There is no specific strategy for increasing young people’s participation in Sweden. Instead, youth participation is an important component of the Swedish youth policy objective [1], approved by Parliament in 2014:

‘All young people should have access to good living conditions, power to shape their own lives and influence over the development of the society’.

What more, initiatives to foster young people's political participation are streamlined in the national democracy policy. The communication, ‘Policy for a living democracy’ (En politik för en levande demokrat[2]), presented measures to increase young people's political participation. These are presented in 'Scope and contents' below.
Scope and contents

The communication ‘Policy for a living democracy’ from 2013 has five points of departure:

1. **A high and more equal voter turnout**

According the communication, voter turnout is an expression of the rootedness of democracy in society. What more, a higher turnout also means a more equal turnout, so election results more accurately reflect the diverse interests and views expressed in society.

In total, seven measures were presented. Among these, the following three are of interest for youth. The National Board for Youth Affairs (now Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society, MUCF) was commissioned:

- to distribute funding to civil society organisations and to municipalities that run activities aimed at increasing voter turnout. Activities should primarily focus on young people and the foreign born, and be carried out in areas with low voter turnout in previous elections
- to hold school elections ahead of general elections
- to produce support material for compulsory and upper secondary school teachers on the management of political information in schools and the presence of political party representatives.

2. **Broader and equal participation in elected assemblies**

The main argument was that it is crucial to the vitality of democracy that there is widespread interest in holding elected office and participating in elected assemblies. According to the Communication, it is also important for decision-making political assemblies to reflect the composition of the population, above all with respect to sex, age and country of birth.

In total, six measures were presented. Among these the following is of interest to youth:

- The Government intended to initiate work to promote involvement in representative democracy and improve social representativeness.

3. **Strengthened opportunities for influence, transparency and participation between elections**

A point was made on the importance of all individuals being able to make their voices heard in ways other than voting in the general elections. A continuous dialogue between decision-makers and voters is a significant factor in the rootedness of democracy in society. Furthermore, the Communication argued that it is particularly important to create opportunities for influence among those who otherwise participate to a lesser extent.
In total, seven measures were presented. Among these, the following are of interest to youth:

- The Committee of inquiry on democratic participation and influence, that the Government intended to appoint, was given the task of evaluating the individual's opportunities to influence policy-making between elections, especially existing forms of direct and participatory democracy, and of clarifying methods for greater influence by young people and other voter groups with low voter turnout.
- The Government intended to instruct the then planned Committee of inquiry on democratic participation and influence to review the effects existing forums for participation, such as youth councils, youth assemblies and pilots, have had on young people’s opportunities for influencing local democracy and to investigate young people’s conditions for participating in formal decision-making and propose measures to strengthen young people’s influence and participation in policy-making.

1. **Increased democratic awareness**

Awareness of the fundamental principles of democracy and knowledge of the rules of democracy are a prerequisite for a functioning democratic form of government.

In total, three measures were presented. Among these the following are of interest to youth:

- The Government prolonged the Living History Forum’s (Forum för levande historia) task of implementing initiatives to strengthen young people’s democratic values through elucidating democracy’s history, development and significance in a European context. The Forum was tasked in 2012 with distributing methods and working materials for reinforcing young people’s democratic values. The target group for this material is teachers of pupils in compulsory and upper secondary schools.
- The Government prolonged the National Board for Youth Affairs (now the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society) task from 2011 of allocating funds to civil society organisations for activities that reinforce young people’s democratic values, and allocated approximately SEK 6 million (626 000 euros) to various projects. The task of allocating funds to activities that promote democracy was then inserted into the action plan to safeguard democracy against violent extremism and continued until the end of 2014. A total of some SEK 10 million (1,04 million euros) was allocated to 23 projects in the period 2012–2014, in accordance with the Ordinance on Central Government Grants for Activities that Promote Democracy.

1. **Safeguarding democracy against violence-promoting extremism**

According to the Communication, ideological violence directed at society’s institutions, its representatives or at private citizens is a challenge for democracy and social cohesion in society. Furthermore, a society that does not clearly distance itself from violence promoting extremism and ideologically motivated violence risks becoming polarised.

In total, three measures were presented. Among these the following are of interest to youth (see section 4.5, Key initiatives to safeguard democracy, for more information):
- The Government prolonged the National Board for Youth Affairs' (now the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society, MUCF) task from 2012 of allocating funds to civil society organisations for activities that prevent violent extremism
- The Government prolonged the task given to the Swedish Media Council (Medierådet) of strengthen young people's awareness as media users and thereby prevent the impact of anti-democratic and violence-promoting messages conveyed via the internet
- The Forum for Living History (Forum för levande historia) was tasked with producing a digital resource for use in compulsory and upper-secondary schools based on witness testimony from the Holocaust, the crimes of communism and other crimes against humanity.

**Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy**

The Government, specifically the Ministry for Culture (since October 2014) and Justice (before October 2014), is responsible for actions taken within their respective domains. For each action of the strategy, the Government has commissioned a responsible actor, as explained above. In general, a final report is presented for the Government after the task has been implemented.

**Revisions/Updates**

In August 2015, the Government presented the communication [3] 'Actions to Make Society More Resilient to Violent Extremism' (see section 4.5 [4], Key initiatives to safeguard democracy, for more information).

In January 2016, the Commission on Democracy presented their results on how to increase and broaden political engagement within representative democracy, and how to increase the influence of individuals between election in 'Let the future be shaped by many!' (Låt fler forma framtiden! [5]). See section 5.10 [6], Current debates and reforms, for more information.