

Educational achievement reveals deep-seated inequality ...

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A partially ChatGPT-generated summary of this article is:

A-level results in England highlight widening educational inequalities between rich and poor, different regions, and private vs. state schools, with London outperforming areas like the East Midlands.

This can be attributed to structural issues such as fewer resources, opportunities, and lower ambition in disadvantaged areas.

To address this, the government could equalize educational investment across regions, adopt a regional industrial strategy, and shift focus from GDP growth to promoting equal opportunities and outcomes nationwide.

I noted the A-level results in England yesterday, and spent a part of the morning advising one friend on his choices when he did not get the grades he wanted due to illness during the exam period. I am pleased to say, he ended up with a good clearing offer at what I think to be a good university.

This [summary of events](#) by Nadeine Asbali in the Guardian was, however, troubling:

In reality, the gap between the richest and poorest young people is bigger than it has ever been (apart from during the pandemic) and class divisions and regional disparities are growing.

In London, the nation's highest-performing area (and a place where schools have far more resources, and students more opportunities on their doorstep) 31.3% of all grades were marked A or A.*

However, in the East Midlands, the lowest-performing region, where my own experiences of teaching there opened my eyes to just how scarce opportunities and

funding are, it was 22.5%.

Likewise, the gap between the private and state sector has widened. In fee-paying schools, nearly half of all grades were A or A compared with around a quarter of those in academies or comprehensives.*

I share her concern. This is troubling.

It is unsurprising that we have a divided country when opportunities for some and lower chances for others are baked in from the start.

I refuse to believe that people outside London and the south-east are any less intelligent than those in the capital.

I am quite certain that those in private schools are no brighter than average. You can argue otherwise, but good luck with presenting eugenic arguments and getting away with it in a world that has long moved on from accepting them, except when it comes to the royal family. You will find no support here.

Instead, I think that the differences in outcome arise from:

- * Lower resource resource input
- * Lower levels of opportunity near a person's home and family
- * The messaging that these two issues provide

In other words, the problem is structural. Fewer jobs and lower educational resources result in reduced ambition, whether from the child themselves or for them from those around them. None of that is surprising when lived experience has dashed far too many hopes.

So the question is, can anything be done about this? The answer is that, of course, it could be. A government could:

- * Equalise the input of educational resources around the country.
- * Have a genuine regional industrial strategy.
- * Equalise investment around the country, which would require a bias against the capital for some time to come.

Other options are also available.

What it could most certainly do is stop threatening the closure of universities, as Labour is now doing.

But that may not be enough. Suppose it was serious about this need for equal opportunity? Couldn't that become part of its goals?

Right now, the only goal the government has is to increase GDP. [That is useless.](#) Suppose a range of key performance indicators was chosen to replace GDP as the goal of government, and this levelling up of education was one of them. What might happen then?

This would really change things.