

DECLARATION OF INTENT
BETWEEN THE REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE STATES AND REGIONS IN
THE THREE-BORDER REGION
BELGIUM-GERMANY-NETHERLANDS

26. September 2023

In Brussels

In light of unlocking the potential for knowledge advancement, technological progress through scientific research and development in the field of gravitational waves, and to increase societal impact;

A shared interest in the establishment of the Einstein Telescope (ET), an advanced gravitational wave observatory, to enhance our understanding of the universe on the basis of collaboration, cooperation, and joint efforts,

The Representatives of the states and regions of the three-border-region Belgium-Germany-Netherlands are committed to fostering scientific cooperation, promoting technological innovation, and driving economic development within the three-border region

THE FOLLOWING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATES AND REGIONS IN THE THREE-BORDER REGION

The Federal Government of Belgium
The Government of Flanders
The Government of Wallonia
The Government of the French Speaking Community
The Government of the German Speaking Community
The Government of the Netherlands
The Province of Limburg of the Netherlands
The Government of North Rhine-Westphalia

Hereafter referred to as “the Participants”,

HAVE COME TO THE FOLLOWING UNDERSTANDING.

Section 1 PURPOSE

This Declaration of Intent (DoI) aims to establish a framework for collaboration among the Participants on the preparation and submission of the proposal for building the ET in the three-border region Belgium-Germany-Netherlands, hereafter referred to as the Three-Border Region Einstein Telescope Project (the Project).

This region is usually referred to as the 'Euregio Meuse-Rhine' (EMR). Whenever 'EMR' is used in this DoI, it only refers to this geographical location, without any reference to legal or other dimensions that may otherwise be associated with it.

The purpose of the collaboration framework is.

- 1° To prepare the establishment of a consortium;
- 2° To outline the engagement and responsibilities of each Participant within the consortium to be,
- 3° To promote the development of research and innovation in the field of gravitational wave detection and related technologies,
- 4° To foster regional and international cooperation to economic and social growth and indicate economic opportunities and leverage complementary expertise within the participating countries in the three-border region.

Section 2 SCOPE OF COOPERATION

The Participants will encourage cooperation in the following fields:

- 1° General Policies: Pursue joint thinking and exchanges on regional, national, and international level,
- 2° Information sharing. The Participants will actively take part and share in all transparency all information necessary for the progress of the activities in the Project, which shared information will be kept confidential by the other Participant if so requested by the Participant who shared the information;
- 3° All Participants will strive to involve their respective stakeholders of interest in the implementation of the Project,

and in particular on

1° Science and Innovation Policy Explore possibilities to foster scientific research and economic innovation in the field of gravitational wave detection and complementary fields, enhance institutional collaboration, and raise public awareness through science communication;

2° Economy The Participants will indicate and promote the socio-economic benefits of the project for the three-border region and Europe

Section 3 GOVERNANCE AND DECISION-MAKING

§1 The Participants agree on the establishment and composition of the governance structure for the Project, comprising of a high-level meeting composed of ministers competent for science policy and other high level representatives of the Participants, such as provincial executives (the ET-Ministerial meeting) and a Task Force (TF) at working level, consisting of representatives of the Participants and supported by the ET-EMR Project Office (the Project Office)

§2 The ET-Ministerial meetings will act as the highest level within the Project to:

- provide strategic direction to the TF and the Project Office;
- monitor and discuss activities such as, but not limited to, the ones related to the preparation of the proposal for building the ET in the three-border region,
- consider relevant international developments to the Project.

The attending ministers and other high-level representatives comprising the ET-Ministerial meetings represent and inform their respective governments of the engagements in this DoI.

§3 The Task Force will discuss the progress and actions and decide on a working agenda for the following tasks:

- a) Collection and coordination of relevant information and dissemination thereof between members of the Task Force and to other interested parties;
- b) Coordination with scientific experts and existing committees involved in the Einstein Telescope,

- c) Preparation of the bid book, in consultation with scientists and existing committees concerned with this question, including the Project Office,
- d) Preparation of a host consortium which will be established at a later stage to coordinate the commitment of the states and regions involved,
- e) Preparation and follow-up of the ET-Ministerial meetings and any other relevant meetings at the ministerial level;
- f) Work out a plan and roadmap covering a period as long as deemed necessary, indicating priorities, division of tasks and milestones;
- g) Prepare and coordinate the communication related to the Project

The Task Force may decide to establish expert committees to advise the Task Force on the tasks set out above.

The states, regions and entities represented in the Task Force may, unilaterally or together, create and finance positions with the aim to assist in the implementation of these tasks.

§4 The ET-EMR Project Office will oversee the day-to-day operation related to the preparation of the proposal of the ET Project, and is tasked to:

- provide the secretarial function for the TF,
- assume a coordinating position where it comes to site-specific scientific and technical feasibility studies, leading towards the bidbook,
- assume to coordinate communication with regards to the scientific and technical feasibility of the EMR site candidature,
- coordinate the general communication activities in close contact with the Participants

Section 4: DECLARATION ARRANGEMENTS

§1 This Declaration of Intent is a statement of the engagement of all Participants and does not impose any binding commitments in this phase of the ET Project

§2 This Declaration of Intent will come into effect upon signature.

§3 In a coherent and strong manner, Participants will take all appropriate efforts, political and diplomatic, at the highest level to advance and promote the success of the Project

§4 The Participants commit themselves to making their best efforts to secure funding for the ET project through regional, national, European, and international sources.

Section 5: SIGNING

The undersigned representatives of the participating States and regions in the three-border region acknowledge their agreement to this Declaration of Intent.

Signed in Brussels, September 26th 2023.

For the Federal Government of Belgium

Thomas Dermine,
*State Secretary in charge of Science
Policy*

A blue ink signature consisting of a large 'D' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

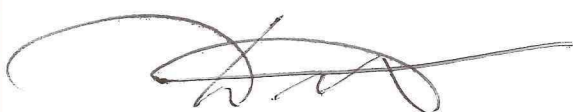
For the Government of Flanders

Jo Brouns,
Minister of Science and Innovation

A blue ink signature starting with a large 'J' and ending with a horizontal line.

For the Government of the Netherlands

Robbert Dijkgraaf,
*Minister of Education, Culture and
Science*

A blue ink signature with a large, stylized 'R' and several loops.

For the Province of Limburg of the
Netherlands

Stephan Satijn,
*Regional Minister for Economy, Finance,
Business Operations and Public Affairs*

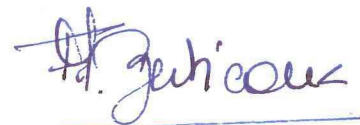
A blue ink signature with a large 'S' and several loops.

For the Government of Wallonia

For the Government of the French
Speaking Community

Willy Borsus,
Minister of Research and Innovation

Françoise Bertieaux,
Minister of Scientific Research

A stylized, horizontal signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long trailing line.A signature in blue ink, starting with a large 'F' and followed by the name 'Bertieaux' in a cursive script.

For the Government of the German Speaking Community

Oliver Paasch,
Minister-President

A signature in blue ink, featuring a large, stylized 'O' and 'P' followed by the name 'Paasch' in a cursive script.

For the Government of North Rhine-Westphalia

Gonca Türkeli-Dehnert,
*State Secretary in the Ministry
of Culture and Science*

A signature in blue ink, starting with a large 'G' and followed by the name 'Türkeli-Dehnert' in a cursive script.

**Addendum to the “Declaration of
Intent between the Representatives of
the states and regions in the three-
border region Belgium-Germany-
Netherlands”**

30 May 2024

In Eupen

Introduction

In the spirit of the “Declaration of Intent between the representatives of the states and regions in the three-border region Belgium-Germany-Netherlands” signed on 26 September 2023 for the preparation of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine (EMR) bid for the Einstein Telescope (ET), the collaboration between states and regions in the three-border region Belgium-Germany-Netherlands has intensified and financial contributions from different participants are taking shape.

To manage these financial contributions, a Memorandum of Understanding will be drawn up between the organisations from the states and regions which provide funding and Nikhef (Dutch National Institute for Subatomic Physics) which is both joint ET-EMR fund administrator and legal entity for the ET-EMR Project Office.

At the same time, the representatives of the states and regions in the three-border region Belgium-Germany-Netherlands intending to strengthen coordination and governance arrangements for the EMR bid in terms of distribution of responsibilities and decision-making have come to the following understanding:

1. Purpose

The purpose of the present addendum to the “Declaration of Intent between the representatives of the states and regions in the three-border region Belgium-Germany-Netherlands” is to optimise the coordination and governance of the partnership responsible for preparing the EMR bid by:

- clarifying the responsibilities and the working relationship of the Task Force and the ET-EMR Project Office,
- establishing transparent and multilateral mechanisms for decision-making.

2. Distribution of responsibilities and decision-making

2.1. Plan, budget and bidbook preparation

The ET- EMR Project Office will oversee the day-to-day operation related to the preparation of the proposal of the ET project. It will prepare the plan and budget proposal for feasibility studies and will carry out their implementation. It will provide the Task Force with a quarterly progress report reflecting changes in costs, available funding, interim findings of the feasibility studies, etc. It will remain at the disposal of the Task Force for additional reporting requests.

Upon the availability of the required resources, the ET-EMR Project Office will support the Task Force in the necessary preparations of the bidbook and host consortium, by:

- Preparing one EMR framework for the bidbook (with the Einstein Telescope Organisation (ETO) and EMR experts);

- Leading the process management and writing the bidbook (with proposed suppliers);
- Including the EMR Research & Development agenda (of the cooperating research institutes in the EMR);
- Including the valorisation & impact agenda (of the Valorisation & Impact Expert Committee);
- Supporting the international partner strategy (of the Working Group);
- Supporting stakeholder management, communication and events (of the Working Group);
- Supporting governance, legal and finance proposals (together with the ETO and ET Preparatory Phase Project's Work Package 2 experts).

The Task Force supervises the work of the ET-EMR Project Office. It validates its plan and deliverables related to feasibility studies and bidbook. When doing so, it makes sure to stay aligned with decisions made by states and regions which provide funding in the framework of the above-mentioned Memorandum of Understanding.

The presentation of the proposals to the EMR Task Force highlights the rationale and impact of the main strategic and technical choices made the EMR Project Office during their development.

2.2. Funding

The states and regions represented in the Task Force update the ET-EMR Project Office of the amount of funding that is available to support its work.

In accordance with the validated plan (cf. supra), the ET-EMR Project Office keeps the Task Force informed about the allocation of funding for the activities in preparation of the bidbook.

A mechanism to monitor the funding will be set up between the organisations from the states and regions which provide funding and Nikhef as the joint ET-EMR fund administrator for the ET-EMR Project Office.

2.3. Validation mechanism within the Task Force

Proposals and deliverables of the ET-EMR Project Office will be validated by the Task Force.

3. Declaration arrangements

This Addendum to the "Declaration of Intent between the representatives of the states and regions in the three-border region Belgium-Germany-Netherlands" signed on 26 September 2023 is a statement of the involvement of all participants and does not impose any binding commitments in this phase of the ET-Project. This Addendum is not meant to constitute an international treaty or to create any rights or obligations under international law.

This Addendum to the "Declaration of Intent between the representatives of the states and regions in the three-border region Belgium-Germany-Netherlands" will come into effect upon signature. It may be amended at any time by mutual consent; amendments should be done in writing.

4. Signing

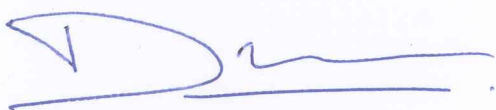
The undersigned representatives of the participating States and regions in the three-border region approve this Addendum to the "Declaration of Intent between the representatives of the states and regions in the three-border region Belgium-Germany-Netherlands".

Signed in Eupen on 30 May 2024 in English.

For the Federal Government of Belgium

Thomas Dermine

State Secretary in charge of Science Policy



For the Government of the Netherlands

Robbert Dijkgraaf

Minister of Education, Culture and Science



For the Government of Flanders

Jo Brouns

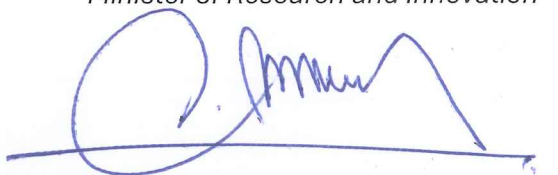
Minister of Science and Innovation



For the Government of Wallonia

Willy Borsus

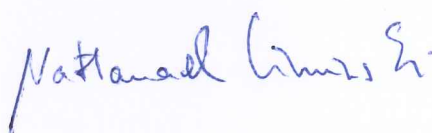
Minister of Research and Innovation



For the Government of North Rhine-Westphalia

Nathanael Liminski

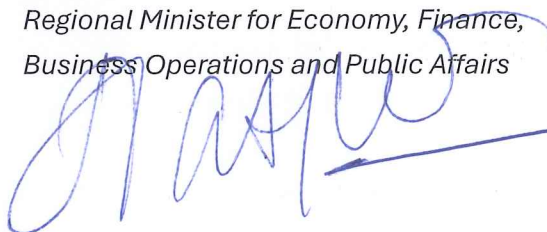
*Minister for Federal, European and International
Affairs and the Media*



For the Province of Limburg of the Netherlands

Stephan Satijn

*Regional Minister for Economy, Finance,
Business Operations and Public Affairs*



For the Government of the German Speaking
Community

Oliver Paasch

Minister-President

