



## Questioned Documents Section - 2016

### J1 Evaluation of the Problems in the Field of Questioned Documents in Turkey

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After attending this presentation, attendees will gain an understanding of the problems and suggested solutions regarding forensic document examination and expertise in Turkey.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by presenting the idea that there are serious system problems in forensic document examination in various parts of the world and by making attendees aware of Turkey's current international crime status.

In Turkey, two separate law enforcement agencies conduct forensic examinations of questioned documents in crime investigations on behalf of prosecutors. The Turkish National Police (TNP) and the Gendarmerie Criminal Forensic Department (JKDB) are assigned jurisdiction over crime investigations based on the regional location of the crime's commission. In urban areas, all forensic criminal investigations are managed by the TNP; in rural areas and districts which do not have police organizations, criminal investigations are within the jurisdiction of the JKDB. All laboratories are located in major cities and serve the provinces they are located in as well as the surrounding provinces. Forensic examinations include forensic questioned document services.

The TNP and JKDB are not planning to increase the number of special forensic laboratories but have proposed to replace existing laboratories by building laboratories large enough to meet the increasing demand. Current laboratories are too small to house the number of personnel conducting examinations and, more importantly in the future, the current facilities lack the specifications of modern forensic facilities. Laboratories were established by both organizations with special focus on geographical location, workload, and need.

The demand for forensic document examination has intensified over the years due to an increase in crime along with population, introduction of new laws during the European Union (EU) acquisition process, and new forensic analysis techniques. Today, the primary problem facing questioned documents in the forensic sciences of Turkey is the lack of qualified academic and laboratory staff. Most practitioners who are qualified have completed minimal formal education requirements and lack foundational knowledge in forensic sciences. The judiciary and all levels of the legal system are encountering serious problems and deficits in Turkey. This presentation will discuss the qualification methods for legal practitioners and the judiciary in Turkey as well as the main problems in the current expertise of this system.

The police organization can be judged as a relatively efficient organization. However, the methods of forensic document examination have to be aligned with European standards as far as forensic science is concerned. It was through this process that the need for forensic document examination services in Turkey became apparent.

The expert problems encountered in questioned documents in the forensic sciences field in Turkey and the solutions offered will be discussed and evaluated in detail.

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### Questioned Documents, Forensic Laboratories, Turkish Judicial System