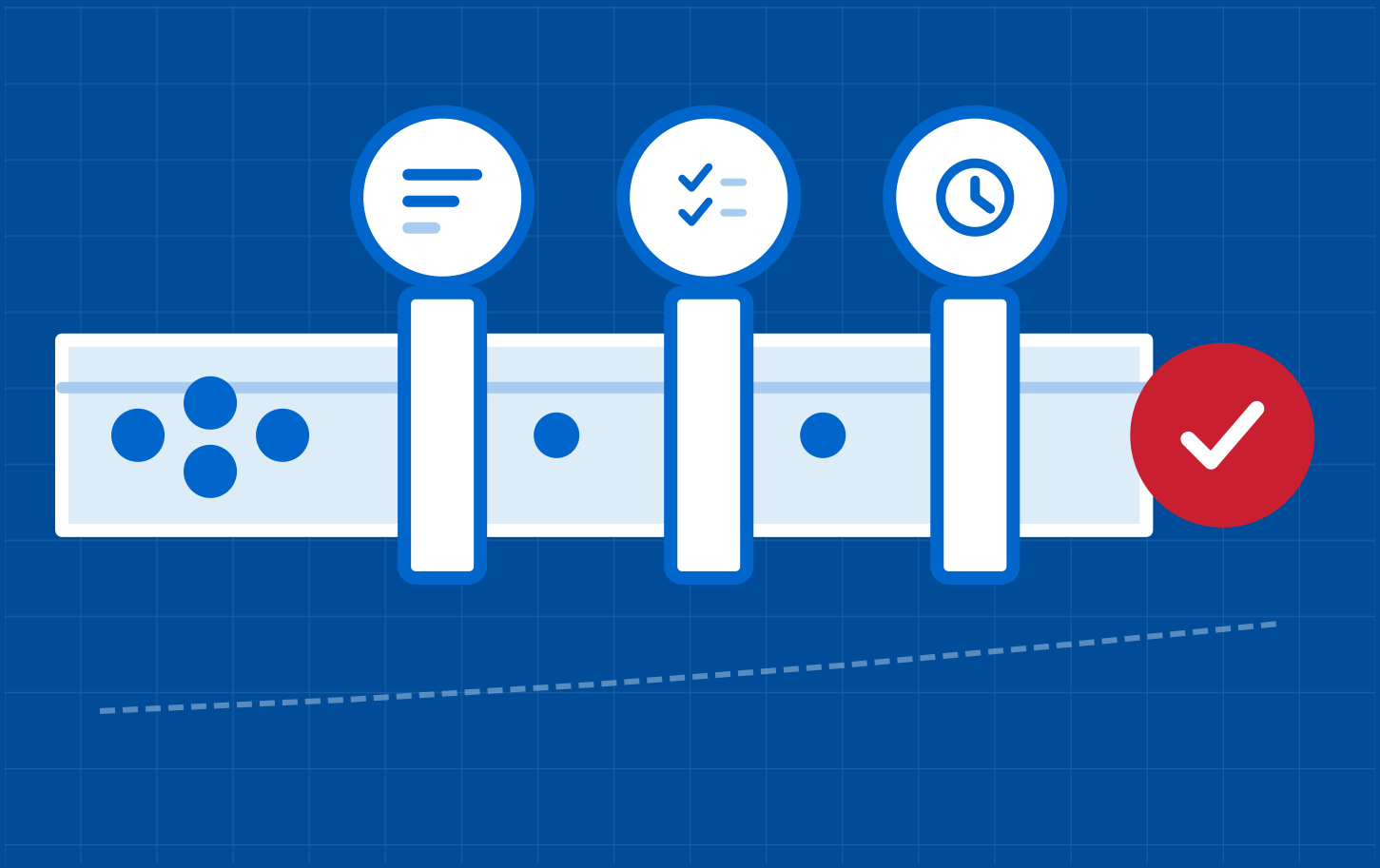
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The Global Payroll RFP Toolkit: Scorecard, Questions and Red Flags

A working toolkit for comparing providers, testing evidence, and agreeing service levels.



Start with the decision

For CFOs, payroll directors, and HR operations leads comparing providers across Turkey and MENA. Collect evidence, score consistently, and agree responsibility before signature.

Define your evaluation

Organization

Evaluation owner / decision panel

Countries / employees in scope

Current providers

Target cutover

Review date

Work through the toolkit

1. Set the rules

Record country scope, gates, and weights before proposals arrive.

2. Collect the evidence

Send all 60 questions and request supporting documents.

3. Score independently

Use the 0 to 5 rubric, then reconcile differences as a panel.

4. Close the gaps

Test red flags and agree country SLAs before signing.

Find the right tool

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Keep the evidence behind each score. Unanswered questions score 0. Weights and contract terms are illustrative and must be adapted to your scope.

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60	8	0–5
due-diligence questions	weighted criteria	evidence scoring scale

100	TR + MENA
total weighted points	country scope

Evaluate Payroll Vendors With Datassist

Bring your country scope and shortlist.

Discuss Your Payroll RFP

datassist.com/en/contact

One platform · One dedicated contact · One responsible partner

Check the country requirements

Verify the operating requirements before comparing proposals.

This toolkit helps CFOs and payroll leaders compare providers across Turkey and MENA. Use the scorecard, 60 questions, and sample clauses to test the service you will receive country by country.

Each additional payroll vendor adds another contract, data transfer, and cut-off calendar. The RFP is your chance to define who owns the full process when a country file is late or incorrect.

What changed for 2026 and 2027

The cost of a mistake rose because the rules moved under existing contracts. Three changes matter most to a buyer running Turkey and MENA payroll.

Change	Effective	What it does to a vendor decision
Turkey Law No. 7566, Articles 23-24	1 January 2026	Raised the SGK earnings ceiling from 7.5x to 9x minimum wage, raised the total employer SGK contribution rate from an effective 20.75% to 23.75% (teşviksiz), and reduced the Treasury-funded non-manufacturing discount from 4 percentage points to 2. Vendors must have re-run every employer cost model.
Gulf wage-protection regimes (UAE WPS, Saudi Mudad)	Ongoing, enforced	Test salary-file acceptance, correction handling, and wage-payment evidence in each country. Check current UAE WPS rules and Saudi wage-protection requirements. The employer retains its statutory duties.
EU Pay Transparency Directive 2023/970	Transposition deadline 7 June 2026	Check national implementation and reporting dates. Ask bidders for pay data by sex and worker category, with access controls and a reporting method.

Saudi Arabia's Personal Data Protection Law can apply to processing Saudi residents' data outside the Kingdom. Require a contractual commitment to meet applicable privacy rules and transfer safeguards. Have legal counsel review the data map and proposed transfer mechanism.

> **Worked Example:** A group pays 400 people in Turkey and 200 in MENA. Its vendor updates SGK parameters, but the ERP feed does not. The contract must define who reconciles the mismatch, corrects the report, and escalates before close.

Turn the rule into an evaluation request

Country / applicable requirement	Evidence requested / responsible reviewer

Plan the RFP process

Use the schedule as a planning framework, then adapt it to your countries.

Set your scoring rules before you open any proposal, because bias enters at the moment you see a polished deck.

The 14-week schedule below is an illustrative planning framework. Country scope, data readiness, regulators, and delivery partners determine the actual dates. Protect time for references and parallel-run validation.

The seven steps

1. **Define scope and volumes.** List countries, headcount per country, pay frequencies, currencies, and the systems that must receive payroll output.
2. **Lock the scorecard weights.** Agree the weights with HR, Finance and IT in one meeting and record them. Do not change them after proposals arrive.
3. **Issue a short RFI first.** Ask for coverage, ownership model and certifications. Cut the field to four or five bidders.
4. **Send the full RFP.** Include the 60 questions and your volumes, and require written answers in your template.
5. **Score independently.** Each evaluator scores alone, then the panel reconciles differences in one session.
6. **Run demos and reference calls.** Ask references about a missed deadline, not about satisfaction.
7. **Validate a parallel cycle.** Agree data protection and commercial terms before sharing employee data. Complete a parallel cycle before cutover, with documented reconciliation and joint sign-off.

Phase	Weeks	Output	Who signs off
Scope and weights	1 to 2	Volumes, locked scorecard	CFO, HR Director, IT
RFI and shortlist	3 to 4	4 to 5 bidders	Procurement
Full RFP and scoring	5 to 8	Scored matrix	Evaluation panel
Demos and references	9 to 10	Verified claims	Panel
Parallel run and contract	11 to 14	Signed contract with SLAs	CFO, Legal

Expert Take: Ask shortlisted bidders to price your difficult cases before quoting: retroactive corrections, rejected filings, and late inputs. Record their assumptions and excluded services in the proposal.
Action: Appoint one non-voting facilitator who collects all scores, hides vendor names during the first scoring pass, and reports the ranking only after weights are applied.

Agree the next milestone

Milestone / target date

Decision owner / dependencies

Set the scorecard and rubric

Lock the weights before opening proposals. These sample weights prioritize statutory accuracy, accountability, and security. Document any changes and apply them consistently.

Eight criteria · 100 points

#	Criterion	Weight	What you are really testing
1	Local statutory accuracy	20	Does the vendor compute and file correctly in each country, including 2026 changes?
2	Delivery model and accountability	15	Who actually does the work, and who is accountable when it fails?
3	Security and data protection	15	Controls, certifications, data location, subprocessors
4	Technology and integration	12	Data flows to your ERP, HRIS and bank, plus reporting
5	Service levels and support	12	Measurable SLAs, named people, escalation
6	Implementation and transition	10	Plan, parallel run, resourcing, track record
7	Commercials and price transparency	10	Total cost, add-ons, indexation, exit costs
8	References and financial stability	6	Evidence from comparable clients
	Total	**100**	

One evidence scale for every bidder

Score	Meaning	Evidence standard
0	No answer or unacceptable	Missing, evasive or contradicts the RFP
1	Weak	Claim only, no evidence, manual workaround
2	Partial	Meets some requirements, gaps acknowledged
3	Meets requirement	Documented and referenceable
4	Strong	Meets requirement with evidence from a comparable client
5	Exceptional	Exceeds requirement, verified in demo or reference call

Calculate the total

Weighted score = Σ (criterion score ÷ 5 × criterion weight). The result is out of 100. Average the question scores within each criterion before applying its weight.

Apply gates before scoring

Some requirements should disqualify a bidder outright. Treat these as pass or fail gates, not as points.

- The vendor can identify the contracting entity and demonstrate any legally required local registrations for the agreed country scope.
- The vendor will sign a data processing agreement that fits your regulator's transfer rules.
- The vendor will agree measurable service levels by country and incident priority, with responsibilities and remedies defined.
- The vendor can provide appropriate independent assurance. Check the scope, reporting period, and exceptions. An ISO 27001 certificate and a service-organization controls report serve different purposes.

Score the total operating cost, including internal coordination, correction work, implementation, and exit. A low per-payslip price alone does not show value.

Compare qualified bidders

Criterion	Weight	Bidder A 0–5	Bidder B 0–5	Bidder C 0–5
Statutory accuracy	20			
Delivery and accountability	15			
Security and data protection	15			
Technology and integration	12			
Service levels and support	12			
Implementation and transition	10			
Commercials	10			
References and stability	6			
Weighted total / 100	100			

Bidder names: A / B / C

Evidence gaps / follow-up owner

Keep the scale consistent

For double-weighted questions, divide the weighted sum by the total question weights. Do not confuse the 0–5 criterion score with the weighted result out of 100.

Evaluate the evidence: 1–12

Request written answers and supporting documents. Score each answer from 0 to 5 using page 6. Record evidence gaps in the notes below.

No.	Question	Evidence to look for	0–5
A. Delivery model and accountability (8 questions)			
1	Which legal entity will be our contracting party, and in which country is it registered?	A named entity with registration details	
2	For each country, who performs the payroll calculation: your employees, a partner or a subcontractor?	A country-by-country explanation of delivery, oversight, and contractual responsibility	
3	If a partner performs the work, who holds the liability toward us, and is it written in the contract?	One accountable contracting party with a defined service standard and change-control process	
4	Who is our named contact, what is their experience in each of our countries, and what is the backup?	Named people with tenure and a deputy	
5	How many clients does each payroll specialist handle?	A stated ratio, not "it depends"	
6	What share of your payroll team is based in the country of the payroll?	A percentage with headcount	
7	How do you handle a country you do not currently cover?	A defined onboarding path with timelines	
8	Which of our countries would you not recommend serving yourself?	Honest limits, no "we cover everything"	
B. Local statutory accuracy (8 questions)			
9	How do you track and implement statutory changes, and how fast?	A monitoring process, accountable role, and change-notice procedure	
10	Show how Law No. 7566 changed your Turkish calculation parameters in January 2026.	Before and after parameters, implementation date	
11	How do you apply the Treasury-funded SGK premium discount and who verifies eligibility?	A defined method and a review step	
12	How do you handle end-of-service payments in each country (Turkish severance, Gulf end-of-service)?	A calculation method per country with sample output	

Evidence gaps and follow-up

Question number / document to request

Owner / follow-up date

Evaluate the evidence: 13–24

Request written answers and supporting documents. Score each answer from 0 to 5 using page 6. Record evidence gaps in the notes below.

No.	Question	Evidence to look for	0–5
B. Local statutory accuracy (8 questions)			
13	What statutory filings do you submit for us, and what is the cut-off for each?	A filing calendar per country	
14	What is your process when a filing is rejected by the authority?	Defined response time and owner	
15	Provide your last three regulatory corrections and how you notified clients.	Real examples with dates	
16	Who signs off the payroll before release and what do they check?	A named role and a checklist	
C. Security and data protection (8 questions)			
17	Which independent assurance reports do you hold (ISAE 3402, SOC 1 or SOC 2 Type II, and ISO 27001), and for what scope?	Current reports covering the services we buy	
18	Where will our employee data be stored and processed, by country?	A reviewed data map and applicable privacy and transfer commitments	
19	How do you disclose subprocessors and manage changes under applicable data-protection requirements?	Required disclosures, documented safeguards, and an agreed change-notice process	
20	How do you meet Saudi PDPL and EU GDPR transfer requirements for our data?	Named transfer mechanisms and contract clauses	
21	How is access to payroll data controlled, logged and reviewed?	Role-based access, quarterly review, log retention period	
22	What are your recovery time and recovery point objectives?	Stated RTO and RPO with last test date	
23	How quickly do you notify us of a security incident?	A contracted hour limit	
24	What happens to our data at contract end?	Return format, deletion timeline, certificate of deletion	

Evidence gaps and follow-up

Question number / document to request

Owner / follow-up date

Evaluate the evidence: 25–36

Request written answers and supporting documents. Score each answer from 0 to 5 using page 6. Record evidence gaps in the notes below.

No.	Question	Evidence to look for	0–5
D. Technology and integration (7 questions)			
25	List every integration you support with our ERP, HRIS and bank.	Named connectors, live clients	
26	How do payroll results reach our general ledger, and how often?	Mapped journal output per cycle	
27	What reports do we get out of the box for headcount, cost and pay equity?	Sample reports, including cross-country views	
28	How do employees access payslips and submit queries?	Portal or app demo, language support	
29	How do you handle a mid-cycle change received after cut-off?	A defined off-cycle process and fee	
30	What is your release schedule and how do you notify us of changes?	Calendar and change-notice period	
31	Can we export all historic payroll data in a usable format at any time?	Yes, with format and lead time	
E. Service levels and support (7 questions)			
32	Which SLA metrics will you commit to in the contract?	Accuracy, on-time delivery, query response, incident notice	
33	How do you define a payroll error and how do you count it?	A written definition and counting method	
34	What service credits or remedies apply when you miss an SLA?	A credit schedule, not "we will review"	
35	What is your query response and resolution time for employees and for HR?	Targets by priority level	
36	What are your support hours, languages and time zones?	Coverage matching our countries	

Evidence gaps and follow-up

Question number / document to request

Owner / follow-up date

Evaluate the evidence: 37–48

Request written answers and supporting documents. Score each answer from 0 to 5 using page 6. Record evidence gaps in the notes below.

No.	Question	Evidence to look for	0–5
E. Service levels and support (7 questions)			
37	How do you escalate, and who is the executive sponsor?	Named escalation path	
38	Show your service report for a comparable client for the last 12 months.	An anonymized report with real trend data	
F. Implementation and transition (7 questions)			
39	What is the implementation plan by country and how long does each take?	A dated plan with dependencies	
40	Who from your team runs our implementation, and are they in the proposal team?	Named lead who attended the demos	
41	How do you run the parallel payroll and what tolerance counts as a pass?	One or more cycles, a stated variance tolerance	
42	How do you migrate year-to-date balances and employee master data?	A defined template and validation step	
43	What do you need from us, by when?	A responsibility matrix	
44	What was your worst implementation in the last two years, and what did you change?	An honest account with corrective action	
45	What is the go-live decision process?	Criteria and joint sign-off	
G. Commercials and price transparency (8 questions)			
46	Provide all fees: setup, per-payslip, off-cycle, year-end, filings, reporting, support.	A complete price schedule	
47	Which services are excluded and charged separately?	A listed exclusions schedule	
48	In which currency is each fee quoted and invoiced?	Local currency at source, FX method stated	

Evidence gaps and follow-up

Question number / document to request

Owner / follow-up date

Evaluate the evidence: 49–60

Request written answers and supporting documents. Score each answer from 0 to 5 using page 6. Record evidence gaps in the notes below.

No.	Question	Evidence to look for	0–5
G. Commercials and price transparency (8 questions)			
49	How are fees indexed, and what is the annual cap?	A stated index and cap	
50	What happens to fees if our headcount drops by 30 percent?	Defined minimums and tiers	
51	What are the termination fees and the notice period?	Clear terms, no lock-in penalties hidden in schedules	
52	Is there an exit assistance fee and what does it cover?	A fixed scope and price	
53	What would make your price rise in year two?	A short, specific list	
H. References and exit (7 questions)			
54	Give three references of similar size and country mix, including one that left you.	Contactable references, including a departure	
55	What is your client retention rate and how do you calculate it?	A number and a method	
56	What is your annual revenue band and ownership structure?	Disclosed band and owners	
57	Have you had a regulatory sanction, major data breach or litigation in five years?	Full disclosure with outcome	
58	What awards or independent recognition have you earned, and from whom?	Third-party named, verifiable	
59	If we leave, what is the exit plan, timeline and our deliverables?	A written exit plan with dates	
60	What is the one thing a customer would criticize about working with you?	A specific, credible answer	

Evidence gaps and follow-up

Question number / document to request

Owner / follow-up date

Make service levels measurable

Use country calendars and incident priorities to agree operational terms.

A payroll SLA that cannot be measured is a promise, and a promise cannot be enforced.

Published benchmarks vary widely, so your SLA must define every metric itself. Typical payroll KPIs include error frequency, off-cycle payments, query response time and time to resolve issues.

The metrics to contract

Metric	Sample target	Measured how	Remedy
Payslips correct at first release	99.5 percent or higher per cycle	1 minus (errors found by client or employee within 30 days, divided by payslips issued)	Service credit on fees
Payroll funded and filed on time	100 percent of statutory deadlines	Filing receipts against the filing calendar	Vendor pays penalties it caused
Query first response	Agreed by incident priority and country support hours	Time received to first substantive response	Agreed remedy by priority
Query resolution	Agreed by priority, with escalation before payroll cut-off	Resolution and escalation log	Agreed remedy by priority
Security incident notice	Applicable legal deadline and agreed contractual escalation	Discovery and notification log	Contractual remedy without limiting statutory duties
Statutory change implemented	Before the first affected cycle	Change log	Vendor corrects at its cost

All numeric targets and time periods in this section are illustrative negotiation inputs. Agree the actual measures, exceptions, reporting calendar, and remedies with legal counsel and payroll operations.

Define the measurement before the target

Scope

Country, service, pay cycle, and which party owns each step.

Clock

Start time, support hours, cut-offs, exclusions, and incident priority.

Evidence

Filing receipts, query logs, corrections, and monthly service reports.

Remedy

Escalation, correction, credit, and any repeated-breach provisions.

Put responsibility into the contract

Sample wording to review with counsel, not a universal contract template.

The wording below is a drafting starting point. Have your counsel adapt it to your jurisdiction.

Definition of error. "Payroll Error" means any payment, deduction, contribution or filing that differs from the correct amount under applicable law and the Customer's approved instructions, regardless of the cause, unless the cause is incorrect or late data supplied by the Customer in breach of the agreed cut-off.

Accountability. "The Supplier is responsible for the acts and omissions of its subcontractors and partners as for its own and retains the agreed service standard if its delivery arrangements change. Required partner and subprocessor disclosures will follow applicable law and the agreed change-control process."

Penalties and interest. "The Supplier will reimburse any statutory penalty, interest or fine caused by a Payroll Error or missed filing for which the Supplier is responsible."

Data protection. "The Supplier will comply with applicable data-protection and transfer requirements, document the agreed processing arrangements, and follow the notice and approval procedures in the data processing agreement before a material change."

Exit. "On termination for any reason, the Supplier will deliver all payroll data in a structured, commonly used format within 30 days and will provide transition assistance for up to 90 days at the rates in Schedule Z."

Worked Example: - Contract: 1,000 payslips per month, first-release accuracy target 99.5 percent. - Allowed errors: 5 per month. - Month result: 12 errors found within 30 days. Accuracy: 98.8 percent. - Effect: the SLA is breached by 7 errors, so the service credit applies. Without a written error definition, the vendor would argue that 8 of the 12 were data changes received late.

Risk: Credits are a symbolic remedy. The clauses that protect you are the ones that make the vendor pay for penalties it caused and give you the right to terminate for repeated breach.

Record the points for counsel

Clause	Open term / required change	Reviewer
Error definition		
Supplier accountability		
Penalties and interest		
Data protection		
Exit and assistance		

Test the red flags before signature

Most payroll disappointments are visible in the RFP, but only if you know where to look.

The flags below come from procurement practice, not from any single vendor. Each has a test you can run before signature.

Red flag	What it usually means	Test during the RFP
"We cover 100 countries" with no list of who performs the work	Coverage alone does not establish service accountability	Questions 2 and 3: test country delivery, oversight, and contractual responsibility
The sales team answers every question and delivery staff never appear	The people you meet will not run your account	Ask to interview the implementation lead and a payroll specialist
No written error definition	Disputes over what counts as a miss	Question 33, and compare to your definition
Price is a single blended fee	Add-ons will appear after signature	Questions 46 and 47: demand the full schedule
Fees quoted in a foreign currency for local payroll	FX margin inside the price	Question 48: ask for the FX method
Support through a ticket queue only	Slow resolution when a filing deadline is hours away	Ask for the average resolution time for a deadline-critical issue
Only a Type I report, or a report that excludes payroll services	Evidence may not cover the service or period you need	Question 17: check scope and period
Subprocessors not listed	Privacy review may lack required disclosures or transfer safeguards	Question 19
Reluctance to run a parallel cycle	Output cannot match your current results	Make parallel run a contract condition
References are all small or all from one country	The vendor has not run a case like yours	Question 54: ask for a client that left
Exit terms are vague or fee-heavy	Switching later will be costly	Questions 51 to 53 and 59

Two scenarios that show the pattern

The resold country. A group signs a multi-country contract and learns in month three that its Gulf payroll is processed by a subcontractor that the vendor's contract does not name. A WPS file is rejected, the penalty lands on the employer, and the vendor points to the partner. The contract should keep responsibility with the lead supplier, set a consistent country service standard, and define remedies for supplier-caused failures. Legal counsel must check whether the proposed remedy is enforceable.

The quiet price rise. A buyer accepts a flat monthly fee. In the second year the vendor invoices separately for off-cycle runs, year-end filings and reporting, none of which the proposal listed as extras. The fix is cheap and early: require a complete price schedule and a statement of exclusions in the RFP response.

> **Expert Take:** The strongest single signal is how a bidder behaves when you ask for something awkward. A bidder that welcomes a parallel run, names a weakness and documents its responsibilities is usually a bidder that will behave the same way under pressure.

Check the scoring in practice

Numbers settle arguments, so here is the arithmetic applied to a realistic shortlist.

Assume a group with 400 employees in Turkey and 200 in two Gulf countries. Three bidders reach the final round. The scores below are illustrative.

Criterion	Weight	Bidder A (global platform)	Bidder B (regional specialist)	Bidder C (low-cost local)
Local statutory accuracy	20	3	5	4
Delivery model and accountability	15	2	4	3
Security and data protection	15	5	4	2
Technology and integration	12	5	3	2
Service levels and support	12	3	4	3
Implementation and transition	10	3	4	3
Commercials and price transparency	10	3	4	5
References and financial stability	6	5	3	2

The weighted score is the sum of (score / 5) times weight.

Bidder	Calculation	Weighted score
A	12.0 + 6.0 + 15.0 + 12.0 + 7.2 + 6.0 + 6.0 + 6.0	**70.2**
B	20.0 + 12.0 + 12.0 + 7.2 + 9.6 + 8.0 + 8.0 + 3.6	**80.4**
C	16.0 + 9.0 + 6.0 + 4.8 + 7.2 + 6.0 + 10.0 + 2.4	**61.4**

Bidder B wins on the criteria that carry the highest weights, even though Bidder A has better technology and security scores. Suppose Bidder A raised its accountability score from 2 to 4 by demonstrating stronger country oversight and contractual accountability. Its total would rise by 6 points to 76.2 and still trail B. That tells you where to press in the negotiation.

> **Key Finding:** Run a sensitivity check. Change each weight by plus or minus 5 points and see whether the winner changes. If it does, your decision depends on a judgment call that deserves discussion in the panel, not buried in a spreadsheet.
> **Action:** Record the scores, the rationale and the date in a decision memo. Your auditor and your future successor will both ask for it.

Record the decision and handover

Close the checklist before signature. Record the owner and evidence for any item still open.

- [ ] Scorecard weights were locked and recorded before proposals were opened.
- [ ] Every bidder answered all 60 questions in writing, with evidence.
- [ ] Gates were passed: contracting responsibility, required local registrations, data processing agreement, and appropriate independent assurance.
- [ ] A country scope table defines delivery responsibilities, oversight, and any required legal registrations.
- [ ] The lead supplier remains accountable for delivery, with consistent service standards and an agreed process for delivery changes.
- [ ] Reference calls included a client of similar size and one client that left.
- [ ] One parallel payroll cycle matched within the agreed tolerance.
- [ ] The SLA defines "error," lists the metrics, and states remedies.
- [ ] The contract passes statutory penalties caused by the vendor back to the vendor.
- [ ] Privacy commitments, required disclosures, transfer safeguards, and change-notice procedures are documented.
- [ ] The full price schedule includes exclusions, indexation and a headcount-change clause.
- [ ] Exit terms specify data format, timeline and assistance scope.
- [ ] A decision memo records scores, sensitivity check and rationale.

Selected bidder / decision date

Outstanding condition / owner / due date

Approval / handover to implementation

Work through the RFP with Datassist

Datassist has delivered Turkey payroll since 1999 and coordinates MENA partners under a GMFA, country letters of engagement, and agreed SLAs. Bring the scorecard, country scope, and unresolved questions to your review.

Discuss your payroll RFP ↗

This guide is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal or tax advice. Sample contract wording is a drafting starting point and should be reviewed by qualified counsel. For binding determinations, consult Turkish official sources (resmigazete.gov.tr, sgk.gov.tr) or a qualified advisor. Regulations cited are current checked on November 6, 2026.