

## **Patriarchate delegation to meet with PM, archbishop on church-state relations**



A delegation representing the Istanbul-based Ecumenical Patriarchate will arrive in Athens this week to meet with Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and Greek Archbishop Ieronymos to discuss the government's proposed changes to church-state relations.

The proposal to remove clerics from the state payroll – and to pay them instead via an annual state subsidy to be managed by the Church – was rejected in November by the Holy Synod. The Ecumenical Patriarchate, which has jurisdiction over the churches of Crete and the Dodecanese, has also opposed the proposal.

The exact day of the visit was not announced but it will coincide with the presentation of a draft bill on church-state relations. The move by the Patriarchate to send a delegation was also seen in Athens as an expression of dismay toward Education Minister Costas Gavroglou, whom it accuses of failing to provide timely updates on developments.

(Source: APOSTOLOS LAKASAS / ekathimerini)