



CIO'S CHECKLIST

The CIO's checklist for an AI-ready, sovereign cloud

Who it's for

CIOs and IT leaders balancing innovation with compliance, cost control, and sovereignty in the EU.

How to use

Answer each question with Yes/No. Any gaps highlight where you may need policy, process, or platform changes.



Data sovereignty & EU compliance

- Do we have documented EU data residency, with clear jurisdiction over all AI data flows?
- Have we mapped legal bases, retention, and cross-border transfers for training and inference data?
- Can we demonstrate protection from extra-territorial laws such as the US CLOUD Act?

Secure access & governance

- Are model, data, and admin actions protected by least-privilege roles and Two-Factor Authentication (2FA)?
- Are all network paths segmented and protected with end-to-end encryption, including private connectivity to sensitive sources?
- Do we manage API Keys, secrets, and model endpoints centrally, with policy-based approvals?



AI workload & runtime readiness

- Do we have proven capacity for bursty GPU workloads, with predictable cost controls?
- Can we choose, run, and swap Open Source models to match risk, cost, and performance needs?
- Are our data pipelines prepared to securely integrate enterprise data into AI applications?

Auditability & evidence

- Do we log prompts, outputs, training data use, and admin actions with tamper-evident storage?
- Can we produce DPIAs, consent records, and data lineage for every AI use case?
- Is there change control for model versions, datasets, and prompts, with rollback paths?

Score your readiness

0–4 Yes: Foundational work needed. Prioritise residency controls, access policy, and basic runtime capacity.

5–8 Yes: On the right track. Close gaps in governance, audit trails, and elastic GPU access.

9–12 Yes: Strong posture. Focus on cost optimisation and continuous compliance.

Next steps

Answering 'no' is common. Many organisations are still hardening controls while proving compliance. What you need next: true data sovereignty, robust security, and ready-to-use AI infrastructure that scales.

IONOS is built for Europe. The [IONOS CLOUD AI Model Hub](#) is a sovereign, EU-hosted AI platform that's 100% GDPR compliant, built on proven Open Source models to avoid Vendor Lock-in, and offered on a pay-as-you-go basis. Pair with high-performance [GPU Servers](#) for training and inference.



Plan your sovereign AI — book a free consultation



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