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FORESIGHT AS A SYSTEM OF THE FUTURE PREDICTION METHODS

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Active development of predictive researches aimed at determination of strategic perspectives of innovation development, revealing of the process breakthroughs capable of having maximum positive influence on economics and society for the long-term outlook, became one of the key tendencies in the world in the middle of XX – beginning of XXI century. For successful development of economics it is necessary sufficiently and timely single out priorities of innovation development. Prediction that was popular in the past in the course of time starts losing meaning of the universal methodology. In modern conditions more actual task is representation of the future not capable of being interpreted as ordinary continuation of the past in connection with that it could acquire basically distinctive forms and structures compared to what was known in the past. Foresight is a tool of the future prediction method.

Nowadays, Foresight methodology is actively applied at national, supranational, branch, regional and corporate levels. The main advantage of this methodology compared to the traditional approaches is orientation to involve all the parties who are interested that allows not just maximum fully taking into account of all the important aspects of the problems being reviewed but finding ground for making agreement of positions on searching for mutually acceptable ways of their solution [9].

The projects based on application of Foresight methodology have acquired particular popularity in the middle of 1990s when following Japan, Great Britain and Germany the other European states started to apply them (France, Italy, Spain, Austria, Sweden etc.), new industrial countries (Korea, Malaysia, Thailand) as well the countries with transient economics (Hungary, Czech Republic etc) [8]. For Ukraine the notion “Foresight” is considered as innovation since only several scientific being works have been dedicated to this subject.

Among the works of domestic scientists who perform researches concerning this subject area one should note the works of L.I. Fedulova, T.K. Kvasha, N.V. Gaponenko and N.L. Marenkov.

The aim of this article is investigation of different approaches to determination of the term “foresight”, as well as its characteristics and differences from the other tools of studying the future.

The term “Foresight” indicates “prevision” or “sight into future”. It was first proposed by the British scientists. There are several definitions of the term “Foresight”. The most common are given in Table 1.

Table 1**Definition of the term “Foresight”**

Author	Definition
Ben Martin	Process connected with systematic attempt of looking into the far future of science, technologies, economics and society with the purpose of determining the areas of strategic researches and processes which can obviously bring most economical and social profits [2].
Cooperation program UNIDO	Script prediction of social and economical development of economics, industry and society for 10-20 years’ perspective [4].
EU	Process of active cognition of the future and creation of vision of intermediate-term and long-term perspective aimed at making of actual decisions and mobilization of the united efforts [3].
A. Sokolov	System of methods of expert evaluation of strategic trends of social-economic and innovation development, revealing of the process breakthroughs capable of influencing economics and society for intermediate and long-term perspective [8].
Australian Center For Innovation	This is systematic reflection of the future and influence on the future [6].
EU FOREN Guide	Systematic, joint process of constructing vision of the future aimed at increasing quality of decisions being made at present and acceleration of joint actions. Ideology of Foresight comes from convergence of tendencies of the modern developments in the field of political analysis and prediction [5].

So, determination of the term Foresight by a number of the authors is ambiguous since some of them consider it as a process but the others – as a system of methods.

On the ground of generalization of the available definitions Foresight can be defined as a system of methods intended to determine strategic approaches of social- economic and innovation development of the field under investigation, multilateral interactive process of forming of the future with participation of all the interested persons with obligatory achievement of agreement.

The main necessity of Foresight is stipulated the fact with that the world and environmental conditions of societies, organizations and individuals becomes more and more unstable and uncertain. Changes occur quite fast and can appear unexpectedly, one can’t foresee integrated process of scanning them.

Foresight allows:

- Improving process of making decisions;
- Managing selection of processes;
- Creating alternate approaches for the future development;
- Strengthening the process of training and improving readiness for force majeure

circumstances;

- Giving reasons for changes [7].

Some scientists identify Foresight with prediction but the majority determines its role in designing the future with conducting additional analysis of political, economical and social factors and investigation of their mutual influence.

Foresight has common features with prediction. As we know it is scientifically grounded judgment of possible states of an object in the future and alternate ways and terms of achieving these states [8]. The main common features of Foresight and prediction are as follows:

- considering of the objective tendencies and efforts affecting development;
- using prediction methods: Delphi technique (expert evaluation), script planning, expert discussions (focus-groups, brainstorming);
- determining of critical processes.

At the same time Foresight considerably differs from prediction:

- it involves all the key participants of development: scientific and technical area, business, government and the community. Traditional prediction is carried out by the scientists [7]. Perhaps, this is the main difference of prediction from Foresight;

- it develops cooperation between the state, business and scientists;
- it provides possibility of selecting of direction of actions depending to “vision” of the future;

- it contains elements of active influence on the future (by means of research zones and appearing technologies which could bring the most economical and social benefits and executing (early concentration of resources on these directions) [7].

So, Foresight is effective process of construction of the future vision considering possible changes in all the areas of public activities: science, technologies, economics, social relations, culture; this is totality of approaches to make decisions with the aim of improving factors affecting the future in the long-term period [9].

The main distinctive characteristics of technique of performing Foresight are as follows:

- evaluation of possible perspectives of innovation development taking into account science and technology progress;

- attraction of a wide circle of experts and sometimes some special layers of population interested in solving the problem by means of questionnaires;

- aiming at the designing of practical measures to achieve selected strategies of the future.

Thus, Foresight is one of the most effective tools for determination of strategic perspectives of innovation development, revealing the technological breakthrough process capable of maximum effective influence on economics and society in the long-term perspective. Application of Foresight methodology allows formulation of possible trends of social-economic and technological development for the long-term perspective and reaching agreement between state, business and society concerning to strategic trends of the national development.