

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002947/26
to the Commission
Yannis Maniatis (S&D)
(15 July 2026)**

Subject: Underfunding of research and excellence in Greece

According to reports ⁽¹⁾ ⁽²⁾, the Greek State Scholarships Foundation (IKY) has been subject to severe budget cuts, with its resources dwindling from EUR 21.5 million to a mere EUR 3.5 million. Despite longstanding support from European and national funds, significant difficulties have been reported in funding new scholarship programmes, as well as post-doctoral research. Greek academic institutions have expressed strong concerns about this situation, which undermines efforts to stem the brain drain and severely limits opportunities for young researchers.

Bearing in mind that the EU has made it a strategic priority to strengthen the European Research Area (ERA), attract and retain scientists, reduce regional disparities in research and strengthen competitiveness through the production and development of knowledge and innovation, can the Commission answer the following:

1. How does it assess the impact of the government's policy choices regarding the IKY on achieving the objectives of the ERA, research excellence and on attracting and retaining scientists in the EU?
2. Does it believe that Greece is making sufficient use of the possibilities offered by EU programmes and financial instruments to support scholarships, post-doctoral research and young researchers?
3. Does it intend to examine, in the context of the European Semester, whether Greece's investment in the human capital of research and innovation is in line with the EU's priorities and needs?

Submitted: 15.7.2026

**Answer given by Ms Zaharieva on behalf of the European Commission
(28 September 2026)**

While national resources and scholarship schemes are a Member State competence, sustained investment in doctoral and postdoctoral opportunities is key to research excellence and attracting and retaining talent ⁽¹⁾.

Recent European Research Area (ERA) monitoring reports mention several measures in Greece to support doctoral and postdoctoral researchers and industrial doctorates, aimed at countering brain drain and improving career prospects, but they also indicate that inward mobility remains a challenge ⁽²⁾.

Greece has gradually increased its participation in EU research and innovation programmes, reaching high levels under the current Horizon Europe Widening instruments, especially those supporting research talent at all career stages ⁽³⁾.

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) have also provided investment opportunities for boosting mainly applied research excellence and talent ⁽⁴⁾, and Greece has benefited from the Horizon Policy Support Facility.

Greece has also benefited from the support of the Knowledge and Innovation Communities of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology.

The European Semester consistently analyses research talent in the context of scientific performance in Greece. Although public research and development spending grew over the long term, it has stagnated, falling slightly below the EU average in 2024, showing weak coordination, high administrative burdens and slow procedures, which continue to hold back research activity and talent retention.

¹ <https://www.in.gr/2026/06/23/greece/i-epistimoniki-ereyna-ston-pago-oi-ereynites-stin-endeia-pagomenes-oi-ypotrofies-tou-iky>.

² https://www.alfavita.gr/ekpaideysi/551000_iky-dramatiki-meiosi-kondylion-kai-pagoma-stis-metadidaktorikes-ypotrofies.

⁽¹⁾ This aligns with the Choose Europe for Science initiative's goal of attracting and retaining research talent through sustainable careers, mobility, infrastructure access and stable funding: https://commission.europa.eu/topics/research-and-innovation/choose-europe_en.

⁽²⁾ See ERA Country Report 2023 (Greece, p. 3) identifying attracting and retaining researchers and talent as a major challenge and 2024 (Greece, pp. 6, 8 and 17) referring to doctoral scholarships and postdoctoral funding provided by the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation, industrial doctorates financed under the Recovery and Resilience Plan, and funding schemes intended to support a new generation of researchers and existing research careers. It also finds that the circulation of talent from abroad remains below the EU average and that the gap is widening: <https://european-research-area.ec.europa.eu/documents/country-report-greece>.

⁽³⁾ Further information and figures for Greece can be found on the Horizon Dashboard: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/horizon-dashboard>.

⁽⁴⁾ For Greece: Under the ERDF for the period 2021-2027, the allocation for applied research and innovation investments amounts to EUR 792.6 million (EU contribution) for projects relevant to the national and regional Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3) to foster knowledge-based growth in EU regions and countries, and EUR 201 million (EU contribution) for projects relevant to Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform, as well as EUR 1.010 billion under the RRF.

The recommendation to Greece ⁽⁶⁾ is to reduce the fragmentation of research policy management and funding, which would also positively impact talent availability.

⁽⁶⁾ See European Semester Country Specific Recommendation for Greece from spring package and adopted country-specific recommendations (10 July 2026): https://reforms-investments.ec.europa.eu/document/download/02adf981-3c59-4a26-8c82-b66e21d52087_en?filename=EL-COM_2026_208_1_EN_ACT_part1_v4.pdf and <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2026/07/10/european-semester-2026-council-adopts-country-specific-recommendations/>.