Final minutes from the European Cloud Partnership Steering Board meeting

Brussels, 13 February 2014

Main conclusions from the meeting:

- The Steering Board is **widely supportive** of the current draft Vision document on Trusted Cloud Europe – TCE.
- The Steering Board wishes to **accelerate the finalisation of this document**, so that the future actions envisaged by the document can be undertaken.
- Comments are to be elicited though **consultation with the public** on the basis of a **publishable version of the document, to be developed within the next two weeks**.
- Minor comments were made which will be integrated by the end of the week of 17 February. A new version is to be circulated at that time, allowing the Sherpas to provide any further comments for one more week. **A final version of the document will thus be available by the end of February**.
- In principle this was the final meeting of the Steering Board; however, the chairman reserved the **option to call for an additional Steering Board meeting if needed**.
- It was noted to be important to get back to the Council with the result of the work. This will require full active support from Member States and from all SB members.
- Timeline:
  - **End-February: finalisation of Vision document;**
  - **Mid-March: obtaining final approval from SB, publication and consultation;**
  - **Mid-April: stepping up efforts to make the work of the ECP visible to the Council for the forthcoming Council meeting (May 2014).**

The Steering Board meeting was organized in Brussels at the Hotel Silken Berlaymont, on 13 February 2014, convening from 10h00 to 12h30, with the following agenda:

Agenda	
10h00-10h10	Welcome address by President Toomas Hendrik Ilves
10h10-10h20	Welcome by Neelie Kroes, Vice-President of the European Commission, responsible for the Digital Agenda for Europe
10h20-10h35	Update on the three working group activities and outputs (Public Sector Due Diligence, Public Sector Pilots, and Private Sector); representatives to be announced
10h35-10h50	Presentation of the consensus document by the rapporteur H. Graux
10h50-12h25	Discussion of the consensus document by the Steering board
12h25-12h35	Update on the status of ongoing Cloud Strategy activities – Standards mapping and standardised contracts (including SLAs) by Ken Ducatel (Head of Unit)
12h35-12h50	Discussion of next steps for the ECP – promotion of the consensus document, including towards the Council
12h50-13h00	Concluding remarks and closing of the Steering Board meeting by Pres. Ilves

Minutes

Introduction

The Steering Board members are welcomed by President Ilves, who thanked the Sherpas for the very substantial work so far, and outlined today's objective of evaluating and finalizing the efforts. He welcomes the approach of the Vision document, the concept of the Trusted Cloud Europe (TCE), and the two task pillars foreseen in the document. Two key aspects which must be strongly emphasized in the final document are the importance of risk assessment to make informed cloud choices, and the importance of flexibility in order to keep up with technological change.

Vice-President Kroes acknowledges the positive work done so far, and recalls the need to continue working at a high pace. The Vision document provides us with a new brand name: the TCE. It will be important to establish this in the market and towards policy makers. Both President Ilves and Vice-President Kroes repeat that our goal must be to set the framework for political decisions, and to put the TCE on the political agenda.

Report and discussions on the Vision document and the TCE

The rapporteur Hans Graux presents the Vision document, the work done by the Working Groups of the ECP, and the goals and actions of the TCE.

A discussion on the document and the TCE follows, led by President Ilves. All Steering Board members are invited to provide their feedback on the Vision document and the TCE. Overall, the members are widely and explicitly supportive of the work, the Vision document and the TCE. Several Steering Board members indicate that they have "tested" the TCE vision document with their constituency (customers etc), and support was near universal. The TCE label itself is welcomed as a solid approach that could act as a European brand.

Several smaller issues are requested to be adjusted in the TCE vision document:

- M. Posch welcomed the document as a good basis for future action, and suggested that one of the follow-up actions might be to list cloud needs for the public sector (e.g. redundancy, backups, replacement of a provider in case of failures or bankruptcy, standards compliance, government controlled cryptography, etc.).
- M. de Brisis similarly supported the document, but requested a check to ensure terminological consistency (e.g. on declaration-accreditation-certification, or categories of data). Realism would be needed: we should be able to work on a step by step basis, including for any national reviews of legislation. The EU could facilitate this work by providing a common platform to Member States. The urgency for action is still there but should allow for small steps; this is also true for any calls for reviews of policy, legislation or data location requirements: the text must be clear that this is a stepwise process where changes will be made when circumstances are mature.
- M. Breton offered congratulations on the work done, and particularly welcomed the creation of a roadmap for future action. Now we need to move fast to implement the vision presented here. Consistency between the various ECP documents is however crucial, including in terms of timing; this will need to be checked. M. Breton recalled that the outputs of ongoing work (SLA, code of conduct, certification scheme) should be made available for consultation as soon as they are in a sufficiently mature version, which was understood to be expected by the end of March. This is crucial to show concrete results for the action points referenced in the vision document, and to obtain feedback before the end of 2014.
- Ms. Dubarry supports the global approach, and notes that France considers the efforts around best practices, support to SMEs and the implementation of a cloud label to be crucial. The TCE label should not only guarantee security and safety levels and SLA, but also data location and applicable regulations. Self-declarations of compliance are less convincing. French authorities also express strong reserves about any actions that would lead to the elimination of national regulations regarding data location, as it raises extremely important security and sovereignty concerns. France would additionally prefer to see more explicit references to the importance of supporting the development of a European cloud industrial offer (for example, through innovation and R&D or support for small software editors in the evolution of their offer towards SaaS). With respect to procurements, France stresses the need to respect flexibility and national autonomy in making appropriate procurement decisions.
- M. Vogels supported the document, and stressed the importance of a pragmatic, usable and user friendly approach. Working examples of best practices exist, and should be re-used where possible. Best practices should be supported where appropriate, although care should be taken not to make these mandatory; we should avoid creating new legacy.

- M. Van den Wyngaert welcomed the consistent references to the interests of users which were made at EuroCIO's requests. It supports the call for expedient follow-up action, and supported the remarks made by President Ilves to more explicitly reference the need for solid risk assessment. References to the importance of the Data Protection Regulation were similarly welcomed. Finally, EuroCIO is skeptical on the unambiguous support for 'cloud first' procurement policies; this should be sufficiently nuanced.
- M.Kotteman is positive towards cloud first policies, provided that such policies are well defined and targeted. However, they are dependent on the prior creation of trusted clouds: privacy, security, liability all need to be ensured first, before any such policies can be adopted.
- M. Fredrikson declares to be fully supportive of the document, and supports cloud first procurement policies. He similarly indicates the importance of moving quickly, and declares his willingness to support the indicated pilots, including particularly the Transparent Cybertrust pilot.
- M. Hange supports the document, and encourages all ECP members to move expediently in implementing the planned actions, focusing on building a strong consensus between businesses and public administrations.

Future actions

The members supported the need to finalize the document quickly in order to publish it and move on with future actions. It is agreed that the Vision document should be made publicly available for consultation, in accordance with the following timeline:

- A new version incorporating the aforementioned smaller updates should be shared within a week of this meeting;
- By the end of February: finalisation of TCE vision document;
- By Mid-March: obtaining final approval from the Steering Board, followed by publication and consultation;
- By Mid-April: stepping up efforts to make the work of the ECP visible to the Council for the forthcoming Council meeting (May 2014).

Wrap up

The state of the art for key actions (SLAs, certification schemes and Codes of Conduct) is briefly presented by Ken Ducatel. President Ilves calls for the ECP members to remain willing to reconvene if necessary to push the planned initiatives forward. Both President Ilves and Vice-President Kroes indicate their satisfaction with the outcome of the meeting and the ECP process in general. President Ilves closes the Steering Board meeting at 12h40.