

European Commission Talks Cloud Plans

Written by Marco Attard
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European Commission VP in charge of Digital Agenda Neelie Kroes says the cloud "offers a massive boost for Europe" at the Berlin Cloud for Europe conference, before claiming it contributes no less than "hundreds of billions of euros."



The speech comes as a reaction to the recent revelations on the extent of spying by the likes of the NSA on mostly US-based cloud storage services. Europe must protect itself, Kroes insists, not by turning its back to the cloud but by putting itself on the cloud forefront.

According to Kroes Europe needs nothing less than a joint pan-European cloud storage, with public sector systems working across borders in the name of "more resilience, better services, and greater economies of scale." The first steps for such a plan are already taking place as EU member states consolidate isolated data centres into national clouds.

"Through the Connecting Europe Facility, we can already support the key building blocks that enable pan-European services, like electronic invoicing and e-signature," Kroes continues.

The EU also has programs aiding in with both standards and supply through the likes of ETSI technical certification, model service agreements from EMISA and the H2020 2 research and innovation fund.

As for security, Kroes suggests uniform legal base for data protection, and a pan-European cloud framework allowing users to know exactly what happens to their data, even in the case of breach.

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In summary, Kroes gives 5 steps for a European cloud-- investment in key pan-european service infrastructures, demand stimulation through government procurement, and supply through research and innovation, the building of trust and transparency, and the development of a single data market.

"Europe has a great opportunity now," the VP concludes. "To become the home, the world's leader, in trustworthy cloud computing."

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