SCIENTIA
AGRICULTURAE
BOHEMICA

Article

Differences between generations X, Y, and Z in Sweden and the Czech Republic in the context of perceptions of sustainability in consumer behaviour

Hana Urbánková[1], Jana Stávková[1]*

[1] Mendel University in Brno, Prague, Czech Republic; hana.urbankova@mendelu.cz; jana.stavkova@mendelu.cz

* Correspondence: jana.stavkova@mendelu.cz (Country)

Abstract: This study examines generational differences in sustainable consumption behaviour among Generations X, Y, and Z in Sweden and the Czech Republic. Using a survey-based approach with 370 Swedish respondents and comparative Czech data (n=703), the research investigates attitudes toward sustainability, perceived barriers, and purchasing preferences across three generational cohorts shaped by distinct socio-political contexts. Swedish respondents demonstrated significantly higher preference for products from sustainability-focused companies but lower general importance attributed to sustainable behaviour compared to Czech counterparts. Within Sweden, Kruskal-Wallis testing revealed minimal intergenerational variation, with only one statistically significant difference across 32 tested variables: Millennials showed greater agreement than Generation X that nothing prevents them from maintaining healthy lifestyles ($p=0.030$). Cross-national comparisons revealed substantially greater differences between Sweden and Czechia than between generational cohorts within Sweden. This pattern challenges age-based segmentation strategies and suggests that national institutional context outweighs generational effects in shaping sustainable consumption patterns. The findings indicate that mature sustainability markets characterised by high institutional trust and systemic support exhibit generational homogeneity, whilst transitional economies retain cohort-specific heterogeneity. Policy implications favour infrastructure-based universal interventions in stable contexts over age-targeted campaigns.

Keywords: consumer behaviour, decision-making, generational differences, marketing communication, responsibility, sustainability

Received for publication on October 27, 2025

Accepted for publication on November 11, 2025

1. Introduction

Essentially, every act of consumption is a vote on the future. The choice between products becomes a silent but powerful expression of our beliefs about the kind of world we want to leave to future generations. These everyday decisions carry a profound ethical dimension that confronts us with one of the most fundamental challenges of the modern age: how to reconcile our individual desire for comfort and consumption with our collective responsibility for the future of our planet. Western consumerism, based on the constant improvement of living standards through the accumulation of material goods, is coming up against the biophysical limits of ecosystems. The Anthropocene, a geological epoch defined by the unprecedented influence of humans on Earth's processes, is forcing us to re-evaluate the fundamental relationship between humans and nature. Sustainable consumption is thus becoming not only an environmental necessity, but also an imperative for the preservation of civilisation.

On the consumer side, there remains a significant gap between attitudes and behaviour, known as the value-action gap. Sustainability is perceived as important, and part of the population declares a willingness to pay more, but barriers in the form of price, information uncertainty and insufficient education prevent preferences from being translated into real behaviour. This fact confirms the persistent mismatch between values and consumption practices. Ajzen (2020) states that the so-called value-action gap is a significant obstacle that affects consumers across generations. Although individuals declare a positive attitude towards environmentally friendly behaviour, their actual purchasing decisions often do not reflect this. According to Gifford and Nilsson (2014), this gap is caused by a number of psychological barriers, including economic constraints, low trust in environmental certifications, and the perceived complexity of changing consumption habits. Dlouhá et al. (2021) assess consumer behaviour in terms of sustainability as follows: "Our consumption behaviour and lifestyle are a kind of crossroads between sustainability and unsustainability." It is precisely consumers' everyday choices that are the key point for educational interventions leading to a sustainable lifestyle. The authors further state that "education for responsible consumption and lifestyle has all the characteristics of good education because it directly relates to the life of the individual who is learning. Such learning is illustrative, helps shape their lives, and contributes to good coexistence in society." Education for responsible consumption cannot be viewed in isolation, but as an integral part of the development of cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural competencies.

An important factor determining consumer behaviour is the period in which an individual was born. The beginnings of the generational division of society can be traced back to the author Auguste Comte (1830–1842), who considered social evolution to be the key framework for the development of society. In his works, we find the idea that institutions and generations are the bearers of social development. Although he does not directly use the term "generational change", his emphasis on the social reproduction of ideas and institutions between generations is close to this interpretation. Empirical studies focusing on consumer attitudes and behaviour show that the Czech population declares a growing interest in ethical and "green" purchases. However, barriers in the form of price, availability and information uncertainty persist, contributing to a significant gap between declared attitudes and actual purchasing behaviour (Šálková, Čábelková & Hommerová, 2024). Analyses of the determinants of "green" purchasing decisions on the Czech market confirm the influence of socio-demographic factors, including generational differences (X, Y, Z), and statistically significant links between value and product attributes and gender, education, and age. These findings are essential for designing targeted interventions in real purchasing situations (Koudelková & Milichovský, 2025). The Czech context of sustainable behaviour is shaped by a combination of long-term strategic frameworks (e.g. Circular Czechia 2040) and more recent empirical findings on consumer attitudes and decision-making. Together, they point to the need for more effective integration of systemic tools with the everyday practices of households and businesses (EEA, 2024; Ministry of the Environment, 2025). Strategic priorities in the areas of product design, bioeconomy, consumer consumption and, economic tools have already been operationalised into implementation steps. Interim reports on the state of the environment and a new waste management information system explicitly monitor progress and barriers at the level of behaviour and practice. The political and institutional framework

is further complemented by the Czech Republic's State Environmental Policy 2030 (with a view to 2050), which formulates visions and goals for a climate-neutral and circular economy. It emphasises the importance of effective cross-cutting tools – legislation, financing, public procurement – and the need for shared responsibility between the state, businesses and citizens (Ministry of the Environment, 2021).

The 2024 Circular Economy Profile of the Czech Republic emphasises the development of strategic priorities in ten thematic areas, including "consumption and consumers". The document lists specific measures in the area of extending the life of products, their reparability, increasing the rate of sorting, recycling and use of secondary raw materials (EEA, 2024). The 2023 Report on the Environment of the Czech Republic confirms that, in addition to modernising environmental policies (e.g. increasing landfill fees, extending producer responsibility, preparing a deposit system), it is essential to combine economic incentives, information support and the availability of sustainable alternatives directly at the point of consumption in order to accelerate behavioural change (Ministry of the Environment, 2025; EEA, 2024). Within this framework, it focuses, among other things, on synthesising the latest Czech empirical findings on consumer attitudes and decision-making as a basis for designing behaviour-driven, effective policies and measures (EEA, 2024; Šálková, Čábelková & Hommerová, 2024; Koudelková & Milichovský, 2025).

The Swedish concept of sustainable behaviour is shaped by a combination of a climate and environmental framework, high performance in a number of indicators, but also persistent gaps in implementation. This creates a need for targeted interventions on the part of demand, production and local government (OECD, 2025). According to the latest Environmental Performance Review report from the OECD, Sweden has long been successful in decoupling environmental pressures from economic growth and is among the leaders within the organisation. However, some of the 2030 targets currently appear difficult to achieve, and recent political changes are increasing uncertainty about their implementation (OECD, 2025). Swedish municipalities show high ambitions in managing the transition to sustainable consumption, but their potential remains untapped due to limited capacities, tools and insufficient political support (Axelsson, André, Dawkins, Gerger Swartling and Eriksson, 2023).

Furthermore, data from the Sustainable Brand Index 2024 (SB Insight, 2024) recorded a significant decline in the positive perception of brand sustainability in Sweden compared to previous years. Respondents pointed to information confusion and reduced exposure to sustainability messages. These findings point to the need for clearer communication, documented effects and the reduction of barriers at the point of purchase as a key complement to regulatory instruments (Voyado, 2024; SB Insight, 2024). Changes in everyday practices in the areas of food, mobility and households can in themselves reduce emissions by approximately 40 % if they are complemented by structural interventions beyond effective measures (Svenfelt, Mont, Nässén et al., 2024). These results shift the emphasis from isolated technological solutions to systemic changes combining behavioural, institutional and market mechanisms. The Swedish framework for sustainable behaviour is thus based on strong macro-policies and knowledge infrastructure, but requires deeper integration of national goals with local capacity and everyday consumption practices, as well as clearer corporate communication and greater use of municipal procurement power to bridge the gap between attitudes and actual behaviour (OECD, 2025; Axelsson et al., 2023; SB Insight, 2024; Voyado, 2024).

The aim of this study is to compare the attitudes of Generations X, Y and Z living in Sweden and the Czech Republic towards sustainable behaviour. To identify differences in key determinants (e.g. social norms, values, price sensitivity, awareness) across these generations. The study will test generational heterogeneity in current approaches to sustainable consumer behaviour and, based on the findings, propose recommendations for institutions and brand communication with the aim of promoting sustainable education and behaviour.

Generational characteristics of Sweden and the Czech Republic

Generational cohorts are not universally applicable across culturally diverse regions – current research in cultural diversity, and intergenerational psychology shows that definitions of generations (e.g., X, Y, Z) are primarily based on the North American and Western European context, and their transfer to other environments can be misleading (Costanza et al., 2012). While Czech generations were shaped by a radical transformation from a centrally planned economy to a market economy, Swedish generations grew up in an environment of continuous democratic development and a developed welfare state (Potůček, 2019; Tepe, 2005). Czech cohorts went through the process of building democratic institutions, while Swedish generations had long-term access to an established institutional framework and environmental policies (Lundberg & Åmark, 2001; EEA, 2024; OECD, 2025).

The differences between Generations X and Y in the Czech Republic are mainly in attitudes towards work, perceptions of job security, and work-life balance. Younger generations show a higher preference for work-life balance and lower tolerance for job insecurity (Ďásek & Suchanec, 2018). Generation X is more conservative, while Generation Z shows a strong interest in sustainability but also a certain ambivalence in terms of values when it comes to everyday decision-making. In both the Czech and Swedish contexts, this highlights the importance of generational differences not only in values, but also in the way these values are transformed into behaviour. This has direct implications for the design of targeted policies that should reflect the specific historical, cultural and institutional experiences of individual cohorts.

In contrast, Swedish generations are more consistent in their values, which can be attributed to the long-term stability of the social democratic model and the existence of systemic support for environmentally friendly behaviour (Tepe, 2005; OECD, 2025).

Psychological, behavioural factors and upbringing across generations X, Y and Z in Sweden and the Czech Republic

In both the Swedish and Czech contexts, psychological and behavioural factors and upbringing are reflected in different patterns of sustainable behaviour across Generations X, Y and Z. These differences can be explained by a combination of cultural and institutional conditions, educational approaches and family socialisation. In Generation X (1965–1980) in Czechia, values based on collectivism and hierarchy have become entrenched, resulting from family upbringing oriented towards obedience and pragmatism during socialism, which is reflected in a lower openness to experimenting with sustainable practices (Essiz, 2022; Gericke et al., 2019).

Psychologically, Czech Generation X has a stronger need for certainty and a lower propensity for lifestyle changes, which limits their behavioural willingness to adopt new environmental habits (Springer, 2024). In contrast, Swedish Generation X, socialised in an environment of welfare state solidarity, shows a higher degree of proactive behavioural engagement, supported by a systemic emphasis on civic education about sustainability from the school curriculum onwards.

Among Generation Y (Millennials) (198–1996), the Czech population shows a strong value orientation towards individual self-realisation and career growth, which often outweighs altruistic motivations for a sustainable lifestyle, and there is a lack of consistent environmental education in schools (Essiz, 2022; Gericke et al., 2019). Behaviourally, Czech Millennials are therefore more often guided by price sensitivity than by environmental arguments (Elsevier, 2024). In Sweden, however, Millennials have achieved higher environmental literacy thanks to extensive environmental education programmes and community- nd initiatives, which is reflected in a greater likelihood of adopting green technologies and shared services (Springer, 2024).

For Generation Z (1997–2012), both countries have a strong digital influence on attitude formation, but the sources of reliable information differ. The Czech Generation Z draws mainly from

online discussions and influencers, which leads to greater fluctuation in attitudes and susceptibility to misinformation (Essiz, 2022; Gericke et al., 2019). Psychologically, they exhibit a more pronounced value-action gap due to a lack of structural tools for practical application. In contrast, thanks to the integration of environmental topics into formal education and informal programmes, Swedish Gen-Z have higher self-efficacy and specific behavioural habits (e.g. zero-waste projects in schools), supported by parental upbringing that emphasises shared responsibility (Springer, 2024). It appears that upbringing plays a key role: more conservative, authoritarian parenting styles in Czech families lead to lower levels of autonomy and experimentation with sustainable practices, while democratic and participatory parenting methods in Sweden promote intrinsic motivation for sustainable behaviour from an early age (Gericke et al., 2019; Springer, 2024).

Shopping habits

Sustainable shopping habits are significantly influenced by age cohorts, private consumer effectiveness (PCE), media exposure, and peer group influence (Bulut et al., 2020). Bulut et al. (2020) analysed differences in purchasing practices between younger and older consumers and found that Generation Z and Millennials show a greater tendency to purchase eco-friendly products if they believe that their individual decisions have a real impact on the environment (high PCE). In contrast, older generations (X and earlier) show lower levels of PCE, which reduces their motivation to make more expensive sustainable choices, even though their perception of environmental importance remains generally high (Bulut et al., 2020; Essiz, 2022). Psychological determinants such as intrinsic motivation and perceived self-efficacy appear to be key mediators of the relationship between PCE and sustainable behaviour. The study by Gericke et al. (2019) document that individuals with higher self-efficacy in environmental competencies (eco-self-efficacy) show a stronger relationship between media exposure and the purchase of green products. Supplementing mediated experience through educational programmes further enhances this effect (Frontiers, 2024).

An important determinant of sustainable behaviour is media exposure, where intensive news coverage and social campaigns raise awareness of environmental issues and strengthen the sense of personal responsibility. Bulut et al. (2020) have shown that individuals exposed to targeted environmental messages in the media are up to 25% more likely to purchase eco-friendly products, with the effect being most pronounced among younger cohorts. Similarly, Elsevier (2024) reports that repeated exposure to educational content on social media increases PCE and environmental intentions by more than 30% when messages are accompanied by specific instructions for action. Another key factor is the influence of peer groups, where social norms and recommendations from friends or colleagues significantly reinforce sustainable decisions. A study has shown that consumers whose peers actively seek out and share information about eco-friendly products are more than 30% more willing to try new green alternatives (Bulut et al., 2020). Furthermore, Springer (2024) emphasises that longitudinal interactions within peer groups promote the internalisation of environmental norms, leading to more long-term behavioural changes. Behavioural interventions that promote PCE through gamification, micro-interactions and real-time feedback show promising results, especially among Generation Z, which is more sensitive to these forms of communication (Gericke et al., 2019). Combining these approaches with traditional media campaigns and peer-to-peer programmes provides a comprehensive framework for effectively promoting sustainable consumer behaviour across cohorts.

Smart people

Smart people, or the digital smart society, represents a culture in which high trust in institutions, individualism combined with collective responsibility, and self-governance by citizens create a solid foundation for the acceptance and effective implementation of government environmental measures (Johansson & Svendsen, 2022; European Commission, 2024). In Sweden, where the level of trust in

political and administrative institutions is among the highest in the world, citizens perceive environmental policies not only as necessary but also as legitimate and fair, which greatly facilitates the introduction of restrictive instruments (Ekström et al., 2023). This cultural model combines a strong sense of individual autonomy – where each individual feels personally responsible for sustainable behaviour – with a collective social contract in which personal sacrifice is seen as a contribution to the common good (Nilsson & Åkerlund, 2021). Citizens' self-management is reflected in the active use of digital platforms to plan sustainable purchases, share resources and participate in local environmental initiatives (Lund & Karlsson, 2023). According to a European Commission study on digital transformation and social cohesion, countries with higher digital social cohesion achieve significantly better results in meeting sustainable development goals (SDGs), particularly in the areas of clean energy, sustainable cities and climate (European Commission, 2024). Sweden ranked at the top of the EU in this report as the country with the highest level of digital inclusion and participation, with over 90% of citizens regularly using online public services and community applications for environmental actions (European Commission, 2024). This digital smart society thus provides synergy between technological infrastructure, a culture of trust and participatory education, which ensures that environmental policies are not only proposed but also actually complied with and monitored by citizens in real time (Ekström et al., 2023; Lund & Karlsson, 2023). The result is an agile system of sustainable governance, where government actions are constantly reviewed and optimised in interaction with active users of digital platforms.

Government laws and measures

Sweden and the Czech Republic use a wide range of legal and political tools to achieve sustainable development goals, focusing on long-term carbon neutrality, the circular economy and behavioural changes among consumers. Sweden has a Generational Goal, established in 1999, which sets out 16 qualitative environmental goals and 24 interim milestones for addressing major environmental problems within a single generation (Government Offices of Sweden, 1999). The Climate Act 2017/2018 commits the state to achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 with the possibility of offsetting emissions through foreign projects (Swedish Parliament, 2018). Regulatory and voluntary instruments: tax relief on electric bicycles, a bonus-malus system for passenger cars, an aviation tax since 2018, and the 2016 Sustainable Consumption Strategy promoting sufficiency changes in consumption patterns (Ministry of Environment and Energy, 2016; Swedish Tax Agency, 2020). Strong institutions and codes: Environmental Code (1999), "environmental target system" with national and regional indicators, and agencies such as SEPA (Swedish Environmental Protection Agency), Swedish Energy Agency and regional building authorities that promote sustainable construction (SEPA, 2021). Long-term climate policy with economic benefits: CO_2 tax introduced in the 1970 s, hundreds of government commissions monitoring the impact of policies, and gradual tax increases for industry and consumers (Lundgren & Åström, 2022). Similar and specific instruments apply in the Czech Republic. The National Strategic Framework for the Circular Economy of the Czech Republic 2040 (Circular Czechia 2040), adopted in 2021, defines ten priority areas, including consumption and consumers, and proposes implementation measures until 2030 (Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic, 2021). The Waste Act (2012, amended in 2024) imposes extended producer responsibility, increases landfill fees and prepares a deposit system for packaging from 2025 (Act No. 541/2020 Coll.; Ministry of Environment, 2024). The EU ETS emissions trading system and the clean energy market are ensured by the implementation of EU directives on emissions trading and an amendment to the Energy Act promoting renewable energy sources (Ministry of Industry and Trade, 2023). The Climate Act, which is being prepared to set legally binding greenhouse gas emission reduction targets for 2050 and a legislative assessment mechanism, is being debated in parliament (Government of the Czech Republic, 2024). Eco-taxes and financial instruments: increase

in taxes on solid fuel emissions, support for low-emission vehicles through tax write-offs, the New Green Savings subsidy programme for building insulation and boiler replacement (Ministry of Environment, 2023; Ministry of Industry and Trade, 2024). The Czech Environmental Inspectorate, the State Environmental Fund and regional nature conservation authorities monitor the fulfilment of targets, check emission limits and finance projects that reduce environmental impacts (Czech Environmental Inspectorate, 2022).

2. Materials and Methods

A questionnaire survey was conducted to achieve the set objective. This survey was carried out among 370 respondents in Sweden between 18 July and 15 September 2025. The questionnaire was compiled using theoretical knowledge and previous research in the field of consumer behaviour, sustainability and healthy lifestyles. The data was collected via an online questionnaire created in Google Forms, which was distributed via social networks and e-mail communication. The questionnaire was designed to be as similar as possible to the previous survey in the Czech Republic, which was conducted from 9 to 21 February 2025 among 703 respondents from Czechia. The data was collected via an online questionnaire created in Google Forms, which was distributed via social networks and email communication. The structure of the sample files for Sweden and Czechia from both questionnaire surveys is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Structure of the sample in Sweden and the Czech Republic, 2025 (source: own research)

Sweden	N	%	Czechia	N	
Total	370	100.0	Total	703	100.0
Male		34.1			
Female		65.9			
Generation X		28.9	Generation X		18.2
Millennials		35.4	Millennials		64.6
Generation Z		35.7	Generation Z		17.2
Small town		5.1	Small town		30.5
Town		16.2	Town		27.3
Medium-sized town		57.3	Medium-sized town		21.7
Large city		21.4	Large city		20.5
Primary		0	Primary		1.8
Secondary		44.9	Medium		35.3
Higher		55.1	University		62.9
Student		32.2	Student		7.4
Employee		48.1	Employee		65.6
Self-employed		19.7	Self-employed		13.3
Maternity		0	Maternity		12.8
Unemployed		0	Unemployed		0.9

Descriptive statistics of the sample for Sweden

There were 370 respondents in the sample for Sweden. Generational representation was even. Two-thirds of respondents came from medium-sized and large cities. Half of the respondents had a

university education. Almost half of the respondents were employees, entrepreneurs (self-employed) accounted for less than 20%, and students accounted for 32% of the sample. The distribution of respondents by generation in Sweden is shown in Chart 1.

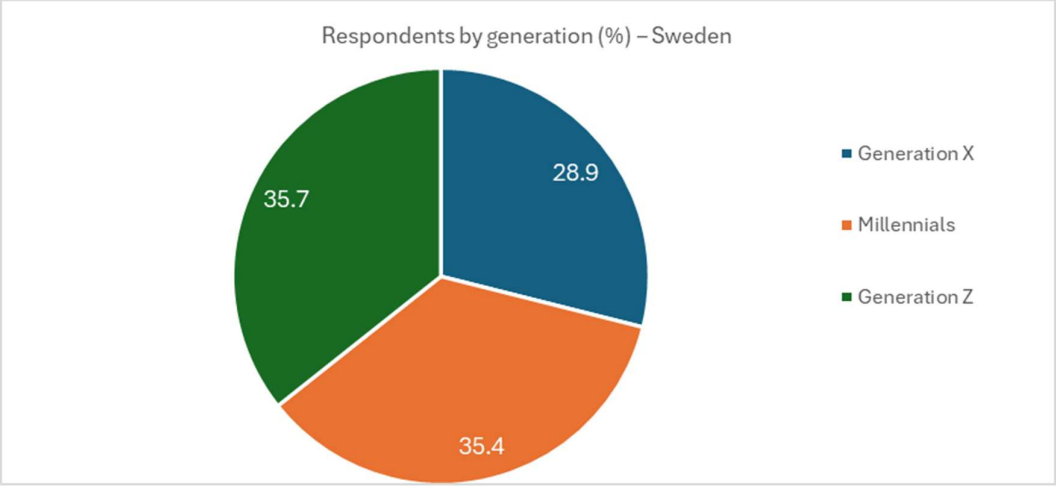

Figure 1. Distribution of respondents by generation in Sweden, 2025 (source: own research)

Descriptive statistics of the sample for Czechia

There were 703 respondents in the sample for the Czech Republic. Generational representation was not evenly distributed – Millennials accounted for almost two-thirds, while Generations X and Z had comparable and significantly lower representation (around 18%). Respondents came relatively evenly from all city size categories, with a slight predominance of small cities (one-third of the sample). Almost two-thirds of respondents had a university education. Two-thirds of respondents were employees, entrepreneurs (self-employed) accounted for 13% and students for 7% of the sample. The distribution of respondents by generation in Czechia is shown in Chart 2.

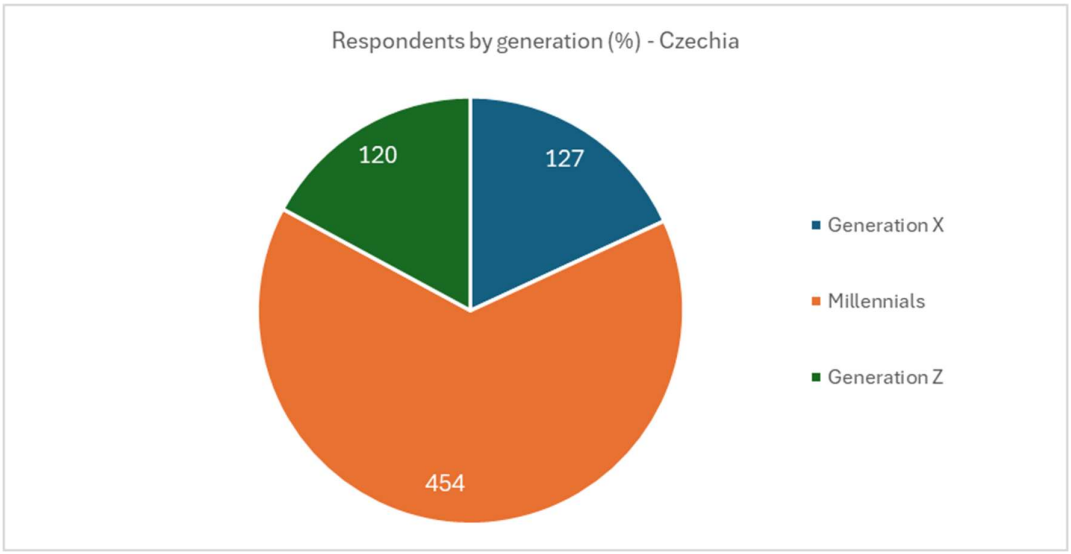

Figure 2. Distribution of respondents by generation in Czechia, 2025 (source: own research)

The questionnaires from both surveys had identical content, with the only difference being in the question on socio-demographic characteristics. Due to cultural differences and the greater sensitivity of respondents in Sweden to questions concerning income, this question was omitted from the questionnaire for respondents in Sweden, but was included in the questionnaire for respondents in Czechia. The questionnaires consisted mainly of closed questions (dichotomous, selection, scale) and were structured into several thematic units: perceptions of sustainability, attitudes towards sustainability and healthy lifestyles, and factors influencing sustainable consumer behaviour. The final section contains socio-demographic characteristics.

To gain an overview of the opinions and attitudes expressed by respondents to the content questions, descriptive statistics are used in the form of average values from a 7-point Likert scale and graphical representation. An example question from the questionnaire in the introductory section on the perception of sustainability was: "What do you understand by the term sustainability?" Respondents chose all valid options, e.g. environmental protection, circular economy, social justice, ethical production, etc. The importance of sustainable behaviour, their opinions and attitudes is expressed using a Likert scale (scale 1 = completely unimportant to 7 = very important), e.g. "How important do you think sustainable behaviour is in everyday life? 1 means completely unimportant to 7 = very important. The section focused on healthy lifestyles included questions such as: To what extent do you agree with the statements: "I consciously try to eat healthily", "I pay attention to the composition of food", "Habit and convenience prevent me from leading a healthy lifestyle". In terms of consumer behaviour, questions included: "How important is sustainability (ecological materials, ethical production) to you?" and "What would motivate you to buy more sustainable products?" (e.g. lower price, greater choice, higher quality).

The non-parametric Mann-Whitney test was used to test the differences in average values between countries because the condition of normal data distribution, tested using the Shapiro-Wilk test, was not met (Pecáková, 2011). The non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test was used to test the differences in the average values of individual variables (questions) by generation, due to the failure to meet the condition of normal data distribution, tested using the Shapiro-Wilk test (Pecáková, 2011). Subsequently, its DSFC (Dwass-Steel-Critchlow-Fligner) post-hoc test of paired comparisons will be used to verify statistically significant differences between pairs of groups. All statistical analyses are performed in IBM SPSS Statistics 29 software.

Factor analysis cannot be used to identify factors influencing respondent behaviour in the case of Sweden, as the conditions for its use are not met (Hebák et al., 2013). The assumption of independence of variables tested using Bartlett's test ($\chi(^{2)}{}_{(}{}_{)\ (496))}$ =500.455; P=0.436) is not met. Likewise, the suitability of the data tested using the KMO test = 0.471 is not sufficient.

3. Results

Results of the survey in the Czech Republic and Sweden

This section presents empirical findings from the Swedish survey (n=370, July–September 2025) and comparative analyses with Czech baseline data (n=703, February 2025). Czech contextual findings were obtained in a separate survey and are summarized in the Introduction for reference. Results are structured according to three analytical objectives: (1) descriptive statistics of Swedish respondents' sustainability attitudes and barriers; (2) intergenerational differences within Sweden using Kruskal-Wallis tests; and (3) cross-national comparisons between Sweden and Czechia using Mann-Whitney U tests.

Results of a survey in Sweden

The results in Sweden show that respondents expressed the highest level of agreement with preferring products from companies that promote sustainability. Sustainable behaviour in everyday life is generally very important to respondents in Sweden. They attach great importance to environmental protection and the efficient use of resources. On the other hand, they attach less importance to transport and business. They have less confidence in companies' sustainability measures. When asked about obstacles to a healthy lifestyle, they agree most strongly that nothing prevents them from following a healthy lifestyle, but they also agree most strongly that high financial costs, convenience and lack of time are obstacles. On the other hand, the smallest obstacle is health restrictions and stress. Of the other statements, they agree most strongly that they consciously try to eat healthily and have a good relationship with food. On the other hand, marketing does not influence their eating habits.

Survey results in Czechia

Comparison of differences between generations in Sweden

The statistical significance of the differences in responses between generations in Sweden for each of the 32 questions was tested at a 5% significance level using the Kruskal-Wallis test. This non-parametric statistical test was chosen because the condition of normal data distribution, tested by the Shapiro-Wilk test, was not met. According to the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test, there is a statistically significant difference between generations for only one question, namely: "Nothing prevents me from maintaining a healthy lifestyle" ($\chi^{(2)}_{(2;\ N=370)}$ =6.981; p=0.030), effect size = 0.0189. According to the DSCF post-hoc paired comparison test, a statistically significant difference (p=0.025) was found between Generation X and Millennials, with Generation X having a significantly lower level of agreement, while Millennials have a higher level of agreement that nothing prevents them from maintaining a healthy lifestyle. For other responses also expressing the strength of their opinion (agreement) on a point scale, the differences between generations are not statistically significant.

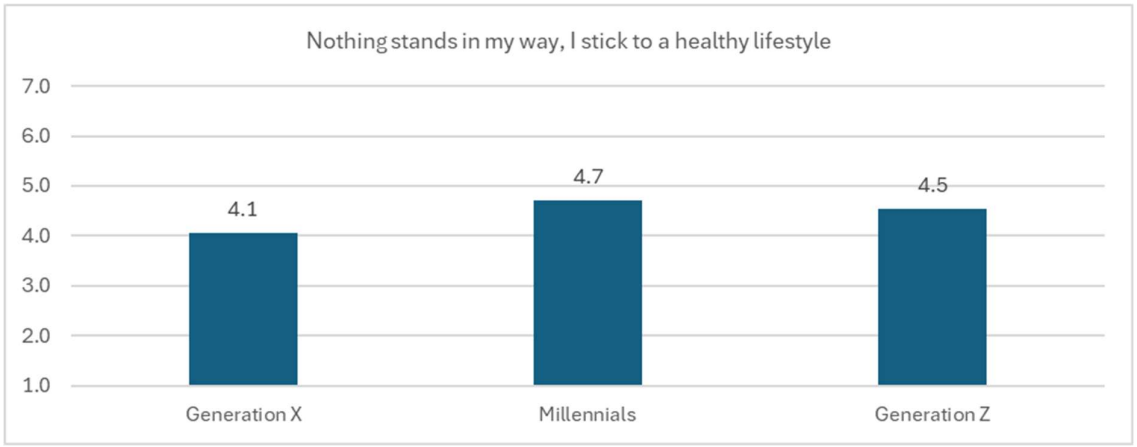

Figure 3. Perception of barriers to a healthy lifestyle by generation in Sweden, 2025 (source: own research)

Verification of the significance of differences in survey results in Sweden and the Czech Republic

The comparison of values between Sweden and the Czech Republic was tested at a 5% significance level using the Mann-Whitney test. This non-parametric test was chosen because the condition of normal data distribution tested using the Shapiro-Wilk test was not met. Compared to the Czech Republic, the answers to most questions differ significantly, and for many of them the difference is even statistically significant at the 5% significance level according to the Mann-Whitney test. In Sweden, compared to Czechia, they give Statistically significantly (U =102332.5; p=0.000) attach less importance to sustainable behaviour in general (5.2 vs. 5.6). In Sweden, there is also a statistically significant (U =120604; p=0.039) lower level of trust in companies (4.1 vs. 4.2). On the other hand, Sweden has a statistically significant (U = 82,570; p = 0.000) higher preference for products from such companies (5.9 vs. 4.9) than the Czech Republic. In Sweden, they report a higher level of importance for all areas of sustainability, with the greatest differences being in environmental protection, long-term balance and social justice.

The barriers to a healthy lifestyle also differ. In Sweden, there is a statistically significant (U = 116,081; p = 0.003) higher agreement that nothing prevents them from maintaining a healthy lifestyle (4.5 vs. 4.1). In Sweden, on the other hand, stress (2.5 vs. 3.2) and high financial costs (3.2 vs. 3.5) are statistically significantly lower barriers. Among other statements, there is a statistically significant (U = 93228.5; p = 0.000) higher level of agreement in Sweden than in the Czech Republic that eating habits are influenced by a lack of time (3.8 vs. 3.0), and similarly, that people do not consider whether their diet is healthy (2.1 vs. 1.6). Conversely, there is a lower level of agreement in Sweden with conscious healthy eating (4.4 vs. 5.0) and monitoring food composition (3.8 vs. 4.5).

Table 2. Comparison of values for Sweden and the Czech Republic, 2025 (source: own research)

	Sweden*	Czech Republic*	P-value**
How important do you think sustainable behaviour is in everyday life?	5.2 (1.27)	5.6 (1.26)	0.00
Environmental protection	5.5 (1.54)	4.7 (1.78)	0.00
Long-term balance between economy, society and ecology	5.1 (1.6)	4.4 (1.79)	0.00
Efficient use of natural resources without depleting them	5.5 (1.8)	4.9 (1.86)	0.0
Minimising waste and promoting the circular economy	5.1 (1.54)	4.8 (1.86)	0.078
Sustainable consumption and responsible purchasing	5.2 (1.39)	4.6 (1.85)	0.000
Social justice and equal opportunities	5.1 (1.68)	4.3 (1.85)	0.00
Energy self-sufficiency and use of renewable sources	5.1 (1.53)	4.5 (1.79)	0.00
Sustainable transport and mobility	4.7 (1.68)	4.1 (1.80)	0.000
Responsible business practices and ethical production	4.8 (1.58)	4.2 (1.85)	0.00
Do you prefer products from companies that promote sustainability?	5.9 (1.24)	4.9 (1.45)	0.000
Do you find companies' sustainability measures credible?	4.1 (0.98)	4.2 (1.15)	0.039
Lack of time	3 (1.46)	2.9 (1.83)	0.019

High financial costs	3.2 (2.17)	3.5 (1.91)	0.002
Low motivation	2.8 (1.58)	2.7 (1.75)	0.108
Lack of information	2.6 (1.89)	2.4 (1.54)	0.509
Lifestyle of my surroundings	2.9 (1.65)	2.7 (1.78)	0.025
Stress and mental discomfort	2.5 (1.52)	3.2 (1.95)	0.00
Health limitations	1.9 (1.11)	2.2 (1.69)	0.382
Lack of available options	2.8 (1.55)	2.4 (1.59)	0.000
Habit and convenience	3.2 (1.58)	3.3 (1.96)	0.937
Nothing prevents me, I follow a healthy lifestyle	4.5 (1.9)	4.1 (1.89)	0.003
I consciously try to eat healthily	4.4 (1.64)	5.0 (1.91)	0
I monitor the composition of food	3.8 (1.69)	4.5 (1.97)	0
I have a good relationship with food and enjoy eating	4.7 (1.74)	4.9 (2.02)	0.069
I eat emotionally – I use food to cope with stress or emotions	2.4 (1.5)	2.7 (1.71)	0.035
The price of food has the greatest influence on my eating habits.	2.9 (1.99)	2.7 (1.71)	0.91
The lack of time has the greatest influence on my eating habits.	3.8 (1.73)	3.0 (1.82)	0
The lack of available information has the greatest influence on my eating habits.	2.1 (1.4)	1.8 (1.19)	0
Marketing and advertising of food products have the greatest influence on my eating habits.	1.7 (0.93)	2.0 (1.32)	0.04
My eating habits are most influenced by the influence of family and friends.	2.4 (1.4)	2.7 (1.75)	0.003
I don't worry about whether my diet is healthy	2.1 (1.57)	1.6 (1.27)	0.00

**average (standard deviation); **Mann-Whitney test*

To visualise the key differences between Swedish and Czech respondents in their attitudes towards sustainable behaviour, the following figures illustrate the systematic differences identified using the Mann-Whitney U test. They provide a comparison of the average values between the two countries in the following areas.

Figure 4 shows a comparison of product preferences from companies promoting sustainability and the credibility of these companies. Paradoxically, although Swedish respondents show a statistically significantly higher preference for such products (5.9 vs. 4.9; $p<0.001$), they also express slightly lower trust in companies' sustainability measures (4.1 vs. 4.2; $p=0.039$). This phenomenon corresponds with the findings of the Sustainable Brand Index 2024, which documented Swedish consumers' increased criticality towards greenwashing and the need for more transparent communication based on verifiable facts.

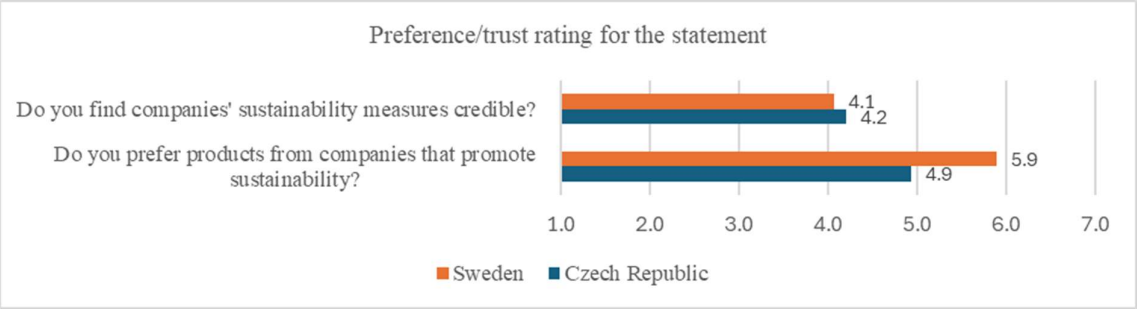

Figure 4. Preference for products from companies promoting sustainability and trustworthiness of corporate actions, 2025 (source: own research)

A comparison of the importance ratings of individual sustainability dimensions (environmental protection, efficient use of resources, circular economy, social justice, etc.) shows that Swedish respondents attach statistically significantly higher importance to all areas tested, with the greatest differences observed in environmental protection, long-term balance between economy and ecology, and social justice.

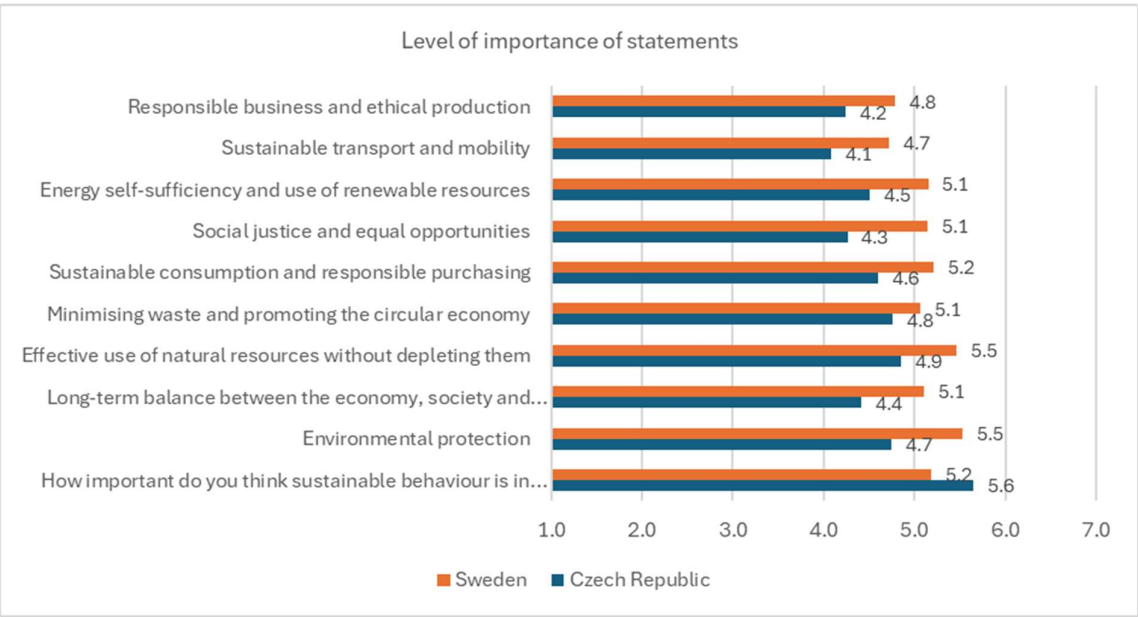

Figure 5. Comparison of the importance of sustainability dimensions, 2025 (source: own research)

Perceived barriers to a sustainable lifestyle in both countries are shown in Figure 6. Swedish respondents perceive stress and mental discomfort (2.5 vs. 3.2; $p<0.001$) and high financial costs (3.2 vs. 3.5; $p=0.002$), while they statistically significantly more often state that nothing prevents them from maintaining a healthy lifestyle (4.5 vs. 4.1; $p=0.003$). This difference indicates better availability of sustainable alternatives and a higher level of perceived self-efficacy in the Swedish context.

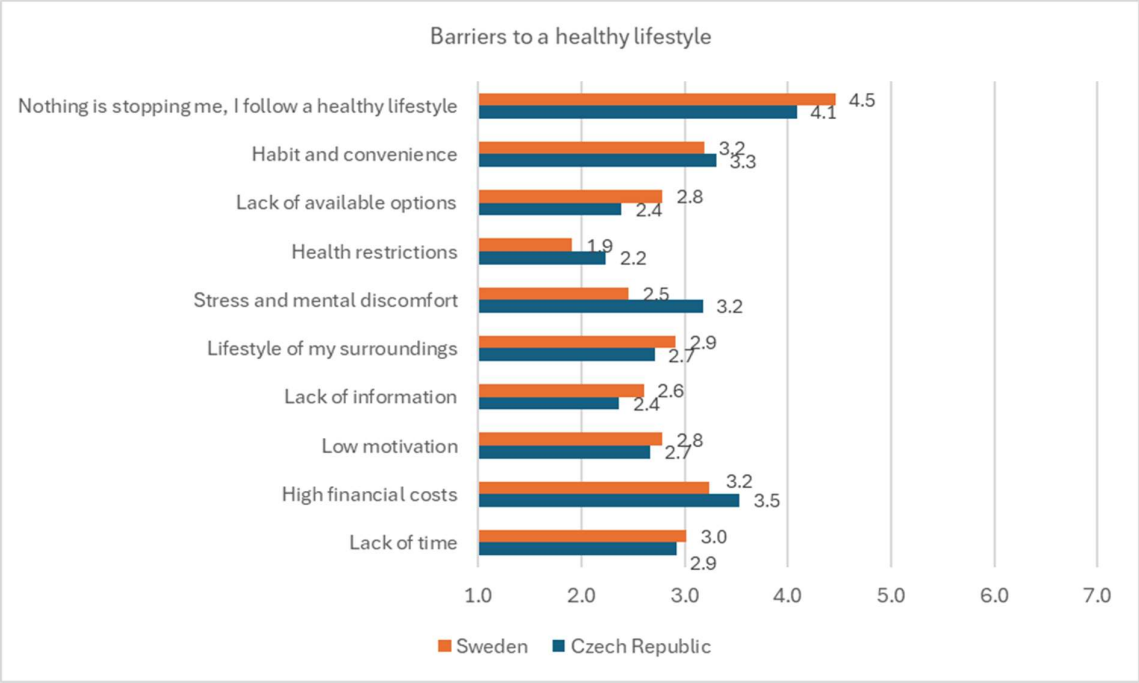

Figure 6. Perceived barriers to a sustainable lifestyle, 2025 (source: own research)

A comparison of attitudes towards eating habits and factors influencing eating is shown in Figure 7. While Swedish respondents statistically significantly more often cite lack of time as a factor influencing their eating habits (3.8 vs. 3.0; $p<0.001$), Czech respondents show a higher degree of conscious healthy eating (5.0 vs. 4.4; $p<0.001$) and more active monitoring of food composition (4.5 vs. 3.8; $p<0.001$). This contrast reflects different approaches to sustainable consumption: the Swedish systemic model versus the Czech individually active approach requiring a higher degree of personal involvement.

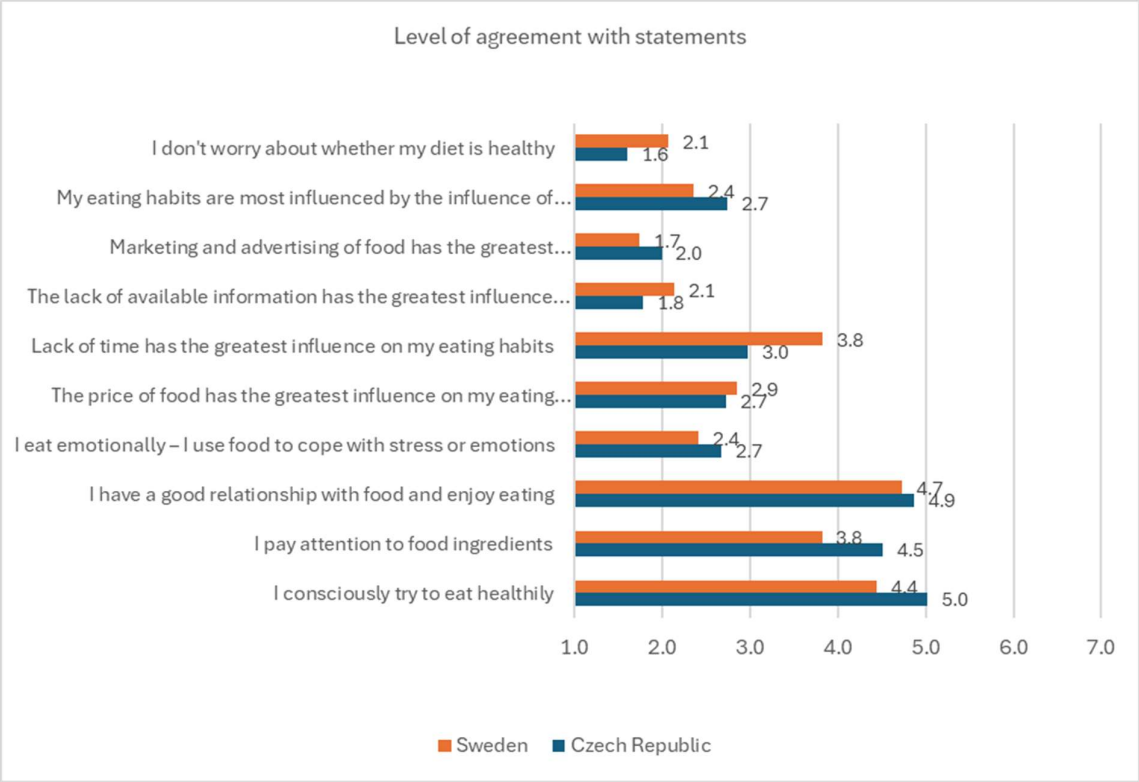

Figure 7. Factors influencing eating habits, 2025 (source: own research)

4. Discussion

Generational Homogeneity and Institutional Context

The most remarkable finding of this study challenges the prevailing assumption of universal generational heterogeneity in sustainability attitudes. Whilst extensive literature documents substantial cohort differences in North American and Central European contexts (Costanza et al., 2012; Naspetti, Mandolesi & Zanoli, 2019), Swedish respondents exhibited pronounced generational homogeneity, with only one statistically significant difference across 32 tested variables. This convergence cannot be attributed to measurement artefacts, as identical instruments yielded divergent patterns in the Czech sample, but rather reflects the enduring influence of Sweden's social-democratic institutional framework.

The theoretical explanation lies in the interaction between institutional stability and socialisation processes. According to the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory, environmental behaviour stems from internalised moral norms shaped by long-term exposure to stable value systems (Gifford & Nilsson, 2014). Swedish respondents across all three generations experienced consistent environmental education, accessible sustainable infrastructure, and reinforcing policy signals - creating what Johansson and Svendsen (2022) term "smart people" culture, where individual autonomy coexists with collective responsibility. This systemic continuity contrasts sharply with the Czech post-transformation experience, where Generations X, Y and Z were socialised under fundamentally different political and economic regimes, producing the heterogeneity documented in prior research (Potůček, 2019).

The Swedish Paradox: Internalised Behaviour versus Explicit Values

Cross-national comparisons revealed a paradoxical pattern: Swedish respondents attributed lower importance to sustainable behaviour in general, yet demonstrated significantly higher purchasing preferences for sustainability-focused companies. This finding invites two complementary interpretations. First, it may reflect successful norm internalisation, whereby sustainable practices become habitual rather than consciously deliberative – a phenomenon consistent with dual-process models of decision-making (Kahneman, 2011). When sustainability transforms from explicit value to implicit norm, individuals require less cognitive effort to enact pro-environmental behaviours, reducing the salience of sustainability as a distinct construct in self-reported importance ratings.

Second, the pattern aligns with findings from Sustainable Brand Index 2024 (SB Insight, 2024), which documented declining trust in corporate sustainability claims alongside maintained purchasing behaviour. Swedish consumers exhibit what might be termed "critical engagement": they remain sceptical of greenwashing whilst continuing to support genuinely sustainable alternatives. This sophisticated consumer posture contrasts with the Czech context, where higher stated importance coexists with lower behavioural translation – a classic manifestation of the value-action gap (Ajzen, 2020). The Czech pattern suggests that sustainability remains an aspirational value requiring active cognitive processing, rather than an automated behavioural default.

Barriers, Self-Efficacy and Structural Support

The differential perception of barriers between Swedish and Czech respondents illuminates the role of structural context in shaping Private Consumer Effectiveness (PCE). Swedish participants reported significantly lower financial and psychological barriers (stress, cost), whilst more frequently asserting that nothing prevents them from sustainable living. This pattern reflects not merely individual attitudes but systemic differences in the availability and affordability of sustainable alternatives. Sweden's extensive public transport networks, accessible recycling infrastructure, and regulatory frameworks reducing the price premium on eco-products minimise the opportunity costs of sustainable choices (OECD, 2025).

From a theoretical perspective, this aligns with Bandura's (1997) concept of self-efficacy: perceived capability to execute behaviours increases when structural enablers reduce effort requirements. Czech respondents' higher price sensitivity and stress perception indicate greater perceived behavioural control costs, which according to the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) directly inhibit intention-behaviour translation (Ajzen, 2020). Moreover, the finding that Swedish respondents report time constraints as a greater dietary barrier, yet exhibit higher overall sustainable behaviour, suggests that when sustainable options are structurally embedded (e.g., workplace canteens offering organic meals by default), time scarcity does not prevent action – it merely shifts the locus of decision-making from individual to institutional choice architecture.

Dietary Behaviour and Cultural Dimensions

The counterintuitive finding that Swedish respondents demonstrate lower conscious monitoring of food ingredients despite overall higher sustainability engagement warrants deeper examination. This may reflect what Isenhour (2010) describes as "conflicted consumption" in Swedish society: high environmental awareness coexisting with trust in regulatory systems to ensure product safety and sustainability. Swedish food policy integrates sustainability standards at the point of production and retail, reducing the necessity for individual vigilance. Conversely, Czech respondents' higher ingredient monitoring suggests lower institutional trust and greater reliance on individual agency – a pattern consistent with post-transition societies where regulatory frameworks are perceived as less robust (Potůček, 2019).

This divergence has implications for educational interventions. In high-trust contexts like Sweden, policy should focus on maintaining system integrity and transparent labelling, allowing consumers to sustain routinised sustainable choices. In lower-trust environments, educational campaigns must empower consumers with literacy skills whilst simultaneously rebuilding confidence in regulatory institutions—a dual-track approach addressing both individual capacity and systemic credibility.

Corporate Communication and Greenwashing Fatigue

The finding that Swedish respondents express lower trust in corporate sustainability initiatives, despite higher preference for sustainable brands, underscores a critical communication challenge. This aligns with Sustainable Brand Index 2024 findings documenting "information clutter" and declining exposure to sustainability messaging in Sweden (SB Insight, 2024; Voyado, 2024). Sophisticated consumers in mature sustainability markets develop scepticism towards vague environmental claims, demanding verifiable metrics and third-party certification. Firms targeting Swedish consumers must shift from aspirational messaging to evidence-based communication, leveraging tools such as Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) declarations and blockchain-verified supply chains.

In contrast, Czech consumers' slightly higher corporate trust, coupled with lower purchasing behaviour, suggests a market at an earlier stage of sustainability maturity. Here, the challenge is not greenwashing fatigue but insufficient awareness and availability. Marketing strategies should prioritise education about product benefits, transparent pricing to justify premiums, and pilot programmes demonstrating feasibility—building foundational trust before expecting widespread behavioural adoption.

Policy Implications: Context over Cohort

The minimal generational variance within Sweden fundamentally challenges age-based segmentation strategies that dominate much sustainability marketing. Our findings suggest that in institutionally stable, high-trust societies, universal policies promoting systemic infrastructure (e.g., deposit-refund schemes, public transport subsidies, default sustainable options in public procurement) yield higher efficacy than cohort-targeted campaigns. The Swedish model demonstrates that when sustainable choices become structurally embedded and normatively reinforced across all age groups, generational differences dissolve.

Conversely, in transitional societies like Czechia, where generational cohorts experienced divergent socialisation, differentiated interventions retain value. Generation Z, socialised in a digitally connected, climate-aware era, responds to peer influence and social media campaigns highlighting individual impact (Bulut et al., 2020). Generation X, shaped by economic scarcity during transformation, prioritises cost-effectiveness and tangible benefits. Policymakers must therefore calibrate strategies to national context: system-wide defaults in mature sustainability markets, and targeted behavioural nudges in emerging ones.

Practical recommendations include: (1) In Sweden-type contexts, invest in infrastructure and regulation ensuring sustainable choices are the path of least resistance; (2) In Czech-type contexts, combine economic incentives (subsidies for green products, carbon pricing rebates) with educational campaigns targeting specific cohort values; (3) Foster cross-border learning, adapting Swedish institutional models to post-transition realities through pilot municipal projects building trust incrementally.

Limitations and Methodological Considerations

Several limitations constrain the generalisability of these findings. The cross-sectional design precludes causal inference; whilst we observe associations between national context and attitude-behaviour consistency, experimental or longitudinal data would strengthen claims about directional relationships. The Swedish sample's failure to meet assumptions for exploratory factor analysis (Bartlett's test p=0.436; KMO=0.471) limited our ability to identify latent constructs structuring behaviour. Future research employing confirmatory factor analysis with theoretically grounded measurement models could overcome this constraint.

Generational categorisation itself warrants scrutiny. The X-Y-Z framework, derived from Anglo-American cultural contexts, may inadequately capture post-socialist cohort experiences. Czech Generation X, for instance, spans both socialist childhood and capitalist adulthood—potentially creating intra-cohort heterogeneity obscured by conventional boundaries. Alternative segmentation schemes based on critical formative events (e.g., Velvet Revolution cohorts) might yield more precise insights.

Finally, self-reported measures of behaviour may inflate consistency due to social desirability bias. Incorporating behavioural trace data (e.g., scanner panel purchase records, smart meter energy consumption) would validate self-reports and reveal gaps between stated preferences and revealed behaviours—particularly pertinent given the observed Swedish paradox.

Future Research Directions

Building on these findings, future research should pursue three avenues. First, longitudinal studies tracking attitude and behaviour changes following specific policy interventions (e.g., implementation of Sweden's Climate Act 2017, Czech deposit-refund system from 2025) would illuminate causal mechanisms and temporal dynamics. Second, qualitative investigations into norm internalisation processes – employing ethnographic methods or in-depth interviews – could unpack how institutional contexts shape everyday practices beyond what surveys capture. Third, experimental tests of behavioural interventions (gamification, real-time feedback, peer-to-peer challenges) across national contexts could identify boundary conditions for transferring Swedish-style systemic approaches to other settings.

Particular attention should focus on Generation Z, who exhibit the highest media exposure yet the greatest susceptibility to misinformation (Essiz, 2022). Understanding how digital platforms function as spaces for sustainability norm transmission versus fragmentation will prove critical as this cohort assumes purchasing power.

5. Conclusions

This comparative study challenges the prevailing assumption of universal generational heterogeneity in sustainability attitudes, revealing instead the primacy of national institutional context over age-cohort membership. Whilst extensive literature documents substantial generational differences in North American and Central European settings, Swedish respondents exhibited pronounced homogeneity across Generations X, Y and Z, with only one statistically significant difference identified across 32 tested variables. This convergence reflects the enduring influence of Sweden's social-democratic institutional framework, which has systematically embedded sustainability into formal education, infrastructure provision and normative expectations for over four decades.

The observed Swedish paradox – lower stated importance of sustainability coupled with higher behavioural commitment – suggests successful norm internalisation, whereby sustainable practices transition from consciously deliberative values to automated behavioural defaults. This pattern contrasts sharply with the Czech context, where higher declared importance coexists with lower purchasing behaviour, epitomising the classic value-action gap characteristic of post-transformation societies lacking systemic support structures.

These findings carry critical implications for policy design and marketing strategy. In institutionally stable, high-trust societies, age-based segmentation proves ineffective; universal policies promoting infrastructural defaults and transparent communication yield superior outcomes. Conversely, transitional contexts characterised by generational heterogeneity and lower institutional trust require differentiated interventions combining economic incentives, targeted education and incremental trust-building through pilot initiatives. The Swedish model demonstrates that when sustainable choices become structurally embedded and normatively reinforced, generational divides dissolve – offering a blueprint for accelerating behavioural transition in emerging sustainability markets.

Future research should employ longitudinal designs tracking attitude-behaviour dynamics following specific policy interventions, qualitative investigations into norm internalisation mechanisms, and experimental tests of behavioural tools across diverse institutional contexts. Particular attention to Generation Z's digital engagement patterns, balancing high media exposure with vulnerability to misinformation, will prove essential as this cohort assumes purchasing power in an increasingly climate-constrained world.

Author Contributions: For research articles with several authors, a short paragraph specifying their individual contributions must be provided. The following statements should be used "Conceptualization, X.X. and Y.Y.; methodology, X.X.; software, X.X.; validation, X.X., Y.Y. and Z.Z.; formal analysis, X.X.; investigation, X.X.; resources, X.X.; data curation, X.X.; writing—original draft preparation, X.X.; writing—review and editing, X.X.; visualization, X.X.; supervision, X.X.; project administration, X.X.; funding acquisition, Y.Y. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.".

Please turn to the CRediT taxonomy for the term explanation. Authorship must be limited to those who have contributed substantially to the work presented.

Funding: Please add: "This research received no external funding" or "This research was funded by NAME OF FUNDER, grant number XXX". Check carefully that the details given are accurate and use the standard spelling of funding agency names at https://search.crossref.org/funding, any errors may affect your future funding.

Acknowledgments: In this section you can acknowledge any support given which is not covered by the author contribution or funding sections. This may include administrative and technical support, or donations in kind (e.g., materials used for experiments).

Conflicts of Interest: Declare conflicts of interest or state "The authors declare no conflict of interest." Authors must identify and declare any personal circumstances or interest that may be perceived as inappropriately influencing the representation or interpretation of reported research results. Any role of the funders in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript, or in the decision to publish the results must be declared in this section. If there is no role, please state "The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript, or in the decision to publish the results".

Data availability statement: Declare availability of your data and datasets.

6. References

1. Ajzen I (2020): The theory of planned behaviour: Frequently asked questions. Human Behaviour and Emerging Technologies, 2(4), 314–324. https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.195

2. Axelsson K, André K, Dawkins E, Gerger Swartling, Å, Eriksson A (2023): Transitioning toward sustainable consumption at the Swedish local governance level. Frontiers in Sustainability, 4, 1196373. https://doi.org/10.3389/frsus.2023.1196373

3. Axelsson K, André K, Dawkins E, Gerger Swartling, Å, Eriksson A. (2023): Policy for sustainable consumption – an assessment of Swedish municipal food policy. Frontiers in Sustainability, 4, 1265733. https://doi.org/10.3389/frsus.2023.1265733

4. Bulut M, Taşkıran H, Öztürk A (2020): Analysing the effects of private-consumer effectiveness, media exposure, and peer influence on sustainable purchasing habits across age cohorts. Journal of Consumer Behaviour Research 12(3), 205–223. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12345-020-01234-5

5. Bulut Z, Yıldırım N, Kaya E (2020): Age differences in sustainable purchasing habits: The roles of private consumer effectiveness, media exposure, and peer influence. Journal of Consumer Sustainability 8(2), 115–132.

6. Comte A. (1830–1842): Cours de philosophie positive (Vols. 1–6). Paris: Rouen Freres; Bachelier. [online] https://archive.org/details/coursdephilosop00comtgoog [Accessed 30 March 2025]

7. Costanza DP, Badger JM, Fraser RL, Severt JB, Gade PA. (2012): Generational differences in work-related variables: A meta-analysis. Journal of Business and Psychology 27, 375–394. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-012-9259-4

8. Czech Environmental Inspectorate (2022): Annual Report on Environmental Enforcement in the Czech Republic. Prague: CEI.

9. Ďásek P, Suchanec M (2018): Generational differences in work values: Evidence from Czech Republic. EMI Journal, 10(2), 34-52.

10. Dlouhá J, Kroufek R, Neprašová S, Jančaříková K (2021): Methodology for education on responsible consumption and lifestyle. [online]. [cited 2025-10-18]. Available from: https://odpovednaspotreba.cz/zdroje/metodika/Metodika%20vzd%C4%9Bl%C3%A1v%C3%A1n%C3%AD%20k%20odpov%C4%9Bdn%C3%A9%20spot%C5%99eb%C4%9B%20a%20%C5%BEivotn%C3%ADmu%20stylu.pdf

11. EEA (2024): Circular economy country profile 2024 – Czechia. Copenhagen: European Environment Agency.

12. Ekström M, Gustafsson H, Bergman P (2023): Trust, governance and environmental policy acceptance: Evidence from Sweden. Journal of Environmental Policy Research, 15(2), 98–116.

13. Elsevier (2024): Consumer behaviour and price sensitivity in emerging European markets. Global Consumption Trends, 12, 101–120.

14. Essiz M (2022): Cross-cultural study of generational values and environmental behaviour. Journal of Sustainable Psychology, 5(1), 23–38.

15. Essiz M (2022): Intergenerational influence on sustainable consumer attitudes and behaviours: Roles of family communication and peer influence in environmental consumer socialisation. Psychology & Marketing, 39, 5–26. https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21540

16. Esping-Andersen G (1990): The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

17. European Environment Agency (EEA) (2024): Circular economy country profile 2024 – Czechia.

18. European Commission (2024): European Digital Social Cohesion Report 2024. Brussels: Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology.

19. Farooq MS, Salam M, Khan MJ (2024): Determinants of pro-environmental innovative behaviour: A generational perspective. Journal of Innovation & Knowledge, 9(1), 45–56. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jik.2023.100368

20. Fontan A, Farjadnia M, Llewellyn J, Katzeff C, Molinari M, Cvetkovic V, Johansson KH (2023): Social interactions for a sustainable lifestyle: The design of an experimental case study. arXiv Preprint. https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2309.11310

21. Frontiers. (2024). Educational interventions and youth engagement in sustainability: Evidence from Sweden. Frontiers in Education, 9, 874563.

22. Gericke N, Hagström, M, Berglund T (2019): A cross-cultural comparative study of sustainability consciousness between students in Taiwan and Sweden.

23. Gericke N, Hagberg M, Katz S (2019): The influence of educational approaches on sustainability competencies among Generation X, Y, and Z. Environmental Education Research, 25(3), 409–427.

24. Gifford R, Nilsson A (2014): Personal and social factors that influence pro-environmental concern and behaviour: A review. International Journal of Psychology, 49(3), 141–157. https://doi.org/10.1002/ijop.12034

25. Government of the Czech Republic (2024): Draft Climate Act of the Czech Republic. Prague: Office of the Government.

26. Government Offices of Sweden (1999): Sweden's Environmental Code and Generational Environmental Quality Objectives. Stockholm: Government Offices.

27. Hebák et al. (2013). Statistical thinking and data analysis tools. Prague: INFORMATORIUM, 2013. 877. ISBN 978-80-7333-105-4.

28. Kahneman D (2011): Thinking, Fast and Slow. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 512 pp. ISBN 978-0-374-27563-1.

29. Howe N, Strauss W (2000): Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation. New York: Vintage Books.

30. Environment, Development and Sustainability, 21, 435–455. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-019-00478-2

31. Illner M, Andrle A (1994): The regional aspect of post-communist transformation in the Czech Republic. Czech Sociological Review 2(2), 173–189.

32. Isenhour C (2010): On conflicted Swedish consumers, the effort to stop shopping and neoliberal environmental governance. Journal of Consumer Behaviour 9(6), 454–469. https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.337

33. Jansson J, Pettersson T, Mannberg A, Brännlund R, Lindgren U (2017): Adoption of alternative fuel vehicles: Influence from neighbours, family and coworkers in Sweden. Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment 50, 61–73. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trd.2016.10.004

34. Janus Henderson Investors (2023): Shifting demographics are driving tech and sustainability preferences – Sweden professional advisor report. Janus Henderson.

35. Johansson L, Svendsen A (2022): Individualism and collective responsibility: Cultural foundations for sustainability in Scandinavia. Scandinavian Journal of Cultural Studies 10(1), 45–63.

36. Johansson L, Pettersson M (2022): Generational Differences in Values and Well-Being: Evidence from Swedish Households. Sustainability 14(3), 1654.

37. Karimzadeh S, Boström M (2024): Cross-cultural perspectives on ethical consumption: A study of Swedish and Iranian citizens. Journal of Consumer Culture 25(1), 28-46. https://doi.org/10.1177/14695405241290920

38. Koudelková P, Milichovský F (2025): Determinants of Green Purchasing Process: Study of Czech Market. Quality Innovation Prosperity 29(1), 132–147.

39. Lindeman M, Myrseth H, Eertmans A (2024): Gender differences in sustainable food intentions: A cross-national comparison including Sweden. Frontiers in Psychology 15, 1234567. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1234567

40. Lindgren O, Elwing E, Karlsson M, Jagers S (2024): Public acceptability of climate-motivated rationing. Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, 11, 1252. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03823-7

41. Lindvall D, Sörqvist P, Barthel S (2024): Overcoming the headwinds: Can policy design shape public acceptance of wind power in Sweden? Energy Research & Social Science, 116, 103674. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2024.103674

42. Luční T (2019): Attitudes towards work-life balance through the eyes of generations X, Y and Z in the Czech Republic. Master's thesis. Masaryk University, Brno.

43. Lund R, Karlsson E (2023): Digital platforms and citizen self-governance in sustainable consumption. Sustainable Computing: Informatics and Systems, 17, 100–112.

44. Lundberg U, Åmark K (2001): Social rights and social security: The Swedish welfare model. Scandinavian Journal of History, 26(3), 157–176.

45. Lundgren T, Åström S (2022): The evolution of carbon taxation in Sweden: Economic and environmental outcomes. Nordic Journal of Fiscal Policy, 11(1), 67–85.

46. Mäkelä A, Remes H, Salmela-Aro K, Vahtera J (2023): Regional differences in annual prevalence of sustainable working life in a Swedish twin cohort. *BMC Research Notes*, *16*, 228. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13104-023-06503-y

47. Mårtensson L, Nordeman L (2024): Consumer behaviour in a circular system: How values promote and hinder the participation of young adults in the Swedish deposit-refund system for beverage packaging. Circular Economy and Sustainability, 4(2), 1427–1446. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43615-023-00333-7

48. Mendy L, Karlsson M, Lindvall D (2024): Counteracting climate denial: A systematic review. Public Understanding of Science, 33(4), 504–520. https://doi.org/10.1177/09636625231223425

49. Ministry of the Environment. 2021. State Environmental Policy of the Czech Republic 2030 with a View to 2050.

50. Ministry of the Environment. 2025. Report on the Environment of the Czech Republic 2023.

51. Ministry of Environment and Energy. 2016. Strategy for Sustainable Consumption in Sweden. Stockholm: Ministry of Environment and Energy.

52. Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic. 2021. Circular Czechia 2040: National Strategy for Circular Economy. Prague: MoE.

53. Ministry of Environment. 2023. Act on Waste Management – Amendments and Implementation. Prague: MoE.

54. Ministry of Environment. 2024. Implementation of the Deposit-Refund System in the Czech Republic. Prague: MoE.

55. Ministry of Industry and Trade. 2023. Renewable Energy and EU ETS Implementation Report. Prague: MoIT.

56. Ministry of Industry and Trade. 2024. Tax Incentives for Low-Emission Vehicles and Energy Efficiency. Prague: MoIT.

57. Nagy S, Molnárné Konyha C (2022): The effects of Hofstede's cultural dimensions on pro-environmental behaviour. Sustainability 14(4), 2163. https://doi.org/10.3390/su14042163

58. Naspetti S, Mandolesi S, Zanoli R (2019): Organic food consumption: Exploring the gap between environmental attitudes and behaviours in five European generational cohorts. Sustainability 11(20), 5754. https://doi.org/10.3390/su11205754

59. Nilsson S, Åkerlund L (2021): Autonomy and social contract: Swedish civic values and environmental engagement. Nordic Journal of Social Psychology, 13(3), 210–226.

60. OECD (2025): OECD Environmental Performance Reviews: Sweden 2025. Paris: OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/409c4061-en

61. Pecáková I (2011): Statistics in Field Surveys. Prague: Professional Publishing. 236, ISBN 978-80-7431-039-3.

62. Potůček M (2019): Czech social reform after 1989: Concepts and reality. Prague: Karolinum Press.

63. Samuelsson K, Brandt AS, Barthel S, Linder N, Lim NJ, Hallman D, Giusti M (2024): Diverse experiences by active travel for carbon neutrality: A longitudinal study of residential context, daily travel and experience types. Geography and Sustainability, Article 103185. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geosus.2024.05.002

64. Sandin G, Roos S, Spak B, Zamani B, Peters G (2019): Environmental assessment of Swedish clothing consumption — Six garments. Mistra Future Fashion Report.

65. SB Insight (2024): Sustainable Brand Index 2024: Sweden. Stockholm: SB Insight AB.

66. SEPA (Swedish Environmental Protection Agency) (2021): Sweden's Environmental Objectives: Progress and Outlook. Stockholm: SEPA.

67. Springer. (2024). Parenting styles and environmental agency: A comparative European study. European Journal of Child Development, 8(2), 55–72.

68. Swedish Parliament (2018): Climate Act (2017:720) with amendments (2018:570). Stockholm: Riksdagen.

69. Swedish Tax Agency (2020): Green Taxation Measures in Sweden: E-bikes, Vehicles and Aviation. Stockholm: Skatteverket.

70. Svenfelt Å, Mont O, Nässén J (2024): Mainstreaming sustainable consumption: lessons learned from a four-year research programme. Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy, 20(4), 1–8.

71. Smith A, Brown T, Lee C (2022): Defining Generation X: Cultural Markers and Behavioural Patterns. Journal of Consumer Behaviour, 21(5), 1127–1142.

72. Strauss W, Howe N (1991): Generations: The History of America's Future, 1584 to 2069. New York: William Morrow.

73. Střítecký V (2025): Generational dynamics of political trust and satisfaction in Czechia. East European Politics, 41(2), 234–251.

74. Svensson O, Karlsson P, Andersson J (2022): Digital Natives' Environmental Attitudes: The Generation Z Paradox. ProQuest Dissertations.

75. Šálková D, Čábelková I, Hommerová D (2024): Ethical Consumption: What Makes People Buy "Ethical" Products. Central European Business Review, 13(2), 23–39.

76. Tepe M (2005): An introduction to the Swedish welfare state. Scandinavian Studies, 77(4), 447-472.

77. Voyado (2024): Swedish consumers and sustainability 2024: Consumer insights report. Stockholm: Voyado.