

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3497/07
by Georgios Karatzaferis (IND/DEM)
to the Commission

Subject: Turkey and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

Ecumenical Patriarchate Bartholomew is the recognised religious leader of Orthodox Christians worldwide, and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople is the seat of the Orthodox Church. Ecumenical Patriarchate Bartholomew is Pope Benedict's partner in dialogue, and the dialogue between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches takes place on the initiative of their respective Primates. Although all this is self-evident and well-known, Turkey appears unwilling to accept it: it refuses to recognise the ecumenical standing of the Patriarchate, while insisting on EU accession.

How does the Commission view this fresh provocation? Will Turkey be able accede to the EU without having fully and unconditionally recognised the legal personality of the Patriarchate and without having returned to it the property it has illegally seized?