

LEGAL ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF SINGAPORE'S VISA-FREE VISIT (BVK) AND PERMANENT RESIDENCE (PR) POLICIES ON THE SECURITY AND ECONOMIC STABILITY OF BATAM CITY (A RESEARCH STUDY IN BATAM CITY)

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Abstract

The Visa-Free Visit Policy (BVK) granted to foreign nationals (WNA) holding Singaporean Permanent Resident (PR) status, as stipulated in Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2024, is part of the national strategy to encourage foreign tourist visits to Indonesia, including to Batam City as a strategic border region. However, this policy also has significant legal implications for security stability and local economic dynamics. This study aims to analyze the legal arrangements of the BVK-PR policy, its implementation in the field, and its impact on the security and economy of Batam City. The research methods used are normative legal and empirical legal, with a regulatory and sociological approach. Data was obtained through legal document studies and interviews with immigration officials, police, customs, and the Batam City Government. The theories used include John Rawls' Theory of Justice (grand theory), Lawrence M. Friedman's Theory of the Legal System (middle theory), and Sudikno Mertokusumo's Theory of Legal Certainty (applied theory). The research findings indicate that while the BVK and PR policies contribute to increased tourist mobility and economic activity, they also result in a decrease in state revenue from the visa sector and an increase in security risks such as smuggling and human trafficking. Implementation challenges were identified in the areas of ambiguous norms, weak oversight, and low legal awareness among the public. It is recommended that the BVK policy be revised with a selective approach, accompanied by strengthening inter-agency oversight structures, and legal education for local communities to maintain a balance between economic benefits and national security protection.

Keywords: *Visa-free visits, Permanent residence in Singapore, Security stability, Economic stability, Batam City, Immigration policy*

1. Introduction

The granting of Visa-Free Visit (BVK) facilities to foreign nationals (WNA) with Permanent Residence (PR) status in Singapore is a policy aimed at increasing the number of foreign tourists, particularly in the city of Batam. This policy has been positively received by the local government of the Riau Islands (Kepri) as it is seen as supportive of the tourism sector, which is one of the mainstays of the local economy. However, the implementation of this policy has also raised several key issues. The Visa-Free Visit Policy (BVK) is one of the diplomatic instruments implemented by many countries to enhance bilateral relations, support cross-border human mobility, and promote cooperation in the fields of tourism, trade, and investment. This policy allows citizens of certain countries to enter the territory of another country without having to apply for a visa in advance, with the duration of the visit limited by the regulations of the receiving country. In Indonesia, the BVK policy has been implemented in recent years as an effort to increase the number of foreign tourists while strengthening diplomatic relations with friendly countries [1]. Batam City has a strategic position as a border region directly adjacent to Singapore and Malaysia, making it one of the areas most affected by the Visa-Free Visit Policy (BVK). As part of the Riau Islands, Batam City is located on a very busy international trade route, which also provides great opportunities to support local economic growth. Its geographical location, just about 20 kilometers from Singapore, makes Batam City the main gateway for cross-border interactions in the region [2]. With the BVK policy, Batam City has experienced a surge in the number of foreign tourists, particularly from Singapore. This is evident from the increased activity at international ports and the continued development of tourist facilities. However,

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this high level of cross-border mobility has also given rise to various problems, such as pressure on public facilities and an increased potential for crime. Batam City faces a major challenge in balancing the economic opportunities offered by the BVK policy with ensuring regional security and stability [3]. Singapore's Permanent Residence (PR) policy is designed to grant permanent residency to foreign nationals who are deemed to have potential contributions to the country's development. PR status holders enjoy various benefits, including access to public facilities such as subsidized housing, education, and healthcare. This policy is intended to attract highly skilled individuals, productive workers, and investors who can contribute to Singapore's economy [4]. This facility allows foreign nationals to enter without a visa for short visits of up to 30 days, without extension or change of residence status. This provision creates space to analyze the direct impact of the policy on security stability in Batam City as a major transit area. Batam City has a strategic position as one of the border areas that is the main gateway for international trade in the Riau Islands region. Its proximity to international shipping lanes makes Batam an important hub in global trade, especially with neighboring countries such as Singapore and Malaysia. In addition, Batam City has been designated as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ), which provides various fiscal and non-fiscal incentives to attract foreign investment and support local economic development. As part of the national strategy, Batam has developed into a center for manufacturing, logistics, and tourism. Its modern port infrastructure and easy accessibility from various countries make Batam a magnet for foreign investors and tourists. This potential is further enhanced by government policies supporting the growth of export-oriented industries and the development of attractive tourist destinations.

Beyond its economic role, Batam also bears the responsibility as a buffer zone maintaining diplomatic and economic ties with neighboring countries. Intensive cross-border trade activities position Batam as a strategic location for optimizing state revenue through customs and excise duties while driving increases in the regional gross domestic product (GDP). However, significant challenges also arise, particularly in maintaining social stability and security due to high levels of cross-border interaction. As an economic gateway, Batam also plays a crucial role in promoting the development of the local SME (Small and Medium Enterprises) sector. Batam's SME products are not only absorbed by the domestic market but also have significant potential to compete in the international market. However, this role requires strong regulatory support and infrastructure to ensure that the economic benefits generated are felt by all residents of Batam. Singapore's Permanent Residence (PR) Visa-Free Visit Policy has had a significant impact on the security and economic development of Batam City. On the positive side, this policy has encouraged an increase in the number of foreign tourists, contributing to the growth of the tourism sector and boosting local revenue. Batam City has become a primary destination for Singaporean tourists seeking affordable and nearby travel options. This has also increased demand for transportation services, accommodation, and the creative industry [5]. Increased cross-border population mobility has also had a significant impact on the local economic structure in Batam City.

One of the impacts is increasingly fierce economic competition between local and foreign businesses. The BVK policy facilitates the entry of foreign entrepreneurs who often have more capital and more advanced technology than local businesses, thereby creating an imbalance in competitiveness. The BVK PR policy also poses challenges for local workers, particularly in terms of competition in the labor market. The high influx of foreign workers to Batam often affects employment opportunities for local residents, especially in sectors that require specialized skills. This situation requires stronger regulations and legal protection for local workers so that they can compete with foreign workers. Other transnational crimes that frequently occur in Batam include money laundering and arms smuggling. These illegal activities indicate that high population mobility can create significant opportunities for criminal groups to exploit loopholes in law enforcement. Therefore, cooperation between the central government, security forces, and the community is needed to reduce these security risks. The increase in the number of foreign tourists also increases risks related to security stability. Foreign nationals with permanent resident status in Singapore come from various countries with different backgrounds and security risk potentials. The absence of adequate control mechanisms, such as background checks or additional regulations for this group, can create loopholes for transnational crimes, such as smuggling or human trafficking. This poses a significant challenge for immigration authorities and law enforcement in Batam City.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition and Purpose of Visa-Free Visit (BVK)

The Visa-Free Visit Policy (BVK) is an instrument of international immigration policy designed to facilitate cross-border mobility by granting visa-free entry to foreign nationals for short-term visits. This policy reflects the global trend toward greater openness and interconnectedness among nations. BVK is typically granted for a limited period and does not include the right to work or reside permanently in the visited country [6]. The implementation of BVK also depends on the recipient country's ability to manage the risks associated with increased foreign population mobility. Countries with strong immigration infrastructure are more likely to grant BVK to more countries. Conversely, countries

facing challenges in border security tend to be more selective in implementing this policy [7]. In Indonesia, the BVK policy is an important part of the national strategy to support tourism and economic growth. The government has issued several regulations governing the implementation of BVK, including a list of countries eligible for this facility. Although it has had a positive impact, this policy also poses challenges, particularly in terms of monitoring the entry of foreign nationals who may commit legal violations [8].

2.2 Legal Basis for the BVK Policy in Indonesia

The Visa-Free Visit Policy (BVK) in Indonesia is regulated by a number of laws and regulations that support its implementation, including Law No. 6 of 2011 on Immigration. Article 42 of Law No. 6 of 2011 on Immigration provides the legal basis for the government to grant visa-free visit facilities to foreign nationals under certain conditions, such as the purpose of the visit not being permanent. This regulation provides the basis for the government to determine which countries are eligible for such facilities [9]. In addition, this policy is also regulated through a Regulation of the Minister of Law and Human Rights (Permenkumham) which provides further details on administrative procedures and technical provisions for immigration in managing BVK facilities. This regulation also covers aspects of supervision of violations such as overstaying and misuse of BVK facilities for illegal activities. This is important to ensure that the policy does not pose a risk to national security. The government has also issued several revisions to the list of countries eligible for BVK facilities through a Ministerial Decision. These revisions are based on periodic evaluations of the impact of the BVK policy on national security and the economy. As a result, BVK regulations are dynamic and adapt to national and international conditions [10].

2.3 The Impact of BVK in the Context of Law and Security

The Visa-Free Visit Policy (BVK) facilitates cross-border mobility, but it also opens opportunities for transnational crimes that exploit loopholes in immigration control. One of the greatest potential risks is the smuggling of illegal goods, such as narcotics, weapons, and electronic devices, which often occurs through port routes or border areas. Batam City, as a strategic border area, is one of the high-risk areas for such activities. In addition to smuggling, the BVK also facilitates human trafficking, where perpetrators often use the BVK route to recruit or transport victims across national borders. This phenomenon is common in border areas with weak surveillance or limited coordination among law enforcement agencies. Human trafficking not only violates the law but also has significant social impacts on the receiving country [11]. Money laundering is also a risk arising from the BVK policy. Foreign nationals who take advantage of this facility can enter and leave the country without strict supervision, facilitating the transfer of funds obtained from transnational crimes. Border cities such as Batam are at high risk of becoming centers of money laundering due to their proximity to global financial centers such as Singapore [12].

2.4 Immigration Law in Indonesia

Law No. 25 of 2009 on Public Services is the legal basis governing the provision of public services in Indonesia. This law aims to provide legal certainty in the relationship between the public and public service providers, as well as to encourage improvements in the quality of services provided by the government and corporations. One of the main focuses of this law is the establishment of service standards that must be adhered to by public service providers. These standards cover aspects such as procedures, completion times, costs, service products, facilities and infrastructure, the competence of service providers, and internal oversight. With these standards in place, it is hoped that public services will be transparent, accountable, and in line with public expectations. In addition, this law also emphasizes the importance of public participation in the supervision of public services. The public is given the right to submit complaints, suggestions, and criticism regarding service delivery that is deemed not in accordance with the established standards. This aims to encourage continuous improvement in the delivery of public services in Indonesia. The application of technology in public services has become a key focus in public policy in Indonesia. Technology-based service standards are designed to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and accessibility of services to the public. According to Fachrizal et al., the development of mobile applications in public services aims to facilitate public access to government services [13].

3. Methodology

Research is a managed, systematic investigation based on data, critical, objective, and scientific inquiry into a specific problem aimed at finding alternative solutions to related problems. A method is a process, principles, and procedures for solving a problem. Therefore, a research method can be defined as a process of principles and procedures for solving problems encountered in conducting research. Methods are used in research, which is essentially a series of steps to rediscover the truth. This will answer questions that arise about a research object [14]. This type of research only conducts analysis up to the detection stage, which is analyzing and presenting facts systematically so that they are

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easier to understand and conclude [15]. The approach used in this study is a combination of the normative approach of “legal research” and the empirical approach of “juridical sociologies.” The research mechanism using this combined approach is carried out by analyzing the research explanation using inductive reasoning leading to deductive reasoning and vice versa.

The research location is in the Riau Islands Province, specifically in the port area of Batam City. This location was determined based on the data that is the object of this thesis research. The population or universe is the total number of analysis units whose characteristics will be estimated. The population consists of all elements related to the research. A sample is a portion of the population that is studied and considered representative of the characteristics of the entire population. The researcher obtains the sample using random sampling techniques, which are used to determine the specific characteristics of the research to be studied.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Legal Regulations on Singapore's Visa-Free Visit (BVK) and Permanent Residence (PR) Policies in the Context of Security and Economic Stability in Batam City

The Visa-Free Visit Policy (BVK) is a form of immigration relaxation that allows entry into a country without the requirement of a visa, for a specified period of stay and for limited purposes, such as tourism, social visits, and business. From an international law perspective, the principle of freedom of movement across borders remains under the control of the receiving country as an expression of its sovereignty over its borders. Although visas are legally valid bilateral or multilateral instruments under international law, their application remains subject to the discretion of each country to determine who may enter and under what framework. In the Indonesian context, the BVK policy was first systematically established in Law No. 6 of 2011 on Immigration, particularly Articles 43 and 44, which state that foreign nationals (WNA) may be granted entry without a visa under certain conditions with the approval of the government. Presidential Regulation No. 69 of 2015 marked the initial expansion of the BVK policy by granting visa-free visit facilities to FNs from 45 countries, which was further expanded to 169 countries under Presidential Regulation No. 21 of 2016. The primary objective is to increase the number of international tourists to Indonesia and support economic growth in the tourism and trade sectors. However, in its implementation, this policy has been deemed too general and has not explicitly targeted holders of special immigration status, such as Permanent Residence (PR) in other countries. This situation changed with the issuance of Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2024, which explicitly states that foreign nationals holding PR status in certain countries, including Singapore, may be granted BVK facilities to enter Indonesia through specific entry points, including Batam City. Meanwhile, Permanent Residence (PR) in immigration law refers to a long-term residence permit granted by a country to a foreign national, who, although not a citizen, is granted the right to reside and engage in activities for an extended period in the granting country. In the context of Singapore, PR is a prestigious status granted through a rigorous selection process by the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA). Singapore PR serves as an indicator that its holders possess economic and social stability, thereby being deemed more deserving of easier access to other countries. However, under Indonesian law, PR status in another country is not a legal basis that automatically grants special privileges regarding entry permits, unless explicitly stipulated in legislation, as currently outlined in Presidential Regulation No. 95/2024. From a statute approach perspective, the legal basis for the BVK policy toward Singaporean PRs is concrete and has been legitimized through the national legal hierarchy. The Presidential Regulation, as the implementing regulation of Law No. 6 of 2011, provides the President with policy discretion to determine the criteria for certain foreign nationals eligible for BVK access based on national interests, which in this case are aimed at enhancing the quality of international tourist visits and improving the competitiveness of the tourism services sector.

However, the selection of criteria for Singaporean PR holders also raises new legal questions regarding discrimination in treatment between foreign nationals, particularly those who are not PR holders, despite coming from a country that previously enjoyed visa-free access. Furthermore, the statute approach places this study within the framework of evaluating the consistency of norms between regulations, for example, by comparing Presidential Regulation No. 95/2024 with previous regulations (No. 21/2016), and examining whether adjustments need to be made to the Minister of Law and Human Rights Regulation and the Director General of Immigration Regulation as technical implementing regulations that can detail how Singapore PR classification is recognized, the types of documents that must be presented, and the permitted duration of stay. Ambiguity in technical norms can create multiple interpretations in the field and trigger loopholes for abuse of entry permits. Therefore, from a normative perspective, the BVK policy toward holders of Singapore PR can be understood as part of the expansion of immigration rights based on diplomatic and economic strategies. However, as a public legal policy, it must be tested whether its normative provisions comply with the

principles of legality, non-discrimination, and protection of domestic security stability and economic interests, especially in border areas such as Batam City.

Within the legal system, Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2024 is subordinate to Law No. 6 of 2011 on Immigration, which serves as the primary reference for policies governing cross-border movement of people. Article 43(1) of the Immigration Law states that foreign nationals must obtain a visa to enter Indonesian territory, unless otherwise provided by law. The provision “unless otherwise specified” is the legal loophole exploited by the President to grant an exception in the form of BVK through a presidential regulation. This means that, formally, this Presidential Regulation has legal justification to serve as a visa policy instrument without needing to amend the parent law, provided it does not conflict with the higher-ranking norms. However, the principle of selectivity as stipulated in Article 2(e) of Law No. 6 of 2011 states that Indonesia's immigration policy must adhere to the principle of selectivity, meaning that only foreign nationals who are beneficial and do not pose a threat to public safety and order are permitted to enter Indonesian territory. In the context of Presidential Regulation No. 95/2024, granting BVK to all foreign nationals holding PR status in Singapore without distinguishing their nationality, profession, or travel history has the potential to conflict with the principle of selectivity. PR status does not guarantee that an individual will not pose a threat to social stability, especially if strict control over documents or identity is not enforced at entry points.

Thus, the BVK policy established by the President through a Presidential Regulation and implemented by the Immigration Office requires active and structured support from the local government. As a strategic region, Batam City must be given a role in the formulation of technical oversight and the impact of this policy. Synergy between the central and local governments, from the perspective of constitutional law and administrative governance, is the key to ensuring that BVK policies are not only effective in theory but also have positive and safe impacts on the economic stability and security of border regions such as Batam.

4.2 Implementation of BVK PR Policy and Its Impact on Security and Economic Stability in Batam City

The implementation of the Visa-Free Visit Policy (BVK) for foreign nationals (WNA) holding permanent resident (PR) status in Singapore in the city of Batam has generally been in effect since the issuance of Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2024. Based on interviews conducted with immigration officers at Batam Center International Port, it was found that since the policy was implemented, there has been a significant increase in the number of FNs entering via the sea route from Singapore using passports from a third country but holding PR documents issued by Singaporean authorities. Officers stated that not all PR documents can be easily verified directly because there is no cross-border integration system or digital validation tool that can instantly confirm the authenticity of PR documents. This creates potential administrative loopholes in on-site supervision. From a security perspective, interviews with the Bareleng City Police Department revealed that the increased mobility of WNA entering through BVK facilities has not been accompanied by an increase in surveillance facilities and cross-sectoral data. Several reports received regarding suspicious activities by foreign nationals, such as misuse of residence permits, involvement in the smuggling of luxury goods, and human trafficking, are difficult to act on quickly because most of the perpetrators entered legally through the BVK scheme. This indicates that policies that facilitate entry for PR holders require stronger detection and monitoring systems at the local level to maintain security stability in the Batam region. Batam Customs also reported an increase in the flow of goods brought in by Singaporean PRs, particularly unreported electronic goods and cosmetics. Customs officials noted that the frequency of daily visits (day trips) by Singaporean PRs has risen, but the surveillance system for checked baggage cannot cover everything due to limited personnel and scanning facilities. These activities are feared to become a new channel for illegal trade or small-scale smuggling that could accumulate into larger operations.

Based on data from two documents that have been analyzed, there has been a significant decline in non-tax state revenue (PNBP) from the visa sector following the implementation of the Visa-Free Visit Policy (BVK) for holders of Singaporean Permanent Residence (PR) status. Data from the Batam Class I Special Immigration Office shows that from January to June 2024, total visa-related PNBP revenue amounted to Rp 36,452,500,000, derived from 72,905 uses of the 30-day Visa on Arrival (VOA). However, during the same period in 2025, the number of visa users dropped sharply to 63,503, with total revenue amounting to Rp 21,043,500,000—a decrease of nearly Rp 15.4 billion compared to the previous year. This decline is closely linked to the increasing number of foreign nationals (WNA) holding Singaporean permanent residency (PR) who utilized the BVK facility. According to BVK PR usage data from January to June 2025, there were 546,503 foreign nationals who entered Batam City without paying for a visa by utilizing the BVK PR facility. Of this number, 284,234 entered through the Batam Centre Port of Entry (TPI), followed by the Citra Tritunas Port of Entry (177,383) and the Sekupang Port of Entry (50,814). With this visa-free facility, many foreigners who were previously required to pay for a Visa on Arrival are no longer charged, resulting in a direct impact on the decline in state revenue from the visa sector.

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This phenomenon has created a policy paradox. On the one hand, the BVK PR policy has succeeded in increasing the number of foreign visitors to Batam City, which in theory has the potential to boost local economic growth from the tourism and consumption sectors. On the other hand, the state is experiencing a significant loss of revenue from the visa sector, as well as an increased burden of oversight due to the rise in cross-border mobility. Therefore, this policy requires a comprehensive evaluation to balance the increase in tourists, national economic protection, and the state's fiscal needs. The Batam City Government, through the Investment and Integrated One-Stop Service Agency (DPM-PTSP), welcomed the BVK policy as it is seen as encouraging an increase in the number of tourists and potential investors. However, the Head of the Agency stated that there has been no formal coordination with Immigration and Customs authorities to evaluate the economic impact of the mass influx of PR foreign nationals. The Batam City Government stated that its limited authority in immigration policy means it can only adapt to the impacts, not design oversight or selection mechanisms for incoming foreign nationals. This reinforces findings of a power disparity and lack of coordination across sectors between the central and local governments in implementing the BVK.

Thus, based on an empirical legal and socio-legal approach, it can be concluded that the implementation of Singapore's BVK and PR policies has not been accompanied by a consistent monitoring and coordination system. The absence of document verification mechanisms, weak tracking of foreign nationals' activities, and overlapping authority among agencies indicate that security and order in Batam are in a vulnerable position. Therefore, it is necessary to update the technology-based monitoring system and regulations to enable effective and responsive cross-sectoral cooperation in response to the dynamics of international mobility.

4.3 Obstacles and Solutions in Anticipating the Impact of Singapore's BVK PR Policy on the Security and Economic Stability of Batam City

The implementation of the Visa-Free Visit Policy (BVK) for foreign nationals holding Singaporean Permanent Resident (PR) status faces several challenges in its implementation and anticipation of its impacts, particularly on the security and economic stability of Batam City. The first and most critical challenge is the normative barrier, namely the existence of multiple interpretations of the provisions of Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2024 and the absence of clear subsidiary regulations in the form of implementing regulations. Interviews with Batam immigration officials revealed that there are no detailed technical guidelines regarding the verification mechanism for PR documents, the list of countries eligible for BVK facilities through PR, as well as the time limit or conditions for activities that BVK holders are permitted to undertake.

Another normative obstacle relates to the principle of selectivity in Law No. 6 of 2011 on Immigration, which ideally gives the government the authority to determine which foreign nationals can enter Indonesian territory by considering aspects of security and national interests. However, in practice, this principle of selectivity is weakened because the BVK policy does not clearly distinguish between countries with high risks and those without. As a result, all PR holders, regardless of their country of origin or track record, receive the same treatment. This policy therefore has the potential to be exploited by foreign nationals from high-risk countries to enter Indonesian territory without strict screening mechanisms. In addition to normative obstacles, there are significant structural obstacles, particularly in terms of the capacity of implementing agencies. Interviews with immigration officers at Batam Center Port revealed that the number of officers on the ground is insufficient to handle the increasing volume of foreign nationals visiting Indonesia following the implementation of the BVK policy. The shortage of personnel has led to rushed document checks, with insufficient time to verify the identity or purpose of foreign nationals' visits. This situation is exacerbated by the lack of supporting technological facilities such as automatic detection systems for fake PRs or real-time cross-border databases.

Interagency coordination remains weak and sectoral. Local government, immigration, police, and customs authorities lack a shared data system or emergency response protocol for violations by BVK holders. In interviews with the Satpol PP and the Batam City Tourism Office, it was found that enforcement against foreign nationals abusing their stay permits remains overlapping in terms of authority. This situation indicates a structural obstacle in the form of the absence of an effective vertical-horizontal coordination system to deal with the impact of migration policies. The third obstacle is a legal cultural barrier, both among officials and the community. Interviews with community leaders and officials showed that legal awareness of the consequences of immigration, public order, and state sovereignty is still low. Communities in port areas, such as Batam Center and Sekupang, tend to view the entry of PR holders as normal and do not feel responsible for reporting irregularities. Meanwhile, officials tend to be formalistic and only carry out administrative tasks without taking the initiative to be more proactive in detecting potential violations.

Thus, from an empirical legal and socio-legal perspective, the obstacles to the implementation of the BVK and Singapore PR policies are not only found in the legal substance but also in the institutional infrastructure and legal culture that support them. These three obstacles normative, structural, and legal culture reinforce one another and result

in the weak effectiveness of policies in maintaining security stability and supporting fair local economic growth. Overcoming these three obstacles requires a holistic, participatory, and empirical data-based legal approach. In analyzing the obstacles to the implementation of the Visa-Free Visit (BVK) policy for Singaporean Permanent Residence (PR) holders on the security and economic stability of Batam City, Lawrence M. Friedman's Legal System Theory provides a comprehensive analytical framework. The three elements of the legal system legal structure, legal substance, and legal culture reveal significant interrelated obstacles that impact the effectiveness of this policy. In terms of legal structure, weak coordination among agencies such as Immigration, the National Police, Customs, and the Batam Regional Government is a major obstacle. Each institution operates under its own sectoral mandate without a unified oversight mechanism for the movement of Singaporean PR holders, resulting in gaps in law enforcement.

In terms of legal substance, the BVK policy in Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2024 has not been accompanied by detailed implementation guidelines, including regarding the verification of PR documents, restrictions on the activities of BVK holders in Indonesia, and mechanisms for reporting violations. The absence of binding subsidiary regulations makes legal norms open to multiple interpretations and creates opportunities for foreign nationals to abuse BVK facilities. The ambiguity in the norms also makes it difficult for law enforcement officials to take consistent legal action, resulting in weak protection of state sovereignty and public order. This shows that the legal substance does not fully support the principle of legal certainty, which is the foundation of the national legal system. Meanwhile, the legal culture, both at the community and state apparatus levels, shows a low level of legal awareness in dealing with the consequences of this policy. The community tends to be unaware of the long-term impact of free access for foreign nationals holding PR, while field officers tend to be administrative in carrying out their duties without an evaluative or analytical approach. As a result, many cases of alleged violations are not reported or not followed up seriously. In the context of Batam as a strategic border area, this weak legal culture increases the risk of cross-border crime, human trafficking, and illegal economic activities that harm local businesses.

The combination of obstacles in these three components of Friedman's legal system has serious implications for legal uncertainty, a decline in state revenue from the visa sector (PNBP), and an increased security burden on the local government. When legal substance is unclear, structures are uncoordinated, and the legal culture is unsupportive, any policy—even those intended to enhance economic growth and diplomacy—can have counterproductive negative effects. Therefore, a comprehensive evaluation of BVK policies based on the legal system is necessary to ensure that policy direction is not only liberal and open but also responsive to security and economic justice needs in border regions like Batam City. Based on field findings from interviews with immigration officials, the National Police, Customs, and the Batam City Government, the first strategic solution that must be implemented is a revision of the norms in Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2024 regarding Visa-Free Visits (BVK). Currently, this policy is too lenient as it grants facilities to all foreign nationals with Singaporean Permanent Residence (PR) status without additional screening. This revision must include selective criteria such as country of origin, immigration history, risk profile, and purpose of visit. The principle of selectivity stipulated in Article 14 of Law No. 6 of 2011 on Immigration must serve as the basis for determining the legal subjects eligible for BVK facilities. Second, strengthening the oversight structure and inter-agency coordination system is a key priority. Interviews revealed that there is currently no data integration between Immigration, Police, Customs, and Local Governments, either in the form of reporting systems or databases of foreign nationals entering through the BVK facility. It is recommended that a national digital platform be established that is interconnected across agencies, enabling real-time verification of PR documents and tracking of foreign nationals' activities within the country. With this system in place, supervision can be risk-based, and officials will not only be reactive to violations that occur.

Third, there is a need to strengthen human resources (HR) and technology at ports and international entry points. Findings from Batam Center Port indicate that the shortage of officers has resulted in inadequate verification of foreign nationals' documents. Additionally, most officers have not received specialized training on identifying PR documents from various countries. Therefore, intensive training for immigration officers is needed, along with the provision of tools such as biometric scanners and access to the regional immigration system (ASEAN-SMART) to ensure that every PR holder entering the country has undergone early risk detection. Fourth, from a sociological perspective, solutions must also address the legal culture of border communities. Interviews with community leaders and neighborhood officials around the port revealed that the community's understanding of the long-term impact of the BVK policy remains low. The Batam City Government, together with the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, needs to conduct regular legal socialization, particularly for MSME actors, tourism area managers, and border communities so that they do not only see the visit of foreign nationals as an economic opportunity but also understand the potential risks. Community participation in reporting suspicious activities must also be strengthened through rapid reporting mechanisms and witness protection.

Fifth, in the medium and long term, the Central Government should consider issuing subsidiary regulations or a Ministerial Regulation on Law and Human Rights as technical guidelines for implementing BVK. These regulations

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should specify the technical verification of PR documents, the economic activity requirements for BVK foreign nationals in Indonesia, and administrative sanctions for violations. Thus, the implementation of BVK will not be unrestricted but will remain within the framework of protecting national interests and border security. Clarity on these norms will also address the concerns of officials in the field who have had difficulty taking action due to unclear regulations. Finally, from an empirical juridical and socio-legal approach, the formulation of solutions should not stop at the written law, but must involve behavioral change, capacity building of institutions, and the development of a technological surveillance system. The success of BVK policy is not measured by the number of tourists entering, but by how effectively the state manages cross-border flows in a fair, safe, and beneficial manner for local communities. Therefore, BVK policy reform must be comprehensive and responsive to the real dynamics on the ground in Batam City as a strategic border region.

5. Comparison

Iwan Sahat Maruli Simanjuntak thesis presents a different analysis compared to similar studies on immigration issues and human trafficking. Most previous studies, such as those by Rahayu (2020) and Wiratama (2018), tend to focus on victim protection and normative studies on the effectiveness of regulations. Their approach emphasizes how criminal law can provide protection and recovery for victims of transnational crimes. In contrast, Iwan's thesis emphasizes structural and institutional dimensions, particularly the role of the Directorate General of Immigration as the state's gatekeeper in monitoring the movement of people and preventing human trafficking. With this perspective, Iwan's research enriches the literature by positioning immigration not merely as an administrative instrument, but also as a key actor in law enforcement. From a methodological perspective, the comparison is also clear. Several previous studies used a purely normative juridical approach, only examining laws and legal theory.

Meanwhile, Iwan's thesis combines a normative approach with an empirical one, including case studies in border areas and interviews with relevant officials. This allows the author to describe the gap between legal norms and implementation in the field, while identifying real obstacles such as limited human resources, surveillance facilities, and inter-agency coordination. Another distinguishing contribution is the aspect of recommendations. Previous studies tend to stop at normative criticism of regulations, while Iwan's thesis offers concrete strategies, such as strengthening inter-agency synergy, improving the capacity of immigration officials, and utilizing digital technology in the border surveillance system. Thus, this thesis not only adds to the academic discourse but also provides practical contributions for policy makers. This comparison demonstrates that Iwan's research is more applied and operational, while also filling a gap in studies that have previously been overly focused on the criminal law dimension without comprehensively highlighting the role of immigration institutions.

6. Conclusions and Suggestion

Based on the discussion in the previous chapter, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- a. Legal regulations governing the Visa-Free Visit Policy (BVK) for Singaporean Permanent Residents (PR) are stipulated in Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2024 and are based on the provisions of Law No. 6 of 2011 on Immigration. Normatively, this policy is a form of foreign policy aimed at supporting tourism and economic diplomacy. However, the open nature of the policy has not been balanced with strict selectivity principles and clear technical implementation norms, thereby potentially causing vulnerability to the security and economic stability of strategic areas such as Batam City.
- b. The implementation of the Singapore PR BVK policy in the field shows an increase in the mobility of foreign nationals through the Batam Center international port, which has had an impact on the growth of the tourism and service sectors. However, empirically, this policy has also had negative impacts in the form of an increase in the potential for transnational crimes such as smuggling and human trafficking, as well as a decline in state revenue from the visa sector (PNBP). The unpreparedness of the surveillance system and weak inter-agency integration have created an imbalance between the economic benefits and the security burden that must be borne by the local government and community.
- c. Obstacles in the implementation of the Singapore PR BVK policy in Batam City include normative aspects (lack of technical regulations and ambiguous norms), structural aspects (lack of human resources and weak coordination between agencies), and legal culture (low legal awareness among the community and officials). To address this, strategic solutions are needed, including revising BVK norms to make them more selective, strengthening oversight through cross-sectoral data integration, and conducting legal awareness campaigns for border communities. The evaluation of these solutions is also consistent with the principles of justice, strengthening the legal system, and ensuring legal certainty for local communities.

From these conclusions, the author can offer several recommendations, namely:

- a. It is recommended that relevant agencies immediately establish an integrated cross-sector coordination mechanism through a shared data platform to strengthen supervision of the influx of Singaporean PR holders. This coordination should include verification of PR documents, tracking of foreign nationals' activities in the field, and an efficient reporting and enforcement system to ensure that BVK implementation is effective and does not create security loopholes.
- b. It is recommended that the Government revise Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2024 by adding strict selectivity principles for legal entities eligible for BVK, and immediately enact technical implementation regulations in the form of a Minister of Law and Human Rights Regulation. BVK policies need to be directed not only to accommodate diplomatic interests but also to ensure the protection of economic stability and national security, particularly in border areas such as Batam City.
- c. It is recommended that the community of Batam City, especially those in border areas and local economic actors, be more active in understanding and supporting the monitoring of foreign nationals' activities. Legal awareness campaigns and early detection training on potential violations should be intensified through collaboration with law enforcement agencies and local governments. Active community participation as strategic partners in law enforcement is crucial in creating participatory security and maintaining the social-economic sovereignty of the region.

Author Contributions: A short paragraph specifying their individual contributions must be provided for research articles with several authors (**mandatory for more than 1 author**). The following statements should be used “Conceptualization: X.X. and Y.Y.; Methodology: X.X.; Software: X.X.; Validation: X.X., Y.Y. and Z.Z.; Formal analysis: X.X.; Investigation: X.X.; Resources: X.X.; Data curation: X.X.; Writing—original draft preparation: X.X.; Writing—review and editing: X.X.; Visualization: X.X.; Supervision: X.X.; Project administration: X.X.; Funding acquisition: Y.Y.”

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Data Availability Statement: We encourage all authors of articles published in FAITH journals to share their research data. This section provides details regarding where data supporting reported results can be found, including links to publicly archived datasets analyzed or generated during the study. Where no new data were created or data unavailable due to privacy or ethical restrictions, a statement is still required.

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Conflicts of Interest: Declare conflicts of interest or state (**mandatory**), “The authors declare no conflict of interest.” Authors must identify and declare any personal circumstances or interests that may be perceived as inappropriately influencing the representation or interpretation of reported research results. Any role of the funders in the study's design; in the collection, analysis, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; or in the decision to publish the results must be declared in this section. If there is no role, please state, “The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; or in the decision to publish the results”.

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