

THE FUTURE OF ECONOMIC SECURITY: NEW CHALLENGES AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTIONS

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20738578>

Israilova Dilduza Karimovna

Professor, Department of Economics,

Doctor of Economic Sciences

"University of Economics and Pedagogy" (NOTM)

Abstract: *Background: Economic security is undergoing a paradigm shift due to globalization, digitalization, climate change, and geopolitical instability. Objective: This study analyzes new and emerging threats to economic security in Uzbekistan and proposes strategic development directions. Methods: The research employs a theoretical analysis of contemporary economic security literature, strategic forecasting methods, and a review of national development strategies. Results: Key findings indicate that digital sovereignty, climate-induced resource scarcity, the paradox of globalization, and rapid socio-technological change constitute primary threats. Conclusion: The future of economic security depends on transitioning from a reactive defense model to a proactive adaptive system based on human capital, digital infrastructure, and climate resilience.*

Keywords: *economic security, digital sovereignty, climate change, globalization, strategic foresight, Uzbekistan.*

INTRODUCTION

The concept of economic security is undergoing a fundamental transformation as global interdependence, technological progress, and the relationship with nature reach unprecedented levels. Traditionally, economic security was understood as the protection of national economic independence and stability within sovereign borders, as reflected in the foundational works of Senchagov (2007) and Tatarkin and Lvov (2005). However, contemporary realities demand a broader, multi-layered interpretation encompassing not only national but also regional, global, and even human security dimensions, a perspective supported by scholars such as Glazyev (1993) and Oleynikov (2005). For Uzbekistan, this theoretical shift is particularly relevant, as the country is navigating not only global volatility but also its own profound socio-economic transformation. The central research problem addressed in this article is the identification of new challenges to Uzbekistan's economic security in the twenty-first century and the formulation of strategic directions to address them. The aim of this study is to identify emerging threats ranging from digital vulnerabilities and climate risks to global supply chain disruptions and social change, and to propose a comprehensive framework for enhancing Uzbekistan's economic resilience and adaptability. Figure 1 provides a visual summary of the conceptual framework underpinning this study, illustrating the shift from a traditional stability-based approach to an adaptive

security model, the key challenges identified, the strategic directions proposed, and the proactive governance tools required for implementation.

Economic Security of Uzbekistan

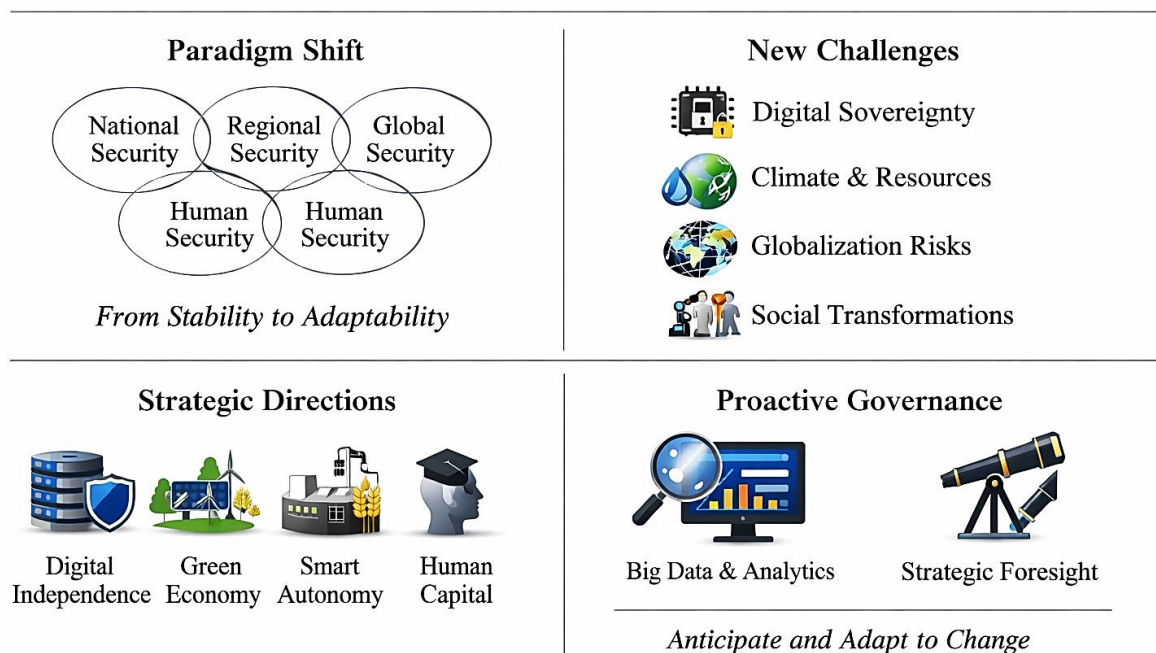


Figure 1. Economic Security of Uzbekistan

Methods. This study is based on a qualitative theoretical analysis employing several complementary methodological approaches. The first approach involved a systematic review of foundational and contemporary works on economic security, including Russian-language scholarship by Senchagov (2007), Tatarkin and Lvov (2005), Glazyev (1993), and Oleynikov (2005), as well as national sources such as Norkulov (2017) and Israilova (2023). The second approach consisted of policy document analysis, specifically the examination of Uzbekistan's national development strategies, particularly the Strategy for the Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030 (2023), to assess current policy priorities and identify existing gaps. The third approach applied strategic foresight and scenario analysis methodologies, utilizing big data analytics principles to project potential future risks and identify proactive policy responses. Finally, an interdisciplinary synthesis was employed, integrating perspectives from economics, technology, environmental science, and sociology to capture the multidimensional nature of contemporary security challenges. The analytical framework focused on four key threat clusters identified as critical for Uzbekistan: digital sovereignty and cyber risks; climate change and resource security; the paradox of globalization; and socio-demographic and technological disruption.

Results. The analysis reveals four major new challenges to Uzbekistan's economic security that require urgent attention. The first challenge concerns digital sovereignty and cyber threats. The rapid digitalization of Uzbekistan's economy, while offering significant growth opportunities, has introduced considerable vulnerabilities. Control over data, algorithms, and digital infrastructure now constitutes a primary source of economic power,

surpassing many material resources in strategic importance. Key risks include dependence on foreign cloud platforms and jurisdictions for data storage, insufficient domestic digital companies and limited national IT infrastructure, growing cyber threats including attacks on critical information systems, and a shortage of skilled specialists in artificial intelligence, big data, and cybersecurity.

The second major challenge is climate change and resource security. Central Asia faces acute water scarcity, which directly threatens agriculture, energy production, and regional stability. In addition, the global "green transition" and decarbonization trends are fundamentally restructuring energy markets and trade flows. For Uzbekistan, this creates a dual challenge: adapting to environmental constraints while simultaneously transforming a traditionally resource-intensive economy into a more sustainable and resilient system.

The third challenge is the paradox of globalization. Global supply chain restructuring and rising geopolitical tensions present a difficult dilemma for developing economies. Deep integration into global markets is essential for access to technology and competitiveness, yet strategic autonomy in critical sectors such as food, energy, and healthcare remains imperative. This tension requires a delicate balancing act between openness and self-sufficiency, a challenge that is particularly acute for Uzbekistan as it seeks to expand its international economic engagement while safeguarding national interests.

The fourth challenge stems from rapid socio-technological change. Artificial intelligence, automation, demographic shifts, and labor migration are transforming employment patterns and social stability at an unprecedented pace. Traditional models of social protection and workforce development are under increasing pressure, demanding a new approach based on continuous learning, adaptability, and enhanced human capital investment.

Discussion. The results of this analysis indicate that Uzbekistan's economic security strategy must evolve from a static, defensive posture to a dynamic, proactive framework capable of anticipating and adapting to emerging threats. Based on the identified challenges, several strategic development directions are proposed. The first strategic direction is ensuring digital sovereignty, which requires significant investment in national digital infrastructure and domestic digital platforms, strengthening data protection and cybersecurity legislation, and developing educational programs to train specialists in artificial intelligence, big data, and cloud computing. Without these measures, Uzbekistan risks becoming dependent on foreign technological providers and vulnerable to cyber threats that could undermine critical economic functions.

The second strategic direction is the transition to a climate-resilient economy. This involves implementing integrated water resource management systems to address the growing scarcity of water in Central Asia, diversifying renewable energy sources to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and mitigate environmental degradation, promoting climate-adaptive agricultural practices, and adopting circular economy models that minimize waste and maximize resource efficiency. These measures are essential not only for environmental sustainability but also for long-term economic stability and competitiveness.

The third strategic direction is adopting a "smart autonomy" foreign economic strategy. This approach requires balancing global economic integration with strategic self-sufficiency in critical sectors, orienting import substitution policies toward enhancing export competitiveness, and diversifying trade and investment partners to reduce overdependence on any single market or country. Such a strategy enables Uzbekistan to participate in global value chains while maintaining the capacity to withstand external shocks and geopolitical pressures.

The fourth strategic direction is building human capital-based security. This entails modernizing education and healthcare systems to meet new technological realities, strengthening social safety nets and lifelong learning opportunities to support workers displaced by automation and structural change, and enhancing institutional capacity for crisis response and social resilience. A well-educated, healthy, and adaptable population is the most reliable foundation for economic security in an uncertain world.

The fifth and cross-cutting strategic direction is implementing proactive governance and strategic foresight. This requires establishing early warning systems for emerging economic risks, using big data analytics and econometric modeling for real-time monitoring, and adopting foresight methodologies for long-term strategic planning. The study confirms that economic security in the twenty-first century is not merely about financial stability or military protection but fundamentally about knowledge, technology, and adaptability. Uzbekistan's success will depend on its ability to anticipate change, invest in human capital, and actively participate in shaping global norms rather than passively responding to them.

Conclusion. This article has demonstrated that the future of economic security for Uzbekistan is more complex and multifaceted than traditional models suggest. New threats including digital vulnerabilities, climate-induced resource scarcity, the paradox of globalization, and rapid socio-technological disruption require a fundamental shift in strategic thinking. The transition from a defensive model focused primarily on protecting against threats to an adaptive, proactive system that uses global changes as opportunities for development is essential. This transition involves strengthening digital sovereignty and cybersecurity, building climate resilience and resource efficiency, balancing global integration with strategic autonomy, investing in human capital and social adaptability, and implementing strategic foresight and risk management systems. While Uzbekistan is at an early stage in developing these capacities, the urgency of climate change, global instability, and technological disruption necessitates accelerated action. The ultimate goal is to construct an economy that not only survives global challenges but actively participates in shaping a more stable and prosperous future. Strategic foresight and risk management represent the most complex, responsible, and essential areas of economic security. Although the future cannot be known with certainty, preparation is both possible and necessary. Crises strike the prepared less severely, and Uzbekistan must urgently develop its forecasting and risk management systems to navigate the turbulent decades ahead.

REFERENCES:

1. Senchagov, V.K. (2007). Economic Security: Geopolitics, Globalization, Self-Preservation and Development. Moscow: ZAO "Finstatinform".
2. Tatarkin, A.I., & Lvov, D.S. et al. (2005). Economic Security of Russia: General Course. Moscow: Delo.
3. Glazyev, S.Yu. (1993). Theory of Long-Term Techno-Economic Development. Moscow: VlaDar.
4. Oleynikov, E.A. (2005). Economic and National Security. Moscow: Ekzamen.
5. Norkulov, N.K. (2017). Security Aspects of Uzbekistan's Foreign Economic Activity. Tashkent: Iqtisodiyot.
6. Israilova, D.K. (2023). Improving the Methodology for Regulating External Labor Migration in Uzbekistan. (Doctoral dissertation).
7. Strategy for the Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030. (2023). Tashkent.