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ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN OF MIGRANTS IN THE AKTOBE REGION OF KAZAKHSTAN:

Recommendations for the
Evidence-Based Decision Making

White Paper

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About the Author

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About the Public Foundation «Daris-2016»



«Daris-2016» — is a public foundation based in Aktobe, Kazakhstan. Its mission is to promote the development and improvement of the social sphere in the country, to support the most important and promising scientific research and socio-economic projects, and to foster civic engagement among vulnerable segments of the population. [The Public Foundation «Daris-2016»](#) conducts public outreach on issues of social protection, legal support, and the legally guaranteed rights of socially vulnerable groups and individuals in difficult life circumstances. [The project manager](#) is Gulnur Idigeeva; the legal expert is Natalia Iskhakova; and the interviewers-consultants are Aziya Duzbaeva and Sherkhan Maratuly.

About IWPR

IWPR (Institute for War & Peace Reporting) amplifies the voices of local communities, helping them drive change in countries experiencing conflict, crisis, and transition. Where hate speech and propaganda spread, and journalists and civil society activists are under attack, IWPR promotes credible information and fosters public discussions that truly matter. In a context where new forms of disinformation are fueling societal divisions, digital threats are growing, and attacks on journalists are increasing, IWPR's mission to support local voices is especially vital. [The organization's main](#) goal is to strengthen the flow of reliable and objective information, enabling journalists and civil society to inform, educate, and mobilize communities. IWPR helps societies find their own solutions by strengthening their capacity in journalism and civic activism, and by supporting the fight for accountability, freedom of expression, and human rights.

About the European Union

The European Union is an economic and political union of 27 European countries. It is based on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. It acts globally to promote sustainable social, environmental, and economic development for the benefit of all.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CS4K	«Civil Society for Kazakhstan»
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
EU	European Union
IWPR	Institute for War and Peace Reporting
MIA RK	Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan
MMS MIA RK	Migration Management Service Committee of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan
CRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
CLP MSHE RK	Committee on Language Policy of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan
MSHE RK	Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ME RK	Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan
MLSPP RK	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan
UN	United Nations
PF «INIDI»	Public Foundation «Institute of National and International Development Initiatives»
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
RK	Republic of Kazakhstan
CA	Central Asia



White Paper

ABSTRACT

This study, conducted within the framework of the «Civil Society for Kazakhstan» project and funded by the European Union, examines access to education for migrant children in the Aktobe region of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The primary objective of the study is to assess current policy and to develop the recommendations for the evidence-based decision making.

The analysis identified the following key barriers to education and educational integration of migrant children: 1). The gaps, the inconsistencies, and the contradictions in the existing legislative framework; 2). The insufficient awareness among migrants of their children's right to education; 3). A lack of statistical data, or the absence of statistics altogether, for the key indicators; 4). The language barriers that hinder integration into the educational process and limit access to the quality education; 5). The inadequate cooperation among the administrative stakeholders involved — the relevant ministries and educational institutions.

The identified problems also result in the insufficient compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, both of which Kazakhstan has ratified.

As a result of this study, the recommendations have been developed for the government agencies, the local authorities, the educational institutions, and the migrant families. The measures taken on the basis of these recommendations will help to remove the barriers impeding the education and the educational integration of migrant children in the Aktobe region.

In accordance with the advocacy strategy and the methodology defined within the project, this analytical document will be used by the Public Foundation «[Daris-2016](#)» for targeted direct engagement with the government bodies.

PROBLEM ANALYSIS: AT THE INTERSECTION OF FOUR POLICY AREAS — MIGRATION, LABOUR, EDUCATION, LANGUAGE

This analytical study was conducted within the framework of the «[Civil Society for Kazakhstan](#)» project, funded by the European Union, with the aim of identifying the key problems and factors affecting the migrant children's access to education in the Aktobe region, as well as of developing measures to address the underlying causes and to improve the situation. The analysis was carried out jointly with IWPR and the Public Foundation «[Daris-2016](#)» — on the basis of data collected by the PF «[Daris-2016](#)», and drawing on its legal expertise and legal support.

Relevance of the Issue of Migrant Children's Access to Education in the Aktobe Region

Kazakhstan is the second most important destination country, after Russia, for the labour migrants from the countries of Central Asia. The experts estimate that more than 2 million people enter the country annually, primarily for work purposes. The adults frequently arrive with their children, drawing them into the process of unsafe migration.

Assessing the scale of this phenomenon is difficult, as there is no unified and systematic statistical data on migrant children.

On December 16, 2022, Order No. 481 of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan approved new Rules governing the receipt of education by foreigners and stateless persons permanently residing in Kazakhstan. The Order specifies the categories of foreigners whose children have the right to attend schools in Kazakhstan. These categories constitute only a small proportion of the foreigners actually present in Kazakhstan. Moreover, the Order contains conflicts, gaps, and inconsistencies that complicate its application.

As a result, the majority of migrant children have lost the right to receive education at school. This includes children of irregular migrants temporarily residing in Kazakhstan without the right to work legally, children of undocumented migrants, children of migrants whose citizenship is undetermined, and others.

According to the data provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 10,597,719 immigrants were present in Kazakhstan over the nine months of 2023. Of these, those entitled to have their children attend school include permanently resident foreigners, refugees, asylum seekers, consular officers, diplomatic staff, and labour migrants officially working in Kazakhstan — a figure constituting only a small fraction of the total number of immigrants. For example,

more than 200,000 foreigners hold permanent residence status, and 14,300 foreign nationals are engaged in employment in Kazakhstan — no more than 2 % of the total number of foreigners. Other categories of foreigners whose children have the right to attend school represent an even smaller proportion.



It is impossible to determine the precise number of migrant children who do not have the right to attend schools in Kazakhstan.



The number of foreigners temporarily residing in Kazakhstan without the right to work legally is not captured in the official statistics.



The number of undocumented persons and/or persons whose citizenship is currently undetermined is unknown.¹

The relevance of the problem of migrant children's access to education in the Aktoke region is driven by a number of factors:

1. Growing number of migrants.

The Aktoke region, as one of Kazakhstan's dynamically developing and transit regions, attracts migrants, including from neighbouring countries. As a result, the number of children in need of access to educational services is increasing.

2. Unequal conditions for school enrolment.

Many migrant children encounter difficulties when enrolling in schools due to the absence of the required documents, registration, or insufficient legal awareness among their parents regarding educational rights.

3. Language of instruction.

For migrant children whose families do not speak the languages of instruction used in Kazakhstan's schools, the language of instruction may present a significant barrier. The language difficulties hinder the integration into the educational process and limit the opportunities to receive a quality education.

¹. From the materials of speeches by Gulnur Idigeeva, Executive Director of the Public Foundation «Daris-2016», delivered in Geneva with Kazakhstan's Alternative Report (June 24, 2025) for the UN Human Rights Committee, and at the international Warsaw Human Dimension Conference (October 13–15, 2025)

4. Social adaptation.

Migrant children frequently experience social isolation and discrimination in educational institutions. The absence of appropriate social support and inclusive programmes deepens the challenges of adaptation and successful learning.

5. Income level.

The low income of migrant families may also restrict children's access to education, as parents may lack the means to provide school uniforms, educational materials, and additional tuition.

6. Lack of information.

Migrant parents often lack adequate information about their children's right to education and the available services, which prevents their engagement in the educational process and their ability to support their children.

The specific and complex nature of the issue under consideration lies in the fact that it is at the intersection of four policy areas — migration, labour, education, and language — and, moreover, extends beyond the Kazakhstani level to encompass the regional Central Asian and the international dimensions. As a result, it involves a wide range of stakeholders and requires a comprehensive approach and solution.

The key relevant stakeholders include:

1. Ministries of the Republic of Kazakhstan

1. issuing [acts](#) (in the form of orders, instructions, and directives) within their competence, on the basis of and in execution of laws and decisions of higher-level state authorities, as well as Presidential decrees

- Ministry of Internal Affairs
- Ministry of Science and Higher Education
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population

2. [Committee for Children Rights Protection of the Ministry of Education of the RK](#)

— a body of the Ministry of Education performing regulatory, implementation, and oversight functions, and participating in the strategic functions of the central executive authority within the Committee's competence.

3. [Committees of Migration Service and Language Policy](#)

— Committee of Migration Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which coordinates and implements migration policy and handles citizenship and refugee issues

— Committee on Language Policy, a body of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education responsible for implementing state language policy in Kazakhstan.

4. [Regional and district education departments](#)

— Aktobe City Education Department

— Regional Education Department

— 12 district education [departments](#) of the Aktobe region.

5. [Educational institutions](#)

— Schools

— Other educational establishments

6. [Migrant families](#)

— Parents

— Guardians of migrant children

7. [International organisations](#)

— International Organization for Migration (IOM)

— United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The [primary objective of the research is to ensure greater social integration and equality](#) of opportunity for all children, and ultimately to address the question of school admission for all foreign children, regardless of their parents' migration status — in line with the requirements of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Kazakhstan in 1994.

The principal beneficiaries of this study are:

①

Migrant children, for whom conditions for full access to quality education will be created through the identification and removal of barriers to their educational integration.

②

Migrant families — parents and guardians — who will be able to access more information about their rights, the available services, and opportunities for their children, leading to more effective adaptation and the ability to advocate for their children's interests.

Key beneficiaries:

- Migrant children
- Migrant families
- Educational institutions
- Local authorities and government agencies

③

Educational institutions — schools, kindergartens, and other educational establishments — for which recommendations are developed to improve inclusivity and engagement with migrant children, resulting in higher quality and more effective educational process.

④

Local authorities and government agencies — local administrations and education departments — which will be better able to understand the challenges and needs of migrant communities, and consequently to develop more effective support strategies and programmes.

RELEVANCE OF THE ISSUE: WHAT DOES THE FACTUAL DATA SAY?

As an evidence base to confirm the relevance and timeliness of the issue of migrant children's access to education in the Aktobe region, the Public Foundation «Daris-2016» conducted a comprehensive and detailed situational analysis from December 2024 to October 2025.

This analysis comprised the following two successive phases:

- I. Desktop research: December 2024 — March 2025;
- II. Data collection: February — October 2025.

The desktop research

was carried out by the project's legal expert (Natalia Iskhakova) and represents a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the legislative framework of the Republic of Kazakhstan relating to migration in general and to the education of migrant children in particular.

The data collection

was conducted by a research team consisting of the project manager (Gulnur Idigeeva), the legal expert (Natalia Iskhakova), and the interviewers-consultants (Aziya Duzbaeva and Sherkhan Maratuly).

The data collection process consisted of:

- 1. A pilot study: December 2024 — March 2025;
- 2. Surveys / focus groups / interviews:
February — May 2025;
- 3. Requests for official administrative data:
December 2024 — October 2025.

This systematic approach ensured the depth and the rigour of the collected data as the foundation for the study's primary objective — development of the evidence-based policy recommendations.

I. DESKTOP RESEARCH FINDINGS



The expert desktop research, focused on assessing the legislative framework governing migration and education policy, revealed the following:

- ① The rules and standards regulating (1) school admission and (2) the receipt of pre-school, primary, basic secondary, and general secondary education contain certain gaps, conflicts, and inconsistencies with migration legislation:

- Lack of consistency and clarity in the «Rules for Obtaining Pre-primary, Primary, Basic Secondary, and General Secondary Education by Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons Permanently Residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan»;

- Gaps, lack of consistency, and lack of clarity in the content of the «Standard Rules for Admission to Educational Institutions Implementing General Education Curricula of Primary, Basic Secondary, and General Secondary Education»;

- ② The absence of the term «labour migrants» in the migration legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

In particular:

Lack of consistency and clarity in the «Rules for Obtaining Pre-primary, Primary, Basic Secondary, and General Secondary Education by Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons Permanently Residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan» (hereinafter — the Rules), approved by Order No. 468 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated September 28, 2010

1) From the very title of the document and the content of Clause 1, Chapter 1, which are inconsistent with Clause 2 of the same chapter:

— The title and Clause 1, Chapter 1 state that these Rules were developed for foreigners and stateless persons permanently residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

— Clause 2, Chapter 1 states that educational organisations admit for obtaining pre-primary, primary, basic secondary, and general secondary education «Children of foreigners and stateless persons permanently residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well **of persons temporarily residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan**» (followed by a list of specific categories of temporarily residing foreigners).

2) Clause 2, Chapter 1 also states that the listed categories of foreigners enjoy «the same rights as citizens of Kazakhstan»; however, Clause 3, Chapter 2 contains a restriction on parents' right to freely choose a school for their children: «Parents or other legal representatives of foreign children and stateless persons under 16 years of age, when placing their child in an educational organisation, apply to the education management authorities of the region, city of national significance, capital, district (city of regional significance) to obtain a placement referral...».

When approaching the education authorities for referrals to schools, **parents are not required to submit documents** relating to the child's educational background (school reports or academic transcripts); these documents are submitted directly to the school.

According to Paragraph 2 of Clause 7, Chapter 2, «in the absence of educational documents, the city (district) education department shall form a commission to determine the applicant's educational level».

This creates the unnecessary bureaucratic delays in the process of enrolling a child to a school, which could be avoided by including the educational documents to the list of materials submitted to the education authorities which issue the referrals.

3) In accordance with Paragraph 1 of Clause 7, Chapter 2: «Heads of educational organisations shall enrol foreign children and stateless persons in the appropriate year groups based on the level of education received abroad, in accordance with educational documents, **the successful socialisation of the child in the learning environment, provided that children who are citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan constitute no less than 85% of the total number** of children in that class».

This formulation requires commentary to clarify the concept of «successful socialisation of the child in the learning environment» and the means by which «successful socialisation» is to be determined, measured, and assessed at the point of school admission.

It is likewise unclear how school principals should proceed if the proportion of Kazakhstani children in a class falls below 85% at the time of admitting a foreign child.

Contradictions between the «Rules for Obtaining Pre-primary, Primary, Basic Secondary, and General Secondary Education by Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons Permanently Residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan»

approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 468 dated September 28, 2010, and the «Standard Rules for Admission to Educational Institutions Implementing General Education Curricula of Primary, Basic Secondary, and General Secondary Education» (hereinafter — the Standard Rules) approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 564 dated October 12, 2018).

1) The Standard Rules explicitly state (Clause 7, Chapter 1) that «Parents or other legal representatives of a child or a pupil choose educational organisations...».

Consequently, taking into account the inconsistencies noted above between the Rules and the Standard Rules, the parents of foreign children in fact are deprived of the right to choose a school for their children, even though in practice it is established that the specialists of the education departments issuing referrals are trying to take into account the parents' school preferences in relation to distance from home and the language of instruction.

2) Clause 2 of Chapter 1, following the category of foreign nationals permanently residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan, lists the following categories of temporarily residing foreign nationals:

- refugees,
- asylum seekers,
- consular officials,
- employees of diplomatic missions,
- labour migrants working in the Republic of Kazakhstan in accordance with migration legislation.



At the same time, Clause 3 of Chapter 2 specifies that parents must present a document confirming the right of permanent residence in the RK:

- a foreign national — a foreign national's residence permit in the Republic of Kazakhstan;
- a stateless person — a stateless person's identity document;
- a refugee — a refugee identity document;
- an asylum seeker — an asylum seeker's certificate;
- a kandas — a kandas identity document or a certificate issued by the migration authorities (a kandas is an ethnic Kazakh and/or members of his or her family of Kazakh nationality who were not previously citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan and have been granted the corresponding status in accordance with the procedure established by the authorised migration authority).

In this regard, only the first and the last categories of the listed here foreigners are permanent residents of the Republic of Kazakhstan, while the remaining categories are temporary residents under migration legislation.

Furthermore, the category of [«kandas»](#) appears here despite not being mentioned in Clause 2 of Chapter 1.

In addition, the following categories from Clause 2 of Chapter 1 are omitted — which constitutes the gap: consular officials, employees of diplomatic missions, and labour migrants, for whom no required identity documents are specified for submission to the education authorities listed in Clause 2 of Chapter 1.

Absence of the term «labour migrants» in the migration legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Although the Rules make reference to the concept of «labour migrants working in the Republic of Kazakhstan in accordance with migration legislation», it should be noted that this term does not exist in Kazakhstan's migration legislation.

Article 34 of the Law «On Population Migration» dated 22 July 2011, No. 477-IV lists the categories of immigrants arriving in Kazakhstan for the purpose of employment:

1) FOREIGN WORKERS — IMMIGRANTS:

- arriving for independent employment in professions demanded in priority economic sectors
- engaged by employers to work in Kazakhstan, including intra-corporate transfers of employees.

2) BUSINESS — IMMIGRANTS:

immigrants arriving to engage in entrepreneurial activity in accordance with Kazakhstani legislation.

3) SEASONAL FOREIGN WORKERS:

immigrants recruited by employers for a period of no more than one year to perform seasonal work which, due to climatic or other natural conditions, is carried out during a specific period (season), in accordance with the list of professions approved by the authorised migration authority in coordination with the authorised state bodies responsible for the relevant areas of public administration.

4) LABOUR IMMIGRANTS:

immigrants arriving in the Republic of Kazakhstan as domestic workers for the purpose of performing work (rendering services) for individual employers in a household setting, on the basis of a permit issued to a labour immigrant.

Furthermore, in accordance with paragraphs 1, 3, and 4 of Article 97 and paragraph 1 of Article 98 of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan «[On the Ratification of the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union](#)» dated October 14, 2014, No. 240-V ZRK, «[employers and/or customers of work \(services\) of a member state shall have the right to engage workers of member states in labour activities without regard to restrictions on the protection of the national labour market. At the same time, workers of member states are not required to obtain a work permit in the state of employment](#)».

All of the aforementioned categories of labour migrants working in the Republic of Kazakhstan in accordance with migration legislation are classified [as temporary residents with varying periods](#) of lawful stay in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

For example, labour immigrants are provided with a temporary residence permit in the Republic of Kazakhstan for the duration of the employment contract concluded with the employer, which is generally one year. A temporary residence permit for the same period is also issued to the family members of the labour immigrant.

Labour immigrants (domestic workers) are entitled to enter into an employment contract with an individual for a period of three months, with the possibility of further extension of up to 12 months.

For all the categories of working foreign nationals, it is necessary to define the documents confirming the right of temporary residence in the Republic of Kazakhstan, which are to be submitted to the education authorities responsible for issuing the school referrals.



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II. Analysis of data collection

Data collection was conducted by the Public Foundation «Daris-2016»: (1) in the Martuk district, which is a border region — with the support of Border Service officers of the National Security Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan, who are long-standing partners of the Public Foundation «Daris-2016»; and (2) in the city of Aktobe.

The data collection involved specialists from district education departments, school principals and deputy principals, teachers, and parents of migrant student children.

Martuk District:	City of Aktobe:
● District Education Department; ● Zhaysan Secondary School; ● School No. 2 in Martuk village; ● Secondary School in Sarzhansay village; ● Sarzhansay Secondary Gymnasium.	● Aktobe City Education Department — teachers and education department specialists (administrative staff); ● School No. 25; ● School No. 28.

The data collection process comprised the following stages:

- 1 Pilot study;
- 2 Surveys / focus groups / interviews;
- 3 Requests for official administrative data.

1. Pilot Study

The main data collection was preceded by a pilot study — designed to ensure the high quality of the subsequent primary data collection by testing the data collection instruments, identifying possible shortcomings, making further adjustments, and verifying the adequacy of the human and administrative resources available for the data collection.

- ① The pilot study was conducted in the Martuk district and in the city of Aktobe, and involved parents of migrant children as well as teachers and school administrators.
- ② Based on the results of the pilot study, the data collection instruments were revised and refined.

2. Surveys / Focus Groups / Interviews

The response rate for the surveys / focus groups / interviews was 100%.

The obtained data confirmed the findings of the desktop research.

The data obtained through surveys/focus groups/interviews conducted in the Martuk District and the city of Aktobe confirmed and reinforced the findings of the desk research, with a response rate of 100% during the data collection.

Survey Analysis

The survey involved parents of migrant students and teachers. The analysis of the completed and returned questionnaires (28 parent questionnaires and 27 teacher questionnaires) reveals the following.

Parents' Opinions:

The majority of parents are not familiar with the procedures for enrolling foreign children in school in Kazakhstan:

Question	Yes	No	Difficult to say
Are you familiar with the procedures for enrolling foreign children in school in Kazakhstan?	8	18	0

The majority of parents noted a lack of explanatory outreach by the Education Department regarding their children's rights:

Question	Yes	No	Difficult to say
Does the Education Department carry out explanatory work to clarify your children's rights?	4	21	3

In relation to the suggestions regarding (1) simplifying the admission procedure for foreign children and (2) migrant parents' right to choose a school for their children, a number of comments were provided:

Simplifying admission procedures for foreign children	Migrant parents' right to choose a school for their children
«Documentation support from the school is needed». «Parents should ideally have access to a migration specialist for consultations, rather than having to visit all the relevant offices». «The list of required documents needs to be shortened and the process of admitting children to schools simplified». «Children need support with adaptation». «There is no guidance on school choice, so parents do not have the information they need». «A very large number of documents were requested, and the school year had already begun».	«There is a need for the ability to independently choose a school for our children». «Admission on a single-window principle would be preferable, enabling a child to be admitted to the nearest school without having to approach the district office, given that the school is far from home, there are no buses in the village, and children walk to school». «In many schools there are no places — a reserve should be created in local schools». «The school is in a different district, but every child has the right to study at the school closest to home».

Teachers' Opinions:

The teachers who participated in the survey have an average of 15–25 years of professional teaching experience.

Question	Yes	No	Difficult to say
Does the Education Directorate carry out explanatory work to clarify the rights of foreign children?	5	7	15
Are you familiar with the procedure for enrolling foreign children studying at the school?	10	17	0
Have you had occasion to enroll foreign children?	4	23	0

In relation to the suggestions for simplifying school admission procedures for foreign children, teachers noted the following:

Your proposals regarding the simplification of admission procedures for foreign children

- «Take into account the parents' preferences».
- «Simplify the registration procedure so that parents can register their children independently».
- «Carry out explanatory outreach».
- «An interview directly with the child would be preferable».
- «Russian language courses should be organised for foreign children».²

² During the interviews and the informal conversations with teachers and school principals, the view was also expressed that children of foreign nationals from Turkic-speaking countries understand spoken Kazakh but are unable to write in Cyrillic, as they use a different writing system. The teachers suggested introducing the additional classes for such children within schools.

This issue was discussed by the Public Foundation "Dáris-2016" with experts from the Ministry of Education on January 16, 2025, where it became apparent that the proposal is not feasible within the existing publicly funded supplementary education programmes. Fee-based classes may be offered where necessary.

Focus Groups Analysis

Focus Groups with Staff of Zhaysan General Secondary School:

- ① When asked whether they found contradictions in Clauses 1 and 2 of Chapter 1 «General Provisions», the majority of respondents answered in the affirmative, pointing to discrepancies in the terminology used for the categories of permanently residing and temporarily staying foreigners.
- ② When asked whether the document title corresponds to the content of Clause 2, Chapter 1, participants unanimously agreed that the title does not match the content and that amendments are needed.
- ③ When comparing Clauses 2 (Chapter 1) and 3 (Chapter 2), the following was identified: several categories of foreigners listed in Clause 2, Chapter 1 — consular officers, diplomatic staff, and labour migrants working in Kazakhstan - are absent from Clause 3, Chapter 2, while a new category — kandas — appears in the latter but not in the former.
- ④ When asked to explain the category of «labour migrants working in the Republic of Kazakhstan in accordance with migration legislation» (Clause 2, Chapter 1 of the Rules), respondents could not provide a definitive answer beyond the understanding that these are foreigners working in Kazakhstan. After being provided with reference information from the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan «On Population Migration», they concluded that there are many different categories of foreigners working in Kazakhstan, and that the required documents for each category need to be specified for submission to the education authorities.
- ⑤ All participants expressed disagreement with the provision that «when approaching the education authorities for school referrals, parents are not required to submit the child's educational documents (school reports or academic transcripts), which are submitted directly to the school». Participants held that the authority issuing the referral is obliged to review the student's educational documents — particularly since, if such documents are absent and this is discovered upon arrival at school with the referral, parents must return to the education department, which clearly prolongs the admission process and creates unnecessary difficulty for all parties.
- ⑥ Participants expressed unanimous agreement that, where applicant foreigners lack educational documents, the commission to determine the applicant's educational level should be established directly at the school, and this should be enshrined in the Rules.
- ⑦ Participants reached the view that the provision stating that «heads of educational organisations shall enrol children of foreigners and stateless persons in the appropriate year groups based on the level of education received abroad, in accordance with educational documents» does not reflect reality. It is impossible to accurately determine a child's level of knowledge from documents alone; an interview or testing of the applicant is necessary.

- ⑧ Regarding the «**successful socialisation of the child in the learning environment**» as a criterion for school admission, a shared view is that it is impossible to determine the future success of a child's socialisation at the time of first acquaintance. The socialisation success will be assessed over time by the psychologists and teachers working with the foreign student.
- ⑨ On the question of how school principals should proceed if Kazakhstani children constitute **less than 85% of a class** upon the admission of a foreign child, participants noted that this is not a problem characteristic of the Aktoke region, as the number of foreigners in schools and classes remains small.
- ⑩ On the question of the necessity and possibility of providing schooling for children of foreigners temporarily residing in Kazakhstan who are not classified as «**labour migrants**», participants stated that all foreign children should receive education, regardless of their parents' migration status.³
- ⑪ An additional proposal was put forward regarding the need to inform parents — where children hold the citizenship of a foreign state — about the legal requirements for timely documentation through the consular service of the child's state of citizenship, and to monitor the obtaining of passports upon reaching a certain age, for example, at the age of 14 in the case of Russian Federation citizenship.
- ⑫ In cases where children who do not speak the language of instruction or are unfamiliar with the Cyrillic alphabet are admitted to school, optional supplementary classes may be organised for children with limited proficiency in the language of instruction, not exclusively for foreign nationals.

«The level of knowledge of migrant children cannot be determined from documents alone; an interview or testing of the applicant is required».

Based on the outcomes of the conducted focus groups

«All children should have access to education, regardless of their migration status».

Based on the outcomes of the conducted focus groups

³. This issue was also discussed by the Public Foundation «Dáris-2016» with experts from the Ministry of Education on January 16, 2025, and a number of interesting proposals were received.

Regarding the requirement for foreign national children enrolled in school to obtain a temporary residence permit in the Republic of Kazakhstan, respondents from educational institutions expressed a unanimous view that this is not appropriate for schools to handle, as it falls within the purview of the parents.

- ⑬ Regarding the requirement for foreign national children enrolled in school to obtain a temporary residence permit in the Republic of Kazakhstan, respondents from educational institutions expressed a unanimous view that this is not appropriate for schools to handle, as it falls within the purview of the parents.
- ⑭ Children of foreign nationals are entitled to obtain a temporary or permanent residence permit in the Republic of Kazakhstan together with their parents and for the same period. When a foreign national's residence permit is being processed, their children should automatically receive one together with their parents.

Children of foreign nationals are entitled to obtain a temporary or permanent residence permit in the Republic of Kazakhstan together with their parents and for the same period. When a foreign national's residence permit is being processed, their children should automatically receive one together with their parents.

These matters will be discussed by experts of the Public Foundation «Dáris-2016» with specialists from the Migration Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan within the framework of a working group to which the Public Foundation «Dáris-2016» has been admitted.

Focus group with School Administrative Staff:

In response to the question «Do you find any contradictions (conflicts) in the content of Clauses 1 and 2 of Chapter 1 'General Provisions'? If so, which ones?» all participants responded affirmatively, noting unequivocally that Clause 1 states that the Rules «govern the procedure for obtaining pre-primary, primary, basic secondary, and general secondary education in educational institutions regardless of their form of ownership by foreign nationals and stateless persons permanently residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan», while Clause 2 additionally covers children of foreign nationals «temporarily residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan».

Similar responses followed in relation to the question of whether the title of the document corresponds to the content of Clause 2 of Chapter 1. Proposals were put forward to rename the document so that its title is not misleading — specifically, to remove the words «permanently residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan» or replace them with «certain categories of foreign nationals».

When comparing the content of Clause 2 of Chapter 1 and Clause 3 of Chapter 2 for consistency and correspondence, the following was identified: Clause 3 of Chapter 2 does not include a list of documents to be submitted by the following categories of parents: consular officials, employees of diplomatic missions, and labour migrants working in the Republic of Kazakhstan, while at the same time specifying documents to be submitted by kandas, a category not mentioned in Clause 2 of Chapter 1.

As in the previous focus group, when asked «How do you understand the category 'labour migrants working in the Republic of Kazakhstan in accordance with migration legislation' (Clause 2 of Chapter 1 of the Rules)?», respondents were unable to give a definitive answer and only concluded that this probably refers to foreign nationals working in Kazakhstan. They also found it difficult to answer the question «Which groups of foreign nationals working in the Republic of Kazakhstan may be included in this category?» and, having reviewed the reference material provided to them in the form of an extract from the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan «On Migration of the Population», concluded that there is considerable diversity among foreign nationals working in the Republic of Kazakhstan and that the required documents to be submitted to the education department need to be specified for each of these categories.

The provision stating that «when applying to the education authorities that issue school referrals, parents are not required to submit their children's educational documents (grade reports or a transcript of current marks), as these documents are submitted directly to the school» caused confusion, since the authority issuing the school referral has both the right and the need to review any available educational documents of the pupil. This is particularly relevant given that, should such documents be absent and this only come to light when the parents present themselves at the school with the referral issued by the education department, the parents would be required to return to the education department for an assessment of the pupil's level of knowledge — a process that clearly prolongs the enrolment procedure and creates unnecessary bureaucratic inconvenience for all parties involved.

In order to expedite the admission process for children of foreign nationals, amendments to the Rules are required. Paragraph 2 of Clause 7 states: «In the absence of educational documents, the city (district) education department shall form a commission to determine the educational level of the applicant in accordance with sub-paragraph 1-13) of clause 1 of Article 27 of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan 'On Local State Administration and Self-Government in the Republic of Kazakhstan' (hereinafter referred to as the Law)». In this regard, it is necessary to submit a proposal to the relevant local executive body for such commissions to be formed directly within schools, to be enshrined in accordance with the aforementioned article of the Law. In addition, discussion participant #1 proposed that commissions be composed of experienced educators, including retired teachers.

In response to the question «How do you understand the provision in Clause 7 of Chapter 2 that 'heads of educational institutions shall enrol children of foreign nationals and stateless persons into the appropriate classes based on the level of education obtained by them abroad, in accordance with educational documents'?», participants agreed that the best approach would be to conduct an interview with the child in order to assess whether their level of knowledge meets the criteria set out in the guidelines for comparing school curricula of foreign states and the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Regarding «the successful socialisation of the child in the learning environment» as a criterion for school admission, discussion participants agreed that it is impossible to assess the prospects for a child's successful future socialisation in the learning environment at the point of their initial contact with the school. Participant #2 added that psychologists assess the success of socialisation over a period of time and in a dynamic context. Participant #1 further noted that at a first meeting with a child, certain external indicators — such as tidiness, hygiene, attentiveness, and other observable behaviours — may suggest the possible presence of asocial tendencies, but that the success of socialisation in a learning environment cannot be determined at first glance.

When discussing the question «How should heads of educational institutions proceed if, upon admitting children of foreign nationals, the number of children who are citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan falls below 85% of the total class enrolment? How can such a situation be anticipated and avoided?», participants noted that education departments currently hold statistical data on the number of foreign children not only by school but also by class, making it possible to identify the schools and the classes where the proportion of foreign nationals is not particularly high. For the Aktobe region, an influx of foreign nationals with children of a magnitude that could affect the percentage balance in classrooms is not yet a problem; this may be more characteristic of the southern regions of the country.

Views on the necessity and feasibility of educating in schools the children of foreign nationals temporarily residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan who are not «labour migrants» converged on the position that all those wishing to study should be given the opportunity to do so, but that the form this should take is a matter for local executive bodies to decide. There is existing experience of providing supplementary language-of-instruction classes for children through so-called teaching assistants, who

are engaged on a fee basis not only for children of foreign nationals but also for citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan where necessary — for example, children who have returned from abroad.

In addition to the questions planned under the discussion guide, [proposals were put forward for improving statistics and the organisation of the education process for foreign nationals](#).

Upon a child's enrolment in school, it is necessary to verify the Kazakhstani citizenship of the parents, and where the parents hold different citizenships, to require the parents to undergo the established procedure for determining the citizenship of their children. Where children hold the citizenship of a foreign state, parents should be informed of the legal requirements for timely documentation through the consular service of the child's state of citizenship, and compliance with the requirement to obtain a passport upon reaching a certain age should be monitored — for example, at the age of 14 in the case of Russian Federation citizenship. There have been instances where high school male pupils were summoned before a conscription board, and it was found that some of them were not citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Where children who do not speak the language of instruction or are unfamiliar with the Cyrillic alphabet are admitted to school, [school charters should provide for the engagement, on a fee basis, of specialists proficient in the languages of the foreign national students being admitted](#).

The provision placing an obligation on educational institutions to obtain a temporary residence permit in the Republic of Kazakhstan for foreign national children enrolled in school is not appropriate for schools to fulfil, particularly given that it does not specify the duration for which the permit is to be issued ([Clause 3 of Article 6-1 «Obtaining a Temporary Residence Permit in the Republic of Kazakhstan» of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan «On Migration of the Population»](#)). Children of foreign nationals are entitled to obtain a temporary or permanent residence permit in the Republic of Kazakhstan together with their parents and for the same period. When a foreign national's residence permit is being processed, their children should automatically receive one together with their parents.

Interviews Analysis

A total of five interviews were conducted:

Three in the Martuk district, which — according to the regional education department — has the largest number of foreign children enrolled among all districts: 16.

In the city of Aktobe, the largest number of foreigners (13) study at School No. 25, which received particular attention.

«Aqbobek International School» enrolls 12 foreign students according to the regional education department; however, research was not conducted there as it is a private school and the principal declined to participate.

Interviews were conducted with the chief specialist of the district education department and with school principals and deputy principals. All interviewees have extensive professional experience — between 14 and 40 years of teaching experience, and between 1 and 19 years in their current positions. All have been involved in or have dealt with the enrolment of children in school, including foreign children.

All interviewees were familiar with the Rules and confirmed the inconsistencies and gaps in the Rules:

- ① The title of the document and Clause 1 of Chapter 1 indicate that these Rules were developed for foreign nationals and stateless persons permanently residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan, while the text subsequently introduces certain categories of temporarily residing foreign nationals.
- ② Parents of foreign children do not enjoy entirely the same rights as citizens of Kazakhstan when it comes to choosing a school for their children, in that in localities where more than one school exists, the school is chosen by the district education department. However, parental preferences regarding the choice of a school are taken into account — including on location and language of instruction.

- ③ The procedure established by the Rules for foreign nationals to obtain a school referral requires the submission to the city or district education department of documents confirming the legal migration status of the foreign national parents in the Republic of Kazakhstan, while educational documents ([grade reports or a transcript of current marks](#)) are not required at this stage — these are submitted by the parents directly to the school together with the referral from the education department. The education authorities issue the school referral in person within three working days of receiving the parents' application. The use of the term «[in person](#)» raises questions: if a family lives outside the district centre, at a considerable distance from it, who delivers the referral to them? In practice, referrals were issued to parents directly upon application, given the limited choice of schools — for example, where a locality has only two schools, one with Russian as the language of instruction and one with the state language, the referral is issued to one of the schools based on the parents' choice of language of instruction. All surveyed specialists expressed a unanimous view that in rural districts of the region, where the number of schools is small, distances from settlements to the district centre are vast, there is no public transport, and roads are poor, there is no need for referrals to be issued by the education department directly. In the regional centre, the city education department also takes into account parental preferences when issuing school referrals.
- ④ Where parents do not have their children's educational documents, or other difficulties arise in determining the level of education, they are required to reapply to the education department. In the absence of educational documents, the city ([district](#)) education department forms a commission to determine the educational level of the applicant in accordance with [sub-paragraph 1-13 of paragraph 1 of Article 27](#) of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan «On Local State Administration and Self-Government in the Republic of Kazakhstan».* However, the said article does not explicitly require such actions to be carried out, and the commission is formed from teachers working at the school rather than from education department specialists. All of this creates unnecessary bureaucratic delays in the process of enrolling children of foreign nationals in school. It would be more appropriate to conduct the assessment of the educational level of foreign children directly at the schools, by establishing such a procedure through a relevant normative act of the regional akimat in accordance with the aforementioned article.

[*Article 27. Competence of the Oblast Akimat, the Akimat of a City of National Significance, and the Capital](#)

[1. The akimat of an oblast, a city of national significance, or the capital, in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan: 1-13\) adopts normative legal acts ensuring the resolution of matters of local significance and the implementation of state policy within the relevant territory.](#)

- ⑤ Various problems arose in the course of enrolling children in school that affected the determination of the appropriate class for foreign children. These included poor proficiency in the language of instruction, which prevents a pupil from assimilating the curriculum at the level corresponding to their educational document; unfamiliarity with the Cyrillic alphabet among immigrants from countries using the Latin script; significant gaps in knowledge relative to the curriculum of the class indicated in the educational document; and periods of schooling effectively missed due to the actions of the parents — a matter that had been the subject of proceedings before the commission for the protection of minors' rights and resulted in placement in a class below the level indicated in the educational documents. All such issues come to light directly at the school, and it is therefore at the school level that the question of determining the educational level of foreign children should be resolved.

All interviewees consider that the Rules do not specify the required documents for all categories of foreigners listed therein. This can create problems with their children's admission to school. The category of «labour migrants working in the Republic of Kazakhstan in accordance with migration legislation» is not directly defined in migration legislation, and education staff cannot be expected to know which foreigners fall into this category or what residence documents they should hold.

Article 2 of the Rules lists the following categories of foreign nationals:

permanently residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as temporarily residing

refugees

asylum seekers

consular officials

employees of diplomatic missions

labour migrants

Article 3 of the Rules lists the following foreign nationals and the documents they are required to submit:

a foreign national — a foreign national's residence permit in the RK;

a stateless person — a stateless person's identity document;

a refugee — a refugee identity document;

an asylum seeker — an asylum seeker's certificate;

a kandas — a kandas identity document or a certificate issued by the migration authorities.

A comparison of the two provisions reveals a clear discrepancy. [Article 3 contains no information regarding the documents to be submitted by consular officials, employees of diplomatic missions, or labour migrants.](#) At the same time, new categories of foreign nationals have appeared — stateless persons and kandas — that are not mentioned in [Article 2](#). Furthermore, a permanent residence permit is not listed, despite the fact that there is a family whose children attend one of the rural schools while mother has not yet obtained a residence permit and holds only a permanent residence permit.

There is a considerable number of different categories of working foreign nationals in the Republic of Kazakhstan for whom no specification exists as to which documents they must submit when enrolling their children in school.

The results of interviews conducted by the Public Foundation «Daris-2016» showed that neither district education department staff nor school principals are aware of these categories of foreign nationals or of the residence documents to which they are entitled in the RK.

Despite the Rules having entered into force at the end of 2022, district education departments only began issuing school referrals in 2025, as education department specialists had not previously been informed of this requirement.

The interview results also demonstrated that heads of educational institutions, when enrolling children of foreign nationals and stateless persons, are unable to determine whether the level of education obtained abroad corresponds, on the basis of educational documents alone, to the appropriate class in their school. This can only be established through an interview or testing of the prospective pupil — a procedure not provided for in the Rules - or alternatively emerges in the course of the educational process itself, as does the success of the child's socialisation in the learning environment.

Almost all interview participants expressed the view **that the commissions for determining educational levels should be established directly at schools** as needed when foreign nationals apply for enrolment. Under the Rules, the commission tasked with assessing the educational level of a prospective pupil is formed by the city (district) education department only in the absence of educational documents.

Additional proposals were put forward regarding the improvement of language-of-instruction proficiency through optional supplementary classes, and the creation of favourable conditions for the socialisation of foreign nationals in the learning environment.

3. Requests for Official Administrative Data

The Public Foundation «Daris-2016» submitted official requests to the following government bodies:

Nº	Organisation	Response Received?
01.	Ministry of Education of the RK	No*
02.	State Institution «Education Department of the Aktoke Region»	Yes
03.	State Institution «Police Department of the Aktoke Region of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan»	Yes
04.	State Institution «Aktoke Regional Department for Employment Coordination and Social Programmes»	Yes

* The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan did not provide an official written response, but contacted the Public Foundation «Daris-2016» by telephone and subsequently organised an online working meeting, at which the issues of amendments and additions to the current legislation on secondary education for foreigners in Kazakhstan were examined in detail. Ministry representatives verbally confirmed that work on this matter has been under way since October 2025, i.e. from the time of the Public Foundation «Daris-2016»'s initial inquiry.

According to the data received from the Aktoke Regional Education Department, **58 migrant children are currently enrolled in educational organisations in the Aktoke region.** The majority attend schools in the city of Aktoke, as well as in the Kargaly and Martuk districts. The main flow of migrant children into the region comes from Uzbekistan, Russia, Tajikistan, the Republic of Korea, and Azerbaijan.

The Aktope Regional Education Department also notes that «Access to education for migrant children in the region is assessed according to the following key indicators:

availability of legal documents (in particular, birth certificates), which allow children to be officially registered and to access educational and other social services;

measures implemented to ensure equal access to pre-school, school, and supplementary education regardless of citizenship, migration status, or place of residence registration;

actual coverage by educational services — the share of migrant children who are not only registered but actually attend educational organisations;

provision of support and assistance in cases of missing documents, language barriers, and other obstacles to access education».

According to the response received from the Migration Service Directorate of the Police Department of the Aktope Region, «Under the current legislation, [statistical records are not kept regarding the presence of foreign children of pre-school age, those who have received legal assistance, those with knowledge of the state and official languages, relocants, and foreigners in need of access to educational services](#)».

«Within the framework of existing legislation, no statistical records are maintained in respect of foreign nationals of pre-school age who have received legal assistance, who speak the state and official languages, who are relocants, or who are in need of access to educational services».

Migration Service Directorate
of the Police Department of the
Aktope Region

According to the response received from the Police Department of the Aktope Region: «[In accordance with Article 10 of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan 'On the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals,' foreign nationals and stateless persons permanently residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan have equal rights with citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan to receive pre-primary, primary, basic secondary, and general secondary education in the manner established by the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the field of education](#)».

According to the data from the Aktobe Regional Department for Employment Coordination and Social Programmes, «in 2024, 78 families — comprising 106 ethnic Kazakhs, of whom 17 were minors -returned to their historical homeland and were granted kandas status in Aktobe Oblast. In addition, 13 Ukrainian citizens with refugee status reside in Aktobe Oblast, of whom 2 are minors».

Nº	Country of Origin	Total Number of Kandas	Of Whom Children Under 18
01.	Uzbekistan	85	17 (Aktobe city — 7, Kargaly district — 1, Alga district — 5, Mugalzhar district — 1, Martuk district — 3)
02.	Russia	11	—
03.	Turkmenistan	6	—
04.	Tajikistan	1	—
05.	Ukraine	1	—
06.	China (PRC)	1	—
07.	Kyrgyzstan	1	—
	Total	106	17

Nº	Country of Origin	Total Number of Refugees	Of Whom Children Under 18
01.	Ukraine	13	2 (Aktobe city — 1, Martuk district — 1)
	Total	13	2

OVERVIEW OF THE OBTAINED FACTUAL DATA

The in-depth two-stage situational analysis conducted by the experts of the Public Foundation «Daris-2016» identified a number of key factors impeding the education and educational integration of migrant children. [These barriers relate to the spheres of \(1\) migration policy, \(2\) labour policy, \(3\) education policy, and \(4\) language policy.](#)

At the same time, state language policy in Kazakhstan is implemented by the [Committee on Language Policy](#) — a body of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education — while migration policy is coordinated and implemented by the [Migration Service Committee of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the RK](#), which also handles citizenship and refugee matters.

Accordingly, the key factors identified can be summarised as follows, on the basis of their subject matter and in accordance with the responsibilities of the relevant government bodies:

№	Main Barriers to Migrant Children's Access to Education	Policy area and responsible ministries			
		Migra- tion Policy	Labour Policy	Educa- tion Policy	Lan- guage Policy
		MIA ⁴	MLSP	ME	MSHE ⁵
01.	Difficulties enrolling in school due to missing documents and/or registration	●		●	
02.	No or limited knowledge of the language of instruction			●	●
03.	Social isolation and/or discrimination in educational institutions			●	●

№	Main Barriers to Migrant Children's Access to Education	Policy area and responsible ministries			
		Migration Policy	Labour Policy	Education Policy	Language Policy
		MIA ⁴	MLSP	ME	MSHE ⁵
04.	Low family income in migrant families adversely affecting ability to provide school uniforms, educational materials, and supplementary tuition		●	●	●
05.	Insufficient legal awareness among parents/guardians of migrant children regarding their children's right to education	●		●	●
06.	Insufficient awareness among parents/guardians of migrant children about available educational services	●		●	●
07.	Rules and standards governing (1) school admission and (2) obtaining of pre-school through general secondary education contain gaps, conflicts, and inconsistencies with migration legislation	●	●	●	●
08.	Lack of consistency and clarity in the «Rules for Obtaining Pre-primary, Primary, Basic Secondary, and General Secondary Education by Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons Permanently Residing in the RK»	●		●	

⁴. Migration Service Committee of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan

⁵. Committee on Language Policy of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the RK

№	Main Barriers to Migrant Children's Access to Education	Policy area and responsible ministries			
		Migration Policy	Labour Policy	Education Policy	Language Policy
		MIA ⁴	MLSPP	ME	MSHE ⁵
09.	Gaps and lack of consistency and clarity in the «Standard Rules for Admission to Educational Institutions Implementing General Education Curricula of Primary, Basic Secondary, and General Secondary Education»	●		●	
10.	Absence of the term «labour migrants» in Kazakhstan's migration legislation	●	●		
11.	Within the framework of existing legislation, no statistical records are maintained in respect of foreign nationals of pre-school age who have received legal assistance, who speak the state and official languages, who are relocants, or who are in need of access to educational services ⁶	●	●	●	●
12.	Insufficient cooperation by school principals in Aktobe/Aktobe region in the research on migrant children's access to education	●		●	●

⁶. According to the data from the Migration Service Directorate of the Police Department of the Aktobe Region, provided in response to an official request from the Public Foundation «Daris-2016»

The identified barriers to access to education relate to different levels of decision-making:

- The political/legislative level: parliament, ministries, committees;
- The local government level: regional and district education departments;
- The level of educational institutions;
- The level of migrant families: parents and guardians of migrant children.

They may also be categorised according to the groups of key beneficiaries they focus on:

- Migrant children;
- Migrant families;
- Educational institutions;
- Local authorities and government agencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION MAKING

I. Workshop on Defining an Advocacy Method

Within the framework of the project, and with the aim to build the effective advocacy approach, the workshop «[Planning the Advocacy Campaign Based on the developed Policy Brief and White Paper](#)» was held on 22 July 2025 in the city of Aktobe by the Public Foundation «[Daris-2016](#)», with the support of IWPR and the Public Foundation «[INIDI](#)».

The workshop was held with the participation of the partner organisations of the Public Foundation «[Daris-2016](#)», the education department representatives, the human rights ombudsperson, the media ([Rika TV](#), the «[AQTÓBE](#)» newspaper, the «[Aktubinsky Vestnik](#)» newspaper, and others), journalists, and experts capable of advancing the subject of the research. The workshop included an in-depth stakeholder analysis, identification of potential risks, and the formulation of key messages for different target audiences.

The primary goal of the workshop was to determine the advocacy strategies and methods, to plan the expected outcomes, and to develop the realistic and structured steps for implementing the recommendations developed on the basis of the policy brief/white paper.

The workshop resolved to pursue the targeted direct engagement with the government bodies by the Public Foundation «[Daris-2016](#)» as the primary advocacy method, entailing the direct submission of requests to government bodies by the Public Foundation «[Daris-2016](#)». This advocacy method corresponds best to the objectives of the study.

One of the positive outcomes of the workshop was also the Ministry of Education's decision to include Gulnur Idigeeva ([project manager](#)) and Natalia Iskhakova ([project legal expert](#)) — as key project implementers, in the Ministry of Education's Working Group for the development of the «[Children of Kazakhstan](#)» Concept. Within this activity, the recommendations developed as a result of the current research will be considered and implemented — for example, the law enforcement practice in relation to the identified gaps, conflicts, and inconsistencies.

«Targeted engagement by the Public Foundation 'Daris-2016' with the state authorities has been identified as the primary advocacy method».

Based on the Workshop outcomes

On January 16 2026, an online working meeting was held by the Public Foundation «Daris-2016» experts with the representatives of the Ministry of Education of Kazakhstan on improving foreigners' access to education. The following two blocks of issues were examined: (1) the issues that can be resolved at local level; (2) the amendments and additions to the current Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 468 dated 28 September 2010.

The experts of the Ministry of Education suggested to establish a permanent working group to develop proposals for improving the legislation governing secondary education for foreigners in Kazakhstan, with the inclusion of the representatives of the MIA Migration Service, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population, other relevant authorities (as needed), and NGOs' specialists. The experts of the Public Foundation «Daris-2016» expressed their readiness and interest in participating in this group, drawing on their extensive experience in submitting proposals for amendments to the existing legislation and in developing the new laws.

International Advocacy

The successful international advocacy conducted by the Public Foundation «Daris-2016» in the context of this study has become one of the project's main achievements.

In particular, Gulnur Idigeeva, project manager, presented the Kazakhstan's Alternative Report for the UN Human Rights Committee in Geneva ([June 24, 2025](#)) and spoke in Warsaw at the International Conference on the Human Dimension ([October 13–15, 2025](#)) where she engaged the international professional community in discussion of migrant children's access to education in the Aktope region of Kazakhstan and in Kazakhstan in general, noting that Kazakhstan is currently failing to fulfil one of the objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration — the collection and use of accurate, disaggregated data.

The successful international advocacy has enabled the implementation of the recommendations put forward by the Public Foundation «[Daris-2016](#)» and the improvement of access to education for migrant children not only [in the Aktope region of Kazakhstan](#), but in the [Republic of Kazakhstan in general](#).

Closing Round Table on Project Results



II. Recommendations Based on the Selected Advocacy Method

On the basis of the factual data obtained from the comprehensive and rigorous data collection conducted by the Public Foundation «[Daris-2016](#)», it has become possible to develop the recommendations for the evidence-based decision making.

Since the subject matter under examination is at the intersection of four policy areas — migration, labour, education, and language — the effective implementation of the recommendations will require close cooperation among the authorities responsible for migration, labour, education, and language policies.

Legislative-Level Recommendations

Ministries and Committees are recommended to consider introducing the following amendments:

Amendments to the «[Rules for Obtaining Pre-primary, Primary, Basic Secondary, and General Secondary Education by Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons Permanently Residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan](#)» to eliminate conflicts and gaps, and to bring them into conformity with migration legislation;

Amendments to the «[Standard Rules for Admission to Educational Organisations Implementing General Educational Curricula for Primary, Basic Secondary and General Secondary Education](#)» to eliminate conflicts and gaps, to bring them into conformity with migration legislation and with the «[Rules for Obtaining Pre-primary, Primary, Basic Secondary, and General Secondary Education by Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons Permanently Residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan](#)»;

Consideration of a proposal for the temporary registration of migrant children and the issuance of temporary residence permits jointly with their parents: Law «[On Population Migration](#)», Article 6-1: Obtaining a Permit for Temporary Residence in the Republic of Kazakhstan.⁷

⁷ Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan «On Migration of the Population» dated July 22, 2011, No. 477-IV; Article 6-1. Obtaining a Temporary Residence Permit in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

A temporary residence permit shall be issued on the basis of applications from: 3) educational institutions implementing educational programmes of general secondary, technical and vocational, post-secondary, higher, and postgraduate education, including through organised student exchange programmes and preparatory courses, that have enrolled immigrants in a full-time form of study;

Recommendations for the Migration Service Directorate of the Police Department of the Aktobe Region

Consider making it mandatory to provide foreigners arriving with minor children with an explanation of the procedure for obtaining temporary and permanent residence permits for their children.

Recommendations for Regional and District Education Departments

Ensure adequate legal awareness among parents/guardians of migrant children regarding their children's right to education — through consultations and explanatory outreach activities for migrant families (parents/guardians);

Organise consultancy activities for teachers to inform them of the procedures for enrolling foreign children in schools in Kazakhstan;

Develop measures to support migrant children in their adaptation, as well as methods for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of these measures;

Conduct informational events for parents/guardians on the selection of schools for their children;

Ensure the active cooperation of private schools' principals in Aktobe/Aktobe region in the ongoing research on migrant children's access to education — through communication about the importance of such research and its goals and objectives.

The implementation of the developed recommendations will ensure: (1) for local authorities and education departments — a better understanding of the problems and needs of migrant communities, and consequently the development of more effective support strategies and programmes; (2) for educational institutions — improved inclusivity and engagement with migrant children, resulting in a higher quality education process; (3) for migrant families - effective adaptation and advocacy for their children's interests, as a result of access to more detailed information about their rights and the available services and opportunities for their children.

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14. Order «On the Approval of the Rules for Issuing Permits for Temporary and Permanent Residence in the Republic of Kazakhstan to Foreigners and Stateless Persons» of the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 992 dated 4 December 2015. Registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan on 20 January 2016
15. Order «On the Distribution of Functions between Education Management Bodies» of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan No.553 dated 29 December 2020
16. Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 148 dated 21 January 2012 on the Approval of the Rules on the Entry and Stay of Immigrants in the Republic of Kazakhstan, and their Departure from Kazakhstan
17. Resolution of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated 8 June 1994 «On the Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child»
18. Rules for Obtaining Pre-primary, Primary, Basic Secondary, and General Secondary Education by Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons Permanently Residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan, approved by Order No. 468 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated 28 September 2010
19. Standard Rules for Admission to Educational Institutions Implementing General Education Curricula of Primary, Basic Secondary, and General Secondary Education approved by Order No. 564 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated 12 October 2018
20. The Press Service of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan: Migration Policy Concept 2023-2027 approved by Kazakhstan Government (2022)
21. UNICEF. Migrant Children: Enhancing Protection Systems (2019)