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Rethinking resilient futures for Nordic tourism

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ABSTRACT

Amid escalating environmental degradation, geopolitical and geoeconomic instability, and the structural vulnerabilities exposed by COVID-19 pandemic, resilience has become a central concern in tourism scholarship and policymaking. This introduction and the associated special issue examine how resilience is conceptualised and operationalised in Nordic tourism contexts. It demonstrates that resilience is not a neutral or universally shared idea or goal. The contributions in the special issue highlight how resilience emerges through social innovation in second-home destinations, communication strategies of destination management organisations, biodiversity-oriented leadership in national policy frameworks, post-disaster recovery and transformation processes, and the role of change agency under crisis conditions. These studies offer a multi-scalar view of resilience and reveal how institutional constraints, governance dynamics, and power asymmetries between different actors and scales shape what forms of resilience are possible and included or excluded. Based on this, there is a need to challenge often dominant instrumental and recovery-oriented uses of the concept and call for a more inclusive, ecologically grounded, and politically sensitive research agenda. By synthesising these insights and outlining future directions for resilience research in Nordic tourism, we call for moving beyond managerial framings to engage with the socio-ecological, political, and spatial conditions shaping tourism futures.

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1. Introduction

Rapid and accelerating global change has created increasing needs to adapt to our future. Due to this change, resilience has become a central idea in tourism and hospitality studies and governance (O'Connor et al., 2025). At a general level, resilience thinking is used to examine how tourism systems in different scales respond to crises, shocks, and change

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(Hall et al., 2023; Prayag, 2020). As with sustainability, the term has been widely adopted across a wide number of academic disciplines and in various policy settings. This wide usage has led to a conceptual ambiguity; the term is often used without clear definitions, applied inconsistently across different contexts, and employed to support varying and sometimes conflicting policy objectives (Amore et al., 2018). Resilience is a typical boundary concept that is shared by several different academic communities but potentially viewed or used differently by each of them (Star, 2010). While this is understandable, the definitional vagueness weakens the analytical utility of resilience, raising similar questions as in sustainability research: Resilience to what, to whom, and on what scale and conditions?

Thus, the emergence of resilience thinking in tourism calls for critical reflections, including its premises and normative claims (Hall et al., 2023). Resilience is often positioned as desirable, yet not all forms of resilience are inherently beneficial or desirable (to all). Indeed, calls for resilience may reinforce existing inequalities, protect the status quo, or place the burden of adaptation on vulnerable groups. Despite such risks and critical views, resilience has gained momentum, particularly during periods of intensified disruption. In tourism studies, the COVID-19 pandemic triggered a surge in resilience-focused research, revealing not only the fragility of tourism systems but also the need to rethink how destinations plan for uncertainty (Prayag, 2023; Rastegar et al., 2025). In the Nordic context, the rapid warming and changes in the Arctic has caused urgent needs for resilience building in tourism and tourism dependent communities (Saarinen, 2025). Overall, heightened awareness of environmental breakdown and geopolitical and geoeconomic instability has made resilience a timely issue.

This Special Issue focuses on these concerns and research needs by examining how resilience is constructed, practised, and contested in Nordic and related tourism settings. Here we address some of the current gaps in Nordic tourism scholarship by drawing attention to underexplored links between resilience, governance, social innovation, and environmental change. First, we trace the evolution of resilience research in tourism, identifying key theoretical approaches and debates. Second, we synthesise the five contributions to this Special Issue, highlighting shared concerns around adaptation, agency, and institutional change. Third, we propose a future research agenda that centres inclusion as a necessary condition for resilience in Nordic tourism. Based on this, we argue that resilience must be understood not only as a technical or ecological issue, but also as a political and social one. Future studies should examine how power, representation, and distributional justice shape both the aims and outcomes of resilience strategies. We conclude with reflections on how these insights can inform more equitable and adaptive approaches to tourism governance in uncertain times.

2. The evolution and development of resilience research

In the use of resilience in tourism-related studies several themes can be identified, which have also developed over time (Figure 1). As an early example, Holder (1980) used resilience in an economic context in reference to its role in strengthening and diversifying Caribbean economies. Similarly, O'Hare and Barrett (1994) used the term to refer to the capacity of the Sri Lankan tourism industry to respond to crises and political instability. The first-time tourism appeared in an ecological or biogeographical paper relating to ecological resilience was in Lovejoy (1994), which was also the first paper to connect

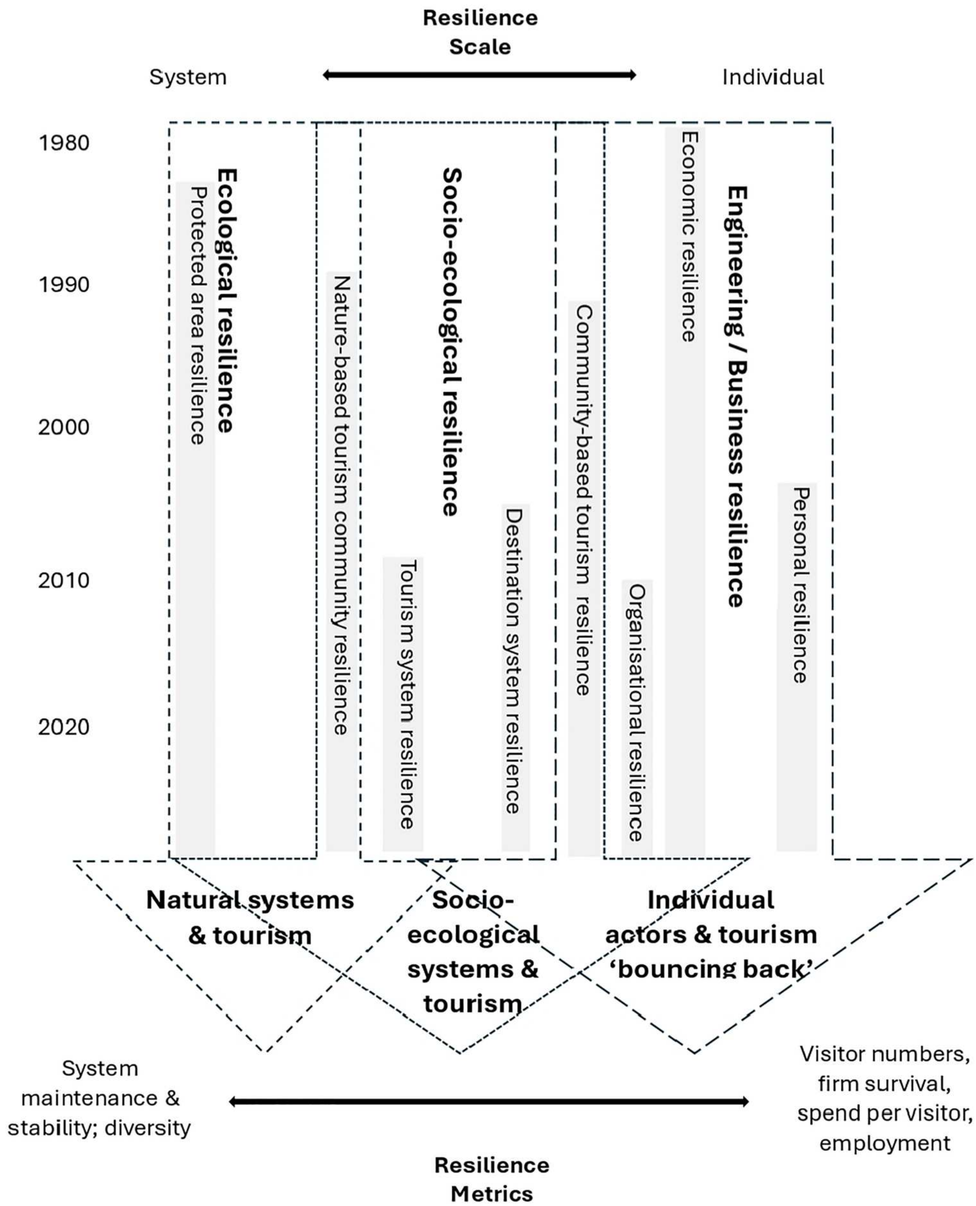

Figure 1. Major themes in resilience research in tourism studies (Source: Authors).

resilience and sustainable development issues in conjunction with tourism. The application of ecological resilience (see Holling, 1973) as a factor in tourism resource management was first argued in Tyler and Dangerfield (1999) work on ecotourism, which stressed the need for ecosystem management as the basis for ecotourism related developments.

Most of the research that is explicitly connected to ecological resilience and tourism is connected ecological disturbance and landscape change, particularly with respect to protected areas and national parks (McCook et al., 2010). Interestingly, much of the examination of ecosystem alteration or changes in biodiversity is closely connected to community-based tourism (see MacCord & Begossi, 2006) and how tourism can support protected areas and the communities that depend on them (Terk & Knowlton, 2010). Research that explicitly utilises a socio-ecological resilience lens in tourism is relatively uncommon but tends to stress the relationships between communities and the natural resources and environments, particularly protected areas, the depend on economically (Gu et al., 2012; Ruiz-Ballesteros, 2011). Rescia et al.'s (2010) examination of land use change and management in Sierra Norte de Sevilla Natural Park and Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve in Spain and their implications for the cultural landscape is one of the first to do so. In this benchmark study they reported that the ecological resilience of reserves was affected by socio-economic change with loss of natural diversity linked to the homogenization of the landscape and population change. In a salient conclusion, often repeated in similar studies, they argue that effective cultural landscape management, requires them to be understood as social–ecological systems, and should integrate the social and ecological components into adaptive management frameworks that involve the local population.

In their review of six communities in Dominica that had been through a seven-year community tourism development programme, Holladay and Powell (2013) examined resident perceptions of social, institutional, economic and ecological resilience. Like many such studies they concluded as to the importance of social relationships, local institutional capacity, tourism product diversification, and better managed development in enhancing community-based tourism. However, they also related these factors to adaptive capacity as well as enhancing sustainability, which they defined as "from a resilience theory perspective is the likelihood an existing system of resource use will persist indefinitely without a decline in social and natural resource bases" (Holladay & Powell, 2013, p. 1188). The socio-ecological resilience framework, together with related work on the role of social capital and relationships between actors in community based-tourism therefore also underlies much of the work on community resilience in tourism (Bec et al., 2016; Pyke et al., 2018). Although the, at times, problematic nature of defining communities and the nature of the tourism system at the destination level can lead to conceptual confusion as to the interplay between actors in the resilience of communities (Deason et al., 2022).

Research on organisation and business resilience in tourism is more recent, with it drawing on research on tourism sub-systems (Becken, 2013), socio-ecological resilience and environmental change (Smit & Wandel, 2006), business response to disasters and crises (Biggs et al., 2012; Orchiston & Higham, 2016), and from the general business resilience literature (Burnard & Bhamra, 2011; McManus et al., 2008). With much of the latter being drawn from natural hazard and disaster management research (Lee et al., 2013). Attempts at synthesising socio-ecological systems-oriented approaches to resilience with that of organisations are arguably best seen in the work of Biggs et al. (2012) on formal and informal tourism business in post-disaster Thailand and Australia (Biggs et al., 2015), Lew (2014) on tourism planning, and Prayag (2024) and colleagues work on organisational post-disaster resilience in New Zealand (Chowdhury et al., 2019; Jia et al., 2020; Prayag et al., 2020). Amore et al. (2018) and Filimonau and De Coteau (2020) also sought to provide an integrated framework for understanding resiience at a destination level. However, a common issue with much of the resilience and tourism business work has been concept confusion with both definitions of resilience and the theoretical grounding of studies (Fisher et al., 2019; Hall et al., 2017; Hall et al., 2023), together with broader questions as to the relationship between personal resilience and organisational resilience (Prayag et al., 2020; Senbeto & Hon, 2020) and the continued inadequate framing of the relationship between resilience and sustainability (Espiner et al., 2017; Hall et al., 2017; Tyrrell & Johnston, 2008).

While COVID-19 undoubtedly provided a major boost to studies of resilience, conceptual confusion was continued if not exacerbated by the sheer volume of papers that dealt with tourism business, destination, and consumer response to the pandemic (Hall et al., 2023; Hall & Naderi Koupaei, 2024; Prayag, 2020; Rastegar et al., 2025). Table 1 illustrates the dramatic growth in the use of resilience as a concept in the tourism and hospitality literature. What is clear in the table is the dramatic impetus that the COVID-19 pandemic gave to research on tourism and resilience. However, it is also apparent that the concept is itself a resilient idea, in that its importance to research and conceptual thinking remains. This is perhaps indicative of the contemporary polycrisis, led by climate and environmental change, geopolitical change, and economic uncertainty, that tourism finds itself in.

In studies related to human resource management (Ngoc Su et al., 2021), organizational resilience (Pathak & Joshi, 2021), mental health (Lindsay-Smith et al., 2022), psychological and social capital (Tanner et al., 2022), and the development of recovery strategies by business and government (Gu et al., 2023), resilience often came to be equated with the survival of tourism businesses rather than organisational change and system change (Hemmington & Neill, 2022; Ntounis et al., 2022; Wieczorek-Kosmala, 2022), with only limited attempts to connect resilience at different scales (Hall et al., 2023; Prayag & Dassanayake, 2023). Consumer studies were also usually framed in the context of risk rather than with respect to consumer resilience (Bae & Chang, 2021; Hall et al., 2021; Rather, 2021; Sánchez-Cañizares et al., 2021). This is not to suggest that there was no desire for system change, as numerous papers saw COVID-19 as an opportunity to change the nature of tourism to being more sustainable (however defined), and

Table 1. Occurrence of resilience terminology in Scopus (Source: Authors).

Terms	Pre-1990	1990–1994	1995–1999	2000–2004	2005–2009	2010–2014	2015–2019	2020-
Tourism								
and "resilience"	1	1	6	19	48	155	470	2122
and "community resilience"						7	30	136
and "business resilience"						1	3	40
and "organisational resilience"							8	70
and "individual resilience"							1	8
and "destination resilience"						1	21	66
Hospitality								
and "resilience"				2	2	10	19	402
and "community resilience"						1	1	13
and "business resilience"						1	1	26
and "organisational resilience"						2		33
and "individual resilience"								3
and "destination resilience"								5

particularly as an opportunity to control overtourism (Cheer, 2020; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020; Sharma et al., 2021). However, this was a hoped-for normative change in tourism at a macro-system or destination level. Thus, it was not necessarily connected to either socio-ecological resilience or an understanding of the dominance of profit and competitiveness in tourism industry behaviour (Gössling et al., 2020; Hall, 2022; Hall et al., 2020; Price et al., 2022).

While research on resilience in tourism and hospitality has clearly grown substantially and will likely continue to grow in the foreseeable future given the major economic, environmental, social, and geopolitical issues facing tourism, research remains challenged by issues of definition, scale of analysis, and conceptualisation. The great majority of resilience research focuses on the response of business, destinations, communities and people to shocks, e.g. disaster and crisis events (Hall, 2010; Hall et al., 2023; Seyfi et al., 2025; Tsao & Ni, 2016). Moreover, even if the analysis is theoretically informed, it is often not clear if resilience is being described in terms of a system state or in "bouncing back" or "forward" with respect to specific metrics, such as visitor numbers or economic impact, or some fusion of the two. However, given the adaptive nature of tourism systems at various scales, it is essential to recognise that the changes that are affecting resilience capacities may well be slow or gradual in nature (Hall et al., 2017). The situation is also further complicated by the panarchical and concatenated nature of tourism and subsystems, i.e. they are linked together vertically and horizontally so that influences and effects can move both up and down the tourism system but also between systems at the same scale (Hall, 2025). Therefore, in seeking to address the different challenges for a resilient future noted in the next section it becomes more important than ever to be clear in terms of how resilience is defined and understood, as well as the theoretical frameworks that inform it.

3. Synthesis of contributions in this special issue

Hall et al. (2024) offer a critical examination of how crises function as trigger events in destination development, using the 2016 Kaikōura earthquake in New Zealand as a case study. The central question concerns whether such trigger events lead to genuine transformation or merely reinforce existing trajectories. Framed through the lens of resilience and destination evolution, the study interrogates the often-repeated "disaster-reform hypothesis' by asking whether post-disaster transitions lead to more resilient pathways or merely reinstate the status quo presented as adaptation. The authors propose and apply a typology of destination development pathways that includes experimentation, competition, scale effects, and lock-in. The authors highlight the role of multi-scalar governance in constraining alternative pathways and argue that resilience, as currently operationalised, often reinforces existing power structures. This challenges the view that disasters naturally lead to reform and calls for greater attention to political and institutional barriers in future resilience research.

In their study, Wistveen et al. (2024) investigates how second-home tourism affects social sustainability and innovation in Øyer, Southeast Norway. Drawing on policy documents and interviews, the research finds that second-home development has strained local infrastructure, weakened community cohesion, and diminished residents' quality of life. Despite some perceived economic benefits, a disconnect remains between strategic goals and the lived experience of residents, largely due to weak collaboration and the exclusion of local voices from planning processes. The study shows that social sustainability, understood through inclusion, co-creation, and well-being, is not sufficiently integrated into tourism policy, which remains growth-driven. The authors also argue that elements of social sustainability can act as drivers of social innovation, but only if planning becomes more participatory and place-based. Without genuine involvement of both residents and second-home owners, the benefits of second-home tourism remain uneven, and its long-term value contested.

Tveteraas et al. (2024) explore how change agency and regional conditions shape a destination's capacity for path development during crises, using the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on two Norwegian regions, Stavanger and Kristiansand, as comparative cases. Drawing on economic geography, the authors apply the concept of change agency to assess how local actors respond to shocks, and how industry structure, leadership, and coordination influence resilience. Their findings show that while both destinations faced similar external pressures, Kristiansand demonstrated greater adaptability due to stronger place leadership and the presence of a unifying attraction. Stavanger, by contrast, suffered from weak coordination and fragmented responses, limiting the potential for renewal. The paper argues that crisis alone is not sufficient to trigger transformative change. Instead, the presence of enabling conditions, such as institutional capacity, stakeholder cooperation, and innovation networks, determines whether destinations can "bounce forward" rather than merely recover.

Similarly, Månsson and Eksell (2024) examine in the context of the COVID-19 crisis how destination management organisations (DMOs) in Sweden used communication to influence destination resilience. Based on interviews with major Swedish DMOs, the study finds that communication, particularly through networks and business intelligence, played a central role in enabling both adaptive and planned forms of resilience. The authors show that DMOs not only adjusted their messaging strategies but also redefined their roles and stakeholder relationships to respond to the fast-changing crisis environment. The study's key insight is that resilience depends on both horizontal (local-regional) and vertical (local-national) communication integration. The DMOs' capacity to act as intermediaries and information hubs allowed them to link actors across scales and sustain collaborative efforts during a period of prolonged uncertainty. The authors argue that DMOs' communication work must be seen not as a support function but as a core mechanism through which resilience is enacted. Their findings advance the understanding of how meso-level actors shape system responses in crisis contexts and point to the need for agile, network-based communication infrastructures in future resilience planning.

Finally, Sorakunnas et al. (2024) examine how Finland's Sustainable Travel Finland (STF) program addresses the relationship between biodiversity, leadership, and resilience in the tourism sector. Using interviews and document analysis, the authors assess the program's effectiveness in promoting biodiversity-respectful practices and enhancing resilience. While STF provides a structured framework for sustainability certification, its biodiversity measures remain limited in scale and mostly instrumental, reflecting a narrow, business-centered view of nature. The study finds that resilience-building in the program is constrained by a focus on local actions and a lack of integration of broader ecosystem values. Sorakunnas et al. (2024) argue that tourism's resilience in the face of ecological crisis requires moving beyond token biodiversity efforts. Instead, leadership should embed biodiversity protection across all aspects of tourism operations, marketing, and infrastructure planning. The paper calls for a shift from an anthropocentric to an eco-centric model, treating biodiversity not just as a resource but as a foundation for long-term viability. While STF represents a positive step, its potential as a resilience-building tool will depend on whether its leadership embraces this broader strategic vision.

4. Towards a new research agenda for resilience in Nordic tourism

The expansion of resilience as a research theme in tourism has produced a growing body of case studies, frameworks, and empirical insights. Yet, despite the increased volume of work, resilience scholarship involves some challenges in tourism studies (Amore et al., 2018; Hall et al., 2023; O'Connor et al., 2025). Conceptual inconsistencies remain, with resilience being invoked as a vague objective or context rather than as a carefully defined condition or strategy. In many cases, resilience is reduced to short-term recovery following disruption, measured through indicators such as visitor numbers, revenue restoration, or business continuity. This focus on "bouncing back" aligns with engineering-based understandings of resilience but leaves limited room for considering whether a return to pre-crisis conditions is either desirable or sustainable. As shown in Hall et al.'s (2024) study on Kaikōura with Nordic relevance, resilience strategies often reinforce existing development paths while presenting them as transformation, sidelining alternative futures that local actors may envision.

The contributions in this special issue collectively argue for a more situated, multi-scalar, and socially and politically aware understanding of resilience. Each paper, while rooted in a specific context, reveals shared themes that could inform a research agenda for inclusive resilient futures for Nordic tourism. First, the need to address structural constraints on transformation is evident. Whether in the limited experimentation allowed by post-earthquake governance in Kaikōura, or the marginalisation of local voices in second-home tourism planning in Øyer (Wistveen et al., 2024), resilience is rarely a neutral or universally shared goal. It is shaped by institutional arrangements, policy priorities, funding structures, and asymmetries of power between local and national actors. Future research must avoid treating resilience as an outcome to be delivered by technical means and instead treat it as a contested process with political stakes.

Second, the importance of agency and institutional capacity emerges as a critical theme. Tveteraas et al. (2024) show how change agents operating within specific structural conditions can shape, redirect, or fail to alter development trajectories in response to crises. In Kristiansand, the presence of strong place leadership allowed for a coordinated response to the pandemic; in Stavanger, institutional fragmentation weakened the region's adaptive capacity. The implication is clear: resilience depends not only on external conditions or the severity of shocks, but on the ability of actors to recognise opportunity spaces, mobilise support, and coordinate action. This calls for more attention to the enabling (or inhibiting) role of tourism governance arrangements, stakeholder coalitions, and the informal networks through which change is negotiated.

Third, the paper by Månsson and Eksell (2024) illustrates how communication infrastructures underpin resilience strategies at the meso-level. Their study of Swedish DMOs during the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the importance of vertically and horizontally integrated networks. These networks enabled DMOs to manage uncertainty, interpret information flows, and frame coordinated responses. Importantly, communication is not merely a transmission of information, it is a form of power that shapes what issues are prioritised, which voices are heard, and how resilience is defined. Future research must examine not just the presence of networks but their internal dynamics: who sets the agenda, how decisions are communicated, and how competing interests are reconciled.

Fourth, ecological conditions and biodiversity loss have not received adequate attention in resilience debates, especially in tourism settings where nature is both a resource and a vulnerable asset. Sorakunnas et al. (2024) show that while Finland's Sustainable Travel Finland program acknowledges biodiversity, it does so largely through a narrow, instrumental lens. Small-scale actions remain decoupled from the broader ecological challenges facing the Nordic region, including habitat degradation, species loss, and climate-linked ecosystem shifts. A resilience strategy that fails to address these conditions risks being performative. The authors argue that biodiversity must be treated not only as a source of value for tourism but as a foundational condition for social and economic life. This requires an epistemological shift: from an anthropocentric view that treats nature as an input, to an ecocentric view that treats tourism as embedded within natural systems.

Overall, these studies suggest that a revised research agenda for resilience in Nordic tourism should resist managerial framings that reduce resilience to risk mitigation or market adaptation. Instead, it should investigate how resilience is shaped by histories of land use, institutional legacies, value systems, and governance structures. This agenda must also move beyond event-driven analyses, which tend to focus on acute disruptions such as pandemics, disasters, or economic shocks. While such events draw attention and funding, many of the most profound threats to resilience are slow-moving: environmental degradation, demographic shifts, housing precarity, and the erosion of trust in institutions. These processes rarely produce headlines, but they degrade the adaptive capacity of tourism systems over time.

5. Conclusions: Resilient futures for Nordic tourism in the era of polycrisis

Resilience thinking in tourism needs to address the structural conditions in which it is currently situated. Resilience is increasingly shaped by a condition widely referred to as a polycrisis, where multiple crises occur simultaneously, interact with one another, and create overlapping disruptions (Gössling & Scott, 2025). For Nordic tourism futures, this includes rising temperatures and unstable winters, changing mobility regimes shaped by conflict and migration, labour shortages, housing inflation in seasonal destinations, and geopolitical and geoeconomic reconfigurations that may alter patterns of travel and investment (Hall & Saarinen, 2021). The resurgence of populist governance models, including renewed nationalism, anti-environmentalism, and the retreat from multilateral frameworks, further complicates efforts to build coherent, long-term resilience strategies. These macro-political shifts are not external to tourism. They reshape the conditions of tourism; what forms of tourism are promoted, who is welcomed, and how destinations and tourism mobilities are governed.

In this context, resilience cannot be reduced to institutional durability or market flexibility. It should be examined in terms of who is being made resilient, for what purpose, and at whose expense (Bertella, 2022). This is particularly important in the Nordic region, where the image of stability and sustainability may obscure deeper exclusions: marginalised rural residents, overburdened infrastructure in second-home regions, seasonal workers without security, and indigenous communities whose claims are often ignored in planning processes (Saarinen, 2025). A serious resilience agenda would ask whether current tourism models are compatible with the social and ecological thresholds that define long-term viability. Moreover, transformation and resilience must not be treated as interchangeable. True transformation involves redistributing power, rethinking objectives, and accepting that some systems should not be preserved. Research should trace where these trade-offs occur and how they are justified.

To build from this foundational clarification, future research must also confront how resilience operates across and between different scales of tourism systems. Advancing resilience research in Nordic tourism requires conceptual discipline and empirical precision. First, it is essential to clarify what is meant by resilience in a given study context and case. In this respect, future research should be explicit about the system under analysis, the spatial and temporal boundaries of the inquiry, and the underlying assumptions embedded in the use of the term. Without such clarification, resilience risks becoming a hollow signifier. Second, research needs to connect different analytical scales without collapsing them. Micro-level responses, such as firm-level adaptation or household decision-making, must be linked to meso-level structures like destination management organisations and to macro-level dynamics such as state policy or climate change (Zamani, 2025). However, these linkages must preserve the specificity of each scale, actors operate under different constraints and with different forms of agency. Third, the research agenda on resilience must highlight structural inequalities and the political conflicts embedded in tourism development and planning. Resilience policies are never neutral, they reflect choices about what to protect, who to include, and which futures are prioritised. Research should therefore investigate how historical legacies, institutional inertia, and socio-economic disparities shape resilience strategies. This includes examining how marginalised groups, such as seasonal workers, peripheral communities, or indigenous groups, are positioned within these strategies, and whether their needs and knowledges are included or excluded.

Fourth, resilience thinking should be reconceptualised beyond the logic of simple recovery. Instead of a "bouncing back" approach, resilience needs to be assessed through metrics that reflect diversification of economic activity, regeneration of ecological systems, social inclusion, and flexibility in governance arrangements. This shift requires moving towards more comprehensive evaluations of long-term system health and adaptive capacity. Developing meaningful measures and indicators for resilience in tourism is still an unresolved challenge. Much of the current assessment relies on relatively narrow, short-term metrics such as visitor numbers, business recovery rates, or infrastructure repair. A more robust approach would use multi-dimensional indicators to reflect adaptive capacity, ecological regeneration, social inclusion, institutional responsiveness, and how risks and benefits are distributed across different groups. In the Nordic context, this means tracking not only economic performance but also indicators related to biodiversity health, resident well-being, workforce stability, and stakeholder participation in planning. Therefore, future research needs to prioritise the co-development of such indicators with local communities, public agencies, and tourism actors to ensure they reflect situated values and trade-offs, rather than externally imposed benchmarks. Finally, research must treat the polycrisis seriously and more than a temporary disruption, it is the context in which tourism now operates. Future research should develop conceptual and methodological tools to understand how these crises interact, how they constrain the range of plausible futures, and how resilience strategies can be designed to address layered and recurring risks.

To conclude, the contributions in this special issue show that resilience in tourism must be treated not as a fixed goal but as a contested, negotiated, and uneven process. Across very different empirical contexts each study reveals how resilience is shaped by governance structures, institutional capacity, competing priorities, and broader political conditions. Indeed, resilience cannot be reduced to recovery or adaptation alone: it needs to be interrogated for what it preserves, what it enables, and what it restricts. In the Nordic region, where tourism development is often linked to narratives of balance, stability, and sustainability, these questions are especially urgent. What emerges from this collection is the need to rethink the assumptions underlying much of resilience discourse. The emphasis on coordination, communication, local agency, and long-term planning is important, but insufficient unless it is accompanied by a critical understanding of power, scale, and exclusion. A consistent theme across the papers in this special issue is the disconnect between strategic goals and actual practice, whether in the implementation of sustainability certifications, the treatment of residents in second-home destinations, or the limits of transformation after crises. These gaps suggest that resilience strategies need to be grounded in proactive and inclusive planning and supported by institutional arrangements that can absorb and respond to competing claims and shifting conditions. Resilience research in Nordic tourism is well positioned to lead in this rethinking for studying how resilience can be made more equitable, strategic, and ecologically grounded. This requires a break from narratives of recovery and growth, towards futures that are not only more resilient, but also more inclusive and just.

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