

## THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO ECONOMIC SECURITY

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**Annotation.** *The article analyses the transformation of the concept of economic security in the context of the challenges of the modern world – geopolitical crises, pandemics, climate change and economic globalisation. Economic security is understood here not only as a set of macroeconomic indicators, but as a multifaceted phenomenon, encompassing the fiscal autonomy of the state, the resilience of strategic sectors, the ability of households to withstand economic shocks and public trust in institutions. Based on three-level model (macro, meso, micro), different planes of analysis are distinguished, which allow for a holistic assessment of both structural and subjective aspects of security. The comparative analysis applied in the article allows for the identification of five main theoretical paradigms of economic security: liberalism, neorealism, critical, feminist and ecological. Each of them offers a unique value perspective on what security is, what its threats are and what political responses are appropriate. In this way, the article contributes to the theoretical discussion on the conceptualisation of economic security and the possibilities of its practical implementation in the context of Eastern Europe and especially Lithuania. It is emphasised that economic security is not only the result of political decisions or structural power, but also a discursive construction – it is formed in the public narrative, the media, the emotional sphere and the collective imagination. The article justifies that the assessment of economic security must be interdisciplinary, combining economics, communication, sociology, cultural studies and public policy. Such an approach allows us to understand how economic security becomes both a material and symbolic dimension of survival in modern society.*

**Keywords:** *economic security, theoretical approaches, macro-meso-micro model, subjective security.*

### Introduction

Economic security in the modern world is becoming an increasingly important object of analysis in both academic and political discourse. This concept, according to Rose (2017), is no longer limited to financial stability or macroeconomic indicators - it is becoming a complex, multidimensional concept that includes both national policy directions and citizens' emotional and social security (Bajc & De Lint, 2011; Gomułka, 2023). It is increasingly emphasized that the basis of economic security is not only objective data, but also subjective citizens' trust in the future, state competence, reliability of systems and transparency of public communication.

Globalisation processes, increased dependence on international markets, and geopolitical crises – such as the Russia-Ukraine war – are radically reshaping the concept of economic security in the Eastern European region (Gomułka, 2023; Baldaro & Constantini, 2021). Traditional security models based on stability and growth are becoming insufficient to manage challenges such as the fragility of supply chains, fluctuating commodity prices, the vulnerability of digital technologies, or the dependence of the financial sector on external factors.

New challenges – energy vulnerability, inflation spikes, the economic consequences of climate change and increasingly frequent cases of economic blackmail – intensify public anxiety and shape new visualisations of threats in the media. These visualisations are often expressed in the media through symbolic narratives – “the threat of inflation”, “energy crisis”, “pressure from global markets” – which become not only informational messages, but also mechanisms for generating emotional (in)security.

As Bajc ir De Lint (2011) notes, the modern understanding of security can no longer be separated from everyday experience – economic security is becoming a part of people’s everyday lives, related to job security, housing affordability, predictability of service prices and the ability to live with dignity. Meanwhile, Nugaraitė (2015) emphasizes that in Lithuanian society, economic security is increasingly linked to the ability of public authorities to communicate, anticipate, engage and respond to crises.

Thus, the discourse of economic security today encompasses not only economic indicators but also trust in institutions, narratives shaped by the media, social solidarity, and the ability to critically assess risk communication. In this way, economic security becomes not only a challenge for the state but also a mirror for society’s values, collective memory, and reactions to uncertainty.

This article is relevant both on a theoretical and practical level, as it responds to the fundamentally changed discourse on economic security in the context of the 21st century. In recent years, society and policymakers have been faced with complex threats – from geopolitical conflicts (e.g., Russia’s war against Ukraine), the climate crisis, pandemics to supply chain disruptions and inflation spikes. Such phenomena have revealed the limitations of traditional security concepts and the need to expand and update them. The article argues that economic security in the modern world can no longer be assessed solely in terms of macroeconomic indicators. It is becoming an interdisciplinary construct that encompasses both the fiscal autonomy of the state and the individual’s subjective confidence in the future.

The study is particularly relevant in the context of Lithuania and Eastern Europe. These countries are economically and politically more sensitive to global crises, and economic security is increasingly associated with energy independence, information management, communication transparency and maintaining social solidarity. The study also reveals that public communication, media narratives and symbolic threats become shapers of a real sense of insecurity, therefore, it is necessary to include elements of discourse analysis in the analysis of economic security. The article provides a detailed theoretical map of the concept of economic security, comparing five main paradigms: liberalism, neorealism, critical, feminist and ecological. This allows not only to deeply understand the value tensions in security policy, but also to create a consistent, value-based model of resilience.

Research object: the concept of economic security.

The purpose of the research: to analyse theoretical approaches to economic security.

Research objectives:

1. reveal the concept of economic security;
2. discuss philosophical approaches to economic security.

Research methods: method of analysis of scientific literature, comparative analysis, conceptual analysis, synthesis and generalisation.

In reviewing the development of the concept of economic security, its historical origins and theoretical models (e. g. Mishchuk, 2023; Kalyniuk, 2023; Gradoboev & Solskaya, 2022; Koba, 202; Blakytė et al., 2021 etc.), an analysis of scientific literature was used. Comparative analysis was applied to compare different concepts of economic security and their philosophical foundations in Tables 2 and 3. This allowed us to assess the differences between the liberalism, neorealism, critical, feminist and ecological paradigms. Conceptual analysis was used to refine the concept of economic security and structure its level model (macro, meso, micro). Synthesis and generalisation were applied to summarise theoretical positions and formulate conclusions.

## Concept of economic security

The concept of economic security has undergone a significant transformation in recent decades. Initially, it was considered a secondary component of national security, dominated by macroeconomic variables - budget deficit, trade balance, GDP growth or inflation rate. However, the modern approach increasingly treats economic security as a multi-level and interdisciplinary concept, covering both the state and individual levels. Such an approach, according to Bilgin (2023), allows us to discuss not only the objective parameters of the economic system but also the subjective sense of security of members of society.

Economic security is becoming a fundamental condition for the resilience of a modern state. It is defined not only as the capacity to avoid economic shocks, but also as the ability to quickly adapt to their consequences and ensure the continuity of the well-being of the population. Pisani-Ferry ir kt. (2024) points out that the paradigm of economic security must be revised in light of constantly changing global risk factors – energy crises, pandemics, military conflicts or climate challenges. Such changes show that traditional assessment models based solely on economic indicators are becoming insufficient.

Historically, economic security emerged as a branch of geopolitical economics, in which states sought to ensure the independence of their economic systems, control of resources, and resilience to external pressure. However, at the end of the 20th century, the concept of human security emerged, which integrated social, economic, and cultural aspects. According to this paradigm, security could no longer be defined solely by state power – it had to be measured by the parameters of the individual's quality of life (Lindstaedt, 2021). Scientific research highlights the importance of human security in the context of 21st-century challenges – from climate change to pandemics. According to Gasper (2005), human security helps to combine the goals of development, human rights, and security policy: “Human security is about the vital core of all human lives, in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment.” Furthermore, Acharya (2001) suggests that human security is an effective instrument for regional conflict prevention, as it targets the most vulnerable groups and the structural causes of violence. Despite its broad applicability, the concept of human security has also been criticised for its conceptual vagueness. Paris (2001) notes that this concept is too broad to be of practical application in policymaking: “Human security is like sustainable development – everyone is for it, but few people have a clear idea of what it means.” However, authors such as Owen (2004) emphasise that the flexibility of human security allows it to be applied in different regional and cultural contexts, which is its strength.

Andersen-Rodgers ir Crawford (2022), emphasises that the change in the concept of security allows for the inclusion of aspects such as job stability, access to basic services, lifestyle continuity, and the ability to avoid poverty. In this way, economic security becomes not only a structural issue, but also a matter of everyday life. It also includes an emotional component - even with good macroeconomic indicators, residents may feel insecure about the future, political instability, or changing prices.

After analyzing a number of scholarly works (Mishchuk, 2023; Kalyniuk, 2023; Gradoboev & Solskaya, 2022; Koba, 2021; Blakytė et al., 2021), a three-level economic security analysis is recommended: macro – the state's strategic independence and fiscal stability; meso – the resilience of individual sectors, especially energy and IT; micro – individual households, their financial situation and ability to withstand economic shocks. This structure allows us to assess economic security not only as a result of state policy, but also as a dimension of every person's life.

**Table 1. Model of the concept of economic security**  
(compiled by the author)

Macro Level: State Economic Autonomy	Meso Level: Sectoral Resilience	Micro Level: Individual and Household Security
Assessment of national economic security	Assessment of specific economic sectors' security	Assessment of individual citizens' or families' security
<b>MOST ATTENTION GIVEN TO:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fiscal stability (budget deficit control, debt management)</li> <li>• Monetary policy (inflation control, currency stability)</li> <li>• Resource control (energy, food and natural resource self-sufficiency)</li> <li>• Economic diplomacy (reducing dependency on external suppliers or markets)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy sector (import dependency, infrastructure vulnerability)</li> <li>• Information technologies (cybersecurity)</li> <li>• Healthcare (supply chains, medicine independence)</li> <li>• Agriculture and food production</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal or family income and its sustainability</li> <li>• Debt levels and savings opportunities</li> <li>• Ability to obtain essential goods and services (housing, healthcare, food)</li> <li>• Subjective sense of security (perceived threat of job loss, living standards)</li> <li>• Level of financial literacy</li> </ul>

Koba (2021) argue that at the macro level, the most important thing is to ensure strategic independence – i.e., that the country can function even during a global crisis or supply chain disruptions. For example, the LNG terminal in Lithuania is considered a macro security solution that allows for reducing energy dependence on unfriendly sources. At the meso level, the resilience of individual sectors to crises is assessed – whether they can continue to operate in the face of challenges, whether they have alternative supply channels, or whether they depend on one country/region. For example, if IT infrastructure (servers, cloud computing) is dependent on foreign countries, this may become a risk to national security. The meso level also allows for the assessment of sectoral policies: whether they contribute to long-term sustainability, or whether they promote innovation and self-reliance. Even with stable macro indicators, economic security may be low at the micro level – for example, when households are unable to withstand unexpected expenses, are under debt pressure, or do not have social security. Therefore, the micro level becomes extremely important in assessing the issues of social inequality, exclusion and long-term poverty. Three-level analysis model allows combining different aspects of economic security into a single system, helping to form a holistic security policy, in which both state sovereignty and the well-being of each citizen are equally important.

In Lithuania, the concept of economic security has expanded substantially since the 2008 global financial crisis, when it became clear that macroeconomic growth or budgetary discipline do not guarantee either public satisfaction or long-term trust in institutions. Crises have exposed structural weaknesses in social resilience, especially among the most vulnerable groups in society. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted these challenges – supply chains have been disrupted, energy insecurity has increased, and communication of economic decisions has become a key factor in trust.

In 2022, the war launched by Russia in Ukraine again moved the issue of economic security to the first plan of the political agenda – this time in the forms of energy independence, strategic reserves, control of the information space and social stability. As Persaud (2022) notes, the feeling of economic security of society increasingly depends not on GDP growth, but on

trust in institutions, price predictability and transparency of communication. This view is also confirmed by Matonytė, Gajauskaitė and Jasinavičius (2024), whose research shows that the economic insecurity experienced by young people is often associated not with actual income or the situation on the labor market, but with the uncertainty of information, uncertainty about the future and a crisis of public authority credibility.

In Lithuania, economic security is understood more and more broadly today as a complex system that includes not only financial stability, but also the maintenance of social trust, the quality of communication, the accountability of institutions and the ability of residents to navigate in information chaos. This allows us to talk about a new dimension of security—discursive economic security, in which the public narrative becomes no less important than real economic measures. It is important to mention that the modern concept of economic security also includes an emotional component – even with good indicators, people may feel insecure. This means that economic security is not only an objective condition, but also the result of perception and trust. Education, as an institute of social sustainability, is one of the most important factors in the formation of long-term trust, and Kazlauskaitė-Markelienė and Petrauskaitė (2011) highlights the importance of solidarity and social awareness as the opposite of economic and political egocentrism. In this author's view, the sustainability of economic security is impossible without cultural capital and a collective understanding that resilience is a community, not an individual project.

A study by Matonytė, Gajauskaitė, and Jasinavičius (2024) shows that perceptions of economic insecurity often stem from emotional reactions to uncertainty, especially among young people, where hybrid threats (e.g., price spikes, job instability, inflation narratives in the media) trigger a sense of loss of control. This confirms the need to combine both economic indicators and subjective experience research in the analysis of economic security.

**Table 2. Comparison of concepts of economic security**  
*(compiled by the author)*

Author	Perspective	Concept of Economic Security	Key Focus Area
Smith, E. (2020)	Neorealism	Economic security is the state's ability to control strategic resources and protect markets from external threats.	Sovereignty, national interests, and resource geopolitics.
Bilgin, P. (2023)	Critical Theory	Economic security is a guarantee of human rights and dignity, grounded in social justice.	Social equality, reducing exclusion, and human rights.
Persaud, R. B. (2022)	Human Security Theory	Economic security is an individual's ability to live free from poverty, access basic services, and exercise economic choice.	Dignity, everyday security, and people-centred analysis.
Blakytė et al. (2021), Koba, O. (2021)	Complex Analysis	Economic security is a multi-level (macro, meso, micro) balance between strategic stability and individual well-being.	Sectoral responsibility, fiscal autonomy, household stability.
Kazlauskaitė-Markelienė, R. ir Petrauskaitė, A. (2011)	Educational-Cultural	Economic security is inseparable from education and civic awareness – it depends on risk perception and responsible action.	Trust, education, critical thinking, and social resilience.

Concepts of economic security in various theoretical contexts reveal that it is not a homogeneous, "technical" concept - it depends on the analytical point of view, the chosen level (state or individual), and the political-cultural value system.



The five concepts of economic security presented in Table 2 recognise that economic security encompasses more than just financial stability. The concepts shift the focus of analysis: from the state (Smith) → sector ((Blakytā; Koba) → individual (Bilgin) → society (Kazlauskaitė-Markelienė ir Petrauskaitė). The interpretation of the source of risk also varies: for some, it is external threats, for others, social exclusion or cultural fragmentation. Thus, the need for an interdisciplinary assessment that would connect political science, sociology, economics and educationology becomes apparent.

Finally, economic security in the modern world is not only an objective outcome of politics or a set of economic indicators – it is also a product of social imagination, based on how individuals and communities perceive risks, threats and their possibilities to act. As McDonald (2021) argues, security “is not just about protection from threat – it is also about giving meaning to uncertainty”. In other words, people respond not so much to the risk itself, but to how it is named, interpreted and broadcast through the media or political discourse. In this way, economic security becomes a dynamic, constantly changing construction that operates in social space. Trust in institutions, emotional background, tone of information and symbolic power – all of these become both expressions of security and its shaper.

This constructivist perspective allows us to understand economic security as a constantly rewritten narrative that is sensitive to historical context, communication tools, and collective memory. For example, what was considered a security guarantee in one era (e.g., global trade) may be considered a threat in another (e.g., dependence on Chinese or Russian supply chains). In times of contemporary economic shocks (pandemics, inflationary shocks, wars), it becomes evident that economic security requires not only political action but also ongoing discursive management, empathy in communication, inter-institutional cooperation, and citizen empowerment. Therefore, an interdisciplinary assessment – encompassing economics, communication, cultural studies, and public policy – becomes a necessity. Economic security cannot be ensured by regulating the budget or laws alone; it must be understood, felt, and made meaningful in society as the result of shared responsibility.

## Philosophical approaches to economic security

Although the concept of economic security has already been presented in a general context, it is necessary to separately analyse how different philosophical directions conceptualise this concept. This subsection focuses on comparing different philosophical perspectives – how they explain the assumptions, sources, aspirations and policy goals of economic security. This reflects different value positions on what constitutes “security”, “threat”, or “risk” in economics. Each of these concepts answers different questions and raises different priorities for public policy makers. This approach allows not only to understand the theoretical dispute between paradigms, but also to choose a research position when analysing media discourses.

One of the dominant historical interpretations of economic security is based on the liberal paradigm, which is based on the idea that the market, competition and free trade by themselves ensure state stability. State intervention is treated as an exception, necessary only to ensure efficient market activity. According to this logic, the more economic exchanges take place, the more the probability of conflicts decreases, as countries become interdependent. As Barbieri (2002) states, from the perspective of the liberal paradigm, economic security is not ensured through control or isolation, but through integration, transparency and investment openness. Liberalism in the analysis of economic security is based on the fundamental assumption that free markets, open trade channels, institutional integration and international cooperation are

key elements in achieving stability and security. Unlike proponents of the realist or neorealist paradigms, liberals treat economic security not as state control of resources, but as effective involvement in the global market and trust in international institutions (Keohane & Nye, 2017). According to Barbieri (2002), “economic interdependence reduces the risk of conflict and creates a structural incentive for security”, which is especially relevant in the modern era of globalisation, where countries’ economic relations are becoming not only an instrument of profit but also of security. The liberal paradigm also emphasises the role of institutions – from the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to the mechanisms of the European Union – as guarantors that reduce transaction risks and increase predictability (Baldwin, 2018). Liberal analysis of economic security often emphasises the dimension of human security, that is, the ability to ensure personal dignity, access to services, financial stability and social protection through the functioning of the market. As Higgott and Watson (2008) point out, liberalism is not limited to economics – it offers a normative vision in which economic security is achieved through international regulation, efficient markets and human mobility. However, liberalism faces challenges in the contemporary debate. In 2008, the financial crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic and Russian aggression have shown that excessive dependence on the global market without internal protection mechanisms can become a threat. Therefore, this paradigm is often supplemented today by the concept of resilience, in which the market still plays an important role, but at the same time, a balance between national security and strategic autonomy is necessary (Gereffi, 2020).

Neorealism, as a theoretical paradigm of international relations, is based on the basic assumption that the state is the main actor seeking survival in an anarchic international system (Waltz, 2010). According to this model, economic security is the ability to control key strategic sectors (e.g. energy, defence industry), ensure the availability of resources and limit dependence on unpredictable partners. According to Kirshner (2020), “economic security refers to the ability of a state to act independently of the economic decisions of other states, while maintaining control both nationally and transnationally”. This paradigm pays special attention to the control of energy, raw materials, technology and infrastructure, which are considered strategic elements. Some authors, such as Cohen (2017), argue that economic security becomes a geopolitical weapon when countries use sanctions, investment controls and trade policies to ensure national interests. The neorealist tradition also emphasises the importance of self-sufficiency and resilience. According to Mearsheimer (2001), “dependence on global systems, even if they are economically efficient, can become a source of national vulnerability”. Therefore, states, acting according to the logic of neorealism, often choose policies of economic nationalism or strategic autonomy, limiting the influence of foreign capital in the most sensitive sectors. Persaud (2022) argue that the degree of economic sovereignty of a state is directly related to its ability to protect the well-being of its population in the event of a crisis. The neorealist paradigm emphasises the role of the state and strategic autonomy. Economic security is considered a matter of resource control, protection of domestic production and geopolitical balance (Smith, 2020; Zdanavičius & Statkus, 2020). Smith (2020) and Zdanavičius & Statkus (2020) emphasise that energy or technological dependence is not only an economic but also a security threat. The COVID-19 pandemic and Russia’s war in Ukraine have only further strengthened this view. Countries are reviewing their dependence on external supply chains, investing in domestic production, energy independence, and control of critical technologies, which is consistent with neorealist priorities (Blackwill & Harris, 2016). A weakness of this paradigm is that the state can become protectionist, closed to other states.

The critical theoretical approach, based on neo-Marxist and post-structuralist thought, holds that economic security cannot be assessed without an analysis of power structures. Its

representatives emphasise social exclusion, class inequalities, gender disproportion and the insecurity of marginalised groups. Critical theory in the analysis of economic security goes beyond the narrow framework of economic indicators and seeks to understand the deeper structural forms of power that determine economic inequality, marginalisation and social vulnerability. Its origins lie in the Frankfurt School, but in modern economic analysis, critical theory has transformed into a normative instrument that allows us to rethink what it means to be “secure” in a society where economic resources are distributed unevenly. Bilgin (2023) notes that “economic security is not just a statistical indicator – it is also the ability to live with dignity, without the constant threat of being excluded from the system”. The critical paradigm raises issues of inequality, marginalisation and social justice. Bilgin (2023) argues that “economic security is part of human rights” – and therefore it must be assessed through the prism of opportunities, dignity and social cohesion. According to Horkheimer (1972), “critical theory seeks not only to explain the world, but also to change it” – this is especially important in a context where economic security is related to people’s dignity, social protection and the possibility of living without poverty. In this view, the lack of economic security is seen as a systemic form of violence, not just a technical problem.

Unlike traditional paradigms, the critical approach focuses on the analysis of inequality and power. Economic security is understood here as a question of ensuring human rights, and the main goal is to guarantee a dignified existence for all. Walker (2002) notes in his work that the concept of “security”, dominant in the classical IR (International Relations) literature, is “too state-centric” and ignores the everyday economic traumas experienced by socially excluded people. Therefore, critical analysis suggests expanding the category of security to “everyday security”, focused on ensuring housing, food, education and access to services. Fehér’s (2020) study on Eastern Europe shows that discursive narratives about the crisis often hide deep structural inequalities that political and economic institutions support. His work argues that media rhetoric about “resilience” often acts as an ideological veil to cover up deepening inequalities. A critical theoretical approach requires fundamental structural changes and is more difficult to integrate into traditional politics, which is its weakness. An analysis of the impact of neoliberal policies is provided by Fraser (2020), who argues that the exclusion of unpaid work, the care crisis and women’s vulnerability from economic accounting threatens social stability. This opens up cross-disciplinary connections between critical and feminist theory.

Feminist economic security theory offers a radically different view of security, not as an instrument of state power or a macroeconomic condition, but as the security of everyday life and care systems. This approach criticises the traditional security discourse, which ignores unpaid care work, social vulnerability within the family and the impact of gender inequality on economic stability. As Elson (1999) points out, economic policies often assume a “neutral market”, but in reality, their effects are deeply gender-asymmetric. For example, the reduction of the public sector, the privatisation of care services or flexible work models have a disproportionate impact on women. Feminist theory raises the question of how the concept of economic security reflects (or ignores) the situation of women and the significance of unpaid work. It shows that official economic statistics often overlook invisible work, which is essential for the functioning of society as a whole. Economic security in feminist analysis means both economic autonomy and protection from dependency relations. Feminist theory also emphasises the economic challenges of the family and the vulnerability of women in times of crisis. According to Tickner (1992), economic security policies often ignore unpaid care work, which is essential for the functioning of society. This theory highlights invisible work (caregiving, child-rearing), the importance of which is often ignored in economic statistics.



Young (2008) emphasises that households often become centres of the “invisible economy”, and the family burden, especially for women, is a structural barrier to full participation in the economic system. A feminist approach requires rethinking these structures and incorporating them into policy-making. Tickner (1992) argues that “security must be reinterpreted through the prism of human experience, not state defence”. She proposes the so-called gender-sensitive security paradigm, in which women’s experiences become the centre of analytical significance. In this way, feminist analysis expands the category of security to include the dimensions of essential access to basic services, decent work, and emotional and social stability. Women often experience greater insecurity during crises, and their work is inadequately valued or excluded from decision-making processes (Tickner, 1992). A feminist approach requires a reconceptualisation of the economy as a social process in which informal, unpaid work is essential for the functioning of society. In contemporary academic debate, feminist authors such as True (2012) emphasise that gender inequality is not only a moral but also an economic issue, and that investments in care infrastructure (childcare, elderly care, social guarantees) are necessary conditions for economic security. Furthermore, feminist analysis is often integrated with the human security paradigm, which focuses on the guarantee of individual dignity, integrity and opportunities, not just physical protection from threats. Analyses by authors such as Robinson (2015) suggest that economic security should be measured not only in terms of GDP, but also in terms of how much people can live free from exploitation and with the right to full participation in society. This theory is appreciated for its emphasis on gender equality and social visibility, but is often dismissed as “uneconomic” in traditional analyses.

The ecological perspective links economic security to long-term sustainability: if economic activity disrupts the ecological balance, it eventually becomes unsafe for society itself (Barry, 2012). According to Barry (2012), economic security should be measured not only by GDP growth, but also by the ability to maintain ecological balance, social cohesion and intergenerational justice. In this way, economic security cannot be assessed without an analysis of climate change, resource depletion and environmental risks. Ecological crises – climate change, biodiversity loss, and overexploitation of resources – already pose direct threats to the economy: disrupt agriculture, pose risks to energy supply, and cause waves of migration. According to Dalby (2009), “economic security must be integrated with climate policy – otherwise it becomes artificially separated from real systemic risks”. Barry (2012) and other authors emphasise that economic security must be long-term and sustainable, which means responsible use of resources, transition to renewable energy and climate change management. This concept links security with environmental awareness – if economic development destroys ecological foundations, it becomes a threat to itself. The ecological perspective of economic security is difficult to reconcile with rapid growth or short-term political ambitions. An ecological approach requires rethinking development strategies – instead of the growth paradigm, a green economy, circular production, carbon emissions reduction and renewable energy are proposed. Raworth (2017) proposes the so-called “circular security zone” in the “circular economy” model, where it is necessary to ensure basic social conditions for people without overspending the planet. Adger et al. (2013) analyse the impact of climate change on security and note that “the ability of people to adapt is no less important than physical infrastructure”; therefore, social inequality, health disparities and lack of education become factors that multiply vulnerability in the context of the climate crisis.

Table 3 compares the five main theoretical paradigms of economic security in terms of their sources of security, identified threats, and policy responses.

**Table 3. Economic Security Paradigms: Theoretical Comparison**  
(compiled by the author)

Perspective	Source of Security	Source of Threat	Political Response
Liberalism	Market integration, interdependence	Protectionism, market disruptions	Institutional regulation, trade liberalisation
Neorealism	State power, autonomy, and resource control	External dominance, dependency	Strategic autonomy, protection of national sectors
Critical Theory	Social justice, reducing inequality	Economic exclusion, marginalisation	Strengthening social policies, inclusion
Feminism Paradigm	Recognition of care work, gender equality	Unpaid labour, family vulnerability	Gender policy, family support models
Ecological approach	Environmental sustainability, ecological balance	Environmental degradation, climate crisis	Promotion of green investments, transition to sustainability.

The table below provides a consistent assessment of how different theoretical paradigms interpret the concept of economic security, identify threats, and formulate policy responses. The liberal paradigm bases security on market logic and interdependence, but becomes vulnerable to disruptions in the global market. Neorealism emphasises the role of the state and strategic autonomy, believing that external dependence poses the main threat to national security. Critical theory draws attention to social structure, inequality, and marginalised groups, proposing to ensure security through strengthening social cohesion. Meanwhile, the feminist paradigm expands the field of security to everyday life – family, invisible work, emotional vulnerability – and proposes gender-sensitive policy measures. The ecological approach views economic security as inseparable from long-term environmental stability and climate sustainability, therefore emphasising green investments and transformative policies. This theoretical map makes it clear that economic security is a multifaceted phenomenon that requires a comprehensive approach. Different paradigms complement each other and together shape the contemporary political economy discussion about what determines the security of a state, society, or individual against the backdrop of economic turmoil.

## Conclusions

The concept of economic security is treated in scientific literature as complex and multidimensional, encompassing not only economic, but also social, political and informational aspects. Different theoretical approaches provide an opportunity to look at the phenomenon of economic security from various perspectives and create the prerequisites for defining economic security as a state in which the state and society maintain the ability to respond to economic threats, preserve the most important functions and ensure their development in the long term. Recently, the subjective concept of security, based on the population's trust in institutions, social resilience, the stability of the information space and access to vital resources, has been increasingly emphasised.

Different philosophical approaches offer unique perspectives on the issue of economic security. Liberals rely on the market, realists on the state, critics on structural equality, feminists on the invisible aspects of the economy, and ecologists on the limits of the planet. Concepts of economic security reflect value conflicts: Is efficiency or equality more important? National sovereignty or international integration? Human dignity or fiscal discipline? These different

philosophical approaches complement each other and allow us to understand economic security as a multifaceted phenomenon that requires an integrated, contextual, and sensitive approach.

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