

Incentives for a health promoting school development

The school development award “Good and Healthy School” in NRW

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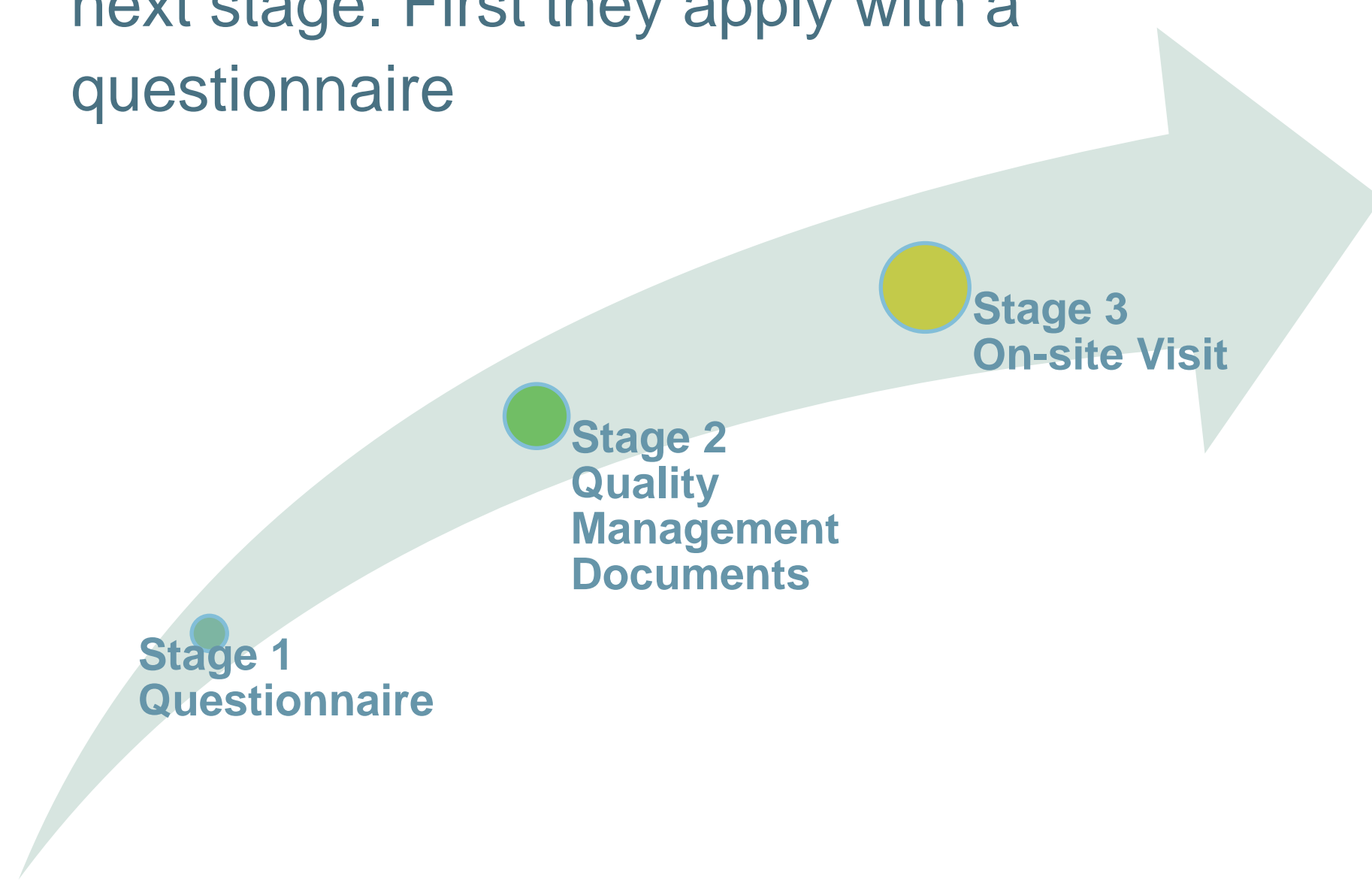
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Objectives

The aim of the school development award “Good and Healthy School” is to reward schools for their health oriented organizational development. Since 2008 schools in North Rhine-Westphalia can apply for the award and gain an amount of up to 15.000 Euros. About 50 schools are awarded every year. Within the application procedures a broad range of health and safety related quality aspects are considered.

Application procedure

To win the award, schools have to go through three stages. After every stage, schools are evaluated and selected for the next stage. First they apply with a questionnaire



The evaluation instruments in all stages follow the quality framework of a good and healthy school by Brägger/Posse (2007). For the application procedure this has been modified to the following 5 quality dimensions.

- 1) Workplaces & Working Conditions
- 2) Daily Structure & Leisure Time Activities
- 3) School Climate, Inclusion & Participation
- 4) Cooperation & Teamwork
- 5) Health Management

Program evaluation

The comprehensive evaluation of the prevention program and incentive system includes the yearly questioning of the successful and not successful schools. It furthermore comprises a survey of about 1.000 participating and non-participating schools.

Participation

Over the last 7 Years ~1.300 schools in North Rhine-Westphalia (20%) applied for the award at least once. More than 300 of them have been awarded one or more times (Figure 1).

Furthermore regional differences in the participation rates can be recognized (Figure 2), that can lead to targeted measures to investigate the specific reasons and to address local actors and stake-holders.

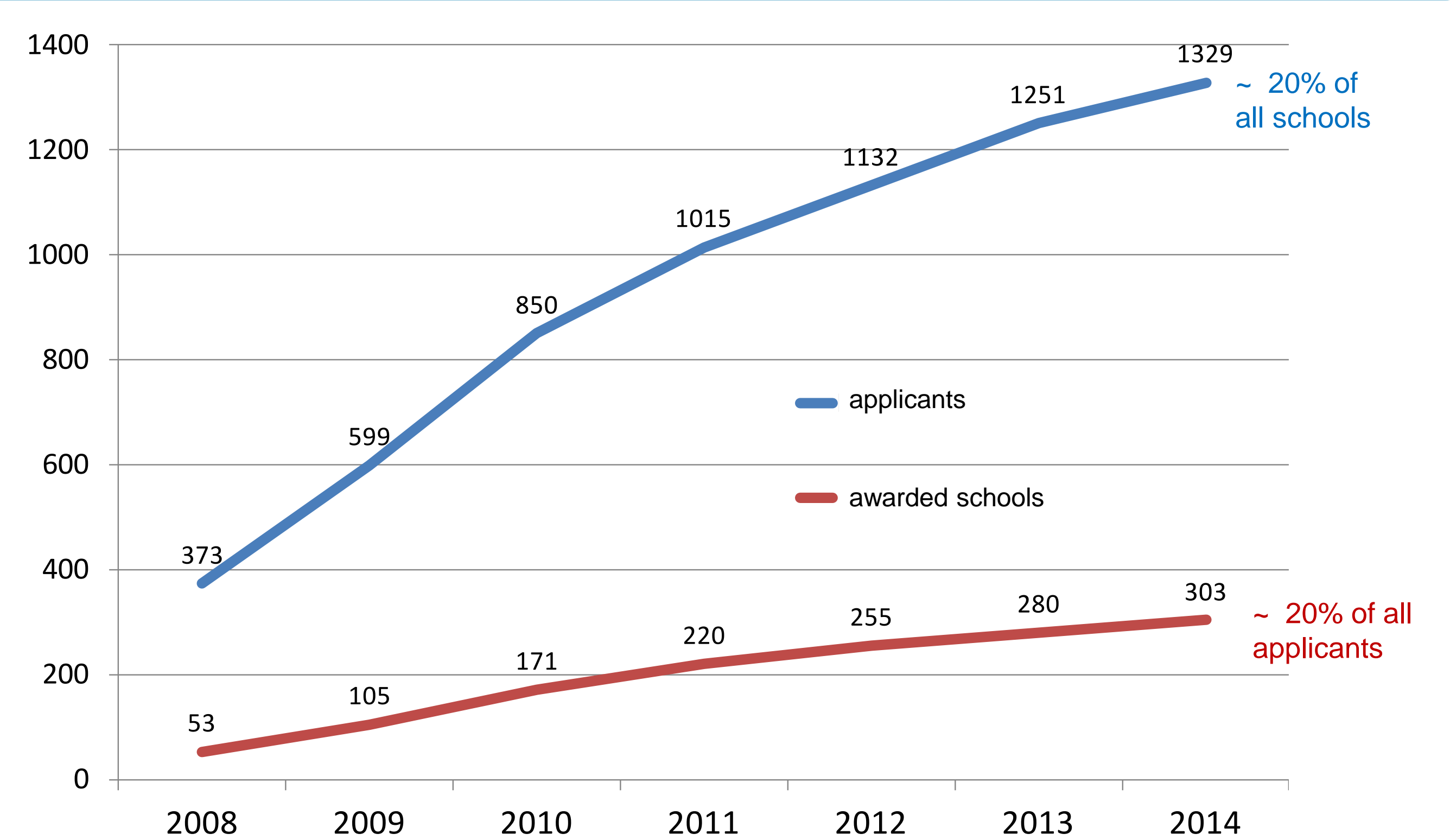


Figure 1: Number of applicants and awarded schools from 2008 to 2014

Evaluation results

The main reason for headmasters, not to participate is the lack of time and human resources. The results of the questioning show that the main motivation to participate is the necessity to receive impulses for school development. Furthermore, external feedback, prize money, and public recognition play a significant role for participation. As a result of the survey 62% of the schools that applied without winning the award and 94% of the awarded schools state that the teaching staff is more sensitized for health and security issues. 54% of the applicants and 87% of the awarded schools confirm that measures to improve the working conditions have been initiated in the context of their participation. Similar approval ratings can be seen in the answers to the questions of preventive measures, e.g. to promote physical activity, reduce stress, supply healthy food or prevent injuries.

Conclusion

Economic incentives in schools can lead to substantial improvements in the health orientated school development. The participation induces a discussion within the schools that can be structured by the application instruments and focused on the required health topics. The award is strong motivation for a sustainable health oriented school development by which many schools can be reached compared to other health promoting measures educational settings. The school development award “Good and Healthy School” is therefore a successful prevention tool, that not only achieves an impact by its monetary incentive but by the mediated health and safety related contents.

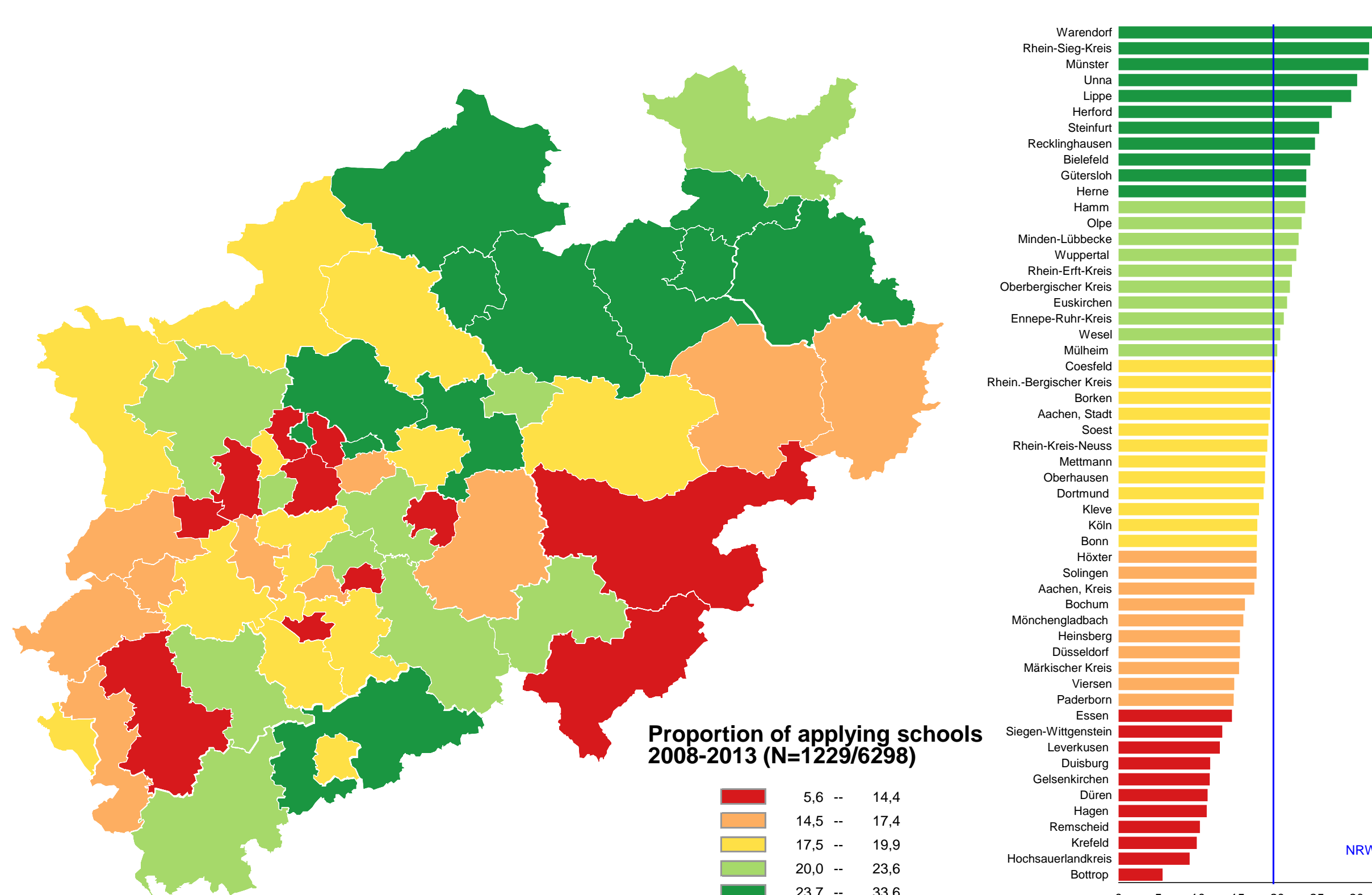


Figure 2: Regional differences in the participation rates of schools

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