



RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Impact of Immigration Law and Policy on Crime Rates in Immigrant Communities in the United States

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Jun 27, 2024 Accepted: Sep 13, 2024	The aim of the study is to analyse the relationships between migration legislation, migrant integration policies, and the crime rate. The article examines various aspects of migration legislation and policy, including integration programmes, the strictness of migration laws, and their impact on the socio-economic situation of migrants. The study involves a statistical assessment of criminal cases among migrants and identified vulnerabilities of migration policy in the USA. Rehabilitation programs in the USA show varying success rates, ranging from 20% to 60%, depending on the type of program. Semi-freedom houses and therapeutic communities proved to be the most effective. The results of the study indicate that a balanced migration policy that promotes the integration of migrants can have a positive impact on reducing crime rates. The practical significance of the research is the identified ways to optimize the migration policy to increase the social integration of migrants and reduce crime rates in the USA.
Keywords Migration legislation Migration policy Crime rate, migration Communities Social integration	
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INTRODUCTION

The steady growth of the number of migrants in the USA in recent decades has caused a number of socio-political crises that affected the country's political space. The arrival of large numbers of migrants has intensified debates about migration policy, national security, and economic instability. There is a need for manpower and a humanitarian responsibility to provide shelter to those fleeing conflict and persecution. However, there are questions about assimilation and the impact on social services. The result has been intense debate and polarized public opinion, requiring politicians to strike a balance between protecting borders and ensuring openness and tolerance.

The need to regulate the labour market, develop a democratic migration policy and clear norms is becoming increasingly relevant in the modern American society. In view of a significant impact of migration on the labour-scarce corporate economy, the creation of an effective system ensured legal access to the labour market. Such a system should be based on accurate knowledge of market needs and be adapted to the rapidly changing conditions of globalization (Akimov et al., 2020). Development of an inclusive migration policy should take into account human rights and promote integration to improve socio-economic policy.

The issue of criminality and ineffective integration of migrants into American society is a critical issue. Stereotypes and negative perceptions of migrants are often intensified by incidents of criminal activity. They lead to the stigmatization of a whole population group and complicate their opportunities for integration. The lack of effective adaptation and integration programmes only increases the isolation and alienation of migrants, thereby entailing an increase in the crime rate. Rehabilitation programs are an important component of the criminal justice system aimed at reducing recidivism and supporting the successful reintegration of ex-prisoners into society (Melnik et al., 2022). There is a wide range of programs in the United States, including drug addiction treatment, educational and vocational courses, psychological counseling, and others. Analysis of their effectiveness is important for evaluating the success of rehabilitation measures and determining optimal ways of their improvement. The development of a systemic policy, which includes educational measures, employment support and access to social services, plays a primary role in solving this problem. Cooperation between government agencies, non-profit organizations, and migrant communities exists to develop modern integration strategies (Hubanova et al., 2021; Lytvyn et al., 2022).

The aim of the study is to examine the impact of immigration laws and policies on crime rates in the US immigrant communities. The aim involved the fulfilment of the following research objectives: 1. Systematize statistics on the crime rate among migrants and determine the dynamics of the number of migrants. 2. Assess the impact of migration policy on changing the criminal environment among migrant communities in the ten largest states of America. 3. Develop recommendations on the optimization of legislative and political instruments in order to reduce crime among migrants.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of the effectiveness of migration legislation and policy on the crime rate in the US migrant communities reveals deep differences in the conclusions and approaches of researchers. Thomas-Brown (2023) argues that strict migration laws contribute to an increase in crime rate due to social isolation and economic hardship among migrant communities. At the same time, Copeland et al. (2023) point to statistics that confirm a decreased crime rate in states with a liberal migration policy, which promotes the integration of migrants. According to Feeney et al. (2023), there is a significant impact of local integration programmes on improving the socio-economic situation of migrants. Arteaga-Fonseca et al. (2023) examine specific legislative initiatives such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), pointing to the need to expand such programmes. Trozze et al. (2023) emphasize the potential risks of abuse within migration programmes and the need for increased controls and checks. According to Kros et al. (2023), the difficulty of ensuring a balance between the security of the state and the rights of migrants is the most important for the globalized world.

Gerber and Jia (2023) consider the dilemma between manpower needs and national security, which often leads to trade-offs. As Lee-Price (2023) noted, understanding the dynamics of crime among migrant communities requires empirical research to identify root causes. Kodama et al. (2023) draw attention to the importance of international cooperation in solving migration problems. Balqis Romulia (2023) believes that the adoption of a set of measures restricting freedoms could contain existing problems. According to Ryo (2021), the development and implementation of comprehensive integration programmes for migrants should include language training, vocational training, and access to education. Dai (2023) states that some liberal programmes contribute to the adaptation of migrants and the reduction of social isolation. Smith et al. (2023) claim that the reform of migration legislation with the aim of simplifying the legal paths of migration can increase the crime rate. Conclusions drawn by Pessanha et al. (2023) concern the strengthening of international cooperation and the development of global strategies. Stout (2023) believes that research should be focused on identifying the main reasons for migration. Pinchak et al. (2023) identify the connection between strict immigration laws and increased crime rates.

Huber et al. (2023) provide a clear argument that restrictive measures increase the level of stress and social isolation among migrants and are factors in increasing crime rates. Guzmán et al. (2023) note that inclusive migration programmes can reduce crime rates, contributing to economic stabilization and social cohesion. The problem of implementation of integration strategies is studied by Narzullaev (2023), who points to insufficient resources and support for effective adaptation of migrants. Holliday et al. (2023) consider the role of local communities in integration processes, demonstrating that the involvement of migrants in public life reduces the potential for conflicts and crimes. According to McDonough and Knight (2023), multicultural programmes promote understanding and acceptance between ethnic groups, which reduces social tensions. Son and Bell (2023) emphasize that the effective implementation of the migration policy requires a comprehensive approach that includes social support and legal protection measures. Analysis carried out by Jacobson and Tichenor (2023) indicates the need to optimize the legal framework for migration to ensure security without violating human rights. Yefimova (2023) emphasizes the importance of international cooperation to address global migration challenges. So, the researchers cover various aspects of migration policy and legislation, taking into account the impact on migration communities. A critically important issue is the development of integration strategies that stimulate socio-economic development (Semenets-Orlova et al., 2022).

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the study is to examine the impact of immigration laws and policies on crime rates in the US immigrant communities. The aim involved the fulfilment of the following research objectives:

1. Systematize statistics on the crime rate among migrants and determine the dynamics of the number of migrants.
2. Assess the impact of migration policy on changing the criminal environment among migrant communities in the ten largest states of America.
3. Develop recommendations on the optimization of legislative and political instruments in order to reduce crime among migrants.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research design follows a cross-sectional study that includes an assessment of the number of criminal offenses, the growth of the migrant population in 10 key states, an evaluation of US legislation, and the methods of restriction applied to the migrant community. The assessment of the number of criminal offenses is based on the analysis of official police and law enforcement agency reports covering the period from (2017-2023). This analysis identifies trends and changes in the criminal environment among migrants.

The growth of the immigrant population in each of the ten states was examined through statistical analysis of data provided by federal agencies such as the U.S. Census Bureau and non-profit organizations specializing in immigration. The review of legislation and restriction methods is grounded in a thorough study of existing laws, executive orders, and court decisions that influence U.S. migration policy.

The research employed quantitative methods, specifically correlation and regression analysis, to explore the relationship between migration flows and criminal activity. Data from law enforcement agencies provided specific figures and case details, while information from migrant communities was gathered to understand the socio-cultural challenges faced by immigrants.

The study sample includes 10 key states: California, Texas, Florida, New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Georgia, North Carolina, Arizona, and Virginia. These states were selected based on their large

migrant populations and the significant impact of migration on socio-economic conditions and criminal statistics.

The analysis tools included a systematic examination of federal reports, organization and coding of data, calculation of crime rates among migrants, and identification of gaps in U.S. law. These tools were applied rigorously to ensure an objective and comprehensive study, allowing the identification of key weaknesses in migration policy. The results of this research could form the basis for developing more effective legislative initiatives and policies.

RESULTS

The issue of migration in the United States has always occupied an important place in the country’s political discourse. In 2023-2024, this issue became particularly acute against the background of global changes. The variety of migration routes, from legal immigration and refugees to illegal border crossing, emphasizes the complexity of the problem, which requires balanced and comprehensive solutions. The legal status of the millions of undocumented migrants already living in the United States and the future of the DACA programme, which provides temporary protection from deportation, are particularly urgent. There is an active discussion of reforms related to strengthening borders and providing pathways to legalization and citizenship for those who meet certain criteria in the political arena. Figure 1 shows a total number of crimes committed by illegal migrants during 2017-2023.

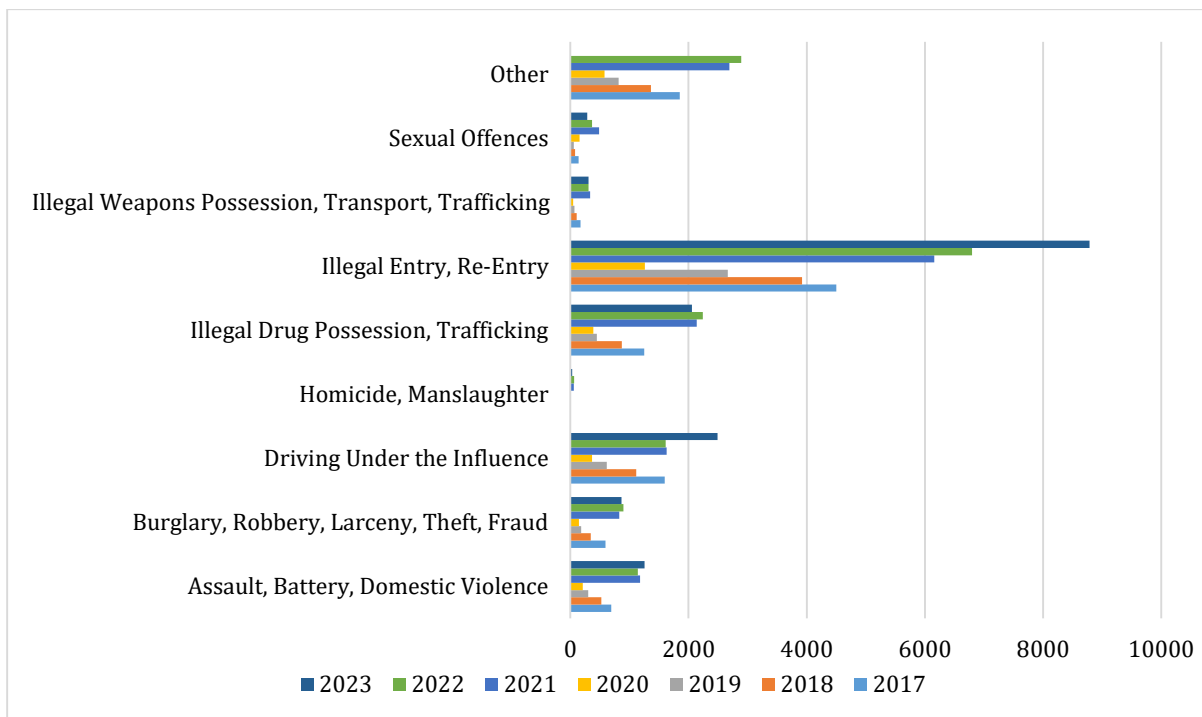


Figure 1. Total criminal convictions by type (source: created by the authors based on U.S. Customs and Border Protection (2024))

A significant increase in criminal manifestations by more than 35% in the United States because of the imperfection of the migration policy has become one of the most discussed migration problems. Implementation and support of effective rehabilitation programs can significantly reduce the level of crime in various categories. In particular, for crimes related to assault, battery and domestic violence, the potential reduction could be as high as 9%. At the same time, this figure could be as high as 18% for theft, robbery and fraud. Drug addiction treatment programs can reduce drug possession and trafficking by 12.25%. Even for crimes with relatively low program success rates, such as murder and

manslaughter, a slight but positive decrease of 1% can be expected. Overall, these programs have the potential to significantly improve crime rates by facilitating the successful reintegration of ex-prisoners into society (see Table 1).

Table 1. A potential reduction in the level of crime through the implementation of rehabilitation programs (source: created by the authors)

Type of conviction	Average annual convictions (2017-2023)	Percentage of success of the respective programs (%)	Potential reduction in crime (%)
Assault, beating, domestic violence	756.71	30	9.00
Theft, robbery, fraud	550.57	45	18.00
Drunk driving	1346.14	35	12.25
Murder, involuntary manslaughter	23.14	10	1.00
Illegal possession, drug trafficking	1341.00	35	12.25
Illegal entry, re-entry	4870.43	10	1.00
Illegal possession, transportation, trade in weapons	192.29	20	4.00
Sexual crimes	224.00	25	6.25
Others	1925.29	30	9.00

Rehabilitation programs reduce crime rates and potentially impact migrant communities positively. Successful rehabilitation of ex-prisoners facilitates their integration into society, reducing the risk of recidivism and contributing to the safety of communities. It is especially important for migrant communities, who may face additional challenges such as economic instability and cultural barriers. Positive aspects of migration include the enrichment of the cultural environment, the development of the economy due to the active participation of migrants in the labor market, and the reduction of the burden on the penitentiary system due to the reduction of the crime rate.

Analyzing data that estimates the number of undocumented immigrants and their children born in the USA in 2023, California, Texas, and Florida lead the way in the number of undocumented immigrants. It indicates the economic attractiveness of states and geographic factors that favor cross-border migration. The proximity of California and Texas to the border with Mexico makes it easy to cross the border. Looking at different USA states, we can conclude that the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs can significantly impact crime statistics. For example, in California, where the number of crimes is 1,109,452, and the crime rate is 28.43 per 1,000 residents, implementing and maintaining effective rehabilitation programs significantly reduce these indicators. Similarly, in Texas, with 820,362 crimes and a crime rate of 27.32, successful rehabilitation programs can help reduce the overall crime rate.

The implications of the state of affairs are multifaceted, including pressures on local resources, the need for integration programs, and challenges to the law enforcement system. According to statistical data from federal law enforcement agencies, the level of crime is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Crime Rates by States (source: created by the authors based on Security Gauge (2024))

State	Number of Crimes	Crime Rate (per 1,000 residents)
California	1109452	28.43
Texas	820362	27.32
Florida	405990	18.25
New York	423226	21.51

New Jersey	150,003	16.20
Illinois	247,870	19.70
Georgia	224,561	20.58
North Carolina	264,185	24.69
Arizona	183,175	24.89
Virginia	167,573	19.30

Crime rates are particularly high in California and Texas. California has the highest number of illegal immigrants, crime rate per 1000 residents. The legislative problem is the difficulty of trying to initiate a case of criminal liability in accordance with the problem of illegal migration. Effective rehabilitation programs have a success rate of 60% and 55%, respectively, demonstrating their importance in reintegration. They help reduce the risk of recidivism, which can decrease crime in states such as Florida (405,990 crimes, rate 18.25) and New York (423,226 crimes, rate 21.51).

The regulation of migration in the USA has undergone significant changes in recent decades. In 1952, the Immigration and Nationality Act was passed, which established the basic framework for regulating migration processes. The implementation of the DACA programme in 2012 was a step toward recognizing the rights of undocumented immigrants who arrived in the country as children, giving them a chance at a deferment from deportation and the opportunity to legally work. The administrations of different presidents, from Obama to Trump and Biden, have developed and made changes in migration policy, responding to contemporary challenges and needs of society. The main rehabilitation programs are listed in Table 3.

Table 3. List of rehabilitation programs to reduce crime (source: developed by the author)

Rehabilitation program	Successful Return Percentage (%)	Names of programs in the USA
Drug addiction treatment	35	Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE)
Educational programs	45	GED Programs, Prison University Project
Professional education	50	Correctional Industries Program
Psychological counseling	30	Mental Health America (MHA) Programs
Anger management	25	Resolve to Stop the Violence Project
Public works	40	Court-Ordered Community Service
Religious programs	20	Prison Fellowship Ministries
Therapeutic communities	55	Amity Foundation Programs
Houses of semi-freedom	60	Oxford House, Salvation Army Housing

Research data shows that different rehabilitation programs have different levels of success in returning ex-prisoners to a normal life. The most successful were the houses of semi-freedom, where the rate of successful return to society is 60%. Therapeutic communities also show a high level of effectiveness, with a rate of 55%. Other programs, such as vocational training and education courses, have a significant impact, with 50% and 45% success rates, respectively. Drug addiction treatment and psychological counseling programs show lower but still significant results, with successful re-entry rates of 35% and 30%, respectively. Religious programs show the least effectiveness, with an indicator of 20%.

The reform of restrictive measures in different USA states has demonstrated the diversity of approaches to solving the issues of migration and integration of immigrants. For example, California and New York adopted a number of protective measures to support migrants, including sanctuary cities that limit local police cooperation with federal immigration authorities. In response to the Trump administration's policies of building a border wall with Mexico and tightening immigration

enforcement, states have taken steps to protect migrants' rights at the local level. The new administration, led by Joe Biden, has focused its efforts on restoring the DACA programme, halting the construction of the wall, overhauling its refugee policy, and moving the country toward a more humane immigration policy. The measures reflect recognition of the importance of the immigrant community to American society, as well as the need to adapt legislation to constantly changing global trends. However, measures in place to detain migrants for a significant number of days to establish all the circumstances and further possible protection of asylum, are illustrated in Figure 2.

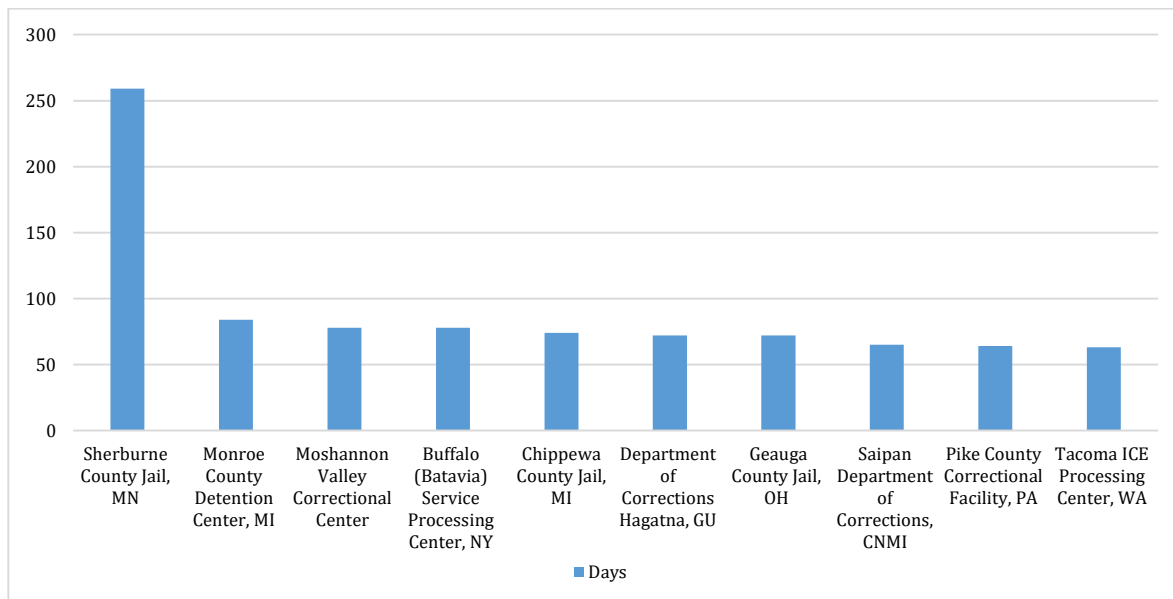


Figure 2: Immigrant Prisons and Jails that Hold People the Longest (source: created by the authors based on the statistics of Freedomforimmigrants (2023))

Migrant restriction and integration policies in the United States have evolved with varying degrees of success, reflecting fluctuations in the policy approaches of different administrations. The programmes aimed at facilitating the integration of migrants into society were introduced at the state and federal levels. Future migration policy should consider balancing controlling migration flows and ensuring high-quality rehabilitation programs for prisoners. The integration of migrants into society should be supported by programs that contribute to their social, economic and cultural adaptation. This includes the development of educational, vocational and psychosocial rehabilitation interventions that can reduce recidivism rates and improve overall safety in communities. It is important that governments at all levels actively work to improve the conditions and effectiveness of these programs, involving civil society organizations, businesses and other stakeholders in the process. Such an approach will ensure a reduction in the level of crime and contribute to the formation of a more integrated and safe society.

DISCUSSION

Discussions of migration law and policy on the crime rate in US migrant communities have a number of heterogeneous views. The hypothesis advanced by Wainwright et al. (2023) is confirmed by our own results, which indicate the imperfection of the migration policy and the need for integration programmes. The estimates of criminal cases are consistent with the analysis conducted by Heckel et al. (2023), which emphasize that an open migration policy has a positive effect on the labour market, but exacerbates social tensions. The study by Reichman (2022) demonstrates that programmes like DACA provide legal status and access to education in the labour market. The researcher Liu et al. (2023) point out the importance of sufficient resource provision of integration programmes for their effectiveness. According to Andrea and Tanuwijaya (2023), the involvement of

migrants in public life and the development of multiculturalism is important for strengthening social cohesion and reducing the potential for conflicts.

However, the problems identified by Ferrucci (2023) exacerbate the need to improve multicultural programmes because of the increase in crime rates in the United States. An analysis conducted by Kouloglou et al. (2023) emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach to reforming migration legislation in order to ensure an effective solution to security and integration issues. At the same time, Soto-Nishimura (2023) indicates the need to optimize the legal framework in order to avoid conflicts and ensure the protection of migrants' rights. The researchers Burman et al. (2023) recommend the development of additional studies and pilot programmes aimed at studying the effectiveness of the causes of social tension among migrants. According to Fershtman (2023), it is important to improve international cooperation to solve global migration challenges and reduce crime in migration communities. Therefore, attention should be paid to the development of policies that ensure the economic integration of migrants and strengthen control over their legalization.

CONCLUSION

The conducted research gives grounds to conclude about a complex relationship between migration policy, legislation, and socio-economic factors affecting the crime rate among migrants. The analysis showed that strategies to limit migration without due attention to integration programmes lead to an increase in crime due to the social isolation and economic vulnerability of migrant communities. Policies that focus on integration to ensure equal opportunities for migrants show a positive impact on reducing crime rates. An important condition for ensuring security and harmony in society is a balanced combination of migration policy, which includes measures to control and regulate migration.

The problems facing the United States in the context of migration policy are multifaceted in the historical, cultural, and legal sectors. There is the challenge of ensuring border security and effective management of migration flows, which must balance between national security and humanitarian obligations. Social integration of migrants, combating discrimination and ensuring access to education and employment require significant efforts and resources. Development of effective mechanisms for combating economic exploitation associated with illegal migration. Rehabilitation programs demonstrate significant potential in reducing recidivism and overall crime rates, contributing to the successful reintegration of ex-prisoners into society. The effectiveness of these programs is particularly important for migrant communities, where they can help overcome additional challenges. Investing in such programs is critical to improving public safety and social stability.

Recommendations

1. Analysis of the impact of migration legislation encourages the formation of a safe and inclusive society based on a number of recommendations for ensuring the security of the country.
2. Develop a Comprehensive Legal Framework for Migration Policy: Establish a clear and structured legal framework that addresses the correlation between migration and criminal activity. This framework should include specific provisions for different types of migrants (e.g., refugees, economic migrants) and focus on preventive measures, such as early intervention programs for at-risk groups.
3. Enhance Public Participation in Migration Policy Development: Actively involve migrant communities, civil society organizations, and the general public in the policymaking process. This can be achieved through regular public consultations, town hall meetings, and online platforms where stakeholders can provide feedback and contribute to policy proposals.

4. Provide Targeted Training for Authorities and Social Services: Organize mandatory educational sessions and specialized training programs for government officials, law enforcement officers, and social service providers. These sessions should cover the legal rights of migrants, cultural competence, and best practices for supporting migrant integration. Training should be tailored to the specific needs of different regions and types of migrant populations.
5. Implement Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation of Rehabilitation Policies: Establish a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of laws and policies related to the rehabilitation of former prisoners, particularly those from migrant backgrounds. This should include the creation of an independent oversight body responsible for assessing the impact of rehabilitation programs and making evidence-based recommendations for improvements.
6. Secure Sustainable Funding for Integration Programs: Ensure that integration programs for migrants are adequately funded and supported with the necessary resources. This includes allocating budgetary provisions at both the federal and state levels, as well as encouraging public-private partnerships to expand the reach and effectiveness of integration initiatives. Additionally, regular audits should be conducted to ensure the efficient use of funds and the achievement of program goals.

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