

REN

Rural Expertise in the North



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Overview

- Main funding: EU Interreg IIIB, Northern Periphery Programme
- Duration: 2006 – 2007
- Budget: 600 000 €
- Aim: Exploitation of advanced technologies in rural areas
- Participants: Highlands and Islands area of Scotland, Northern Sweden and Northern Finland



Challenges in rural areas

- Rural area challenges in the field of advanced technologies:
 - Concentration to bigger cities
 - Need for innovative solutions to guarantee future growth
 - Small and fragmented innovation systems
 - Inadequate operating phase of innovation systems



New tools needed for development of
“knowledge based economy” in rural areas

Knowledge based economy

- Requires a functioning innovations system comprising of four nodes:
 - Science base (e.g. Universities)
 - Company base of innovative companies
 - Innovation infrastructure (e.g. incubation centres)
 - Business intermediaries (e.g. IP lawyers)
- Systematic and interactive linkages between nodes

Project objectives

- To create new, innovative management practices
- To develop new tools relevant for
 - Smaller communities
 - Activities in the fields of advanced technologies
- To combine the know-how and expertise of the participating regions
- To spread the knowledge about rural area possibilities

Project methods

- Creation, introduction and testing of new concrete tools, namely innovative instruments
- Combination of
 - The experiences of regions with similar challenges
 - The know-how of international experts
 - The latest research findings

Participants

- Northern Finland
 - Micropolis Ltd. www.micropolis.fi/english
- Highlands and Islands area of Scotland (UK)
 - Highlands and Islands Enterprise www.hie.co.uk
- Northern Sweden
 - Luleå University of Technology www.ltu.se/

Micropolis Ltd.

- Technology park in the community of Ii, Finland
 - Three microelectronics companies and 13 other organisations
 - Employs around 120 people
 - Founded 1997
 - Member of the Multipolis network
- Innovative instrument: Micropolis Spectrum design and testing centre
- More information: www.micropolis.fi



Micropolis Spectrum

- Design and testing centre for microelectronics companies
- Operation starting in 2007
- Services
 - Renting of laboratory and device time (e.g. microscope)
 - Testing and sample testing services (e.g. testing against specific standards)
 - Consulting and education services (e.g. test manager service)
- Part of TestLabNet, a network of test laboratories in Northern Finland

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)

- Economic development agency for the north of Scotland
- Innovative instrument: new tools for building of knowledge Economy
- More information: www.hie.co.uk



Knowledge Based Economy in Highlands and Islands Enterprise

- Usage of new tools for
 - Knowledge transfer from international research units to SMEs in remote areas
 - Support of SMEs in e.g. technology marketing skills

Luleå Technical University

- Division of Sound and Vibrations
- Innovative instrument: Car testing cluster in Arjeplog
- More information: www.ltu.se



Arjeplog car testing cluster

- Main partner: Arjeplog Testing Management, ATM AB
- Goals:
 - Attract companies to high-tech companies
 - Strengthen strategic partnerships with international partners
 - Catalyse car testing cluster to take next step
 - Sustain services and experts in the area
 - Expand knowledge based content in the car testing industry

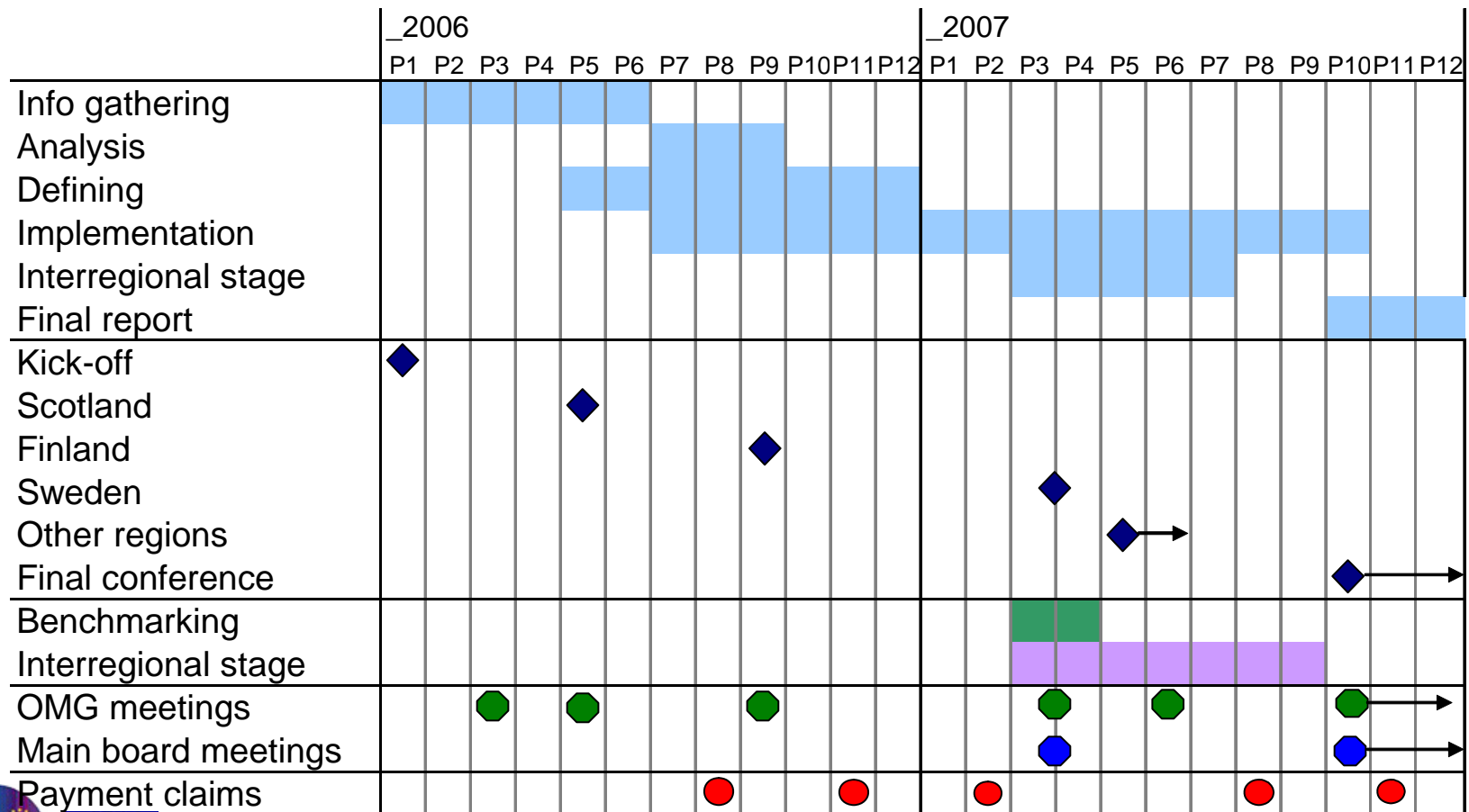
Funding

- EU Interreg III B Northern Periphery Programme
- National funding:
 - Finland: Ministry of Internal Affairs, Micropolis Ltd.
 - Sweden: Luleå University of Technology, Norrbotten County
 - Scotland: Highlands and Islands Enterprise

Project phases

- I. Information gathering
- II. Analysis
- III. Joint evaluation and brainstorming of interregional cooperation possibilities
- IV. Defining and planning of innovative instruments
- V. Implementation and testing of innovative instruments
- VI. Interregional benchmarking
- VII. Intensive interregional stage
- VIII. Recommendations for future actions

Time schedule



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