

Optimizing the Intelligence Cycle in Migration Governance: The Transition Toward Early-Warning-Based Immigration Monitoring in Bali Province

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Keywords:

National Resilience,
Intelligence Cycle,
Foreign Nationals, Visa
Misuse

Abstract

The rapid increase in international tourist arrivals in Bali has intensified the complexity of immigration governance, particularly regarding the misuse of visit visas by foreign nationals. While immigration supervision has traditionally focused on administrative enforcement, evolving patterns of visa abuse involving unauthorized employment, nominee business practices, and hidden economic activities require a more proactive intelligence-based approach. This study aims to analyze the optimization of the immigration intelligence cycle in strengthening early-warning-based monitoring of foreign nationals in Bali Province. A qualitative research design was employed through semi-structured in-depth interviews with immigration officers, analysis of immigration regulations and policy documents, and examination of relevant media reports. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, supported by source triangulation to enhance credibility. The findings reveal that current immigration supervision remains predominantly reactive, relying on public reports and post-incident investigations rather than predictive threat detection. The study identifies an "iceberg phenomenon," where detected violations represent only a small proportion of actual irregular activities. To address this limitation, the research proposes an Early Warning Immigration Intelligence Model integrating multi-source intelligence, risk analysis, intelligence sharing, and preventive immigration actions within the intelligence cycle. The study concludes that strengthening early-warning-based immigration intelligence can improve proactive surveillance, enhance interagency coordination, and contribute to national resilience by preventing immigration-related threats before they escalate into broader economic, social, and security risks.

INTRODUCTION

Bali is one of the main international tourism destinations in Indonesia that has a very high level of foreigner mobility. International tourism makes Bali one of the region's most open to global tourist flows. Based on data from BPS Bali Province, there will be 6.3 million foreign tourist visits to Bali during 2024. This data has exceeded the target of 5.5 million visits for the lower limit and 6 million visits for the upper limit (BPS Bali, 2025).

Ease of visa access, including through visa on arrival schemes, contributes significantly to increasing international tourist flows and economic growth of tourist destinations (Ramos & Allis, 2025). Many countries are developing more flexible visa schemes, such as visas on arrival and electronic visas, to increase the attractiveness of the tourism sector (Atierum, 2026; Atierum et al., 2026). The digitalization of the visa system also allows for the improvement of the efficiency of immigration services as well as the strengthening of the border security system

(Yadav & Srivastava, 2021). However, this convenience also has the potential to open up space for irregularities in the use of visit permits that are not always detected in the formal supervision system (Dupont, 2024).

The large number of foreign arrivals certainly poses its own challenges for the immigration supervision system. Supervision is not only on the inspection process at the immigration checkpoint, but also includes the activities of foreigners during the period of their residence permit in Indonesian territory (Marizska & Yusran, 2026; Oktarina & Santiago, 2021). The potential for abuse of residence permits is also increasing if the supervision system does not run optimally (Azhari, 2022). This is evident from the data on immigration administrative actions in Bali. There has been a significant increase in cases of immigration administrative violations by foreigners in Bali. In 2024, there will be 155 foreigners deported from Bali (Kanim Ngurah Rai, 2025). Most of the violations are overstay and the use of visas is not in accordance with the purpose (Kanim Ngurah Rai, 2025).

Immigration administration enforcement data (see Figure 1.3) shows that the presence of foreign nationals (WNA) in Bali contains potential threats that are multidimensional, including administrative, economic, social, and security aspects. Administrative violations in the form of overstay still dominate with 73 cases (47%) in 2024 and 42 cases (34%) in 2025 (Kanim Ngurah Rai, 2025), which reflects vulnerabilities in the aspect of residence permit compliance. However, the category of abuse of residence permits for inappropriate activities (misuse) has actually increased from 18 cases (11.6%) in 2024 to 23 cases (18.9%) in 2025. This trend shows a shift in the pattern of violations from administrative to more hidden and economically oriented activities. On the other hand, violations related to criminal acts and ex-convicts are relatively stable, at around 12–13 cases ($\pm 10\%$), which indicates the existence of a security threat dimension. In addition, violations related to public disorder and non-compliance with legal norms also continue to appear consistently, reflecting potential disturbances to social stability and public order.

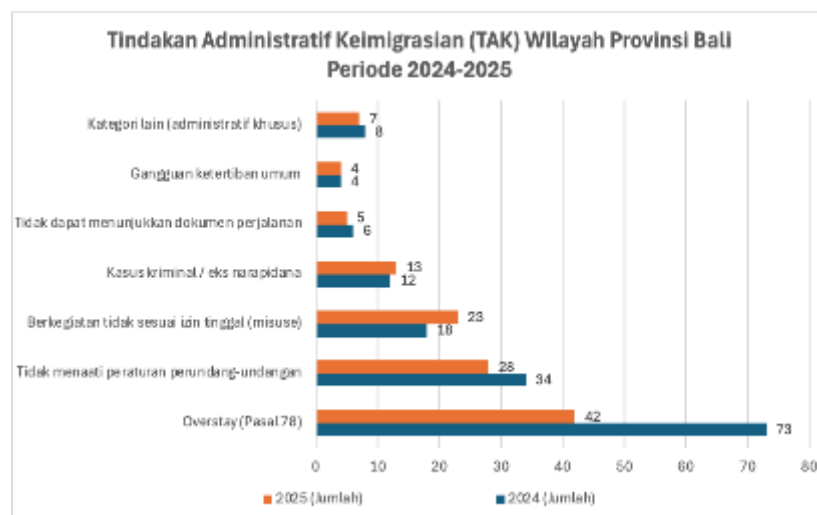


Figure 1. Immigration Administrative Action (TAK) Data Based on Abuse of Residence/Visit Permits by Foreigners in Bali in 2025
(Source: Kanim Ngurah Rai Internal Data, 2025)

The risk of abuse of residence permits on a large mobility scale in Bali not only poses administrative immigration problems, but is also a form of vulnerability that can affect national resilience, especially in economic, social, and security aspects (Hanita, 2023). This condition requires a shift in the supervisory approach from a reactive one to an intelligence-based approach that is able to identify patterns, anomalies, and indications of irregularities early through an early warning mechanism. The role of immigration intelligence is very important in supporting the surveillance system for foreign citizens. Intelligence is a systematic process of collecting, analyzing, and distributing relevant information to support strategic decision-making (Lowenthal, 2020)

Previous studies have shown that migration monitoring systems still face limitations in data integration, interagency coordination, and the use of information technology (Hasmianti et al., 2024; Kerwin, 2013). However, studies that specifically analyze the optimization of immigration intelligence strategies in comprehensively detecting irregularities in visit permits are still relatively limited. Thus, the misuse of visit permits by foreigners is not only understood as an administrative violation, but as a strategic phenomenon in the dynamics of global mobility that has the potential to affect national resilience. Therefore, research is needed to examine how immigration intelligence strategies can be optimized to support early detection systems against various potential threats.

METHOD

This study applied a qualitative design to examine the phenomenon of administrative violations of the use of visit permits by foreigners and analyze the role of immigration intelligence in supervising these activities. This approach was chosen to obtain a comprehensive explanation of the process, dynamics, and context behind the occurrence of this phenomenon. Creswell (2014) emphasized that qualitative research is used to elaborate and understand the meaning given by individuals and groups to a social problem. The qualitative approach allows researchers to delve deeper into immigration surveillance practices as well as intelligence strategies applied in an effort to prevent the use of inappropriate visit permits by foreigners in Bali.

In-Depth Interviews. The interview process was carried out to obtain primary data from informants who had understanding and experience related to intelligence activities against foreign nationals. Interviews are conducted in a semi-structured manner, so that the researcher has a question guide that provides an opportunity for informants to explain their experiences and views on the topic more broadly. Through this interview, information about problem patterns is unearthed, immigration supervision practices, and the implementation of immigration intelligence functions in detecting and preventing visitation permit violations.

Analysis of Regulatory Documents. Secondary data was also obtained through analysis of various regulatory documents related to the immigration system and the use of foreign labor in Indonesia. The documents analyzed include Law Number 6 of 2011 which regulates Immigration, Government Regulation Number 31 of 2013 jo. Government Regulation Number 40 of 2023, as well as various ministerial regulations that regulate visas, residence permits, and the use of foreign workers.

This study also uses mass media articles as a secondary data source to map cases of misuse of foreigners' visit permits to work without permission. In addition, this data also provides an understanding of public sentiment towards this issue.

Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with informants who have knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in the process of supervising foreigners. Through these primary data sources, the researcher explored information related to the pattern and spectrum of deviations in foreign activities, the monitoring mechanisms carried out, and specifically the implementation of immigration intelligence functions in the process of collecting, analyzing, and utilizing information to support early detection (early warning system) (Lowenthal, 2020). Primary data not only serves to describe the phenomenon of breaches, but also to understand the effectiveness of intelligence approaches in anticipating potential threats.

The data analysis technique in this study uses a qualitative analysis model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014). This analysis model emphasizes that the qualitative data analysis process is carried out interactively and lasts from the data collection stage to the drawing of conclusions. According to Miles et al. (2014), qualitative data analysis consists of three flows, namely the data condensation stage that serves to simplify and focus the information obtained, the data presentation stage that is used to display the results of data processing systematically, and the conclusion extraction and verification stage which is carried out to formulate research findings while ensuring the validity of the analysis results (Miles et al., 2014). The three stages are carried out cyclically and interrelated during the research process.

This research also applies triangulation techniques. Triangulation is carried out by comparing and testing the consistency of information obtained from various data sources, namely the results of interviews with informants, official immigration documents, and media reports relevant to cases of abuse of visit permits by foreigners. Through the triangulation process, researchers can verify the suitability of information between sources so that research findings do not depend only on one data source. This approach is important in qualitative research to increase the credibility and validity of the analysis results by ensuring that the conclusions produced are supported by a variety of corroborating empirical evidence.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bali is one of the international destinations with a high level of foreigner mobility in Indonesia. The existence of a growing tourism sector, easy access to international transportation, and economic and cultural attraction make Bali a destination for various categories of foreign citizens (WNA), ranging from tourists, investors, remote workers, to business actors. This high mobility causes the supervision of foreigners to become one of the important issues in the implementation of immigration functions in the Bali region.

The high mobility of foreigners in Bali is followed by the emergence of various forms of immigration violations with increasingly diverse characteristics. Based on the results of interviews with the informants, the violations found were not only in the form of administrative violations such as overstay, but also included abuse of residence permits, economic activities that were not in accordance with the permits owned, nominee business practices, and involvement in general criminal acts. These findings show that immigration problems in Bali

are developing along with the increasing intensity of interaction between foreign citizens and various economic and social sectors in society.

One of the most dominant forms of violations found is the abuse of residence permits. In practice, a number of foreign nationals enter Indonesia using a visit visa or Visa on Arrival which is intended for tourist activities, but then carry out activities that generate economic benefits while in Bali. These activities are found in various sectors, ranging from the creative industry, fitness services, property promotion, to the tourism sector. Based on information from informants from the Immigration Intelligence and Enforcement Division, the forms of abuse of residence permits that are often found involve foreign nationals who work as models, photographers, content creators, villa marketing, DJs, and tour guides.

In addition to the abuse of residence permits to work, this study also found business practices that utilize the mechanism of nominee or borrowing the name of Indonesian citizens (Hasbi, 2026; Noor, 2021). Based on the results of the interviews, this practice is widely found in the property sector and tourist accommodation businesses. In this pattern, foreign citizens use the name of Indonesian citizens as the formal owners of the business, while the management and control of the business is carried out by foreign parties. The informant explained that the property sector is one of the sectors most vulnerable to this practice due to the high interest of foreign investment in the construction of villas and lodging in Bali. However, the practice of nominees is relatively difficult to prove because administratively all business documents show legal ownership by Indonesian citizens.

These limitations produce a phenomenon that in this study can be referred to as the iceberg phenomenon of immigration violations. The concept of an iceberg refers to a condition when a successful violation is identified and acted upon only represents a small part of the overall activity that actually occurs. Meanwhile, most potentially unlawful activities remain below the surface because they are not detected by existing surveillance systems. This phenomenon is relevant to explain why the number of violations that have been successfully prosecuted is relatively small compared to the high mobility of foreigners and the complexity of activities taking place in Bali.



Figure 5.1 Iceberg Phenomenon of Immigration Violations
Source: Processed Results of Research Findings Synthesis, 2026

This phenomenon shows that the measure of surveillance effectiveness cannot be based solely on the number of immigration administrative actions that have been successfully carried out. The more violations that are acted upon does not necessarily indicate the more effective surveillance is, as they may represent only a small fraction of the threat that is actually evolving. Thus, the main challenge of immigration intelligence is not just to find more violations, but to improve the ability to identify unknown threats.

Intelligence is basically a state instrument to reduce uncertainty in decision-making through the process of collecting, processing, analyzing, and disseminating information relevant to a threat (Lowenthal, 2020). In the context of immigration, the intelligence function is not only oriented to the identification of violations that have occurred, but also to the ability to detect early indications that have the potential to develop into threats to state interests. Therefore, the effectiveness of surveillance of foreigners is largely determined by the ability of intelligence systems to produce accurate, timely, and actionable information.

One of the most widely used frameworks for understanding the work process of intelligence is the Intelligence Cycle (Muhić, 2025). This model views intelligence as a process that takes place continuously through the stages of information collection, analysis, dissemination, and information utilization to support decision-making and preventive measures (Lowenthal, 2020). Although this model initially developed in the context of state security, the principles contained in it are also relevant to explain how surveillance of foreign nationals is carried out in the modern immigration system.

The ultimate goal of the intelligence process is not to generate information, but rather to allow for preventive action before a threat develops into a real nuisance. Therefore, early warning is the essence of the entire intelligence process because it is the meeting point between knowledge and action. An effective early warning system allows organizations to identify threat indicators early on so that responses can be made before greater consequences arise (Organization, 2023).

In the context of surveillance of foreigners in Bali, the analysis shows that the current system is still dominated by a pattern of surveillance that is reactive. Most surveillance actions are carried out after public reports, field patrol findings, social media virality, or indications of violations that have been seen in real life. In other words, the detection process often takes place after the threat begins to manifest itself in the form of observable activity. This situation shows that surveillance is still operating in the post-event detection phase compared to pre-event prevention.

From an intelligence perspective, these conditions reflect a gap between the surveillance function and the early warning function. Reactive surveillance is oriented towards identifying violations that have occurred, while early warning is oriented towards identifying indicators that precede violations. This distinction is very important because modern threats generally do not appear suddenly, but rather develop through a series of initial signals that can be observed if the organization has adequate analytical capacity (Lowenthal, 2020).

Table 5.1 Analysis of Immigration Intelligence Practices Against Foreigners in Bali in the Perspective of the Intelligence Cycle

Stages	Current Conditions	Strategic Issues
Collection	The intelligence sources come from immigration data, cyber patrols, social media, the community, banjar, and pecalang.	It has not been integrated into one intelligence system.
Analysis	Analysis based on individual profiling and identification of violations.	It has not yet developed into threat mapping and predictive intelligence.
Dissemination	Information exchange through TIMPORA and cross-agency coordination.	It is still sectoral and has not yet real-time intelligence sharing.
Early Warning	Threat detection through patrols, community reports, and social media.	It is still predominantly reactive and not yet based on risk indicators.

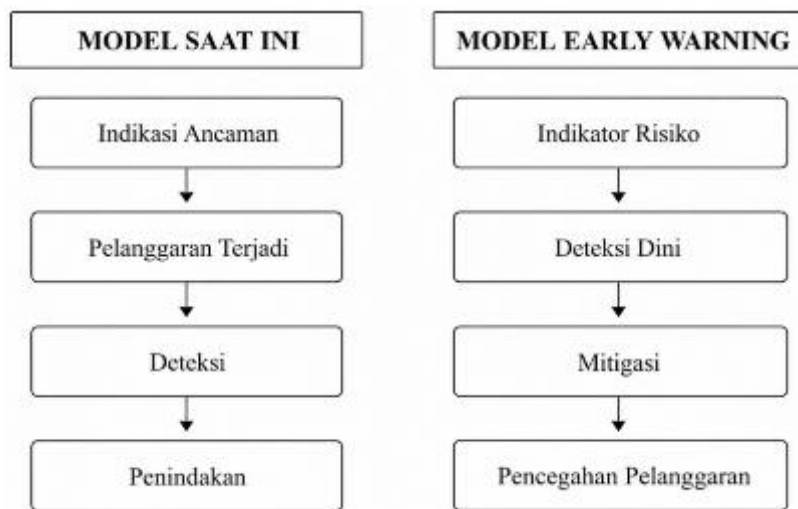


Figure 5.2 Shift from Reactive Surveillance to Early Warning

Based on this analysis, this study constructs an early warning-based immigration intelligence model that relies on four main components, namely multi-source intelligence, risk analysis, intelligence sharing, and preventive action. The four components are the result of a synthesis between the Intelligence Cycle framework, and the dynamics of foreign surveillance that develops in Bali.

The first component is multi-source intelligence. In contrast to the traditional intelligence paradigm that relies on formal state sources of information, contemporary migration surveillance requires the integration of various sources of information from government institutions as well as non-state actors. This is in line with the development of networked intelligence which explains that the production of modern security information is increasingly dependent on networks of interconnected actors. In the Balinese context, the effectiveness of surveillance is largely determined by the ability to integrate information from the immigration system, digital media, local communities, indigenous communities, as well as various institutions involved in migration governance.

The second component is the risk analysis engine. Previous analyses have shown that surveillance that focuses only on the identification of individual violations has limitations in understanding systemic evolving threats. Therefore, risk analysis needs to move from just

individual profiling to threat profiling. The shift allows surveillance to not only identify who is at risk, but also understand how threats evolve, through what networks threats operate, and what factors allow those threats to grow. In this context, the intelligence function does not stop at the classification of individuals, but results in a more comprehensive threat mapping.

The third component is intelligence sharing. Previous analysis shows that one of the main problems in surveillance of foreigners is the fragmentation of information spread across various institutions. Therefore, the effectiveness of early warning systems is highly dependent on the ability to build information exchange mechanisms that allow all stakeholders to have a common understanding of evolving threats.

The fourth component is preventive immigration action. At this stage, intelligence no longer serves as a supporting instrument for enforcement, but becomes the basis for measurable preventive measures. These actions can be in the form of more targeted supervision, increased monitoring of at-risk groups, strengthening cross-sector coordination, and community involvement in supporting the surveillance process. Thus, the main goal of the system is not to increase the number of deportations or administrative immigration actions, but rather to reduce the probability of the threat developing from the early stages.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the abuse of visit permits by foreign nationals in Bali has undergone a transformation from an administrative violation of immigration to a non-traditional threat that impacts economic, socio-cultural, and security resilience. The threat is no longer limited to overstay or abuse of residence permits, but develops through hidden economic activities, nominee practices, abuse of digital platforms, violations of cultural norms, and involvement in transnational crimes. These findings show that immigration issues need to be understood as part of the dynamics of national resilience which is increasingly influenced by global mobility and the development of digital technology. The practice of immigration intelligence in Bali has accommodated all stages of the intelligence cycle which includes collection, analysis, dissemination, and early warning. However, its implementation still shows a number of limitations. Information collection has utilized diverse sources, but it has not been optimally integrated. The analysis still focuses on individual risk profiling and has not yet developed into threat-based intelligence. Information exchange across agencies has taken place through various coordination mechanisms, but has not resulted in an integrated intelligence sharing system. Meanwhile, the early warning function is still dominated by a reactive approach that responds to threats after indicators of violation come to the surface. The study also shows that surveillance of foreigners in Bali cannot rely entirely on state capacity. The high mobility of foreign nationals and the growing complexity of threats encourage the emergence of the role of local communities as part of the surveillance ecosystem. In the context of Bali, banjars, pecalang, local communities, and the community act as sources of information that complement the limitations of formal state supervision. This condition shows the development of a form of community-based surveillance that contributes to the early detection of foreign citizens' activities at the local level. The Early Warning Immigration Intelligence model can be a reinforcement of immigration intelligence in the surveillance of foreigners. This model integrates multi-source intelligence, risk analysis, intelligence sharing, and preventive immigration action into a single surveillance cycle oriented towards early detection and threat

prevention. Thus, foreign surveillance is no longer focused on enforcement after a breach has occurred, but is geared towards the ability to identify and manage risks before they develop into threats to national resilience.

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