



The Power of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage in Shaping Cultural Economy and Prosperity: An Inspirational Case Study of İstanbul and Paris

Kültürel Ekonomi ve Refahın Şekillenmesinde Somut ve Soyut Kültürel Mirasın Gücü: İstanbul ve Paris'ten İlham Verici Bir Vaka İncelemesi

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Citation: Küçük, Ö. (2025). The power of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in shaping cultural economy and prosperity: an inspirational case study of İstanbul and Paris. *Journal of Humanities and Tourism Research*, 15 (1), 42-60.

Submitted: 02.12.2024.

Accepted: 26.02.2025

Abstract

This study aims to compare two notable cities, İstanbul and Paris, in addressing the challenges faced by cultural industries and promoting sustainable tourism. Cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, is essential for sustainable development. Over the last forty years, UNESCO has highlighted the importance of safeguarding intangible heritage and protecting tangible heritage from climate change and other threats. The World Bank supports initiatives to strengthen cultural heritage and promote sustainable tourism to reduce damage from natural disasters. Since 2021, the World Bank and UNESCO have collaborated to enhance cities' cultural industry and creativity, boosting cultural tourism and employment. According to the UN WTO, cultural heritage in international tourism promotes peace and understanding by fostering respect for diverse cultures. This article explores how tangible and intangible cultural heritage contributes to the cultural economy in İstanbul and Paris. It includes case studies of two cities that demonstrate the impact of cultural heritage sites on international tourism and discusses strategies for preserving these sites while promoting sustainability. The dataset used in this work combines TURKSTAT, Euromonitor, Statista, and the World Bank data house. The study findings demonstrate three crucial phenomena that explain the characteristics of the cultural economy and sustainable tourism of two cities: (1) the parallel phenomenon between tangible and intangible cultural values and the local economy's prosperity, (2) the social-economic complex insights of İstanbul and Paris regarding over-tourism (3) the challenging characteristics of the sustainable tourism. This study contributes to the cultural economy and tourism field by presenting a case study on İstanbul and Paris.

Keywords: Cultural Economy, Sustainable Tourism, Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage, Employment, Prosperity, UNESCO

Özet

Bu çalışma, kültürel endüstrilerin karşılaştığı zorlukları ele almak ve sürdürülebilir turizmi teşvik etmek amacıyla İstanbul ve Paris gibi iki önemli şehri karşılaştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Hem somut hem de soyut kültürel miras, sürdürülebilir kalkınma için hayati öneme sahiptir. Son kırk yılda UNESCO, soyut mirasın korunmasının

önemini vurgulamış ve somut mirasın iklim değişikliği ve diğer tehditlere karşı korunmasına dikkat çekmiştir. Dünya Bankası, doğal afetlerden kaynaklanan zararları azaltmak için kültürel mirası güçlendiren ve sürdürülebilir turizmi teşvik eden girişimleri desteklemektedir. 2021 yılından bu yana Dünya Bankası ve UNESCO, şehirlerin kültürel endüstrisini ve yaratıcılığını artırmak, kültürel turizmi ve istihdamı desteklemek amacıyla iş birliği yapmaktadır. BM Dünya Turizm Örgütü'ne göre, uluslararası turizmde kültürel miras, farklı kültürlerle saygıyı teşvik ederek barış ve anlayışı destekler. Bu makale, İstanbul ve Paris'te somut ve soyut kültürel mirasın kültürel ekonomiye nasıl katkıda bulunduğunu incelemektedir. İki şehrin uluslararası turizm üzerinde kültürel miras alanlarının etkisini gösteren vaka analizlerini içermekte ve bu alanları korurken sürdürülebilirliği teşvik etme stratejilerini tartışmaktadır. Bu çalışmada kullanılan veri seti, TÜİK, Euromonitor, Statista ve Dünya Bankası verilerinden oluşmaktadır. Araştırma bulguları, iki şehrin kültürel ekonomisi ve sürdürülebilir turizmin özelliklerini açıklayan üç önemli olguyu ortaya koymaktadır: (1) Somut ve soyut kültürel değerler ile yerel ekonominin refahı arasındaki paralel olgu, (2) İstanbul ve Paris'in aşırı turizme ilişkin sosyo-ekonomik karmaşık çıkarımları, (3) Sürdürülebilir turizmin zorlu özellikleri. Bu çalışma, İstanbul ve Paris üzerine bir vaka çalışması sunarak kültürel ekonomi ve turizm alanına katkı sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültürel Ekonomi, Sürdürülebilir Turizm, Somut ve Soyut Kültürel Miras, İstihdam, Refah, UNESCO

1. INTRODUCTION

Cultural industries grew annually at twice the rate of service industries during the 1990s. Thus, in 2005, the global cultural industry accounted for more than 7% of the global GDP, generating jobs and income at the value of US\$1.3 trillion. In 2015, cultural industries supported approximately 30 million jobs, employing 1% of the world's active population. Income losses in cultural industries ranged from 20% to 40%, varying from country to country, in 2020. This loss in cultural industries affected the United Kingdom (-30%), France (-25%), and Germany (-23%) the most in Europe (UNESCO, 2021; UNESCO, 2010).

Traditions play a crucial role in the cultural economy and tourism. In Chiang Mai, a northern city in Thailand, thousands of tourists gather each year to participate in a celebration where paper lanterns throw into the sky as a way to make wishes. This event marks the end of the monsoon season and celebrates on the full moon of the second month of the Lanna lunar calendar (a Haber, 18.11.2024).

UNESCO recognizes various forms of intangible cultural heritage, including:

- Viennese coffee houses
- Andalusian Flamenco
- The whistling language of Giresun in Turkey
- Paraguay's Poncho Para'í de 60 Listas de Piribebuy
- Traditional olive cultivation in Turkey
- Polish dance
- Garba, a ritualistic dance from India (UNESCO, 2006).

These traditions display global cultural diversity. While the body of literature examining the relationship between cultural tourism and prosperity is expanding, scientific research in this area remains fragmented and unclear. This article explores how Europe's rich cultural heritage—both intangible and tangible—contributes to its status as the most visited region in the world. It also looks into how the prosperity generated by its most popular tourist attractions benefits local communities. To conduct this investigation, I utilized a comprehensive approach that included a wide range of academic documents, articles, books, chapters, statistics, and case studies sourced from databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, Assos, Sage, Statista, Euromonitor, UNWTO, UNESCO, and the World Bank.

Cultural heritage includes both material and spiritual values that have been preserved over centuries, connecting the past to the present. It encompasses elements such as ancient civilizations, monuments, buildings, landscapes, arts, traditions, history, people, cultures, and emotions. One example of this is the whistling language, which serves as a natural form of communication. It is used for long-distance interaction, confidentiality, communication in noisy environments, or brief exchanges. In the rugged terrain of the Eastern Black Sea region, this whistling language acts as an alternative means of communication, allowing speakers to simulate and articulate words. This unique form of communication has been recognized by UNESCO and has been included in the Intangible Cultural Heritage List in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (Uzun, Zaman and Birinci, 2021; Xiao, Li and Seekamp, 2024).

Macau serves as China's gateway to the West and has a rich cultural heritage that includes classical music, painting, and mechanical clock-making. Along with advancements in Chinese technology, these cultural elements have played a significant role in helping Chinese goods reach Western markets. This "raises" an important question: Can Macau become a sustainable tourism destination where local customs thrive and cultural diversity is preserved? In the People's Republic of China, the central government is responsible for creating legislation related to heritage management and protection. Notably, Macau was first recognized as a heritage conservation site by Portugal in 1953 (du Cros, 2009).

In the 21st century, World Heritage property safeguards have become increasingly important. In 2015, the thirty-ninth session of the World Heritage Committee, held in Bonn, registered that many properties listed on the World Heritage List still suffer from inadequate management systems or plans. There are three types of World Heritage properties: natural, cultural, and those that are both natural and cultural. After the Tombs of the Buganda Kings in the Kasubi area of Uganda were included on the List of World Heritage in Danger, restoration efforts were initiated with the support of UNESCO. Additionally, climate change and invasive species pose significant threats to natural heritage sites, particularly the Great Barrier Reef (Marsden, 2017; UNESCO, 2023).

Archaeological sites, cultural structures, monuments, and fortifications serve as historical legacies that convey stories from the past, present, and future to both tourists and local Indigenous populations. However, climate-driven natural hazards pose a threat to these tangible coastal cultural heritage sites. In response, conservation agencies have adopted a comprehensive approach that focuses on meeting the adaptation needs of both the tangible and intangible aspects of cultural heritage and the cultural identities within local communities (Xiao, Li and Seekamp 2024).

Sawahlunto, a former mining town in Indonesia, has the potential to be a significant destination for cultural heritage tourism, thanks to the legacy of its past mining activities. Heritage mining can help preserve cities from decline and destruction while revitalizing the hopes of local communities. Efforts to transform Sawahlunto into a coal mining heritage tourism city began in 2001. The tourism sector offers greater job creation opportunities compared to the mining industry. Although mining activities have led to dramatic changes—both positive and negative—in Latin America since the 16th century, the tourism sector plays a vital role in human development and economic growth in the region. The success of developing the cultural heritage tourism sector, however, is contingent upon addressing climate-driven natural hazards (Syafri, D., Mardiah, D., Permata, B.D. et al., 2023). Cajamarca and Cusco are located in Peru and are significant centers for both mining and tourism. The expansion of mining activities in these cities has led to increased migration and population growth. Both Cajamarca and Cusco are rich in historical and cultural heritage, and today, urbanization in these areas reflects the intersection of tourism and mining (Küçük, 2023; World Bank, 2022).

The Ifugao people, indigenous to the Philippines, have preserved their cultural heritage in the Cordillera mountains for centuries. They are known for their rituals, which include weaving, wood carving, and the creation of wet rice terraces. The Ifugao are also recognized for their traditional farming systems and agroforestry practices. Today, the town of Banaue, home to the Ifugao community, has opened its doors to visitors, making tourism one of the main industries in the area. Banaue is listed as a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site, largely due to its stunning wet rice terraces, a farming system developed over 2,000 years ago that continues to be maintained and passed down through generations. While tourism provides significant employment and business opportunities for residents, it is evident that outsiders control a large portion of the industry. In Banaue, local tourist guides serve as cultural brokers, bridging the gap between visitors and the cultural meanings and experiences of the Ifugao people (Bulilan, 2007).

Cerisola and Panzera (2024) examined the impact of tourism on local communities in Italy's leading cultural heritage cities. Their findings provide strong evidence that cultural heritage tourism can enhance local prosperity. However, they also highlight the need for solutions to address the drawbacks of over-tourism, such as environmental pollution and rising crime rates. An influx of foreign visitors that exceeds the region's capacity can lead to the degradation of both material and cultural assets. The regions of the Earth that harbor the stunning biodiversity are coral reefs in marine environments and rainforests on land. Ecosystems are distinguished by their rich diversity of living species and complex ecological interactions. By the way, anthropogenic pollution poses a significant threat to marine biodiversity, putting numerous biological species in seas and oceans at risk of extinction. Of the nations impacted by marine pollution, Australia stands out as particularly affected. Moreover, Australia is home to the most frequently visited maritime museum, which underscores the country's engagement with maritime heritage and environmental conservation. Therefore, it is essential to explore sustainable tourism solutions (Küçük, 2022; Cerisola and Panzera, 2024).

Cumalıkızık Village is recognized on the UNESCO World Heritage list due to its unique architecture, natural and cultural resources, and a history spanning over 700 years. The village's cultural heritage includes both tangible and intangible elements, such as the mosque, traditional Cumalıkızık houses, the Gin Range, the Turkish Bath, the museum, the streets of Cumalıkızık, and its cuisine. Research conducted by Pekerşen, Güneş, and Seçuk (2020) examined the local community's awareness and protection of Cumalıkızık's cultural heritage properties. The findings revealed that residents benefit significantly from tourism, which positively impacts the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in the area (Pekerşen, Güneş and Seçuk, 2019).

The Basilica Therma that located in Sarıkaya, a district in Yozgat province. This historical site has a history of approximately 2,000 years and was noted in the 2018 UNESCO World Heritage List. In ancient times, it served as a thermal treatment center. The hot water from Basilica Therma was used for both central heating and therapeutic purposes during the Roman period, and it continues to have active hot springs today. This site is an important asset for health and cultural tourism and deserves recognition and evaluation (Şengül ve Çilgınoğlu, 2021; Akça, 2021).

This article explores the impact of European cultural assets on economic development and welfare by establishing the region as one of the world's most attractive tourism destinations. I utilize two types of data sets for this examination. The first consists of literature reviews that focus on European cultural heritage, tourist attractions, and the economic impact on welfare, drawing from articles, book chapters, and similar resources found on platforms such as Sage, JSTOR, and Web of Science. The second data set is derived from research and statistics related to tourism in

Europe, sourced from UNESCO, UN WTO, TURKSTAT, Euromonitor, the World Bank, and Statista.

The results indicate that both tangible and intangible European cultural values attract a significant number of tourists from within and outside the continent. Europe remains the most visited region in the world. The most popular museums include the Louvre Museum in Paris, France, the Vatican Museum in Italy, and the British Museum in England. Despite growing concerns about excessive tourist numbers, rising costs associated with tourism, and measures being implemented to manage visitor influx, the flow of tourists to Europe continues unabated. While tourism positively impacts the well-being of European communities, it also raises issues such as overcrowding, noise, and pollution, sparking discussions about the sustainable future of cultural tourism. The 230-year-old Louvre Museum is one of the world's most famous and most visited cultural heritages. The first range of 10.2 million people visited the museum in 2018 and 9.6 million in 2019, but despite reaching approximately 9.4 million people in 2024, it could not get the pre-pandemic figures. On the other hand, the National Museum of China, which was visited by 7.3 million people in 2019, hosted approximately 7.5 million visitors in 2024. Although museums in Europe are the most visited, visitation rates of museums in the United States, China, and Taiwan have started to increase faster (Statista, 2024, 19th November; Statista, 2024, 20th August).

This fall, French President Emmanuel Macron announced a major renovation of the Louvre. The Prussian Cultural Foundation, which manages all state museums in Berlin, also prepared a multibillion-dollar plan in 1999 to overhaul the museums. The aim is to renew damp walls and narrow visitor corridors while making museums vibrant and social (Wünsch, 2025).

This study has been a comprehensive comparison of the place, importance, and sustainability of two cities, Istanbul and Paris, which are very renowned of cultural heritage on the UNESCO cultural heritage list, in the culture industry and tourism using tourist statistics, museum data, research reports, online databases, and portals and polls.

2. THE CONTRIBUTION OF TANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE ON ECONOMIC GROWTH

The UNESCO meeting in Paris on October 17, 2003, adopted the Convention for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. This convention depends on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, established in 1948, and the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights in 1966. The agreement aims to create a universal commitment to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, raise awareness, and reduce the threats of its disappearance, deterioration, and destruction. Historical buildings and structures convey the legacy of past generations and our collective identity, attracting both local and foreign visitors today (UNESCO, 9th September, 2021).

Vencatachellum (2018) argues that museums, among the cultural institutions that bring together the values of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, should be maximized for social good. The Louvre Museum in Paris and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York can further strengthen society and individuals by creating "virtual museums" that highlight the non-monetary values of culture (Vencatachellum, 2018). Many studies argue that tangible and intangible cultural heritage is the driving force of sustainable development. Tourism has been a part of human history since classical antiquity. The Greco-Roman culture, with its remarkable advancements in art, architecture, law, philosophy, language, and politics, significantly influenced the development of modern tourism in Western Europe during the 17th century. As a result, mass tourism began to emerge in the coastal areas of the Mediterranean, driven by advancements in transportation

technology and the allure of the Seven Wonders of the World in the early 20th century. The Mediterranean coastal regions have since become major tourist destinations, attracting low-interest loans from international financial institutions and drawing the attention of global hotel chains, particularly in countries like Turkey, Greece, Egypt, Spain, France, and Italy, thanks to favorable policy changes by national governments. For centuries, Europe has remained the world's foremost tourist attraction. In 2023, some of the most visited cultural heritage sites included the Louvre Museum, the Vatican Museum, the National Museum of China, the British Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Mevlana Museum in Konya. On the other hand, Buckingham Palace recognized as a symbol of England, is one of the most visited historic sites and boasts the most prominent royal lineage. Following the pandemic, the number of international tourists to Europe rebounded to over 94% of the levels seen in 2019, fueled by strong demand from visitors in the United States. Intangible cultural heritage (ICH)—is transmitted from one generation to the next and continuously reshaped by communities based on their interactions with the environment, nature, and history—plays a crucial role in cultural identity and continuity. ICH encompasses a variety of cultural elements, including traditions and narratives, performing arts, social practices, rituals, celebrations, and knowledge related to nature and the universe. It also includes handicraft traditions (Sezgin and Yolal, 2012).

According to Euromonitor's index of 100 city destinations, the top ten tourism destinations in the world in 2024, Europe maintains its leadership with six cities, largely due to its better tourism infrastructure. Paris leads the list, followed by Madrid, Spain. Two cities from Spain (Madrid and Barcelona), two from Italy (Rome and Milan), and one from the Netherlands (Amsterdam) are also included. However, in 2024, Paris grew by 2% compared to 2023, while İstanbul grew by 14% compared to last year, becoming the second city in the world in terms of the highest international tourist arrivals. Among the reasons for İstanbul's remarkable growth is that the city is a cultural treasure, with its street food scene, shopping, vibrant bazaars, taverns, and intertwined history and ethnic texture. Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, ranked first with a 37% increase in international tourist arrivals compared to the previous year, with its street food, Buddhist beliefs and temples, Thai massage, and cultural values (Euromonitor, 2024).

2.1. Cultural Heritage and UNESCO World Heritage List

Culture encompasses the essential tangible and intangible assets that distinguish one society from another. It represents the unique traits that are passed down to future generations, reflecting the knowledge and values humanity has gained from its interaction with nature since the Paleolithic era. Through this process, shared habits and values are transmitted and preserved across generations. Tangible cultural heritage includes physical elements that can be touched, such as monuments, sites, buildings, statues, and paintings. In contrast, intangible cultural heritage is expressed through the traditions and practices of people rather than through inanimate objects (Karapınar ve Barakazi, 2017; Köroğlu, Ulusoy & Avcıkurt, 2018).

UNESCO is a non-profit organization, officially the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, which was founded in 1945. It has since expanded to include 195 member countries, promoting fairness, dignity, wellness, and peace around the world. UNESCO has initiated conventions focused on cultural diversity and has a significant impact on the preservation of intangible cultural heritage (Seeger, 2015).

Cultural heritage tourism involves non-commercial travel where visitors explore the historical and cultural significance of a region. Cultural heritage encompasses all tangible and intangible properties, both movable and immovable, that a region possesses. Culture includes the tangible and intangible values inherited from individuals and communities, as well as the

interactions between them, which are then passed on to future generations. Examples of tangible cultural properties include ancient buildings, monuments, archival materials, books, artworks, and artifacts. Natural heritage, on the other hand, includes biodiversity, landscapes, and natural monuments (Tüt, Tuna and Aldoğan-Şenol, 2022).

As of the 2014 UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Sites list, Italy boasts 46 cultural sites, while Spain has 40, with the same record Germany and France have 36 each. Among these, Florence is well-known as a city in Italy with cultural heritage sites. In 2022/2023, Venice signed to UNESCO's World Heritage List as a site at risk. UNESCO noted that not enough efforts to implement protections for Venice against the challenges of over-tourism and climate change. Consequently, in the 2023 UNESCO World Heritage List, Italy possesses 58 properties, followed by China with 56 properties, and Germany in third place with 51 properties (World Economic Forum, 2015; Buchholz, 2023).

As of 2023, the UNESCO World Heritage List includes a total of 1,199 sites, comprising 933 cultural monuments, 227 natural monuments, and 39 mixed sites. Among these, 56 properties are currently considered to be in danger. A notable example is the ancient city of Aleppo in the Syrian Arab Republic, which faces threats from overpopulation. The city is home to unique historical structures, including 16th and 17th-century khans, baths, madrasahs, residences, and the 12th-century Great Mosque. Additionally, ongoing internal and external armed conflicts in the Arab States region—such as in Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Libya, and Yemen—pose significant risks to the cultural monuments in these areas (Statista, 2023),

Countries aim to obtain UNESCO World Heritage listings for their cultural and historical sites. Each year, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) meets to decide which locations will receive World Heritage status. The rapid growth of heritage tourism underscores the importance of preserving the cultural, social, and historical aspects of these areas. Kulangsu, which features heritage sites on the World Heritage list, serves as a significant example of the environmental, social, and cultural challenges associated with sustainable heritage tourism (Zhao, L., Li, Y., Zhang, N. et al. 2023).

Cultural assets have a positive impact on the economic performance and sustainability of tourism, while also enhancing the brand of tourism destinations and local cultural identities. In 2023, İstanbul ranked as the most visited city in the world, surpassing both London and Paris. The city experienced a growth of 26% compared to the previous year and topped the 2023 Top 100 City Destinations Index (Leasca, 2024).

In the research conducted by Perić et al. (2021), it was found that among the 27 European Union countries listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites between 2008 and 2018, those with the most heritage sites experienced higher tourism income and greater employment opportunities (Škrabić Perić et al., 2021).

UNESCO is actively engaged in combating the illicit trade of cultural property. Cultural goods often change hands due to various reasons, including the displacement of artifacts caused by war, looting of archaeological sites, and theft from private collections or cultural heritage institutions. One example is the Ishak Pasha Palace, located in the Doğubeyazıt district of Ağrı province, which is included on UNESCO's World Tentative List of World Heritage Sites. This palace is historically significant as it housed the world's first central heating system. During the Russian invasion in the Crimean War, the gold-leafed wings from the harem entrance gates of Ishak Pasha Palace were taken to Russia (European Commission, 2024; Haber 7, 2021).

2.2. The Contribution of Cultural Heritage on European Cultural Tourism and Welfare

UNESCO categorizes cultural heritage into two main types: tangible and intangible heritage. Tangible heritage is further divided into three subcategories: movable heritage, immovable heritage, and underwater cultural heritage. Movable cultural heritage includes items such as manuscripts, coins, paintings, and sculptures. Immovable cultural heritage encompasses archaeological sites, ancient civilizations, and permanent monuments. Underwater cultural heritage refers to underwater ruins, shipwrecks, and submerged cities. On the other hand, intangible cultural heritage consists of elements such as festivals, rituals, handicrafts, performing arts, and oral traditions (Pasikowska-Schnass, 2018).

Many of the world's most recognizable landmarks, popularized in films, books, and news, are located in Europe. These include Buckingham Palace, Vatican City, the banks of the Seine, the Tower of London, the Fountain of Love, the city of Venice, the Roman Colosseum, the London Eye, the ancient city of Prague, the Berlin Wall, the Acropolis of Athens, Neuschwanstein Castle, the Sultan Ahmet Cami (Blue Mosque), Stonehenge, and the Basilica de la Sagrada Familia (Pratesi and Forster, 2024).

In 2023, among the top ten countries with the highest travel and tourism revenues, the United States ranks first with \$204.45 billion, followed by China with \$149.18 billion, and Germany with \$68.48 billion. The United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, and France rank fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth, respectively. Therefore, five of the ten countries with the highest tourism and travel revenues are in Europe (Statista, 26th September, 2024).

The La Unión Mining Park in the province of Murcia, Spain, is an important historical site due to its close ties with the Sierra de Cartagena – La Unión mining areas. It serves as a valuable heritage attraction for cultural tourism enthusiasts interested in the lives of the miners who worked there. Notable places to visit include the Museo Minero de La Unión and the Parque Minero de La Unión mine site. Additionally, Playa Cola del Caballo beach is worth exploring for its unique black sand, tranquil atmosphere, and intriguing rock caves. Every year, the "Cante de las Minas" Festival in La Unión celebrates Flamenco, which was recognized as an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO in 2010, drawing in tourists from around the world (Conesa, 2009; Foster, 2020).

UNESCO, UNWTO, and the World Bank state that cultural heritage has an important role in the economic development of the local people. Nowadays, in addition to intangible and tangible cultural heritage, there is also increasing interest in derelict industrial sites' heritage for tourism aims. In Spain, which has a significant cultural heritage, the European Union has taken action to increase the use of industrial sites' heritage for tourism aims. In Spain, which has a very strong industrial heritage, this transformation process started largely during the 1980s and 1990s (Del Pozo and González, 2012).

France was one of the countries that attracted the most international tourists in the world from 2019 to 2023. It was followed by Spain, the USA, Italy, and Turkey. Mexico surpassed Turkey between 2020 and 2021, during the peak of the pandemic, earning the sixth spot. England ranked seventh, Germany eighth, Greece ninth, and Austria tenth. Seven European countries made the top ten for the highest international tourist arrivals from 2019 to 2023 (Statista, 10th January, 2024).

Europe boasts a rich variety of cultural sites, monuments, sculptures, paintings, languages, cuisines, landscapes, festivals, and rituals, making it one of the most attractive destinations in the world. In 2023, Europe alone received approximately 707 million of the total 1.304 billion international tourist arrivals worldwide, accounting for about half of all global tourist traffic.

Venice, which is on the UNESCO Preserved Cultural Heritage list has been challenged with a tourist density exceeding its carrying capacity. The entrance fee, which was implemented in April 2024 to reduce tourist density, did not work. On the list, trary, while there is an increase in the number of tourists compared to prior years, this course is only applied to day-trippers on peak days as a 5-euro entrance fee (Povoledo, 2024).

The tourism sector is extremely vulnerable to climate change, loss of biodiversity, extinction of wildlife, and destruction of local cultures (Küçük, 2023). Paraguay is a country in South America bordering Argentina, Brazil and Bolivia. Despite being a Spanish colony for many years and the death of 90% of the male population after a seven-year war with Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay, the country has managed to preserve its indigenous language, Guaraní. Despite all this pressure, the Guaraní language did not disappear; it continued to exist and became the official language in 1992 (Ito, 2012). "Guaraní" speakers in Bolivia do not prefer to affiliation with an Indigenous group. A project with active grassroots participation for Aymara, Guaraní, and Quechua children was launched by UNICEF in Bolivia in 1990 and in 1994 intercultural bilingual education was institutionalized as a national policy. In the Latin American region, preserving Indigenous languages and cultures should be designed in a way that respects the interconnection between cultures, traditions, languages, beliefs, and values, without causing Indigenous peoples to lose their culture and language due to the use of more than one language (Freire, Schwartz, Steven, et al, 2015).

Tourism was one of the first sectors providing several tourist services digitized online booking of hotels, and flights, on a global scale, making going abroad easier. The use of all these technologies, including the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, location-based services, augmented virtual reality, and block chain technology, has brought international tourism to a new dimension and increased interest in space tourism. Tourism increases mutual understanding, intercultural exchange, and the importance of cultural values, prevents conflict, and establishes peace. Intangible cultural heritage helps build more sustainable tourism by increasing intergenerational interaction (Küçük, 2022). Cultural tourism, which constitutes approximately 40% of all tourism activities worldwide, is a growing tourism that focuses on cultural products and attractions, according to the UNWTO. Cultural tourism contributes to the local people's economy. Cultural tourism, which constitutes approximately 40% of global tourism revenues, is an important source of employment with the capacity to generate jobs.

Intangible cultural heritage also reveals the spiritual performance of Europe and contributes to the transfer of traditions and rituals of local people to future generations. Europe, the world's most popular tourism destination, has museums, cultural sites, monuments, arts as well as intangible cultural values such as France's baked bread produced with traditional cultural knowledge, modern dance training techniques in Germany, timber rafting in several European countries, bell ringing for information-sharing in Spain, Syrrako festival from Greece, traditional Polish dance, etc (UNESCO, 2021).

Over-tourism is an escalating issue in popular tourist destinations, leading to a significant increase in visitor numbers. Although tourism remains a crucial source of employment and revenue, it also contributes substantially to Europe's cultural economy. However, this region is facing heightened competition from emerging destinations that offer unique cultural experiences at lower prices, challenging the prominence of cities like Paris, London, and Barcelona. Additionally, the growing discontent among residents in top tourist spots in Spain and Italy, who feel their living spaces are being encroached upon, underscores the complex dynamics of the tourism industry (Petronela, 2016).

Cultural Heritage Tourism and Global Tourism can coexist by obeying sustainable legislation. The Nubian Monument existed in Aswan which is the ancient city of Egypt and is endangered because of rising Nil waters saved by a UNESCO campaign from 1960 to 1980. The worst flooding experience in Venice's history was in 1966. During this disaster, in which the water level reached almost 2 meters, UNESCO and the Italian government launched a major campaign. While the whole world was experiencing lockdowns due to the COVID-19 disease, the people of Venice held demonstrations, claiming that their living spaces and public resources were being limited due to cruise ships and heavy tourist traffic. Thus, in April 2024, Venice officials announced that a 5 euro entrance fee would be charged to day trippers visiting Venice on peak days. Throughout the period, regardless of the fee, according to prior years, more tourists had come to Venice. Thus, the demand for a fee to reduce the tourist density in Venice only returned to Venice as a profit, while there was no decrease in the number of tourists (UNESCO, 18th July, 2023: Povoledo, 2024).

2.3. Two Heritage Cities and Prosperity: İstanbul and Paris

Pierre Gilles, a writer who lived in the 16th century, said of İstanbul that this glorious metropolis, situated on the shores of the Bosphorus that unites Asia and Europe, is an extraordinary city that will continue as long as humanity lives, and where there has been always something special (Frankopan, 2017). With its rich historical and cultural assets, İstanbul became the most popular tourist destination of 2023 and reached the highest number of international arrivals (Leasca, 2024).

Paris known as the "City of Lights", which fascinates culture, art, and history lovers with its iconic architecture, renowned museums, and rich history, has attracted international tourists. Cultural heritage tourism offers strong economic and social contributions to tourist destinations with elements that improve social life and facilitate international interaction.

İstanbul and Paris are two important and leading cities of cultural heritage tourism. İstanbul ranks first in Turkey on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The number of foreign arriving tourists in İstanbul was almost 12 million in 2014. The number reached very nearly 15 million in 2019. In 2020, there was a sharp down of 10 million. The arrival number realized 5 million foreign tourists. İstanbul reached 17.4 million international tourists in 2023 (Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2024),.

In 2022, in the number of inbound tourism market staying in hotels in Paris, the USA ranked first, the United Kingdom ranked second, Germany ranked 3rd, Italy ranked 4th and the Netherlands ranked 5th. The number of foreign tourists arriving in Paris and the Île-de-France region totaled 28.4 million in 2019 (Statista, 10th January, 2024).

Table 1. İstanbul and Paris International Tourist Arrivals

Yıl	İstanbul (International Tourist Arrivals and Tourism Incomes)	Paris (International and Domestic Tourist Arrivals and Tourism Incomes)
2019	15 million / \$30 billion	50.6 million / €21.9 billion
2020	5 million / \$10 billion	17.4 million / €6 billion
2021	9 million / \$15 billion	22.6 million / €8.4 billion
2022	16 million / \$18 billion	44.1 million / €19.6 billion
2023	20.2 million / \$21 billion	47.6 million / €14 billion
2024	23 million / \$24 billion	48 million / €21 billion

From 2014 to 2023, the number of domestic tourists visiting Île-de-France region and Paris has exceeded the number of foreign tourists. In 2023, 25.8 million domestic and 21.8 million foreign tourists visited Paris and the Île-de-France region. Approximately 20.2 million foreign tourists

visited İstanbul in 2023 (Dierks, 2025; Euromonitor, 2023). Tourists from Russia ranked first, Germany ranked second, and Iran ranked third. Excluding approximately one million tourists, 71.78% of them arrived in İstanbul via İstanbul Airport, while 28.12% arrived in İstanbul via Sabiha Gökçen Airport. Approximately 15% of Turkey's tourism income comes from Turkish citizens who are residents abroad and are coming to Turkey for holidays. In 2020, approximately 13 million international tourists came to Turkey, 5 million of whom came to İstanbul. In 2020, approximately 10 billion of Turkey's total 13.77 billion international tourism receipts were realized in İstanbul. In 2022, İstanbul contributed 2.46 percent of Turkey's gross national product contribution by province. (TURKSTAT, 2023; İstanbul Provincial Culture and Tourism Directorate, 2023). According to the UNWTO's data, the European continent was 6% below the number of international tourist arrivals in 2023 compared to 2019. The only region that exceeded 2019's international tourist arrivals is the Middle East (+22%), while Asia-Pacific remained 35% below 2019 in 2023. Still, in 2023, approximately 55% of the tourists went to the European continent (Investpublication, 2024; World Bank, 2020)

Since 2019, Russia has been among the top three foreign tourists coming to İstanbul, and Russian tourists came to İstanbul the most in 2020, 2022, 2023, and 2024. Despite being the most visited city in 2023, İstanbul could not generate more tourism revenue than Antalya, which ranked fourth. While foreign tourists stayed in Antalya for approximately three times as overnight stays as İstanbul, Antalya provided more tourism revenue with its tourism infrastructure, seasonal tourism opportunities, and targeted marketing strategy. When the foreign tourist profile that has visited Paris the most was seen, Belgium was in the first place, England was in second place, and the US was in third place. Paris has attracted international tourists from nearby geography, İstanbul a diversified tourism base from Europe, the Middle East and Asia. In 2019, Turkey welcomed 45 million international tourists, generating approximately \$41.5 billion in tourism revenue. In 2020, despite the global pandemic, 13 million international tourists visited Turkey, with around 5 million visiting İstanbul, generating \$13.77 billion in tourism revenue.

The increase in average spending per tourist in 2020 and beyond likely reflects changes in travel behavior. While 17.4 million tourists visited Paris and the Île-de-France region in 2020, tourism revenue remained at 6 billion euros. Paris receives more tourists from nearby regions and locals, and those who come stay for short periods (Investpublication, 2024; UNWTO, 2024).

Table 2. İstanbul and Paris Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage Panorama View

City	Museums	Historical and Cultural Sites
İstanbul	Rahmi M. Koç Museum Focuses on industrial and engineering history	Hagia Sophia An architectural marvel and former cathedral/mosque
	İstanbul Archaeology Museums Home to archaeological artifacts from around the world	Blue Mosque A stunning example of Ottoman architecture
	Topkapı Palace Museum Former imperial residence of Ottoman sultans	Sultanahmet Square Historic heart of İstanbul
	Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum Displays a vast collection of Islamic art	Basilica Cistern Ancient underground water reservoir
	İstanbul Modern Art Museum Contemporary art museum showcasing Turkish and international artists	Grand Bazaar One of the largest and oldest covered markets in the world
Paris	Louvre Museum	Eiffel Tower

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The world's richest art museum and a historic monument	Iconic symbol of Paris and a must-visit landmark
Musée d'Orsay Houses French art from 1848 to 1914	Notre-Dame Cathedral Gothic architecture masterpiece
Centre Pompidou Known for its modern art and unique architecture	Sacré-Cœur Basilica A Roman Catholic church and minor basilica
Musée de l'Orangerie Famous for Claude Monet's Water Lilies murals	Palace of Versailles A symbol of the absolute monarchy of the Ancien Régime
Musée Rodin Dedicated to the works of the French sculptor Auguste Rodin	Arc de Triomphe Honors those who fought and died for France in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars

Source: (Created by the author)

Table 3. Paris Intangible Heritage List

Category	Intangible Cultural Heritage	Description
Literature and Intellectual Culture	Literary Legacy	Renowned writers and poets like Victor Hugo, Gustave Flaubert, and Charles Baudelaire have made significant contributions to world literature.
	Cafés and Salons	Historic cafés such as Café de Flore and Les Deux Magots were hubs for intellectuals and artists, fostering creative and philosophical exchanges.
Music and Performing Arts	Chanson Française	A genre characterized by lyric-driven French songs, with iconic artists like Édith Piaf and Charles Aznavour.
	Cabaret and Theatre	Parisian cabarets like Moulin Rouge and theatre venues play significant roles in the performing arts.
Culinary Traditions	Gastronomy	Parisian cuisine is world-famous, with traditional dishes like croissants, escargot, and coq au vin.
	Wine and Cheese	The appreciation and pairing of wine and cheese are integral to French culinary culture.
Fashion and Craftsmanship	Haute Couture	Paris is the epicenter of high fashion, with major fashion houses such as Chanel, Dior, and Louis Vuitton.
	Artisanal Crafts	Craftsmanship in areas like jewelry-making, leather goods, and perfume is highly valued.
Social and Cultural Practices	Festivals and Celebrations	Events like Bastille Day, Nuit Blanche, and Fête de la Musique celebrate Parisian culture and community.
	Street Markets	Markets like Marché aux Fleurs and Marché d'Aligre are traditions where locals and tourists experience the city's vibrant market culture.
Languages and Communication	French Language	The French language, with its expressions, dialects, and idiomatic nuances, is a crucial part of Parisian heritage.
	Storytelling and Folklore	Oral traditions and local legends contribute to the cultural fabric of the city.

Source: (Created by the author)

Table 4. İstanbul Intangible Heritage List

Category	Intangible Cultural Heritage	Description
Literature and Intellectual Culture	Literary Legacy	İstanbul has inspired many writers and poets, including Orhan Veli Kanık, who wrote poems about İstanbul, and Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, a famous novelist from İstanbul.
	Cafés and Salons	Historic cafés and teahouses like Pierre Loti Café serve as social and intellectual hubs.
Music and Performing Arts	Classical Turkish Music	Traditional music, including Ottoman classical music and folk songs, is integral to İstanbul's culture.
	Mevlevi Sufi Music and Dance	The Whirling Dervishes' performances are a unique spiritual and cultural tradition.
Culinary Traditions	Cuisine	Rich culinary heritage with dishes like Kanlıca yoghurt, Sarıyer börek, Karaköy simit, kebabs, mezes, baklava, and Turkish delight.
	Turkish Tea and Coffee	The tradition of tea and coffee culture, including the preparation and social rituals.
	Boza	A traditional winter drink made from fermented grains, enjoyed particularly on cold nights.
	Tamarind Sherbet	A popular beverage during Ramadan, known for its refreshing taste.
Craftsmanship and Handicrafts	Carpet Weaving	Traditional techniques and designs in carpet and kilim weaving.
	Ceramics and Pottery	The art of creating intricate designs in ceramics and pottery.
	Calligraphy	Islamic calligraphy and decorative arts.
Social and Cultural Practices	Festivals and Celebrations	Events like the İstanbul Biennial, İstanbul Film Festival, and various cultural and religious festivals.
	Hıdırellez	The Spring Festival taking place on May 6, considered Hızır Day, marking the day when nature awakens.
	Hammams (Turkish Baths)	Traditional bathhouses that offer a unique cultural and social experience.
	Religious Tolerance	İstanbul is a city of tolerance where synagogues, churches, and mosques coexist, reflecting the harmonious living of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities.
	Taverns in Beyoğlu	Taverns in Beyoğlu are central to İstanbul's entertainment and food culture, offering a vibrant social scene and traditional dishes.
Languages and Communication	Multilingualism	Use of Turkish, Kurdish, and other minority languages.
	Storytelling and Oral Traditions	Rich tradition of storytelling, including legends, myths, and folktales.

Source: (Created by author)

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Cultural economy and cultural tourism are vital components of Europe's economic and social landscape. Tourism contributes approximately 10% to the EU's GDP, highlighting its significant importance to the European economy (Dutton, 2023). Notably, cultural tourism represents 40% of total tourism in the region. İstanbul is recognized as Turkey's leading tourist destination, featuring the highest concentration of museums compared to other cities in the country. In recent years, numerous initiatives have been undertaken to enhance İstanbul's cultural tourism potential and appeal. As a result, İstanbul was named the first international arrival city globally in 2023 and ranked as the second most visited city in 2024, following Bangkok. Paris holds the top position in the world's top ten city destination index by Euromonitor, evaluated across six key pillars: infrastructure, health and safety, tourism performance, tourism policies, sustainability, and economic and business performance. On the other hand, rising living costs in Paris might deter tourists, affecting its position in the city destination index. This article highlights how cultural monuments, sites, and elements such as traditions, customs, and oral histories of İstanbul and Paris play a significant role in fostering sustainable practices through communities. It enhances specific examples where local knowledge and cultural practices have led to improved environmental stewardship and resource management, underscoring the role of heritage in shaping sustainable behaviors. Cultural heritage is material and spiritual values preserved for centuries from the past to the present. Heritage includes ancient civilizations, monuments, buildings, landscapes, arts, traditions, history, people, culture, and emotions. Cultural tourism is a prominent part of international tourism, providing approximately 40%. Cultural tourism must be sustainable, and tangible and intangible cultural heritage must be protected. Cultural tourism should provide a source of income for local people, and it should be possible to pass on cultural heritage to future generations. For example, Whistling language, an alternative way of communication by whistling to simulate and articulate words on the steep mountains and rugged topography of the Eastern Black Sea region, has been included in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List in the Need of Urgent Safeguarding. My first suggestion for transmitting and preserving the "Whistling Language" of Giresun province to future generations is to encourage teaching this culture in Tourism Faculties. My second suggestion would be to configure and control more limited communication technologies in the Eastern Black Sea region.

İstanbul and Paris are both major cultural hubs, each contributing significantly to the cultural industries in their unique ways: İstanbul has a Historical Heritage: İstanbul's rich history as the capital of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires has left a legacy of architectural marvels, museums, and cultural sites. Film Industry: İstanbul is a popular filming location for Turkish dramas and comedies, contributing to the local and national film industry. Arts and Festivals: The city hosts numerous arts and culture festivals showcasing traditional and contemporary Turkish art. Fashion Design: İstanbul is emerging as a fashion capital, with a growing number of fashion designers and events. Cultural Triangle: The city's cultural triangle, encompassing areas like Beyoğlu, Sultanahmet, and Taksim, is a vibrant hub for cultural activities and social networks. Paris is the center of world-renowned museums like the Louvre, Musée d'Orsay, and Musée Picasso, housing masterpieces from various art movements. Fashion and Design: Paris is a global fashion capital, hosting major fashion weeks and home to luxury brands. Music and Entertainment: The city has a vibrant music scene, with numerous theaters, concert halls, and cabarets like the Moulin Rouge. Media and Publishing: Paris is a major center for media and publishing, with influential newspapers and magazines. Cultural and Creative Industries: The Paris region accounts for a significant portion of France's cultural employment and is a leader in sectors like audiovisual, cinema, and multimedia. Both cities play crucial roles in their respective

cultural industries, attracting tourists, fostering creativity, and contributing to the global cultural landscape. Films that promote visiting the historical and cultural sites of Paris and İstanbul contribute to these cities being among the most visited in the world. Both cities benefit immensely from cultural tourism, which not only boosts their economies but also helps preserve and promote their unique cultural heritages. İstanbul provides numerous job opportunities across various sectors, including tourism, finance, and manufacturing. Paris offers several job opportunities in economies like fashion, arts, and technology. While both cities contribute immensely to their countries' inclusive growth, Paris's structured social programs and global influence might give it a slight edge in promoting inclusive growth. However, İstanbul's rapid urban development and economic significance are also crucial for Turkey's inclusive growth. These two cities have successfully integrated their cultural heritage into their economic strategies, but challenges in the potential benefits that arise from this approach in achieving long-term sustainability. Although İstanbul and Paris are attractive elements of cultural economy and cultural tourism, both cities have some challenges in terms of sustainability. The most important struggle for İstanbul is the solution to tourism infrastructure problems due to over-tourism. In this case, İstanbul should either take various measures to control over-tourism or empower the solutions with GenAI and disruptive technologies. Although Paris appears to have an advantage over İstanbul in terms of sustainability, the city faces significant challenges such as rising living costs, increasing rents, and stringent tourism policies. These factors contribute to the negative effects of the struggles within the cultural economy and cultural tourism sectors. Museums, one of the most crucial elements of the cultural economy, provide considerable income to the countries visited. When we look at museum visits after the pandemic, although the Louvre maintains its first place, interest in museums in Asia and the US has increased. While the Louvre could not reach the numbers in 2018 and 2019 in 2024, the National Museum of China passed the figures for 2019. In particular, France has taken action at the highest management level to renovate the Louvre Museum and make it a more vibrant and social center. İstanbul is a city rich in museums. However, it would enhance the experience if these museums were more vibrant and engaging, encouraging visitors to spend more time there. It's important for museums to offer nighttime hours, create spaces for people to chat and socialize, host live music events, and increase both their numbers and capacities.

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