

Trees and shrubs provide many benefits to the inhabitants, both in the countryside and in the city. These include the following: landscape design, identity building and unique characterization of a place, air purification from gases and dusts, creation urban microclimate, water management, fostering an active lifestyle, reducing stress, stimulating social interaction, creating spatial order, creating privacy and comfort. These benefits are often treated as taken for granted and costless. However, the number of trees in many localities in Poland is decreasing, which aggravates the inhabitants' ability to use nature. An important element in the management of green areas is the cutting down, replacement and planting of trees and shrubs. The cutting down of trees is governed by the law specifying the procedures and conditions necessary for obtaining permits. Each municipality annually issues permits (in thousands) for the removal of trees or shrubs from the property, upon the request of inhabitants. Trees are an example of public and environmental good, requiring the creation of standards in order to protect them. In 2017 changes in legislation have taken place, which resulted in a sharp increase in the cut. The exact scale and impact of this on benefits provided by trees and shrubs is unknown, and the purpose of our study is to investigate the consequences of the changes that have occurred.

The subject of the research in this project is how the changes in the regulations governing the cutting down affect the decisions of the inhabitants; what effect does cutting down trees by inhabitants bring from the point of view of the benefits provided by the trees and shrubs; what are the social preferences for constraints imposed on inhabitants' decisions, in terms of trees on private (non-commercially) land. In addition, we check whether the use of the method of group debate can affect social preferences. According to the opinion poll, half of the Poles support restrictions on the right of private inhabitants to cut down trees, while the other half supports a liberal view, with no restrictions. This is a contentious issue, and this project explores issues that are being discussed scientifically and which are important for social life.