

**Olga Hannonen and Kati Pitkänen**

### **Second home mobility in Finland during the pandemic period**

The paper presents an overview of the effect of the world pandemic on second home tourism in Finland. Second home tourism is the most popular domestic form of tourism in Finland. During the pandemic the role of second homes has quickly changed from places for recreational to sanctuary sites. The mass exodus to second homes in spring 2020 contradicted the official line of the Finnish Government. In the official government discourse, second homes were seen as non-essential mobility that should be restricted until the pandemic outbreak would ease. The Finnish Prime Minister in the Government press conference on 25th March emphasised that it was not the right time to travel to the *mökki* (fin. second home) (Yle, 2020). Just before she had announced heavy travel restrictions between the capital region of Uusimaa and the rest of the country (Finnish Government, 2020). One of the main reasons for the restrictions was to prevent people's leisure mobility from the capital region with the highest number of infected persons to other areas with less health care capacity and fewer infections.

Also contesting views were presented. Scholars of constitution and human rights law publicly argued that the closure of Uusimaa was against human rights as it prevented the citizens from seeking protection against the virus by escaping to their second homes. Also, many second home owners felt that moving to the second home would enable them to better avoid human contacts while simultaneously support active lifestyle that would not be possible in the densely populated urban areas.

In this paper we raised questions concerning the effect of the pandemic on the increase/decrease of second home tourism. How will the global economic uncertainty impact on people's possibilities to invest in their own safe haven? How much pressure of the temporary populations on services and infrastructure can local communities sustain? Alongside the Finnish case we also present examples from other countries.

According to the Statistics Finland (2020) Finns stayed almost 50% more nights at their own or rental cottages in the summer 2020 than a year before. Many have stayed at their second homes or rented a cottage to move the home office into the countryside as the summer has changed into autumn and Finland has been hit with the second wave of the pandemic. The popularity of second homes in Finland combined with remote work advice and/or requirement has developed a new type of domestic tourism - *etätyömatkailu* or remote work travel, in which private and rental cottages in rural areas have becoming popular for longer getaways (Rantala, 2020).

The Finnish case demonstrated an increase of second home use and rise of second home tourism during the pandemic. We observe a transformation of the second home space, and upsurge of new recreational practices during the time of relaxations.

## References:

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