

**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND DIGITAL
INEQUALITY: PROBLEMS OF PROTECTING THE
RIGHTS OF SOCIALLY VULNERABLE CLASSES****Bakhronov Ravshan Rashid ugli****Stundet institute of state and law****Manager of Zakovat NGO****Email: bahronov.ravshan@mail.ru****Phone: +998 90 990 02 44****<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18899234>****ARTICLE INFO**

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digital traces.***ABSTRACT***This article explores the field of artificial intelligence and digital inequality, analyzing the potential threats posed by artificial intelligence to vulnerable groups and their prevention.*

The rapid digitalization processes in modern legal science and the public administration system are creating completely new legal problems for ensuring human rights. Although the introduction of information technologies and artificial intelligence systems in the spheres of public services and social protection in the Republic of Uzbekistan increases management efficiency, under conditions of insufficient legal guarantees, it deepens the phenomenon of "digital inequality" in society. Digital inequality is not simply a lack of access to the internet or technologies, but rather the legal consequence of this technological disruption of an individual's inability to exercise their constitutional rights (for example, the rights to social security, justice, education, and healthcare). In particular, this problem creates acute legal conflicts in protecting the rights of socially vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, low-income families, and residents of remote areas.[1]

Although the rights of socially vulnerable groups are guaranteed in the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, in particular, in the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Comprehensive Measures to Provide Quality Social Services and Assistance to the Population and Establish an Effective Control System," today the distribution of these services is mainly carried out through automated information systems such as the "Unified Register of Social Protection." [2]

Artificial intelligence models rely on citizens' "digital traces" (e-purchases, bank transfers, social media activity) when drawing their conclusions. The absence or very small number of such digital traces in socially vulnerable groups leads to artificial intelligence evaluating them as "non-existent" or "suspicious" subjects. As a result, a violation of what is called "algorithmic discrimination" in the legal language arises, and a situation of open violation of human rights by artificial intelligence is observed.

This practice is becoming increasingly popular worldwide, for example, in the European Union's Artificial Intelligence Act adopted in 2024, the establishment of algorithmic control over vulnerable segments of the population (children, the elderly, people with disabilities) or decision-making through artificial intelligence using their social status is classified as "High-risk" and in some cases "Absolutely prohibited" systems. [3]

In addition, experts have their own opinions on this issue, in particular, as Doctor of Law E.V. Talapina noted in her research on human rights in public administration: "In the context of a digital state, the legislator faces an important task - the bureaucratic convenience of artificial intelligence should not prevail over human dignity. With the full automation of public services, the right of socially vulnerable people to always demand human intervention and receive alternative services offline must be legally guaranteed." [4]

In order for the mass introduction of artificial intelligence technologies in the context of digital inequality not to violate the rights of socially vulnerable groups, it is necessary to introduce the following conceptual legal proposal into the national legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan: The draft Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Artificial Intelligence," which is planned to be adopted, must include a special article entitled "The Right to Request Online Alternative Services." According to this norm, when government agencies automate any social, financial, or administrative services, citizens with digital disabilities must be strictly guaranteed the right to receive the same service in paper form without any discrimination and unnecessary payments, with the direct participation of a person (civil servant).

It would not be an exaggeration to say that this legal mechanism ensures the priority of human rights in the digital space in the Republic of Uzbekistan and prevents artificial intelligence technologies from becoming a weapon that deepens inequality in society.

In conclusion, it can be said that no matter how much artificial intelligence and digital technologies develop, human rights and personal data protection are fundamental and irrelevant. Therefore, it is necessary to take measures to prevent human rights violations through artificial intelligence. Indeed, these actions serve the development of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the well-being of the people.

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