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Govt bill to merge four tertiary-level supreme ecclesiastical academies in Greece into two



A majority of deputies in Greece's Parliament on Thursday voted in favor of a draft bill tabled by the education and religious affairs ministry, which, among others, merges the four tertiary-level supreme ecclesiastical academies in the country into two. The vote came despite stepped up opposition by several hierarchs of the Church of Greece, academics, graduates of the academies and current students. Additionally, members of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Greece's permanent Holy Synod had sent the relevant minister a list of 14 proposed revisions to articles in the draft bill, primarily aimed at preserving the clerical studies program at the Thessaloniki academy, something which was not accepted by the government.

Specifically, the academies outside Ioannina, at the Vellas township, and Thessaloniki will be absorbed by the two remaining schools, in Athens and on the island of Crete, respectively – with the measure to take effect in the 2022-2023 academic year.