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Issues of Ensuring the Economic Security of the Northern Regions of Russia¹

Problemas para garantizar la seguridad económica de las regiones del norte de Rusia

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RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta los resultados de la investigación de la seguridad económica actual en la región norte de Rusia. El documento cubre la influencia del sistema de Iniciativa Tecnológica Nacional de Rusia sobre la seguridad económica en el Okrug Autónomo Khanty-Mansi - Ugra. El objetivo principal del estudio es explorar los problemas y las perspectivas para garantizar la seguridad económica en las regiones productoras de petróleo y gas del norte de Rusia como un curso prioritario de la política del gobierno en la región norte. Los autores realizaron un análisis del sistema y evaluaron los objetivos científicos y técnicos, tecnológicos e innovadores del desarrollo económico regional.

Palabras clave: Regiones del norte, seguridad económica, complejo de energía y combustible, innovación y desarrollo.

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the results of research of the current economic security in the northern region of Russia. The paper covers the influence of the National Technological Initiative system of Russia on economic security in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Ugra. The main aim of the study is to explore the issues and prospects for ensuring economic security in the northern oil-and-gas producing regions of Russia as a course of priority of the policy of the government in the northern region. The authors conducted a system analysis and assessed the scientific and technical, technological, and innovative objectives of the regional economic development.

Keywords: northern regions, economic security, fuel and energy complex, innovative development.

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INTRODUCCIÓN

The issue of ensuring economic security in Russia is relevant virtually for all regions of the country. This is explained by the fact that economic security of the northern regions producing single raw materials plays a critical role in economic modernization of Russia, improving the standard of living of the population, employment creation, developing modern high-technology infrastructure of the Russian economy. The RF Economic Security Strategy until 2030 notes a special position of the Russian economy in the context of “objective evidence of destruction of the unipolar world. The transformation towards multipolarity is accompanied by geopolitical instability and unsustainable world economic development as well as by exacerbating global competition” (“On the Russian Federation Economic Security Strategy Until 2030”, 2017).

The Russian economy has ambitious aims to maintain and develop economic security based on digitalization of the economy and the technological breakthrough, which is supposed to be accomplished in the nearest period until the year 2035, which consist in development of the scientific and engineering initiative and entering of Russia into the world technological markets. This was announced by the President of Russia Vladimir Putin: “We shall not be able to pass to the next technological formation without digital economy. Without this transition to a new technological formation, the Russian economy, and this means the country, has no future.” (Live session with Vladimir Putin, 2017).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Economic security is an object of research by many native and foreign scientists. This is explained by the demands of the contemporary economy to the scientific community.

The contemporary native scientific doctrine has developed many definitions of economic security, some of which differ essentially. According to Academician L. I. Abalkin, economic security is an aggregate of the conditions and factors providing independence of the national economy, its stability, and ability of constant renovation and self-improvement, which, from this point of view, was studied by many scientists – economists (Iashin and Puzov, 2006). According to some researchers, economic security of Russia is such a state of the economy, in which social tension inside the society is relieved by means of growth of the population welfare, raising of the prestige of the country at the global level (Tropin, 2004; Senchagov, 2012).

It is worth noting that an attempt to give a definition of economic security at the law-making level was made for the first time in the Federal law dated October 13, 1995. No. 157-FZ “On the regulation by the government of the foreign trade activity”, in which it is indicated that economic security is the state of the economy ensuring a sufficient level of the social, political and defense existence, progressive development of the Russian Federation, and invulnerability of its economic interests with respect to possible external and internal threats and impacts.

The contemporary understanding of economic security is related to the transformation crisis accompanied by recession in manufacture, destruction of the system of interconnections in the industries (Listopad, 2011), and adoption of the State Economic Security Strategy of the Russian Federation in 1996, where economic security has acquired the State status. Many definitions of economic security were formed during this period, the key parameter in which was the term “protection” (Orlova, 2012).

“Such a state of the economy and the power institutions, under which guaranteed protection of the national interests, socially oriented development of the country as a whole, sufficient defense potential are ensured, even under unfavorable conditions for development of the external and internal processes” is understood as economic security at the governmental level (Senchagov, 2008).

Economic security as “a state of protection of the national economy against external and internal threats, under which economic sovereignty of the country, unity of its economic space, conditions for the implementation of the strategic national priorities of the Russian Federation are ensured” (“On the Russian

Federation Economic Security Strategy Until 2030", 2017) was used in their works by many contemporary scientists-economists (V. F. Islamutdinov, A. N. Ustyuzhantseva, L. L. Bogomolova, A. B. Zelenskaia, R. K. Araslanov, I. V. Takmasheva).

Virtually no analysis of the latest theoretical and practical research and publications, in which the issues of ensuring economic security in relation to the National Technological Initiative would be examined, has been made.

METHODOLOGY

Scientific research on development of theoretical and methodological bases of ensuring economic security on the basis of developing the National Technological Initiative (NTI) at the regional level has been conducted using the economic methods of comparative and systems analyses and statistics using the common economic methods of the situation analysis and of forecasting economic processes.

The following methods were applied by the authors during this research:

The statistical methods were used for research of the northern regions' economic security indicators (indices, coefficients, and other economic security parameters); comparative analysis (technical analysis) was one of the main methods used in the research for economic evaluation of the dynamics and the structure of changes in the basic indicators and for diagnostics of ensuring economic security of the northern region; content analysis was applied in the research to study documents: orders, normative documents, the road maps of the government of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Ugra, the region economy development strategies and programs, forecasts, statistical data and memoranda.

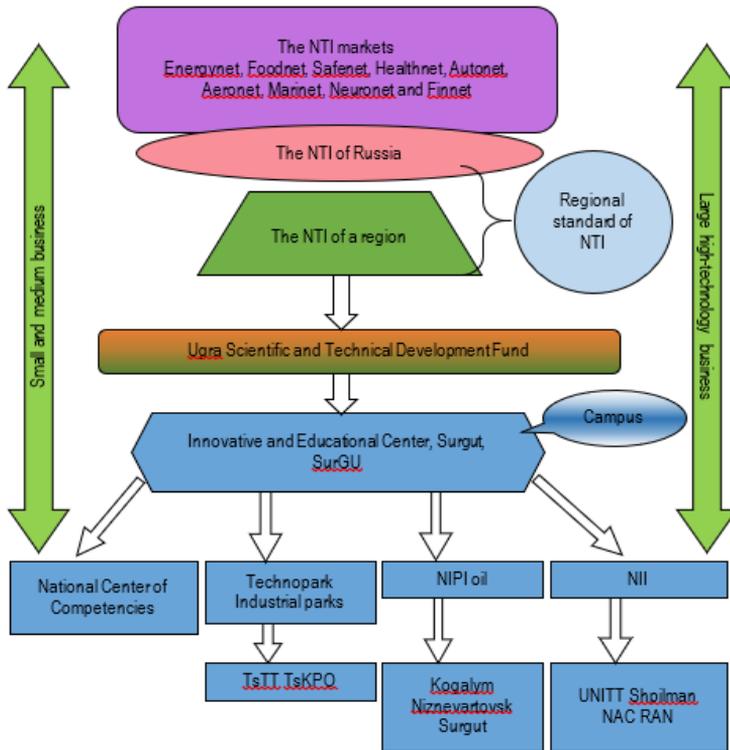
The data were visualized using the table and graphical methods. The trustworthiness of the information base of the research is confirmed by using the indicators of the northern region economy development from official publications (programs, reports, strategies normative law acts, analytical memoranda) and the statistical repertoires of the Federal State Statistics Service as data sources.

RESULTS

Creation of a balanced Russian system of the NTI and the technological breakthrough in the economy of the regions are possible on the basis of regulation and support by the State. Creation of the NTI of the northern oil-and-gas producing regions can become an effective lever for ensuring the economic security of the regional economy on the basis of uniting all the contemporary priorities of the Russian economy development: digitalization, innovative development, and the technological breakthrough.

These things will become the results of setting up and development of the NTI at the regional level:

- Raising of the economic security of the region on the basis of creation of a high-technology enterprises system.
- Entering by the region with its projects into the central system of the NTI of Russia.
- Development and implementation of the system of actions ("road maps") within the NTI of the region.
- Development of the state support system for creation of the NTI: granting of subsidies from the federal budget.
- Ensuring the key market direction of the implementation of the NTI and entry into the markets: Energy net, Food net, Safe net, Health net, Auto net, Aero net, Marine net, Neuro net and Finance net at the regional level (Figure 1).



NIPI oil – Oil and Gas Research and Design Institute

NII – Research and Design Institute

TsTT – Technologies transfer center

TsKPO – Equipment Collective Use Centers

UNIIT – Ugra Research Institute of Information Technologies

Shpilman NAC RAN – Shpilman Scientific and Analytical Center of Rational Use of the Entrails of the Earth

Figure 1. Infrastructure transformations in formation of the scientific and technological and innovative activity of the region

The infrastructure transformations in the scientific and technological system of the region will allow to implement the message of the President of Russia to create NTIs in the regions based on creation of regional innovative and venture startups with a high level of payback and creation of high-intellect personnel reserve of the regions.

DISCUSSION

Achievement of such a complex aim as formation and ensuring the economic security of the northern regions encounters certain challenges and threats, and the issues and the limitations of the economic security of the regions have virtually not changed both at the federal and the regional levels during the period of the implementation of the RF Economic Security Strategy until 2030 (Table 1).

The single-product development of the northern regions of Russia, for example, the accumulation of natural, financial resources, human capital at the production of a single end product, single activity (auth.), for example, crude oil production (code of OKVED (2019) (Economic Activities Classifier of Russia)) draws away the main resources thus slowing down the development of parallel industries, which requires significant resources for diversification of the economy.

The prevailing role of the FEC in the development of the northern territories also belongs to the limitations of economic security. Development of the FEC influences directly both the filling of the budgets with taxes and the development of the social sector, and the state of economic security as well, in particular such basic parameters as the volumes of investments into gross regional product and the specific weight of the investments into the fixed capital of the region.

Besides this, the following limitations of governmental centrist nature influence the ensuring of the regions' economic security, specifically:

- The power bodies of the Federation constituents ignore the real needs of the management environment or impose unclaimed regulation technologies and forms of their management;
- The decisions being taken and the links being formed have short-term nature and cannot influence solving of strategic tasks (Bogomolova et al., 2018).

Comparison of the issues of insuring economic security on the basis of the strategic documents of Russia showed that both documents were tightly related to the FEC of the country and its role for the economy of Russia and its regions (Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of the internal issues and limitations of insuring economic security based on the strategic documents of Russia

RF Economic Security Strategy until 2030 ("On the Russian Federation Economic Security Strategy until 2030", 2017)	Russia Power Strategy until 2035 (Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation dated November 13, 2009. No. 1715-r and Russia Power Strategy until 2035)
exhaustion of the raw materials export model of economic development, abrupt lowering of the role of the traditional economic growth	low competitiveness and the raw materials export model of development of the Russian economy, in consequence of which the FEC is subject to high tax and customs duties and tariffs load
insufficient amount of investments into the real sector of economy conditions	limited possibilities of attraction of the available long-term financial resources
weak innovative activity, falling behind in development and introduction of new and promising technologies (including those of the digital economy)	technological lagging of certain segments of the Russian FEC behind the advanced level and excessive dependence on import of certain types of equipment, materials and services
exhaustion of the resources of the fuel-and-raw materials industries as the functioning deposits are gradually being exhausted	deterioration of the resources of the fuel industries

Source: composed by the authors based on the strategic documents of the RF

The issues and limitations of economic security are mainly related to the threats of economic nature and decrease, exhaustion of the resources of the fuel-and-energy industries. Besides, the northern territories of Russia differ significantly in their regional features, which are characteristic only of these territories.

Northern regions in all countries of the world are the major economic areas. As a rule, these regions have rich natural resource potential. However, they are characterized with specific social-economic and natural climatic conditions, which often very adversely affect people (Bogomolova et al., 2017).

The Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Ugra is a northern region with grandiose deposits of useful minerals, the main merit of which is oil production. The region possesses the colossal potential of 12.1 billion tons of technologically extractable deposits; however, 1.9 billion tons of oil reserves recoverable with difficulties are in the pools exhausted by less than 1 % (VYGON Consulting, 2018).

Division of the Russian economy into donor regions and recipient regions presumes a different look at economic security and ensuring of it from the position of protection against external threats to the regional economy, of strategic tasks and priorities of development. In this sense the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Ugra is economically stronger region, which belongs to donor regions, and it can a priori be classified as a region with a high level of sustainability, with stable economic security (Table 2).

Table 2. Parameters of the state of economic security of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Ugra

Indicator	2015		2016		2017		Threshold value	Growth rate	
	RF	Ugra	RF	Ugra	RF	Ugra		RF	Ugra
Volumes of investments in GDP/GRP, %	19,6	24,4	17	25	17,3	27	-	88,27	110,66
Index of the physical volume of GDP/GRP, %	97,2	98,2	99,8	100	102	100	-	105,04	101,83
Share of investments into the fixed capital in GDP/GRP, %	20	24,3	21,2	26,4	21,4	26,9	25	107,00	110,70
Coefficient of tension at the labor market	0,6	0,8	0,64	0,6	0,54	0,5	-	90,00	62,50
Share of innovative goods, works, and services in the total volume, %	8,4	0,3	8,5	0,4	7,2	0,5	not less than 30	85,71	166,67
Share of high-technology and science-intensive product in GDP/GRP, %	20,2	6,1	20,7	6,4	21,2	6,5	-	104,9	106,5
Share of organizations that implement technological innovations, %	8,3	3,6	7,3	4,5	7,5	4,7	-	90,36	130,56
Share of innovative goods, works, and services in the total volume of export of the goods, works, services by the industrial manufacture enterprises	8,9	-	8,4	-	7,1	-	-	79,78	-
Share of the population, which has revenues lower than the subsistence level, %	13,3	12,8	13,3	13	13,2	11,1	7	99,25	86,72
Unemployment level, %	5,6	4,4	5,5	4,5	5,2	3,3	7	92,86	75,00

Source: composed by the authors based on (Rosstat, 2018; Helpiks.org, 2019; Cyberpedia, 2019; Filatova, 2016)

Nevertheless, analysis of the basic indices of economic security of Ugra showed that against the background of the growth of GRP per head by 1.55 %, of the index of the physical volume of GRP by 1.83 %, and with the volumes of investments in GRP being higher by 10.6 %, and the total investments in Russia being higher by 22.39 %, while the industrial manufacture index grew insignificantly by leaps and the labor productivity index descended, the economy of the autonomous district underwent significant changes in the

innovative and technological spheres. It is enough to note that the fixed assets consumption degree on average during the past three years has stayed at a very low level, and was equal to 69.26 %, which exceeds the threshold value virtually 2.3 times. The share of innovative goods, works on average is insignificant during the period being studied, and makes only 6.3 % of the total volume of the shipped goods, performed works, and provided services, although it tends to grow. The share of organizations which implement technological innovations is also insignificant – only 4.2 % of the total number of enterprises implement innovations in the technological sphere, which is only four of every 100 enterprises applying renewed technologies. Export of innovative goods, works and services is in general absent in the region (Figure 2).

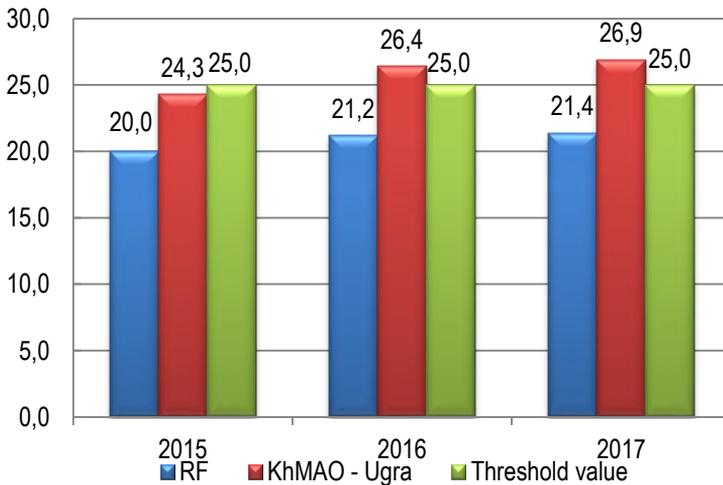


Figure 2. Dynamics of the specific weight of the investments into the fixed capital in GDP/GRP, %
 Source: composed by the authors based on (Rosstat, 2018)

The share of investments into the fixed capital in the GDP of Russia has been growing in dynamics during the past three years, but it does not reach the level of the threshold value of the indicator, set up by the development strategies, and on average makes 20.86 %, which is lower than the strategic threshold by 5.86 %. The share of investments into the fixed capital in the GRP in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Ugra grows dynamically and exceeds the threshold level by 1.86 % on average during three years, and it is by 5 % higher than the average indicator in Russia.

The main principle laid in the basis of the strategic priorities of the social and economic development of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Ugra as a northern oil- and-gas producing province for long-term prospects is ensuring the economic security of the region based on the NTI.

Now all the conditions for the implementation of the NTI have been created, and the Regional Standard of the NTI as a set of methodic recommendations intended to regulate the work of the power bodies and entrepreneurial communities in the regions on collection and approval of projects of the NTI has been developed in the RF (RVC, 2019). The distinguishing peculiarity of the NTI is that the content part of the list of actions on achievement by Russia of leadership in new markets is phrased by the high-technology business itself (Figure 3).

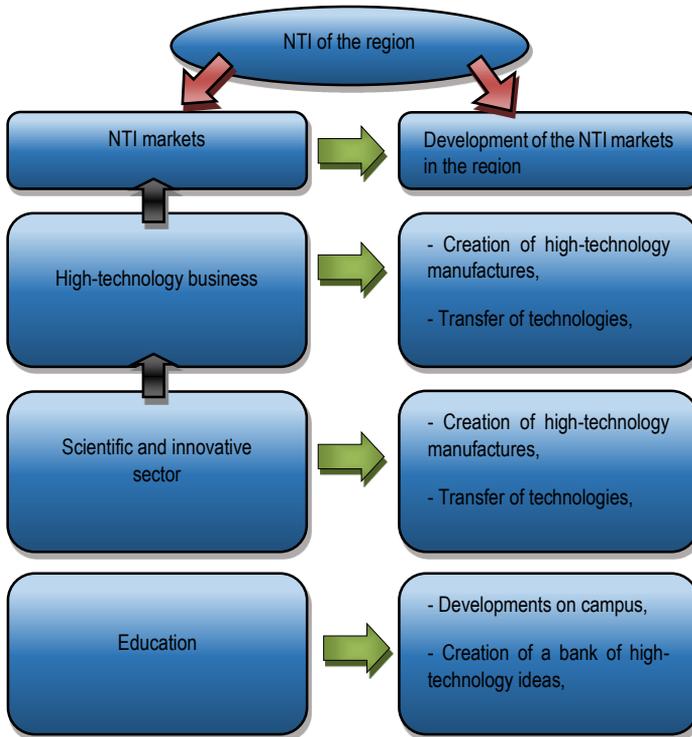


Figure 3. Functions of the system-forming elements of the NTI of the region Source: composed by the authors based on official data and strategic documents of the government of Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Ugra

The regional NTI forms new and strengthens the functioning programs of scientific and technological development, of ensuring the economic security of the region, while ensuring formation and transmission of enquiries from potential leaders of the new markets into the state government system. The formation of the innovative and educational center of the autonomous okrug, the so-called Campus, lies in the basis of the regional scientific and technological initiative.

The Campus, as a unit of the NTI infrastructure, is intended for accumulation of new technologies and promotion of them to the end-point of the implementation – large business enterprises (Figure 4).

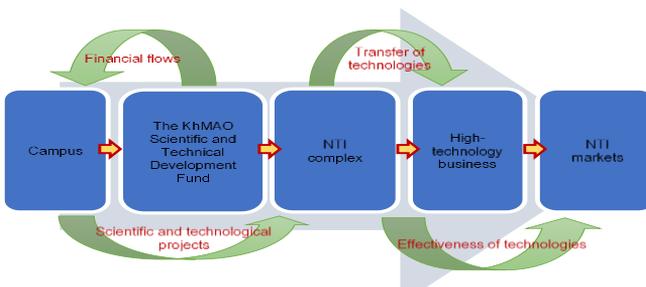


Figure 4. Composition and interaction of the Ugra NTI elements

Source: composed by the authors based on the official data and the strategic documents of the Government of Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Ugra

A regional financial organization has been created in order to develop the scientific and technical, and innovative activity of the new institute — the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Ugra Scientific and Technical Development Fund (FSTD). The main aim of the Fund must be improving the economic security of the region. These main tasks were marked out among the multitude of tasks which The Ugra Scientific and Technical Development Fund must fulfill:

- to ensure formation and development of the scientific and technological and innovative environment in the autonomous okrug;
- to contribute to the attraction of venture capital into the autonomous okrug with the aim to finance innovative and high-technology projects (On the implementation of the National Technological Initiative on the territory of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Ugra, 2019).

As a result of the support by the state for the technological development, the region will be included into the NTI system at the federal level. The higher education system, the innovative small and medium enterprises, the engineering business, the techno parks, and the institutes of the intellectual property market form a unified system, which is capable of ensuring a technological breakthrough and entry by the region into the world markets. Improvement of the economic security of the region will involve creation of high-technology enterprises with a higher level of equipment, which will significantly lower the degree of tension at the labor market and the fixed assets consumption degree.

CONCLUSION

The creation of the Russian system of the NTI and digitalization of the economy are based on technological solutions, which can transform the institutional relations: from informal institutions to formal ones; and which can be claimed for ensuring economic security, protection against threats and limitations of the latest period. The hypothesis that the significant worsening of the northern regions' economic security parameters during the latest period brings forth the necessity to develop the innovative and technological sectors of the economy of the region based on the creation of a regional NTI system has been confirmed in the course of the research. The implementation of the NTI in the regions will help form both new technological solutions and new institutions, which will allow limiting the threats to the economic security based on the creation of a solid scientific and technological foundation. The economic security of the northern oil-and-gas producing region will grow by means of creating high-technology enterprises with a higher level of modern equipment, which will significantly improve the basic parameters of economic security: this will lower the degree of tension at the labor market according to the calculations by 1.5 % and the fixed assets consumption degree by 4.8 %. The synergetic effect of entry by the region into the Russian NTI system will equal more than 7.8 billion rubles.

The research has shown that the implementation of the enumerated actions will promote the development of the scientific and technological system of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Ugra and accumulation of the necessary base of high-technology projects of the NTI in order to ensure the economic security of both the region and the national economy as a whole.

Thus, the following actions are necessary in order to fulfill the set tasks of ensuring the economic security based on the NTI:

- Working out road maps of inclusion into the NTI system at the federal level with the possibility to implement high-technology projects and regional scientific research.
- Working out high-technology designs of enterprises, which allow providing the basic economic security parameters: increment of the GDP, including per head both in the regions and in Russia as a whole.

- Developing a system of state partnership and broadening it up to the level of interstate significance based on the transfer of technologies by the orders of high-technology business.
- Focusing attention on those markets of the NTI, in which the possibility of development of high-technology branches has been created, which are especially significant from the point of view of ensuring the economic security and raising the level of living of the northern region population.

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