

**Migrant children's access to rights in Thailand:
The importance of social integration and the roles of civil society**

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This paper aims to describe the current conditions of access to birth registration, education, and health care for cross-border migrant children in Thailand. It highlights the importance of integrating the migrant population into Thai society, and the activities at the civil-society level (i.e., community-based organizations) that aim to facilitate and enhance migrant children's access to rights. Quantitative and qualitative data from three study sites – Mae Sot, Ranong, and Chumporn – are disseminated and analyzed. The quantitative survey found that about 73 percent of migrant children born in Thailand in the past 5 years had their births registered with the Thai registrar. An overall 83 percent of migrant children aged 7 to 15 were enrolled in school. The majority of enrollees were at NGO-run learning centers, while only one-fifth were at regular Thai school. Approximately three-fourths of the children were not covered by a health insurance scheme. The qualitative study found that, although Thai laws and regulations allow migrant children to register at birth (in Thailand), school enrollment and access to health insurance were problematic for all migrant children, regardless of their parents' status in the country. This paper presents evidence that social integration of migrants into local civil society can be instrumental for upholding the rights of migrant children, and improve the quality of life for migrants and native Thais alike.

Biographical Note

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Chalermpol is an assistant professor at the Institute for Population and Social Research (IPSR), Mahidol University, Thailand. He is currently the chairperson of the Master of Arts Program in Population and Sexual and Reproductive Health. He holds a Ph.D. in Area Studies from Kyoto University, Japan, and has a Master's and Bachelor's Degree in Economics. His recent works and research interests concentrate on migration and migrant populations in Thailand, population aging and the elderly, reproductive health, health systems and policy, social protection, and development.

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