

Ministry regulations on specialization training in veterinary medicine in Türkiye

Özgül KÜÇÜKASLAN^{1,a}, Nigar YERLİKAYA^{2,b}, Raziye Tamay BAŞAĞAÇ GÜL^{2,c,✉}

¹Dicle University, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Department of Veterinary History and Deontology, Diyarbakır – Türkiye; ²Ankara University, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Department of Veterinary History and Deontology, Ankara – Türkiye

^aORCID: 0000-0002-7494-0236; ^bORCID: 0000-0002-7106-1367; ^cORCID: 0000-0003-0089-9186

ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received : 12.04.2022

Accepted : 06.12.2022

DOI: 10.33988/auvfd.1101986

Keywords

Ministry of Agriculture
Regulations
Specialization training
Türkiye
Veterinary medicine

✉Corresponding author

tamaybasagac@gmail.com

How to cite this article: Küçükaslan Ö, Yerlikaya N, Başağaç Gül RT (2024): Ministry regulations on specialization training in veterinary medicine in Türkiye. Ankara Univ Vet Fak Derg, 71 (1), 9-17. DOI: 10.33988/auvfd.1101986.

ABSTRACT

The first practices associated with specialization training in veterinary medicine in Türkiye were initiated in the field of military veterinary medicine in the 1880s. The first civilian veterinarians were sent abroad for specialization training in 1909. In the Republican era, specialization training in civil veterinary medicine was carried out in a planned and programmed system by the seven basic regulations issued by the Ministry of Agriculture from 1942 to the 1980s. In 1982, all graduate studies in the field of health sciences were included in graduate schools of health sciences, meanwhile, the Specialization High School, the main institution that trains specialists for civil veterinary services, was closed, thus specialization education in this field was terminated. In the following years, the legal regulations prepared for specialization training in civil veterinary medicine could not be put into effect, thus specialists could not be trained for about 40 years. In 2018, a new regulation was put into effect for specialization training in civil veterinary medicine. However, despite the end of the three-year transition period, the shortage of specialists in the field still continues, since education has not yet started. On the other hand, some details in the new regulation do not fully coincide with international practices. There is no doubt that specialization training in veterinary medicine in Türkiye should be carried out in line with national requirements; but it should also be of universal standards.

Introduction

The first examples of specialization training in veterinary medicine in Türkiye were initiated under the umbrella of the military veterinary organization; an operation hospital was opened in 1881 for the graduates of the Military Veterinary School to do practical training. In this institution, which was transformed into a school (*Baytar Ameliyat Mektebi*) in 1883 and renamed *Askeri Tatbikat-ı Baytariye Mektebi* in 1909; graduates were provided with internships for one year (23). In 1909, six civilian veterinarians were sent to Germany and France for specialization training for the first time; in the following years, a limited number of veterinarians continued to be sent abroad (24). Following the foundation of the Turkish Republic, *Askeri Tatbikat-ı Baytariye Mektebi* was restructured under the name of *Askeri Tatbikat-ı Baytariye Mektebi ve Seririyatı*. One of the founding purposes of this institution was determined as to train specialists as much

as the army needed with two years of education and training period in the specialization branches (*internal medicine, infectious diseases, and bacteriology, external medicine and operation, podiatry and horseshoe technique, pathology and meat control, chemistry, sanitation, and anatomy*) of the school (1, 10). Thus, in this school, the name of which was changed respectively as *Askeri Veteriner Akademisi* (1949), *Askeri Veteriner Okulu* (1969), *Askeri Veteriner Araştırma Enstitüsü ve Eğitim Merkezi Komutanlığı* (1978) and *Askeri Veteriner Okulu ve Eğitim Merkezi Komutanlığı* (1992), specialist staff was educated for military veterinary organization. Specialists for military veterinary services were also trained in *Milli Savunma Bakanlığı Veteriner Bakteriyoloji ve Serum Aşı Evi*, which was established in 1922 and has continued its activities (2, 14, 15).

In the Republican period of Türkiye, specialization training in the field of civil veterinary medicine was

provided by the Ministry of Agriculture in cooperation with the Veterinary Faculty¹ (Faculties after 1970) and institutions/organizations affiliated with the Ministry of Agriculture by the regulations enacted in various dates. Since the second half of the 1970s, specialization training had been carried out mainly at the Specialization High School (*Ankara Üniversitesi Veteriner Fakültesi Hayvan Yetiştiriciliği ve Sağlık Bilimleri Uzmanlık Yüksek Okulu*), which was established for this purpose at the Ankara University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (13).

Diñçer (17) states that in the first 50 years of the Republic, 272 veterinarians completed their specialization training in institutions affiliated to the Ministry, in cooperation with the veterinary faculties. He also reported that 161 veterinary specialists graduated from the Specialization High School. Therefore, a total of 433 specialization studies were carried out in civil veterinary medicine until 1982.

This study aims to examine the Ministry regulations on the education of veterinary specialization in Türkiye in a historical framework and to evaluate discussions on the latest regulation published in the Official Newspaper in 2018. Thus, from one hand, an important contribution will be made to the existing literature on the history of veterinary medicine, on the other hand, the veterinary specialization training, which is envisaged to be restarted in near future will be better understood and monitored correctly.

Materials and Methods

The first-hand sources of the research were eight regulations issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and archived documents of the Department of Veterinary History and Deontology, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of Ankara University. In addition, the main sources of the history of veterinary medicine, the second-hand sources reached by scanning the keywords of the article were also used. As is seen in the article, eight basic regulations on the subject were examined. The regulation with a stay of execution decision, the regulations amending some articles of the basic regulations and the relevant legislation of other institutions and organizations were excluded. In the Results section, the data obtained through document analysis were presented in the tables. In the Discussion and Conclusion section, the findings are discussed and evaluated by referring to the relevant literature. Tags of the documents and additional explanatory information have shown in the footnotes. The tags of the Official Newspapers are given in the footnotes

where they are first used in the text, and the relevant footnotes are referred to in subsequent uses.

Results

As it is known, shortly after the proclamation of the Turkish Republic, the Law numbered 3203² was put into effect and both the task of the Ministry of Agriculture was defined and the organizational structure of the central and provincial units of the Ministry was formed. The title of "specialist" was included for the first time in the "provinces" section of the General Directorate of Veterinary Affairs.

Following this Law, *the Specialization Instruction and Practice Program for Veterinary Organization (Veteriner Teşkilâtı İhtisas Talimatnamesi ve Tatbikat Programı)*³ was issued by the Ministry of Agriculture on the 6th of March, 1942. Thus, to be employed in the services specified in the Article 9 of the Law numbered 3203, civilian veterinarians were provided with the opportunity to receive specialization training in nine specialization branches that were taught in three specialization areas (*Clinic, Laboratory, and Zootechnics*), at the Veterinary Faculty of the Higher Agriculture Institute and certain institutions of the Ministry.

On the 18th of March, 1954 the Law numbered 6343⁴, which has been the legal basis for the execution of the veterinary profession in Türkiye and provided the establishment of the Turkish Veterinary Medical Association was brought into force. The subject of specialization was clarified in the Article 7 of this Law as follows: "in order to have the title of specialist - to have specialized training in one of the branches written in the related Directive, to pass the exam to be held in accordance with the regulation to be prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture and to obtain a specialization certificate - are obligatory." Following this Law, a total of eight basic regulations were enacted, seven of which regulated specialization training in civilian veterinary medicine and one of which could not be implemented. All regulations, enacted and organizing specialization training in Türkiye, and the regulations amending some articles of these basic regulations are shown in Table 1; the educational principles of the basic regulations are given in Table 2, and the specialization areas and branches are presented in Table 3.

In 1968, a Specialization High School for Animal Breeding and Health Sciences at the Ankara University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (*Ankara Üniversitesi Veteriner Fakültesi Hayvan Yetiştiriciliği ve Sağlık Bilimleri Uzmanlık Yüksek Okulu*), which was decided to

¹ Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the Higher Agricultural Institute until 1948; Ankara University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine since 1948.

² Official Newspaper, Nr: 3630, June 14, 1937.

³ Ziraat Vekâleti Veteriner Umum Müdürlüğü. Umumî Sayı:536, Veteriner Serisi:15. This regulation and its implementation program was later published in the Official Newspaper, Nr: 7307, September 15,1949.

⁴ Official Newspaper, Nr: 8661, March 18, 1954.

be established with the decision of the Senate in accordance with Article 2 of the Law No. 4936⁵, begun its operations⁶. Thus, specialized training in civil veterinary medicine started to be carried out in close cooperation between this School and the Ministry. The school was also allowed to provide Ph.D. education within the framework of the "Doctoral Regulation" of the Veterinary Faculty of Ankara University (16).

Considering the Regulation⁷ on teaching and examination principles of the Specialization High School, in the fifth Specialization Regulation (*Veteriner Hekimliği Uzmanlık Yönetmeliği*⁸) issued by the Ministry of Agriculture in 1968, the specialization areas were directly included without three main specialization branches specified in the previous regulations.

In the Regulation (*Veteriner İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü Veteriner Hekimliği Uzmanlık Yönetmeliği*⁹) issued on January 8, 1975, "specialist veterinarian" was defined for

the first time as "the veterinarian who adopted the foreseen qualifications of this regulation, successfully completed the training period and candidacy exam, gained proficiency in the final science exam, showed competence and merit to work in the field and received a diploma."

Due to the advantages provided by the Universities Law numbered 1750¹⁰, the Specialization High School became the leading institution in the 1970s. But in 1982, with a decree-law¹¹, issued for the organization of higher education institutions, the Specialization High School was closed and the specialization training in the field of veterinary medicine was terminated. With the enactment of the Higher Education Law¹² a new era began in higher education. In the meantime, the graduate studies in the field of health sciences including veterinary medicine were left to graduate schools of health sciences established within universities.

Table 1. Regulations on Veterinary Specialization.

Year	Regulations	Sources
1942	Veteriner Teşkilâtı İhtisas Talimatnamesi ve Tatbikat Programı	General Directorate of Veterinary Medicine, Ministry of Agriculture, Issue Nr: 536, Veterinary Series Nr: 15 (Official Newspaper Nr: 7307, 15 th September 1949)
1955	Veteriner Hekim İhtisas Talimatnamesi	Official Newspaper Nr: 9018, 2 nd June 1955
1958	Veteriner Hekim İhtisas Talimatnamesi	Official Newspaper Nr: 9897, 3 rd May 1958
1963	Veteriner Hekimliği Uzmanlık Yönetmeliği	Official Newspaper Nr: 11562, 22 nd November 1963
1966	22 Kasım 1963 gün ve 11562 sayılı Resmî Gazete'de Yayınlanan 13/11/1963 gün ve 2338 sayılı Veteriner Hekimliği Uzmanlık Yönetmeliğinin 2nci Maddesinin b, c ve ç Fıkralarıyla 13üncü Maddesinin Değiştirilmesine Dair Yönetmelik	Official Newspaper Nr: 12286, 29 th April 1966
1968	Veteriner Hekimliği Uzmanlık Yönetmeliği	Official Newspaper Nr: 12898, 14 th May 1968
1969	Yürürlükteki Veteriner Hekimliği Uzmanlık Yönetmeliğine bir Teknik Uzmanlık Dalı'nın İlâve Edilmesi Hakkında Yönetmelik	Official Newspaper Nr: 13147, 13 th March 1969
1970	Veteriner Hekimliği Uzmanlık Yönetmeliği	Official Newspaper Nr: 13654, 1 st November 1970
1975	Veteriner İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü Veteriner Hekimliği Uzmanlık Yönetmeliği	Official Newspaper Nr: 15112, 8 th January 1975
1975	Veteriner Hekimliği Uzmanlık Yönetmeliğinin 12. Maddesini Değiştiren Yönetmelik	Official Newspaper Nr: 15427, 29 th November 1975
1979	Veteriner Hekimliği Uzmanlık Yönetmeliğinin 12. Maddesini Değiştiren Yönetmeliğin Değiştirilmesine Dair Yönetmelik	Official Newspaper Nr: 16579, 15 th March 1979
1995*	Tarım ve Köyişleri Bakanlığı Veteriner Hekimliği Uzmanlık Yönetmeliği	Official Newspaper Nr: 22362, 2 nd August 1995
2018	Veteriner Hekimliğinde Uzmanlık Eğitimi Yönetmeliği	Official Newspaper Nr: 30409, 2 nd May 2018

*This Regulation was not put into effect because of a stay of execution decision.

⁵ Official Newspaper, Nr: 6336, June 18, 1946.

⁶ The Decision of the Senate of Ankara University, Nr: 2919/Date: May 16, 1965. The School became operational with the Law numbered 1030, Official Newspaper, Nr: 12852, March 19, 1968.

⁷ Official Newspaper, Nr: 12340, July 5, 1966.

⁸ Official Newspaper Nr: 12898, May 14, 1968.

⁹ Official Newspaper, Nr: 15112, January 8, 1975.

¹⁰ Official Newspaper, Nr: 14587, July 7, 1973.

¹¹ Official Newspaper, Nr: 17760, July 20, 1982.

¹² Official Newspaper, Nr: 17506, November 6, 1981.

Table 2. Training Fundamentals of Veterinary Specialization.

Regulations ¹	Training Facilities	Entrance Exam	Number of Main Areas & Branches	Training Period	Graduation Thesis/Exam	Title
1942	Veterinary Faculty Bacteriology Institutes Stud Farms	+	3 & 9	min. 3 years	- /+	Level 1 Specialist Level 2 Specialist
1955	Veterinary Faculty Bacteriology Institutes Stud Farms Schools of Animal Health Officers	+	3 & 18	3 years	- /+	Specialist
1958	Not specified	+	3 & 19	2 years	- /+	Specialist
1963	Veterinary Faculty Schools of Animal Health Officers Bacteriology Institutes Livestock Institutions of the Ministry of Agriculture	+	3 & 19	3 years	- /+	Specialist
1968	Specialization High School for Animal Breeding and Health Sciences-Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Ankara University Institutions affiliated to the General Directorate of Veterinary Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture	+	14	3 years	+ /+	Specialist
1970	Specialization High School for Animal Breeding and Health Sciences-Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Ankara University Institutions affiliated to the General Directorate of Veterinary Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture Military Veterinary Institutions	+	15	3 years	+ /+	Specialist
1975	Specialization High School for Animal Breeding and Health Sciences- Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Ankara University Others: Not specified	+	20	3 years	+ /+	Specialized Veterinarian
2018	Authorized Higher Education Institutions and Other Institutes	+	26	4 years	+ /+	Specialist

¹: The Regulations were indicated by the years in which they were enacted. Due to the decision to stay the execution, the Regulation issued in 1995 was not included in the Table.

Table 3. The Specialization Branches According to the Regulations*.

Branches	Regulations**							
	1942	1955	1958	1963	1968	1970	1975	2018
Internal Medicine ¹	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Surgery ²	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Foot Diseases		+						
Traumatology and Orthopedics							+	
Obstetrics and Gynecology ³						+	+	+
Bacteriology ⁴	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Virology and Epidemics ⁵						+	+	+
Parasitology ⁶		+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Food Control ⁷	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Pathology ⁸		+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Biochemistry ⁹		+	+	+	+	+	+	+
X-ray and Physiotherapy ¹⁰		+	+	+				
Pharmacology and Toxicology ¹¹				+	+	+	+	+
Fisheries and Diseases ¹²				+	+	+	+	+
Zootechnics								+
Horse Breeding and Diseases ^{13, 14}	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Cattle Breeding and Diseases ¹³	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
Small Ruminant Breeding and Diseases ^{13, 15}	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
Poultry Breeding and Diseases ^{13, 16}	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Farm Animals and Diseases								+
Pet Diseases								+
Fur Animal Breeding ¹⁷	+						+	
Pig and Geological Garden, Wild, Fur and Laboratory Animal Breeding and Diseases ¹⁸		+	+	+	+			+
Wool-Mohair-Feather and Hair ¹⁹			+			+	+	
Beekeeping and Diseases							+	+
Herd Health and Management								+
Genetic		+	+					+
Hygiene and Animal Nutrition ²⁰		+	+	+				+
Reproductive Biology and Artificial Insemination ²¹		+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Livestock Economics ²²		+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Animal Nutrition and Nutritional Diseases ²³			+	+	+	+	+	+
Dairying						+		
Milk Inspection-Control and Technology							+	
Biostatistics								+

*Changes in the titles of branches were shown in the footnotes, ** The Regulations were indicated by the years in which they were enacted. Due to the decision to stay the execution, the Regulation issued in 1995 was not included in the Table. ¹2018: Veterinary Internal Medicine; ²1955: Surgery and Obstetrics, 1958: Surgery and Foot Diseases-Obstetrics, 1963: Surgery-Obstetrics-Orthopedics, 2018: Veterinary Surgery; ³2018: Veterinary Obstetrics and Gynecology, ⁴1955/1958/1963/1968: Bacteriology and Epidemic Diseases, 1968/1970: Bacteriology and Epidemics, 1975: acteriology-Mycology and Epidemics, 2018: Veterinary Microbiology; ⁵1975: Virology, 2018: Veterinary Virology; ⁶1958/1963/1968/1970/1975: Parasitology and Parasitic Diseases, 2018: Veterinary Parasitology; ⁷1963: Food Control-Analysis and Technology, 1968: Foot Control and Preventive Medicine, 1970/1975: Food Control and Technology, 2018: Food Hygiene and Technology; ⁸2018: Veterinary Pathology; ⁹2018: Veterinary Biochemistry; ¹⁰1963: Radiology and Radiobiology; ¹¹2018: Veterinary Pharmacology and Toxicology; ¹²1968/1970: Fisheries; ¹³1942: Horse Breeding, Cattle Breeding, Small Ruminant Breeding, Poultry Breeding; ¹⁴2018: Horse Diseases; ¹⁵1963/1975: Sheep and Angora Goat Breeding and Diseases; 1968/1970: Sheep Breeding and Diseases; ¹⁶2018: Poultry Diseases; ¹⁷1975: Rabbit and Fur Animal Breeding and Diseases; ¹⁸1958: Fur and Laboratory Animals-Zoology and Wild Animals and Pig Breeding, 1963: Fur and Laboratory Animals-Pig and Wild Animal Breeding and Diseases, 1968: Leatherwork-Fur and Laboratory Animals, 2018: Wild Animal Diseases and Laboratory Animal Diseases took place as two separate branches in this Regulation; ¹⁹1968: Wool and Mohair, 1970: Wool-Mohair and Leatherwork, 1975: Wool-Mohair-Leather Inspection-Control and Technology; ²⁰1958: Hygiene, 1963: Hygiene-Preventive Veterinary Medicine and Public Training, 2018: Veterinary Public Health; ²¹1958: Reproductive Biology-Pathology and Artificial Insemination, 1963: Genetic-Artificial Insemination-Reproductive Biology, 1968/1970: Genetic and Reproductive Biology, 1975: Artificial Insemination- Genetics and Reproductive Biology, 2018: Reproduction and Artificial Insemination; ²²1968: Livestock Economics and Statistics, 1975: Marketing and Livestock Economics, 2018: Livestock Health Economics and Management; ²³1963/2018: Animal Nutrition and Nutritional Diseases, 1968/1970: Feedstuffs and Animal Nutrition, 1975: Animal Feedstuffs-Nutrition and Nutritional Diseases.

In 1995, a new Regulation (*Tarım ve Köyişleri Bakanlığı Veteriner Hekimliği Uzmanlık Yönetmeliği*¹³) was issued for specialization training in veterinary medicine. However, this Regulation was suspended due to the lawsuit filed because it only organized the specialized training of the Ministry personnel and therefore it violated the Law numbered 6343 (3, 4).

After nearly twenty years, the Law numbered 6569¹⁴ was enacted in 2014, and specialization training in veterinary medicine was included in graduate education along with specialization training in the fields of medicine, dentistry, and pharmacy. In this Regulation, "specialization in veterinary medicine" was defined as "a higher education conducted in accordance with the principles regulated by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock and aiming to provide veterinarians with special skills and authority in certain fields". In addition, with the arrangements in the relevant article (50 (1) a) of the Law numbered 2547¹⁵, the opportunity for specialization training in civil veterinary medicine was provided. Upon these developments, a draft regulation was prepared by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock, sent to the Central Council of the Turkish Veterinary Medical Association, and submitted to the opinions of interested parties such as veterinary chambers, professional organizations, and institutes via the official website of the Central Council (6, 7). As a result of these efforts, the Regulation on specialization training in veterinary medicine (*Veteriner Hekimliğinde Uzmanlık Eğitimi Yönetmeliği*¹⁶) was published in the Official Newspaper in May 2018. Thus, the general principles of specialization education have been determined. Accordingly, both higher education institutions and other institutes with a sufficient number of trainers authorized by the Specialization Board would be able to provide specialization training.

With this Regulation, the Specialization Board has been assigned with issues such as specialization institutions and branches, student quotas, application conditions and criteria for specialization examination, evaluation principles of training, the appointment of supervisor, principles related to specialization thesis, and final examination. The "Field Commission", which consists of academic members and/or specialist veterinarians for the specialization branches, has been authorized to carry out studies on the specified subjects and submit them to the approval of the Specialization Board. The "Academic Commission", which will be

chaired by the authorized person of the institute and will be composed of trainers in the relevant program and at least one specialization student, has been given the task of creating the core and extended training curricula for specialization education.

In the Regulation, the requirements for specialist candidates are determined as follows: "To graduate from a veterinary faculty in Türkiye or to have a graduation document obtained from veterinary faculties in other countries and to get its equivalency, approved by the Council of Higher Education, to have the requirements of being a veterinarian as specified in the Law numbered 6343, to get at least 50 out of 100 points on foreign language exam (in English, French or German languages), of which validity period of 5 years has not expired as of the date of application to the veterinary specialization exam or to have an international document, of which equivalence is recognized by the Assessment Selection and Placement Center (OSYM)." The OSYM has been tasked with conducting this exam and placing the specialist candidates in one of the five choices they have made regarding the scores they get from the exam. As it is seen in Table 3, in the Regulation, 26 specialization branches (*Veterinary Surgery, Veterinary Microbiology, Veterinary Internal Medicine, Veterinary Obstetrics and Gynecology, Zootechnics, Veterinary Biochemistry, Veterinary Pharmacology and Toxicology, Veterinary Parasitology, Veterinary Virology, Veterinary Pathology, Reproduction and Artificial Insemination, Food Hygiene and Technology, Animal Nutrition and Nutritional Diseases, Poultry Diseases, Beekeeping and Diseases, Fisheries and Diseases, Laboratory Animals and Diseases, Herd Health and Management, Veterinary Public Health, Farm Animals and Diseases, Wild Animals and Diseases, Horse Diseases, Pet Diseases, Biostatistics, Genetic, Livestock Health Economics, and Management*), each of which has four years training period, are included. The training period can not exceed six years in total, including the registration suspends made with the approval of the board.

In order to complete the specialization training, completion of the training period and rotations¹⁷ of the specialization branch, preparation of the thesis under the supervision of the tutor, acceptance of the thesis by a jury consisting of at least three principal and two substitute members and passing the specialization training exam, which has two stages, include professional knowledge and practical skills are necessary.

¹³ Official Newspaper, Nr: 22362, August 2, 1995.

¹⁴ Official Newspaper, Nr: 29187, November 26, 2014.

¹⁵ For the current Law text, please see: <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.2547.pdf>

¹⁶ Official Newspaper, Nr: 30409, May 2, 2018.

¹⁷ When the compulsory rotation training periods determined by the Board are completed, whether the goals set by the trainers have been achieved or not is evaluated via the Veterinary Specialization Training Tracking System. Proficiency in rotation training is achieved if the objectives are achieved, otherwise, the training is repeated.

According to the Regulation; those who have completed their Ph.D. education in one of the fields determined as a specialization branch in veterinary medicine before 26th of November, 2014 may exceptionally be granted a specialization certificate by the Ministry upon their requests. As a matter of fact, by the relevant provision, specialization certificates have been started to be given to those who applied to the Ministry with the Authority's Approval dated 26th of November, 2020 (8). On the other hand, it was foreseen in the Regulation that both the specialization training tracking system was going to make operational and the specialization training was going to start within three years following the enforcement of the Regulation. But, although this three-year period has expired, specialization training in the field of civil veterinary medicine has not yet started.

Discussion and Conclusion

Although the prototype examples of specialization training in veterinary medicine in Türkiye were seen in the Ottoman State (14), contemporary specialization training was initiated in the Republic of Türkiye and its legal framework was established for the first time with the Regulation issued in 1942 (*See footnote 3*). It is important that specialization training in veterinary medicine was started shortly after the enactment of the Law numbered 3203 (*See footnote 2*). In this Law, in which all public veterinary services were given the responsibility of the General Directorate of Veterinary Affairs, the fact that specialists veterinarians would be appointed in various units of the Directorate should have revealed the necessity of training these staff as soon as possible. Thus, specialization training was started and specialist veterinarians were trained uninterruptedly until the 1980s. Beginning in 1942, the organization and execution of specialization training were carried out by the regulations (*See Table 1*) issued throughout the history of the Republic. All these regulations (*See Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3*), including the institutions and organizations where the specialization training would be taken place, the entrance exams and conditions, the fields and branches of specialization, the duration of the training, the final exams and other details; show that specialization training in veterinary medicine was carried out within a planned and programmed system.

In almost all regulations (enacted in 1942, 1955, 1963, 1968, 1970, 1975), the fact that Ankara University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (before 1948, the Veterinary Faculty of the Higher Agriculture Institute) was always among the institutions that would provide specialist training (*See Table 2*) shows the pioneering and important role of this Faculty in specialization training in its field. The Specialization High School, which was

established in 1965 within Ankara University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (*See footnotes 5 and 6*) and is the only example in Türkiye in the field of health sciences, continued its educational activities with the infrastructure and manpower support of this Faculty.

In the 1980s, both with the reorganization of the Ministry of Agriculture and the transformations in higher education after the enactment of the Law numbered 2547 (*See footnote 12*), a major blow was dealt to veterinary medicine in Türkiye (12). In such a period when the Law numbered 3203 (*See footnote 2*) was repealed and the General Directorate of Veterinary Affairs was abolished, the Specialization High School was closed and the specialization training in the field of veterinary medicine was terminated (5). In these years, while graduate education in health sciences was transferred to the institutes of health sciences, specialization training in medicine was excluded from this approach and preserved its current status (11). A similar approach - unfortunately - could not be applied to specialization training in veterinary medicine and it is not possible to find a justification for this attempt. As a matter of fact, this situation was met with the objections of the relevant professional organizations and scientists (5). But these efforts did not bear fruit and draft regulations prepared for the resumption of this training could not be brought into effect. In such a process, the shortage of specialists was tried to be eliminated by those who completed the training programs organized periodically by the Ministry of Agriculture (5, 17, 21). However, this approach also led to discussions in practice, since the programs in question are not equivalent to specialization training (13).

After nearly about 40 years of interruption, in 2014, the new legal arrangement (*See footnotes 14 and 15*) for specialization training in veterinary medicine was implemented and in 2018, the Regulation on the conduct of training was issued. Despite these important developments, some discussions have come to the fore with this Regulation. For example, in the Regulation; those who have completed their Ph.D. education in one of the fields determined as a specialization branch in veterinary medicine before October 26, 2014, were allowed to be given specialization certificates upon their request and this decision was begun to accomplish. On the other hand, shortly after the new Regulation, with an amendment to the Law numbered 2547 (*See footnote 15*), like the degree of Ph.D., the title “*Specialist*” was deemed sufficient for the titles and position assignments of “*Assistant Professor*” and “*Associate Professor*”. In the Ph.D. education which is organized by the Higher Education Institution and carried out by the Health Sciences Institutes, it is aimed to gain the right to work in an academic institute by obtaining the title of “*doctor*” as a result of in-depth academic studies in a field (20, 25).

However, in the specialization training to be carried out in cooperation with the Ministry and educational institutions, it is aimed to train competent who have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for the needs of the field.¹⁸ Therefore, it is not correct to consider these two pieces of training, which have different aims, functions, processes, and outputs, as equal. And it is anticipated that this situation may cause various problems in practice. The provision in the new Regulation that “*the specialization student cannot work in any job other than the conditions required by the specialization training*” constitutes an obstacle for veterinarians working in the private sector to get specialization training. So, in such a case, the fact that private veterinarians will have to take a break from their work to receive specialist training is another topic of discussion. The extent to which the needs of the field are taken into account in the determination of the branches of specialization in the new Regulation and how the specialization training is implemented should be discussed separately, with reference to this training in the world. It is known that the first specialization colleges of veterinary medicine in the world began to be established in the USA in the 1960s. Today, specialization training in veterinary medicine is carried out in 41 disciplines in 22 specialization institutions under the guidance of the American Board of Veterinary Specialties (ABVS) in the USA (9, 18). In Europe, it is conducted in 27 specialization institutions with more than 38 disciplines under the guidance of the European Board of Veterinary Specialization (EBVS) (18, 19, 22). In these two systems, the average training periods for specialization programs, which are organ, species or discipline-oriented, are three years (maximum six years). In the new system that is envisaged to be implemented in Türkiye, there are 26 specialization areas, each of which has 4-year training period, and these areas are not the same as the areas and branches in Europe and in the USA. This incompatibility between the areas and disciplines brings to mind the question of how a veterinarian trained abroad in a specialization discipline that has no equivalence in Türkiye, can get diploma equivalence. Similarly, it is not known whether this incompatibility will pose a problem for Turkish veterinary medicine, which is trying to catch up with the European Union standards in the field of veterinary medicine.

Finally, despite the completion of the three-year transition period envisaged for the initiation of training from the date of publication of the new Regulation, specialization training cannot be started yet. Considering the lack of specialists in the field of veterinary medicine in country that have emerged in nearly 40 years, this is also a problem.

In conclusion, specialization training in the field of veterinary medicine in Türkiye was carried out within a planned and programmed system in accordance with the regulations issued from 1942 to the 1980s. With the reorganization of the Ministry of Agriculture and the transformations in higher education in the 1980s, the General Directorate of Veterinary Affairs was abolished, the Specialization High School was closed and specialization training in veterinary medicine was terminated. Thus, specialists in this field could not be trained for about 40 years. In 2018, the new Regulation for specialization training was put into effect, however, although the three-year transition period for the start of training has expired, the specialization training has not yet started. Therefore, the lack of enough number of specialists in this field is still an ongoing problem. The issues in the new Regulation regarding the organization, execution and areas and disciplines of specialization training do not exactly coincide with international practices. There is no doubt that specialization training in the field of veterinary medicine in Türkiye should be carried out in line with national requirements; but it should also be of universal standards at the same time.

Acknowledgements

The preliminary researches of this topic were carried out by Assist. Prof. Dr. Özgül Küçükaslan and Prof. Dr. R. Tamay Başağaç Gül and presented with a poster presentation at the 32nd World Veterinary Congress held in İstanbul on September 13-17, 2015 (Abstract Book p. 515). This research – on the other hand- was conducted with three authors. Only some parts of the Abstract overlaps with the poster presentation. Results are completely original and are presented for the first time in this article. The authors would like to thank Mustafa Mercan, the Ph.D. student of the Department of Veterinary History and Deontology, Samsun Ondokuz Mayıs University, for his kind helps in accessing all relevant legislation.

Financial Support

This research received no grant from any funding agency/sector.

Conflict of Interest

The authors report no conflicts of interest. The authors alone are responsible for the content and writing of paper.

Author Contributions

RTBG and ÖK conceived the ideas of the study. ÖK prepared the preliminary research. First hand sources were

¹⁸ Official Newspaper, Nr: 29690, April 20, 2016.

found by ÖK and NY. The draft text was written by ÖK. The final text was written and translated to English by RTBG. The tables were prepared by RTBG and NY. References were inserted into the text and the list of References by NY. All authors have checked and approved the final version of the article. As the PhD tutor of the first and second authors and a senior academician, RTBG preferred to be the third author of the manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting this study's findings are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Ethical Statement

This study does not present any ethical concerns.

References

- Anonymous** (1928): Askerî Baytar Tatbikat Mektebi ve Hastanesi beş senelik mesaisi. Askerî Tıbbiye Matbaası, 4-12, İstanbul.
- Anonymous** (1945): T.C. M.S.B. Veteriner Bakteriyoloji ve Serum Aşı Evi 23 yıllık çalışmaları. Y.Z.E. Basımevi, Ankara.
- Anonymous** (1996): *Veteriner Hekimliği Uzmanlık Yönetmeliği'ne yürütmeyi durdurma kararı*. Vet Hek Der Derg, **67**, 4-5.
- Anonymous** (1997): *Uzmanlık yönetmeliğimiz üzerine danıştay kararı*. Vet Hek Der Derg, **68**, 37-39.
- Anonymous** (1998): 1. Türk Veteriner Hekimliği Kurultayı Sonuç Raporu. Ankara.
- Anonymous** (2015): Veteriner hekimlikte uzmanlık yönetmelik taslağı görüşe açıldı. Available at <https://tvhb.org.tr/2015/07/01/veteriner-hekimlikte-uzmanlik-yonetmelik-taslagi-goruse-acildi/>. (Accessed October 10, 2021).
- Anonymous** (2021): Veteriner hekimlikte uzmanlık yönetmelik taslağı görüşe açıldı. Available at <http://www.izmir-vho.org/duyuru-234-veteriner-hekimlikte-uzmanlik-yonetmelik-taslagi-goruse-acildi.html>. (Accessed October 13, 2021).
- Anonymous** (2021): Veteriner hekimlikte uzmanlik belgesi verilmesi. Available at <https://www.tarimorman.gov.tr/Duyuru/1258/Veteriner-Hekimlikte-Uzmanlik-Belgesi-Verilmesi>. (Accessed October 18, 2021).
- AVMA** (2021): Veterinary Specialties. Available at <https://www.avma.org/education/veterinaryspecialties>. (Accessed October 13, 2021).
- Başagaç RT** (2001): Türkiye'de iki dünya savaşı arasında veteriner hekimliği hizmetleri ve hayvancılık politikaları üzerinde araştırmalar. Doktora Tezi. Ankara Üniversitesi Sağlık Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Ankara.
- Başagaç RT** (2007): Tarihçe. Available at <http://sagbilens.ankara.edu.tr/tarihce/>. (Accessed October 13, 2021).
- Başagaç Gül RT** (2007): *Türkiye'de Tarım Bakanlığı bünyesinde kamu veteriner hekimliği örgütlenmesinin dönüştürülmesi*. Vet Hek Der Derg, **78**, 58-61.
- Başagaç Gül RT, Özkul T, Akçay A, et al** (2010): *Türkiye'de veteriner hekimliği alanında lisansüstü eğitim*. Ankara Univ Vet Fak Derg, **57**, 19-24.
- Dinçer F** (1969): Türk askeri veteriner hekimliği öğretimi, teşkilatı ve Askeri Veteriner Akademisi tarihçesi. Ankara Üniversitesi Veteriner Fakültesi, Ankara.
- Dinçer F** (1980): *Türkiye'de askeri veteriner hekimlik tarihi üzerinde araştırmalar III. Bölüm*. Ankara Univ Vet Fak Derg, **27**, 294-321.
- Dinçer F** (1983): Veteriner Fakültesi. In, Dinçer F (Ed): Ziraat-Veteriner-Orman Fakültelerinin Yüksek Ziraat Enstitüsü bünyesinde kuruluşlarının 50'nci Yılı 1933-1983. Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, Ankara.
- Dinçer F** (1999): Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin 75. yılında veteriner hekimliğinin bilimsel bilançosu. In, Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin 75. Yılında Bilim "Bilanço 1923-1998" Ulusal Toplantısı I. Kitap, I. Cilt, TÜBİTAK Matbaası, Ankara, 335-368.
- EBVS** (2021): About European Board of Veterinary Specialisation, Available at <https://ebvs.eu/about>. (Accessed October 13, 2021).
- EBVS** (2021): Policies & Procedures of the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation. Version 3 (Approved at and includes votes of the April 2021 GA), 2021.
- Erdem AR** (2012): *Bilim İnsanı Yetiştirmede Araştırma Eğitimi. Research Education in Training of Scientists*. Yükseköğretim ve Bilim Dergisi, **2**, 166-175.
- Erk N, Dinçer F** (1970): Türkiye'de veteriner hekimlik öğretimi ve Ankara Üniversitesi Veteriner Fakültesi tarihi. Ankara Üniversitesi Veteriner Fakültesi Yayınları. Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, Ankara.
- Lumeij JT, Herrtage ME** (2006): *Veterinary Specialization in Europe*. JVME, **33**, 176-179.
- Melikoğlu B, Osmanağaoglu Ş** (2011): *Baytar Ameliyat Hastanesi'nden Askeri Tatbikat-ı Baytariye Mektebi'ne uzanan tarihsel gelişim süreci*. Türk Veteriner Hekimleri Birliği Dergisi, **11**, 109-117.
- Melikoğlu BG** (2019): *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Avrupa'ya gönderilen veteriner hekimliği öğrencileri*. Ankara Univ Vet Fak Derg, **66**, 131-139.
- YÖK** (2021): Lisansüstü eğitim öğretim yönetmeliği. Available at <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuat?MevzuatNo=21510&MevzuatTur=7&MevzuatTertip=5>. (Accessed October 10, 2021).

Publisher's Note

All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers. Any product that may be evaluated in this article, or claim that may be made by its manufacturer, is not guaranteed or endorsed by the publisher.