

Abstract

In the introduction of the paper, we presented theoretical aspects related to rural tourism, equestrian, and horse-drawn carriage tourism. Next, we presented the organisation of the research, and then we presented and analysed results. The research carried out in 2016 had two phases. In the first phase, questionnaires were administered to residents about equestrian and horse-drawn carriage tourism heritage of Mărişelu village and its capitalisation. In the second phase, a teaching experiment was held with 22 pupils in the primary grades from Mărişelu Middle School, Bistriţa-Năsăud County, Romania. An initial test and a final one were applied, and in between, an experimental activity took place consisting of pupils' completion of a 25 km long route, during 12 hours through six villages of Mărişelu coomune, accompanied by teachers and parents in horse-drawn carriages.

Keywords: *rural identity, cultural identity, rural image, rural landscape, rural tourism, cultural tourism*