

# **Promotion of Economic and Border Security: BOMCA Experience**

Aldis CEVERS, Normunds RUDZITIS

**Riga Technical University, Faculty of Engineering Economics and Management  
6 Kalnciema Street, Riga, LV-1048, Latvia**

## **ABSTRACT**

Primary aspect of quality of life is human protectability from various types of threats, subjection level to contemporary threats. Concept of security has become a global phenomenon. In contemporary understanding it is protectability from worldwide threats, which can lead to rapid worsening of living conditions in separate states, regions or in the world in general or even endanger existence of humanity. Economic security is one of foundation stones of national security, which can be interpreted rather widely, however it is definitely subjected to border security. Threats of economic security in states are dependent on diverse and different conditions. Frequently it is hard to tackle this issue without external assistance, because, by forming international projects for research of problems and development of solutions, experts with rich international experience, concerned institutions and organizations are involved, as well as national forces are consolidated and newest scientific conclusions are utilized. The BOMCA (Border Management Programme in Central Asia) Programme has developed to its 9th stage during the last 15 years, therefore it is objective to appraise its contribution to issues which are related to security, and promotion of trade and economic development on regional and national levels.

**Keywords:** National Security, Economic Security, Border Security, Integrated Border Management, Public Administration Capacity.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Today external and internal environmental impact on national security of the state and the state's place and role in the international security system are analysed regularly, as well as measures of authorities performed for strengthening of the national security are being identified. Even in case if at some moment direct significant threats to the state, to its security and welfare cannot be detected, both internally and externally political threats may exist, identification and prevention of which is important for guaranteeing the national security and stability. Matters of external and internal security of the states shall be prioritised, specific security risk prevention operations must be identified, which shall be carried out by various governmental institutions and organisations in the fields of civil protection, social cohesion and integration, operation of education system and media policy, construction, information technology, etc. Defence security is closely related with political security, which in one's turn cannot be separated from economic security. In the same way attention must be brought upon ecological, energetic, financial, social, information security fields.

Economic security is one of the primary dimensions of human security. The concept is sufficiently dynamic to capture and incorporate pervasive threats to the well-being of the people. Understanding the political impact and influence of economic

security is just as important as studying the economic dynamics [19]. Economic security is a major element of national security, even as borders are less important than ever. No matter how we look at national security, there can be no question of the need to include the economic viability of the [7].

Understanding of the concept of "economic security" is tied both with protectability from internal and external threats, and ability of the economy to effectively provide the necessities of the society on national and international levels [8]. Specific criteria and an indication system for economic security is established, threats are researched in accordance with specific character of the particular state or region, linked geopolitical processes and tendencies of development of society. Experts of Russian customs academy suggest to research economic security in context with such matters as social politics, economic growth and hidden economy, investments and innovations, food safety, financial security, external economic activity, ecologic security, risk management in business activities, information systems and technology [8].

To a certain extent globalization has undermined the traditional definition of economic security that is based on economic vulnerability to other states. At the same time, globalization has produced a redefinition of economic security in regards with the risks posed by cross-border networks of non-state participants and by the economic volatility of the new global environment. However, the relationship between economic globalization and undesirable economic and political outcomes must be specified precisely and assessed carefully. National institutions will preserve its main part to the provision of economic security under conditions of globalization. Regional and global institutions can complement one another thus alleviating the new economic insecurity [14].

How to conceptualize economic security under conditions of globalization: ensuring a low probability of damage? For this purpose, appropriately designed national, regional and global institutions can function as mechanisms of governance in the interests of economic security [9].

Latvian experts point to close connection between state's economic security with state's public revenue policy, when issue of border security and effective border management becomes significant [1].

## **2. BORDER SECURITY AS THE ELEMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY**

To ensure uniformity of appearance for the Proceedings, your paper should conform to the following specifications. If your paper deviates significantly from these specifications, the printer may not be able to include your paper in the Proceedings.

Today the concept of "border" is not simple anymore. New definitions for borders are formed, they are categorized – natural, institutional, functional or mixed. Border management should be approached by using specific, appropriate analytical instruments, methods and models. It must be understood – can traditional management theories and methods be applied or should

practically feasible cross-border cooperation plans and systems of conflict management be developed, which allows policy makers to resolve problems, which are caused by our ever more interactive world [17].

Border management and security is a subject of interest for researchers. Researchers face issues of border management also when studying supply chain security [6].

Contemporary border management policy makers, while working on improving border management, contrary to traditional reform programmes with focus on customs activities, must implement a new, pervasive approach to trade facilitation, which grasps a much broader scope of governance. An enhanced understanding of necessity of customs and other border management agencies playing the main part in national security is necessary [2].

Border security is tied with a full threat system to native, local, regional and global security. A security system is created corresponding to each level of the threat, which must establish a connection with other level systems. For example, expert of security of Hungary, Istvan Samu [10] displays threat levels and according security systems visually as follows (Figure 1).

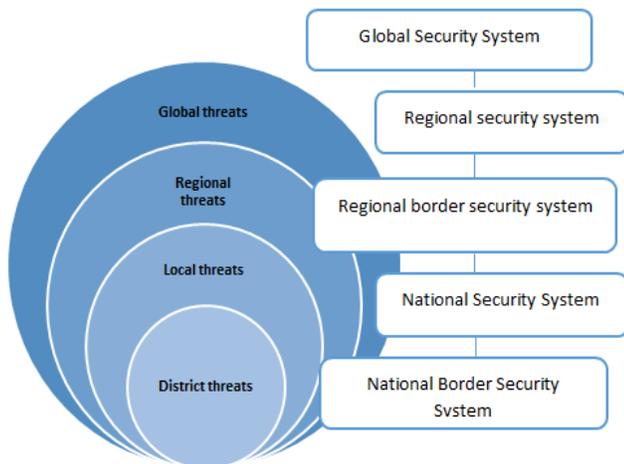


Figure 1. Threats and security systems

Global border security threats cause major damage to the national security, by undermining sovereignty of the state, relying on cross-border crime as the negative consequences of globalization processes. Several blocks of threats exist, which are closely tied to the national border: economic and social threats (poverty, diseases, ecological degradation), cross-border conflicts, weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, cross-border organized crime relevant to illegal migration, human trafficking, money laundering, circulation of illegal narcotics, smuggling and other types of circulation of illegal goods.

National border control is considered as a system, because it is performed by implementing political, organizational, judicial, diplomatic, economic, military, migration, customs, sanitary-epidemiological, ecological, etc. complex of activities. The flow of individuals, goods and vehicles constitute threats, that must be duly identified and prevented, while being aware of challenges of the state's and law enforcement authorities' capacity to mobilize resources, to use instruments of vertical and horizontal cooperation co-ordinately, to administrate large volume information and exchange data effectively, simultaneously preserving a high standard of complying with fundamental rights. Response to identified threats demand an integrated approach for the national border security. Nowadays when discussing about processes that appear on the national border we use terms like

“integrated border control”, “coordinated border defence” or “complex border management”, which are understood as activities of state administration institutions, to create an effective and rational system, which provide open, but also well-controlled and secure borders. For building up of such system a coordinated use of staff of various border control institutions, technology and technical means is necessary.

Regardless of common features created by globalization, regionalization and integration, each national system has its own specific character, which is established by objective and subjective conditions, cultures, traditions and opportunities. Regardless of that, it should be taken into account that nowadays states are not able to single-handedly deal with all issues related to various new and unconventional threats.

Diverse threats in different regions of the world are related to the different geopolitical events and processes. In the field of economic security of the states of Central Asia, the geographic criteria and connection with the conventional restricted and illegal flows and routes of goods, international relations within one region, specifics of organizational and executive features of the state management must be evaluated. Tremendous differences in human development, security and democracy hinder progress in promoting of public security. Great part is played by global and regional initiatives, purpose of which is promoting issues of public security [13].

### 3. REGIONAL SPECIFICITIES IN CENTRAL ASIA

Central Asian region occupies the area of more than 4 million square kilometers, and has a population of more than 55 million people. Border security threats in the region are:

- **Unresolved border disputes**, especially in the valley of Fergana, where the Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan and Tajikistan regions collide. The borderline conflicts are reinforced by the enclaves of other countries, which is a legacy of the Soviet era. According to Kyrgyzstan's delimitation and demarcation department information the length of the Kyrgyz-Tajik border is 970 km, with only 567 km described, among them only 519 km are approved by governmental delegations. The length of the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border is 1378 km, with only 1062 km described, among them only 1007 km are approved by governmental delegations [5].
- **Cross-border crimes** like drug trafficking. For example, Tajik border control agencies have removed 4676 kg of drugs from illegal circulation in 2015, while there is a growing tendency in dynamics of crimes related to illegal trafficking of drugs in Tajikistan in the period of 2010-2015; comparing to 2010, there is an increase in number of detained traffickers by 18.4 percent in 2015 (1004 people have been arrested in 2015 for committing drugs-related crimes) [16].
- **Increase in the spread of religious extremism and terrorism.** A new wave of terrorist activity should be noted dangerously close to the borders of the Central Asian states. The Taliban movement has intensified its activities in the north of Afghanistan. New militant training centers have been set up near the borders of CA countries (mainly Tajikistan), where more than 6,000 militants are concentrated. It should be noted that groups of religious extremism (for example, "Islamic movements of Uzbekistan" - operates in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Jimmaat Ansarulloh, etc.) have intensified their activity and

recruited more and more new members inside the Central Asian countries [11].

- **Water and energy problems** are interconnected and exist mainly between the countries of upper and lower stream lines of major rivers Amudarya and Syrdarya. These problems include: building of large hydroelectric power plants in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan that is strongly opposed by Uzbekistan at first; use of existing hydroelectric power plants in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan not for irrigation, but for energy production – the water is discharged in the winter period, while in the summer period there is not enough water for irrigation in neighboring Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan (in the Soviet period hydroelectric plants were usually used for water accumulation for irrigation in the summer period, and in the winter period Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan supplied Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan with gas, coal and fuel oil for the work of thermal power plants) [5].
- **The aggravation of the demographic situation, the increase in uncontrolled migration**, including the flow of labor from CA countries. The average age of Central Asian countries is decreasing and the proportion of young people in the community is growing rapidly. For example, the EU average age is 39, while in Kyrgyzstan it is 25.2 years, but in Tajikistan it is even 22.9 years. This situation at the same time causes a high level of unemployment among young people and increases political instability and the risk of ethnic conflicts and the large migration of work and education to Russia [12].
- **Organized crime** .The crime tries not only to ensure control over economy, but also to enter political establishment. According to the police, in 2015 Kyrgyzstan was a home for nearly 20 sustainable criminal gang groups [5].
- **Corruption and the underground economy**. According to the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index in 2017, Kazakhstan ranked 122th, Kyrgyzstan - 135th, Uzbekistan - 157th, Tajikistan - 161st place and Turkmenistan - 167th out of the 180 countries covered by the study [4].

The level of risk is reinforced by insufficient resource provision for border management authorities and the low level of IT technology development that results in low border control efficiency [15].

#### 4. DEVELOPMENT OF THE BOMCA PROJECT

The European Union sees Central Asia as one of the strategically important regions. Trans-regional challenges such as human trafficking, trafficking of drugs, organised crime and terrorism influence the EU interests. Therefore, the EU has been supporting the Central Asian states through various development and cooperation mechanisms [3]. The real objective of the EU is to create a religion extremists, terrorists, drug barriers in the Central Asian countries. The basis of the EU approach towards the Central Asian states is underlined in the EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership that was adopted by the European Council in June 2007. The document was targeted at strengthening ties through numerous areas including political and human rights dialogue; cooperation on education; the rule of law;

energy and transport; environment and water; threats and challenges relevant for the two sides. In addition to the above-mentioned Strategy, a number of documents reflect EU's policy toward Central Asia such as Council Conclusions on Central Asia (3179th Foreign Affairs Council Meeting, June 2012); Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with four Central Asian countries and the Interim Agreement of the PCA with Turkmenistan; European Community Regional Strategy Paper for Assistance to Central Asia (2007 - 2013); Increasing the Impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for change, October 2011; Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM), 2011 ad Council Conclusions on GAMM, May 2012; EU Drug Strategy (2013 – 2020) and EU-Central Asia Action Plan on Drugs (current 2009 – 2013 and 2014 – 2017); the Guidelines for Integrated Border Management in EC External Cooperation, 2010 [3].

Membership in the 9th stage of the Border Management Programme in Central Asia (BOMCA) was moved forward as one of priorities at the time of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU. The main objective of the project is the increase of overall security in Central Asia, assistance to five Central Asia (CA) states in simplifying of mutual trade and transit, control of migration flows, as well as strengthening cooperation for reducing of illegal circulation of goods and individuals. The overall objective of the project is to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of border management in Central Asia by introducing advanced elements of Integrated Border Management (IBM), assisting governments in developing and reforming their migration governance, mobility and trade facilitation policies, and strengthening capacities of Border and Migration Agencies, thus contributing to security and economic development at national and regional levels.

Riga Technical University has become a partner in this international border management project financed by the European Commission in five states of Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

On November 27, 2015, during the BOMCA-9 opening conference, the BOMCA-9 Consortium agreement about mutual cooperation between Latvian State Border Guard, Lithuanian Customs Agency, International Centre for Migration Policy development and RTU was signed. BOMCA-9 project consists of 3 components:

1. institutional development of border management agencies;
2. institutional framework for management of mixed migration flows at borders;
3. adoption of trade facilitation regimes at borders.

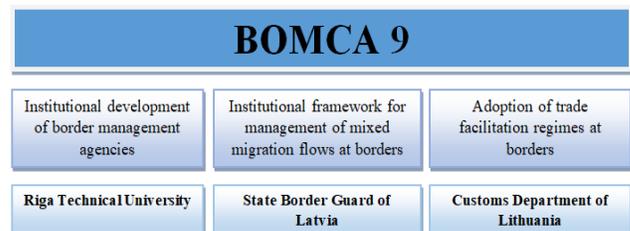


Figure 2. Components of the BOMCA project

First component of the BOMCA project is administered by RTU, the second component – State Border Guard, third component – Customs Department of Lithuania. In addition to the aforementioned institutions the State Revenue Service and the Food and Veterinary Service from Latvia, Ministry of the Interior of Hungary and Immigration and Borders Service of Portugal and are involved in implementing of the BOMCA project. To guarantee reaching the goals of the 1st component, Institute of

international economic relations and customs of RTU (SESMI) provides training for staff and professors of border management institutions in the states of Central Asia, consultations of experts and missions of technical assistance and study trips. The purpose of activities is to introduce the competent authorities of the states of Central Asia with the best practice of the European Union in the fields of customs and border management, planning and controlling of finances as well as human resources. Particular attention is devoted to the combatting of corruption in border management institutions as well as building up and improving the educational system in the higher institutions of education of these states.

## 5. BOMCA IMPACT ASSESSMENT

When commencing the BOMCA project the main challenges in the CA states that affected the border security and at the same time left an impact on economic security, were the low efficiency of border management, which was caused by insufficiently organized HRM and resulted in low competency of employees, improper education and training system organization, insufficient materially-technical provision both at BCPs and other border management institutions, as well as lack of education prevented comprehensive use of available border control equipment. Border management agencies had poorly organized communication and information exchange systems both on intra-agency and interagency levels (headquarters, BCPs, regions). Innovative solutions (risk management, profiling) for improving efficiency of operation were poorly performed in border management agencies, as well as low level of progress in use of IT technologies for organization of operations and providing services to clients of border management agencies was discovered. At the same time, it must be noted that the level of corruption in operation of border management agencies was extremely high.

In order to improve the situation, the main outputs of the BOMCA project were achieved:

- Legislation and institutional frameworks are revised/reformed
- Training facilities of Border Agencies is renovated/constructed
- Border control capacity is strengthened through provision of infrastructure, equipment
- Key skills are trained for officials of CA Border Agencies
- Enhanced and strengthened cooperation at regional level
- Border management strategies elaborated with and for Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan Border Agencies
- Coordinated efforts of different donors in each country.

As a result of BOMCA project, during the period of 2003 – 2018, EUR 42 901 784 was invested in improving of security of border management, 91% of which were funds of the EU.

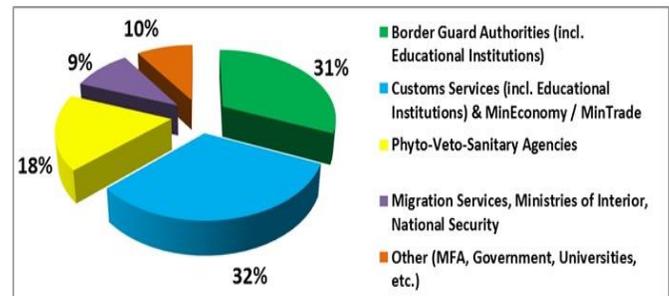


Figure 3. The main beneficiaries from 2015 to 2017 [18]

BOMCA's main results are:

- Increased the efficiency of the security sector
- Institutional reforms in Border Agencies are performed
- Trade corridors are developed
- Improved border management systems
- Drug trafficking is reduced [18]

When describing the BOMCA project results it must be noted, that all the results are correlated and establishment of certain operations has influence on several results of the project.

In the process of introducing the project a integrated border management system has been established, including a strategic planning system, under which specific strategy implementation plans and a control system of execution of plans are set on a governmental level in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The benefit is the establishment of a integrated system of development of border management agencies, which includes establishment of new methods of operations, a systemic flow of information and various forms of cooperation mechanisms.

Methods of risk management and profiling work methods are established in all border management agencies of the CA states, simultaneously providing both substantiation of institutional changes and training for every level of chief clerks.

Major progress is achieved to improve training process in border management agencies of the CA states. Seven training centres and seven training classes for border guards, four hostels for educational centres and six cynological centres have been reconstructed and freshly built, more than 9,000 officials have upgraded their qualification in Border guards' Training Centres of Kyrgyzstan a distance learning system has been established, and in the Higher Military Customs Institute in Uzbekistan, a unified distance learning IT supply is being established for creating a unified educational network [18].

An essential role is played by development of the cooperation by introducing joint technological solutions of operations (joint BCPs, joint vehicle search and joint risk analysis). In the field of efficiency courses – a cooperation within educational and training institutions has been activated by improving the information exchange regarding implementing of innovative educational methods and educational/ training programmes, as well as providing exchange programmes for trainers and trainees both within the CA states and between the Training Centres of border agencies in the EU and the CA.

Significant contribution has been made in the field of reducing the flow of narcotics, because there have been established six cynological centres, three veterinary units for cynological centres and two units for drug profiling in the CA states. Within the BOMCA project service dogs for border management agencies of Turkmenistan have been purchased while simultaneously providing training for the instructors. Training of cynologists

were expanded in all the CA states by involving both local and the EU experts.

For the purpose of securing the increase of economic security a significant contribution has been made in reducing of corruption in the border management agencies of the CA, both by training of employees and developing plans of operation for reducing the level of corruption.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

There are not many studies in which experience of problem solving of effective control of cross-border flows would be summarized and major part of them are not publicly available. Responsibility for security of border security should be taken by people of various professions from state management and political fields, law enforcement institutions, scientists and researchers. The public and representatives of business environment must be involved in these processes. Everyone must understand the place and role of border security system in national, regional and global security system, in order to provide an effective cooperation of all the involved parties. To effectively remedy the threats related to border security, a knowledge base is necessary, which facilitates systematic, complex and integrated thinking. The success of the implementation of the EU border security programs is dependent on communication with the Border Agencies of the CA states, through an explanatory work on both the usefulness of innovative solutions and the benefits of implementing integrated management systems. Empirical methods must be secured and perfected with theoretical studies. Experience of creating large regional systems indicate that using a scientific approach when choosing methods and principles of creating of systems, is the correct move. Systems with scientific foundation are more stable, oriented towards development and are subject to less risks.

## 7. REFERENCES

[1] V. Andrejeva, K. Ketners, **Valsts ieņēmumu teorijas pamati: mācību grāmata**, 2.izd., Rīga, RTU izdevniecība, 2008, 440. lpp.

[2] **Border Management Modernization: A Practical Guide for Reformers**. Edited by G. McLinden, E. Fanta, D. Widdowson and T. Doyle, <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/6043/4817c84ea9a4d741874fc98301b8bc2bb843.pdf> [electronic source]

[3] **Border Management Programme in Central Asia. Background.**, BOMCA, 2015 <https://www.bomca-eu.org/en/programme/background>.

[4] **Corruption Perceptions Index 2017**, Transparency International, 2018, [https://www.transparency.org/news/-feature/corruption\\_perceptions\\_index\\_2017](https://www.transparency.org/news/-feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2017).

[5] Y. Daneykin, E. Andreevsky, M. Rogozhin, O. Sernetsky, "Threats and Challenges to the Regional Security in Central Asian Region (the Example of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan)", **Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences**, 166, 2015, pp. 86 – 91.

[6] J. Hintsā, **Supply Chain Security (SCS) Compendium: A Decade of Academic SCS Research**, Riga, RTU Press, 2017, 452 p.

[7] **Economic Security: Neglected Dimension of National Security?** Edited by S.R. Ronis, published for the Center for Strategic Conferencing Institute for National Strategic Studies by National Defense University Press Washington, D.C. 2011.

[8] **Ekonomicheskaja bezopastnostj**, Pod redakcijej V.B.Mantusova i N.D.Eriashvili, Moskva, JUNITI-DANA, 2018, 567 s.

[9] H. E. S. Nesadurai, Introduction: economic security, globalization and governance, **The Pacific Review**, Vol. 17, 2004, pp. 459-484.

[10] I. Shamu, **Osnovnije elementi sistemi ohrani gosudarstvennoi granici**, 2013.

[11] E. Karin, **Central Asian security dilemmas**, Institut Francais des Relations Internationales, 2017, [https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/rnv98\\_erlan\\_karin\\_dilemmy\\_bezopasnosti\\_centralnoy\\_azii\\_rus\\_2017.pdf](https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/rnv98_erlan_karin_dilemmy_bezopasnosti_centralnoy_azii_rus_2017.pdf) [electronic source]

[12] A. Kazancev, **Central Asia: Trends of Regional Development**, Russian International Affairs Council, 2013, [http://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/tsentralnaya-aziya-tendentsii-regionalnogo-razvitiya/?sphrase\\_id=471867](http://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/tsentralnaya-aziya-tendentsii-regionalnogo-razvitiya/?sphrase_id=471867) [electronic source]

[13] M. Caballero-Anthony, "Community security: human security at 21", **Contemporary Politics**, Vol. 21, 2015, pp. 53-69.

[14] M. Kahler, "Economic security in an era of globalization: definition and provision", **The Pacific Review**, Vol. 17, 2004, pp. 485-502.

[15] **National Strategy for the Establishment and Introduction of Integrated Border Management System in the Kyrgyz Republic for the Period up to 2022**, approved by Resolution of the Government of Kyrgyz Republic dated March 16, 2012, No.183.

[16] **Review of Tajikistan National Border Management Strategy and Its Implementation Plan for 2010-2025**, OSCE-UNDP, 2016, Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

[17] R. Guo, **Cross-Border Management Theory, Method and Application**, Berlin, Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2015.

[18] R. Tiliks, **The 15th anniversary of the BOMCA program** Presentation, 2018, Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

[19] S. M. Tang, "Rethinking economic security in a globalized world", **Journal Contemporary Politics**, Vol. 21, 2015, pp. 40-52.