

Conceptions of second home mobility in Norwegian policy and political discourse

Introduction

The growth of second homes in Norway during the last decades has been formidable, increasing approximately by 50.000 from 1998 to 2008, with the number of second homeowners having a nearly corresponding increase. Most second homes are located in rural areas and owned by people living in the towns and cities. Currently, approximately 418.000 cabins or second homes exist in the country, and more than 20 per cent of the population owns a second home while more than half has access to a second home¹. This increase partly stems from tremendous private economic growth in the country as well as Western Europe in general, although having a cabin in the mountains or by the sea has long been a tradition in Norway. The increasing number of second homes is facilitated by improved communication and invariably leads to an increase in mobility between the rural and the urban. Furthermore, living standards in the cabins have undergone a discernible upgrading, with the average square meters per second home increasing by nearly 60 per cent. Such development makes it possible to use second homes more often and for longer periods².

From a European perspective, the issue of second homes as a major driver of social and economic change in rural areas is highly contested (Gallent et al., 2005). However, from a theoretical as well as empirical perspective, the Norwegian development of second homes represents several interesting

¹ See Statistics Norway, www.ssb.no, for further details.

² The same development can be observed in Sweden. The population of 9.2 million has 680.000 second homes. Nearly half the population between 16 and 84 years old has access to second homes—a situation that has been quite similar for the last 20 years. Sweden, Finland, and Norway have exceptionally high rates of second home ownership among the population compared to other European countries (Gallent et al., 2005).

questions, especially as the dimension of centre and periphery, or the urban rural divide, has played a crucial role in Norwegian regional development as well as in political discourse. What we are witnessing is an extensive mobility between spatial entities that are politically quite often kept apart. Thus, this article aims to address how this mobility is reflected in Norwegian regional policy and political discourses. In regional politics, a sedentarist principle of a categorical division between the rural and the urban has to come to terms with the transgressive reality of mobile practices. The material practices of second homes is a key illustrative example of how mobility is represented, whether it is as connectivity, conjunctive processes and a space of flow, or disjunctive processes of the division between the rural and the urban as territorial spaces. This further raises the question of whether the spatial logic of flow and of territory as bounded entities and stability are to be understood in dualistic terms or as co-existing. We consider this to be an important discussion as we know little of the conceptual understanding that guides political decisions on regional development or how the new *Zeitgeist* of increasing mobility is framed and implemented politically. In the context of this work, we therefore ask whether political discourses on second home mobility transcend spatial entities of rural and urban and represent a bridging across these spatial categories.

Empirically, we have investigated two political fields in which second homes are part of the discourses—namely, regional policy and policy for transport and infrastructure at the national level. Before analysing these fields in terms of division and connectivity, we discuss the dimension of mobility related to spatial logics and spatial categories. In the final section, towards a politics of mobility, we return to the theoretical implications of the discourse analysis.

Mobility and spatial logics

The urban-rural divide has much older roots than 20th century sociology, but the emergence of sociology in the early 20th century established a theoretical divide between the rural and the urban based on perspectives about an increasingly mobile world (Cresswell, 2006). Cresswell demonstrated how mobility has been framed as disorder in his works at the Chicago School. The rural was theorised

as a place of rest and rootedness, while the urban was a site for movement and alienation (ibid.). However, contemporary theory on mobility has not been structured by the rural/urban divide; moreover, mobility does not structure the dichotomy. Mobility is not perceived as a threat to place or community in the same way as in the Chicago School study. Instead, the focus of mobility studies has shifted to connectivity and networks (Amin 2002, Sheller and Urry 2006, Larsen et. al. 2006, Bærenholdt 2007). Mobility is this present day Zeitgeist (e.g., Urry 2007). These approaches often originate from a perspective of globalisation in which people are not seen as autonomous and free-floating individuals, but more as nomads than monads. Larsen, Urry and Axhausen (2006) argued that relational economies of commitments and obligations to family members, partners, and friends connect people and their networks, often across physical distances that presuppose physical and mental mobility. Bærenholdt (2007) indicated that practices of coping with distances are central in the production of Nordic Atlantic societies, arguing that such practices produce, reproduce, and change the extreme living conditions that characterise these societies.

Connections and mobility also have consequences for how we conceptualise place. Hetherington (1997: 187) argues that places circulate “through material placings [...] Places are not fixed by geometry of space but are free to move across the boundaries of geometry into some elsewhere which lies beyond the limitations of subjective ways of representing objects and their spatial distribution.” In other words, places are a contingent effect of the processes of placing and ordering. Placing and ordering are attempts to order heterogeneity, or Massey’s (2005) “thrown together” focus on place as a relational and existential quality. Material artefacts, like documents, photos and scientific materials, imaginations, memories and performances (see Bærenholdt 2007) are part of this “circulation of places”, while connectivity pinpoints the complexity involved in separating and bounding spatial entities (Hudson 2006).

From the preceding short discussion, we can identify two dimensions relevant for conceptualising second home mobility in Norwegian national policy and political discourse. The first dimension can

relate to a sedentarist or territorial frame. International literature has shown that second homes in rural areas are used as sites for contemplation in contrast to the busy urban everyday life. The rural and the urban are placed in completely different meaning contexts in structuring second home living. The second dimension, mobility, is interesting as an alternative as well as a supplement in the way it opens for connectivity and networking between the urban and the rural as part of cognitive and material practices. People commute between their urban home and their rural second home, not only physically, but also via memories, imaginations, artefacts, etc.

The sedentarist and mobility dimensions can be further elaborated upon in spatial logics that make the distinction between them not as obvious as previously stated. It is possible to see the emergence of two spatial logics when we discuss mobility, especially when we want to investigate second home mobility's significance for the transcending or maintenance of the spatial categories mentioned herein. The theoretical discussion of *making society* may be a relevant frame here. One perspective is represented by Putnam's (2000) concept of social capital, which is to a certain degree a functionalistic concept that emphasises dense local networks and reciprocal social relations. Trust and group dynamics that bridge instead of separate across conventional social divides are highlighted as success criteria in society building, along with neighbourhoods and local face-to-face relations. Mobility in this context is said to undermine the production of social capital and concomitant civic engagement, not unlike the argument from the Chicago School.

The other dimension takes into consideration what Urry (2004, 2007), Sheller and Urry (2006), Larsen et al. (2006), and Bærenholdt (2007, 2008) call *a new paradigm for mobility*. Unlike Putnam's territorial argument, these writers argue that network capital implies the freedom of movement in order to meet other people in a face-to-face context. In this respect, we consider Bærenholdt's (2008) discussion about mobility and territoriality in making societies to be of particular relevance. Taking the increasing mobility into his core of discussion, Bærenholdt asks whether the sociation and sociability among people that include mobile practices—called *mobile bonding*—vary from the

making of societies as a territorial bridging, implying that people are increasingly connected in reciprocal relations to people at a distance. The question aims to determine whether these connections are separate from imagined communities of political associations. Mobility thus emerges as a complementary concept to former territorially based ideas about the making of society.

Our discussion of mobility represented by the increase in the number of second homes may benefit from the theoretical arguments about mobility, society making, and territoriality. For this purpose we need to highlight the categorical and conceptual space of urban and rural because Norwegian regional policy has been decisively structured by this division. However, an interesting question is whether the phenomenon of second homes in the political discourse maintains this divide by treating second home mobility as commuting between different spatial entities. An alternative conceptualisation is also possible—namely, that second home mobility represents connections between the rural and the urban. If the latter is true, does the increase in second home mobility then represent a new phenomenon that nurtures the development of politically new understandings of Norwegian society not trapped in conceptually territorial containers?

Similar to how Halfacree (2001) analysed taxonomic practices of counterurbanisation, we can in a methodological sense relate the two dimensions—mobility and sedentarism or territoriality—to two different sorts of *categories for perception and experience*. On one hand, certain categories have clear and distinct borders that separate different entities (see Figure 1a). Membership in one category depends on the fact that it is unmistakable whether the classified objects hold or do not hold certain qualities or properties. As illustrated in Figure 1a, B is a member of category A whereas C is not. Such properties are so important that they determine membership in the category. The rural and the urban represent two distinct categories with their own categorical space. This type of categorisation is also called *platonic categorisation* (Givón 1989).

The other kind of categorisation we have in mind is the *prototype*. A prototype does not expose a clear and distinct categorical space. Rather, the categories are formed in the overlap between several

typical or characteristic features. The most typical features in the categorical space are in the core where we find the highest number of what is the most typical for the category. Givón (ibid.) calls these features the normative examples of the category because it is in the overlap between different categories that the category is created, as illustrated in Figure 1b.

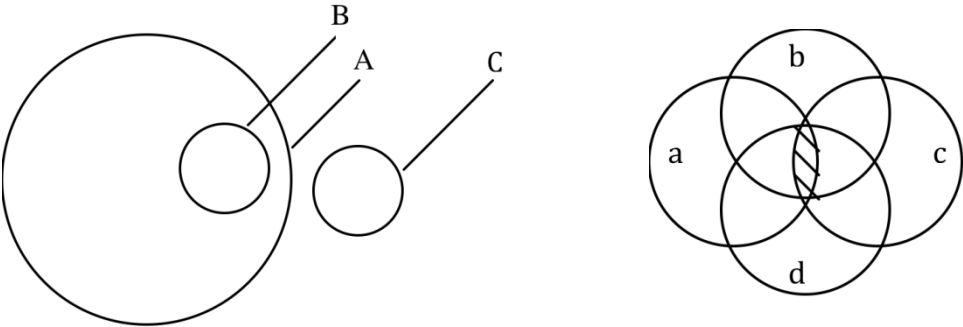


Figure 1: a. Platonic categorisation b. Prototype or cluster categorisation (after Givón 1989).

This overlapping space constitutes the prototype. We also find other features that are part of the category, but not in the categorical core. In other words, membership in the prototypical core is a matter of gradation (Rosch 1978). Unlike the platonic category, which has clear and distinct borders, prototypes have blurred and diffuse borders and boundaries. For instance, the rural may be interpreted as having more nature than the category of urbanity as well as more silence and less noise, more fresh air than polluted air, and so on. Lakoff and Johnson (1999) argue that "*living systems must categorize*" (1999: 19) and that our categories are formed through our embodiment. This means that categories are part of our experience, and it is not possible to have an uncategorised and unconceptualised experience. It is not possible to move beyond these categories; rather they are the stuff of experience itself. Categories are structures that differentiate aspects of our experience and make it possible to see differences. In other words, they are a fundamental part of our perceptions and practices.

The two dimensions—territoriality and mobility—and the discussion about platonic categorisation and prototypes are also politically relevant. In the Norwegian political context, the categorical divide between the rural and the urban is not immediately obvious. On one side, Norwegian politics for rural areas are based on exactly this divide as a platonic categorisation. The political axiom of settlement in the whole country versus the continuous trend of rural-urban migration and urbanisation processes implies a policy of positive discrimination that supports rural areas. Both implicitly and explicitly, this policy focuses on making divisions between the urban and the rural. In order to be implemented, it is necessary to define dispersal areas, urban areas, rural areas, centre, and periphery along quantitative features based on clear categorical spaces. On the other side, the rural-urban divide makes less sense in the contemporary Norwegian debate about regionalisation as in rural policy in general and in settlement policy in particular. The rural-urban dichotomy is said to be less relevant for regional policies than it used to be (Andersson, Ek, & Molina 2006). Rather than modernising or preserving rural areas, the intertwining between the countryside and the city should be considered more in policy making. The intertwining makes the categories more blurred, and new descriptions and geographical imaginations are needed that are more adequate. Regionalisation highlights connectivity—the relational and common situation between centre (cities) and hinterland (the rural). Thus, the rural and urban are conceptualised as “more or less” of certain qualities, not as categorical space.

Using this theoretical and methodological discussion as a basis, we turn to the analysis of political discourses based on public documents and reports from commissions appointed by the Norwegian Government, discussions from the Parliament, white papers, and political discussions in media. All the empirical data are from 1988 to the present time. The following discussion is an investigation to determine into which political meaning contexts second homes are placed. We structure the discussion according to the concepts of *division* and *connectivity*, as previously explored.

Second homes in political meaning contexts

Division

The Commission for the Districts³, appointed by the Norwegian Government, was tasked with discussing contemporary regional and rural policies and presenting suggestions for future adaptations. The commission delivered its report entitled “*Vigorous districts and regions—Frames for a general and geographically adapted policy*” in 2004. Second homes are not mentioned more than three times in the document; nevertheless, they are valued with high importance in the future policy and development in sparsely populated areas.

Culture and nature based travel-business increases. For example, in Inner Finnmark there is a huge demand for experience tourism based on Sami culture and traditions. In many districts, the domestic segment of second homes is an important market (p. 54).

The meaning context into which second homes are placed here is basically economic, discussed in relation to travel-business. The policy for increased value creation is exclusively focused on human competence and the will to exploit demand. In the discussion about development in Norwegian districts and regions, the division between rural and urban areas is visible and functions as a structuring element related to questions about the development of second homes. Second homes are perceived as a potentiality in economic development structured by the division between the rural and the urban. Politicians, based on this dichotomy, attempt to either stimulate a change in the rural economy through innovation and education or focus on the right to exploit resources locally and increase outcome. Second homes are placed in such a context: “*For some farmers the building of second homes has become an important income*” (p. 55). Diversification aids farmers to stay in place, supporting Norway’s political mantra of achieving a balanced population development in all parts of the country. The dichotomy of centre and periphery is itself underlined by the storylines of concentration, urbanisation, and dispersal.

³ The Norwegian *distriktene* refers to sparsely populated areas—in other words, fundamentally rural areas.

Under the heading *Job offer, attractiveness and motivation for relocation* (p. 68) in the same report, another dimension is added. The economic meaning context is present here too, but although the intention is to portray the rural as offering more varied opportunities, the division between urban and rural is presumed.

Along with the increase in income levels, many second homes have improved standards in a way that the difference between ordinary residence and second home is diminished. This development increases the possibility for using second homes in larger parts of the year, and more or less as an ordinary residence number two. In many districts second homes are important. This development can provide new opportunities simultaneously as this development also raises new challenges such as better infrastructure. This development may also represent new challenges in condition to taxes and the national register (p. 70).

Here, second homes are still framed as part of an economic development strategy in rural areas. The passage comes from the document discussing attractiveness and choice of place of residence, especially among young people in the phase of establishment. The opportunity set for business development in the districts is discussed in the context of place marketing and attractiveness, using individualisation, distinctiveness, and peculiarity as backdrops for the discussion. The assumption is that more people would like to live in rural areas than actually do so. The challenge for many districts is to realise this potential to encourage people to move into the districts. To solve this problem, questions related to job opportunities, opportunities for different careers, and different identity and lifestyle projects should be highlighted. Second homes are placed in this context, primarily as a strategy for economic and business opportunities in making rural areas more diverse, attractive, and offering a higher selection of possibilities. Although the passage contains elements of connectivity in terms of infrastructure, opportunities and challenges are seen in this meaning context, structured by the division between the rural and the urban.

This structuring element is also evident in the white paper entitled “About Regional Policy” (2004-2005). Second homes are included in a passage discussing the potential for business development in mountain areas. The passage generally states that nature and cultural experience are the main bases for tourism in Norway, highlighting the mountain areas as a potential site for business development. *“The construction of second homes and tourism provides an important income for many municipalities”* (p. 83).

This structuring of second homes as an economic opportunity is deeply embedded in the larger general Norwegian discourse about regional and districts policy; therefore, we will clarify this issue in the following discussion. In the general debates about rural policies, it is common to talk about rural and urban value creation as two separate activities. However, politicians do not agree on whether the cities or the countryside can be considered the economic drivers in the economy. In the first case, they claim that *“City regions are increasingly important as motors for regional development and for the total value creation”* (St.meld.nr.25 2004: 18). The problem is that rural areas are very dependent on primary and secondary industries as well as the public sector:

...I am talking about the change from being a society dominated by primary industry, through becoming a society based on service industry. This change into a knowledge and service society has been the primary challenge for the rural parts of Norway ... It is therefore about time that we change our regional and rural policy into one that realizes the actual development traits and changes in our society (Erna Solberg 2002).

A change in the industrial base is considered necessary, and innovation is seen as the means towards this end. Innovation processes and creation of new business opportunities are expected to adjust rural businesses to the post-industrial age. Primary industry has to become more efficient and increasingly based on large-scale production. In short, the rural economy should change and dependency on natural resources be reduced (Rydningen 2004). Policies for increased value creation

are therefore exclusively focused on competence, innovation, and increased knowledge and processing.

Yet this is not the only approach towards the rural economy. An alternative discourse treats rural value creation as the driver of the nation's economy:

The Norwegian economy has its basis in the rural. This is where our exclusive natural resources are and where value creation in Norway mainly takes place (Kanstad in Nordlys 29 November 1994).

This latter purely economic argument for supporting the rural economy—as it is allegedly the economic driver of Norway—gained ground starting in the beginning of the 1990s (Kanstad 1996) and today remains a much-used argument.

Much of the basis for Norwegian value creation is in the districts. Even if the significance of the primary economy for employment is reduced strongly, Norway still has an economy based on raw materials. The basis for important national value creation systems lies in our maritime tradition and in the tapping of resources along the coast, in the fjords and in the interior (Distriktskommisjonen 2004: 16).

Even if the dichotomy is maintained in this alternative approach to the driver of value creation, the policy implications differ from those previously mentioned. Instead of focusing on the way people add value to natural resources, this discourse focuses on the effect of the distribution of the margin of profits. We should understand values as inherent in the resources themselves, which may be the most common approach among economists and social researchers dealing with natural resources (Brox 1989; Østerud 2002; Steinshamn 2005). Societies on Norway's coast, for instance, experienced growth from the 1950s onwards not because of the value added through the *processing* of fish, but through the effect of the distribution of the margin of profits from the harvesting of the resource. This argument is often paired with the call for more autonomy on the local and regional levels. There

is a demand for rights to exploit the resources locally and a struggle for feedback of profits to the regions and communities that aim to make the most of resources (Kanstad 1996; Bukve 2004; Distriktskommisjonen 2004; Selstad & Onsager 2004; St.meld.nr.12 2006; Ploeg 2008, forthcoming).

It is suggested that the regions should also be permitted to call in a certain economic rent from making the most of regional resources, and possibly also receive some economic compensation for securing national natural resources (Distriktskommisjonen 2004: 135, author's translation)

Either way, a rural-urban dichotomy exists regarding value creation. Based on this dichotomy, politicians attempt either to stimulate a change in the rural economy through innovation and education or to focus on the right to exploit resources locally and make it possible for more people to live off these resources in rural areas.

Second homes are often placed in this economic context—namely, as an opportunity to utilise local resources such as nature experiences, sparsely populated areas and wilderness, different sports opportunities, and other rural qualities such as silence and less stress as opposed to the urban way of life. The most important structuring principle along the division line in the political discourse stems from the economic discourse investigated herein. In this regard, the policy of division is based on both platonic categorisation (in the way it insists on the difference between the rural and the urban as target for policy) and prototypes (in the way political discourses highlight typicality in descriptions of rurality). The prototypical dimension means that second homes are also contextualised in a more blurred and diffuse category that opens up for connectivity.

Connectivity

Based on the report from the Commission for Districts (2004) previously mentioned, we can also interpret sensitivity to connectivity. The statement that second homes are bigger than before and have a higher level of standard (making it possible to use them longer parts of the year and more or

less as an ordinary second residence) is an implicit expression of sensitivity to connectivity. This, combined with the statement that *“this development may also represent new challenges in condition to taxes and national register”* (ibid: 70), underscores the idea that second homes challenge the way of conceptualising the division between rural and urban as well as administrative borders between municipalities in general. This understanding is based on a consideration of the way in which second homes are used, which may imply an opening for connectivity between different spatial entities structured by dichotomous concepts that have long been held separate at the conceptual level. When the issue is value creation, the relation between urban and rural is not constructed in terms of difference, but rather mutual dependency.

The departure point should be that city and country are mutually dependent on each other. In this perspective the debate that comes up from time to time, about which areas contributes the most to value creation, has little worth (Former Prime Minister Brundtland in *Aftenposten*, 4 February 1995).

Cities have traditionally not been a part of regional and district policies in Norway. In order to strengthen Norway’s international competitive abilities as well as simultaneously further a balanced regional development, urban politics should be part of an encompassing regional politics (White Book, nr.31, p. 63).

The growth of cities shall contribute to further international competitiveness, value generation, populated and viable local communities over the whole country (White book on urban politics).

We contend that the duality of rural/urban permeates the presentation. The underlying frame of mind is based on this dichotomy and its taken-for-granted constructs. However, the differences between the urban and the rural are constructed in terms of reliance, trying to downplay taken-for-granted categories as past antagonisms. Regionalism has become the order of the day and the dominant philosophy that ameliorates the dichotomy between rural and urban. In defining the

region, the urban and the rural are connected in mutual dependency. In this context, second home mobility can be considered an important element in ensuring viable communities in the periphery. Policy and practice support the blurring of distinctions based on a categorical conception of space.

The key to stimulating value creation—either in cities or in the countryside—is in the general terms for businesses: interest rates, taxes and infrastructure. A policy that discriminates among different areas or between the cities and the countryside will hamper the driving force of the market in this logic. This is basically a market-based approach from economic theory, where it is claimed that value creation is maximised if production factors are allowed to flow without friction. In other words, national economic safety is secured through the market mechanism. The general terms for business development in turn encourage innovation and value creation to the benefit of all. Here, the emphasis is not on which industrial activities are performed, but rather on their profitability. The implications are to disregard business structure and geography and reduce the traditional specific initiatives to instead think about general initiatives such as education and better economic terms for business development. A common denominator in the connections of elements is that rurality is no longer constructed as an exclusive delimited category, but is contextualised to a larger degree out of a general societal development in the global world (Hidle et al. 2006: 194). Because of the global economy and market logic, rurality is also treated as a resource in the global economy and in categorising rurality; prototypes rather than platonic categorisation are employed. Second homes form a substantial part of connectivity and value creation in terms of employment and the municipal economy.

Although second homes are basically placed in an economic meaning context in regional and district policy, connectivity is more explicit in the policy for transport and communication. According to the suggestion to the National Plan for Transport (2010-2019), second homes are part of the planning process.

Around the biggest cities the increase in weekend traffic to second homes areas in the mountains and along the coast results in long queues and often serious traffic accidents. Even if such capacity problems are limited to a few hours a day, it results in high costs. Further increase in the development of second homes areas may increase these problems (p. 21.)

Further construction of second home areas may increase these problems, but on the other hand, long travel time may moderate the increase in travel business in some areas. Better roads may contribute in developing local business life associated with construction, maintenance and service of second homes (p. 139).

E6 is a main road for the tourist traffic through Gudbrandsdalen towards Sør-Trøndelag, Møre and Romsdal and Sogn and Fjordane. The tourist traffic on national road 3 is influenced by the capacity problems on E6 in connection with big excursion weekends. A huge extent of construction of second homes and expansive plans for expansion of ski slopes in Trysil will intensify the traffic problems (p. 155).

These three quotations are located throughout the document, yet are quite similar. The first is part of the introduction, in which general infrastructure and transport challenges are discussed with a specific focus on issues like transport trends, the capacity of existing transport systems, and environmental issues. The second quotation is part of a section called regional development, with a special focus on districts and the need for transport systems. The third quotation is part of a section that describes important regional functions. All quotations highlight the connectivity between the urban and the rural in terms of the need for transport between first residences (urban) and second homes (rural). However, since the second and third quotations are part of sections that deal with transport and regional development, second homes are placed in meaning contexts that treat transport systems and second homes where rurality has special needs. The development of local (i.e., rural) business suggests that the dichotomy is taken for granted; it is evident in this policy field that

second homes are placed in a context of connectivity between the rural and the urban. Second homes are thus structured by an urban/rural divide on the conceptual or principal level, whereas on a functional level distances and transport systems between the urban and the rural (second homes) are the focus. The practice of second homes represents special challenges with which national transport planners and authorities also have to cope. This practice simultaneously represents opportunities for rural communities and districts. Well-functioning transport systems are a condition for realising this potential for opportunities that second homes as business represent.

Transport systems relate to the space of flow. Yet even if this political field treats connectivity and flow in functional terms, this logic may also fit in a broader ideological dimension that is not structured by the urban/rural divide. For example, today it is problematic to relate to either the urban or the rural as a distinct way of life—as separate forms of civilisation that are located in either rural or urban settings. According to Murdoch (1995), the urban-rural dualism has been, by and large, translated into a network paradigm as a matter of positions within the nodes of the global organising network. The interplay between rural and urban entities seems to be increasing on all levels and in every field of human life. The boundaries between rural and urban places in these theories are slowly obliterated—economically as well as socially and culturally (Bengs & Schmidt-Thomé 2005).

Towards a politics of mobility/connectivity

The second home phenomenon is firmly established in the Norwegian imagination, and the crossing of dichotomies is indeed an everyday activity. A sustained flow of urbanites leads to their second homes in rural areas, which have become the recreational playground of the modern urban man. The flows are based on motilities (i.e., interests and propensities) that are culturally structured and part of the cultural and social practices and experiences transmitted from generation to generation. Although the space of flow empirically incorporates differences in travel as people look for other experiences—e.g., skiing, fishing, boating, and family relations in a different environment—the amenities provided in these homes and in the municipalities increasingly acquire the standards of an

urban environment. Mountain landscapes are now interspersed with resort-like centers replete with cinemas, cafés, and shopping malls. The rural maintains its other qualities, but in a reduced or transformed manner. On the other hand, many urban municipalities maintain a rural character, with many people in such urban areas owning a second home in the same municipality. These urban leisure municipalities allow for all the various activities sought—urban as well as rural. Dichotomies are transcended, and boundaries turn fuzzy. In such a context, prototypical space is more evident than platonic categorical space.

Despite the general empirical and ideological trends, it is not obvious that these ideological trends contribute to placing second homes in a context of connectivity between the rural and the urban when it comes to the political structure of the phenomenon. The previous discussion demonstrated that we can point to the predominant logic, in which the dichotomy between the rural and urban is maintained (way of life and value creation), and the logic of connectivity, in which rurality is part of a network. These two logics strongly relate to two different conceptions of space. In Castells' (1996) vision, contemporary society is experiencing a period of historical transformation due to the revolution in information technology, globalisation, and the emergence of a new form of organisation, which he calls networking; a specific kind of networking is changing the ways in which we perceive and manage social life. The result is a new social structure: the network society (Castells 2002). In the network society, a new spatial form dominates: the space of flows, "the material organization of time-sharing social practices that work through flows" (Castells 1996: 412).

This perspective also permeates Baumann's concept of *light modernity* (2000; 2006), which tries to capture the nature of the present changes in the process of modernisation. According to Baumann, light modernity is different from heavy because, among other things, everything is now about flows and movement. Cyberspace and the immediacy of the financial community are important forces behind this shrinking of the world; meanwhile, the barriers against the flow of people, goods, and services are reduced. There is no point in denying this process, but Doreen Massey (2007)

nevertheless asks if this is the only way of conceptualising space. She prefers to treat this “notion of a shrinking world” as a *manoeuvre*, not an objective description of what happens. According to Massey, the shrinking world is a manoeuvre exemplified by the new global elite of neoliberal wealth, who try to represent *their* world as *the* world. Distance is in this world exclusively a burden, and the trip between two places is without value in itself. The historical depth in different cultures is overlooked. Culture is instead reduced to a commodity that can be sold on a market, while local cultures are made meaningful in a competition among places that can attract tourists and the creative class to their region (Florida 2002).

The space of flows does not permeate down to the whole realm of human experience. People live in places, a “*locale whose form, function and meaning are self-contained within the boundaries of physical contiguity*” (Castells 1996: 423). “*Increased mobility will not lead to a homogenisation of space. Indeed, it will bring about a new hierarchy of space*” (Mormont 1990: 32). Regional and rural policies must recognise that society is increasingly organised into the space of flows; however, at the same time we must not forget that “*people do still live in places*” (Castells 2002: 428). The important dichotomy, therefore, occurs between the space of flows and the meaning of place in people’s everyday experience. This distinction does not overlap with the traditional urban-rural dichotomy, which is where we can claim that the rural is a misleading category. The political conceptualisation of second home mobility along both dimensions of connectivity and division may reflect this duplicity in spatial approaches, theoretically as well as empirically. We also see this duplicity of spatial logics in several other fields, such as the managing of borders in the European Union (EU). The management of the external borders are stricter than ever, especially concerning migrants to the EU from outside the EU. At the same time, the EU wants to facilitate mobility and connectivity arrangements inside the EU for people, goods, and money. On a national level, Norway implements stricter rules for immigration of asylum seekers than ever, but has more open national borders than ever concerning the flow of money, goods, and temporary work migrants.

The duplicity in the political conceptualisation of second home mobility in Norway is, theoretically speaking, parallel to the examples already mentioned—at least when it comes to spatial logics. One logic relates to closing and structuring a field in territorial terms, the other is about flow and blurred borders and boundaries between categories that were previously held separate. The first focuses on managing categorical space while the second focuses on managing prototypical space. The presence of both processes demonstrates that second home mobility is, politically speaking, about simultaneously managing mobility and territoriality. In this regard, Bærenholdt (2008:8) asserted: “*To a high extent one can say that the crossing of borders and mobility politics are used to governmentalize certain ideas about a certain common space [...].*” He introduced the concept of *governmobility* in order to combine territoriality and mobility into one notion, which is highly relevant when it comes to the political conceptualisation of second home mobility. The argument behind the concept of *governmobility* is that societies are *assembled*, which means for instance that people are territorialised—often in the sense of being part of a culturally and politically nationalised social order. Incorporating mobility where the regulation of practices is internalised in peoples’ practices of mobility, Bærenholdt arrived at *governmobility*. However, the question of society is not only a question of sameness, but also diversity and difference. Unfortunately, diversity is often transformed into singularity. When someone speaks on behalf of another or on behalf of “us”, this is an act of power that translates other actors into a single will. This is society-making based on an imagined co-citizenship and a mechanism of elite governing through assembling, in which units are made to manage certain challenges.

In the case of the political conceptions of second home mobility, this argumentation is helpful for understanding the political role of the increasing second home mobility. In our discussion of conceptualisations of second home mobility, the management of national space is of interest in terms of the conceptions of rural and urban space and centre and periphery as spatial categories. This spatial categorisation has been an important element of structure in the political landscape in Norway since before the Second World War. Norwegian nationalism has been built on rural

imaginings. Our previous discussion of second home mobility as *division* clearly shows that this dimension remains strong. Thus, it is reasonable to argue that the conceptualisation of second home as division is based on rurality and urbanity as two different single wills assembled in two different imagined communities.

However, second home mobility is also conceptualised as connectivity. On a conceptual level it makes sense to argue that rural and urban are held separate while material practices such as second home mobility and material settings create connections between these categories, making borders fuzzy, on the conceptual level as well. Second home and second home mobility are in harmony with certain ideas relating to what society is going to be as a common space. It is still a space of structured transgressions, diversity, and heterogeneity. In this regard, the practices of second home owners represent a society en route (Bærenholdt 2007). At the same time, policies of connectivity also represent a process that hold the national society together based on the imaginings of a national political economy (Latour 1986; Sassen 2006). The material dimension is of particular interest here. Second homes, second home places, and roads between second homes and first homes represent materiality that is of importance in politics of connectivity. It is important to highlight how societies are made materially as well (Bærenholdt 2008; Latour *ibid.*). The argument is that society is not what holds people together, but what is being held together. In other words, politics for connectivity may be perceived as a policy that facilitates a society remaining held together (e.g., through roads, second homes). In this regard a policy for second home mobility represents a *governmobility*, denoting how connections are governed as part of the production and maintenance of a common space. This can be said to be part of a national order based on certain ideas of what this space is and how it can be managed. Two spatial logics meet and collide in the context of everyday experiences: the space of flows and territorial space. Both logics should be considered when developing politics for connectivity.

Conclusion

We contend that discourses on rural-urban relations are changing alongside the growth of second homes, not solely because of this development. Regional policies in Norway in the first fifteen years after the Second World War focused on building the country aided by a Keynesian interventionist approach. Rural policies in this period were a part of industrial policies. In the subsequent era, this ambition was supplemented with active attempts to modernise the periphery by establishing growth poles, building infrastructure, and generating a marked increase in public sector employment at the level of municipalities and counties during the 1970s. However, widespread agreement has existed about the decrease since the 1980s in governmental efforts towards counter-centralisation measures (NOU2004:2; Teigen et al. 1995). A marked shift has also emerged, moving away from a focus on rural maintenance towards regional growth (Hansen in Teigen et al. 1995) and from governmental sharing with and modernising the rural in the 1970s towards stimulating the competitive ability of rural and urban regions through governance (Amdam & Bukve 2004). However, we also contend that second home mobility in its volume and transcending character represents material processes that may have a profound impact on rural-urban relations.

This paper investigated how second home mobility is reflected in Norwegian regional policy and political discourses. In regional politics, an emerging recognition exists regarding the significance of second homes in rural areas in terms of an economic development strategy. However, the conceptual dichotomy and division of the rural and the urban remain ingrained and are based on a platonic categorisation insisting on the difference between the rural and the urban as targets for policy. Second homes are predominantly portrayed within this context of a territorial logic. Yet signs also suggest that political discourse pays attention to the blurring of boundaries, the concept of network, and the material dimension of connectivity. A bridging process is occurring between the rural and urban, creating a movement for managing prototypical space. Although this bridging is more apparent in the form of regionalisations and transport policies, the potentiality of second home mobility in terms of networking and place development remains to be appropriately addressed

politically. Political discourses concerning second homes are few and are, by and large, placed in an economic meaning context. The perspective of governmobility adds, in our view, an essential dimension: the making of society in the space of flows. In this sense, we need to move away from seeing second home owners as outsiders (division) to recognising their place in society and the municipality (connectivity).

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