

Applying the concept of foresight method for building tourism destination management scenarios

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Abstract. The article presents a methodological concept for the creation of tourism management foresight scenarios for selected areas of intervention and driving forces as well as the obligatory components influencing the directions of its evolution. Recommendations were made on methods and research techniques for preparing such a scenario. The proposed concept of creating foresight of positive and negative future events or situations will enable stakeholders and decision-makers to evaluate what effect the foreseen transformation should have on the management of a destination, which will result in new organizational, financial and legal tools within the framework of the tourism policy of the country or region. The scenarios identify the network of agents of change and the expected benefits and facilitate a continuous diagnostic of the state of the tourism function in the destination and further evolution from the perspectives of diverse stakeholder types.

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1. Introduction

The interdisciplinary nature of tourism, particularly in the context of the ongoing impact of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, is facing novel and dynamic challenges that must be addressed for the sector to remain resilient and agile (Zhao & Ling, 2023). It is crucial to consider not only the assessment of its current state in terms of benefits and costs, but also from the perspective of management and long-term evolution. Up until this point, the advancement of tourism has been evaluated based on various key indicators, including annual growth in visitor numbers, capacity of accommodation facilities, level of tourist spending, and economic indicators within the hotel industry. It is uncommon to derive conclusions from indicators of a destination's tourism function and tourism load (e.g., the Defert, Charvat or Schneider indices) (Chau & Yan, 2021). Global trends in tourism supply and demand (Trend Map, Infuture Institute, 2024) indicate the necessity to modify tourism development metrics from quantitative to qualitative (UNWTO, 2020). The consequences of implementing these metrics affect population and space (including cultural heritage) and have an overarching role in destination functioning (see Koens et al., 2021). Additionally, development can be achieved through the evolution of the tourism management model.

The consequences of the development of the tourism function to date have created various scenarios, and the social and economic costs of tourism cannot be underestimated (Golovnya, 2021). These include the physical degradation of historical sites, the increase in rental prices for housing, the overgrowth of short-term rentals, tourism gentrification, the replacement of tourists interested in cultural heritage with mass arrivals of day visitors, spatial and temporal congestion of tourist traffic, and degradation of the natural environment (Szromek et al., 2023). The position of many destinations in the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) model (Butler, 1980) is also likely to have changed, and there may even be a "vicious cycle" of tourism development now or in the near future (Russo & Scarnato, 2018). Concurrently, the quantitative expansion of tourism gives rise to conflicts between stakeholders, the causes and extent of which are diverse (Hristov & Zehrer, 2015; Kruczek et al., 2022; Idisondjaja et al., 2023).

The preceding factors demonstrate that contemporary tourism necessitates effective management, forward planning and even the ability to anticipate future changes (see Hartman et al.,

2020). Foresight can be employed as a method to facilitate the anticipation of changes in the tourism sector (Awedyk, 2015a, b). Concurrently, the utilisation of foresight scenarios to evaluate and plan the impact of global change on national tourism economies is still in its nascent stages (Drakes et al., 2020). Fortunately, numerous scholars have indicated that foresight is understood as the capacity to predict what will or may occur in the future (Voronkova et al., 2022). The increasing uncertainty among contemporary communities and stakeholders necessitates the formulation of a vision of the future. This can enhance the practicality of foresight and facilitate an appropriate response to future challenges (Giunta et al., 2021). Furthermore, it enables the assessment of the efficacy of proposed solutions and their projected future impact (Melnychenko et al., 2020).

In this article, the authors present a methodological concept for the creation of foresight scenarios, with a particular focus on the tourism sector. The analysis is supported by a review of the scientific literature, expert studies, and the authors' empirical experience in creating scenarios for the management of tourism destinations.

2. Literature review

The tourism economy is managed at destinations, where intense competition (Line & Runyan, 2014) and the convergence of disparate, and often contradictory, interests (Chamizo-Nieto et al., 2023) prevail. This is achieved through the involvement of different stakeholder groups (Roxas et al., 2020) and the implementation of diverse strategic approaches (Pawlowska-Legwand et al., 2024; Uchiyama & Kohsaka, 2023).

At the same time, the growing role of Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) in the management of these destinations is often pointed out, and they are often treated as leaders or initiators of the evolution of the tourism economy or advocates of its forecasting (Borzyszkowski, 2011, 2016; Zmysłony, 2016; Katemliadis, 2020; Honovic & Klapan, 2021; Ness & Haugland, 2022; Wagenseil et al., 2022; Borzyszkowski & Walas, 2023; Morrison & Buhalis, 2023). Similarly, local governments (LGs) and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) cannot be omitted from analyses of the development of the tourism economy (Panasiuk, 2009).

Organisations and enterprises in the tourism economy, which are not "lonely islands" (Galata, 2004), should strive to establish or update

organisational networks between their members and stakeholders and the market (Maráková & Džuríková, 2023). This will ensure that a culture of cooperation with the objective of attaining greater self-efficacy can prevail (Farrell et al., 2008; Huang et al., 2022) through reciprocal interaction. The necessity of developing an optimal model of tourism management entails a focus on stakeholder collaboration, which is intrinsic to the functioning of contemporary organisations, societies and entrepreneurship (Gretzel & Scarpino-Johns, 2018; Czernek-Marszałek, 2020).

The occurrence of negative consequences in the environment stimulates tourism organisations managing destinations and local governments to act prospectively, trying to find answers to the question of the future of tourism and management tools. These are understood as strategies and tactical programmes that use and integrate available tools to stimulate the development of tourism supply and to control tourism demand, in line with established objectives (Mason, 2008). Tourism management should ultimately be based on the principles of “good governance” (Gretzel & Tazim, 2024) and the vertical and horizontal integration of tourism service providers (Fong et al., 2021), while at the same time creating opportunities for local residents to generate new economic activity of their own towards visitors and to achieve a new quality of life locally. If one considers that tourism development should be considered on three levels (economic, social, environmental), it becomes evident that there is a conflict between the first level and the others. Without the creation of an appropriate environment, including the fostering of social awareness and activity, it is impossible to prevent the devastation of both the natural environment (Hausner et al., 2013) and cultural heritage and human relations.

Any change that allows a destination to achieve a competitive advantage plays a key role in stimulating the tourism function of an area or in adapting to changes in the environment and continuing to evolve (Ávila-Robinson & Wakabayashi, 2018). Analyses of contemporary directions of change in destinations (Fedyk et al., 2023; Walas et al., 2023) allow us to note that the key drivers of evolution may be, in terms of impact (positive as well as negative): the implementation or abandonment of the principles of sustainable development; the increase or decrease in the competitiveness of the destination; the intensification or reduction of integration of entrepreneurs; the adaptation or not of services to the process of hyper-personalisation of demand; the introduction or not of a tourist tax; the separation or expansion of the competences and

tasks of stakeholders in the current model of tourism management; and the increase or reduction in the importance of enterprises in relations with the local government; or, finally, the minimisation or intensification of conflicts between them.

It is becoming increasingly evident that the concept of the “new tourism” must encompass the delivery of activities and outcomes derived from the relationships and interactions between tourists, suppliers, local authorities, residents, and the wider environment. The novel approach to tourism, particularly evident since the pandemic, has brought the issue of sustainability to the fore (Buhalis et al., 2023). The concept is frequently discussed in academic literature as a process through which the consequences of tourists' behaviour and the business models of local service providers do not result in losses or difficult-to-reverse changes in ecological capacity (caring capacity), environmental space and changes in social and economic relations (Pender & Shalper, 2008; Dzwonkowska, 2011; Line & Runyan, 2014; Reinhold et al., 2018; Walas, 2021; Sustainable, 2023).

The current situation indicates that contemporary tourism management should be guided by analysis according to the VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous) concept (see Burke, 1985), based on: anticipating problems, understanding the consequences of problems and actions, appreciating the interdependence of variables, and preparing for alternative realities and challenges (Lubowiecki et al., 2023). Also, the presence of threats such as pandemics, wars, climate change or the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the tourism environment indicates that the future of tourism will be increasingly shaped in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world and this requires its intelligent forecasting (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2023). Consequently, it is possible to evaluate the various tools (organisational, economic, or legal) that destinations are trying to implement post-pandemic in the management of the tourism economy with its sustainability as an overarching objective. Nevertheless, there always remain some stakeholders opposed to restrictions on demand or legal regulation of the supply of tourism services, including accommodation.

An understanding of all the processes involved may allow, through an in-depth scenario analysis, to identify the consequences of the evolution in managing contemporary tourism. Open and increasingly common rivalry in various areas of building strategic advantages is inexpedient in a situation of increasingly diverse variable and unpredictable needs and expectations of customers,

organisation stakeholders and companies (Paunović et al., 2020; Idisondjaja et al., 2023), as well as a turbulent environment in the tourism economy. Its cause may be crisis phenomena, including COVID-19 or political tensions (Fedyk et al., 2022a and b). Changes in stakeholder relations will result from changes in the sector or different visions of further development (Viglianisi & Calabrò, 2022), and these are influenced by global trends. These trends exert changes in management models and can be mutually exclusive (Križman-Pavlović & Cynobry, 2022). At the same time, there is a need to better understand trends and future challenges and identify opportunities to develop innovative solutions oriented towards destination sustainability (Pace et al., 2023) and greater effectiveness in the roles of organisations in a tourism destination (Petković et al., 2023). In view of this need, implementing new tourism management solutions requires some foresight (Sarasadat & Nematpourm, 2022). Nevertheless, changes in stakeholder relations are the result of transformations in tourism and different visions of its further development (Viglianisi & Calabrò, 2022), often resulting from an egocentric point of view.

Foresight can be a method that can support the process of anticipating the evolution, management and implementation of changes in tourism. Foresight does not have a one-word Polish equivalent (Kuciński, 2010) and is understood as a methodology for analysing forecasts or hypotheses about the future in the medium and long term. Foresight is also sometimes associated with studies on the future that have an applied purpose and nature intended to help specific entities take concrete actions, and not just be an exploration of possible futures (Ejdys, 2013). Foresight can become an effective tool for implementing the structural changes needed to stimulate the creation of an innovative market (Afanasyev et al., 2020). Moreover, foresight understood as predictive thinking and organisational learning is also a crisis management tool used by DMOs (Makian & Nematpour, 2022), which are assigned key roles in designing evolution in the tourism economy (Borzyszkowski, 2011, 2016).

Foresight is also not just a process indicating more or less likely visions of the future (Antczak, 2011) but is understood by the research community and industry experts as a kind of looking into the future, as a tool to influence the course of events (Szpilko, 2016) or as an effective tool that anticipates the future of a smart city (Szpilko, 2020). According to Güell (2012), the foresight process has several characteristics that give it a methodical character, i.e. anticipation (structured, long-term foresight), vision

(together with the needs of stakeholders/society), participation (in the debate of stakeholders from interest groups), action (shaping the image of the future) and networking (transfer and exchange of ideas, views, experiences). It is also sometimes considered as a process of creating society's thinking about the future (Szpilko, 2016), in which both scientists and representatives of business or organisations take part and set strategic directions of actions, changes and development (so-called "foresight scenarios"), in order to bring the greatest economic and social benefits. In the Polish economy, including tourism, one can see attempts to use the foresight method to indicate the future of regions or local areas (Borodako, 2011, 2016; Dębkowska, 2013; Awedyk, 2015a and b, 2016; Brzostowski et al., 2019; Dębkowska et al., 2020; *Prognozy*, 2022), implemented in order to learn about the state of the sector and the changes occurring within, as well as activities leading to a debate on the future of tourism (and its stakeholders) in a given area. There is no single integrated method used within foresight, and several interrelated methods or techniques are applied to the phenomena under study (Popper, 2008; Ropuszyńska-Surma, 2014). These methods can be grouped into four dimensions: creativity, interaction, facts and expert knowledge (Szpilko, 2016).

The scenario method consists in describing events and indicating their logical and coherent sequence (Kanoniuk, 2011). In the method of foresight scenarios, which are a way of exploring the future, various functions can be analysed, and these in turn imply the choice of the type of scenario (Table 1). This allows the creation of a tool to support strategic decisions displaying available choices and their consequences. Foresight scenarios are visions of the future that involve expert analysis of trends, challenges and opportunities in order to create several future scenarios (e.g. Chmielewska-Szlajfer et al., 2020; Dębkowska et al., 2020). They are a valuable tool that can help diverse types of organisations to understand and prepare for the future and that can then be used to make strategic decisions (Wright et al., 2020).

The unifying element of diverse types of analyses or foresight methods for a given area (here, tourism management) are its basic components indicated in Table 2.

Table 1. Typology of scenarios: illustrative approach

Type of scenario	Nature of scenario
scenario of possible events (here, the scenario in question)	describes the development of the sector and its environment, considering internal and external factors
simulation scenario	describes the environment of a specific sector and the factors affecting it
ambient states scenario	describes how strongly the different environmental factors will affect the sector under study
ambient process scenario	describes how strongly the sector under study will be affected by the various processes taking place in the environment
exploratory scenario	builds a sequence of events from the initial situation through a logical sequence of events leading to a likely future; considers trends and tendencies prevailing in the environment
anticipatory scenario	provides a picture of the future and the changes that will affect reality in the way required to achieve the desired end state

Source: own compilation using: Antczak, 2011; Ejdyś, 2013; Szpilko, 2016

Table 2. Key features of foresight analysis for a given area of intervention

Feature	Scope of action	Analysis tools/techniques - (examples)
thinking about the future	analysis of the situation and development trends	desk research
discussing the future	identifying the views of different communities	individual in-depth interviews, focus group interviews, strategy workshops
identification of key factors (e.g., political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, technical factors)		
drawing up a vision of the future	scenario-building	scenario method
consultation (analysis of multiple possible “futures”)	identifying the views of different communities	programme conferences
shaping the future (recommendations)	building alternative scenarios	scenario method

Source: own compilation using: Ropuszyńska-Surma, 2014

3. Methodology

As Popper (2008b) points out, methods should be chosen flexibly and work in harmony with the objective of constructing a foresight research methodology. The applied approach to scenario preparation is the author's adaptation of two methods: foresight and transformational scenario planning, and follows the workflow presented in Figure 1.

The above figure illustrates the sequence of reasoning supported by the applied research

methods and techniques, while their selection is only a recommendation, as other matrix techniques may be used.

3.1. Methods for analysing the environment

The preparation of the scenario must be based on qualitative and quantitative research, applying at least several methods in a set sequence, which will allow a picture of the environment and the state

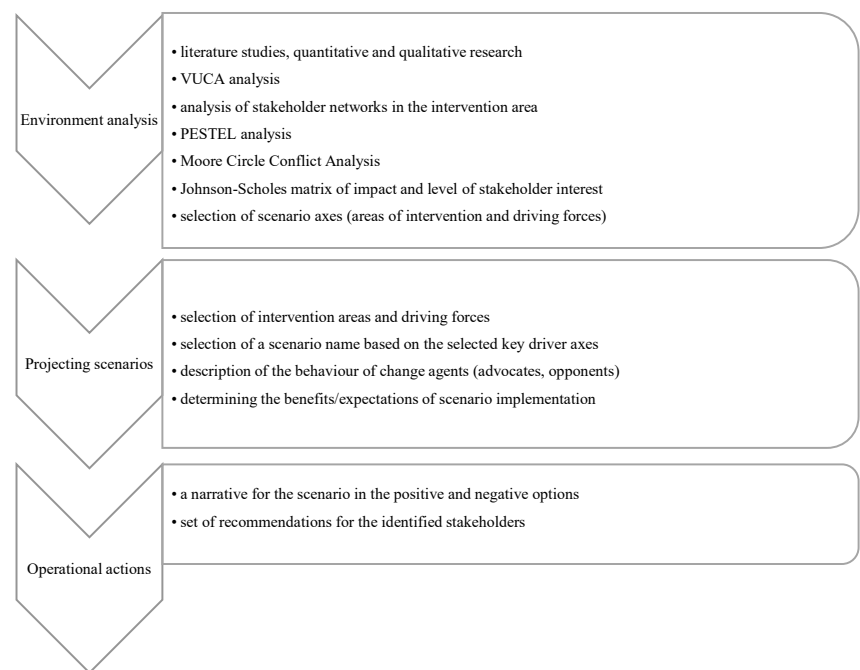


Fig. 1. Stages of foresight scenario construction
Source: own study

of the tourism economy to be presented, typifying the key areas in need of intervention and the existing drivers of change. The methodological assumptions of some of them are described below, and their order is not accidental, as it allows for a diagnostic analysis from general to specific.

3.1.1. VUCA

Understanding the processes occurring in the environment should start with VUCA analysis (see Burke, 1985). The principles of this concept are based on anticipating problems that may arise and understanding their consequences and actions, appreciating the interdependence of variables and preparing for alternative realities and challenges when interpreting and exploiting existing opportunities. In response to the VUCA situation, stakeholders should acquire a set of skills called VUCA Prime (Johansen, 2007): Vision, Understanding, Clarity and Agility.

Tourism organisations or companies in the destinations need to be flexible, innovative, and ready for dynamic transformations, while focusing on sustainability and competitiveness to meet the expectations of today’s travellers (Watson & Deller, 2022) in the given areas of intervention

(Table 3). In the analysis process, all features of the intervention area should be identified in terms of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. The identified processes are the starting point for selecting the intervention area(s) that will be subject to the scenario(s) description.

3.1.2. PESTEL analysis

Global megatrends have a significant impact on tourism (Vlatka et al., 2022). Extensive trend analysis and mapping is carried out periodically by the Infuture Institute, which identifies five groups of megatrends: the mirror world, the multi-polarised world, the bio-era, the symbiocene, and demographic change. Within each group there are specific subrends. The shape of tourism will be determined soon by technological solutions introduced in customer segmentation or increasing sales conversion. Therefore, in a few years, changes can be expected on the demand side, the supply side and the communication and sales management side (Walas, 2024).

The expert PESTEL analysis (or in a broader version, STEEPVL) of the socio-economic environment of the tourism economy (Table 4), together with the indicated and specified importance of factors and

Table 3. State of the intervention area in terms of the VUCA concept

Concept element	Characteristics of selected features for the area of intervention
Volatility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ variability of the tourism environment ✓ dynamic variability in trends and tourist preferences/behaviour ✓ variability in regulation at global, national, and local levels ✓ market volatility in the environment ✓ variability in management ✓ price and cost volatility ✓ technological variability ✓ volatility in competition and partnerships ✓ changing perceptions of sustainability ✓ volatility of the political environment ✓ volatility of tourism demand ✓ variability of tourist flow characteristics and seasonality ✓ variability of competences in tourism destinations ✓ variability in strategic planning and business models ✓ variability in approaches to marketing
Uncertainty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ uncertainty regarding sustainability regulations ✓ uncertainty of changes in the political and economic situation ✓ uncertainty of climatic conditions ✓ security uncertainty ✓ uncertainty of achieving sustainable development goals ✓ uncertainty of sustainability and efficiency/effectiveness of relationships in the management ✓ uncertainty of the scale of demand and future needs of tourists ✓ uncertainty regarding the development of tourism infrastructure opportunities ✓ uncertainty in the adaptation and remit of tourism stakeholders ✓ uncertainty related to the low profitability rate of the tourism economy
Complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ complexity of demand and global trends in tourism ✓ complexity of commercialisation processes ✓ complexity resulting from the diversity of the tourist offer ✓ cultural complexity of customer/tourist groups and market segmentation processes ✓ complexity of partnerships and areas of stakeholder conflict ✓ complexity resulting from the interdisciplinary of the tourism phenomenon ✓ the complexity of competitiveness ✓ the complexity of data management and decision-making processes ✓ the complexity of resource management in tourism destinations
Ambiguity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ambiguity of support rules (protectionist policies of destinations) ✓ political ambiguity ✓ ambiguity of tribal segments ✓ ambiguity in the competitiveness of SMEs ✓ ambiguity of development goals ✓ ambiguity of stakeholder expectations ✓ ambiguity of the governance and cooperation model in destinations ✓ ambiguity in marketing strategies and concepts ✓ ambiguity in tourism crisis management

Source: own study

the probability of their occurrence, should form the basis for the construction of scenarios. The concept of the design of the adopted PESTEL analysis collates global trends and the resulting factors having an impact on tourism, both positive (+ sign) and negative (- sign). The degree of impact on tourism should additionally be estimated on a scale from 1 (weak) to 5 (strong). The selection of factors and trends should be based on the results of quantitative and qualitative studies (Fedyk et al., 2023; Walas et al., 2023), analyses of international institutions, selected literature sources or expert assessment (Table 4). Trend selection can be a two-stage process. Global trends are overarching (published annually by Infuture Institute), within which trends related directly to tourism can be specified.

3.1.3. Moore’s circle of conflict

Conflicts occur between stakeholders in the tourism economy, some of which have a natural basis related to market competition. One analytical tool for managing the universal nature of conflict is the so-called “wheel of conflict” (Moore, 2014), defined according to its principal components: values and attitudes, interests, relations between the sides in conflict, access to information, and structural conditions (the course of the conflict). The sources of such conflicts can be: information, relationships, values, structural, interests.

The circle of conflicts and their scale has already been used in studies dedicated to tourism (Zmysłony & Kowalczyk-Anioł, 2019; Kruczek et al., 2022). Identifying the circle of conflicts will allow us to

identify areas of intervention and stakeholder groups (change agents) whose role in the tourism market may be conflictual.

3.1.4. Change agents

In the construction of the final scenario narrative, the assumption is to focus only on the types of stakeholders that can be described as key change agents (advocates and opponents), which are identified in Table 5.

The choice of change agents depends on the scope of the scenario (local, regional, national) and the area of intervention. The list of agents can include both public and private institutions (see Table 5).

The attitude of each change agent can be considered depending on the driving force adopted in the intervention area in a positive or negative version of the scenario, i.e. the same stakeholder can be a supporter or an opponent of change.

3.1.5. Johnson–Scholes matrix

The identification of the agents of change in the previous step allows an attempt to identify and value their power of influence and level of interest in tourism management influencing the outcome of the evolution.

The relationship matrix (Fig. 2) illustrates the position of the hypothetical change agents with an indication of the level of interest and the strength of influence on a scale from 1 to 10, where it can

Table 4. Key factors of the PESTEL analysis as determinants of the directions of change in the tourism economy

Environment	Trend/factor (global or tourist)	Importance of	Probability of occurrence	Weighted average	Degree of influence on the tourism economy
		(from 0 to 10)	(from 0 to 1)		(1 to 5)
		1	2	1x2	+ (in plus) - (negative)
political					
economic					
social					
technological					
ecological					
legal					

Source: own study

Table 5. Typology of change agents in tourist destinations

local governments (LG) (municipality, district, voivodship)	tourism organisations with membership of local governments, including RTOs and LTOs (DMOs)	tourism organisations without membership of local governments	financial support institutions (banks, agencies and funds)
ministry responsible for tourism	local Convention Bureau	managers of tourist attractions and venues	product consortia
Polish Tourist Organisation (PTO)	nature and heritage conservation institutions	tourism clusters	Chambers of Commerce
airlines and airports	residents/local community - urban movements	Local Action Groups (LAGs)	HORECA sector
deputies, councillors	tour guides	academia and other educational institutions	online travel agencies (OTAs)
ministries with responsibilities affecting tourism	media and lobbyists	travel agencies, PCOs, event agencies	Big Tech companies
managers of tourist facilities	public and private local transport (taxis, buses, ski lifts)	leisure service companies	tourists and visitors

Source: own study

be assumed that the relevant ones are those who obtained a value of at least 5 in both parameters.

The decomposition of stakeholders on the Johnson–Scholes (1990) matrix allows them to be divided into four groups: key stakeholders, potential allies, potentially dangerous, potentially indifferent, and these groups should also be considered in the final design of the foresight scenarios.

3.2. Designing foresight scenarios

A key methodological assumption is to base the scenario construction on the selection of so-called “axes” - driving forces linked to selected key factors (impact and predictability forces) (Fig. 3 and 4).

Based on the key factors identified and grouped according to strength and predictability, an assumption can be made to create four types of scenarios in the form of a four-field matrix (Fig. 4 and 5).

4. Results

The conditions, drivers and change agents collected and described allow, in the next step, a process of modelling a foresight scenario based on the selection of an area of intervention and a minimum of two driving forces. The choice of driving forces plays a key role, as both must clearly influence the area of intervention. The proposed intervention areas and driving forces in the tourism management are illustrated in Table 6. The authors focus on the extreme scenarios of positive and negative options (optimistic and pessimistic) because these two are the most expressive in illustrating the attitudes of change agents and the consequences, and often this perspective is unfairly overlooked in research, and the perception of phenomena itself becomes incomplete, lacking foresight.

The most positive scenario (type 1 +/+) and the most negative scenario (type 3 -/-) were selected for further exploration as the most expressive and far-

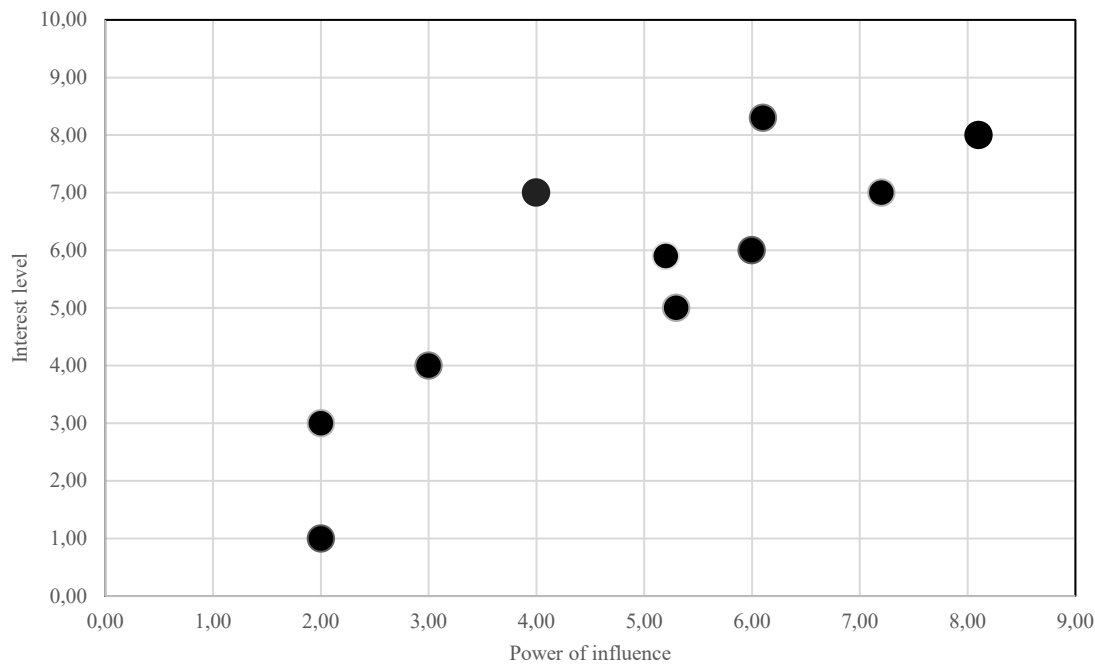


Fig. 2. Relationship system (strength of influence/level of interest) of stakeholders in the intervention area
Note: Fictional values of influence strength and interest level were adopted as a case study
Source: own study

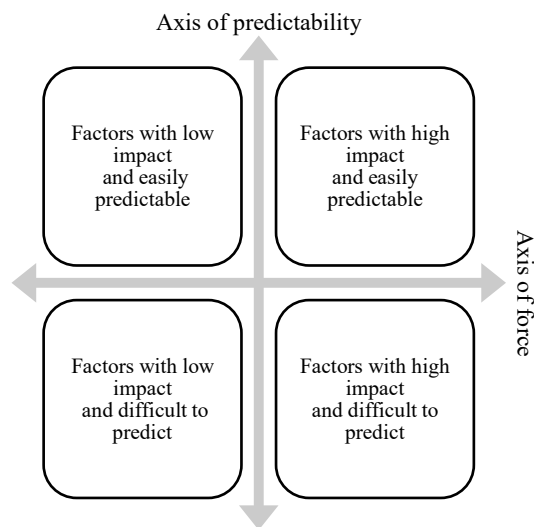


Fig. 3. Groups of key factors (impact and predictability) as a basis for scenario construction
Source: own study

reaching (in terms of potential impact on the tourism economy). At the same time, the challenge for each foresight scenario is to look for each scenario's own name (even a light, associative one) that captures the essence of the narrative. For example, the scenarios for tourism after the COVID-19 pandemic in Małopolska Province (Proгноzy, 2022) were given names such as: "The long-awaited normality", "Tourists do not want to return" or "Małopolska must wait".

In the construction of the scenario narratives, the focus should be on only those stakeholder types that can be described as key change agents (advocates and opponents) and identified in Table 5 and Figure 2.

An example of the application of the foresight method is a scenario in which the tourist tax and the evolution of competences and tasks in the PTO-RTO-LTO-LG model (Polish Tourism Organization, Regional Tourism Organizations, Local Tourism Organizations and Local Governments) were considered driving forces. Two extreme versions of the scenario can be assumed: positive and negative. In the case study, the negative version was adopted, i.e. the consequences of not introducing a tourist tax and the lack of division of competences and between stakeholders. The authors arrived at this scenario based on quantitative and qualitative research (Walas et al., 2024) and the lack of official,

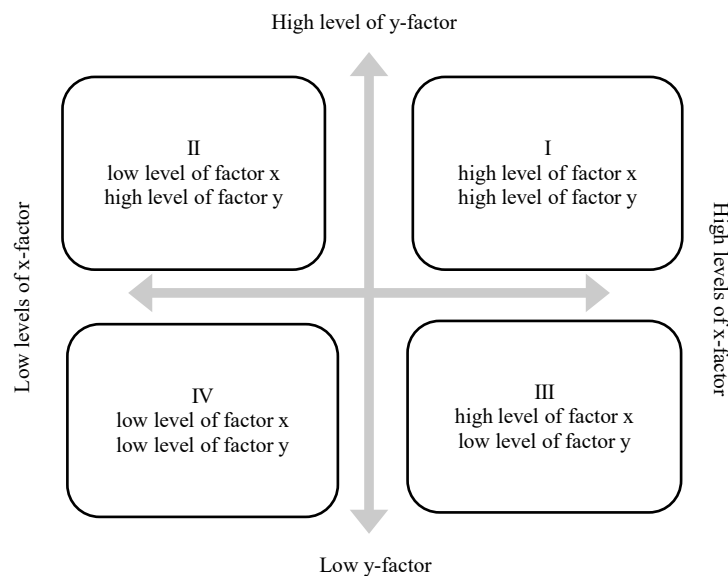


Fig. 4. Matrix of key factor positions as a basis for scenario construction
Source: own study

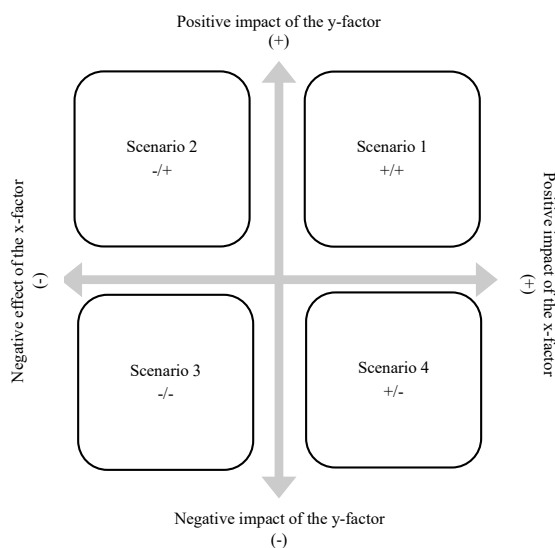


Fig. 5. Idealised scenario diagram based on key factors X and Y
Source: own development using: Szpilko (2016: 117)

empirically deepened, preliminary concepts in this area. Despite the contradictory declarations and expectations of members/stakeholders regarding the distribution of collected funds, there is a consensus among experts on the justification for introducing such a financial instrument to improve management efficiency, following the example of foreign solutions (Borzyszkowski, 2015; Burzec, 2019). It is assumed that thanks to the new revenues from the tax, there should be a division of competences

and tasks between stakeholders in destination management. The negative version of the scenario is a kind of storytelling of the consequences of not implementing the driving forces.

The adopted name of the scenario is “Tourism Freedom”, and its negative version is called “Tourism at ease” (Fig. 6). The choice of driving forces with a negative connotation is a conscious and necessary research approach, as it allows for an in-depth perception of both the negative and positive effects of their impact (here, new values not previously identified), which are often overlooked by academics and industry experts when evaluating forces or phenomena with negative connotations. Furthermore, the extreme scenario described allows the radical behaviour and benefits of change agents to be observed. This does not preclude the description of all four versions of the scenario in the analyses.

All the previous steps in the adopted concept of foresight scenario construction allow a descriptive narrative of the scenario to be prepared. That scenario includes recommendations understood to be key indications for actions in the area of a given tourism phenomenon, including counteracting the unfavourable effects of such a scenario. Table 7 presents the image of the management of a destination in an assumed time horizon, in the conceptual area of intervention and with key driving forces and the results of the analyses carried out.

An example of the application of the foresight method is a scenario in which the tourist tax and the evolution of competences and tasks in the PTO-

Table 6. Hypothetical areas of intervention and driving forces behind the scenarios

Areas of intervention	Type of scenario	Driving forces
The tourism market in the light of global trends	positive	Implementation of sustainable development principles Increased competitiveness of tourist reception areas
	negative	Failure to implement sustainable development principles Decreasing competitiveness of tourist reception areas
Horizontal and vertical integration of the service providers	positive	Increasing the integration process of entrepreneurs Adapting services to hyper-personalise demand
	negative	No intensification of the business integration process Failure to adapt services to hyper-personalisation of demand
Evolution of competences and tasks in the PTO-RTO-LTO-LG model	positive	Introduction of a tourist (residence) tax Separation of competences and tasks in the PTO-RTO-LTO-LG model
	negative	Failure to introduce a tourist (residence) tax Lack of separation of competences and tasks in the PTO-RTO-LTO-LG model
Cooperation on the line LG-SMEs	positive	Increasing importance of SMEs in the relationship with LG Minimising conflicts between SMEs and LG
	negative	Marginalisation of the importance of SMEs in relations with LG Increasing conflicts between SMEs and LG

Source: own study

Table 7. Narrative structure of the scenario

Name of scenario	
Area of intervention	
Name of scenario variation (+/+)	name of scenario
Driving forces / Axes of influence	narration of scenario (including references to key change agents)
Key recommendations	Areas of action (for change agents) N (<i>new</i>) – new activities not previously undertaken: C (<i>continued</i>) – activities implemented to date that should be continued: R (<i>redundant</i>) – redundant activities that should be discontinued: R (<i>restored</i>) – activities that have been carried out in the past that should be revisited:
	VUCA Prime concept (for change agents) Vision: Understanding: Clarity: Agility:

Source: own study

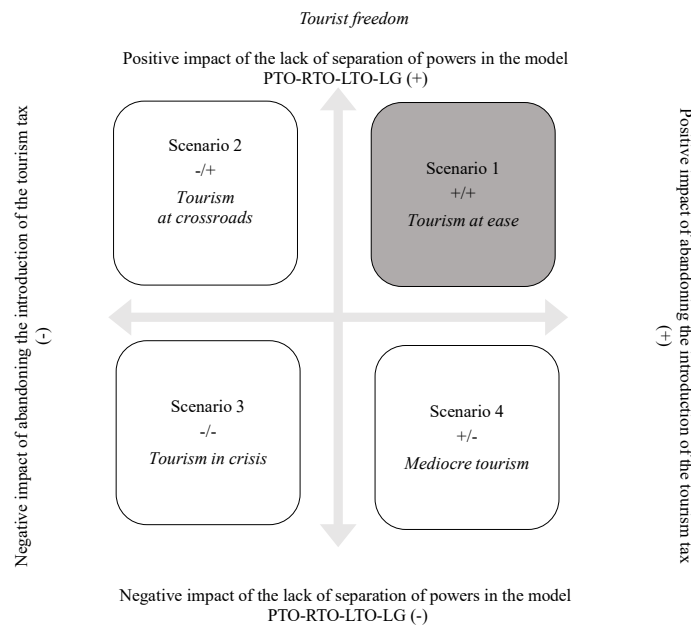


Fig. 6. Idea diagram of a scenario based on the driving forces in the intervention area

Source: own development using: Walas et al., 2024

RTO-LTO-LG model (Polish Tourism Organization, Regional Tourism Organizations, Local Tourism Organizations and Local Governments) were considered driving forces. Two extreme versions of the scenario can be assumed: positive and negative. In the case study, the negative version was adopted, i.e. the consequences of not introducing a tourist tax and the lack of division of competences and between stakeholders. The authors arrived at this scenario based on quantitative and qualitative research (Walas et al., 2024) and the lack of official, empirically deepened, preliminary concepts in this area. Despite the contradictory declarations and expectations of members/stakeholders regarding the distribution of collected funds, there is a consensus among experts on the justification for introducing such a financial instrument to improve management efficiency, following the example of foreign solutions (Borzyszkowski, 2015; Burzec, 2019). It is assumed that thanks to the new revenues from the tax, there should be a division of competences and tasks between stakeholders in destination management. The negative version of the scenario is a kind of storytelling of the consequences of not implementing the driving forces.

The adopted name of the scenario is “Tourism Freedom”, and its negative version is called “Tourism at ease” (Fig. 6). The choice of driving forces with a negative connotation is a conscious and necessary research approach, as it allows for an in-depth perception of both the negative and

positive effects of their impact (here, new values not previously identified), which are often overlooked by academics and industry experts when evaluating forces or phenomena with negative connotations. Furthermore, the extreme scenario described allows the radical behaviour and benefits of change agents to be observed. This does not preclude the description of all four versions of the scenario in the analyses.

The choice of scenario 1 (Fig. 6), aims at looking at the evolution of the tourism management taking into account the “black hat” position from Edward de Bono’s (2008) concept of Six Thinking Hats, where the black hat, acts as “devil’s advocate”, an objective critique with logical justification, and an in-depth lateral thinking, taking into account risks, looking for gaps and shortcomings in the system or phenomena being described (cf. Fedyk, 2023).

Maintaining the status quo in the Polish tourism management system may seem completely unnecessary. This applies both to the omission of the introduction of task-sharing in the PTO-RTO-LTO-LG model, as well as the non-implementation of the tourist tax. Nevertheless, every change has its advocates as well as its opponents, and this is a key area of necessary analysis when designing foresight for evolution in the tourism economy. In any situation, there may be institutions and individuals who will not be interested in change (and for a variety of reasons), as well as those who

would benefit from changes in the tourism model (cf. Fedyk et al., 2023; Walas et al., 2023).

To present the foresight scenario methodology, an attempt was made to identify and value the strength of influence and level of interest of the diverse types of stakeholders (the “relationship matrix”) present in the structures or in the environment. The set of identified stakeholders can be complete or generalised (see Fig. 7 and cf. Table 8). The expert’s matrix (agents of change) was developed based on the results of quantitative and qualitative research among stakeholders (Walas et al., 2024). In the presented relationship matrix, the triangle sign indicates the stakeholders with the highest power of influence and a level of interest

equal to or higher than five on the adopted scale from 1 to 10.

Table 8 illustrates a piecemeal picture of stakeholders’ (change agents) relations in the negative scenario (the most far-reaching in the foresight scenario matrix, see Fig. 6) over the assumed time horizon (a 7-to-10-year horizon) in a given area of intervention and with the key driving forces, i.e. not introducing the tourism tax and the lack of separation of competences and tasks of stakeholders in the model.

In the narrative itself, which can take the form of an essay (in this case only partial), attention was focused on the perspective of changes in the tourism management taking into account the expected benefits of the identified change agents with the

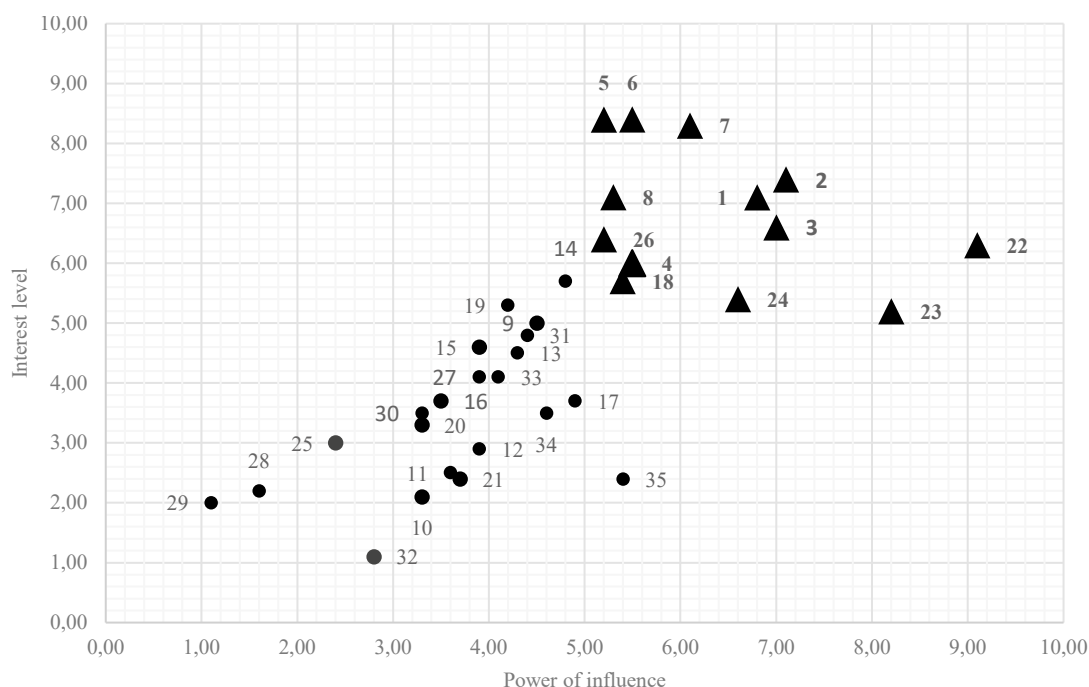


Fig. 7. Relationship system (strength of influence/level of interest) of stakeholders in a given area of intervention

1 – Board of regional DMOs, 2 – Ordinary members of regional DMOs, 3 – Local Tourist Organisation (LTO) (member of RTO), 4 – Local Tourist Organisation (LTO) (outside of RTO), 5 – LG-Municipality (competent department for: tourism, promotion, economy, development, recreation, sports, culture, etc.), 6 – LG-County (competent department for: tourism, promotion, economy, development, recreation, sports, culture, etc.), 7 – LG-Province (competent department for: tourism, economy, development, sports, culture, etc.), 8 – SMEs (in DMOs)-accommodation, 9 – SMEs (in DMOs)-gastronomic facilities, 10 – SMEs (in DMOs)-transportation services (taxi, bus, minibus, etc.), 11 – SMEs (in DMOs)-gestor of tourist attraction, 12 – SMEs (in DMOs)-tourist services (pilotage, guiding), 13 – SMEs (in DMOs)-organisation of events, 14 – Tourist associations and organisations (in DMOs), 15 – Tourist associations and organisations, 16 – Local Action Groups (LAGs), 17 – Tourism Clusters, 18 – Product Consortia, 19 – Tourism Industry Chambers, 20 – Tourism SMEs (outside DMOs), 21 – Media, 22 – Ministry of Sport and Tourism (MST), 23 – PTO, 24 – Other DMOs (RTOs), 25 – Educational institutions (vocational secondary schools and fields of study at universities), 26 – Business partners of DMOs (sponsors, donors), 27 – Local Convention Bureau, 28 – Wildlife and cultural heritage institutions, 29 – Security services (police, municipal police), 30 – Local community, 31 – Tourists and visitors, 32 – Financial support institutions (banks, agencies and funds), 33 – Industry experts, 34 – Tourism academia, 35 – MEPs (including from the committee responsible for tourism), Local politicians in the tourist reception area (TRA), including councillors

Note: the change agent matrix uses the values of influence strength and interest level as a case study based on the results of quantitative and qualitative research among stakeholders (cf. Walas et al., 2024).

Source: own study

Table 8. Structure of the scenario narrative in the intervention area and with the given driving forces

Name of scenario	<i>Tourist freedom</i>
Area of intervention	Evolution of tasks in the PTO-RTO-LTO-LG model
Variety name scenario (+/+)	<i>Tourism at ease</i>
Narration of the scenario (extract)	<p>In the 2030 perspective, the Polish tourism economy is facing an evolution in governance. Differences of opinion have resulted in the failure to implement the tourism tax, and in the failure to make significant changes in the division of competences of the entire PTO-RTO-LTO-LG model and at the interface with SMEs. The lack of solutions has led to a kind of <i>tourism freedom</i> in which a significant part of the tasks and competences are still not sorted out, to the delight of some stakeholders. This has contributed to a chaos of tasks and competences, and as a result, many ventures are simply run completely freely and “at will”. The tax could have served as a source of funding for the development of tourism and paratourism infrastructure, environmental protection, marketing communication and even measures to limit the effects of the overgrowth of the tourism function. However, a decision has been taken which could appear misguided or even wrong. The absence of a tourism tax did not mean that the development of the tourism sphere was abandoned. On the contrary, it became a driver of innovation in the Polish tourism sector. To compensate for potential financial losses resulting from the tax, the tourism industry focused on optimising processes, increasing efficiency and effectiveness, and introducing innovative solutions, including competitive tourism products. The lack of an additional source of funding has forced SMEs and DMOs (here also RTO and LTO), to actively and unconventionally seek alternative sources of revenue and business models. Contrary to initial fears, the lack of a clear separation of competences and tasks proved to be a stimulus for creativity, flexibility and agility among the model stakeholders. Collaboration became smoother and clearer, enabling faster and more efficient change management. The implementation of rigid, formalised rules, relating to regional (RTO) and local tourism organisations (LTO), was thus avoided. The Polish Tourism Organisation (PTO) has become a bridge between the public sector, the private sector, and the local community, with an unwavering position in the market. PTO and RTO and LTO have, to a greater extent, started to compete qualitatively. RTO, instead of competing, started to carry out joint activities accumulating budgets. LTO underwent a necessary metamorphosis, transforming themselves into micro networks supporting community development. They became catalysts for community initiatives, involving local residents in the creation of authentic and sustainable tourism experiences, in consultation with representatives of SMEs and local governments (LG). The lack of introduction of solutions has avoided administrative burdens, potential conflicts with LG, the need for organisational and human resource changes. Unencumbered by constant restructuring, DMOs were able to focus on creative design of local tourism experiences and building new tourism products. The lack of pressure for change allowed for longer planning, resulting in unique initiatives.</p> <p>LGs, faced with the decision not to change, have revised their existing activities and expanded them significantly. In a peculiar way, the forced partnership of LG with the private sector and civil society has become a driver of innovation and creativity. Co-operation of a “loose”, “free” and non-formalised nature in many cases has proved beneficial to all stakeholders in the local and regional tourism economy. Accommodation providers were relieved by the decision not to introduce a tourist tax, as it would have been an administrative and bureaucratic burden. The lack of change became a catalyst for new ventures by specialised product consortia. They have become the brains of the “no-tourist-taxtax”</p>

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	<p>cooperation by integrating local offers and their commercialisation. The positive effects of the lack of a tourism tax have reinforced the role of the Ministry of Sport and Tourism (MST) in tools of interventionism and protectionism, including through grants and subsidies. DMOs' business partners and suppliers became not only a source of funding, but also the creative architects of a new vision for tourism. Tourists were relieved to see no increase in the cost of trips.</p>
Key recommendations	<p style="text-align: center;">Areas of action (for change agents)</p> <p>N (new) - new activities not previously undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- identifying non-formalised rules for cooperation between tourism policy stakeholders- creating rules and opportunities for financing tourism activities (excluding the tourism tax) <p>C (continued) - activities implemented to date that should be continued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- further work on the role of key stakeholders in the tourism sector- organisational and financial strengthening of RTO and LTO (considering no change in the PTO-RTO-LTO-LG model) <p>R (redundant) - redundant activities that should be discontinued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- creation of conflicts between LG-DMOs, because of forcing the division of competences or their duplication- creation of conflicts on the PTO-RTO-LTO line, because of forcing the division of tasks and spheres of action <p>R (restored) - activities that have been carried out in the past that should be revisited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- activities for the possibility of implementing new organisational forms in Polish tourism
	<p style="text-align: center;">VUCA Prime concept (for change agents)</p> <p>Vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- defining long-term tourism development objectives excluding the definition of tasks and responsibilities of all PTO-RTO-LTO-LG entities- identifying long-term tourism development objectives, including in terms of seeking alternative forms of funding <p>Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- analysing and understanding the impact of the lack of a tourism tax on different segments of tourists and the local community- understanding the mutual needs of the PTO-RTO-LTO and LG stakeholders <p>Clarity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- ensuring that the objectives and benefits of not introducing a tourism tax are clear to the various stakeholders, including tourists, the local community and tourism entrepreneurs- ensuring clarity in the "freedom" of action of the various actors, which make up the PTO-RTO-LTO-LG system <p>Agility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the ability of tourism businesses and institutions to adapt quickly to changes in the external environment and the market in the absence of a tourism levy (including the aspect of international competitiveness)

Source: Source: own development using: Walas et al., 2024

strongest position (see Fig. 6) and the results of the VUCA (see Table 3) and PESTEL analyses. Attention was also paid to the implications of the solutions against the identified conflict fields (captured in Moore's conflict wheel).

5. Discussion and conclusions

The authors decided to combine discussion and conclusions because the lack of analogous studies

on tourism does not allow for comparative analysis. The foresight paradigm is based on the practical idea that multiple options and opportunities should be found to consciously change the environment (here, tourism management) according to the needs of the stakeholders and the common overarching value. Concepts assuming that companies/ organisations act only in the interests of their owners are slowly losing relevance in today's environment (Mihajlović, 2016). Phenomena in the socio-economic environment of tourism are leading to the need for modifications of management modes in the

tourism economy and destinations, as highlighted by Kalinichenko et al. (2022). Increasing the importance of the external environment in tourism management and broadening the responsibility for its successful development, as well as ensuring the expected satisfaction of other groups interested in tourism activities, can generate values that are a source of competitive advantage in social responsibility activities and the concept of creating shared value (CSV) (Porter, 2011). Such action is primarily possible by networking of tourism stakeholders and actors in the destination (Hartman et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2022), who in foresight scenarios must try to see the structure of the future of local or regional tourism, rather than its content, shape or operational details (Awedyk, 2015). The foresight scenario as a tool for looking into the future, based on the gathered knowledge of the environment, generates unique knowledge of the key partners of the local tourism economy regarding the potential “paths” of tourism development (Prognozy, 2022), as well as the role of individual stakeholders (“change agents”) in the process of tourism evolution in destinations. In turn, the components of the foresight scenario (Borodako, 2011) serve to develop a common, consensus-based, long- to medium-term vision of tourism development in the region, and this vision should be binding for all stakeholders, as postulated by Roxas et al. (2020).

The use of scenario methodology can be helpful, as argued by Awedyk (2015a, 2015b) or Borodako (2011, 2016) in developing strategic documents for tourism destinations, tourism development strategies, sectoral strategies or, finally, entrepreneurs. Scenarios are not forecasts of the future, because this, especially in the distant future, in a dynamic environment, is characterised by high uncertainty (Nguyen et al., 2022), nevertheless, by describing positive and negative consequences, it allows for a wide view of the evolution and certainly allows for an assessment of the effects of the legal, financial or organisational regulations introduced, as pointed out by Bertocchi et al. (2020). The analysis of future scenarios prompts action today, making it possible to reinforce desirable development paths or prevent those whose course may appear unfavourable.

Importantly, it is necessary to think laterally, against empirically unjustified opinions about the directions of the evolution of the tourism economy. These present mostly optimistic variants of it (cf. Brzostowski et al., 2019; Chmielewska-Szljajfer, 2020; Dębkowska, 2020) and forget about the existing dualisms in the approach to change and the existence of stakeholders who do not expect change (or even oppose it) and see the benefits of such a position.

This gap in approach to designing the evolution of the tourism economy is filled by this study.

The concept presented in this article has significant implications. Primarily, in addition to enriching the existing body of science on foresight scenario building and its applications (Awedyk, 2015b; Kuciński, 2010; Wright et al., 2020), it allows us to indicate practical, predictable directions for the evolution of the economic sector on the example of tourism. The authors hope that the indicated solutions may prove useful for a wide range of decision-makers and can be used for in-depth analyses before making strategic decisions. At the same time, the proposed solutions are limited to specific scenarios related to the directions of tourism management evolution.

The essence of foresight is to predict environmental conditions to undertake strategic actions, because the opinions and attitudes of stakeholders do not have to be objective, which is a limitation of this methodological concept.

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