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### **EFFECT OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM TO CULTURAL TOURISM DEMAND: CASE OF ISTANBUL**

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#### **EXTENSIVE SUMMARY**

Today, the economic, social, cultural and political effects created by tourism, especially in international economic and political relations, play an increasingly important role. This situation increases tourism not only in developed countries, which have a large share of the international tourism movement, but also increasing in developing countries. Tourism is a sector that creates wide employment opportunities on an international scale and employs around 300 million people worldwide. In other words; One in every 16 employees in the world is in the tourism sector and about 7% of all international capital investments are made in the field of tourism. In this context, the importance given to tourism in the world and our country is increasing, tourism trends are becoming diversified, new places and new tourism types attract people's attention.

As a result of the search for new species, it is possible, especially in developing countries, to increase the share they receive from the global tourism market and to diversify their tourism products. Tourists prefer not only sea, sand and sun classic holiday tourism but also starting to prefer different special interests during their travels. In addition to factors such as rest, entertainment, health, religion, sports, cultural tourism also plays an important role in people's participation in tourism. Especially in recent years, cultural factor has become one of the major reason for people to travel. According to the World Tourism Organization, cultural tourism is among the most developing tourism types and is expected to show rapid growth. In this context, the development of cultural tourism, which is an important alternative tourism type, has great importance in terms of economic, social and cultural benefits. The capital of the empires, Istanbul, where unusual historical layers can be seen in the same places; Bosphorus, Prince Islands, Historical Peninsula and both cultural ,natural features are attracting a large number of tourists every year. In addition to this, it is on its way to become an alternative tourism destination with other kinds of tourism developing. With its geographical location, natural beauties and historical monuments, Istanbul is the biggest megapol city that is always mentioned by its name and at the same time it is the second city (after Antalya) that attracts the most foreign tourists in our country at the same time. At the forefront of Istanbul's attractions is the capital city of many different civilizations, historical values, natural values and geographical proximity to the Western European tourist market.

The cultural and artistic possibilities that Istanbul possesses are a level that will not be underestimated when compared with the European cities from qualitative and quantitative aspects. The Historical Areas of Istanbul

were included in 4 main sections on the UNESCO World Heritage List on 6 December 1985. These are; Hippodrome, Hagia Sophia, Hagia Eirene, Small Hagia Sophia; Suleymaniye Conservation Area; The Zeyrek Mosque and surrounding areas include the Zeyrek Conservation Area and the Historic Walls Protection Area. Compared to the two sides in terms of culture and art possibilities in Istanbul, the European Side is more advantageous than the Anatolian Side.

The cultural heritage of Istanbul is the main factor of its contribution to tourism. As of the end of September 2012, 27.5% of foreign tourists visiting Turkey visited Istanbul. Compared to 2011, there is a 16% increase in the number of foreign tourists visiting Istanbul. The number of tourists who visited Istanbul after 2000 increased by 219.6% in 2009; A decrease of 7.3% was observed in 2010 compared to 2009. In terms of the number of tourists coming to Istanbul, Turkey's share decreased to 2004, which decreased from 29% in 1994 to 20% in 2004. However, at the end of 2004, this rate started to increase. In 2010, the number of foreign visitors to Istanbul was 24% of the number of tourists coming to Turkey. This situation led to the arrival of 6,960,980 foreign tourists to Istanbul in 2010.

The main reasons for the arrival of tourists who prefer Istanbul according to the information obtained from the sources found in the literature survey are the natural and cultural values that Istanbul has.