



ASSYSTEM



SINEQUANET Support Priorities for SMEs : Ensuring Unique Added Value

**Siemon Smid
Virginia Mulvihill**

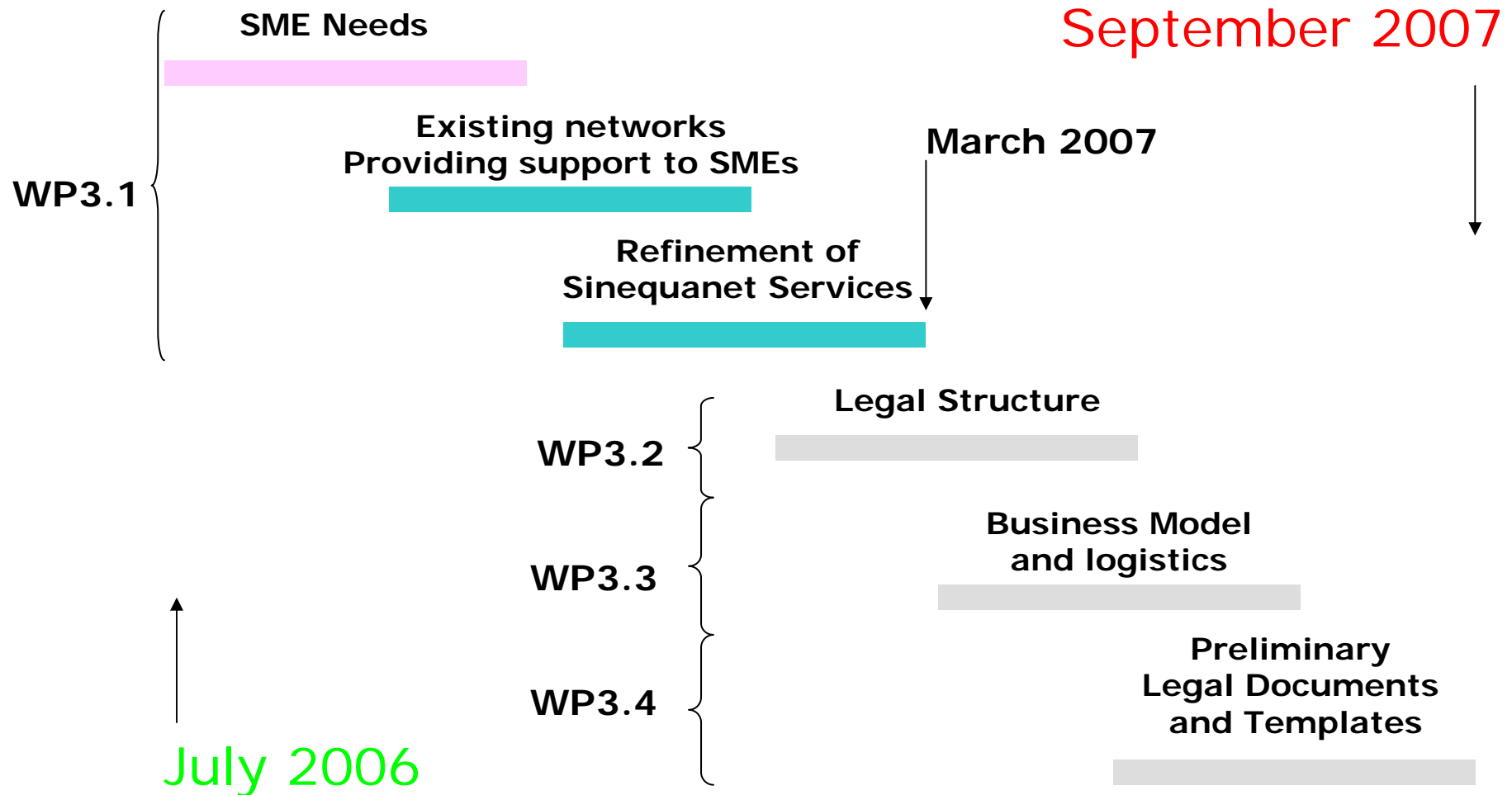
ASSYSTEM Group

ENGINEERING & INNOVATION CONSULTANCY

28 March 2007

- › Introduction
- › Service requirements
 - > Study objective
 - > Understanding of the requirements
- › Study approach
- › Review of existing services
 - > Overview of the sample
 - > SineQuaNet Focus and Cooperation
 - > Willingness to cooperate
 - > Services available in Europe
- › Identification of Services
 - > Main barriers
 - > Synthesis on existing services

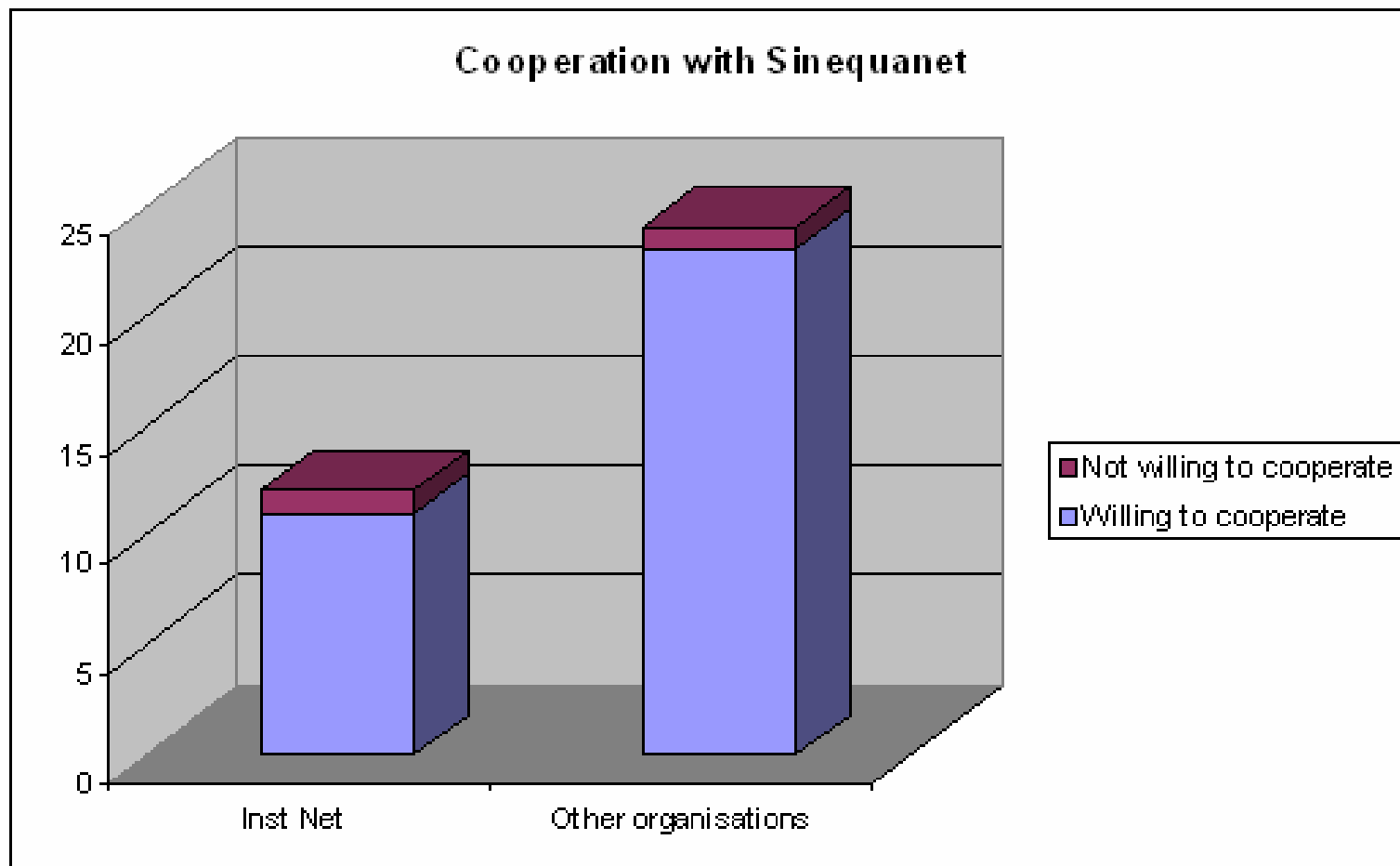
- › Part of SINEQUANET project WP3: Baseline study
- › Workpackage WP3.1 objectives
 - > Investigate services for SMEs offered by existing organisations and thereby to identify:
 - risk of duplication and areas for cooperation
 - service refinements
- › Understanding of the requirements
 - > SME: <250 people; <50 MEuro annual turnover
 - > Existing services a priori include all entities which provide engineering and technical services, training and services to SMEs and institutional entities supporting SME's.
 - > The core services to exclusively consider are: hands-on support, training and access to technical facilities.



Overview of the sample

Type of Organisation		Support provided in space areas			Services offered to SMEs								
		Satellite payload	Downstream services	Satellite ground stations	Engineering Support	Process Support	Access to Technical Facilities	Business support	IPR Support	Web site	News-letter	Internat. Co-operation	Other services
Private entities (9)	among which EU Net (2)	6	1	4	6	1	5	4	4	3	1	5	3
		0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	2	1	2	1
Public entities (18)	among which EU Net (9)	5	4	4	8	6	7	9	6	12	7	10	12
		1	1	0	1	1	0	5	3	4	2	4	4
Other entities (9)	among which EU Net (1)	2	2	1	3	0	3	7	4	5	5	3	6
		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0

- › Technical support within the scope of SineQuaNet:
 - > Technical consulting – Hands-on support, advise
 - > Training
 - > Access to Facilities
- › Technical support not within the scope of SineQuaNet but with linked interest:
 - > Certification
 - > Business development
 - > Mentoring
 - > Technology and patent transfer
- › Non technical support not within the scope of SineQuaNet but with linked interest:
 - > General support for SMEs
 - > Networking, and
 - > Financing.



Technical Consulting

- › There are many service providers for hands-on support:
 - > on an interim placement basis: e.g., AOES, ATOS-Origin, Serco, Rhea Group etc.
 - > on a secondment basis: e.g., Passerelle and CREATI
 - > on a short term consultancy basis: Enterprise Ireland (engineering support), NSC (process support), and (marginally) ONERA-France, ESA.
 - > possibly combined with business support: Innovation Norway; NPL-UK; TNO-NL
- › There are other technical consulting services, e.g., for certification, technology transfer, patent exploitation, etc.. But they are out of the scope of SINEQUANET intended services.

Training

- › There are several service providers for training:
 - > at least 6 institutes train towards specific ECSS standards
 - > Space Industry Skillnet, Ireland provide specific training for SMEs in Ireland (and possibly outside).
 - > ESA provides specific (free of charge) training for SMEs.

Access to Technical Facilities

- › There are many technical facilities providers
 - > > 74 potential sources of technical facilities identified through WP4 activities
 - > Mostly access facilitated for local customers
 - > ESA recently started the European Environmental Test Facilities Inventory (EETFI)

A review of the existing service providers limitations shows that they may not serve the SMEs to a sufficient extent due to several barriers, which are:

- › High cost of getting services
 - > Beside the high cost of technical expertise, fragmentation of offer and lack of 'standard procedures' make the search and the establishment of contract for services very time consuming and therefore costly.
- › Scarcity of offer
 - > In a context of scarcity of technical expertise available for services, SME have to compete with potentially more appreciated customers (based on their technical credibility, potential for future businesses, financial ability, etc...).
- › National, regional or thematic barriers
 - > Service based on institutional programme or network agreements are usually not accessible to all SMEs which may need it due e.g., to geographic or thematic restrictions.

Synthesis on existing services

- There is a place for an entity operating in the space sector with
 - > a strategic focus on support to SMEs and delivering engineering and technical support or training
- Added value is in overcoming the barriers identified, especially through:
 - > Establishing (or simplifying) procedures for searching service providers and for establishing contracts
 - > Networking the available resources
 - > Establishing links with other kind of services, especially:
 - funding for SMEs and
 - other engineering support organisations