



13-14 November 2025

Perceptions and Motivations of Generation Z Toward Rural Tourism in Romania

MILITARU FLORIN DANIEL, CIOLAC RAMONA, MARIN DIANA, GAVRILĂ FLAVIUS-
IONATAN, POPESCU GABRIELA

*University of Life Sciences "King Mihai I" from Timisoara, Faculty of Management and
Rural Tourism, Timisoara, Romania*

IOSUD University of Life Sciences "King Mihai I" from Timisoara, Timisoara, Romania

Abstract: The study aimed to analyze Generation Z's perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral patterns regarding rural tourism in Romania. Using a structured questionnaire and a representative sample of young respondents, the research examined how demographic characteristics, travel frequency, and residential environment influence preferences for rural destinations. The findings revealed that Generation Z values comfort, cultural discovery, and nature-based experiences as core elements of rural tourism. Female respondents showed a stronger orientation toward cultural and experiential aspects, while male respondents were more focused on functional factors such as infrastructure and cost. Urban residents perceived rural destinations as opportunities for reconnection with heritage and nature, whereas rural participants expressed greater awareness of infrastructural deficiencies.

• Results and discussions

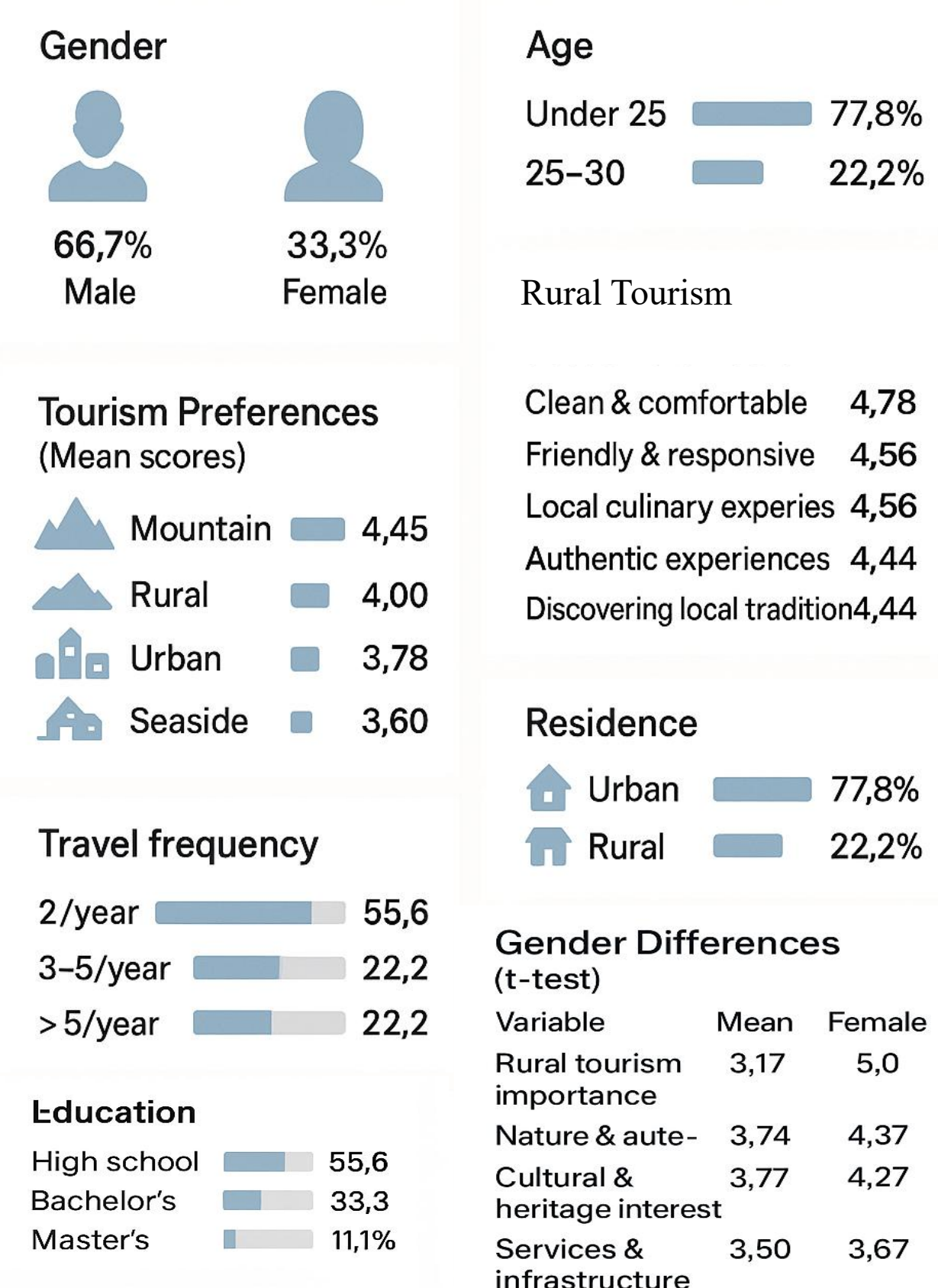
• Introduction

Rural tourism in Romania has gained importance through its links with sustainability, authenticity, and local heritage. Generation Z, shaped by digitalization and global values, increasingly seeks meaningful, nature-based, and culturally rich experiences. Understanding their perceptions is essential for developing competitive and sustainable rural destinations. The study investigates how demographic factors, gender, residence, and travel frequency influence Generation Z's attitudes toward rural tourism.

• Material and method

Quantitative research was conducted through a self-administered online questionnaire targeting Romanian Generation Z respondents. The instrument contained 65 items on perceptions, motivations, and socio-demographics, using five-point Likert scales. Data from 144 valid responses were analyzed in IBM SPSS using descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, t-tests, and ANOVA. Reliability was confirmed with Cronbach's α (0.76–0.91), ensuring consistency across dimensions such as authenticity, culture, and service quality.

Demographic Profile (n = 144)



• Conclusions

Generation Z views rural tourism as a fusion of comfort, culture, and nature. Emotional and experiential dimensions dominate their preferences, with clear gender and residence-based distinctions. To attract this segment, rural tourism providers should improve infrastructure, enhance service quality, and promote authentic local experiences through digital channels aligned with Generation Z's communication habits.