

## **The Library and Documentation Center of the Turkish Grand National Assembly**

**Sevgi Korkut\***

### **General Information**

The Library and Documentation Center of the Turkish Grand National Assembly is the service unit which was founded to provide all sorts of information and document for the Members of Parliament who might need when they carry out their legislative, oversight and representational functions, and the functions in connection with their constituencies.

The Center employs a staff of 51 whom they consist of librarians, documentalists and researchers, along with attendants who offer various services.

Along with the Members of Parliament, ex-Members, staff of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, outside users (both Turkish and foreign) can also make use of the Center's facilities if the materials they need are not available elsewhere provided they are granted permission by the Library Administration. Additionally, the Library provides service to a larger group of users within the framework of interlibrary cooperation.

The Center is open on weekdays from 09:00 a.m to 6.00 p.m. continuously during the plenary sessions and on weekends from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### **Library Services**

The Library Services Division undertakes the duty of serving the collection to the users in a healthy, quick and systematical way.

The TGNA Library Collection, consisting of 260.000 volumes of which 210.000 are monographs, 50.000 are newspapers and journals, is the institution having the richest sources in the field of social sciences. Following the Library's acquisition policy, about 5000-6000 publications are added to the collection each year through gifts, exchanges, purchases and legal depository. Almost 2000 publications are purchased every year.

New publications are selected by the library specialists and the researchers through utilizing various methods and sources.

The Reader Services unit has been organized in order to carry out the duties of reference, loan, copying and current awareness services, and to provide materials for the Members of Parliament.

Library specialists undertake the task of providing reference services in order to meet the information needs of the Members. For this service, in addition to the reference sources, they also use the KİTBAN (Book Database) which includes the biblio-

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graphic records of the Library sources. This database is the first example of library automation and thesaurus creation operations in our country.

The Library of TGNA, having the collection of legal sources in a broad framework, provides information services related to the legal documents such as laws, by-laws, regulations, and the official debates which are the fundamental sources produced by the Parliament. With these activities, the TGNA Library serves as a legislative sub-unit of the national information system.

This unit also organizes and places the depositories which contain the collections of newspapers, journals and books at a service as effective and quick as possible. Furthermore, it undertakes the task of selective dissemination of information (SDI) which at first began as current awareness bulletins and then transformed into SDI together with the new developments in the field of technology.

Another activity of the Readers Services Unit is the orientation of the Members to the system. For this, it organizes various programs occasionally.

The TGNA Library has one of the best periodicals collections which contains not only the current Turkish and foreign newspapers and journals, but also the periodicals acquired from the Ottoman Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. The Library keeps a collection of around one thousand domestic and foreign newspapers and journals.

Since 1963, the microfilming activities have been continued within the framework of the determined policy in order to secure the transfer of material to the future generations in a healthy way, and to facilitate the conservation and copying. Many libraries are able to make copies from the TGNA's microfilm collection.

## Documentation Service

The following national data banks are available through the TGNA Library and Documentation Center:

**DOKBAN** (Newspaper and Journal Data Bank): This system, which has been developed based on the image storage technology, covers selected cuttings of five dailies since 1991 onwards. Daily additions to the system amount around 150 cuttings. The system is adequate for all sorts of searching and printing. It has been a sample project not only for our country, but also for the parliamentary libraries of the whole world.

**TUTBAN** (Official Debates Data Bank): This indexing activity, which covers the period after 1983, has been continued, and it enables the users to pursue both the legislative activities of the individual Members and the legislative activities in terms of types.

**MILBAN** (Biographical Data Bank of the Members of Parliament): It contains biographies of the Members and their activities and responsibilities either in the Parliament or in their own political parties. This data bank, which covers the biographical information of the Members after 1983 onwards, is updated regularly.

**KABBAN** (Cabinets Data Bank): It contains information about governments and ministers since 1920.

**LIDBAN** (Leaders Data Bank): It is a data bank which covers biographical information of the leaders of political parties represented in the Parliament, and their speeches delivered in the Parliament.

**PARBAN** (Political Parties Data Bank): It is a data bank which covers information related to all the political parties established after 1983, whether represented or not at TGNA. Information about the foundation of the parties, their leaders, their congresses, elections that they run, and their dissolutions are continuously updated.

**BIYBAN** (Biographical Data Bank): Biyban provides the biographical information and was set up with a view to complete MILBAN. Its contents consist of information exclusively related to the Presidents of the Republic, Prime Ministers and the Speakers of the TGNA. This data bank, in which the more detailed biographical information are included, enables us to access them as text.

## Accessible Databases

The Library provides the readers with a facility to access some national and international databases.

Through the Internet connection, it is possible to reach many foreign and domestic centers, and transfer information and communicate in a quick and safe way through electronic mail.<sup>1</sup>

Besides, through the Profile connection, it is possible to search databases of various foreign newspapers, journals and press agencies. Also, it is possible to access the Parliamentary On-Line Information System (POLIS) of the British Parliament. Through this, the official debates of the British Parliament, British laws, the collection of the Library and the research reports can be searched. Another database to which the TGNA Library has direct access is the European Parliament's EPOQUE database. Through this database, minutes of proceedings, its library catalogue and the reports and studies produced by the European Parliament are accessible.

## Research Services

In 1982, the TGNA Library has created within its own structure a Research Service in parallel with the applications of the parliaments of the developed countries.

At present this service unit, which employs specialists with educational backgrounds in the fields of economics, international relations, political science and public administration, meets principally the research needs of the Members of TGNA.

The Research Service provides written and oral answers to the inquiries of the individual Members upon request. Requests may range from a simple statistical information to the topics which require the preparation of in-depth reports. The research staff also seek to meet and anticipate the needs of Members by providing several works on the subjects of public and parliamentary concern. For this aim, *Bilgi*, a quarterly journal, is published. The content of this journal is determined parallel with the changing agenda of the Parliament, the country and the current regional and international developments. Furthermore, various research papers and reports prepared by the Research Services are printed as books and distributed widely. Members of Parliament can forward their requests to the Center through telephone, letters or in person visits.

## Publications

In addition to the quarterly journal *Bilgi*, prepared by the Research Services, and the union catalogue prepared by the Periodicals Section, various works, qualified as reference sources and bibliography, are produced. Most of them were published.

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<sup>1</sup> The TGNA Library's email address is thmm@servis.net.tr.