NUTANIX

Solution Brief

Digital Sovereignty for Government

Maintain control, security, and operational independence on your terms

Geopolitical instability, supplier consolidation, escalating cyberattacks, and evolving data residency laws have exposed the fragility of government IT dependencies. Agencies dependent on a single cloud or SaaS provider can find their data, applications and pricing held hostage — often with no practical path to exit. Digital sovereignty — the ability to maintain control, security, and independence across your entire IT estate — is now a mission-critical requirement.

A Framework for Digital Sovereignty

Consider three dimensions for a resilient sovereignty posture:

- **Control:** Who owns, secures, and accesses your applications, infrastructure, and data? True sovereignty requires physical and operational authority across the full technology stack, with security policies that persist regardless of where workloads reside.
- **Choice:** Can you change direction without disruption? You need consistent operations across on-premises, edge, and public clouds — including air-gapped and dark-site environments — with open APIs, live workload migration, and no refactoring required.
- **Exit Strategy:** Can you survive disruption? You must be able to migrate data and workloads without vendor cooperation, recover from cyber incidents with governance intact, and operate using in-house or in-country expertise.

Key Insight:

Sovereignty is not binary. “Maximum sovereignty” is neither realistic nor necessary. The right approach is a tiered strategy: apply the strongest controls where stakes are highest — national security, identity management, critical infrastructure — while using proportionate models for lower-sensitivity services. Regardless of the tier, control must be enforceable, auditable, and reversible.

Is Open Source The Answer?

Look beneath the surface of most “open source” deployments. Commercial vendors routinely bundle open-source components with proprietary management, monitoring, and security layers — then sell you the package. Hardware runs closed-source firmware. GPU drivers wrap binary blobs.

More fundamentally, the applications that run government — financial systems, citizen services, and case management — are overwhelmingly commercial off-the-shelf software, with many requiring proprietary databases or legacy operating systems. When your entire application stack is closed source, debating the openness of your hypervisor license is a distraction. The answer isn’t a single open-source layer, but a full-stack architecture that ensures portability; otherwise, open source is just a transparent lid on a locked proprietary box.

How Nutanix Delivers Sovereignty Across Your IT Estate

Nutanix enables government agencies and sovereign service providers to build, operate and govern distributed sovereign clouds with consistent control everywhere — from data centers, colocation facilities, and edge locations to fully air-gapped environments. One platform runs it all, without patchwork integrations or armies of specialists.

This platform coherence is the sovereignty differentiator. It avoids fragmentation, manages operational risk, and ensures control remains with the accountable organization. VMs, modern container platforms, and AI workloads co-exist on a single software stack — managed through a unified control plane for centralized visibility across all environments.

Nutanix capabilities that keep you in control:

- **Technology flexibility:** Run on any certified x86 hardware and across public clouds (AWS (including AWS European Sovereign Cloud), Azure, Google Cloud, OVHcloud). Deploy in dark sites and air-gapped environments with full lifecycle management and no external telemetry requirements. Choose our included Nutanix AHV hypervisor or ESX; use any container platform. Integrate third-party storage where required.
- **Cloud repatriation – Fast:** Live workload mobility between clusters reduces stranded risk; move workloads back on-premises with applications and security policies intact.
- **Open standards:** Support for NFS/SMB, S3-compatible storage, and KVM-based AHV hypervisor preserves your right to exit. The Nutanix Kubernetes Platform provides enterprise-grade, upstream Kubernetes without vendor lock-in.
- **Simplified operations:** A single console provides visibility and operational control across data center, edge, and public cloud. A self-healing architecture and automated lifecycle management allows generalist IT staff to own and operate the full stack.
- **Data sovereignty:** Geo-distributed clusters enforce jurisdictional boundaries and placement requirements. Immutable snapshots strengthen ransomware resilience while maintaining strict governance during data movement.
- **Built-in security:** FIPS 140-2/3 aligned encryption for data at rest and in transit, with a Common Criteria (ISO/IEC 15408) certified product suite. Zero Trust microsegmentation provides continuous compliance monitoring; aligned to NIST, GDPR, and other global standards.
- **Enterprise AI:** Govern AI model usage with full observability — track downloads, enforce policies, and block unauthorized models on-premises.

Mission-Ready Sovereignty, From Classified to Commercial Workloads

Nutanix gives government agencies the flexibility to run classified workloads in air-gapped facilities while simultaneously leveraging commercial clouds for cost-optimized, lower-sensitivity applications — all on the same software stack. If a cloud provider relationship changes or risks increase, workloads can be repatriated on-premises without compromising security or functionality.

For over a decade, government organizations worldwide have trusted Nutanix to modernize and simplify mission-critical IT. The Nutanix platform enables you to enforce data residency, apply rigorous access controls, and maintain regional operational authority. The result: IT teams spend less time managing vendor dependencies and integration sprawl, and more time delivering outcomes across resilient, governable infrastructure.

Learn more: www.nutanix.com/solutions/digital-sovereignty

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info@nutanix.com | www.nutanix.com | @nutanix

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