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Rural Tourism Development in Portugal: Analysis of Generations Y and Z

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Master in Hospitality and Tourism Management

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for Management and Economics

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**BUSINESS
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Resumo

Título: Desenvolvimento do Turismo Rural em Portugal: Análise das Gerações Y e Z

Autor: Inês Runa

A procura do turismo rural é cada vez maior, pela sua riqueza e beleza natural, pela sensação de paz e tranquilidade que proporciona e pela proximidade com a comunidade local. Além disso, a pandemia Covid-19 impactou a procura pelo turismo rural, sendo que as pessoas se sentiam mais seguras longe dos centros urbanos. As áreas rurais são menos desenvolvidas que as urbanas, os salários são mais baixos, a taxa demográfica é baixa, há falta de logística e baixo desenvolvimento tecnológico. Mais ainda, as características do turismo rural são o seu ponto de venda único, toda a riqueza ambiental e natural e o sentimento que lhe é associado, como o escapismo e a liberdade são a chave. Por todas estas razões expostas, o turismo rural é fundamental para o desenvolvimento das zonas rurais em Portugal e, para a sua expansão e valorização, devem ser considerados os roteiros turísticos. A finalidade deste tipo de turismo deve ser proporcionar uma experiência personalizada aos visitantes, onde se inserem as atrações e produtos locais, formando um único produto final. Este produto final deve incluir infraestruturas bem desenvolvidas, participação e consciencialização da população local, produtos e serviços locais, tecnologia e publicidade através dos canais online e, mais importante, deve ser sustentável. Esta dissertação pretende analisar as diferentes necessidades e preferências das Gerações Y e Z e como podem ser integradas no desenvolvimento do turismo rural em Portugal.

Palavras-Chave: Turismo Rural, Portugal, Rotas, Geração Y, Geração Z

Sistema de Classificação JEL:

Z310 – Turismo: Estudos da Indústria
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Abstract

Title: Rural Tourism Development in Portugal: Analysis of Generations Y and Z

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The demand for rural tourism is continuously increasing, because of its natural richness and beauty, the peaceful and quiet feeling it provides, and the proximity to the local community. Also, the Covid-19 epidemic impacted the rural tourism demand, as people were looking for places located far from the cities' centers where they would feel safer. Rural areas are less developed than urban areas, salaries are lower, the demographic rate is low, there is a lack of logistics, and low technological development. Moreover, rural tourism's characteristics are its unique selling point, all the environmental and natural richness and the feeling associated with it, such as escapism and freedom are the key. For all these stated reasons, rural tourism is key to the rural areas' development in Portugal, and, for its expansion and valorization, tourism routes shall be considered. The purpose of this type of tourism should be to give a personalized experience to the visitors where the area's attractions and products should be included, forming one single final product. This final product should include well-developed infrastructures, local people participation and awareness, local products and services, technology, and advertisement through online channels and most importantly it should be sustainable. This dissertation intends to analyze the different needs and preferences of Generations Y and Z and how can they be integrated into the rural tourism development in Portugal.

Keywords: Rural Tourism, Portugal, Routes, Generation Y, Generation Z

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1. Introduction

Covid- 19 is one of the main events of the 21st century, it has shaped our world, our way of living, of work, of traveling. It started in Wuhan (China) and on the 31st of December 2019, the World Health Organization stated that in this location there were several people affected with pneumonia. In 2020, the virus started to spread across the world (despite the efforts made by governments), and as of January 30, 2020, the WHO declared a global health emergency (Schumaker, 2020). On 11 March 2020, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the director–general of WHO declared the situation as an epidemy, "this is not just a public health crisis, it is a crisis that will touch every sector – so every sector and every individual must be involved in the fight" (WHO, 2021).

The consequences were visible, as of 2021, the death of 5 million people worldwide, the contraction of the global economy by 3.2%, and the general increment of prices, especially on energy, "power prices have risen to about four times the historical average in several European countries" (Mckinsey, 2021). Levels of inflation reached unprecedented levels, as of October 2021, the values were 3,6% in the European Union, 5,4% in the United States of America, 10,25% in Brazil, 52, 5% in Argentina, and 1,5% in Portugal (Trading Economics, 2021). The International Monetary Fund (IMF) described it as the worst recession since the great depression of 1930. All over the world, inequalities were raised – "entire communities and regions are being left behind", and that is mainly due to technologies and jobs automation (IMF, 2020). Exclusion, discrimination, and unemployment have been increasing during the pandemic period, deaths are higher in poorer regions and poorer individuals are more exposed, homeless people, refugees, and migrants are particularly affected. Older people, persons with disabilities, youth, and indigenous people have to be mentioned in this segment (UN, 2021). Lora Jones, Daniele Palumbo, & David Brown (2021) from BBC emphasized the high number of people who lost their jobs, the increasing employment rates, and the lack of job opportunities. The impacts on the younger generation have to be recognized, specifically in their education, well-being, and mental and physical health. The problem is bigger with children facing poverty, where the majority had difficulty accessing the proper technology required to have online classes (BBC News 2021).

Tourism has persisted in numerous negative events worldwide and across the years, including natural disasters, terrorism, Ebola, and SARS, however, this crisis has unprecedented consequences for this industry (BBC News 2021). In 2019, global travel and tourism contributed 8,9$ trillion to the world GDP and just in the first 10 months of 2020, the cost of

tourism reached 935$ billion, with the forecast to reach 2.4$ trillion in losses on the Global GDP in 2021 (Madden,2021). Just in 2020, 1.8 billion passengers flew, compared to 4.5 billion in 2019 (60.2% decrease). As of the last day of March 2020, there were 37.924 flights worldwide, in 2019 there were 105.193. The hardest period for the airline industry was in April 2020, with a drop higher than 70% in the number of commercial flights. (Flightradar24, 2021). Global airline passenger revenues fell by 69%, from $189 billion in 2019, which translated into a net loss of $126.4 billion. Governments gave support to this industry, of which 50% were loans, which results in debts for these companies. In Portugal, tourism is responsible for 18,6% of total employment ("A recuperação do Turismo | McKinsey," 2021). In 2020, the number of guests in Portugal decreased by 61% compared to the previous year (2019), less than 16.6 million people accommodated, a loss of 2.89 million euros only including accommodation (Laranjeiro, 2021).

Furthermore, governments took several measures to reduce the pandemic's impact, from social distancing, and mask use, to lockdowns, all contributing to "deglobalization". Sigala (2020) said that the COVID-19 crisis is different and "it can have profound and long-term structural and transformational changes to tourism." The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic will, most probably, persist in the proximate future, and "the tourism market is expected to suffer a prolonged contraction", alongside with the alteration on tourist behavior (Jeon & Yang, 2021). COVID-19 boosted technology usage, which is fundamental as it is a "disruptor of tourism, as well as a tool to build tourism resilience in crisis" - AI, robots, and big data for fast decision-making will ultimately result in the creation of smart destinations (Sigala, 2020). In particular, automation of all travel stages, for example with mobile check-in and check-out, contactless payments, access to fast wireless internet, digital menus, digital signs, chatbots, and interactive digital platforms, can increase service quality and safety (Sigala, 2020).

Tourist behavior has changed: Jeon & Yang (2021) said that tourists have been opting for local areas near their place of residence with low density and natural landscapes, basically rural areas - "as tourists have adjusted to the altered circumstances, tourist activities have changed." Communities of the same region have strengthened ties, as a result of the tourists' movement between these regions. The connection between major companies with local suppliers and small businesses increased with forecasts to continue in the future (Jeon & Yang, 2021). The repeated visitors exhibited a wider range of movement compared to the first-time visitors. Also, travel routes were a major choice for travelers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

All of these elaborated a new approach to tourism experiences with technological support, and a "rethink of business ecosystems and partnerships" (Sigala, 2020).

This scenario is an opportunity to transform and reform the tourism sector and to increase the market competitiveness in this industry (Wojcieszak-Zbierska, Jęczmyk, Zawadka, & Uglis, 2020). As stated by the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, this crisis can be "an opportunity to rethink how tourism interacts with our societies, other economic sectors, and our natural resources and ecosystems; to measure and manage it better; to ensure the fairer distribution of its benefits and to advance the transition towards a carbon-neutral and more resilient tourism economy." (UNWTO, 2020d. Accordingly, there is the chance to rebuild the tourism industry with the following principles: governance, innovation, technology, accessibility, and sustainability, building "smart destinations". (UNWTO, 2020d). It is fundamental to develop a growth tourism model that does not reside in intensive growth, but instead in a positive model, which enables the Portuguese destinations to be authentic, sustainable, and supportive. Rita Marques, the State Secretary for Tourism in Portugal mentioned the five-key areas of intervention for the future: connectivity, investment, territory, knowledge, and promotion. (IPDT, 2020). The president of *Turismo de Portugal*, Luís Araújo, indicated four areas of intervention, companies' revitalization through financial support, qualifying the human resources to improve the service, innovation, digitalization and, finally sustainability (IPDT, 2020). The president of *Turismo de Portugal* also said that "the only way forward is precisely through sustainability, protecting the planet and the well-being of the people who live in the territory" (Macedo, 2020). The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is centralized in equality, to take this situation as an opportunity to build a global economy that serves us all. The IMF Managing Director, Kristalina Georgieva, said "the best memorial we can build to the people who have died in the pandemic is a greener, smarter, and fairer world" (IMF, 2020). The United Nations mentioned the importance of countries' social policies, as the United Nations Secretary-General said, *"we must come to the aid of the ultra-vulnerable – millions upon millions of people who are least able to protect themselves. This is a matter of basic human solidarity, this is the moment to step up for the vulnerable "* (UN, 2021). The World Tourism Organization emphasized rural tourism's important role in the upcoming years to face the impacts caused by the COVID-19 epidemic in rural areas. For example, Germán Cardoso, Minister for Tourism in Uruguay, mentioned the importance of rural tourism in market diversification and the unique experiences offered by it. Matías Lammen, the Minister for Tourism in Argentina highlighted the "greener future". Marcelo Alvaro Antonio, Minister of Tourism for Brazil, highlights the importance of innovation and investments alongside

adventure tourism and ecotourism. The Minister of Tourism in Paraguay, Sofía de Afara, reinforced the sustainable principles and the need to work with the local community (UNWTO, 2020c). IATA's President Willie Walsh, is positive for the future, mentioning that the worst part is behind and now is time to recover. "I think it's going to take several years to get back to 2019 levels. The latest prediction is 2024. If you're an optimist you'd say 2023, the pessimists are saying 2027. Personally, I think it's closer to 2023...that's probably a reasonable forecast" (Hancock, 2021). The tourism of the next decade will be different with emphasis on two concepts: sustainability and security (IPDT, 2020).

In this way, the need to look at rural areas and their development has increased, not only because of the growth in demand but also because of the areas' potential and the lack of preservation. There are several problems in rural areas, in particular depopulation, low income, lack of logistics (transports, services, and infrastructures), and low digital and technological development associated with traditional business models with low diversity (UNWTO, 2020c). In accordance with UNWTO (2020c), nearly 1 billion youth with ages between 15 and 24 years old live in developing countries and 88% of them in rural areas, 75 million are unemployed. Besides, 50% of the world's population lives in metropolitan areas and it is expected that this number will increase to 66% by 2050 ("Link. urban Rural Tour. Strateg. Sustain.," 2017). In Portugal, the higher population density is in the metropolitan area of Lisbon, with a value of 946,8 individuals per Km^2, followed by Madeira Island with 317 and the north area with 167,9 in the year 2019. In opposition, the lower density values occur in Alentejo (22,3), the center (78,6), and Algarve (87,8). ("PORDATA - Densidade populacional," 2020).

There is a huge developing gap among the several areas of Portugal and rural tourism can be used as a tool to improve these circumstances, by reconnecting people to nature and rural areas. The connection with nature has several health benefits, both psychological and physiological. (Slocum, Susan L., 2011). "National, regional and local governments should place tourism as one of the strategic pillars of rural development." (UNWTO, 2020c). That is because tourism is considered a less costly non-traditional rural development strategy, and not necessarily dependent on outside companies (Wilson, Fesenmaier, Fesenmaier, & Van Es, 2001).

Briedenhann & Wickens (2004) argued that there is a high opportunity to explore rural areas by "establishing networks of different service providers, organized in such a way to maximize opportunity and offer a diverse range of activities." Authors have mentioned the development of rural tourism routes stimulates entrepreneurial activities, the ancillary services, provide a diverse range of optional activities, and disperse tourists, resulting in the reduction of

the negative environmental impacts, and the generated income is more distributed along the stakeholders (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004). Moreover, tourism is a tool of rural development as it stimulates the economy, increases the less visited regions' visibility and it will ultimately improve the local population's lifestyle. Its benefits must be felt not only in the urban areas but also in the rural areas and must "provide opportunities for all" (UNWTO, 2020c).

Slivar, Aleric, & Dolenec (2019) add that through the understanding of the tourists' characteristics, alongside the travel trends of new generations, it will be possible to modify the offers provided to better satisfy the needs of the target group, contributing to "the overall satisfaction of tourists, reduce complaints, improve the relations with tourists and influence the total experience of the tourist destination they are visiting." Breda, Pacheco, & Dinis (2019) refer that "we cannot predict the future nor can fully prepare for it, however, if we withdraw information from current experiences, we can prepare ourselves for change." This statement is supported by the article of Xiang, Magnini, & Fesenmaier (2015), in which it is cited that "sustaining business success hinges upon a firm's ability to understand and capitalize on consumer behavior trends." Also, as quoted by IPDT (2020), "we need to adapt to tourist's behavior changes, who will be more attentive to issues like security, information, and flexibility". Therefore, it is important that companies in this sector continually analyze the needs and expectations of consumers. "An analysis of tourist profiles is important to understand the main dynamics of the tourism industry and generation theory can shed light on visitor research in tourism." (Karakaş, Çizel, Selçuk, Coşkun Öksüz, & Ceylan, 2021). To study the changes in the tourism market, it is essential to analyze the attitudes, motivations, and behavior of consumers, giving greater importance to generation Y (born between 1980 and 1994) and Z (born between 1995 and 2012), because these will have increasing importance in tourism (Monaco, 2018). Accordingly, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), published the international tourist arrivals (2018) - 1.4 billion in 2018 - due to the aspiration of Generation Z and Y and to the role of technologies and social media, enabling travel more accessible.

Rural tourism's importance is obvious, and it has become a more frequent choice in recent times, and it can be viewed as one of the main paths to overcome the crisis and the lack of development faced in rural areas and to decrease the inequalities faced inside countries, including Portugal. Besides, it is vital to study the younger generations, as they are part of tourism nowadays and will be the tourists of the future. Accordingly, this report studies the consumer's needs, demands, and expectations on rural tourism and travel routes in Portugal, with a focus on Generations Y and Z. The aim is to understand potential key development factors on rural tourism, considering the most recent travel generations, Generation Y and Z.

Also, to perceive the differences between these two generations when considering tourism preferences. With this research, it is aimed to answer the following questions: "How is rural Tourism perceived in Portugal from the perspectives of Generations Z and Y?", "What are the main differences in the rural tourism and travel routes preferences of both Generations?", "What are the most relevant items to consider for rural tourism development in Portugal?". To answer these questions, firstly research was made on several topics, such as rural tourism, touristic routes, and the Generations. Then, it was made into an empirical study which includes a focus Group and a survey made specifically to Generations Z and Y.

The study of Generation Y and Z has great importance for the success of industries, including tourism, in which these Generations already play a major role. They should be listened to, and companies should build their strategy according to the new trends and preferences as they are very different from the previous Generations. The world is changing fast and the companies and sectors that don't accompany these changes are doomed to fail.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Rural Tourism

2.1.1. The concept

Ruiz-Real et al. (2020) consider rural tourism an alternative to mass tourism with several premises, located in rural areas, involved with the local practices, traditions, and heritage. Commonly small enterprises connected with nature have slow growth and contribute to community development (Ruiz-Real et al., 2020). Similarly, Lane (1994) uses several components to define rural tourism as it is a complex concept. Rural tourism occurs in areas with low population density which corresponds to most of tourists' motivations: to escape from the urban areas and to have different experiences. Rural tourism takes place in natural areas with forests and agriculture. Being a repository of "the natural world and wildlife", it incorporates the rural heritage that composes the rural tourism character (Lane, 1994). The author mentioned the vital points that compose the rural tourism concept, to be located in rural areas within the traditional traces, small-scale enterprises "growing slowly and organically" (Lane, 1994).

According to the World Tourism Organization, rural tourism is "a type of tourism activity in which the visitor's experience is related to a wide range of products generally linked to nature-based activities, agriculture, rural lifestyle/culture, angling and sightseeing" (UNWTO, 2020a). More precisely, rural tourism activities must fulfill some parameters, be located in rural areas with the domination of agriculture and forestry activities, also with low population density and "traditional social structure and lifestyle". (UNWTO, 2020a). Lane (1994) cited, "if rural tourism is special, if rurality in its many manifestations is a unique selling point, then great care must be taken to maintain rurality."

Gilbert (1989) refers to the fact that rural tourism is a product, and every product is constituted by two components, features, and benefits. The benefits are the characteristics that increase visitors' satisfaction and pleasure obtained by the "feeling of communing with nature or a sense of freedom or escapism". Rural tourism features are the ones fundamental to customer satisfaction, the basic services that tourists are expecting, for example, car parking. These two concepts form the product offering or the augmented product. (Gilbert, 1989). In addition, this author says that rural tourism cannot be too successful as it may become a form of mass tourism and lose its authenticity, and ultimately "change the nature of the product".

There are a considerable number of rural tourism advantages, including its focus on the local economy, the connection with the neighboring areas, and local culture integration (Sánchez-Ollero, García-Pozo, & Marchante-Lara, 2011). The major contributions of rural tourism development are equal tourism benefits distribution, job creation, and empowerment with inclusion, "particularly women, youth and indigenous people". Also, the culture and nature protection and accessibility improvement (UNWTO, 2020d). The World Tourism Organization said that rural tourism is a support to rural communities, creating employment and supporting local businesses, and at the same time protecting the natural and cultural heritage "that makes us human" (UNWTO, 2020b). In 1993, Martha Frederick had already provided a detailed vision of the rural tourism advantages: development and growth of the rural areas' infrastructures and facilities with public and private resources. It gives a positive economic impact in such areas considering that tourism gives extra value to local resources. Finally, there are several indirect benefits such as the income generated for the tourism facilities which will ultimately increase the regional economy (Frederick, 1993). Likewise, Paresishvili et al. (2017), refer to the regional economic development, magnified through job creation for the local population. Wilson et al. (2001) highlight the destination characteristics as a rural tourism advantage, "rural areas have a special appeal to tourists because of the mystique associated with rural areas and their distinct cultural, historic, ethnic, and geographic characteristics" (Wilson et al., 2001). As reported by the WTO, rural tourism "has a high potential" to arouse the "local economies" and to provoke "social changes", because it supports other economic activities, it contributes to GDP and "job creation", and it combats seasonality in a "wider territory" (UNWTO, 2020a). Rural tourism enables us to maintain and to even accentuate the rural life spirit, at the same time it provides an experience to tourists. It can increase rural area attractiveness, "mitigating demographic challenges and reducing migration" (UNWTO, 2020c).

2.1.2. Rural Tourism Development

Gilbert (1989) proposed the following definition: "Appropriate rural tourism development is the planned use of resources for a countryside area which will lead to an increase in the general welfare of the environment, the community, and the visitor." It is a concept, as its purpose is to develop the rural area and the community life, involving the host, visitor, and the environment. It is a phenomenon of interaction between the resources of people, technology, and available budgets. It is a multidisciplinary strategy to "logically improve the social benefits

derived by the host, the visitor, and the environment". Rural tourism must evolve considering the local area economy, history, and location. Ultimately, rural tourism must present a sustainable approach (Lane, 1994).

There are several successful rural tourism development components, its natural and manmade attractions, the marketing, to promote the destination, the community, and its features (Wilson et al., 2001). Well-developed infrastructures are very important, namely, accessibility, means of transportation, communication, water and power services, and parking, alongside the region's range of services, mainly lodging, restaurants, and health care services (Wilson et al., 2001) (Paresishvili et al., 2017). Local people's hospitality is very important, being reflected in the community approach to tourists, alongside the community and rural tourism entrepreneurs' collaboration (Wilson et al., 2001). "Without human capital, rural development would be impossible" - the WTO refers that rural communities shall adapt to the rapid digital advance and embrace it, creating awareness in the population. Innovation, technology, and digitalization must be promoted and ensured in rural tourism by the governments.

In 2020, the WTO elaborated a long-term rural tourism development strategy, considering the upcoming years which contains numerous principles. First, local communities have major importance. Thus, the rural essence and identity should not suffer any changes, as well as the natural reserves and the historical and cultural heritage, which will result in engagement. The rural and urban tourism industry alongside other sectors and activities should be committed to the same purpose: to develop the rural areas and to promote the destination sustainably. Equal gender opportunities must be ensured by the governments. An environment for investments shall be created especially to attract the micro small and medium enterprises, which will attract innovation, digitalization, and entrepreneurship, "this can be achieved through the development of essential infrastructure and services, fiscal policies, monetary incentives, and education and training" (UNWTO, 2020d). The focus of rural tourism should be to provide an authentic, new, and personalized experience "that is unique to rural areas, promoting contact with nature, and culture in uncrowded environments". All rural resources (i.e.: natural landscapes, culture, gastronomy, health, wellness, and sports activities) shall be incorporated into the tourism strategy. Lastly, WTO adds the community, stakeholders and visitors' awareness-raising with local culture, environmental conservation, rural community importance, and "ensuring respect for the destination." Governments must guarantee awareness for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in the rural areas (UNWTO, 2020c). The tourism industry must have sustainable development, fight against consumerism, and use local resources to "generate well-being" (Sigala, 2020).

The type of tourists, their motivations, and expectations are fundamental to a better tourism development strategy. Besides, it is important to comprehend the area's tourism potential alongside the local community perceptions (Frederick, 1993).

2.2. Touristic Routes

2.2.1. Integrated Tourism

There is a consensus among literature - urban and rural places benefit from its connection. The European development strategy involves the development of the relations between rural and urban areas, through the promotion of partnerships. ("Link. urban Rural Tour. Strateg. Sustain.," 2017).

Cawley & Gillmor (2008) have stated that there is a positive relation between the way activities fit into a community and the destination's competitive advantage. The lack of relations between the different stakeholders will probably result in a barrier to rural tourism development (Cawley & Gillmor, 2008). "The success of integrated tourism is dependent on the strength of the connections and the ability to negotiate, collaborate and work towards common goals." (Slocum, Susan L., 2011).

Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) is defined as the cooperation and collaboration linkages between stakeholders, businesses, resources, and tourism activities (Slocum, Susan L., 2011). Integration in tourism planning is the "tourism that is explicitly linked to the economic, social, cultural, natural, and human resources of the localities in which it takes place" with the main goal of empowering communities and facilitating sustainability. It is the communities' integration to reach a common goal: to develop a tourism system that supports the locals, and the destination itself (Slocum, Susan L., 2011). IRT has several intrinsic characteristics, such as being small-scale, authentic, a link between agriculture and tourism experience, educational, and formed through several partnerships among the community and other interested parties (Cawley & Gillmor, 2008). This concept is fundamental for reaching the area's full potential through a coordinated usage of its resources. It is often implemented in regional contexts, and it can be used as a form to disperse tourists, their money, and their impacts. Integrated tourism is characterized by the integration into the local life and system, complementarity to other industries and ways of life, sustainability principles, and network creation between several stakeholders and its empowerment. (Slocum, Susan L., 2011). "Research shows that the tourist sector requires a network approach since it allows organizations and tourist areas to function in the changing, complex and competitive environment" (Naramski & Szromek, 2019).

2.2.2. The Concept of Route Tourism

Murray & Graham (1997) defined route tourism and its importance as, the "creation of historical, economic and cultural linkages between individual sites, smaller towns, tourist-historic cities, and regions." Murray & Graham (1997) cited, "the experiences obtained along the way are at least as important as the destinations themselves", therefore management of touring routes must reconcile linkages between points of attractions and the different interests and motivations. "Inter-organizational networks are a form of cooperation that can be applied to the unique branch of the economy that is tourism and specifically to tourist routes and heritage tourist sites" (Naramski & Szromek, 2019). This network enables more control of the tourist traffic and creates new knowledge, resulting in the network, and route improvement (Naramski & Szromek, 2019).

Flognfeldt (2005) mentioned that routes are an important part of touristic products and also, the author referred events that contributed to the touristic routes' growth, the pilgrimages, the cars invention, the creation of travel guidebooks, and travel programs. Hardy (2003) specified the importance of drive holidays or drive tourism – travel to a certain destination or destinations with a car - it provides a sense of freedom and independence. Drive tourism has several positive outcomes, for instance, the dispersal of tourism flows and the increment of economic income to local cities. By attracting a small number of people, in contrast with mass tourism, it is possible to better control the visitors' impact (Hardy, 2003).

Hardy (2003) stated that "themed touring routes have been advocated as opportunities to link regional communities together, form partnerships, encourage tourism development in commonly traveled routes, provide a more satisfactory tourism experience and maximize economic benefits to local businesspeople by encouraging longer stays and greater spending in the region." Which will, ultimately, create opportunities for local communities to conduct a gainful activity, based on knowledge and culture" (Naramski & Szromek, 2019). More specifically, themed tourist drives or trails are defined as being an initiative by the local entities, thus are on a smaller scale involving particular attractions, besides they can be in the form of a circuit leading tourists back to the proximity of the point where they started (Hardy, 2003). The development of themed touring routes is due to the increase in the number of people wanting to experience free and independent travel and also due to local communities' commitment to participating in tourism-related activities (Hardy, 2003). Naramski & Szromek (2019) wrote about the importance of the network approach on the tourist routes, "since it contributes for the relationship between the touristic product of the region and the space of local communities,

which gives significance to the routes." To defend this argument, several benefits for the tourist enterprises were mentioned by the authors: an increase in inter-organizational-learning and knowledge, increased competitive advantage (Naramski & Szromek, 2019); Reduced costs, contributing to creating an added value for the client, "the competitive advantages in building partnerships, networks, and subnetworks or other thematic structures is a way to defend the heritage and territory, providing sustainability and increasing the competitiveness of communities and their local business. Also reduces inequalities and creates new spaces and opportunities" (Mendes, Galvão, & Martins, 2012). That is because this relation "provides solutions to address common socio-economic and environmental problems in a more sustainable perspective" ("Link. urban Rural Tour. Strateg. Sustain.," 2017). The preservation of rural landscapes and the enhancement of tourism experiences are benefits of this linkage. Tourist experiences obtained with these routes are richer and will consequently increase tourist consumption in the area and better distribute the wealth through a broader area; these itineraries will positively affect the destination's promotion (Murray & Graham, 1997). Moreover, Naramski & Szromek (2019) stated that tourist routes contribute to the value for the local communities and to the region's sustainable development as it allows the preservation of heritage through its commercialization, which results in more funds for its maintenance.

2.2.3. Touristic Routes Development

Hardy (2003) defined the successful principles for themed tourist routes in a pyramid. On this basis, there are the local characteristics and attractions that fulfill the customer's needs, resulting in an increment of competitive advantage, for instance, landscapes and monuments. After, in the pyramid, is a safe and efficient road network, followed by clear directional and tourist signage. It is important to have adequate infrastructure and efficient user-friendly information. Lastly, tours and visitor services should be linked and packaged, which will lead to the top of the pyramid – a well-managed network (Hardy, 2003). This author has enumerated some success factors to develop a successful route, firstly the acceptance, embracing, and commitment from the communities and local entities. Also, the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders where the equality principle is dominant, "no single source or level of stake prioritizes the interest of the different groups." (Hardy, 2003). All parts of the partnership must develop genuine relations, considering each other's region's value, therefore awareness is a core concept, involving tourism and cultural heritage components (Atcharee, Sastra, & Kosit, 2015). Stakeholders must be involved, participate in the decision-making process, and be empowered. Secondly, the provision of the main attraction which is the core of the tourism experience and

used by the route promotion, to transmit what the destination has to offer to visitors, "gives visitors a reason to stop en route" (Hardy, 2003). Likewise, Murray & Graham (1997) highlight the theme definition importance, "a theme that transcends geographical diversity and distance to provide a spatially expansive but integrative marketable theme." Thirdly, the provision of high-quality interpretation can enhance the visitor's experience and create awareness of certain issues and consequently facilitate sustainable tourism. Interpretation as an educational and entertaining component in the trip is themed touring routes, "is vitally important in signage design for roads and sites, brochures, visitor centers, and map design. It is also crucial in explaining to people why sites are significant as well as giving the touring route a clear and identifiable theme" (Hardy, 2003).

There must be products and experiences to incentivize individual spending. In addition, to freely involve the communities is primordial, "in which the voices of local communities are heard and decisions relating to the type, scale and rate of tourism development informed by their input" (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004). Murray & Graham (1997) add that a successful management strategy must be made with the principles of inclusion and mutual respect, connecting host communities, travelers, and governance policies. Consequently, it is necessary to sustain some conditions, to maintain good partnerships, for instance, to have similar and compatible interests, willingness to share the cooperation benefits, its costs, and risks, and have an honest motivation to participate in the cooperation (Naramski & Szromek, 2019).

Essentially, Hardy (2003), resumes touristic route's success in the following factors: place (location and accessibility are fundamental factors), product, in which visitors' feedback and satisfaction are very important, and promotion by understanding the target market and people. This may be in the form of the internet, brochures, or maps." The path, which is to clearly define the pathway with signage i.e., "presentation of the route as a whole (product) must be consistent." Principles of interpretation – "include brochures, internet sites, visitor centers, static signs and guided tours", it must be "enjoyable, relevant, organized and, most importantly thematic", it shall also be consistent. Price and protection of natural and cultural heritage, ensuring the route sustainability. Finally, people, "refers to visitors, those working in the industry and the local community and the importance of product delivery" and packaging, to have an ultimate single product, composed by several elements in several locales (Hardy, 2003).

Mendes et al., (2012) emphasized the great importance of social media – "the creation of networks of exchange and sharing cultural heritage information through a digital knowledge platform are critical for citizens, enterprises, government, and researches". The authors made a strategic plan based on cooperation between cities, "reinforcing the differentiation factors,

attractiveness, competitiveness and internationalization dynamics." A common strategy for the promotion of partnerships is a must, with multidisciplinary teams for management and exploitation of the region, resulting in social and economic sustainability. Consolidation alongside innovativeness and knowledge – "promotion of attraction and establishment of innovative activities and qualifying human resources and creative professionals." International projection image, resources, and brand creation with qualitative (World Heritage) and quantitative factors (i.e.: visiting 4 monuments). Create awareness for the visitors and locals by assuming the site's competitive advantages – "encouraging visitors to learn more about the territory and extend their stay." Provide qualified touristic services with a human resources team, which will result in an improved visitor experience.

Flognfeldt (2005) outlined the importance of sites on touristic routes, "every site on a specified route might also have something that makes a stop at this site special for at least one segment of travelers". The conditions in which the route is developed, its efficiency, and characteristics directly influence the touristic flows (Flognfeldt, 2005). Festivals are very relevant as they can be used as a link between cultural tourism routes – "this kind of event helps to develop the image of the countryside while stimulating the enterprising qualities of the local people and increasing their willingness to participate in business ventures" (Atcharee, Sastra, & Kosit 2015). These tourism routes, involving the traditional festivals, have a great impact on the region's appeal and can encourage tourists to prolong their stays and spend more money (Atcharee et al., 2015) (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004).

Two examples of well-managed tour routes can be mentioned, both USA routes, the *Cascade Loop,* and *The Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail* (Hardy, 2003). The first, *Cascade Loop* is a 400-mile self-drive tourism trail in Washington state, USA, which includes itineraries for bus tours, tour themes, accommodation, attractions, and a mileage matrix. There are several reasons for its success, but the main one is the fact that it is promoted as one product. Moreover, it is an industry-driven organization, has an excellent internet site and supporting material, is set in an area of natural beauty, and it is a combination of the private and public sectors (Hardy, 2003). On the other hand, the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail (GTCBT) is based on an idea to connect nature tourism with the communities in Texas, and ultimately, encourage the protection of coastal native bird habitats. It is possible to enumerate some reasons for its success, such as the fact the central coast of Texas was already well-known among birdwatchers, thus the trail capitalized on the region's main attraction. Besides, community involvement is an important factor in its success, as many communities have changed the focus of their attractions, having the focus on birding and nature tourism. Hardy (2003) cited that

"developing the GTCBT required a change of mindset amongst the communities along the coast of Texas, which had traditionally competed for tourists between themselves." Moreover, Ismoilov, Mullabayev, & Abdulxakimov (2020) referred to the example of the new tourist route, "Safed Boulogne or Shah Jarir", which has several successful features, namely: it clearly shows the different activities and directions, the development of a 3D model and an electronic map, as has a very good and complete digital platform.

2.3. Generations: A comparative analysis

2.3.1. Preferences and motivations

Tourists' preferences have changed due to the pandemic, currently, they look for less crowded areas with open-air activities, for new and authentic experiences mostly in rural areas, they expect digital innovation, flexibility, and a "greener approach in all stages of the travel" (UNWTO, 2020d). There were several alterations in customer behavior, namely during the pandemic, there was a high increment in buying (caused by panic) and overconsumption of virtual experiences. Priorities and lifestyles have changed, "people are reflecting and recalibrating their priorities and social values", during lockdowns people's usage of technologies and social media increased (Sigala, 2020). Rural tourists have several motivations, such as ecological uniqueness, adventure opportunities, cultural attractions, and the quietness of the rural zones (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004).

Xiang, Magnini, & Fesenmaier (2015) studied customer behavior in tourism and listed the factors that mostly influence the purchasing of tourism products, namely the search engines, the growth of social media, and the massive usage of smartphones and their apps. The importance of innovation is high as customer needs are constantly changing. The Internet, more specifically the Online Travel Agencies (OTAs), are the primary source of information in travel planning, whilst the customer prefers to analyze different channels of information (online and offline) to make a final decision. The offline sources serve as complementary sources of information (Xiang et al., 2015). The World Tourism Organization (WTO) had stated that safety procedures must be part of the tourism destination communications alongside sustainability, innovation, and adequate data use ("post-pandemic tourism - Jornal Económico," 2020). Sustainability should be the main focus of the tourism business, being the best approach to distribute the tourism wealth more equitably, preserve the natural and cultural resources and

increase the destination companies' profitability and notoriety (IPDT, 2020) (Murray & Graham, 1997).

In this way, it is critical to develop a system that gathers various sources of information (online and offline) "to distribute their products and better communicate with their prospective and returning customers" (Xiang et al., 2015). An important finding by Xiang et al., (2015) demonstrates that products non-related directly to accommodation providers (i.e.: museums, festivals, and events) are becoming more relevant and would be an advantage if they would be aggregated into a single product or package. The younger generations are "digitally savvy" and more engaged in travel planning, using a broader range of tools to search for useful information. (Xiang et al., 2015)

2.3.2. The Generations

The theory of generations was developed in 1952 by Mannheim, which determines that each generation is classified based on a specific period, experiences, and historical context. This author also states the existence of subgroups in each generation. There is not an exact clearness on the dates comprehended in each generation date range: Pichler et al. (2021) considered Generation Y the ones born between 1981 and 1996 and Generation Z the individuals born between 1997 and 2012. Leslie et al. (2021) consider the Millennials the ones born between 1981 and 1995. The interval range considered in the present study for Generation Z comprehends people born in the period from 1995 to 2012 (Gomez et al., 2021) (Liu, Liu, Yoganathan, & Osburg 2021). Generation Y is considered to be between the dates of 1980 and 1994 (Giovanis & Athanasopoulou, 2017)

Gen Z and Y like to explore less visited destinations, preferably "to a different world region, for a longer period", they value the activities in the destination as they would obtain a better experience. Both generations are familiar with technologies, they set trends, are positive and non-linear thinkers, are innovative people, and "face-to-face and digital word of mouth are particularly influential". Social media has a big impact on their lives, a study conducted by *Booking.com* in 2018, demonstrates that "60% of all travelers intend to post their travel experience on social media each day, where the younger generation is more likely to do it. 84% of Gen Y post on their vacation on social media", they predominantly use *Facebook, Instagram,* and *Tripadvisor.* 40% of Generation Y and Z travel with friends, 34.3% with partners, and 20% with family members, whilst 5.7% are solo travelers, both prefer to stay in private accommodation (Giovanis & Athanasopoulou, 2017).

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Gen Z has been recognized as technology-driven because it is not only present in their daily routines, but it is part of it and this generation was born surrounded by technology, whilst the Millenials had to adapt to it (Pichler, Kohli, & Granitz, 2021). The authors also highlighted the negative aspects of intensive technology usage, which are addiction, lack of sleep, attention issues, anxiety, depression, and loneliness. Due to this connection with technology, Generation Z has more access to information and consequently is more individualistic, even when compared to generation Y. A study was made to compare these two generations, concluding that the most recent generation has more social difficulties: "in the USA 74% of *Gen Zers* say they struggle with in-person communication compared to 50% of early Millennials and 65% of late Millennials", (Pichler, Kohli, & Granitz, 2021). In addition, Generation Z has lived in a volatile world, experiencing disruptive events, for instance, racial inequity, turbulent politics, the rapid growth of technology, and most recently, the pandemics. Also, it is considered the most diverse generation and, as a result, the more intolerant to inequality. This generation is the first generation to grow up with the Internet, mediatization, and globalization (Pichler, Kohli, & Granitz, 2021). Gomez et al., (2021) emphasize the Generation Y and Z connection with social media, as it "gave them the ability and power to share their opinions, influence distant people and institutions, and question authority in new ways". Moreover, these two generations are perceived as persistent, and more willing to embrace causes, and stimulate change through individual power. Members of these generations are more concerned with the environment than the previous generations, their buying decision can be influenced by the impact of the company on the environment (Gomez et al., 2021). These authors also studied the post-pandemic alterations in the mentioned generations, the increment of anxiety, and the uncertainty related to the financial future. A study made by Gomez et al. (2021) from Deloitte, exhibited data from both generations, which revealed that the number one aspiration of both generations is to travel and see the world, followed by earning high salaries, buying homes of their one, making a positive impact on society and, lastly to have children or start a family.

Generation Y, also known as the "Millennial Generation" is shaped by the internet and globalization, "they were raised with the belief that anything is possible", they were more attached to parents and more protected by them when compared to previous generations. They are optimistic and social, have high expectations and a short attention span, are more entrepreneurial, open to changes, and realistic. When choosing an accommodation, Generation Y is more open to alternative lodgings (compared to previous generations), "influenced by special offers, proximity to transport options and sustainable travel" (Dimock, 2019). They don't value the beach proximity or their previous experiences and don't have brand loyalty,

low-cost airlines are the ideal choice option for this group. "Working less, appreciating the moment and hedonism are at the forefront for Generation Y" (Karakaş et al., 2021). The *Millenials* grew up in times of Afghanistan and Iraq war which made their opinions more polarized in terms of politics. (Pichler et al., 2021). Generation Y ("Millenials") is characterized by having high technological skills and a high level of education, with a strong connection to the digital environment, seeking authentic and unique experiences, they prefer the expression "traveler" instead of "tourist"(Karakaş et al., 2021). People from this generation have impatient personalities, demanding immediate answers and solutions. Also, they live in financial uncertainty and have a high worry regarding the environment. When choosing the destination, this generation evaluates a considerable number of options and decides mainly based on social media and friends' advice instead of seeking professional help. Liberato, Liberato, Abreu, Alén-González, & Rocha (2018) evidence the characteristics of Generation Y, being composed by self-centered, multicultural, and living with the philosophy of *YOLO (You Only Live Once)*. Thus, this Generation likes to enjoy the present moment, and personalized experiences, seek fun and alternative activities, such as sports, parties, events, and new cuisines, discover new cultures and meet young people. Despite not being able to exactly define what this generation pursues while traveling, one can say that they want to relate with the destination, "with the residents, want to live an experience of everyday life in the destination and increase their knowledge" (Liberato, Liberato, Abreu, Alén-González, & Rocha, 2018). They are flexible tourists when talking about dates and destinations, who travel, explore more, organize everything for themselves and look for different destinations and to not repeat the same. This group prefers to travel abroad, to use an app for everything, and to organize the trip online - the most used applications are TripAdvisor, Airbnb, Skyscanner, and Booking – since it is possible to see the comments of other tourists. Indeed, "49% of Generation Y uses the smartphone to plan a trip, 40% to share, during the experience, and 35% to make reservations" (Liberato et al., 2018). The authors identified the most common types of tourism among this Generation, adventure tourism, and shopping tourism, as part of this generation has high purchasing power. This segment "represents approximately 190 million international trips per year and approximately 165 billion dollars according to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in 2014", more "Generation Y has power over the tourist market, power of digital knowledge, having created a new way of traveling" (Liberato et al., 2018). To share what they have experienced is very relevant for this generation, for example, to share pictures of a certain trip, a dinner, or an event, therefore social media performs a central role for this generation - "they need to share what they see, what they eat, where they are, in real-time" (Liberato et al., 2018).

This generation likes to have personalized and affordable trips. Millennials also travel to "express experience and to find good deals, "nearly half of millennials are willing to provide more personal information in exchange for advertising targeted to their interests." These generations are frequent users of travel apps and platforms, "online travel agencies received private equity/venture capital investments worth $18.7 billion between January 2011 and August 2019" (Srivastava, 2019).

Generation Z or "Post-millennials" or Gen Z or "iGeneration", "as opposite to millennials tend to be more individualistic, less focused, better multi-taskers, entrepreneurial, more globally oriented with higher expectations." Gen Z tends to make more online bookings (Dimock, 2019). Generation Z members, born after the communism collapse, an era where information is available and free, are classified as tech-dependent and are becoming the most educated generation of all time. They are not loyal to brands and prefer authentic experiences and new adventures. They have a low attention capacity and prefer digital communication. As for the job, money is important to this generation, just as balance, flexible hours, and benefits, however, "Gen Z values salary less than every other generation." This generation prioritizes social activism and when purchasing a product considers the ethics, practices, and social impact of the enterprise (Gomez et al., 2021). On the other hand, generation Z is less loyal to the brand, as they have several motivations. For instance, environmental protection, "enjoy a great open-mindedness", and a "great deal from their travels" (Haddouche & Salomone, 2018) (Karakaş et al., 2021). This generation is hyper-connected to the internet and social media, as they grew up surrounded by technological information (Haddouche & Salomone, 2018). Also, this group prefers to purchase a destination based on word of mouth, and last-minute decisions, increasing of the low-cost services and they present a "strong demand for "useful" travel and a growing sensitivity to solidarity tourism" (Haddouche & Salomone, 2018). Therefore, it is possible to perceive that Generation Z, compared to Generation Y, is more active in social media, being a narcissistic generation, "seeking to put forward their selves" (Haddouche & Salomone, 2018). Furthermore, Haddouche & Salomone (2018) mentioned that the core of Generation Z travel experiences is the emotional connection (Haddouche & Salomone, 2018).

3. Methodology

3.1. Focus Group

Kitzinger (1994) defined a Focus Group as "group discussions organized to explore a specific set of issues such as people's views and experiences". This author listed some of the focus group advantages, such as it encourages open communication between the participants, enabling them to express their opinions, ideas, and experiences, and facilitates the discussion of divergent opinions, at the same time exploring the arguments people use. And "highlights the respondents' attitudes, priorities, and language" (Kitzinger, 1994). This is a qualitative analysis method, used to obtain a vision of the attitudes and behaviors of a carefully selected group of people, ideally six to eight participants, about a central theme (Allen, 2017).

In this report, a Focus Group was carried out to obtain different perspectives and opinions and, for a more objective and clear study of rural tourism, involving the expectations and needs of each person, also to gather the most relevant topics for a more detailed analysis. On this one, there was a special interest to capture more elements of Generations Z and Y to perceive their opinions and interests which would, *a posteriori,* facilitate the survey's development, as it is only focused on the studied Generations. In the Focus Group, there was just one individual from another Generation, a *Baby Boomer* (born between 1945 and 1964) which turned the conversation more dynamic, insightful, and most of all, it was an opportunity to perceive the differences between the oldest Generation and the youngest.

Each participant filled out a small questionnaire, retrieved from the articles of Callan & Bowman (2000) and Fátima & Aguiar (2016), to characterize the group and understand their connection and proximity with rural tourism. The Focus Group was made on January 19th of 2021, on the Zoom platform and supported by a PowerPoint presentation (Annex I: A), as a way to facilitate theme comprehension, increase interactivity, and maintain the group focus. The transcription of the audio to text was carried out, being "a reproduction as faithful as possible so that its reading allows to "visualize" what happened in the group"(Silva, Veloso, & Keating, 2014), see Annex I: C. Then, the WordArt program was used to get a perception of the highlighted and most common words in the Focus Group, the result was a cloud with highlighted words and phrases ("WordArt," 2020), subsequently, each of the Focus Group's opinions was analyzed. It should be noted that the focus group was made during the Covid-19 pandemic, therefore the participants were asked about their touristic experiences during Covid-19, before, and their future perspectives and expectations. That makes it possible to do a

comparison of these three scenarios and draw some conclusions about potential divergences and similarities.

3.2. The Survey

In order to conduct a survey two requisites must be ensured: first it must be anonymous and second a pre-test shall be made to detect possible deviations and errors (López-Guzmán, Vieira-Rodríguez, & Rodríguez-García, 2014). Accordingly, the rights of individuals were protected, in which the acquired data only had scientific purpose, without any commercial or profitable purpose. A pre-test was made, having in total 20 respondents, in which the feedback was generally positive, "the questionnaire is quite complete", "simple to carry out", with "many options for answers", "the questionnaire is carried out easily on the mobile phone", and most respondents completed the questionnaire in approximately 5 minutes. There was a certain number of alterations made after this pre-test, leading to the result present in Annex II.

The questionnaire is divided into several sections. In the beginning, it is a brief introduction to the theme, followed by the age group, divided into the Y and Z generations. The section after, is related to rural tourism's previous experiences, questioning the preceding trip in this type of tourism, the location (district/ region, county, and locality), the type of accommodation, and the trip duration. Likewise, it is asked how the trip was booked (through an online agency, physical agency, or directly with the service provider), with whom was the trip made, the means of transportation, and the amount spent (approximately, per person). The next question was to rank from 1 to 5 the elements of "accommodation", "food", "transports", "entertaining" and "souvenirs," in which 1 represents the element where more money was spent, and 5 less money was spent. Subsequently, the three aspects that the respondent considered most relevant in their rural tourism trip, considering that it was given a list of 14 options ("rest", "exercise and health", "exclusivity", "trendy", "get a good deal quality/ price", "experience new cultures", "increase knowledge", "learn a new skill", "nostalgia", "adventure", "romance, escapism", "spiritual development" and to "visit friends and relatives". The number of times to the destination, and the topic ends with two questions with an affirmative or negative answer: "interested in repeating the visit" and "Was this your last trip in Rural Tourism integrated into a tourist route?". This last question is directly connected with the next ones: requesting the respondents to specify the tourist route they traveled by the number of accommodations visited during the route (single or multiple accommodations) and the resources used to obtain information on the mentioned route. The next question is to rate on a

Likert scale (1 to 5 according to the importance) the following elements in terms of their importance: "climate", "history and monuments", "sustainability", "events", "nature/ landscape", "sports", "adventure", "rest", "guided tours/ excursions", "accommodation", "trails and walking paths", "architecture" and "gastronomy". Hereinafter, are the questions about tourist routes preferences, it is once more asked to select, a number (1 to 5 according to the importance), for each parameter: "visit historic cities", "visit cultural heritage", "try typical gastronomy", "visit museums", "visit religious heritage", "discover/ buy local crafts", "visit local wine producers, "go to the beach", "go to Spas", "participating in wine tasting", "participate in extreme sports", "nightlife" and "attend to concerts". To finalize this section, two routes are presented (with a short description of each), the Vicentina route and the N2, the respondents were asked to choose one of the two or none for the next trip, and if they already visited and which one. To conclude, there were questions about demographics, specifically gender, education, monthly gross income, and occupation. It should be noted that all these questions, as they are personal, have the option "no answer", and the respondents can choose not to answer. The end has a small message simply to thank all those who took a little bit of their time to complete the questionnaire.

4. Results

4.1. Focus Group Results

The total number of participants was seven (see Annex I: B), three males and four females, six people are "single" and one is married. The age range is relatively dispersed, with four people born between 1995 and 2012, representing Generation Z, two people born between 1980 and 1994, corresponding to Generation Y or Millennials, and one person born in 1959 - Baby *Boomer*. On the educational parameter, there is also diversification: one person has basic education, two have secondary education, two have a bachelor and one a master's degree. The jobs of the studied group are the following: environmental and rural tourism technician, plastic artist, hotel management and tourism marketing, administrative assistant in rural accommodation, PSP agent, retired, law student, and sociocultural animator in a retirement home. The most referred words were, "accommodation", "tourism", "rural", "person", "country", "agency", "Covid-19" and "destination", which convey the core of the Focus Group.

In the scope of rural tourism, four people have stayed in rural accommodation more than twice, two people twice and one has never stayed. Four people traveled on holidays, three people on a weekend break, and also holidays. The approximate length of stay varies between

participants, three people between 2 to 4 days, three people between 5 to 7 days, and one person between 14 days. The most mentioned source for choosing accommodation was *Booking.com* followed by the internet, family & friends, and social networks. One person, from Generation Y, also added that it was important to call the accommodation. The typology of accommodation is ordered starting with the most referred to, rural hotel, country house, and residential tourism. The amount spent on accommodation (per day), ranges between 30€ and 80€. The factors that most influence visit intentions in rural tourism mentioned were, climate, price, landscape, nature, rest, less crowded and calm areas, safety, tranquility, beauty, and interesting spaces to visit. There is almost unanimity regarding the additional services required in the accommodation, four people do not purchase any additional services, two people only meals and one-person (the youngest) purchases meals, Spa, and other activities. Only one participant mentioned that he traveled accompanied by friends, the rest were accompanied by their families. The answer to the question "would I return to rural tourism" was consensual, with all participants having answered affirmatively. Some participants mentioned that they would repeat their destination and accommodations, while others would prefer to know other destinations.

The most outstanding aspects of rural tourism are tranquility, location (in rural spaces and far from large population centers) and escaping from everyday life. Rural tourism was considered a growing type of tourism with a strong connection to nature, authenticity, and alternative, being the opposite of mass tourism. It adapts to different groups with different needs and motivations – "it ends up offering the possibility of traveling from north to south, enjoying accommodations of this type of tourism." The demand for a different experience in a family environment and the interest in the Portuguese identity, people, culture, and gastronomy were as well, associated with rural tourism.

The most mentioned attributes of rural accommodations were location, attractions in and around the accommodation, the involvement with nature, cleanliness, and price. It is expected to have greater informality, spontaneity, friendliness, empathy, and availability on the part of the rural tourism employees. Sustainability was closely associated with rural tourism. Participants believe that rural tourism accommodation should focus on sustainability, they must be more concerned with nature, because that is where they are inserted.

Accommodation is only booked when the destination is already selected, it is therefore a supplement. The destination was considered a priority, as well as the itinerary and the activities in that area. When choosing a destination in Portugal, it is preferable to visit more than one place, more than one city. For the group, it is important to understand what the location

"has to offer" and each participant revealed to do previous research on a destination and its attractions, to know its specificities, and to make a final decision.

Digitization reflects evolution: "everything is just a click away." Social media has had a crescent impact on our society and the tourism sector is no exception. Some participants use social media to research a destination, namely on "holidays or travel influencers profiles". Thus, social media is fundamental, because many of the possible consumers are found online, "when I see a destination that interests me, through the visualization of photographs, I immediately search for it." Social networks are perceived as important in the trip plan and they also offer an opportunity for direct contact with the accommodation, increasing proximity. Participants believe that Portuguese hotels are already making good use of technology, however, there is always space for improvement. *WhatsApp* is widely used by people, it reduces direct human contact, but, at the same time, increases proximity.

All participants use Online Travel Platforms (OTAs), whether to research the destination or to make a reservation, Booking.com was the most mentioned platform, followed by *Airbnb*, *Expedia*, and *TripAdvisor*. The reason is the ease of use of these platforms, to carry out a comparative analysis, "to look for different prices", "to choose a personalized experience", and "the interest in looking for information about the destination". The reviews in the OTA's also proved to be important because it shows different people's opinions, and proximity to public transportation is crucial, in order to have greater mobility. Physical travel agencies are not used to book trips in the national territory, since it is easy to directly contact and to have proximity with the local service providers. However, it was stated that physical travel agencies provide security and guarantees, for instance in the case of cancellations.

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was found that among all the participants, there was a fear of traveling in 2020, but all respondents visited a rural destination in the national territory. Rural tourism in Portugal is the preferred choice for tourism in the next future trips. The perception of greater security in rural tourism stands out due to the rapid reaction and adaptation to pandemics (mainly the accommodation sector), as well as its intrinsic characteristics which already transmit safety. Moreover, the countless places to discover in Portugal, the lack of confidence in international destinations, and the people's solidarity with the national economy, are all reasons for doing domestic tourism as discussed in the focus group. During the pandemic, all participants admit that their priorities have changed, hygiene, quietness and the existence of a private bathroom are decisive factors in the choice of accommodation. There is an increment in direct reservations (made directly with the lodging provider) because people need to have confidence in the accommodation to stay there, thus the

employees must be very professional. There is also a growing concern with sustainability and COVID-19 has accentuated this panorama as it has made it possible to increase environmental awareness.

Most rural accommodations are located in isolated areas and, most likely, tourists will need a vehicle, which was highlighted as a possible obstacle, particularly for the youngest, due to the lack of infrastructure in rural areas. Furthermore, a few suggestions were made by the focus group participants, concerning their needs and preferences, as it was pointed out the urge for investment in rural tourism. Firstly, there must be joint communication from different entities, "not just from each hotel, but from everyone, from travel agencies and regional tourism entities". For example, "there could be a route or at least a list made up only of rural hotels." It should be a strategic effort carried out jointly by various regional and local entities, to promote the destination as a whole. "Investment in health and safety is essential", accordingly certificates must be created, protocols, and appropriate prevention measures. Most participants revealed that this topic is important to them – "people, when they travel, want to have a good experience and they pay for it." And a good experience is living what the destination has to offer, the focus is not just the accommodation, but everything else. It was perceived that the activities provided by the accommodation are directly connected with the experience. Hotels should have a broader offer of activities, in order to explore the entire surrounding area and nature - "have guided tours, walks or trails to certain surrounding areas." Rural tourism is an experience as a whole and, therefore, it should highlight the characteristics of the place - "the focus should not be just one (for example, the beach), but rather creating alternatives and different activities to satisfy people." Rural tourism accommodation must also present a greater connection with the locals, such as the suppliers, and thus create a set of activities, which have emerged at the destination. "At *Quinta dos Machados – Nature, Love and Relax*, we do several workshops, all related to the region's costumes, for example, learning how to make Mafra bread. As accommodation, we have to understand what the destination has to offer and take advantage of it." To conclude, participants consider that accommodation can also take advantage of technologies, for example, automatic check-in: "it is essential today and will be even more in the future."

4.2. Survey Results

4.2.1. The Sample

In this study, it was obtained a total number of 305 valid answers (see table 1), in which exactly 49.8% were from Generation Z and the other 50.2% from generation Y. From the total respondents, 73.1% were female and 26.9% male. Higher education stands out, being the degree with the highest percentage (46.9%), followed by high school (30.5%). The individual gross monthly income has its majority in the range between 665€ and 1000€ (39%) and secondly the income comprehended between 1001€ and 2000€ (23.6%). It is important to note that on this question there was a considerable number of respondents 21.3%, who preferred not to answer the question. Finally, six categories were represented on the job variable: employee (63%), student (18.4%), self-employed (12.8%) and unemployed (2.6%).

Variables		Frequency (N=305)	Frequency (%)
Age	18-26 (Generation Z)	152	49.8%
	27-41 (Generation Y)	153	50.2%
Gender	Female	223	73.1%
	Male	82	26.9%
Education	Degree	143	46.9%
	High School	93	30.5%
	Master	56	18.4%
	Basic Education	8	2.6%
	PhD	3	1%
	Does not reply	2	0.7%
Individual gross monthly income	Until 664€	34	11.1%
	Between 665€ and 1000€	119	39%
	Between 1001€ and 2000€	72	23.6%
	Between 2001€ and 3000€	13	4.3%
	Between 3001€ and 4000€	2	0.7%
	Does not reply	65	21.3%
Job	Employee	192	63%
	Student	56	18.4%
	Self-employed	39	12.8%
	Unemployed	8	2.6%
	Maid	3	1%
	Retired	1	0.3%
	Does not reply	6	2%

Table 1 – The Sample's demographics

4.2.2. Rural Tourism

Thereafter, it will be presented the data and analyzes related to rural tourism, as it was only selected the respondents that answered "yes" to the following question: "Have you ever done rural tourism?". Firstly, there is the reservation information (divided by the generations Z and Y) and the trip location, including the district/region, the county, and the locality.

4.2.2.1. Trip information and reservation

The total number of respondents who did rural tourism equals to 163, of which 72 belong to Generation Z and 91 to Generation Y. More than half of the respondents (54.6%) booked the trip directly with the service provider, whereas 41.7% went through an online agency. In addition, a comparison was made between the two generations, where the results were very similar as it is possible to see on table 2.

How did you book your accommodation/trip?	Per Generation	Frequency (N=163)	Frequency (%)
Directly with the service provider	*Generation Z*	39	54.2%
	Generation Y	50	54.9%
	Total	89	54.6%
Through an online agency (for example Booking, Expedia or Airbnb)	*Generation Z*	30	41.7%
	Generation Y	38	41.8%
	Total	68	41.7%
Invitation	*Generation Z*	3	4.2%
	Generation Y	1	1.1%
	Total	4	2.5%
Through a physical agency	*Generation Z*	0	0%
	Generation Y	2	2.2%
	Total	2	1.2%

Table 2 – Reservation information

The most visited city is Évora (12.3%), then Braga (10.4%), Beja and Coimbra with 9.2% and Castelo Branco with 8.6%. On the county, the frequency is quite identical with Odemira first (6.7%), Reguengos de Monsaraz (4.3%), Évora, Fundão, Terras de Bouro, Lousã and Guarda have the same result (3.1%). In the locality, the most visited places are Gerês, Monsaraz, Vila Nova de Milfontes and Zambujeira do Mar, each with a frequency of 3.1%, see

Annex III: A. The variables of location have dispersed results; however, the most visited regions are, Alentejo, Minho and Beiras.

The country house was the preferred accommodation to stay on the last rural trip, chosen by 33.74% of the respondents, after the residential tourism and rural hotel with similar percentages, 20.86% and 19.63%, respectively. Camping is also relevant with 12.88%, in contrast to touristic apartment (4.91%), agrotourism (2.45%), hostel (2.45%), local lodging (1.84%) and glamping (1.23%) with lower representativity as shown is Graph 1.
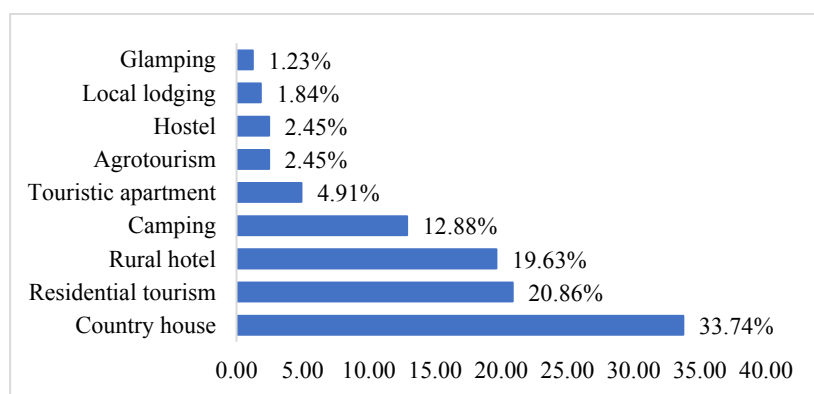
Graph 1 – Accommodation Typology

4.2.2.2. Tourist Behavior

In the last rural tourism trip, the respondents state they were mostly accompanied by the partner (40.5%), family (39.3%) and friends (18.4%). The one who traveled alone accounted for only 1.2% as it is possible to see in table 3. With respect to the means of transportation, there is an absolute concordance with 92% of respondents using their own car, (see table 4). In graph 2 it is possible to see the length of stay in the last rural tourism trip, and to deduce that the more relevant intervals of time are between 1 to 2 days (37.4%) and 3 to 4 days (41.1%), thus the short breaks. On average, the number of nights spent on the trip is 3.60 and the most mentioned value is 3, while the minimum is 1 and the maximum length of stay mentioned is 20 nights. Moreover, the standard deviation equals 2.7, which indicates the deviation from the mean, concluding that there is consistency on the number of nights spent, not presenting a high spread.

Who did you travel with?	Frequency (N=163)	Frequency (%)
Partner	66	40.5%
Family	64	39.3%
Friends	30	18.4%
Alone	2	1.2%
Other/ Does not reply	1	0.6%

Table 3 – Trip's companion

Means of transportation:	Frequency (N=163)	Frequency (%)
Own car	150	92%
Bus	7	4.3%
Rented car	4	2.5%
Motorcycle	1	0.6%
Train	1	0.6%

Table 4 - Means of Transportation
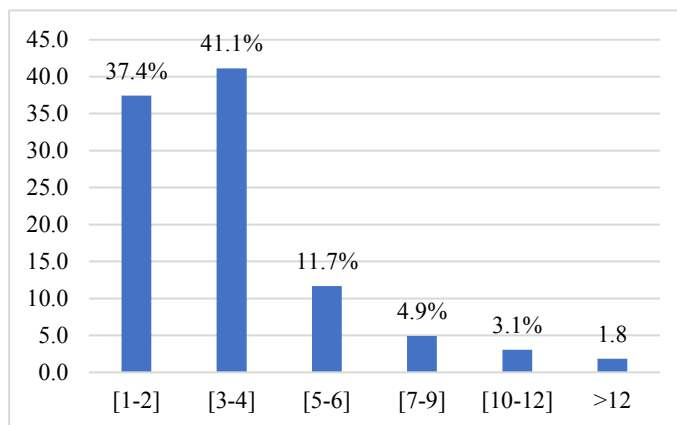
N=163	
Mean	3.60
Mode	3
Std. Deviation	2.664
Minimum	1
Maximum	20

Graph 2 – Length of stay

In order to better analyze the most valued components when reserving the last tourism trip on, and to have a more visual and interesting result, the program "WordArt" (2021) was used. Therefore, the most repeated words are the highlighted and bigger ones. It was made a comparison between the two generations studied to understand if there are any differences on the rural tourism purchasing preferences. The results are presented on table 5, in total were made 275 options selected from generation Y and 215 from generation Z, considering that 3 options should be selected by each respondent. Generation Z and Y have quite similar preferences, being *the rest* the most valued component for both, with 26.51% of the total selections for generation Z and considered a bit more important for generation Y (29.09%). *Escapism* is the second most preferred aspect for both generations, having a slightly higher on generation Y (24.36%) while on generation Z is 22.33%. *Adventure* is the second component in both generations, having a major impact on Generation's Z purchasing decision (13.02%) and 9.09% in Generation Y. The next chosen components are different between the generations,

while on generation Z *increase knowledge* (6.98%) and a *good deal quality/ price* (6.51%) are the 4th and 5th most selected components (still relevant on the reservation decision), on Generation Y a *good deal quality/ price* (7.27%), *Romance* (7.27%), *increase knowledge (*6.55%), and *exercise and health* (5.82%) are relevant. The other components have a lower impact on the trip purchasing decision, all accounting for less than 5%, specifically for Generation Z are *exclusivity* (4.19%). *exercise and health* (3.72%). *visit friends and relatives* (3.72%). *experience new cultures* (3.26%). *nostalgia* (2.33%). *spiritual development* (1.40%) and *fun (0,47%)*. On Generation Y, the least relevant elements are *exclusivity* (3.64%). *experience new cultures* (2.55%). *visit friends and relatives* (1.82%). *nostalgia* (1.09%). *spiritual development* (0.73%) and *nature* (0.73%).

Generation Z			Generation Y		
Rest	57	26.51%	Rest	80	29.09%
Escapism	48	22.33%	Escapism	67	24.36%
Adventure	28	13.02%	Adventure	25	9.09%
Increase knowledge	15	6.98%	Good deal quality/ price	20	7.27%
Good deal quality/ price	14	6.51%	Romance	20	7.27%
Exclusivity	9	4.19%	Increase knowledge	18	6.55%
Exercise and health	8	3.72%	Exercise and health	16	5.82%
Visit friends and relatives	8	3.72%	Exclusivity	10	3.64%
Experience new cultures	7	3.26%	Experience new cultures	7	2.55%
Nostalgia	5	2.33%	Visit friends and relatives	5	1.82%
Spiritual development	3	1.40%	Nostalgia	3	1.09%
Fun	1	0.47%	Spiritual development	2	0.73%
			Nature	2	0.73%

Table 5 – Generation Z and Y most valued components on the purchasing decision
www.wordart.pt

The majority spent less than 100€ (61.3%), per day in their trip, whilst 27% spent between 100€ and 199€, see graph 3.
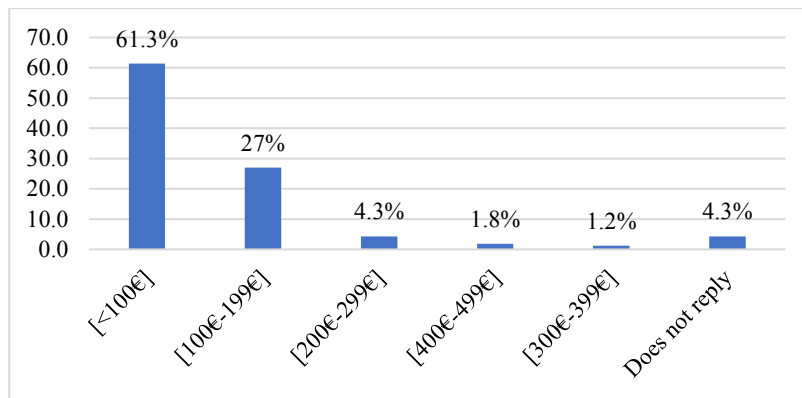
Graph 3 – Average daily amount spent on the trip

The respondents were also asked to rank the elements on which they spent more money, see Annex III: B and Table 6. Both Generations spend the money on the same order, first in accommodation, then food, transports, entertainment, and souvenirs. Nonetheless, there are several observations to be made on this topic. Firstly, the item in which the respondents spent more money is the accommodation. In contrast, the second highest percentage of respondents selected as the element they spent less money, 33.3% by Generation Z, and 20.9% by Generation Y. Generation Y had more expenses with accommodation (mean rank =2.45) than generation Z (mean rank= 2.94). The second element in which both generations spent more money is food with similar values between Generation Y and Z, mean rank of 2.75 and 2.76, respectively. The third item is transports, mean rank of 3.07 in Generation Z whilst Generation Y has the mean rank of 2.89, thus Generation Y spends more money on it. Entertainment is the 4th item generations spend more money on, but Generation Z spends a bit more on this item (mean rank = 3.06) than Generation Y (mean rank = 3.4). Lastly, souvenirs are the variable Generations spent less money in, Generation Z mean rank is 3.17 and Generation Y is 3.52. In resume, Generation Z spent more money on souvenirs, entertainment, and food, whilst Generation Y spent on accommodation.

Generation Z					
N=72					
Components	Mean	Mode	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Accommodation	2.94	1	1.799	1	5
Food	2.76	2	0.927	1	5
Transports	3.07	3	1.025	1	5
Entertainment	3.06	2	1.112	1	5
Souvenirs	3.17	5	1.914	1	5

Generation Y					
N=91					
Components	**Mean**	**Mode**	**Std. Deviation**	**Minimum**	**Maximum**
Accommodation	2.45	1	1.614	1	5
Food	2.75	3	1.06	1	5
Transports	2.89	3	1.005	1	5
Entertainment	3.4	4	1.246	1	5
Souvenirs	3.52	5	1.734	1	5

Table 6 – Elements in which the Generations spent their money

The majority of respondents (53.4%) were only once in the destination, 20.9% twice and 25.7% 3 times or more (see Graph 4). The respondents were very satisfied with the destination they visited, since 91.41% would like to repeat the visit, see table 7.
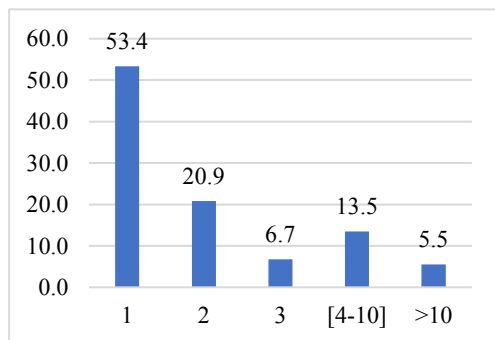
Graph 4 – Number of times on the destination

Table 7 - Intention to repeat the visit

	Frequency (N=163)	Frequency (%)
Yes	149.0	91.41%
No	14.0	8.59%

Only 23.9% of the respondents who did a rural tourism trip mentioned it was integrated on a touristic route, specifically 39 people, see table 8.

	Frequency (N=163)	Percent (%)
No	124	76.1%
Yes	39	23.9%

Table 8 – Number of respondents that did a rural touristic route

4.2.2.3. Touristic Routes

Following the previous chapter, 39 respondents (23.9%) visited a touristic route while doing rural tourism. Vicentina Route (15.4%) was the most mentioned, after *Xisto* Village (12.8%), Gerês, N1, North and Douro Route, all with 5.1%. The majority (51.3%) visited other routes, including 1 person per route (2.6%), see table 9. The answers obtained show that the main resource used to get information (Table 10), for the trip is through friends and relatives, also

known as *WOM (*World of Mouth), with 35.94%. After, 28.13% used blogs or online travel platforms, 15.63% social media, 7.81% travel book/ guide/ brochures. Less respondents resorted to service providers (6.25%) and to advertisement/ travel articles or documentaries (6.25%). It is relevant to say that in this question, the respondents could select more than one option, thus the number of answers is higher than 39. In addition, the majority of respondents (66.7%) stayed on a single accommodation while were doing the touristic routes, 33.3% stayed in several accommodations (Table 11).

Routes	Frequency (N=39)	Percent (%)
Vicentina route	6	15.4%
Xisto Village	5	12.8%
Gerês	2	5.1%
N1	2	5.1%
North	2	5.1%
Douro route	2	5.1%
Other	20	51.3%

Table 9 – Visited routes in the last tourism trip

Resources used to obtain information on the route:	Frequency (N=39)	Frequency (%)
Information from friends and relatives	23	35.94%
Blog/ Online travel platform	18	28.13%
Social Media	10	15.63%
Travel book/guide/brochure	5	7.81%
Through service providers	4	6.25%
Advertisement / Travel articles or documentaries (TV, radio)	4	6.25%

Table 10 – Resources used to obtain information on the routes

	Frequency (N=39)	Frequency (%)
Single accommodation	26	66.7%
Several accommodations integrated in the route	13	33.3%

Table 11- Accommodation on the touristic route

4.2.3. Preferences

4.2.3.1. Rural Tourism

In order to understand the importance of different aspects in rural tourism, it was asked the respondents the following: "On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following elements in terms of their importance". The components analyzed are "climate", "history and monuments", "sustainability", "events", "nature and landscape", "sports", "adventure", "rest", "guided tours", "accommodation", "trails", "gastronomy" and "architecture". A Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was conducted, which is frequently applied with the aim to reduce a large sample of variables without losing much information into a smaller set of PCs (Principal Components). Also, the PCA was made to understand the correlation between the variables. Once results are interpreted, it will be possible to better comprehend these two Generations preferences and behavior on the studied topic, through the perceptiveness of their similarities and differences. The PCA results are presented in Annex III: C.

In the rotated component matrix through the Varimax method, the five components obtained are displayed in such a way to facilitate the interpretation. Therefore, the first component is related to the overall aspects of a "good" accommodation/ stay experience, such as rest (0.833), accommodation (0.830), climate (0.760) and gastronomy (0.733). The second aspect is more specific, it involves history and monuments (0.770), architecture (0.711) and guided tours/ excursions (0.677). The third is related to outside activities, trails, and walking paths (0.763), nature/ landscape (0.706) and adventure (0.612). The fourth is only related to activities, namely sports (0.793) and events (0.600). The last component is intrinsically related to sustainability (0.801), see table 12.

Components	Variables' loadings	Interpretation
rPCA1	Rest = 0.833 Accommodation = 0.830 Climate = 0.760 Gastronomy = 0.733	*Importance of overall stay/ accommodation experience*
rPCA2	History and monuments = 0.770 Architecture = 0.711 Guided tours/ excursions = 0.677	*Importance of cultural activities*
rPCA3	Trails and walking paths = 0.763 Nature / landscape = 0.706 Adventure = 0.612	*Importance of outdoor activities and nature*
rPCA4	Sports = 0.793 Events = 0.600	*Importance of sports, activities and animation*
rPCA5	Sustainability = 0.801	*Importance of sustainability*

Table 12 – Rotated component matrix on the rural tourism preferences

4.2.3.2. Touristic Routes

Just as in the previous chapter, the touristic routes preferences are interpreted with the Principal Component Analysis (PCA), see Annex III: D, as it was asked the respondents to evaluate the importance of each aspect in a Linkert scale from 1 to 5. Five components were extracted (see table 13), the first one involves the visit of diverse touristic attractions, *including visit historic cities*, *visit natural and landscape heritage*, *visit cultural heritage*, and *try typical gastronomy*. The second component is entitled "entertainment", composed by *nightlife*, *attend to concerts, and participate in extreme sports*. The third component is "wine and crafts", with *visit local wine producers*, *participate in wine tasting* and *discover/ buy local crafts*. The fourth component is "culture and religion" with *visit religious heritage* and *visit museums*. The last component is denominated "beach and spas" with *go to the beach* and *go to spas*.

Components	Variables	Interpretation
rPCA1	Visit historic cities = 0.868 Visit natural and landscape heritage = 0.857 Visit cultural heritage = 0.824 Try typical gastronomy = 0.529	*Visit diverse touristic attractions*
rPCA2	Nightlife = 0.837 Attend to concerts = 0.813 Participate in extreme sports = 0.755	*Entertainment*
rPCA3	Visit local wine producers = 0.905 Participate in wine tasting = 0.865 Discover/ buy local crafts = 0.531	*Wine and crafts*
rPCA4	Visit religious heritage = 0.843 Visit Museums = 0.839	*Culture and religion*
rPCA5	Go to the beach = 0.800 Go to Spas = 0.659	*Beach and spas*

Table 13 - Rotated component matrix on the touristic routes' preferences

4.2.3.3. Generation Z and Y

A comparison between Generation Z and Y was intended with the aim of understanding if there are significative differences between the means of Principal Components concerning rural tourism. To do so, the T-Test was used to compare the means: results are presented on Annex III: E. In this way, there are several observations to be made, representing the main differences between the two generations studied.

The only significant difference found refers to the third (rotated) Principal Component. In the sample it has a mean of 0.1536682 in Generation Z, while on Generation Y has a mean of -0.1526228, meaning Generation Z gives more importance to nature, when choosing the rural tourism destination, than the average (see Graph 5). The oldest Generation gives less

importance to nature compared to the average. More specifically, Generation Z gives more importance to "trails and walking paths", "nature/ landscape" and "adventure".
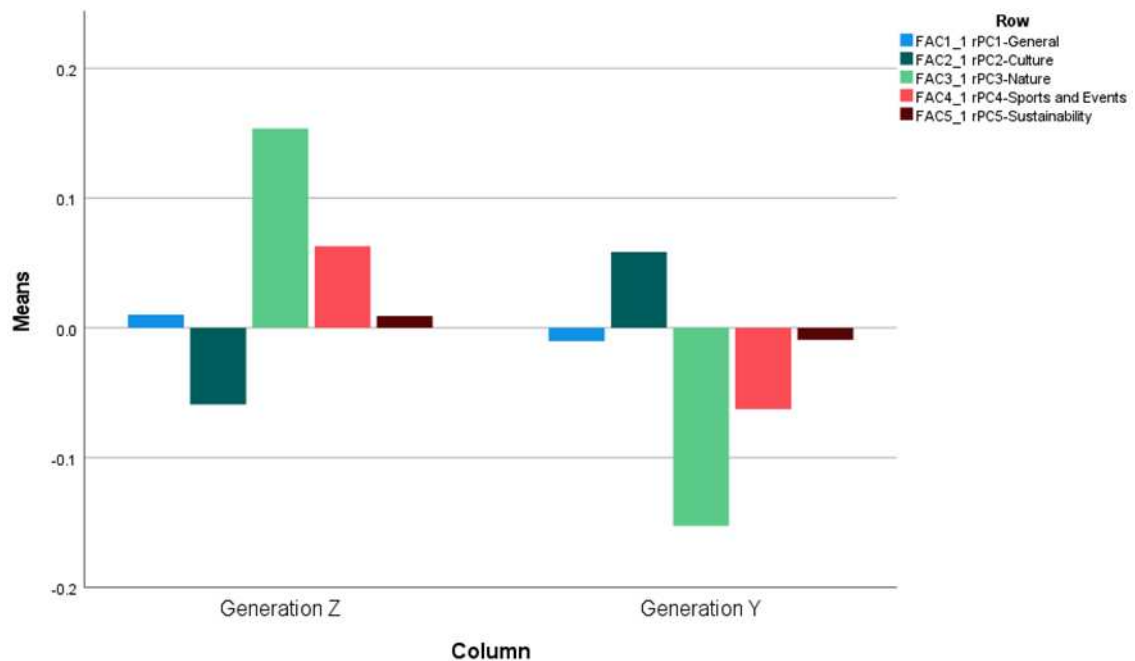
Graph 5 – Comparison between Generation Z and Y on the rural tourism preferences

On the touristic routes' preferences, there are three components that stand out, indicating a significant difference in the means between generations. Sample results illustrated in the graph show that entertainment is more valued in Generation Z than in Generation Y. Generation Y values wine and crafts as well as museums more than generation Z, see Graph 6.
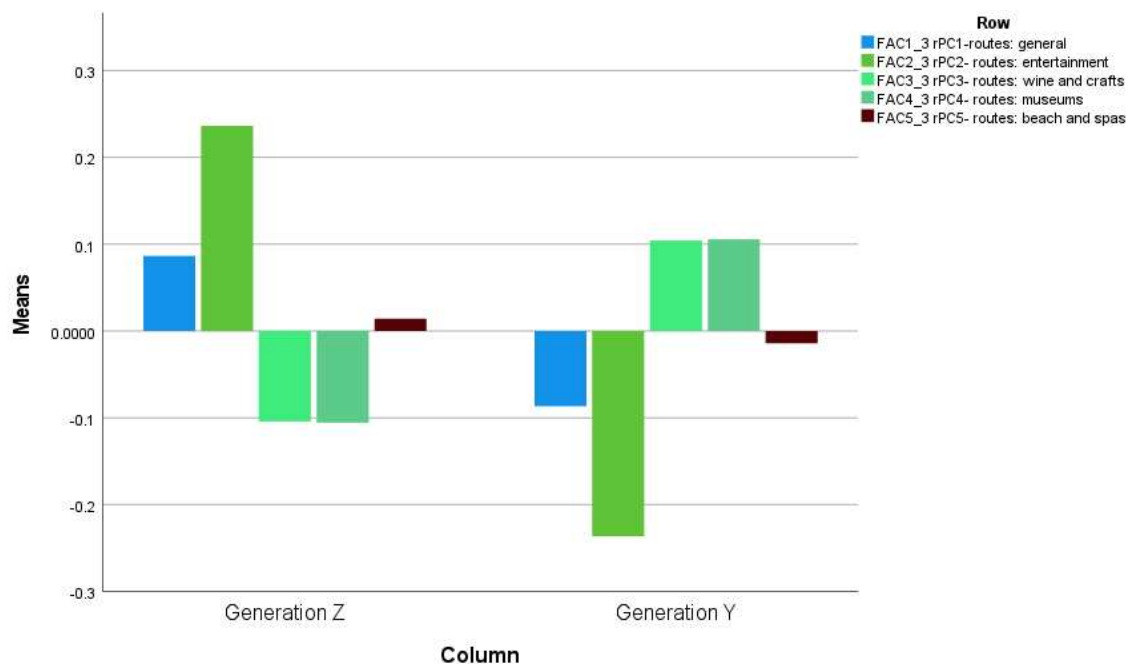
Graph 6 – Comparison between Generation Z and Y on the travel routes' preferences

5. Conclusion

Rural tourism's importance in Portugal is undeniable, it already plays an important role in Portuguese rural areas' development. Simultaneously, Generation Z and Y are key for the tourism industry, therefore tourism enterprises must consider their preferences in the business strategy.

In this way, there were two studies made, a focus group and a survey. In the first one, participants described rural tourism as a way to escape the daily routine, being associated with tranquility, nature, culture, people, and authenticity as was studied by Gilbert (1989). Also, this type of tourism was not associated with one specific location but with a destination as a whole, where it would be possible to visit several attractions, thus offering more possibilities.

Sustainability is an important factor, which includes actions for the conservation and preservation of rural destinations, supporting, also mentioned by Slocum, Susan L. (2011). Social media is fundamental when searching for a predetermined destination or simply to find a new one to discover. And also, some people use it to directly contact the hosts or the accommodation providers. All participants use Online Travel Agencies (OTA's), not only to book their place to stay, but also to search the area's accommodations and to do a comparative analyzes which will result in the best choice There is some research involved, including reviews analysis, prices, surroundings, and general conditions. However, in Portugal, participants also showed confidence to book the accommodation directly, without using any intermediary. Rural tourism in Portugal is viewed as a crescent form of tourism, due to the safety it transmits, the characteristics it has, and the contribution to the local economies. More, the potential of the unexplored and hidden places in Portugal is enormous, which makes the participants feel they still have a lot of places to visit in Portugal.

There were several elements of development mentioned in the studies, first, the infrastructure should be improved to receive tourists, by having means of connectivity between different places, that is public transportation and a set of roads in very good condition. Its importance is mentioned in the studies of Wilson et al. (2001) and Paresishvili et al. (2017). Likewise, travel routes' development is perceived as quite similar where identical principles have to be considered according to authors. That is, the whole infrastructural network, composed of good roads, signage, and facilities, was also discussed in the research work of Hardy (2003).

Second, experience is the focus of a travel journey for the participants, therefore all the attractions and activities should be integrated into one single product - "the focus should not be

just one (for example, the beach), but rather creating alternatives and different activities to satisfy people", said one focus group respondent (Annex I: C).

These activities could include guided tours or trails with the main purpose of highlighting the destination and enhancing the traveler's experience. This was highlighted in the studies of Hardy (2023) and Flognfeldt (2005). Moreover, there must be a defined and catchy theme that would easily be advertised and identified - it must consider the main attractions and be built around it. All the attractions, tours, services, and facilities (such as accommodations and restaurants) involved under this theme, should be included in the route, and advertised as one product, through official internet websites, signages, brochures, and social media as also mentioned on the studies of Mendes et al., (2012). This last one can also be utilized as a way to create awareness and engage with the destination. On this line, interpretation should also be a focus to these routes which would, after all, result in a better understanding of the route and its components, resulting in sustainable tourism and an unforgettable experience.

Third, there should be joint and effective communication and effort among the different stakeholders and locals, namely the population, hotels, travel agencies, and regional entities, with the focus of delivering one solid product and then advertising it as one. Locals should have a main role, not only in the decision-making and development process but also in the hospitality sector, where they would be the ones representing the region. For this, locals have to be aware of the rural tourism strategy and transmit their identity, local customs, and traditions authentically, at the same time preserving their values and culture. Their involvement and commitment are very important, alongside their active participation in the project. This is supported by the studies of Briedenhann & Wickens, (2004), Murray & Graham (1997), and Naramski & Szromek (2019) and included in the rural tourism development strategy by the WTO (2020).

Fourth, technology is a key factor and must be integrated with the lodging properties to ease all the operational processes and also enrich the traveler's experience. One participant mentioned, "it is essential today and will be even more in the future" (Annex I: C). The technology usage was also recommended by the WTO (2020) and is highly connected with Generations Z and Y, per Gomez et al., (2021) and Pichler, Kohli, & Granitz, (2021) research. Data and telecommunications infrastructures are fundamental. Hence, when creating a route these previous components must be considered, and also, the creation of a touristic digital platform, composed of access channels, touristic enterprises and authorities, layers, data resources, and application services. More specifically, when considering these two generations,

technology is vital, it has to be included in the business model to achieve success. The usage of fast communication tools, instant messages, even videos, emojis, symbols, electronic and interactive maps are very important. It is recommended, to adapt the communication to mobile devices, to make the program/ website usage interface easy, simple, and "cool". Lastly, health and safety are essential because of the recent pandemics we faced, so they should be reinforced.

The second study conducted, the survey, including only Generation Z and Y has some outstanding findings. For instance, the majority of both generations booked the last rural trip directly with the accommodation and just after with an Online Travel Agency (OTA). Mobility is key when talking about rural tourism in Portugal, where these two generations prefer to visit these places with their car. The preferences of both Generations are quite similar, with a focus on rest, escapism, and adventure. The main sources used to obtain information about the travel routes are friends and family, online platforms, and social media. Actually, on a touristic route, travelers prefer to opt just for one accommodation instead of several across the road.

Both Generations spend money in the same order, first on accommodation, then food, transportation, entertainment, and souvenirs, with some highlights to be mentioned. Accommodation was, indeed, the factor where 43.95% of these Generations spent more money. However, it is interesting to refer that 26.2% of the inquiries refer to it as the element where they spend less money. It is ambiguous, at the same time accommodation is the most important item (in terms of money spent), but it is, for the other group of people, the least important item with less money spent. Food is the second item where these Generations spent more money. Transportation is the third element followed by entertainment. Lastly, the item both generations spend less money on is souvenirs. Generation Y spends more money on accommodation and Generation Z on food. On entertainment, the evidence showed that Generation Z spends more money on it with a substantial difference when compared to the older Generation. Generation Z also spends more money when buying souvenirs.

In rural tourism preferences, Gen Z and Gen Y value more the accommodation experience in which rest, the lodging itself, climate, and gastronomy are very important. After, the cultural activities (history and monuments, architecture, and guided tours) and the outdoor/ nature exploration. Lastly, these Generations include sports and events in their preferences, never forgetting sustainability. On the touristic routes, the preferences of both Generations are quite different from the rural tourism ones. The most valued items are the attractions themselves – historic cities, natural and cultural heritage, and typical gastronomy. Then, the entertainment (nightlife, concerts, extreme sports), the wine tasting, and the local culture and religion, in

which visiting museums and religious heritage are included. Ultimately, going to the beach and Spas is also a preference on the touristic routes.

Despite the similarities between both Generations, some differences were perceived in the study made.

Regarding the tourist behavior on their last trip, it seemed that rest and escapism is more important for Generation Y, while adventure is more valued by Generation Z. Further, Generation Y showed a tendency to give more importance to a good deal quality/ price as the research of Karakaş et al. (2021) showed by also mentioning the financial uncertainty they lived in. Generation Y gives more importance to romance and Gen Z to knowledge gained on the trips.

Generation Z gives more importance to nature when choosing a rural tourism destination than Generation Y. More specifically, Generation Z gives more importance to tourism trails, landscapes, and adventure.

On the touristic routes' preferences, Generation Z gives more importance to entertainment which incorporates nightlife, concerts, and participation in extreme sports. Whilst Generation Y gives more value to visiting local wine producers, participating in wine tasting, and discovering or buying local crafts. Also, visiting museums and religious heritage is more important to Generation Y.

6. Limitations and Recommendations

This research has certain limitations that should be considered and that pave the way for future research. Only a small number of the inquiries on the survey did a travel route in Portugal, so the results on this specific topic can be misleading taking into account the small numbers. Also, the majority of the participants of the survey were Portuguese, living in the metropolitan area of Lisbon, which is not representative of these generations worldwide.

The Generations have a considerable number of similarities, thus, to encounter more significative differences, more studies shall be made.

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A. PowerPoint

Tipo de alojamento rural

O que fazem durante as férias em Portugal?

O que procuram?

As necessidades são satisfeitas?

Diferença antes e durante COVID-19?
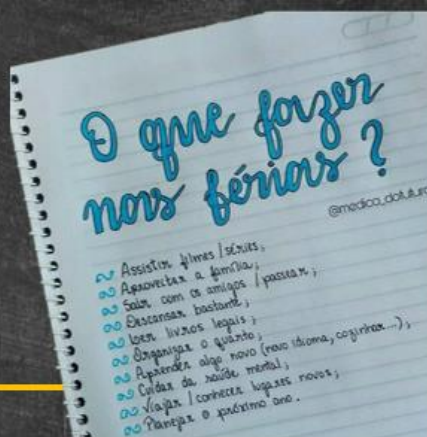
Estão dispostos a viajar num futuro próximo?

Destinos Nacionais ou Internacionais?

Porquê?

Prós e Contras?

FIM!

Obrigada pela vossa participação!

B. Respondents Profile and rural tourism decisions

	Respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3	Respondent 4	Respondent 5	Respondent 6	Respondent 7
Generation Group	Generation Y	Generation Z	Generation Z	Generation Z	*Baby Boomer*	Generation Z	Generation Y
Gender	Male	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female	Female
Education	High School	Master	Degree	Degree	Basic Education	High School	Degree
Civil Status	Single	Single	Single	Single	Married	Single	Single
Job	Environmental and rural tourism technician; Visual artist	Operations and client assistance in a touristic company; Doing a PhD in marketing	Administrative assistant in rural accommodation	PSP agent	Retired	Law student	Sociocultural animator in a retirement house
How many times have you stayed in rural tourism developments in Portugal in the last 3 years?	0	3	3	2	2	6	3
If the previous answer is greater than 2: Why did you decide to repeat the experience in rural tourism?	-	Climate, price, landscape, and nature.	Landscape/nature; rest, search for less crowded areas	-	-	Greater safety due to the pandemic. Contact with nature. More peaceful with greater beauty around	Prices and the landscape, nature; Interesting and calm places to visit
When did you travel? (Ex.: holidays, weekend, or both)	Holidays	Both	Holidays	Holidays	Both	Both	Holidays
What was the approximate length of stay?	14 days	2-3 days	3-6 days	5-7 days	2-3 days	3-4 days	5-7 days
Which additional services did you require in the accommodation?	None	None	Meals	None	None	Spa; Meals; Activities provided by the accommodation	Meals
What is the average amount spent on accommodation per day (without additional services)?	-	30€	Between 30€ and 80€	70 €	60 €	70€	45 €

In which type of accommodation did you stay?	-	Country house; residential tourism	Residential tourism; rural hotel	Country house	Rural hotel; Country house	Rural Hotel	Country House
Who did you travel with?	Family	Friends	Family	Family	Partner	Family; partner	Family
What was the main source of information you have used to select the accommodation?	Family	Booking	TV; friends; Booking	Booking, Internet	Booking	Friends; social media; Online Travel Agencies (OTA's)	Internet; friends; directly with the lodging
Would you return to rural tourism? In the same destination or another? And if in the same destination, would you repeat the accommodation?	-	Yes; Same destination; the same lodging depends on the prices.	Yes; other destination; to repeat the accommodation.	Yes	Yes, in other destination.	"I would return to rural tourism in other destinations and in the same because I really liked the place; I would repeat any of the rural tourism lodgings I stayed before"	To repeat the same destination and others; The accommodation is definitely to repeat.

C. Focus Group Transcription

1. Type of rural tourism accommodation (images)

Respondent 7: À primeira vista, optaria logo pela imagem.

Respondent 4: Imagem 1, por causa da piscina.

Respondent 5: Há pouco tempo tive num turismo rural que tinha uma aparência semelhante à da imagem 1, pelo que por vezes o facto de ter uma imagem da piscina é ilusiva. Temos de ter atenção porque as fotografias enganam. Prefiro a 3ª imagem porque quando vamos fazer turismo devemos olhar para o todo, a piscina é um complemento, é um embelezamento da paisagem. Quando se faz turismo procura-se conhecer todo o meio envolvente, a não ser que o motivo de viagem seja apenas o descanso.

Respondent 2: Escolheria a imagem 3 porque consigo identificar a área geográfica. É uma zona do país que gosto bastante, e o próprio alojamento transmite mais tranquilidade.

Respondent 6: Eu escolheria o 3, apesar do 2 me chamar mais à atenção por ser uma estrutura mais moderna e eu gosto de coisas mais modernas. Mas escolho a 3 por ser um sítio que gosto muito, por ser na região do Douro.

Respondent 3: Escolheria a imagem 3 porque transmite mais tranquilidade, o campo.

Respondent 1: Escolheria a imagem 3, mas a imagem 2 também me desperto a atenção devido à estrutura. Acabei por escolher a 3 porque me remete mais uma ideia de experiência, ou seja, quando vamos escolher um alojamento, nomeadamente um turismo rural, vamos à procura da experiência. É sair daquele que é o nosso quotidiano e procurar algo que seja mais afastado da confusão e que nos leve para o descanso. É uma fuga do nosso dia-a-dia e do stress que se vive na rotina.

2. Last holidays in Portugal

Respondent 5: Há muitos anos que reparo no impacto crescente das redes sociais no turismo, dado que as pessoas mais jovens têm a tendência de colocar fotografias dos locais que visitam nas redes sociais. Sou da opinião que, em primeiro lugar devemos conhecer o que temos no nosso país, temos maravilhas e vários espaços ainda muito pouco explorados. Temos coisas tão lindas à nossa porta, em Portugal. Em Portugal o que procuro é exatamente isso, conhecer o nosso país cada vez melhor. Normalmente faço um roteiro e procuro o que há para visitar nas proximidades, depois reservo o alojamento e faço o meu percurso de 3 ou 4 dias. Eu quero conhecer o país e a nossa identidade, as pessoas, a comida, a bebida, a forma de estar e dentro disso momentos de lazer.

Respondent 4: Eu fui habituada como o meu pai a passear em Portugal durante 3 ou 4 dias. Mas como jovem também gosto de sair de Portugal. Eu acho que o ideal é manter um equilíbrio, visitar Portugal porque é o nosso país e tem coisas muito bonitas, como também destino internacionais se tivermos oportunidades para tal. Quando faço turismo em Portugal escolho um local e visito 3 ou 4 cidades diferentes juntas a esse mesmo local sendo que tento perceber o que cada local tem para oferecer.

Respondent 7: Eu posso dizer que sou apologista que antes de conhecermos o exterior, devemos conhecer o interior, o nosso país. Tenho começado agora e explorar mais Portugal de norte a sul. Em pequenina viajava muito pelo país com os meus pais. Agora tenho ido mais para a zona norte porque tenho um maior gosto pela natureza do que propriamente pelo Algarve, pela parte das praias. Gosto de ir a zonas que ainda não visitei, mas das zonas que já visitei gosto muito. Este ano, devido à COVID-19 tive um pouco de receio, mas optei por ir na mesma e correu tudo bem. E lá está, este ano devido ao COVID-19, optei pelo turismo rural porque acho que é mais seguro e mais resguardado, não havia tanto contacto com as pessoas e com a multidão.

Respondent 6: Eu gosto muito do nosso país, gosto do Norte, mas não é o sítio que me desperta mais. No nosso país, os sítios que me despertam mais a atenção são o Alentejo e o Algarve, sou apaixonada pelo Alentejo, porque sinto que o Alentejo transmite sempre paz. E o Algarve porque adoro praia. No ano de 2020, fui ao Alentejo e ao Algarve. No Alentejo fiquei num Eco – Resort, mesmo no meio da natureza, escolhi este local porque me transmitiu uma maior segurança tendo em conta a situação do COVID-19. No Algarve fiquei num hotel, mas nessa altura os números de COVID-19 eram baixos e por isso senti-me mais segura. Foi um ano em que não passeei muito, em que não visitei muitos hotéis e não fiz muito turismo rural devido ao COVID. Eu fiquei muito satisfeita com as minhas

duas escolhas de 2020, relativamente aos sítios em que fiquei alojada, porque gosto muito de pesquisar o sítio onde fico, desde a localidade ao alojamento.

Respondent 2: Procuro essencialmente atividades de turismo de natureza. Por norma, primeiro escolho a zona geográfica, as atividades, e só depois procuro o alojamento. Dou sempre prioridade a alojamentos de turismo rural, embora por vezes o preço não o permita. Isto porque os alojamentos TER evoluíram bastante nos últimos anos, e nem sempre os preços são acessíveis para jovens. Nos últimos anos, para colmatar o problema dos preços, comecei a optar pelo caravanismo, é uma opção que permite estar em contacto com a natureza, e poupar um pouco. O caravanismo permite ainda fazer férias em movimento, não estando propriamente "preso" a um alojamento em espaço físico.

Respondent 1: Procuro sempre uma experiência diferente cada vez que realizo turismo, no ano anterior optei pelo caravanismo. No turismo rural procuro uma experiência diferente, num meio familiar, num alojamento diferente e num destino que prima pela diferença e, no qual me possa deslumbrar pela natureza e paisagens. Procuro um ambiente diferente daquele que é o do meu dia-a-dia.

3. Intentions on travel in the near future

Respondent 3: Eu não tenho nenhuma viagem planeada, mas se viajasse para algum destino escolheria Portugal porque gosto mais do nosso país e acho que ainda temos muito para ver, temos das melhores ofertas desde campo a mar. Eu acho que não nos vamos sentir preparados para viajar para o estrangeiro tão depressa. Isto porque não sinto segurança, existe falta de informação e sinto que os alojamentos portugueses (no geral) têm condições para receber pessoas. Claro que existem hotéis que podem não estar a tomar as medidas corretamente, mas pelo que visitei no ano de 2020 também gostei de todas as medidas que os alojamentos tomaram. Acho que o turismo rural é completamente dominante, com o COVID-19 a procura por alojamentos rurais aumentou, pelo menos essa foi a opinião de muitos clientes com quem falei. As pessoas vão à procura de locais afastados das cidades, da confusão, vão à procura de descanso, de sair da rotina. Na Quinta dos Machados tive casos de pessoas que viviam na zona, mas que queriam sair um pouco da sua casa e sem dúvida que um alojamento rural espaçoso é sempre uma opção para não estarem confinados a um espaço pequeno. Também acredito que as pessoas, num futuro próximo, ficarão em Portugal para também ajudar a economia nacional que está a ser muito impactada pela epidemia.

Respondent 7: Eu gostava que tivéssemos também a opção de ir para destinos internacionais, mas sinto que neste futuro próximo não será uma possibilidade.

Respondent 4: Mas acaba por ser bom para o nosso país por um lado.

Respondent 1: Estou disposto a viajar num futuro próximo, gostaria que fosse um destino internacional. Embora, e devido às circunstâncias em que nos encontramos, provavelmente ficarei em Portugal e, se assim for visitarei as ilhas.

Respondent 5: As pessoas despertaram para o turismo rural em Portugal porque o facto de as pessoas não quererem estar mais fechadas em casa e não quererem estar no meio de multidões acaba por ser uma mais valia para o turismo rural porque é isso que estes oferecem. No ano de 2020, em Setembro, fiz férias em Portugal e foi uma maravilha. O alojamento de turismo rural em que fiquei foi espetacular e sem sombra de dúvidas acho que é uma das grandes opções. Para mim não há nada de negativo em viajar num futuro próximo para turismo rural, antes pelo contrário. No ano de 2020 também visitei o Algarve, mas com cuidados maiores comparativamente a antes, no hotel estava tudo controlado. Neste momento, com estas condições dou preferência ao turismo rural e penso que será a realidade de muita gente.

Respondent 2: Comparando o antes e depois do COVID-19, julgo que os alojamentos de turismo rural oferecem uma segurança maior. Também, com os aeroportos fechados, os turistas nacionais que preferiam destinos no estrangeiro, viram-se obrigados a viajar por Portugal. Sendo que a maior parte deles já conheciam as grandes cidades, optaram por turismo em espaço rural. Voltei na semana passada dos Açores, mesmo porque foi o destino que me ofereceu mais segurança, pela sua envolvência natural. Há um ponto negativo no turismo rural, nomeadamente para jovens. Existem alojamentos de turismo rural que ficam isolados. Para tal, é necessário ter transporte próprio para chegar a esses alojamentos. Para os jovens que viajam para outros destinos, há dificuldades em aluguer de viaturas, como aluguer para menores de 25 anos, bloqueios de franquia nos cartões de crédito.

4. Trip information and reservation

Respondent 1: Em termos de pesquisa, noto que as pessoas têm usado mais o Facebook, nomeadamente grupos de férias nesta plataforma, até porque os próprios alojamento, especificamente os rurais colocam anúncios no Facebook. Também utilizam muito as extranets, como é o caso do *Booking.com*, *Expedia* e *AirBnB*. O Alojamento local é muito semelhante ao turismo rural, e tenho reparado que as pessoas através do Facebook e outras redes sociais procuram saber mais sobre o alojamento e entrar em contacto com o mesmo. As redes sociais possibilitam a proximidade dos alojamentos com as pessoas, até se chegam a negociar valores através das redes sociais. Isto é o reflexo da evolução, já não acontece, como antigamente, o telefonema aos alojamentos, agora está tudo à distância do clique, está tudo digitalizado. Enquanto consumidor, fui para a zona norte no ano de 2020, e viajei de autocaravana por ser mais flexível, móvel e seguro. Também reparei que existe muita adesão ao caravanismo. Cada vez mais as pessoas procuram preços diferentes e, para tal, utilizam diferentes canais para compararem preço. Também acho que as pessoas cada vez menos recorrem a agências de viagens, sendo que há uma maior autonomia e interesse por procurar informações sobre o destino e cada pessoa pode escolher uma experiência à sua medida.

Respondent 2: Pessoalmente, quando procuro um alojamento vou a uma plataforma de reservas, normalmente Booking ou AirBnB e filtro a pesquisa por preço, depois vejo a qualidade do alojamento. Por exemplo se vir vários alojamentos ao mesmo preço, mas com uma maior pontuação na plataforma, escolherei o que tiver uma maior pontuação. Vejo ainda as *reviews*, qual a opinião das pessoas, se o alojamento é limpo por exemplo. Uma coisa que valorizo muito é a acessibilidade, escolho um alojamento rural mais central para que tenha uma maior proximidade com os transportes e assim ter uma maior mobilidade. Devido ao COVID-19, ao procurar um alojamento seleciono o filtro de casa de banho privada, não me sinto de momento confortável em partilhar casa de banho com outros. Anteriormente, realizei viagens em que partilhava casa de banho e quarto, atualmente isso já não acontece, dou primazia à privacidade, sossego e higiene. Não recorro muito a agências de viagem, no entanto quando reservei uma viagem através de uma agência os contratempos foram imediatamente resolvidos e se tivesse reservado por conta própria, possivelmente a situação teria sido mais complicada. As agências de viagens têm um poder de influência muito grande, porque são grandes compradores de serviços, notei que durante a pandemia as pessoas que realizaram as reservas através de agências de viagem foram reembolsadas, transmitindo assim uma maior segurança. Compensa ir a agências a partir de um determinado valor, se os valores forem baixos não compensa ir a uma agência de viagens. Mas se realmente precisasse de ir para um destino mais longínquo em que os voos são caros (Austrália por exemplo), não me importaria de pagar mais 100€ e ser uma agência de viagens a organizar a viagem. Acho que não tem tanto a ver com organização, até porque gosto bastante de planear as minhas viagens. Tem a ver sim com segurança e garantias em caso de cancelamentos. A meu ver, as pessoas mais velhas preferem agências pela segurança e facilitismo associados. Nos alojamentos rurais por serem normalmente pequenos, penso que não faça sentido realizar reservas através de uma agência porque normalmente são bastante acessíveis, existe uma grande proximidade e o contacto direto é facilitado. Não utilizo redes sociais para fazer reservas, no entanto sigo muitas páginas de viagens e quando vejo um destino que me interessa, através da visualização de fotografias, vou logo pesquisar. O alojamento não é o meu foco, mas sim o destino em si, o alojamento é um complemento.

Respondent 5: No ano de 2019 visitei os Açores, durante 8 dias, e procurei uma agência de viagens porque me sinto mais seguro e é tudo muito mais fácil. Em breve quero ir novamente aos Açores, ver as ilhas que não visitei e irei novamente a uma agência. Em Portugal continental prefiro a *Booking* ou semelhantes, que têm informação suficiente por onde escolher, ou seja, sempre que saio para um destino em que estou mais vulnerável, não arrisco e prefiro ir através de uma agência. Embora mais caro, mas vamos com uma certeza. Quando fui à Madeira fui eu que organizei tudo mas percebi que nos Açores seria diferente, até porque tinha de passar de ilha para ilha. Neste caso, teria de ser um operador profissional a organizar tudo incluindo um guia. E, ainda para mais com a situação do COVID-19 sinto-me mais seguro indo viajar através de uma agência, porque as coisas estão muito mais controladas. Até porque ocorreu um reforço por parte destes operadores no que concerne à segurança. O caravanismo também era um sonho meu, mas tenho a perceção que o caravanismo estava a ocorrer de forma desenfreada e com pouca legislação, se bem que penso que irão ocorrer alterações de forma que haja um maior controlo. Concordo com o facto de haver pouco contacto das agências de viagens com a população rural, deveria de haver mais representação das agências em meio rural. As pessoas precisam de alguém que os movimente e que os mobilize porque a necessidade existe, um exemplo disso são as excursões que existem maioritariamente em aldeias.

Respondent 6: Eu como jovem e morando numa aldeia, noto que os jovens procuram mais plataformas como *Booking*, *Trivago*, etc. e não agências de viagem para viajar dentro do próprio país. Mas sinto que, ao morar numa aldeia, pessoas da faixa etária dos 50, 60 e adiante não conhecem mais o nosso país devido ao facto de no meio mais rural não existirem agências de viagem. Existem muitas nas cidades, por exemplo Torres Vedras, Lisboa, mas nas

aldeias ou freguesias já não existe tanto. E penso que se existisse, as pessoas sentir-se-iam mais seguras e acho que viajariam muito mais. Para os mais jovens é tão mais fácil realizarem reservas e procurar destinos através da internet, mas para os mais velhos não, a informação não chega. Penso que seria um negócio rentável abrir uma agência de viagens numa aldeia e acabar com a barreira existente entre a informação e as pessoas mais velhas.

5. Rural tourism features

Respondent 4: Eu acho que o turismo rural oferece tranquilidade, mais sossego e menos confusão, não vejo pontos negativos. E realmente, o que as pessoas procuram mais é a tranquilidade, fugir dos aglomerados populacionais e estar mais em contacto com a natureza. O turismo rural em Portugal é relevante e ainda mais quando vivemos hoje com a pandemia.

Respondent 7: Aliás, penso que é mesmo o turismo rural é o que está e o que continuará a ajudar o turismo em Portugal.

Respondent 2: O que mais destaco em turismo rural é a tranquilidade, quando as pessoas vão para um turismo rural querem descansar, fugir dos grandes centros e fugir da rotina. A sustentabilidade é outro aspeto que destaco e as pessoas pagam por um alojamento sustentável. Também reparo que por vezes há uma falsa promoção de sustentabilidade apenas para atrair turistas, ou seja, não existe uma autenticidade e é apenas uma estratégia de marketing e não uma prática adotada. Por isso não associo alojamento rural a sustentabilidade. Quando penso em turismo em espaço rural também penso em autenticidade, associo a alojamentos pequenos e familiares, são meios em que não existe turistificação e uma distorção da realidade do local e da realidade portuguesa. Por exemplo, na região do Douro vinhateiro é possível visitar várias quintas de produção de vinho em que a autenticidade à cultura portuguesa é notória.

Respondent 3: O que mais destaco no turismo rural é a tranquilidade. Um aspeto negativo, é o facto de não haver infraestruturas no meio envolvente ao alojamento de turismo rural. Por exemplo, se as pessoas quiserem comprar algo ou precisarem de algo de última hora, algo tão simples como tabaco ou pasta de dentes, não têm nas proximidades. Vejo pelo local onde trabalho, uma quinta de turismo rural em que se verifica esta situação, as pessoas têm de se deslocar alguns quilómetros, de carro, para terem acesso a certos serviços. Por exemplo, algumas pessoas vêm diretamente do aeroporto até à Quinta dos Machados, pelo que não têm viatura própria, e necessitam de produtos que não temos disponíveis, então é frustrante quando têm de se deslocar a distâncias consideráveis. Por esta razão, a localização é das características que temos uma menor pontuação na Booking, mas não podemos fazer nada e tal, também depende da pesquisa de cada um. Há uma falta de investimento em turismo rural, porque até agora não era um tipo de turismo dominante em Portugal, no entanto considero que tenha ocorrido um grande aumento do turismo rural em Portugal no ano de 2020. Noto que as pessoas cada vez mais apostam em turismo rural, nomeadamente através de alojamento local. Uma outra reclamação que temos por parte dos clientes são os insetos que, por vezes, se encontram dentro do edifício. Mas, realmente tal deve-se ao facto de estarmos inseridos em meio rural e é algo que tentamos controlar, mas que nem sempre é possível. Também acho que as propriedades de turismo rural são mais preocupadas com o ambiente por estarem inseridas na natureza.

Respondent 5: Não faria sentido os alojamentos de turismo rural não estarem preocupados com o ambiente, recebendo as pessoas e não ter em conta o ambiente. As pessoas já estão alertadas para o problema ambiental em que vivemos e considero que o turismo rural deve estar bem preparado neste sentido. Eu penso que, de forma geral, as pessoas estão mais preocupadas com o ambiente e percebem que estava a ser uma loucura e de repente para tudo e as pessoas interiorizam isso com uma força bastante grande e então, apercebemo-nos que temos de nos voltar para a natureza. Isto vai ficando na mente de todos, até porque todos os portugueses têm um sentimento muito próximo do meio rural. Nós não estávamos a respeitar a natureza, estávamos a construir em demasia e deforma desenfreada. Aliás, eu conheci o Algarve em miúdo, há cerca de 30 e tal anos atrás, recordo-me de Albufeira e Quarteira com poucas casas antigas e atualmente é um horror e não há qualquer autenticidade. Pelo que penso, que as pessoas hoje estão mais conscientes. E o COVID-19 acentuou este panorama, havendo um maior foco para as medidas de segurança que cada vez mais terão de ser mais rigorosas. Atualmente e no futuro é fundamental mostrarmos que somos um país seguro para acolher turistas, caso isto não aconteça será muito mais difícil retomarmos a atividade turística e então correremos atrás do prejuízo. Após o primeiro confinamento no qual tivemos uma boa resposta, conseguimos transmitir segurança o que é crucial. Eu até comparo isto a circunstâncias de terrorismo, eu não vou para um país instável, pelo que realço a importância da segurança e confiança.

Respondent 1: Considero o turismo rural relevante em Portugal e um tipo de turismo em crescimento. É um tipo de turismo alternativo e que foge ao grosso da oferta que temos em Portugal, por exemplo ao turismo de sol e mar. Considero que o turismo rural é uma alternativa que se adapta a um público com diferentes necessidades e motivações. Este tipo de turismo está ligado ao turismo de natureza, ao turismo de aventura e a outros. Acaba por oferecer a possibilidade de viajar de norte a sul usufruindo de alojamentos tipo de turismo. Conheço alguns alojamentos rurais que são sustentáveis, um deles eco hotel, onde existe um grande aproveitamento dos recursos naturais do local e pouco desperdício. Para mim este é um grande exemplo de turismo rural, onde a sustentabilidade é um imperativo e deve ser o foco. Mas nem todos os hotéis praticam o que referi e por isso nem todos são sustentáveis.

6. Rural hotels attributes and characteristics

Respondent 7: Eu antes dava mais valor à localização, limpeza e às coisas que podia fazer à volta do alojamento. Atualmente o que considero mais relevante é a higiene que acaba por ser relevante na escolha de alojamento. Por exemplo, ao reservar um alojamento olho para os comentários e pontuação da Booking no que concerne à higiene.

Respondent 1: O que mais valorizo num alojamento é a simpatia, empatia e disponibilidade dos funcionários. Valorizo este fator ainda mais que o próprio espaço do alojamento. Para além da experiência que posso obter e do meio familiar em que gosto de estar inserido quando viajo, valorizo o gosto por cuidar e por receber e que no fim vão tornar a estadia mais agradável.

Respondent 2: Considero o espaço importante num alojamento rural e a sua estrutura deve estar em conformidade com a paisagem, deverá envolver-se com a paisagem. E aquando da construção, não deve haver degradação da natureza. Num hotel rural, em oposto a um hotel de cidade, espero uma maior informalidade e naturalidade que as pessoas sejam autênticas a como são diariamente, que sejam elas próprias e que não haja uma etiqueta excessiva. Mas para mim o preço é muito importante.

Respondent 3: A limpeza é fundamental, mesmo que as pessoas façam a reserva através da *Booking,* ligam diretamente ao hotel para perceberam se as normas de COVID-19 estão a ser devidamente implementadas. Mas está a haver um aumento das reservas diretas, até porque as pessoas se sentem mais seguras desta forma e mais à vontade para realizarem todas as questões. Em primeiro lugar ligam para o hotel e perguntam o que temos implementado de medidas de higiene e de que formas estamos a implementar, até para perceberem se vai de encontro às expetativas. As pessoas perguntam muito sobre o SPA e se o temos em funcionamento, o que é negativo, também perguntam se termos normas adotadas para garantirmos o distanciamento. Ao marcarem pela *Booking* não sentem total confiança nos procedimentos adotados em abordagem à COVID-19, porque através desta plataforma não se conseguem aperceber e ter a certeza de tais normas. Uma das questões mais frequentes atualmente está relacionada com o pequeno-almoço e como este funciona, se é *buffet,* se é a pessoa que se serve ou se é um colaborador. O pequeno-almoço é muito importante na visão do hóspede, a pessoa quer perceber para o que vai e o que a espera em termos de limpeza, pequeno-almoço, o que está aberto, se a piscina continua à disposição. As pessoas, precisam de sentir confiança ao ir a um alojamento e por isso também temos de ter profissionalismo, transmitir simpatia, explicar com segurança o procedimento. Se o colaborador não está seguro naquilo que diz, ou se não está bem informado, ou se não concordar, as pessoas vão perceber e não se sentirão seguras. É fundamental e faz toda a diferença num serviço a simpatia e clareza de um colaborador quando transmite determinadas informações.

7. Actual needs and investments on rural tourism

Respondent 2: Comunicação, sem dúvida. E essa comunicação não pode ser feita só em cada hotel, porque são muitos e nunca vão chegar ao consumidor final. Por exemplo como existem as rotas do vinho, em que cada região publicita as suas adegas e infraestruturas, podia haver também uma rota, ou pelo menos uma lista publicitada pelas regiões dos hotéis rurais. Porque eu não vou seguir o hotel x, mas sigo o turismo do centro onde o hotel está inserido. E sem dúvida, os give aways foi uma coisa que resultou na pandemia porque as pessoas passaram os dias com o telemóvel na mão.

Respondent 4: A questão de segurança e higiene é fundamental. Deveria de haver uma maior oferta de atividades por parte dos hotéis de modo a explorarmos a zona envolvente e a natureza. Ter visitas guiadas, passeios ou *trails* a determinadas zonas envolventes. Acho que os empreendimentos rurais usam a tecnologia.

Respondent 3: Eu também acho que os alojamentos rurais fazem já um bom uso da tecnologia. Por exemplo, no caso da Quinta dos Machados, nós tivemos de nos adaptar, no caso do processo de check-in para ser mais simples e usámos as tecnologias. Pedir logo os dados de check in através do e-mail, agora contactamos com os clientes por

WhatsApp. E é curioso porque as pessoas utilizam muito, por exemplo, um cliente estar nas nossas instalações e pedir-nos algo pelo WhatsApp ou informar-nos que se encontra muita gente num determinado local. É uma ferramenta ótima que nos ajudou imenso e que reduz o contacto humano direto, mas que, ao mesmo tempo aumenta a nossa proximidade com os hóspedes. Existe um facilitismo muito grande associado à tecnologia e, por ser tão fácil as pessoas usam com maior frequência. Os alojamentos podem ainda tirar muito partido das tecnologias, por exemplo o check-in automático. Por um lado, a tecnologia torna-se assustadora por ser tão simples, mas que pode retirar empregos a algumas pessoas. A certeza é de que a tecnologia é essencial hoje em dia e será ainda mais dominante no futuro. Na Quinta dos Machados, tivemos uma grande adesão aos nossos workshops, nomeadamente ao de se aprender a fazer pão. Enquanto alojamento, temos de perceber o que o destino tem para oferecer e tirarmos proveito disso.

Respondent 5: A tecnologia é o caminho. O turismo rural deve ser bem feito, deve realçar as características do local: a gastronomia, as bebidas locais, etc. Este tipo de turismo envolve o bem-estar, lazer e toda a essência do local em que se encontra. O turismo rural é uma experiência como um todo. O foco não deve ser só um, mas sim criar alternativas e diferentes atividades com vista à satisfação das pessoas. Os alojamentos de turismo rural devem garantir uma maior conectividade e ligação com os meios locais e não dependerem apenas de uma característica como por exemplo a neve ou a praia. Devem estar emersos no destino, devem de existir parcerias com fornecedores e instituições locais.

Respondent 6: Independentemente de estarmos a passar uma fase de pandemia que tem a ver com saúde pública, mas que terá impactos na economia, eu acho que as pessoas quando viajam querem ter uma boa experiência e que pagam para tal, pelo menos é o que eu faça e o que as pessoas à minha volta fazem. Queremos ter uma boa experiência, mesmo que tenha um valor acrescentado. Uma boa experiência em turismo é viver o que o destino nos tem para oferecer com um todo e não só uma característica do mesmo. Quando o foco não é só o alojamento, mas sim tudo o resto.

Respondent 1: Em Turismo rural, espero poder descansar, poder ver paisagens e sítios novos, aproveitar o ar puro, "escapar" do stress do quotidiano e poder canalizar a minha energia. O fator COVID-19 requer maleabilidade por parte do turismo e penso que os alojamentos de turismo deveriam de ter certificações de higiene e mesmo de segurança conta o COVID-19, transmitindo uma sensação de "free COVID-19". As unidades de alojamento devem ter medidas de prevenção adequadas, nomeadamente no que toca ao contacto humano e às distâncias mínimas necessárias.

Inquérito: Turismo Rural e Rotas Turísticas em Portugal

O presente questionário enquadra-se num projeto de investigação desenvolvido no ISCTE - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, como parte do mestrado em Gestão de Hotelaria e Turismo. O principal objetivo é o de estudar as gerações Y e Z no que concerne à sua experiência e atitudes face ao turismo rural e rotas turísticas em Portugal.

O preenchimento do questionário tem uma duração estimada de 5 minutos. Toda a informação será utilizada para fins de pesquisa, sendo anónima e confidencial.

Desde já muito obrigada pela sua colaboração.

Idade:

- ☐ 18 – 26 (Geração Z)
- ☐ 27 – 41 (Geração Y)
- ☐ Outra

Sobre a sua última viagem em turismo rural

Já alguma vez realizou turismo em espaço rural?

- ☐ Sim
- ☐ Não

Qual foi o destino da sua última viagem em turismo rural?

Distrito

- ☐ Aveiro
- ☐ Beja
- ☐ Braga
- ☐ Bragança
- ☐ Castelo Branco
- ☐ Coimbra
- ☐ Évora
- ☐ Faro
- ☐ Guarda
- ☐ Leiria
- ☐ Lisboa
- ☐ Portalegre
- ☐ Porto
- ☐ Santarém
- ☐ Setúbal
- ☐ Viana do Castelo
- ☐ Vila Real
- ☐ Viseu
- ☐ Região Autónoma dos Açores
- ☐ Região Autónoma da Madeira

Concelho:

Localidade:

Tipologia de Alojamento:

- ☐ Hotel Rural
- ☐ Alojamento local
- ☐ Turismo de habitação
- ☐ Parque de campismo
- ☐ Agroturismo
- ☐ Hostel
- ☐ Apartamento Turístico
- ☐ Outra opção: _____

Duração da estadia (número de noites):

Como efetuou a sua reserva do alojamento/ viagem:

- ☐ Diretamente com o prestador de serviço
- ☐ Através de uma agência online (por exemplo *Booking, Expedia* ou *Airbnb).*
- ☐ Através de uma agência física
- ☐ Outra opção: _____

Viajou com:

- ☐ Sozinho
- ☐ Namorado (a)/ Cônjuge
- ☐ Amigos
- ☐ Familiares
- ☐ Outro /Não responde

Meio de transporte:

- ☐ Automóvel próprio
- ☐ Comboio
- ☐ Autocarro
- ☐ Automóvel alugado
- ☐ Outra opção: _____

Valor diário aproximado despendido na estadia por pessoa (incluindo refeições e alojamento):

- ☐ Até 100€
- ☐ Entre 100€ e 199€
- ☐ Entre 200€ e 299€
- ☐ Entre 300€ e 399€
- ☐ Entre 400€ e 499€
- ☐ Entre 500€ e 599€
- ☐ Mais de 600€
- ☐ Não responde

Despesas (itens): Ordene de 1(onde gastou mais dinheiro) até 5 (onde gastou menos dinheiro).

- ☐ Alojamento
- ☐ Comida
- ☐ Transportes
- ☐ Entretenimento
- ☐ Lembranças

Na decisão relativa a esta sua viagem turística que aspetos privilegiou? (assinale os 3 mais relevantes)

- ☐ Descanso
- ☐ Exercício e saúde
- ☐ Exclusividade
- ☐ Moda / tendência
- ☐ Obter um bom negócio qualidade/preço
- ☐ Experienciar outras culturas
- ☐ Aumentar o conhecimento
- ☐ Aprender uma nova competência
- ☐ Nostalgia
- ☐ Aventura
- ☐ Romance
- ☐ Escapismo
- ☐ Desenvolvimento espiritual
- ☐ Visitar amigos e família

Quantas vezes esteve no destino (incluindo a viagem que refere)? _____

Interessado (a) em repetir a visita:

- ☐ Sim
- ☐ Não

Esta sua última viagem em Turismo Rural foi integrada numa rota Turística?

- ☐ Sim
- ☐ Não

Especifique a rota, por favor:

Nesta viagem, integrada numa rota turística, ficou em:

- ☐ Alojamento único
- ☐ Vários alojamentos integrados na rota

Quais dos recursos seguintes usou para obter informações sobre rotas existentes:

- ☐ Blog/ Plataforma de viagens online
- ☐ Informações de amigos ou familiares
- ☐ Publicidade / artigos de viagem ou documentários (TV, rádio)
- ☐ Livro/guia/brochura de viagem
- ☐ Através dos prestadores de serviço
- ☐ Agência de Viagens física

- ☐ Redes Sociais
- ☐ Outra opção: _____

Sobre turismo rural

Numa viagem futura em turismo rural, classifique os seguintes elementos relativamente à sua importância: Utilize a escala 1 - nada importante, 2, 3, 4, 5 - muito importante (indique uma resposta em cada linha).

- ☐ Clima
- ☐ História e monumentos
- ☐ Sustentabilidade
- ☐ Eventos
- ☐ Natureza / paisagem
- ☐ Desporto
- ☐ Aventura
- ☐ Descanso
- ☐ Visitas Guiadas/ excursões
- ☐ Alojamento
- ☐ Trilhos e Percursos Pedestres
- ☐ Gastronomia
- ☐ Arquitetura

Sobre rotas turísticas

Preferências relativas a temáticas de rotas: Utilize a escala 1 - nada importante, 2, 3, 4, 5 - muito importante (indique uma resposta em cada linha).

- ☐ Visitar património natural e paisagístico
- ☐ Visitar as cidades históricas
- ☐ Visitar património cultural
- ☐ Experimentar gastronomia típica
- ☐ Ir a restaurantes típicos e tradicionais
- ☐ Visitar museus
- ☐ Visitar património religioso
- ☐ Conhecer/comprar artesanato local
- ☐ Visitar produtores de vinho locais
- ☐ Ir à praia
- ☐ Frequentar termas/spas
- ☐ Participar em degustações de vinho
- ☐ Participar em desportos radicais
- ☐ Vida noturna
- ☐ Assistir a concertos

Considere a Rota Vicentina e a Rota N2 ilustradas de seguida, qual preferia visitar numa próxima viagem?

☐ **Rota Vicentina - https://rotavicentina.com/:** "A Rota Vicentina, com 350 km de percursos pedestres sinalizados, é um projeto que visa promover a sustentabilidade da economia local, preservando os recursos naturais da região."

☐ **Rota N2: https://www.rotan2.pt/** "A ESTRADA QUE NOS UNE, 1 país em 739,26 km, 11 distritos e 35 municípios, 11 serras e 13 rios, 1 experiência única. Atreva-se!"

☐ Nenhuma

Já visitou alguma das rotas anteriores? (Selecione a opção que mais se adequa)

☐ Rota Vicentina
☐ Rota N2
☐ Ambas
☐ Nenhuma

Perfil do Respondente

Identidade de Género:

☐ Feminino
☐ Masculino
☐ Não responde
☐ Outra opção: _____

Idade:

Educação (formação concluída):

☐ Ensino Básico
☐ Ensino Secundário
☐ Bacharelato/ Licenciatura

- ☐ Mestrado
- ☐ Doutoramento
- ☐ Não responde _____

Rendimento mensal bruto individual:

- ☐ Até 664€
- ☐ Entre 665€ e 1000€
- ☐ Entre 1001€ e 2000€
- ☐ Entre 2001€ e 3000€
- ☐ Entre 3001€ e 4000€
- ☐ Superior a 4000€
- ☐ Não responde

Profissão:

- ☐ Trabalhador por conta própria
- ☐ Reformado(a)
- ☐ Estudante
- ☐ Trabalhador por conta de outrem
- ☐ Desempregado(a)
- ☐ Doméstica
- ☐ Não responde

Fim: muito obrigada pelo tempo e ajuda disponibilizados!

III. Survey Results

A. Last Rural Tourism Trip

Have you ever done rural tourism:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	164	53.6	53.6	53.6
	No	142	46.4	46.4	100.0
	Total	306	100.0	100.0	

District/ Region visited on the last rural tourism trip:

Variables		Frequency (N)	Frequency (%)
District/ Region	Évora	20	12.3%
	Braga	17	10.4%
	Beja	15	9.2%
	Coimbra	15	9.2%
	Castelo Branco	14	8.6%
	Faro	11	6.7%
	Guarda	8	4.9%
	Portalegre	8	4.9%
	Viana do Castelo	8	4.9%
	Aveiro	6	3.7%
	Leiria	6	3.7%
	Porto	6	3.7%
	Setúbal	6	3.7%
	Vila Real	6	3.7%
	Lisboa	5	3.1%
	Viseu	4	2.5%
	Região Autónoma dos Açores	3	1.8%
	Santarém	3	1.8%
	Bragança	2	1.2%
County	Odemira	11	6.7%
	Reguengos de Monsaraz	7	4.3%
	Évora	5	3.1%
	Fundão	5	3.1%
	Terras de Bouro	5	3.1%
	Lousã	5	3.1%
	Guarda	5	3.1%
	Vila Real de Santo António	4	2.5%
	Gerês	4	2.5%
	Other (<2%; N≤3)	112	68.7%
Locality	Gerês	5	3.1%
	Monsaraz	5	3.1%
	Vila nova de Milfontes	5	3.1%
	Zambujeira do Mar	5	3.1%
	Évora	4	2.5%
	Fundão	4	2.5%
	Lousã	4	2.5%
	No answer	33	20.2%
	Other (<2%; N≤3)	98	60.1%

B. Expenses on the last rural tourism trip (divided by generations):

GENERATION Z			GENERATION Y		
Expenses (items): [Accommodation]			**Expenses (items): [Accommodation]**		
	Frequency (N)	**Frequency (%)**		**Frequency (N)**	**Frequency (%)**
1	30	41.7	1	41	45.1
5	24	33.3	5	19	20.9
4	11	15.3	2	14	15.4
3	4	5.6	3	9	9.9
2	3	4.2	4	8	8.8
Expenses (items): [Food]			**Expenses (items): [Food]**		
	Frequency (N)	**Frequency (%)**		**Frequency (N)**	**Frequency (%)**
2	25	34.7	3	29	31.9
3	25	34.7	2	28	30.8
4	16	22.2	4	19	20.9
1	5	6.9	1	11	12.1
5	1	1.4	5	4	4.4
Expenses (items): [Transports]			**Expenses (items): [Transports]**		
	Frequency (N)	**Frequency (%)**		**Frequency (N)**	**Frequency (%)**
3	33	45.8	3	44	48.4
2	15	20.8	2	22	24.2
4	12	16.7	4	10	11.0
5	8	11.1	5	8	8.8
1	4	5.6	1	7	7.7
Expenses (items): [Entertainment]			**Expenses (items): [Entertainment]**		
	Frequency (N)	**Frequency (%)**		**Frequency (N)**	**Frequency (%)**
2	28	38.9	4	42	46.2
4	28	38.9	2	20	22.0
3	8	11.1	5	15	16.5
5	5	6.9	1	8	8.8
1	3	4.2	3	6	6.6
Expenses (items): [Souvenirs]			**Expenses (items): [Souvenirs]**		
	Frequency (N)	**Frequency (%)**		**Frequency (N)**	**Frequency (%)**
5	34	47.2	5	45	49.5
1	30	41.7	1	24	26.4
4	5	6.9	4	12	13.2
3	2	2.8	3	7	7.7
2	1	1.4	2	3	3.3

C. Preferences in rural tourism

To conduct the Principal Components Analysis (PCA), it is important to meet specific conditions and assumptions such as: all variables have to be metric; the number of observations collected in the data set must be greater or equal to 5 times the number of original variables (5x13=65); through the Bartlett's test and KMO test, it must be verified that all variables should be correlated with each other; all correlations have to be suitable once summarized according to KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) value; conduct the Bartlett's test to confirm the rejection of H0: correlation matrix is an identity matrix. The P original values are metric, the first condition is demonstrated. The second condition is also confirmed as the number of observations is 305. The third condition refers to the correlation among the variables, and that is proven by the values above 0.3 meaning there is correlation. The fourth condition is the KMO, which summarizes all the correlations, it indicates the proportion of variance that can be attributed to common factors. If the value presented is above 0.5 is considered acceptable, below this value is unacceptable. In this present test the Kaiser value is 0.844, showing good adequacy of PCA.

The p-Value (Sig.) obtained from the Bartlett's Test is 0.000, which is smaller than 0.05 (level of significance), in that way the H0 is rejected. Finally, it is possible to conclude that the PCA test is adequate, as all the conditions are proven to be satisfied.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.844
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1342.682
	df	78
	Sig.	0.000

KMO and Bartlett's Test on rural preferences

Reliability and good quality of conducted PCA depend on the following factors: extracted components must explain at least 70% of total variance; all communalities must be greater than 0.5; the last factor is interpretability as the set of components should provide an interpretable solution. In this case the first 5 components account for 71.926% of total variance explained which means that information loss is equal to 28.074%, thus the first condition is met, see table below; The second condition is satisfied because there are no communalities below 0.5; The lowest communality is gastronomy (0.626), so it is possible to conclude that all the communalities are well explained by the factors. The third condition interpretability was met from the analysis of the rotated component matrix, it shows the correlations between the original variables and the Principal Components. Weak correlations (r values from -0.3 to 0.3) were suppressed to facilitate interpretation. Therefore, and through the analysis of the rotated component matrix, it is possible to interpret the 5 PC retained.

Total Variance Explained

Comp.	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.697	36.134	36.134	4.697	36.134	36.134	2.971	22.855	22.855
2	1.810	13.926	50.059	1.810	13.926	50.059	1.910	14.693	37.548
3	1.255	9.655	59.714	1.255	9.655	59.714	1.821	14.008	51.557
4	.842	6.474	66.188	.842	6.474	66.188	1.649	12.681	64.238
5	.746	5.738	71.926	.746	5.738	71.926	.999	7.688	71.926
6	.605	4.657	76.583						
7	.584	4.495	81.078						
8	.544	4.181	85.259						
9	.487	3.743	89.002						
10	.445	3.423	92.424						
11	.420	3.235	95.659						
12	.306	2.357	98.016						
13	.258	1.984	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotated Component Matrix[a]					
	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following elements in terms of their importance. [Rest]	0.833				
On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following elements in terms of their importance. [Accommodation]	0.830				
On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following elements in terms of their importance. [Climate]	0.760				
On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following elements in terms of their importance. [Gastronomy]	0.733				
On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following elements in terms of their importance. [History and monuments]		0.770	0.369		
On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following elements in terms of their importance. [Architecture]		0.711			0.341
On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following elements in terms of their importance. [Guided tours/excursions]		0.677		0.449	
On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following			0.763		

Item					
elements in terms of their importance. [Trails and walking paths]					
On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following elements in terms of their importance. [Nature / landscape]	0.517		0.706		
On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following elements in terms of their importance. [Adventure]		0.612	0.509		
On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following elements in terms of their importance. [Sports]				0.793	
On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following elements in terms of their importance. [Events]		0.462		0.600	
On a future rural tourism trip, rate the following elements in terms of their importance. [Sustainability]					0.801

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
  a.   Rotation converged in 18 iterations.

Principal Component Analysis on the importance of rural tourism aspects

D. Preferences related to touristic routes

The conditions to conduct the PCA were all assured, as the original values are metric (first condition is satisfied), the number of observations, 305, with p=14, thus [5x14 = 70 < 305] - (second condition is satisfied), the values above 0.3 meaning there is relevant correlation between the original variables (third condition is satisfied). The fourth condition is also satisfied, the KMO is above 0.5, indicating good adequacy, see table below.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.793
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	**Approx. Chi-Square**	2208.901
	df	91.000
	Sig.	0.000

KMO e Bartlett's Test on the touristic routes' preferences

The fifth condition and the last is based on the Bartlett's test, testing two hypotheses: The p-Value (Sig.) obtained from the Bartlett's Test is 0.000, which is smaller than 0.05 (level of significance), in that way the H0 is rejected. The quality of the obtained solution was verified according to the proportion of the total variance explained (76.5%), the minimum value of the communalities is greater than 0.5 and the set of components provide an interpretable solution, which is derived from the Rotated Component Matrix, see table below.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.644	33.175	33.175	4.644	33.175	33.175	2.637	18.833	18.833
2	2.619	18.710	51.884	2.619	18.710	51.884	2.216	15.831	34.663
3	1.480	10.573	62.458	1.480	10.573	62.458	2.188	15.626	50.289
4	1.057	7.553	70.011	1.057	7.553	70.011	2.150	15.358	65.647
5	0.905	6.462	76.473	0.905	6.462	76.473	1.516	10.826	76.473
6	0.567	4.052	80.525						
7	0.547	3.907	84.432						
8	0.514	3.673	88.105						
9	0.484	3.460	91.565						
10	0.371	2.652	94.217						
11	0.301	2.152	96.370						
12	0.228	1.625	97.995						
13	0.175	1.252	99.247						
14	0.105	0.753	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The rotated component matrix with the five components extracted, is presented in the table below:

Rotated Component Matrix[a]					
	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Preferences related to touristic routes: [Visit historic cities]	.868			.351	
Preferences related to route themes: [Visit natural and landscape heritage]	.857				
Preferences related to touristic routes: [Visit cultural heritage]	.824			.422	
Preferences related to touristic routes: [Try typical gastronomy]	.529		.363		.516
Preferences related to touristic routes: [Nightlife]		.837			
Preferences related to touristic routes: [Attend to concerts]		.813			
Preferences related to touristic routes: [Participate in extreme sports]		.755			
Preferences related to touristic routes: [Visit local wine producers]			.905		
Preferences related to touristic routes: [Participate in wine tasting]			.865		
Preferences related to touristic routes: [Discover/buy local crafts]			.531	.467	
Preferences related to touristic routes: [Visit religious heritage]				.843	
Preferences related to touristic routes: [Visit museums]	.319			.839	
Preferences related to touristic routes: [Go to the beach]					.800
Preferences related to touristic routes: [Go to spas]				.338	.659
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.a					
a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.					

E. Comparison between Generations Y and Z

Means of Principal Components

The comparison of the PC means concerning rural tourism preferences is conducted through a T-Test which shows significant differences of the 3rd (rotated) PC.

Independent Samples Test

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | |
		F	Sig.	t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
FAC1_1 rPC1-General	Equal variances assumed	.401	.527	.175	291	.431	.861
	Equal variances not assumed			.175	287.289	.431	.861
FAC2_1 rPC2-Culture	Equal variances assumed	.082	.774	-1.006	291	.158	.315
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.006	290.612	.158	.315
FAC3_1 rPC3-Nature	Equal variances assumed	6.364	.012	2.648	291	.004	.009
	Equal variances not assumed			2.650	282.737	.004	.009
FAC4_1 rPC4-Sports and Events	Equal variances assumed	.964	.327	1.075	291	.142	.283
	Equal variances not assumed			1.075	288.345	.142	.283
FAC5_1 rPC5-Sustainability	Equal variances assumed	.525	.469	.156	291	.438	.876
	Equal variances not assumed			.156	290.999	.438	.876

The comparison between Generations Z and Y of the PC means concerning tourism routes preferences shows significant difference between component rPC2, rPC3 and rPC4.

Independent Samples Test

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |
		F	Sig.	t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	Upper
FAC1_3 rPC1-routes: general	Equal variances assumed	4.523	.034	1.519	304	.065	.130	.39776519
	Equal variances not assumed			1.519	291.789	.065	.130	.39780274
FAC2_3 rPC2- routes: entertainment	Equal variances assumed	3.381	.067	4.250	304	<.001	<.001	.69177511
	Equal variances not assumed			4.250	301.797	<.001	<.001	.69178150
FAC3_3 rPC3- routes: wine and crafts	Equal variances assumed	.237	.626	-1.828	304	.034	.068	.01588757
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.828	303.632	.034	.068	.01588866
FAC4_3 rPC4- routes: museums	Equal variances assumed	.060	.807	-1.856	304	.032	.064	.01269175
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.856	303.182	.032	.064	.01269417
FAC5_3 rPC5- routes: beach and spas	Equal variances assumed	.014	.907	.248	304	.402	.804	.25373599
	Equal variances not assumed			.248	303.607	.402	.804	.25373716