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**Trump V. Biden on the Comprehensive Immigration Reform:
Challenges and Policy Proposals**

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Culture*

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Dedication

We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to the people who supported and encouraged us throughout this research journey.

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Abstract

This study examines the divergent immigration reform policies during both the Trump and Biden administrations in evaluating their influence on the enduring discourse regarding the comprehensive immigration reform in the United States. The main issue being discussed is the profound ideological and political rifts between Republican enforcement-first strategies and Democratic initiatives aimed at creating legal avenues for undocumented immigrants, particularly those who were brought to the U.S. as children. The work analyses significant executive actions, legislative proposals, and enforcement mechanisms, such as the Trump's policy of "Remain in Mexico" and Biden's Citizenship Act, to elucidate the legal and humanitarian ramifications of each administration's strategy. The study underscores the difficulties of reconciling border security, economic requirements, and humanitarian responsibilities within a divided political landscape. It also analyses the practical constraints of current policy frameworks and legislative stagnation that have obstructed meaningful reform. The research employs comparative and analytical methods to elucidate how these contrasting approaches have influenced the overarching U.S. immigration system and proposes prospective policy recommendations to harmonize conflicting priorities. At last, it ultimately provides insight into the reasons behind the persistent challenges in attaining enduring immigration reform and explores potential frameworks that could facilitate the development of a more equitable and sustainable policy environment.

Keywords: Comprehensive Immigration Reform, Policy Proposals, Trump Administration, Biden Administration, Immigration, Undocumented Immigrants, Border Security

Résumé

Cette étude examine les politiques divergentes de réforme de l'immigration durant les administrations Trump et Biden afin d'évaluer leur influence sur le discours persistant concernant la réforme globale de l'immigration aux États-Unis. La question principale discutée est les profondes divergences idéologiques et politiques entre les stratégies républicaines axées sur l'application de la loi et les initiatives démocrates visant à créer des voies légales pour les immigrants sans papiers, en particulier ceux qui ont été amenés aux États-Unis lorsqu'ils étaient enfants. Le travail analyse des actions exécutives significatives, des propositions législatives et des mécanismes d'application, tels que la politique de "Rester au Mexique" de Trump et la loi sur la citoyenneté de Biden, afin d'élucider les ramifications juridiques et humanitaires de la stratégie de chaque administration. L'étude souligne les difficultés de concilier la sécurité des frontières, les exigences économiques et les responsabilités humanitaires dans un paysage politique divisé. Il analyse également les contraintes pratiques des cadres politiques actuels et la stagnation législative qui ont entravé une réforme significative. La recherche utilise des méthodes comparatives et analytiques pour élucider comment ces approches contrastées ont influencé le système d'immigration américain dans son ensemble et propose des recommandations politiques prospectives pour harmoniser les priorités conflictuelles. Enfin, il fournit finalement un aperçu des raisons derrière les défis persistants pour atteindre une réforme migratoire durable et explore des cadres potentiels qui pourraient faciliter le développement d'un environnement politique plus équitable et durable.

ملخص

يعالج هذا العمل السياسات المتأبينة للإصلاحات الهجرية في إدارات ترامب و بايدن لتقييم تأثيرها على الخطاب المستمر في الولايات المتحدة. القضية الرئيسية التي يتم مناقشتها هي الانقسامات الأيديولوجية و بشأن الإصلاح الشامل للهجرة السياسية العميقة بين استراتيجيات الجمهوريين التي تركز على التنفيذ أولا و المبادرات الديموقراطية التي تهدف إلى خلق قنوات قانونية للمهاجرين غير الموثقين، لا سيما أولئك الذين جلبوا إلى الولايات المتحدة كأطفال. يحلل هذا العمل الإجراءات التنفيذية الهامة، و المقترحات التشريعية، وآليات التنفيذ مثل سياسة "ابق في المسكك" المقترح من طرف ترامب و قانون المواطنة الذي اقترحه بايدن، لتوضيح التداعيات القانونية والإنسانية للاستراتيجية ككل إدارة. يدرس هذا العمل صعوبات التوفيق بين أمن الحدود و المتطلبات الاقتصادية و المسؤوليات الإنسانية ضمن مشهد سياسي منقسم. كما أنه يبرز القيود العلمية للأطر السياسية الحالية و الركود التشريعي الذي أعاق الإصلاحات الجادة. تستخدم الدراسة أساليب مقارنة و تحليلية لتوضيح كيف أثرت هذه النهج المتأبينة على النظام الشامل للهجرة في الولايات المتحدة و تقترح توصيات سياسية مستقبلية لتنسيق الأولويات المتضاربة. تُعزز الأطروحة في النهاية فهم الأسباب وراء التحديات المستمرة في تحقيق إصلاح هجرة دائم و تستكشف الأطر المحتملة التي يمكن أن تسهل تطوير بيئة سياسة أكثر عدلاً و استدامة.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AI	Artificial Intelligence
ASEC	Annual social and economic supplement
BIA	Board of Immigration Appeals
CBP	Custom Border Protection
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
CHNV	Cuban, Haitian, Nicaraguan, Venezuelan
CIR	Comprehensive immigration reform
CNN	Cable News Network
COVID	COrona VIRus Disease
CPA	Certified Practising Accountant
CPS	Current Population Survey
DACA	Deferred Action For Childhood Arrivals
DAPA	Deferred Action for Parental Accountability
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DREAMERS	Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors
EMIF-N	Northern Border Migration survey
EOIR	Office of Immigration Review
FY	Fiscal Year

GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICE	Immigration and Customs Enforcements
KPI	Key public Indicator
MPI	Migration Policy Institute
MPP	Migrant Protection Protocols
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NYUL	New York University Law
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USA	United States of America
WWII	World War 2

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Introduction

The issue of immigration reform has long been a contentious and pivotal topic in American politics, reflecting deep divisions over how to address the estimated 10.5 million unauthorized immigrants residing in the United States. Though opinions differ on the details of legal status versus citizenship, the public has generally supported giving undocumented immigrants who meet certain requirements such as paying fines, passing background checks, and learning English a path to legal status or citizenship (American Immigration Council “Comprehensive Immigration Reform”).

In the late summer of 2009 President Obama reiterated his intention to put comprehensive immigration reform on the Congressional agenda sometime in 2010. Since then, congressional leaders of both the Democratic and Republican parties have shared their thoughts on what that agenda ought to be. This report gives background information on immigration reform, talks about resources for studying the topic, and examines congressional proposals and their reactions (Wasem 4). The history, legislation, and policies surrounding immigration reform are examined in *The Biography of a Symbol. Competing Perspectives* examines the current proposals, which are broken down into four categories: measures to improve system efficiency, stricter enforcement, and temporary legal status for certain undocumented individuals. Procedural concerns about concentrating on the issue's merits are frequently raised during the evaluation of reform.

A comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) proposal linked to Senator Edward Kennedy and Representative Luis Gutiérrez seeks to improve border and workplace enforcement, reform work systems, and provide undocumented individuals with a path to legal status. In 2007, the Senate considered but rejected CIR. John McCain, a Republican candidate in 2008, stressed the necessity of security measures and stated he could not support the bill. President Obama

reignited interest in CIR at the beginning of 2009, and it is anticipated that future legislation will adhere to the same five-point plan as previous proposals.

The 2016 presidential election brought to light the sharp differences between the two major parties: Democrats support pathways to citizenship, particularly for those brought to the country as children, and highlight the United States as a nation of immigrants. They also support comprehensive immigration reform that includes security and economic benefits. Republicans, on the other hand, place a higher priority on law enforcement and border security, oppose amnesty, and emphasize the consequences of illegal entry and hiring undocumented workers (American Immigration Council “Tracking the Biden Agenda on Immigration Enforcement”; Eurasia Review “Comparison Between Migration Policies Of Trump And Biden Administrations”).

Strict enforcement measures, such as the "Remain in Mexico" policy, which required asylum seekers to wait outside the United States for their hearings, and the use of Title 42 to quickly expel migrants during the COVID-19 pandemic, were hallmarks of President Trump's immigration policies. These measures were criticized for their humanitarian effects even though they were intended to discourage unauthorized crossings and lower immigration levels (VisaVerge “Biden vs Trump Border Policies Comparison”; Eurasia Review “Comparison Between Migration Policies of Trump And Biden Administrations”). While retaining some enforcement tools like Title 42 during the pandemic, President Biden has attempted to undo many of Trump's policies and promote a more compassionate approach with plans for an eight-year pathway to citizenship, increased legal immigration, and initiatives to reunite separated families (Pew Research Center “Key facts about U.S. immigration policies”; VisaVerge “Biden vs Trump Border Policies Comparison”). Notwithstanding these distinctions, the debate over comprehensive immigration reform continues to be a major and unresolved issue in U.S. domestic policy, and both administrations have struggled to strike a

balance between humanitarian concerns and enforcement (Congress.gov; Eurasia Review “Comparison Between Migration Policies of Trump and Biden Administrations”).

The U.S has not yet adopted a thorough immigration reform addressing border security and the situation of illegal immigrants despite decades of political discussion. Immigration policy under President Donald Trump stressed restrictionism and enforcement, while President Joe Biden has indicated a more inclusive, reform-oriented agenda. Within the larger objective of long-term immigration reform, there is little scholarly study contrasting the efficacy, legal ramifications, and political viability of their approaches. This study fills in the void by assessing the difficulties under both administrations and investigating workable future policy proposals guided by this comparative analysis. This study aims to critically compare the immigration reform agendas of Presidents Donald Trump and Joe Biden, with a focus on their legislative, executive, and rhetorical approaches to comprehensive immigration reform. It aims to examine the obstacles that have restricted reform initiatives under both administrations as well as to suggest future policy directions that might result in a more efficient and sustainable immigration system for the U.S.

The main research question in this dissertation revolves around: How do the immigration policies of the Trump and Biden administrations differ in addressing the challenges of comprehensive immigration reform in the United States, and what implications do these differences hold for future policy development?

The study asserts that the significant disparities in enforcement priorities, legislative approaches, and rhetorical frameworks between the two administrations expose inherent tensions in reconciling border security, humanitarian issues, and economic requirements. The analysis indicates that enduring reform relies on harmonizing these conflicting perspectives via evidence-based policymaking that tackles the fundamental causes of migration while

updating legal pathways - a challenge exacerbated by polarized political dynamics and evolving demographic realities.

As the dissertation tries to answer the following sub-questions: How have historical immigration policies and ideological frameworks shaped the approaches of the Trump and Biden administrations to Comprehensive Immigration Reform?

What political, social, institutional, and economic challenges hindered the implementation of Comprehensive Immigration Reform during the Trump and Biden administrations?

How do the contrasting immigration policies of the Trump and Biden administrations impact the socio-economic integration of immigrants and the broader U.S. immigration system?

The hypothesis driving this investigation posits that the differing policy priorities and enforcement strategies reveal profound ideological rifts and institutional limitations that hinder substantial reform. The work is based on a qualitative research, focusing on the descriptive and comparative analyses methodologies to investigate these questions. The descriptive element delineates the progression of immigration policy and the ideological influences characterizing the Trump and Biden administrations. Analytical and comparative methodologies entail scrutinizing official documents, executive orders, public declarations, and policy results, augmented by perspectives from political figures, immigration proponents, and specialists during both administrations. The research utilizes various primary sources, including White House publications and announcements, and prominent news organizations in accordance with secondary literature from academic journals and policy analyses to elucidate the complexity and contentiousness of immigration reform discussions during both administrations.

Elizabeth Harvey's 2021 report, *The Biden Immigration Policy*, offers a detailed analysis of the Biden administration's attempts to reform a severely flawed immigration system inherited from Donald Trump. Harvey underscores that although Biden campaigned on overturning Trump's stringent immigration policies and reinstating humane practices, his presidency has been characterized by a conflict between idealism and systemic as well as political limitations. Biden aimed to rescind stringent policies such as the Muslim travel ban, family separations, and the "Remain in Mexico" initiative. Despite dismantling aspects of the Trump legacy, Biden retained contentious enforcement mechanisms like Title 42—a public health policy employed to swiftly expel migrants during the COVID-19 pandemic, initially implemented under Trump without scientific justification.

Harvey indicates that the implementation of Title 42 symbolizes Biden's duality: promoting compassion while concurrently sanctioning expulsions, notably the prominent deportation of thousands of Haitian migrants from Del Rio, Texas. This incident elicited significant criticism for reflecting the policies Biden had vowed to abandon, prompting immigration advocates to scrutinize his dedication to reform.

Harvey elucidates that Biden's U.S. Citizenship Act—a proposal aimed at legalizing undocumented immigrants and modernizing visa systems—remained largely symbolic due to insufficient Republican backing. Efforts to implement reforms through budget reconciliation were obstructed by Senate Parliamentary decisions, highlighting the structural constraints that have impeded Biden's agenda.

Harvey's analysis underscores that although Biden's rhetoric differs from Trump's, his policies embody a pragmatic and occasionally contradictory balancing act. The administration's dependence on inherited enforcement mechanisms, legislative inertia, and overwhelmed systems underscores the intricacies of substantive immigration reform in a polarized political environment. Harvey asserts that in the absence of structural legislative

reform, Biden's immigration legacy is likely to be characterized by managed crisis rather than significant transformation.

In "Trump's Immigration Policy: Borderline Unconstitutional." Aparicio emphasizes that Trump's immigration plan lacks specificity, particularly regarding the execution of his proposed mass deportations. This absence of a clear operational framework raises concerns about the feasibility and legality of such actions. The article points out that undocumented immigrants are afforded fundamental constitutional rights, a fact that complicates Trump's proposed policies and suggests potential legal challenges. The assertion that deporting all undocumented immigrants would lead to substantial costs for taxpayers, due to the legal fees associated with fair trials, further underscores the practical difficulties of implementing such a sweeping immigration reform.

Moreover, in the article, he criticizes Trump's intention to rescind President Obama's deportation-relief policies, which were designed to protect certain undocumented immigrants from deportation. Aparicio argues that these proposed changes lack a solid legal foundation, highlighting the potential for constitutional challenges that could arise from such sweeping reforms. This aspect of Trump's immigration strategy raises questions about the balance of power and the role of executive authority in shaping immigration policy.

In "The Economics of Immigration Reform," by F. Chang presents a comprehensive analysis of the polarized landscape surrounding immigration policy in the United States, particularly contrasting the approaches of President Trump and his predecessor, President Biden. F. Chang highlights the deep divisions among the American populace and their representatives regarding immigration, emphasizing that Trump's administration has not only taken a hard stance against unauthorized immigration but has also imposed restrictions on legal immigration pathways. This perspective is crucial for understanding the broader implications of immigration reform and the political climate influencing policy proposals.

Chang discusses the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which serves as a critical point of contention in the immigration debate. The program offers temporary protection from deportation and work authorization to unauthorized immigrants who arrived in the U.S. as children. The Trump administration's efforts to dismantle DACA starkly contrast with the bipartisan support that the comprehensive immigration reform bill received in the Senate in 2013. This historical context is vital as it illustrates the shifting political dynamics and the challenges of achieving consensus on immigration reform.

The article also delves into the economic implications of immigration, arguing that the free movement of workers can enhance global economic welfare. Chang posits that labor mobility is essential for maximizing the benefits of international trade, suggesting that restrictive immigration policies could hinder economic growth. This economic rationale provides a compelling argument for comprehensive immigration reform, as it highlights the potential gains that could be realized through more inclusive immigration policies.

Furthermore, Chang's analysis underscores the necessity for policymakers to reconcile the divergent views on immigration. The stark contrast between the Trump administration's restrictive measures and the more inclusive proposals likely favored by Biden presents significant challenges for future immigration reform. As Chang notes, addressing these challenges will require not only a reevaluation of existing policies but also a concerted effort to engage various stakeholders in a dialogue that recognizes the economic benefits of immigration.

The dissertation comprises three principal chapters, starting with a foundational chapter that contextualizes the study within its historical and policy framework. The initial chapter, "Policy Frameworks and Historical Context," offers a comprehensive analysis of U.S. immigration policies, detailing their development to delineate the context for recent reforms

that have been suggested and enacted. This chapter establishes the context by analyzing the legislative and administrative precedents that influence current immigration discussions.

The second chapter, titled "Examining the Challenges of the Comprehensive Immigration Reform on the U.S.," focuses on the specific obstacles and policy dynamics encountered under both presidencies. It examines the varying strategies, political obstacles, and administrative impediments that have impacted the advancements and regressions of immigration reform initiatives under these two administrations.

The third chapter, "Implications of the Immigration Policy Change: Trump and Biden in Perspectives," assesses the extensive ramifications of the policy alterations, contrasting the effects of Trump's and Biden's immigration approaches on American society, governance, and prospective policymaking. This chapter synthesizes essential insights and presents forward-looking proposals derived from the comparative analysis of the immigration policies of the two administrations and future policy proposals.

Chapter One

Policy Frameworks and Historical Context

Still one of the most divisive and powerful policy debates in modern-day United States is immigration. The difficulties of enacting sensible and compassionate immigration reforms have become ever more pressing as waves of global migration continue to change national demographics. Aimed at overhauling the United States. immigration system, the Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) policy initiative captures decades of political debate, legislative fragmentation, and social polarizing effect. Knowing the difficulties surrounding CIR is essential since its success or failure will have significant effects on labor markets, civil liberties, national identity of America, economic development, and national security.

Focusing especially on the development and difficulties of the Comprehensive Immigration Reform initiatives, this chapter offers the conceptual and historical roots for understanding U.S. immigration policy. From open-door ideas to limited policies and executive-driven enforcement, this chapter shows how profoundly ingrained political, economic, and ideological tensions shape the reform scene by placing present legislative debates inside the larger policy history. Important themes include the definition difficulties of words like "illegal," "undocumented," and "pre-legal," the function of push-pull migration dynamics, and the sometimes dubious character of immigration law enforcement. The chapter also prepares the ground for the main study of the dissertation: How might legal, political, and structural impediments prevent the realization of Comprehensive Immigration Reform in the United States? In answering this question, the chapter highlights the critical influence of presidential policies, congressional gridlock, and public opinion in determining

outcomes while interacting with conflicting narratives from national security to humanitarian justice.

The reader should thus anticipate a thorough review of the fundamental ideas, terminologies, and theoretical frameworks required to understand the CIR discourse. This covers talks about emigration, migration patterns, past policy changes, and modern debates about illegal immigrants. By means of this analytical prism, the chapter lays the foundation for evaluating CIR's viability and the wider consequences of its momentum for American society.

1.1.Key Concepts and Meaning

1.1.1. Immigration

Immigration refers to the process of people relocating into another nation to live. The U.S. is a major destination of immigrants, thus the growing global economy keeps moving people more and more important (M. Jr. Briggs 1). Immigration has brought many benefits to the United States, filling the voids in high-tech, highly skilled and highly paid employment, filling the need for low-skilled, low-paying jobs that native-born workers routinely avoid, and the fresh ideas and entrepreneurship accompanying workers with education and skills developed in other countries.

From near-zero public concern in 1994 to consistent manifestation as a number one public concern in national and local polls, increased immigration—especially from Mexico—has recently sharply raised the profile of immigration on the political agenda. Between 1995 and 2000, the Pew Research Center projects a rise in the U.S.-Mexico undocumented immigrant population of 5 million, or 54 percent, highlighting the less obvious math of displacing many native-born workers and inflating wages crushed by the flood of cheap immigrant labor.

Knowing the current public worry about immigration helps one to realize that it reflects a complicated mix of factors beyond only numbers. As low and unskilled immigrant labor replaces low and unskilled native-born Americans, there is the awareness that rising poverty and declining educational attainment and skill levels accompanying the recent great immigration inflow have produced a wave of growing social tensions. With the opening of the border greatly expanded, there are concerns about the future of American civil society with the arrival of illiberal Mexican ethnic communities and worries about sworn enemies of America aggrandizing with more ease, anonymity and access.

1.1.2. Emigration

Emigration is defined as the act of leaving one's country to settle in another, and it holds significant meaning in the context of the United States, particularly from a historical perspective. Rising as a main emigration destination, British America became a test ground for ideas of pluralism and tolerance. Often portrayed in literature as a large swath providing refuge for those escaping tyranny, the American colonies embodied the idea of being a "land of opportunity." Social unrest in Britain starting in the middle of the 19th century set off a tsunami of emigration, especially among the lower classes looking for better opportunities in the United States. (Shukla 8)

For what was once British America, this era was a turning point. The ideas that defined the young country, especially the "American spirit" expressed by Winthrop Kirkland Hillard in 1835—assimilation of transcendentalism with nationalism—beyond started to fade by the 1860s. American literary output at this period deviated from conventional Anglo-American themes, as seen in the works of Emerson, Whitman, Melville, and Poe, which often questioned the American republic.

By then, the concept of emigration had changed but had not yet established a real haven for the victims of the more general social injustices connected with imperial development from nations including France, Italy, Germany, Spain, and Portugal. Whereas exiles sought to transcend their circumstances and help to reinterpret their homelands, emigration mostly affected those oppressed by the tides of history.

Although Europeans discovered America as a backup, their dreams often rested in continental exile. But over a century of research on emigrational experiences revealed a range of psychological and spiritual responses on their past life and hopes for rebirth in the "land of pines." Emigration to the United States thus developed not only as a physical move but also as a complex interaction of identity, purpose, and the search for a fresh beginning.

1.1.3. Migration

Migration, in the context of the United States, refers to the movement of individuals from one country to another, specifically regarding their pursuit of residency and citizenship. Historically, the U.S. has experienced various phases of migration policy, ranging from no restrictions to various forms of personal and numerical limitations on incoming migrants (Gerber 3). Especially, the United States has never used numerical limitations apart from personal limitations.

While numerical restrictions relate to the total count of foreign immigrants and the variables guiding the distribution of migrant visas, debates concerning personal restrictions have focused on issues of alienage and related legal considerations. Terms like "alien" and "immigrant," both derived from the Latin word "alienus" via the French "aliène," abound in the vocabulary connected with migration debates. These words have complex connotations in English; they can indicate a relationship to other nations, and "alien" also describes a foreigner or someone born outside the United States (Dzhurova 1119).

Significantly, there is a dearth of language addressing the particular difficulties experienced by migrating women, so reflecting gaps in the debate on migration policies. Usually limiting their ability to change their immigration status, personal restrictions usually control the procedures by which people, categorized as aliens, may enter the U.S. An alien can only contest decisions on their application with prior approval from the Secretary of Homeland Security; they cannot apply for further immigration visas. (Corgan 2026)

Reflecting the nation's changing approach to immigration and its consequences for different demographics in the framework of a diverse and global community, migration policies in the United States overall comprise complicated legal frameworks shaped by historical precedents and continuous societal debates.

1.1.4. Illegal Immigration

Illegal immigration is a crucial issue in the United States, with deep historical roots tracing back to the nation's inception. Although different rules limiting access existed prior to the 1920s, formal immigration laws started to take shape in that decade. The idea of illegal immigration was invented to stifle debates about sensible policies for handling recently arrived immigrants. (Sackey-Ansah 2)

For those already living in the nation, this structure virtually removed the possibility of thinking about legalization or concessions. The blending of border crossings with criminal activity has distorted public opinion and resulted in the general labeling of many people as illegal immigrants. For most people who are in the country without legal documentation, the label pre-legal immigrant would be more fitting since they were often seen as pre-legal prior to a major change in their legal status. Events that change this status fall into pre-legal classification. (Ruiz Ramos)

For decades, political rhetoric and media headlines have been saturated with the negative connotation connected with the term illegal immigrant. Originally used in the 1920s and 1930s to describe people crossing borders against the law—especially during a time of more limited Asian immigration—the term progressively changed to become the legal label illegal alien, which at first was not meant to dehumanize. The preferred language changed to illegal immigrant as illegal alien became to have a negative connotation; today, this term is usually greeted with hostility. Originally embraced by conservative groups, the term has since been adopted by academics and policy analysts who occasionally considered it as neutral and descriptive. On the other hand, one could argue that illegal immigrants have become among the most negative terms used in the immigration debate since they subtly connect the act of immigration with criminal activity and so impede possible legislative solutions. Many people without U.S. citizenship thus discover they lack immigration records. More than just status, they have lost chances for legal rights and privileges because of different WALLS-OUT obstacles: political, logistical, and financial ones. In every particular instance, knowing the chronology of events results in a more accurate term: pre-legal immigrant. They should not be labeled as illegal immigrants or felons before any significant event influencing their legal status; hence, the term pre-legal is a more appropriate comparison for their situation.

1.1.4.1. Illegal

Illegal immigration is a term that refers to an immigrant who has entered or resided in a country in violation of the immigration laws of that country. In the U.S. context, it refers to someone from another country who either stayed in the United States without a legal immigration status or illegally entered the country. United States immigration laws control immigration into the country. Title 8 of the U.S. Code, Chapter 12 finds most of the clauses in

U.S. immigration law. Those statutes outline severe civil penalties on individuals who engage in various acts of illegal immigration or assist others in doing so, outline the removal of individuals who illegally immigrate to the United States, provide for various forms of immigration relief or exemption from these provisions, and forbid admission to the United States for some people. Criminal penalties are imposed on those who illegally enter the United States.

Regarding illegal immigration, there is a bifurcated enforcement system with civil against criminal provisions distinction. Civil agencies including U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection make up government players tasked with upholding the immigration laws. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, for instance, is charged with upholding the civil provisions of immigration law while its criminal division is a smaller agency that investigates and charges criminal immigration law violations. It has both criminal and civil powers. Practically, most illegal immigrants in the United States are not prosecuted.

Illegal immigration is generally linked in the United States with border crossing. Transactional networks are those whose nodes are the people who fund/make it possible for people to be smuggled across the border, those who provide the means of transportation, the keepers of the "stash," or safehouses, and the people who will profit from the labor of the workers once they are smuggled into the U.S. Although in the mid-1990s statistics started tracking out-migrations as well, so inflating the estimates, illegal crossings have generally averaged about 700,000 a year. The Mexican economy collapsed in 1993, and the first wave of illegal immigration was the biggest recorded—upwards of 1.5 million yearly for two years.

1.1.4.2. Undocumented

The term undocumented is, at its core, a legal description of the immigration status of an individual. Within the United States, It describes someone who arrived in the nation without the required paperwork or later violated their visa. Undocumented immigrants' basic rights remain unaltered depending on their status as people are entitled to the same human rights. All Americans living under the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights are entitled to the right to dignity, freedom from slavery and torture, the right to a standard of living sufficient for health and well-being, the right to education, and the right to work among many others. These rights are universal and applicable independent of immigration status of any individual (Williams 12). Still, being undocumented carries great stigma and results in the denial of many of these liberties even with these safeguards.

Undocumented immigrants deal with major legal, social, and psychological issues; suggests another meaning, that of a stigma, a label that expresses a deficiency toward an individual or group, as a legal description of immigration status. A stigma is a deeply discrediting quality marked as "undesired differentness". Common based on race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic level, education, and sexual orientation, stigmas offer means for social exclusion. Undocumented people, regardless of race, ethnicity, or nationality, have also become major targets of social stigma leading to a multiplicity of social labeling in recent years (i.e., illegal alien, undocumented, undocumented immigrant). Undocumented immigrants are sometimes blamed for causing social disturbance and for fueling social deterioration. Undocumented is a category of difference that includes nationality, color, ethnicity, social class, and language ability. Moreover, the stigma of being undocumented is sometimes articulated, or expressed, in anti-immigrant attitude, a multi-layered discrimination.

1.1.2. Push and Pull Factors

Two different types of migration factors commonly referred to as push-pull factors are usually acknowledged in migration literature. While pull factors are the conditions and expectations of the host country that define immigration, push factors relate to the home country conditions that start emigration. These elements all exist on a continuum whereby the sensibility of a potential émigré's choice to leave a home country rises as the balance between push and pull elements tilts backwards (Barajas 266). Even unfavorable conditions elsewhere will not stop the often dangerous decision to leave home when conditions in one nation become intolerable because of war, poverty, or persecution.

Disease and famine cause great human suffering; hence, they can inspire people to leave their houses even if they object to the concept of immigration. The paradox stems from nations like the United States, where immigration policies have grown ever intolerable. Nonetheless, certain groups are increasingly opting to immigrate, despite facing substantial or even overwhelming challenges. The U.S is strengthening its already tight immigration laws, and the benefits of migration greatly exceed the related risks and challenges, thus these people make a logical decision to immigrate. Examining both historical and contemporary elements that support immigration from Mexico helps one to clarify how historically improbable immigrants now pose a major obstacle for the United States. Along with long-term trends that have changed Mexico's situation, the interaction of these factors has led to mass migration to the United States as both a logical and usually the only choice left to those impacted. Current Mexican socioeconomic and demographic conditions mixed with their historical antecedents are the Mexican conditions or forces causing out-migration contemporarily examined. In-migration to Mexico becomes more logical as Mexico's unofficial economy rules and the effects of the Family Planning Program are felt de-stabilize the country. Along with long-standing Mexican conditions, aggressive US policies have produced whole new conditions from which mass immigration is both justified and inevitable. Analyzed are past

trade and immigration policies to show how these synergies have changed forces from improbable to inevitable in ex-Mexico emigration.

1.1.2.1. Push Factors

Immigrants' reasons for leaving the country of origin are often referred to as push factors. The rationale for researching push factors is threefold. First, this study helps to define the categories of variables included into the more complete statistical model applied on the survey data. Second, perceptions of push factors could help one comprehend and assess how decisions on country-selection could have reflected the needs of immigrants. Observing immigrant post-migration goals and expectations requires an awareness of the forces driving them from their country of origin. Political persecution and instability, economic conditions and the labor market, the quality of education, crime, and violence—many elements that might drive people from Mexico to the United States—are generalizable to other groups of immigrants (Aiad-Toss 3). Political and political factors are those pertaining to the political system and civil and political rights in the nation of origin. Structured questions in the survey asked respondents to agree whether the following three factors had pushed them to migrate: 'persecution because of political beliefs,' 'an unstable political environment,' and 'the absence of civil rights such as freedom of expression, assembly, and press.'" Three items taken into account in this study fit the broad category of variables often discussed in migration research: "very low wages," "poor job opportunities," and "strong inflation." Push factors pertaining to economic conditions and the labor market cover a wide spectrum of variables. The general quality of education questions the educational system of a nation of origin in terms of availability, safety, and how well it treats children and young people. In this respect, it was hypothesized that a past experience of having lived in a nation with many educational

problems would push respondents to migrate. Issues pertaining to crime and violence relate to unsafe living and social conditions in the country of origin.

1.1.2.2. Pull Factors

As discussed under Section Push Factors, the receptivity of the United States to the political, social, and economic conditions in Mexico is important in understanding immigration to the U.S. Although the pull factors are less helpful for comprehending earlier migratory streams to the U.S., they are more so for modern immigration to the country, particularly over the past ten years and a half. Mexicans weigh geographic, financial, political, social, and environmental elements among other things while deciding where to migrate. Conditions in Mexico, and more especially in the states of Michoacán, Guanajuato, Jalisco, and Colima, are significant but not usually outside the larger picture. Understanding immigration depends much on the receptivity of the U.S. pull factors, particularly with regard to social and economic conditions.

Many American conditions have a significant, independent influence on the choice to immigrate. Among these disorders, the most common one is the worry with economic possibilities, more especially with regard to wages and employment chances. Would-be immigrants generally felt they would be hired shortly after arriving in the United States and in better-paying jobs than were typically accessible in Mexico. Geographic and economic circumstances in Mexico underwent notable change and perception during the 1980–2000 period. Making the challenging shift to life in the United States was more difficult, thus it was less likely that Mexicans who would have otherwise emigrated would have done. The availability of social support to help with adjustment to conditions in the United States, which generally included support from coethnic networks already living there, was another factor seen as vital in their decision to immigrate.

Conditions in Mexico and the United States have drastically changed since the late 1980s, when mass migration from Michoacán started (M. Jr. Briggs 14). One of the most well-known of these disorders was women beginning to participate in the workforce on a significant scale; declining economic possibilities in Mexico left families without other option, but this went unreported. Women joining the workforce brought other elements of life, including family safety, greater relevance. Concern with economic possibilities gave way in the 1990s to concern with living conditions including public health and crime issues.

1.2. Historical Overview of Major U.S Immigration Policies

Over its history, the United States has developed immigration laws reflecting political, social, and economic changes. Immigration was first of all essentially free and accepted everyone seeking possibilities. But late 19th-century social tensions and economic difficulty changed this; this led to the first federal measure prohibiting immigration by ethnicity, the Chinese Exclusion measure of 1882. This set the benchmark for adhering to regulations imposing restrictions and targets. Reflecting nativist concepts, the Immigration Act of 1924 excluded immigration from Asia and set national origin limits, therefore restricting immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe. After World War II, labor needs and civil rights movements changed immigration restrictions. Eliminating the quota system and thereby encouraging family reunification and labor demands, the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 fundamentally impacted the U.S. population as greater immigration from Asia, Latin America, and Africa occurred. Later years saw changes in immigration policies that reflected both economic reality and humanitarian issues. Although many businesses employing many illegal immigrants were allowed, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 provided amnesty to many of them. The 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act

brought in faster rules against illegal immigration. Following September 11, 2001, immigration policy debates in the twenty-first century were more focused and accompanied extra security measures and inspection. Starting in 2012, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program highlighted the difficulty of immigration status and reform by allowing illegal immigrants brought to the United States as minors temporary protection from deportation. All things considered, U.S. immigration rules reflect a dynamic interaction of values, wants, and goals that forms the national identity and handles immigration-related challenges. (Marinari, 283)

1.2.1. Open Door Policy

For years, aspirant immigrants have flocked to the United States. Mostly seen as an opportunity, big waves of immigrants were kindly welcomed. The United States stood as an open door. Native-born Americans as well as the federal government encouraged immigration with little intervention from the Civil War era through World War I. Only the Chinese were turned away from admission (Coffman, 7).

From 12 million to 105 million, the United States population grew more than eight-fold between 1830 and 1920. Many of the immigrants to the nation were poverty, war, and persecution refugees. Their arrival altered the national character as much as the terrain of the country. More than eighty percent of newly arriving immigrants in the 1890s came from southern and eastern Europe. There were reportedly two million Jews living in the United States by 1910. Beginning roughly at 1900, Italian immigration grew quickly. The poorest of the immigrants settled in tenements reminiscent of slums, where the filth bred illness and death. Lung disease deaths run three to four times higher than those of native born people. Other immigrants headed for sweatshop employment were mostly found working in manufacturing. Usually unskilled and illiterate, these immigrants were These laborers had to

spend long hours in at least one instance in filthy, unbearably hot warehouses, working nonstop until their legs exploded with infection from too much standing. Among them, the death rate was rather high—not surprisingly 22% of new arrivals, however, were industrial workers who were more suited for integration once they established themselves. Whether they were trying to save and go back to their native country or to set some money aside to upgrade their house, they worked hard (Wright, 11 12)

Anti-immigrant sentiment grew. The success of the new immigrants in uprisings which attacked the prohibition of trade unions and low wages led to increased repression which fell increasingly on all the workers, especially those from eastern and southern Europe. Anti-Slavic sentiment paralleled the rise in xenophobia. A need to upsurge sympathy in the eastern establishment over the plight of their brethren abroad helped fuel the panic. By 1895, the perception that Slavs were all imbued with criminality and some form of inhumanity became commonplace throughout the nation.

1.2.2. Restrictive Policy

A strict immigration policy was implemented in July 2008, requiring people to complete forms navigating broad, administrative, and sometimes arbitrary criteria. Public reaction against this structure resulted in a changed policy ten months later featuring a new form meant for a panel of five reviewers. Although this modification sought to be more specific, it finally fell short, reflecting the ongoing uncertainty usually connected with immigration law. Such laws are usually marked by uncertainty and are mostly subject to bureaucratic discretion, so encouraging a sense of arbitrariness that complicates the experiences of people seeking immigration.

Since 1790, immigrant eligibility for economic possibilities, property ownership, and full citizenship rights in the United States has been much influenced by their status. This ongoing lack of clarity begs important issues regarding the change of immigration policies

throughout time. The study will contend that two interrelated reasons mostly explain the vague and administrative character of these laws: first, they have been used to exploit the lack of established legal frameworks to improve the economic status of particular groups, so simplifying their path to citizenship; second, they have been designed to protect economic privileges while also expanding chances for other demographics.

Clarifying the main emphasis of this study will help one to properly review immigration law and its historical background. Although the study is mostly textual, this debate will focus on the formal elements influencing the restrictive immigration law framework, so acknowledging that particular immigration patterns, legislative changes, and prevailing society discourses have shaped the origins of these legal texts. Important background material for this study will be historical narratives of many immigrant groups. Moreover, as immigration law covers a wide legal spectrum, particular attention will be paid to the early restrictive laws that developed in the United States following 1882, especially those aimed at particular groups, such the Chinese Exclusion Acts, which started in 1882 and included strict policies against particular immigrant classes. (Pegler-Gordon, 135)

1.2.3. Revision of the Immigration Act of 1965

The Immigration Act of 1965 sought to eliminate racial and ethnic discrimination from immigration laws. Critics said its effects on the Western Hemisphere resulted in unintentional inequalities. The convoluted history of the law addresses foreign policy and sensitive political concerns in Congress. As such, several immigration laws with rigorous customs enforcement for income tax fraud among aliens seeking legal residency exist. This Act sought to change earlier legislation and correct the 1965 monitoring oversight. Congress thought American labor was enough, thus an alien's professional background was irrelevant before the Act unless it was required for a particular job. By 1965, this perspective had changed and professional aliens were now considered as valuable. New Section 203(b) added a preference

for professionals; the Department of Labor categorized jobs based on educational requirements, so limiting eligibility to US university graduates. Extra monthly visas for 1,000 professionals were given by graduate-level training, subject on no negative effect on the American labor market. Any alien could possibly help the United States before the amendments; but, the lack of a degree or job offer proved to be a challenge. About quota restrictions, the amendments listed no nationalities except for Soviet Union members. The changed Act sought to solve this while also protecting nationalities honored by historical leaders. The enactment happened quickly and human factors shaped intention, results, debate, and later confusion. Effective in 1968, the 1965 Act defined eight categories of specialty occupations for H-1 visas, so posing issues regarding what exactly qualifies as a specialty occupation and employment. (F. Harris, 295) (Marinari, 271)

1.2.4. Modern Legislation

Particularly with the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, modern immigration laws in the United States have changed significantly over the past century. Eliminating the national origins quota system, this historic law placed more focus on family reunion and the integration of skilled labor, so changing the demographic profile of the country by greatly increasing immigration from areas including Asia, Latin America, and Africa. In response to world humanitarian crises, the Refugee Act of 1980 created official channels for refugee and asylum seeker admission. (Ward and Batalova, 4, 5)

By granting amnesty to millions of illegal immigrants and enacting clauses meant to stop future illegal entries, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 sought to solve unauthorized immigration. Following the September 11 attacks, increased security issues have greatly shaped immigration policy in the twenty-first century, resulting in the USA PATRIOT Act's passage and the founding of the Department of Homeland Security, so drastically changing immigration enforcement methods.

Introduced in 2012, the DACA program reflected continuous divisive discussions about immigration reform and offers illegal immigrants brought to the United States as children temporary relief from deportation. Modern laws still give border security top priority; different administrations suggest projects to fortify borders and lower illegal immigration by means of enhanced surveillance and more funding for enforcement. Important debates on paths to citizenship, family reunion, and the necessity of striking a balance between national security and humanitarian obligations still shape American immigration policy. Moreover, the terrible conditions in Central America have spurred significant immigration, mostly from Salvadorans, as people flee growing violence and persecution, so impacting U.S. reactions and policies in the area. (Jackson, 9)

1.3.Trump's and Biden's Immigration Policies: From Campaign to Implementation

Donald Trump expressed a strong opposition against illegal immigration during the 2020 presidential campaign, pledging to give criminal deportation top priority and aimed at overhauling the legal immigration procedures. Immigration lawyers expected Trump's immigration policies—which included an executive order requiring the Department of Homeland Security to hasten the expulsion of noncitizens, including those with temporary protected status to be adopted immediately following his re-election bid. The Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency stepped up its activities under his direction, investigating companies and doing workplace raids. States like California responded by passing legislation meant to undermine efforts at federal immigration control. Legal challenges against Trump's travel restrictions based on nationality surfaced, so affecting procedures including naturalization, asylum applications, DACA, and legal representation access for detained people. The increased attention on immigration caused anxiety among immigrant families, which resulted in worries of separation and upheaval that highlighted immigration as a

divisive issue both during the election and following. Democrats, including Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, led opposition to Trump's harsh deportation policies; many party members expressed humanitarian concerns about the aggressive enforcement environment. (Eshbaugh-Soha and Barnes, 790)

Joe Biden, on the other hand, ran as the Democratic candidate supporting an immigration policy distinguished by empathy and thorough reform. His strategy was clearly different from Trump's nationalist interpretation, which usually portrayed immigrants as security concerns. Emphasizing the need of helping immigrant families, guaranteeing fair treatment, and fixing the structural flaws in the immigration system, Biden's agenda This different perspective on immigration not only underlined the divisive policies of Trump and Biden but also spurred more general debates on national identity and the function of immigrants in American society. Biden's vision sought to rebuild and restore confidence in the immigration system while supporting inclusivity and appreciating immigrant contributions, so countering the anxieties and divisions that defined the approach of the previous government. (Vaughan, 299)

1.3.1. Trump's Policy

In outlining an immigration policy meant to "stopping illegal immigration, deporting all criminal aliens, and saving American lives." President Trump promised to deport almost three million illegal immigrants, boost local police enforcement of immigration rules, and speed 'criminal alien' removal. His government set aside large federal monies to further this immigration agenda. Using the narrative of danger, Trump's campaign targeted immigrant populations especially with the "catch and release" message. At least a month of an enforcement action blackout followed with the announcement of a list of transnational gang members as a show of might. Early morning meetings pertaining to 287(g) programs were set aside to restrict immigrant attendance, so reflecting a perceived threat from these

communities. Many started acting preventatively against possible enforcement actions as the reality of weak immigration system defenses became clear. Plans called for community monitoring, police support requests, and law enforcement training for ONSH Dragnet. Certain towns even posted signs forbidding federal agents from visiting schools. Often seen as polarizing, Trump's attitude has been marked by insensitivity and a propensity to reject the truth. But those who feel excluded from political debate could find resonance in this very disrespectfulness. Although many of his supporters do not necessarily agree with all of his actions or words, they value his openness to voice unreserved opinions, which runs counter to the general political correctness. (Ngai, 144)

1.3.2. Biden's Policy

Emphasizing compassion and inclusivity, Biden's immigration policy emphasizes a humane approach in sharp contrast to Trump's divisive rhetoric, so polarizing the country. Although both candidates formally promised to reform immigration for the better, Biden's particular goal is to undo Trump's executive orders from the beginning of his presidency, especially in connection to the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program that shields young immigrants. He promises strongly to support comprehensive immigration reform that would solve the situation of almost 11 million illegal immigrants now living in the shadows as well as to defend DACA recipients. Biden's vision aims to create a fair immigration system that gives dignity, empathy, and respect for every person—from all backgrounds top priority. But properly implementing these progressive ideas calls for strong political support from a Republican Party that might object strongly to many of his ideas. Biden was outspoken in his criticism of the shortcomings of the 'Washington establishment', so matching his high aspirations with a more general aim to drastically change the immigration scene inside the United States, so addressing long-standing issues and striving for a fairer system for all immigrants. (Hovenkamp, 21-24)

1.4.Measuring the Population of Immigrants in the U.S

Almost nowhere are scholarly studies using probability-based sampling to define the features of migrant deportations and return migration. Published counts of the illegal Mexican immigrant population in the United States rely on either census-based projections or administrative data, both of which could be biased. (Sohn et al., 2023) This paper thus answers the following research questions: Before their leaving, what was the estimated population count of recently deported and temporary return migrants residing in the United States? Each group has what demographic traits? Apart from recording the numbers of deportees and returnees in relation to the undocumented immigrant population, the results help to clarify how migrant traits could mirror federal government deportation policies and practices throughout time.

Based on information gathered by the Mexican government, deported Mexican immigrants were approximated from the U.S. to Mexico prior to their historical return in past 12 months population count. Historically, the southwestern border areas of Texas, New Mexico, California, and Arizona have been subject to most strict U.S. immigration enforcement policy. American officials could have grown cautious about trying to deport Mexican immigrants living inland and away from the border. Since their race changed to Dominican and Haitian for African immigrants, this deportation system has lately turned its focus on criminals. Nearly two-thirds of deportees had been persons caught crossing the U.S.-Mexico border and accused of illegal entry until President Obama took office in 2009. Targeting people living in the United States for several years, deportations from the interior started to climb in 2008 and surged once more in 2014. Knowing deportation policies means knowing how demographics have evolved over time.

Based on the Survey of Returned Migrants of the Mexican government, the survey design most recently measuring counts and traits of recently arrived deportees and returnees—deported (or voluntary return) migrants were estimated. The survey design, however, neglected deportees or voluntary returnees whose exit points were under observation by a foreign consulate and/or did not follow a land route. Thus, projected counts derived from the oversample returnees and deportations above levels recorded by alternative administrative data.

1.4.1. The Estimates of Legal Immigrants

The immigration data on the inflow of legal permanent residents is based on the estimates produced by the U.S. Census Bureau. Every year, the Census Bureau publishes estimates of the number of legal immigrants (i.e., legal permanent residents) from 1880 to the latest year available like in Table 1 (A. Brauer 3).

Figure 1: Projections of Net Migration in Selected Years

Projections of Net Migration in Selected Years

(Thousands of people per year)

	2006	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2050	2100
Social Security Administration (2006)								
"Low cost"	1,270	1,400	1,400	1,350	1,350	1,300	1,300	1,300
Intermediate	1,075	1,000	1,000	950	950	900	900	900
"High cost"	810	723	723	673	673	673	673	673
U.S. Census Bureau (2000)								
High series	1,645	1,571	1,726	1,854	2,269	2,680	2,814	3,047
Interim projection (2004) ^a	920	766	796	819	996	1,161	1,097	1,058
Middle series	872	713	734	751	912	1,061	984	926
Low series	317	149	130	120	182	233	166	113

Source: Sohn, H., R. Pebley, A., Landrian Gonzalez, A., and Goldman, N.

"Deportations and departures: Undocumented Mexican immigrants' return migration during three presidential administrations." 2023. ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

These approximations form part of the projections of the US foreign-born population. Reported for five-year periods of residence in the United States, the estimates in the Current Population Reports and Statistical Abstract of the United States are the most often used estimates of the foreign-born population. The estimates for the years before 1970 essentially reflect those found in Historical Statistics of the United States. Both estimates of the foreign-born population use basically the same technique. Subtracting estimates of the native-born population from the overall population estimates—available annually—helps one to derive the population born abroad.

One of the most fundamental and widespread activities of humans throughout history is their cross-border mobility; hence, one of the most constant driving forces of immigrants is their wish to better their life. With 51.02 million of the 272.64 million estimated international migrants worldwide expected in 2019, the United States accounted for 22.86 percent of the total worldwide count. For 2020 these figures were respectively projected to be 51.20 million and 273.90 million. These gather approximations of the foreign-born population—that is, immigrants—people whose country of birth is not the stated country of residence. As can be seen, the estimations are predicated on national census data sent to the United Nations by governments. Unfortunately, equally crucial components of the immigration phenomenon—the inflow of legal permanent residents (i.e., the total of people who acquired the legal immigrant status), as well as its appropriate age and growth model—have escaped researcher's focus.

Two important immigration laws were adopted under the Trump presidency. Under the Enforcement First approach, the first concentrated on criminal deportation, hence increasing the quantity of deportations connected to criminal activity. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was instructed to extend its attention to include "criminal aliens" and even those at large in the U.S. Moreover, the Trump government restored the 287(g) and Secure

Communities programs, so hastening removal operations including forceful workplace raids resulting in 680 arrests in food processing facilities—the most in a decade. In the first week following their announcement, these actions resulted in almost 3,000 deportations, which terrified illegal immigrants and interfered with their capacity to show up for court hearings or go about daily business. Many of the deportees had complicated life situations, usually supporting families and providing labor in several fields. Although deportations rose under the Obama presidency, they still fell short of current highs by hundreds of thousands yearly. A public charge rule was also expanded to include more receivers, which sparked concerns about possible denial of healthcare and education as well as family separation. Increased government attention on public benefits added to this by more aggressive immigration control in these regions.

During Biden's first two years, various policies impacted attitudes toward immigrant populations. The administration created immigrant-related cabinet positions and closed over 30,000 immigration cases from the Trump era, ending legal battles over the travel ban, asylum policies, and border wall construction. It prioritized repealing deterrents and resumed programs that delayed deportation for some undocumented migrants. Public health coverage was expanded to include undocumented immigrants during the COVID-19 pandemic. Plans for immigration-related executive orders, including access to driver's licenses and Comprehensive Immigration Reform, were underway. By March 31, 2021, only 56 deportations occurred, and on April 12, a Comprehensive Immigration Reform bill was presented. However, vaccine requirements for undocumented migrants and increased inspections of agricultural firms employing them indicated a tougher stance. After the midterms, strict but limited actions were likely to control U.S.-Mexico border comings to appease opposition. Unaccompanied minors would be released to relatives or foster care, with no second chance for legal entry. The transit asylum ban was set to expand, and while CPA

would remain available, criteria for humanitarian parole and employment visas were expected to tighten. (Sohn et al., 2023)

1.4.2. The Estimates of Undocumented Immigrants

Estimates of undocumented immigrants residing in the U.S. are derived from the ASEC of the CPS for the years 1994-2020 utilizing the methodology outlined by Sohn et al. (2023). Values are derived from two Poisson regression models that incorporate key coefficients in relation to presidential terms and account for the year. Supplementary control variables are incorporated in one of the models to address disparities in ASEC's demographic representation across presidential terms. The initial Bush administration serves as the reference period in all interaction models. Although estimates of the number of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. seem to be relatively uniform across various sources, all estimates appear to be understated. The ASEC likely underestimated the undocumented population residing in the U.S. The ASEC reports that the population of undocumented immigrants residing in the U.S. decreased significantly from 10.17 million in 2016 to 9.69 million in 2019 during the Trump and Biden administrations. It subsequently rebounded, attaining 10.92 million in 2020 and 10.10 million in 2021. All estimates are, at a minimum, likely multiples of the actual count of the undocumented population residing in the U.S. Discrepancies appear to exist in estimates between the ASEC and alternative data sources. Variations in demographic coverage among sources may elucidate discrepancies between them. Significantly, EMIF-N is the sole survey of migrant movements at U.S.-Mexico transit locations since 2008. EMIF-N is regarded as the most dependable data source, exhibiting the least bias, for estimating the influx of undocumented immigrants traversing the U.S.-Mexico border. Current data on migrant flows is perceived to possess significant biases.

The recent Trump immigration policy may have invalidated previous estimates of undocumented immigrants. During Trump's administration, enhanced immigration

enforcement likely resulted in net outmigration of immigrant populations, rendering previous demographic estimates excessively optimistic. Research demonstrates that this enforcement substantially influenced immigrants' choices to remain or depart, more so than previous administrations. Policies including prolonged detention for families, an increase in immigration judges, more stringent asylum criteria, and obstacles for Central Americans led many immigrants to choose to depart the U.S. or to utilize irregular routes upon their return. Undocumented immigrants, especially susceptible to COVID-19 and enforcement threats, encountered increased probabilities of deportation, resulting in net outmigration. Consequently, contemporary population models may inadequately represent the current immigrant landscape, as they failed to consider these substantial political changes. Moreover, prior research centered on older groups of undocumented immigrants has become obsolete due to the emergence of a newer, more substantial cohort impacted by these policies. (Sohn et al., 2023) (Wilson and P Stimpson, 2020)

The United States has undergone a persistent influx of immigrants and refugees, predominantly from Mexico and Central America. President Trump's dedication to building a border wall and implementing stringent immigration policies instigated apprehensions regarding mass deportations and a transition towards nativism. The pandemic exacerbated resettlement challenges. In contrast, President Biden promptly annulled numerous policies instituted by Trump upon assuming office, pledging to increase annual refugee admission quotas. Immigration courts were instructed to accelerate the efficient processing of straightforward cases and eliminate backlogs intensified by the pandemic. Since January 21, 2021, significant growth in specific immigrant populations with established routes has been observed. Substantial influxes of contracted laborers from Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Africa were documented as displaced individuals discovered new prospects in the labor-deficient U.S. economy. Following the Taliban takeover, there was a significant increase in

Afghan refugees, with the Biden administration pledging to resettle 95,000 individuals. The conflict in Ukraine has resulted in a significant influx of displaced persons seeking refuge in NATO countries, leading to anticipated increases in arrivals in the U.S. via the visa waiver program and initiatives to resettle 100,000 Ukrainians with the assistance of NGOs and philanthropic organizations. (Sohn et al., 2023)

1.4.3. Variations and Locations of Undocumented Immigrants

A study identifies types of undocumented immigrants and their subsequent return migration locations to Mexico during the Trump and Biden presidencies. To accomplish this, informants aged 25 to 45 at the time of the survey were chosen from a nationally representative sample. Also measured were socio-demographic characteristics, whether returned to Mexico since 2016, when in which U.S. states or region departed, and to which Mexican states.

The estimated likelihood of non-return migration was examined using multinomial logit regression. Results are presented for Trump first, as he was the predecessor to the Biden administration. During Biden's administration, notable disparities among states and regions of the U.S. were observed: the majority of responses originated from California, Texas, or other general locales. High school diplomas without graduation were common. More than half of them resided only between 0 and 15 years in the U.S. before voluntary return and deportation. Individuals aged 30 or older were twice as likely to depart compared to those under 29. According to the documentation, a proportion of the respondents were estimated to be undocumented migrants, holders of documented work visas, and individuals with other documented statuses, respectively.

In Mexico, the majority of Voluntary Return cases predominantly relocated to Jalisco, Michoacán, Guanajuato, and Guerrero, among other regions, constituting a substantial share

overall. A proportion of deported individuals returned to Michoacán, Guanajuato, Guerrero, and Oaxaca. Consequently, the findings provide distinct insights into the recent and contemporary return migration of undocumented immigrants to adjacent areas of northwestern Mexico. This also includes information about the location of deportation by specific Mexican states within the same regions. Attention should also be directed toward increasing risk factors that motivate undocumented migration inward in the short term.

Since the 2016 election, U.S. immigration enforcement has undergone significant transformation, particularly following Donald Trump's election, which resulted in an assertive augmentation of local law enforcement responsibilities and heightened animosity towards immigrants. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) transitioned from detaining immigrants to increasingly depending on DHS returns and voluntary departures. Three primary factors escalated undocumented Mexican deportations during Trump's administration. Initially, Trump's anti-immigrant platform emphasized illegal immigration as a central theme of his campaign, leading to specific measures against the undocumented population, especially Hispanic immigrants, by ICE agents executing unannounced mass raids. Upon assuming office, Trump instructed the Department of Homeland Security to vigorously implement immigration policies, granting ICE agents exceptional autonomy to apprehend and expel undocumented immigrants, despite local police departments imposing restrictions on collaboration with ICE. This engendered uncertainty for numerous undocumented immigrants regarding their safe places of residence. Secondly, Trump's election significantly transformed the immigration enforcement framework, emphasizing the apprehension and deportation of all undocumented individuals, thereby instigating apprehensions regarding arbitrary enforcement encounters. The strategy manifested as a method of "shaking the tree," leading to extensive arrests and increased apprehension among immigrants regarding possible interactions with law enforcement. In sharp contrast to the prior administration's data-centric enforcement

strategies, Trump's administration witnessed heightened participation of local police in DHS collaborations, resulting in a greater number of apprehensions of immigrants lacking criminal records. (Sohn et al., 2023)

In fiscal year 2021, there was a significant rise in the number of migrant apprehensions at the border. In fiscal year 2022 these fears peaked and stayed high in fiscal year 2023. The president of Mexico stated that it was likely that as many as one million migrants could be apprehended each year (Sohn et al., 2023). Many in the media have coined these years "the Biden border crisis." Despite border closures and the epidemic, this great degree of border anxiety caused many to conjecture that a flood of illegal immigrants started under Biden's presidency. This assumption is intrinsically connected to the causal interpretation of observed variations in border apprehension.

The number of migrant apprehensions at the border increased significantly in fiscal year 2021. These anxieties peaked in fiscal year 2022 and continued to be high in fiscal year 2023. According to the Mexican president, up to one million migrants could be caught annually (Sohn et al., 2023). The term "the Biden border crisis" has been used by many media outlets in recent years. This high level of border anxiety led many to speculate that Biden's presidency was the beginning of an illegal immigration flood, despite border closures and the epidemic. The causal interpretation of observed differences in border apprehension is inherently linked to this assumption.

This chapter has looked at the fundamental historical and philosophical foundations of U.S. immigration policy, offering a combined picture of the main ideas necessary to grasp the current immigration scene. From early waves of emigration to the United States to the consolidation of immigration as a complicated legal and sociopolitical phenomenon, the research tracked changing migration patterns. Reflecting the

changing semantics and ideological stakes ingrained in immigration debate, it highlighted the definitional ambiguities surrounding terms like "immigrant," "emigrant," "undocumented," and "illegal. The chapter also looked at the dynamics of push and pull factors—economic, political, and social conditions that drive people across borders—and how historically they have shaped and still affect migration flows, especially from areas like Mexico and Central America. Examining limited immigration laws—including legislative landmarks like the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Immigration Act of 1924, and the changes brought about under the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965—was a vital part of the chapter. These laws expose a long-standing conflict between the country's practices of racial, class, and national origin exclusion and its self-image as a land of opportunity. Thematic throughline illustrating how legislative, executive, and public opinion pressures combine to shape the prospects for systemic change was the development and contestation of the Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) effort.

Establishing a historical and theoretical framework helps this chapter to set the stage for a sophisticated examination of the legal, political, and structural obstacles still preventing thorough immigration reform in the United States. The issues under discussion here prepare the ground for the more general investigation of how these legacies of exclusion and reform still affect public opinion, policy development, and policy execution. By doing this, this chapter supports the main goal of the dissertation: to evaluate the feasibility of CIR inside the larger spectrum of U.S. immigration history and policymaking.

Chapter Two

Examining the Challenges of the Comprehensive Immigration Reform on the U.S

Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) remains one of the most enduringly complex and politically contentious issues in the United States. The U.S. has historically swung between welcoming immigrants and enforcing exclusionary policies anchored in economic, security, and cultural concerns as a country shaped by successive waves of immigration. Even as demographic changes, labor market needs, humanitarian responsibilities, and national security issues highlight its urgency. Attempts at CIR have regularly failed in recent years to generate sustainable bipartisan consensus. The great stakes this issue carries for the American legal, financial, and social fabric as well as for millions of undocumented immigrants highlight its relevance.

This chapter looks at the operational, political, and structural obstacles preventing CIR from being realized. It directly relates to the main points of research of this dissertation: how different presidential administrations affect immigration enforcement, how legal status mediates economic and social integration, and how public opinion still shapes legislative gridlock? The chapter explores the interaction between ideology, enforcement practices, and reform viability by means of policy actions and administrative rhetoric analysis under both the Trump and Biden administrations.

Proceeding with a methodical, comparative study starting with a thorough assessment of border security policies, interior enforcement, and deportation statistics under both administrations. Labor market contributions, fiscal effects, and long-term demographic trends will help us investigating the economic consequences of immigration documented as well illegal. With an eye toward rights, service access, and the part rhetoric plays in forming immigrant experiences, the chapter will also look at social integration of immigrant

communities. At last, the chapter will evaluate public opinion changes about immigration and how these views affect policy decisions.

This chapter offers a sophisticated knowledge of why immigration reform remains elusive—and what consequences this has for the future of U.S. governance, identity, and justice—by mapping the modern challenges of CIR against historical and political backdrop.

2.1. Border Security

Border security has become a crucial area of national policy as the US negotiates its second century of ongoing mass migration. The post-9/11 era marked a significant shift in the country's perception of immigrants and immigration, ushering in a new and qualitatively different regime of immigration enforcement. The administration of President Donald Trump, who was elected on a platform portraying immigrants, especially Muslims and Mexicans, as dangerous criminals who pose a threat to American jobs and social structures, implemented harsh enforcement tactics. Trump's administration continued to use fear-based and discriminatory rhetoric, not only against immigrants but also to rally support for strict enforcement policies. Trump increased the scope and tactics of immigration enforcement while simultaneously dismantling many rights-oriented and due process policies through Executive Actions. In order to evaluate border security, interior enforcement, and workplace raids, this analysis starts by comparing Trump's administration's immigration enforcement actions to those of earlier and later administrations using data from U.S. Customs and Border Protection and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. It includes data on removals, detentions, and illegal crossings—items that don't always distinguish between administrations. It also emphasizes how CBP and ICE enforcement practices have changed to include entrapment, surveillance, monitoring, processing, and general treatment of immigrants, in addition to border control and workplace inspections.

President Joe Biden sought to undo many of the policies of the previous administration after Trump's term ended, taking a more compassionate stance on immigration. Restoring legal immigration routes and reducing enforcement actions that disproportionately affected immigrant communities became Biden's priorities. He advocated for comprehensive immigration reform that placed an emphasis on humanitarian commitments and worked to halt the construction of Trump's border wall. Biden did, however, face obstacles, such as ongoing pressure at the southern border and political polarization that made his administration's attempts to reform immigration policy more difficult. In addition to contrasting the two administrations' approaches to enforcement, this analysis looks at how each has handled important issues pertaining to immigration in the US during a turbulent time.

2.1.1 Border security measures under Trump

During the first term of President Trump's administration, a series of executive orders issued on January 25 significantly increased the level of national and international enforcement of immigration policies. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was tasked with increasing its workforce by recruiting 15,000 more immigration and border agents as a result of these directives. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program was terminated, undocumented immigrants were promptly deported, a registration system specifically targeted at Muslims was established, and a barrier was built along the U.S.-Mexico border, among other important measures. In addition, the orders sought to penalize sanctuary cities and demanded more funding for local law enforcement organizations charged with enforcing federal immigration laws. The Secretary of Homeland Security was instructed to implement these broad policies, which were anticipated to have an impact on millions of Americans. At this point, the United States was facing more than 250,000 deportations annually, and due to the shortage of agents, less than 10% of the 11 million or so

undocumented people were being held until resources could be increased. Furthermore, starting in 2013, the Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR) implemented a number of policies that negatively impacted the adjudication procedures in immigration courts. These changes to the legal and administrative systems included a new prosecution priority memo from the Department of Justice, hiring judges without seasoned supervisors, and plans to open 75 new EOIR sites nationwide by 2020. When taken as a whole, these changes created a quasi-judicial setting that gave immigration enforcement officers and non-legal administrators significant operational power. Although the stated goal of these programs was to clear the backlog in immigration courts, the political motivations behind them suggested that they were meant to create an environment of intimidation against those who disagreed with or opposed immigration enforcement priorities.

The administration's aggressive immigration enforcement strategy is exemplified by the statistics from President Trump's first term. The administration enacted broad measures to increase deportations and decrease unauthorized border crossings shortly after taking office in January 2017. For instance, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) arrested roughly 14,000 people in the first three weeks alone, indicating a sharp increase in enforcement activity (Hesson) (*"Factbox: Trump's Early Immigration"*). With roughly 8,300 arrests in February 2017, the lowest monthly total since records began in 2000, and a dramatic drop from the 141,000 arrests in February 2016 during the previous administration, Border Patrol apprehensions at the southern border fell precipitously. Southwest border encounters decreased by 65% year over year, from over 176,000 in January 2016 to roughly 61,465 in January 2017 (U.S. House Committee). From an average of 1,800 per day under the previous administration to just 132 per day in early 2017 (U.S. House Committee). The number of "gotaways"—those who avoid capture—also fell by more than 90%. The Executive Office of Immigration Review issued nearly 50,000 orders of removal in the first six months of Trump's

presidency, a 27.8% increase from the same period in 2016, indicating the administration's emphasis on expedited removals. Deportations also rose significantly during this time (*"Return to Rule of Law"*). The Trump administration's emphasis on stringent border control and immigration enforcement, which led to historically low border apprehensions and increased deportation activity despite limited detention capacity, is highlighted by these numbers taken together (Hesson) (U.S. House Committee; *"Return to Rule of Law"*).

2.1.2. Border security measures under Biden

As soon as he took office, Joe Biden moved to repeal many of the previous administration's policies that he accused of causing humanitarian crises, but he kept some in place. As with his predecessor, the Biden administration's strategy often seemed authoritarian, resulting in a string of executive orders that appeared to be written more for political purposes than in accordance with the law. The redistribution of resources to the southern border resulted in significant changes to immigration legalization policies and the backlog in immigration courts. While deportation policies remained mostly the same, removal practices differed by region, resulting in varying humanitarian consequences due to infrastructure investment and technological advancements. The burden of poor policy legacy from previous leaders fell on succeeding administrations, but they quickly adjusted, frequently using untested enforcement strategies. Communication breakdowns, as demonstrated by the problem of *los desaparecidos*, or people who disappear while crossing borders, frequently resulted in cross-border tragedies. Reversing immigration directives may have seemed simple, but it raised serious concerns about human equity because it created problems with the feasibility of policy options and Congress's slow response. These reversals were seen by advocacy groups as betrayals, particularly given the inadequacy and flaws of the immigration processing system that existed prior to Biden, which was marked by significant backlogs and

insufficient wage safety nets. The quick policy changes after the inauguration exposed a lack of strategic vision and backup plans, and social media public opinion changed from focusing on the challenges of detention to unfulfilled expectations about alternatives to detention, raising doubts about potential beneficiaries' eligibility. The Biden administration decided to go for a wider impact rather than utilizing effective regional processing programs.

Deportation rates remained high even after the Biden administration initially undid many Trump-era policies and took over a complicated border situation. The Biden administration deported about 1.1 million people between fiscal year 2021 and February 2024, which is on track to equal the 1.5 million removals that took place during Trump's four years in office (*"Trump's Early Immigration"*). About 271,000 immigrants were deported by ICE in fiscal year 2024 alone, more than in any other year during Trump's presidency and the highest annual total since 2014 (*"US Deportations Rose"*). ICE arrests of illegal immigrants in the United States, however, decreased by 33% from the previous year, in part because more officers were deployed to border security operations, even though deportations increased (U.S. Department of Homeland Security). Despite recent efforts to drastically lower these numbers, the Biden administration also experienced record-high border encounters during its tenure, with monthly averages approaching 160,000 and daily peaks of 15,000. These figures show how Biden's immigration policies strike a delicate balance between humanitarian concerns and law enforcement.

2.1.3. Comparative analysis of the two approaches

Pre-election statements from the Trump Administration included ominous forecasts of an unguarded border, criminal activity, and job losses. Trump appeared committed to making that nightmare a reality when he took office. When he took office, he promised to halt illegal immigration and construct a wall along the Mexican border, which would cost billions of dollars and be paid for by the Mexicans. He declared that he would terminate the Deferred

Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which grants legal status to undocumented people who came to the country as minors. He threatened to bring charges against immigration judges who gave cases they heard excessive relief. He denounced "immigrant bashing" because his own mother was an immigrant, but he promised to strengthen immigration enforcement after taking office.

Trump claimed that all Mexicans were rapists, praised the return of the "deportation machine" on the campaign trail, and used immigrants as scapegoats to raid communities and round up people. He shamelessly made illegal entry into the United States and immigration status crimes. He maintained that local police departments' requests to stop enforcing immigration laws should be disregarded by federal authorities. He instructed localities to seek aid outside of federal borders in a broadening of enforcement authority. He worked to end Obama's Deferred Action for Child Arrivals (DACA), which was pending in court, while he was president. It appeared to be effective for a while, as the number of apprehensions decreased in 2018. However, disillusionment and deaths transpired behind the scenes. In immigrant communities, the Trump Administration purposefully stoked confusion and fear. Across the country, local politicians joined forces to allay fears, churches and community centers hosted meetings, and law clinics were set up for worried citizens. Nevertheless, agencies diverted public funds to create a massive deportation machine, and cruelty and destruction continued to wreak havoc on immigrant communities. With a final order of removal, ICE sought to deport everyone under the new leadership. More sweeps and arrests occurred in 2017, leaving families devastated as fathers were deported with little opportunity to challenge their deportation in court.

Due to varying operational contexts and policy priorities, there are notable differences between the Biden administration and the Trump first presidency in terms of border security results and enforcement rigor. Border apprehensions fell precipitously to record lows during

Trump's first term. For instance, in February 2017, there were only 8,450 arrests at the southwest border, the fewest monthly total in more than 25 years, a sharp drop from 141,000 arrests in February 2016. Additionally, the number of "gotaways" decreased by more than 90%, suggesting a significant decline in successful illegal crossings. Trump's administration saw a sharp rise in deportations; in the first half of 2017, the Executive Office of Immigration Review issued almost 50,000 removal orders, a 27.8% increase from the year before. Nevertheless, during fiscal years 2019 and 2020, only roughly 37% of border crossers who were arrested were removed within 18 months, with many of them being released back into the United States population. With over 10.8 million encounters nationwide since FY2021, the Biden administration has, in contrast, experienced historically high border encounters—nearly four times as many as during FY2017–2020. In spite of this spike, Biden's DHS has removed roughly 51% more border crossers who were arrested and has increased removals overall by a factor of 3.5 when compared to Trump's last two years. Trump's peak year in 2019 was surpassed by a record 271,484 deportations in fiscal year 2024 alone. Even though Biden's administration has been able to increase enforcement in the face of an increase in crossings, it has encountered difficulties like significant backlogs and diplomatic roadblocks. All things considered, these figures demonstrate the challenging enforcement environment that each administration had to traverse: Biden's experience of handling record-breaking border encounters and deportations contrasts with Trump's early sharp drops in border apprehensions and increases in deportation orders, indicating essentially different operational realities and policy approaches (U.S. House Committee; Gramlich; Bier; *"Falling Short: Trump's Deportations"*; Caro; Galvez).

2.2. Economic Impact

Under the opposing leadership styles of President Biden and former President Trump, immigration has become a major topic of debate in U.S. politics over past years. Widespread

demonstrations against Trump's immigration policies—which frequently portrayed immigrants and refugees as threats, including criminals and economic drainers—erupted all around the country under his presidency. Concerns about the financial effects of illegal immigration, particularly in industries like agriculture, construction, and services mostly dependent on immigrant labour, drove this strong reaction mostly. Many Americans believe that big corporations and a so-called "Coastal elite" are profits from the "rest of America," so orienting immigrants as part of this discontent from non-coastal areas. For almost a century and a half, immigration has been a major domestic issue in the United States; the American identity revolves on the concept of a "immigrant nation". Historically, immigration is seen as a constant source of economic and cultural possibility that keeps redefining the limits of the country. Still, this possibility has not been always easily available. While highly skilled immigrants—especially those in the technology sectors—are acknowledged as major drivers of economic growth, low-skilled and illegal immigrants often suffer obstacles to labour, economic stability, and prospects. Under Biden especially, immigration has remained a divisive and occasionally hostile political topic. Before 1980, debates on immigration and labour concentrated on including immigrant workers and appreciating their indispensable contribution to the economy. But especially low-skilled and illegal immigration has been increasingly presented in the last four decades as a dangerous, outside, or criminal element within the debate on public safety, benefits, and economic vulnerability. (F. Chang, 113)

2.2.1. Trump Administration: Immigration Policies and Economic Implications

Proposals for immigration reform presented a major threat to the U.S. economy and citizens' financial situation during President Trump's first term. Originally aiming to drastically restrict legal immigration, the government's policies raised economic questions since prosperity developed outside of Silicon Valley. Comprising almost 15% of the U.S.

population, immigrants are essential for consumer spending, skilled labor, and new businesses fostering economic growth. Over \$500 billion was expected to be lost in the GDP, so affecting per capita GDP and consumption. Over ten years, a decrease in economic output would mean an estimated \$149 billion less state and local tax collections. A population drop would aggravate income losses and lower taxes. Essential grants for education and healthcare would become less feasible, and cuts to social services would disproportionately affect low-income people, presumably increasing homelessness, poverty, and food insecurity. These effects taken together seriously jeopardize the general economic health, fiscal stability, and quality of life for Americans.

Immigration policies under Donald Trump's first presidency (2017–2021) stressed rigorous enforcement and notable declines in both legal and illegal immigration, which had clear economic effects. Removing 1.3 million migrants could lower the U.S. labor force by 0.8% by 2028, according to research modeling deportation scenarios; this would result in a GDP drop of roughly 1.2% and employment to drop by 1.1%. With inflation rising by 0.6%, this would also affect the deportation scenario estimates. More extreme deportation scenarios involving 7 to 8.3 million illegal workers were projected to cost between \$84 billion and \$223 billion, severely impacting productivity and consumption, especially in the manufacturing and agriculture sectors. Trump-era refugee and asylum policies also cut refugee arrivals by 86% and Asylum applications by 68%, so costing the U.S. economy almost \$9.1 billion yearly and so depriving government revenues exceeding \$2 billion annually. These numbers highlight the significant financial risks connected to strict immigration policies, including labor shortages and lower economic output—clearly shown during Trump's first term. (Hicks ; Hensch ; "Immigration Policy").

2.2.2. Biden Administration: Shifts in Immigration Policy

American opinions of immigration have changed significantly under President Biden's direction. Only 32% of respondents in 2006 considered immigration as a major concern; this increased to 43% following Trump's 2016 election. Concerns about immigration seem to have dropped recently; around half of people oppose progressive policies, usually connecting their worries to expected crime rises. These opinions are shaped in great part by demographics; those making less than \$30,000 show less disapproval than those higher earners. Moreover, support of liberal policies differs clearly between Hispanic groups and whites. Aiming to modernize the immigration system to suit different needs and statuses, legislative efforts for complete immigration reform take first priority. Based on several assessment models, reform targets emphasize on labour market effects and routes to legalization. Research show the financial and demographic impacts of "comprehensive immigration reform." Views on labour migration reform during Biden's term are related to North America's economic and demographic trends since the exclusion of temporary labour migration from trade deals like NAFTA addresses growing informal employment and job instability in Mexico. Furthermore, influencing public opinion are sociopolitical and cultural elements; a clear correlation between cultural homogeneity and support of temporary labour migration exists. Reflecting more general trends in neoliberal capitalism, companies that see labour as a component of American identity sometimes oppose guest worker program reforms.

Aiming to undo limiting Trump-era policies, immigration policy under the Biden administration changed toward expansion and protection of immigrant rights. Biden enhanced protections for DACA holders and offered routes to citizenship for up to 11 million illegal immigrants. Rising from 17.3% earlier, immigrants now account for almost 19% of the U.S. workforce, greatly driving economic growth. Rising immigration beginning in 2022, the Congressional Budget Office estimated could increase GDP by \$7 trillion over the next ten years. With possible unequal effects on sectors like restaurants and construction, the

government's recent attempts to lower border crossings could momentarily slow down labour force increase. These numbers highlight how crucial immigration is to maintaining labour markets and general expansion economically. (Pierce and Selee; (Ollstein; Gonzalez and Nichols).

2.2.3. Comparative Analysis of Economic Impact

Methodologically complicated and doubtful, estimating the effects of immigration on the American economy is Every action in the causal chain generates uncertainty that results in low estimate confidence. Because there are less good natural experiments, immigration effects are more difficult to evaluate than trade effects. Positive long-run effects on many labour market outcomes, including employment, wages, and labour force participation, are suggested by evidence. Under several policy scenarios, executive orders have notable effects on Supreme Court decisions on economic matters. Though public charge rule repeal is one of the changes in immigration policy, generally they improve GDP, wages, equity, consumption, and general welfare. The most executive order impact estimates are rather remarkable. Future estimate should concentrate on organizing activities between federal and local agencies using more focused data collecting techniques to properly evaluate changes in immigration policy.

Comparing the immigration policies of Trump and Biden exposes clear differences in economic results. While Biden's policies are expected to generate net social benefits by increasing legal immigration and safeguarding immigrant workers, Trump's limited approach is linked with possible net social losses due of reduced immigration flows and labour force contraction. For instance, whereas Biden's immigration expansion could add trillions to GDP over ten years, Trump's deportation policies could cut labour supply by up to 0.8% and cost the economy tens of billions annually. These numbers show how directly decisions about immigration policy impact demographic trends, labour market dynamics, and economic

vitality all around the United States. (Neri-Lainé And Rapoport ,6) (Pierce and Selee ; Ollstein)

2.3. Social Integration of Immigrants

The top destination for foreign immigrants continues to be the United States. As they integrate into American society, these immigrants—documented or not—face many obstacles. In search of greater social mobility and a higher standard of living, countless immigrants keep coming to America. Millions of people from all over the world apply every year for the opportunity to become citizens of the United States. More than 1.5 million new immigrants arrived in 2013, and five million more green cards were announced through family sponsorships and temporary work visas (W Terry, 3). Every immigrant seeking a fresh start in America faces emotional, financial, electrical, and cultural obstacles. There is little to no hope for those without documentation if immigrants with legal status feel that social mobility obstacles still exist despite their status. If immigrants want to experience upward social mobility, they must fundamentally alter their access to social networks, education, the labor market, and health care.

Gaining education and understanding of the unwritten laws of American society is one of the most essential steps toward achieving upward social mobility. In America, people who have access to public education do significantly better than those who do not. Immigrants need time to adjust to the different socialization of American education compared to their home country. Since not all teachers and students speak the same language, language in schools is "Americanized." Since children spend the majority of their time in school and because formative experiences influence future expectations for citizenship, it is essential to continue interacting with schools in order to gain an understanding of American citizenship. Despite these distinctions, schools expose kids to American culture and serve as a self-

contained microcosm of the country's broader society. Direct social mobility is possible if the existing political laws and social infrastructure are sufficiently understood.

Immigrants' networks grow and their chances for social mobility rise as they adjust to American politics. The path of chain migration for immigrants and the ongoing flood of new arrivals that causes isolation for the elderly are important components of social mobility. Due to their lack of basic political knowledge, new immigrants are having trouble adjusting to citizenship and taking the oath of allegiance. This poses a challenge since they will encounter systemic obstacles while looking for work in the labor market. These immigrants will lose their wealth as well as their social and emotional connections in the new world they have entered if they are unable to acquire Americanized knowledge of the political system and society.

2.3.1. Social Integration Challenges during Trump Administration

Immigrants' social integration in the United States is complicated and calls for supportive environments and updated laws. Social issues that immigrants deal with include worries about discrimination, housing, employment security, healthcare, and immigration. Although less severe under Biden, these problems still exist and grew during the Trump administration. Political unrest slowed down the development of integration policies, and the majority of the programs that were already in place failed. A contemporary "moral panic," particularly with regard to Latino immigration, was triggered by demographic concerns about cultural deterioration. Rising xenophobia and calls for deportations posed a challenge to proposed urban renewal and equity measures. Significant human rights concerns were also raised by the abuse of migrant families at the border, and hate-fueled violence against Latino families increased in places like Texas and California. Undocumented communities were terrified by crackdowns on unassimilated families. The immigration situation was complicated by cultural separatist movements that opposed Latino political groups. Once-

fundamental laws have evolved into instruments of social control. All Latino immigrants were more concerned about legal risks as a result of controversial immigration remarks. Policies that discriminated against asylum seekers became increasingly common. At the moment, there is no unified funding for cooperation between states, cities, and universities to tackle these pressing problems. The gradual improvement of immigrant rights through five strategic actions—addressing funding biases, rephrasing discourse, reforming policing tactics, legalizing marginalized populations, and mitigating immigration-related risks—is recommended because, even in the best-case scenario, changes in immigrant rights could have a negative impact on Latinos. Depending on changing circumstances, support mobilization in these areas may be extensive and expensive.

Social anxiety and insecurity among immigrant communities were exacerbated by the Trump administration's (2017–2021) stricter immigration enforcement policies, which drastically decreased legal immigration inflows and increased deportations (Hesson “Trump's early immigration enforcement record, by the numbers”). A decrease in new legal immigrants and increased anxiety among undocumented populations resulted from the administration's suspension of the visa lottery program, restrictions on work-based visas, and revisions to the family reunification requirements. Social integration issues were made worse by these policy changes, which came as anti-immigrant rhetoric and hate crimes increased, especially targeting Latino communities in states like Texas and California. During this time, the number of refugees resettled in the United States also fell to all-time lows, which is another indication of the country's restrictive immigration policies. These figures demonstrate how the policies of the Trump administration exacerbated the hostile environment and impeded the social integration of immigrants. (Batalova et al.)

2.3.2. Social Integration challenges during Biden Administration

Rules issued by President Biden: The Biden Administration took important steps and introduced legislation pertaining to immigration and immigrant social rights within 100 days of taking office in January 2021. The goal of the proposed U.S. Citizenship Act of 2021 is to provide nine million undocumented immigrants who were living in the country prior to 2021 with a more equitable future. President Biden established a special immigration procedure for foreign nationals who served on the front lines of the pandemic in February 2021.

The program's specifics, including how immigrants can apply and what paperwork will be needed, have not yet been decided upon and made public (Park and Shimada, 12). Likewise, the President's proposals did not specifically address upcoming modifications to the H-1B visa program. Many foreign students and skilled workers have already left the United States as a result of restrictions on the number of work visas available to immigrants. Therefore, some of the participants were worried about additional proposed changes to the immigration policy that would be detrimental to immigrants before President Biden's plans were made public. However, a large number of participants did not view upcoming limitations on work visas as a significant worry. Participants' opinions of the current administration improved as a result of recently implemented immigration laws that uphold the social rights of immigrants. The immigration policies of the Biden Administration represent the first distinct chance for many of these participants to follow their aspirations in the United States. A fair, orderly, and humane immigration system has been established since President Biden took office in January 2021 in accordance with the objectives and challenges outlined in the plan. The ability of the recently suggested policies to be passed by Congress through ordinary legislation is thought to be a safeguard against future governments implementing or repealing immigration laws arbitrarily.

Opportunities for social integration: Most of the negative effects of Trump's immigration policies on foreign students and other immigrants have been substantially

mitigated since President Biden took office, and in certain regions, respondents' opinions of the US and their confidence in safe social integration opportunities have improved. However, the psychological burden resulting from the dichotomy between the United States' immigration policies and positive education and increasingly devastating social realities has not been readily resolved due to the rise in anti-Asian and anti-immigrant hate crimes (Wilson and P. Stimpson, "US Policies Increase Vulnerability of Immigrant Communities").

2.3.3. Comparative Analysis of Integration Strategies

Both Joe Biden (January 2021–January 2024) and Donald Trump (January 2017–January 2021) carried out important immigration policy reforms during their main terms. Trump made the three-part claim that Mexican immigrants brought drugs, crime, and rapists when he was running for president in 2015. This nearly mandated a defensive approach to immigration-related policymaking for the next four years. The number of legal and unimpeded immigration inflows was decreased by measures like stopping the visa lottery program, banning work-based visas, and even defining "family" differently for immigration based on family reunions (Moynihan et al. 32). However, adherence to propaganda also meant that inertia was necessary for the legitimacy of immigration policies. As a result, a number of principles persisted after Trump, such as extensive border fencing, internal audits for employment verification, and ethical oversight of decisions pertaining to asylum. During the 2020 election campaign, Biden had said that immigrants were essential to the recovery from COVID-19 as well as to long-term health and economic advancements. This selfless approach to immigration policymaking creates a wide range of opportunities for fresh pro-immigrant projects. Innovative formal and informal agenda-setting suggested during the presidential campaign were some of the first attempts to enact change in the new context, even though previous broad policy changes were rarely delivered. Throughout his first term in office, Biden issued several executive orders and instructed DHS to increase public outreach

to immigrant communities about vaccination program access. The US Census Bureau was directed to increase communication with underrepresented and difficult-to-reach populations. Even previously established methods of establishing agendas outside of Executive Orders, like holding forums to discuss legislative proposals, were promptly reinstated. The initiative on immigration policies was expanding as Biden persisted in using crises as a means of rallying pro-immigrant forces.

2.4. U.S Public Opinion

Though it hasn't been a top voter issue in recent elections, immigration reform is still a divisive topic. Although it attracted lot of attention in 2008 and 2012, its importance has dropped. Public opinion on immigration is not clear-cut and usually misinformed since variation results in several interpretations. Key elements affecting immigration opinions are political affiliations, uncertainty about immigration status, and the supposed efficiency of monitoring. As nations work on their immigration policies, approval rates for immigration reform are especially under close inspection. National identity and the credibility of government depend on agreement on these problems. Notwithstanding efforts to define immigration policy, public opinion is still unclear and difficult to measure, which might cause overgeneralizations and a strong political dichotomy about immigration positions. Analyzing public opinion changes across different countries shows that, influenced by changing attitudes over time, immigration policies are a major issue in political arguments. Examining trends from national polls conducted in the United States reveals notable shifts in support for illegal immigration reform and points to fundamental factors influencing pro-reform attitudes, so underscoring the dynamic character of public opinion on this important question. (Iannelli et al)

2.4.1. US public opinion on Trump administration

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program got quite controversial in 2017 as Trump took office. At first, in 2013, almost 800,000 illegal immigrants under 16 qualified for DACA. Trump did, however, declare intentions to revoke DACA as well as DAPA and other deportation stopping policies. While no immediate action was taken, on September 1, 2017 a phase-off notice was issued. Opponents said the original law would aggravate illegal immigration and declared the legislation immoral and illegal. Even with the approaching phase-out, another 3,900 people obtained DACA protections. With little conversation inside the Executive Office prior, the President and the Attorney General made the decision to phase out DACA. The phase-down plan reflected past political strategies meant to complicate acceptance of young immigrants. Public opinion was divided; a September 6–7 poll revealed just 38 percent of respondents supported stopping DACA, while a later Fox News poll found 55 percent of respondents approved of its cancellation. At the same time, a USA News poll showed that immigration was not a top issue; only 24 percent of respondents ranked it above terrorism at 64 percent. Among prospective voters, 76 percent felt a Democratic president could better advance immigration goals, while 50 percent had some faith in Trump's ability and only 19 percent thought he could properly handle DACA. (N Brusko, 4-5)

Public opinion on immigration policies was sharply split under Trump's first presidency. After Trump revealed intentions to phase out DACA in 2017, for instance, polls revealed conflicting responses: a September 2017 poll found only 38% supported ending DACA protections, while a later Fox News poll indicated 55% approval of its cancellation. Still, most Americans at the time did not give immigration top priority; just 24% ranked it above terrorism (64%). Of the potential voters, 76% felt a Democratic president would be better able to handle immigration, while just 19% felt Trump could manage DACA appropriately. These numbers reflect public mistrust of Trump's approach to immigrant

protections, so highlighting the divisive and polarized character of immigration issues under his presidency. (Gitis and Cox)

2.4.2. US public opinion on Biden administration

Key in the immigration discussion across the Obama, Trump, and Biden administrations is comprehensive immigration reform (CIR). The inability of the Trump government to implement such policies begged questions regarding the direction of CIR. Like with Supreme Court nominations, the Biden administration—which promised CIR action—saw a declining approval rating for immigration issues. This study follows public opinion shifts about immigrant protections and enforcement between administrations. First defining public opinion by high- and low-profile actions, it then examines how approval and opposition ratings changed, especially in the last months of Trump and the early months of Biden. This study clarifies why enforcement messaging resonated in Trump's era and provides insights for favorable public reception of CIR, so revealing the complexity of public opinion. Immigration public opinion is still a difficult and debatable subject with major influence on policy-making and agenda setting. The paper looks at public approval of Biden's immigration agenda and stresses two ways to grasp public opinion on immigration. The first method evaluates opinions depending on themes, positions, or presenters; the second analyzes how different immigration reform proposals affect public attitude by means of language and timing. Examining 21 measures overall on protections and enforcement actions along with their approval or opposition has produced 259 total items referenced. (Loweree and Reichlin-Melnick 21)

Comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) has been difficultly reconciled under the Obama, Trump, and Biden administrations. Future of CIR was unknown since the Trump government neglected to support it. Reversing Trump-era lows, Biden promised to raise refugee admissions to 125,000 for FY 2022.

These efforts failed to increase public acceptance of Biden's immigration policies. Early polls of early 2024 showed 48% of respondents disapproving of his immigration policy and 42% supporting it at rates of 55–56%, independents and Republicans opposed border . Republicans opposed it at 92%. Of Democrats, 20–29% were unhappy. Notably Republicans (67%), and independents 47% of respondents in 2023 disagreed lifting the refugee ceiling from 15,000 to 62,500. With just 25% support for his government, Biden's border surge and unaccompanied children were greeted negatively.

These results reveal that immigration public opinion still shapes Trump-era enforcement messaging, which makes CIR under Biden challenging. This study using 21 variables and 259 referenced items found subtle changes in approval and opposition between administrations. (United States, Department of State ; Democratic Support)

2.4.3. Comparative analysis on U.S Public Response and Opinion

The U.S. public's opinions on immigration reform under Trump and Biden were analyzed using two measures: "Public Response" and "Public Opinion.". These steps were independently modeled for comparative use. An initial analysis looked at whether they reflected different underlying patterns, which produced an indirect measure for perceived abstraction. Regressed on fixed effects, this measure was controlled for the administration and particular measures. Given the former is one-time responses to particular events and the latter reflects general attitudes toward immigration reform, it was expected that Public Response ratings would be lower than Public Opinion ratings. One could observe a clear trend verifying the validity of these policies. Public reactions to Trump's immigration reform initiatives were then examined, noting 22 events spanning September 2017 through January 2019. Examining the number and positivity of news items inside a 30-day window around each event—both generally and individually—was part of the study. Results revealed that responses to the

public charge rule and "zero tolerance" policy were generally negative, indicating variation in opinions throughout events. (Puiu)

Emphasizing the areas of border security, economic impact, social integration, and public opinion, Chapter Two reviewed the several obstacles preventing the realization of Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) in the United States. Reflecting more general structural constraints that remain regardless of leadership changes, the study emphasizes how the ideological, strategic, and political differences between the Trump and Biden administrations have greatly shaped the implementation and framing of immigration policy. Often based on exclusionary and stigmatizing rhetoric, the Trump administration adopted a punitive, enforcement-heavy model of border security that stressed deterrence through deportations, physical barriers, and enlarged surveillance. Though rhetorically more humanitarian, the Biden administration's approach has been hampered by infrastructure legacy, record-high migrant contacts, and internal conflicts between enforcement and compassion. High deportation rates under Biden expose the structural inertia of immigration enforcement systems and draw attention to how firmly ingrained institutional and political barriers can limit reformist agendas.

Particularly in industries dependent on immigrant labor, Trump's tight immigration policy—especially attempts to lower legal immigration and increase deportations—had clearly negative effects on labor supply, tax revenues, and economic productivity on the financial front. Biden's policy orientation, which favors more legal paths and protections for illegal immigrants, is expected to greatly help to stabilize the labor market and boost GDP growth. Nevertheless, bureaucratic gridlock and legislative inaction have diminished these possible benefits by highlighting the flimsiness of executive-led economic immigration policies in the lack of solid congressional support.

In terms of social integration, Trump-era policies heightened social fragmentation and anxiety among immigrant populations, so aggravating xenophobia and erasing public institution trust. Although Biden's government instituted significant corrective actions including the U.S. Citizenship Act and pandemic-related protections, it has struggled to restore the social fabric frayed by years of strict enforcement. Racialized violence and inadequate structural support for integration among other ongoing issues point to the fact that meaningful inclusion calls for continuous institutional commitment rather than only policy reversal.

At last, public opinion has stayed a volatile and erratic force, sometimes polarized along political lines. While Trump used nativist ideas to defend harsh policies, Biden's more inclusive approach has not generated general public support for CIR. Rather, public ambivalence and media-driven narratives still shape political viability for reform. Both administrations highlight the challenge of creating immigration laws that can withstand populist opposition while attending to complicated demographic and humanitarian reality. Together, the different approaches of the Trump and Biden administrations highlight not only conflicting ideas for immigration but also the ongoing institutional, political, and cultural restrictions impeding thorough reform. The oscillation between punitive and humanitarian policies emphasizes the need of a systematic reimagining of immigration policy—one that goes beyond transient executive actions and addresses the fundamental legal, social, and economic structures influencing migration in the United States of the twenty-century.

Chapter Three

Implications of the Immigration Policy Change: Trump and Biden in Perspectives

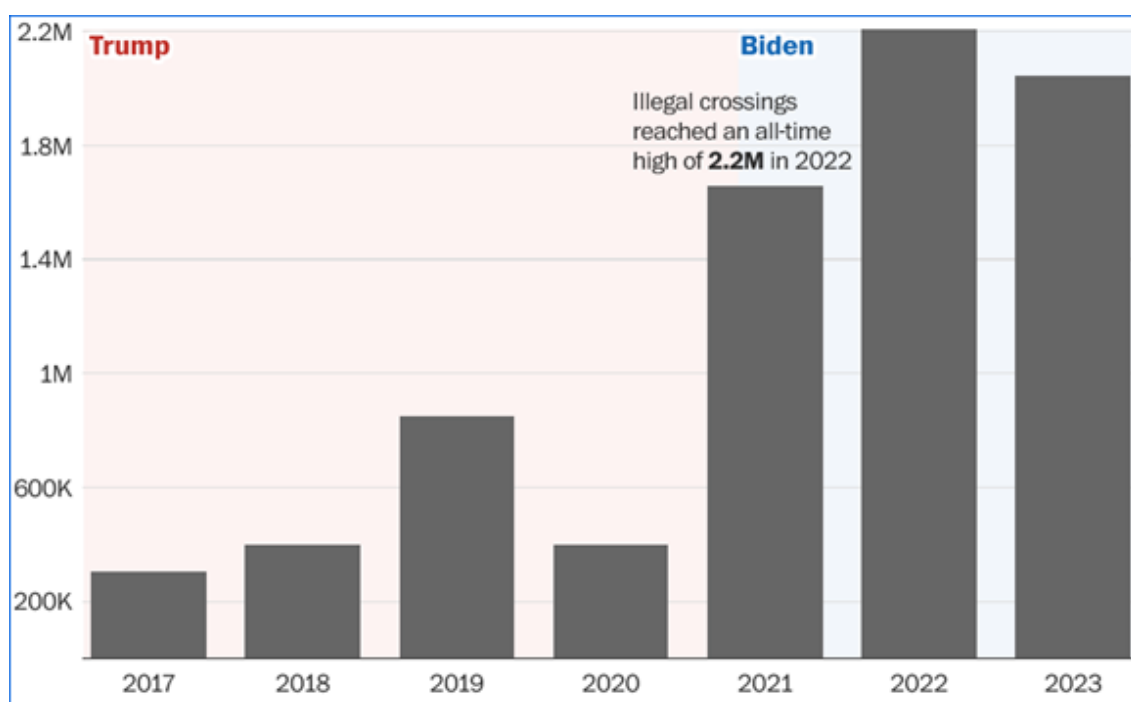
The argument about immigration in the United States reflects the changing character of the country, its socioeconomic priorities, and its constitutional guarantees of justice and equality, so transcending mere policy. Though everyone agrees the U.S. immigration system has to be modernized, efforts at Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) have repeatedly failed. Deeply ingrained institutional, political, and ideological divisions that complicate consensus on a road forward account for this ongoing legislative gridlock rather than any accidental outcome.

Focusing especially on the different strategies followed by the Trump and Biden administrations, this chapter critically examines the main obstacles preventing CIR in the United States. It directly tackles the main research question of this study: What structural, political, and social forces have prevented the realization of comprehensive immigration reform in the U.S., and how have recent administrations helped to either directly or indirectly remove these obstacles? By means of a comparative policy analysis, the chapter investigates the ways in which public messaging, administrative priorities, and enforcement policies have moulded the modern reform scene.

Starting with a review of border security policies, the study emphasizes the operational changes and ideological foundations unique to every government approach. It then shifts to the economic ramifications of immigration policy, considering how treatment of both documented and illegal populations influences labor markets and budgetary planning. The chapter also looks at social integration, asylum, and family separation, so exposing the personal results of political decisions. At last, it considers how public opinion might either

support or hinder reform, paying particular attention to media impact and party differences. Taken together, this chapter offers a multidimensional perspective of the ongoing difficulties to CIR and emphasizes the need of matching immigration law with modern demographic and ethical reality. It also talks about Future policy proposals assesses the potential effectiveness, feasibility, and equity implications of initiatives such as regional processing centers, expedited asylum procedures,

Figure 2. *Illegal Crossings at the U.S.-Mexico Border (2017-2023).*



Source: "The Washington Post. Trump and Biden's Immigration Policies Compared: How Border Crossings Have Changed." *The Washington Post*, 11 Feb. 2024, www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2024/02/11/trump-biden-immigration-border-compared/.

The graph, which shows the number of illegal crossings at the U.S.-Mexico border between 2017 and 2023, illustrates the complex interactions between external shocks, policy interventions, and structural migration drivers under the Trump and Biden administrations. According to the data, crossings increased from about 600,000 in 2017 to 1.4 million in 2019, marking the beginning of an upward trajectory during the Trump administration (2017–2020). Trump's enforcement-focused policies have largely ignored structural violence, unstable economies, and environmental crises, which have led to increased migration pressures in Central America at the same time as this increase. The administration's focus on deterrence, which included the building of border walls and the "Remain in Mexico" program (MPP), did not substantially decrease these flows. This demonstrates how ineffective unilateral border security measures are at addressing the main causes of migration. But rather than being a result of the policy's efficacy, the sharp decline to 200,000 crossings in 2020 is a noticeable anomaly that can be linked to the COVID-19 pandemic and the application of Title 42. This public health order concealed the humanitarian consequences and manipulated recorded numbers to enable rapid expulsions without asylum processing.

The Biden administration transition (2021–2023) saw a dramatic rise in border crossings, which reached record highs of 1.8 million in 2021 and 2.2 million in 2022. This surge can be attributed to a number of factors, including the relaxation of pandemic-era restrictions, pent-up demand for migration, and perceptions of policy leniency following Biden's termination of MPP and expansion of asylum pathways. But blaming the spike solely on Biden's humanitarian reforms is oversimplified. Furthermore, the post-2020 era saw unprecedented global displacement crises, including political turmoil in Venezuela and Nicaragua, economic collapse exacerbated by pandemics, and climate-related disasters—structural push factors beyond the control of U.S. policymakers. While there was a slight decrease in crossings in 2023, the numbers were still higher than before the pandemic, likely

due to the administration's efforts to expand legal migration channels and regional partnerships. This suggests that, in spite of being more humanitarian, Biden's policies have struggled to balance humanitarian needs with the efficiency of enforcement when faced with systemic migration pressures.

A critical analysis of these trends challenges binary comparisons between Trump's deterrence model and Biden's humanitarian approach. Trump's 2020 numbers, which at first glance seemed to demonstrate success in border control, were severely skewed by Title 42 expulsions, which evaded official immigration processing and concealed the true extent of migration. However, direct comparisons are difficult because Biden's higher apprehension rates are partly due to a methodological shift away from expulsion and toward processing migrants through legal frameworks. Both administrations struggled with cyclical migration patterns influenced by external factors, demonstrating the incapacity of domestic policies to unilaterally control border flows. For instance, Trump's focus on punitive measures and physical barriers neglected to address the root causes of migration, while Biden's reforms—while more human rights-conscious—have been politically weaponized amid record-high crossings, highlighting the tension between public perception and moral governance.

A more general academic requirement is shown in Figure 2: the debate over border security must transcend partisan simplifications and recognize the complexity of migration. Because of the pandemic's temporal impact, differences in enforcement metrics, and the role of transnational crises, a thorough contextualization is required. The chart indicates that effective border management requires a combination of humane enforcement strategies and sustained investments in tackling underlying issues such as economic inequality, climate vulnerability, and corruption. The fact that neither administration was able to fully reconcile this balance shows how the objectives of policy and the realities of migration continue to diverge. This study emphasizes the necessity of interdisciplinary frameworks that combine

immigration policy with global political economy since border security is as dependent on international cooperation as it is on domestic strategy.

3.1. Trump on Immigration

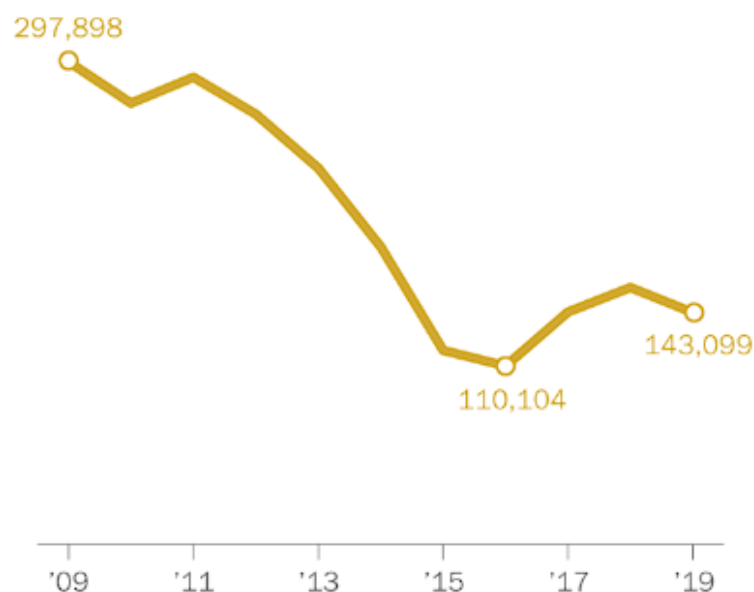
During the 2016 presidential election, President Trump's campaign included promises of an administration that "will stop illegal immigration, deport all criminal aliens, and save American lives," and "will reform legal immigration to serve the best interests of America and its workers, the forgotten people..." Trump has issued a number of Executive Orders and memos as President that drastically alter federal policies on immigration enforcement priorities, immigration benefits, and alien admissibility for asylum and refugee status. Trump's first speech to a joint session of Congress, "The time for the talk is over," clearly reflects the unambiguous goal of this broad policy modification—very much in line with his original campaign promises. Right now is the time for the action. To lower the count of illegal immigrants, the Trump government insists on forceful implementation of policies (Kalhan 46).

The promises of the campaign have caused significant changes in immigration laws, some of which have already come true. Still, the continuous flux of these problems complicates accurate analysis and makes future scenario prediction impossible. More broadly, analysts might provide lawyers comprehensive disclaimers and detailed background but still fall short of clear expectations about upcoming changes. The real ability of the immigration system to produce logical results for properly filed applications has suffered greatly; cases of functionality almost completely disappeared. Furthermore, the unanticipated costs related to getting a visa or residency status have gotten excessively high, so increasing a real risk of enforcement actions. Managing the immigration system seems more difficult without the help of a qualified attorney. Moreover, the global immigration legal community has faced

significant opposition to once-regular visa applications, which has shown up as both overt intimidation directed at those seeking visas and official legislative changes. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has also greatly stepped up its probes of workplace compliance. (Scott et al. 165)

With public attitude sharply divided along political lines, the immigration debate has become much more intense after Trump's election. Trump's determination to build a border wall and his demand that Mexico pay for it have set off a political deadlock that results in the protracted government shutdown the longest in American memory. Under a climate of acrimonious public debate in which enemies are vilified with accusations of terrorism and fascism, the possibility of reaching a bipartisan agreement during this impasse—such as offering protections for Dreamers in exchange for enhanced border security measures—becomes ever elusive. More generally, the Trump era immigration debate paints a scene marked by conflict and anxiety. Prominent Democratic figures, including Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, have advocated for the dissolution of ICE, pointing to the escalation of its aggressive practices since Trump's assumption of office, including the detainment and deportation of individuals previously afforded enforcement discretion. (Hassen 6)

Figure 3: ICE Administrative Arrests in the U.S., 2009–2019: A Shift in Enforcement Under the Trump Administration.



Notes: Includes only administrative arrests by ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations. Figures do not include Customs and Border Protection apprehensions.
Source: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

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Source: Gonzalez-Barrera, Ana, and Luis Noe-Bustamante. “How Border Apprehensions, ICE Arrests and Deportations Have Changed under Trump.” *Pew Research Center*, 2 Mar. 2020, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2020/03/02/how-border-apprehensions-ice-arrests-and-deportations-have-changed-under-trump/>.

With special emphasis on the Trump administration, the graph displays the trend of administrative arrests made by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Enforcement and Removal Operations from 2009 to 2019. Although arrests show a downward trend in the early years, reaching a low of about 110,104 in 2016, this pattern significantly reverses with the inauguration of President Donald J. Trump in January 2017.

Immigration enforcement underwent a significant policy change during the Trump administration. Trump's executive orders, like Executive Order 13768, Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States, mandated a wider scope than the previous Obama-era policies, which prioritized the removal of people with serious criminal convictions. This order gave ICE the authority to increase the number and scope of arrests by broadening enforcement priorities to include almost any undocumented immigrant, regardless of criminal history.

The graph shows that after Trump took office, the number of administrative arrests increased significantly, reaching 143,099 by 2019. Compared to 2016 levels, this increase is a 30% increase. Increased funding, staffing, and political will to carry out high-profile immigration crackdowns are all factors contributing to the increase in arrests, in addition to modifications in enforcement guidelines. A more aggressive and extensive enforcement apparatus resulted from Trump's constant emphasis on "law and order" and the restoration of immigration control in both his rhetoric and policy.

Despite the increase, it is noteworthy that the number of arrests during the Trump administration did not reach the nearly 298,000 high of 2009. This implies that even though enforcement was stepped up, the administration might not have been able to reach pre-Obama enforcement levels due to legal and logistical constraints, such as sanctuary jurisdiction opposition and the difficulties of due process.

Overall, the Trump administration saw a purposeful and ideologically motivated increase in ICE administrative arrests, moving away from a more targeted enforcement strategy and toward a more comprehensive strategy that maximized removals from the nation's interior.

3.1.1. DACA, Dreamers, and Other Migrants after Obama

In America, there are 11 million “unauthorized” people, many of whom live in the shadows due to fear of deportation. Dreamers, those granted deferments from removal under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, were often seen safely outside the removal path prior to the 2016 presidential campaign. Dreamers participated actively in their communities, expressed political preferences, protested politicians for “xenophobically” trying to deport them, worked for government, and even waited for lawful permanent resident status. After the campaign, though, the suggested narrative has changed: Dreamers covered in the same public fear KPI as all migrants classified as “unauthorized” in 2017. Apart from making Dreamers hypothetically defensible or “targeted” for elimination, the imposition of fear drove Dreamers inside the removal pipeline. Note that the removal pipeline is the bureaucratic process that renders noncitizens deportable and the enlargement of the whole process and area of removability.

The removability condition is implemented—that is, self-executed—at several degrees of abstraction. Dealing directly with the noncitizens themselves, immigration judges or removal procedures at least abstractly condemn noncitizens to removal based on statutory criteria. More abstractly, agents or officials capture noncitizens on behalf of the executive branch depending on criteria of dangerousness, student status, or “administrative,” or “immigration,” violations. Approaching the most abstract level, legislators or policy-makers create statutes, barriers, and architecture that build classes of removability, their characteristics, and the agent rightly charged with enforcement (Scott et al. 174).

Advocates of and participants in DACA knew that by “shifting” away from prosecutorial discretion, DACA was more easily transportable and revocable “as shunted through high politics,” but were less aware of the far-reaching effects of a move totally into affirmative status, away from identity determination within the removal pipeline (Lee and M. Ashar 1890). Basically, DACA self-atomized individuals into 800,000 individual applications

and made the vulnerability of those people dependent on the political discretion of the agency concerning DACA policies and personnel.

3.1.1.1. Deportation

To address illegal immigration, Congress created ICE and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2003. Arresting "criminal aliens," which equated to immigrants with criminal convictions, was the stated goal. "Removals," or sending someone through official removal procedures before a judge, were ICE's primary method of deportation. The objective was to raise the deportation (i.e., removals) count relative to "DHS returns," a deportation mechanism established in 2002 devoid of court review. Obama underlined deportation safety nets during his presidency, while Senate Democrats pushed for a comprehensive program to give applicants legal status, so motivating many to apply. This excluded those with criminal records, though, which resulted in an unfairly high number of Latino deportees. Affected were Central American immigrants, especially from El Salvador and Honduras (Sohn et al., 2023).

For illegal immigrants who worried about being removed, the Trump presidency was terrible. Trump kept anti-immigrant rhetoric and was voted on an anti-immigrant platform. Among the campaign pledges were mass deportation of 11 million illegal immigrants, a wall across the Southern border, and a cancellation of DACA. Trump's anti-immigrant agenda was carried out through hundreds of executive actions involving several executive agencies, so generating an uncertain and fearful anti-immigrant environment (Ong Hing 317). For almost the whole four-year presidency, a highly visible and attention-grabbing stream of action reports highlighted multiple high-profile ICE and CBP arrests all around the nation. Emphasized as a campaign issue in many legal states, especially in the Latino community,

immigration enforcement was underlined during the Trump presidency and resulted in anti-immigrant attitudes.

Fears of detention and deportation resulted from Trump giving all illegal immigrants top priority as deportation targets. Aggressive enforcement-style measures started right away upon assuming office. Trump signed a set of executive orders reversing Obama-era policies ten days ago. The insistence on removal orders as the basis for deportation clogged immigration courts and helped many immigrants to be kept in detention under appalling conditions before deportation. Enforcement reach seemed random and forceful, with harsh court deportations on the border and arrests at courthouses and universities. Along with a host of other policies aimed not only on border security but also on interior enforcement, entrance into the United States became shockingly difficult. States also varied greatly in their degree of cooperation with DHS/ ICE enforcement initiatives.

3.1.1.2. Children and American Families

During Trump's first presidency, the administration's policies and stance on immigration created a palpable sense of anxiety among various immigrant communities, particularly those from Central America who had fled to the United States due to natural disasters and violence. Deeper knowledge of the difficulties people faced surfaced as people started to relate their personal narratives. This conversation exposed moving stories illustrating the actual events of people impacted. Many voiced worries about possible deportation as they went about their daily business, including driving to work or dropping their kids off to see doctors. This anxiety highlighted the increased risk present in the immigration scene of today. Although most people saw the threat of unstable legal status as an abstract issue, conversations with local leaders revealed hitherto unnoticed injustices. The great anxiety these leaders revealed about possible tragedies during regular events caused a

reassessment of priorities in the current political environment, turning nebulous concerns about family separation into real worries that affected every day life. (Kiehne and Hafen 7)

Particularly the younger generation, American families were greatly affected by the changing immigration laws during this time. Many children's psychological and emotional well-being suffered greatly when their anxiety of being apart from their guardians became a pressing issue. Media and educational debates brought attention to conversations on family separations, immigration restrictions, and traumatic childhood events. The administration's emphasis on enforcement policies compounded these problems even more, resulting in the continuous suffering of caregivers' detentions, more deportation actions, forced relocation, severed relationships with non-resident parents, and the current lack of main caregivers. (Zhang 8) Many children pushed themselves to face many difficulties related with such events as they tried to negotiate their places inside new communities. This shared feeling of family uncertainty highlighted the emotional toll of living under such extreme conditions and the fragility of their situation.

3.1.1.3. Asylum Seekers at the Border

Particularly for political asylum seekers, President Trump's administration has made the U.S. immigration system practically impossible to negotiate without an experienced attorney. Policies of the Trump government have mostly affected Asylum seekers kept at the border. Recent controversial policies this government adopted include "zero tolerance," "public charge" rule expansions, and "Remain in Mexico." These laws have denied immigrants seeking redress of their immigration denials access to the immigration courts. Officially adopted in 2018, the "zero tolerance" policy calls for everyone entering the United States without inspection to be criminally prosecuted, so discouraging asylum-seeking entrance itself. The Trump government also sought to implement these rules on Border Patrol

agents assigned to San Diego's eastern ports of entrance and started blatantly turning away thousands of asylum seekers. (Karpman 1552)

Unmatched in U.S. history, the policies passed by the Trump administration essentially blocked access to asylum for many migrants escaping violence and persecution. Concentrated along the 1,540-mile land border between the United States and Mexico, the main obstacles Asylum seekers encounter in claiming their rights are Particularly the "remain in Mexico," or "Migrant Protection Protocols," are a thorough and proactive endeavor meant to discourage Central Americans from using their statutory and international legal rights to apply for asylum at American ports of entry. Therefore, the Trump administration's established domestic rules clearly aim to prevent asylum seekers from making their claims at these important points of access. Comparatively to the quick eradication of the Fourth Circuit's Court of Appeals and BIA precedents following the Professional Responsibility Advisory Office intervened to insulate the Trump administration's immigration judges amid a politically charged environment marked by the removal of Gen. Mattis, this situation may mark one of the most significant and quick dismantling of a previously efficient immigration court system in U.S. history. (Ashbee and Hurst 14)

Table 1. Asylum Seekers and Humanitarian Parolees Allowed into the United States, 2021-24

Pathway	Number of Migrants
TOTAL	5,844,700
U.S.-Mexico Border (including CBP one entrants)	4,695,300
Cuban, Haitian, Nicaraguan, and Venezuelan (CHNV) parole	531,600
U.S.-Canada Border	327,900
Uniting for Ukraine	241,800
Operation Allies Welcome	75,000

Source : Muzaffar Chishti et al., 'Biden's Immigration Legacy,' Migration Policy Institute, 10 Dec. 2024.

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/biden-immigration-legacy>.

This table above provides quantitative insight into the distribution of migrants entering the United States through various humanitarian and asylum-related pathways over a three-year period. The data encompasses a total of 5,844,700 individuals and disaggregates this figure across five specific migration routes.

Including those processed through the CBP One mobile application, the vast majority of all migrants—roughly 80.3%—entered the country through the U.S.-Mexico border. This significant percentage highlights how important the southern border is as the main route for parolees and asylum seekers. Geographical proximity, well-established migration networks, and changing U.S. border policies that have either facilitated or restricted access over time are likely contributing factors to the pathway's magnitude.

531,600 entrants, or about 9.1% of the total, are through the second most important pathway, the Cuban, Haitian, Nicaraguan, and Venezuelan (CHNV) parole process. By

offering a legitimate alternative to illegal border crossings for humanitarian entry, this program has responded specifically to the regional instability and migration pressures from these four nations.

With 327,900 migrants (5.6% of the total), the U.S.-Canada border is a less used entry point, underscoring its relatively small role in admissions for asylum and parole. It does, however, represent a consistent, albeit smaller, avenue for humanitarian migration, which may include asylum seekers evading the Safe Third Country Agreement in certain circumstances. Programmatic responses to acute geopolitical crises—in Afghanistan and Ukraine, respectively—can be seen in the *Operation Allies Welcome* program, which allowed entry for 75,000 people (1.3%), and the *Uniting for Ukraine* initiative, which accounted for 214,800 admissions (3.7%). These routes demonstrate how the U.S. government can modify its humanitarian intake procedures in reaction to newly emerging global conflicts.

Overall, the information shows how the southern land border is the primary location for receiving humanitarian parolees and asylum seekers, and it also shows how structured parole programs have emerged as a result of a strategic and policy-driven approach to migration management. Both the geographic dynamics of migration and the impact of U.S. foreign policy priorities on humanitarian admissions are revealed by the differentiated scale of each pathway.

3.2. Biden on Immigration

The Biden administration has presented a complex immigration strategy that, while seemingly comforting, often lacks clarity in its implications. This project marks a notable break from the antagonistic attitude of the previous government. Aligning with social justice, a fundamental component of this program seems to be a desire to create a more compassionate and fair immigration system. Since the end of the Reconstruction period, this

change has been much promoted. Still unknown, though, is how much the new immigration policy actually solves the legitimate issues expressed by its supporters. (Biden .R, 15 16)

The Biden government does not seem to have plans to radically change the current immigration laws. Instead, its proposed immigration program seems to be concentrated on enhancing the long-standing national origins quota system influencing U.S. immigration policy since the 1920s. Instead of adhering to modern immigration policy recommendations that support effective governance, this proposal may hinder major immigration reform in the foreseeable future. This could thus heighten the discontent of underprivileged groups and help to deflected social tensions from the political sphere. Since 1986, the U.S. immigration environment has clearly shifted to the right in three main respects: the rejection of the Good Rule principle defining U.S. immigration policy from 1891 until 1986; the erosion of fundamental and compassionate elements from the 1965 immigration reforms; and the establishment of a broad and punitive immigration enforcement framework. According to the Biden government's immigration agenda, it is meant toward a "immigration system that is humane, orderly, and safe". Examining these claims in line with the Good Rule concepts, their actual use, and their possible outcomes will enable one to evaluate them fairly. This assessment is especially important since the search of Good Rule still presents a significant challenge for modern society.

3.2.1. Administrative Amnesty

Under the Biden administration, immigration policy has undergone significant transformation from the complex, baroque framework of 2016. The situation as it stands now clearly changed once Biden took office. Changing political surroundings has influenced government style and policy direction. New leadership in place is forcing review of many projects and strategies, so affecting both domestic and international relations. Government

priorities of different nature could influence social, environmental, and financial issues.

Citizens and stakeholders are learning to live with this new reality as debates on significant concerns keep evolving without Biden's government. shows a simpler, modernist style, so restoring a narrative of choice and discretion inside the immigration control system. The black-letter rules enforcing denaturalization and deportation highlight the shift from the past ten years' emphasis on administrative amnesty when many felt they had established rights and entitlements. (Loweree and Reichlin-Melnick 5,6)

Following Joe Biden's election, amnesty has once more taken front stage in conversation. Although quick enforcement actions targeted at undoing detrimental policies impacting immigrants were evident in the first days of his presidency, expectations of significant executive action depending on agency discretion have since been moderated. Though introduced during the Obama administration, speculation on the possible revival of elements reminiscent of the 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program has emerged, especially with reference to a possible DACA-plus initiative including marriage and family issues akin to the reforms of 1986. The political scene of today has helped this concept to become popular.

Looking ahead under Biden's administration, what lessons formal and informal stakeholders can learn from past mistakes? Examining the course of immigration policy offers a window into the complexity of the future; the path stresses a subtle approach to administrative amnesty instead of concentrating just on aspirational goals. From the last century, the immigration competition paradigm reflects present patterns among American legislators and stakeholders. Future projects most certainly will be influenced by the ideological changes that shaped past policy decisions. Moreover, the political capital spent by candidates supporting denaturalization rules could affect next legislative and executive actions. As recent years have underlined the significance of both procedural and substantive

elements of immigration, the possibility of political disturbances stays a relevant issue in current debates. (H. Chen, 203)

3.2.3. Interior Security

A thorough overhaul of immigration policy gained quick momentum under the Biden administration and drew plenty of media attention in the next months. Not long after taking office, President Biden quickly eliminated several restrictions—especially those related to travel from countries with a lot of Muslims. Press reactions to the government's practically instantaneous immigration policies were divided. Business leaders and municipal politicians' worries about a worker shortage spurred more in-depth conversations on the growing need for labour in many diverse industries. Many first-hand accounts and interviews taken together offer a complicated picture of the workforce during this age. The treatment of immigrant workers has changed drastically in the national debate with new laws supporting fair labour practices stressing their rights and protections. The first priority of the Biden government was protecting immigrant workers, so strengthening its commitment to equitable treatment and extending rights. In sharp contrast to the anxiety of enforcement activities defining the previous government, many staff members felt relieved and cautiously hopeful about job stability. Important discussions on legal resources and workplace rights surfaced as well as training programs meant to prepare staff members for possible law enforcement interactions. Examining legal payment choices also helped to guarantee adherence to labour standards as stakeholders sought fair compensation in line with the Fair Labor Standards Act. As these individuals faced various difficulties, issues about the shortcomings of employees in various fields surfaced. Many people felt that immigrants do not represent the threats occasionally displayed in past political narratives. Though they were once seen inside national security concerns, generally speaking the public's view has changed to acknowledge that immigrant workers are now seen as essential members of society. (Sarah C, 98)

3.2.4. National Security and the Rule of Law

Critics of Biden's immigration policy argue that increased enforcement discretion compromises national security. They argue that failing to enforce immigration laws for each illegal immigrant compromises security, so breaking the law. By supporting its unlimited application and ignoring the need of establishing enforcement priorities, which are essential to lower system overload while maintaining the rule of law, this argument basically undercuts the law. Politically, immigration law enforcement unfairly spends money and mechanically shapes objectivity of decision-making. While a methodical approach of deciding enforcement priorities does not compromise national security or legal obligations, a strong immigration system calls for judgment. Policies like DACA and DAPA start meaningful debates on policy execution, responsibility, and rule of law compliance instead of being bad or illegal. Giving enforcement top priority helps the US to include legal compliance into a strict immigration policy. Critics still object to major changes including restrictions on immigrant admission. While Justices Roberts and Gorsuch offer less contradicting points of view, Justice Barrett does not fairly address the issues facing the court. This suggests a resistance to evaluate the pragmatic relevance of law concepts guiding financial decisions as well as the legal power granted by discretion. By means of cost-benefit analysis and mix their views on DAPA with accepted legal doctrines, Justice Barrett, Roberts, and Gorsuch evaluate the costs of non-performance and so provide a strong case for authority. (Cox and Kaufman, 1815)

(Chauvin,143)

3.3. Future Policy Direction

This part examines new policy proposals intended to modernize U.S. immigration systems, emphasizing advancements in border security and asylum adjudication, along with reforms to employment-based visa programs. This chapter examines the structural, legal, and

ethical aspects of proposed reforms, informed by recent recommendations from academic institutions and policy think tanks, such as the Cornell Law School's Immigration Law and Policy Program and the Migration Policy Institute. This evaluation examines the potential efficacy, practicality, and equity ramifications of initiatives including regional processing centers, expedited asylum procedures, and the establishment of a bridge visa for foreign workers. This analysis seeks to clarify avenues for establishing a more equitable, humane, and adaptive immigration system through the implementation of progressive strategies.

3.3.1. Border Security and Asylum System Modernization

The current proposals seek to strike a balance between humane asylum processing and border enforcement. Dismantling smuggling networks, setting up processing facilities abroad, and reforming asylum adjudication are the three pillars of the Immigration Law and Policy Program at Cornell Law School (Yale-Loehr et al., 4). The United States could pre-screen asylum seekers before they set out on perilous journeys northward by setting up Regional Processing Centers in Central America. Piloted through Guatemala's Movilidad Segura offices, this model ensures adherence to international law's non-refoulement obligations while lowering incentives for irregular migration (Yale-Loehr et al.,5; "MPI Proposes"). Sorting asylum claims according to entry method is a crucial innovation. This measure, which aims to reduce procedural backlogs exceeding 3 million cases, would subject individuals crossing between ports of entry to expedited proceedings with stricter eligibility thresholds and limited appeal rights (Yale-Loehr et al., 4). However civil rights activists caution, however, that such tiered systems run the risk of infringing on Fifth Amendment due process rights.

Significant infrastructure investments are necessary for effective implementation. In order to hire 1,000 new asylum officers, 500 immigration judges, and biometric screening systems, the Cornell proposal projects upfront costs of \$14 billion (Yale-Loehr et al,10).

Despite ongoing concerns about algorithmic bias, machine learning algorithms may give priority to cases involving vulnerable populations. Only 37% of asylum seekers currently have access to legal representation; public-private partnerships with NGOs could increase that number (Yale-Loehr et al., 4).

3.3.2. Employment-Based Immigration Reforms

The bridge visa proposal from the Migration Policy Institute provides a versatile way to fill labor shortages. With the possibility of self-sponsored permanent residency after six years, this three-year renewable permit would enable employers from a variety of industries to sponsor foreign workers (Migration Policy Institute). In order to address concerns that the current employment-visa systems rely on occupational classifications from the 1990s, an independent commission would modify annual caps based on current labor market data (Migration Policy Institute).

International STEM graduates are the focus of high-skilled retention strategies. For engineers and scientists with U.S. degrees, especially those working on AI and clean energy technologies, President Biden's executive action from June 2024 expedites the green card application process (D'Arduini et al, "What You Need to Know About President Biden's New Immigration Actions). This expands on the 226,000 work authorizations that were given out in 2023 under the current Optional Practical Training program (Migration Policy Institute). Labor protections are still controversial. Through increased Wage and Hour Division audits, the bridge visa framework requires labor market testing up front. Wages for both native and immigrant workers could be standardized through sectoral bargaining agreements in the construction and agricultural industries. Project 2025's demand for widespread E-Verify adoption, however, raises questions about database errors that disproportionately impact naturalized citizens (The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights).

With an eye toward DACA, deportation, asylum, administrative amnesty, and interior enforcement, Chapter Three thoroughly examined how the Trump and Biden administrations altered U.S. immigration policy. These policy categories highlight some shared structural rigidity of the U.S. immigration system as well as ideological and pragmatic differences between the two administrations.

The DACA program of the Trump government differs significantly from Obama's. By ending the program and routing Dreamers toward deportation, Trump heightened legal and social risk for hundreds of thousands of illegal children. The Biden government aimed to keep and increase DACA protections, on the other hand. But legislative delay and judicial opposition have strengthened the belief that executive action by itself cannot over time safeguard underprivileged immigrant populations.

Deportation and enforcement differ greatly. Under Trump's high-profile raids and indiscriminate targeting, ICE came to represent forceful execution. Under Biden, deportations remain high; but, worker protections and enforcement take front stage. Political blowback and inherited institutional systems restrict this movement, so demonstrating that enforcement agencies have authority and discretion independent of executive rhetoric.

With "zero tolerance," the "public charge" rule, and "Remain in Mexico," the Trump government destroyed asylum access, so erasing the legal foundation allowing humanitarian protections. With mixed results, the Biden government has sought to undo many of these programs. Although some deterrent-oriented policies were withdrawn, political division, inadequate adjudicative capacity, and volume of asylum claims have kept systematic change out of reach.

Biden's administrative pardon, particularly with regard to legalization paths, contrasts philosophically with Trump's punitive agenda. Biden has emphasized regularism, compassion,

and moderation. But congressional deadlock and court review limit such initiatives, leading to a rhetorically unique approach connected to the same institutional architecture that hampered reform initiatives under past administrations.

Labor protections, resource allocation, and humanitarian concerns have taken front stage in Biden's internal enforcement plan above Trump's erratic and fear-based approach. The national security framing of immigration continues, and depending on politics, discretionary enforcement is still attacked for being either too lax or too harsh.

These policy spheres taken together exhibit change and continuity. Although the Biden government has aimed to undo the most blatantly exclusive aspects of the Trump era, it has not completely free from the political and structural limitations defining immigration control in the United States. Not only partisanship, but also institutional inertia from decades of legislative deadlock, bureaucratic complexity, and migration securitization reflects here.

Finally, the different paths taken by Trump and Biden highlight how profoundly immigration philosophy and policy are ingrained in more general conflicts over national identity, rule of law, and executive authority. Biden's adjusted strategy may show reform, but it stays limited by many of the same legal, political, and operational constraints that moulded the policies of his predecessor. These dynamics draw attention to the flimsiness of reform initiatives depending on executive judgment instead of thorough legislative action. Thus, the chapter confirms a fundamental tenet of this dissertation: meaningful and sustainable immigration reform in the United States calls not only political will but also structural reconfiguration grounded in humane values, legal clarity, and democratic consensus.

The effective execution of the future policy reforms depends on strong political commitment, continuous investment in institutional capacity, and vigilance against unintended outcomes, including discriminatory practices or the erosion of civil liberties. As the United States progresses toward a more flexible and just immigration system, the proposals presented

herein function not only as policy frameworks but also as reflections of the values and priorities that will influence the nation's immigration strategy in the forthcoming decades.

Conclusion

This study offers a thorough comparative analysis of the immigration reform agendas implemented by Presidents Donald Trump and Joe Biden, emphasizing their unique legislative initiatives, executive actions, and rhetorical strategies directed at comprehensive immigration reform. This research has critically evaluated the strategies of both administrations, revealing the intricate political, legal, and social barriers that have persistently hindered substantial reform of the U.S. immigration system. The challenges encompass partisan divisions, administrative limitations, and divergent public sentiments, all of which have influenced the direction and efficacy of immigration policies across various presidencies. Moreover, the study has pinpointed critical areas where the efforts of both administrations were inadequate, alongside instances of potential progress that were ultimately hindered. Based on these insights, the research presents prospective policy recommendations aimed at addressing current obstacles and promoting a more cohesive, efficient, and sustainable immigration framework. These proposals underscore the necessity for bipartisan cooperation, extensive legislative initiatives, and pragmatic executive actions that reconcile enforcement with humanitarian concerns. This study enhances the discourse on immigration reform by elucidating insights gained from the Trump and Biden administrations and delineating a trajectory for future policies that more effectively address the intricacies and requirements of the United States' immigration framework.

With all these in consideration and at the heart of the study was the question of how do the immigration policies of the Trump and Biden administrations differ in addressing the challenges of comprehensive immigration reform in the United States, and what implications do these differences hold for future policy development?

This study Identified and compared the core policies towards undocumented immigrants under both administrations of Joe Biden and Donald Trump. Also, it has examined whether the impact of undocumented immigrants in the us is effective or detrimental to the us society these policies were effective through qualitative, quantitative insights. Adding to that this study has assessed both of the socio-political and economic consequences of these policies under both administrations.

The study examined how Trump administration emphasized strict border security and enforcement, enacting policies designed to deter illegal immigration through actions such as the "Remain in Mexico" program, travel bans on certain nations, and broadened deportation priorities aimed at undocumented immigrants. Moreover, Trump's immigration reform framework comprised four key elements: establishing a pathway to citizenship for DREAMers, enhancing border security (including financing a border wall), eliminating the diversity visa lottery, and constraining family-based immigration, indicative of a restrictive approach to legal immigration avenues. Meanwhile Trump's policies resulted in considerable legal disputes and controversies, with proponents asserting they safeguarded American employment and national security, whereas detractors emphasized humanitarian crises and constitutional issues.

However, upon taking office, Biden committed to reversing numerous restrictive policies instituted by Trump and implementing a more humane immigration strategy, which encompasses initiatives to increase refugee admissions, restore DACA protections, and cease the deportation of undocumented immigrants within the U.S. interior. Also, despite these intentions, Biden's immigration reforms have encountered political impasse and criticism from both immigration advocates (for perceived severity) and detractors (for perceived permissiveness), complicating comprehensive reform initiatives.

Additionally, the obvious contrast between Trump's enforcement-heavy, restrictive policies and Biden's more inclusive, reformative agenda highlights the profound partisan divide that hinders comprehensive immigration reform in the U.S. Furthermore, future administrations may need to reconcile the enforcement priorities highlighted by Trump with the humanitarian and legalization objectives advocated by Biden to attain sustainable, comprehensive immigration reform.

Finally, The Trump administration's immigration policies focused on restriction, enforcement, and deterrence, whereas the Biden administration has aimed to transition towards reform, legalization, and a more compassionate approach. The contrasting strategies underscore the intricacies of immigration reform in the U.S. and indicate that forthcoming policy formulation must reconcile security issues with humanitarian and legal obligations to establish a sustainable and efficient immigration framework.

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