The Steering Board of the new European Cloud Partnership (ECP) met for the first time in Brussels today, kicking-off a process where public authorities and industry work together to help building the EU Digital Single Market for cloud computing pursuant to the European Cloud Computing Strategy. Specifically, the ECP aims at leveraging the public sector's buying power to shape the growing and maturing market for cloud computing services. Chaired by Toomas Hendrik Ilves, President of Estonia, the board brings together tech Chief Executive Officers and government representatives with responsibility for IT procurement. The board will deliver strategic advice to Vice President Kroes (see annex for full list of members).

European Commission Vice-President Neelie Kroes said: "I need this top-level input so that all of Europe can see the full benefits of cloud computing, and quickly. President Ilves and all Board members are going to give no-nonsense, action-oriented advice to get the European Cloud Partnership moving."

Under the guidance of its Steering Board, the ECP will bring together public authorities and industry consortia to implement pre-commercial procurement actions for public sector cloud computing. The ECP will develop common cloud computing procurement requirements for use by Member States and public authorities throughout the EU.

Today the Steering Board discussed and decided on its 2013-2014 objectives (see its public statement). Most importantly, the board will work to raise public awareness and map out practical solutions to barriers to cloud computing adoption in the public sector whilst dispelling imaginary ones. It aims at making cloud readiness and adoption a political priority. In addition, the board has decided to support the Commission's work on actions related to cloud computing standards and certification schemes; and to identify cross-border and interoperable cloud pilot projects to be set in motion by 2014 in mission-critical areas of business and public life, such as eID, smart cities, eHealth, eEducation, research and digital content services, building on existing large scale pilots.

Background

This is one of the key actions of the European Cloud Computing Strategy adopted by the

European Commission earlier this year.

The main mission of the Steering Board is to provide strategic advice to the ECP and orientations for possible new ECP initiatives. In particular this could comprise reviewing and advising on implementation issues and providing recommendations for future implementation, uptake and research actions. Looking beyond the ECP, the board may also express views and recommendations on the range of other policies and actions put forward in the Cloud Computing Strategy.

The board, the Chairperson and members of the Steering Board were appointed by Vice-President Kroes. It will meet two or three times per year and may consult with industrial, academic and governmental bodies and experts.

On the implementation level, an initial budget of €10 million has already been earmarked for a pre-commercial procurement project in the ICT theme of the 7th Framework Programme for Research (FP7). The relevant call for proposals was published on 9 July.

Annex: Members of the European Cloud Partnership Steering Board

Toomas Hendrik Ilves, Chair of Steering Board, President of Estonia
Léo Apotheker, former CEO of SAP AG and HP
Thierry Breton, Chairman and CEO of ATOS
Bernard Charles, President and CEO of Dassault Systèmes
Christian Fredrikson, President and CEO of F-Secure Corporation
Michael Gorriz, CIO of Daimler AG and President of EuroCIO
Jim Hagemann-Snabe, Co-CEO of SAP AG
Matthew Key, Chairman and CEO of Telefonica Digital
Pierre Nanterme, CEO of Accenture
Karl-Heinz Streibich, CEO, Chairman of the Management Board and Group Executive Board of Software AG
Hans Vestberg, President and CEO of Ericsson
Werner Vogels, Vice President and Chief Technology Officer of Amazon.com
Katarina de Brisis, Deputy Director General of the Norwegian Ministry of Government Administration and Reform
Aitor Cubo Contreras, Deputy Director General of Programs, Studies and Promotion of

Electronic Administration, Spanish Ministry of Finance and Public Administrations
Jérôme Filippini, ICT Corporate Director for France, Direction interministérielle des systèmes d'information et de communication de l'État
Maarten Hillenaar, Government CIO and Director of the central government ICT-policy department, Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations
Reinhard Posch, CIO and Chair of the Austrian e-Government DIGITAL:AUSTRIA, Austrian Federal Government
Andrzej Ręgowski, Vice-Minister, Polish Ministry of Administration and Digital Affairs

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