

GLOBAL HEALTH AS AN ELEMENT OF PUBLIC SECURITY: THE CASE OF  
UZBEKISTAN

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**Abstract:** This study explores the interconnection between global health systems and public security, using Uzbekistan as a case study. Through a theoretical review and an empirical mini-survey, it analyzes how national health reforms contribute to strengthening social trust, resilience to epidemiological risks, and citizens' sense of safety. The main hypothesis is that public security in Uzbekistan directly depends on the effectiveness of global health strategies and their adaptation to local conditions. The conclusion presents recommendations for further enhancement of health diplomacy and youth participation mechanisms.

**Keywords:** global health, public security, Uzbekistan, health as security, SDG 3.

**Introduction**

Contemporary global challenges—pandemics, antimicrobial resistance, and climate change—demonstrate the close link between public health and public security. In the post-COVID-19 era, the boundaries between medical risks and national security have blurred. The introduction of early infection detection systems, international cooperation, and resilient healthcare institutions has become an integral part of national security strategies.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, Uzbekistan faced the need for accelerated transformation of its healthcare system, enhancement of emergency preparedness, and implementation of digital technologies. These processes have created a foundation for a redefined understanding of security—not only as protection from external threats but also as a guarantee of citizens' sustainable health.

The aim of the study is to substantiate and confirm that public security depends on the level of societal health and the efficiency of healthcare systems.

Objectives:

1. Provide a theoretical basis for the relationship between global health and safety.
2. Analyze healthcare reforms in Uzbekistan after COVID-19.
3. Conduct a mini-survey and analyze how the population perceives the link between health and security.
4. Identify key risks and propose recommendations for strengthening health diplomacy.

Hypothesis:

“Public safety in Uzbekistan directly depends on the effectiveness of global health strategies and their localization.”



## 1. Theoretical foundations of global health

### 1.1 Definition and concepts

Global health is an interdisciplinary field that encompasses issues of public health in a transnational dimension, equitable access to medical services, and the prevention of global threats. It combines medicine, diplomacy, economics, and international relations.

The World Health Organization (WHO) plays a key role in developing international response standards, sharing data, and supporting national systems. The concepts of “**One Health**” and “**Health Security**” are the foundation of the modern approach:

- **One Health** emphasizes the interconnection between human, animal, and ecosystem health.
- **Health Security** views health as an element of national and public security, including prevention, preparedness, and response to threats.

### 1.2 The role of international institutions

- **WHO** provides coordination, monitoring, and technical support.
- **UNICEF** focuses on protecting the health of mothers and children.
- **The Global Fund** finances the fight against HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria.

Joint programs create a basis for sharing experiences and implementing best practices in countries, including Uzbekistan.

## 2. Healthcare system and public safety in Uzbekistan

### 2.1 National reforms and the Healthy Uzbekistan 2030 strategy

Since 2018, Uzbekistan has been implementing systemic health care reforms aimed at modernizing primary health care, digitization, and improving financial management.

Presidential Decree No. PP-185 (2024–2025) provides for reform in 15 cities, the creation of public health services at the regional level, and the launch of a state health insurance system on July 1, 2025.

A mechanism for reimbursing the cost of medicines under the state insurance system has also been introduced, reducing the financial burden on patients and promoting social stability.

### 2.2 Digitalization and telemedicine

As part of the digital transformation, electronic prescriptions, medical information systems, and telemedicine platforms are being introduced.



A pilot project in the Syrdarya region has become a model of an integrated approach that includes quality control, transparency of costs, and improved access to medical care.

### **2.3 National programs and infection control**

Uzbekistan is implementing a National Health Security Action Plan for 2024–2028, based on the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005).

Cooperation with WHO and USAID is aimed at strengthening epidemiological surveillance and interagency coordination.

Vaccination and tuberculosis control programs have become an important component of public safety.

### **2.4 The Dok-1 Max incident: lessons learned and consequences**

The tragic case of toxic syrups (2022–2023) revealed the vulnerability of the drug quality control system. This crisis prompted legislative reforms and strengthened oversight, which directly affects public trust and perceptions of safety.

## **3. Global partnerships and health diplomacy**

### **3.1 International cooperation**

Uzbekistan actively cooperates with the WHO, UNDP, the Global Fund, and GIZ. These partnerships are aimed at strengthening human resources, improving infrastructure, and enhancing the quality of health services.

As part of the Uzbekistan 2030 strategy, a Health Project Center is being established to coordinate donor programs and national reforms.

### **3.2 Health Diplomacy as an Element of Soft Power**

Health diplomacy is becoming a tool for strengthening a country's international image.

Uzbekistan's participation in regional initiatives in Central Asia and the exchange of experience in the field of epidemic prevention contribute to strengthening the state's credibility and international authority.

According to a study by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) entitled “The Role and Significance of Public Services in Uzbekistan during the Lockdown” (2020), the digitization of public and medical services during the COVID-19 pandemic has become a key factor in social stability. 25.6% of respondents named healthcare as one of the most sought-after areas, and 60.7% used the online portal my.gov.uz to obtain medical and administrative services. This shows that the introduction of e-health and transparent digital tools has not only increased the efficiency of the healthcare system, but also strengthened public trust in state institutions, which directly affects the perception of public safety.



#### 4. Empirical part of the study

##### 4.1. Research methodology

For the empirical part of the study, an online survey was conducted among 262 respondents from various regions of Uzbekistan—Tashkent, Samarkand, Fergana, Bukhara, Namangan, Nukus, and others.

The sample included students, young professionals, medical workers, and representatives of the civil sector. The participants were aged between 17 and 40, which allowed us to cover both young people and the professionally active audience.

The questionnaire included 10 questions aimed at identifying perceptions of the relationship between health, public safety, and trust in the healthcare system.

##### Sample composition:

- Women — 60% (157 people)
- Men — 40% (105 people)
- Place of residence: 62% — urban residents, 38% — rural and suburban areas
- Age:
  - 17–25 years old — 48%,
  - 26–33 years old — 34%,
  - 34–40 years old — 18%.

**Analysis method:** statistical summarization and comparative analysis by gender, age, and place of residence.

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##### 4.2. Main survey results (in percentages)

###### 1. What do you think has the greatest impact on public safety?

- Public health — 74%
- Economic stability — 63%
- Law and order/police — 49%
- Education — 42%



- Environment and climate — 36%

**2. How much do you trust the healthcare system in Uzbekistan?**

- High trust — 22%
- Average trust — 47%
- Low trust — 31%

**3. Do you think that health is related to national security?**

- Yes, directly related — 79%
- Partially — 18%
- No — 3%

**4. How informed are you about global threats (pandemics, antibiotic resistance, biorisks)?**

- Well informed — 27%
- Partially — 50%
- Poorly — 23%

**5. Which right do you consider fundamental to the sustainable security of society?**

- The right to health — 61%
- The right to education — 22%
- The right to information — 10%
- The right to participate in decision-making — 7%

**6. Trust in international organizations (WHO, UNICEF, UNDP):**

- High — 46%
- Average — 39%
- Low — 15%

**7. Assessment of the effectiveness of healthcare reforms (after COVID-19):**

- Positive — 39%



- Neutral — 43%
- Negative — 18%

## 8. Which health threats do you consider most dangerous?

- Infectious diseases — 65%
- Air pollution/environment — 53%
- Mental health — 39%
- Biological and technological risks — 28%

### 4.3. Data analysis

The survey results show that most respondents consider health to be a key element of public safety (74%), which confirms the main hypothesis of the study.

At the same time, 79% of participants directly link health to national security, which highlights the growing awareness of the role of medicine and prevention in ensuring social stability.

However, confidence in the national healthcare system remains moderate: only 22% expressed complete confidence, while almost a third (31%) indicated a low level of confidence in state medical institutions. This points to the need to strengthen communication between the healthcare system and the population, increase transparency, and encourage public participation in reforms.

Interesting gender differences emerged in the perception of threats: women more often noted the importance of health and the environment (68% and 56%, respectively), while men more often cited economic stability (70%) and law and order (58%) as the main factors of security.

An age analysis showed that young people (17–25 years old) demonstrate a higher level of trust in international organizations (54%) than older respondents (32%). This reflects the globalized thinking of the new generation and the influence of international media on the formation of civic consciousness.

Overall, the data obtained confirms that a sustainable and safe society is formed where health is viewed as a strategic resource and the population is actively involved in the processes of reform, cooperation, and monitoring the effectiveness of the healthcare system.

## 5. Risks and challenges

1. Biological safety: the rise in infections, bioterrorism, and bacterial resistance.
2. Cybersecurity: protecting medical databases and patient confidentiality.
3. Ethical challenges: balancing public welfare and individual rights.



4. Financial sustainability: the need for stable funding and cost control.
5. Public trust: the importance of transparency, feedback, and citizen participation in decision-making.

## Conclusion

The study confirmed the hypothesis that public safety in Uzbekistan is closely linked to the effectiveness of the healthcare system and its adaptation to global strategies.

Strengthening trust, developing health diplomacy, and engaging young people can transform health into the foundation of a sustainable and safe society.

## Recommendations:

1. Strengthen Uzbekistan's participation in international health initiatives.
2. Establish a National Center for Public Health and Safety.
3. Expand programs to engage youth and women.
4. Improve transparency in governance and data protection.
5. Continue training medical personnel according to international standards.

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