secure the results.

Another aspect worth problematizing in regards of the secondary data analysis is the fact that 43,6 (13-16 years old) percent respectively 43,1 (16-19) percent of the children and youths answering LUPP have answered that they do not know to what extent they have possibilities to influence the municipal policy. However, one could assume that if one believes that the possibilities are great, one would not answer "do not know". If this is the case, it would not affect the results as much.

Lastly, comparisons have only been made within Halmstad municipality. To fully determine what is considered high and low values, it would be beneficial to compare for instance with a mean for all Swedish municipalities conducting LUPP.

By doing so, the analysis could be more relevant for other municipalities as well. However, no such data is provided by MUCF.

#### 4.4.3 *Geographical Information Systems*

The reality will always be more detailed than the map, and it is the cartographer's job to make the map as true as possible but at the same time understandable. Decisions on what to include and what to exclude are not always easy (Monmonier, 2018). In this subsection, I present a pitfall when analyzing data using GIS; the Modifiable Areal Unit Problem. I also discuss the classification methods used.

##### 4.4.3.1 *Modifiable Areal Unit Problem*

The Modifiable Areal Unit Problem (MAUP) was first coined by Openshaw in 1979. It refers to the fact that analysis results differ depending on how the geographical boundaries are set (Ballas, 2018). There are two different types of biases for the MAUP. The first one concerns scale and the second zones. Regarding scale, the larger the scale the more detailed is the map, showing the results more accurately. Regarding zones, the geographical boundaries affect how accurate the results are. The smaller geographical zones, the more accurate are the results (GIS Geography, 2024).

Related to MAUP in the context for this thesis, is that Halmstad municipality reevaluated and changed the geographical areas selectable in LUPP (from nine to sixteen geographical areas) between 2018 and 2021 (Maps 1 and 2). This makes comparisons between 2021 on the one hand and 2018 on the other more difficult to conduct and have been excluded from this research.

As elsewhere, there are several different ways of defining the geographical areas within Halmstad. For LUPP, Halmstad municipality based the areas on demographical statistical areas (*demografiska statistikområden, DESO*). An alternative to DESO would be key code areas, (*nyckelkodssystemet, NYKO*). Naturally, for this research, the same areas which are selectable in the LUPP survey have been used. However, for this research, instead of using DESO from the start, a layer based on NYKO has been transformed into the same geographical DESO-areas in QGIS, using the merging tool (Maantay – Ziegler, 2006). Although not optimal, there are no indications this affects the result of the research. Cases of uncertainty on how to merge some geographical areas have only concerned industrial areas where there are residences, which indicates that the manual merging will not affect the results. To complement the geographical

knowledge, the uncertain areas have been combined with a layer of population between 13 and 19 years, also showing that no one in those ages are registered there. Considering LUPP specifically, it would be difficult to divide the municipality to even smaller geographical areas and still secure that answers will be completely anonymous. The interviews conducted for this research reveals that small municipalities do not compare the result based on geographical areas.

Another issue related to MAUP is the fact that there are no ways to control that the children fill in their residential districts accurately. For instance, one can assume that some children have separated parents and thus live in two different areas. This issue concerns both the municipalities using LUPP as well as for this research. To minimize this problem, Halmstad municipality included a map to LUPP which easily explained the different geographical areas selectable in 2021.

#### *4.4.3.2 Classification Methods*

For all thematic maps, except for Map 13, which shows voter turnout, equal intervals have been used to classify the data. Equal interval is suitable when the data is relatively evenly spread throughout the range (Maantay – Ziegler, 2006), which was the case for the data used in the research. Although the classification method used felt easy to choose, whether to assign each map the same color for each class was more difficult to decide. If each interval had the same color on each map, it would of course facilitate comparisons between the maps. However, it was the apprehension that this could not be done without jeopardizing the possibility to present each map on its on as fair as possible. Thus, in the end, each interval is not assigned a specific color for all maps.

For Map 13, quantiles have been used as classification method because the data set had no outliers (Maantay – Ziegler, 2006).



## 5 Results and Analysis

In this chapter the results are presented combined with an analysis of the results. The results will then be discussed in Chapter 6. This chapter contains two sections, one for each research question.

### 5.1 LUPP as a Way of Developing Children’s and Youths’ Influence and Participation in Decision-Making Processes

This section aims at answering the research question “In what ways does LUPP contribute to developing children’s and youths’ influence and participation in decision-making processes?”. The results and analysis are based on the self-administered questionnaire, the semi-structured interviews and MUCF’s own investigation (MUCF, 2023b). The section is divided into four subsections: one for each category which was distinguished during the analysis of the questionnaire and interviews. The categories found are different dimensions on how LUPP can be perceived as citizen participation.

Twenty municipalities answered the self-administered questionnaire, resulting in a response rate of 55 percent. The final sample for the questionnaire is presented in Appendix 5. All the municipalities agreed to be included in the research. The final sample for the semi-structured interviews is further presented in Table 6. Everyone who was contacted for the interviews agreed to participate. The interview guide served its purpose very well because it sparked discussion and helped reach the ultimate goal of reaching a conclusion.

*Table 6. Overview of Interviews.*

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Date of Interview</b>	<b>Time Length of Interview</b>
1	I1	21 <sup>st</sup> of March 2024	18 minutes, 12 seconds
2	I2	21 <sup>st</sup> of March 2024	12 minutes, 40 seconds
3	I3	22 <sup>nd</sup> of March 2024	11 minutes

In general, one can conclude that LUPP as children and youth participation is difficult to connect to the different ways of developing children and youth participation in

decision-making processes (see 3.2) (Heinrich – Million, 2014). If anything, it can be considered to be state-led participation because MUCF which provides LUPP is a Swedish authority. The fact that LUPP in itself is not completely applicable also confirms the arguments which will be presented in following subsections that LUPP should only be considered to be the first step of citizen participation, and that LUPP should be complemented with other means as well.

### *5.1.1 Variation in Response Rates Between Age Groups*

The questionnaire conducted for this thesis reveals that eight municipalities use the LUPP survey for 13-16 years only. Eleven respondents use both the survey for 13-16 years as well as the survey for 16-19 years. Only one municipality of the ones answering the questionnaire uses the LUPP only for 16-19 years. Consequently, none of the municipalities which participated in the research send LUPP to the oldest age category: 19-25 years old. Reasons for not including citizens aged between 19-25 are mainly because the response rates are too low. For instance, one municipality answered that many citizens in this age group are still registered to live with their parents but are in reality studying elsewhere or travelling. Ten municipalities express that it is easy to reach the citizens when in school, and not all municipalities have upper secondary schools which also hampers the ability to receive desirable response rate for the oldest age group. The questionnaire conducted also reveals that other reasons for not including all age groups are the fact that only one age group corresponds the labor input available. One municipality wrote that they want to easily give feedback to the participants, which they only have capacity to do for the 13-16 years old. Another municipality wrote that the younger age groups are within the framework for the municipality's political child and youth work. Lastly, one municipality uses the same age groups as the neighboring municipalities to facilitate comparisons between municipalities.

From this one can conclude that LUPP, as a means to develop children's and youths' participation in decision-making, fails to reach and include all age groups in the processes. However, the municipalities are rather pragmatic in the way they work with LUPP, to secure that the results are valuable. Although it is beyond the scope for this thesis, it would be of interest to further investigate whether there are other ways of reaching the oldest age group; 19-35 years old. On the other hand, they are allowed to vote and can participate in decision-making that way. Also, this age group is not

covered by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Despite the fact that reasons for not sending the survey to this age group to a large extent are beyond the municipalities control and that they are allowed to vote in election it is rather paradoxical that LUPP is perceived as a democratically mean but that the answer frequency among 19-25 years old is so low no one included in this research uses it.

Although it is still important to have in mind that the survey for 19-25 years old are not as frequently used, the following subsections consider LUPP's possibilities to increase children and youth participation for the children and youths who participate in the survey.

### *5.1.2 The LUPP Results are Shared and Spread*

According to the questionnaire conducted, 95 percent of the municipalities share their results with internal personnel and politicians. The one municipality which do not share the results with the mentioned instances (internal personnel and politicians) only shares it with the pupils participating in LUPP. 60 percent share the results with the citizens in the municipality. 95 percent of the participants share the results with the children and youths who have participated in LUPP. Another municipal representative wrote in the questionnaire that LUPP is a great tool for getting an engagement in the political youth work.

In the interviews, I1 and I3 also said that there is a great interest in LUPP from politicians, internal personnel as well as citizens and the participants in LUPP. I3 said that the results are positively received. There is a general feeling among the interviewees that LUPP sparks engagement and easily sparks discussions.

According to MUCF's own investigation, 80 percent of the municipalities share the results with politicians and administrations. 70 percent share the results with the young and principals. Although not exactly the same numbers, MUCF's results corresponds well with the results of this thesis.

The fact that the results to a large extent are shared indicates that adults are given great possibilities to learn about children's and youths' perceptions and to consider them in decision-making. Applying R. Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation to these results, only conducting LUPP would be indications consulting (4). Applying Hart's (2008) ladder, the one municipality which does not give feedback to the children and youths who participated in LUPP would be an example of manipulation (1). Further, the results are not good enough to conclude exactly "where on the ladder"

municipalities which uses LUPP are, but one can conclude that it is important to thoroughly explain to the participants in LUPP why they are selected and also that pupil's councils lies on democratic grounds where the pupils themselves choose their representatives to avoid tokenism (3) (Hart, 2008). As we will see later, the interviewees discussed pupil's councils as other forms of children participation.

### *5.1.3 LUPP Gives a Voice to Everyone*

When asked if LUPP can contribute to children and youth participation in municipal policy, all three interviewees stressed that LUPP itself is a direct way of including children and youths:

*“I think [...] about children and youths who are not members in the pupil's council or do not have the strongest voices on the class meeting [...] they get a chance to express themselves. There are many open-ended questions [...]”*

*I1, 21<sup>st</sup> of March, 2024.*

*“You give a voice to everyone in grade 8 [junior high school] and grade 2 [upper secondary level]. If one does not want to influence anywhere else, then at least one has a chance to do so through LUPP”*

*I2, 21<sup>st</sup> of March, 2024*

*“It [LUPP] is a great tool for us to collect children's and youths' opinions, and make their voices heard”*

*I3, 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, 2024*

I1 and I2 believe that the fact that many pupils answer the survey is one of the strengths with LUPP. However, I1 also mentions that some pupils do not have the energy to answer it seriously, or not answering at all which could be reasons to question the reliability.

I2 and I3 both expressed that LUPP is the first stage of citizen participation, and that the methods for working with the results determinates to what extent LUPP contributes to children's and youths' possibilities to having an influence. I1 is also positive when asked if LUPP contributes to children and youth participation.

Although one can conclude that LUPP is perceived as a way of giving a voice to many children and youths, the interviews reveal that LUPP is only one of many ways of working with children and youth participation. In the municipality I2 represents, LUPP is said to constitute the heart and soul of their political youth work, but also that LUPP is one of many other ways of including children and youths in the municipal policy. Examples provided by at least one of the participants are them visiting schools and talking to the pupils, having youth councils as well as pupil's council. Pupil's council can be considered as consulted and informed (5) (Hart, 2008). One can assume the pupil's council has greater potential of reaching the sixth rung on the ladder as well, adult initiated, shared decisions with children. I2 mentioned a project fund aimed specifically at children and youths.

One can conclude that LUPP itself is a democratic tool to increase children and youth participation because it gives a voice to everyone answering the survey. Then, on top of that, their actual influence can increase even more depending on how internal personnel and politicians consider the results and change their way of working depending on the LUPP results, which we will come back to in the following subsection. This result also implies that LUPP can be considered to be consulting (4) (Arnstein, 1969) partly because (attitude) surveys are given as examples of consulting, but also because the participants argue that LUPP must combined with other measures to be successful. One could also argue that LUPP is an example of placation (5) (Arnstein, 1969) if one considers LUPP as a way for children and youths to advice the decision-makers without taking part in the decision-making. This is in alignment with Nyberg's (2024) position that LUPP is an example of citizen participation and a good foundation for democratic principles.

Another interesting aspect worth mentioning is that among the participants, I1 argued the least that municipalities truly have to put effort in working with the results after conducting LUPP, and still was the interviewee who could give account for most measures originating from the LUPP-results. None of the ladder metaphors of citizen participation (Arnstein, 1969) (Hart, 2008) are applicable to this certain aspect.

Also, in order for LUPP to truly give a voice to all who participates the results must be considered and taken seriously. For instance, I2 mentioned the fact that adults often do "adult-guessing" on children's and youths' perceptions and that LUPP is great in that way because the results really are facts which no one can question. In relation to this, I1 discussed the fact that there sometimes is a tendency from people taking part

of the results from LUPP to question the participants' validity, and not taking the results seriously when they themselves believe they have the answers to the problems experienced by the children which of course jeopardizes the great possibilities of LUPP.

From the interview with I3, it was also revealed that children and youths who have participated in LUPP often forget about it afterwards and have to be reminded of it when wanting to discuss the results with them later on. This could perhaps indicate that, for the participants, it is not a democratic act they execute. Although the research for this thesis does not explore this, one guess could be that the children perceive it as a must: something their teachers have told them to do rather than seeing it as an opportunity to influence the municipal policy. This in turn could be interpreted as a type of "adult gaze" and of course an indication of tokenism (3) (Hart, 2008). I3 explained that the municipality aspire to visit the schools beforehand to inform about the survey and increase the awareness of LUPP. This is in turn related to assigned but informed participation (4) (Hart, 2008) since it fulfills every criteria of that level.

MUCF's own investigation (2023b) provides no knowledge on how the municipalities perceive LUPP contributes to giving a voice to everyone.

#### *5.1.4 LUPP is a Basis for Decision-Making*

90 percent of the participants in the self-administered questionnaire said that the LUPP results have laid foundation for organizational development (*verksamhetsutveckling*). MUCF's investigation reveals that in 48 percent of the municipalities the LUPP results have laid the foundation for changes in the youth policy. Almost 50 percent of the asked municipalities in MUCF's investigation (2023b) answered that LUPP has led to investments in children and youths without political influence led by schools and youth recreation centers. In the self-administered questionnaire for this research, one of the municipalities answering no on this question says that because 2023 was their first-time conducting LUPP, they do not yet know how the results will be used. The other municipality has conducted LUPP two times, but the results have not been the basis for organizational development.

Examples taken from the questionnaire of how LUPP have laid a foundation for organizational development concerns violence prevention work, crime prevention, well-being and safety in public spaces and schools, the opening of a youth recreation center and creating venues for dialogues between children and youths on the one hand

and politicians and elected representatives on the other. The interviews also confirm that LUPP is a basis for decision-making. When interviewed, I1 gave several examples of measures taken after conducting LUPP to improve the situation for children and youths based on their answers in LUPP. For instance, the LUPP results showed that the municipality had no direct communication channels between the children and youths on the one side and the politicians on the other. Hence, they created a venue for them to regularly meet in real life and share experiences. Examples of measures mentioned in MUCF's investigation are implementing youth panels, citizen dialogue and having youth recreation centers open for more hours. Some municipalities also invite their politicians to meet the children and youths who have participated in LUPP and let the results of LUPP be the foundation for political decision-making. In other municipalities, where the economic possibilities are smaller, LUPP is used as argument for not continuing with retrenchments.

These results indicates that LUPP not only is a way of consulting (4) the children but also placation (5) (Arnstein, 1969).

I2 and I3 also emphasize that LUPP is a tool for receiving knowledge on how the children and youths perceive their current existence. However, LUPP provides no answers on why the LUPP participants answers as they do, and that LUPP should be seen as a tool for specifically receiving knowledge and providing an opportunity to get to learn even more about the reasons behind the results.

*“LUPP is the first step to highlight things about the target group [i.e. children and youths], the second step is do dive into [...] it and see what can be done about it”*

*I3 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, 2024.*

All three interviewees also emphasize the importance of not only analyzing the results after conducting LUPP but also to use the results and work with it. I3 says it is a pitfall to conduct LUPP and then mark it as done, instead of thinking that having collected all the answers is the first step. Likewise, I2 also stresses that in order for LUPP to reach its full potential one has to have plan for how to work with the results. These opinions are in alignment with R. Arnstein (1969) who argued that consulting (4) in itself is not successful. I2 also said during the interview that when meeting adults, I2 often let them guess what children and youths think about certain questions, and often are the adults completely wrong, once again proving that they have an adult

perspective on questions regarding children and youths and that there is a need for better knowledge on children's and youths' experiences. As expressed by one municipal representative in the questionnaire: LUPP contributes to an increased consideration on children's and youths' view on life. However, in MUCF's investigation one participant argues that LUPP should be the foundation for dialogue, not decision-making since the survey is rather complex and do not consider that opinions might differ between genders, for instance. Related to this is also the fact that when asked if they use the LUPP-results to recognize geographical differences within their municipalities, none of the interviewees said they do. This was due to the fact that they all considered their respective municipalities too small for it to be valuable, without jeopardizing the anonymity of the children and youths.

## **5.2 Characteristics Which Could Be Related to Children's and Youths' Perceptions on Participation in Decision-Making Processes**

This section aims at answering the research question "*What characteristics could be used to explain geographical differences between children's and youths' will and experienced possibilities to influence and participate in decision-making processes?*". The results and analysis will be based on the secondary data collected (see 4.3.2). The section is divided into three different subsections which will cover one characteristic each. Note that for this section all comparisons have been done with other geographical areas within Halmstad municipality, as discussed in 4.4.2. In other words, no comparisons with for instance a mean for all Swedish municipalities have been done.

Firstly, the geographical areas used for LUPP in Halmstad are presented in Map 1 and 2.



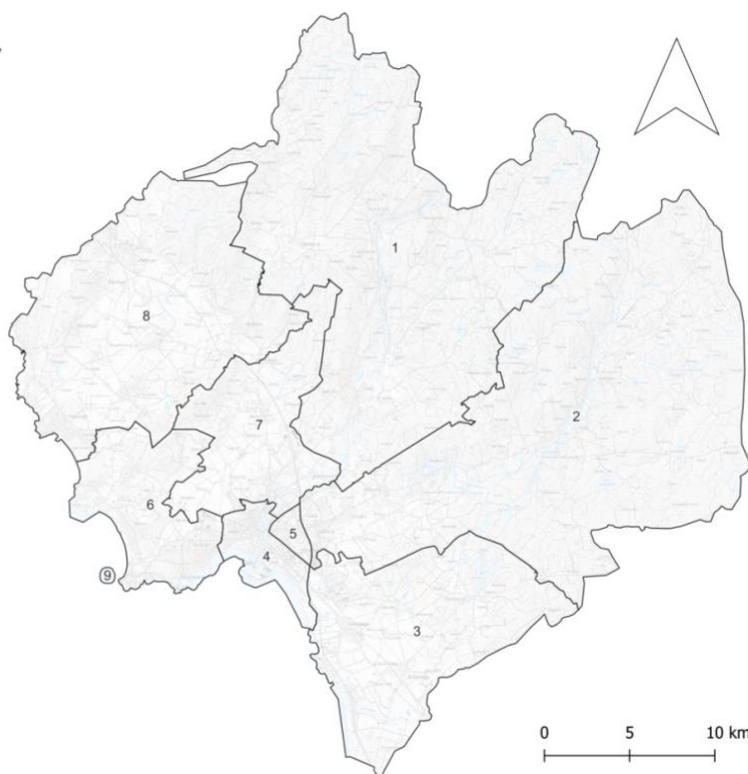
- 1 Oskarström
- 2 Åled, Sennan, Slättåkra, Johansfors, Skavböcke
- 3 Skedalahed, Simlångsdalen, Skedala, Marbäck
- 4 Trönninge, Laxvik, Påarp, Gullbranna, Eldsberga, Tönnersö
- 5 Fyllinge
- 6 Vallås, Brogård, Snöstorp
- 7 Andersberg
- 8 Linehed, Gustavsfält, Östergård, Nyhem, Nyatorp, Engelbrekt, Östra förstaden, Larsfrid, Östra stranden, Hamnen
- 9 Centrum, Galgberget, Slottsbron, Örjansområdet, Gamletull, SlottsJordan, Kattegatt-söder
- 10 Frennarps, Furet, Norra utmarken, Kärleken, Sofieberg, Hålan, Tegelbruket, Slottsmöllan, Holm, Sannarp, Vapnö
- 11 Alet, Rotorp, Mickedala
- 12 Söndrum, Karlstorp, Bergsgård, Pålbo, Bäckagård, Eketånga, Stenhuggeriet
- 13 Frösakull, Görvik, Sandhamn, Tylösand, Ringenäs, Vilshärad
- 14 Haverdal, Steninge, Gullbrandstorp, Särda
- 15 Getinge, Rävinge, Kvibille, Harplinge
- 16 Annat område (other area)



Cartographer: Ulrika Fridh, 2024

Map 1. Geographical areas for LUPP in Halmstad 2021. Created by Ulrika Fridh 2024.

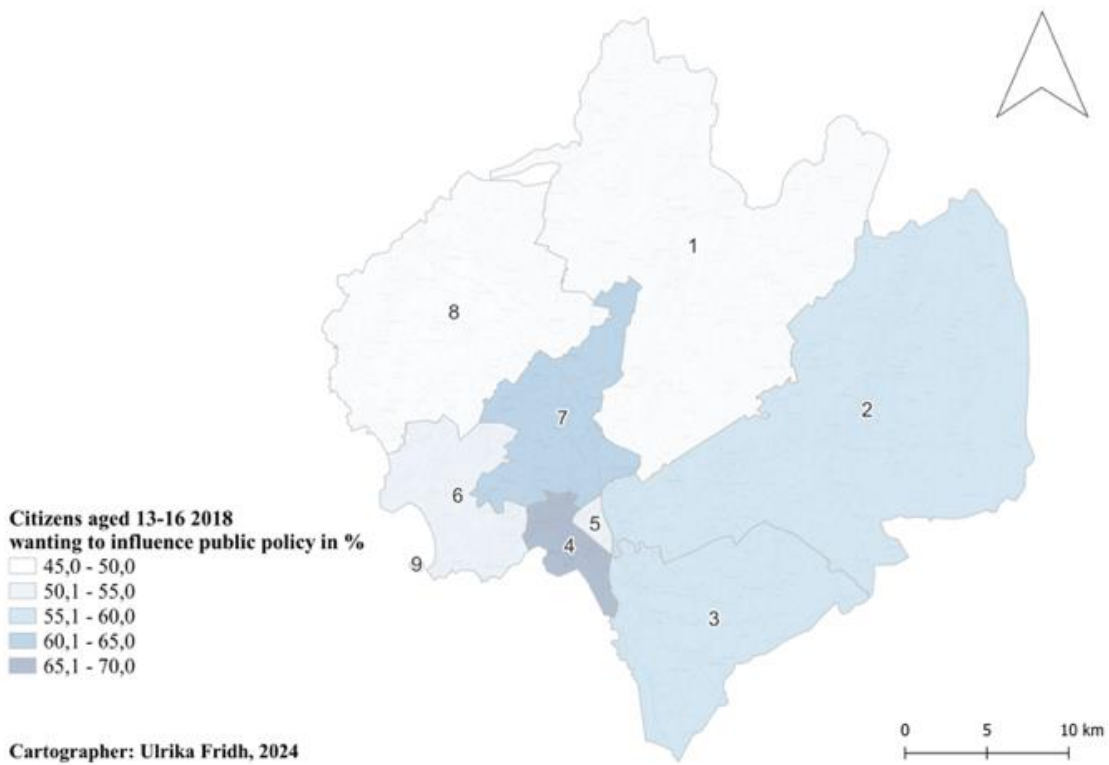
- 1 Oskarström, Åled, Sennan, Slättåkra, Johansfors, Skavböcke
- 2 Brogård, Snöstorp, Skedalahed, Simlångsdalen, Skedala, Marbäck, Vallås
- 3 Fyllinge, Trönninge, Laxvik, Påarp, Gullbranna, Eldsberga, Tönnersö
- 4 Centrum, Östra Förstaden, Mickedala, Rotorp, Alet, Söder, Östra stranden, Galgberget, Väster
- 5 Andersberg, Linehed, Gustavsfält, Östergård, Nyhem, Nyatorp
- 6 Söndrum, Tylösand, Frösakull, Görvik, Sandhamn, Ringenäs, Gullbrandstorp, Vilshärad
- 7 Frennarps, Furet, Norra utmarken, Kärleken, Sofieberg, Hålan, Holm, Tegelbruket
- 8 Getinge, Rävinge, Kvibille, Harplinge, Haverdal, Steninge
- 9 Annat område (other area)



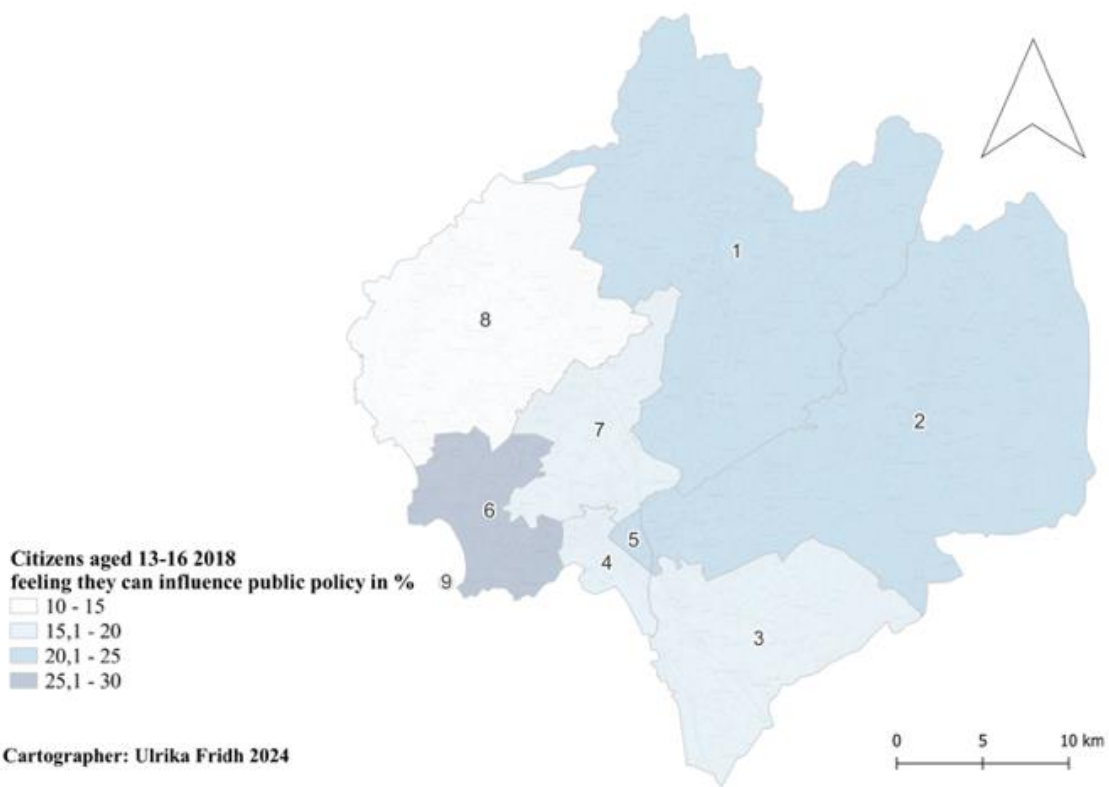
Cartographer: Ulrika Fridh, 2024

Map 2. Geographical areas for LUPP in Halmstad 2018. Created by Ulrika Fridh, 2024

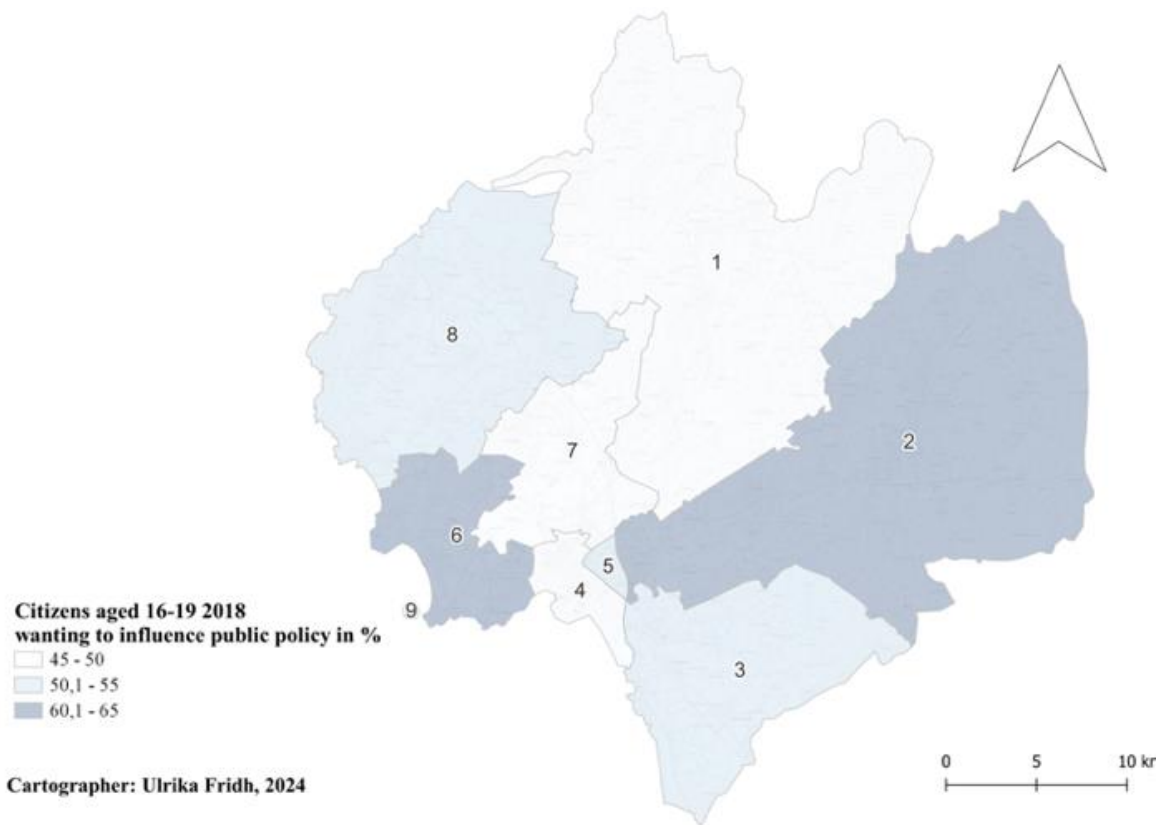
The secondary data used to compare the three different characteristics are presented in Maps 3-10. Maps 3-6 regards data from 2018 which concerns statistics on will to influence municipal policy as well as experienced possibilities to do so. Maps 7-10 regards the same data but for 2021 instead. The data from 2018 have been used for comparisons with voter turnout and economic standards. The data from 2021 have been used for comparisons with their knowledge on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.



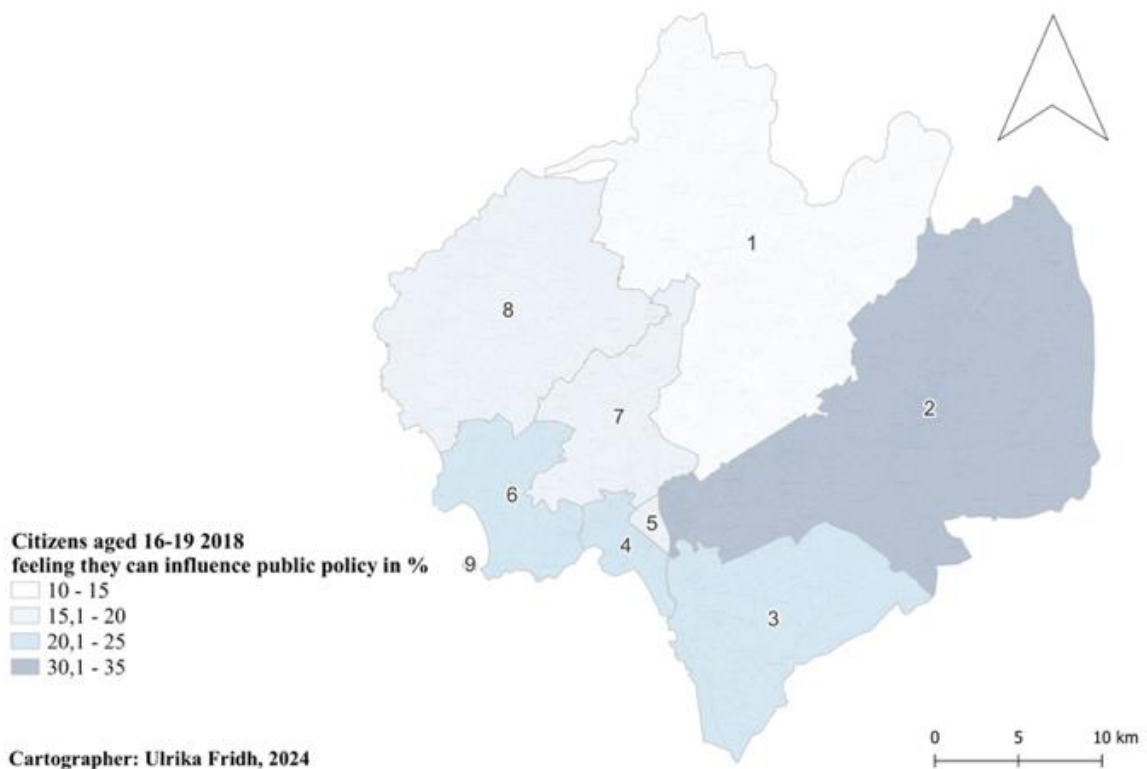
Map 3. Percentage of citizens aged 13-16 in Halmstad 2018 wanting to influence public policy. Created by Ulrika Fridh, 2024.



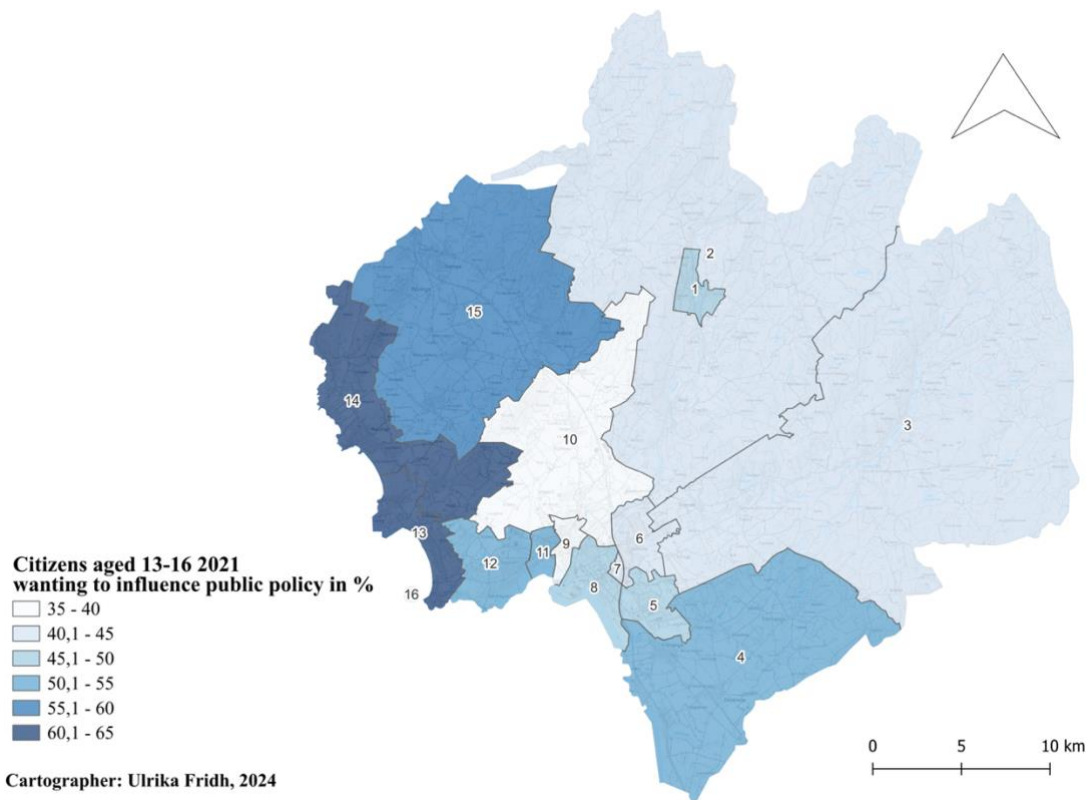
Map 4. Percentage of citizens aged 13-16 in Halmstad 2018 feeling they can influence public policy. Created by Ulrika Fridh, 2024.



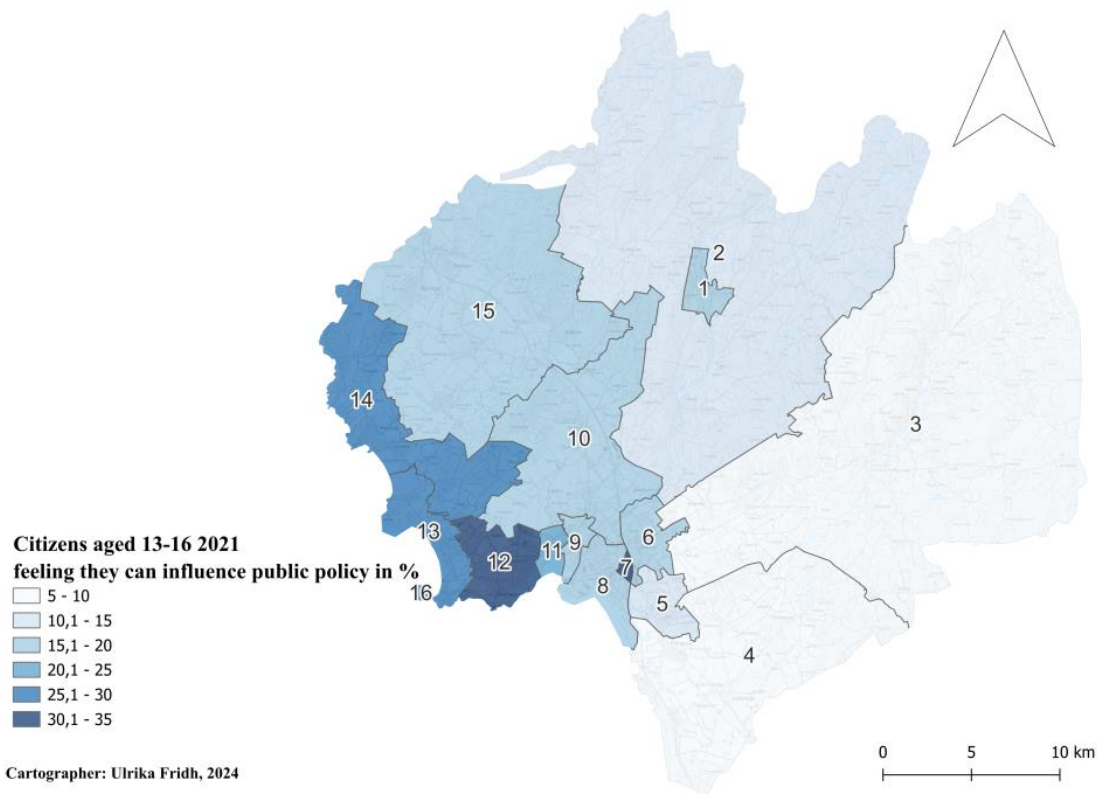
Map 5. Percentage of citizens aged 16-19 2018 in Halmstad wanting to influence public policy. Created by Ulrika Fridh, 2024.



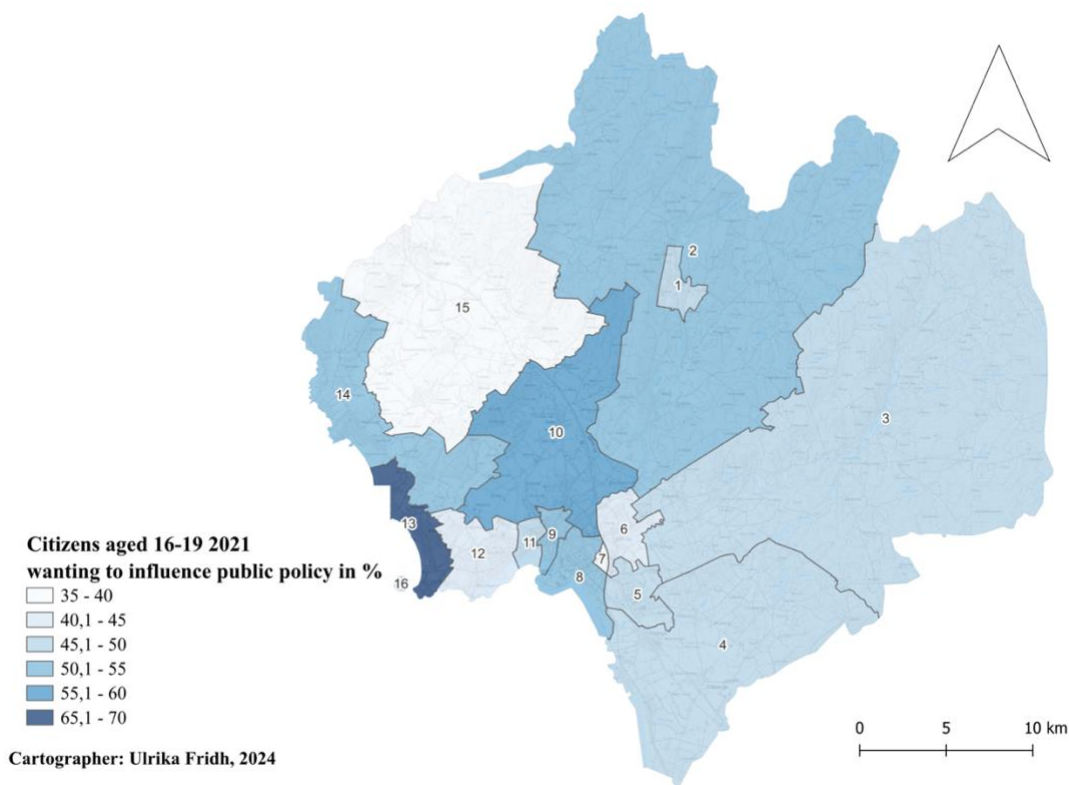
Map 6. Percentage of citizens 16-19 2018 in Halmstad feeling they can influence public policy. Created by Ulrika Fridh, 2024.



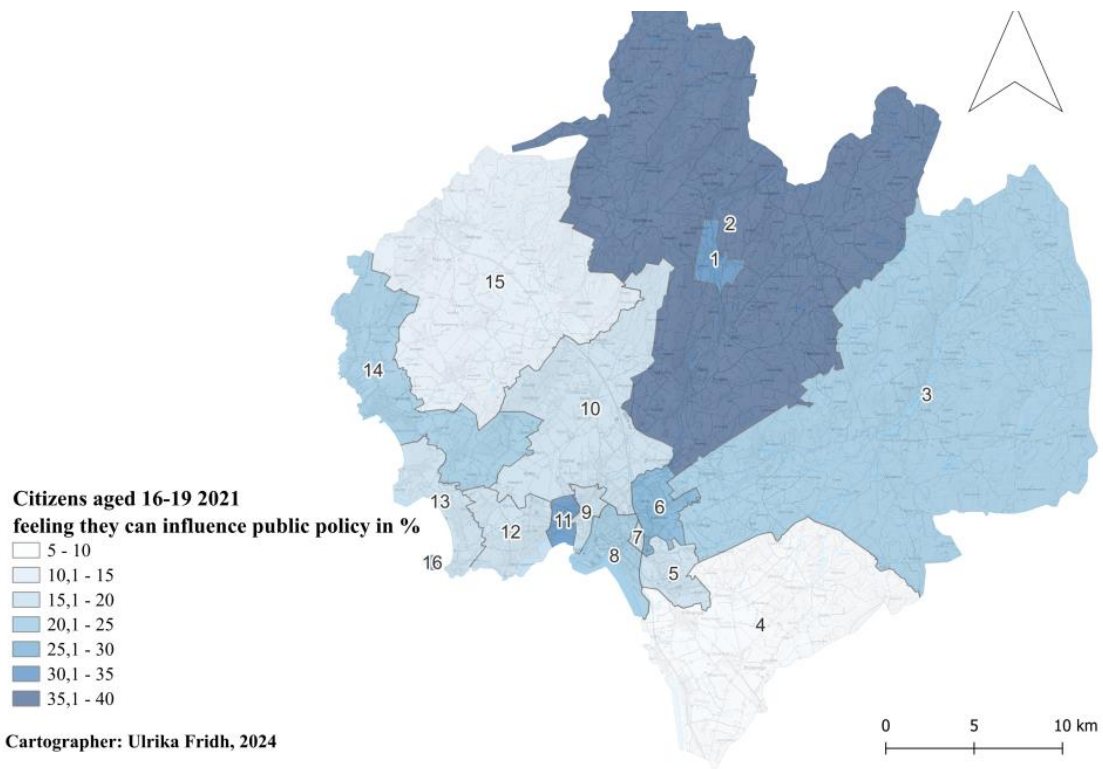
Map 7. Percentage of citizens aged 13-16 2021 in Halmstad wanting to influence public policy. Created by Ulrika Fridh, 2024.



Map 8. Percentage of citizens aged 13-16 2021 in Halmstad feeling they can influence public policy. Created by Ulrika Fridh, 2024.



Map 9. Percentage of citizens aged 16-19 2021 in Halmstad wanting to influence public policy. Created by Ulrika Fridh, 2024.



Map 10. Percentage of citizens aged 16-19 2021 in Halmstad feeling they can influence public policy. Created by Ulrika Fridh, 2024

Map 3 reveals that between the ages of 13 to 16 years, the score of participants wanting to influence municipal policy ranges between 45 and 70 percent. The highest score is found in Centrum et al. (4) and the lowest are found in Oskarström (1) and Getinge et al. (8). For this age group the highest percentage (25,1-30) of feeling they can influence municipal policy, (Map 4) is found in Söndrum et al. (6). The lowest percentage is found in Oskarström (1). Map 5 shows that for the participants aged 16-19, the percentage wanting to influence municipal policy ranges between 45 and 65 percent. The highest percentages are found in area Brogård et al. (2) and Söndrum et al. (6). For Brogård et al., that is the same percentage as for 13-16. For Söndrum et al. it is slightly lower compared to 13-16. For this age group the highest percentage (30,1-35) of children and youths feeling they can influence municipal policy is found in Brogård et al. (Map 6). The lowest score is found in Oskarström (1). In general, Maps 3-6 show that the feeling of being able to influence public policy is lower than the will to do so. In neither age group the feeling of being able to influence reaches a majority (Maps 4 and 6).

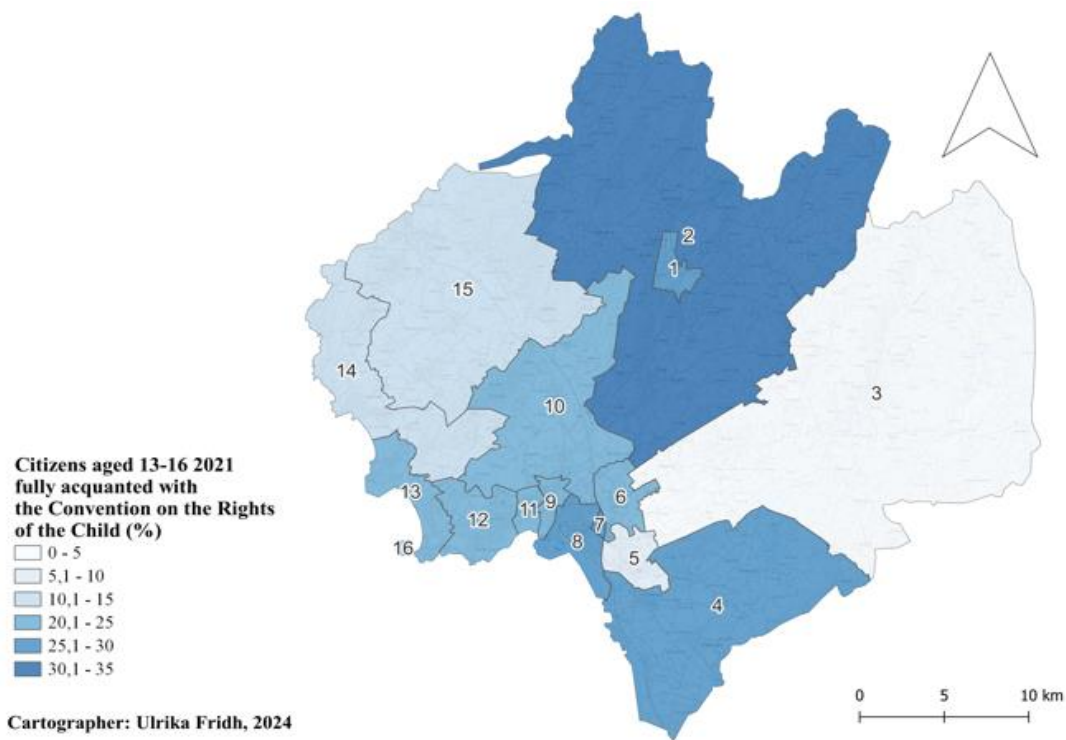
Maps 7-10 regard the same statistics as Maps 3-6 but for 2021 instead of 2018. Map 7 reveals that among the 13-16 years old participants, the will to influence public policy have the highest scores in the western parts of Halmstad: Alet et al. (11), Söndrum et al. (12), Frösakull et al. (13), Haverdal et al. (14) and Getinge et al. (15). Maps 7 and 8 together reveal that for the 13-16 years old, the will to influence public policy slightly corresponds with their perceived possibilities to do so. Map 8 reveals that between the ages of 13-16 years old, the score of participants feeling they can influence public policy ranges between 5 and 35 percent. The highest score is found in Söndrum et al. (12), whereas area Frösakull et al. (13) and Haverdal et al. (14) also have high scores. The lowest score of wanting to influence municipal policy is found in Centrum et al. (9) and Frennarp et al. (10). The lowest score of children feeling they can influence are found in Skedalahed et al. (3) and Trönninge et al. (4).

Looking at the older age group, Map 9, shows that the highest score on will to influence among the 16-19 years old is in Frösakull (13). The lowest share is in Andersberg (7). Also, Vallås et al. (6), Söndrum et al. (12) and Getinge et al. (15) have low scores. This corresponds quite well with their perceived possibilities to influence public policy as shown on Map 10. However, the highest score of feeling they can influence municipal policy is found in Åled et al. (2), and the lowest scores are in Trönninge et al. (4) and Getinge et al. (15).

In the following subsections the data presented in 5.2 (Maps 3-10) will be compared with the three different characteristics, one characteristic for each subsection.

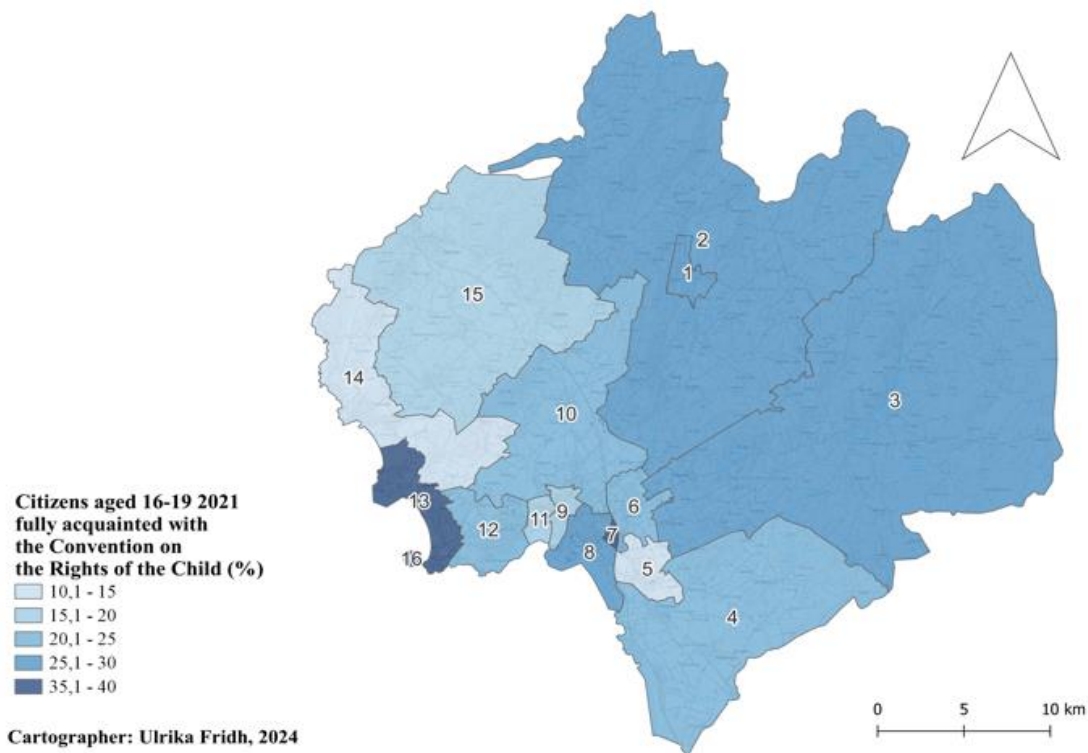
### 5.2.1 Knowledge on the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Maps 11 and 12 show to what extent children and youths in Halmstad municipality are acquainted with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.



Map 11. Citizens aged between 13-16 in Halmstad in 2021 fully acquainted with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Created by Ulrika Fridh, 2024.





Map 12. Citizens aged between 16-19 in Halmstad in 2021 fully acquainted with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Created by Ulrika Fridh, 2024.

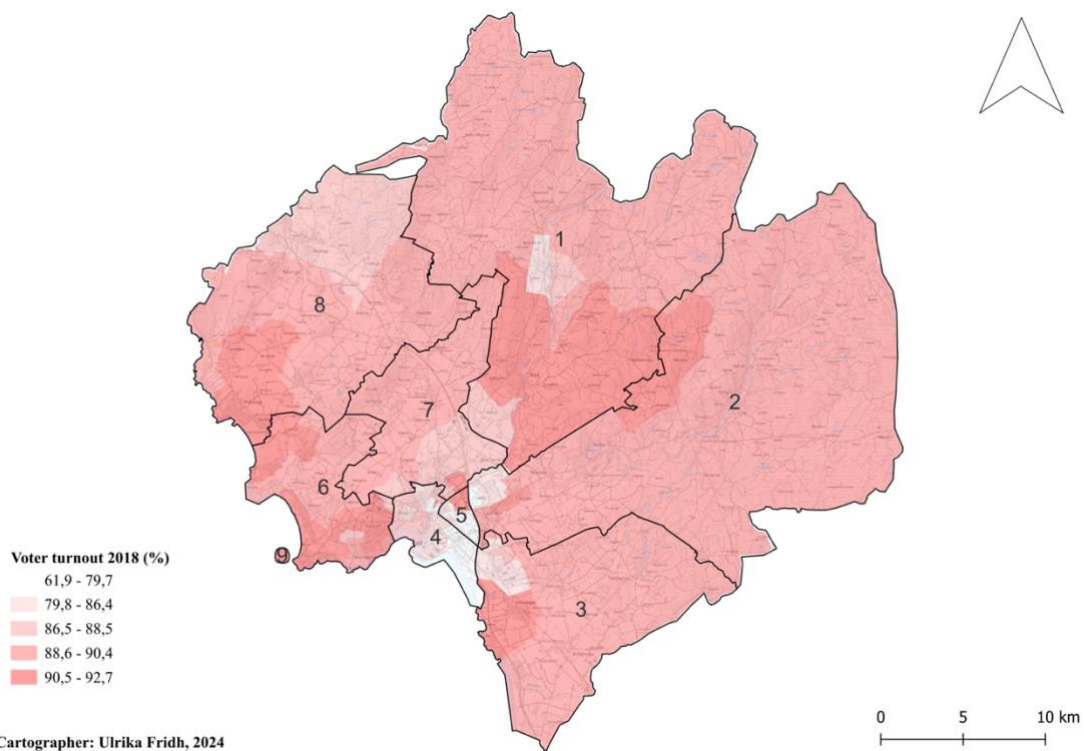
The results show that in general the knowledge on the Convention on the Rights of the Child is low. The percentage never reaches above 40 percent of the participants. Among the 13-16 years old, the highest rate is found in Åled et al. (2) (32 percent). Interestingly, the lowest rate (3 percent) is found in Skedalahed et al. (3) which has one of the highest rates in the oldest age group. Looking at their will and experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy, both areas have low scores. Among the 16-19 years old, the highest rates are found Andersberg (7) and Frösakull (13) (38 and 39 percent). Looking at the will to influence in these areas, the results are high in Frösakull et al. (13) and low in Andersberg (7). The experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy in these areas are neither high nor low compared to the other areas. The lowest score of acquaintance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child in this age group is found in Fyllinge (5) and Haverdal et al. (14). In these areas, the will and experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy are relatively high.

So far, the results indicate that there are no clear connections between the will and experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy and the knowledge on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Oskarström (1), Andersberg (7) and Linehed et al. (8) show high rates on acquaintance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child for both age groups (26, 28 and 26 percent for 13-16 years old and 29, 38, and 29 percent for 16-19 years old). Looking at the will to influence public policy in these areas (Maps 7 and 9), the rates are rather low. An exception is Linehed et al. (8) between the 16-19 years old. Regarding the experienced possibilities to influence public policy (Maps 8 and 10) in these areas, the results are quite similar regardless of age group, and are neither high nor low. For both age groups, Fyllinge (5) and Haverdal et al. (14) have very low rates (9, and 15 percent for Fyllinge, and 13 and 15 percent for Haverdal), although slightly higher for the participants aged 16-19. Interestingly, Haverdal et al. has the highest share of citizens aged 13-16 wanting to influence public policy as well as feeling they can influence public policy. Looking at the answers on their will and experienced possibilities to influence public policy, Haverdal et al. is placed among the highest rates for both questions in both age groups. For all questions in all age groups, Fyllinge is placed in the middle of the range. All together this once again indicates that there are no connections between being acquainted with the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the one hand, and wanting or/and experiencing good possibilities to influence public policy on the other. The study shows that the results probably are very individually depended and that one should be careful of generalizing based on these data sets. However, having the Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969) in mind, informing citizens about their rights is the first step of legitimate citizen participation. Thus, one could argue that the fact not all children and youths know their rights is examples of undemocratic traces in society. As accounted of in 3.3.3, six years after Norway had made the Convention on the Rights of the Child law, it was concluded that it had contributed to improving children's legal status in the country (UNICEF, 2020). In 2024, it is four years ago since Sweden made it a law, opening up for the possibility to investigate if it have had the same effects in Sweden.

### *5.2.2 Voter Turnout*

Map 13 shows the voter turnout for the different election districts in the municipal election in Halmstad in 2018. The layer showing the geographical areas selectable in LUPP 2018 is also added to the map.



Map 13. Voter turnout in Halmstad municipal election 2018. Created by Ulrika Fridh, 2024.

The voter turnout within Halmstad differs between 61,9 percent and 92.7 percent. Halmstad had 55 election districts in 2018. The ten election districts with the lowest turnout are in Andersberg (norra och södra), Östra stranden – Larsfrid, Vallås Västra, Nyhem norra, Linehed, Nyhem västra, Oskarström västra, Gustavsfält and Östergård. With the exception of Oskarström, all these districts are included in area 5 for this thesis (Map 2). In area 5, the will to influence municipal policy is between 45-50 percent for 13-16 years old (the lowest score), and between 50,1 – 55 percent for 16-19 years old which is neither high nor low compared to the other areas. When asked if they feel they can influence public policy, the percentage is 20,1 – 25 for the youngest age group which is relatively high. For the oldest age group, the percentage is 15,1-20 which is rather low.

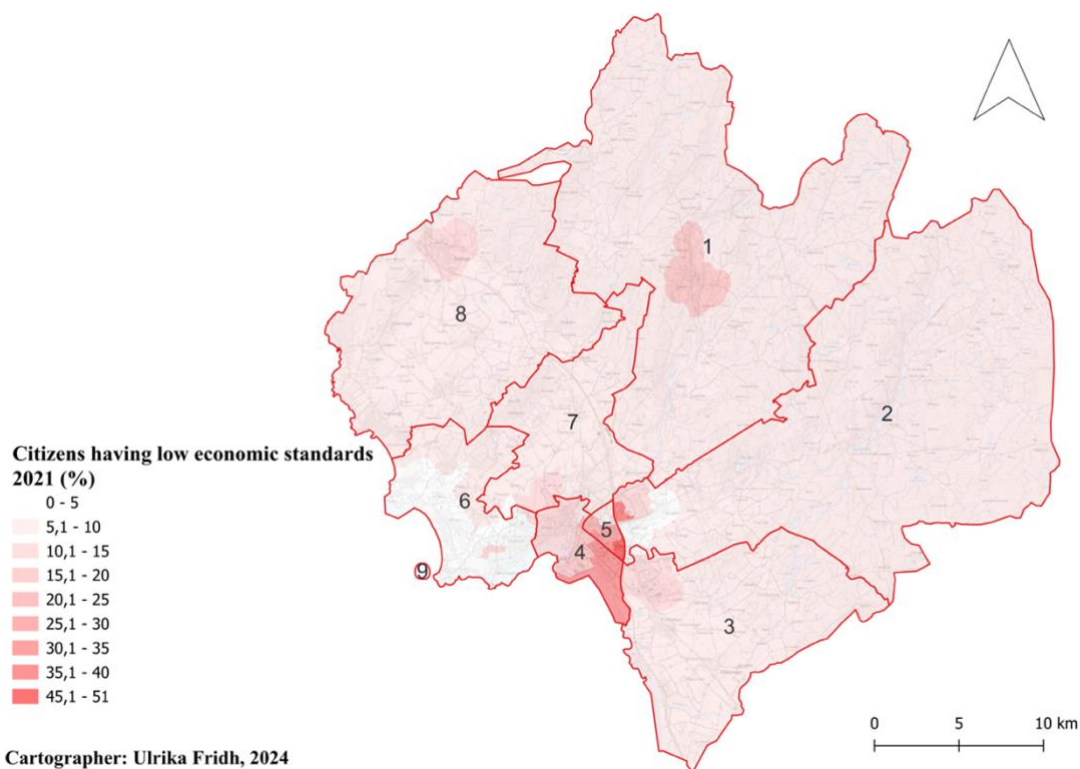
On the contrary, the highest voter turnouts are in election districts Onsjö – Fammarp, Söndrum Södra, Brogård, Haverdal, Eketånga Södra, Gamletull, Frennarp, Eketånga Norra, Gullbrandstorp, Tylösand – Frösakull. In this thesis, these election districts are primarily included in area 6, but also 7 and 8 which means that the turnouts are higher in the western parts of Halmstad municipality. Two of the districts are included in area 2 and 3 which are the east-southern parts of Halmstad. As shown on

Maps 3-6, these areas have the highest scores in all age groups concerning will and experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy.

Although one cannot completely conclude whether this result confirms the social learning theory or the status transmission theory, it could indicate that there is a connection between voter turnout and children's and youths' will and experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy. What is remarkable is the fact that there is a relatively high percentage of children aged 13-16 in Andersberg et al. (5) feeling they can influence municipal policy. In this area, the voter turnout is very low which, and thus Andersberg et al. (5) shows no connection between voter turnout and will to participate in municipal policy. Explanations for why this is the case is beyond the scope of this thesis. It would be interesting to investigate further if, for instance, Halmstad municipality has put much effort in this area for instance.

### 5.2.3 Economic Standards

Map 14 shows the percentage of citizens in Halmstad in 2021 having low economic standards. The layer showing the geographical areas selectable in LUPP 2018 is also added to the map.



Map 14. Percentage of Citizens having low economic standards in Halmstad, 2021. Created by Ulrika Fridh, 2024.

The share of citizens living with low economic standard in Halmstad varies between 3 and 51 percent. The mean is 16 and the median is 12. The areas with the top five highest share of citizens having low economic standard in Halmstad are Andersberg, Vallås västra, Nyhem södra, Linehed södra – Östra stranden and Linehed norra – Gustavsält. They have all percentages above 30 percent. These areas are included in area 5 for this thesis, except from Vallås which is included in area 2 (Map 2). However, they are neighboring each other so they are still located very close to each other. Area 5 has one of the lowest shares of children aged between 13 and 16 wanting to influence municipal policy. The share is slightly higher (50,1-55 percent) for the children and youths aged between 16 and 19, although not as high as in other areas. In area 5, they percentage of participants answering they feel they can influence public policy are 15,1-20 percent in both age groups which is relatively low compared to the other areas.

The five areas with the lowest share of citizens having low economic standards are Söndrum – Eketånga, Snöstorp – Brogård, Bäckagård norra – Bäckagård södra, Frösakull Tylösand and Gullbrandstorp – Haverdal - Steninge. These areas are included in area 2, 6 and 8 for this thesis. Among the youngest age group, these areas have rather low scores of wanting to influence municipal policy. However, area 2 and 6 have the highest score of participants wanting to influence municipal policy among the oldest age group. Area 8 has a slightly lower score but still relatively high. Likewise, the highest share of children and youths feeling they can influence public policy are found in area 6 for the younger age group and in area 2 for the older one.

This result could indicate that there is a connection between economic standard and children's and youths' will and experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy. Thus the results could confirm the theory on the relative power approach (Goodin – Dryzek, 1980) (see 3.3.1).

## 6 Discussion

In this chapter, the results will be further discussed and valued. It includes five sections which all discuss different aspects of the thesis in a wider context. Firstly, LUPP is discussed on a broader scale, mentioning its strengths and weaknesses (6.1). The second subsection (6.2) further elaborates on the discussion in 6.1 and aims at discussing why children sometimes are forgotten in planning. Following that, is a short discussion on the possibilities with neogeography in municipal policy (6.3). In 6.4 Hart's (2008) work on children participation is presented and discussed. Lastly (6.5), alternative methods for conducting this research are presented and discussed.

### 6.1 LUPP in a Wider Context

Having the initial discussion on the literature on separating children and youth in science (see 2.1.2) in mind, LUPP is doing correctly by offering the survey in three different age categories instead of having one for all. Doing so surely facilitates for working in alignment with recent research and creates great opportunities to have policies suitable for both children and youths. However, LUPP itself is not geographical. Although the results show no indications that LUPP-results could not contribute to developing children's and youths' participation specifically in planning processes (related to research question 1), the results in 5.1 reveal that LUPP constitutes a basis for decision-making in several aspects - perhaps not primarily in terms of children's and youths' geographies. However, of course some of the examples given by the participants (for instance violence and crime prevention, safety in public spaces and opening youth recreation centers) can be connected to children's and youths' geographies. In other words, LUPP has potential of contributing to knowledge on children and youths regarding many aspects. Not all measures taken by Swedish municipalities based on the LUPP-results presented in 5.1 can be connected to the issues presented (Yantzi, 2018; Helleman et al., 2023; Cele – van der Burgt, 2015) in Chapter 1, specifically concerning children's and youths geographies and use of public space. As the results show, LUPP can help understand children's and youths' experiences of public space, but to gain deeper understandings I argue LUPP should be supplemented with alternative methods such as mental maps. Mental maps are defined as “a person's perception of a place. A mental map may include the physical characteristics of a place, such as boundaries of a neighborhood, or the attributes of a place, such as a neighborhood's perceived unsafe areas. A mental map is primarily a

psychological construct, although it may also be rendered as an actual map” (Esri, n.d). Further, if the aim of using LUPP-results would be to further understand geographical differences (research question 2) the current design is not completely sufficient. This discussion is related to the discussion on neogeography in section 6.3. Doing geographical comparisons is not suitable for all municipalities, as revealed in 5.1.3, due to the size of the municipality. But when suitable it should be based on knowledge building. MUCF could facilitate doing geographical comparisons, for instance by improving the formats they provide the data and the statistics in, to the municipalities. Several hours of work for this thesis has constituted of managing and preparing the data in order to being able to use it in FME and QGIS. Although research always implies managing data, it would be in MUCF’s interest to facilitate for the municipalities to analyze the data. Offering the data per question *and* per residential area or school would facilitate for analyzing the LUPP results. On a more important note though, as one participant in the research for this thesis argued (see 5.1.4), LUPP-answers cannot be sorted on gender. This is used as arguments as for why LUPP should be the foundation for dialogue, and not decision-making, clearly limiting the potential of LUPP as foundation for decision-making. This is relevant to consider especially in light of the literature review (2.2.1) which presents research showing that girl’s and boy’s experiences of their geography vary. This also relates to what was previously discussed regarding the fact that only larger municipalities (in terms of citizens) could consider doing geographical comparisons without jeopardizing the anonymity of the children (5.1.3), which goes back to the ethical dilemmas discussed in 2.2.1. In other words, the question of seeking explanations for geographical differences within a municipality is restricted to larger municipalities since smaller municipalities do not find it as valuable. LUPP provides such a large foundation and although the result of this thesis is that LUPP is used as a foundation for decision-making in municipal policy one cannot draw any conclusions on the degree of impact it has in proportion to how big the survey is in terms of number of questions and hours of work it requires.

One challenge doing this research which not fully has been overcome is that different data has different geographical areas which naturally renders the possibility to combine data and reach conclusions (see 4.4.2). Of course, in some cases one need to accept how things are (for instance elections districts which are difficult to change) and the fact that it would not be suitable to use election districts as geographical areas for LUPP. However, it would be beneficial for municipalities to use the same

geographical areas for different data as much as possible to facilitate combining the data and to be able to compare different geographical areas. Again, this, to some extent, only apply to larger municipalities.

LUPP contains questions on if the participants have 1) contacted politicians, internal personnel or decision-makers, 2) written a citizen proposal and 3) participated in a demonstration in the last twelve months. It also contains questions on 1) whom they turn to if they want to influence something in the municipality, 2) what they want to have influence on (this one is an open-ended question) and 3) the reasons for not wanting to influence. This means that there is great potential to further analyze and gain deeper understandings on children's and youths' perceptions on citizen participation. The second question also indicates that LUPP has great potential of providing information specifically on how children and youths perceive their geographies. Maybe one could complement these questions on how they perceive the feedback from LUPP, as well if they perceive LUPP as valuable citizen participation in general and for influencing public space in particular, or not.

Lastly, one can conclude that the similarities between LUPP and the International Children's Worlds Study (ISCWeB) as presented in the literature review (2.2.2) are many in terms of what questions are asked and how the people conducting the study believes it is an important area of study. ISCWeB is evidence that it is possible to conduct large international studies to gain knowledge on children's and youths' perception on their lives. Rees and Dinisman (2015) also proves that it is possible to do large cross-national comparisons. Sweden is not part of ISCWeB (ISCWeb, n.d). However, MUCF also provides a national youth survey (*nationella ungdomsenkäten*) which is sent to children and youths between 16 and 25 years each third year (MUCF, n.d). Despite this, I would argue MUCF could be inspired by ISCWeB and provide better opportunities to do national comparisons on the LUPP-results.

## **6.2 Why Have Children and Youths Have Been Overlooked?**

What has struck me is the fact that while there seems to be a general agreement on the fact that children easily are overlooked and not really considered in planning despite the obvious fact that everyone has once been a child. Every adult has experienced the world as a child and thus it becomes interesting to explore why, when becoming adults, it seems as we forget what it felt like walking the streets as kids or having no place to



socialize with friends. It is also interesting to think about what comes next, when children increasingly are taken into consideration. Maybe it would be interesting for municipalities to gain further knowledge on how elderly people perceive public space and how their geographies differ from other age groups. There are literature to be inspired from on how to proceed with research on elderly's geographies (Dubbin – Yen, 2023; Wang et al., 2024). Another indication that children and youths perhaps are less overlooked nowadays is the fact that the decision to expand E22 through Lund, which was made in February 2024, is appealed against by the Swedish Green Party (*Miljöpartiet*). They refer to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and argue that no analysis of how children will be affected has been done before making the decision in terms of the increased climate changes sparked by the expansion of the highway (Kuprijanko, 2024). Maybe this is something we will encounter more often, when protesting against decisions which could be argued to be disadvantageous for future generations.

I would also argue that overlooking children and youths could have long-term consequences as well. The urbanization of Sweden has increased exponentially in the 20<sup>th</sup> and in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century (SCB, 2015). In 2061 it is expected that half of the Swedish population will live in 29 municipalities (SCB, 2022). Also, there are reports (Larsson, 2023; SCB, 2023) saying that Swedish childbearing is decreasing and reaching new bottom levels. Considering this, I argue it is even more important to consider children's and youths' opinions in municipal policy. I believe the incentives for staying in the same municipality as where you grew up becomes larger if you feel that your voice has been heard and that you have been taken care of when growing up. There are questions in LUPP asking about the participant's plans for the future, if the participants plan to move to another municipality or not. What is also relevant for this discussion is the fact that I2 discussed the fact that there is an increased interest in human capital and the conflict between needing citizens to stay within the municipality on the one hand and experiencing requirements of cost saving and reductions on the other.

Being critical towards the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the principles stated in the convention seem to be not only generous and kind towards the children, but also the only reasonable point of departure to have. However, writing this thesis has also made me reason if it is only idle words. Is it in reality possible to always have children's best interests in mind in decision-making processes? If yes, then the

convention is not only idle words. If no, the convention, to some extent, is idle words. But maybe it is still worth striving towards it because it is the only reasonable thing to do. UNICEF (2020) is clear on that the responsibility lies with the adults (see 3.3.3) when they argue that implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child is a new way of seeing this. It is also worth asking oneself what comes first. Is it the will to influence public policy or is it the feeling that you can influence which makes you want to influence? Do children and youths not want to influence because they do not feel they can? It seems logical that children and youths who feel adults listen to them and that they are interested in hearing their perspectives, also want to influence decision-making. But on the other hand, if they *want* to influence, then they might reach out and feel listened to in that way. Then it all comes down to the question of whose responsibility it is. Should it be the children or the adults? Regardless of the answer to this question, one can conclude that the Swedish authorities have created a good method (LUPP) to meet the general critiques of children and youth being excluded from municipal policy.

Lastly, I2 offered an interesting discussion on the topic of overlooking children and youths when saying that adults conduct “adult-guessing” in situations where children and youths are discussed. To me, this indicates that there is a clear distinction between having a (what is thought to be) child’s perspective (*barnperspektiv*) on the one hand and actually having children’s perspective (*barns perspektiv*) in mind.

### **6.3 Indications of Neogeography**

This research has shown that in some cases, for some municipalities, it could be beneficial to map out geographical differences. For instance, to seek connections between characteristics which could influence each other. Believing that not only geographers, but everyone, working with municipal policy having a geographical perspective would be beneficial opens up for the discussion on neogeography. Neogeography was first coined in in 2006 by Di-Anne Eisnor to name new practices connected to Geographic Information Systems such as Google Earth and mapping application programming interfaces. One definition of neogeography is that it is a composition of “digital spatial media- including encoding standards, applications, programming techniques and Web services that supersede and break with conventional mapping practices and technologies, namely, Geographic Information Systems (GIS)” (Leszczynski, 2014 p. 61). The essence of neogeography is in “people using and

creating their own maps, on their own terms, sharing location information with friends and visitors, helping shape context, and conveying understanding through knowledge of place” (Leszczynski, 2014, p. 61). In this context it is also relevant to discuss counter-mapping which is defined as “maps by a community that seeks to challenge the maps produced and used by a state, administrative body or commercial company” (Rogers et al., 2013). Counter-mapping could be considered effective tools to gain knowledge on how spaces are experienced which in turn could facilitate for fact-based decisions.

Neogeography could open for organizations and municipalities to include all people working with children and youths in this context. It could open for other groups of people participating in planning processes or, for that reason, maybe starting to analyze LUPP-results using GIS. Children and youths could create mental maps, describing how they perceive public space and letting adults into their world that way.

#### **6.4 Participation Becomes Segregation**

In an additional paper, Roger A. Hart (2008) who proposed the use of the ladder of children’s participation, argues that children in North America and Europe have been segregated from everyday participatory activities with adults. Hart argues that establishments of play and recreation programs as well as children’s decreased use of public space (for instance the research from Matthews in 2001 (see 2.2.1) are examples of children being removed from informal participation with adults. This discussion also connects to the fact that teenagers try to avoid the “adult gaze” (Matthews et al., 1997) which of course also results in the type of segregation Hart (2008) discuss. Here, I would argue that adults have great responsibilities and possibilities to change their way of problematizing children and youths in public space to avoid this type of segregation. Children learn much from participating in plays with each other and this has increasingly been replaced by the more segregated way of participating: formal participation in projects and programs, Hart argues. In relation to the result of this thesis, Hart’s argumentation becomes interesting because the results show that municipalities have implemented youth recreation centers because their LUPP results have shown that children wish for it. In the context of their municipal work and in the context of this thesis, this has been perceived as democratic actions and examples of children and youth participation. Hart’s (2008) argumentation though put this line of argument in another light. I argue these different ways of arguing is evidence of the complexity of the topic and proof that there is not one answer as how children and

youth participation is best incorporated in municipal policy. I would argue that this line of thought is in alignment with what Hart argues that “children’s potential as citizens need to be recognized to the fullest [...]” (Hart, 2008, p. 24). I agree with Hart’s statement that the most important thing is not to have children in charge but recognize that “others” sometimes should be involved in decision-making not only because it affects them, but because it is their right. In other words, the aim of the ladder was never for Hart to argue that children should be in charge, but to argue for the importance of recognizing “the rights of others to have a voice and involve them” (Hart, 2008, p. 24), which seems like a healthy point of departure for municipalities and other authorities to have.

## **6.5 Alternative Methods**

Instead of using secondary data from LUPP, one could adopt the methods named in 2.1.1 (structured open-ended questionnaires, non-participant observations, ethnography, participant observation, interviews, focus groups and so-called child-friendly techniques such as sentence completion and art and play therapy methods) or instance conducting interviews, walking interviews or focus groups. Of course, that type of research requires much more thorough ethical considerations since the research regards children and youths. I also believe it would be beneficial to conduct focus groups with municipal representatives instead of doing semi-structured interviews since I believe that would have sparked more discussion and new thoughts among the participants. The self-administered questionnaire was valuable and an efficient way of collecting relatively much data and this it is still believed to be a relevant method. To improve the results though one could exclude all the open-ended questions and only include closed questions. This would probably make possible to send the questionnaire to even more municipalities since that data would be quicker to analyze.

## 7 Conclusion and Further Research

The first aim of this thesis was to explore what role Swedish municipalities perceive the Local follow up on youth policy-survey (LUPP) plays in terms of citizen participation. The second aim was then to investigate what characteristics can be used to explain geographical differences on citizen participation in general and children's and youths' will and opportunities to participate in particular. The first aim has been investigated by conducting a self-administered questionnaire which was complemented with semi-structured interviews. The second aim was investigated by a secondary data analysis on Halmstad municipality where three variables were compared with the questions in LUPP concerning the participants will and experienced possibilities to influence municipal policy.

With regards to the relatively small sample and the fact that only municipalities which uses LUPP have been included in the research, there are limitations on possible conclusions to be drawn. The fact that no statistical analysis was made on the secondary data also limits the possibility to make conclusions. What can be said though is that LUPP is perceived, by municipalities who regularly uses it, as a good tool for giving opportunities to children and youth to influence municipal policy. However, it is beneficial to combine it with other ways of children participation. LUPP does not primarily contribute to improving children's and youths' geographies, but can constitute a basis for decision-making in many aspects. Regarding the second aim, one can conclude that voter turnout and economic standards to a larger extent relate to children's and youths' will and possibilities to influence public policy compared to them being acquainted with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Regardless of age group and/or year, the will to influence public policy is higher than the experienced possibilities to do so. Indications on (visual) connections could be found when comparing the data with voter turnout. An exception is Andersberg et al. (5) which had low voter turnout but especially among the 13-16 years old, a high percentage feel they can influence public policy. Further, one could argue that the research done confirms the theory on the relative power approach (Goodin – Dryzek, 1980) (see 3.3.1), indicating a (visual) connection between economic standards on the one hand and will and experienced possibilities to influence public policy on the other.

Suggestions for further research are 1) investigating whether children's and youths' legal status has improved since the Convention on the Rights of the Child

became law in Sweden (see 5.2.1), 2) although not ethically easy, investigating children's and youths perceptions on LUPP. Considering the fact that research shows that they are concerned about citizen participation (Hart, 2009) (see 2.2), do they perceive LUPP as a valuable way of expressing their opinions? and 3) conducting research using mental maps (Esri, n.d) to gain further knowledge on children's and youths' geographies. As already discussed, LUPP is in itself not specially focused on children's and youths' spatial and geographical experiences of their environments.

To extend the findings from this thesis, one could of course use other characteristics to compare the data from LUPP with, as there certainly are other variables as well which could explain geographical differences on children's and youths' perceptions on citizen participation.

Lastly, conducting this research and writing the thesis has sparked many intriguing thoughts on interesting variables to compare with each other. For instance if the number of children and youths who read (which also is a question in LUPP) varies depending on where they live or where they go to school. Further, there are more questions in LUPP regarding influence on municipal policy. One can assume that it would be of interest to know whether the children's and youths' opinions on this varies depending on where they live or if it varies between schools. Another interesting aspect would be to investigate if there are any connections between how the youths who have right to vote actually votes and compare this with the LUPP-results.

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## 9 Appendices

### 9.1 Municipalities Conducting LUPP 2023

- *Ale kommun*
- *Alvesta kommun*
- *Bengtsfors kommun*
- *Bodens kommun*
- *Borås kommun*
- *Finspångs kommun*
- *Färgelanda kommun*
- *Gällivare kommun*
- *Hjo kommun*
- *Härryda kommun*
- *Jokkmokks kommun*
- *Järfälla kommun*
- *Kalix kommun*
- *Kungsbacka kommun*
- *Kungälv kommun*
- *Lerum kommun*
- *Lessebo kommun*
- *Lilla Edet kommun*
- *Ludvika kommun*
- *Lysekil kommun*
- *Norbergs kommun*
- *Olofströms kommun*
- *Partille kommun*
- *Ronneby kommun*
- *Stenungsunds kommun*
- *Strömstads kommun*
- *Svedala kommun*
- *Svenljunga kommun*
- *Sölvesborgs kommun*
- *Tanums kommun*
- *Tjörns kommun*

- *Trelleborgs kommun*
- *Ulricehamns kommun*
- *Åmåls kommun*
- *Öckerö kommun*
- *Örkelljunga kommun*

## 9.2 Questionnaire for Municipalities Which Conducted LUPP In 2023

1. Jag godkänner att mina svar i denna enkät kan komma att användas i det slutliga resultatet av examensarbetet

- *ja*
- *nej*

2. Vilken kommun representerar du?

[See the municipalities in appendix 1]

3. Vilken/vilka enkäter använder ni (åldersgrupper)?

- *13-16 år*
- *16-19 år*
- *19-25 år*

4. Om ni inte använder alla enkäter, varför har ni valt att använda just de ni gör?

[Open-ended question]

5. Hur ofta genomför ni enkäten?

- *Varje år*
- *Vartannat år*
- *Var tredje år*
- *Var fjärde år*
- *Annat*

6. Jämför ni systematiskt nya resultat med tidigare års resultat?

- *Ja*
- *Nej*
- *Annat*

7. Om ni svarat ja på föregående fråga, hur analyserar ni resultaten?

[Open-ended question]

8. Vilka målgrupper presenterar ni resultatet för?

- *Ungdomar som svarat på enkäten*
- *Invånare i kommunen*

- *Politiker*
  - *Tjänstepersoner internt*
  - *Vi presenterar inte resultaten*
9. Hur presenterar ni resultaten för de målgrupper ni vill nå?  
[open ended-question]
10. Använder ni resultaten som grund för verksamhetsutveckling?
- *Ja*
  - *Nej*
11. Om ni svarat ja på föregående fråga, på vilket sätt har resultaten legat till grund för verksamhetsutveckling? Ge gärna exempel på insatser  
[Open-ended question]
12. Finns det något annat som ni vill tillägga?  
[Open-ended question]
13. Vi vill ta del av det slutliga resultatet av examensarbetet (tidigast i maj 2024)
- *Ja*
  - *Nej*
14. Vi godkänner att Ulrika Fridh hör av sig för eventuella kompletterande frågor.
- *Ja*
  - *Nej*
15. Om ni svarat ja på någon eller båda av föregående frågor, vänligen ange mailadress eller telefonnummer

### **9.3 Interview Guide for Semi-Structured Interviews**

1. Ni använder LUPP var X år. Hur länge har ni gjort LUPP?
2. Vet du vad anledningen till att ni började med LUPP var?
3. Skulle du säga att LUPP bidrar till barn och ungas inflytande i kommunpolitiken?
  - a) Om ja, på vilket sätt?
  - b) Om nej, varför inte?
4. Jobbar ni med andra sätt - utöver LUPP - att ge barn och unga möjlighet att ha inflytande i kommunpolitiken?

5. Med utgångspunkt i att barn ska ges möjlighet att uttrycka sina åsikter om frågor som berör dem och saker som är viktiga i deras liv, vad är LUPP:s styrkor och svagheter i detta avseende?

6. Ni visar resultaten för barn och ungdomar som svarat på enkäten, invånare i kommunen, politiker och tjänstepersoner internt. Hur brukar resultatet av LUPP mottas av dessa?

7. Jämför ni resultaten utifrån vilka geografiska områden ungdomarna tillhör?

8. Finns det något du vill tillägga?

## 9.4 Consent Form



LUNDS UNIVERSITET  
Samhällsvetenskapliga fakulteten

Samtycke till deltagande i en studie om *Svenska kommuners syn på LUPP i relation till barnkonventionen*

### Medgivande

Jag bekräftar härmed att jag har tagit del av skriftlig och muntlig information om studien och accepterar att delta. Jag har fått möjlighet att ställa frågor om studien. Jag godkänner att intervjun spelas in.

Jag har fått information om att de uppgifter som samlas in om mig kommer att behandlas konfidentiellt, på ett sådant sätt att min identitet inte kommer att avslöjas för obehöriga.

Jag är medveten om att min medverkan är helt frivillig och att jag när som helst och utan närmare förklaring kan avbryta mitt deltagande.

Ort och datum \_\_\_\_\_

Förnamn och efternamn \_\_\_\_\_

Namnteckning \_\_\_\_\_

## 9.5 Final Sample of the Self-Administered Questionnaire



- *Alvesta kommun*
- *Borås kommun*
- *Färgelanda kommun*
- *Hjo kommun*
- *Järfälla kommun*
- *Kungsbacka kommun*
- *Kungälv kommun*
- *Lerum kommun*
- *Lessebo kommun*
- *Ludvika kommun*
- *Olofströms kommun*
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