

Think 2026: IBM Makes Digital Sovereignty Operational with General Availability of IBM Sovereign Core

New capabilities help enterprises, governments, and service providers operationalize digital sovereignty with continuous compliance and control across hybrid environments



BOSTON, May 5, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- At Think 2026, IBM (NYSE:IBM) today announced the general availability of **IBM Sovereign Core**, a new **software platform** designed to help organizations build and operate AI-ready sovereign environments and verify their control — giving enterprises and governments an end-to-end approach to digital sovereignty.

As AI adoption accelerates, digital sovereignty has become a critical requirement, extending beyond data residency to include control over infrastructure, operations, and AI systems. Organizations must balance maintaining necessary authority with the pace of innovation, while facing increasing scrutiny from regulators, auditors, and boards. Yet most platforms can struggle to provide consistent, auditable answers to these requirements — creating a gap between policy and operational reality.

"AI has made sovereignty a runtime requirement, not a policy statement. With IBM Sovereign Core, organizations don't have to choose between deploying AI at speed and verifying their control. Sovereignty shouldn't be a constraint on innovation — with the right software foundation, it's an enabler of it," said **Dinesh Nirmal, SVP, IBM Software**.

Defining Digital Sovereignty for the AI Era

IBM defines digital sovereignty across four pillars:

- **Operational Sovereignty** — Control over how environments are operated
- **Data Sovereignty** — Control over data at rest, in use, and in motion
- **Technology Sovereignty** — Open, modular architecture that avoids vendor lock-in
- **AI Sovereignty** — Control over where models run and how inference is governed

Together, these pillars form the foundation of IBM's unified approach to digital sovereignty—bringing control across operations, data, technology, and AI.

A Unified Approach for Digital Sovereignty

IBM Sovereign Core introduces a new model for operational sovereignty, where governance, compliance, and control are built into the system from the start to enable organizations to scale AI while maintaining their sovereignty, trust, and operational independence. IBM Sovereign Core delivers an integrated sovereign software platform that combines control plane, identity, security, compliance, and AI execution functions operate within a single deployment model.

Key capabilities include:

- **Customer-operated control plane** enabling full authority over configuration, operations, and lifecycle management
- **In-boundary identity, encryption, and data services**, ensuring all access, secrets, keys, logs, and audit evidence remain under customer control
- **Continuous compliance monitoring and evidence generation**, providing real-time audit readiness
- **Preloaded regulatory frameworks** to accelerate company defined compliance postures across regions and industries
- **Governed AI execution**, ensuring models, inference, and agent operations run within defined sovereign boundaries
- **Open, modular architecture** built on open standards, supporting portability and avoiding vendor lock-in

Together, these capabilities establish a **sovereign control plane** that enables organizations to operate environments and verify their control across data, operations, and AI.

Continuous, Verifiable Compliance

IBM Sovereign Core enables organizations to move from static compliance models to dynamic continuous, verifiable compliance models that are verifiable. Integrated monitoring, drift detection, and automated evidence generation allow organizations to:

- Validate compliance in real time
- Maintain audit-ready evidence within the sovereign boundary
- Reduce reliance on manual validation and point-in-time audits

This ensures sovereignty is not only defined, but observable, enforceable, and provable at scale.

AI Governance Within Your Sovereign Boundary

As AI systems become central to enterprise operations, governance must extend beyond data to include models, inference, and agent behavior. IBM Sovereign Core enables organizations to deploy and operate AI models, agents, and inference workloads entirely within the sovereign boundary, ensuring their:

- Control over where AI processing occurs
- Traceability of model execution and decisions
- Governance over access, updates, and lifecycle management

This ensures that AI systems operate with accountability, transparency, and control, even in highly regulated environments.

Extensible Ecosystem and Deployment Flexibility

Built on open, enterprise-grade technologies like Red Hat OpenShift and Red Hat AI, IBM Sovereign Core enables

organizations to extend existing investments across hybrid and partner environments.

IBM Sovereign Core includes an extensible catalog that organizations can curate for their own users, with their own applications, or populated with pre-vetted IBM, third-party and open source software and services from an ecosystem of software and infrastructure partners that includes: AMD, ATOS, Cegeka, Cloudera, Dell, Elastic, HCL, Intel, Mistral, MongoDB, and Palo Alto Networks.

CPU, GPU, and AI inference environments can be provisioned using standardized templates and automated configuration profiles, enabling teams to deploy and manage workloads consistently across sovereign regions while maintaining alignment to their compliance and sovereignty requirements.

Designed for Regulated Regions, Enterprises and Governments

IBM Sovereign Core is designed for organizations that require greater control, flexibility, and compliance across sensitive workloads.

- **Enterprises** can run regulated applications and AI workloads within controlled environments
- **Governments and public sector organizations** can support sovereign operations for critical services
- **Service providers and regional cloud operators** can deliver sovereign cloud and AI services at scale

Across these use cases, IBM Sovereign Core enables organizations to innovate with AI while maintaining demonstrable authority over their systems, data, and operations. IBM Sovereign Core is now generally available.

Supporting Quotes

*"Control and compliance have long been barriers to enterprise AI adoption," said **Marjorie Janiewicz, Chief Revenue Officer at Mistral AI**. "IBM Sovereign Core delivers a ready-to-deploy foundation that allows our models to operate within trusted boundaries from day one, enabling organizations to accelerate AI adoption while maintaining full control over their data. We're pleased to be the first model provider partner for Sovereign Core to certify our frontier models and support enterprise customers globally."*

*"AI is reshaping how nations, governments and enterprises operate, making digital sovereignty not just a policy discussion, but a leadership priority," said **Philip Guido, EVP & Chief Commercial Officer, AMD**. "As organizations deploy AI at scale, control over technology becomes increasingly critical. Together with IBM and Red Hat, we're enabling clients to exercise greater autonomy and flexibility in their digital sovereignty choices across the full IT stack through an open, secure and transparent approach."*

*"As organizations navigate increasingly complex compliance and regulatory requirements, we're seeing strong demand for digital platforms and software that allows sensitive data to remain within controlled, compliant boundaries," said **Gaetan Willems, VP Cloud & Digital Platforms, Cegeka**. "Partnering with IBM to offer a pre-architected solution through our in-country environment enables us to deliver enterprise-ready software to our clients, while allowing them to address local compliance standards."*

*"As part of our strategic alliance with IBM, Deloitte is focused on enabling a Sovereign Core technology stack that supports clients in building secure, scalable, and compliant cloud ecosystems. Leveraging IBM's platform capabilities alongside Deloitte's deep regulatory and transformation expertise, we help organizations address critical imperatives such as data localization, security, regulatory compliance, and India's DPDP requirements." — **Vinay Prabhakar Chief Commercial Officer Deloitte***

AP & National Sales & Alliances Leader Deloitte South Asia

*"India deserves cloud infrastructure that is sovereign by design. At NxtGen, that has always been our operating principle and our promise to customers: superior performance, lower TCO, and zero trade-offs on compliance. The IBM Sovereign Core collaboration is a direct expression of that commitment, bringing secure, compliant cloud capabilities built for India's regulatory reality." — **A S Rajgopal, MD & CEO, NxtGen***

*"The ability to establish—and prove—control over data, models and operations is quickly becoming a differentiator for trust, resilience and innovation in AI adoption," said **Bill Pearson, vice president of data center and AI software, Intel Data Center Group**. "Establishing sovereign AI frameworks, spanning open hybrid architectures and transparent governance, requires a foundation built for performance, security, and control. Intel continues to innovate with technologies such as Intel Xeon 6 processors and Intel TDX to provide in-use protection for data and AI workloads across environments with CPU and GPUs to support sovereign infrastructure initiatives like IBM Sovereign Core."*

Supporting Materials

[Blog: IBM Sovereign Core: The new end to end system for Sovereign AI](#)

[IBM Sovereign Core Product Page](#)

[IBM Sovereign Core Ecosystem Catalog](#)

[IBM Sovereign Core Compliance Center](#)

[Statement of Direction for IBM Sovereign Core](#)

About IBM

IBM is a leading provider of global hybrid cloud and AI, and consulting expertise. We help clients in more than 175 countries capitalize on insights from their data, streamline business processes, reduce costs and gain the competitive edge in their industries. Thousands of governments and corporate entities in critical infrastructure areas such as financial services, telecommunications and healthcare rely on IBM's hybrid cloud platform and Red Hat OpenShift to affect their digital transformations quickly, efficiently and securely. IBM's breakthrough innovations in AI, quantum computing, industry-specific cloud solutions and consulting deliver open and flexible options to our clients. All of this is backed by IBM's long-standing commitment to trust, transparency, responsibility, inclusivity and service.

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