

DIGITALIZATION OF THE ROMANIAN GASTRONOMIC HERITAGE: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO CONSERVATION AND PROMOTION

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ABSTRACT

Romania's gastronomic heritage reflects a remarkable cultural diversity, rooted in local identities, community history, and the relationship between people, the environment, and seasonal cycles. In the context of globalization and rapid digital transformation, oral transmission and traditional documentation are no longer sufficient for long-term preservation. This article analyses the opportunities and challenges of digitizing Romania's gastronomic heritage, focusing on interdisciplinary, participatory, and sustainable approaches. The study draws on relevant international examples—from France, Italy, Japan, Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria—where digital platforms, databases, mobile applications, and augmented reality are used to archive, promote, and educate the public about traditional culinary practices. Structural and institutional differences are highlighted in comparison to Romania, where existing initiatives remain fragmented, underfunded, and lack a coherent national strategy. The article suggests a number of strategic directions for Romania, including the creation of a national digital platform, the formation of an inter-institutional consortium, and the integration of digital tools into education and tourism. Key digital tools—such as multimedia databases, augmented reality, and mobile applications—are evaluated for their potential to support the preservation, valorization, and transmission of traditional culinary knowledge. The research argues that digitization is not just a technological solution, but a complex cultural process that is essential for the protection and revitalization of Romania's gastronomic heritage in the 21st century.

Keywords: culinary heritage, digitization, mobile applications, cultural identity.

INTRODUCTION

Gastronomic heritage occupies a special place within the broader framework of intangible cultural heritage, as defined by UNESCO. Far from being merely a set of recipes, it is an intricate cultural system in which ingredients, preparation techniques, rituals, and symbolic meanings converge. In the Romanian context, this heritage is a living archive of regional identities, shaped by centuries of interaction between pastoral and agricultural livelihoods, seasonal rhythms of planting and harvesting, and the socio-economic exchanges along historical trade routes [1].