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Article

Geography Matters: Explaining Education Inequalities of Latvian Children in England

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Abstract
This article explores the issue of "geography of education" focusing on the pivotal contribution of place to one's education. The geographic location of schools and the administrative organisation of local authorities that are responsible for state schools in England create sociospatial inequalities that are associated with individual life-course trajectories and can contribute to the intergenerational transfer of disadvantage. This article focuses on Latvian migrant families for whom better status often can be achieved through being included in the education system of the country. Therefore, the educational achievement of the children who speak Latvian at home but live and attend schools in England is the main focus of this article. The academic attainment of these children is well below not only the national average across all levels of compulsory education but also compared to both monolingual English speakers and all pupils speaking English as an additional language. The article provides evidence that in addition to the sociodemographic individual and family-level factors geography also plays a significant role in explaining the educational achievement gaps. As the descriptive quantitative analysis of the geographical and educational data indicates, Latvian children are disproportionally present in local authorities where there is a relatively high proportion of low-quality schools, a higher-than-average proportion of individuals with low qualifications and those in low-qualified jobs.

Keywords
educational inequalities; geography of education; intergenerational; Latvian; migration; socio-spatial context

Issue
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1. Introduction

This article is positioned in the field of "geography of education" (Taylor, 2009) and contributes to the interdisciplinary field of sociology and geography and a long-standing discussion about the unequal geographical distribution of resources and social positions. I focus on the pivotal role that location plays in education by restricting or opening personal opportunities and thus contributing to the intergenerational transfer of disadvantage. The socio-spatial inequalities are particularly important for children because the location of their home and school links to their family circumstances and directly impacts their schooling experiences, which at least partially determine their life courses.

This article focuses on Latvian migrant families and the relatively low educational achievement of their children (Strand, et al., 2015) and considers the role of geography in explaining these educational inequalities. Education is of special significance for families who have migrated to a new country because status and position often are gained through the inclusion in—or exclusion from—the education system of the country. However, families and schools have access to unequally distributed resources as they are located in specific geographic places and, as McAreavey and Argent (2018), suggest whilst arguing for the importance of context in explaining the uneven nature of migrant social inclusion, neither is a "place powerless" nor is "power placeless." Focusing on the characteristics of schools and local authorities

in England with a high number of children who speak Latvian at home, I explore the power of place. In the context of England where educational resources are redistributed at a local municipality level and the pupil's distance from school is one of the primary means of school allocation, it is not only who the parents are and what they do (Melhuish et al., 2008; Sylva et al., 2004), but also where they live that may create and maintain educational inequalities.

2. Theoretical and Empirical Context

2.1. Educational Achievement of Children Who Use English as an Additional Language

Twenty-one percent of primary and 17% of secondary pupils in England were identified as using English as an additional language (EAL; DfE, 2021). There are large regional differences in the number of pupils who use EAL. For example, in London, 44% of pupils used EAL in 2020–2021, the most of any region in England, whereas just 7% of school students spoke EAL in North East England. There is a considerable amount of research to show that some young people who speak EAL have a sizable risk that can harm their development of literacy skills and academic achievement (Alsford et al., 2017; Hoff, 2013; Strand et al., 2015) without appropriate support and understanding of their circumstances and need.

A lot of existing research considers the factors that may explain the educational outcomes of children who use EAL. Some researchers draw attention to individual-level factors such as the age of the child, their ethnicity, the subject of the exam taken, or the age at which the child came to England. All of these factors are commonly associated with English language proficiency among migrant children and their families (Demie, 2018; Hessel & Strand, 2021; Hutchinson, 2018; Strand et al., 2015; Whiteside et al., 2017). However, the EAL group is very diverse not only in their first language, ethnicity, and age of arrival, but also in their family settings and their life experiences. Therefore, some other researchers focus on family-level factors, such as socioeconomic circumstances or parental involvement (Arnot et al., 2014; Murphy & Unthiah, 2015; Schneider & Arnot, 2018).

Furthermore, other researchers focus on the role of schools in explaining the differences in academic achievement. As research shows, the quality of a school plays a role in children's academic achievement (Bramley & Karley, 2007; Dearden et al., 2002; Leckie, 2009; Mangan et al., 2010). There is research evidence that children of ethnic minorities and migrants may attend lower-quality schools which in turn impact their attainment (Dustmann et al., 2008; Kingdon & Cassen, 2007). However, Strand's (2010) study provided no evidence of differential school effectiveness concerning ethnic groups.

The quality of school education in England varies greatly, even in state schools and this discrepancy affects both the academic achievement of students and their future educational prospects and choices, as well as their behaviour, safety, and well-being. Admission to a state school, whether primary or secondary, in England, is based on the "closest school" principle, which takes into account the distance from the school to home, and about half of the children attend the school closest to their house (Burgess et al., 2005). Many parents consider the quality of schools and the distance to the best school as the most important factor when buying a home or moving to a new place (Wilkins, 2010). This educational system creates and maintains class-specific local "circuits of schooling" (Ball et al., 1996) where schools often reflect the social composition of catchment areas (Webber & Butler, 2007) and strengthen existing educational outcome differences between social classes. In this context, opportunities for families who use EAL and their children are both enabled and constrained by spatial constructs (e.g., housing patterns, transport, social networks) that demonstrate the necessity of the spatial analysis of "lived" educational experiences (Ball et al., 1998).

There are differences in educational provision, access, and attainment in England across a variety of spatial scales from the regional to the local (Ball, 2018; Hamnett & Butler, 2011), and there is a need to talk about the geography of education in addition to already existing research geography of health and welfare (Bywaters et al., 2016). The nature of the "local" in England is complex and the structure of the English school system has been changing almost continuously since the 1980s. The present governance system is a mix of national, local, and school-level players. Although "local management of schools" instituted by the 1988 Education Reform Act has now changed, the local authorities with responsibilities for state education continue playing an important role to warrant accountability and responsiveness to the local circumstances of individual schools and communities (Woods & Simkins, 2014).

A much smaller number of studies has looked at the broader geographic locality context of the pupils who use EAL, although there is some evidence to show that it is a key moderator for educational outcomes for this group (Strand et al., 2015) but that regional disparities are shaping achievement chances for all young people as well (Allen et al., 2016; Allison, 2018; Gibbons & Vignoles, 2012). Moreover, research on so-called new immigration destinations (NIDs) demonstrates uneven social inclusion of migrants (McAreavey & Argent, 2018), particularly in less-diverse disadvantaged rural areas. Many migrant families live in precarious positions characterised by low wages, increased job insecurity, mobility, and flexibility as they face discrimination and unequal access to employment rights and have fewer social networks. Here, a family's socioeconomic circumstances are often interrelated with spatial dimensions of education and locality (Webber & Butler, 2007) which can produce an amplifying intergenerational effect.

Therefore, this study uses a contextualised, regional approach to understanding the experiences of EAL young

people to recognise the importance of the geographical location as migrants tend to settle in specific areas, and children migrate together with their parents. Migrant children's opportunities are shaped by the geography of migration of their parents and by the geography of opportunities that the locality has on offer. Not only the parental characteristics but their migration and geographical positioning influence the opportunities and educational outcomes for their children. "Geography matters" (Massey et al., 1984) for children, young people, and their families.

2.2. Geography of Education and Opportunities

There is a longstanding argument in social research that there is an unequal distribution of welfare based on one's locality. For example, Smith (1974) maintained that housing, health, education, and other forms of social provision are geographically inequitably distributed. Bringing the exploration of geographical reality into social research and integrating it with sociological or economist research approaches allows noticing that space is endogenous to the socio-economic processes and is uneven as it is produced by them (Sheppard, 1990). As Soja (1980, p. 211) argued, "social and spatial relations are dialectically inter-reactive, interdependent."

Economists, Plummer and Sheppard (2006) further expand the conversation about a socio-spatial dialectic when looking at social and spatial structural constraints on agents and their interdependencies. In this socio-spatial ontological tradition, represented in this article but adapted for a sociological focus, the relationship is twofold: Not only do people create and maintain spaces by engaging in collective action, but the preferences and behaviours of individual people are shaped by their socio-spatial position, the social structures, and the cultural context in which they find themselves. Social research therefore must consider how space may be linked to social processes and how geographical unevenness (Sheppard, 2002) and differences in the relative location of individuals can be crucial to the opportunities available and the outcomes for individuals (Tate, 2008). The power of place impacts our ability to choose what activities to engage in and what lives to live and, therefore, without an analysis of a geographical context or place, no research on educational inequality can be comprehensive.

Research on education at the level of community and neighbourhood is not new. As Taylor (2009) suggests, the exploration of space and place has been at the heart of UK educational research for a long time, including studies not only on the role of education and curriculum development in nation-building but also on the role of geographical locality in territorial justice and educational governance at the level of local authorities.

The work of Scottish sociologist Catherine Garner provides evidence for the essential role residential location plays, in addition to family factors, in shaping the educational attainment of young people. The power of place demonstrated in Garner's study of neighbourhood factors and educational achievement in Glasgow is striking:

> A school leaver with an advantaged home background living in an advantaged area has a 70 percent probability of qualifying, whereas a school leaver with a disadvantaged home background living in a disadvantaged area has only a 3 percent probability. (Garner, 1988, p. 248)

Garner's research suggests that policies and any action to alleviate educational disadvantage cannot be focused solely on schools or families but must include initiatives and interventions in immediate localities and the broader society (see Garner, 1988; Garner et al., 1987).

The UK geographical-education research explored a wider variety of issues ranging from the relationship between educational attainment and neighbourhood (Garner & Raudenbush, 1991) to school choice (Taylor & Gorard, 2001) and the impact of the regional governance of education on territorial justice (Rees et al., 2007). Most recently, Karyda and Jenkins (2018) suggested that living in a high-crime area is linked with an increase in the odds of a young person not being in employment or education (NEET).

There has also been some criticism about the inconclusive findings of neighbourhood effects research (van Ham et al., 2012) suggesting that this field needs to break away from the "tyranny" of neighbourhood (Petrović et al., 2020) and arguing for broadening and diversifying the understanding of localities for more nuanced approaches (Galster, 2012; Sampson et al., 2002) to bring the wider sociospatial context of people into social research. Petrović et al. (2020) advocate exploring microgeographic data to operationalise the concept as well as adding some temporal dimensions to explore what shapes individual outcomes across multiple scales and geographies.

While most researchers agree that the life opportunities of young people can be predicted by the characteristics of their neighbourhood (Sampson, 2017) there is still a debate about whether the neighbourhood effects are causal or if they reflect a selection of families with different characteristics in different neighbourhoods (Sampson et al., 2002). The most recent contribution to the debate was made by Belsky et al. (2019) providing evidence for modest genetic selection for poor educational outcomes. Therefore, neighbourhood effects should not be interpreted in purely causal terms as people are not found in localities randomly; people end up living in their neighbourhoods selectively. Belsky et al. (2019) suggest that poor education could be a more proximate cause of economic circumstances that then determine where families can live. This is even more pertinent in the case of the migrant population that often chooses to live where jobs and established social

networks are but, as NIDs research suggests (McAreavey & Argent, 2018), are also categorised by disadvantage, discrimination, and social exclusion.

Integrating geography and sociology of education, and most recently genetics, approaches allows separating individual, home, school and neighbourhood contributions to education outcomes and the research suggests that neither individuals and families nor schools are independent of their geographical location. However, in no way do I want to argue that family factors do not have any power beyond the location that families choose or are forced to live in and where perhaps most of the education happens outside school. Nevertheless, even this position warrants considering localities as schools, families, and children are a part of geographical neighbourhoods.

This article brings the sociology of education and geography together (Taylor, 2009) and is concerned with the spatial dimension by focusing on educational inequalities within localities. Additionally, this study considers the time dimension to bringing intergenerational aspects of space to explore the educational achievement of migrant children in England. There is a significant number of studies that focus on school characteristics, and parents' circumstances, but there is a paucity of studies that look at micro geographical data to explore the socio-spatial context. This study addresses it by combining National Pupils Database (NPD) data with data on schools, census data, and English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMDs).

3. Methodological Approach

I use different administrative datasets to explore educational outcomes and the socio-spatial context of families and children who are exposed to the Latvian language at home and who attend state-maintained schools in England. The first is the NPD, which is an administrative set of data on all pupils in state schools in England collected by the Department of Education. This database contains information on pupils' sociodemographic characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, first language and special educational needs, as well as the results of pupils' standardised tests and examinations at various stages of education. The NPD dataset is suitable for research in the field of education because, unlike surveys, which represent a sample of students, it includes all students in state schools at any given moment. I combine this individual-level dataset with school census data that contains aggregated data at the school level, the average values of the exam results and the characteristics of the school (school size, type, etc.). Unfortunately, there is no information on family sociodemographic characteristics, so in this analysis, I only use the NPD data to look at the educational outcomes and spatial distribution in terms of schools and local authorities that are responsible for state education. As the NPD data contains administrative codes only for the local authorities with responsibility for state education in the analysis, I included 152 local authorities out of 333. England has several tiers of local government and the relevant local education authority type and geographical area under its jurisdiction varies as education in the UK is a devolved matter with each of the countries having separate systems under separate governments, the NPD data limits the analysis to the pupils attending state schools in England as Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.

In England, there is a special term for children who may use another language when they are outside school. These are identified as "children with English as an additional language," that is, these children come from an environment where they are exposed to another language but are educated in English. Until 2008, the NPD database contained only information on whether English was the first language; from 2008 onwards, schools must record the actual first language of the pupils. These changes make it possible to identify children with Latvian as their home language (LLH). This approach, of course, has its limitations. This approach underestimates the number of children that are exposed to the Latvian language at home as the dataset records only self-identified responses and there could be unobservable patterns of families self-selecting themselves into EAL or non-EAL groups. Therefore, this can potentially bias the full picture of where this group of children is located geographically. Moreover, I only had access to the individual data for the children who identified LLH and for the other language-based groups I only had aggregated data. Despite these limitations, these data are still valuable for the study of migrant children and young people and their educational outcomes in specific socio-spatial contexts as well as their integration into the English education system and localities.

The second database is an administrative data set containing the results of inspections by the Ofsted. The Ofsted inspects schools and other educational establishments to assess school performance and standards in terms of school management, pupil development and well-being, the quality of learning and teacher work, the implementation of the curriculum, and the care and support provided by schools.

As the third source of information, I use a database containing the English Deprivation Indices for 2015, which describes the level of relative prosperity in English municipalities. In total, there are seven main indices covering income, employment, health, crime, education, housing, and the living environment, and one general composite index. Each field has its number of points and ranks. In addition, two indices have been developed focusing on children and the elderly. I use both the education index and the financial disadvantage children-related index. The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) measures the proportion of children aged 0 to 15 in families living in financial deprivation (e.g., receiving unemployment benefits, jobseeker/unemployment benefits, recipients of needy benefits, etc.). The Education Skills and Training

Deprivation Index demonstrates the lack of attainment and skills in the local population.

Finally, I use national census data for 2011 to look at the broader social context in localities with a high number of Latvian children.

4. Findings

4.1. Numbers and Attainment

According to the data of the Latvian Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (PLMP), as of 1 July 2015, 49,137 Latvian citizens lived in Great Britain, although the PLMP registers only those Latvian citizens who have officially informed them about their place of residence. The Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimated that around 100,000 Latvian citizens lived in the UK in 2015. The Workers Registration Scheme in England shows that between May 2004 and April 2011, 79,754 Latvian nationals registered to work in England. However, these data do not include any information on the length of stay. Self-employed individuals were also not required to register through the scheme. The National Insurance data show that in the period from January 2004 to June 2015, 161,994 Latvian citizens were registered. This dataset does record all individuals entering the UK for work purposes, including both students and the self-employed, but again the data do not show whether these individuals stayed in the UK permanently. Finally, UK 2011 census showed that 31,523 English residents indicated Latvian as their first language and 54,669 English residents indicated Latvia as their place of birth and 90% of them came to England from 2004 to 2011.

All these data show the general trends of migration of Latvian nationals to the UK, mostly England, but they mainly include adults. However, migration often affects entire families and many children come with their parents or are born in England. Table 1 shows both the changes in the number of children with LLH and, for comparison, the numerical trends of all children who use EAL in the period from 2008 to 2015. Overall, the number of pupils speaking EAL has almost doubled. In the 2014–2015 school year, more than a million children (17.3%) who used EAL were enrolled in state schools in England. However, the proportion of LLH has increased even more significantly; it has increased tenfold, from 739 in the 2008–2009 school year to 7388 in the 2014–2015 school year.

Table 1 also shows that the number of pupils using LLH is higher in primary schools than in secondary schools, which to an extent may relate to migration patterns as well as to integration or assimilation trends. By scrutinising the distribution of the number of pupils who have LLH by class and age in the 2014–2015 school year, it can be seen that the number of these pupils in secondary school classes is almost unchanged, indicating smaller migration trends among this age group. In primary school, on the other hand, this number is increasing with each subsequent grade, indicating that some children arrive in primary school.

A higher number in primary school could be because families with pre-school-aged children could be more likely to migrate. Then families with younger children who are just starting school and have recently arrived in the country might be more likely to use and report LLH. The difference between primary and secondary school can also be partly explained by the fact that data is often updated and checked during the transition from primary to secondary school, and children and families who identify LLH in primary school have an opportunity to switch to another identifier in secondary school. Moreover, secondary schools encourage identifying the pupil's primary or home language after a conversation with them, whereas in primary schools more often it is the parents who decide about the home language identification in the school paperwork.

Similarly to the recent studies of children who speak EAL (Demie, 2018; Strand et al., 2015) this NPD data

Table 1. Pupils with LLH between 2008–2015 (only state-funded schools included).

	Primary phase (4–11 years old)				Secondary phase (12–18 years old)				Total			
	All EAL		LLH		All EAL		LLH		All EAL		LLH	
Year	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2007	447,650	13.5	271	0.06	342,140	10.5	106	0.03	789,790	12.2	378	0.05
2008	470,080	14.4	474	0.10	354,300	10.8	265	0.07	824,380	12.9	739	0.09
2009	491,340	15.2	689	0.13	362,600	11.1	404	0.11	853,940	13.5	1,093	0.12
2010	518,020	16.0	1,235	0.23	378,210	11.6	610	0.15	896,230	14.1	1,845	0.19
2011	547,030	16.8	2,221	0.38	399,550	12.3	1,024	0.25	946,580	14.9	3,245	0.33
2012	577,555	17.5	3,225	0.53	417,765	12.9	1,457	0.33	995,320	15.6	4,682	0.45
2013	612,160	18.1	4,046	0.62	435,150	13.6	1,714	0.38	1,048,310	16.2	5,760	0.52
2014	654,405	18.7	4,691	0.68	455,205	14.3	2,009	0.42	1,109,610	16.6	6,700	0.57
2015	693,815	19.4	5,137	0.74	477,286	15.0	2,251	0.47	1,171,101	17.3	7,388	0.63

Source: NPD data 2008–2015.

analysis (Table 2) shows that children who use LLH have on average lower attainment in secondary school compared to English monolingual and other children who speak EAL. At the end of the Reception, only 31% of children who have LLH reach a good level of development compared to 63% of pupils with English as their first language (FLE) and 53% of all pupils who use EAL. Looking at the odds ratio, it can be concluded that the chances of children who use LLH achieving a good level of development are 0.26 (or 74%) lower compared to those students who have FLE and 0.40 (or 60%) lower compared to all students who speak EAL. It would be expected that, at the very end of the first school year, children who do not speak English at all or use it relatively little at home may score lower on standardised school tests. What is surprising, even compared to other EAL children, is that Latvian-speaking children achieve much lower results.

Overall, the difference between pupils who use EAL and FLE disappears over time in the educational system. At the end of school, this difference is almost imperceptible. However, the difference between Latvian children and FLE does not change much over their schooling time. It decreases in Key Stage 2, but then comes back at the end of primary school and continues into the GCSE stage. It is important to note that the differences are slightly smaller in mathematics than in English language exams, which could indicate that some of the low academic achievements of Latvian-speaking children are related to English language skills.

4.2. School Characteristics

To investigate the attainment of children who are exposed to the Latvian language at home, as previous research identified (Dustmann et al., 2008; Kingdon & Cassen, 2007), it is important to look at the schools they attend. As Table 3 shows, children who have LLH are more likely to attend schools with an average higher number of pupils, which can be explained by the fact that many Latvian families have mostly settled in urban environments, where schools tend to be larger. These schools also tend to be more diverse and have a larger number of other children who use EAL and have a lower proportion of White British pupils and a higher proportion of other White pupils. These schools have higher than average proportions of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and are eligible for free school meals (FSM), which indicates financial difficulties for their families. Looking at the quality of schools that the LLH children attend, it can be concluded that the attainment across all school phases and subject areas is lower than the national average based on the results of the national examinations. Moreover, the Ofsted inspection outcomes regarding the overall effectiveness also indicate lower quality for primary and secondary schools attended by Latvian children compared with the national average level.

4.3. Socio-Spatial Context

To investigate the social inclusion of pupils with LLH in the English education system, it is important to analyse the socio-spatial context of their geographical location. As can be seen from Table 4, most Latvian pupils attend schools in the East Midlands, Yorkshire, and the Humber and the East of England. These areas are not the typical regions with a large number of pupils who use EAL, such as Greater London or the West Midlands. However, as has been noted earlier, the schools that Latvian pupils are more likely to attend have a higher-than-average proportion of children who speak EAL.

Table 2. Standardised assessment results between 2014–2015 (only state-funded schools included).

Age	Phase	Subject	Measure	FLE (A)	EAL (B)	LLH (C)	Odd ratio (C vs A)	Odds ratio (C vs B)
5	Early years	Reading	At least expected level	76%	66%	43%	0.24	0.39
		Maths	At least expected level	76%	68%	48%	0.29	0.43
		Overall	Good level of Development (GLD)	63%	53%	31%	**0.26**	**0.40**
7	Key Stage 1	Reading	Level 2A+	59%	50%	45%	0.57	0.82
		Writing	Level 2A+	41%	36%	36%	0.81	1
		Maths	Level 2A+	54%	48%	51%	0.89	1.13
11	Key Stage 2	Reading	Level 4B+	80%	72%	46%	0.21	0.33
		Maths	Level 4B+	76%	75%	64%	0.56	0.59
16	Key Stage 4	English	GCSE A* -C	69%	65%	37%	0.26	0.32
		Maths	GCSE A* -C	71%	72%	53%	0.46	0.44
		Overall	GCSE 5+ A* -C, incl. English and Maths	61%	58%	30%	**0.27**	**0.31**

Source: NPD data 2014, 2015.

Table 3. State-funded schools with LLH in England, 2015.

	Schools with LLH		Schools without LLH		All schools in England	
	Primary schools (N = 2,047)	Secondary schools (N = 740)	Primary schools (N = 14,719)	Secondary schools (N = 2,047)	Primary schools (N = 16,766)	Secondary schools (N = 3,381)
Average pupil number	362	1,013	256	922	269	942
FSM %	20.9	18.6	13.5	13.7	14.5	14.8
EAL %	28.3	21.8	12.7	12.6	14.6	14.6
White British %	59.4	65.3	77.2	74.3	75.1	72.4
White Other %	9.9	6.9	4.3	3.8	4.9	4.5
Ofsted inspection outcome						
1: Outstanding	11.3	11.6	18.4	24.3	17.6	21.5
2: Good	64.7	50.9	64.4	50.2	64.4	50.4
3: Satisfactory	21.0	29.0	15.7	20.2	16.4	22.2
4: Inadequate	3.0	8.5	1.5	5.2	1.6	5.9
Primary schools: Achieve age-related expectations in reading. writing. and maths (all)	61.7		66.8		66.1	
Secondary schools: 5+ GCSE A*-C. incl. English and maths		50.7		59.4		57.4
English (reading)	73.3	70.3	77.9	73.6	77.4	72.9
Maths	72.2	61.6	74.9	68.0	74.6	66.5

Source: Spring School census data March 2015.

The map of local governments in England (see Figure 1) allows the visualisation of the geographical location of children who are exposed to the Latvian language at home with darker areas having a higher number of pupils with LLH. This demonstrates that although Latvian families live in most areas of England, they are more likely to settle in specific geographical areas.

A more detailed analysis of English local authorities with more than 100 LLH students (Table 5) shows that in the 2014–2015 school year 8% of all these pupils attended schools in Lincolnshire, 6% in Northampton, 5% in Peterborough, and 4% in Kent. The main economic sector of all these municipalities is the processing industry and agriculture, which also attracts large

Table 4. Pupils with LLH in the English education system per region, 2015.

	LLH		All EAL		
	N	% of all LLH	N	% of all EAL	% all pupils in the region
East Midlands	1,725	21.7	70,260	6.0	12.0
East of England	1,250	15.8	92,437	7.9	12.1
Greater London	696	8.8	468,009	40.0	44.9
North East	62	0.8	18,643	1.6	3.2
North West	662	8.3	114,009	9.7	12.6
South East	944	11.9	124,664	10.6	11.7
South West	419	5.3	38,875	3.3	6.1
West Midlands	892	11.2	141,349	12.1	18.9
Yorkshire and the Humber	1,283	16.2	102,855	8.8	15.0
Total	7,933	100.0	1,171,101	100.0	17.4

Source: NPD data 2015 and Spring School census data March 2015.

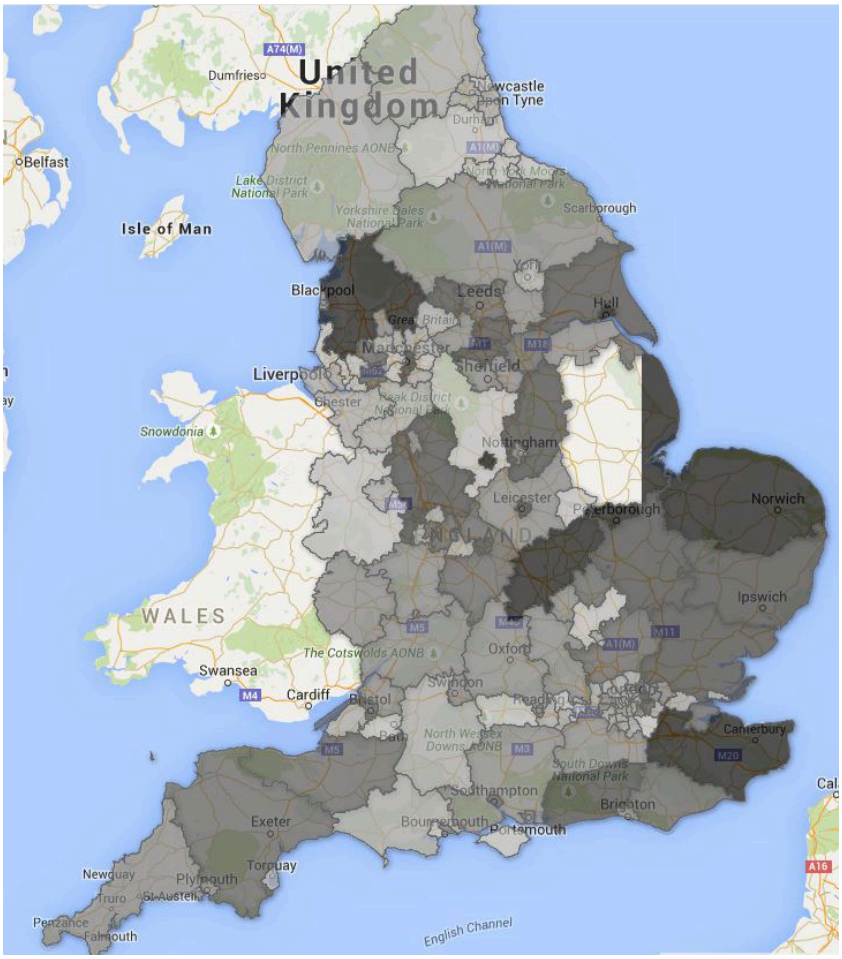

Figure 1. Pupils with LLH in schools in local authorities in England. Source: NPD data 2015 and Spring School census data March 2015.

numbers of migrants. However, it is also significant that although a large number of these children with LLH live in areas that have traditionally received migrants, such as Peterborough, Bradford, Leicester, Manchester, or London, a significant number have settled in municipalities with very few migrants.

Almost a quarter of all Latvian children live in the four local authorities and 63% live in 23 of the 152 local authorities that have responsibility for state education in England. This geographical distribution for the Latvian children's location is similar to that of the population over the age of two, who specified Latvian as their main language in the 2011 Census. This allows us to conclude that the geographical location of Latvian families is relatively concentrated and sustainable. As the number of Latvian nationals in England increases, their location in municipalities proportionally does not change much.

It is also important to look at other socio-spatial characteristics of the localities with a large number of children who have LLH (Table 6). These children and their families live in areas with a large number of migrants from the Baltic States, but the overall level of migration in those areas is below average. It is also interesting to note that while the unemployment rate in these municipalities is often below the national average, a large number of children live in relative poverty and are more likely not to attend university and drop out of school.

This reflects the geography of opportunities concept well and similarly to existing research on the NIDs (McAreavey & Argent, 2018), demonstrates that Latvians in England are more likely to settle in certain places with a specific social and economic context, particular labour market opportunities, and educational chances, where the locality can provide relatively low wages and requires unskilled labour. All these factors are also related to the quality of education and the level of schools in these municipalities, which in turn is possibly related to the achievements of children and the resulting future opportunities.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The article demonstrated the power of place by presenting the case of Latvian migrants settling in specific areas in England. The thesis of this article is that geography may play a part in the creation of educational inequality and social exclusion and amplify its effects. This article contributes to the broader discussion

Table 5. Local authorities in England with 100 or more pupils with LLH, 2015.

Local authority	Pupils with LLH			Pupils who use EAL			Population with Latvian as their main language (aged 3 years and older) as per 2011 census		
	N	% all LLH in the locality	% from all EAL pupils in LA	N	% from all pupils in LA	% from all pupils in England	N	% population in local authorities	% from all with Latvian as their main language
Lincolnshire	651	8.2	9.3	6,979	9.2	0.6	2,609	0.4	8.3
Northamptonshire	473	6.0	4.0	11,805	13.7	1.0	1,225	0.2	3.9
Peterborough	414	5.2	4.0	10,326	38.4	0.9	1,098	0.6	3.5
Kent	339	4.3	1.8	18,364	10.7	1.6	1,498	0.1	4.8
Kingston upon Hull. City of	250	3.2	6.6	3,798	13.8	0.3	718	0.3	2.3
Lancashire	248	3.1	1.6	15,461	12.2	1.3	885	0.1	2.8
Norfolk	248	3.1	3.3	7,479	9.2	0.6	919	0.1	2.9
Derby	206	2.6	2.8	7,476	23.1	0.6	895	0.4	2.8
Bradford	199	2.5	0.6	33,136	43.2	2.8	985	0.2	3.1
Cambridgeshire	195	2.5	2.4	7,977	12.7	0.7	798	0.1	2.5
Nottinghamshire	191	2.4	3.7	5,232	6.0	0.4	854	0.1	2.7
Coventry	181	2.3	1.3	13,754	32.2	1.2	674	0.2	2.1
Staffordshire	169	2.1	3.2	5,293	6.2	0.5	582	0.1	1.8
Wolverhampton	159	2.0	2.0	8,134	26.4	0.7	408	0.2	1.3
Wakefield	141	1.8	4.5	3,145	9.1	0.3	409	0.1	1.3
East Riding of Yorkshire	138	1.7	12.5	1,101	3.3	0.1	504	0.2	1.6
Leicester	128	1.6	0.6	21,149	50.4	1.8	483	0.1	1.5
West Sussex	123	1.6	1.4	9,013	10.4	0.8	628	0.1	2.0
Suffolk	119	1.5	2.0	5,981	8.0	0.5	396	0.1	1.3
Newham	113	1.4	0.3	33,880	74.8	2.9	590	0.2	1.9
Barnsley	105	1.3	9.5	1,103	4.6	0.1	214	0.1	0.7
Manchester	102	1.3	0.4	23,129	40.0	2.0	315	0.1	1.0
Essex	100	1.3	1.0	10,310	6.6	0.9	394	0.03	1.2
Total	4.992	63.0	—	264,025	—	22.6	11,651	—	57.3

of intergenerational barriers and opportunities in education for Latvian migrant children in England and their social inclusion by bringing together geographical, educational and administrative data to explore the socio-spatial dimension of educational inequalities.

This article demonstrates that children with Latvian home language in state schools are more likely to underachieve compared to monolingual English speakers and other pupils using EAL. The explanation offered by similar studies (Demie & Strand, 2006; Strand et al., 2015) focuses on a lower proficiency in English among both these children and their families. In addition, many Latvian children join the English education system in the later stages of primary or early stages of secondary school, and even if they have a good knowledge of English, children need time to understand the system and adapt socially and emotionally. Finally, parents may themselves have poor English language skills and an understanding of the education system (Demie, 2013), which hinders their involvement in the learning process and their inability to help their children with their studies. This is certainly part of the explanation, but these results need to be seen in the light of the fact that if a child or their parents indicate that their home language is Latvian, this does not say anything about the pupil's English language skills.

The analysis shows that the educational disadvantage of children and young people who identify LLH continues into later stages of secondary school whereas for many other EAL groups the achievement gap decreases

Table 6. Local authorities in England with 100 or more pupils with LLH, 2015.

Local authority				2011 Census			
	Unemployment rate (2014)	% of children in poverty (IDACI)	% increased due to international migration (2014)	% Not pursuing education after age 16	% do not enter higher education	% White British	% identify as originating from the Baltic States
National average	6.2	19.2	54.0	21.1	61.2	79.8	0.2
Lincolnshire	5.2	23.5	44.3	21.2	73.8	93.0	0.8
Northamptonshire	4.8	27.2	48.2	23.9	73.6	85.7	0.4
Peterborough	5.9	34.9	89.4	27.5	70.2	71.0	1.9
Kent	5.7	35.1	33.3	24.7	72.9	89.1	0.2
Kingston upon Hull. City of	11.7	47.1	(a)	28.2	81.8	89.7	0.6
Lancashire	5.9	33.2	57.6	22.9	78.1	89.7	0.1
Norfolk	5.6	29.2	48.9	25.7	79.9	92.5	0.5
Derby	6.9	43.6	93.8	26.3	69.5	75.4	0.5
Bradford	8.9	41.1	69.7	25.8	77.0	63.9	0.3
Cambridgeshire	3.9	25.8	52.6	23.3	78.3	84.5	0.5
Nottinghamshire	5.6	35.6	28.9	24.7	82.3	92.7	0.2
Coventry	7.5	39.6	78.1	21.4	72.9	66.7	0.3
Staffordshire	4.3	30.1	52.3	19.0	75.9	93.6	0.1
Wolverhampton	11.3	47.2	62.9	21.4	67.9	64.7	0.5
Wakefield	6.9	30.7	33.1	31.1	78.0	92.8	0.2
East Riding of Yorkshire	4.8	25.7	23.2	27.1	81.2	96.2	0.2
Leicester	8.7	38.1	(a)	27.3	70.5	45.2	0.2
West Sussex	4.1	20.1	27.2	21.5	69.6	89.0	0.2
Suffolk	4.9	23.5	(b)	25.9	70.3	90.9	0.2
Newham	9.1	46.1	(a)	23.4	54.7	17.0	1.9
Barnsley	7.7	27.7	29.4	26.7	80.3	96.1	0.1
Manchester	9.5	53.2	75.5	27.1	75.6	59.5	0.2
Essex	5.3	27.8	21.1	21.4	70.0	90.8	0.1

Notes: (a) International net migration is smaller than internal migration plus neutral increase; (b) international net migration is negative.

or disappears. Therefore, it is important to look for some other explanations beyond the knowledge of English and the education system. While this study agrees with the other frequent explanation of the intergenerational transmission of (dis)advantage associated with parental characteristics and behaviours, the focus of this article was on the role of geography in this relationship. Education, particularly at the early stages, takes place locally as most children go to school close to their home.

One of the factors in play for the educational disadvantage is related to the quality of schools (Dustmann et al., 2008; Kingdon & Cassen, 2007). There is evidence that in the context of the school choice system in England migrant parents sometimes lack information and knowledge about schools and the school system and, as a result, are unable to "place" their children in better schools. However, I would like to take this further and argue that even if the parents understand the system, they may be restricted in their choice of schools to those in their geographical proximity and not have the resources to relocate to a local authority with a better choice of schools. As the analysis of the geographical data suggests, Latvian children are disproportionally present in specific local authorities where there is a higher-than-average proportion of individuals with low qualifications and those in low-qualified jobs as well as a relatively high proportion of low-quality schools.

The data show that many Latvian migrant families in England do not settle in typical "migrant" regions or urban areas, such as Greater London or the West

Midlands. Thus, this article contributes to research on a specific type of migration—NIDs where international migrants settle in rural and regional communities with little prior experience of migration with varying attitudes to immigrants and immigration (McAreavey & Argent, 2018). This uneven nature of migrant social inclusion strengthens the importance of socio-spatial context.

Latvian nationals in England are more likely to live close to other families and people from Latvia and other Baltic countries (Dzenovska, 2017; Kaprāns, 2022), forming relatively segregated communities that may not provide as many opportunities to learn about the education system and find help with these issues within the community. Here it is difficult to assess how much the "choice" of the lower quality schools is the result of the parents' insufficient knowledge about the English school system or simply there is an overall lower quality of education in the locality where Latvian families live.

The Latvian migrant families could be at risk of double exclusion which can contribute to the academic achievement gap of their children. Firstly, the educational context in rural local authorities in England is different from urban areas with a higher level of need, competing priorities and fewer resources to share (Ball, 2018; Bywaters et al., 2016). Therefore, Latvian families are more likely to live in socially disadvantaged areas. Secondly, while shared spaces in the local community, such as schools, bring different groups together, encouraging interaction and facilitating inclusion, some migrants, including Latvians (Dzenovska, 2017; Kaprāns, 2022; Schneider & Arnot, 2018; Tereshchenko & Archer, 2014) may remain socially excluded. So, the geographical location can affect the educational success of Latvian children affecting the quality of schools they attend, the social links in the community their parents have and the economic opportunities their families have. The study demonstrates social-interactive, geographical, and institutional mechanisms (Galster, 2012) that are in play and provides further (Belsky et al., 2019; Garner, 1988) evidence that educational policies and any action to lessen educational disadvantage need to support migrant children and families directly but also must include effective place-based interventions and initiatives in immediate localities and the broader society.

Of course, the nature of the explanation on this issue is not so clear, and most likely all of the above explanations are valid. This article provides evidence for the power of geography and place in creating and strengthening intergenerational educational inequalities. Children do not choose where to live or study, it is their parents and families who are making these choices or are forced to settle in specific geographical locations. Migrants move and follow specific jobs and settle in areas where they have some social connections. However, assuming "real" causal relationships between spatial contexts and individual outcomes is problematic as "neighbourhood effects" may reflect effects from multiple contexts with different temporal and spatial scopes. Geography of education is useful but needs to be careful in measuring the degree of impact as factors interact and there are unobserved factors that come with the interaction for example, between parental involvement and locality, that also can reinforce the disadvantage, transmitting it between generations, and acting as a barrier to social integration.

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Conflict of Interests

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