

# **TURKISH STATISTICAL INSTITUTE AND THE HISTORY OF STATISTICS**

While statistics was considered as a technical discipline at the beginning, now it is accepted as a scientific branch, it made the basis of developments in national and international level. The developments known as information age made statistics the universal speech language.

Today, the determination of national and international social and economic development goals and the achievement of these goals are made possible with up to date and reliable statistics. In the process of right information, right comment and right decision, researchers, politicians, decision makers and every individual use statistical information effectively in their works.

Even in ancient times, people required the determination of some collective events. With the foundation of countries, people started taking records of borders, collection of taxes, and distribution of land. One of the conditions for continuation of sovereignty on different races, languages, religions and cultures in a big geography comes certainly from the good record systems.

## **BEFORE REPUBLIC**

Turkish societies that founded great civilizations in the Middle Asia had given importance to information in India, China and Iran, population censuses were made in the era of Ilhanis and Seljuks. "Record systems" that were among the traditions of administration from the foundation, were considered important by Ottoman administration. The organizations of the state had collected detailed, systematic documents and books while making administrative and financial functions. The Ottomans conducted many censuses and regularly collected information on population and land. But in practice, statistical controls were usually relatively weak, and the compilations were never completed. Moreover, the counts were undertaken to determine labor and military obligations and were usually limited to the head of households, males of military age and landowners.

Statistical studies began in the early years of the Ottoman Empire. Special importance was given to collecting information about agriculture and land. For this purpose, between the years of 1326-1360 and 1360-1389 some land-population censuses were carried out. The records belonging to "Defterhanes" that were founded in 1389 partly include statistics. Later, between 1512-1520, Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent initiated a general census and had it written in the constitution that it should be repeated every 100 years.

Mustafa Paşa, the chronicler, mentions a general land and population census taken between the years of 1566-1574 which covered the whole Empire. Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Paşa, the Prime Minister between 1638-1643, appreciated the usefulness of censuses and decided to take a population census every 30 years to obtain regular information about the population and agriculture. Unfortunately, these censuses were not realized due to a number of wars.

The efforts of the Ottoman administration for benefiting from modern statistical information and methodologies had started with the reform process in 19<sup>th</sup> century. The population census dated 1831 is the first example of this process. The first successfully completed population census during the era of the Ottoman Empire was realised in 1831, during the time of Mahmut the 2nd. This census covered the entire Moslem and Christian male population in Thrace and

Anatolia with the purpose of finding out the number of people who could be drafted into the army and for new tax sources.

The Ottoman administration that developed the central structure after the Tanzimat reforms (1839), had increased the responsibilities on education, health, communication, transportation etc., therefore had required healthy and measurable information about the society. After the census in 1831, other censuses were conducted, one in 1844 which included the female population, and another one in 1854 which could not be completed. In 1856, another census aiming at tax fixation covered Anatolia and Syria, only partially. Another general census planned for 1870 was not carried out. In 1874, a census over the Danube provinces was followed by the last census of the Ottomans. This census began after the 1878 Russian war and tried to estimate the populations of Tripolitania and Arabia. The regulations for population registration were issued, and the registries of births and deaths were established for the first time during the Ottoman Empire. The first Office of Statistics was formed in 1874 but closed in 1877.

From the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century, central and regional offices based on central system were opened, a central organ was formed in order to follow up and control the studies. With the “Bab-ı Ali İstatistik Encümeni Nizamnamesi” enforced in 1891, Central Statistical Council founded in Bab-ı Ali, İstanbul and statistical services were placed on a legal basis.

From the beginning of the 20th century, statistics offices were opened with a centralised system in every ministry in Istanbul, and in every province and district. Additionally, a committee was formed to control and follow their studies. All statistical duties and services were brought into legal status by the formation of a central statistical council at Bab-i Ali (the Central Office of the Imperial Government).

In 1918, a statistics department was established by a new law, and separate statistical activities were combined within the same office. But a year later, with the cancellation of that law, the old system was maintained until the Turkish Republic Period.

## **THE PERIOD OF THE TURKISH REPUBLIC**

Based on scientific principles, modern statistical services began with the establishment of The Central Statistical Department in 1926 after the foundation of the Republic, functioning as a partially-centralized system.

In 1930, the title of the Department was changed to The General Directorate of Statistics (GDS), and The National Statistical System was changed to a centralized system.

In earlier years, statistical sources were relatively simple and data collection was confined to activities related to some of the relevant functions of the government with population censuses every five years, and with agriculture and industry censuses every ten years. Gradually the activities of the GDS widened in accordance with the increasing demand for new statistical data and statistics. Between the years 1926- 1960, GDS conducted 11 censuses and hundreds of surveys. In addition to those censuses and surveys, many continuous publications on economic, social and cultural subjects were published by this institute to provide necessary information.

With the introduction of **Development Planning** after 1960, it became clear that some statistical data needed for formulating and implementing economic plans were missing, and some of those available were inadequate. Accordingly, the need for improvements in the

statistical system of the country became critical. Proposals were developed for reorganizing the GDS into State Institute of Statistics (SIS) with wider authority and responsibilities, and more resources. For this purpose, Law No. 53 was enacted in June 1962 in order to set up the State Institute of Statistics under the Office of the Prime Minister.

For this reason, the State Institute of Statistics and its functions have been further reorganized and rearranged by the legal decrees numbered 219 and 357 in 1984 and 1989 respectively, taking into consideration Turkey's newly emerging needs and circumstances.

### **TURKISH STATISTICAL INSTITUTE (TURKSTAT)**

With the growth and increasing complexity of the Turkish economy and the resulting societal changes, there has been an increasing interest in statistics as a means of monitoring many aspects of the country's development, including the functioning of government, at all levels. The universal recognition of the importance of statistics and the compliance studies to the EU standards has placed a heavy responsibility on the State Institute of Statistics. For this reason, a new statistical law has been prepared in compliance with the EU standards.

Turkish Statistical Law has been published in the Official Gazette numbered 25997 on 18th of November, 2005 and entered into force on the same day. The new law has been adopted in accordance with our commitments that are to meet EU norms and standards in the field of statistics. The new law has also changed the name of our institute as the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat).

With the New Turkish Statistical Law some provisions concerning the organizational structure of the Institute have been introduced and principles regarding the Official Statistics are set out. In accordance with the Law, preparation of a Multi-Annual Official Statistical Programme is adopted and implementation principles and authorities of the Programme are determined. On the other hand, functions and organization of the Statistical Council are re-arranged by including the Statistical Council into the organizational structure of the Institute.

As a result of the new law, clear roles for TurkStat were defined and thus, the power and authority of TurkStat have been strengthened. Apart from this, the means of TurkStat to access to records and registers have ascended gradually. Furthermore, the authority of standardisation of national register system is given to TurkStat and Turkstat decides on national statistical classification systems. With the new law, acts to decrease burden on the respondents have come into effect.

Apart from the primary legislation, secondary legislation has come into question from the year 2006 on. Within this context, By-law on Statistical Council (5 May 2006), By-law on Data Quality Control Board (20 June 2006), By-law on Data Security and Confidentiality (20 June 2006), By-law on Training and Research Center (4 June 2006), By-law on Appointment by Means of Rotation of Turkstat Personnel (6 December 2007), Amendment to Turkish Statistical Law (25 November 2008), Adoption of "Passive Confidentiality" (25 November 2008) and Increase in penalties and inclusion of some institutions in the law (25 November 2008) could be mentioned.

## BRIEF HISTORY OF THE STATISTICAL SYSTEM AFTER THE REPUBLIC ERA

1926 - 2005

Year	Explanation
1926	"Merkezi İstatistik Dairesi" (Central Statistics Department) was founded.
1930	It was named "İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü" (Central Statistical Administration) with the law no. 1554.
1933	"İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü" (Central Statistical Administration) continued his duties with General Director, Consultancy, Vice Director and 10 Divisions with the law no. 2203.
1939	It was decided to include "Taşra Mıntıka Teşkilatı" (Regional District Organization) and "Price Statistics Department" with the law no. 3656.
1945	The name of the organization was changed to "İstatistik Genel Müdürlüğü" (General Statistical Administration).
1950	With the law no. 5629, some cadres in the laws numbered 3656 and 4644 were abolished and new cadres and new activities were foreseen, "Investigation and Research Department" was founded.
1952	It was renamed as "İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü" (Central Statistical Administration).
1955	With the law no. 6534, some provisions about the years of conduction of General Population, General Agriculture and General Business Censuses were brought.
1960	It was renamed as "İstatistik Genel Müdürlüğü" (Central Statistical Administration).
1962	A new organization named as "Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü" (State Institute of Statistics) was founded with the law no. 53 with the decision of foundation of State Planning Organization.
1984	The organization was reorganized with "Decree Law no. 219 on the Establishment, Duties and Authorities of the State Institute of Statistics"
1989-90	Some new arrangements were made with the decrees having the force of law no. 357, 367 and 403.
2005	Turkish Statistical Institute was founded with the Turkish Statistical Law no. 5429. Turkish Statistical Institute was made up of Statistical Council and Turkish Statistical Institute Presidency.