

# FACTSHEET



## EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

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## CONSIDERING EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

EI01

### Use the media

Media can be anything from news programs on TV to newspapers and monthly magazines.

By doing such a simple thing as bringing up one or two current news items at every board meeting the members will get used to thinking of news as something important for their work in the Association. That makes it more likely that general trends and changes in society will be detected at an early stage, making it possible to act in a strategically wise way.

### Appoint an External Influences officer

Appoint a member of the board to take responsibility for keeping the board updated on relevant trends and changes in the surrounding world. Studying the media, reading books on the topic as well as organising an advisory board of scholars can be part of the job description. Arranging a forecast workshop with the advisory board every second year keeps the topic alive for all board members and helps to anchor decisions in the strategy, decisions that might appear too far out for those less future oriented.

Decide in what fields the External Influences officer should focus his or her monitoring. Trying to cover the whole makes it a dreadful task.

A person with a general interest in society and a habit of staying updated is obviously preferable in such a position. A network of relevant scholars is an advantage for anyone applying for the job.

### Limiting the research

Scanning for trends is a huge undertaking unless you define what you are looking for. By deciding which member groups involvement are most important to foresee, the field of research can be limited. Age groups are a convenient way to start, and then maybe add aspects such as urban/rural lifestyle, higher/lower education and family/single person households.

Which factors are more important than others when a member decides how much time she/he is willing to spend on Scouting? Answering that question also helps to limit the research and ease the work of finding relevant information.

### Scenario planning

Scenario planning is about creating several possible scenarios for the future. What might happen over the next five or ten years? Once the scenarios are drawn up, it is time to ask the questions; "What will the consequences for our Association be?", "How do we deal with that?"



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By doing this it is more likely that the Association is proactive instead of reactive – meaning it acts in advance. In this way, it maintains the initiative and, hopefully, it is part of shaping the future instead of just letting it happen.

Unless the Association has the resources to prepare all scenarios and act on all possible consequences, it has to prioritise among the most likely and/or the most powerful.

