



# Dacha dwellers and gardeners: garden plots and second homes in Europe and Russia

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## Abstract

One of the ways to solve the problems associated with rapid growth of urban population and the development of industry in Western Europe in the 19th century was the creation of collective gardens and vegetable plots, which could be used to grow food for personal consumption. The peak of their popularity was during the First and Second World Wars. In the second half of the 20th century, as food shortages decrease, the number of garden plots in Western Europe sharply decreased. The revival of interest in gardening at the end of the 20 century is connected with the development of nature protection movement and ecological culture. In Eastern Europe, most of the collective gardens and vegetable plots appeared after the Second World War in a planned economy, they were most popular during the periods of economic recession. In some countries – Russia, Poland – gardeners have now become one of the largest land users. The article deals with the history and main factors that influenced the development of collective gardening and vegetable gardening in Europe and analyzes the laws presently regulating the activity of gardeners. The change of functions of garden plots in European countries in the 19–21 centuries is shown. The article presents comparative statistics on the number of second homes in Northern and Southern Europe. On the example of these two regions, the peculiarities of distribution of second homes are revealed and the main areas of their location are shown.

## Keywords

horticulture, dacha, second housing, garden plots, second homes, food crisis

**JEL codes:** P25, P28, N50, N90

## Introduction

In contemporary economic and geographical studies, a dacha is considered as a specific Russian cultural and spatial phenomenon surrounding almost all major cities and influen-

cing communications between the suburbs and the center. In Russian science dachas are analyzed in the context of seasonal pulsation of the population (AG Makhrova), spatial mobility of the population (TG Nefedova, AI Treyvish), patterns of land use (AE Osetrov, VA Uglov), and so on, however, there are almost no published works considering dachas in the pan-European context. At the same time, according to the team of authors from the Institute of Geography of RAS, there are about 200 million dacha owners in the world, and the total flows of dacha-men may exceed the international tourist flow (Nefedova et al. 2016: 283).

The study of summer and garden allotments is a complex problem that has economic, ecological, geographical, and socio-demographic aspects. Economic aspects are related to the use of land for production; demographic ones concern the reproduction of the population, which depends on its qualitative characteristics, directly related to health and recreation; and geographical aspects determine the location of second homes and their functions. At the post-industrial stage of development of society, the relevance of the study of dachas and horticulture in the world has increased as higher labour productivity implies equivalent performance of different functions with different alternative costs and different social effects. For Russia, this is of particular importance, as such multifunctionality is implemented in relatively new conditions of a free land market, after many decades of its “planned” use. From this point of view, the study of the experience of foreign countries with different history of economic development increases.

Dachas and second homes already existed in the Roman Empire, when Roman patriicians built summer villas along the banks of rivers and often went away from the bustle of the capital to monitor the work at their farms, and already in the Middle Ages so did landlords in Europe (Nefedova et al. 2016: 284). In the agrarian society, the second home was a luxury accessible only to a few of its richest members, and existing cities were not so polluted and overpopulated that there was a need to leave them for a period of time. The situation changed with the transition to machine production: increased agricultural productivity and high population growth sharply speeded up urbanization – cities began to grow at the expense of vibrant industry in them, which ultimately predetermined transition from an agrarian society to an industrial society. These dramatic social changes have created a number of problems, one of which was food shortages, compounded by rapid population growth and landlessness of peasants. One way to solve the food problem was to allocate small plots of land on which new citizens could grow food for their own consumption.

In global scientific literature there is no single term that unites all the numerous types of such plots, in English-language articles they are often referred to as allotment plots, and associations of plots — as allotment gardens. A common translation of these terms in Russian literature also does not exist, therefore, in our opinion, the term “collective gardening and vegetable gardening” is appropriate. There is also no common definition of the term “dacha” in the Russian language, neither in academic literature nor in the legal field. Until recently there were nine different forms of organizational-legal associations of summer residents in Russia. However, since January 1, 2019 there are only two of them: gardening association (*sadovodcheskoye tovarishstvo* — land plot on which capital construction of houses is permitted) and small holding association (*ogorodnoye tovarishstvo* — land plot on which only temporary farm buildings are permitted) (Federal Law... 2017). This legal definition is similar to the experience of European countries, most of which have now developed into collective horticulture, in fact, representing gardening associations — garden plots without

the possibility of capital construction. A large part of the housing stock in Russia consists of second homes of urban residents in the countryside, resorts, suburban cottage villages, i.e. they are typical dachas. However, due to the lack of data on the totality of second homes, the emphasis in this article is placed on garden associations and small plot associations as the most mass types for which there are official statistics.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the history of the emergence of garden and cottage plots and changes in their functions depending on socio-economic conditions in the countries of Western and Eastern Europe. The objectives of the study include: analysis of changes in the function of garden plots in the process of social and economic development in the countries of Europe; periodization and identification of leading factors, explanation of regional differences between the countries of Eastern Europe and Western Europe. The work is based on the analysis of academic literature, statistical data and cartographic material.

England, Germany and France are chosen as principal examples for studying the history of collective gardening in Europe, as they have primarily experienced economic and social changes, which were then extended to the rest of Western Europe, and there are statistics for the development of dynamic series. Russia and Poland are good examples in Eastern Europe as they embody characteristics of garden farming in the socialist countries after the Second World War.

## Gardeners and vegetable growers

### *The origin of citizens' gardening*

The first collective garden plots in England appeared at the end of the 18th century. In 1795, Sir Thomas Escort, an Englishman, leased a piece of his land divided into small plots to his workers so that they could feed themselves (Crouch and Ward 1988). Until the middle of the second half of the 19th century collective gardens were created, as a rule, in rural areas as a measure of support of former peasants, but with the development of industry began to arise also in cities. Collective gardens existed in cities before, but were used mainly for recreation of craftsmen and for growing flowers rather than food (*leisure gardens*). In the second half of the 19th century, the number of garden plots in England increased almost 5 times (from 100,000 in 1840 to 483,000 in 1895) (Nilsen 2014: 41), which was associated with mass migration to cities due to economic decline in agriculture. In the process of expanding electoral rights, gardens have become a political tool: parties could sponsor the purchase or lease of land for enterprises in order to earn workers' votes.

In Germany, the first collective gardens appeared in the early 19th century in the land of Schleswig-Holstein and were used as a place where the urban poor could grow food for their own needs. By 1826 there were 314 plots in such gardens with an average size of 525 square meters. In 1830 in the capital of the land, the city of Kiele, plots (300-400 square meters) were leased to workers for a small fee, and this initiative was gradually supported by the rest of the German cities (Stein 1998).

In Germany, there are many different types of garden areas that can be combined into two large groups:

*Kleingarten* – plots that are mainly used for cultivation;

*Schrebergarten* — sites used mainly for recreation, sports, educational purposes.

In France, collective gardening began to develop later than in England and Germany, although in the first half of the 19th century the opportunity to cultivate their own vegetable garden after a working day at the factory was seen by workers as a great value. The impetus for the development of gardening was an exhibition in Paris in 1867, where special prizes were awarded to projects connecting factories and agricultural production. At the time of the Third Republic (1870 — 1940), the task of creating collective horticulture was one of the main in the social program of the Catholic party.

The central role in the development of horticulture in France belonged to the priest and political figure *Julius Lemire*. On his initiative in 1896, France established the *French League of the plot of land and health*, and in October 1903 the First International Congress of Horticulturists was held, which brought together over 800 participants and presented 134 collective gardening projects, and subsequently, in 1927, the International Union of Horticulturists was formed in Luxembourg (Nilsen 2014: 124).

In many European countries, the first collective horticulture appeared at the turn of the 19 and 20 centuries.:

- in Austria — in 1904 in the suburbs of Vienna;
- in Switzerland — in 1907 in Zurich;
- in Norway — in 1908 in Oslo.

In Poland, the first collective garden association (*Kapiele Słoneczne*) appeared in 1897 in the city of Grudziądz [Bellows 2004: 255]. In the first half of the 20th century collective gardens played a significant role in the industrialization of the country – many industrial enterprises attracted former peasants with the opportunity to obtain a small plot of land for personal use.

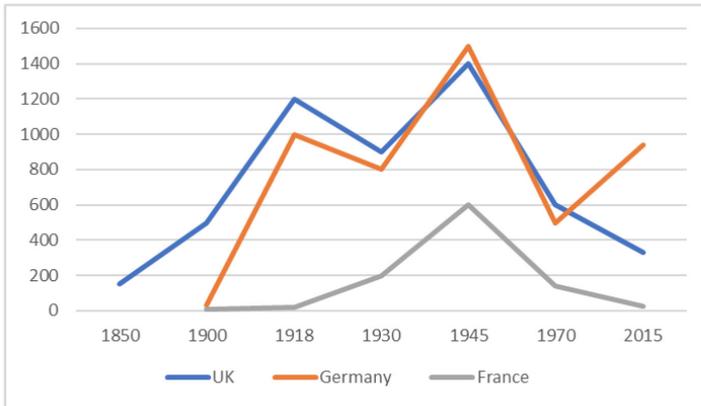
### *The role of garden plots of urban residents in the 20th century*

Garden allotments played a significant role in providing food in European countries in the first half of the 20th century. During this period, a legislative framework was elaborated for the allocation of free land in cities and their environs for the cultivation of food and the first gardeners' unions were established to protect the rights of allotment holders.

In England, the largest unions were the *National Union of Allotment Holders* (1918), which brought together urban gardeners, and the *Allotment Organization Society* (1924), representing the interests of rural gardeners. When united in 1930, these organizations formed the *National Allotment Society*, which regulates the provision of garden plots to the British citizens until now.

In 1912 in Danzig, Germany (now Gdansk, Poland) the First German National Congress of Horticulturists was held, and in 1916 Parliament adopted two decrees regulating the allocation of land for the needs of horticulture and rent on them. In 1919, the National Allotment Society (*KGO*) was formed and in 1933 it came under complete control of the National Socialist Party, which established very strict rules for the use of gardens, which remained in force up until the end of the Second World War.

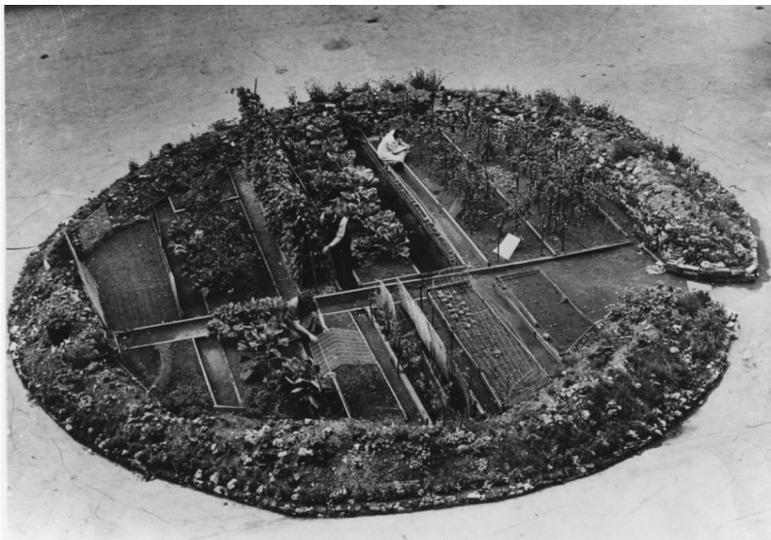
In France, the National Federation of Gardening Workers was founded in 1921. In addition to economic reasons, the significant increase in the number of garden plots was resulting from the reduction of working hours. In 1923 France became the first country to move from an 11-hour to an 8-hour working day. Many companies began to buy small plots of land and allow their workers to cultivate them and grow vegetables to protect them from drunkenness and political movements. In the decade since the end of the First World War, the



**Figure 1.** Trends in the number of collective gardens in Western Europe (thousands). Source: compiled by the author according to the book [Nilsen, 2014].

number of garden plots in France has grown almost tenfold (Fig. 1); most of them belonged to mining (88,000) and railway companies (60,000).

As shown in Figure 1, the maximum number of garden plots in Europe was during wartime, especially during the Second World War, when almost all the free plots of land were utilized for vegetable gardening. The wartime gardens were called *victory gardens*; they were small plots set up directly in urban public gardens or lawns. In Russia, such gardens played a special role during the blockade of Leningrad, when citizens in 1942 grew cabbage even on the square at St. Isaac’s Cathedral. A well-known photograph taken in the military London, where a garden is set up right in a crater left by a German bomb (Fig. 2).



**Figure 2.** A collective garden in military London. Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victory\\_garden#/media/File:Victory\\_Gardens.\\_Where\\_the\\_Nazi%27s\\_sowed\\_death,\\_a\\_Londoner\\_and\\_his\\_wife\\_have\\_sown\\_life-giving\\_vegetables\\_in\\_a\\_London...\\_-\\_NARA\\_-\\_196480.tif](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victory_garden#/media/File:Victory_Gardens._Where_the_Nazi%27s_sowed_death,_a_Londoner_and_his_wife_have_sown_life-giving_vegetables_in_a_London..._-_NARA_-_196480.tif).

In addition to practical, such gardens had a great symbolic value: gardeners, usually women, wives of soldiers, could thus contribute to the common cause of victory, for this purpose a special nationwide action *Dig for victory* was organized (*Twigs way*) (Twigs way... 2015).

After the Second World War, Western Europe experienced a sharp decline in interest in garden plots. Its main reasons were:

- increased demand for land for housing and industrial construction in war-worn cities;
- stable economic growth, reduction of unemployment, growth of labour productivity in agriculture, free access to cheap products in shops of walking distance, without the need to grow food on their own;
- negative image of garden sites associated with war hunger and poverty;
- new housing construction with a small individual plot next to the house;
- availability of many types of recreation (tourism, sports, vacation trips).

At the same time, in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, collective gardening, on the contrary, quickly gained popularity after the war, reaching its maximum by the end of the 1980s.

### *Collective gardening in Eastern Europe*

The main country for studying garden plots in the countries of the socialist bloc is the USSR. The Second World War exacerbated the food problem in the country and provoked the development of mass gardening. In 1949 the resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR “On collective and individual gardening of workers and employees” was issued. According to the Act, plots of 600 to 1,200 square meters were issued to workers for life-long use, subject to continuous work in the enterprise for 5 years after receiving the plot (Resolution... 1949). The rules for the use of the plots were strictly regulated by the authorities: any constructions except small barns for inventory storage were banned. However, after transition to the five-day working week in the late 1960s and the possibility to spend two days on weekends in the countryside, residential buildings gradually appeared on the plots, although they were usually much more modest than traditional dachas. At this time, the traditional image of garden plots was formed: “six hundred square meters”, a part of which is occupied by the house, and the other by berry bushes, garden trees, a vegetable garden and greenhouses. The presence of a house and quite developed infrastructure makes the main difference of garden plots of the Soviet (Russian) type from Western European analogues; in many countries the construction of capital buildings at garden plots is forbidden; however, most often it is not necessary, as the plots are within walking distance from the house.

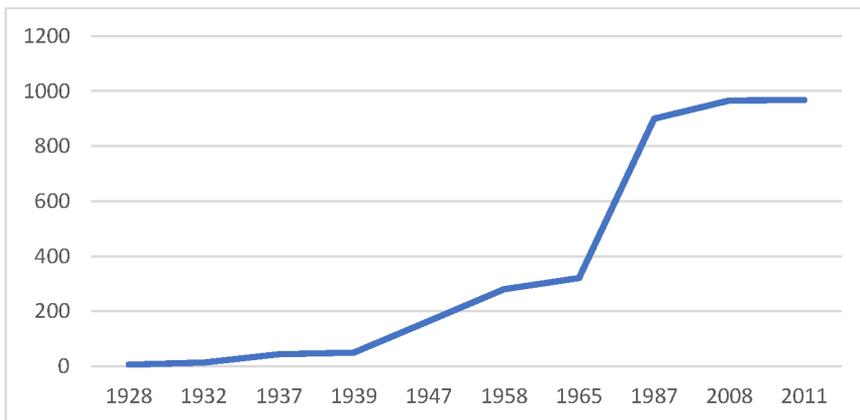
This form of gardening has become very popular among Soviet inhabitants: in 1950 about 40,000 families consisted in gardening associations, by 1970 their number increased to 3 million, and by 1990 — to 8.5 million (Nefedova 2012: 207). That massive ownership of garden plots framed the typical two-homes pattern of contemporary Russia, in which a person often owns an apartment in a city and a garden plot outside the city, where he/she lives in the warm season. Russia is estimated the world leader in the number of garden plots and in the number of people involved in gardening, which, according to various data, is up to 50 million people.

There is no single reliable statistics on the number of garden plots in the socialist countries, but the available data show that they reached the maximum amount by the mid-1980s. It was caused, first of all, by the general stagnation of the planned economy, food deficit, and, as a consequence, the need for self-sufficiency in food.

For example, by the time of unification in 1989 of the German Democratic Republic with Western Germany there were about 3.5 million garden plots for 16 million inhabitants, i.e. almost every second inhabitant of the country had access to them. After the reunification of Germany, demand for garden plots declined, and their number is now around 1 million (Lorbek and Martinsen 2015: 104) (see Figure 1).

In Slovakia, by the end of the 1980s, there were about 220 thousand gardeners and vegetable growers, and the total area of plots was about 5.5 thousand hectares. The number of people involved in horticulture has now been reduced to approximately 100,000. (Duží et al. 2014: 93).

One of the Eastern European countries with good horticulture statistics is Poland. The history of post-war horticulture in Poland is similar to the Russian: in accordance with the law of 1949, the land was nationalized by the State, and the right of workers to receive and use plots in collective horticulture was legislated. The vast majority of the collective gardens currently operating in Poland were organized during the socialist planned economy, but their total number continued to grow even after the collapse of socialism (Fig. 3). Allocation of land for collective gardens was one of the political demands of the opposition trade union “Solidarity”, which defended the rights of workers in the 1980s. During these years the number of Polish collective gardens increased by 30% (Bellows 2004: 252).



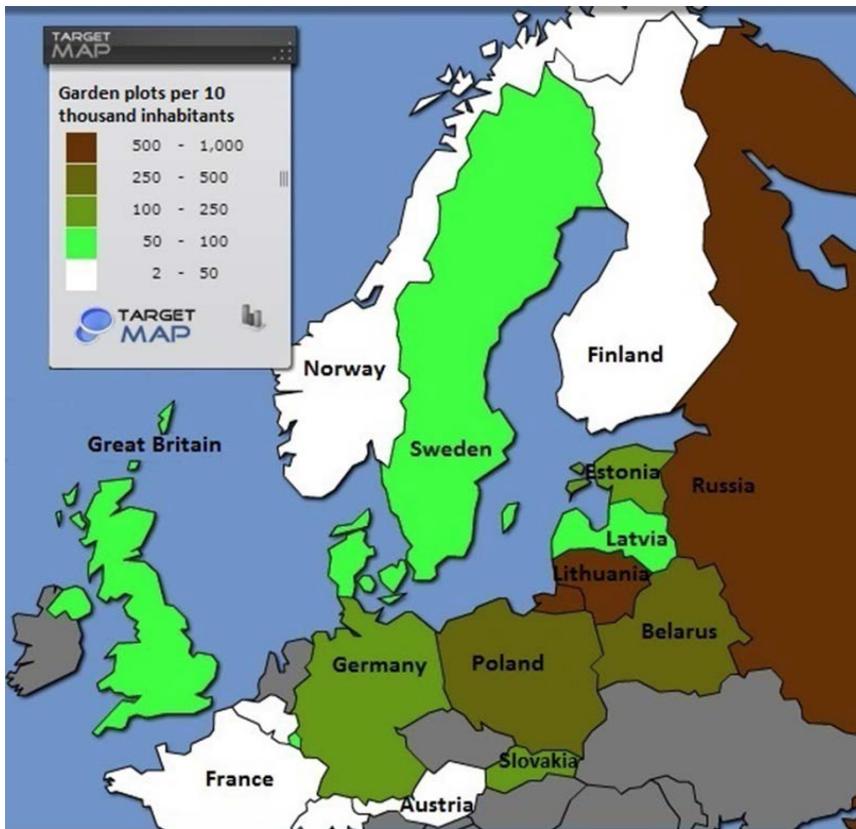
**Figure 3.** Dynamics of the number of garden plots in Poland, thousand units. Source: compiled by the author according to the statistical study of the Polish Union of Gardeners (Kim są polscy działkowcy? 2011; Bellows 2004: 247–274).

At present, the basic provisions concerning gardening in Poland are enshrined in Law No. 486 of 1995. According to this law, the land under gardens is owned by municipalities, the plots are issued for long-term rent free of charge. The mediator between municipalities is the Polish Union of Gardeners (*Polski Związek Działkowców*), which is the largest non-profit organization (NPO), and gardeners are the most numerous land users in Poland. The land is in State ownership, and the Polish Union of Gardeners manages it.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the “Eastern bloc” in the former socialist countries, land was denationalized, causing a reduction in garden areas, as some of them were returned to former owners, part of the garden plots lost their function

during renovation of the urban environment. Their role and modern functions depend on local legislation, which varies in Eastern European countries. In countries where capital construction is not prohibited by law, gardens are gradually becoming a place for seasonal or even permanent residence. The most striking example is Russia, where the two-homes pattern has gradually formed among urban residents: part of citizens spend a cold season in an apartment in the city, and the warm season in a residence on a plot outside the city.

The leader in the number of garden plots per 10 thousand people among European countries is Russia, where the garden plot is owned by almost every tenth inhabitant (Fig. 4). Lithuania is slightly behind (768), followed by the former Soviet republics — Belarus (391) and Estonia (197); the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe — Poland (289), the Czech Republic (161) and Slovakia (151). Among the major countries of Western Europe are Germany (120), mainly due to the territories of the former GDR, and the United Kingdom (52). Among the less populated countries are Luxembourg (84), Denmark (71), Sweden (51). In the remaining countries where statistics are available, the number of garden plots per 10,000 people does not exceed 50.



**Figure 4.** Number of garden plots per 10,000 people in Europe. Source: compiled by the author according to the data of the International Union of Horticulturists (Regroupement des fédérations européennes des jardins familiaux association sans but lucrative 2016).

A significant number of garden plots in the countries of the former Soviet Union can be explained by institutional features, under which large plots of land were purposefully allocated for collective and individual gardening in the second half of the 20th century. Due to progress in the legislation, gardeners have got a right to build capital houses on their plots, and after the collapse of the socialist system — to privatize them. As a result, garden plots gradually turned from gardens to second homes and remain one of the most popular types of suburban real estate in Russia, Lithuania, Belarus and Estonia.

In the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia) the situation is different: after the fall of the communist regime, the land remained State property, and the gardens were only partially privatized; therefore, their number reduced considerably. Currently, two main types of garden plots exist in these countries: municipal, located directly in the cities and owned by the State, which are essentially vegetable gardens, without the possibility of capital house construction, and suburban plots with houses owned privately, similar to plots in Russian garden associations (Fig. 5).



**Figure 5.** Garden association in Poland, January 2019, author's photo

In Western and Northern European countries, garden plots are located directly within the city, usually within walking distance of the main dwellings and are owned by the municipal authorities, which set out rules for their use. The main feature is the prohibition of capital construction, i.e. in comparison with Russian legislation, they are small holding pots. Meanwhile, in the 21st century the environmental factor becomes the most stimulating among holders of such plots.

### *Ecological role of horticulture*

In the second half of the 20th century, with the rising standards of life in Western Europe, garden plots lost their importance in providing citizens with food. It inspired rethinking of their role in urban life (Table 1). In 1969, the *Thorpe Report*, the most comprehensive report on the history of gardening, was released in the UK, proposing a new term — *Leisure garden*. Thus, Thorpe suggested that emphasis should be placed on the ecological role of gardens as a place to spend time in harmony with nature (Thorpe 1975: 178).

**Table 1.** Changing the function of garden plots in Eastern and Western Europe, 19th – 21st centuries

Period	Main functions	Western Europe	Eastern Europe
The middle of the 19 — early 20 century	Agricultural production	Emergence and development against the backdrop of urbanization and industrialization. Main users – workers	Appearance of the first collective horticulture only at the end of the 19th century due to later urbanization and industrialization
Early— middle 20 century	Agricultural / political	Development and legalization against the background of world wars and economic crises	Massive development and legalization against the background of world wars and economic crises
Middle 20 century — late 1980s	Agricultural / social	Reduction against the background of improved quality of life	Nationalization of land, significant growth, especially among urban dwellers
Early 1990s — Present	Environmental / social / residential	Revival of interest against the background of development of ecological thinking and ideas of sustainable development	Land denationalization, mass reduction, change of functions (depending on the legislation of individual countries)

Source: compiled by the author.

In the 1970s, gardens were used both for economic and ecological reasons. On the one hand, the financial crisis of the early 1970s caused an increase in inflation and led to the rise in unemployment and a decrease in incomes, which led to the revival of demand for gardens as places where food can be grown. On the other hand, development of technologies after the war and modernization of society provoked the alienation of man from nature and the risk of overexploitation of natural resources. Ecological thinking was triggered off by D. Meadows' report "The Limits to Growth" at a meeting of the Roman Club in 1972, in which it was shown to what catastrophic consequences uncontrolled environmental pollution and the use of exhaustible natural resources may lead. Since then the environmental agenda has become one of the central points of the European political parties. Ecological thinking and ideas of environmental protection actively developed in the 1980s. After the Brundtland Report "Our Common Future" in 1987, and the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992, they were realized in the concept of sustainable development. Garden plots regained popularity as a place where environmentally friendly products not contaminated with chemicals can be grown.

In the 21st century, garden plots are among the main providers of ecosystem services in cities, which include air filtration, microclimate regulation, noise reduction, rainwater drainage, as well as provision of recreational and cultural values (Lorbek and Martinsen 2015: 101).

Gardening in Europe is now more for environmental than for economic reasons. Since the mid-1990s, *community gardens*, located near residential areas, on which local inhabitants can grow vegetables for local consumption, have been actively developing in both Western and Eastern Europe. The main purpose of their creation is to restore local communities, and among gardeners the young middle class prevail (Benda 2016: 93). In the 21st century in Denmark school gardens, where schoolchildren engaged in horticulture in order to teach food literacy, gained popularity. In 2009 in the UK, a report was released on the forecast of consumption up to 2050, which noted the special role of garden plots in food creation.

## Summer residents

### *Second homes in Russia and Europe*

According to the most general definition, a summer house owner (*dacha-man*) is an owner of an urban and a holder of suburban, temporarily visited real estate (house, plot), which is used not only for residence and income (Nefedova et al. 2016: 283).

The term “*dacha*” has Russian roots and describes the phenomenon that originated in the early 18th century, during the reign of Peter the Great, when land plots in the suburbs of St. Petersburg were issued as incentives to the Emperor’s courtiers. The impetus to the development of *dachas* was the construction of the first railways in the second half of the 19th century. In the conditions of changing economic conditions, *dachas* gradually began to replace the manors of noblemen. *Dachas* were most numerous in the vicinity of the largest Russian cities — Moscow and St. Petersburg (Nefedova and Treyvish 2015).

After the 1917 revolution, the *dacha* villages were included in the official structure of settlements and became an object of regulation, land plots size limitation, taxation, etc. In the 1930s norms of planning and development of the territories for *dacha* construction were approved, which made the construction of *dachas* a part of the State housing policy [Temporary... 1945]. Holding the country house was a privilege that the Soviet state granted to certain categories of citizens, while ordinary urban residents could rent residential premises for the inhabitants of the surrounding villages.

As noted in the introduction, the *dachas* already existed in Europe in the Roman Empire, and in the 18th century there was a large number of second homes of urban residents located in resort areas on the coasts, where their owners lived during the summer (Muller 2004: 8). The most important factor that influenced the increase of number of second homes in Europe, as in Russia, was the development of transport. For example, in the vicinity of Stockholm and Oslo, second homes were built on the islands along the steamship route (Ljungdal 1938). The rise in living standards after the Second World War and the increased availability of private vehicles stimulated a sharp increase in the number of second homes in the 1960s.

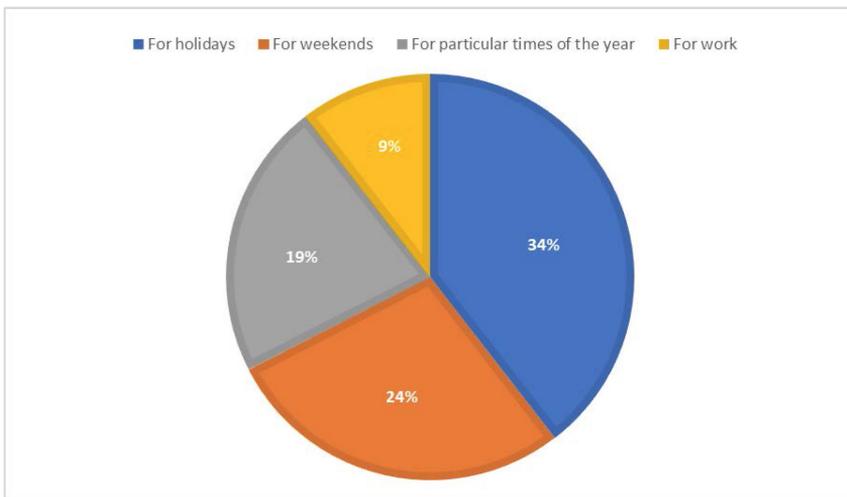
There is no common definition of a second home in academic literature. In English-language articles the most common terms are: *cottage*, *holiday home*, *leisure home*, *recreational home*, *summer home*, *summer house*, *vacation home*, *weekend home*, *cabin*. A common feature of these terms is that the main use of the second home is focused on leisure and

recreation. In some countries, caravans, mobile homes and floating houses are also classified as second homes (Hall 2014), although most studies focus on non-mobile second homes. Differences in approaches to the definition of second homes in different countries complicates the comparative analysis at the international level. Nevertheless, the analysis of official statistics, literature, and data of real estate agencies can reveal their peculiarities in the European context.

According to A.I. Treyvish there are three main types of summer villages (Treyvish 2014):

- suburban — places of accumulation of second homes around cities;
- rural-peripheral — houses left by former owners in rural areas to heirs and buyers living in cities;
- resort — second homes in resorts on coasts and mountains.

According to a study by the *Re/Max* international real estate agency, conducted in 2015 in 16 European countries, 15.6% of Europeans own second homes. Almost one in ten of them (9.2%) is the owner of a second home abroad. The vast majority of second homes are used for recreational purposes (Fig. 6). Almost one third of second homes (34%) are used for holidays, 24% for weekend trips, 19% for visits at certain times of the year and 9% for working purposes.



**Figure 6.** Preferred mode of second home use in Europe. Source: compiled by the author according to the research of the *Re/Max* real estate agency *Second homes in Europe (Re/Max)*. Access Mode: <http://www.at-home-in-europe.eu/home-life/europe/most-people-have-their-secondary-residence-in-their-home-country>.

Table 2 shows two main regions in Europe in terms of the number of second homes per 10,000 persons:

1. Northern Europe (Finland, Sweden, Norway, to a lesser extent Denmark and Iceland);
2. Southern Europe (Portugal, Greece, Spain, Italy).

The analysis of literature enables distinguishing the main features of “dacha tourism” in these two groups of countries.

The following features are characteristic of *Northern Europe*:

- The second homes are not only a spatial, but also a cultural phenomenon, which allows to reproduce the traditional way of life and contribute to the development of rural and peripheral areas.

**Table 2.** Number of second homes and garden plots per 10,000 persons in European countries

	<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of garden plots per 10,000 persons</b>	<b>Year of data collection</b>	<b>Number of second homes per 10,000 persons</b>	<b>Year of data collection</b>	<b>Proportion of population with second homes*, %</b>
1	Russia	959	2016	-	-	-
2	Lithuania	768	2013	-	-	-
3	Belarus	391	2014	-	-	-
4	Poland	289	2011	170	2013	25.1
5	Czech Republic	161	2014	380	2001	19.2
6	Slovakia	151	2014	-	-	23
7	Finland	11	2016	910	2013	12.1
8	Norway	3	2016	870	2010	-
9	Sweden	51	2016	750	2005	11.8
10	Denmark	71	2016	390	2012	-
11	Iceland	-	-	330	2011	-
12	Portugal	-	-	900	2001	17
13	Greece	-	-	840	2001	32.8
14	Spain	-	-	790	2011	20.4
15	Italy	-	-	568	1991	15.2
16	Switzerland	27	2016	650	2010	6.8
17	France	2	2016	500	2008	8.2
18	Belgium	4	2016	-	-	-
19	Luxembourg	84	2016	-	-	-
20	The United Kingdom	52	2016	-	-	7**
21	Austria	44	2016	-	-	15.4
22	Germany	120	-	-	-	5.4
23	The Netherlands	16	2016	230	2000	5.6
24	Estonia	197	-	-	-	-
25	Latvia	62	-	-	-	-
26	Croatia	-	-	410	2001	-
27	Turkey	-	-	-	-	24.8

\* According to the *Re/Max* international real estate agency.

\*\* England only.

Source: compiled by the author according to the reports of the International Union of Horticulturists, the Finnish Environment Institute, the *Re/Max* international real estate agency.

- Most of the second homes are located close to metropolitan regions, which corresponds to the suburban type of dacha villages. In Sweden, it is the Stockholm archipelago (Muller 2004). In Norway, about half of the second homes are located within a radius of 200 km from Oslo; they are located mainly in small settlements resembling cottage villages (Overvag 2009). Modern construction standards allow for the construction of second homes suitable for year-round living, so some of them become a place of permanent residence.
- The concentration of second homes is increasing in tourist areas (mainly coasts and mountains; investment in second homes is an attractive investment. The number of foreign owners of second homes is increasing. The skiing mountain areas of Sweden and Norway attract buyers from Western Europe and the lake regions of Finland — customers from Russia. This indicates the development of the resort type of dacha areas.

Dacha tourism in the countries of *Southern Europe* has similar features:

- The largest number of second homes are located close to large agglomerations; regular weekend trips are taken there by urban owners (suburban type). In Portugal, it is the Oeste region west of Lisbon (Oliveira et al. 2015: 186). In Spain, according to the annual report on domestic tourism, 40% of second homes are located in the zone of large agglomerations (Familiar 2001).
- The inland rural depopulation areas of Southern Europe are characterized by the development of the rural-peripheral type: people whose families have been forced to migrate in search of work from these districts, acquire or rebuild their former first homes and seek to spend holidays in their native areas. This is especially true in Italy (Peri 2013: 53) and Portugal.
- Sea resorts attract not only local residents, but also foreign buyers who buy second homes there in order to spend part of the year in a favourable climate.

The lower popularity of second homes in large countries of Western Europe (the United Kingdom, Germany, France) can be partly explained by the fact that residents of these countries often prefer to buy real estate abroad. According to the report of the UN Economic Commission (Second homes abroad 2011), Spain and France are the most popular countries for buying foreign real estate. In 2009, 8.6% of tourists who visited Spain stayed in their own home, a third of them were British.

In Russia, it is difficult to distinguish houses in garden associations from suburban second homes, because in the suburbs of large cities garden associations lose agricultural functions, and new or modernized houses in them are suitable for year-round living. Therefore T.G. Nefedova classifies four main types of second homes (2012):

- houses in garden associations — the most mass type discussed above;
- classic two-storey cottages, typical primarily for the metropolitan suburbs. Many dacha communities have broken up, so the exact number of such dachas is unknown, as their land does not belong to the category of agricultural land for which the census is carried out;
- rural houses inherited or bought by townspeople in a village or a small town are extremely difficult to count, as they are also excluded from the agricultural census;
- mansions, villas or cottages are the newest type typical of the post-Soviet period. In the vicinity of Moscow alone there are over 2,000 cottage villages, but the exact statistics in the context of Russia also do not exist.

Thus, despite the abundance of “white spots”, statistics show that Russia occupies the leading position in the number of summer residents in Europe. For Russia and the countries of the former Soviet Union, the most typical model is in which citizens own two dwellings — an apartment in the city and a cottage outside the city, inhabited mainly seasonally. The country plot can be used as a place for passive rest, and as a garden where vegetables and fruits can be grown for personal consumption or for sale. Another model is characteristic of Western Europe, in which a person can often own a second house away from the main residence and rent a small piece of land directly in the city within walking distance of his apartment and grow food for personal consumption there. The former socialist countries of Eastern Europe combine features characteristic of both Russia and Western Europe.

## Conclusion

The history of collective gardening in Europe is closely linked to the history of cities and the development of urbanization. Mass demand for garden areas manifested in the second half of the 19th century, when with rapidly developing industry many new citizens appeared who needed self-provision of food; the subsidiary and agrarian role of garden plots was leading at this stage. By the beginning of the 20th century, with the growth of the number of industrial enterprises and, consequently, growth of the number of workers and their active struggle for electoral rights, the role of collective gardeners as associations of workers increased. In the first half of the 20th century, their legalization took place — in many countries trade unions of gardeners emerged, and in 1927 the International Union of Gardeners was founded. Thus, during this period, the subsidiary agricultural role of garden plots, which manifested itself to the maximum extent during the First and Second World Wars, was supplemented with their political role and many political parties used garden areas as a way of attracting voters.

In the second half of the twentieth century, as food shortages decrease, the popularity of garden plots in Western Europe fell sharply, for some time they were associated with the deprivation of war years and their number declined significantly. However, by the end of the 1970s, they began to regain popularity, but at that time they were perceived not only as a place where food can simply be grown, but do so without using harmful chemicals, which attracts modern gardeners.

In the socialist economies of Eastern Europe, in contrast, the post-war period saw a peak in the number of garden plots designed to fill the food deficit. In addition, they performed an important social function, giving their owners a sense of ownership of private property that had been limited in the planned economy.

In the countries of the former USSR, gardens were privatized after its collapse, which, along with the more pronounced seasonality of climate and urban planning patterns, was the cause for collective gardening establishments gradually acquiring the necessary infrastructure and becoming, in fact, a second home for urban residents, used mainly in the warm season. Differences in the features of post-war socio-economic development determine the difference in the number of garden plots, which is much higher in Eastern Europe compared to Western Europe. Generally, the subsidiary agricultural role of garden plots increases in times of economic and military crises, while in more favourable periods, they become a

place to eliminate the urban life stress and spend time in harmony with nature (the potential for food supply can also be of value).

The second homes surround almost all major cities and have considerable potential, on the one hand, for the development of resort areas, especially on coasts and mountains, and on the other hand, for anchoring population in the depopulating rural areas. The development of high-speed rail transport and, first of all, reduction of the cost of air travel due to the emergence of low-cost companies, allows to make an assumption that in the 21st century there may be an increase in the number of dacha-men making regular recreational trips not just outside the city, but outside their country of residence.

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