

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003265/25
to the Commission
Yannis Maniatis (S&D)
(20 August 2025)**

Subject: Ensuring transparency, meritocracy and effective use of European research resources in Greece

In Greece, EUR 300 million from the Recovery and Resilience Fund (RRF) were planned for allocation to three programmes:

- ‘Universities of Excellence’, for top-level university equipment and infrastructure, where, however, fragmentation into small projects of EUR 30-40 000 essentially led to waste.
- ‘Research Excellence Partnerships’, for partnerships between universities and businesses, where, however, evaluation of the proposals was carried out in the absence of evaluation criteria.
- ‘Trust Your Stars’, for supporting young researchers and implementing high-level research programmes, where over 1 000 proposals were evaluated in just two months by a committee of just 12 experts, who also evaluated proposals outside their area of expertise, with the obvious use of artificial intelligence tools, and delays so long that funding deadlines were missed.

On the contrary, the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (HFRI), as a reliable and accepted expert mechanism, with experience in managing research projects and proven know-how, was not utilised at all.

Already 52 university professors and researchers, in a letter to the Prime Minister, are requesting the revocation of the evaluation results and the establishment of new independent re-evaluation committees with transparent procedures and expert specialists.

In view of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of the above scandalous and humiliating conditions for knowledge-based research?
2. How are such conditions assessed on the basis of best practice established by strategies, directives and frameworks promoted by the EU?
3. What interventions are envisaged in similar cases?

Submitted: 20.8.2025

**Answer given by Mr Dombrovskis on behalf of the European Commission
(17 October 2025)**

The projects relate to measure 16289: ‘Strategy for Excellence in Universities & Innovation’ of Greece’s Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) ⁽¹⁾. Following Greece’s request to modify its RRP, the project ‘Trust Your Stars’ was removed from the RRP as approved by the Council on 17 July 2025.

The Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) ⁽²⁾ is a performance-based instrument. The only condition for RRF payments to Member States is the satisfactory fulfilment of milestones and targets.

Pursuant to Article 22 of Regulation (EU) 2021/241, Member States are primarily responsible for the protection of the financial interests of the EU under the RRF. They must put in place an effective and efficient internal control system and ensure that the use of EU funds complies with EU and national rules.

For each payment request, national authorities must submit a management declaration that the funds were used for their intended purpose and that the control systems give the necessary assurances that the funds were managed in accordance with all applicable rules. In Greece’s RRP’s management and control framework, the implementing bodies (such as ministries or other public authorities) are responsible for the implementation of RRP measures, while ensuring compliance with EU and national rules.

⁽¹⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility/country-pages/greeces-recovery-and-resilience-plan_en.

⁽²⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility_en.

Based on Greece's information, for measure 16289, the Commission has positively assessed the first milestone (M147), which required issuing approval decisions for certain projects. The second and final milestone (M150) that concerns the completion of the projects will be assessed by the Commission during the RRP's ninth payment request.
