

Where does your AI data actually live?

Same model. Different deployment.
Completely different compliance posture.

As regulated financial institutions accelerate AI adoption, the question of *where your data goes* during model inference is no longer a technical detail. It is a compliance imperative. This guide maps every major model against the key regions for regulated financial institutions operating across the UK, EU, and Gulf.



UK
UK GDPR & FCA

Strong coverage



EU
GDPR & EU AI Act

Strong coverage



UAE
DIFC / ADGM Rules

Good coverage



KSA
SAMA & NCA

Expanding 2026



QATAR
QCB & QFCRA

Limited options

Claude (Anthropic) & GPT (OpenAI)

Closed-weight models requiring cloud-provider deployment for regional data residency.

Claude (Anthropic)

Deployment	UK	EU	UAE	Saudi Arabia	Qatar
Direct API	Routes to US	Routes to US	Routes to US	Routes to US	Routes to US
Via Cloud Provider	AWS Bedrock (eu-west-2), Azure UK South	AWS Bedrock (eu-central-1, eu-west-1), Azure EU DataZone, Vertex AI (europe-west1/4)	AWS Bedrock (me-central-1)	AWS & Azure coming Q4 2026. Vertex AI via CNTXT only	Not available in-country

GPT (OpenAI)

Deployment	UK	EU	UAE	Saudi Arabia	Qatar
Direct API	Routes to US	Routes to US	Routes to US	Routes to US	Routes to US
Via Cloud Provider	Azure UK South, AWS Bedrock gpt-oss (eu-west-2)	Azure EU DataZone, AWS Bedrock gpt-oss (eu-central-1, eu-west-1)	Azure UAE North	Azure coming Q4 2026	Azure Qatar Central

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Regions where Direct API routes data to US

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Regions where Claude has full in-country coverage today

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Regions where GPT has in-country coverage today

Q4 '26

Target date for Saudi Arabia expansion for both providers

Key rule: Direct API calls for Claude and GPT route all traffic through US infrastructure regardless of end-user location. For regulated financial data, cloud provider deployment is *mandatory*.

Gemini (Google)

Vertex AI is Google's enterprise deployment path, the only option for regional data residency.

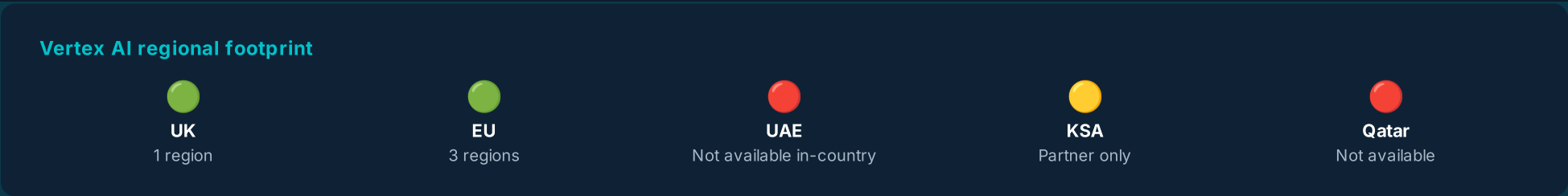
Gemini (Google DeepMind)

Deployment	UK	EU	UAE	Saudi Arabia	Qatar
Direct API (AI Studio)	Routes to US	Routes to US	Routes to US	Routes to US	Routes to US
Via Vertex AI	europa-west2 (London)	europa-west1 (Belgium), europa-west3 (Frankfurt), europa-west4 (Netherlands)	Not available in-country.	Via CNTXT & PIF partner only	Not available in-country

KEY

- Live in-country today; data does not leave the region
- Partial or coming soon; verify before committing to production
- Not available; inference data leaves the country

Direct API calls for **all proprietary models** route through US infrastructure regardless of your location. This applies to Anthropic, OpenAI, and Google AI Studio APIs alike. Always use the cloud provider deployment path for regulated workloads.



Fully Deployable In Your Own Cloud Region

Open-weight models can be hosted entirely inside your chosen region. No data leaves your environment.

Model	UK	EU	UAE	Saudi Arabia	Qatar
Llama 4 Meta	 AWS Bedrock (eu-west-2), Azure UK South, self-host	 AWS Bedrock (eu-central-1, eu-west-1), Azure West Europe, self-host	 AWS Bedrock (me-central-1)	 AWS 2026, CNTXT self-host	 Self-host Azure Qatar Central
Mistral Large France	 AWS Bedrock (eu-west-2), Azure UK South, Mistral EU	 AWS Bedrock (eu-central-1), Azure EU DataZone, Mistral EU	 AWS Bedrock (me-central-1)	 AWS 2026, self-host	 Self-host Azure Qatar Central
DeepSeek V3/R1 Chinese-origin	 AWS Bedrock (eu-west-2), Azure UK South, self-host	 AWS Bedrock (eu-central-1), Azure West Europe, self-host	 AWS Bedrock (me-central-1)	 AWS 2026, self-host	 Self-host Azure Qatar Central
Phi-4 Microsoft	 Azure UK South	 Azure West Europe, North Europe	 Azure UAE North	 Azure Q4 2026	 Azure Qatar Central
Gemma 3 Google	 Vertex AI (europe-west2), self-host	 Vertex AI (europe-west1, europe-west4), self-host	 Vertex AI (me-west1)	 CNTXT, self-host	 Self-host on Azure Qatar Central
Qwen 3 Chinese-origin	 AWS Bedrock (eu-west-2), self-host	 AWS Bedrock (eu-central-1), self-host	 AWS Bedrock (me-central-1)	 AWS 2026, self-host	 Self-host Azure Qatar Central

DeepSeek and Qwen are Chinese-origin models. Always deploy via Western-hosted cloud infrastructure only. Never use their native Chinese APIs for regulated financial data.

Why Open-Source for Regulated Finance

Full control over inference infrastructure and data routing

Deploy in any sovereign cloud region, including air-gapped environments.

No vendor lock-in or model deprecation risk on your timeline

Important notes

- ▶ **Saudi Arabia:** AWS Bedrock and Azure AI Foundry both targeting Q4 2026. Google Vertex AI available today via local partner CNTXT only.
- ▶ **Qatar:** Azure Qatar Central in Doha is the strongest option today. AWS has no full Qatar region. Google Vertex AI not yet available in-country.
- ▶ **Compliance status** depends on data classification, institutional policy, and regulatory framework. Always validate with your legal team before production deployment.

"The Gulf is not one market."

UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar each have a different infrastructure reality today. The wrong assumption could create a compliance gap before you write a single line of production code.

Ihab Salem

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Helping regulated financial institutions deploy AI, compliantly.

Data correct as of March 2026. Cloud provider availability changes frequently. Verify current regional availability directly with your chosen provider before deployment.