

Dear Librarians and To Whom It May Concern,

The National Library of Turkey, celebrating its 65th anniversary, was established with the intention of becoming a center for a national network of knowledge and information. It would thus contribute to cultural development, economic growth, and creation of a knowledge society in Turkey. The National Library maintains a collection of 2.927.591 items, comprising books, periodicals, and non-book materials. The number of books at the Library is currently 1.203.660; the collection of periodicals there offers 1.434.539 issues/volumes of daily papers, magazines, bulletins, almanacs, and similar materials. The Library also maintains a collection of audio-visual materials, which includes posters, maps, sheet music, audio recordings (in CD and cassette), and a few masterpiece paintings, etc., totaling 205.855 items stored under requisite conditions, along with 27.309 manuscripts/rare books and besides its Latin alphabet items, 56.228 printed works with Arabic letters.

The National Library of Turkey now has at its disposal about 40.000 square meters of usable floor area, in three blocks with modular construction. Library serves over 2.000 researchers everyday and serves as host to cultural activities as well, with its conference halls and its art gallery. The National Library's section for visually impaired persons was established in 1955, and the name of this section was changed later, in 1986, to Talking Books Library. This section offers a collection of 5.000 items in digital audio format, including books and magazines in Turkish and foreign languages, and sheet music as well. In parallel to technological development, recording studios have been set up and book recordings are now being offered to service of visually impaired persons over the Internet, via web site, <http://www.mkutup.gov.tr/konusankitap/>. The Talking Books collection has a volunteering methodology to increase its content. Dubbing of books for the visually-impaired is performed on the voluntary basis. Around 100 voluntary readers record audio books in the modern studio. The books to be dubbed are chosen upon the requests of the visually-impaired users.

The National Library of Turkey has signed an agreement to contribute Europeana, the single, direct and multilingual gateway to Europe's cultural heritage, to promote cultural diversity and creative content across Europe. Europeana has an important role to enable people to explore its content aggregated from Europe's museums, libraries, archives and audio-visual collections. Europeana's multilingual cyber space where users can engage, share in and be inspired by the rich diversity of Europe's cultural and scientific heritage will be a meeting point for not only specialists in the academic community, but also broad public. The valuable manuscripts can be seen through Europeana to prove the diversity and richness of Europe's cultural heritage. For instance, one manuscripts is written with Greek alphabet on Gazelle leather. The binding is wood covered with the dark brown leather. It is the beginning of the Matthew Bible. Written in Ethiopian language, known to be Ge'ez, this bible includes Prophet David's hymns and prayers.

National Library of Turkey evaluates to increase its Europeana contribution and plays an active role by participating projects that are applied to ICT Policy Support Programme Call 5 under objectives defined in 'Theme 2 : Digital Content':

- 2.1: Aggregating content in Europeana

- 2.2: Digitising content for Europeana
- 2.3: Raising awareness of Europeana and promoting its use

As National Library of Turkey, we has initiated a **Working Group** to facilitate the communication and preparation of ICT PSP project proposals and assess the partner invitations to align them with the Library's priorities. We aim to join Best Practice Networks to share our experiences and analyze the adaptation of other good practices. At first place, our intention is to provide content, for instance 36.807 posters, 5.375 maps, 513 paintings (some masterpieces), to be digitized under Pilot B projects if there is a project proposal on aforementioned subjects. We would like to invite you to participate in Europeana together and to discuss possible innovative project ideas on the effective and efficient use of digital content based on our cultural heritage materials.

We would like to involve Best Practice Networks and Pilot B projects applied in 'Theme 2 : Digital Content'. Looking forward to getting your comments and invitations to contact address given below.

Kind Regards,

Tuncel ACAR

President, National Library of Turkey

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