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Factionalism in the modern Republican party of the USA: the dilemma between economic nationalism and technological globalism

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Abstract. The conflict over the H-1B visa program has exacerbated the split within the US Republican Party and caused great discussions among other political forces. Technology elites, including Elon Musk, are demanding an expansion of the program to support innovative leadership. The nationalist wing of MAGA insists on the priority of American workers and reducing dependence on foreign labor. The work of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), created by Donald Trump, has exacerbated the contradictions, touching upon issues of immigration, bureaucracy and employment. The split affects key areas: economic strategy, technological sovereignty, immigration policy, and attitudes towards globalization. The Republican Party demonstrates structural heterogeneity and ideological instability, which makes the vector of its development unpredictable and dependent on a combination of internal and external factors. The study analyzes how these political conflicts affect the technological sovereignty and national economy of the US, as well as assesses the potential consequences for the changing ideological landscape of the Republican Party. The conclusion is drawn: since the party demonstrates structural heterogeneity, the further development of events is influenced by many factors, both internal and external, including migration legislation, views on resolving international conflicts, incitement of hatred on the Internet, etc.

Keywords: Trump, MAGA, Tech Bro, Musk, H-1B program, DOGE, technocrats, economy, technological sovereignty, STEM

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Фракционализм в современной Республиканской партии США: дилемма между экономическим национализмом и технологическим глобализмом

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Аннотация. Конфликт вокруг визовой программы H-1B обострил раскол внутри Республиканской партии США и вызвал большие дискуссии среди других политических сил. Технологические элиты, включая Илона Маска, требуют расширения программы для поддержки инновационного лидерства. Националистическое крыло MAGA настаивает на приоритете американских рабочих и сокращении зависимости от иностранной рабочей силы. Работа созданного Дональдом Трампом Департамента эффективности государственного управления (DOGE) усугубила противоречия, затронув вопросы иммиграции, бюрократии и занятости. Раскол затрагивает ключевые направления: экономическую стратегию, технологический суверенитет, иммиграционную политику и отношение к глобализации. Республиканская партия демонстрирует структурную неоднородность и идеологическую нестабильность, что делает вектор ее развития непредсказуемым и зависимым от совокупности внутренних и внешних факторов. Проанализировано, как эти политические конфликты влияют на технологический суверенитет и национальную экономику США, а также оценены потенциальные последствия для меняющегося идеологического ландшафта Республиканской партии. Сделан вывод: поскольку партия демонстрирует структурную неоднородность, на дальнейшее развитие событий влияет множество факторов, как внутренних, так и внешних, в т.ч. миграционное законодательство, взгляды на решение международных конфликтов, разжигание ненависти в Интернете и т.д.

Ключевые слова: Трамп, MAGA, Tech Bro, Маск, программа H-1B, DOGE, STEM, технократы, экономика, технологический суверенитет

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Introduction

The issue of highly skilled migration is splitting the US Republican Party. Donald Trump's supporters are locked in a battle over the H-1B program, a scheme that helps companies hire foreign software developers and a range of other technical workers, including those with highly specialized skills. One consequence of the program is that a significant portion of US tech industry has become dependent on foreign labor. Prominent figures such as Elon Musk, alongside other leaders within the U.S. technology sector, strongly endorse the H-1B visa program, emphasizing its critical role in sustaining competitive advantage for American enterprises. Conversely, certain factions within Trump's administration, aligned with the MAGA (Make America Great Again) agenda, advocate for prioritizing domestic labor force development. Their stance emphasizes retraining and employment of American workers as a strategic alternative to reliance on foreign talent.

This study seeks to identify characteristic features of evolving political dynamics within the United States' domestic sphere during the second presidential tenure of Donald Trump, with particular emphasis on the H-1B visa program and protectionist policies championed by economic nationalist factions. Given the inherent structural heterogeneity within the Republican Party, projections regarding the US economic and technological sovereignty necessitate consideration of multifaceted determinants — both internal and external — such as operational efficacy within the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), immigration legislation, the conflict in Gaza, and emerging vectors of cyber-enabled sociopolitical polarization. The paper employs a systematic analytical approach to dissect principal components of U.S. domestic political dynamics, particularly those pertaining to intra-administrative discord during Trump's tenure. Content and discourse analysis made it possible to identify dominant narratives pervasive in modern American media landscape, while an assessment of quantitative indicators based on data from state agencies helped determine the scale of the problem. Comparative political analysis and elite theory helped to qualitatively assess ideological differences within the Republican Party and examine the impact of business and political elites, as well as factionalism, on political decision-making. By combining these approaches, the article provides a closer look at the influence of internal and external factors on US immigration policy and public administration. In the course of research, the author relied on official

documents and materials from US government agencies, statistical resources, and expertise and analysis from US think tanks.

Russian researchers have conducted extensive in-depth studies of the intricate interplay between the United States' economic framework and its broader sociopolitical landscape. One example is profound research by S.A. Tolkachev on reindustrialization in the United States and technological security of the US industrial base [1]. Another worthy note is a research by A.M. Menshikova on the economy in the US national security system [2].

Issues related to migration to the United States are covered in the works of G.K. Nikolskaya, [3], Senior Researcher N.E. Petrovskaya [4], and A.S. Toganian, Zh.A. Kevorkova, and A.V. Chirkov [5].

The influence of technocrats on the US internal political landscape has likewise garnered significant attention. As noted by A.N. Sytnik, the activities of the second Trump administration will be marked by a vibrant technological policy [6]. Issues related to the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the sphere of US national security are covered by V.I. Proshina [7], Y.V. Selyanin [8], R.S. Vykhodets [9], L.V. Savin [10], Yu.S. Sokolshchik¹, while N.A. Tsvetkova, A.N. Sytnik [11] explores digitalization, data diplomacy, and Twitter diplomacy.

Russian researchers have extensively examined the intricate landscape of political factions within the contemporary US, yet scholarly discourse has thus far neglected to analyze a pronounced ideological divide that emerged in 2024, the struggle between the “traditionalists” who support the “Make America Great Again” concept and the technology lobby has not yet been well studied in Russian American studies.

Among foreign authors, it is worth highlighting E. Crandall, R. Brown, J. McMahan [12]. These authors argue that Silicon Valley's technological utopia is based on an exploitative work ethic, reinterpreted in line with innovative spirit of the industry. M. Weiner [13] provides a comprehensive analysis of social aspects and challenges associated with labour migration.

Among other interesting research are the works devoted to technological sovereignty and competition by J. Allen et al.², N. Cory et al. [14], K. Fuchs [15],

¹ Sokolshchik Yu. Artificial intelligence and national security: a plan to preserve the technological superiority of the United States. Russian Council on International Affairs (INF). 03/09/2021. URL: <https://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/columns/cybercolumn/iskusstvennyy-intellekt-inatsbezopasnost-plan-po-sokhraneniyyu-tekhnologicheskogo-prevoskhodstva-ssh/> (date of access: 10/20/2025).

² Technological Leadership. Together or alone?: Choices and Strategies for Transatlantic Relations for 2021 and Beyond. Washington, DC : German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2020. P. 30–33.

S. Kumar [16], as well as research conducted by the Heritage Foundation³ and the Rand Corporation⁴.

The struggle within Trump's circle over the issue of hiring foreign specialists to work in the US in late 2024 — early 2025 between MAGA Internet Warriors and Elon Musk's creation Tech Bro⁵ is increasingly attracting the attention of US Studies experts. The struggle is rooted in their respective ideological and economic priorities, as MAGA prioritizes traditionalist conservatism, nationalist policies, and the socioeconomic interests of industrial proletariat, whereas Tech Bro predominantly champions neoliberal globalism, social progress, free market and innovation. MAGA seeks to protecting the American economy from outsourcing, criticizing tech companies for moving production overseas and replacing jobs with automation. Tech Bro is interested in global integration, minimal regulation and cheap labor, including issuing H-1B visas to recruit foreign specialists. However, there is growing discontent in American society regarding immigration. Conversely, Elon Musk and his tech lobby supporters are concerned with the future of American corporations and additional global competitive advantages for American businesses. They advocate for the right of American businesses to train and hire highly skilled specialists. Their views on technology policy also differ: while MAGA criticizes large tech companies (such as Google and Meta) for censoring conservative voices, Tech Bros support content moderation to combat misinformation, which MAGA sees as an infringement on freedom of speech.

On December 22, 2024, President-elect Donald Trump announced the appointment of Sriram as senior advisor to the White House on AI policy⁶. Mr. Krishnan is an Indian immigrant, venture capitalist, Elon Musk's colleague, and general partner at Andreessen Horowitz. This strategic maneuver is indicative of Trump's strategic approach to establishing the

³ Frederick K. Combating Big Tech's totalitarianism: a road map. The Heritage Foundation. URL: <https://www.heritage.org/big-tech/report/combating-big-techs-totalitarianism-road-map> (accessed: 24.10.2025).

⁴ Leading with artificial intelligence. Insights for U.S. Civilian and military leaders on strengthening the AI workforce. RAND. URL: <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PEA3414-1.html> (Accessed: 24.10.2025).

⁵ Conventional designation for representatives of the technological elite, who are often liberal-minded. — A.D.

⁶ Wiggers K. Sriram Krishnan named Trump's senior policy advisor for AI. Tech Crunch. 22.12.2024. URL: <https://techcrunch.com/2024/12/22/sriram-krishnan-named-trumps-senior-policy-advisor-for-ai/> (accessed: 09.01.2025).

United States' leadership in the rapidly evolving field of AI. At around the same time, it was decided that David O. Sachs would lead the White House's AI and cryptography effort.

Sriram Krishnan's appointment to the Trump administration demonstrates that these two forces are able to find common ground. However, the situation is not that straightforward. Tensions within MAGA escalated following Krishnan's social media post. He expressed support for an idea to lift restrictions on green cards for skilled foreign workers. "Anything to remove country caps for green cards/ unlock skilled immigration would be huge." wrote Krishnan on X⁷ a social network prohibited in Russia. This initiative received support from Elon Musk and other Silicon Valley-based professionals⁸. In November 2024, Krishnan articulated the following: "simple logic — we need the best, regardless of where they happen to be born..."⁹.

Of note is the position of Trump's ally Laura Loomer. In April 2023, Trump attempted to recruit her for his presidential campaign team. However, his campaign advisers convinced him not to do so. By September 2023, some of Trump's associates were concerned about Loomer's presence in Trump's inner circle and the influence she was exerting on him. She noted: "It's alarming to see the number of career leftists who are now being appointed to serve in Trump's admin when they share views that are in direct opposition to Trump's America First agenda. How will he control immigration in our country and promote America First innovation when Trump appointed this guy who wants to REMOVE all restrictions on green card caps in the United States so that foreign students (which makes up 78% of the employees in Silicon Valley) can come to the US and take jobs that should be given to American STEM students. This is very troubling. Mind you, none of the tech executives who are meeting with Trump and getting appointed in his cabinet supported him in 2020 or during the 2024 primary. I feel like many

⁷ Sriram Krishnan (@sriramk) on X. 14.11.2024. URL: <https://x.com/sriramk/status/1857032180846714956> (accessed: 09.01.2025). (Social network 'X' is banned in the Russian Federation).

⁸ Elon Musk slams 'wrong-headed' economics, backs Sriram Krishnan skilled immigration push in US. *The Times of India*. 26.12.2024. URL: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/us/elon-musk-slams-wrong-headed-economics-backs-sriram-krishnans-skilled-immigration-push-in-us/articleshow/116666354.cms> (accessed: 10.01.2025).

⁹ Sriram Krishnan (@sriramk) on X. 14.11.2024. URL: <https://x.com/sriramk/status/1857038806240649691> (accessed: 09.01.2025). (Social network 'X' is banned in the Russian Federation).

of them are trying to get into Trump's admin to enrich themselves and get contracts at DOD. This is not America First policy".¹⁰

L. Loomer's supporters of also voiced strong disapproval of S. Krishnan. Thus, the following post received over 7.4 million views. "Did any of yall vote for this Indian to run America?"¹¹ Following further consideration, the comment was supplemented with this addition. "No matter what Sriram Krishnan says, he is INDIA First. No matter what the people around him say. Their only goal is to import more Indians to REPLACE American Workers"¹²¹³.

Mr. Krishnan and Mr. Musk are both immigrants who went on to become US citizens. It is evident that they have a strong interest in upholding the H-1B program. Mr Musk has repeatedly made it known via social media that he believes the H-1B program to be beneficial to the US. However, it has not been well received by a significant segment of the US population, who have repeatedly expressed concern that Americans are losing high-paying jobs to the influx of immigrants, which only benefits American billionaires. Trump has also consistently advocated for addressing this issue to ensure order.

As "Indians" and "H-1B" became trending topics on X, Musk urged supporters to ignore Loomer: "there are many attention-seeking trolls on all social media platforms trying to yank your chain. They win if you respond."¹⁴

Elon Musk's response to criticism directed at him and Sriram Krishnan was immediate, "...there is a dire shortage of extremely talented and motivated engineers in America.... OF COURSE my companies and I would prefer to hire Americans and we DO, as that is MUCH easier than going through the incredibly painful and slow work visa process. This is not about handing out opportunities from some magical hat... This is blindingly obvious when looking at NBA teams, as the physical differences are so obvious to see.

¹⁰ Laura Loomer (@LauraLoomer) on X. 23.12.2024. URL: <https://x.com/LauraLoomer/status/1871262423950520454> (accessed: 09.01.2025). (Social network 'X' is banned in the Russian Federation).

¹¹ Nas Escobar (@nasescobar316) on X. 24.12.2024. URL: <https://x.com/nasescobar316/status/1871526624233132350> (retrieved on 09.01.2025). (Social network 'X' is banned in the Russian Federation).

¹² Nas Escobar (@nasescobar316) on X. URL: <https://x.com/nasescobar316/status/1871526896485462057> (retrieved on 09.01.2025). (Social network 'X' is banned in the Russian Federation).

¹³ *Spelling and transliteration according to the source. — A.D.*

¹⁴ Elon Musk (@elonmusk) on X. 26.12.2024. URL: <https://x.com/elonmusk/status/1872374991800652146> (retrieved on 09.01.2025). (Social network 'X' is banned in the Russian Federation).

However, the MENTAL differences between humans are FAR bigger than the physical differences!”¹⁵

Vivek Ramaswamy¹⁶, former Republican presidential candidate and co-chair of the Department of Government Efficiency, has become a vocal critic of the H-1B program, aligning himself with Trump’s allies in doing so. “Tech companies often hire foreign-born & first-generation engineers over ‘native’ Americans, because American culture tends to value mediocrity over excellence... A culture that celebrates the prom queen over the math olympiad champ will not produce the best engineers.”¹⁷ These statements provoked a strong reaction from former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley, who stated, “there is nothing wrong with American workers or American culture... All you have to do is look at the border and see how many want what we have.”¹⁸

Disagreements between Vivek Ramaswamy and Elon Musk over the role and function of DOGE exacerbated tensions within Trump’s circle. Ramaswamy, who sought structural reforms through an independent analytical approach, clashed with Musk, who insisted on government integration and working with confidential information. Their tensions escalated due to Ramaswamy’s contentious stance on visa policy, which estranged Trump’s supporters¹⁹. This situation mirrors the long-standing discord between technocrats and established political elites in the United States. Intra-party disagreements can often hinder key initiatives, particularly in the context of competition for influence in the White House.

According to the 2023 annual report to Congress by the American Immigration Council, the average annual salary for H-1B holders in 2023 was

¹⁵ Elon Musk (@elonmusk) on X. 25.12.2024. URL: <https://x.com/elonmusk/status/1871993406357958693> (retrieved on 09.01.2025). (Social network ‘X’ is banned in the Russian Federation).

¹⁶ Vivek Ramaswamy is an American businessman and politician of Indian origin, founder of a biotechnology company Roivant Sciences (2014) and an investment firm Strive Asset Management (2022). His net worth exceeds \$1 billion. He is known for his conservative views, including criticism of ESG initiatives and support for a market-based approach to corporate activity. After declining to run for president as a Republican, he shifted his focus to other political ambitions, including a potential run for Ohio governor. — *A.D.*

¹⁷ *Watrobski K.* Ramaswamy blames US 'mediocrity' culture for tech companies hiring foreign-born engineers. *CBS Austin*. 27.12.2024. URL: <https://cbsaustin.com/news/nation-world/ramaswamy-blames-us-mediocrity-culture-for-tech-companies-hiring-foreign-born-engineers-vivek-immigration-doge-nikki-haley-elon-musk> (retrieved on 10.01.2025).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Dobrunov M.* Ramaswamy changes his mind on joining Trump's administration over his split with Musk. *RBK*. 22.01.2025. URL: <https://rbc-ru.turbopages.org/rbc.ru/s/politics/22/01/2025/67908a669a794777f26afaa9> (retrieved on 30 January 2025).

\$118,000²⁰ — substantially higher than the average salary of a US worker of \$53,490 — which explains why the program is so attractive for skilled professionals²¹. On top of that, the average annual salary of an H-1B visa holder in computer-related occupations in 2023 totaled \$123,000²². The number of visas approved over the five-year period was reached than 2 million (Table 1), while the number of petitions approved in 2023 for workers in technology-related occupations accounted for 65% of the total²³.

Table 1

Number of H1B Petitions Filed and Approved, FY 2019–FY 2023

Fiscal Year	Filed Petitions	Approved Petitions
2019	420.577	389.378
2020	427.245	426.710
2021	398.269	407.071
2022	474.301	442.043
2023	386.584	386.340

Source: compiled by A.S. Derbenev based on data from the US Department of Homeland Security.

The largest corporate beneficiaries of the H-1B program are Amazon, Google, and Tesla. The vast majority of tomorrow’s workforce originates from India, predominantly occupying roles in software development, information technology, and engineering sectors. Introduced by the Congress in 1990, the H-1B program is an important bridge to a “brighter future” in the United States for highly skilled foreign workers. Visa holders may eventually become eligible to apply for a green card, which will allow them to remain in the country indefinitely.

The number of visas issued annually is capped at 85,000. Given that corporations submit thousands of applications each fiscal year (Fig. 1),

²⁰ Characteristics of H-1B Specialty Occupation Workers. Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report to Congress. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, U.S. Department of Homeland Security. URL: https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/reports/OLA_Signed_H-1B_Characteristics_Congressional_Report_FY2023.pdf (retrieved on 11.01.2025).

²¹ Average Salary in the U.S. 2023. *Jobted*. URL: [https://www.jobted.com/salary#:~:text=Average%20Salary%20in%20the%20U.S.,40-hour%20work%20week\).%20Popular%20Salaries](https://www.jobted.com/salary#:~:text=Average%20Salary%20in%20the%20U.S.,40-hour%20work%20week).%20Popular%20Salaries) (retrieved on 11.01.2025).

²² Characteristics of H-1B Specialty Occupation Workers. Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report to Congress. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, U.S. Department of Homeland Security. URL: https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/reports/OLA_Signed_H-1B_Characteristics_Congressional_Report_FY2023.pdf (retrieved on 11.01.2025).

²³ *Ibid*.

participation in the program is equitably allocated through a lottery system. University employees and those of other non-profit organizations are generally exempt from the restriction. Data from the Department of Labor provides insight into the factors driving growing demand for foreign specialists. In October 2024, there were twice as many job openings as there were unemployed people in the “professional and business services” sector, where the tech field belongs.

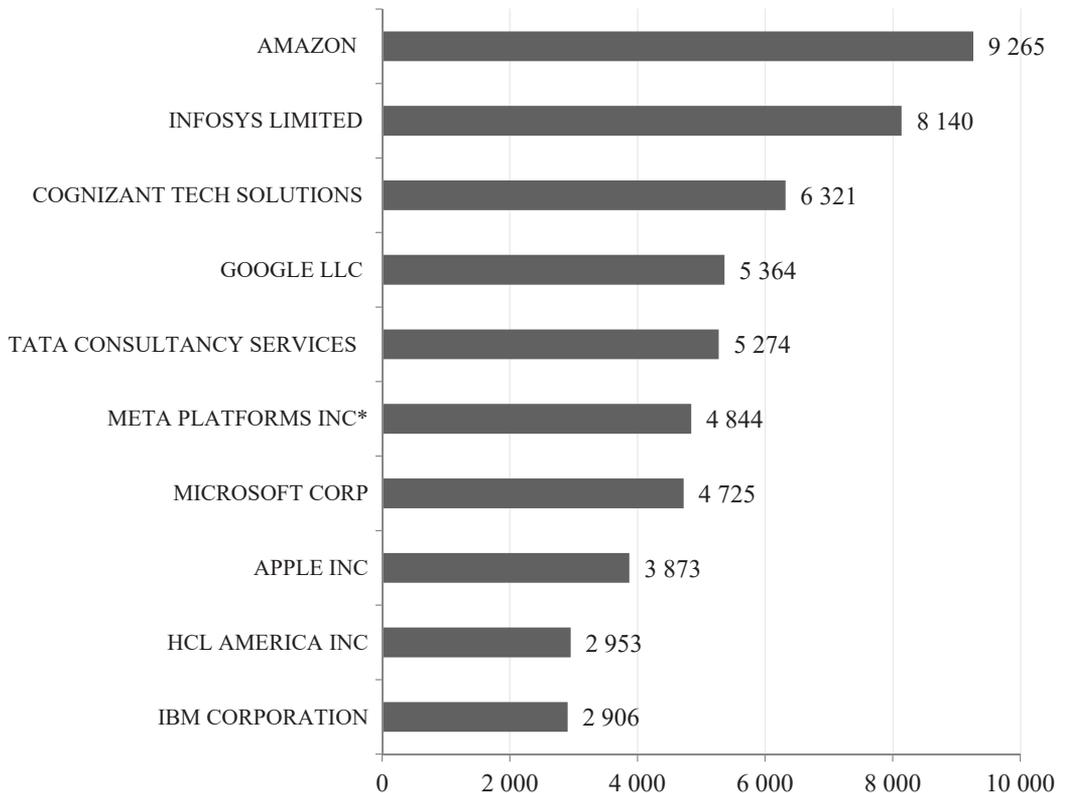


Figure 1. Number of approved H-1B visa beneficiaries among leading employers in 2024

Source: compiled by A.S. Derbenev based on data from the US Migration Service.²⁴

* It is recognized as an extremist organization and banned in the Russian Federation.

The H-1B visa program mandates that employers compensate workers at the “prevailing wage” rate. However, data from a 2020 Economic Policy Institute analysis reveals that 60% of government-certified positions offered

²⁴ H-1B Employer Data Hub. U.S. Citizenship and Migration Services, U.S. Department of Homeland Security. URL: <https://www.uscis.gov/tools/reports-and-studies/h-1b-employer-data-hub> (retrieved on 16.01.2025).

remuneration substantially below the occupational mean wage nationwide²⁵. According to experts from the same institute, a fundamental flaw in the H-1B program is that “it allows U.S. employers to legally remunerate H-1B employees at rates inferior to those of comparable domestic workers²⁶.”

In 2020, the Trump administration sought to revise the H-1B program. It is important to note that they increased the minimum wage that employers are required to pay. These proposed modifications, however, were ultimately rescinded under the subsequent Biden administration.

In 2024, the largest users of H-1B visas were Cognizant Technology Solutions, Tata Consultancy Services, and HCL America, which primarily provide IT services (See Fig. 1). Companies in this sector frequently apply for visas to fill low-paying positions. Giovanni Peri, Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Davis, and Research Fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research in Cambridge, Massachusetts, provided the following commentary on the H-1B program, “The only companies that can get a lot of visas are companies that are very well organized, which have a lot of lawyers, that send the application in time, all in perfect shape.”²⁷

In April 2024, the Institute of Labor Economics (IZA) presented a report entitled “The Impact of Immigration on Firms and Workers: Insights from the H-1B Lottery.” The introduction states that companies that won the H-1B lottery show an increase in the number of immigrants with higher education, as well as growth in revenue and business scale²⁸. Based on this data, the program enhances the viability of companies to compete and grow their businesses in the future. “The 2007 H-1B Regular Cap lottery... led to random, exogenous changes in the ability of firms to hire skilled immigrants... We do not find evidence for displacement of native-born, college-educated workers at the firm level. However, this result masks dynamics among more specific subgroups” the same report states²⁹.

²⁵ Costa D, Hira R. H-1B visas and prevailing wage levels. Economic Policy Institute. 04.05.2020. URL: <https://www.epi.org/publication/h-1b-visas-and-prevailing-wage-levels/> (retrieved on 16.01.2025).

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Jim Russell (@ProducerCities) on X. 01.01.2025. URL: <https://x.com/ProducerCities/status/1874529906195132919> (retrieved on 16.01.2025). (Social network ‘X’ is banned in the Russian Federation).

²⁸ The Impact of Immigration on Firms and Workers: Insights from the H-1B Lottery. IZA — Institute of Labor Economics. URL: <https://docs.iza.org/dp16917.pdf> (retrieved on 16.01.2025).

²⁹ Ibid.

Gaurav Khanna, a labor economist at the University of California, San Diego, posits a direct correlation between issued H-1B visa numbers and two key economic indicators — a measurable increase in U.S. patent production, alongside rising mean wage levels for workers in both the United States and India³⁰.

Many US companies have long faced a shortage of highly skilled professionals in the so-called STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). Demand for this type of expertise has skyrocketed. According to an estimate by the Semiconductor Industry Association, “there will be a STEM shortage of approximately 1.4 million technicians, computer scientists and engineers in the U.S. by 2030.”³¹

According to Artificial Intelligence Report 2024 by Stanford University, the impact of AI on society has grown significantly. In 2023, the industry led the way in developing advanced machine learning models, introducing 51 notable models, while academic institutions created only 15. The financial investment required for training such models has reached unprecedented levels. For instance, the estimated cost of training OpenAI’s GPT-4 was \$78 million, and Google’s Gemini Ultra was estimated at \$191 million³².

In 2023, investment in generative AI rose sharply, reaching \$25.2 billion, which is almost eight times as much as in 2022 (\$3.1 billion). The US continued to take the lead, attracting \$67.2 billion in private investment in AI, significantly ahead of other countries. However, despite the growth in investment, the number of AI-related job vacancies in the US fell from 2.0% of the total in 2022 to 1.6% in 2023. This decline is due to a decrease in the proportion of technical positions in companies and a decline in hiring by large AI companies.

At the same time, there appears to be a lack of standardization in the field of ethical AI. Major developers such as Google, OpenAI, and Anthropic use different criteria to test their models, which makes it difficult to compare them. In addition, there is growing concern over political and ethical aspects of AI, including deepfakes and potential political biases in models such as ChatGPT. AI is also having a significant impact on science and medicine: in 2023, apps such as AlphaDev and GNoME help increase algorithmic efficiency and discover new

³⁰ Jim Russell (@ProducerCities) on X. URL: <https://x.com/ProducerCities/status/1874530547055341717> (retrieved on 20.01.2025). (Social network ‘X’ is banned in the Russian Federation).

³¹ STEM shortage in the US for STEM professionals. Harvey Law Corporation. 14.12.2024. URL: <https://harveylawcorporation.com/stem-shortage-in-the-us-immigrate-to-the-us/> (дата обращения: 21.01.2025).

³² AI Index Report 2024. Stanford University. URL: <https://aiindex.stanford.edu/report/> (retrieved on: 23.01.2025).

materials. In medicine, tools such as EVEscape and AlphaMissense are helping to predict pandemics and analyze genetic mutations.

Concurrently, public perception of AI is becoming more conscious. Surveys indicate that 66% of people believe that AI will have a significant impact on their lives, with many expressing concern about its potential consequences. This is evidenced by a marked surge in AI-related legislative initiatives: whereas merely one AI-focused regulation was enacted in the United States in 2016, this figure escalated to 25 by 2023.

In the context of technological sovereignty, the US is proactively enhancing its competitiveness in critical technologies. The CHIPS and Science Act³³ allocates \$280 billion to support scientific research and educational programmes, with \$52.7 billion earmarked for the development of domestic semiconductor manufacturing. This demonstrates the US's commitment to reducing its dependence on foreign supplies and strengthening its position in the global technology race, as the tech sector continues to have a significant impact on the US economy. Despite a contraction in aggregate private sector investment in artificial intelligence, a surge in generative AI funding underscores its expanding economic significance (Fig. 2). This divergence coincides with dwindling AI-related job openings, suggesting an imperative for workforce realignment amid accelerating technological transformation³⁴.

US President Donald Trump announced the creation of Stargate, a company that will develop AI infrastructure within the US. The project is built around such tech giants as OpenAI, Oracle, and SoftBank. The total investment will amount to \$500 billion, making it the largest AI project in history³⁵. The initiative aims to create more than 100,000 jobs in the US over four years. The initial \$100 billion investment is expected to be allocated for the construction of data centers in Texas. The Stargate project represents a deliberate geopolitical move designed to counter China's rising technological dominance, thereby reflecting the United States' unequivocal commitment to preserving its hegemony in the artificial intelligence domain.

³³ Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors and Science Act of 2022 — a law passed in the United States in August 2022 aimed to develop semiconductor manufacturing and support scientific research in critical technologies. The law was passed to bolster the country's technological sovereignty, reduce dependence on foreign microchip supplies, and boost competitiveness in the global technology race. — *A.D.*

³⁴ AI Index Report 2024. Stanford University. URL: <https://aiindex.stanford.edu/report/> (retrieved on 23.01.2025).

³⁵ Trump announces largest AI project in history, worth \$500 billion. BCS Express. 22.01.2025. URL: <https://bcs-express.ru/novosti-i-analitika/tramp-obiaviil-o-krupneishem-ii-proekte-v-istorii-na-500-mlrd> (retrieved on 30.01.2025).

Advancements in technological sphere and AI market create more opportunities in the labour market. However, Ron Hira, a professor in the Department of Political Science at Howard University and Research Fellow at the Economic Policy Institute in Washington, dispels some myths over perceived shortage of STEM professionals in the US. In his assessment, those lack robust statistical substantiation [17]. The labour market is in an imbalance, with many STEM graduates unable to find jobs in their professional areas, while other STEM fields see an oversupply of specialists. On top of that, high qualifications do not always guarantee stable employment, especially in the context of global competition. According to US authorities, an influx of foreign specialists creates vulnerabilities in critical sectors such as national defence and information technology, which poses a threat to US technological sovereignty.

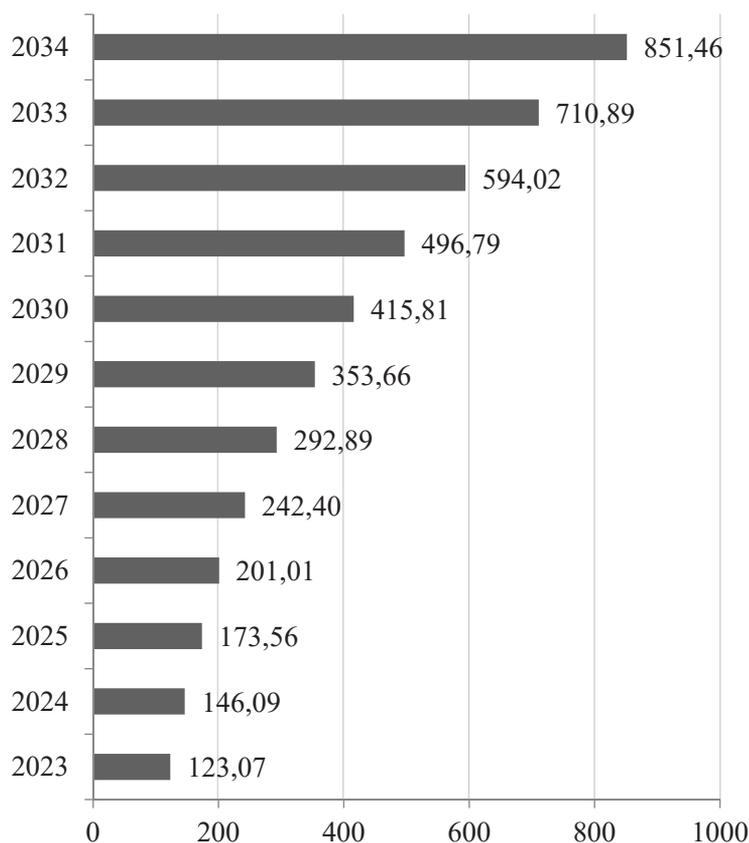


Figure 2. Forecast for the artificial intelligence market in the USA 2023–2034, USD bln
Source: compiled by A.S. Derbenev based on data from Precedence Research³⁶.

³⁶ Artificial Intelligence (AI) Market Size, Share, and Trends 2024 to 2034. Precedence Research. URL: <https://www.precedenceresearch.com/artificial-intelligence-market> (retrieved on 24.01.2025).

According to the 2020 US Census, Asian Indians form the largest ethnic group of migrants from Asia living in the United States (second only to migrants from Mexico), 4,397,737 people in total³⁷. Since 2023, the number of online comments directed against Asian Americans, particularly those of South Asian origin, has grown steadily as political statements on tougher immigration policies and the protection of American workers have gained popularity. According to Stop AAPI Hate, January 2025 saw the highest number of online insults against Asians in a single month since monitoring began in August 2022, totaling 87,945. Following the election, the number of insults increased by 66%³⁸. This is a striking example of how protectionist measures and rhetoric by proponents of economic nationalism can incite interethnic hatred and take on a chauvinistic tone.

As of 2022, the United States employed approximately 10.4 million people³⁹ in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) sector, of which approximately 5.6 million worked in IT support, network engineering, software development, and data science⁴⁰. This indicates that a substantial segment of the U.S. labor force is engaged in computer-related occupations, underscoring the growing importance of technology across diverse economic sectors. Technology-related professions are most likely to experience accelerated growth in comparison to the mean expansion rate of other economic sectors in the foreseeable future. This testifies to growing importance of the tech industry for both the US economy and global labor market.

At the same time, one should not ignore the measures that Trump's second administration may take to maintain US leadership in artificial intelligence in the face of growing competition from China. One of the key initiatives provides for restricted export of advanced technologies to China, which is supposed to slow down the development of Chinese AI capabilities and reduce the risk of technology

³⁷ Detailed Races and Ethnicities in the United States and Puerto Rico: 2020 Census. United States Census Bureau. 21.09.2023. URL: <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/detailed-race-ethnicities-2020-census.html> (retrieved on 24.01.2025).

³⁸ Anti-Asian online hate in US saw 'alarming surge' after election, report says. Reuters. 20.02.2025 URL: <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/anti-asian-online-hate-us-saw-alarming-surge-after-election-report-says-2025-02-20/> (retrieved on: 23.02.2025).

³⁹ Beckhusen J. Occupations in Information Technology. United States Census Bureau. August 2016. URL: <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2016/acs/acs-35.pdf> (дата обращения: 25.01.2025).

⁴⁰ Computer, engineering, & science occupations. Data USA. URL: <https://datausa.io/profile/soc/computer-engineering-science-occupations> (retrieved on: 25.01.2025).

leakage⁴¹. At the same time, the US is seeking to develop domestic manufacturing capacity for semiconductors, thus reducing its dependence on Asian suppliers and boosting supply chain security. There is growing strategic emphasis on fostering collaborative alliances with like-minded nations to effectively mitigate China's technological ambitions and protect intellectual property. To strengthen leadership in AI, it is proposed to increase public and private investment in research and development. Another important task is to ensure free data exchange within the country and with trusted partners, as access to large amounts of data is a key factor in the development of artificial intelligence technologies. In general, all these steps aim to strengthen the US position in the global technology race and prevent China from dominating critical technology sectors⁴².

A split on all fronts: Trump tests Republican Party unity

The origins of ongoing split and its long-term consequences are significant. For example, in January 2025, *The Wall Street Journal* published an article on Congressman Mike Turner's removal by House Speaker Mike Johnson from his position as chair of the House Intelligence Committee. According to Turner, this decision was motivated by "concerns from Mar-a-Lago," Donald Trump's residence⁴³. This event underscores Trump's persistent influence over both the Republican Party's rank-and-file and its governing elite. The removal of Turner — a figure renowned for his independent stance and pointed criticism of certain Trump administration policies — likely reflects an effort to consolidate authority over key congressional committees. The appointment of a new Trump's loyalist as chair of the Intelligence Committee could alter the direction of its work, including its control over intelligence services. It could also deepen divisions within the Republican Party between traditionalist conservatives and Trump supporters. Overall, Mike Turner's removal as chairman of the House Intelligence Committee reflects complex dynamics within the Republican Party and highlights Trump's significant influence on its politics and decision-making, especially given

⁴¹ *Amodei D., Pottinger M.* Trump Can Keep America's AI Advantage. *The Wall Street Journal*. URL: <https://www.wsj.com/opinion/trump-can-keep-americas-ai-advantage-china-chips-data-eccdc91> (retrieved on 30.01.2025).

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *MAGA Cashiers a Check on Tulsi Gabbard as DNI.* *The Wall Street Journal*. 16.01.2025. URL: <https://www.wsj.com/opinion/mike-turner-ousted-house-intelligence-committee-mike-johnson-donald-trump-house-gop-1363d4ef> (retrieved on 30.01.2025).

Trump's ambivalent stance on some issues, particularly balancing his support for technology with his immigration promises.

During his first presidential term, he criticized the H-1B visa program, labeling it “unfair” to American workers, and initiated changes under the “Hire Americans” policy to ensure that visas were issued to the highest-paid and most qualified candidates. Trump's immigration policy has traditionally focused on combating illegal immigration — a key point in his election campaign. However, in the new reality, Trump expressed support for H-1B visas, stating that he has always supported the program as a means of attracting skilled foreign workers to the United States. Despite public criticism, Trump acknowledges employing H-1B visa workers at his facilities and regards the program as “excellent,” without specifying whether he plans to change the quotas or rules for the visas⁴⁴. At the same time, a possible solution to the dilemma — at least partially — could be the introduction of so-called “golden cards” for foreigners who invest \$5 million or more in the US economy⁴⁵.

Following Trump's inauguration, Republicans have backed virtually all of their leader's initiatives, going to great lengths to defend him against attacks from the US Democratic Party. However, divisions have emerged within the Republican Party over the US president's proposal to control Gaza in the future.

Long-time Trump supporter Steve Bannon noted, “We love the president, but our focus in the War Room is East Palestine, not Palestine.” He was referring to his podcast, War Room, and the Ohio city of East Palestine, devastated by a train crash involving hazardous waste in 2023. Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, a Republican and another Trump ally, cited unanimous opposition among his Senate colleagues regarding the deployment of US troops to Gaza⁴⁶. Likewise, The Hill writes that another Trump supporter, when asked whose responsibility it was to rebuild Gaza, said that most Americans would react by saying “not ours.”⁴⁷ This focus on domestic issues in the US suggests that traditionalists are prioritizing national security issues to cultivate a politically advantageous public perception among the electorate.

⁴⁴ Levine J. Trump supports immigration visas backed by Musk: ‘I have many H-1B visas on my properties’. New York Post. 28.12.2024. URL: <https://nypost.com/2024/12/28/us-news/donald-trump-backs-h-1b-visa-program-supported-by-elon-musk/> (retrieved on 25.10.2025).

⁴⁵ US to Start Selling “Golden” Residence Permits for \$5 million. RBK. 26.02.2025. URL: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/26/02/2025/67be66419a7947957eccf506> (retrieved on 25..10.2025).

⁴⁶ Trump doubles down on Gaza takeover proposal despite bipartisan opposition. The Guardian. 06.02.2025. URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/feb/06/donald-trump-gaza-takeover-opposition> (retrieved on 25.10.2025).

⁴⁷ Ibid.

However, the problem is that Trump's proposal conflicts with Republican efforts to reduce military spending. Such statements could potentially encourage sabotage within US ministries and agencies. There are interesting parallels between current disagreements over immigration policy and a longstanding conflict between isolationists and interventionists. MAGA nationalists declare "America first" principle and seek to minimize military spending abroad. Traditional hawks have historically supported US military presence, but in this case, they are cautiously distancing themselves from Trump's initiative. In both the H-1B issue and the situation in Gaza, MAGA faction opposes actions that they believe contradict American interests.

Technocratic reaction against economic nationalism: the intraparty split in the United States on the issue of highly skilled migration

Ever since the second Trump administration took office, developments in US domestic politics have a significant impact on the H-1B program shaping projections on the nation's capacity to assert technological sovereignty. The program has become a subject of controversy in political circles, leading to political uncertainty and discussions on possible reforms, such as reducing the number of visas issued or introducing stricter requirements.

In December 2024, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued a final ruling aimed at modernizing the H-1B program⁴⁸. Taking effect on 17 January 2025, this ruling aims to streamline the approval process, increase employers' flexibility in retaining skilled foreign workers, and strengthen its integrity and oversight. These changes are intended to align the H-1B program with modern workforce needs and potentially bolster the US technology sector by making it easier to hire skilled professionals.

It is also worth noting the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), a temporary organization established by Trump on 20 January 2025. Its primary goals were to optimize the activities of federal agencies, reduce wasteful spending and modernize government technology to increase efficiency and productivity. Trump appointed Elon Musk to spearhead the change, allowing him to share his experience in the tech sector with the federal government. Despite achieving significant cost savings, DOGE methods and initiatives became the subject of controversy and litigation, with the overall domestic political climate in the US beginning to resemble a kind of "perestroika."

⁴⁸ Modernizing H-1B Requirements, Providing Flexibility in the F-1 Program, and Program Improvements Affecting Other Nonimmigrant Workers. Federal Register. URL: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/12/18/2024-29354/modernizing-h-1b-requirements-providing-flexibility-in-the-f-1-program-and-program-improvements> (retrieved on 25.10.2025).

At the same time, aggressive staff cuts at federal agencies carried out by DOGE may indirectly affect the implementation of the H-1B program. If it affects such agencies as United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), it could result in longer processing times and a backlog of applications, making it more difficult for companies to recruit foreign workers. However, if Trump's visa initiatives yield expected results, visas could be issued more efficiently by reducing bureaucratic delays, potentially to the benefit of visa applicants. Elon Musk actively advocates for skilled immigration to the US. Given his position in the US business community and his former leadership at DOGE, it is quite possible that he could shape the future of the H-1B program for highly skilled workers in STEM fields, despite conflicting opinions from MAGA supporters. This circumstance creates political conflict among Trump supporters, leading to a rather contradictory policy on H-1B.

Discussions on immigration policy reveal a deep divide within the Republican Party between the MAGA movement, which favors economic nationalism and restrictions on immigration, and Republicans who support the tech sector and advocate for skilled immigration and deregulation. This represents a fundamental problem for the party's platform. It is interesting to note how the key principles enshrined in the party's charter⁴⁹ align with — or contradict — the emerging domestic policy agenda of Trump's second administration. The principles of economic development and free markets are meant to encourage business innovation and reduce government intervention. The emphasis on making the American dream accessible again through increased prosperity for citizens, alongside opposition to policies that replace American workers with foreign labor, indicates the need for tighter immigration controls (as evidenced by Chapter 2's bold headline on closing borders and halting the influx of migrants)⁵⁰. While the MAGA movement supports reducing bureaucracy, which is consistent with DOGE's goals, it also advocates for more active government intervention in industries such as manufacturing to protect American jobs. The rise of DOGE at the start of Trump's second term is in line with Republican economic policy, but its efforts to cut the workforce could have some not-so-great consequences. Musk's influence challenges MAGA orthodoxy by pushing for policies that favor business and skilled immigration. Thus, in today's reality, protectionism and populism go hand in hand in the actions of Republicans. However, delving deeper into the structure of their ideological orientations and interests, several factions can be identified (Table 2).

⁴⁹ 2024 Republican Party Platform. The American Presidency Project. URL: <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2024-republican-party-platform> (retrieved on 25.10.2025).

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Table 2

Factions in the Republican Party and their positions on H-1B visas, immigration, and economic policy

Faction	Key figures	Tech policy	Stance on H-1B	Stance on DOGE
MAGA nationalists	Donald Trump, J.D. Vance, Stephen Miller, Josh Hawley, Tom Cotton	They support anti-monopoly regulation for Big Tech, believe that large IT companies work against the interests of conservatives, and promote government investment in manufacturing and critical industries	They oppose the H-1B program, believing that it lowers the wages of American workers and replaces them with cheap foreign specialists; demand strict restrictions and checks	They advocate for a radical reduction in bureaucracy, but demand that strict immigration controls remain in place; support reform of the administrative apparatus, but not at the expense of state regulation of the economy
Techno-Libertarians	Elon Musk, Peter Thiel, Vivek Ramaswamy, Rand Paul	They advocate for a free market and minimal government intervention; believe that the US should accelerate innovation and support global competition; oppose antitrust pressure on Big Tech	They actively support H-1B as a tool for attracting global talent; advocate for simplified visa process, especially for STEM professionals; oppose strict quotas and restrictions	They intend to radically reduce bureaucracy; support automation and removal of regulatory barriers; see DOGE as a tool to completely transform the state apparatus
Business conservatives	Mitch McConnell, Mike Pence, US Chamber of Commerce	They favor business stability and moderate regulation; oppose a sharp increase in state control, but also do not welcome tough antitrust measures against IT giants	They advocate moderate support for H-1B visas, but demand stricter control mechanisms to prevent abuse; see the program as a means to fill the shortage of skilled workforce	They are cautious about bureaucratic reforms; believe that reforms should be balanced so as not to disrupt the work of state institutions; support moderate cuts
“hawkish right”	Marco Rubio, Lindsey Graham	They argue that the state should invest in defence technologies; support subsidies for the AI development, semiconductors and cybersecurity; critical of Big Tech’s cooperation with China	They support H-1B visas, but with reservations; approve of hiring scientists and engineers, but oppose issuing visas to specialists from China, Russia, and other potentially hostile countries; demand rigorous screening of applicants	They advocate for bureaucratic reform, but demand adequate funding for law enforcement agencies; support DOGE, provided it does not weaken the country’s defence capabilities

Source: compiled by A.S. Derbenev.

For example, MAGA nationalist conservatives support reducing bureaucracy, but only if it does not result in a weaker government presence in terms of immigration and industry control. Musk's support for the H-1B visa program directly challenges their vision of restricting foreign labor. This creates tension between those who favor free-market globalization and those who prefer economic nationalism.

Of course, this internal split in the Republican Party does not seem fatal, but on closer inspection, it reveals important contradictions in Trump's team that can be utilized by both domestic political opponents and foreign powers to shift the focus of the American administration. In the long term, this could affect not only H-1B policy, but also broader migration and economic reforms over the next four years.

The outcome of this political debate has significant implications for US technological sovereignty. Proponents of the H-1B programme argue that it is necessary to maintain the country's competitiveness in technology and innovation by filling critical talent gaps. Critics, on the other hand, argue that excessive reliance on foreign workers could weaken domestic capabilities and make the US more vulnerable to fluctuations in the global market⁵¹. Future policy directions are likely to influence the balance between leveraging global expertise and developing local talent in the technology sector.

Conclusion

Political groupings in the United States take different views on AI technologies development and, respectively, on recruitment policies. However, virtually all political factions demonstrate a vested interest in leveraging cutting-edge technological advancements and innovative solutions. Substantial financial investments in AI development announced by the second Trump administration testify to the fact that the country's leaders expect high returns from technological projects for the national economy. These initiatives will require much more than a dozen or two of highly specialized professionals, thus creating good employment opportunities in the US. MAGA supporters focus on traditional values and patriotism while criticizing Big Tech corporations, as the latter believe that it is very important for the United States to welcome liberalism and diversity of all kinds and attract highly skilled foreign workforce to the country. This lays the groundwork for cultural division, as MAGA supporters believe that technocrats feel no connection to "traditional America."

⁵¹ Hackman M. Trump Has Made America More Hostile to Immigrants. He Isn't Done Yet. *The Wall Street Journal*. 03.02.2025. URL: <https://www.wsj.com/politics/policy/trump-has-made-america-more-hostile-to-immigrants-he-isnt-done-yet-24a55269> (retrieved on 25.10.2025).

Another important factor is that tech corporations are often criticized for their influence on the media in terms of alleged censorship and bias towards certain events in the country, which MAGA supporters use to mobilize their electorate. In addition, MAGA supporters are concerned with the country's lack of equitable wealth reallocation or adequate advocacy for the American labor force. They criticize excessive expansion of Silicon Valley corporations and increasing wealth inequality.

Washington in general and Trump's associates in particular realize that the country must lead the world in artificial intelligence, a prerequisite to ensuring national security and a strong economy. AI is gradually becoming a powerful strategic technology of the 21st century. AI, developed by the world's leading corporations, might well be capable of solving a considerable number of problems in most areas of science and technology. AI helps solve complex problems that would take humans hours, even months to complete such as developing new weapons or creating drugs to fight diseases. The countries that take the lead in creating advanced AI systems will gain a strategic advantage in its use. Trump's entourage and the new US presidential administration are taking steps to ensure that the United States and its allies lead the way in the development of this technology.

If they succeed, this could lead to breakthroughs in a wide range of industries: military, healthcare, energy, finance, etc. It could also expand American military capabilities. China can surpass the United States in the development of AI, and the Russian Federation also has its own competitive developments. The United States has a psychological need: it is extremely important for them that Western democratic societies, with their values, the rule of law, etc., establish norms and rules according to which AI is used. In the American mind, it is impossible to allow "undemocratic" (In their interpretation) governments to take the lead in the race for AI dominance.

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