

WINE TOURISM AND SMALL TOWNS WITH (NO) DREAMS: THE CASE OF ROMANIA

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ABSTRACT. The present paper investigates the point of intersection between wine tourism and urban tourism in 87 Romanian small towns. The presence of vineyards and wine-incentives represent distinctive features with the potential to become (niche) tourism attractions, therefore having the capacity to provide a competitive edge for these towns in a fierce and aggressive tourism market. For the current investigation, the research question is: do the wine-attractions related to these localities influence the tourist accommodation facilities and arrivals and therefore their position as wine tourism destinations? The research results show, with painful clarity, that the Romanian municipalities and towns related to wine-attractions do not use this differentiating feature in order to raise their profile as wine tourism destinations. Having wine-related attractions at their core, Romanian smaller urban localities could benefit from potential factors to regenerate their economic and social conditions through tourism. Most of them are presently ignoring this competitive advantage, seeming to have no dreams to become wine tourism destinations.

Keywords: wine tourism, small towns, Romania

JEL classification: L83, Z32

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Introduction

Small towns are ‘understudied locales’ as shown by Brown-Saracino (2020). Situated at the intersection between rural areas and urban settlements, the small towns used to play an important economic and administrative role (Steinfuehrer, 2022) which stagnated and/or declined over the past three decades due to various reasons (Powe *et al.*, 2022). The needed reorientation of small towns is a significant challenge based on the local resources (Horlings *et al.*, 2018). Considering the development of tourism is can be one option, taking into consideration the interconnections between tourism and the economic activities (Susila *et al.*, 2024). Moreover, the development of a niche tourism based on wine-related attractions can provide a competitive advantage and an increased visibility as a tourism destination (Ruggeri *et al.*, 2024). Wine tourism is versatile and can be attached to heritage tourism, cultural tourism, nature tourism just to mention a few tourism types. Attached to a small town, wine tourism can stop its economic decline and improve the perspectives for future development (Dossou *et al.*, 2023). Nonetheless, local communities need to understand the value of their available (wine-related) resources and to be willing to use them for tourism development. Also, a good strategy for tourism development at national level, integrating various niche tourism types, including wine tourism, is to be desired (Powe *et al.*, 2022; Horlings *et al.*, 2018).

The intersection between Romanian urban tourism in small towns and wine tourism does not take place under good auspices. More than three decades after December 1989, when Ceausescu’s communist regime was overturned, Romania is still struggling to find an identity as a tourism destination. This uncertainty and absence of confidence comes from the fact that Romania is spoiled by very many options, from spa & health tourism to natural and cultural tourism (including World Heritage Sites like Danube Delta and the villages with fortified churches) and various niche tourism forms (Pop *et al.*, 2007; Turnock, 2006). To these many types and forms, one must add the obsolete, nostalgic, and persisting ideas – for about two decades after 1989 – that Romania should be presented as a seaside destination based on the country’s past-time success (in the mid-1970s).

Three campaigns have had some reputation: a) *The eternal and fascinating Romania* of the early ’90s (1995-1997/1998), followed by the short campaign dedicated to the total solar eclipse of 1999, which started to late and, therefore,

was short and unsuccessful; b) *Romania simply surprising*, which was the tourism slogan between 2000/2001 and 2007/2008, and which, despite being criticized for its negative intimation, it had the merit to be honest, in tune with the country's realities; c) *Romania – explore the Carpathian garden* which was launched at the end of 2010 and remained the county's tourism slogan ever since; despite its longevity, this tagline does not resonate with Romanians (those who are aware of its existence) since Romania does not have any traditions in gardening and one can only pinpoint a handful of known (at national level) botanical gardens in urban areas. The best mirror of the lack of success of these campaigns is illustrated by the international tourism receipts of Romania (Figure 1), which represented in average billion 1.90 USD (annual average for 2000-2015), reaching billion 2.0 USD in 2016 and registering a growth trend, to reach billion 5.80 USD in 2024, despite the COVID-19 generated gap in 2020 (1.4 billion USD) and 2021 (3.3 billion USD) (World Bank, 2025; UNWTO Tourism Dashboard, 2025). On average, from 1995 to 2024, the international tourism receipts represented less than 4% of the total exports (annual average for 1995-2024) based on World Bank data and the UNWTO Dashboard data. For the most recent year, 2024, Romania's international tourism receipts are low given its potential; they are higher than Bulgaria's (4.3 billion USD) and Slovenia's (3.6 billion USD) but they are significantly lower compared to those of Hungary (8.1 billion USD) and Poland (15 billion USD) (UNWTO Tourism Dashboard, 2025).

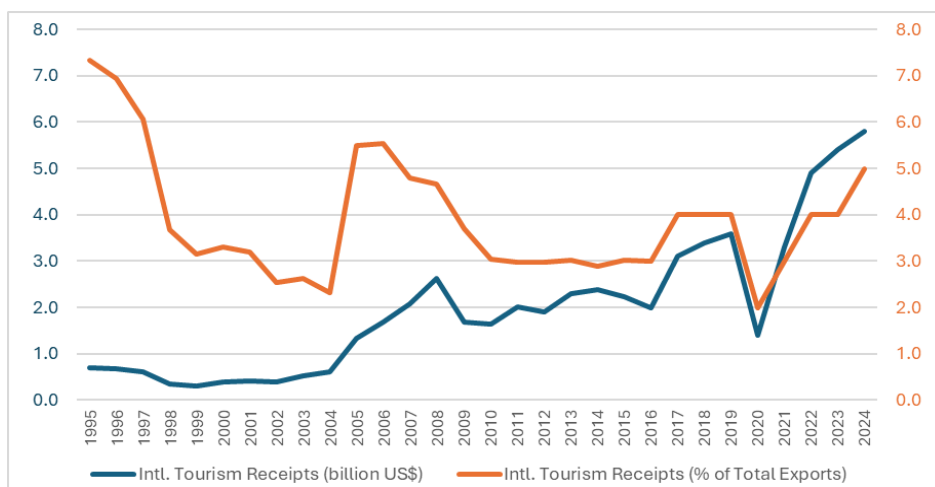


Figure No. 1. Romania's international tourism receipts

Sources: World Bank data were used for the 2000-2016 time span and UNWTO data for the 2016-2024 time frame; however, one ought to note that the World Bank data are provided by UNWTO as well.

A look at a potential development of wine tourism in Romania can be viewed as a natural occurrence since the country's average ranks 10th worldwide and 5th in the European Union (EU) in terms of cultivated vineyard surface, and 13th globally and 6th in the EU, from the production point of view (according to the OIV statistics for 2005-2024). The potential of wine tourism was considered as a form of alternative tourism only in 2002-2003, approximately a decade later, after the trend of wine tourism development had started around the world. In 2002-2003, the then existing Ministry of Tourism (MoT) launched the program **Romania – Land of Wine**, with the sub-program **Wine Route/Road** (Pop & Coros, 2023). This program had a short life due to political changes at the governmental level, with the later integration of the MoT in the larger structure of another ministry (the Ministry of Transports, Constructions, and Tourism), and the departure of the person who initiated the program, the former minister of tourism, Dan Mihai Agathon. The potential for wine tourism development is briefly presented in the Master Plan 2007-2026 for Romanian Tourism Development, however no details are provided regarding the potential further development, as shown by Pop *et al.* (2023).

The results of the above-mentioned program (and sub-program) remain modest. Some skeletal structures for wine routes were identified by Pop *et al.* (2023). Some of these wine routes seem to be functional but they lack the sophistication required by such wine destinations, while others only have the potential to become wine routes, with a long development path ahead.

Similar to the phenomenon of urban tourism worldwide (Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2016; Powell *et al.*, 2018), Romania also has a dominant urban tourism, in 2024 Bucharest and the county residencies concentrating 43.92% of all tourist arrivals and 77.69% of the international tourist arrivals and 36.39% of all overnight stays in the same destinations, with 78.81% of the international overnight stays. Moreover, similar values were registered in average between 1994 and 2024 (with average arrivals of 46.75% and 74.75% for international arrivals, respectively average overnight stays of 30.98%, respectively 65.88% for international overnight stays). To these, other localities and tourist routes ought to be added (with accounting for 16.87% in terms of overall arrivals and 12.02% of the overnight stays of 2024, respectively of 11.49% of the international arrivals and 11.34% of the foreigners' overnight stays). In terms of arrivals, Bucharest is leading by aggregating 13.76% of the tourist arrivals (having attracted over 2 million tourists in 2024), given its administrative position as Romania's capital, followed by an important business sector, and valuable cultural attractions. No other Romanian urban locality can compete with this standing. The remaining 318 urban localities (of which NIS collects data on arrivals and overnight stays only for 281) account for 65.35% of the

tourist arrivals and 65.21% of the overnight stays. Of these towns, 87 are directly related to vineyards/wine-attractions, and they manage to draw in only about 14.8% of the tourist arrivals (although about 40.8% of these arrivals are concentrated in only two urban localities, one a large county residence and the other a seaside destination).

While the program **Romania – Land of Wine** and its sub-program ***Wine Road/Route*** were intended to target mainly rural areas and to enhance rural tourism, Romanian towns related to wine attractions ought to be linked to this program as the majority of them are small or very small localities (74 of these 87 towns have a population below 50,000 people) and administratively include rural areas. These small towns can be placed in the *country towns* category proposed by Hall (2005) and/or considered either as small towns in remote/rural/peripheral regions or small towns in intermediate regions (between metropolitan areas and rural/peripheral areas), two categories suggested by Atkinson (2019).

As the presence of vineyards and wine-incentives represents distinctive features with the potential to become (niche) tourism attractions, the present research investigates the case of the 87 urban localities with wine tourism potential. The research question is: do the wine attractions related to these localities influence tourist accommodation facilities and arrivals, and consequently their position as wine tourism destinations? To the best of the authors' knowledge, no other Romanian academic paper has either identified or discussed the situation of these 87 urban localities with wine tourism prospects.

Literature Review

Urban Tourism

Urban areas around the world have been and continue to represent significant tourism destinations as they have the needed attributes (developed tourism attractions, diverse accommodation facilities, being transportation and communication hubs) and provide assorted, flexible, and convenient tourism products required by tourism industry (Edwards *et al.*, 2008; Ashworth & Page, 2011; Morrison, 2020). Nonetheless, the competition for attracting tourism is led by those cities that are large and multifunctional entities since the global (and sub-global) cities, as defined by Hall (2005), and that enjoy the best position to benefit from their various tourism assets (Ashworth & Page, 2011; Henderson, 2017).

Cities are considered the most important tourism product of Europe (Powell *et al.*, 2018), mainly as cultural and heritage destinations (Wickens, 2017). Also, cities are seen as the most dynamic segment of European tourism (Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2016). Nonetheless, Europe has an important number of small (sometimes very small) and medium-sized towns given its old settlement system (Zdanowska *et al.*, 2020), and therefore European urban destinations range from small towns to world (global) cities such as Paris (Maxim, 2019). The tourism potential of these small and medium-sized towns has been highlighted for a decade already by ECM (2014), with a special mention of Eastern European towns, which were expected to increase their standing as urban tourism destinations. However, as underlined by Smith & Klicek (2020), the international tourism development of these former communist towns was limited before 1989 and they had to adapt to the new conditions (political, social) of the post-communist era, combined with the pressure of economic restructuring triggered by the de-industrialization, followed by the loss of investments and talented people (Richards & Duif, 2018).

As tourist destinations, Eastern European cities and towns have very diverse trajectories: some attracted tourism at an earlier stage (e.g. Hungarian urban localities); others benefited from the nomination as a European Capital of Culture (e.g., Sibiu, Romania in 2007, which raised its profile as a tourism destination); while many remained relatively undiscovered, Romanian towns being listed under this category (Smith & Klicek, 2020). Furthermore, it should be stressed that for most Eastern European countries, foreign tourists are more familiar with the respective countries' (administrative) capitals and this situation can be related to the early stages of the global networks diffusion in these countries, reaching mainly the capitals and a few larger towns (Zdanowska *et al.*, 2020).

For the Eastern European undiscovered towns, including the Romanian ones, urban tourism can be considered a leverage for urban regeneration, demonstrating the respective town's capacity to transfer its tangible and intangible assets into distinctive tourism offers that might attract (sustainable) types of tourism (Della Lucia *et al.*, 2016). One argument in favor of the small towns' orientation towards (sustainable) tourism development is their probably higher capacity to act more quickly and flexibly for such a transformation (Richards & Duif, 2018), provided that the needed structures exist and are functional. Furthermore, small cities are viewed as friendlier and as having a greater sense of local community, therefore more sociable (Richards & Duif, 2018), all these features being important (intangible) assets for becoming inviting tourism destinations. As shown by Light *et al.* (2020), Central and Eastern European (CEE) small towns benefited from the growth of heritage

tourism, attracting an increasing number of visitors. Given the close relationship between gastronomy and (local) heritage (Light *et al.*, 2020; Lin *et al.*, 2021), culinary tourism became a rapidly growing form of special interest tourism for small CEE towns because it can emphasize place identity and distinctiveness as a tourism destination (Salvado & Kastenholz, 2017; Rachao *et al.*, 2019). Regarded as a sub-type of culinary tourism (Turnock, 2006; Bonarou *et al.*, 2019; Garcia Revilla & Martinez Moure, 2021), wine tourism, based on related wine resources, has the potential to elevate the unique profile of a tourism destination.

Wine Tourism

Nowadays, wine tourism is regarded as one of the most burgeoning branches of (global) tourism, registering a rapid growth at the global level (UNWTO, 2018; Santos *et al.*, 2021; Ruggeri *et al.*, 2024).

The occurrence of wine tourism (also called enotourism or œnotourism) was identified by academic research in the mid-1980s through Becker's (1984) paper on *Wine Tourism on the Moselle* (Duran-Sanchez *et al.*, 2016). As announced by its name, the core motivations and activities of wine tourism are wine tasting (and buying) at cellar doors or in the wineries and the visiting of the related vineyards (Getz & Brown, 2006; Santos *et al.*, 2021; Sidorkiewicz, 2023). Nonetheless, over the past three decades, wine tourism developed into a more diversified, multi-faceted, and sophisticated form of tourism (Kim *et al.*, 2019; Bonarou *et al.*, 2019). Wine tourism expanded its products and services to include (along with the core activities) wine shows and wine festivals, wine-related gastronomy, various other leisure activities in the wine-producing region (e.g., wine museums), heritage and cultural features like wine architecture embedded in wine-related accommodations (Ferreira & Hunter, 2017; Bruwer & Rueger-Muck, 2018). Through these developments, wine tourism is currently identified as 'terroir tourism' (Caldeira *et al.*, 2021), where the mixing between the natural and cultural factors is essential (Liberato *et al.*, 2023).

The growth of wine tourism, as niche tourism (Montella, 2017; Ruggeri *et al.*, 2024), can be related to the increasing interest in offbeat tourism destinations and the visitors' desire to explore the unique features of wine destinations, like vineyard landscapes and/or wine-related heritage and traditions (Andrade-Suarez & Caamao-Franco, 2020; Karamehmedovic & Raspudic, 2024). Therefore, wine tourism, as a type of special interest (alternative) tourism (Montella, 2017; Ruggeri *et al.*, 2024) influences and is influenced by the neo-localism (tourism) movement, as an alternative to intensely criticized mass tourism (Liberato *et al.*, 2023; Cunha *et al.*, 2021), enriching local tourism with alternative leisure activities (Depetris Chauvin, 2025).

The following 3 main aspects justify the development of wine tourism in wine-producing regions:

a) *from a socio-economic perspective*: for vine-growing and wine-producing regions, the core activity of processing grapes into wine represents the center of the socio-economic status of the respective regions; hence, the wine can become the main thematic pivot which can be surrounded by a broad mix of tourism-related activities (Chiodo *et al.*, 2020). The position of wine tourism as an engine for local/regional economic and social sustainable development – including environmental conservation (Garcia Revilla & Martinez Moure, 2021; McGregor & Robinson, 2019; Cunha *et al.*, 2021) is based on the capacity of wine tourism to create positive synergies (interactions and integrations) between agriculture (vine cultivation) as a primary sector, the secondary sector of the wine industry (production and bottling), the tertiary sector, tourism, enabling the emergence of a wine-related tourism destination (Salvado & Kastenholtz, 2017; Andrade-Suarez & Caamao-Franco, 2020). Furthermore, wine tourism-related activities (e.g., visits to wineries and museums, accommodation and food services) provide diversification to the existing primary and secondary sectors, generating extra-revenue streams, stimulating job creation, and potential local business growth, contributing to the well-being of the locals (Karamehmedovic & Raspidic, 2024; Martinez-Falco *et al.*, 2024; Tafel & Szolnoki, 2020; Martinez-Navarro & Sellers-Rubio, 2024). At the same time, wine tourism can support further innovation, keeping the wine-related regions alive (Montella, 2017; Bonarou *et al.*, 2019).

b) *from the point of view of the preservation capacity*: vine-cultivation, wine creation and production, and other wine-related activities are embedded in the lifestyle of the local residents (Bonarou *et al.*, 2019) and reflect the cultural heritage (traditions, arts and crafts, history, and architecture) of the wine-producing regions (Santos *et al.*, 2022; Roy *et al.*, 2019). Wine tourism is considered a significant tool for supporting and preserving the local/regional cultural heritage, having the potential to uncover and rediscover old traditions and customs, bringing into focus the regions' wine legacy and enhancing the local/regional identity (Santos *et al.*, 2021).

c) *from the viewpoint of being a distinctive feature*: each wine-producing region has specific, unique features related to the geographic location, the man-made winescapes, wine products, wine-related activities, all impacting the locals' way of living (Ferreira, 2020; Bonarou *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, wine and wine-attractions are at the core elements of a wine area's/region's identity, giving the respective area/region differentiating and distinctive (sometimes unique) features capable of enhancing and elevating its position as a tourism destination (Dreyer, 2019; Andrade-Suarez & Caamano-Franco, 2020; Liberato *et al.*, 2023).

Hence, wine-producing regions can derive direct or indirect competitive advantages from positioning the wine at the core of their tourism offer (Vazquez Vicente *et al.*, 2021; Martinez-Falco *et al.*, 2024) that can generate an increase in tourist visits and can influence the image of wine regions as quality tourism destinations related to (if it exists) a wine brand (Karamehmedovic & Raspudic, 2024; Cunha *et al.*, 2021, Baird *et al.*, 2019). This process is further enhanced by the fact that wine can be offered either as a stand-alone attraction or in combination with (high-end) food products (Egresi & Buluc, 2016; Lin *et al.*, 2021), and further by the transformation of wine (and the related gastronomy) from a complementary to the main reason for visiting a destination, as research revealed over the past decade (Duran-Sanchez *et al.*, 2016; Santos *et al.*, 2021).

Kim *et al.* (2010) disseminate the concept of memorable tourism experiences which gradually became the 'raison d'être' of various types of tourism and tourism destinations (Kotur, 2023), including wine-related tourism. As the reviews of wine tourism of Bonn *et al.* (2018) and Martinez-Navarro & Sellers-Rubio (2024) show, the concept of wine tourism became broader and expanded in scope (Camara Malerba *et al.*, 2023; Ingrassia *et al.*, 2022). Provided that wine is not only a product but also a cultural symbol (Garcia Revilla & Martinez Moure, 2021) the gradual evolution of wine tourism towards offering a large variety of multi-faceted, immersive, and holistic experiences came as a natural adaptation to the tourist demands (Santos *et al.*, 2022; Santos *et al.*, 2021; Liberato *et al.*, 2023; Kotur, 2023). Furthermore, these experiences address the (enthusiast) wine tourists' desires to refine and elevate their knowledge of wine crafts and traditions, and of the locals' lifestyle (Kotur, 2023; Vecchio *et al.*, 2024). Several forms in which wine-related experiences manifest are wine festivals, wine-related events and cuisine, winery and vine walks, and museums (Kotur, 2023; Bruwer & Rueger-Muck, 2018). The quality of the experiences offered is essential for the current development of a wine tourism destination (Campos-Andaur *et al.*, 2022) since these experiences must satisfy the (œnological) curiosities of an increasingly sophisticated niche of tourists (Santos *et al.*, 2022; Bonarou *et al.*, 2019) and are more and more viewed as a guarantee for a pleasant way of spending their leisure time within the wine destinations (Bruwer & Rueger-Muck 2018; Del Chiappa *et al.*, 2019; Garcia Revilla & Martinez Moure, 2021).

Wine tourism is a multi-faceted activity (Haller *et al.*, 2020), and a successful wine tourism destination is based on the integration of enological, natural, and cultural elements (Campos-Andaur *et al.*, 2022) to enhance the destination's distinctive appeal (Camara Malerba *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, it depends on the ability of all involved stakeholders to co-create an offer which responds to the needs and expectations of (enthusiast) wine tourists (Ben Tahar *et al.*, 2021).

The Crossroad between Urban and Wine Tourism

Wine tourism is often associated with rural tourism (Cunha *et al.*, 2021; Figueroa & Rotarou, 2018); however, it can also be associated with small towns (Cevik & Sacilik, 2023) located either in remote/rural or peripheral regions or between metropolitan areas and peripheral regions (Atkinson, 2019) when surrounded by vine-growing areas. Grapevine growing, winemaking, and wine are central components for the identity of such a small town; these components provide specific characteristics for a potential tourism destination (Dreyer, 2019; Bonarou *et al.*, 2019).

Small towns can benefit from the neo-localism (tourism) movement (Cunha *et al.*, 2021) with tourists looking more and more for local, day-to-day experiences (Nientied, 2021) and seeking an increased connection with locals (Scherf, 2021). However, as Richards (2024) shows, Europe has a high number of well-preserved historic towns, and the competition for attracting tourists is fierce. Therefore, those small towns that are blessed with surrounding vine-growing areas and the related wine attractions have the possibility to capitalize on the unique heritage provided by wine cultivation and wine production. The meaning of a place and the related (tourist) experiences are enhanced when wine is present, as highlighted by the literature on wine tourism (Bonn *et al.*, 2018; Martinez-Navarro & Sellers-Rubio, 2024), making the respective small towns more attractive for (enthusiast) oenotourists. Still, the academic literature investigating peripheral small towns related to wine-attractions is scarce to non-existent, as underlined by Gomez *et al.* (2019), Martinez-Navarro & Sellers-Rubio (2024), and Stoica *et al.* (2020).

The Dedicated Academic Literature in Romania

The Romanian academic literature on urban tourism is rich and covers a variety of topics. However, this literature tends to concentrate on larger Romanian cities, which are prone to attract a higher number of (domestic and international) tourists. Among the most studied cities are Bucharest (Zamfir & Corbos, 2015; Buerkner & Totelecan, 2018), Brasov (Candrea *et al.*, 2017; Jucu, 2020; Briciu *et al.*, 2020), Cluj-Napoca (Fleseriu *et al.*, 2018, Cianga, 2020), Timisoara (Popescu & Voiculescu, 2020; Vesalon & Cretan, 2020), given their size, economic standing, and tourism attractions. On the other hand, Romanian small towns are seldom under scrutiny, with or without tourism as a main theme, as shown by Stoica *et al.* (2020).

Nevertheless, the recent study of Stoica *et al.* (2020) points out that an important number of Romanian small towns, facing a decrease in population, show a decline in urban features and a re-emergence of rural characteristics (perhaps because until 2004 most of these small towns were rural localities).

From this position, those small towns related to vine-cultivation and wine-attraction could make use of the development of wine tourism as a solution to prevent further (economic and social) decline.

The academic literature related to wine tourism in Romania is relatively modest but it is on a growing path. This literature is also concentrated on various wine regions, depending on the authors' affiliation and/or interests, it describes extensively various cultural and natural attractions of the wine-producing regions and wine routes (as highlighted by Ungureanu (2015), and cites unverifiable sources for visitor numbers (Pop *et al.*, 2023). Most of the recent wine-related academic literature in Romania is concentrated on a trial to discover the wine tourist profile (Tanase *et al.*, 2022; Oltean & Gabor, 2022) and to discover the wine tourism product(s) offered by various wine regions (Sorcaru *et al.*, 2024; Vilcea *et al.*, 2024).

To the best of the authors' knowledge, no Romanian academic paper has until now investigated the potential relationship between wine tourism and the associated urban areas, except for a brief mention of some towns along the identified wine routes by Pop *et al.* (2023). Thus, by investigating the Romanian towns with wine attractions and their wine tourism potential, the present paper fills an existing gap within (Romanian) academic literature and reveals the status of these differentiating features as a pull factor for tourism.

General Information, Data, and Methodology

For the present paper, the following general information is needed to understand the types of Romanian urban localities. Urban settlements are ranked (based on population size) in *municipalities* and *towns*. Municipalities can be split into two sub-categories: a) those that have the role of administrative capitals for the 41 Romanian counties, further referred to as *county residencies*, and b) other municipalities, in various counties. To the 40 county residencies, the municipality of Bucharest, Romania's capital and the largest urban locality, is added and stands alone; it is also the administrative seat of the 41st county, Ilfov County. Thus, Romania has 40 municipalities as county residencies, 62 other municipalities, and 216 towns; a total of 318 urban localities, Bucharest here excluded given its standalone position and high concentration of tourist arrivals (NIS, 2025).

However, the general structure presented above proved to be difficult to handle for the present paper. The classification by population size proposed by Dijkstra & Poelma (2012) was further used, ignoring the status of municipality or town. Given Romania's situation, to the categories of *large*, *medium*, and *small*

localities proposed by Dijkstra & Poelma (2012), in this study, the categories of extra-small (*xs*) and extra-extra-small (*xxs*) were introduced for the towns that have a low and very low population, as shown in Table 1.

The data used within this study come from secondary sources: Romanian National Institute of Statistics (NIS) via Tempo Online for population, accommodation facilities, and tourist arrivals for 2001-2024; the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development for vineyards and Revino.ro website for wineries; the Ministry of Culture for the historic monuments; the World Heritage website for the Romanian WHS; the National Agency for Protected Natural Areas for natural protected areas. Rankings were created for a) the presence of vineyards based on the number of localities related to vine-cultivation, b) the existence of a wine route, as discussed by Pop *et al.* (2023), c) the other tourist attractions which include the presence of World Heritage Sites (WHSs), the status of tourist resort (of national or local interest) as announced by the Ministry of Tourism (MoT), the existence of ports and/or airports; d) the wine-attraction information included by the official websites of the 87 urban localities under scrutiny. The monuments and protected areas were used as a stand-alone series of data to allow the comparison with other studies.

To investigate the influence of wine-attractions on tourist accommodations and arrivals, PLS-SEM (partial least squares – structural equation modeling) was preferred given this method's capability to estimate more complex cause-effect relationship models (Cepeda-Carrion *et al.*, 2019; Nunez-Maldonado *et al.*, 2022). As recommended by Hair *et al.* (2019), PLS-SEM was also chosen given the use of several formative constructs and due to the concerns related to data distribution. The option for PLS-SEM is supported by Ali *et al.* (2018), who highlight that PLS-SEM is increasingly used in tourism-related academic research. The PLS-SEM uses the formative-reflective high-order components approach. The latent variables, 'lodgings' and 'arrivals', are the reflective constructs, while 'population & economic entities', 'tourist attractions', and 'wine attractions' are the formative ones.

To answer the research question: *Do wine-attractions related to these localities influence their tourist accommodation facilities and arrivals and, therefore, their position as wine tourism destinations?*, the conceptual model employed is presented in Figure 2, below. The model is based on PLS-SEM. The conceptual model is structured into 3 constructs that encapsulate the economic factors (through population and number of economic entities), the tourist attractions (through cultural and natural attractions), and the wine attractions. These 3 constructs are expected to influence the tourist activity at the destination level. The tourist activity is quantified through the construct of lodgings (available accommodation facilities at the destination) and that of the arrivals (tourist

arrivals and the length of stay). The conceptual model is based on the factors suggested by Getz & Brown (2006), Campos-Andaur *et al.* (2022), Camara Malerba *et al.* (2023), Karamehmedovic & Raspudic (2024), and Martinez-Navarro & Sellers-Rubio (2024) for the websites and adapted to the realities and available data for Romania.

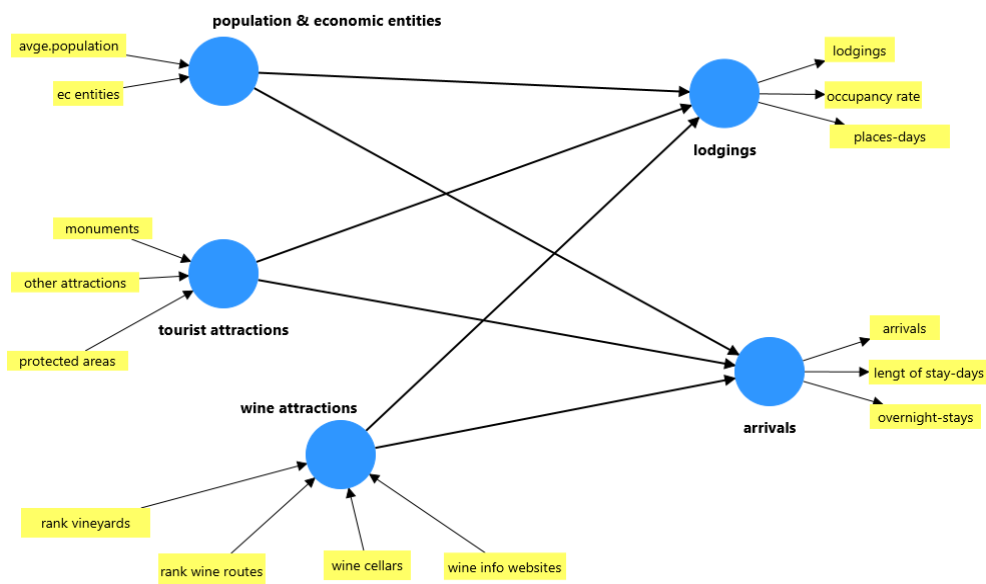


Figure No. 2. The conceptual model investigating the influence of wine-attraction over the tourist activity

Source: Authors' compilation

Urban Tourism and Wine-related Urban Localities (A Brief Discussion)

The 318 urban localities (Bucharest excluded) account on average for 70.16% of the total tourist arrivals and 55.52% of the total lodgings. Appendix 1 shows that urban tourism gravitates mainly around county residencies and resorts of national interest, which aggregate over 75% of the urban lodgings and around 86% of the urban arrivals. These two categories are led by a small number of localities (9 county residencies and 5 resorts of national interest) that account for over 100,000 urban tourist arrivals. From among the county residencies, 4 either include a locality declared resort (the cases of Constanta, Brasov, and Sibiu) or have the status of national resort (Oradea, for a part of its

city center). Other 3 county residencies were or are related to the European Capital of Culture initiative (Sibiu, in 2007, and Timisoara, in 2023) or the European Capital of Youth initiative (Cluj-Napoca, in 2015). The pull power of these localities, beyond their status of county residencies that concentrate county and regional administrative institutions and host large numbers of economic entities, is generated by various cultural events (music, theatre, film festivals, etc.) and other cultural attractions (museums, historic monuments), by being important academic and medical centers, and by having international airports. In the case of the resorts of national importance, their main pull power originates in their location (Mangalia, Eforie, and Navodari, on the Romanian seaside, Sinaia, Busteni, Predeal, and Calimanesti, in mountain areas), several (mainly cultural) tourist attractions (e.g., Peles Castle in Sinaia, Cantacuzino Castle in Busteni), and curative features (Calimanesti).

One ought to mention that, concerning the size of the Romanian urban localities, the majority of the municipalities and towns (295 of the 318 or 92.77%) are small to very small; for the urban localities related to wine-attractions, the proportion is higher (83 of the 87 or 95.40%). This situation places them within the category of *country towns*, as proposed by Hall (2005), or in the categories proposed by Atkinson (2019): either *small towns in intermediate regions* or *small towns in remote/rural or peripheral regions*. This information, combined with the recent findings of Stoica *et al.* (2020) regarding the degradation of urban features for an important number of Romanian towns, points towards a tourism profile with rather rural features, including wine tourism. Thus, these circumstances should be taken into consideration when tourism development is researched.

Of the 14 localities that cumulate over 100,000 tourist arrivals, only 2 (Iasi and Mangalia) are related to wine attractions.

Romanian urban tourism gravitates around several county residencies and resorts of national importance (as further confirmed by Table 1), the 87 urban localities related to wine attractions (dominant small, xs, and xxs localities, see Table 1) would have the position to claim and use this distinctive (wine related) feature to enhance their attractiveness for tourists. Of these 87 localities, 25 are related to 20 independent wine-producing centers (in 18 cases, the name of the urban locality is similar to the wine-producing center), while the remaining 62 are affiliated with 26 vineyards. The status of PDO (protected designation of origin) is available for only one independent wine-producing center (Segarcea) and for 7 of the vineyards (Panciu, Odobesti, Sarica-Niculitel, Iasi, Dealu Bujorului, Murfatlar, and Minis for Minis-Maderat). In several cases, the name of the urban locality is similar to the name of the vineyard or wine-producing center and is known (or well-known) at least at the

regional level: Aiud, Murfatlar, Segarcea, Recas, Dragasani, Odobesti, and Panciu. While wine-related tourism remains a niche tourism, it can generate a flow of tourists attracted to wine, who can further discover the other attractions within or around each of these urban localities. The above-mentioned program, **Romania – Land of Wine**, and the sub-program *Wine Road/Route* could have also been beneficial for these 87 urban localities. However, the abandonment of the program and the constant lack of well-structured information seem to have induced a feeling of insignificance related to the resources represented by vineyards and wine production as pull factors for tourists.

Findings and Discussions

The general structure of the Romanian urban localities and the structure of the cluster of localities related to wine attractions are presented in Table 1. The last column of Table 1 highlights the sub-cluster of the 26 urban localities identified to be on wine routes, either functional or potential, as observed by Pop *et al.* (2023). As Table 1 reveals, more than a quarter (27%) of the Romanian urban localities are related to wine attractions, with a structure similar to the general one. However, in the case of the localities related to wine attractions, the percentage of smaller urban sites is approximately 95%, compared to 93% of the general structure. It is interesting to mention that the urban localities related to wine attractions concentrate 31% of the urban sites without lodgings, of which about a third are in the sub-cluster related to wine routes. Also, the wine-related localities comprise 40% of the localities with lodgings and no tourist arrivals, of which half are located in the wine route sub-cluster. The information in Table 1 suggests that wine attractions seem to be of little importance, at least as a factor for tourist lodgings' development.

Appendix 1 provides more detailed information regarding the concentration of lodgings and tourist arrivals by type of urban localities. So, urban localities related to wine attractions represent a niche accounting for 20% of the urban lodgings and 20% of the urban arrivals. The case of urban localities related to wine attractions replicates the general situation of urban localities. Thus, county residencies, and national resorts account for about 69% of the lodgings and for about 79% of the tourist arrivals. Localities with more than 100,000 arrivals are dominant, even though their position is more likely generated by their status as county residencies (Iasi) or resorts of national interest on the Romanian littoral (Mangalia), rather than by wine attractions.

Table No. 1. The structure of urban localities: general and identified in relation to wine attractions

Type of Urban Locality	Total Urban Localities in Romania	Urban Localities With/Related to Vineyards	Of Which Urban Localities on Wine Routes
Large (250,000 to 500,000 people)	7 all county residencies; >300,000 people	3 (Craiova, Galati, Iasi)	1 (Craiova)
Medium (100,000 to 249,999 people)	16 all county residencies; 4 with >200,000 people	1 (Baia Mare)	0
Small (50,000 to 99,999 people)	22 (16 county residencies; 6 other municipalities)	9 (7 county residencies; 2 other municipalities)	1 (Alba Iulia)
Extra small (10,000 to 49,999 people)	157 (1 county residency; 56 other municipalities)	42 (18 other municipalities)	16 (6 other municipalities)
Extra extra small (< 10,000 people)	116 all towns; 19 with < 5,000 people	32 all towns; 3 with < 5,000 people	8 all towns; 1 with < 5,000 people
Total	318	87	26
Selected information			
Urban localities with/related to WHSs	17	2	0
Urban localities declared resorts	82 (38 national resorts)	11 (4 national resorts)	2
Urban localities with no accommodation facilities	35 (all towns)	11	4
Urban localities with NO arrivals but with lodgings	5 (all towns)	2	1

Source: Authors' compilation based on NIS and research data and the classification proposed by Dijkstra & Poelma (2012)

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for the common indicators considered for the present research. In the case of the population, economic entities, and protected areas, there are no significant variations between all urban localities and those related to wine attractions. Some exceptions occur in the case of urban localities related to wine routes, which are smaller and host fewer economic entities. Differences appear in the case of the historic monuments that are more numerous for wine-related localities, while other tourist attractions decrease in the cases of these localities, becoming almost negligible for the localities on wine routes.

When lodgings and tourist flows are taken into consideration, Table 2 indicates that the urban localities related to wine attractions have a lower lodging capacity, an inferior occupancy rate, fewer tourist arrivals, and a shorter length of stay (of less than 2 days). The data for the localities on wine routes indicate an even poorer situation, suggesting that the wine itineraries, in general, cannot attract tourists towards those localities. This finding is in line with the findings of Pop & Coros (2023), which point towards the lack of visibility of Romanian wine routes.

Table No. 2. Comparative descriptive statistics for the urban localities based on 2001-2024 and 2005-2024 (for economic entities) averages

Indicators	Total Urban Romania	Urban Localities With/Related to Vineyards	Urban Localities on Wine Routes
Lodgings			
Mean	11	8	4
Median	3	2	1
Q1	1	1	1
Q3	9	6	3
Minim	0	0	0
Maxim	275	223	29
Places-days			
Mean	153,386	117,128	48,198
Median	25,706	20,049	11,178
Q1	7,757	4,394	2,812
Q3	112,237	64,985	30,145
Minim	0	0	0
Maxim	3,811,000	3,635,000	540,048
Occupancy Rate (%)			
Mean	17.90	16.90	16.30
Median	17.30	17.00	16.80

Indicators	Total Urban Romania	Urban Localities With/Related to Vineyards	Urban Localities on Wine Routes
Q1	10.60	9.30	10.10
Q3	24.40	24.20	23.60
Minimum	0.00	0.00	0.00
Maximum	57.90	52.50	41.20
Arrivals			
Mean	17,907	13,195	5,710
Median	2,305	1,614	1,323
Q1	506	225	247
Q3	10,550	5,427	3,465
Minimum	0	0	0
Maximum	437,816	290,869	58,326
Length of Stay (days)			
Mean	2.18	1.79	1.58
Median	1.82	1.71	1.74
Q1	1.49	1.39	1.09
Q3	2.41	2.02	1.95
Minimum	0	0	0
Maximum	11.79	9.54	3.91
Population			
Mean	33,367	33,500	28,777
Median	12,809	12,353	11,805
Q1	8,225	8,583	9,103
Q3	29,222	30,617	21,944
Minimum	1,807	3,745	4,413
Maximum	345,279	345,279	309,195
Economic Entities			
Mean	1,222	1,119	988
Median	282	244	256
Q1	153	152	164
Q3	746	778	613
Minimum	0	40	40
Maximum	24,914	14,228	12,987
Monuments			
Mean	26	30	25
Median	9	10	10
Q1	4	5	5
Q3	22	24	16
Minimum	0	0	0
Maximum	498	498	299

Indicators	Total Urban Romania	Urban Localities With/Related to Vineyards	Urban Localities on Wine Routes
Protected Areas			
Mean	2	2	2
Median	1	2	2
Q1	0	1	1
Q3	3	4	3
Minimum	0	0	0
Maximum	15	9	7
Other Tourist Attractions (points)			
Mean	0.557	0.414	0.308
Median	0	0	0
Q1	0	0	0
Q3	1	1	1
Minimum	0	0	0
Maximum	4	3	1

Source: Authors' compilation based on NIS and research data based on www.listafirme.ro;
<https://patrimoniu.ro/en/articles/lista-monumentelor-istorice>;
 (+ monuments + protected areas);
https://www.mmediu.ro/app/webroot/uploads/files/Anexa_nr_1.pdf

The results of the PLS-SEM method are presented in Figures 3 and 4 and in Appendices 2, 3, and 4.

Figure 3 (for all urban localities) shows that the combination of the selected indicators explains 35.7% of the lodgings construct's variance and 65.8% of the arrivals construct's variance. The most important construct influencing both lodgings and arrivals is *tourist attractions*, with the indicator *other attractions* (including WHSs, the status of resort, the accessibility via airports and ports) being the most important, followed by (historic) *monuments*, while the *protected areas* are completely ignored. Further, the economic power of a locality (quantified through the number of active *economic entities*) plays an important role in the existence of lodgings and attracting tourist arrivals. The construct, *wine attractions*, is the one that has a weaker influence, as the data in Appendix 2 indicate. Within the *wine attractions* construct, the most important indicator is the *presence of vineyards*, while the other 3 indicators have a negative influence.

Based on these results, the attractiveness of the Romanian urban destinations seems to be influenced by the economic entities, the position of county residence, and accessibility (business tourism), the status of resorts and location (among the most visited urban sites are those located at Black Seaside,

in mountain areas and/or those hosting a renown spa resort) hinting towards wellbeing tourism and monuments (cultural tourism). Therefore, if wine attractions happen to be related to the above-mentioned factors, they appear to be either overlooked or integrated into the other attractions without distinction. This situation might be due to the scarce information regarding wine attractions and also to the fact that these wine attractions occur mainly related to small, extra small, and extra-extra small urban sites, which are less likely to be visited by niche (foreign) tourists interested in and/or attracted by wine, while Romanian wine consumers represent a relatively small segment. Furthermore, informal discussions revealed that in some county residencies, while wine cellars (or more exactly wine shops) exist, often, urban wine shops tend to be rather dedicated to imported wines rather than to promoting the regional domestic wines (i.e., one case occurs in Timisoara where a well-known cellar/shop offers exclusively French wines, while the region hosts three independent wine-producing centers of which Recas (also a town) is well-known and hosts one of the top wine-producing entities of Romania).

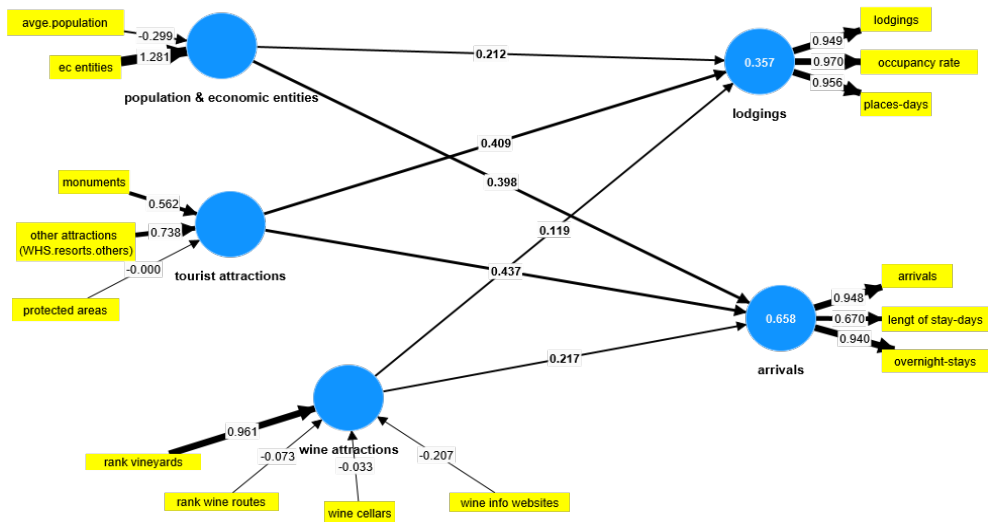


Figure No. 3. Factors influencing lodgings and arrivals in all urban localities

Source: Authors' calculations using SmartPLS4

Figure 4 only focuses on the 87 urban localities that are directly related to vineyards. The considered indicators explain 42.4% of the lodgings construct's variance, and 44.9% of the arrivals construct's variance. Therefore, in this

cluster, the relationship between the constructs and the lodgings increases, while their connection with arrivals decreases. In this case, **tourist attractions** is the single construct that has a significant influence on lodgings and arrivals, with the indicator *other attractions* being the most important. The **wine attractions** construct has no significant (negative) influence, suggesting that these 87 urban localities are visited for other reasons, most likely for their status as (spa) resorts and for some cultural attractions, and not due to the wine attractions. As above-mentioned, in the case of Figure 3, wine attractions are rather ‘discovered’ or encountered by chance and appear to be either ignored or just acknowledged without being truly appreciated. This situation is not surprising, as the information provided by the 87 urban localities’ official websites related to wine attractions is scarce or nonexistent. Thus, the search for information on wine attractions on these localities’ official websites (townhall websites) indicates the following aspects: a) 70% of these urban localities do not offer any information about wine and/or vineyards; b) 15 localities have some hidden information related to wine/vineyards in their region; c) 3 localities offer some indirect information regarding wine attractions; d) only 8 localities (9.20%) have a clear references regarding their wine attractions. Their social media presence (especially via their Facebook pages) was not investigated as, most of the time, on social media, public authorities tend to reproduce the contents of webpages without creating adequate content. Furthermore, the results in Figure 4 suggest that the presence of vineyards and wine cellars seems to be an impediment to tourism rather than a development factor. This situation implies that neither the local authorities nor the wine producers perceive their vineyards as tourism development factors.

The results presented above are further enhanced by the importance performance maps (IPMs) in Appendices 3a, 3b, and 3c for all urban localities and Appendices 4a, 4b, and 4c for the urban localities with/related to vineyards.

As Appendix 3a shows, the performance of selected indicators for both **lodgings** (of 3.91) and **arrivals** (of 30.98) is from very low to modest, with performance ranges between 0 and 100. Further details are provided by Appendices 3b and 3c.

In the case of **lodgings** (Appendix 3c), the factors with the highest importance are: *other attractions*, *economic entities*, and *monuments*. *Vineyard ranks* is only the fourth most important factor, though with the highest performance, while the other 3 wine-related factors have negative scores. This finding suggests that the decision to open an accommodation facility might be influenced mainly by the aforementioned factors, the status as a resort, and the accessibility via airports and ports (included in *other attractions*) being dominant.

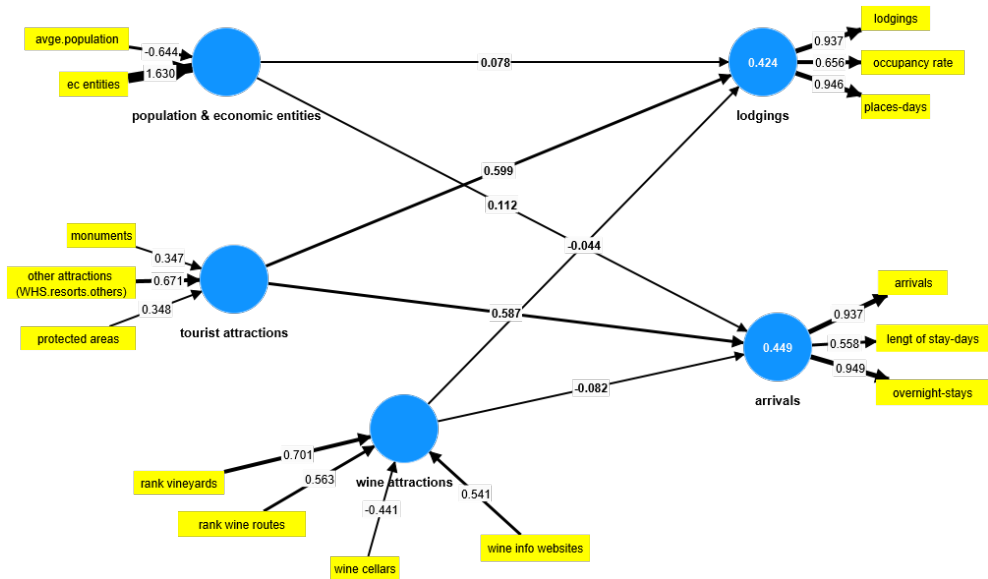


Figure No. 4. Factors influencing lodgings and arrivals in urban localities with/related to vineyards

Source: Authors' calculations using SmartPLS4

In the case of **arrivals** (Appendix 3b), *economic entities* become factors of the highest importance, followed by *other attractions* and *monuments*. *Vineyard ranks* is only the fourth most important factor, despite having the highest performance, while the other 3 wine-related factors gravitate towards 0 importance or register a negative score (*wine info websites*). This indicates that arrivals in urban localities can be mainly due to business tourism (also consistent with the low lengths of stay).

It is worth noting that all the factors (indicators) in Appendices 3b and 3c have a low performance (less than 20 out of 100).

In the case of urban localities with/related to vineyards (Appendix 4a), the performance of selected indicators is slightly higher than in the case of all urban localities, of 32.04 for **lodgings** and 18.76 for **arrivals**; however, it remains modest, similar to Appendix 3a. For **arrivals** and **lodgings**, Appendices 4b and 4c provide similar information; in both cases, *other attractions* is the most important factor, followed (at a distance) by *protected areas* and *monuments*, with almost the same importance. One small difference occurs in the case of **arrivals**, the economic entities have a slightly higher importance than in the case of **lodgings**. In both cases, these 3 wine attractions indicators

have a negative importance, while one (*wine cellars*) gravitates towards 0. Also, several of the considered indicators have a higher performance than in the case of all urban localities, even though this performance remains under 50. These findings advance the idea that in the case of the 87 urban localities with/related to vineyards, the existence of *other attractions*, mainly the status of spa resort, as most of these localities are small and very small (83), seems to be the triggering factor for opening lodgings and attracting tourists, followed by the presence of *protected areas* and *monuments*. These IPMs further underline the idea that wine attractions seem to be an impediment to tourism development.

For the 26 urban localities identified by Pop *et al.* (2023) to be situated on functional or potential wine routes, the results are not reported. The inner model collinearity is very high (VIF of 19). The short series of data is the main problem for this cluster of localities. However, as data in Table 2 indicate, these 26 municipalities and towns do not capitalize on the distinctive features provided by wine attractions.

Conclusions

The research results show with painful clarity that Romanian municipalities and towns related to wine attractions omit this differentiating feature and ignore developing their profile as wine tourism destinations. Furthermore, the results seem to indicate that the presence of wine attractions are rather hindering factors in tourism development. The findings are in line with the recent conclusions of Pop & Coros (2023) for wine attractions in rural areas. One main drawback appears to be the lack of information (with 61 websites of the 87 that do not offer any information related to wine; only 8 of the 87 websites present their wine attractions clearly). This situation has led to an absent relation between wine attractions and tourist arrivals, suggesting that tourists tend to find wine attractions by chance while visiting the destinations for other reasons.

The research results are also in line with the findings of Lupu & Ganasceac (2023) on Romanian tourists that show that the visits at wine destinations are rather day trips, influenced by the proximity of the destination, a situation indirectly confirmed by the results of Tanase *et al.* (2022), indicating that the visits at a wine destination are rather made with groups of friends. Neither study mentions the intention to revisit a wine destination, confirmed by the low level of tourist arrivals computed in the present analysis, which points towards a modest level of revisiting of these destinations. This is also in line with the findings of Tanase *et al.* (2022), according to which the Romanian

wine destinations offer a limited number of services (wine tasting, wine purchasing, winery visits), with no or few incentives to extend and/or repeat the visits. This situation is not uncommon, as shown by previous studies of Davidescu *et al.* (2018) and Pop & Georgescu (2019), mainly for rural areas, findings which can be easily extended to small towns.

The results also point towards the local authorities' lack of interest and/or knowledge regarding the potential of wine attractions as a core factor for the development of unique wine tourism destinations. The absence of information regarding wine attractions on 70% of the official websites speaks volumes. The relative lack of success of the other 9% that promote their wine attractions is also relevant. Both extremes indicate that the level of sophistication needed to develop either a stand-alone or a related wine route tourism destination is either ignored or not understood at all. This situation can be related to the quasi-absence of Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) as highlighted by Chasovschi (2019). Currently, 27 DMOs are registered in Romania by the MoT (2025), and, in the context of an absent digital presence, none can be linked to wine tourism destinations. Furthermore, the concept of community-based tourism, which can represent an even better option for wine tourism destinations' development, is barely understood and scarcely applied in Romania (Havadi Nagy & Espinosa Segui, 2020). Last, but not least, the absence of an integrated vision regarding wine tourism at the national level implies the lack of coordination and support for local and regional initiatives, when and where they exist.

Despite the wine tourism potential, Romania remains an emerging (wine) destination in this field as shown by Tanase *et al.* (2022), Oltean & Gabor (2022), and Pop & Coros (2023). This emerging state has been ongoing for more than two decades, while the increasing competition among wine regions (Getz & Brown, 2006), intensifies, with new emerging destinations that are ready to include wine in their offer appearing in Central and South-Eastern Europe, like Bosnia-Herzegovina (Bodiroga *et al.*, 2024), Bulgaria (Dimitrova, 2020), or Poland (Sidorkiewicz, 2023). In the context of this competitive climate, Romania's potential as a wine tourism destinations lose ground, as local stakeholders seem to ignore and not to embrace wine attractions as a competitive advantage, as suggested by Vazquez Vicente *et al.* (2021) and Martinez-Falco *et al.* (2024). While the current developments favor smaller urban localities to compete in becoming attractive and distinctive tourism destinations (Richards & Duif, 2018), Romanian small towns related to wine seem to have no dreams of becoming wine tourism destinations. While in some cases, entrepreneurial initiatives seem to exist, they are few and do not engage in the much-needed collaboration among the relevant stakeholders, as revealed by Chasovschi

(2019) and Havadi Nagy & Espinosa Segui (2020). The much-needed political actions (as suggested by Del Chiappa *et al.*, 2019, and Martinez-Falco *et al.*, 2024) are quasi-absent, rather declarative, with the initiative launched over 20 years ago being forgotten in a dusty drawer / (on a dusty shelf). The situation can be considered unsettling and not easy to resolve, as further investigations point towards asking uncomfortable questions to local and central authorities who, most of the time, are not willing to answer.

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APPENDICES

Appendix No. 1. Concentration of lodgings and arrivals by selected types of urban localities

Type of Urban Locality	Lodgings	Arrivals	Economic Entities	Monuments	Protected Areas
All localities	3,469	5,694,496	388,626	8,130	653
Total county residencies	1,211	3,221,564	272,654	4,580	103
% of all localities	34.91%	56.57%	70.16%	56.33%	15.77%
Residencies with >100,000 arrivals	683	2,071,723	129,336	2,024	30
% of all localities	19.69%	36.38%	33.28%	24.90%	4.59%
% of county residencies	56.40%	64.31%	47.44%	44.19%	29.13%
Note: This category includes 9 localities, of which 5 large county residencies (2 national resorts, 1 wine-related), 4 medium county residencies (1 national resort, 1 local resort)					
National resorts (without county residencies)	1,407	1,649,748	13,814	432	110
% of all localities	40.56%	28.97%	3.55%	5.31%	16.85%
National resorts with >100,000 arrivals	742	917,815	3,503	122	20
% of all localities	21.39%	16.12%	0.90%	1.50%	3.06%
% of national resorts	52.74%	55.63%	25.36%	28.24%	18.18%
Note: This category includes 5 localities, of which 2 xs (Mangalia, wine-related, and Sinaia); 3 xxs (Eforie, Predeal, and Călimănești)					
Local resorts (without county residencies)	260	178,738	20,547	678	103
% of all localities	7.49%	3.14%	5.29%	8.34%	15.77%
Note: No local resorts attracted over 100,000 arrivals.					
Type of Urban Locality	Lodgings	Arrivals	Economic Entities	Monuments	Protected Areas
Wine-related all localities	692	1,147,981	97,310	2,574	192
% of all localities	19.95%	20.16%	25.04%	31.66%	29.40%
Wine related county residencies	222	570,628	66,062	1,456	32
% of all localities	6.40%	10.02%	17.00%	17.01%	4.90%
% of wine-related localities	32.08%	49.71%	67.89%	56.57%	16.66%
1 with >100,000 arrivals (Iasi)	43	184,502	14,228	498	5
Note: This category includes 11 localities, of which 3 large county residencies (Iasi, Galati, Craiova)					

Type of Urban Locality	Lodgings	Arrivals	Economic Entities	Monuments	Protected Areas
Wine related national resorts	249	339,690	2,054	25	13
% of all localities	7.18%	5.97%	0.53%	0.31%	1.99%
% of wine related localities	35.98%	29.59%	2.11%	0.97%	6.77%
1 with >100,000 arrivals (Mangalia)	223	290,869	1,619	8	9
Note: This category includes 4 localities of which 2xs and 2xxs					
Wine related local resorts	41	36,246	5,765	157	22
% of all localities	1.18%	0.64%	1.48%	1.93%	3.37%
% of wine related localities	5.92%	3.16%	5.92%	0.61%	11.46%
Note: This category includes 7 localities of which 1 small, 5xs and 1xxs					

Source: Author's calculations based on NIS data and www.listafirme.ro

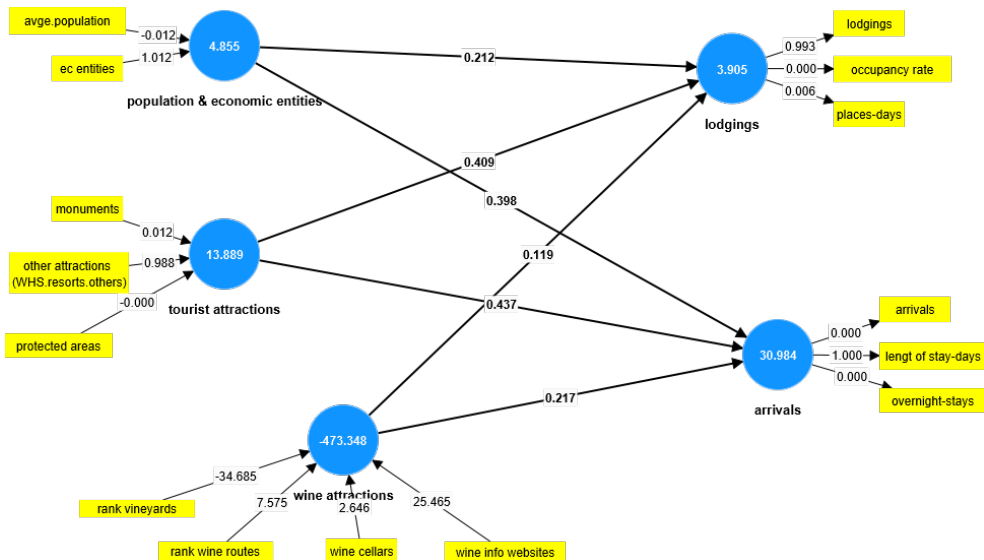
Appendix No. 2. Construct reliability and validity, collinearity statistic (VIF), and path coefficients

All Urban Localities		
Construct reliability and validity		
	Arrivals	Lodgings
Cronbach's Alpha	0.815	0.956
Composite reliability (rho_a)	0.846	0.986
Composite reliability (rho_c)	0.895	0.971
Average variance extracted (AVE)	0.743	0.919
Collinearity statistic – inner model (VIF)		
	Arrivals	Lodgings
population & economic entities	1.620	1.620
tourist attractions	1.788	1.788
wine attractions	1.173	1.173
Path coefficients		
	T statistic	p-values
population & economic entities → arrivals	5.243	0.000
population & economic entities → lodgings	1.850	0.064
tourist attractions → arrivals	7.769	0.000
tourist attractions → lodgings	6.582	0.000
wine attractions → arrivals	3.713	0.000
wine attractions → lodgings	2.821	0.005
Urban Localities With/Related to Vineyards		
Construct reliability and validity		
	Arrivals	Lodgings
Cronbach's alpha	0.760	0.803
Composite reliability (rho_a)	0.853	0.820
Composite reliability (rho_c)	0.868	0.890

All Urban Localities		
Average variance extracted (AVE)	0.697	0.734
Collinearity statistic – inner model (VIF)		
	Arrivals	Lodgings
population & economic entities	1.314	1.314
tourist attractions	1.383	1.383
wine attractions	1.061	1.061
Path coefficients		
	T statistic	p-values
population & economic entities → arrivals	0.570	0.569
population & economic entities → lodgings	0.332	0.740
tourist attractions → arrivals	3.903	0.000
tourist attractions → lodgings	3.207	0.001
wine attractions → arrivals	1.243	0.214
wine attractions → lodgings	0.753	0.451

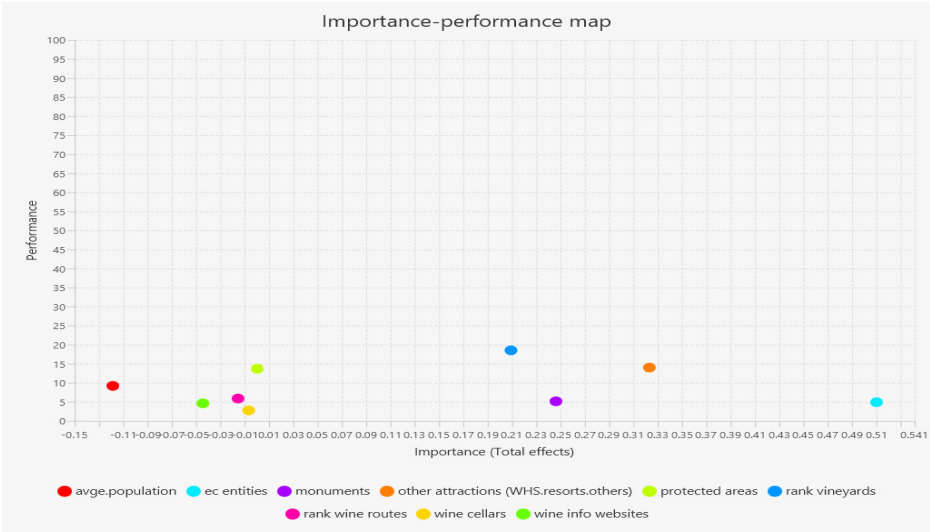
Source: Authors' calculations using SmartPLS4

Appendix No. 3a: All urban localities – Importance-Performance Map analysis



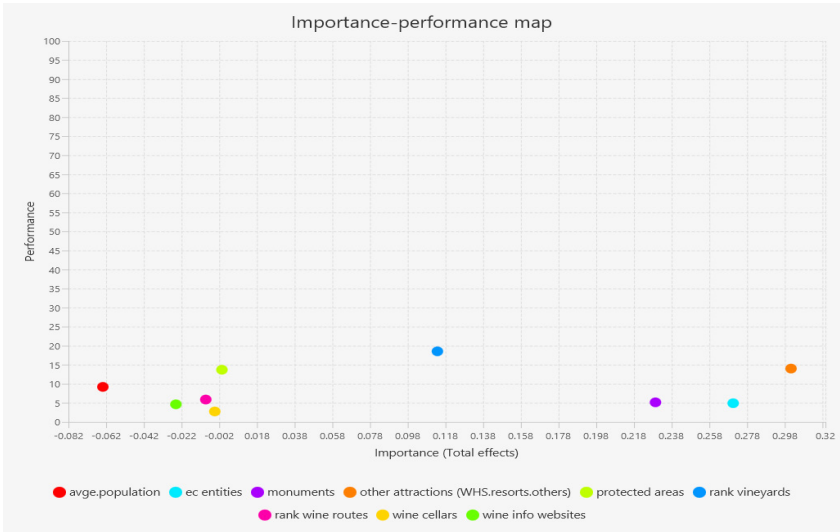
Source: Authors' calculations using SmartPLS4

**Appendix No. 3b. All urban localities –
Importance-Performance Map indicators for arrivals**



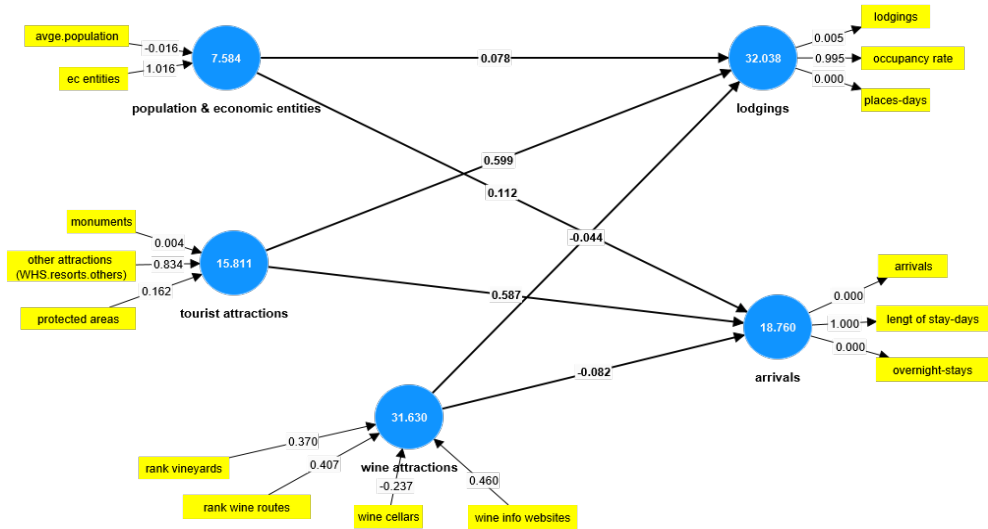
Source: Authors' calculations using SmartPLS4

**Appendix No. 3c: All urban localities –
Importance-Performance Map indicators for lodgings**

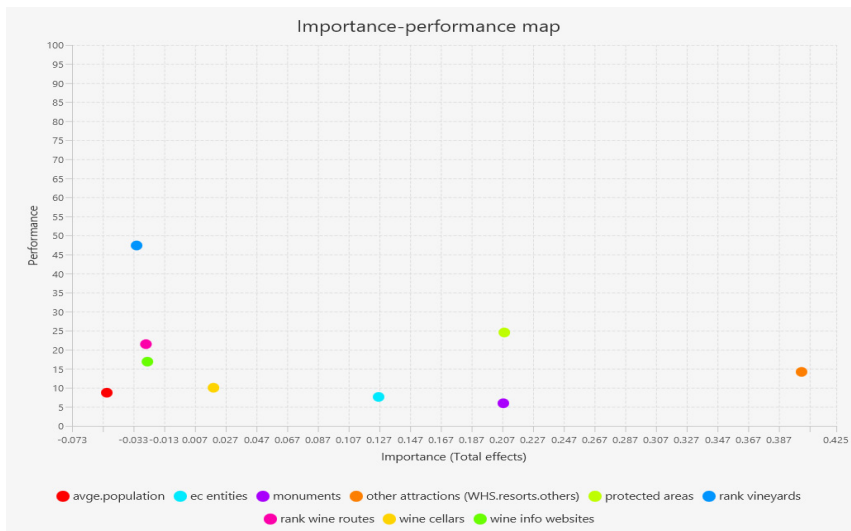


Source: Authors' calculations using SmartPLS4

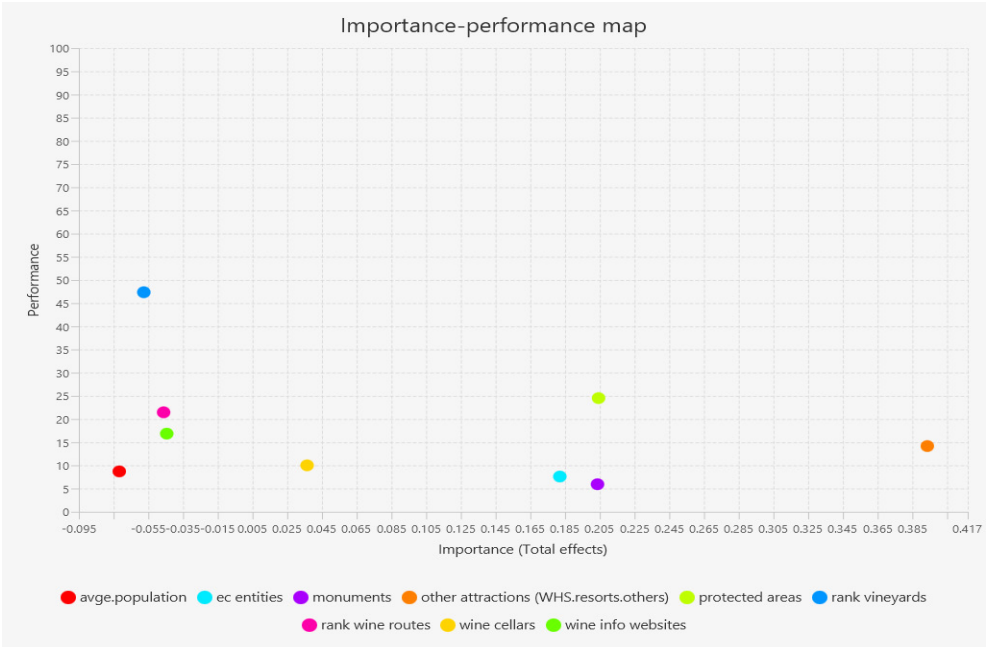
Appendix No. 4a. Urban localities with/related to vineyards – Importance-Performance Map analysis



Appendix No. 4b. Urban localities with/related to vineyards – Importance-Performance Map indicators for arrivals



**Appendix No. 4c. Urban localities with/related to vineyards –
Importance-Performance Map indicators for lodgings**



Source: Authors' calculations using SmartPLS4

