



## Conflicts and contestations. Rural populations' perspectives on the second homes phenomenon

Johan Fredrik Rye\*

Centre for Rural Research and Dept. of Sociology and Political Science, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, N 7491 Trondheim, Norway

### A B S T R A C T

#### Keywords:

Second home  
Rural restructuring  
Rural development  
Rurality  
Norway

In response to demands to restructure and diversify their economies, many rural communities have welcomed the expanding phenomenon of second homes. However, while the second home owners bring new resources to the host communities, the literature also suggests that large second home populations in rural communities provide fertile ground for a number of economic, social and cultural conflicts and contestations. The present paper analyses the views of the local rural populations on the second home phenomenon, with particular attention to variation in these views, both within and between the rural communities (municipalities). The analysis uses material from the survey *City, countryside, second homes 2008*, which was conducted among a large-scale and representative sample of the population in Norwegian rural second home municipalities. The first section of the paper addresses the rural populations' stance towards the second home phenomenon, both in general and as it unfolds in their own vicinity. Results show generally positive views on second home development; however, the analysis identifies a substantial minority which is negative to the second home expansion. Nevertheless, the second section shows that even those rurals who are negative towards further developments of second homes largely report harmonious social relationships with the second home population that is already present. Third, the paper presents and discusses a multivariate logistic regression model to analyse how different segments of the rural population vary in their views on second home phenomena. Here, results suggest differences at both micro and macro levels: the local rural elites, in particular those with direct economic interests in the second home sector, are most positive towards further development. On the municipality level, resistance towards second homes is stronger in municipalities with a high density of second homes. Nevertheless, a high growth rate in the number of second homes, due to high investments, seems to increase local support.

© 2011 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

### 1. Changing ruralities

Western countrysides are currently undergoing major socio-cultural transformation following the restructuring of their economic foundations (Woods, 2005; Falk and Labao, 2003; Hoggart and Paniagua, 2001; Marsden et al., 1993). Whereas the countryside traditionally relied on exports of commodities by the primary industries (agriculture, fisheries, and extractive industries) to urban markets, it has become increasingly characterised by its role as producer of rural services, experiences, and quality of life. It is no longer only a site of production but as much a product in its own right; advertised, transacted and consumed within the framework of market institutions (Van Auken, 2010). Integral to

these developments are processes of commodification, privatisation and individualisation of rural landscapes as well as a growing presence of extra-local actors with interests in and powers to affect the futures of the rural communities.

The 'new' second home phenomenon in many rural communities represents a paradigmatic example of these developments (Vepsäläinen and Pitkänen, 2010). Stronger in numbers and more visible in the rural landscapes, both physically (second home buildings) and socially (second home users), the phenomenon demonstrates how the rural socio-cultural spaces have been reconfigured in the wake of these economic transformations (Almås et al., 2008). In some rural communities, the visiting second home population outnumbers the first home population in terms of both houses and, in peak seasons, humans (Steinecke, 2007).

The restructuring processes, including the introduction of new actors and their various kinds of capitals – economic, cultural and social (Bourdieu, 1986) – change and challenge the traditional rural

\* Tel.: +47 99 27 30 88.

E-mail address: [johan.fredrik.rye@svt.ntnu.no](mailto:johan.fredrik.rye@svt.ntnu.no).

social fabric and the existing power relations among the local rural actors. Some are better positioned to survive and benefit in the post/late-modern rural economic order, often at the expense of less favoured participants in the rural societies. Thus, the growth of the second home sector gives rise to a number of new challenges, conflicts and contestations in rural communities.

On the one hand, the second home expansion is often, though not universally (Gallent et al., 2005) welcomed by local and supra-local policy and planning actors, based on the assumption that second homes and other forms of rural tourism provide vital resources for development of economically sustainable countryside in line with the demands of the rural restructuring processes. For example, in Norway several white papers over the last years have encouraged farmers to utilise their uncultivated land as a resource for commercial activities to supplement their agricultural revenues (e.g. MA, 1999; MLGRD, 2009; see also Rønningen et al., 2001), e.g. by offering land and services for second home owners. At the municipal policy level, there has also been great interest in the second home sector as source of economic growth. Most new second homes have been built as part of larger developments, which are commonly initiated by, or at least involve close cooperation with, local planning authorities in hopes of stimulating the local economy.

On the other hand, many of the local people often perceive the increased presence of second homes and their users in their neighbourhoods as a challenge to their traditional rural ways of life. For example, second homes raise questions about the very nature of rurality and what it *should* be, and about which actors have legitimate claims and powers to take part in the shaping of the countryside (Vepsäläinen and Pitkänen, 2010). Research on second homes abounds with examples of local rural resistance to second home developments (for example, see Van Auken and Rye, 2011), including the physical destruction of second home structures (Hall and Müller, 2004; Gallent et al., 2005). In Wales in the 1970s, protesters even held that the influx of non-Welsh second home owners was not only 'socially unjust; it was also a serious threat to the Welsh language and to the sense of national identity' (see Coppock, 1977a: 201).

Such resistance should be no surprise. Rural restructuring processes imply a reshuffling of positions and powers within rural communities. These developments favour some actors, while others lose out. Thus, despite the assumption of many policy makers that rural second home developments provide attractive opportunities for rural communities, the degree to which the rural lay populations share these positive evaluations of the second home phenomenon is questionable. A further issue is whether different segments of the population have inconsistent and possibly conflicting views.

The object of this paper is to examine the degree and distribution of popular support and resistance to the second home phenomenon empirically at the micro level in rural communities. A further aim is exploration of various socio-structural and spatial dimensions that generate differences in rural actors' evaluations of the second home developments in their rural municipalities. To what extent are rurals' perspectives on second home development related to their social positions in the rural field (*within*-municipality differences), and further, are there differences at community level in how the local populations relate to the second homes phenomenon (*between*-municipality differences)?

Specifically, the paper asks two research questions:

- 1: What are the locals' views on the second home development in their local communities (municipalities)?
- 2: How do the rural populations differ in their stance towards the second home development?

These research questions are examined through quantitative methods and materials, using data from the large Norwegian nationwide and statistically representative survey *City, countryside and second homes 2008*. Unlike most research in the field, which has primarily been of a qualitative nature and/or has involved the use of case study designs, this survey allows for mapping of the wider rural population's views on the second home phenomenon. The study's national context is that of Norway, where the second home phenomenon has characteristics that both parallel and differ from that of other nations, and the paper attempts to address the importance of the national context in analysis of rural populations' perspectives on the second home phenomenon.

## 2. Blessings and curses - a review of the literature

The unfolding of the second home phenomenon has been described in the literature as, to quote Coppock (1977b), both a 'curse and blessing'. The work edited by Coppock explored the second home industries in different Western countries, clearly showing how the phenomenon differs historically, socially, and culturally between countries due to their specific national contexts. However, Coppock's work also demonstrated striking similarities in research questions and policy challenges between countries, and between the research agendas of the 1970s and today.

At the centre of these discussions has been the economic impact of second home development in rural areas (see Coppock, 1977b; Farstad et al., 2008; Gallent et al., 2005; Hall and Müller, 2004 for overviews). First, second home development stimulates the local economy, in both the short and the long run. In the building phase, new entrants in the second home market will invest money in land, benefiting farmers who sell plots, and in buildings, providing contracts for the construction industry. Money from land sales necessarily finds its way to the local actor, the farmer. It is more difficult to estimate the local share of the building investments, as the second home owners may utilise extra-local actors.

Second, local communities are expected to benefit from the second home population after the building phase, as they use local businesses to provide various products and services. This spending benefits a wider range of local actors: grocery retailers and other shops, petrol stations, artisans, restaurants and cafeterias, entertainment providers, etc. However, it is difficult to estimate the extent of these outlays, which will vary between second home locations. The second home owners may also contribute to the incomes of the local public sector by paying various charges, e.g. land tax, refuse collection charges, and other fees. However, the costs of adjusting the infrastructure of public services to meet the demands of the second home populations may exceed these income sources (see Gallent et al., 2005).

Critics further suggest that while second homes may enhance the development of a new, and more diversified, foundation for the local economy, activities following in the wake of rural tourism primarily generate work that is low-paid, seasonal and part-time, and low-skilled. This is unattractive both for individual careers and for the development of robust local labour markets. However, second home development seems, at least in the Norwegian case, to create more attractive jobs than other forms of rural tourism, e.g. employment in the rural construction sector is traditionally full-time, permanent, and well-paid.

In general, the scope and content of economic impacts seem to vary between countries, and between regions within each country. This is due to the specific characters of different market segments. For example, Van Auken and Rye (2011) show how the second home phenomena in the USA and in Norway vary greatly in the degree of commodification and commercialisation, where a far

stronger market logic seems to influence patterns of both ownership and use in the USA.

The terms *endemic* and *epidemic* used by Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones (2001) to describe second home markets indicate another analytic divide reflecting the same dimension. In endemic markets, of which the Scandinavian countries are typical examples, 'ownership of second home is (...) commonplace and not viewed, necessarily, as problematic'. On the other hand, in epidemic markets, of which the UK is the typical case, second home owners compete for the same housing stock as the permanent rural population and this inevitably leads to higher levels of conflicts. Barke (1991, 2008) in his studies of the Spanish second home markets finds a parallel division *within* Spain; with large-scale, highly capitalised development on the one hand and the more casual individual use of an apparently redundant dwelling on the other (1991:20), with similar implications for kinds and levels of conflicts between hosting and visiting populations.

This relates to the issues in another strand of the literature which has emphasised how second home developments often contribute to the depletion of the very qualities of the local communities that attract the visitors in the first place. Second home users often seek out the countryside to enjoy elements of the rural idyll (see Rye, 2006a): the natural and *gemeinschaftliche* community, the urban contrast. As Kaltenborn (1998) suggests, for some people the cabins represent a retreat from modernity, but the very presence of other second homes – both the structures and their users – and of the commodified infrastructure to provide for them threatens to unravel the rural idyll.

Thus, particularly in the *epidemic* second home markets, where the actors in the second home industry (e.g. development actors) or the second home population do not have thick, robust and long-lasting social relations to the permanent population of the rural communities, the second home phenomenon has the potential to destroy the qualities for both the visiting and the host population.

Moreover, second home development often conflicts with environmental concerns and challenges the notion of countryside as symbols of 'clean' and 'natural'. The construction of second homes literally transforms 'nature' into 'culture', replacing uninhabited land with buildings and human activities. The use of second homes demands infrastructure for sanitation and waste management, which has often not been properly in place. Illustratively, in a survey of New Zealand councils' views on second home development, 'inadequate waste disposal' ranked as the most important impact (see Müller et al., 2004). Increased human activities also challenge local wildlife. Furthermore, the second home phenomenon raises broader environmental concerns, such as levels of consumption in Western society, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from cars, and other transport impacts (see Hiltunen, 2006 for an overview). Thus, some critics regard the second home phenomenon as a key example of environmentally unsustainable practices. However, the environmental impacts are not universal, as Müller et al. (2004) emphasise. Negative harms vary between kinds of second home developments and activity patterns and consumption practices of users. In any case, second home tourism is often more environment-friendly than alternative economic restructuring strategies, e.g. industrial activity (see Hiltunen, 2006).

Another discussion concerns the social and cultural impacts of second homes on the local communities. On the one hand, the presence of 'urbanites' in the communities, who invest not only money but also their identities, loyalties and spare time in the hosting region, offers important resources that may be activated by the local population. The urbanites often provide access to important social networks that extend outside the municipality, perform roles as advocates and ambassadors for the locality in their urban environments, and introduce new knowledge and practices in the

rural community. Agnitsch et al. (2006) maintain that this enhances the communities' ability to identify, connect to and make use of extra-local resources, that is, increasing their *bridging* social capital in particular, which is important for any community's ability to develop and respond to challenges (Putnam, 1993, 2000).

On the other hand, the second home users bring new lifestyles and new perceptions of appropriate rural practices. As noted by Marsden et al. (1993), 'social and cultural tensions [will] arise from the different visions and expectations people have about the same place, reflecting their separate life styles and livelihoods'.

Second home owners challenge the established social fabric in two ways. First, they represent a new category of rural actors, with their specific interests and resources to realise them in rural landscapes and rural communities. Second, their presence alters the rules of the game for the rural population. Some rural actors presumably benefit more than others do from the expansion of rural tourism, e.g. those with economic interests in the second home industry, such as farmers selling plots of land or businesses providing goods and services for the second home visitors. Thus, there are in principle two dimensions of conflict: the first is between the visiting and host populations (second home users and rural people), the second between segments of the rural population.

However, conflicts will appear differently in different communities, due to the specifics of the local contexts and the characteristics of the second home phenomenon. For example, the literature suggests that a high density of second homes, particularly if these are located in physical proximity to the local housing areas, increases the conflict potential (Overvåg, 2009; Gallent et al., 2005).

Another key variable is the nature of the second home market. In countries and regions where the second home population does not compete with the local population for the same resources, in particular land (Overvåg and Berg, *in press*) and housing (Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones, 2001; Barke, 1991, 2008), conflict levels are likely to be lower. Smaller socio-economic differences between these populations may also work to reduce conflicts. As will be discussed in more detail below, in the Norwegian case where second home ownership and usage is widespread across both the social hierarchy and the urban/rural dimension, the overlap in social roles and individual identities between (and within) 'locals' and 'visitors' provides for less conflictual environments.

These features of the second home phenomenon will vary between different locations. Newly built and high cost second home complexes, owned by upper class urbanites, generate quite different responses in the rural locality than a limited and sparsely distributed number of traditional, Spartan second homes primarily owned and used by other locals. Consequently, analysis of the second home phenomenon also needs to include variables that tap these super-individual aspects, that is, municipal and regional levels.

### 2.1. The Norwegian context

The second home phenomenon further needs to be interpreted in light of the national context within which it unfolds, and the Norwegian case differs substantially from that of other countries in important respects. This applies to the history, to the scale and to the content of the phenomenon.

First, the historical roots of the present-day second home phenomenon have made it socially embedded as an integral part of the national cultural heritage (see Flognfeldt, 2004). In the primary industries, many farmers spent the summer at their mountain farms ('seter') to utilise grazing resources, while fishermen often spent long periods away from their families living in small huts ('rorbuer'). Following industrialisation and urbanisation, many

people in the working classes in the cities, still with strong rural family roots, would acquire small cabins in the countryside, where land was plentiful and cheap. Trade unions acquired countryside cabins for collective use among members. The urban upper and middle classes would similarly find retreats at an acceptable price near the city. As affluence came with modernity, these practices were reinforced, and today 'the cabin' holds a key status in Norwegian identity.

As a result, today second home ownership in Norway is very common in all layers of society. Presently, the Norwegian population of 4.8 million inhabitants owns some 420,000 building structures registered as second homes (Statistics Norway, 2010)<sup>1</sup>, giving a rate of one second home per 15 inhabitants. In addition, shared ownership or divided use of second homes is quite common, particularly within families. In population surveys, 25.5–32.4 per cent of the national population claim to own a second home while another 15.1–19.3 per cent state that they have a second home at their disposal (Vågane, 2002; (Farstad et al., 2009)<sup>2</sup>). Thus, second home ownership and use are quite extensive, similar to the situation in other Nordic countries (Muller, 2007; Gallent et al., 2005), but far more common than in many other Western societies. While the highest concentration of these second homes is within the weekend travel zone of the major urban centres (Overvåg, 2009), there is a considerable number of second homes all over the country, including the most peripheral regions. Rural municipalities have the highest concentrations of second homes relative to the size of the permanent population, and the population of second home users is thus more 'urban' on average than the hosting population.

However, ownership and use of second homes do not have exclusively urban connotations in the Norwegian case. Second home ownership and use are also very common in the rural population. According to the survey *City, countryside, second homes 2008* (Centre for Rural Research, 2008), some 50 per cent of the rural population has access to a second home, almost as many as among the urban population. Furthermore, their second homes are often located in their own municipality or in another rural location. As a result, there is considerable overlap between the 'host' and 'visitor' categories, because many in the rural population both have second home visitors and visit other rural communities as rural tourists. In effect, the visitor/host role set does not reflect a clear-cut urban/rural dimension in the Norwegian case.

Another key characteristic of the Norwegian second home phenomenon is the distribution of such homes across most layers of the social structure. Spending time at a second home during weekends and holidays is not reserved for the prosperous, but is common in most segments of the population. In some cases, given the accessibility of second homes in many families, resorting to a second home during summer vacations may reflect economic hardship rather than the contrary, as even low-price charter tours to any tourist destinations, domestic and abroad, are far more expensive for families.

The Norwegian second home phenomenon has furthermore changed considerably over the last decade, quantitatively as well as qualitatively. First, there has been a building boom in recent years,

with 6000 new second homes built annually (Farstad et al., 2009). Second, the austerity characterising traditional ideals of how to use your second home has been challenged by new and more modern, in some cases even luxurious, standards. The image of a typical second home as a small and simple building with no 'modern' facilities such as electricity or running water has been replaced by far larger structures resembling traditional homes, occasionally with a satellite dish on the outside (see Vittersø, 2006). In fact, the average size of new second homes is equal to that of new 'first' homes (Manum and Støa, 2010).

Thus, second homes are a far more diverse phenomenon today than previously, both in reality and in popular representations. However, their symbolic role as a sign of what is 'typically' Norwegian continues and is an important ingredient of Norwegian folklore (Muller, 2007). While the most recent second home developments have an indisputable character of commercialisation and commodification (cf. Van Auken and Rye, 2011), the Norwegian second home market has a distinctive 'endemic' character from the comparative perspective (Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones, 2001). This is an important explanation of the seemingly strong support among national as well as local policy makers for continued developments.

### 3. City, countryside, second homes 2008 survey

The paper's analysis builds on the Norwegian national survey *City, countryside, second homes 2008* (Centre for Rural Research, 2008). The survey was conducted in the winter of 2008 among a large and a statistically representative sample of the Norwegian population. It covered a wide range of issues related to informants' second home ownership and use. In addition, informants who were settled in rural areas with a high density of second homes (see below) were asked specifically about their experience and evaluations of the second home phenomenon in their municipality. The questionnaire also asked about informants' views on other issues of relevance to the urban/rural relationship, and mapped their individual residential histories along the rural/urban dimension. Finally, commonly used background variables (age, gender, family status, occupation, income and educational levels, etc.) were included.

A key objective of the survey was to cover the views of the rural population most directly affected by the second home sector. Those living in rural municipalities with a relatively high concentration of second homes were therefore over-sampled, and this sub-sample provides the material for the present paper's analysis.

Two criteria were used to define these 'rural second home municipalities'. First, the municipalities should be 'rural'. On the basis of a revised version of the rural-urban categorisation of Norwegian municipalities by Almås and Elden (1997), they were defined as 'rural' if they met at least one of the following three criteria: a) among the most *peripheral* municipalities in terms of travel distance to a larger service centre, b) among the most *sparsely populated* municipalities, or c) among the municipalities with the highest employment rate in the *primary industries*. Second, the municipality should have a large number of second homes, i.e. at least 125 second homes per 1000 inhabitants.

This gives a relative and continuous definition of rurality and of 'second homeness'. In relative terms, rural second home municipalities are those that are most strongly characterised by aspects commonly conceived of as 'rural' and, at the same time have large second home populations. There is no obvious or natural cut-off point to determine what number of municipalities should be allocated to which category. This must be decided according to the purpose of the study. In the present paper, the cut-off point is set to include 13.2 per cent of the Norwegian population in order to identify the population most distinctly living in rural second home

<sup>1</sup> Arnesen and Overvåg (2006) suggest the estimated number of second homes is too low, as many buildings are utilised as second homes without being registered as such by the authorities.

<sup>2</sup> The surveys are Statistics Norway's Levekårsundersøkelsen [living conditions survey] and the Centre for Rural Research's CSH survey from 2008, which the present paper's analysis employs. Differences in estimates may be caused by methodological differences between the surveys, as well as the fact that the latter surveys were conducted seven years later, a period in which the number of second homes increased considerably.



municipalities. The chosen categorisation of municipalities implies that 55.9 per cent of the 411,000 Norwegian second homes are located in selected study municipalities, while another 10.6 per cent are in other rural municipalities, 10.3 per cent in non-rural second-home municipalities and, finally, 23.2 per cent in non-rural and non-second home municipalities. Compared to parallel numbers for the permanent Norwegian population, the rural second homes municipalities clearly host a greater part than their share of the second home population.

The geographical distribution of the 201 rural second home municipalities is mapped in Fig. 1. The map displays a familiar picture for students of Norwegian second homes, with the exception that very few coastal municipalities in the South ('Sørlandskysten') and the Northwestern region of central Norway ('Nordvestlandet') are included. This results from the rurality criteria, which exclude many municipalities with a high number of second homes that are relatively urban in character (e.g. Risør and Kragerø). The definition presented also implies a municipality-level definition and selection of informants. It is the characteristics of the place where they live (the municipality of residence), not the characteristics of the individuals, that define whether the informant is allocated to the category of rural second home municipalities.

In total, 7000 questionnaires were distributed to informants. Following the over-sampling of informants in rural second home municipalities, half of the questionnaires were sent to informants living in these municipalities, the other half to the remaining municipalities. The response rate for the population in the rural second home municipalities was 42.7 per cent, with a total of 1496 responding informants, and these are the units of analysis in the following. Analysis of the material indicates that the non-respondents are largely random, with the exception that response probability seems related to educational levels.

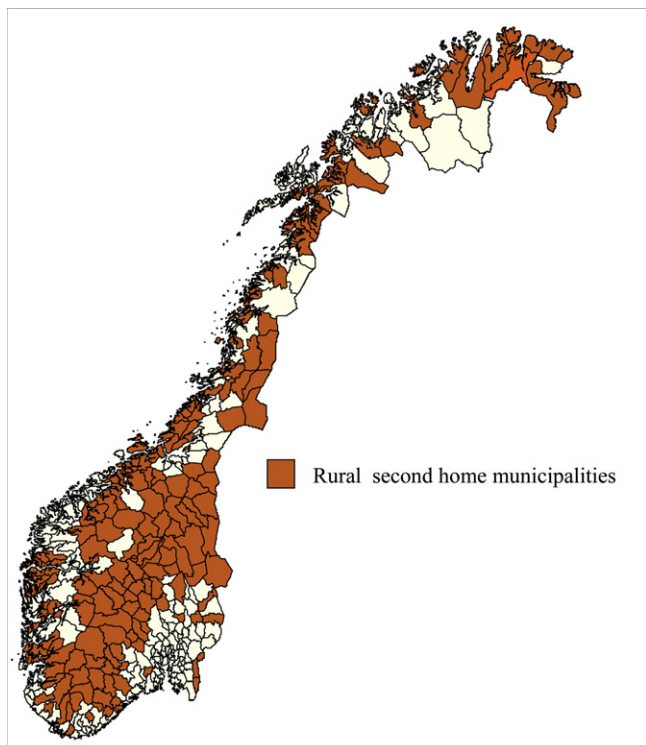


Fig. 1. Rural second home municipalities (cf. 'City, countryside and second homes survey 2008') (Centre for Rural Research).

The first part of the analysis, which examines the rural populations' overall perspectives on the second home phenomenon, employs univariate analysis of the informants' replies to a set of statements about second home developments in their municipality. These covers most of the potentially conflictual issues discussed in Section 2 above except the environmental aspect, which was unfortunately not included in the questionnaire. The second part, where I discuss differences in the rural populations' views on the second home phenomenon, presents a multivariate logistic regression (Hamilton, 1992) model, which estimates how different individual and municipality level characteristics describe and impact the informants' level of support for further second home development in their localities. The specifics of these models, including operationalisation of variables, are presented in Section 4.3.

#### 4. Harmony and contestations

The rural populations' evaluations of the second home phenomenon and its impact on their local communities are varied. The survey results indicate no dominant positions in the discourses of rural lay people on second home developments and whether these are seen as beneficial or destructive for the local rural communities. On the one hand, a large proportion of the rural people support the view that the second homes have more positive than negative effects for the community, that further development should be encouraged, and that the development takes place without high levels of conflict. On the other hand, a substantial minority finds that the problems related to second home development outweigh the benefits, and holds more sceptical views on further development in their communities. Finally, the results of the survey are characterised by the relatively large proportion of rural people who choose neutral response alternatives, indicating that their views on the second home phenomenon are balanced between its perceived pros and cons. Thus, the rural population's views on the second home phenomenon seem to be still in the making, with no final or unifying conclusions reached at the community level on whether or not the phenomenon represents a sustainable strategy in rural communities striving for rural restructuring.

In the following sections, I will add some further nuances to this overall picture, starting with a presentation of the survey informants' responses to five different statements concerning the overall impact of the second home developments on their local rural communities.

##### 4.1. Rural populations' views on second home development

The distribution of informants' responses to five statements concerning the perceived effects and evaluations of the local second home development is presented in Table 1. Together, these represent a rough measurement of their overall relation to phenomena. The first item in the table taps their overall evaluation of the phenomenon by asking them to agree or disagree with the statement that '[t]he second home phenomenon has more upside than downside effects in my municipality'. Half of the informants agree with the statement. This is expected, given the strong assertions of local, regional and state policy makers that development of rural tourism is a key strategy in response to the ongoing economic restructuring of the 'new' countryside.

As such, it is just as interesting to observe the substantial proportion of informants who do not subscribe to the view that the local second home phenomenon is beneficial to their rural communities. A full 19.0 per cent of the sample disagrees with the statement. Another third (31.9 per cent) is 'neutral', seeing the upsides and downsides of second home development as balancing

**Table 1**  
Rural populations' views on second home development. Responses to five statements. Percentages (n:1443–1453).

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1: The second home phenomenon has more upside than downside effects in my municipality	7.3	11.7	31.7	30.0	19.3
2: Second home development should be more strongly encouraged in my municipality	15.2	21.5	34.8	20.3	8.3
3: The second home phenomenon has created more jobs in my municipality	18.4	16.7	19.9	26.8	20.2
4: Second home users do whatever they want in my municipality	26.8	28.4	27.1	11.5	6.2
5: The second home phenomenon destroys the genuine character of my municipality	31.7	30.3	24.7	8.7	4.5

Source: 'City, countryside and second homes survey 2008' (Centre for Rural Research, Norway).

each other, or finding both to be of negligible size. In other words, the Norwegian rural population clearly perceives blessings as well as curses in the wake of the second home phenomenon; however, the relative balance of these is observed differently.

Scepticism towards further second home development is stronger. Less than a third (28.6 per cent) of the rural population agrees with the questionnaire's statement that '[s]econd home development should be more strongly encouraged in my municipality'. Thus, a substantial number of those positive to the *present* second home phenomenon do not advocate further such developments.

The third item in the set of statements asks the informants to evaluate the economic aspect of the local second home phenomenon in terms of its impacts on the local labour market. The same split in informants' answers as above is observed here. Close to half of the sample (47 per cent) agrees with the view that '[t]he second home phenomenon has created more jobs in my municipality'. Another large section of the sample (35.1 per cent) disagrees. These results, which are an aggregate of subjective/individual observations, are poor measures of the *actual* job creation potential of the second home phenomenon; they are nevertheless an interesting indication of the rural population's scepticism towards the economic benefits of second home phenomenon.

The last two items tap into the rural population's views of the socio-cultural influences of the second home phenomenon. Responses to these statements reflect fewer reservations. Fairly few but nevertheless a noticeable minority (17.7 per cent) find that '[s]econd home users do whatever they want in my municipality'. A smaller proportion (13.2 per cent) is worried that the second home phenomenon has the power to influence the social environment in negative ways.

As expected, there are statistically significant correlations between all pairs of items in Table 1, with only one exception (items # 1/5). The strength of correlations ranges from modest (.06; items #3/5) to relatively high (.45; items #1/5, and items #4/5). The direction of all correlations is also as expected; e.g. those positive to present and further second home developments tend to agree that new jobs have been created, and they do not find the second home phenomenon a threat to the genuine character of their municipality, or that second home users do whatever they want.

The results in this section point towards three overall conclusions. First, the majority of the rural population is positive towards second home phenomenon; however, opinions are divided and the results also indicate widespread scepticism. Second, economic effects, here operationalised as creation of new jobs, are recognised but not by everyone in the rural populations. On the other hand, experiences of negative socio-cultural effects following the second home phenomenon are relatively scarce in the material, with only a small minority seeming to find their traditional rural ways of life threatened by the second home phenomenon. Third, adding the

relatively many 'neutral' responses to the overall picture, the survey results may primarily indicate an absence of strong and unified opinions on the second home phenomenon.

#### 4.2. Rural people's views on second home users

In principle, there may be differences in lay people's evaluation of a phenomenon in general and their views on the real life actors representing the very same phenomenon. An example is the commonly observed divergence in people's views on immigration; in principle, they may be negative to immigration into their society at large but nevertheless think of the immigrant next door as a likeable and praiseworthy individual. A parallel pattern is found in the survey, where the informants by and large report very good relationships with the visiting second home users in their municipality, with no exception for those who are sceptical towards the second home phenomenon at a more generalised level. This is illustrated by the results in Table 2 below. Informants were here asked to report how they 'experience the relationship between locals and second home users in your municipality', giving their response on a scale ranging from 0 ('full harmony') to 10 ('high level of conflicts'). Most (64.3 per cent) of the informants report very harmonious relationships with the visiting second home population (values 0 to 3). Another third of the sample chooses the middle scores. Only a handful (4.1 per cent) characterise the relationship between the groups as conflictual (values 7 to 10). The latter score is lower than, e.g. the proportion of rural people who in Table 1 agreed to the statement that second home phenomenon destroys the genuine character of their municipalities.

Interestingly, the second home users in the survey report mirroring relationships. In response to a question parallel to the one presented in Table 1, almost three quarters of the second home users report harmonious relationships between them and the locals (see Farstad et al., 2009: 46).

These results may reflect the relatively strong level of social interaction between the rural and second home populations. 53.5 per cent of the rural people report that they once in a while or often socially interact (e.g. occasional small talk) with visiting second

**Table 2**  
Locals' views on second home users (n = 1456).

'How do you experience the relationship between locals and second home users in your municipality' Answers given using a scale from 0 ('full harmony') to 10 ('high level of conflicts')	
Mean value:	3.0
Std. dev.:	1.9
Experiences of harmony (values 0 to 3):	64.3 per cent
Experiences balanced (values 4 to 6):	31.6 per cent
Experiences of conflict (values 7 to 10):	4.1 per cent

Source: 'City, countryside and second homes survey 2008' (Centre for Rural Research, Norway).

home users. About the same proportion (52.0 per cent) says they have one or more ‘friends’ among the second home users in their municipalities. 17.8 per cent report what seem to be rather solid relationships in that they either ‘often’ socially interact and/or have large number (>6) of friends among the second home users.

These questions specifically ask informants about their contact with visiting and *non-local* second home users. In addition, a substantial proportion of the second home population consists of locals, that is, persons having both their first and second homes in the municipality. As many as 21.6 per cent of the informants report such ownership, which implies that an even larger proportion of the locals have access to second homes in the municipality. Similarly, a considerable number of the informants are of the impression that the second home population predominantly consists of other rurals, either from their own (8.0 per cent) or from other (34.1 per cent) rural municipalities.

Thus, the local and second home populations are not conceived of as socially separate groups of persons. Many are in regular social intercourse with each other, and many also feel that they belong to the same ‘rural’ population. In other words, the second home users not only represent ‘the others’ (distant, urbanites) but they are people of the same kind as themselves (locals, rurals).

#### 4.3. Intra-rural differences in views on second home development

While much has been written on conflicts, both open and covert, between the local rural and second home populations, there are fewer discussions on the intra-rural dimensions of these conflicts. The rural populations are often conceived of as homogeneous, both socially and politically (Gallent et al., 2005), and discussions have centred on the question of rural *communities’* benefits of second home development. However, the above results demonstrate a disparity in rural actors’ perspectives on the second home phenomenon in general. These may originate in the actors’ different locations within the rural social field and/or in differences between how various rural municipalities have been affected by the second home phenomenon.

In this section of the paper, the variance in rural actors’ evaluations of the second home phenomenon (cf. Table 1) is analysed in relation to their positions in the rural communities. This is analysed using logistic regression, where the model’s dependent variable is a dichotomised measure of informants’ support for the first statement in Table 1 (‘Second home development should be more strongly encouraged in my municipality’). Those agreeing with the statement (28.6 per cent of the sample) are coded ‘1’. Thus, the model estimates the relative probability of support for further second home developments in the municipality (odds ratios) for different segments of the rural populations.

##### 4.3.1. Operationalisations of variables

Following the review of the literature, the model includes variables at both micro (individual) and meso (neighbourhood, municipality) levels. In total, eight sets of independent variables are included: sets 1 to 5 tap effects of the individuals’ position in the local social structure, in general and in relation to the second home phenomenon; sets 6 to 8 measure how characteristics of informants’ social environment impact views of the phenomenon.

- 1) Background variables: GENDER: 1 = female, 0 = male; AGE: 1 = young people (<32 years old), 0 = people 32 years or older; FAMILY: Dummy set. Single without children (reference category), single with children, couple without children, couple with children.
- 2) Position in rural class structure. Consider whether informants in different locations of the rural social structure (see Rye,

2006b) relate differently to the second home phenomenon. INCOME: Household income. 1 = the half (44.9 per cent of the sample) with highest incomes (>60,000 EUR), 0 = others; EDUCATION: 1 = the quarter (27.6 per cent of sample) with the highest educational level (secondary or tertiary level education), 0 = others.

- 3) Rural identity. Consider effects of informants’ biographical relationship to the countryside. IN-MIGRANTS: 1 = informants raised in a city (9.1 per cent of sample), 0 = others. RURAL ID: Subjective indicator of informants’ present-time rural identity measured by their response to the question: ‘Do you regard yourself as a typical urban or rural person’, answers given on a point scale of 0 (urban) to 10 (rural)
- 4) Second home ownership. Consider effects of informants owning a second home in the municipality. SH OWNERSHIP: 1 = the fifth (21.6 per cent of the sample) owning such a second home, 0 = others.
- 5) Occupational status and economic interests. Consider effects of informant’s location in the local economy. OCCUPATION. Dummy set. Public sector, private sector, farming, self-employed, others (pensioners, students, unemployed informants, etc.) (reference category); LAND SELLERS: 1 = landowners who have sold or are presently planning to sell land plots for second home development (7.8 per cent of sample), 0 = others; BUSINESS INTERESTS: 1 = self-employed persons offering products or services to second home users and persons employed in such private businesses (14.7 per cent of sample), 0 = others.
- 6) Social contact. Consider effects of informants’ level and quality of social intercourse with the second home population. CONTACT LEVEL: 1 = informants who report that they either a) often have social intercourse with members of the second home population (e.g. occasional small talk) or b) have six or more friends among them (17.8 per cent of the sample), 0 = others; CONTACT QUALITY: 1 = informants’ evaluation of the overall relationship between locals and the second home population. 0 to 10-scale, 0 = ‘full harmony’ and 10 = ‘high level of conflict’.
- 7) Closeness of second home phenomenon. Consider effects of the local second home phenomena’s proximity to informants, physically, culturally and socially. SH DISTANCE: Physical distance. 1 = informants reporting that closest second homes are located farther away than 1 km (0.6 miles) from their house (62.7 per cent of sample), 0 = others; SH RURALS: Cultural distance. 1 = informants reporting that non-local second home owners are mainly rurals or a blend of urbanites/rurals (2.2 and 39.3 per cent of sample), 0 = they are predominantly people from urban locations (50.2 per cent of sample); SH IMPACT: Social impact. Informants’ evaluation of how strongly their municipality is influenced by the second home population. 0 to 10-scale, 0 = ‘low impact’ and 10 = ‘high impact’. 1 = informants finding that second home development has had very strong impact (scores 9 to 10, 7.7 per cent of sample), 0 = others.
- 8) Municipality characteristics. Reflects effects of characteristics at municipality level, in terms of degree of rurality (population pattern and reliance on primary production) and degree of second home development. MUNICIPAL SPARSELY: 1 = informants living in the most sparsely populated municipalities (>50 per cent of municipality population living outside of agglomerations > 200 persons) (75.5 per cent of sample), 0 = others; MUNICIPAL PRIMARY: Continuous measure of percentage of municipal labour force working in primary industries (ranging from 2 to 29, mean value = 10); MUNICIPAL DENSITY: Ratio between numbers of permanent inhabitants in the municipality and numbers of second homes (ranging

from 0.13 to 2.24, mean value = 0.33); MUNICIPAL GROWTH: Percentage growth in the number of second homes in the municipality between 1998 and 2008 (ranging from –21 to 100, mean value = 19.5); SH PRICES: Estimated mean values of second homes in the municipality in the period 2005 to 2007 (mean value = NOK 690,000).

#### 4.3.2. Results

Results from the models (Table 3) are interesting with regard to both the significant and the insignificant results. First, the control variables GENDER and AGE are significant at 0.1 and 0.5 levels respectively. Women are 22 per cent less supportive of further second home development. For the younger part of the rural population, the support is even lower (odds ratio: 0.556). For the FAMILY variable results are weak and insignificant.

The lower support of females and youth may reflect that these are social categories traditionally less represented in the rural elites. Such an interpretation is partly supported by results for the next set of variables. Rural actors with the highest incomes (INCOME) are far more likely to advocate second home developments. These are 52 per cent more likely than those with the lowest incomes to agree to further development. Note that these results are controlled for informants' potential direct or indirect economic interests in such development (cf. the fifth sets of variables, described below). On the other hand, there are no differences in informants' support for second home development related to their educational level (EDUCATION). Thus, to the extent that support of

second home development is an elite phenomenon, the results suggest that this relates primarily to the economic rural elites, the moneyed locals.

Further, the results suggest no divides within the rural population related to their identity across the rural-to-urban dimensions (RURAL ID). In-migrants are no more open to second home development, nor are those with a stronger urban identity (IN-MIGRANTS). Whether or not the informant owns a second home in the municipality also generates insignificant results in the model (SH OWNERSHIP).

Contrary to expectations, views on second home development do not vary between rurals employed in different sectors of the rural economy (OCCUPATION). However, and related to high income rurals' stronger support of second home development, the model suggests that actors with economic benefits from second home development are far more positive in their evaluations than others in the rural communities, whether these are of an indirect or direct character. Specifically, the models show that landowners who have sold or plan to sell plots of land to second home developments are more than three times as likely (LAND SELLERS: odds ratio 3.002) to agree that second home development should be encouraged. The same applies to actors with indirect economic interests, those who own or are employed in local firms selling products or services to the second home population. The effect here is slightly weaker but still substantial (odds ratio: 1.87).

The next variables concern various dimensions of the locals' level of social proximity and level of social intercourse with the visiting second home population. First, as expected, the model shows that both level of contact (CONTACT LEVEL) and overall estimation of the quality of the contact (CONTACT QUALITY) impact the locals' support of second home development. Locals who report having acquaintances or friends among the second home users are almost twice as likely to find further second home development positive. On the other hand, informants who evaluate the relationship between the two populations as conflictual are, again in line with expectations, negative.

Close and high-quality relations strengthen the locals' support for second home development. Nevertheless, the rural population seems to prefer to keep the visitors at some distance, at least in the literal sense. Those with second homes in their immediate vicinity are far less positive than those reporting that the nearest second homes structures are located more than 1 km away from their own home (SH DISTANCE).

Results show further that the rural population prefers second home neighbours who are of their own kind, but not necessarily from their own municipality. Informants stating that the local second home population does not consist exclusively of urbanites, but partly or entirely of other rural persons, report 51 per cent more support for second home development in their municipality (SH RURALS).

The rurals' overall evaluation of the impacts of the existing second home developments also influences their support of further developments. The SH IMPACT odds ratio is 0.417. The logic seems to be that second home users may be good acquaintances, but should in general be kept at a distance and create as little disturbance as possible there. Then further development is preferable.

Some but not all of the municipality level variables in the model generate significant results. The MUNICIPAL SPARSELY variable is insignificant while the MUNICIPAL PRIMARY variable has a significant effect on the support for further development of second homes. The estimated odds ratio is 1.039: for every percentage point increase in the employment rate in the primary sector, the support increases by 4 per cent. For a comparison of two municipalities with 10 and 25 per cent employees in the primary sectors, the odds ratio is 1.80.

The results further show that a large number of second homes, in terms of numbers relative to the size of the permanent

**Table 3**

Locals' views on second home users. Bivariate and multivariate logistic regression models. Dependent variable: strongly agrees (value 5) with statement that second home development should be more strongly encouraged in my municipality ( $n:1280$ ).

	B	S.E	Odds ratio	p
GENDER	-0.249	0.142	0.780	*
AGE	-0.587	0.258	0.556	**
FAMILY (ref. cat.: singles, no child)				
Single, with children	0.135	0.350	1.145	
Couples, no children	0.180	0.208	1.197	
Couples, with children	0.095	0.216	1.099	
EDUCATION	0.175	0.162	1.191	
INCOME	0.402	0.165	1.494	**
IN-MIGRANTS	0.056	0.242	1.058	
RURAL ID	-0.027	0.031	0.973	
SH OWNERSHIP	0.170	0.161	1.185	
OCCUPATION (ref. cat.: 'other')				
Public sector	0.001	0.197	1.001	
Private sector	-0.028	0.202	0.972	
Farmer	-0.360	0.343	0.698	
Self-employed	0.192	0.269	1.212	
LAND SELLERS	1.099	0.246	3.002	***
BUSINESS INTERESTS	0.582	0.189	1.790	***
CONTACT LEVEL	0.687	0.173	1.987	***
CONTACT QUALITY	-0.160	0.038	0.852	***
SH DISTANCE	0.337	0.147	1.400	**
SH RURALS	0.411	0.138	1.508	**
SH IMPACT	-0.874	0.330	0.417	***
MUNICIP SPARSELY	-0.084	0.168	0.920	
MUNICIP PRIMARY	0.038	0.014	1.039	***
MUNICIP DENSITY	-0.587	0.284	0.556	**
MUNICIP GROWTH	0.011	0.004	1.011	**
MUNICIP PRICE	-0.009	0.019	0.991	
Constant	-1.349	0.430	0.259	***
Nagelkerke R square	0.178			
Cox & Snell R square	0.125			

Source: 'City, countryside and second homes survey 2008' (Centre for Rural Research, Norway).

\* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .



population (MUNICIP SENSITY) and growth rate (MUNICIP GROWTH), impacts the rurals' level of support for second home development. On the other hand, price level (MUNICIP PRICE) is insignificant in the model.

The overall explanatory power of the model is satisfactory. The values for two pseudo R-measures, Nagelkerke and Cox & Snell R squares, are 0.178 and 0.125. This is relatively high for logistic models in the social sciences.

## 5. Discussion

The rural restructuring processes demand that rural communities successfully transform and diversify their economies. New jobs in service and tourism sectors are required to replace those lost in the primary industries. Communities that fail to readjust will experience net out-migration and in the long term, their demise. It is in this context that the strong second home development of recent years has been welcomed so warmly by local and national policy makers in Western countries. The paper's analyses show far less enthusiasm for second home development among the rural population in the affected rural communities. While the overall tendency is one of approval, the paper also identifies notable sections of the rural population with reservations about the unfolding second home phenomena. This invites more nuanced approaches to future developments of the second home phenomenon, and in this final section of the paper, I will elaborate on three main lines of argument evolving from the paper's discussions.

### 5.1. *Balanced acceptance*

At an overall level, there is a strong heterogeneity in rural locals' views on second home development. Much of the rural population finds that second homes have contributed positively to their local communities while a notable minority finds the drawbacks to have outweighed the benefits. With regard to further developments, the sceptical section is larger. Also in their evaluations of other aspects of the second home phenomenon, for example its impact on the local labour market, the rural population seems divided. On the other hand, the rural population is less heterogeneous in its views on the relationships between locals and second home users at the individual level. The majority, including those sceptical to the second home phenomenon in general, reports frequent and harmonious relations with their visiting second home users.

These are interesting findings, as they suggest the absence of dominant lay discourses on the second home phenomenon. In apparent contrast to the dominant Norwegian public policy discourses, the rural population has not accepted the presence and further development of second homes as beneficial to their communities. There is a gap between the policy makers and at least sections of the population affected by the implementation of the policies.

An important question is how intensely the negative sections of the rural population experience the downsides of the second home phenomenon in Norway. Are these strong enough to instigate action to hinder further development, or does their lack of support just reflect ignorance about the phenomenon and its importance for rural development? The answer depends on whether the 'neutral' response reflects a lack of strong opinions on the issue (for example because informants do not feel significantly affected by the second homes in their locality), or genuine difficulty in deciding whether the pros or the cons of the local second home phenomenon are most dominant. In terms of methodology, this reflects the difference between 'no' answer and neutral 'middle' response categories. In the present study these were melted into one

response category, making it difficult to estimate the level of involvement in the matter among those using this response alternative.

### 5.2. *Dimensions of conflict*

The second part of the paper attempts to identify the major division lines in the rural population in terms of their different evaluations of the second home phenomenon in their local communities. The attempt yields interesting results, as the analysis identifies several important division lines within the rural population.

First, there are some clear individual level differences in rurals' stance towards the second home phenomenon. A common denominator seems to be that it is those in the most marginal positions in Norwegian rural communities who are negative: the youngest adults, women, and lower income groups. On the other hand, educational level does not generate significant results. This seems related to the findings suggesting that, not surprisingly, those with direct interests in the growing second home economy are most positive. For example, landowners providing plots for new second homes are more than three times as likely to support further developments. In short, money matters. This illustrates that, despite the high level of social equality characterising Norwegian society, which is assumed to be particularly relevant in rural communities (Rye and Blekesaune, 2007, see also Cloke and Thrift, 1990:165), there are clear differences in rural populations' views on second homes development that originate in actors' different positions in the hierarchical social structure.

However, the results clearly demonstrate that 'softer' variables are also important. At an overall level, the model shows that rurals enjoy the company of second home users and often develop good relations with them. However, these are relations that they prefer to develop with people similar to them, preferably other rurals, and to keep at some distance.

The analysis further demonstrates the need for a meso/macro level approach to understand local resistance to second home developments. There are important dividing lines between different kinds of communities, due to their varying characteristics. For example, the model suggests that the populations in the most rural municipalities in terms of economic structure, i.e. municipalities with strong reliance on work in the primary industries, are more in favour of second home development. This may indicate that these municipalities have the greatest need to readjust their financial situations.

Finally, Norwegian municipalities are in different phases of second home development. Here the results show that a high density of second home users is related to higher levels of resistance among the locals. Paradoxically, a high growth rate works in the opposite direction, although this could be expected because economic benefits are the greatest in the investment phase.

In this sense, second home development is a short-term strategy: fine as long as there are new investments, but a burden ever after. Also noteworthy is that the price level of second homes in the municipality does not affect the level of local actors' resistance towards the second home phenomenon as it unfolds in their municipality. Price level may be seen as an indicator of the level of commodification in the second home market. If so, the results suggest that commodification in itself does not represent a problem, possibly because the process is what brings money into the local communities. Wealthy high-class urbanites who spend lavishly on and in their expensive second homes offer greater advantages for the local economy (and community?) than rural middle-class people spending as little money as possible while at their second home.

This furthermore relates to the character of the second homes market. In a highly commodified second homes market, with an economic infrastructure that actively and efficiently offers services (e.g. shops, spare time activities, or amusement parks) to the visiting second home users, the latter will leave larger amounts of money than in less commodified second home markets where visitors spend time but not money. This demonstrates the dilemma local rural policy makers often face: rapid developments of the second home sector, which tend to develop into *epidemic* second home markets, may give the local economy a boost, but the price is often higher levels of conflict.

Nevertheless, and despite the relatively high explanatory powers of the regression model, there are obviously matters of relevance that are not easily addressed with quantitative research designs as used in the present paper. Analysis of large-scale population data inherently draws attention to general trends, the national averages. Of necessity, this does not take into account local-level political, social and cultural contexts of the phenomenon in question. However, many key characteristics of second home developments, and the social processes influencing the rural population's perspectives on these, are genuinely located at the local level and need to be studied as such. In brief, place matters. This will require other, more qualitative and case-oriented methodological designs than those presented in this paper.

### 5.3. Importance of the national context

Finally, the present study further clearly demonstrates the relevance of analysing second home development within the framework of the national context. How individuals living in rural communities in Norway evaluate the phenomenon depends on specifics of the Norwegian context. In particular, the social and cultural proximity between the groups – the second home visitors and their rural host – appears to reduce second home conflicts and works as a barrier to active contestations.

This may reflect the larger picture of strong rural-urban cohesion in Norway, exemplified by widespread support for public spending on rural settlements and industries (Dalen and Lillebø, 2007), small differences in living conditions between rural and urban regions, as well as the marginal cultural differences across the nation (Hompland, 1991). Second home users are not conceived of as 'others' who threaten the traditional social fabric of the rural.

Further, important explanations of the cohesive situation also lie in the historical roots of the phenomenon, which have provided for an 'organic' growth of the second home sector over the years, where many of the development actors have been social and culturally embedded in the rural societies. The strong local character of the second home population has further worked to reduce the number of conflicts and to help solve those that have nevertheless arisen.

Thus, in many regards, thus, the Norwegian second home case by and large represents the 'endemic' type of second home markets in Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones' (2001) typology, however with some newer developments representing a more *epidemic* market logic; with higher degrees of commercialization and commodification, and also conflicts.

## 6. A lasting peace?

Of particular relevance is the question of whether the relatively harmonious situation is an inherent quality of the Norwegian second home phenomenon and, if so, whether it is likely to persist in the future. Two different lines of argument may be advocated in this regard.

First, the historical, political and cultural embeddedness of the Norwegian second home phenomenon in the everyday lives of rural communities may provide for a lasting and sustainable development of a second home industry, despite the increased numbers of second homes and their stronger influence on the rural communities. There is still much land to re-resource for rural tourism purposes, the social and cultural cleavages between hosts and visitors are modest, and there seem to be well-functioning institutions at the municipality level to solve the potential conflicts that may arise. Parts of the rural population are sceptical, but the overall reception of the growing second home phenomena leans towards the positive side. Few experience that their traditional rural ways of life are threatened.

This is an optimistic description of the situation, as it indicates that the present absence of conflicts will continue. An alternative argument is that the observed harmony is provisional and dependent on the relative immaturity of the Norwegian second home phenomenon in terms of levels of commodification, privatisation and marketisation. A new, modernised and consumerised version of the second home industry – changing its character from an *endemic* to an *epidemic* second home market – will represent a qualitatively as well as quantitatively different challenge for the rural communities. Such a development may generate a higher level of conflict in the wake of the second home phenomenon.

There are several signs of this being the case. For example, in their study of Norwegian second homes, Overvåg and Berg (in press) observe signs of stronger land-use conflicts in some rural communities, primarily due to increased pressure to build new second homes on more attractive land, often in overt conflict with the land-use priorities of the permanent rural population. They further note that second home users in some rural locations have started to invest in the same housing market as the locals, driving estate prices up. In the model presented, however, higher price levels for second homes do not indicate local resistance, suggesting that, in the Norwegian case, the hosting and visiting populations do not compete on the same housing markets. We assume, as suggested by Overvåg (2009), that these are tensions that will surface first in the coastal *non-rural* second home municipalities. In rural Norway, land is still plentiful, but also here we see that municipalities with the highest concentration of second homes host the most negative local population.

Moreover, socio-cultural differences between locals and second home users seem to be widening. This provides fertile ground for lifestyle differences and the conflicts that these often provoke. The Norwegian second home phenomenon represents a national heritage shared, valued and practised by members in all sections of the social structure, with the ideals of natural-ness and austerity working to undercommunicate differences in class and prestige. The myth of the second home unifies rather than divides the population. However, this may change as the phenomenon evolves and becomes commodified as well as commercialised. In their comparative study of a Norwegian and an American locality (Hitra/Frøya and Bayfield, Wisconsin), the latter far more characterised by conflict, Van Auken and Rye (2011) suggest that differences between these localities are primarily due to their different levels of maturity.

The present study does not allow for testing of these alternative interpretations, of whether the second home development not is a problem, or does not yet represent a source of future rural conflicts. However, what seems clear is that underneath the present relatively harmonious situation there are sources of intra-rural conflicts and that these are already noticeable in the form of different rural groups' evaluations of the second home phenomenon. As such, the Norwegian second home phenomenon provides an interesting study case for analysing how transformations of

these markets may generate new rural conflicts. Further research may generate better knowledge about what promotes or prevents development of these tensions. What are the thresholds for rural communities' ability, and willingness, to host the growing second home population? How can one facilitate functional social networks between locals and visitors? And in what ways is it possible to enhance real as well as perceived benefits of the second homes industry for the rural communities?

For example, comparative studies (e.g. corresponding to Van Auken and Rye's (2011) study) are needed to analyse whether national differences observed in the second home industries originate in the structural properties of the national contexts, or rather, reflect that the developments have reached different levels of maturity. In particular, studies which examine and compare key characteristics of regional and national second home markets may elaborate on concepts of 'endemic' and 'epidemic' second home markets (Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones, 2001) and thus better provide an understanding of how such structural qualities provide for different types of relationships between rural populations and their second home visitors. Another important issue to discuss is the possibility of development of bifurcation of second homes markets, as Barke's studies (2008, 1991) of the Spanish second home market has demonstrated the existence of. The Spanish case differs from that of other nations on a number of dimensions (e.g. degree of foreign investment and its dependency on the larger tourist sector); nonetheless it demonstrates the possibility of the development of quite different second home markets within one nation.

In conclusion, further second home development may be beneficial for rural communities, and especially so for actors in the moneyed classes – both local and extra-local ones – that have obvious interests in commodification of the countryside. For local and state policy makers the challenge will be to steer future developments in ways that realise the potentials of the second home phenomenon without realising the apparent potential for rural conflicts. In this regard, the paper's analysis suggests the need for policy approaches that ensure that economic benefits are distributed among all layers of the rural population, including those without direct interests in new developments. Rural policy planners need to facilitate work towards a second home phenomenon which is – and also is *perceived* to be – beneficial for the rural communities at large.

Another key challenge is to balance physical distance (i.e. locating second homes away from all year housing) and social proximity (i.e. facilitating development of social relationships between locals and second home users), preferably attracting groups other than the urban elite as second home owners and users. This seems to be a key to the development of non-conflictual relationships.

However, these challenges, as well as the strategies to solve them, will necessarily have to vary between and within national contexts; between endemic and epidemic second home markets, and depending on degree of their maturity, and levels of commercialisation and commodification.

## Acknowledgements

The research is funded by The Norwegian Research Council.

## References

- Agnitsch, K., Flora, J., Ryan, V., 2006. Bonding and bridging social capital: the interactive effects on community action. *Community Development* 37, 36–51.
- Almås, R., Elden, K.M., 1997. Den rurale dimensjon. En teoretisk og geografisk avgrensning. Report 7/1997. Norsk senter for bygdeforskning, Trondheim.
- Almås, R., Haugen, M.S., Rye, J.F., Villa, M., 2008. Omstridde bygder. 2008. In: Almås, R., Haugen, M.S., Rye, J.F., Villa, M. (Eds.), *Den nye bygda*, pp. 9–28 (Tapir, Trondheim).
- Arnesen, T., Overvåg, K., 2006. Mellom fritidsbolig og bolig. Om eiendomsregistrering og om bruksendring. *Utmark* 2006 (1).
- Barke, M., 1991. The growth and changing pattern of second homes in the Spain in the 1970s. *Scottish Geographical Magazine* 107 (1), 12–21.
- Barke, M., 2008. Second homes in the Spanish housing market: one market or two? *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 23, 277–295.
- Bourdieu, P., 1986. The forms of capital. 1986. In: Richardson, J.G. (Ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. Greenwood Press, Westport, pp. 241–258.
- Centre for Rural Research, 2008. *City, Countryside and Second Homes*. Survey.
- Cloke, P.J., Thrift, N., 1990. Class and change in rural Britain. In: Marsden, T., Lowe, P., Whatmore, S. (Eds.), *Rural Restructuring, Global Processes and Their Responses*. David Fulton Publishers, London, pp. 165–181. 1990.
- Coppock, J., 1977a. Issues and conflicts. In: Coppock, J. (Ed.), 1977. *Second Homes: Curse or Blessing*. Pergamon, Oxford.
- Coppock, J. (Ed.), 1977b. *Second Homes: Curse or Blessing*. Pergamon, Oxford.
- Dalen, E., Lillebø, K., 2007. Kjennskap og holdninger til norsk landbruk og til norsk skogbruk. Report for Norges Bondelag and Norsk Landbruksamvirke. Synovate MMI, Oslo.
- Falk, W., Labao, L., 2003. Who benefits from economic restructuring? Lessons from the past, challenges for the future. In: Brown, D., Swanson, L. (Eds.), *Challenges for Rural America in the Twenty-First Century*. University Park, Pennsylvania, pp. 152–165. 2003.
- Farstad, M., Rye, J.F., Almås, R., 2008. Fritidsboligfenomenet i Norge. Working paper. Norsk senter for bygdeforskning, Trondheim.
- Farstad, M., Rye, J.F., Almås, R., 2009. By, bygd og fritidsboliger 2008. Kommentert frekvensrapport. Report. Norsk senter for bygdeforskning, Trondheim.
- Flognfeldt, T., 2004. Second homes as a part of a new rural lifestyle in Norway. In: Hall, C.M., Müller, D.K. (Eds.), *Tourism, Mobility and Second Homes. Between Elite Landscapes and Common Ground*. Channel View Publications, Clevedon, pp. 3–14. 2004.
- Gallent, N., Tewdwr-Jones, M., 2001. Second homes and the UK planning system. *Planning Practice and Research* 16, 59–70.
- Gallent, N., Mace, A., Tewdwr-Jones, M., 2005. Second Homes. European Perspectives and UK Policies. Ashgate, Aldershot.
- Hall, C.M., Müller, D.K., 2004. Introduction: second homes, curse or blessing? Revisited. In: Hall, C.M., Müller, D.K. (Eds.), *Tourism, Mobility and Second Homes. Between Elite Landscapes and Common Ground*. Channel View Publications, Clevedon, pp. 3–14. 2004.
- Hamilton, L., 1992. *Regression with Graphics*. Duxbury Press, Belmont.
- Hiltunen, M.J., 2006. Environmental impacts of rural second home tourism case lake district in Finland. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism* 7, 243–265.
- Hoggart, K., Paniagua, A., 2001. What rural restructuring? *Journal of Rural Studies* 17, 41–62.
- Hompland, A., 1991. Det store kappeskiftet. In: Almås, R. (Ed.), *Åtte perspektiver på bygdeutvikling*. NVLF, Oslo 1991.
- Kaltenborn, B.P., 1998. The alternate home - motives of recreation use. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift* 52, 121–134.
- Müller, D.K., Hall, C.M., Keen, D., 2004. Second home tourism impact, planning and management. In: Hall, C.M., Müller, D.K. (Eds.), *Tourism, Mobility and Second Homes. Between Elite Landscapes and Common Ground*. Channel View Publications, Clevedon, pp. 15–34. 2004.
- Manum, B., Støa, E., 2010. Cabins or second homes? Report from a study examining contemporary Norwegian households and their leisure time houses. Paper presented at the 2. International seasonal homes and amenity migration workshop, March 2010, Trondheim.
- Marsden, T., Murdoch, T., Lowe, P., Munton, R., Flynn, A., 1993. *Constructing the Countryside*. University College London Press, London.
- Ministry of Agriculture (MA), 1999. Om norsk landbruk og matproduksjon. Stortingsmelding no 19 1999–2000 (White Paper). Ministry of Agriculture, Oslo.
- Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (MLGRD), 2009. Lokal vekstkraft og framtidstru: Om distrikts- og regionalpolitikken. Stortingsmelding no. 25 2008–2009. (White Paper). Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Oslo.
- Muller, D.K., 2007. Introduction. Second homes in the Nordic countries: between common heritage and exclusive property. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism* 7, 193–201.
- Overvåg, K., 2009. *Second Homes in Eastern Norway*. Ph.D. Thesis. Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim.
- Overvåg, K., Berg, N.G., in press. Second homes, rurality and contested space issues in Eastern-Norway. *Tourism Geographies*.
- Putnam, R., 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Putnam, R., 2000. *Bowling Alone: the Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Simon and Schuster, New York.
- Rønningen, K., Elden, K.M., Stræte, E.P., 2001. *Utmarka og lokal næringsutvikling*. Report. Centre for Rural Research, Norway.
- Rye, J.F., 2006a. Rural youths' images of the rural. *Journal of Rural Studies* 22, 409–421.
- Rye, J.F., 2006b. *Geographic and social mobility: youth's rural-to-urban migration in Norway*. Doctoral Thesis, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim.
- Rye, J.F., Blekesaune, A., 2007. The class structure of rural-to-urban migration. The case of Norway. *Young - Nordic Journal of Youth Research* 15, 169–191.

- Statistics Norway, 2010. Antall fritidsboliger per 1. January 2009. Fylke (tabell). Statistics Norway, Oslo. (<http://www.ssb.no/bygningsmasse/tab-2009-03-13-04.html>).
- Steinecke, J., 2007. Nordic topography of second homes. *Journal of Nordregio* 7 (3), 12–13.
- Vågane, L., 2002. Samordnet levekårsundersøkelse 2001 – tverrsnittsundersøkelsen. Dokumentasjonsrapport. Working paper 2002/56. Statistics Norway, Oslo.
- Van Auken, P., 2010. Seeing, not participating: viewscape fetishism in American and Norwegian rural amenity areas. *Human Ecology* 38, 521–537.
- Van Auken, P., Rye, J.F., 2011. Amenities, affluence, and ideology: comparing rural restructuring processes in the U.S. and Norway. *Landscape Research* 36 (1), 63–84.
- Vepsäläinen, M., Pitkänen, K., 2010. Second home countryside. Representations of the rural in Finnish popular discourses. *Journal of Rural Studies* 26, 194–204.
- Vittersø, G., 2006. Norwegian cabin life in transition. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism* 7, 266–280.
- Woods, M., 2005. *Rural Geography: Processes, Responses and Experiences in Rural Restructuring*. Sage Publications, London.