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Deliberations on religious neutrality and the clerics payroll regime



Deliberations are ongoing within the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Greece, in society and within the government, as the latter continues to insist on revisions to the constitution in order to promote what it calls – as well as a change in the payroll regime of the clerics in the country.

A second vote in Parliament over revising Article 3 of Greece's constitution, in fact, comes on Thursday.

Orthodox clergymen are adamantly against a change in their payroll regime, and are pressuring the Church's hierarchs to categorically resist any attempts by the government to change the status quo.

The Church of Greece's Holy Synod is also expected to broach the sensitive issue of autocephaly granted to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Finally, Church hierarchs must choose three new Metropolitans for a same number of Metropolises, a process that will not go as smoothly as initially believed.

According to information gathered by the Orthodoxia news agency, the Greek prime minister is also being advised to continue the dialogue, keeping in mind that 2019 will witness no less than three elections in the country, including a general election.

Two “red lines”, however, are reportedly holding up dialogue, one by the Church and the other by the government.

The Church will not relent on the issue of clergymen’s payroll regime, while the Tsipras government has reportedly stated, in writing, that all provisions of a draft agreement should be approved, otherwise the entire agreement will be null.