



E77 Graduate and Undergraduate Education in Forensic Sciences in Turkey

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The goal of this presentation is to provide information regarding the undergraduate and graduate educational programs in the fields of forensic science in Turkey.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing information about the undergraduate and graduate forensic science programs available in Turkey.

In Turkey, evaluation of criminal evidence is achieved by government agencies and private corporations, as is the case for the rest of the world. Among these institutions are the Head of Department of Criminal Police Laboratory and District Laboratories, the Head of Gendarmerie Forensic Laboratories and District Laboratories, the Presidency of Legal Medicine and its subsidiaries, the General Directorate of Customs Enforcement's Laboratories, and the Ministry of Health's Presidency of Hifzisiha and District Laboratories. The presence of expert reports can disturb the public conscience, and unsatisfactory court results are a reality in Turkey in that these reports can arrive at different conclusions from the evidence, and a person can interpret evidence differently from when the evidence in question was analyzed. The biggest problem in Turkey is not any form of pressure directed against government agencies, nor are the custom-made reports issued by private corporations; however, the issue is highly related to the presence of inexperienced and unqualified personnel, in short, the absence of quality assurance and lack of external audit. It was deduced in the report of the State Supervisory Council of the Republic of Turkey that "there have been critical defects for training experts in non-medical disciplines" and that "the expert establishments are problematic, and no criminal expert is being trained."

Raising the level of quality in justice services in Turkey to a modern standard, enabling services provided by crime laboratories and crime scene investigation in Turkey to the maintained level, and preventing discrepancies and misinterpretations in reports is only possible by training the personnel who perform the analysis according to a scheme enabling them to become target-oriented. Courses provided to students who graduated from various science disciplines are obviously not suitable and sufficient to enable them to conduct surveys in a crime laboratory and prepare an expert report, nor are any practical courses of evidence analysis taught as a matter of fact. Thus, these people are trained under a mentor system after employment at private corporations or government agencies. Graduates of forensic science graduate programs, on the other hand, struggle to compensate for their lack of knowledge, a problem arising due to the completion of a different undergraduate program. Current graduate programs are far from training future candidates for a broad range of crime laboratories analyzing chemical, physical, and biological evidence in that these people often graduate without having prior knowledge of current trends and practices. It is also a fact that master's or PhD holders of these programs prefer academic life, rather than employment in a relevant field.

In Turkey, as with every developed country, it is necessary to instruct any interested candidate well equipped with knowledge and experience in forensic science at the undergraduate level to prepare them for conducting scientific research, for developing novel methods and instruments, or for future positions, such as private or government crime laboratories. Transforming our expert establishments, whether private or governmental, and our crime laboratories into organizations that are accredited and well-known in Europe and around the world, and also enabling the export of high technology heavily depends on the aforementioned. The Forensic Science program that is proposed to open under Uskudar University's Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences will be the first such in Turkey, though many types of this program exist abroad. The learning content was prepared in accordance with the Forensic Science Education Programs Accreditation Commission (FEPAC). FEPAC is a body of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS), founded in 1948, which currently has more than 6,500 members and is the only association in the world that accredits undergraduate and graduate education.

Forensic Science in Turkey, Undergraduate Education, Graduate Education