

Chapter 15


Sustainable Business Model Innovation: The Case of Cumalıkızık Restaurant

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ABSTRACT

This section presents the sustainable business model innovation developed for the municipal restaurant planned to be opened in Cumalıkızık Village, which is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Within the scope of the REMODEL Horizon Europe Project, a multi-stage process was carried out using Gassmann's Magic Triangle model and the Business Model Canvas framework. Supported by competitor analysis, field observations, and stakeholder interviews, this process structured the value proposition and business model with concrete strategies. The model aims to

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integrate the preservation of cultural heritage, support for local development, and digitalisation with sustainability. The study provides both a theoretical and practical roadmap for stakeholders seeking to develop innovative business models in tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development, one of today's most critical discussion topics for all societal groups, is defined as “the ability to meet the needs of the present without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). Environmental and social problems have reached dimensions that threaten the future of all humanity. This situation has made it inevitable to adopt sustainable tourism practices, especially in regions where tourism is an important economic resource. Protecting environmental and cultural values and ensuring long-term usability is only possible with sustainable development.

Sustainable tourism aims to preserve the unique characteristics of a region and ensure their transmission to future generations by integrating economic, environmental, and social considerations (Mutdoğan & Öktem, 2024). In this context, sustainable tourism ensures the optimal use of environmental resources, improves the quality of life for local communities, and provides socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders (Streimikiene et al., 2021). Thus, sustainable tourism significantly contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals in general.

Over time, sustainable tourism practices have diversified with various sub-types such as activity tourism, eco-tourism, nature tourism, discovery tourism, adventure tourism, and cultural tourism, each of which has become adaptable to different needs and regional conditions (Garda & Temizel, 2016). In this context, cultural tourism stands out as one of the sustainable tourism types that both protects local cultures and has a significant potential for economic development. Cultural tourism includes exploring historical, artistic, scientific and traditional elements. In other words, this type of tourism includes not only tangible heritage (monuments, museums, etc.) but also intangible heritage elements such as oral history, hand-crafts and traditions (Timothy, 2011; Szromek, 2022) and aims to offer visitors authentic experiences in areas based on historical and cultural heritage (Bandeoğlu, 2015). In recent years, the relationship between culture and tourism has become closer due to the increasing interest in culture as an expression of local identity, tourism's growth, and easier access to cultural values and experiences. According to the Market Research Report of Business Research Insights, the global cultural tourism market, valued at US\$6.97 billion in 2024, is projected to reach US\$7.97 billion in 2025 and US\$20.39 billion in 2033 (Business Research Insights, 2025). The increasing popularity of cultural tourism has brought with it the need to bal-

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