Law Librarianship in Turkey

Sami Cukadar

In this contribution Turkish librarianship education, professional associations, law librarianship and law libraries, legal publications and bibliographies in Turkey are briefly introduced and the library services are explained.

Librarianship Education in Turkey

There are five universities that have an Information and Document Management department which offers undergraduate and graduate programmes. As their main goal, these departments strive to be the first choice of students who wish to work as information professionals; to contribute to science at national and international levels by carrying out research; to create their own resources; and have a respected status in the society.

The first programme on librarianship was opened in 1954/1955 at the Faculty of Letters of Ankara University. Other programmes were established: Istanbul University in 1964, Hacettepe University in 1972, Ataturk University in 1994 and Baskent University in 2002 (Gurdal and Subasioglu 2006). The Department of Archives of Marmara University was opened in 1987 and was renamed Department of Information and Document Management in 2002.

Following a decision of the Higher Education Council in 2002, the sections of librarianship, archiving, and documentation and information at all departments of librarianship were merged and the departments of librarianship were renamed Department of Information and Document Management with a new curriculum (Hacettepe University Department of Information and Document Management 2009).

Associations and Other Organisations for Librarians

Turkish Librarians' Association

The Turkish Librarians' Association was the first vocational organisation in Turkey for librarians, established in 1949. It has been actively serving as an NGO of the world of books and libraries and as the voice of the librarians. Today it has 25 branches and 1,931 members. From 1952 onwards it has been publishing *Turkish Librarianship* and has published 154 books (Celik and Bayir 2008).

University and Research Librarians' Association

The University and Research Librarians' Association (UNAK) was established in 1991, aiming to examine issues arising from the rapid change and advance of technology for university and research libraries, documentation and information centres and private libraries, and compare these

to similar issues and solutions in other countries; investigate and resolve issues concerning the personnel working in these information centres; and implement new technology (Celik and Bayir 2008).

Anatolian University Libraries Consortium

The Anatolian University Libraries Consortium (ANKOS) was established in 2000 with 12 member libraries and three database subscriptions. In 2010 ANKOS has 119 member libraries and 83 database subscriptions. The essential aim of ANKOS is to provide a common policy among its members on issues related to the subscription or purchase of e-resources, considering the collection's rational growth and allowing access to more sources for the educational and research needs of participating users (Anatolian University Libraries Consortium).

The Innovative Library Initiatives Promotion Group (ILIPG)

ILIPG is a group of librarians in Istanbul who run and support activities to improve the standards of public libraries in Turkey, activate and expand librarians' networking (both within Turkey and internationally), and stimulate lobbying efforts for libraries (Innovative Library Initiatives Promotion Group).

UNAK-Turkish Platform of Law Librarians (UNAK-TPLL)

UNAK-TPLL was established by librarians in 2007 to increase cooperation and information sharing between the libraries, and documentation and information centres which serve in the area of law (Cukadar 2008). Its objectives (Turkish Platform of Law Librarians 2007) are:

- To increase cooperation and sharing of information between libraries in Turkey which serve in the area of law
- To broadcast the activities of law libraries
- To give announcements and arrange panels and workshops in the annual meetings of the University and Research Librarians Association
- To share studies about law in Turkey with international law platforms and associations
- To pioneer to create a legal materials database in Turkey in accordance with international standards
- To support the actions on the institutional archive and open access

Legal Education in Turkey

There are 96 state universities, 51 non-profit private universities and six military colleges in Turkey (Council of Higher Education): 49 of them have law faculties and give undergraduate and graduate programmes. Traditionally Turkish law schools have a four-year curriculum leading to a Bachelor's degree (LLB). The main objective of legal training in Turkey is to transfer knowledge of systematic information about legal concepts and institutions, a broad knowledge of general and universal principles of law, the content of legislation, and jurisprudence and teachings of legal scholars. A Bar Examination, which is a competency exam administered by the General Assembly of Bar Associations, has been in effect since 2006 (Yenisey 2004).

Law Libraries, Law Librarians and their Education

Although there have been some studies in law librarianship and legal information management since the establishment of the Turkish Platform of Law Libraries, law libraries are not yet a separate type of library in the universities. Especially in university libraries, legal information resources are located in the general collection or as a separate faculty collection named by the faculty library in a different building. Most courts, law firms and bar associations have their own special legal information libraries.

In general professionals who work in library institutions have a bachelor, master or PhD degree from a university Department of Information and Document Management. Some librarians graduate in other disciplines and get a graduate degree from a Department of Information and Document Management. Paraprofessionals also assist the library services.

The total number of law librarians in Turkey is not known due to unclear job descriptions. In a university library with a legal collection, for example, books are catalogued by the cataloguer who is not specialised in law, but reference services, public relations and user education programmes may be given by a subject specialist. For an overview of law librarians and libraries, some data was collected in 2009 via email and telephone:

- 49 out of 146 universities have a faculty of law and their libraries have legal collections
- The Constitutional Court library has three qualified librarians
- The Court of Accounts library has two qualified librarians and three paraprofessionals
- The Council of State library has one qualified librarian and one paraprofessional
- The Supreme Court library has one qualified librarian and three paraprofessionals
- The Library of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey has 23 qualified librarians and 40 persons from other disciplines
- There are 76 Bar Associations in various cities and 23 of them have libraries (Turkiye Barolar Birligi 2009). Two qualified librarians and 21 other staff work in these libraries
- Numbers of law firms with libraries are increasing in recent years. There are 75 law firms in Turkey (Martindale.com 2009), 51 of these have their own libraries. Four qualified librarians and 21 other staff work in these libraries

There is no specific course related to law librarianship or legal information management at any of the Departments of Information and Document Management. There are two courses which allow students to specialise at Hacettepe University Department of Information and Document Management. The first is 'Information Needs and User Groups' and the second course is 'Information Retrieval in Medicine' (Hacettepe University Department of Information Management 2009).

Major Libraries with Legal Information Resources

Ankara University Faculty of Law Library

Ankara University Faculty of Law Library[65] was established in the same year as the Faculty in 1925. The Library, in the earliest higher education institution of the Republic of Turkey, has expanded throughout the years and is in service of its readers in a three-storey building. In 2009 the library

65 Available at: www.law.ankara.edu.tr/en, accessed 23 June 2010.

had nearly 90,000 textbooks, 1,100 graduate theses and 24,000 bound volumes of journals; it subscribes to 103 periodicals in the Turkish Language and 87 periodicals in other languages. Many publications in the library are law books which are out of print; 135 of these are displayed in the museum within the library and accessible in digitised form.[66] The library has access to electronic resources such as HukukTürk, Kazancı Bilişim, Resmi Gazete, Westlaw International, LexisNexis, SwissLex, Legios, BeckOnline and HeinOnline databases.[67]

Istanbul University Faculty of Law Library

Construction of the Istanbul University Faculty of Law Library started in 1947 and the library opened in 1950. The building is a two-storey building with a reading hall, OPAC, computer room, information desk, photocopy and study rooms on the top floor. On the ground floor, there is an area for lecturers and their assistants and a depot for books and periodicals. Internet access is available on all computers as well as a computer for visually impaired students.

The library uses the Library of Congress classification system and there has been an online catalogue for acquisitions since 1986. There are over 80,000 printed books and 20,000 bound volumes of journals accommodated in an open shelf system. The library collection also has subscriptions to 27 periodicals in Turkish and 89 periodicals in other languages.

Users of the library are the students of the university and of other universities, lecturers and administrative staff, lecturers within the country and from abroad, as well as users from the business world (Istanbul Universitesi Hukuk Fakültesi 2003).

Istanbul Bilgi University Faculty of Law Library

Bilgi Law Library[68] offers an extensive system to support university degree programmes, research and teaching. An impressive collection of books, periodicals, e-books, e-journals, academic Internet resources and other printed materials are available in the library. Online access to digital resources required for all courses is available on the intranet. Electronic reserves are available online to students for 24 hours a day.

Information managers provide assistance in using the library's printed and electronic resources, formulating research strategies and answering general and in-depth questions. Classes and workshops are available at all levels, and focus on general orientation, research tools, electronic resources and academic uses of the Internet. Individual student instruction is also available.

Bilgi University has three libraries. Library resources which are available on a campus other than where the law library is located can be requested via the In-Transit system. Istanbul Bilgi University faculty members and graduate students can borrow and return any library resource at their own campus library. There is an interlibrary loan and document delivery service available to registered faculty members to obtain loans or photocopies of material not owned by Bilgi Library.

Bilgi e-Library as a whole contains 50,000 electronic books, 29,400 electronic journals, 79 electronic databases and encyclopaedias. Access to these resources is via Internet, on-campus or off-campus and free Wi-Fi access is provided in all Bilgi Library locations. Some of the Bilgi e-Library databases are: ALPSP Law Collection, Beck Online, HukukTürk: Mevzuat ve İçtihat

66 Available at: http://auhf.ankara.edu.tr/muze, accessed 23 June 2010.

67 Correspondence with F. Türker of Ankara University Faculty of Law Library on 29 July 2009.

68 Available at: http://library.bilgi.edu.tr, accessed 23 June 2010.

Bilgi Bankası (Turkish Law Database), Kazancı Mevzuat ve İçtihat Bilgi Bankası (Turkish Law Database), Lebib Yalkın Yayımları (Turkish Law Database), LexisNexis Academic, Resmi Gazete (Turkish Official Gazette), Swisslex-Westlaw, United Nations Treaty Collection, Westlaw International and Yargıtay Hukuk Bilgi Bankası (Republic of Turkey Supreme Court Decisions).

The library is open to scientists, students, researchers, and everyone who is interested in benefiting from the university's resources. They may use all printing and electronic resources in the library (Istanbul Bilgi University Library 2009).

User Education Programmes

There are user education programmes and courses in the universities; classes and workshops are available at all levels and focus on general orientation, research tools, electronic resources, library collections and academic Internet resources. They are offered several times each semester by faculty, subject and reference librarians for undergraduate and graduate students, and staff, as well as for external users and special visitors. Faculty and subject specialist librarians help students and staff learn how to access and use legal information resources in the libraries.

Istanbul Bilgi University Faculty of Law, for the first time in Turkey, has added a compulsory course 'LAW 105 – Research Methods and Accessing Legal Information Resources' to its curriculum for the first-year students. The course provides students with a working knowledge of academic research processes and research methods, covering printed and electronic legal information resources with recent academic research on the subject. The goals of the course are to develop students' academic writing skills, increase their exposure to the various applications used in academic research, and to help them become proficient in using traditional and online library systems (İstanbul Bilgi University).

Similar user education programmes have been given to users at law firms, courts and other related libraries. It can be stated that there will be more courses and programmes for legal information users in future years.

Legal Publishing in Turkey

Books

According to 'Turkish Books In-print' (*Türkiye Yayın Kataloğu* 2010), there are 2,266 publishers, 131,337 books in Turkish and 3,144 books in English on the Turkish book market. Of 2,266 publishers, 170 have published books on some area of law. Legal Yayıncılık (Legal Publishing) is one of the important publishers of legal information in Turkey and according to this publisher:

- 10,616 books on legal information are actively on the market
- In 2009: by July 602 new law books had been published
- In 2008: 1,194 new law books were published
- In 2007: 1,350 new law books were published

The publication of legal information resources is increasing recently in Turkey (Legal Yayıncılık 2006).

Periodicals

More than 5,000 serials have been published in Turkey, of which 244 are related to law. Some of these journals have completed their publication life-cycle and some have a long publishing history, for instance *İstanbul Universitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Mecmuası* has been published since 1923 and *Annales de la Faculté de Droit d'Istanbul* since 1951.

Government and Court Online Databases

Resmi Gazete, the official gazette, is published by the Prime Minister's Office General Directorate of Regulatory Development and Publication and is accessible online free of charge since 7 February 2011.[69]

E-Mevzuat Bilgi Sistemi (e-Legislations Information System) was created by the Prime Minister's Office General Directorate of Regulatory Development and Publication. Laws, decree-laws, by-laws, regulations, communiqués, and some important international agreements are accessible online free of charge.[70]

Yargıtay Hukuk Bilgi Bankası (Supreme Court Information Database) contains leading cases, European Court of Human Rights decisions, and all the Supreme Court decisions. It is accessible free of charge.[71]

Anayasa Mahkemesi Kararlar Bilgi Bankası (Decisions of Constitutional Court Information Database) contains decisions of the Constitutional Court including English summaries, the full text of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey with an English translation, a law journal titled *Kararlar Dergisi* and more and is accessible free of charge.[72]

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Database of Multilateral Conventions covers all the international agreements to which Turkey is a party, such as Lausanne Peace Treaty, Charter of the United Nations, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, The European Convention on Human Rights, Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and Optional Protocols, and so on.[73]

Commercial Online Law Databases

There are more than 10 companies working on Turkish legal information; the most well known are HukukTurk, Legal, and LebibYalkin. The companies focus on some part of the legal information system and concentrate their resources in that field so there are many database companies.

These databases on Turkish law include laws, regulations, by-laws, Council of Ministers decrees, international law treaties, directives, translations of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, the *Official Journal of the Republic of Turkey* as well as an extensive collection of the case-law of the Court of Appeals, Council of State and the Constitutional Court. Researchers may access this information over the Internet and most of the databases are updated daily.

Recently a Turkish e-books database has been created by a commercial company with some law books.[74]

---

69 Available at: http://rega.basbakanlik.gov.tr, accessed 23 June 2010.
70 Available at: www.mevzuat.gov.tr/Default.aspx, accessed 23 June 2010.
71 Available at: www.yargitay.gov.tr, accessed 23 June 2010.
72 Available at: www.anayasa.gov.tr, accessed 23 June 2010.
73 Available at: http://ua.mfa.gov.tr, accessed 23 June 2010.
74 Available at: www.hiperkitap.com, accessed 23 June 2010.

Open Access Legal Scholarship

Universities especially offer open access on the Internet to some of their books and journals in Turkey. Ankara University is one of the important universities that allows open access; 350 books, 34 journals and four bulletins, including many books and journals on law, are available. For instance all issues since the first of *Ankara Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Dergisi* (Ankara University Law Faculty Review) are available online.[75]

Bibliographies

The *Makaleler Bibliyografyası/Bibliography of Articles in Turkish Periodicals* has been published since 1952, appears quarterly and is also available online with English search facilities since 1995.[76] A bibliography specific to law, *Hukuk Bibliografyası* (Turkish Law Bibliography), is prepared by various persons and publishers such as Istanbul University Law Faculty, Ankara University Law Faculty and Ankara Bar Association. The periods covered by the bibliography are 1727 to 1957 and 1960 to 2001.

Major Issues for Law Librarians

Professional law librarianship in Turkey is quite young and, paradoxically, has a long established history. There have been law library services for a long time but professional law librarianship activities have been increasing since the establishment of UNAK-Turkish Platform of Law Librarians in 2007:

- Since that time law librarians have a discussion list at unak-hukuk@yahoogroups.com to communicate and share information on legal information
- A web page[77] was created to announce news, legal information resources, law libraries and other topics related to legal information
- Law librarians arrange panels, workshops and seminars at the Annual Conference of the University and Research Librarians Association
- Law librarians in several cities meet and discuss the current issues each year
- The literature on legal information management and law librarianship is rapidly growing
- The International Association of Law Libraries (IALL) 28th Annual Course on International Law Librarianship[78] was held on 11–15 October 2009 in Istanbul. This conference was a great opportunity to establish networks and exchange information among legal information professionals worldwide. In addition to this, it was a great impetus for developing Turkish law librarianship

Although there are some developments and implementations in the field, there also are some basic problems for law libraries in Turkey. These are briefly as follows:

75 Available at: http://onlineyayinevi.ankara.edu.tr, accessed 23 June 2010.
76 Available at: http://makale.mkutup.gov.tr, accessed 23 June 2010.
77 Available at: http://thk.bilgi.edu.tr/default_en.asp, accessed 23 June 2010.
78 Available at: http://iall.org/iall2009, accessed 23 June 2010.

- law libraries do not usually have a separate entity
- lack of education on the resources of law and librarianship in the departments of information and document management
- unqualified staff
- insufficient number of personnel

Conclusion

Turkish librarianship has been rapidly changing and developing in recent years, as explained in this contribution. All departments of librarianship were restructured and renamed as Departments of Information and Document Management with a new curriculum. New courses on user groups, medical and economic librarianship were introduced with the new curriculum and content. It is reasonable to assume that there will be a course on law librarianship in the future.

After establishing the UNAK-Turkish Platform of Law Librarians (TPLL), librarians created a listserv covering the current situation of law librarianship, problems, solutions and future plans. So an electronic network has been created among universities that have faculties of law, bar associations, court and firm libraries. The TPLL continues to work extensively in this field.

Print and e-legal information resources are rapidly increasing all over the world as well as in Turkey. The e-government projects, especially allowing free access to legal information sources for everyone, increase interest in legal information management. Publishers and aggregators are also creating databases covering law journals, cases, codes, legislation, regulations and so on. More online legal resources available from government and companies allow legal information users to find and access relevant information resources in the shortest time.

Finally, it can be concluded that with the establishment of the TPLL, there have been several developments in education and training for librarians who specialise in legal information management in terms of an updated curriculum and additional opportunities, with the TPLL organising and attending panels, workshops, seminars and conferences at the national and international level. Law librarianship will be progressively developed in the coming years in Turkey.

Further Reading

Turkish Platform of Law Librarians (2007). Available at: http://thk.bilgi.edu.tr/hakkimizda_en.asp, accessed 13 July 2009.

Yazici, S. (2009), *A Guide to Turkish Public Law and Legal Research*, update published January 2009. Available at: www.nyulawglobal.org/Globalex/Turkey1.htm, accessed 18 June 2010.

References

Anatolian University Libraries Consortium (2009). Available at: www.ankos.gen.tr/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=12&Itemid=223, accessed 17 July 2009.

Celik, H. and Bayir, D. (2008). 'A General Outlook on Turkish Librarianship and Libraries', in *Turkish Libraries in Transition: New Opportunities and Challenges* (İstanbul: Turkish Librarians' Association). Also available: *Liber Quarterly* 18:3–4, December 2008, 470–9. Available at: http://research.sabanciuniv.edu/11465/1/article.pdf, accessed 18 June 2010.

Council of Higher Education. Available at: www.yok.gov.tr/en/content/view/527/222, accessed 3 August 2009.

Cukadar, S. (2008), 'Turk Hukuk Kutuphanecileri Platformu'nun Olusum Sureci'/'The Establishment Process of Turkish Platform of Law Librarians', *Bilgi Dünyasi/Information World* 9:2, October, 541–53 [in Turkish with English abstract].

Gurdal, O. and Subasioglu, F. (2006), 'The Plane Tree Turns Fifty: A History of the Department of Librarianship at Ankara University', *Library Philosophy and Practice* 8:2, Spring, 7. . Available at: http://unllib.unl.edu/LPP/gurdal.htm, accessed 18 June 2010.

Hacettepe University Department of Information and Document Management (2009). Available at: www.bby.hacettepe.edu.tr/eng/index.asp, accessed 24 July 2009,

Innovative Library Initiatives Promotion Group. Available at: www.library.itu.edu.tr/ilipg/pe01_about_us.html, accessed 12 June 2009.

Istanbul Bilgi University, from Course Catalog. Available at: www.register.bilgi.edu.tr/coursecatalog/yeni/detay.asp?lang=en&cid=LAW%20105, accessed 4 August 2009.

Istanbul Bilgi University Library (2009), from Library and e-Resources. Available at: http://library.bilgi.edu.tr, accessed 12 June 2009.

Istanbul Universitesi Hukuk Fakültesi (2003). Available at: www.istanbul.edu.tr/hukuk/kutuphane_hakkinda.htm, accessed 12 June 2009.

Legal Yayıncılık (2006), from Legal Banks. Available at: www.legal.com.tr/urunler.asp, accessed 12 June 2009.

Martindale.com (2009), from Search Results, country=Turkey. Available at: www.martindale.com/Results.aspx, accessed 10 August 2009.

Turkish Platform of Law Librarians (2007). Available at: http://thk.bilgi.edu.tr/hakkimizda_en.asp, accessed 13 July 2009.

Turkiye Barolar Birligi (2009). Available at: www.barobirlik.org.tr/barolar, accessed 12 June 2009.

Türkiye Yayın Kataloğu – Turkish Books in Print (2010) (Istanbul: Turdav A.S Yayın Grubu).

Yenisey, F. (2004), *Legal Education in Turkey*, paper to the American Association of Law Schools Conference 'Educating Lawyers for Transnational Challenges', May 2004. Available at: www.aals.org/international2004/Papers/yenisey.pdf, accessed 21 June 2009.