

Cittaslow Notion for Sustainable Tourism: Cittaslow Movement in Turkey

Sürdürülebilir Turizm İçin Cittaslow Kavramı: Türkiye'de Cittaslow Hareketi

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Abstract

In the last decades cities' unique structures, architecture, traditions, customs, local cuisine, historical identity, natural resources, and quality of life have been endangered by the pace of rapid development of globalization. In response, a new stream labeled "Cittaslow" was adopted that advocates sustainable urban development focusing on the improvement of quality living. The "Cittaslow" movement envisages the development of urbanism by protecting unique characteristics, structures, arts, cuisine, and social cohesion without harming nature. In fact, the notion of "Cittaslow" embracing the dimensions of sustainability forms a favorable basis for sustainable tourism. Thus, sustainable tourism is oriented toward contributing to the local economy, protecting natural resources and cultural heritage, and improving the life quality of residents and visitors by minimizing the negative effects of tourism on both society and the environment. In this study, the notion of "Cittaslow" is considered an important tool that supports the development of sustainable tourism. Thus, the criteria of the "Cittaslow" notion coincide with the goals of sustainable development within the context of sustainable tourism. Ultimately, the cities in Turkey with the title of "Cittaslow" as of April 2023 are dissected according to some sustainability practices. In conclusion, this study emphasizes the importance of the "Cittaslow" movement in the development of sustainable tourism is adverted.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism, Sustainable Development Goals, Cittaslow, Turkey.

Article History

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Özet

Son yıllarda küreselleşmenin hızla gelişmesiyle kentlerin kendine özgü yapıları, mimarisi, gelenekleri, görenekleri, yerel mutfağı, tarihi kimliği, doğal kaynakları ve yaşam kalitesi tehlike altındadır. Buna karşılık, kaliteli yaşamın iyileştirilmesine odaklanan sürdürülebilir kentsel kalkınmayı savunan "Cittaslow" isimli yeni bir akım benimsendi. "Yavaş Şehir" hareketi, doğaya zarar vermeden, kendine özgü özellikleri, yapıları, sanatları, mutfağı ve toplumsal bütünlüğü koruyarak şehirciliğin gelişmesini öngörmektedir. Aslında sürdürülebilirliğin boyutlarını kapsayan "Yavaş Şehir" kavramı sürdürülebilir turizm için uygun bir temel oluşturmaktadır. Böylece sürdürülebilir turizm, turizmin hem toplum hem de çevre üzerindeki olumsuz etkilerini en aza indirerek yerel ekonomiye katkı sağlamaya, doğal kaynakları ve kültürel mirası korumaya, bölge sakinlerinin ve ziyaretçilerin yaşam kalitesini iyileştirmeye yöneliktir. Bu çalışmada "Cittaslow" kavramı sürdürülebilir turizmin gelişimini destekleyen önemli bir araç olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Böylece "Cittaslow" kavramının kriterleri, sürdürülebilir turizm bağlamında sürdürülebilir kalkınma hedefleriyle örtüşmektedir. Sonuçta Nisan 2023 itibarıyla "Cittaslow" unvanına sahip olan Türkiye'deki şehirler bazı sürdürülebilirlik uygulamalarına göre incelenmiştir. Sonuç olarak bu çalışmada sürdürülebilir turizmin gelişmesinde "Cittaslow" hareketinin önemi vurgulanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sürdürülebilir Turizm, Sürdürülebilir Kalkınma Hedefleri, Yavaş Şehir, Türkiye

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1. INTRODUCTION

Onwards the sustainability concept is acknowledged by the authorities worldwide, the three dimensions are determined as economic, environmental, and social. The economic dimension of sustainability is closely related to the issues such as economic growth, productivity, production processes, and investment. The economic dimension focuses on the allocation of resources while increasing efficiency in the production of goods and services. The possibility of depletion of resources reveals possible risks related to the continuity of production. The environmental dimension of sustainability considers the usage of natural resources without deteriorating the ecosystem. The prevention of environmental deterioration and the conservation of natural resources and ecosystem fall within the scope of the environmental dimension of sustainability. The social dimension of sustainability encompasses the persistence of social values, relations, and institutions for the future. Providing social cohesion and the commitment to common goals for the future indicate that social sustainability has been achieved (Holmberg & Sandbrook, 1992).

Sustainable tourism is defined as an economic development model in which all natural and cultural resources are protected and managed for the residents while providing a quality experience to the visitors, ensuring future generations will benefit from the tourism resources without being fully consumed and polluted. Sustainable tourism, which requires a commitment to nature and an integrated social responsibility with the residents, adopts the principle of meeting the needs of today's tourists and host regions while preserving and developing for future generations. Hereby, the management of all resources is emphasized in a way that economic, environmental, and social requirements are met while ensuring the continuity of cultural integrity, essential ecological cycle, biological diversity, and life support systems. Sustainable tourism products are the beneficial featured products that are in coherence with the local environment, society, and cultures in the pace of touristic development without detrimental effects (Güneş, 2008; Karadeniz, 2014).

In the last century, owing to the rise in industrialization and urbanization with the effect of globalization, the consumption and deterioration rate has gradually been threatening sustainability dimensions. The globalization process, including the tourism industry, is increasingly affecting economic and social life at the international and regional levels. The distinctive differences and characteristics of small cities have been disappearing due to the stereotyped consumption and production of businesses that spread and branded rapidly between countries and continents, considered a process of standardization. However, the notion that is initiated in Italy as a stance among local governments is labeled the "Cittaslow" movement inevitably contributes to the dimensions of sustainability (Nilsson et al., 2011). The "Cittaslow" notion conforms to the three dimensions of sustainability (economic, environmental, and social), which encompasses sustainable urbanism (Ergüven, 2011), sustainable tourism (Ekinçi, 2014), and sustainable development (Semmens & Freeman, 2012). Hereby, it is considered a notion of urbanism and tourism that preserves economic resources, provides social coherence, and prevents environmental deterioration. In essence, the aim is to shape a new notion of consciousness and value among its residents in a city where local culture and identity are preserved, strengthened, and revitalized (Nilsson et al., 2011). Especially in international tourism, Türkiye is among the frequently traveled countries, faced with rapid urbanization as one of the negative effects of globalization jeopardizing sustainability. Thus, in the last decades, the local governments in Türkiye fervently initiated the "Cittaslow" notion to the tourism destinations promoting sustainable tourism. Therefore, this study aims to elucidate the "Cittaslow" notion in the context of sustainable tourism within Türkiye.

2. "CITTASLOW" NOTION

The notion of "Cittaslow" is comprised of the words "Citta" which means city in Italian, and "slow" in English. This notion is established in 1999 by the mayor Paolo Saturnini of "Greve in Chianti" a city in the Tuscany region of Italy, which is famous for its wines. Mayor Paolo Saturnini brought the idea to the national dimension that cities should evaluate themselves and present a different development model to increase the quality of life. In a little while, the Mayors of the cities

Bra (Francesco Guida), Orvieto (Stefano Cimicchi), and Positano (Domenico Marrone) were also involved in this initiative. Thus, the "Cittaslow" notion, which started with 4 Italian cities in 1999, has expanded to 288 cities in 33 countries as of 24 April 2023 (Cittaslow Organization, 2023). Table 1 represents the countries with the number of cities that adopted the "Cittaslow" notion matching the requirements determined by the association (www.cittaslow.org, 2023)

Table 1. Members of "Cittaslow Association"

Countries	Number of Cities	Countries	Number of Cities
Australia	3	Japan	2
Austria	3	Luxembourg	1
Belgium	7	Netherlands	10
Brazil	1	New Zealand	1
Canada	4	Norway	2
China	13	Poland	36
Colombia	1	Portugal	4
Croatia	1	Russia	1
Denmark	2	South Africa	1
Finland	1	South Korea	17
France	13	Spain	11
Germany	24	Sweden	1
Britain	3	Taiwan	5
Hungary	1	Türkiye	22
Iceland	1	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus	5
Ireland	1	USA	2
Italy	88	TOTAL	288

Source: Cittaslow Organization (www.cittaslow.org, 24/04/2023)

International "Cittaslow Association" is defined as a union based on membership of cities aimed to protect the cities' own identities, lifestyles, and local characteristics from destroying effects of industrialization and globalization (Mayer & Knox, 2005). "Cittaslow" notion is based on the "slow food" perspective that evolves over time and becomes a common philosophy of "slowness" not only in nutrition but also in life in diverse aspects such as travel, education, reading, spending, and consumption (Karadeniz, 2014). It is accepted that the establishment of the international "Cittaslow Association" is a prominent motion for the quality of life. One of the main objectives of the international "Cittaslow Association" is to highlight the local identity by aiming to preserve the originality and values of that city and to ensure the continuity of the products belonging to that city (Gorringer, 2011). "Cittaslow" philosophy advocates living life on a slow course for a better life.

3. "CITTASLOW" NOTION FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The "Cittaslow" notion focuses on the creation of self-sufficient and sustainable cities where the residents can easily communicate and socialize while nature, traditions, and customs are protected and renewable energy sources and the convenience of technology are benefited without infrastructure problems (Karadeniz, 2014). Moreover, the "Cittaslow" notion intends to protect and share the nature, culture, heritage, traditions, and history of the city to be experienced by the residents and the guests visiting the city on a slow course. In addition, other attempts of the international "Cittaslow Association" are to control air, noise, light, and electromagnetic pollution constantly and strive to keep it at a level that will not threaten the health of the community. Thus, health is given great importance by taking precautions on many issues from garbage collection hours to disinfection (Çavuş et al., 2019).

Sustainable tourism provides cultural integrity, ecological cycle, biological diversity, and life-sustaining systems preserving the environment for future generations while satisfying the economic

and social needs of residents and tourists in the visited region (Sezgin & Dinç, 2011). It is acknowledged that the concept of sustainable tourism is based on sustainable development. In sustainable tourism, there is a balance between economic development and the protection of environmental resources while satisfying the needs of residents and tourists. In general, there is a complex and interactive relationship between the tourist, residents, and businesses considering regional attractions, and the natural environment. The most distinctive feature of sustainable tourism is to meet the needs of both residents and visitors and to enrich and protect tourist attractions that are utilized as an economic resource (Edgell, 2020).

The “Cittaslow” notion ensures sustainability with the aim of protecting the environmental resources of the city and providing economic development. The dimensions of sustainable development (economic, environmental, and social) are also prominent in the “Cittaslow” movement. Thus, the “Cittaslow” movement can also be promoted to provide sustainable, quality touristic products and experiences in the field of tourism. Highlighting the values of tourism activities on a regional and national scale, then developing these unrecognized features of cities economically and sustainably are ensured by the practical management of the “Cittaslow” movement for sustainable tourism (Zaman et al., 2017). In this respect, the “Cittaslow” notion contributes to the goals of sustainable tourism. In fact, sustainable tourism protects the environment and natural resources composing the ecosystem, respects biological and cultural diversity, and also provides economic income to the residents by increasing their welfare while realizing tourism activities (Nilsson et al., 2011).

In order to become a member of the “Cittaslow Association”, it is necessary to develop and implement projects to realize the criteria determined by the union. The cities that apply to the association must have a population of less than 50,000 and the city administration must be in line with the “Cittaslow” philosophy. The works of the cities within the framework of the criteria are scored and a city must score 50 or more in order to become a member. The criteria determined by the union in 1999 became more universal and acknowledged all over the world. There are seven basic criteria comprised of several items for each criterion. To become a member of the “Cittaslow Association”, the candidate city must fulfill the criteria consisting of 7 categories and 72 items (www.cittaslowturkiye.org, 2023):

- 1) Environmental policies (12 items),
- 2) Infrastructure policies (9 items),
- 3) Urban life quality policies (17 items),
- 4) Policies on agricultural - touristic - tradesmen and craftsmen (10 items),
- 5) Plans for hospitality, awareness, and education (10 items),
- 6) Social cohesion (11 items),
- 7) Partnerships (3 items).

Among the criteria for membership of the “Cittaslow Association”, the most decisive ones are the conservation of the natural environment and historical heritage, the preservation of cultural and social traditions, the sustention of habitual lifestyles, and a population of less than 50 thousand. Moreover, candidate cities should strive for sustainable and regional development in areas such as supporting organic agriculture, protecting cultural values, and marketing local products in order to become a member of the association. Sustainable energy usage, production and consumption of healthy foods by residents, preventing shopping malls, and reducing traffic jams in city centers are among other important issues (www.cittaslow.org, 2023).

The purposes of sustainable tourism were enriched in 2015 with the attempt of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, along with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, sustainable tourism encompasses 17 principles of economic, environmental, and social development that are the basic three pillars of sustainable development (<https://www.unwto.org>,

2023). These principles and the purposes of sustainable tourism cover the ambitious set of 7 criteria of “Cittaslow Association” with 72 items determined for the membership. Although the “Cittaslow” movement did not emerge as a means of developing tourism, the criteria set by the association coincide with the goals of sustainable tourism (Bulatović & Micera, 2018).

4. “CITTASLOW” IN TÜRKİYE

Türkiye network was founded by the “Cittaslow Association” when Seferihisar became a member in 2009. “Cittaslow Türkiye Office” carries out the application process to the international “Cittaslow Association”. The “Cittaslow” application file is the presentation of what the city has and will do within the scope of the “Cittaslow” criteria. The evaluation of the applicant city is assessed through the delivered file by the “Cittaslow Türkiye Office” (www.cittaslowturkiye.org, 2023). The cities in Türkiye with the title of “Cittaslow” as of April 2023 are listed in Table 2. The table presents the 22 cities that received the “Cittaslow” title with the affiliated provinces and regions.

Table 2. “Cittaslow” Cities in Türkiye

	“Cittaslow” Towns	Province	Region	Year
1	Gerze	Sinop	Blacksea Region	2017
2	Göynük	Bolu	Blacksea Region	2014
3	Mudurnu	Bolu	Blacksea Region	2018
4	Perşembe	Ordu	Blacksea Region	2012
5	Şavşat	Artvin	Blacksea Region	2015
6	Uzundere	Erzurum	Blacksea Region	2016
7	Akyaka	Muğla	Eagean Region	2011
8	Foça	İzmir	Eagean Region	2021
9	Köyceğiz	Muğla	Eagean Region	2019
10	Seferihisar	İzmir	Eagean Region	2009
11	Yenipazar	Aydın	Eagean Region	2011
12	Kemaliye	Erzincan	Eastern Anatolia Region	2022
13	Arapgir	Malatya	Eastern Anatolia Region	2021
14	Ahlat	Bitlis	Eastern Anatolia Region	2019
15	Gökçeada	Çanakkale	Marmara Region	2011
16	İznik	Bursa	Marmara Region	2021
17	Vize	Kırklareli	Marmara Region	2012
18	Eğirdir	Isparta	Mediterranean Region	2017
19	Finike	Antalya	Mediterranean Region	2023
20	Yalvaç	Isparta	Mediterranean Region	2012
21	Halfeti	Şanlıurfa	Southeastern Anatolia Region	2013
22	Güdül	Ankara	Central Anatolia Region	2017

Source: Developed by the author

According to Table 2, just one city received the “Cittaslow” title in 2009 (Seferihisar) and also initiated the “Cittaslow” movement in Türkiye. This movement is followed by three cities (Akyaka, Gökçeada, Yenipazar) in different regions in 2011. In the next year, three cities (Perşembe, Vize, Yalvaç) located in other regions contributed to the “Cittaslow” movement in Türkiye. One city for each year between the years 2013 and 2016 became a member of the international “Cittaslow Association” from varied regions (Halfeti, Göynük, Şavşat, Uzundere). In 2017 three more cities (Eğirdir, Gerze, Güdül) attended membership of the international union from various regions of Türkiye. The next year, just one city (Mudurnu) from Türkiye became a member of the international union. While in 2019 just two cities (Ahlat, Köyceğiz) from different regions accepted the international union from Türkiye, in 2021 three more cities (Arapgir, Foça, İznik) were gathered under the union again from various regions. Lastly, one city consequently for each year between the years 2022 and 2023 enrolled in the international “Cittaslow Association” from varied regions

(Kemaliye, Finike). In conclusion, since its first membership in 2009, each year at least one city became a member of the international union from Türkiye except for only 2 years, which are the years 2010 and 2020.

Moreover, Table 2 reveals that all seven regions in Türkiye with at least one city received the title of “Cittaslow”. The Blacksea region has the highest number of members with 6 cities (Gerze, Göynük, Mudurnu, Perşembe, Şavşat, Uzundere) in the international union. It is followed by the Eagean region with 5 cities (Akyaka, Foça, Köyceğiz, Seferihisar, Yenipazar) that became a member of the international “Cittaslow Association”. The Mediterranean (Eğirdir, Finike, Yalvaç), Marmara (Gökçeada, İznik, Vize), and Eastern Anatolia (Ahlat, Arapgir, Kemalye) regions each have the same number of memberships as three cities. Central Anatolia (Güdül) and Southeastern Anatolia (Halfeti) regions each have just one city that received the title of “Cittaslow”. Some information about the cities that are mentioned with the “Cittaslow” title in Türkiye is given below.

Ahlat: In the city, which has been home to many civilizations from the Urartians to the Ottomans due to its natural beauties, the blue of Lake Van and the snowy peaks of Türkiye’s third largest mountain Süphan merge. The city resembles an open-air museum with the ruins of castles, mosques, bridges, tombs, baths, and zawiyas that bears the traces of many civilizations. The historical heritage and natural beauties appeal to domestic and international tourists (www.bitlis.gov.tr, 2023). The usage of water for agricultural products and the sustainability of groundwater is researched (Özcanlı et al., 2019). Thus, it is vital for agricultural products, which are inputs for the tourism industry, to comply with SDGs. The cooperation between public institutions and organizations in the “Cittaslow” membership process provided great convenience to the city in the membership. Therefore, the city had the advantage of meeting more than 50% of the membership criteria before applying for the “Cittaslow” title (Elmas, 2020).

Akyaka: The city is an important residential area located in the untouched bay of Gökova. The attractive features of the town are the two-storey houses with bay windows, and its historical architecture, as well as its forest camping in lush forests and its magnificent underwater flora. It is one of the rare touristic regions with its lush forests, affluent ecosystem, immaculate coast, and historical architecture (www.cittaslowturkiye.org, 2023). In a study on the sustainability indicators of the “Cittaslow” city, it is revealed that the common denominators in the protection of the natural environment are developed considering tourism (Seçal Sarıgül & Sungur, 2023). A study deduced that becoming a “Cittaslow” city positively affected accommodation enterprises in terms of economic and socio-cultural aspects within the scope of sustainability tourism (Canlı, 2016).

Arapgir: The plateaus in Arapgir are used for tourism purposes with the natural beauty and other attractive features. The rural lifestyle in Arapgir attracts the attention of tourists with its traditional village, highland life, scattered settlements and houses built in wooden civil architectural style, customs, and other economic features such as garden and field agriculture and animal husbandry (<https://malatya.ktb.gov.tr>, 2023). It is aimed to develop tourism in the town considering cultural, economic, and natural values based on sustainability principles (<https://fka.gov.tr>, 2023) contributed to receiving the “Cittaslow” title. Within the framework of sustainable development, receiving the “Cittaslow” title contributed to the promotion of the city through alternative tourism (Orhan & Gömüç, 2021).

Eğirdir: The city has great tourism potential in terms of both historical opulence and natural resources. The natural beauties of Lake Eğirdir and the region attract an increasing number of domestic and international tourists every year. Visiting Eğirdir seems to have a journey into history with its historical buildings, caravanserai, mosques, churches, historical castles, ancient cities, and museums (<https://egirdirturizmdanismaniburosu.ktb.gov.tr>, 2023). The town that participates in the “Cittaslow” movement; possesses sustainable architecture, environment, and economic development considering the potential in terms of tourism (Alagöz, 2018).

Finike: The city has hosted many civilizations in history and stands out with its natural beauty as well as its cultural diversity. With its inclusion in the “Cittaslow” network, while agriculture is at

the forefront of the town, is targeted to become an attractive destination in terms of tourism. Tourists visiting this town have the chance to swim in calm bays, tour canyons, and visit ancient cities such as Arykanda and Limyra (<https://antalya.com.tr>, 2023). It is an important sustainability practice to eliminate possible threats to tourism activities by planning to prevent the pollution of natural underground water resources and/or the sea and/or natural environment by arranging sewer lines (<https://www.ilbank.gov.tr>, 2023) that avail the application for “Cittaslow” title.

Foça: Known as Phokaia among the residents, Foça is a peaceful city that takes its name from the seals living on its islands. Foça is one of the most important settlements of the Ionian period in ancient times. Foça, a city that produces, sustains, and preserves the structures remaining from the Hellenistic periods, aims to develop tourism with the philosophy of “Cittaslow” (<https://www.foca.bel.tr>, 2023). Sustainable gastronomy, cultural wealth (Aliyeva & Kurgun, 2021), and agricultural production (Koçan & Balık, 2021) support the development of tourism in the district rewarded with the title of “Cittaslow”.

Gerze: The town with its lush nature, unique handicrafts, and local cuisine is accompanied by the hospitality of the Anatolian people. The town is always a tranquil place with its houses with various flowers in its gardens and its clean air and sea (<http://www.gerze.bel.tr>, 2023). In the study evaluating the “Cittaslow” movement within the scope of sustainability, it was stated that the town supports tourism by preserving its natural and cultural values (Düzenli, 2018). According to the findings of a study, the residents consider that the “Cittaslow” movement contributes to the development of the city in economic, social, and cultural terms and favorably affects tourism (Tankuş et al., 2023).

Gökçeada: The city, with its unique geographical location and natural resources, is Türkiye’s largest island with significant agricultural and tourism potential. It is the first island in the world to have the title of “Cittaslow” with its underwater beauties and lush nature. Being included in the “Cittaslow” network is of particular importance for the development of island tourism (<https://www.gokceada.bel.tr>, 2023). In the context of sustainable tourism, it is revealed that the “Cittaslow” movement has positive effects on agricultural development (Özdemir & Kaptan Ayhan, 2017). It is claimed that the “Cittaslow” criteria provide socio-cultural sustainability on the island that has tourism diversity (Özbaş, 2019).

Göynük: The city is one of the important examples of the Turkish manner of life and settlement culture in Anatolia. Göynük gains importance as a place that has preserved its architecture, traditions, and natural resources. After receiving the “Cittaslow” title, the town is counted as an attractive destination with its lakes, highlands, and nostalgic values (<https://www.goynuk.bel.tr>, 2023). In the context of sustainable tourism practices, the title of “Cittaslow” ensured the recognition of the town (Şengül et al., 2018). A study investigated the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural effects of the tourism destination participating in the “Cittaslow” movement, presenting environmental protection, economic and socio-cultural development (Sandıkçı & Albayrak, 2020).

Güdül: It is a tranquil city and an attractive destination for visitors in terms of both its historical opulence and natural beauties. The forest area in the Sorgun Village and the pond in this area are among the natural affluence. In-önü caves carved into the rocks in Kirmir Stream Valley, Roman Tumulus in Çağa Town, Samutbali Tomb in Kavaközü Village and Kasım Baba Tomb in Tekke region are among the cultural resources of the town (<http://www.sakinsehirgudul.net>, 2023). It is asserted that the “Cittaslow” title contributes to sustainable rural tourism (Çetinkaya, 2022) and sustainable transportation (Tonk & Arslan Selçuk, 2020).

Halfeti: It is one of the important cities that blended the culture inherited from different civilizations with its own culture throughout its history. Besides the monastery, water cistern, cave, and Euphrates River, the city offers unique beauties with its natural beauties, endemic birds, and local cuisine. Halfeti, also known as the “Hidden Paradise” and “Lost City” with its stone architecture under the Euphrates River, has become a town where domestic and international

tourists devote great interest (<http://www.sanliurfa.gov.tr>, 2023). Especially after achieving the "Cittaslow" title, the town became a favorable destination in the scope of tourism due to the preservation and sustainability of its cultural and historical texture, gastronomic heritage, and most importantly a slow city (Coşkun & Arslan Selçuk, 2018; Kodaş & Özçelik, 2022).

İzник: In the historical period from the Roman Empire to the Ottoman Empire, it has an extremely important place in terms of religion and trade. The city is almost an open-air museum and was named the Capital of Civilizations and the Golden City. As a member of "Cittaslow", Iznik is frequently preferred by domestic and international tourists in recent years because of its history, nature, and lake panorama (<https://sakinsehiriznik.com>, 2023). The "Cittaslow" city features particularly the sustainability of cultural heritage and also draws attention to the rich historical texture in terms of culture and faith tourism (Kapuci & Cengiz, 2023).

Kemaliye: Located on the historical Silk Road route, home to many civilizations from past to present, it reflects the samples of the cultural heritage of Anatolia with its traditional architecture. Kemaliye, placed in a very impressive valley on the shore of Keban Dam Lake, preserves its traditional local architecture and texture to a large extent. The town has the second-largest dark canyon in the world after the Grand Canyon which especially attracts the attention of international tourists (<https://www.kemaliye.bel.tr>, 2023). The city recently received the "Cittaslow" title, evaluated in a study with the applications in three dimensions of sustainability to tourism diversity (Danacı et al., 2018).

Köyceğiz: The history of Köyceğiz, which is a quiet and popular holiday resort with its natural beauty and cute architecture, dates back to BC 3400 years. It is also a Turkish village famous for its beaches, hot springs, plateau, lake, bay, and historical ruins. Köyceğiz is awarded the "Cittaslow" title that proportionally increased the number and quality of tourists (<https://www.mugla.bel.tr>, 2023). According to a study conducted during the candidacy process of the "Cittaslow" movement, it is revealed that participation will contribute to economic and cultural sustainability with the development of tourism (Uslu & Avcı, 2020). After receiving the "Cittaslow" title another study uncovered the travel motivation factors of tourists in the context of sustainable tourism (Uslu, 2020).

Mudurnu: The old Ottoman city, which is known for its location on the historical Silk Road and for keeping the Ahi culture present, continued to be a cultural center during the Republican period. The district, which preserves its dense settlement and historical urban texture, stretching between the rocky-forested hills in the Mudurnu Stream valley, attracts the attention of tourists with its rich monumental and civil architecture created by the Ottoman accumulation (<https://mudurnu.bel.tr>, 2023). It is revealed that the residents favorably perceived the economic, social, cultural, and environmental effects of sustainable tourism development within the scope of the "Cittaslow" in a previous study (Kırmacı, 2019).

Perşembe: The town is known for its hidden coves, beaches, and the presence of every shade of green. With its hospitality, cultural texture, fascinating nature, and local cuisine, the town is rewarded with obtaining the title of "Cittaslow". The town is distinguished by natural wonders of unique beauty and historical artifacts such as Hoynat Island and Yasonburnu Peninsula, Çiseli Waterfall, Karga Hill, domes, and churches (<http://www.persembe.gov.tr>, 2023). Sustainable tourism potentials of "Cittaslow" city are discussed in some studies (Karadeniz, 2014; Zaman et al., 2017). In another study, it is stated that the title of "Cittaslow" contributes to sustainable tourism in the city (Numanoğlu & Güçer, 2018).

Seferihisar: The town is the first city in Türkiye to receive the title of "Cittaslow", and dates back to the 1st century BC as one of the 12 Ionian Cities. There are many historical and touristic places to visit with its famous tangerines, olive groves and vineyards, great solar and wind energy resources, beautiful beaches, archaeological sites, natural beauties, and local cuisine (<https://sigacikteos.com>, 2023). Some studies propounded that the "Cittaslow" movement has favorable effects on the environmental, social, cultural, and economic development that strengthens

sustainable tourism due to the perceptions of residents (Çakıcı et al., 2014; Coşar, 2014; Dündar & Sert, 2018).

Şavşat: The history of the town dates back to the BC 2000s conveying the structures of the Middle Ages and Ottoman periods to the present day. The town is very affluent in terms of rivers that offer the most beautiful state of nature with a calm and sustainable lifestyle. It is a hidden paradise with its untouched natural beauties, historical texture, music, cultural heritage, magnificent nature, and hospitality (<https://www.savsat.bel.tr>, 2023). It is emitted that the title of “Cittaslow” in the city favorably affects the sustainable local development within social, economic, and environmental aspects (Öztürk et al., 2023). Moreover, another study exposed the perception of local administrators stating that the increase in the welfare level of the local people in parallel with the increase in tourism along with the “Cittaslow” movement created sustainable development for the city (Türk & Tokmak, 2017).

Uzundere: The history of the town, famous for Yedigöller and the Tortum Waterfall, goes back three thousand years. It is a city that draws attention with its hospitability, authentic architecture, clean air, ecological surroundings, and structure available for outdoor sports. Among the tourism values of the town; lakes, waterfalls, plants and wildlife, historical houses, religious areas such as churches, mosques and chapels, handicrafts, folklore, and local cuisine have an important share (www.cittaslowturkiye.org, 2023). It is exhibited that economic, social, and environmental dimensions are developing with the “Cittaslow” movement providing a sustainable tourism understanding (Kaymaz et al., 2017).

Vize: The history of the city dates back to 4000 BC and it is an important cultural center from the Byzantine period. There is the only known ancient theater of Thrace in Vize. The town is on the Avyolu route used by Suleiman the Magnificent during the first Vienna Expedition. Today, this route has been rediscovered and facilitated to the usage of nature, culture, and history fanciers under the name Sultans Road (<https://www.vize.bel.tr>, 2023). It is stated that within the scope of “Cittaslow” criteria, urban design projects are created with content that emphasizes tourism values and supports sustainable development (Çakır et al., 2022).

Yalvaç: The city, which was once the greatest center of Anatolia, is at the forefront with its Ancient City (Antiocheia in Psidia) and historical ruins. The town had its bright periods under Roman rule. The foundations of Christianity were laid in this city and spread to the world. Especially with the liberation of Christianity at the beginning of the 4th century A.C., the town was also accepted as a religious center in the Byzantine period (<https://www.yalvac.bel.tr>, 2023). Within the scope of the “Cittaslow” movement, the protection and development of cultural natural values and the diversification of tourism project was executed, hence economic, social, and environmental regulations were structured (Çolak, 2019).

Yenipazar: The ancient city of Orthosia, whose history dates back to 2000 BC, is the first settlement of this town. The ancient city of Orthosia, whose history dates back to 2000 BC, is the first settlement of the town. This newly established settlement became a small-scale market and trade center organized once a week. Thus, the town became a small new marketplace for the people living in the surrounding villages and towns to sell their products. The theater and a Byzantine structure, among the city's essential structures, still remain today (<https://yenipazar.bel.tr>, 2023). A study detected that residents' perceptions of becoming a “Cittaslow” city had a positive effect on economic urban life (Ak, 2019). In another study, it was revealed that the “Cittaslow” movement supports the protection of local products and sustainability in agricultural and animal production (Aydemir & Özdemir, 2014). In general terms, the main tourism-related activities of the “Cittaslow” city are shaped by gastronomy tourism (Yalçın, 2019).

“Cittaslow” notion supports sustainable tourism by promoting the sustainable usage of natural and cultural resources. Sustainable tourism is an approach of economic development and social integration in which natural and cultural resources are preserved and managed for local people and tourists. Hence, sustainable tourism focuses on the preservation and development of

Athe values instead of consumption. The “Cittaslow” criteria are closely related to the three dimensions of sustainability (economic, environmental, and social). In addition to the criteria of the “Cittaslow” movement, its objectives are also in line with sustainability. Some of the good practices of the “Cittaslow” criteria, which are also compatible with the sustainable development principles, are presented in Table 3 for the “Cittaslow” cities in Türkiye.

Table 3. Some Sustainability Practices in “Cittaslow” Cities

“Cittaslow” Cities	Some Sustainability Practices
Ahlat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Certification for air quality, - Certification for water quality, - Separation and sorting of solid waste, - Supporting composting, - Availability of wastewater treatment plant for sewage, - Energy savings, - Renewable energy sources, - Reducing visual pollution and traffic noise, - Conservation of biodiversity, - Development of bike routes, - Planning eco-transport, - Sustainable distribution of goods, - Improvement and/or creation of social green fields, - Increasing urban livability, - Supporting sustainable architecture, - Development of agro-ecology, - Preservation of local and traditional cultural events, - Increasing accommodation capacities for hospitality, etc. (Elmas, 2020)
Akyaka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of recycling projects, - Supporting infrastructure policies for environmentally friendly use of land, - Improving the quality of air and city life, - Production of organic products, - Protection from genetically modified organisms (GMOs), - Producing food using natural, environmentally friendly techniques, - Enabling local producers in financial difficulties, - Preserving culture and traditions (Canlı, 2016), - Blue flag, - Endemic plants (Belli & Çelik, 2022).
Arapgir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Certification for air quality, - Certification for water quality, - Separation and sorting of solid waste, - Wastewater treatment plant for sewage project, - Energy savings in buildings and public areas project, - Reducing visual pollution and traffic noise, - Reducing light pollution in the public, - Reducing electrical energy consumption per household, - Conservation of biodiversity (Alaca, 2022), - Geographical indication certificate in plant diversity category (Belli & Çelik, 2022), - Preserving culture and traditions, - Supporting sustainable architecture, - Preservation of local and traditional cultural events, - Improvement and/or creation of green fields, - Organizing cultural festivals and events, sporting tournaments, - Preservation of historical texture and historical buildings (https://www.arapgir.bel.tr, 2023).

Eğirdir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zero waste project (Belli & Çelik, 2022), - Availability of solar and wind-oriented power plants, - Development of renewable energy sources, - Prohibition of genetically modified products (GMOs) in agriculture, - Enacting pesticide-free in agriculture (Seven Colored Life to Seven Colored Lake Project), - Controlling systems for electromagnetic, noise, and visual pollution, - Development of bike routes, - Ensuring accessibility for the disabled, - Improvement and/or creation of green fields, - Organizing festivals (bike, motorbike, etc.), - Planting by landscaping criteria, - Development of organic farming, - Marking of historical centers and touristic places with tourist routes (Alagöz, 2018).
Finike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Separation and sorting of solid waste, - Treating the creek with the algae cleaning tool, - Sustained beach and bay cleaning, - Contribution to animal feeds (Stale bread project), - Drainage channels and roadside cleaning, - Regular street cleaning with road sweeping vehicle, - Home nursing of the elderly, - Disinfection of weeds, - Renovation of green fields and fertilization, - Organizing cultural festivals and events, sporting tournaments, - Blue flag certificate (https://www.finike.bel.tr, 2023).
Foça	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishing and maintaining green fields, regional parks and gardens, - Preservation of cultural and natural assets, historical texture, - Conducting public health inspections in food-producing and selling establishments, - Integration of disabled people, - Providing home care services, - Renewal of the drinking water line, - Waste oil collection services, - Collection of waste electronic goods, - Development of zero waste information system, - Coastal planning projects, - Landscaping projects (Phokaa History Route), - Square projects within the notion of sustainable urbanism, - Parking lot planning projects, - Bicycle path planning project, - Regular coastal cleaning, - Social gender equality program, - Producing projects with the Sustainability Office to protect natural resources and use them more efficiently, - Integration of disabled people, - Establishing cooperatives to generate income, - Fishery and marine ecosystem protection projects, - Supporting culture, art, sports courses, and sports activities, - Regular street cleaning with road sweeping vehicle, - Zero waste project, - Treating beaches with the sand sieving machine, - Sustained beach and bay cleaning, - Natural life park and animal rehabilitation center project (https://www.foca.bel.tr, 2023).

Gerze	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipality energy field project, - National agriculture, and domestic seed project, - Zero waste project, - Blue flag project (Belli & Çelik, 2022), - Reducing public light pollution, - Energy savings, - Renewable energy sources, - Improvement and increment in the value of city centers and public buildings, - Protection of street furniture, signboard, urban landscape areas, etc., - Revaluation and utilization of marginal areas, - Monitoring and reducing pollutants such as noise and electrical systems, - Establishing natural/local shopping centers, - Supporting the social infrastructure, - Protection of handmade and labeled or branded artisan/artist products (certification of local products, establishment of cultural museums), - Increasing the value of traditional work techniques and crafts, - Preservation of local and traditional cultural events and increase their value, - Increasing hotel capacities, - Integration of disabled people, - Supporting natural and traditional foods (Demirant, 2022).
Gökçeada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renovation of drinking water lines, - Afforestation (Belli & Çelik, 2022), - Conservation of biodiversity, - Utilization of green fields by using productive plants, - Development of agroecology, - Prohibition of using GMOs in agriculture, - Establishing local shopping centers for local products (Özdemir & Kaptan Ayhan, 2017), - Organic farming island project, - Designing energy-efficient buildings, - Measurement of air, water, and soil quality, - Supporting wind energy, - Planning slow routes, - Bike paths, - Development of green fields, - Marketing of local products via “Earth Market”, - Promotion of home pensions and hotel businesses - Organizing events and festivals (Özbaş, 2019).
Göynük	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water footprint measurement project (Belli & Çelik, 2022), - Certification for air quality, - Certification for water quality, - Supporting agricultural composting, - Wastewater treatment plant for sewage project, - Energy savings in buildings and public areas project, - Reducing visual pollution and traffic noise (Alaca, 2022).
Güdül	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Park and biological lake project, - Drinking water and sewer systems (Belli & Çelik, 2022), - Certification for air quality, - Certification for water quality, - Separation and sorting of waste project, - Supporting industrial and domestic composting, - Wastewater treatment plant for sewage project, - Energy savings, - Renewable energy sources project, - Reducing visual pollution and traffic noise project, - Reducing light pollution in the public, - Reducing electrical energy consumption per household, - Conservation of biodiversity (Alaca, 2022).

Halfeti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Certification for air quality, - Certification for water quality, - Separation and sorting of solid waste, - Supporting composting, - Availability of wastewater treatment plant for sewage, - Energy savings, - Renewable energy sources, - Reducing visual pollution and traffic noise, - Conservation of biodiversity, - Approved accessibility to healthcare, - Improvement and increment in the value of city centers and public buildings, - Protection of handmade and labeled or branded artisan/artist products, - Preservation of local and traditional cultural events and increase their value, - Increasing hotel capacities, - Supporting natural and traditional foods, - Establishing markets for local products, - Supporting the social infrastructure, - Prohibition from the use of GMOs in agriculture, - Availability of slow routes (Coşkun & Arslan Selçuk, 2018).
İznik	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zero waste project (Belli & Çelik, 2022), - Certification for air quality, - Certification for water quality, - Separation and sorting urban solid waste project, - Agricultural waste composting project, - Availability of wastewater treatment plant for sewage, - Energy savings, - Renewable energy sources (Floating Sun Panels Project), - Reducing visual pollution and traffic noise, - Reducing light pollution in the public, - Reducing electrical energy consumption per household, - Conservation of biodiversity (Alaca, 2022).
Kemaliye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Afforestation practices (Belli & Çelik, 2022), - Preservation of cultural and natural assets, historical texture, - Regular street cleaning with road sweeping vehicle, - Separation and sorting urban solid waste project, - Reducing light pollution in the public, - Organizing festivals and events, - Landscaping projects, - Increasing accommodation capacities for hospitality (https://www.kemaliye.bel.tr, 2023).
Köyceğiz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Certification for air quality, - Certification for water quality, - Sustainable agriculture practices (Aromatic Plants House Project), - Availability of wastewater treatment plant for sewage, - Energy savings in buildings and public areas (utilizing solar energy in traffic signaling systems), - Reducing visual pollution and traffic noise, - Reducing light pollution in the public, - Reducing electrical energy consumption per household, - Conservation of biodiversity (Alaca, 2022).
Mudurnu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Certification for water quality, - Separation and sorting of solid waste, - Supporting composting, - Wastewater treatment plant for sewage project, - Energy savings, - Renewable energy sources, - Reducing visual pollution and traffic noise,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reducing light pollution in the public, - Conservation of biodiversity projects (Alaca, 2022).
Perşembe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Certification for air quality, - Certification for water quality, - Separation and sorting of solid waste, - Wastewater treatment plant for sewage project, - Energy savings, - Reducing visual pollution and traffic noise, - Reducing light pollution in the public, - Reducing electrical energy consumption per household, - Conservation of biodiversity (Alaca, 2022), - Increasing social equality, - Ensuring economic vitality, - Supporting organic agriculture, - Ensuring accessibility for the disabled, - Providing the commercialization of local and organic foods, - Organizing festivals and events (Zaman et al., 2017).
Şavşat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children's municipality afforestation works, - Garbage container grant, - Increasing the amount of water, - Renovation of stormwater and sewer lines, - Organic agriculture practices, - Zero waste practices (Belli & Çelik, 2022), - Certification for air quality, - Certification for water quality, - Separation and sorting of solid waste, - Wastewater treatment plant for sewage project, - Energy savings, - Renewable energy sources, - Reducing visual pollution and traffic noise projects, - Reducing light pollution in the public, - Reducing electrical energy consumption per household, - Conservation of biodiversity (Alaca, 2022).
Seferihisar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature school, - Monument olive trees project, - Photovoltaic power plant installation (Belli & Çelik, 2022), - Separation and sorting of solid waste, - Supporting composting, - Energy savings, - Renewable energy sources, - Reducing public light pollution, - Reducing visual pollution and traffic noise, - Certification for air quality, - Prohibition from the use of GMOs in agriculture, - Establishing markets for the commercialization of local products, - Establishing natural/local shopping centers, - Monitoring and reducing pollutants such as noise and electrical systems, - Availability of wastewater treatment plant for urban sewage, - Development of agroecology, - Protection of handmade and labeled or branded artisan/artist products (certification of local products, establishment of cultural museums), - Supporting natural and traditional foods, - Accessibility to slow routes (Demirant, 2022).
Uzundere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction of Coruh (Uzundere) arboretum - Uzundere dam irrigation project, - Migrants around Tortum Lake, - Construction of breeding and accommodation areas for birds

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good agricultural practices, encouragement of local seed growing and organic goods production practices, - Waste water treatment plant, - Issuing an “Energy Identity Certificate” to public institutions and organizations, private establishments, and all buildings (Belli & Çelik, 2022).
Vize	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tannery creek rehabilitation and landscape project (Belli & Çelik, 2022). - Certification for air quality, - Certification for water quality, - Separation and sorting of solid waste, - Wastewater treatment plant for sewage project, - Renewable energy sources (Wind tribune project), - Reducing light pollution in the public, - Conservation of biodiversity - Ensuring accessibility for the disabled, - Increasing urban livability, - Establishing social green fields by using productive plants and fruit trees, - Establishing markets for the commercialization of local products, - Development of organic agriculture and farming, - Preserving culture and traditions, - Organizing local and traditional cultural events to increase their value, - Reducing visual pollution, - Availability to slow routes, - Slowfood association and activities, - Supporting the integration of different cultures (Yalın, 2018).
Yalvaç	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Certification for water quality, - Separation and sorting of solid waste, - Wastewater treatment plant for sewage project, - Energy savings, - Renewable energy sources, - Reducing visual pollution and traffic noise projects, - Preventing light pollution in the public, - Feeding street animals (Çolak, 2019), - Certification for air quality, - Reducing electrical energy consumption per household, - Conservation of biodiversity (Alaca, 2022).
Yenipazar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing afforestation (Caravan and Tent Camping Area) (Belli & Çelik, 2022), - Conservation of biodiversity, - Reducing visual pollution, - Renewable energy sources, - Development of bike routes, - Landscaping projects, - Preservation of cultural and natural assets, historical texture, - Production with local seeds, - Organizing festivals and events, - Free food products for the needy (Friendly stores project) (Gümüşdal, 2023).

Source: Developed by the author

5. CONCLUSION

The main concept of sustainability is to utilize natural resources in an understanding that will meet the needs of today’s generations without compromising the needs of future generations. Within the framework of this understanding, it is essential to maintain human activities without harming nature in a balance of protection and utilization to adopt a lifestyle that respects natural and cultural assets and values. It is noticeable that the development of cities act a crucial role in the success of the sustainability approach that has a global impact on natural resources and ecological balance. The sustainability approach and the "Cittaslow" movement support each other and aim to

ensure a livable world for future generations based on the same goals. With an attempt of addressing "Cittaslow" criteria conveying the sustainability principles to the city management and the development culminate in raising local, country, and worldwide awareness on the protection of nature, people, and cultural heritage. The "Cittaslow" movement aims to eliminate the standardization of the texture, calmness, and lifestyles of cities, and the destruction of local values with the effect of the rapid development of globalization supports the sustainability dimensions with this perspective. The "Cittaslow" notion provides sustainability principles by preserving existing values. Therefore, in recent years, the "Cittaslow" movement is spreading in the world, and good practices are implemented in terms of sustainability.

Cities, especially those with a historical and cultural structure, are important tourist attraction areas. The main factors that attract tourists to cities are historical architecture, cultural diversity, entertainment, shopping areas, and even the natural geographical features of a city. When the criteria of the "Cittaslow" notion are examined, notably they mostly cover the indicators that are necessary for sustainable tourism. The "Cittaslow" criteria compatible with sustainability principles ensure the right practices that provide invaluable development in sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism aims to establish a balance between natural and cultural resources, human and economic growth elements. On this basis, "Cittaslow" cities are the destinations where sustainable tourism principles are easily performed. Although "Cittaslow" cities are not designed as tourism destinations, these cities contain attraction elements in terms of tourism and therefore they are attraction points. Tourism activities that are not managed well can cause great damage in "Cittaslow" cities. In this respect, the "Cittaslow" notion is of great importance in achieving sustainability and local development as adopting a sustainable tourism approach aims to decline the tensions and conflicts among the tourism sector, visitors, environment, and host community in these destinations. Hence, sustainable tourism accompanied by the "Cittaslow" movement fosters the goals of environmental management, social responsibilities, and economic solutions.

The current study considered the "Cittaslow" notion as an important tool that supports the development of sustainable tourism. In an attempt to merit a "Cittaslow" title, criteria such as environmental, infrastructure, urban life, agricultural, touristic, tradesmen policies, plans for hospitality, awareness, education, social cohesion, and partnerships are required. On the other hand, sustainable tourism encompasses 17 principles of economic, environmental, and social development that are the basic three pillars of sustainable development. Thus, sustainable tourism requires a commitment to nature and an integrated social responsibility in host regions, adopting the principle of meeting the needs of tourists and residents while preserving and developing future opportunities. In fact, the "Cittaslow" movement did not emerge as a means of developing tourism, the criteria set by the association coincide with the goals of sustainable tourism. Thereby, the "Cittaslow" movement is deemed to contribute to sustainable tourism as its criteria provide the good practices of sustainability approach. With this respect, the cities entitled to the "Cittaslow" notion in Türkiye are investigated with some good practices of sustainability to ascertain the contribution to sustainable tourism. In concisely, the "Cittaslow" movement has much importance for sustainable tourism. First of all, the membership of a city to the international "Cittaslow Association" primarily increases the number of tourists visiting that city within the of sustainable development. Moreover, the "Cittaslow" notion contributes to local development by protecting nature and presenting local cultural elements with technological opportunities, on the other hand, by promoting local economic products to visitors by gathering value and wealth for the residents. Along with providing a healthy living environment, the "Cittaslow" movement identifies and protects many historical places and cultural heritages. Thus, cities or destinations that reveal the local and essential identity, gain international importance over time. In addition, the criteria of "Cittaslow" allow for the generation of urban development strategies that improve the local economy. The "Cittaslow" movement promotes environmentally sound development strategies.

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