

EU VP Schinas: We must see how compatible Turkey's EU accession prospects are with certain actions, such as Hagia Sophia



The European Commission Vice-President for Promoting the European Way of Life, Margaritis Schinas, this week flatly rejected allegations by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who two days earlier, claimed that Turkey's exclusion from the Union's "safe list" for Covid-19 travel was politically-motivated.

Speaking during a conference in the western port city of Patras on Thursday, Schinas said the decision to exclude Turkey was made on strictly epidemiological criteria – a day after Turkey's total coronavirus cases rose above 200,000.

Schinas, who hails from northern Greece, also commented directly on the prospect of the Turkish government reconverting the Hagia Sophia into a mosque, a prospect that has generated reactions and opposition throughout the world.

Among others, he Schinas said it was important to maintain a pro-accession

prospect for Turkey, while examining how compatible this prospect is with certain actions by Ankara, such as illegal hydrocarbon exploration and threats to reconvert the Hagia Sophia into a mosque.