

A Multi-Country Study on the Education of Migrant Children

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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مؤتمر القمة العالمي للابتكار في التعليم

An Initiative of Qatar Foundation



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Executive Summary

Mobility — the capacity of people to move from one part of the world to another — is one of the defining features of the modern era. Every year, millions of families uproot themselves from their homes and move to another city or country in search of work, taking their children with them. It is thus very important for researchers and practitioners to understand the needs and challenges of migrant children around the globe who have made this transition. Mobility is an important characteristic of modernity: in contrast to the traditional agrarian societies where most people live their entire lives in the locality that they were born to, modern societies are characterized by mobile individuals and families who cross local and national borders. These mobile individuals and families, however, often run into barriers that limit their cultural, social, political or legal rights and prevent them from integrating into their new communities as full members. Different nations and localities offer different opportunities and pathways — if any at all — for these mobile individuals to obtain cultural, social, political, and legal membership.

In the following chapters, “migrant children” encompasses immigrants who move across national borders to live in host countries as well as internal migrants who cross administrative boundaries within the country. With different social, political, and economic histories, however, these seven countries present different immigration and migration patterns as well as substantial variations in terms of which migrant groups are regarded as salient social problems.

The chapters included in the first part of this document describe the nature and circumstances of the migrant child population in seven countries: China, Vietnam, Thailand, Japan, Finland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Each chapter outlines the context and make-up of that country’s migrant population, discusses educational rights issues faced by migrant children and successful initiatives to address those issues, and makes policy recommendations. The second part of this document presents a comparative analysis of some of the most salient issues raised in the individual country reports. It is our hope that this report will help governments seize the opportunity they have now to make policy decisions that benefit migrant children, and bring about a future that is more just and prosperous for everyone.



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