

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002043/26
to the Commission
Nikolas Farantouris (S&D)
(18 May 2026)**

Subject: Removal of the ‘Trust your Stars’ project from the Recovery and Resilience Fund

In 2022, the project ‘Trust your Stars’, with a total budget of EUR 80.6 million, was included in the Greek recovery and resilience plan. The project was presented as a flagship programme to support young researchers, with the aim of harnessing existing scientific potential and implementing research projects with a high impact on the academic community, the economy and society, showcasing Greece’s universities as hubs of excellence and innovation ⁽¹⁾. However, despite the submission of 1 241 proposals by researchers and research teams ⁽²⁾ and amid multiple complaints from the academic community about significant delays ⁽³⁾, on 28 April 2026 the decision for the project’s inclusion in the Recovery and Resilience Fund was revoked, due to a revision of the Greek recovery and resilience plan and the removal thereof of the project in question ⁽⁴⁾.

Given that the decision to remove the project leaves hundreds of researchers and research groups in the lurch and constitutes an admission of political and administrative failure in the management of public and European research funds, can the Commission say:

1. How did the Greek Government justify the removal of this project, which entailed funding of vital importance for the survival of high-level research university teams?
2. To which projects will the funds that had been earmarked for the ‘Trust your Stars’ project be channelled?
3. How could it help researchers who have been left in the lurch following the decision for the project’s removal?

Submitted: 18.5.2026

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto on behalf of the European Commission
(13 July 2026)**

The project relates to measure 16289: ‘Strategy for Excellence in Universities & Innovation’ of Greece’s Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP).

Following Greece’s request to revise its RRP, the project ‘Trust Your Stars’ was removed from the RRP as approved by the Council on 17 July 2025 ⁽¹⁾.

In the supporting evidence justifying the amendment, the Greek authorities indicated that, due to the high number of applications, the submitted proposals were still at the time under evaluation by external evaluators. The authorities concluded that the project was no longer achievable under the RRP considering the limited time available for implementation.

The overall modifications of measure 16289 included the removal of three projects (‘Visiting Professors/Researchers’; ‘Industrial PhDs’; ‘Trust Your Stars’) and the addition of a new project (‘Postgraduate Study Programs with Foreign Universities’) ⁽²⁾. As a result, the total estimated cost for measure 16289 was reduced.

Finally, the decision for the continuation and financing of projects removed from the RRP lies exclusively with the Greek authorities. The Commission is not responsible for financing decisions of this tenure.

¹ <https://greece20.gov.gr/empistosyni-sta-asteria-mas-enarxi-ypovolis-protaseon/>

² https://www.tovima.gr/2026/05/15/politics/i-ereyna-plirose-pali-ta-spasmena-trust-your-stars-i-trust-nobody/#goog_rewarded

³ <https://www.esos.gr/arhra/98652/exodiko-pros-ypoyrgeio-paideias-gia-programma-empistosyni-sta-asteria-mas-paramenei>

⁴ <https://diavgeia.gov.gr/doc/%CE%A1%CE%9819%CE%97-%CE%950%CE%9D?inline=true>

⁽¹⁾ ST 11101/25 INIT; ST 11101/25 ADD1.

⁽²⁾ https://reforms-investments.ec.europa.eu/recovery-and-resilience-facility-1/country-pages/greeces-recovery-and-resilience-plan_en#documents.