Scrydon

Sovereign procurement criteria

"Sovereign" is not a label on a datasheet. It is five tests you can run against a live system — and a platform decision you only make once.

These are the questions from the closing slide of Why now — Palantir alternatives for Europe (3 September 2026), with what a good answer looks like. Use one sheet per vendor on your shortlist — including the incumbent, and including us. Tick the line that matches what you were actually told.

If any answer is a slide rather than a demonstration, you have your answer. And write the procurement so it increases competition rather than reducing it: four providers, not one. A shortlist with alternatives is leverage; a single winner is the next dependence.

Vendor	Scored by	Date

SP-1 Jurisdiction

weight 20%

Whose law governs the operator of the platform — and which foreign statutes can reach it. Data location is not jurisdiction: a data centre in Frankfurt operated by a non-EU parent answers to that parent's law.

Which legal entity operates the platform, under which governing law — and which foreign statutes can compel it?

Ask for it in writing. The answer you want names an entity and a law, not a region.

- ☐ **L4** A named EU operating entity under EU governing law, with a written compulsion analysis of which statutes reach it
- ☐ **L3** A named EU operating entity under EU governing law, stated in the contract — no compulsion analysis offered
- ☐ **L2** An EU subsidiary of a non-EU parent; the parent's law still reaches the operator
- ☐ **L1** A non-EU operator, with EU data residency offered as the answer to the question
- ☐ **L0** Nobody has asked; the operating entity is not named anywhere you can point to

Where does the control plane run, and who operates it?

Sovereignty is decided on the control plane, not on the storage bucket.

- ☐ **L4** Inside your perimeter, operated under the same EU jurisdiction as the data — demonstrated
- ☐ **L3** In the EU, operated by the EU entity; documented but not shown
- ☐ **L2** In the EU, but reachable and routinely operated from outside for support
- ☐ **L1** Outside your jurisdiction, with "your data stays in Europe" offered instead
- ☐ **L0** Unknown — the question has not been put to the vendor

SP-2 Keys

weight 20%

Who generates, holds and can revoke the encryption keys. If the vendor can decrypt when compelled, this test and the jurisdiction test fail together — and the padlock on the datasheet is decoration.

Who generates, holds and revokes the encryption keys? Can you rotate them — and lock the vendor out — without asking?

"Bring your own key" is not the same as holding the key.

- ☐ **L4** A customer-held KMS: you generate, you rotate, you revoke — demonstrated on the live system
- ☐ **L3** Customer-held keys; rotation and revocation documented but never demonstrated
- ☐ **L2** Bring-your-own-key, where the vendor's service quietly keeps a decryption path
- ☐ **L1** Vendor-held keys, with contractual promises about access
- ☐ **L0** Vendor-managed, with no visibility into who can decrypt

If you revoked the keys tomorrow, what would actually happen?

The useful answer is that the vendor is locked out and the platform keeps running for you.

- ☐ **L4** Revocation locks the vendor out and the platform keeps running for you — tested
- ☐ **L3** Revocation locks the vendor out; the effect on your own operation has not been tested

- [ ] **L2** Revocation would stop the platform for you as well as for the vendor
- [ ] **L1** Revocation needs the vendor's cooperation to take effect
- [ ] **L0** Never established

SP-3 Operating staff

weight 15%

Whose hands are on the admin plane, and whether that is written into the contract or into the brochure. "Vendor-operated" means the supplier's people hold root on your decisions.

Whose staff hold admin access — nationality, clearance, employer — named in the contract, not the brochure?

This is the test the Bundeswehr requirement is really about.

- [ ] **L4** Your own staff, or named, screened personnel operating under your contract
- [ ] **L3** Vendor staff, but named, screened and contractually confined to your jurisdiction
- [ ] **L2** Vendor staff under a general support clause; no naming or screening commitments
- [ ] **L1** "Support may access production for troubleshooting" — unnamed, from anywhere
- [ ] **L0** Unknown who holds root on the environment

Is every privileged action logged — and reviewable by you, without asking?

An audit trail the vendor controls is the vendor's audit trail.

- [ ] **L4** Every privileged action logged, exported into your own systems, and actually reviewed
- [ ] **L3** Every privileged action logged and reviewable by you on demand
- [ ] **L2** Logged by the vendor; released to you after an incident
- [ ] **L1** Partial logging, with gaps around vendor support sessions
- [ ] **L0** No privileged-access logging you can see

SP-4 Disconnected mode

weight 15%

What still works with the cable unplugged — ingestion, identity, ontology, agents, updates, evidence out. For defence and critical infrastructure it is the design case, and it is the honest proxy for every other test: no connection, no hidden dependence.

Has disconnected operation been demonstrated — including updates, identity and evidence export — or only described?

Demonstrated means you watched it, on an isolated network.

- [ ] **L4** The full stack brought up on an isolated network, from its own deployment guide — watched, not diagrammed
- [ ] **L3** Demonstrated disconnected, but updates or evidence export still need a connection
- [ ] **L2** Described in a document; never demonstrated
- [ ] **L1** An "offline mode" that turns out to be a cache
- [ ] **L0** A licence server or control plane that phones home; disconnected is not supported

With the cable unplugged, which parts of the stack keep working?

Ingestion, identity, the ontology, the agents, updates, and getting evidence back out.

- [ ] **L4** All of them — updates and evidence export have an offline path by design
- [ ] **L3** Most of them; one or two components need a connection to stay current
- [ ] **L2** Read-only access to whatever was cached before the disconnection
- [ ] **L1** A user interface, and little behind it
- [ ] **L0** Unknown — it has never been tried

SP-5 Exit

weight 20%

What leaves with you — data, ontology, process flows — in what format, at what cost, rehearsed when. The switching cost is set at signature, not at exit; this is the test almost nobody runs before signing.

Is the exit tested and priced before signature — data, ontology and process flows out, in open formats?

A price you discover when you ask to leave is not a price.

- [ ] **L4** Rehearsed end to end before signature, and priced in the contract
- [ ] **L3** Priced in the contract before signature, but never rehearsed
- [ ] **L2** An export is offered, at a price to be agreed later
- [ ] **L1** A documented export path, with the cost to be discovered at exit
- [ ] **L0** No exit provision in the contract at all

What actually leaves with you?

The data is the easy part. The ontology and the process definitions are the lock-in.

- ☐ **L4** The data in open formats another engine could read tomorrow, plus a documented, machine-readable export of the ontology and the process definitions
- ☐ **L3** The data in open formats, plus a documented export of the ontology; the process definitions stay behind
- ☐ **L2** The data only, in open formats
- ☐ **L1** The data only, as a proprietary dump — or a PDF
- ☐ **L0** Never established

SP-6 Scope & evidence

weight 10%

Whether the offer answers for all four layers — data foundation, ontology, AI and agents, process flows — and whether each answer was shown on a live system or asserted on a slide. If any answer is a slide rather than a demonstration, you have your answer.

Does the offer answer for all four layers — data, ontology, AI, process flows — or one layer plus a roadmap?

Most pitched "alternatives" are the data layer, plus a roadmap.

- ☐ **L4** All four layers, in one platform, each one shown
- ☐ **L3** All four layers; one of them is early, but real and running
- ☐ **L2** Three layers, with the fourth on the roadmap
- ☐ **L1** The data foundation, plus a roadmap for everything above it
- ☐ **L0** A single component presented as a platform

Will each answer be demonstrated on a live system — or only asserted on a slide?

Including the awkward questions. A vendor who answers with an adjective has answered.

- ☐ **L4** Every answer demonstrated on a live system, the awkward ones included
- ☐ **L3** Most demonstrated; the rest documented in a way you could verify yourself
- ☐ **L2** A scripted demo, with the hard questions answered on slides
- ☐ **L1** Slides, and a reference customer who will take your call
- ☐ **L0** Adjectives