

# Little Nomads: Economic and Social Impacts of Migration on Children

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This paper reviews the main findings of 113 studies produced between 1990 and 2023, focusing on the impact of migration on various child groups affected through the migration path. The findings reveal that migration influences children's outcomes in complex and context-dependent ways, and that the impacts of migration are highly dependent on household demographics and public policies at hosting countries.

## Key findings

### Immigrant children

- Fare better than those in their countries of origin, but still fall behind native children in host communities, both in education and health outcomes.
- The age at which children migrate significantly influences the extent of the disparity between native and migrant children.
- Immigration policy has a key role: e.g., deportation enforcement can lower language attainment, increase the probability of repetition and dropping out, and reduce public service enrollment for these populations.

### Native children

- Positive effects on education outcomes are observed when resources adjust quickly to the higher demand for education services. In contrast, negative effects on education outcomes are observed when resources remain unchanged.
- Native parents respond to immigrant inflows by switching their children from public to private schools (native flight).

### Left-behind children

- Remittances usually causes financial stability, which benefits education and physical health of these children. Higher stability can reduce child labor, bolster school retention, and improve nutrition.
- Parental migration has a positive effect on children's anthropometric measures.
- Nevertheless, there are large negative effects of parental absence on cognitive outcomes, mental health, and socioemotional behaviors.

### Forcibly displaced children

- These children are among the most vulnerable worldwide, migrating due to involuntary factors such as conflicts or natural disasters.
- They face a high risk of not returning to school since they often must work inside or outside the household due to the extremely high vulnerability of their families.
- Representative and longitudinal data is missing to comprehensively measure children's outcomes, especially in development countries.

For more information, please see the full paper [here](#).



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