

# Health as an educational resource

The value of investing in school health promotion

↳ K. Dadaczynski

↳ Schools4Health “Innovating health and education”

↳ 31 January 2024

**Hochschule Fulda**  
University of Applied Sciences



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Educational crisis as a starting point

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Health and education: a complex interplay

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Take away messages

# Do we have an educational crisis?

Declining PISA rankings



Illustration by Standsome Worklifestyle via UNsplash

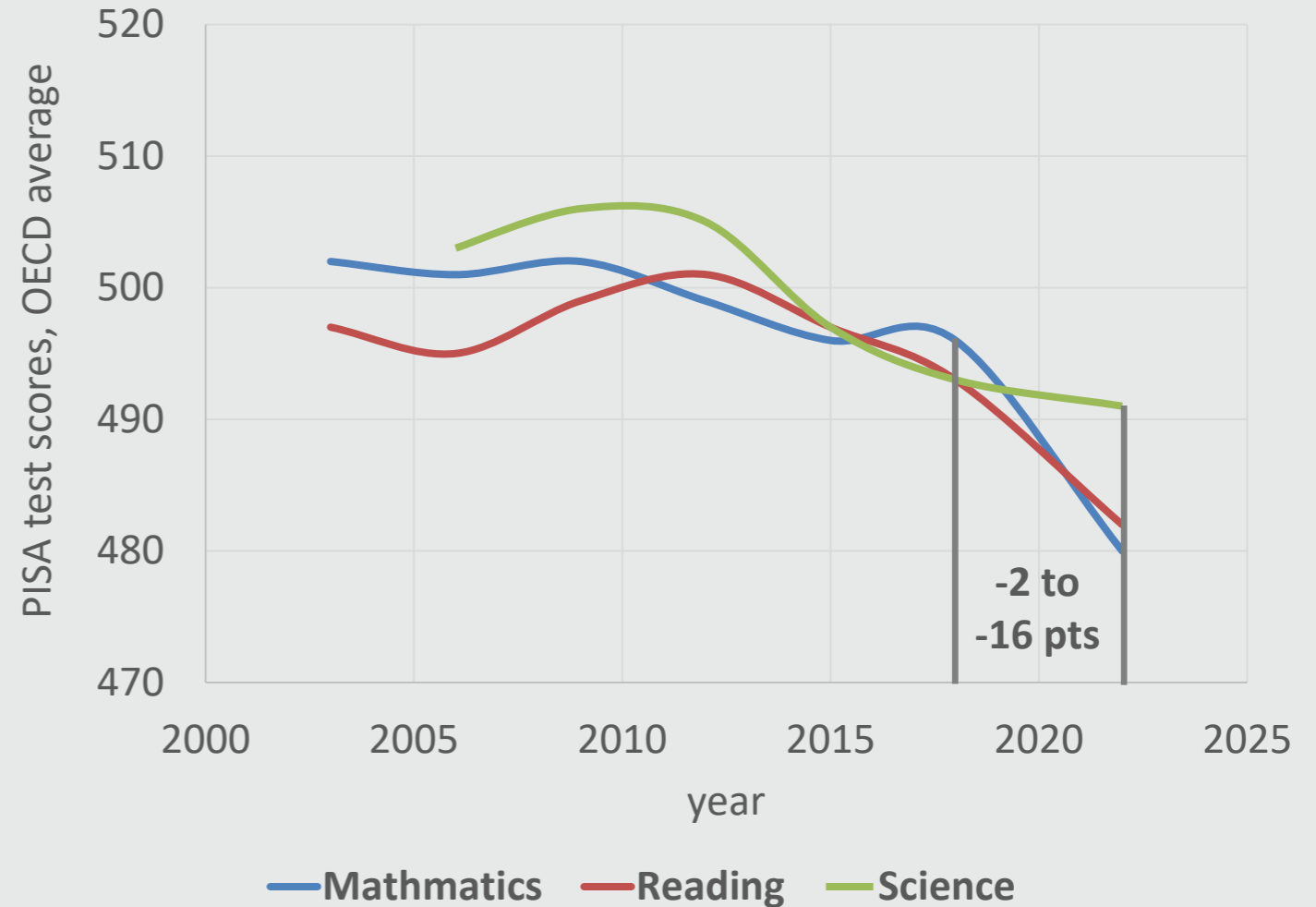
News

5 December 2023

## The kids are not alright: Most EU pupils' educational results tumble in PISA rankings

The latest results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), one of the most prominent student-ranking organisations in the world, are causing headaches across Europe

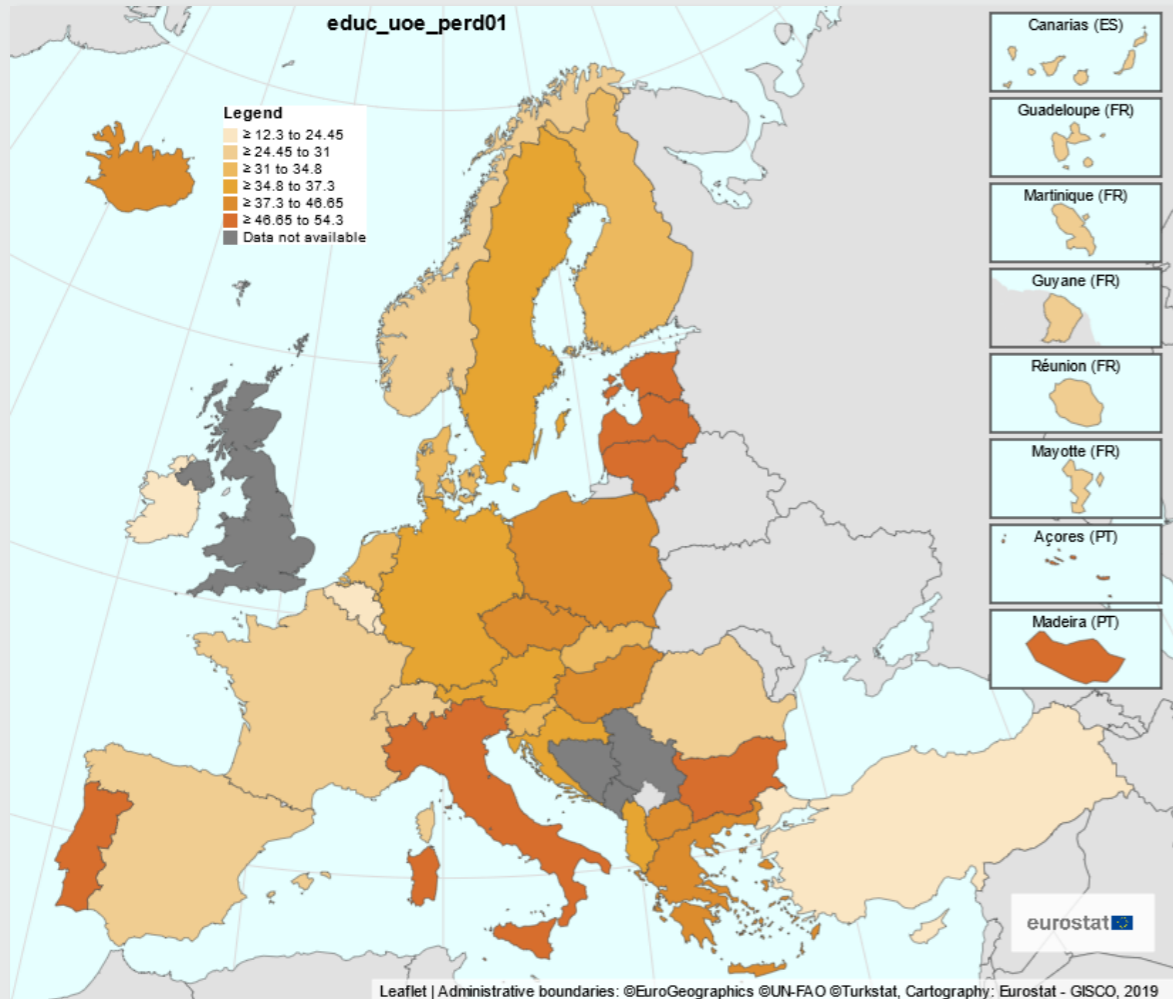
Source: signalbrussels.eu (5 Dec 2023)



OECD (2023). PISA 2022 Results (Volume I): The State of Learning and Equity in Education.

# Do we have an educational crisis?

## Teacher shortages



Teachers 50 years or over, Source: Eurostat, 2023

In the 2019/20 school year, **35** education systems in Europe suffered from a shortage of lower secondary school teachers.

- **Examples (forecasts)**

- Germany: 68.000 teachers (until 2035)
- Portugal: 30.000 (until 2030)

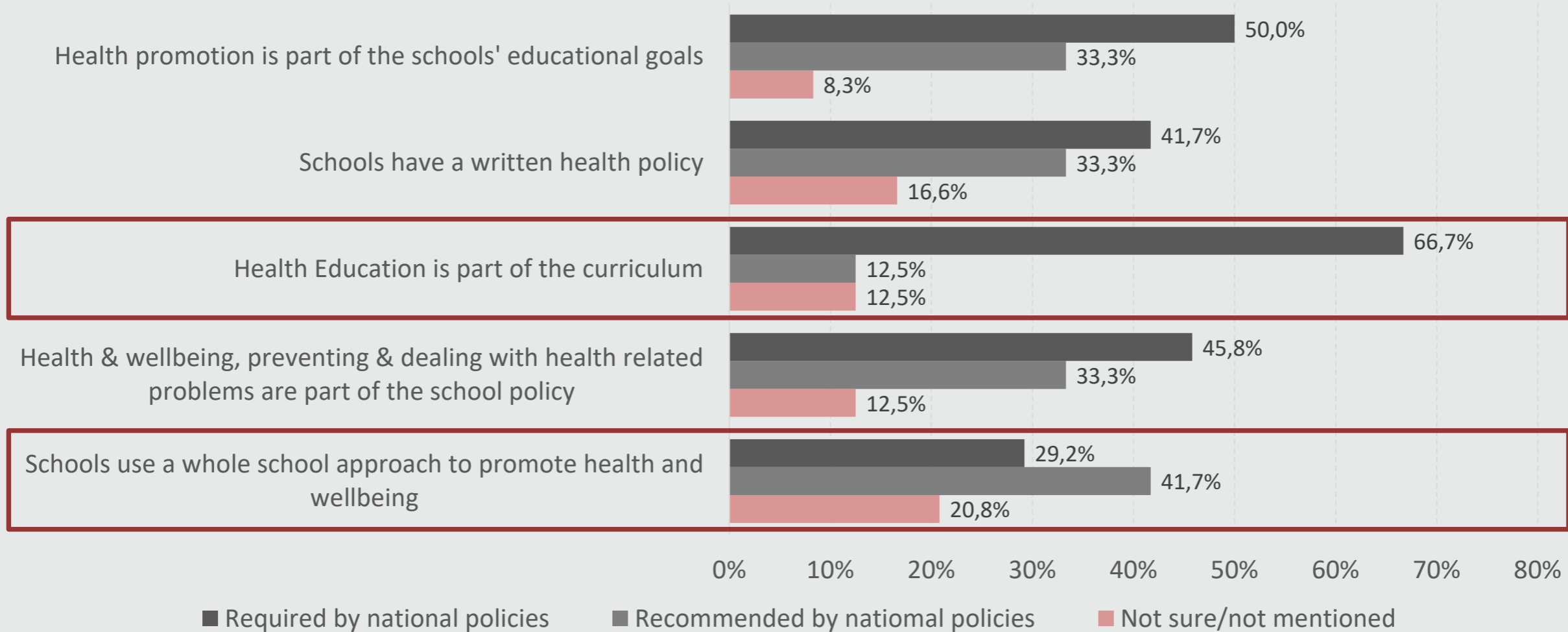
- **Complex problem, many reasons, e.g.:**

- High average age of teaching staff
- Partially low salary
- High proportion of work-related stress (EU-wide: 16% feel stressed at work a lot, PT: 34.8%)
- Main source of stress: administrative work

European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2021

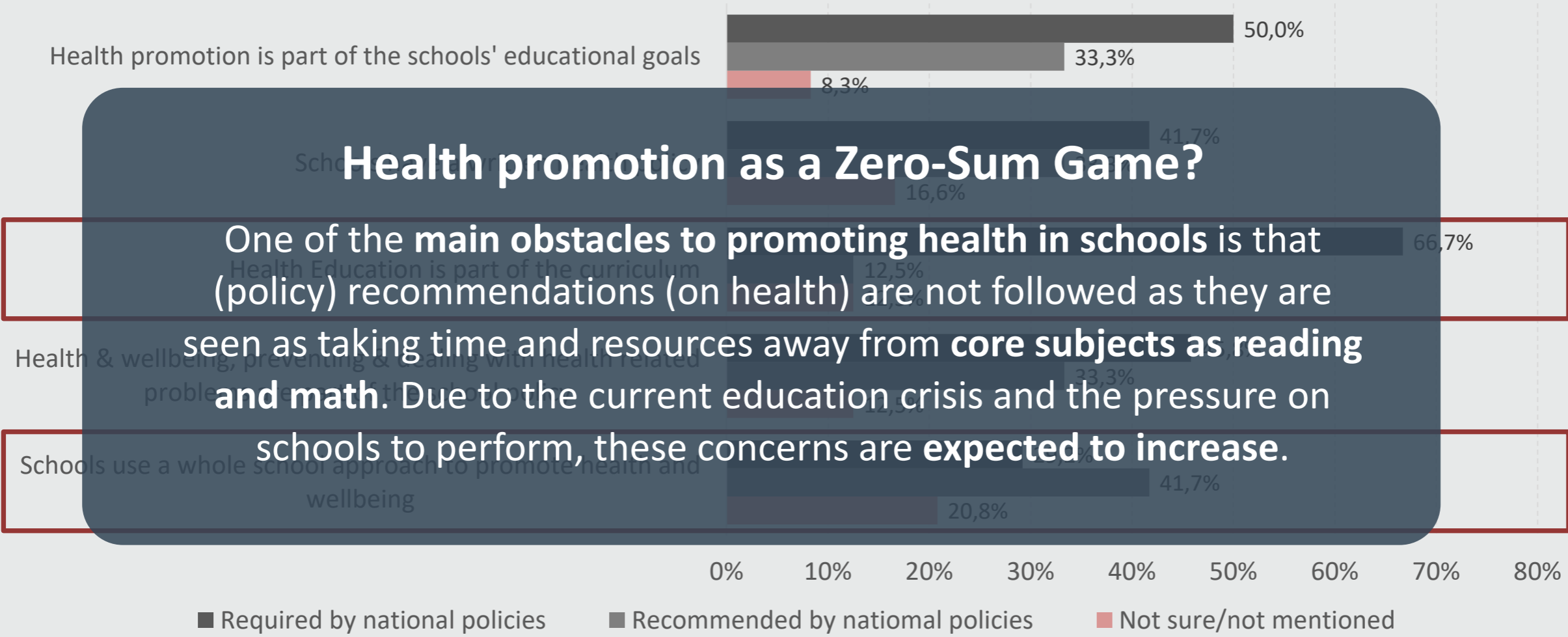


### Perceptions of SHE national coordinators (n=24)



Vilaça et al., 2019

Perceptions of SHE national coordinators (n=24)

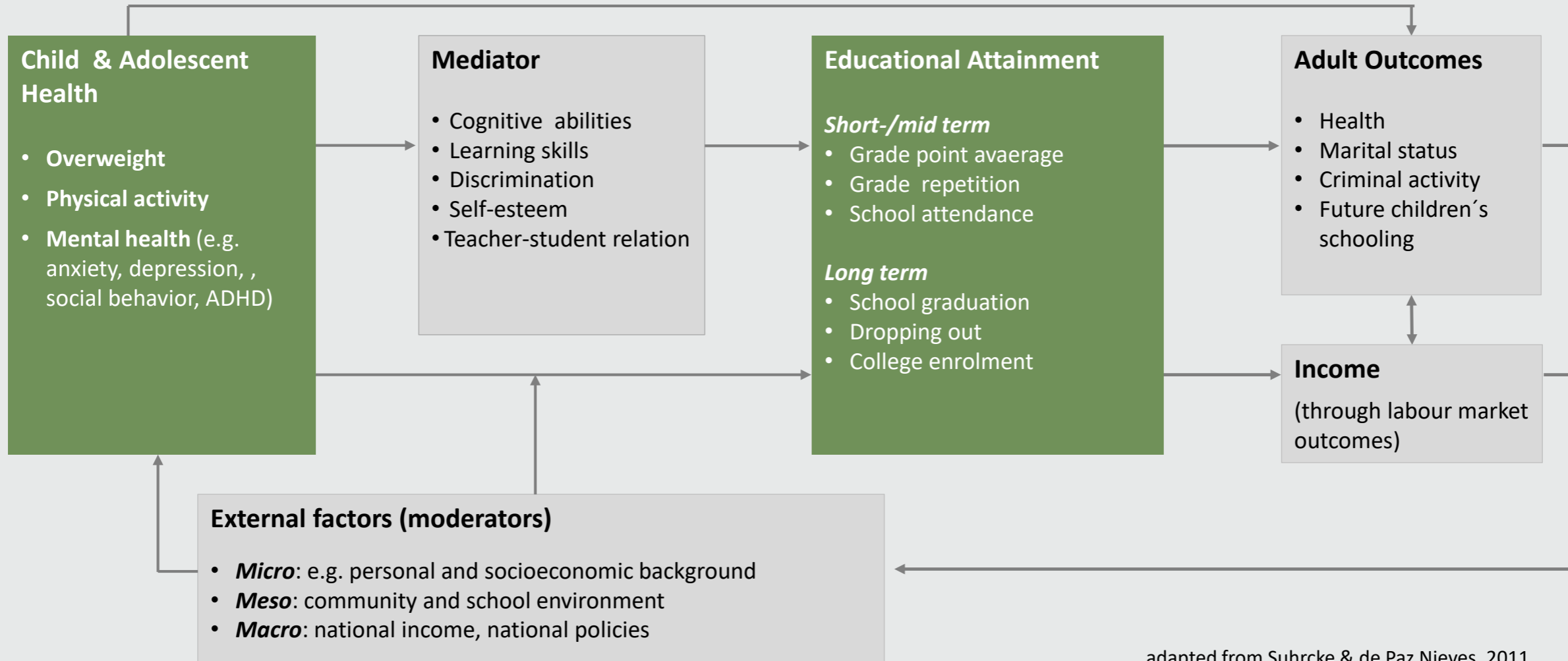


### Health promotion as a Zero-Sum Game?

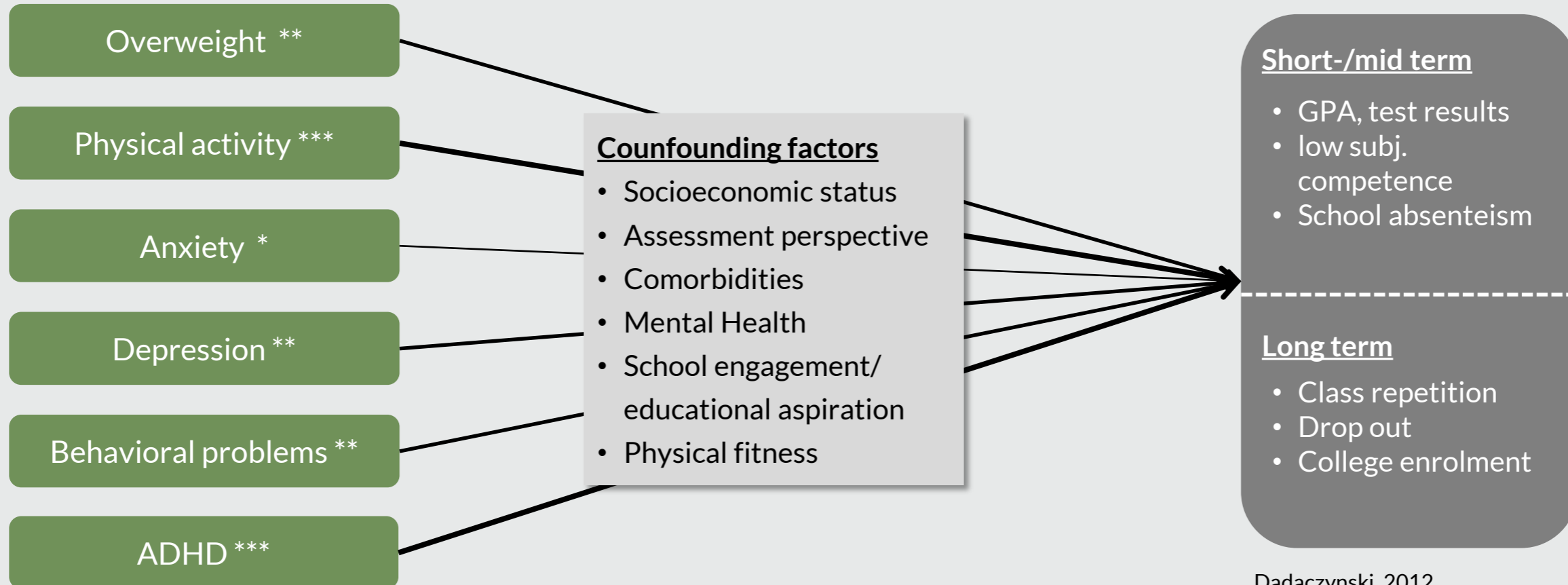
One of the main obstacles to promoting health in schools is that (policy) recommendations (on health) are not followed as they are seen as taking time and resources away from core subjects as reading and math. Due to the current education crisis and the pressure on schools to perform, these concerns are expected to increase.

# Health and Education

The interplay between health and education



adapted from Suhrcke & de Paz Nieves, 2011



Dadaczynski, 2012  
Dadaczynski & Schiemann, 2015  
Dadaczynski, Backhaus & Paulus, 2018

\* Insufficient evidence, \*\* moderate evidence, \*\*\* sufficient evidence  
(best-evidence synthesis: Singh et al., 2012)



	<b>Behavioral Approaches</b>	<b>Health Promoting School</b>
<b>Starting point</b>	Health problems/issues	Health problems/issues
<b>Target group</b>	Single groups (e.g. pupils)	Multiple groups
<b>School perspective</b>	School as setting to reach the target group	School as setting to be created in a healthy way
<b>Motto</b>	Making health the topic of individual target groups	Making health the topic of the whole school
<b>Strategy</b>	Change in individual determinants of health	Change in structural determinants of health
<b>Outcomes</b>	e.g. knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, health	School environment plus individual health outcomes

Paulus & Dadaczynski, 2020

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<b>Target group</b>	Single groups (e.g. pupils)	Multiple groups
<b>School perspective</b>	School as setting to reach target groups	School as setting to be changed
<b>Motto</b>	Making health promotion a goal for individual target groups	Making health promotion a goal for the whole school
<b>Strategy</b>	Change individual determinants of health	Change structural determinants of health
<b>Outcomes</b>	e.g. knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, health	School environment plus individual health outcomes

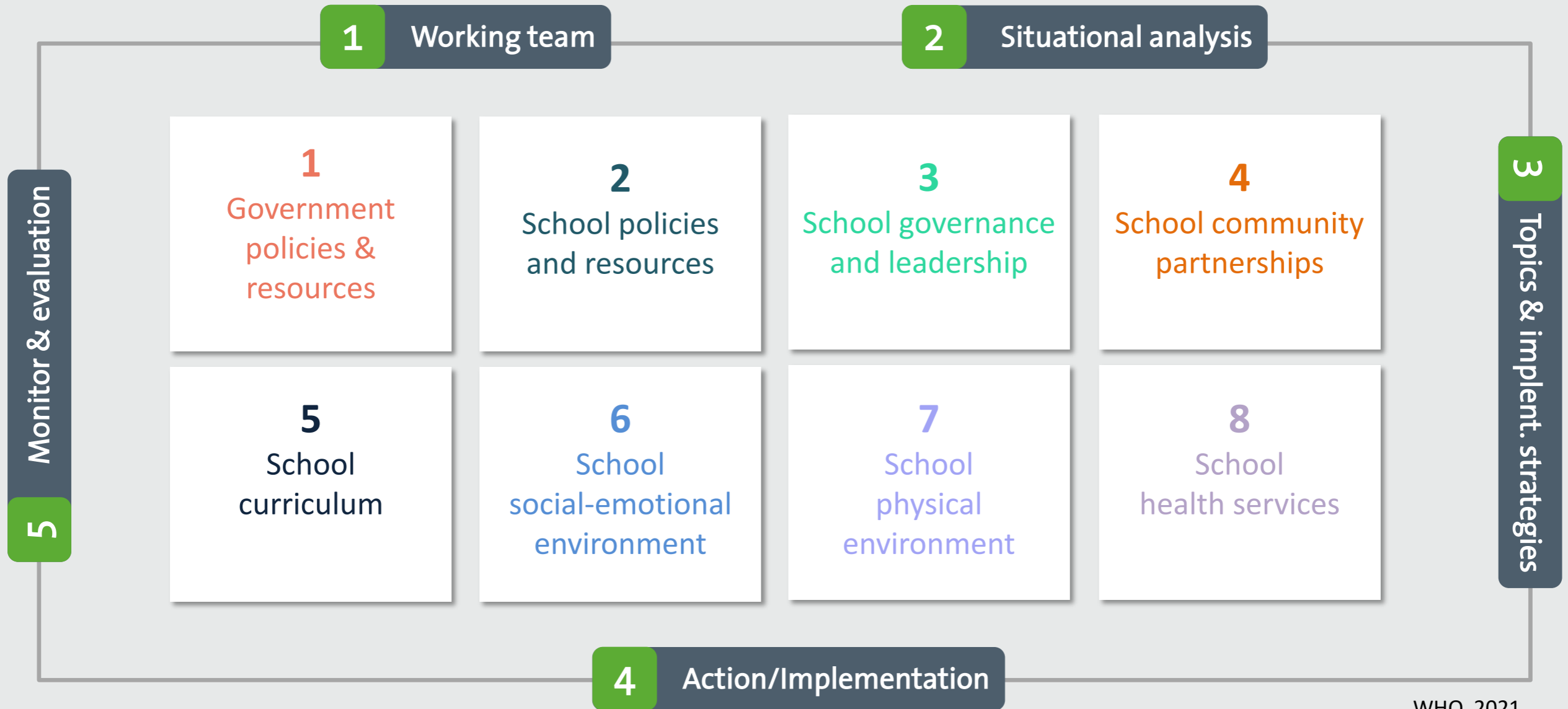
**Health Promotion IN Schools**

**Health Promoting Schools**

Paulus & Dadaczynski, 2020

# School health promotion

Health Promoting School



WHO, 2021

# School health promotion

## Drivers for sustainability of the HPS



*“No interventions were sustained in their entirety; all had some components that were sustained by some schools or staff, bar one that was completely discontinued. No discernible relationship was found between evidence of effectiveness and sustainability.”*

### Key facilitators

- Leader commitment/support
- Observation of positive impact
- Confidence in delivering of HP
- Belief in the value of HP

### Key barriers

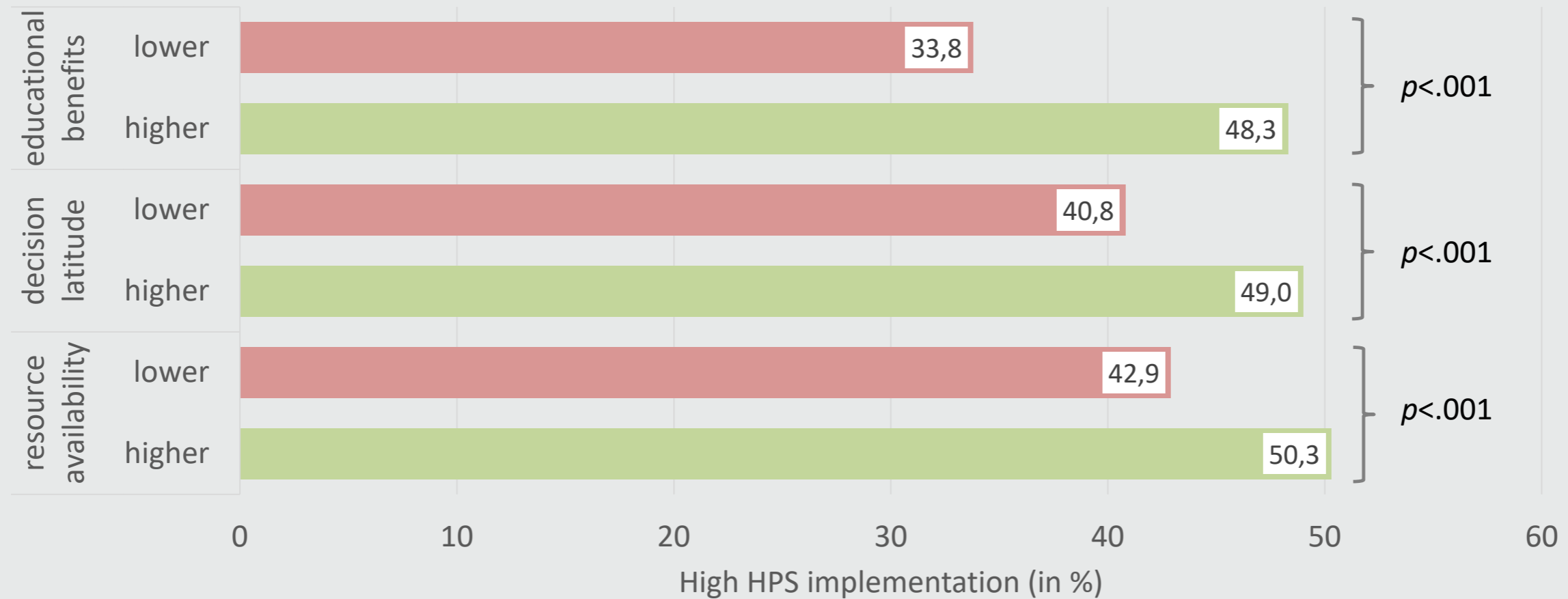
- Prioritising educational outcomes
- Time and resource constraints
- Staff turnover
- Lack of ongoing training

# School health promotion

Drivers for sustainability of the HPS



## High implementation of Health Promoting School



School principals, n=4375-4650,  
Dadaczynski & Hering, 2021

## To take away...

Education systems throughout Europe are in crisis (e.g. crises in achievement, attractiveness). We need to see **health as a solution and not as an additional task**.

Although **health and education are closely interlinked** (health as an education resource), schools are often not required to address health. We need **mandatory school health policies** in all European countries.

**HPS move beyond individual behaviour change** by also aiming at different levels inside and outside the school and by addressing all relevant groups. We need to **enable schools to work on their own issues**.

Think not only about the **WHAT** (topics, measures), but especially about the **HOW** (implementation) and **create the conditions for successful change** (there is a wide range of tools available).

Thank you!

**Fulda University of Applied Science  
Public Health Centre Fulda**

Prof. Dr. Kevin Dadaczynski

kevin.dadaczynski@pg.hs-fulda.de

» [www.hs-fulda.de](http://www.hs-fulda.de)

» [www.dadaczynski.net](http://www.dadaczynski.net)

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