

EUBS 2010













36th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN UNDERWATER AND BAROMEDICAL SOCIETY

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON DIVING AND HYPERBARIC MEDICINE

14-18 September 2010
Istanbul, TURKEY

Abstract and Conference Book

EUBS

European Underwater and Baromedical Society

OP-48

THE PROFILE OF TURKISH FEMALE DIVERS

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Interest in recreational SCUBA diving has been growing among women in the last decades but research about women and diving is very few if any. Ten years ago we had conducted a study that aimed to establish the characteristics of Turkish female divers but since then not many studies have been done neither locally nor globally. Therefore, we prepared a web based research that intends to reveal the present profile of Turkish female divers and how it changed in ten years. An 80 question- survey that takes about 20 minutes to complete was distributed to mail lists of all diving groups and diving web sites in Turkey. The questions were looking into demographical features of female divers, their diving histories and habits, any possible medical problems related to diving and relations with other divers or buddies of opposite sex. (In addition, there was a part with questions only for trainers. The data was collected in a special database and studied with a statistics program.) A similar survey for male divers was also prepared for comparison and distributed in the same manner.
303 female, 363 male divers completed the survey. The average age of female divers was close to the average in the previous study and less than males' (31, 98±7, 92 years). They were mostly postgraduates. Nine out of ten stated they never took risks. However, the results showed that 41% performed dives that required decompression and half of these people's dives were always deco dives. The average maximum depth was 39, 88±14, 31 meters and one third of all female divers went under 42 meters. The survey also revealed some interesting social findings. One third of female divers and one fifth of male divers met their partners/ spouses by dint of diving. One out of four women, whose partner was a diver before, started diving by influence of their partners.
With this survey we were able to carve out the general profile for Turkish female divers, but still we are missing a broader view of the (female) diver population. So, we hope to spread our survey to be able to shape this.

Keywords: scuba diving, woman divers

This work was supported by scientific research projects coordination unit of istanbul university. Project number: 4761.