

Listening to the Young

Engaging Children in Citizen Dialogue for Sustainable Mobility

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The County
Administrative
Board of Skåne

Interreg
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Co-funded by
the European Union

Mobility Makers

Abstract

This report aims to investigate how children can be effectively included in Skåne County's municipal planning processes, with a particular focus on reducing car dependency. An issue recurring often is planning for children rather than with them, which can be problematic when seeking children's opinions. There is a lack of research covering this problem in both the Swedish context and countries where the Children Convention is law. The study is based on the theoretical frameworks of intergenerational justice combined with selected Sustainable Development Goals. Using a qualitative approach, the study combines a literature review with fourteen semi-structured interviews and a thematic analysis. The literature review maps existing research on children's participation and sustainable mobility, while thematic analysis of interview data identifies further challenges and opportunities. Results of the study exhibit challenges with access to children's insights, power imbalances and lack of guidelines, while lack of limiting measures for car usage poses a threat to sustainable mobility. Opportunities for including children in planning processes can be created through new initiatives and projects and serve as an inspiration source for the municipality and other authorities. The main conclusions of the study indicate that children's participation is limited due to unclear guidelines, better cooperation, and resource constraints.

Keywords

Children, Citizen Dialogue, Sustainable Mobility, Intergenerational Justice

Sammanfattning

Denna rapport syftar till att undersöka hur barn effektivt kan inkluderas i Skånes läns kommunala planeringsprocesser, med särskilt fokus på att minska bilberoendet. Ett återkommande problem är att planering görs för barn istället för med dem, vilket kan vara problematiskt när det är barnens åsikter som efterfrågas. Det saknas forskning på området i både den svenska kontexten samt i länder där barnkonventionen är inskriven i lagen. Studien bygger på teoretiska ramverk som behandlar intergenerationell rättvisa i kombination med utvalda delar från de Globala Målen för hållbar utveckling. Med hjälp av en kvalitativ metod kombinerar studien en litteraturgenomgång med fjorton semistrukturerade intervjuer. Litteraturgenomgången kartlägger befintlig forskning om barns deltagande och hållbar mobilitet, medan tematisk analys av intervjudata identifierar ytterligare utmaningar och möjligheter. Studiens resultat visar utmaningar med tillgång till barns åsikter, maktbalanser och en brist på ramverk, medans avsaknaden av begränsningar för bilanvändandet utgör ett hot för hållbar mobilitet. Möjligheter för att inkludera barn i planeringsprocesser kan åstadkommas genom nya initiativ och projekt. Dessa kan agera som en inspirationskälla för kommuner och andra myndigheter. De huvudsakliga slutsatserna indikerar att barns deltagande är begränsat på grund av otydliga riktlinjer, bristande samarbete och begränsningar av resurser.

Nyckelord

Barn, Medborgardialog, Hållbar Mobilitet, Intergenerationell rättvisa

Acknowledgements

The content of this report is based on a master's thesis entitled "Listening to the Young" which was presented and approved in August 2025 at the Department of Sustainable Development, Environmental Science and Technology at KTH.

We are giving our heartfelt thanks to our supervisor at KTH, Berit Brokking Balfors, for her guidance, encouragement, and valuable feedback throughout this project. Her insights and support have been a great help from start to finish. We are equally grateful to Jörgen Dehlin from the Mobility Makers project, whose advice, ideas, and practical input have been important in shaping our work.

A big thank you also goes to all the interview participants from the municipalities, the Swedish Transport Administration, and Region Skåne. We truly appreciate the time you took to share your knowledge and experiences with us — without you, this study would not have been possible.

Finally, we thank everyone who, in one way or another, has supported us during this process.

List of abbreviations

MM Project	The mobility makers Project
The Children's Convention	Convention of the Rights of the Child
EVs	Electricial viechles
CFEs	Child-friendly environments
STA	The Swedish Transport Administration

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1 Introduction

The Children Convention becoming law in Sweden marked a significant step forward for children's inclusion in contributing to society and planning (Saccotelli et al., 2019). Eleven months after the implementation of the Children Convention, Bris (2020) presented in an investigation that only one in three municipalities had implemented the convention into their work and that only 59% had a strategy for applying it in practice. The Children Convention's definition of a child is a person aged 0-18 years and is the definition that will be used throughout the study (Unicef, n.d).

In countries other than Sweden, such as the Netherlands, the United States, and Colombia, the idea that children cannot contribute is long forgotten and their capacity is now being embraced (Saccotelli et al., 2019). With the children convention, children should by law be included in the planning, but the extent to which the region, municipalities, and organisations are doing this, and how it is done, need to be researched further to understand how to improve it. There is a gap in the research that concerns children's inclusion in planning in the Swedish context, which makes this is especially important to investigate.

This thesis explores these two challenges in collaboration with the Mobility Makers (MM) project, which aims to change and investigate people's transport patterns. The project is led by the EU Interreg North Sea Region programme, with the County Administrative Board of Skåne focusing on examining the inclusion of children in dialogue on transport-related issues.

The future change in transport behaviour depends on children, making their inclusivity in the process vital (Casadó et al., 2020). Transport behaviour develops at a young age and relies on the availability of various transport

modes. Children are the ones who will grow up and thrive in future society, so their impact, thoughts and ideas are highly valuable when shaping the future of our cities, regions, and countries.

2 Problem statement

In this section, the problem statement, including the aim and research questions, will be presented. Furthermore, the delimitations identified in this thesis work will be evaluated. Ending with a disposition of what parts will be included in this thesis report.

2.1 Problem statement

Incorporating children into the planning process can be challenging, particularly when distinguishing between planning with a children's perspective and planning from the child's perspective. Planning with a children's perspective often involves making decisions based on what adults believe is best for children, whereas adopting the child's perspective entails directly engaging with children to understand their own views and experiences (SKR, 2023). But including children in the planning process is not the only challenge Sweden, and the world, are facing. Cities are planned for cars, which correlates with the ongoing use of cars. Changing people's transport behaviour can be crucial to reducing the environmental impact of cars (Gummerson, 2005). Using a car has become a part of most people's daily lives, and it is usually the first choice because of shorter travel times, cheaper journeys, and departures when it suits them best. Making other transportation options that can outperform these factors available could be important for encouraging people to change their habits (Strömblad et al., 2022). These are issues which are a challenge and need to be explored further, especially since there is a loss of research in the Swedish context and countries where the children's

convention is incorporated into the law. These highlight challenges within the field of study, underscoring the need for deeper examination and continued research to better understand their implications and potential solutions.

2.2 Aim

The project aims to explore how children can be effectively included in planning processes, with a particular focus on reducing car dependency. When altering car accessibility and offering alternative transport options, it is essential to involve the affected communities in the decision-making process. This study therefore seeks to examine how various authorities in Skåne engage with children, identifying which initiatives have yielded positive outcomes and which have been less successful.

2.3 Research questions

The research question is examined to explore the report's aim and to develop a deeper understanding of the field of study.

- How do municipalities in Skåne and relevant national authorities currently engage in dialogue with children regarding various transport infrastructure projects and work to shift traffic away from cars toward other modes of transportation?
- Which tools could be used to improve the inclusion of children in planning practices?
- What are Skånes municipalities views on the opportunities and challenges for including children in future project planning?

2.4 Delimitations

The area of study can be a delimitation, as time and resource constraints only allowed the thesis to explore a specific county of Sweden rather than the whole country. However, in Skåne County there are municipalities that cover a diverse range of areas, featuring different population sizes and densities. This diversity ensures that the selected cases are well-suited to address the research question. Since the researchers are based in Stockholm, the opportunity to visit the study sites or conduct interviews in person was difficult, which can be seen as a delimitation. Information about the geographical considerations could be obtained online through statistics, maps, and documents. The technology

available today made it possible to conduct the interviews online without disrupting the interaction.

2.5 Structure of the report

The report opens with an introduction to the subject, followed by a problem statement that provides a detailed description of the issue, along with the study's aim, research questions, and delimitations. The background is then provided, followed by the theoretical framework and the methodology of the study. The literature review describes the context and summarises relevant prior research. This section leads into the presentation and analysis of the study's findings. The subsequent discussion offers critical reflections on the methodology, situates the study's results within an international context, and outlines the pathway forward. Lastly, the conclusion summarises the key findings of this study.

3 Background

This chapter will provide a background which gives information about the case study area of Skåne, its position and some demographics. Followed by an explanation on how Swedish planning is structured, including an overview of the relevant authorities and their responsibilities. Subsequently, a debrief of the Mobility Makers project, the listen project and the Convention of the Rights of the Child will be presented.

3.1 Case study area

The Skåne region, situated in southern Sweden, comprises 33 municipalities. By the end of 2024, Skåne's population reached approximately 1.43 million, with the majority residing in major cities such as Malmö, Helsingborg, and Lund. These cities also have the most significant population growth compared to other smaller towns or villages in Skåne. Notably, the southwestern parts of Skåne have seen a particularly high influx of new residents in contrast to many other regions in Sweden, the population of Skåne has increased at a higher rate than the rest of Sweden. It is essential to note that the general growth rate has decreased in the majority of the municipalities in 2024 (Region Skåne, 2024a).

Figure 1.

Map of Skåne County.

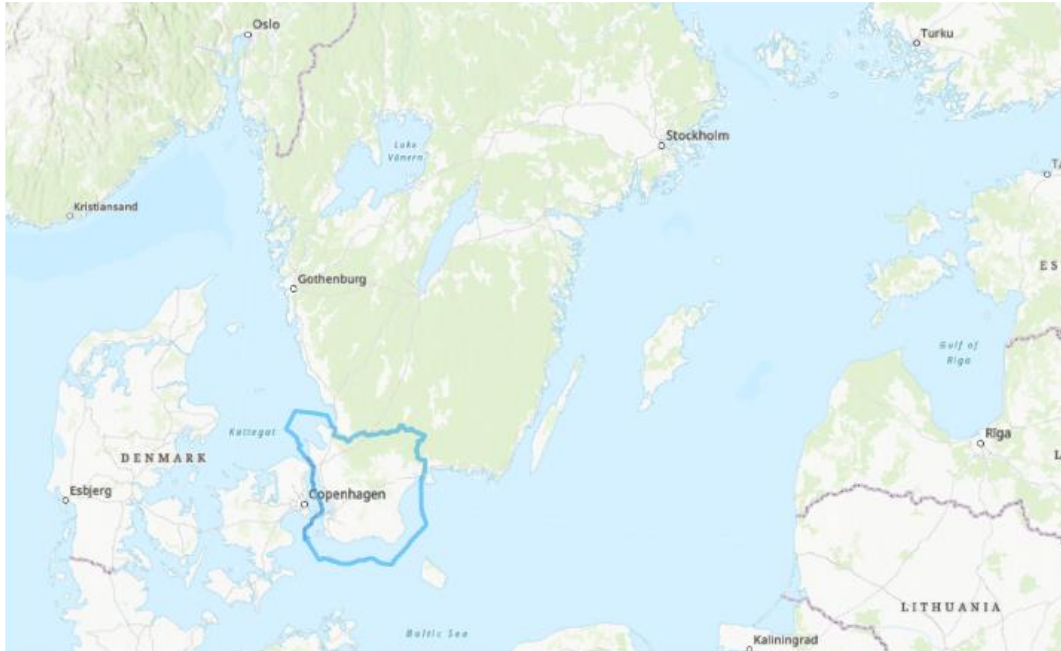


Figure 1: Map of Sweden and Skåne County.

In comparing Skåne County to other counties in Sweden, the population density is relatively high, but not as high as in Stockholm or as low as in Norrbotten County. Skåne County has a land area (in square km) that is relatively big in comparison to other counties, although it does not beat Norrbotten County or Västra Götaland County (see table 1) (Statistikmyndigheten [SCB], 2024).

Table 1.

Table 1: Population density (inhabitants per square kilometres) 2024 – County

County	Inhabitants per square kilometres	Population	Land area in square kilometers
	2024	2024	2024
Skåne County	129,8	1428626	11007,64
Stockholm County	377,7	2473307	6548,09
Västra Götaland County	74,1	1772821	23914,31
Uppsala County	49,6	407912	8230,52

Södermanland County	49,5	301542	6097,20
Norrbottn County	2,5	248620	97968,89
Sweden	25,8	10587710	409628,10

Figure 2.

Municipalities studied in thesis and their position.



Figure 2: The 10 municipalities studied

When examining population density in the municipalities studied in this thesis, significant differences become apparent. In table 2, the municipalities that are closest to Skåne County overall in terms of population density are highlighted in green colour. Osby is one of the least densely populated municipalities among those studied. In contrast, the larger cities of Trelleborg and Helsingborg, naturally have higher population densities (see table 2.). (Statistikmyndigheten [SCB], 2024).

Table 2.

Table 2: Population density (inhabitants per square kilometre) – Municipalities

Municipality	Inhabitants per square kilometre	Population	Land area in square kilometers
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	2024	2024	2024
1276 Klippan	47,1	17714	375,76
1287 Trelleborg	138,4	47269	341,47
1283 Helsingborg	440,8	152091	345,07
1214 Svalöv	37,4	14543	388,36
1263 Svedala	107,9	23581	218,47
1284 Höganäs	197,3	28430	144,12
1272 Bromölla	76,4	12470	163,16
1230 Staffanstorps	254,7	27303	107,19
1231 Burlöv	1059,1	20101	18,98
1273 Osby	22,4	12947	577,50
12 Skåne County	129,8	1428626	11007,64

As mentioned previously, the population growth has decreased to a certain extent during 2024 in Skåne County, as is also envisioned in Figure 3. The municipalities marked out are the municipalities studied in this thesis report. Where Osby, Brömölla, Klippan and Svalöv municipalities have a decreasing population growth (see figure 3.). The people who are moving are mostly moving because of studies, work, etc.; these are people between the ages of 20 and 30. Most of the workplaces are also situated in the bigger cities in Skåne, such as Helsingborg and Lund (Region Skåne 2024a).

Figure 3.

Population growth in Skåne municipalities.

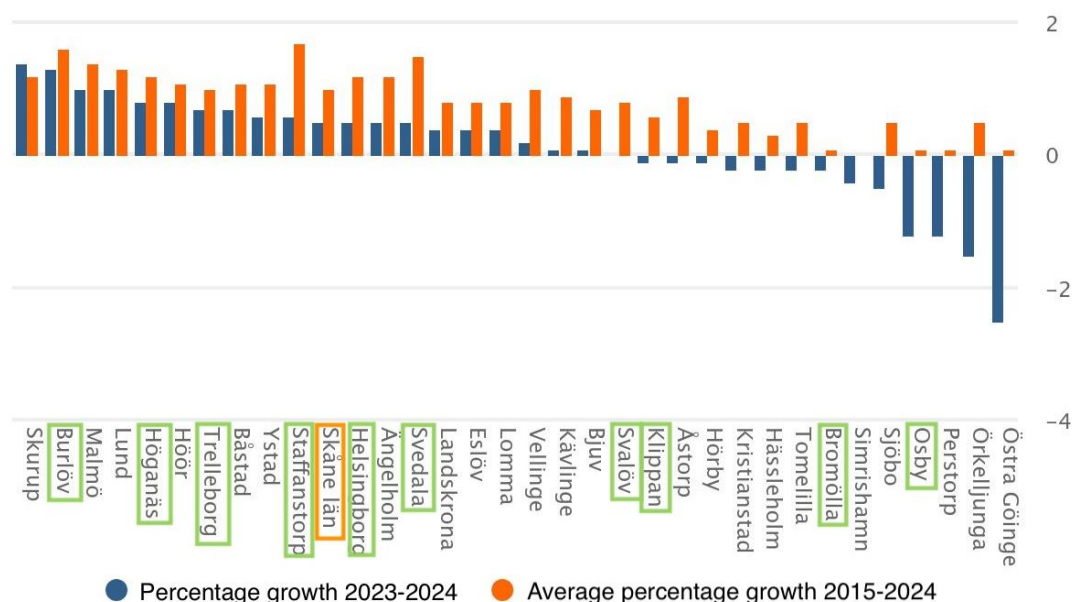


Figure 3: Population growth in Skåne, Percentage change since 2023 and average growth 2015-2024

The number of children born in Skåne County has never been as low in 20 years. Despite Skåne having a relatively young population in relation to the rest of Sweden, most people are 70 or older, and that is expected to be a continuing trend forward (Region Skåne 2024a).

The loss of people also correlates to the discussion about the uneven distribution of public transport in the Skåne region, where cities and more densely populated areas are being prioritised over the more rural areas in Skåne. Density and population numbers can affect public transport in terms of bus stops and the number of buses per day (Region Skåne, n.d.). The accessibility then varies in different parts, as shown in Figure 4 (Region Skåne 2024b). The maps show the proportion of the population outside urban areas that has easy access to public transport within 1 kilometre and 500 metres. It is clear that the western parts of the County have the best access to public transport, and further in, people do not have the same access. This also correlates to the smaller number of people living in those areas compared to the larger municipalities (see figure 4.) (Region Skåne 2024b).

Figure 4.

Public transport access in Skåne County.

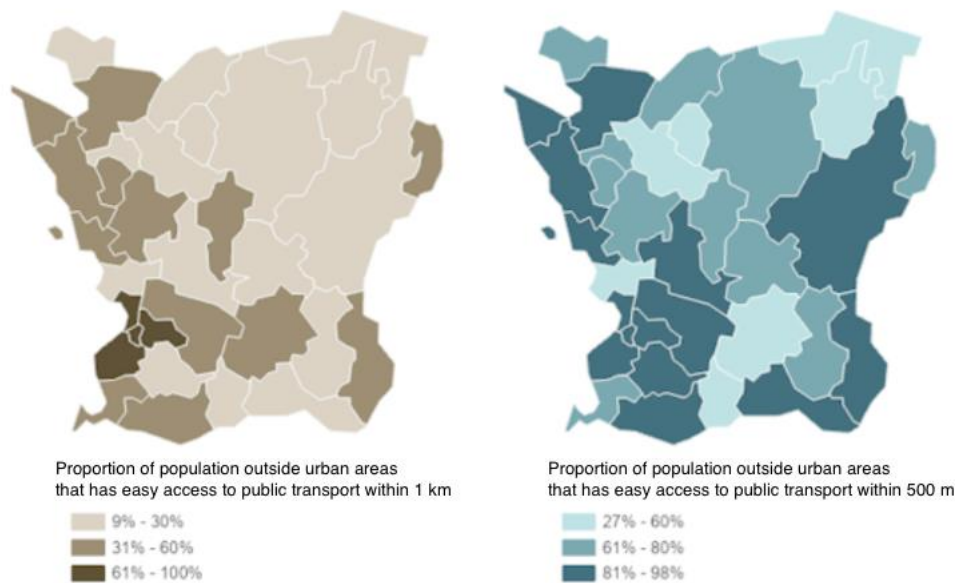


Figure 4: The proportion of the population outside urban areas that has easy access to public transport within 1km and 500m.

The median income in Skåne is generally lower than the rest of Sweden and the income vary greatly between the municipalities in the county. The bigger municipalities such as Malmö have the highest median income as well as the municipalities situated closest to Malmö ex. Staffanstorp municipality (Region Skåne 2024c).

3.2 The Swedish planning system and relevant authorities

In Sweden, various authorities are responsible for different aspects and areas within planning. The state is the highest authority, followed by the region and the municipalities. These authorities have distinct areas of responsibility and are financed through various types of taxes (Sveriges Kommuner och Regioner

[SKR], 2021). This helps to understand how the planning system is structured, and which authority holds which responsibilities.

3.2.1 The Swedish state

The state in Sweden is responsible for creating laws and regulations for the regions and municipalities to follow (SKR, 2021). 21 counties in Sweden have been divided by the state to act as its extended arm, helping to ensure that the adopted legislation is being followed (Forsberg, 2019). The Swedish Transport Administration (STA) is also a state-owned company responsible for the national roads in Sweden. This mainly includes large motorways as well as routes of national interest, and although they pass through regions and municipalities, the STA is the key authority in planning and projects affecting these roads (Regeringskansliet, n.d.).

3.2.2 The Region and County

The regions in Sweden are regulated through legislation and regulations. It is the County Council that holds authority in the regions through politics, and the County Administrative Board acts as the state's extended arm in society, ensuring that the decisions made by the state are followed. The financing of the regions consists of taxes paid by the inhabitants. The Region's primary responsibilities are regional development, public transportation, and healthcare services, as outlined by national legislation (Förordning med länsstyrelseinstruktion, 2007; Forsberg, 2019; Montin, 2015)

Skånetrafiken is the local public transport administration in Skåne, operating under the jurisdiction of Region Skåne. Region Skåne and its politicians makes decisions and allocate resources from public funds. After the decisions are made the public transport committee and Skånetrafiken takes over and develop, plan and manage the public transport in Skåne according to the decisions made. The local trains and buses that are operated by traffic companies (Region Skåne, 2025; Skånetrafiken, n.d.)

3.2.3 The Municipality

The municipalities in Sweden consist of the municipal administration and municipally owned companies. They have access to legislation that provides tools for carrying out community planning, such as the Planning and Building Act. The municipality does not always have all the resources to carry out all planning, which means that cooperation must take place with several actors,

such as the state, the region, private companies, and the local population. In Sweden, municipalities hold the exclusive planning monopoly, meaning they have the sole authority to determine land use and development within their boundaries. This entails that municipalities are responsible for planning, growth, education, inclusiveness, and environmental protection. Municipalities also collaborate with the region to organise and develop public transportation within their communities and the wider region. This joint effort ensures residents can access reliable and sustainable mobility solutions connecting cities, towns, and rural areas throughout Skåne. Financing consists of taxes originating from the municipality's own population (Montin, 2015; SKR, 2025; Forsberg, 2019)

3.2.4 The EU in Swedish planning

Sweden is a part of the European Union [EU], which means that laws, regulations and legalisations adopted by the Union need to be followed in Sweden. Most of the decisions made in the EU council are directives that can be interpreted and applied differently in the state, regions and municipalities (SKR, 2024).

In environmental related developments or issues, a wide range of EU legislations needs to be taken into account in planning practices, and it is therefore important for planners to have an understanding of the EU directives and law that relates to their area (SKR, 2024; Boverket, 2021).

3.3 The Mobility Makers project

The Mobility Makers project is led by the EU program, Interreg North Sea Region, where the organisation IGEMO has a leading role, collaborating with universities such as Ghent University in Belgium. The project's time frame spans from 2023 to 2027. In total, 12 actors are involved in this project, including Länsstyrelsen Skåne (Länsstyrelsen Skåne, n.d.).

The Mobility Makers project involves 11 different areas, also called pilots, concerning mobility and sustainability. For instance, the different pilots focus on creating more attractive train stations, enhancing connectivity between rural and urban areas, and the area of interest in this thesis: participation through dialogue with children in Skåne (Interreg North Sea, 2025a).

Länsstyrelsen Skåne's project is following the developing triangle, which focuses on dialogue with children and includes the topic of children, dialogue

and transport. They are the key to changing transport behaviours in the future, as they will be the ones who will live and prosper in the future society. (Interreg North Sea, 2025b)

Figure 5.

The developing Triangle.

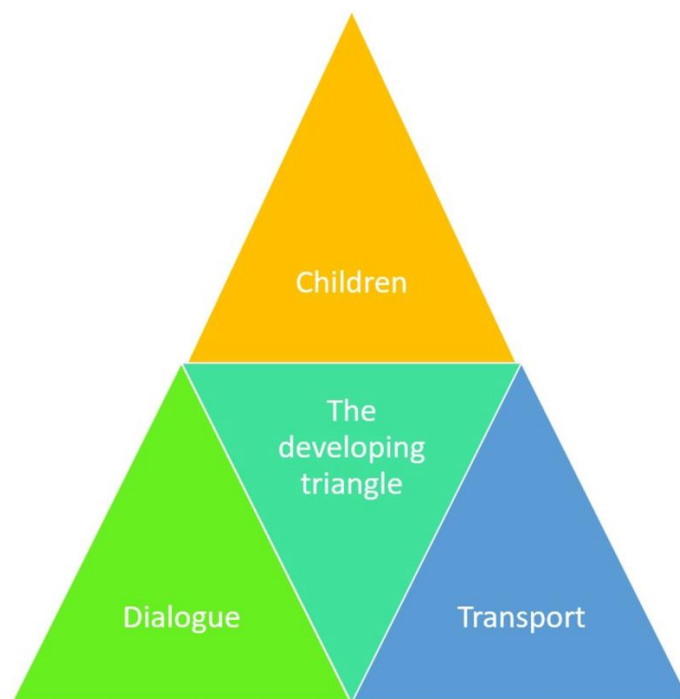


Figure 5: The developing triangle.

3.4 The listen project

The Listen project was created by Mobility Makers and implemented between 2023 and 2025, aimed to enhance youth (8-11 year olds) participation in response to a noted deficit and decline within the EU (Interreg North Sea 2025c). The North Sea region is also facing this issue, and cooperation between the county Administrative Board of Skåne (Sweden), Faaborg-Midtfyn Kommune (Denmark) and ADICE (France) was established to create a solution. The collaborating groups **developed a manual** offering guidance and practical ideas for how countries, counties, or municipalities can enhance youth engagement in the planning process. The manual (see figure 6) is built up of five different principles, which are:

1. Evaluate and keep well-informed
2. Build trust and legitimacy
3. Provide support for initiatives
4. Foster Coordination and Coherence
5. Facilitate and encourage dialogue

Each principle included three initiatives made by the three different actors, and the reasons for the initiative and what it included were described. After each principle, the manual presents the place for the initiative, its difficulty, the required time and resources, and the type of work needed in the process. In addition, each initiative also included three recommendations to the reader if they decided to recreate the initiative or a quote from one participating youth (Interreg North Sea 2025c).

Figure 6.

Manual of Challenges for children's Participation.

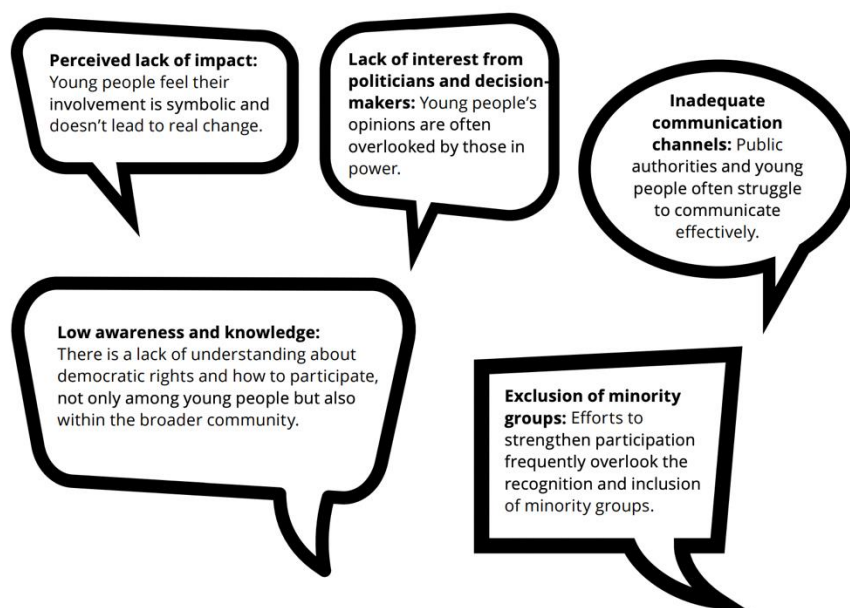


Figure 6: Challenges for children's participation highlighted in the Listen project.

An important point highlighted in the manual is that, although it is created for professionals and other decision-making actors to test new initiatives, ideas or

solutions, it is essential to first listen to and identify the needs of local youth. Conducting research to understand what youth people in the area are lacking and taking these insights into account before starting an initiative is vital. To tackle challenges, those facing them must be listened to (Interreg North Sea 2025c).

3.5 Convention on the Rights of the Child

When evaluating the foundations underlying the importance of children's participation, it was essential to include the Convention on the Rights of the Child in this thesis. Related to the case study area and Sweden as a whole, the Convention on the Rights of the Child has been incorporated into Swedish law since 2020 (Sveriges Kommuner och Regioner [SKR], 2023).

"The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child" (UNCRC) is an agreement by FN to include children's perspectives in decision-making processes that affect them. The convention comprises 54 articles, which cover children's rights to life, protection, development, and participation (FN). Sweden incorporated the UNCRC into its law in 2020, ensuring that children's involvement is considered in decisions affecting them. In relation to this thesis, the articles regarding children's participation are significant (Unicef, n.d.).

Article 3 of the UNCRC states that all actions related to children should always prioritise the best interests of the child. This principle applies to all relevant stakeholders, including legislative bodies and administrative authorities. Furthermore, Article 12 emphasises the importance of listening to the child's views, which entails allowing the child to express themselves and have a voice in matters that affect them. Therefore, children should always be represented, either directly or indirectly through a representative, in administrative and judicial matters (United Nations, 1989).

In connection with children's growth in physical, mental, and social contexts, they should have an adequate standard of living and the right to participate in recreational activities such as engaging in cultural events, playing with peers, and having time for rest. This should apply to all ages, whether you are 5 or 16 (United Nations, 1989).

4 Theoretical framework

In this chapter, the theoretical framework of the study will be presented, encompassing two distinct sectors: Intergenerational justice and sustainability. These theories will address the issues of neglecting children and the environment in planning, as well as the consequences that follow. It also includes goals aimed at achieving a sustainable society, highlighting the importance of sustainable planning methods in relation to the case study area.

4.1 Intergenerational justice

Concerning this thesis framework, a theoretical framework of youth inclusion and intergenerational justice is suitable. In democratic processes, all citizens of a municipality, country, or other relevant entity who are affected should have the opportunity to participate in those decisions or plans, including children. Even so, younger citizens are, for the most part, the ones most affected by decisions currently adopted in relation to other groups in society (García-Antúnez et al., 2023; Kennan et al., 2018).

The intergenerational justice perspective highlights the need for every generation to speak up and have just living environments, among other things, including sustainability, which involves being respectful of future generations and what will be left to them. Especially since Greenhouse gas emissions from present and past generations remain in the atmosphere for a long period of time and have an impact on future generations. It is essential to separate youth inclusion and *intergenerational* justice, as youth inclusion does not involve individuals who have not yet been born. The current youth are the

ones who are affected and are meant to be included in the democratic processes, which is a form of *intra-generational* justice (García-Antúnez et al., 2023).

Figure 7.

Inter-generational and Intra-generational justice.

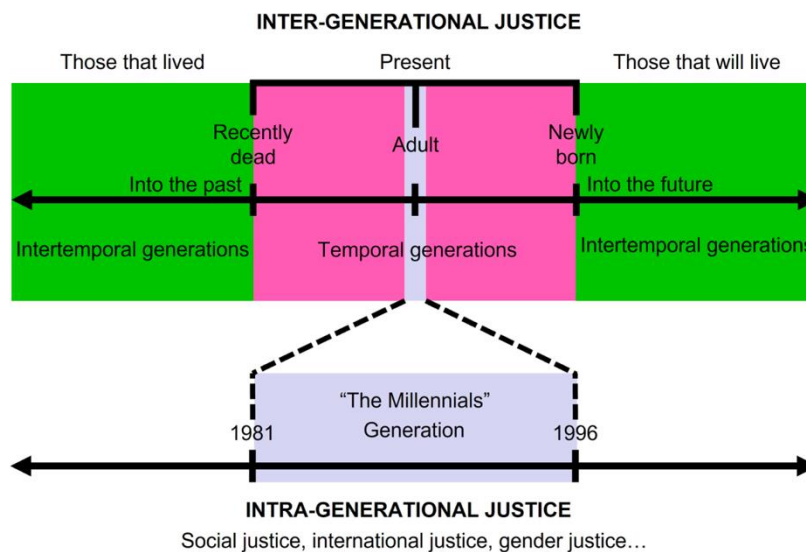


Figure 7: A figure showing inter-generational justice in relation to Intra-generational justice.

Children who live today can feel powerless due to their anxiety about natural disasters and other environmental issues caused by emissions and a lack of respect for nature, which is a form of eco-anxiety. Including children in planning can help prevent social exclusion, in valuing children's input on problems that affects them, which leads to a more inclusive and less segregated community (Hickman, 2020; García-Antúnez et al., 2023).

However, considering only the perspectives of children can lead to intergenerational justice, whereas the perspectives of other generations are not considered. Only allowing the current children to speak for the future citizens is unfair and gives them too much responsibility. The interests of today's citizens may differ from those of future generations, especially since the current children may have a different perspective and those yet to be born, leading to an intergenerational conflict between today's and tomorrow's children. No one will ever know what future generations would want, since there is no way for current generations to communicate with them. It will

always be a challenge to limit planning in a way that does not affect future generations and their desire for planning, as it is nearly impossible. Impossible in the way that planning is inflexible and undynamic, giving little way for future generations to have their own chance of adapting their surroundings. Planning can also be quite tricky because it is influenced by factors such as political standpoints and economic factors (García-Antúnez et al., 2023).

There is a vision of generational special treatment, where individuals can be treated differently depending on their age as they progress through life. In many ways, this can benefit different age groups, as it is adapted to accommodate various age ranges. Children might not have the same understanding as older people do, and therefore, the handling of these differs for the sake of the person at hand. As a structuring feature, it is better for the people involved and would not be perceived as a form of negative special treatment. Despite the structural foundations, all age groups and those in between should treat each other with respect and ensure that none are left out or marginalised to create a cohesive community. There is a balance between separating treatment and sculpting or adapting treatment to each age group (Bidadanure, 2021).

4.2 The Sustainable Development Goals

The SDG goals are crucial for addressing the research questions of this study, as well as the literature review and interviews. Since the SDGs are the goals that should always be the desired outcome, all countries, including municipalities and regions, should work towards them. Certain goals are more directly relevant to the focus of this research than others; therefore, a selection has been made of the goals that are most relevant to this thesis.

Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, Target 11.2, mentions the need for special attention to the requirements of vulnerable groups, including children (United Nations, n.d.). The County of Skåne must design transport systems through a child-friendly lens to ensure that both urban and rural environments support independent and safe mobility for children, as it encompasses both urban centres and populated rural areas. Goal 10 aligns with this aim: inclusion and access should be provided for marginalised groups and people with disabilities. Access to safe and efficient mobility options is essential for children's ability to participate fully in education and community life. Without transport planning that is inclusive, social inequalities may be reinforced or even deepened (UN-Habitat, 2020).

Goal 13: Climate Action includes the relevance of sustainable transport. Car traffic contributes to greenhouse gas emissions and urban air pollution, which can affect children's health. Reducing car usage helps mitigate climate change and lessens children's and all individuals' exposure to air pollutants that can cause or exacerbate respiratory and developmental conditions (Unicef, 2017).

Reducing car usage in the County of Skåne could be beneficial for decreasing car accidents leading to injuries and deaths caused by road traffic, especially for children, as they are vulnerable in traffic environments. This is noted in Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being and Target 3.6, which aims to halve the deaths and accidents caused by road traffic (United Nations, n.d). In addition to the goal of good health and well-being, lowering car usage could also promote other modes of transportation, such as biking, walking, or public transport. Using alternative modes of transport would encourage people to be more physically active, thus enhancing their overall health. It can be important for children to engage in physical activity in order to build a healthy body and foster habits that can improve their quality of life (World Health Organization, 2022).

Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure covers inclusiveness and sustainable infrastructure, which includes transport systems that serve urban and rural regions. In Skåne, where geographical diversity can lead to disparities in accessibility, inclusive infrastructure becomes critical for ensuring all children—regardless of location—have safe and equal access to mobility options (United Nations, n.d.).

Table 3.

Table 3: The SDG goals relevant to the study.

SDG Goal	Description/Target	Relevance to Children & Mobility
Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being	Target 3.6: Halve the number of deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2030.	Children are vulnerable to road users; reducing car dependency enhances safety and promotes active, healthy travel habits.
Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	Promote inclusive and sustainable infrastructure, including transport systems serving urban and rural areas.	Ensures equitable mobility access for children across geographical regions, including rural areas like those in Skåne.
Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities	Ensure equal access for all, including persons with disabilities and marginalized groups.	Promotes inclusive mobility planning that considers the needs of all children, regardless of ability or socio-economic status.
Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	Target 11.2: Provide access to safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable transport systems for all.	Focuses on child-friendly, safe transport environments in both urban and rural settings.
Goal 13: Climate Action	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through sustainable transport solutions.	Lower car usage benefits children's health by improving air quality and mitigating climate impacts.

5 Materials and methods

The aim of this study is to examine how children are involved in the planning process and to identify key challenges and opportunities related to how to minimise car usage. To achieve this, a qualitative research approach was chosen, allowing for a detailed exploration of experiences and perspectives within their real-world context.

5.1 Research Design

The purpose of this study is to explore children inclusion and identify the key challenges and opportunities associated with minimising car usage. For this objective to be achieved, the study used a combination of methods, namely a literature review, an interview study and a thematic analysis. A case study approach is used as it allows a detailed look at how policies and practices are put into action and experienced within a specific place and set of institutions. A case study is a research approach that examines current real-world challenges within their practical setting, offering a deeper understanding of complex issues by considering their specific context (Yin, 2018). The case study is Skåne County, which includes 10 municipalities and two authorities.

5.2 Literature review

A literature review was the first step in examining the field of study and to gain knowledge about previous research. The following section presents how the literature for the study was selected, analysed, and the ethical considerations involved.

5.2.1 Selection of literature

The purpose of this literature review was to gain insight into existing research and findings related to children's participation in planning and reducing car usage. It aims to frame the study within its broader academic context, examine key theories and concepts, and identify areas where further investigation is needed in the field (Bryman, 2016). To find relevant literature for the study, specific keywords were used that related to the themes (Bryman, 2016). The specific keywords were children, planning, child inclusion, citizen dialogue, sustainable mobility, traffic safety and car usage etc. The sources include scientific articles, reports, statistics and policy documents. These were sourced from the KTH Library, Scopus, and the official websites of relevant authorities.

To find further relevant articles within the field, the "snowballing technique" was used. Snowballing involves using references in an article to find new publications that support the research area. This method enables a deeper exploration of references from each article and helps build upon existing knowledge, adding snow to the snowball (Wohlin, 2014).

5.2.2 Reviewing the literature

The aim of reviewing existing literature is to map out what has already been researched about the topic, ensuring it can serve as a foundation for the study. According to Bryman (2016), gaining insight into the themes of the study allows for a broader understanding of the field and helps this study's research contribute to the existing knowledge and where it is lacking. When collecting data from the articles, no fixed pattern was followed; instead, the articles were read thoroughly, and the most important and relevant parts are presented in the study. Analysing the literature gathered is a qualitative approach, and in this study, it is carried out through content analysis, where an overview of what is written within a subject is reviewed and compared with other studies in the same field (Sutton & David, 2016).

The literature review in this study is divided into two themes. The first researching children and planning, why child inclusion is important and how it can be achieved. The second theme addresses how car usage impacts the environment, both in terms of safety and pollution.

5.2.3 Ethical consideration

An ethical consideration for conducting a literature review is the difficulty to know the author's true intent or if their writing can be influenced by personal bias (Dalen, 2015). To understand the intended topic and reduce the risk of misunderstanding or misinformation, it is important to read and compare multiple sources. Even when this is done, interpreting texts is not always simple, and errors in understanding can still affect the results of your research (Dalen, 2015). Due to time constraints, only one researcher read each article, as it was more efficient. The findings in each article were discussed between the researchers to determine its relevance to the study.

5.3 Interview

In this study, interviews were selected as the method to explore the research question. A total of 14 semi-structured interviews were carried out, and the following section presents the structure, ethical considerations, and the selection process.

5.3.1 Semi-structured interview

Interviews are a qualitative research method that explores the interviewee's personal experiences and perspectives (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2014). In this research, semi-structured interviews are used to gain in-depth insights to answer the research questions. Fourteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with both municipalities, and two authorities were contacted via email. Interviews took place online, lasted about 30 to 60 minutes, and were recorded with the interviewee's consent. Recordings of the interviews were then transcribed by the researchers. The participants were informed of their rights before the interview was conducted. This included their consent to the study, gaining all relevant information, and ensuring their responses would be confidential (Dalen, 2019). The participants were also informed about their rights to withdraw or end their participation at any time. Additionally, the participants also received information about the purpose of the study, its content, and how their participation would contribute to the research.

5.3.2 Ethical considerations

Before conducting the interview, by using standard procedure for semi-structured interviews (Kvale 2015), an interview guide (see Appendix A) was

sent out. This guide included questions about whether the individual wished to remain anonymous, how the data would be handled, their right to withdraw from participation, and if they gave their consent to record the interview (Dalen, 2015; Bryman, 2018). These questions were part of the guide and will also be asked again during the interview, alongside the interviewees' right to withdraw at any point and to express regret for their participation. Procedures for handling personal data align with GDPR (Lag med kompletterande bestämmelser till EU:s dataskyddsförordning, 2018). The participating municipalities are listed in the study, which could make it challenging to fully maintain a person's anonymity. Individuals may still be easily identifiable even if not explicitly named. Therefore, obtaining informed consent before the interview is vital to protect participants (Bryman, 2018). However, in the report the interviewees are referred to as “representative from ... municipality” to preserve their anonymity.

When preparing for the interview, the situation must be considered. The interviewer and interviewee influence each other, which could alter the course and responses of the interview (Dalen, 2015). Other external factors, such as stress, may also cause variations in answers. The case study area is in Skåne County, while the researchers are based in Stockholm, meaning the interviews will be conducted on a digital platform, which could pose a challenge to a fully immersive interview experience (Davies et al, 2020).

How the researchers analyse and perceive the data collected from the interviews can also affect the results. The researcher's interpretation of the interview and the notes being taken can also raise questions about how biased the information presented may be (Dalen, 2015). It is never entirely certain that the researchers can understand what a person is saying and the meaning behind it. All individuals are unique with diverse backgrounds and life experiences, which influence how it is perceived (Sutton & David, 2016). This should be kept in mind when collecting and analysing data. To minimise this risk, all the interviews besides one were conducted by both researchers and were discussed afterwards, thereby avoiding personal interpretation of the data.

5.3.3 Thematic analysis of interviews

To analyse the collected data from the interviews, thematic analysis is the method used. Thematic analysis is a qualitative method employed to systematically identify, analyse, and interpret recurring patterns or themes

within a data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006). It not only helps to organise the data but also offers a detailed and insightful understanding of its content. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), using thematic analysis is a flexible tool that can offer a rich and nuanced, though potentially complex, interpretation of the data. To conduct a thematic analysis, six steps should be followed (see Table 4).

Table 4.

Table 4: The six steps of a thematic analysis.

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

The first step involves familiarising yourself with the data collected. After all interviews were completed, they were transcribed using a tool in Microsoft Word called “transcription”. To ensure accuracy, all transcriptions were listened to while reading the text, and necessary adjustments were made. The transcription of the interviews was divided equally between the two researchers, and done individually. The next step was to generate initial codes, which involves examining the data and highlighting relevant and interesting aspects that are useful for the study and answering the research questions. This phase was carried out by each researcher reviewing the interviews they transcribed and gathering relevant information in a separate document. The third step in the process was searching for themes or potential themes that the data can be divided into. This was conducted through discussion between the two researchers about the already collected data and what could be fitting in terms of the research question and field of study.

When the themes were chosen, step four was to define if these work with the highlighted data of relevance and divide the collected data into the different categories. In the document with the relevant data, the text was highlighted in

different colours linked to the theme that was most fitting; then, they were organised under each theme to sort the content. The final phase was producing the actual report, in this case this corresponds to chapter 7. Analysis, where the collected data is related back to the theory, the literature and the research questions.

5.4 Case study

The selected Case Study is Skåne County, consisting of 33 municipalities. The municipalities that comprise our study represent diverse areas of Skåne, characterised by varying population, densities, and sizes. With data on these factors, tables and maps were created to get a better overview of the area (see Tables 1 and 2). This diversity enhances the case study by allowing different patterns and variations across different contexts within the same regional framework (Yin, 2018). Figures showing population growth and public transport access were also retrieved from the Skåne Region website (see Figure 3 and 4).

A mapping of the 33 municipalities in Skåne County was conducted to gather their contact information. We reached out to all 33 municipalities, booked interviews with those that were interested, and thanked those who declined. A few municipalities redirected the email to a specific work sector or person, where some answers were received, while others were not heard back from. Afterwards a second email was sent out to the municipalities that didn't respond, which led to additional interviews being booked. Other than the municipalities, Skåne Region, Skånetrafiken and the Swedish Transport Administration (STA) were also asked to participate in the study. In total, 14 interviews were conducted, with ten of them being with municipalities and three with the STA and the Region of Skåne. Two interviews were conducted with both Trelleborg Municipality and the STA, each involving two different representatives. For Klippan Municipality, two representatives participated in the interview, while for Helsingborg Municipality, three representatives attended. The municipalities that comprise the study represent diverse areas of Skåne, characterised by varying population densities and sizes, as shown in table 2.

6 Results

This section exhibits the study's findings. Starting with section 6.1, which contains the literature review results of relevant research on children's inclusion and car usage. Followed by section 6.2 that presents the results of the interviews, which are divided into four different themes selected through a thematic analysis.

6.1 Literature review

This chapter presents research and models that are relevant to the thesis field of study. Information from the articles and documents is divided into four sections where the first discusses the importance of children's participation, the second explains how children can be included in planning processes, the third presents sustainable modes of transport, and the fourth about traffic safety. The literature selected is relevant as it covers the perspectives relevant for gaining information before conducting the interviews and answering the research questions. As mentioned in problem statement (section 2.1) there is a lack of literature that cover children's inclusion in planning relevant to the study and in connection to car dependency.

6.1.1 The importance of children's participation

Collaboration between citizens, planners and stakeholders can be important when creating policies, environments, and arrangements that provide a sustainable future in urban landscape planning (Hagemann et al., 2024). The challenge for these arrangements is how the citizens, especially children, can

have their voices heard and influence the planning process. Specifically interesting for this thesis is how Hagemann et al. (2024) discuss the different approaches to include children in urban landscape planning. Interactive approaches is proven to yield better results as the children can be more expressive and creative. These approaches do preferably take place over a longer time and allow the participants to express their opinions throughout the whole planning process and the output of it. The interactive process approach was compared to less interactive participation, which did not allow the children to express their articulations (Hagemann et al., 2024). The less-interactive approach is described as a type of formal participation, most commonly including methods such as short hearings or surveys and focusing on gathering data for a specific project or question. The critique on using a more formalised method is that it does not represent the complexity and diversity of children's life conditions. Hagemann et al. (2024) discuss that by using a more interactive, action research approach, children receive a space to express their everyday life experiences and share their vision for the future. The research highlights that children is vital for a sustainable future and that projects need to include more diverse creative action methods that consider children.

It is important to include children for many different reasons, one reason is presented in Jansson and Sundling (2024), where they pinpoint the importance of children and their accessibility to Child-friendly environments (CFEs). By having access to child-friendly environments and particularly a variety of outdoor environments, including open spaces and playgrounds, etc., children have the opportunity to develop certain skills, for instance, their sense of community. In the article, the authors investigate children between the ages of 10-11 and their daily mobility in a small town in southern Sweden (Jansson & Sundling, 2024). There are several factors that pose a threat to access to CFEs, such as urban planning that benefits car usage as well as densification, where open spaces shrink to give way for new housing. The outcome of the study was that, in general, the children thought their views and inputs were not taken into account during the design of the towns and that the developments were happening fast. The findings showed that the children were being deprived of varying open spaces, which limited their sustainable recreational mobility. However, more research is still needed about how planning impacts children's sustainable recreational mobilities (Jansson & Sundling, 2024).

In Sweden, there are legislative requirements related to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as mentioned previously in chapter 3.5. Specifically in the fields of planning, building law, and environmental legislation, the Convention on the Rights of the Child is directly applied in decisions regarding children (SKR, 2023). There are no guidelines set for those legislations, therefore it is also not entirely clear where and when children are affected in a way that requires a child impact assessment. The limitations on when and where to include children are not clearly defined and explained, and it is left to the authority, e.g., the municipality, to take action on the subject at hand (SKR, 2023). Ever since 2020, it has been the responsibility of public actors to act from the perspective of the rights of the child or a child rights perspective. This means a child impact assessment should be conducted in each case that affects children in some way, but the decision to conduct or not conduct an assessment is made by the municipality or region. As mentioned by SKR (2023), it is not feasible in practice to conduct a child impact assessment in every decision that involves citizens.

Each specific case can vary, and therefore, the volume of a child impact assessment may differ. There is a distinction between perspective when involving children. The first is the children's perspective, where the officials consider issues from a viewpoint of the child, reflecting on how decisions affect children and what is deemed, best for them from the official's standpoint. Secondly, there is the child perspective, which involves directly including children's own view and insights, recognizing children as independent, capable of expressing their opinions (SKR, 2023).

6.1.2 How to include children in planning processes

Methods for including children in the planning process can vary, but there are some existing strategies aiming to create frameworks and guidelines to make the process easier. Harry Shier (2001) presents a model (see figure 9) for improving children's participation in decision-making, which builds on earlier theories and summarises that:

- 1. Children are listened to.*
- 2. Children are supported in expressing their views.*
- 3. Children's views are taken into account.*
- 4. Children are involved in decision-making processes.*
- 5. Children share power and responsibility for decision-making.*

This model is an alternative to Roger Hearts' Ladder of Participation (see Figure 8), but Shier (2001) clearly explains that it complements Hearts' theory rather than replacing it. The difference between the two models is that Shier removed the bottom of Hearts' ladder, omitting manipulation, decoration, and tokenism. While some argue that these levels of non-participation are valuable and should be eliminated, Shier (2001) asserts that positive is as important as negative.

Figure 8.

Roger Heart's Ladder of participation

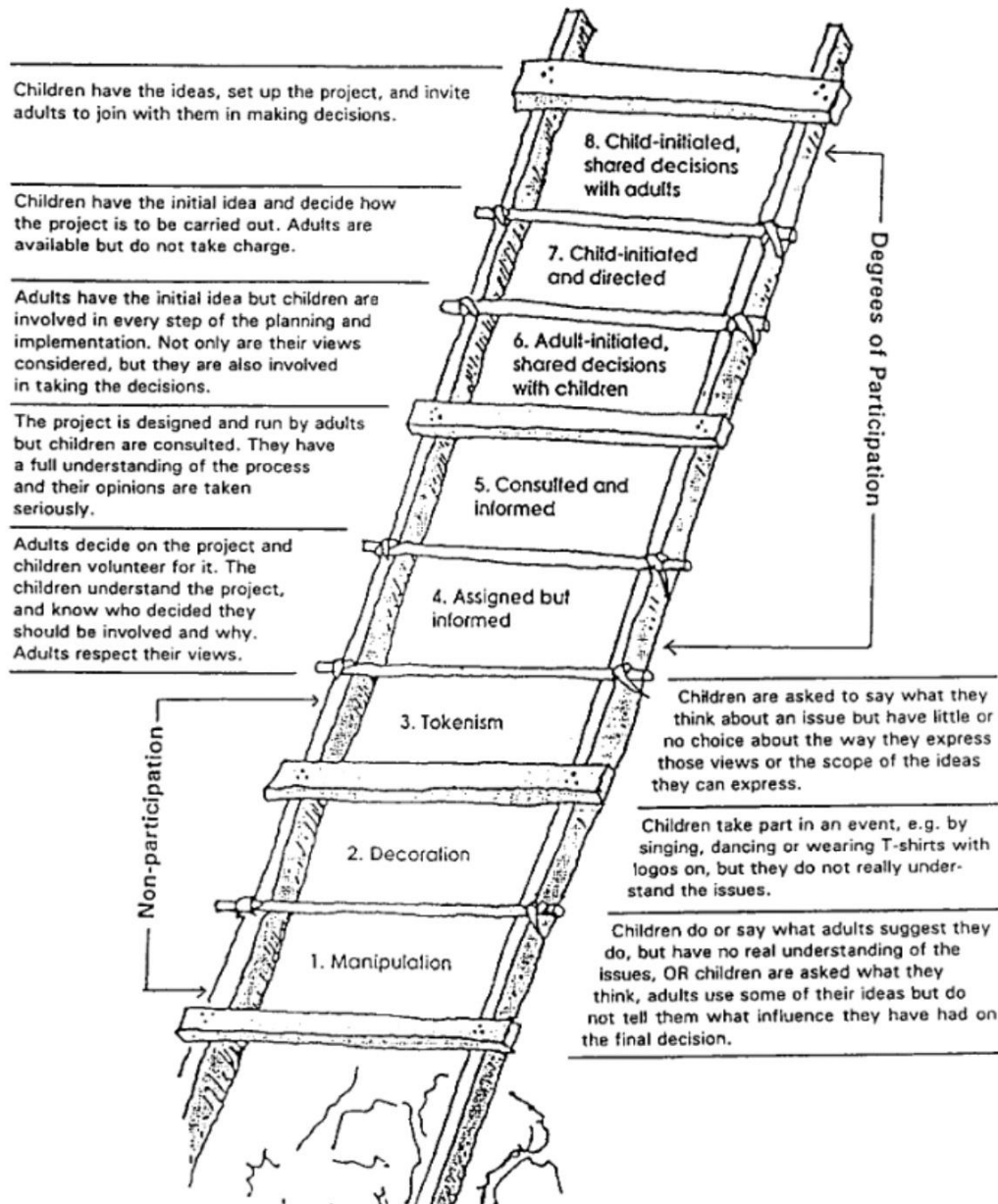


Figure 8: The ladder of participation. From 'The right to play and children's participation' by Roger Hart, in The Article 31 Action Pack, Published by PLAY TRAIN, 1995

Throughout Shiers's (2001) article about the model, Heart's ladder is discussed and referred to but, unlike Heart, Shier uses three stages of commitment to describe the level at which both organisers and individuals are in the process. These are opening, opportunity, and obligation.

- Opening- The worker expresses a commitment or intent to work in a certain way, but the necessary conditions to implement it may not be available.
- Opportunity – The required resources, skills, or procedural changes become available, making it possible to work at that level.
- Obligation – The approach becomes an official policy, making it a mandatory practice within the organisation.

The model helps individuals and organisations assess their current stage and determine the following steps to increase participation levels.

Figure 9.

Harry Shier's Levels of participation

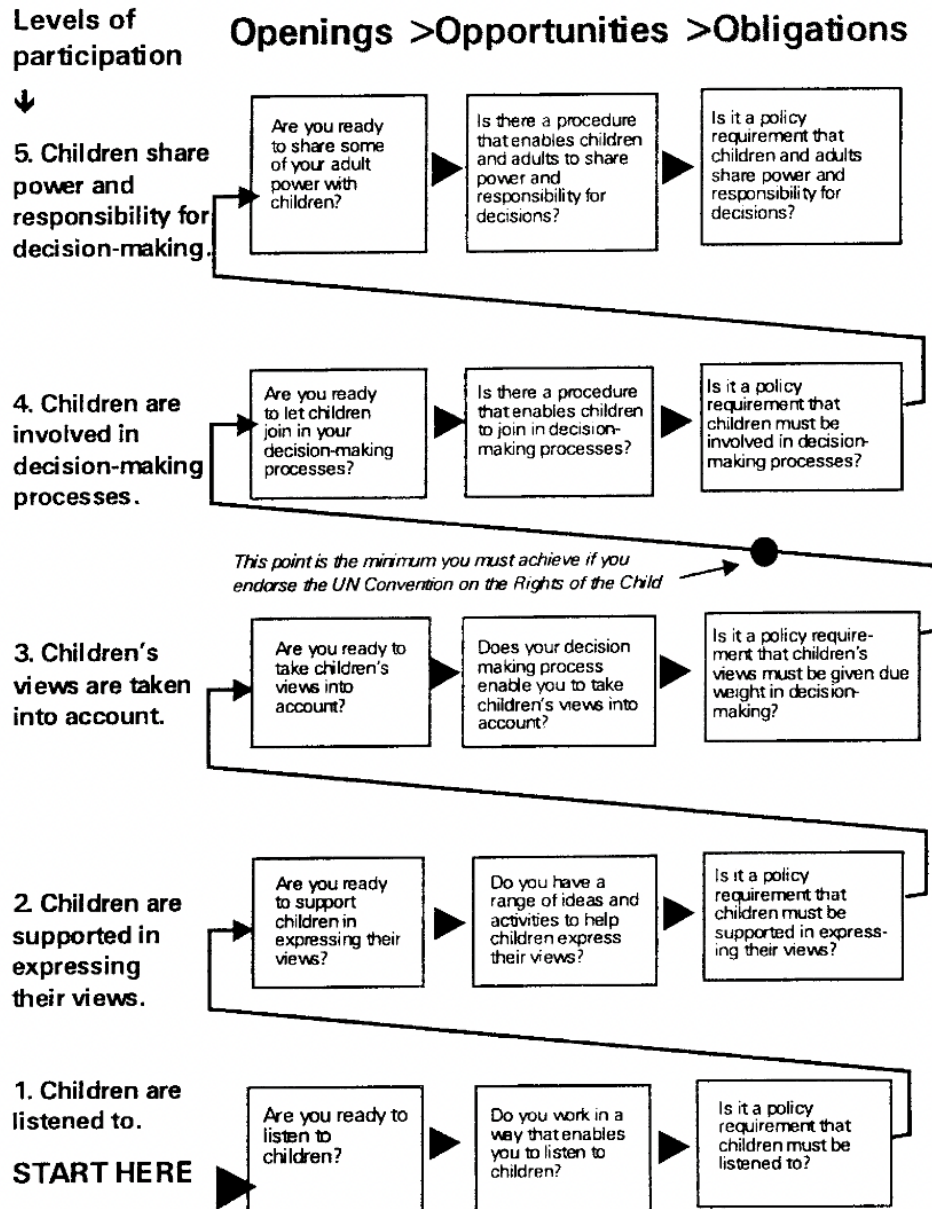


Figure 9: Levels of participation.

How to include children in planning is one thing, but studies involving children are often seen as problematic, as the ethics involving younger individuals must be handled with care. Aronsson (2022) challenges this view and offers a perspective where children's contributions are welcomed rather

than feared. The issue might be that the criticism about studies involving children is that it is often *about* children rather than *with* them. The article examines that children can be informed about their participation in studies can lead to future infrastructure projects, which makes them aware that they are a part of something interesting and meaningful. There is a risk of a power imbalance between the researcher and children when carrying out a study or project including children which makes it highly relevant to listen, see their perspective and acknowledge them. Letting the children feel at ease and trust the person doing the research can also generate better results (Aronsson, 2022). The study shows that informing and engaging children in studies could be an investment for society and individuals, as they might develop an interest in science and contribute to it. Being aware that they were assisting with research and creating results made them feel valued and more interested in the project and future initiatives (Aronsson, 2022).

6.1.3 Sustainable Mobility

To gain insight into sustainable mobility, it's important to understand the current travel habits in Sweden. Strömblad et al. (2022), presents the characteristics of leisure trips in Sweden and their impact on emissions. Transport accounts for so much as 25% of the global greenhouse gas emissions; therefore, it is crucial to tackle this area for sustainability (Strömblad et al., 2022). Leisure trips have a significant impact on emissions in Sweden, with the largest share of car trips under 5 kilometres being for outdoor activities and various exercise purposes. Overall, it is noted that social trips accounts for a significant portion of car usage. In studying the factors associated with everyday leisure trips, the distance travelled by car tends to increase depending on income, the presence of children, and living in a rural area (Strömblad et al., 2022; Holden & Linnerud, 2011).

When targeting leisure trips that involve outdoor activities and various exercise purposes, switching to an alternative form of transportation other than the car may be challenging. This can be due to the given amount of luggage and space required, such as for big families and sports equipment. Leisure trips have a correlation with the well-being of people as they can participate in activities which is beneficial for their health and overall happiness. If a car is more convenient or cost-effective than public transport, it will most likely be chosen (Strömblad et al., 2022; Brajša-Žganec et al., 2011). Therefore, limiting these trips can be a challenge. It may not always be

best for the climate to switch from car to bus, as it's more sustainable for one person to take the car than to have fewer than eight people on a bus (if the bus has engine technology of Euro 5 or 6), as shown in a Norwegian study from 2016 (Norheim, 2017). The authors claim that there is a need to investigate leisure trips further and take appropriate measures to decrease them and stresses the need for a behavioural change in transport. There also needs to be a reduction of the amount of mileage taken and switching to more sustainable alternatives for leisure trips (Strömblad et al., 2022).

An alternative for making travel more sustainable could be using an Electric Vehicle [EV]. Cars powered by fossil fuels pollute the environment and can increase the risk of damaging lungs and the environment with particles (Unicef, 2017). This might imply that EVs could be a solution and a sustainable option, but to be truly sustainable, the electricity used to produce and power these vehicles must also be emission-free. If the energy derived is from fossil fuels and the vehicle's manufacturing is powered by fossil fuels, it still contributes to pollution (Albrechtowicz, 2023). Battery production specifically can raise sustainability concerns, as it depends on minerals often mined using environmentally and socially harmful methods (Agusdinata et al., 2022).

6.1.4 Traffic Safety

In Sweden, a policy called Vision Zero from 1997 has been implemented in traffic planning and focuses on road safety (Road Safety Sweden, n.d.). The policy aims to shift the responsibility for preventing road injuries from individuals, to those responsible for planning the road networks. This approach has been successful, and for over two decades, it has reduced the number of fatal road accidents by 50% (Road Safety Sweden, n.d.). This may prove that planners can influence the safety of road networks, but how this can be achieved might vary. Focusing on changing how networks are used or designing networks for other modes of transport, such as walking, cycling, and public transportation, might affect the number of injuries caused by traffic. It is not only the lower percentage of accidents that makes focusing on other modes of transport positive. Biking, walking, and public transport often involve more physical activity, and shaping the environment for these activities which can improve health through exercise (Fathi et al., 2020; Zhang & Warner 2023).

Parents that have experienced car accidents are more prone to use other modes of transport such as cycling and walking. When other parents might have other

concerns and are more afraid of having their child walking alone, biking or taking public transport and therefore these parents are most likely to take the car instead. Implementing measures such as improving the conditions for pedestrian lanes and reinforce parents could potentially decrease the use of cars and increase the use of other modes of transportation (Mehdizadeh and Ermagun, 2018).

Accessibility from a child's perspective means being able to walk or cycle to places like school, after-school activities, or playgrounds without needing adult supervision. Prioritising traffic safety, especially around schools, is essential. The areas around children should be free from harmful noise and air pollution, instead the areas should be filled with green spaces and nature, as they are crucial for children's health and growth (Gummesson, 2005). Younger children often play near their homes, but as they grow, their range expands—especially with bicycles, which are both toys and means of transport. Safe cycling infrastructure is key to fostering independence and discovery for children and at the same time, bad road conditions, lack of bike lanes, or dangerous traffic is risky for children. Children in rural areas, according to Gummeson (2005), are often more vulnerable, as fast-moving traffic on busy roads with few pavements or bike paths poses a higher risk to them. Usually, they have no choice but to travel by car, which affects their safety and limits their ability to move freely and explore on their own.

6.2 Interview results

The following section presents the results of the interviews. Each category includes answers and citations from all municipalities and authorities without any personal influence from the researchers. The findings are organised into four themes through a thematic analysis (see section 5.3.3). The themes are:

- Tools and methods:
 - Tools and methods that have been used to include children
 - Tools, methods and adaptations to lower car usage
- Projects
 - Projects aimed at including children
 - Projects aimed at promoting sustainable travel
- Challenges
 - Challenges with involving children
 - Challenges with the mobility transition

- Suggested improvements for childrens inclusivity and sustainable transportation

6.2.1 Tools and methods used by the municipalities and authorities

Tools and methods refer to the approaches used for children's participation and the specific tools employed to implement them. This category also includes the tools and methods used to reduce car traffic and the promotion of sustainable travel in each designated area.

6.2.1.1 Tools and methods that have been used to include children

Municipalities, regional bodies, and traffic-related organisations employ different strategies and methods in relation to children's involvement in the planning process. Svalöv municipality has incorporated the children's perspective into one of the seven existing strategies outlined in their overview plan.

So, in our overview plan that was adopted in 2021, seven different strategies are stated for the development of the municipality, and one of those strategies is to ensure that the children's perspective is seriously included in planning...and that is something that we then want to permeate in the planning.

(Representative from Svalöv municipality)

All of the municipalities claim to use various forms of dialogue with children to gain their perspective on issues. Trelleborg municipality has people conducting the overview plan and the traffic plan, speaking to children in schools in a workshop setting or open discussions as part of projects concerning safe school roads, for example. As Hagemann et al. (2024) note, it is beneficial to employ interactive approaches such as interactive workshops when working with children, as they yield better results. Trelleborg municipality mentions a lecture held for high school students, which was highly interesting as it provided them with insights into what they find important in the environment, aspects that the municipality had not previously considered:

"Is it important that the bus stop locations are situated near the school? Are there any electric scooters? They brought up things I've never thought about myself, things I thought were important weren't as important for them."

(Representative from Trelleborg municipality).

Staffanstorp municipality tries to make an extra effort to include children when there is a possibility that they may be highly affected by a detailed plan.

“If we have detailed plans where we feel like children are being highly affected, it often revolves around schools. When detailed plans involve areas where children are significantly affected, often around schools, we make an extra effort, especially if the project is located near a school” (Representative from Staffanstorp municipality).

In physical projects, the Helsingborg municipality claims to include the children’s perspective through the child strategic sector, which is out in schools working with teachers, headmasters and children. To ensure that they ask the children about public transport and sustainable travel. However, they try to involve kids in as many projects as possible, in both municipal comprehensive plans and detailed plans, to a great extent.

General dialogues with citizens are a common practice among all municipalities. Svalöv municipality states that they have held dialogue meetings with citizens, not directly aimed at children, but that the children were present together with their parents. Bromölla municipality utilises social media, local newspapers, its website, and meetings with citizens to communicate.

Svedala municipality communicates with children through a youth council and a parliament, with which they discuss projects. The members of the children council are high school students whom the youth parliament chooses. For example, when developing a cycling plan, both the council and parliament were asked how the bike infrastructure could be improved.

For most municipalities, it is common to send out online surveys when targeting the younger audience, as this method appears to be time-efficient and easy to understand. Typically, the area being sought in conjunction with these surveys is traffic safety. Höganäs municipality sent out a survey to five different schools in the municipality that targeted the school classes 3-5 in middle school; the information that they got was used in mapping out the children’s road to school through GIS and to see the areas that were in desperate need of improvement, resulting in a traffic security program. Helsingborg municipality also sends out surveys in person, in addition to online surveys.

The majority of the municipalities that were interviewed conduct child impact assessments, as mandated by the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

which is incorporated into Swedish law (SKR, 2023). Helsingborg municipality has tested to simplify their child impact assessments by transforming them into several steps that allow users to fill in the details and explain why a particular measure was taken. This should then ease the process for people who are not accustomed to working from a children's perspective.

“It has to be user-friendly for us to take it further and reach the next step. Everyone needs to be able to use it, even those who are not accustomed to working in dialogue with children” (Representative from Helsingborg municipality). Another representative from a municipality, on their initiative, created a template to systematically incorporate the children's perspective into their work, particularly concerning traffic and safety.”

The Swedish Transport Administration (STA) and Region Skåne states that they do not have direct contact with citizens; instead, it is the municipalities that communicate citizens' needs and identify gaps to the authorities. As mentioned by Region Skåne, “So direct contact between us and children is zero” (Representative from Region Skåne). However, despite having no direct contact with children, Region Skåne brought forward during the interview that they include the children's perspective as one of three prioritising grounds when planning bicycle roads, thereby improving the conditions for children as well.

At certain times, some individuals contact the STA directly when they notice particular areas owned by the authority that are in great need of improvement, often in connection to the children's perspective. The STA is developing a document designed to provide a guiding framework for incorporating children's perspectives into project planning. The notion is that it should be included from the start and maintained throughout the entire project, which is not currently the case. Sometimes it can be more critical, as children are highly affected, and at other times, they are only slightly affected, making it less necessary.

6.2.1.2 Tools, methods and adaptations to lower car usage

Many municipalities lack a clear strategy for preventing the use of cars or promoting public transportation. As mentioned previously, Skåne has long distances and insufficient public transport, which makes it even harder to work toward a society with fewer car users. Although many of the municipalities interviewed mention different ways this is addressed, mainly by promoting

alternative means of transportation, such as bicycling. And though dialogues with relevant stakeholders.

Region Skåne highlights the travel habit survey conducted every five years, which reveals how travel habits are changing. However, it is not possible to derive specific strategies or measures from this data. And shortly, some redefining is being done in the traffic strategy to clarify it further, so that it has only one direction.

...you can see how the travelling is changing, but it is not really possible to derive specific measures or strategies, so what has happened to the new transport strategy is that they have tried to refine it a bit so that it only has one direction and so that these areas are prioritized so that there is a system of transport systems.

(Representative from Region Skåne)

The majority of municipalities report that they are using the Region Skåne travel habit survey as a tool for assessing each municipality's travel habits, which provides them with a clear view of how many of their citizens use public transportation, among other things. Beyond Regions Skåne's survey, Svalöv municipality also conduct their own travel habit survey from time to time, in order to monitor travel patterns within the municipality:

...travel habits surveys done by Region Skåne, which provide a certain insight into the effect of these. Then we also, as a municipality, sometimes do travel habit surveys to monitor changes in travel patterns over time.

(Representative from Svalöv municipality)

Bromölla municipality noted that they are attempting to influence public transport through dialogue with Skåne public transport company, Skånetrafiken, regarding train timetables, among other matters. In addition to dialogues with the STA, the goal is to simplify the process for citizens to adopt sustainable travel modes.

What we do as a municipality is like every municipality does, which is to have a very close dialogue with, in our case, Skånetrafiken...As the STA builds new train routes, and so on. We in the municipalities always do so that we have a close dialogue with the ones in charge, where the stations are, including trains and buses and how those lines are drawn, timetable changes and stuff like that.

(Representative from Bromölla municipality)

Osby Municipality also holds dialogues with Skånetrafiken in an attempt to improve public transport connections. Since they have poor public transport connectivity, their citizens are largely dependent on having a car. One measure they take to encourage more people to use public transport, as the representative from the municipality stated, is to cover the cost of public transport for senior citizens and high school students. Staffanstorp, as mentioned by other municipalities in similar terms, is a municipality that neither promotes nor discourages alternative means of transportation to cars.

I work in a municipality where you could say that you neither promote nor do not promote other means of transport than cars. You say that all modes of transport are important. So, perhaps the main thing you do is not plan to prevent car traffic... all modes of transport should have the opportunity to arrive...

(Representative from Staffanstorp municipality)

Several municipalities, such as Klippan and Osby, are implementing numerous measures to expand and connect bicycle paths, aiming to facilitate cycling as a commuting option for residents. Osby municipality claims to be building many more metres of bicycle roads than other municipalities and working actively with traffic safety.

We work very actively here to increase road safety for unprotected road users, above all we are building a lot of cycle paths in our municipality... so we are building a lot of meters of bicycle paths in relation to other municipalities, so we are at the forefront there I

would say, because we have a working method that makes it extremely cost-effective.

(Representative from Osby municipality)

Svedala Municipality has partnered with external organisations to run campaigns encouraging more children to walk and cycle to school, where children can earn points and try out these active travel modes. During the European Mobility Week, Höganäs municipality had the idea to distribute bike helmets and reflectors to the public. They also attempted to gather data on how people travel and asked individuals what would encourage them to choose a more sustainable mode of transportation. Many seemed to answer that better weather would be a factor.

Some municipalities have initiatives in the workplace, often located within municipal offices. Osby municipality encourages its workers to use public transport and has transitioned to electric cars instead of fossil-fuelled vehicles. Accessibility to parking spaces can be linked to the ease of car usage, as mentioned by some municipalities interviewed. One of the municipalities reportedly working on a new parking norm is Burlöv municipality, which limits accessibility to parking, which can potentially lead to a decrease in car usage.

Trelleborg has a traffic plan where one measure is to decrease car usage, but that plan has not yet been approved by the politicians in the municipality, as they want to ensure that cars are prioritised. In this non approved traffic plan, strategies are being introduced to encourage more people to walk, take the bike, or use public transport, which is challenging when the municipality has prioritised the needs of cars and still does, due to political considerations.

We have at the same time a political direction that means that the car should still be welcome in the municipality and in the city. We are working in two directions, you could say. We are working according to adopted goals, while simultaneously, we also have a political direction that points in a somewhat opposite direction.

(Representative from Trelleborg municipality)

Some of the larger municipalities, such as Helsingborg Municipality, are reportedly working to promote walking, cycling, and public transportation in their city planning. “It is walking, cycling, and public transport which are the prioritised traffic types, and that is also connected to our health goals and the climate goals” (Representative from Helsingborg municipality). Region Skåne is heading in the same direction with its new transport strategy, which is currently awaiting approval. Region Skåne, just as Trelleborg Municipality, must adapt to political directives that do not undermine the situation for car users.

In the region, we also have to follow the politics, so we do not have completely free hands, and it is quite important for many that you do not make things worse for those who need a car, so it gets a bit tricky there.

(Representative from Region Skåne)

Politics also influences the STA in certain aspects, and investments are partly set by Region Skåne, which, as mentioned, is governed by political directives. The STA is given the necessary direction for the investments required. In one of the interviews with the STA, it was mentioned that when reading their plans, there is no insight into the topic of decreasing car traffic in the form of a goal or similar.

There are goals to reduce climate impact and things like that in our strategies. But then, if there is a stated goal to reduce car traffic, that is probably the hardest thing to answer. I think if you read our plans, there is nothing. There is no clear goal in our strategies to decrease car traffic.

(Representative from the STA)

6.2.2 Projects employed by the municipalities and authorities in Skåne

The project category includes the projects each municipality and authority has undertaken, or is currently undertaking, to involve children in the planning

process and for sustainable travel. The following section deals with projects of interest.

6.2.2.1 Projects aimed at including children

Projects concerning children and their journey to school, safe school roads, seemed to be of common interest among several of the municipalities. The following project was initiated by Svalöv municipality, following a survey sent out to schools in the municipality. In the survey, children were asked questions and asked to draw a map of their journey to school. "...we sent out a survey to the schoolkids where they were requested to fill out questions and, on a map, draw their journey to school" (Representative from Svalöv municipality). Through the project the municipality stated that they gained insight into how children experience their roads to school and identified areas where there is a lack of traffic safety.

Svalöv municipality used insights from the survey to implement measures that could improve children's safety on their way to and from school. Measures such as marking out crossings and cutting bushes around roads to improve visibility for both children and drivers (Svalöv kommun, 2023). The Trelleborg municipality established similar measures, such as setting speed limits and creating a dedicated lane for cycling and walking.

Höganäs municipality investigated children's school roads through a consulting firm, the results of which they are currently assessing and fixing problems throughout the municipality. "What do they experience if there are shortcomings, if they want something there, or if it is dangerous, or if they feel unsafe when going to school, for example. So we worked with this project to cover up" (Representative from Höganäs municipality). The investigation was conducted through a survey distributed to the five schools in the municipality. From the data they gathered the consulting firm created maps that highlighted areas of danger etc. The project served as one of the foundations for Höganäs municipality's traffic safety program for 2023.

Helsingborg municipality included a school in a project, asking the headmaster, parents, and children about the traffic environment surrounding the school. The traffic sector could then use this information to create a better traffic environment. "We received input on how you saw the traffic environment around the school, and together we could work on the soft issues towards the school, and we rebuilt the environment outside the school to give them better conditions" (Representative from Helsingborg municipality).

Staffanstorp municipality is developing a new neighbourhood in the village of Hjärup, featuring housing and parks. In this project, children are being included through workshops, with the detailed plan currently at an initial stage. However, they express a desire to conduct a follow-up in 2025 and throughout the project. In another project in the municipality, children have been involved much later in the process, during the construction phase, as explained by the representative from the municipality.

Then we also have another school that is being built right now, where children have been involved at a much later stage. Children have been involved during the construction phase itself, in different ways, but then it is not we who do it as the municipality, it is the developer who has initiated that work

(Representative from Staffanstorp municipality)

Helsingborg also mentioned a specific project in Ramlösa where children got the opportunity to participate through surveys sent out as well as in dialogues. A child impact analysis was also made in order to map out how the project might impact children. In relation to this, they also mentioned that “It is not always that we need to speak to children in some projects since we have the knowledge[...]and then we take our experience and the knowledge that exists and that we know what the research says” (Representative from Helsingborg municipality).

6.2.2.2 Projects aimed at promoting sustainable travel

Many of the interviews highlighted cycling as an alternative to cars and public transportation. A project in connection with Mobility Makers is being undertaken by Svalövs municipality, where they will, in the fall of 2026, conduct a test using a “cycling school bus”. The parents or guardians of schoolchildren take turns cycling with a group of kids to school and picking them up at stops along the way; this is a collaborative effort between the school, parents, and the municipality. The project is supposed to improve safety in traffic and reassure that the children arrive safely at school, aimed at young children in elementary school. To begin with, one school will be the first to try out the “cycling school bus”.

Svedala municipality has a project aimed at adults and their choice of transportation. For one month, 50 people were encouraged to take a bike instead of a car. From the municipality's point of view, it seems to have been a success. This creates an opportunity not only for the adults in the family but also for other family members, such as the children. Burlöv municipality had a bicycle in the library, which they lent out, in an attempt to make people try biking more.

Helsingborg municipality is arranging a competition in which participants can sign up and commit to taking bicycle trips instead of using the car or public transport during the summer of 2025, in an attempt to make more people choose the bike (Helsingborg municipality, 2025)

To create better opportunities for people to use public transport in Skåne, Skånetrafiken initiated Skåneflex in the fall of 2024. One of the municipalities involved in Skåneflex is Svalöv municipality "We are one of three municipalities that are participating in Skåne Flex, which is a project owned by Skånetrafiken to make sustainable mobility available in rural areas" (Representative from Svalöv municipality). Skåneflex utilises an app that allows users to request a bus journey by entering a pickup point and a drop-off point, thereby creating a new way to travel by public transport and making sustainable mobility accessible in rural areas (Skånetrafiken, n.d.b).

Staffanstorps municipality has plans to create a super-bus lane where an old train route used to go, which was dismantled a few years ago since it no longer served as a national interest. Since the route runs straight through the landscape, they believe it would create faster public transportation, as only buses would be allowed to drive there. To promote more sustainable transport, a bicycle lane could be added, which would shorten the journey from Staffanstorps to Malmö.

...It is a route for a so-called super-bus. It is a route that goes straight through the landscape and the ambition is to be able to run a bus on this route. And maybe also combine it with a bicycle road, and if that had been made possible, the bicycle road to Malmö would have been shortened a lot, and an exclusive bus route on this passage would have been much faster than the bus today.

(Representative from Staffanstorps municipality)

The Green Mobility Shift project is a project that Region Skåne is involved in, as part of an Interreg project alongside multiple actors and municipalities in Sweden and Denmark. Region Skåne, together with Innovation Skåne, is exploring ways to increase the use of the superbike roads in Skåne. Superbike roads aim to create an easier and faster journey for daily commuters to and from work. In targeting commuter behaviour, Region Skåne and Innovation Skåne strive to find new ways of creating sustainable, long-term travel habits during the project's 3-year period (Region Skåne, 2024d).

6.2.3 Challenges faced by the municipalities and authorities

This section review challenges expressed in the interview and faced problems when it comes to including children in the planning process and when attempting to reduce car usage.

6.2.3.1 Challenges with involving children

The municipalities and authorities in Skåne identified significant challenges in integrating children's perspectives into urban and traffic planning processes. While there is recognition of the value of involving children practical, institutional, and cultural barriers hinder meaningful participation. Children are not often explicitly invited to public consultations or are therefore only indirectly reached in these situations by their parents. Efforts to involve them, such as youth councils or school collaborations, often lack continuity, staff interest, or sufficient resources. According to a Representative from Bromölla municipality, it is hard to find children who are interested in the planning questions, and the ones who are active in the youth council have a limited time to be active.

It can be a few that show up with the parents at a village meeting or dialogue meeting, etc. So it is one person that is going to represent one very large group in society, so it is challenging to get the perspective of children and young people other than through their parents.

(Representative from Bromölla municipality)

Svalöv municipality representative mentions that it's hard to contact children through schools because they rarely have time, and there are already many people wanting to contact the children for various reasons and studies,

according to Trelleborg representatives. Helsingborg also notes that without an “in” at schools, it’s difficult to establish contact or even speak to children, as schools already have a lot to deal with.

Many of the municipalities have used surveys through schools to gather children’s opinions, especially in the project *Säkra Skolvägar*. The challenges to involve children in school environments can be teachers who may not be engaged, or school schedules that are planned too far in advance to accommodate municipal initiatives. The project must also have “meaning” or be a “serious” project for the schools to be involved, cause otherwise they may lack, enthusiasm as mentioned by a representative from Helsingborg municipality.

It is also not that easy to get into their school planning ... the school plans activities like a year in advance. If you’re going to, you have to plan in advance, and you don’t always have that in a project.

(Representative from Burlöv municipality)

As explained in Aronsson’s (2022) article, if children understand that their contribution to a project is important, they will be more interested in helping. The issue is that it is not the children or project leaders who decide whether the project is important, but a third party, such as teachers or headmasters. A representative from Trelleborg municipality follows up on this by suggesting that it would be wise to reach out to children outside school. A representative from Burlöv municipality explains that it is easy to encounter adults in everyday situations outside food shops or through meeting announcements on websites, but children are harder to reach and require more effort.

Representatives from Helsingborg mention that online surveys could be a possible way to engage children, and especially teenagers, as they spend much of their time online. They added that a challenge with online surveys could be losing the personal contact with the person answering. Municipalities such as Trelleborg, Osby, and Burlöv highlight the difficulty of translating children's input into actual change. Children may express their concerns, but louder adult voices, legal restrictions, or bureaucratic procedures often override the final decisions. Children’s input gets lost in the

process, or parents ' or other stakeholders' opinions override it. Trelleborg municipality said something that resonates with this challenge:

...there is a significant conflict of interest there, and unfortunately, we find that much of the children's input gets lost. Because it's rare for children to express, I want a ten-lane parking lot outside the school and a four-lane road.

(Representative from Trelleborg municipality)

Children wouldn't care for a parking space or more lanes since they don't have a driver's license or a car, but the loudest opinion often overrides the children's opinions. This leads into a challenge expressed by the Svalövs municipality representative, where they differentiate the child perspective and the children's perspective.

...what I find interesting is this thing about the child perspective versus the children's perspective, that it's important to distinguish between the two, I think. The child perspective, I believe, is something we include and are aware of – that we have an explicit focus on the child perspective and that we work with several targeted measures for children, especially through things like safe school routes and so on. But the children's perspective – letting them participate, be involved, and take part in the dialogue – that's something else, I think, and it's something we need to get better at.

(Representative from Svalöv Municipality)

This is seen as a challenge because it is hard to distinguish whether you are planning for what a child wants, the child perspective, or what the planner believes to be best for the child, the children's perspective (SKR, 2023). Within a project or a study, there might also be power imbalances between children and the researcher (Aronsson, 2022). This is another challenge that's been mentioned by several municipalities as they might not have the knowledge how to talk to children with a pedagogical approach and neither having the time to become acquainted with the children to make them feel comfortable “...people from the municipality who are not used to working with children may make the teachers or others uncomfortable”

(Representative from Burlöv municipality). In Helsingborg municipality, they had a more divided tasks in the planning department. One task group are responsible for the communication with the school and collection of data from children. This gives the opportunity for schools and their children to familiarise themselves with this specific task group, which can make them comfortable and willing to be part of projects as well as share their ideas.

Region Skåne and the STA recognise the issue with the inclusion of children in the planning process, but they note that their roles are not operational, rather mainly strategic or national. Projects can take years or even decades to complete, often outlasting the children they aim to benefit. The time factor also presents a challenge since the STA handles large projects that can last many years, meaning a preschool that is affected today might no longer exist when the project reaches completion.

The challenge of a project can take many years, and young people want to see results immediately. If something lasts over 20 years, an eight-year-old cannot even imagine such a long future. It's also difficult for them to know where they will be when they're 28.

(Representative from Helsingborg municipality).

This also aligns with Höganäs municipality, whose representative expressed during an interview that "It's a huge challenge when working with children, because children often want to see the change — and to be part of it." Collecting children's perspectives can be difficult when the final project goals may not match their input and they might be disappointed.

6.2.3.2 Challenges with the mobility transition

According to the municipalities, the challenges in reducing car use often stem from infrastructure decisions that still favour cars, despite wanting safer environments for children. This aligns with the article written by Mehdizadeh and Ermagun (2018), where they observed patterns in parents' experiences of car usage and their preferences for the appearance of the school surroundings. The representatives mention explains in the interviews that though children and planners want more pedestrian and biking lanes, parents and politicians rather want to ease car usage. Poor public transportation is another major obstacle to minimising car usage. Bus services are infrequent, expensive, or

poorly connected across the county, particularly in rural municipalities such as Klippan and Höganäs. “It’s hard to convince them to leave the car at home when we can’t offer them good alternatives in form of public transportation” (Representative from Höganäs municipality). Residents often perceive the car as the only viable option, and traditional car use is deeply embedded in local culture. Svalövs municipality mentioned that in their latest travel habit survey, 70% of the population said that they travel by car. Representatives from Svalöv and Staffanstorp municipality expresses that the biggest challenges in reducing car dependence are the longer distances in the municipality: “We can’t cover alternative traffic in all places. Skånetrafiken have different rules and guidelines that depend on the number of people living in that area” (Representative from Svalöv Municipality). Although there is a consensus that lowering car use is desirable, shifting behaviour requires substantial investment, improved alternatives, and time. The economic structure and size of smaller municipalities also limit their ability to fund or influence sustainable transportation options.

I understand this attitude that certain big municipalities have that you should get rid of the car completely. That attitude doesn’t really exist in our small municipalities, because here you are dependent on the car in a different way[...] in our municipality, it does not work to travel by public transport, we have no connection out west at all. We have poor connections to these larger cities, and it should take around an hour and ten minutes to travel by public transport with transfers, but at the same time, it costs more than driving same distance by car.

(Representative from Osby municipality)

In Bromölla, the representative from the municipality explains that they have implemented as many bus stops as possible to encourage the use of public transport but adds that if the bus only departs once every two hours, it is easier to take the car. The representative also clarifies that buying a public transport ticket is very expensive, which means people can usually afford only one or the other, not both. Although some municipalities, like Svedala, have good cycling and walking lanes as well as efficient public transport links, a culture change is needed to reduce car usage. Helsingborg municipality representatives also mention that a change in attitude is necessary, but that it will take time.

Lowering car usage is difficult since citizens believe it is easier and faster to use their own cars, and sometimes cheaper depending on where they are going. However, it might not always be faster, as they have to look for parking and deal with other inconveniences. Representatives from Burlöv municipality also have the same view on this issue: “The more lanes you have, the more traffic it will be”. They continue with explaining that if taking the car is faster than people will do that. But lowering the usage of cars calls for alternative modes of transport, especially for children who can’t drive. The STA mentions an old concept that has been a norm that children under the age of twelve should not cycle alone to school. They see this old norm as a problem and are trying to move away from this concept. This goal is largely influenced by how roads and railways are constructed, ensuring they do not prevent children from cycling either by making it too difficult or by creating a danger.

The STA representative also highlights significant deficiencies in the safety of walking and cycling pathways outside and between urban areas. There are very few connecting roads where children can cycle alone, as there are hardly any branches of roads where parents feel comfortable letting them do so, nor do they want to. This is because these routes pass through smaller urban areas where unprotected road users face potential dangers. Children might also have other concerns, beyond traffic safety, that influence their confidence to cycle alone. Helsingborg municipality representatives explain that some children find cycling frightening due to bushes and darkness, and if someone intimidating appears, there is nowhere to escape because the pathways are too narrow.

The Municipalities also express frustration with national authorities as the STA, Skåne Region and Skånetrafiken which controls major roads and often can’t meet local requests for speed reductions or design changes. The authorities refer to resource limitations, prioritisation of car accessibility, and conflicting mandates as reasons why children and local needs are often sidelined: “It always comes down to that — that there’s too little money to carry out all the measures one would like to see”. In some cases, municipalities also face conflicts over what politicians want and how much they are willing to allocate financially. Even if lowering car usage is the best environmental option, politicians might fear losing voters and, therefore, do not support planners' project proposals. Skåne Region also highlights difficulties with collaboration, explaining that they plan initiatives, but the municipality and

the STA are responsible for construction. The regional representative provides an example of how the process of building bike lanes is very slow due to the STA's lack of project leaders. Klippan, Staffanstorp, as well as other municipalities, talk about a loss of sufficient resources: "It is always a question of balancing resources and so on..." (Representative Staffanstorp municipality). A loss of resources when focusing on children's involvement is not prioritized. The resources that are needed is mainly economic funds but also staff and more working time.

We work with tax funds, we work with budgets, we work with the dialogue with politics, what we are constantly working on in the projects is to create the conditions to be able to do these investigations and analyses involving everyone, this is what we are constantly working on and it is very tough financially that it is limited and then it is often difficult to do everything fully, so you may know you should do it. And then there are often limitations, it quickly becomes clear many times that you might need to do more investigations than you do and this is unfortunately the downside.

(Representative from Klippans Municipality)

A municipality's infrastructure involves not only its own interests but also national considerations. This includes national roads, which have different demands than a regular municipal road, leading to varying opinions on what is feasible to plan for the area.

Our infrastructure is built to last a very long time, making it difficult to predict future needs and how it will be used. It might not always be possible to gather opinions from youths, as doing so could conflict with the goals of the final project, and it can be hard to foresee what all future needs will be, which makes the situation very challenging

(Representative from the STA)

That the present-day needs tend to overly influence future requirements is something that representatives from Trelleborg also mentions. The future needs to be thought about when making the plans to create a sustainably environment.

6.2.4 Suggested improvements for children's inclusivity and sustainable transportation

The municipalities and actors across Skåne express a growing recognition of the importance of involving children in transport planning, but many also emphasise that they lack clear guidance, routines, and methods for doing so effectively. In Svalöv municipality, there is a strong call for clearer guidelines and follow-up mechanisms to ensure that children's perspectives are truly integrated and measurable within transport policy. "We are in need of clearer guidelines on how we are supposed to work more actively in including young citizens in transport planning, as well as improve the way we include dialogues in our work" (Representative from Svalöv municipality). They have a goal within the municipality to include the children's perspective to a greater extent and one of the improvements that could be made is targeted dialogues for different types of planning. The representative believes that they have awareness of what needs to be done, and that the municipality is willing to do it.

Bromölla municipality highlights challenges both in children engagement and infrastructure limitations. There is frustration over public transport policy, particularly regarding the inability to bring bicycles on trains—something they note works better in Denmark and could be taken as an inspiration, "It is the state that owns our transport networks and trains and roads. And in that landscape when it is constantly becoming more and more and more savings also as everything just becomes more and more expensive" (Representative from Bromölla municipality). Engaging children in the planning process is also a challenge, with low turnout and limited interest in school visits. The representative from Bromölla municipality wants to find methods to involve children, saying that they can't locate them and they don't show up when invited. Alternatively, they are not even interested in listening or staying awake during the visits to the schools.

In Klippan municipality, there is a positive attitude towards involving children, although efforts are still developing. There is a call for more systematic methods and routines, with a focus not just on participation for its own sake but on gathering meaningful insights. The representative emphasises on getting the input in an early stage in the planning process: "it is actually really good to have earlier dialogues really long before it becomes a project" (Representative from Klippan Municipality). Officials recognise the value of early dialogue in planning but says that long-term processes often delay visible results, making it harder to demonstrate to children that their input matters, but that it will be important for future generations to come.

Staffanstorp municipality emphasises two effective models for engagement: either regular, recurring interaction over time, or highly practical, hands-on activities that are concrete and engaging. Abstract or one-off interactions tend to be ineffective. The municipality has also introduced subsidised bikes for employees to encourage biking. A big improvement is working with bigger authorities: "A smoother cooperation with the STA. It would have been desirable...but a better overall approach, better collaboration with the STA and perhaps neighbouring municipalities" (Representative from Staffanstorp municipality).

Trelleborg has implemented a five-year test project involving schoolchildren in mapping their transport environments and trialling temporary fixes, followed by evaluations. It also uses participatory budgeting methods where children, alongside parents, propose and vote on initiatives—a micro-democratic approach that fosters ownership. Officials advocate for including diverse age groups in major planning processes and stress the importance of changing parental attitudes that contribute to unsafe environments by prioritising car usage. Health impacts and the need for active transport are also emphasised. However, they face cultural and political resistance to reducing car dependency, especially in areas where long distances and parking availability are entrenched. They are working to shift perspectives through a long-term traffic plan that rethinks school zones and car access. Trelleborg municipality have also implemented digital surveys, allowing them to gather opinions from citizens:

We've historically not been good at asking the citizens what they actually want but we gotten better with digital surveys, it's a bit

easier now than what it's been before! I hope we can do this more, there are nice examples of other municipalities when this has been successful

(Representative from Trelleborg)

The representatives hope the surveys are increasingly used to gather input, and they aim to integrate transport planning into broader urban development to avoid sprawl.

In Höganäs municipality, planning is tightly scheduled until 2027, and they highlight the need to connect participation to projects strategically. They are working to better coordinate bus schedules with school timetables, in collaboration with Skånetrafiken, to make it easier and accessible for children to take the bus to school. The representative from Höganäs municipality put emphasis on the importance of listening to the people living in Höganäs:

I'm not the one walking to school or commuting to work. I can't be everywhere—that's why it's so important to involve the actual users of the infrastructure. They're the ones who can point out the real issues and needs.

(Representative from Höganäs Municipality)

The representative also mentions that reaching out and listening to the people is one thing, and implementing and using their input is another. Money, time, and effort could be a waste if the input is not used.

Then we could've skipped the whole process—we wouldn't have had to spend all that time and money and everything else if we didn't actually want the input to be used. The whole point is that we genuinely want to receive those perspectives.

(Representative from Höganäs municipality)

Burlöv municipality notes progress in support from the municipality council for children inclusion but wants to make participation more systematic. The municipality has good regional transport links but poor internal connectivity, especially between the southern parts of the municipality and the central parts.

“This is being worked on continuously because now you need to go all the way into Malmö and then to the southern part of the municipality, which makes it not very accessible for the citizens” (Representative from Burlöv Municipality). In Helsingborg municipality, no children-specific transport engagement is planned, but officials believe future generations will demand less car use, particularly as they claim that studies show fewer people obtain driver’s licenses. They also anticipate that the growing legal force of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child will eventually spur more action, leading to increased children engagement in the planning process.

Region Skåne stresses the need for stronger collaboration across sectors and clearer coordination between regional, municipal, and national actors. The fragmentation of responsibility in infrastructure planning—where Region Skåne often funds but does not execute projects—is seen as a barrier to effective child-centred development. The representative from Region Skåne mentioned EVs as an alternative to the fossil-fuelled cars: “It may not necessarily be that car traffic needs to decrease, but rather that it must shift from fossil-fuel cars to electric vehicles”. The representative means that in surveys it is not shown how your car is powered, just if you use one, and that this could be misleading in the results as EVs don’t cause the same number of emissions when being used.

The STA highlights its role in making infrastructure safer and more child-friendly, especially in rural areas. They see many opportunities to improve safety environments for children, which include better pedestrian routes, safer school routes, and mitigating the risks of roads and railways.

7 Analysis

In the following section an analysis of the findings of this thesis supported by literature and the theories. The section is divided in three parts that are linked with the research questions, starting with discussing the first research question: *How do municipalities in Skåne and relevant national authorities currently engage in dialogue with children regarding various transport infrastructure projects and work to shift traffic away from cars toward other modes of transportation?* Followed by the analysis of the second research question: *Which tools could be used to improve the inclusion of children in planning practices?* And lastly an analysis of the third research question will be made: *What are Skånes municipalities views on the opportunities and methods for including children in future project planning?*

7.1 How do municipalities engage in dialogue with children.

To which extent and how children are included in planning processes vary between municipalities, as there are no clear guidelines established by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, or any other actor, regarding planning (SKR, 2024). It is entirely up to each municipality to integrate the convention as they see fit, resulting in varied interpretations and approaches to its implementation.

Many municipalities have used the project Säkra skolvägar as a way to engage children in transport infrastructure planning. It is a project designed to involve children in the planning process by gathering information on safety issues around and on the way to school. Information was collected through schools where students filled out surveys and drew their route to school. The data

gathered was valuable as it provided the municipalities with insights into what improvements were needed in order to increase traffic safety for children. The municipalities that did not use Säkra Skolvägar instead employed similar projects about traffic safety but used different methods. These types of projects align with Gummesson's (2005) claims about the importance of creating a safe traffic environment around schools. It's often parents who want to travel to and from school quickly, as they often commute to other cities or municipalities for work. This makes it difficult to use any mode of transport other than a car, as it is the most comfortable option. When having a family, it can be hard to get the life puzzle to work and managing a public transport timetable can be challenging. This aligns with Strömblad et al., (2020), the freedom connected to car usage will prevail as long as it is the easiest and time efficient option, but it's a vicious circle: if you drive more, the infrastructure will reflect that and encourage even more car usage.

Although it is beneficial to focus on areas around and en route to school, research shows that trips to other activities also need to be looked upon (Strömblad et al., 2020). Since leisure trips accounts for a big part of the total emissions from transport in Sweden it is important to also focus on how to make those trips more sustainable. Leisure trip mileage tends to increase for families, people with higher income and for residents in rural areas. As stated, Skåne has several rural areas which can increase leisure trip mileage (Strömblad et al., 2022).

Using the car for leisure trips tends to be more common in rural areas rather than in urban areas as it does not have the same connectivity when it comes to bikeways or public transport. The rural areas are usually further away from activities, making them hard to walk or bike to. This results in a safety issue for the child and therefore they are in need of a guardian to accompany and drive them to those activities (Gummesson, 2005). SDG goal 9 implies that safe mobility options should be equal to all children, even where geographical diversity can hamper the accessibility (United Nations, n.d.). But rural areas often consist of big roads with high speeds that limit the mobility for children, but also for grown-ups. Building infrastructure for improving traffic safety have been proven to be difficult since there are many stakeholders involved which leads to priority disputes.

One of the issues is the long distances, but Skånetrafiken also have rules and guidelines for the public transport depending on how many people live in an area. The demand decides the supply, which means less populated areas can be

affected by seldom departures and fewer allocated bus stops. As shown in section 3.1 the population density in Skåne County varies between the municipalities where Helsingborg and Trelleborg have more inhabitants per square kilometres than for example Osby and Klippan municipality (Region Skåne 2024b). Therefore the less dense municipalities does not have the same possibilities in developing the infrastructure for other modes of transportation than cars. Another issue with municipalities that have a small population is that it results in smaller revenue from taxes and less resources is then available for new developing projects for infrastructure and public transport etc.

Continuing to plan for the car in urban landscapes poses a threat to Child friendly environments [CFEs], since children get less spaces to develop their skills and it limits their sustainable recreational mobility (Jansson & Sundling, 2024). By not including children in developing landscapes in municipalities excludes them from the democratic processes where every generation should be accounted for as García-Antúnez et al., states (2023).

Since Sweden has adopted the SDG goals, counties, municipalities, and other authorities are required to develop plans to achieve these targets. They hold the responsibility to contribute to the SDGs, which includes reducing deaths and injuries resulting from car accidents. Vision zeros also aim to reduce the deaths from car accidents by 50% and shifting the responsibility of safe environments to the planners (Road Safety Sweden, n.d.). This can be benefitted by shifting the traffic away from cars and investing in more sustainable modes of transport, such as walking, biking and public transport (United Nations, n.d). Mehdizadeh and Ermagun (2018) explain that improving the safety and security of walking routes and enhancing pedestrian facilities could encourage more people to walk. The same logic applies to biking and public transport; if improvements were made, these options could become both time- and cost-effective alternatives to driving, leading to increased usage.

Instead of trying to limit the usage of cars, several of the municipalities invest in other mode of transport to make them more accessible and attractive. Skåneflex is one example, where small buses pick people up and drive them if they have requested a lift. This is a better alternative than running an empty regular bus, which produces more emissions than a smaller vehicle. This allows the supply to meet the demand for public transport in rural areas. Another idea of a project is Super bus lane where an old train route can serve as a faster route for only bus and bicycles. This allows a safer and faster transport since it evades regular road traffic.

A combination of sustainable modes could also be a good option. For example, taking your bike on public transport so you can cycle to and from the stations. This seems like a great solution, but it's not feasible since you're not allowed to take the bike on public transport. Another issue with cycling mentioned in one of the interviews is the Swedish weather, which makes it difficult to use the bike all year round.

7.2 Which tools could be used to improve the inclusion of children people in planning practices?

According to the results, the most common tool used when including children in the planning process is a survey. Given the resources available within the municipalities, it is understandable that this approach is used as it is time- and cost-efficient. However, as the literature states (Hagemann et al., 2024), less interactive approaches, such as surveys, are not ideal for including children in planning. Children cannot be as expressive and creative when using these kinds of methods, and that does not represent the complexity and diversity of a child's everyday life experience. Another challenge for planners is working with children when they don't have the right knowledge on how to speak or interact with them. An example of a solution can be found in Helsingborg where a dedicated group is responsible for maintaining the contact with schools and children. This approach helps building trust as the children become acquainted with that group (Aronsson, 2022). This group then works as a bridge between the planners and the children on delivering the children's input on projects. However, this might not be a viable option for all the municipalities since they express a lack of resources.

Different generations have different understandings, making it crucial to adapt approaches in order to effectively include children and find the right balance in communicating with them. This ensures that both parties feel heard and understood when expressing their opinions (Bidadanure, 2021). Another issue could be the power imbalances between the planners and the children. Svalöv among other municipalities expressed that it is important to distinguish between the children's perspective and the child perspective, this is also brought up in Aronsson (2022) and SKR (2023). Planning for what you think children want and what the children expressed is two different things that you need to be aware of in planning.

Children view the world differently than adults and therefore experience safety and risk differently. Helsingborg Municipality explained that in projects with children, they expressed fears of encountering a big dog, darkness, or a group

of older students smoking outside the school as safety concerns. These might not be the typical issues parents or planners see as risks for children, who might instead focus more on road crossings and speed limits to make the environment safer for children. This does not imply that one opinion is more valuable than the other, both need to be considered. Additionally, parents can sometimes have too much influence when the intention is to gather children's perspective. Several municipalities expressed this as a challenge in planning projects, noting that children's desires were occasionally overlooked.

A common pattern in the results is that most of the municipalities find it hard to interpret the Children Convention as it no clear guidelines how to implement the law in their projects (SKR, 2023). Some of the representatives have developed their own strategies to promote children's inclusion. In facing children's inclusion in specifically traffic related projects the Swedish Transport Administration (STA) is working on a guiding framework that is supposed to help to better integrate the inclusion of children throughout the whole process, from start to finish. Creating your own guideline can be profitable as it can be easier to follow and understand. There are models available to help create guidelines when including children in the planning process. Heart's and Shier's model are both presented under Literature Review 6.2 How to include children in planning processes (Shier, 2001). None of the municipalities or authorities reported using any formal model as a tool for including children in the planning process. The interviews did not reveal clear reasons for this; instead, the representatives tended to refer to examples and projects from other municipalities rather than citing established models.

Mobility Makers has an initiative that can help municipalities and other actors include children in different planning projects. In the Listen Project, examples from Sweden, Denmark, and France are presented as inspiration for how children are included (Interreg North Sea, 2025c). This document has just recently been published, which may explain why the municipalities and authorities were not aware of its existence.

7.3 What are Skånes municipalities views on the opportunities and methods for including children in future project planning?

Collaborations between parties and sectors need to be clearer. The municipality, the region, and the STA require improved cooperation and communication to understand conflicts to resolve them. Throughout the interviews, several municipalities expressed concern about being unable to

proceed with projects or change routes because they would pass other roads that are maintained by another authority such as the STA. Their argument is that this hampers their ability to achieve goals such as creating a more child-friendly environment and facilitating easier movement for cyclists and pedestrians within the municipality. The larger actors referred to in this situation are Skåne Region and the STA. When these larger authorities were asked about this conflict during the interviews, they replied that they cannot always meet the municipalities' needs, as they have other obligations that are serving national interest foremost rather than the local.

These obligations could include making car transportation faster and more accessible, or—for example—lowering a speed limit or adding a speed bump which could in turn have an impact on the municipality's own plans. To better address each other's interests, effective collaboration between relevant actors is crucial. Improved collaboration can ultimately enhance the sustainability measures implemented (Hagemann et al., 2024).

One challenge expressed by the municipalities and authorities was that the planning process often takes a long time from start to finish, which in many cases means that the many of the children who contribute may no longer be children by the time it is completed. This can be problematic from an *intergenerational* justice perspective since it is unfair to the future generations that might have other inputs than the ones from children today which is seen as an intergenerational conflict. This places too great a responsibility on today's children to anticipate the desires of future generations. First and foremost, the children of today are the ones that matter in democratic processes which serves *intragenerational* justice, although it is important to be aware of what are left to the generations to come (García-Antúnez et al., 2023).

Planning is often irreversible in the sense that its inflexible and hard to adapt if something is already built, planning processes can also be difficult because of disputes about resources and political views (García-Antúnez et al., 2023).

Involving children in a process where they cannot see immediate results may reduce their interest and motivation to participate. According to Aronsson (2022), making children aware of their contribution to a study or project may also be an investment for the future as they are more willing to be part of coming projects. Another problem for the municipalities was that projects need to be “important” for the schools to letting it take time from the children's education. What or who defines whether a project is important or not? Is it

based on the scale of change it brings, its potential to create groundbreaking outcomes, or other criteria?

Using school to reach children can be challenging, according to Trelleborg municipality and others. A problem with schools is that other organisations also want to engage children in projects through school, which can increase the workload for schools and mean not everyone gets the opportunity to conduct their study. The municipalities understand this and explain that schools already have limited time to deliver the education plan they are obliged to follow. Planning the school year is also done well in advance, leaving little room in the schedule to implement projects from the municipality or other authorities. One possible solution could be to engage children in participation activities outside of the school setting. But this can be challenge as it is hard to know which activities outside school that includes children. These activities often happen outside work hours, which makes it difficult for researchers and planners since it is outside work hours. Resources for research where children might be included, and the time and resources needed to visit these activities can also be difficult to justify.

Findings in the interview was that none of the municipalities or authorities work specifically to minimise car use, but rather promote other modes of transportation such as walking, biking or public transport. Goal 13 Climate Action is one of the SDG goals and covers how greenhouse gas emissions from car traffic can affect both children's health and pollute the environment (United Nations n.d.). Polluting the air not only affects the environment today, but the emissions will remain in the atmosphere and continue to impact the future environment. Future generations will be the ones having to deal with the damage we do to nature today, which can arguably be seen as unfair, not aligning with intergenerational justice (García-Antúnez et al., 2023).

An alternative to the fossil-fuel-powered car is the electric car. Electrically powered vehicles were an alternative mentioned by a representative from the STA for reducing emissions without removing the opportunity and freedom to use a car. As discussed in the literature review chapter 6.1 on sustainable modes of transport, the notion that EVs are genuinely sustainable might be a case of greenwashing. Although these cars do not produce pollutants during use, the manufacturing of the vehicle and battery releases emissions. Additionally, when in use, the vehicle can still pose a threat to traffic safety, similar to a car powered by fossil fuels.

8 Discussion

This thesis work is developed in connection to The Mobility Makers project and the County Administration Board Skåne in order to create a better understanding of children's inclusion in planning processes and what incentives is taken to lower car usage. The study's results indicate that much work remains to be done to properly include children in planning processes. Due to the absence of clear guidelines for municipalities, they face challenges in how to effectively involve children. Additionally, some municipalities lack the knowledge and resources, including time, needed to engage children meaningfully.

Furthermore, the study reveals that collaboration between authorities and municipalities is often imperfect leading to conflicts in planning processes that are already lengthy and time consuming. A major obstacle across projects is the lack of resources which forces municipalities and authorities to prioritise activities based on available funding. As a result, the interests of the municipalities are frequently overshadowed by the national interests. Some municipalities face greater challenges than other due to smaller populations and limited financial and human resources. Regarding efforts to minimise car usage, the municipalities and authorities surveyed in the study tend to focus more on encouraging alternative modes of transport—such as cycling and public transit—rather than implementing measures that directly restrict car use. However, Skåne Region faces a particular challenge, as public transport coverage and frequency are insufficient to enable a full shift away from car usage. Limited-service availability and sparse departures across the county make it difficult for people to rely entirely on public transit.

Other countries than Sweden, have also incorporated the Children Convention into law. Similar projects to the mobility makers project can be found throughout Europe and around the world. For example, the EU project Child and Youth Friendly Governance that aims to give children in the ages from 10 – 18 a chance to make their voices heard on matters in the European Union to decision makers (Child & Youth Friendly Governance Project, n.d.).

There are also other examples of more locally focused projects, for example the project Superblocks initiative in Barcelona, which aimed to create safer areas for children by restrictions car access in certain areas and instead transform those streets into public spaces featuring greenery and playgrounds etc. Giving children a free space where they could play without being afraid of cars crossing through (EIT urban mobility, 2025). An example of a project outside Europe that aimed to include children more in planning were the Child and Youth Engagement Strategy in San Francisco. In the project marginalised child groups of colours got to partake in creating sustainable and inclusive city (San Francisco Planning, n.d.). Finding similar context to the mobility makers projects shows that it is an important initiative that is relevant around the world and today. Drawing inspiration from successful projects is a step towards including children in future planning and reducing car use for a more sustainable future.

Including children in planning is seen as important as they are a marginalised group in society, as their involvement often is not given priority. However, children are not the only marginalised group in society; other groups also require consideration. Prioritising the needs of different groups in planning can be challenging. First, it can be difficult to research and understand the diverse opinions, wants, and needs of each group. Second, the needs of one group may conflict with those of another, creating complex dilemmas. Thirdly, the children, or other groups in society, might not be interested in participating in the planning process and projects. Forcing anyone to be part of something they do not want to be part of is not possible, even though their opinions are sought.

This study also discusses planning for intra- and intergenerational justice, explaining why children today and future generations should be included in planning processes. This is because the actions taken now will affect them, and they could be responsible for solving issues created by previous generations. However, the actions taken today will still impact the current generation. This

emphasises the need to consider not only children and future generations but also the needs of those currently living in our society. Neglecting the existing citizens does not reflect equality or justice, and it is essential to plan for everyone, both existing and future. Given the limited research on intra- and intergenerational justice, it would be valuable to explore how planning efforts should balance addressing today's needs with those of future generations.

Focusing on another theme of the thesis, the study's results show that living in rural areas often means being dependent on a car. This issue is relevant not only in the County of Skåne but also across Sweden, Europe, and the world. Rural areas are often mentioned as a bad example when discussing sustainable travel, but even in cities and suburbs, it is not always apparent that sustainable transport options are available. The infrastructure of a city cannot cover all areas, and car usage may still be the most convenient option for people living in or near the city. Achieving the SDGs requires reducing car usage, as the production and use of cars release emissions. Reducing car use can be seen as limiting people's freedom and as non-inclusive for those who need a car due to illness, age, or disability. However, is personal car use the problem? It is not only cars but the entire transport sector and industrial sectors that need to be considered. Several countries have committed to the SDGs to work together for a sustainable future, but who will judge whether every country is doing its part, and what happens if the goals are not reached? Who should bear the responsibility, and which sector should lead in reducing emissions? This could be questions to answer in future research, as it's relevant for reaching the SDGs about emissions.

Including every group—especially children—in the planning process while simultaneously achieving the SDGs and minimising car usage may seem overwhelming. However, the findings of this study highlight alternative approaches that can help increase the feasibility of accomplishing these goals. One important step is ensuring that the necessary resources and clear guidelines for improvement are readily accessible. By fostering collaboration and working across boundaries it becomes possible to confront challenges collectively and develop effective solutions together.

8.1 Critical reflections

In any research project, it is impossible to cover every aspect due to various constraints. Deciding on the direction of the study can be challenging, and different approaches could always have been taken. This section will discuss

potential sources of error and alternative methods that might have been employed.

Skåne County consists of 33 municipalities, but only ten of them participate in this study. This limited participation may affect the representativeness of the findings regarding how the entire county work with including children and car use reduction. While all municipalities were invited to participate some declined, and others did not respond. Ideally, the study would have included municipalities and counties across all of Sweden; however, due to time constraints, this was not feasible, as such a broader scope would have required a significantly longer timeframe to complete. Another source of error was the inability to obtain input from Skånetrafiken, as repeated email attempts to various contacts within the organization went unanswered. Consequently, their perspective and explanations regarding the criticism raised by interviewees are not included in the study.

Although this study focuses on integrating children into the planning process, children were not directly included as participants. This due to the ethical considerations involved, which require expertise the researchers do not possess. One seminar together with Länsstyrelsen Skåne and children was planned, unfortunately this seminar was cancelled. The literature review didn't include a big number of papers as there is a shortage of research in the area relevant to our study. Despite limited literature in the field of study, the literature review and the interviews together did provide enough data to answer the research questions.

Determining whether the chosen method is the best option can be challenging. One approach is to begin by reviewing existing and previous research within the field of the study. An alternative could've been to use a grounded theory approach where a subject is being researched without any previous information to not have a biased perspective when gathering the data (David & Sutton, 2016). This approach could've limited using a semi-structured interview, as follow-up questions usually demands previous knowledge within the field of study. Therefore this study's choice of conducting a literature review instead of using a grounded theory is profitable for collecting relevant data from the interviews.

Instead of using interviews, a thorough review of each municipalities document considering children and car usage could have been done. Using that method would not have provided the same opportunity to gain insight into

what the planners think, both from their own perspective and from that of the municipality.

8.2 Future studies

To build upon this study, several aspects would be interesting to research further, especially since there is a lack of research about this subject. Regarding including children in the planning process, it would be interesting to investigate municipalities around Sweden, preferably with both similar and different demographics than in Skåne county, to gain a broader perspective and identify additional patterns beyond those discussed in this report. To broaden the perspective even more, examining the approaches of other Nordic countries that have also implemented the Convention on the Rights of the Child into law can help ensure its effective implementation in the planning process. Comparing countries where the Convention is law and where it is not could also be an interesting approach to see if legislating the Convention leads to higher participation rates among children. As different countries have different planning systems, it would be a lot to review to see what approaches work best.

Minimising car usage would be interesting to research in even larger cities and compare them to their country's rural areas. The suburb is also a middle-of-the-road option and receives little mention in this study. A suburb that is an area outside a city, but not the countryside, would be interesting to investigate the tools used to minimise car usage and explore the options for other modes of transport. As mentioned previously in the discussion, seeing how countries work with integrating the SDGs and what the most significant emission sources are would also be interesting. Should the invested resources be put on minimising car usage, or would it be more beneficial to invest them elsewhere to gain a bigger result in lowering emissions?

9 Conclusions

This study explores how municipalities in Skåne County can involve children in their planning processes and how car usage can be reduced. The findings of the study lead to three main conclusions. Firstly, there is a need for improved collaboration between the actors. Several municipalities and authorities called for better cooperation. Since they have different responsibilities within and across municipalities, conflicts can easily arise. Better communication between the actors could help resolve these conflicts or to find a common ground. Secondly, there is a need for more straightforward guidelines to make it easier to incorporate the Children's Convention into municipal planning processes. It is clear that there are various adaptations of the Convention in different municipalities. This is understandable, as there are no clear existing guidelines on how to include children in the planning process. To increase the likelihood of children's inclusion and to simplify the work for municipalities and other stakeholders, a clear framework on how to achieve this needs to be provided. Thirdly, there is a lack of resources necessary to reach the goals, legislation and plans set. A lack of resources was highlighted as a key challenge to including children and reducing car usage. The resources needed were mainly funding for projects, time to complete the required work, and staff to perform the job. The financing set the perimeter of what the municipalities are able to accomplish. The amount of additional financial resources that could be acquired remains a challenge, as they are limited by the population size of each municipality and region.

These main conclusions can contribute to a better understanding and insights into how children can be better included in planning processes and how car use can be reduced. With the commitment of all stakeholders, these findings

can generate lasting benefits to communities, both now and for generations to come.

10 References

10.1 Figures

Figure 1.

Map of Sweden and Skåne county.

Created in ArcGIS Online

Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, USGS

Figure 2.

Map of the municipalities studied in thesis and their position.

Created in ArcGIS Online

Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Figure 3.

Population growth in Skåne municipalities.

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Figure 4.

Public transport access in Skåne County.

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Figure 5.

The developing triangle.

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Figure 6.

Manual of Challenges for Young People's Participation.

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Figure 7.

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Figure 8.

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Figure 9.

Levels of participation.

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10.2 Tables

Table 1

Statistikmyndigheten [SCB] (2024). *Befolkningstäthet (invånare per kvadratkilometer), folkmängd och landareal efter region och kön. År 1991 – 2024*.

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Table 4.

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11 Appendix

11.1 Appendix A – Interview guide

Hej,

Här kommer frågorna vi kommer behandla under intervjun. Vi kommer att spela in intervjun, vi kommer även använda materialet i vår slutgiltiga uppsats som kommer redovisas och publiceras på KTH samt användas som forskningsmaterial i projektet Mobility Makers tillsammans med Länsstyrelsen Skåne. Det inspelade materialet kommer endast användas av Greta och Maria i arbetet med uppsatsen och kommer sedan att raderas

Under intervjun:

Syftet med vår uppsats är att vi ska på uppdrag av Länsstyrelsen Skåne och projektet Mobility Makers undersöka hur barn idag inkluderas i processer som berör planering samt hur dessa är med i mobilitetsförändringen som på sikt ska minska bilanvändandet.

Mobility makers är ett EU projekt som inkluderar ett flertal aktörer i Interreg North sea regionen som undersöker hur olika användargrupper förlitar sig på och använder bilen i sin vardag. De jobbar på att utveckla olika strategier för att hjälpa till i mobilitets omvandlingen. Detta genom 11 olika pilotprojekt. Länsstyrelsen Skåne är med och utvecklar en manual för hur man kan arbeta för att främja dialog med barn och unga i processer som berör trafikplanering

och trafikinfrastruktur. Manualen vänder sig till kommuner, regioner och myndigheter.

Syftet med intervjun är därmed att vi ska undersöka hur ni på kommunen för dialog med unga medborgare kring olika infrastrukturprojekt och vilka insatser som görs för att förändra användningen av bilen till mer hållbara transportsätt

Mer info om projektet Mobility makers: <https://www.interregnorthsea.eu/mm>

Vill du vara anonym eller får din titel och namn användas i arbetet?

Jag vill vara anonym:

Ja ()

Nej ()

(Om anonym kommer vi nämna dig som anställd vid en kommun i Skånes län)

Är du okej med att vi spelar in intervjun?

Ja ()

Nej ()

Personlig information och inspelat material kommer behandlas enligt GDPR (Integritetsskyddsmyndigheten, n.d.). Om du någon gång under processen skulle ångra ditt medverkande så respekterar vi detta och raderar allt material där du medverkar.

Källor:

(Integritetsskyddsmyndigheten. (n.d.). *Det här gäller enligt GDPR.*
<https://www.imy.se/verksamhet/dataskydd/det-har-galler-enligt-gdpr/>)

INLEDNINGSFRÅGOR

Vad är din roll i kommunen?

Berätta allmänt om hur ni er kommun/myndighet inkluderar barn i ert planeringsarbete?

FOKUS BARNPERSPEKTIV

- Hur involverar er kommun/myndighet unga medborgare i diskussioner om transportinfrastrukturprojekt?
- Använder ni er av specifika metoder eller plattformar för att underlätta dialogen med unga och isåfall vilka? (t.ex. enkäter, workshops, digitala plattformar)?
- Finns det ni exempel på lyckade dialogprocesser med unga medborgare kring projekt som vägarbete, gångvägar eller cykelbanor?
- Vilka/Finns det utmaningar möter ni när det gäller att säkerställa meningsfullt deltagande från unga i transportplaneringen?
- Hur säkerställer ni att ungas synpunkter tas i beaktande i beslutsprocesserna?

FOKUS MINSKAD BILTRAFIK

- Vilka strategier har er kommun/myndighet genomfört för att uppmuntra till en övergång från bilanvändning till andra färdmedel (t.ex. cykling, gång, kollektivtrafik)?
- Hur utvärderar ni effektiviteten i dessa strategier?

- Har ni genomfört några studier eller fått in feedback från medborgare, särskilt unga, kring dessa initiativ?
- Vilka är de främsta hindren för att minska bilberoendet i er kommun?
- Finns det några specifika initiativ som riktar sig till barn och unga för att involvera dem i planeringen av transportinfrastruktur?
- Kan ni ge exempel på tidigare eller pågående projekt där unga engagerats i diskussioner kring transportfrågor?
- Har ni kunnat observera några långsiktiga effekter av dessa initiativ i form av ökad medvetenhet eller förändrade beteenden?
- Finns det några planer på att utöka eller förbättra ungdomsengagemanget i transportplaneringen framöver?
- Vilka förbättringar skulle ni vilja se?
- Är det något utöver det vi diskuterat som du anser är viktigt att förmedla?

ÖVRIGT

- Är det något dokument eller något mer du kommer på får du gärna höra av dig?
- Vet du någon mer person som vi skulle kunna ha användning för att prata med?