

**THE RIVALRY STRATEGIES OF POLITICAL  
PARTIES IN ELECTIONS TO THE ASSEMBLY OF  
CITIZENS OF THE FREE AND HANSEATIC CITY OF  
HAMBURG**

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

The author undertakes to discuss the problem of rivalry strategies of political parties in elections to the Citizens' Assembly of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg. The broadness and multidimensional character of the subject area requires moving beyond the limits of political science and entering other related domains, like broadly-conceived historical sciences, also reaching for a number of establishments within legal-historical domains. Firmly grounded historical, legal, polity-related and political aspects of the unification of Germany in the context of German federalism, encouraged and obligated the author, to attempt to bring the above problem up to date. I think that thanks to a broader analysis of elections to the Hamburg Citizens' Assembly over the last 50 years, the real state of the problem area can acquire a fuller context, with an emphasis on the foundations of local government functioning. To prepare this paper I made use of Polish and German sources published by Polish, American and German researchers. Polish and German literature offered a valuable source to become acquainted with the history and the foreseeable future of Hamburg's local government, in particular – the

assumptions behind territorial and functional reforms, the evolution of which we have been able to follow in the Federal Republic of Germany since the 1970s.

The main source of the presented conclusions and facts are data obtained from *Statistisches Amt Für Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein* (the Statistical Office in Hamburg). Among the Polish reference sources the most useful proved to be the book edited by Konstanty Adam Wojtaszczyk and Marta Jarośnińska, under the title *Kraje Związkowe Republiki Federalnej Niemiec* (*The Federal States of the Federal Republic of Germany*).

## 2. THE STRUCTURE OF A FEDERAL STATE

The famous thesis expressed by Harold L. Laski “The epoch of federalism is gone,” published in 1939 in the columns of the New York magazine *The New Republic*, after 60 years undoubtedly became, as J. Wiktor Tkaczyński highlighted Mark Twain’s *bon mot*, a highly exaggerated thesis. Harold L. Laski, justifying his opinion, in the first place indicated the shortcomings of the American federal system, and – somehow in the second place – the poor effectiveness of solving social problems, as well as the weakness of federalism, as a political system, being unable to meet the challenge and problems of the coming epoch were to bring along. The political concept worked out by Laski, to a great extent defended the position of unitarism which – according to him – for the purpose of the proper development of a state and modern society unavoidably is progressing towards centralized forms – towards internal uniformity. Despite the strong impact of the idea (“The epoch of federalism is gone”), Charles Alexis de Tocqueville perceived decentralization in a state organized around federalism as its fundamental feature. Taking into account the whole complexity of federalism, he found – at the same time – support in Montesquieu’s circles, seeing attractiveness of the vertical division of power into three centres, and also the horizontal one between the supra-system (federation) and the subsystem (constituent parts). In this way, the two planes – on the one hand – remain independent in relation to each other; on the other – they are closely linked with each other. The above-

presented formula finds its place – primarily – in the structurally enforced necessity of undertaking cooperation<sup>1</sup>.

A unitarian state is centralized and points to the horizontal division of power. The significance of each public authority, including each organ of local government, is based on regulations imposed by relevant central organs of the state, not holding any attributes of state sovereignty. Pointing to more and more decisive differences between a unitary state and a federal one, it is worth – in the framework of present considerations – underlining that in the case of the latter we clearly come to deal with the vertical division of power, including the following constituents: legislative, executive and judiciary, compliant with the division of sovereignty into the federation and its components. A division of sovereignty into two levels of the state makes the federation a non-centralized state. Premises lying at the foundations of the decentralized model can be found, for instance, in the German construction of a local government, which assumes the coexistence of organs of the central government and those of the local one in the area. It is not without significance that this dualism, for the needs of the division of duties, has manifested itself in the form of its own, commissioned or charged tasks. Thus, organs of the state administration obtain full powers (supervisor's rights) towards the very local government itself. This construction is brought down to understanding the foundations of functioning of territorial administration in Germany and in Austria, although – as L. Rajca stresses – there are far reaching changes being implemented<sup>2</sup>.

Aiming at a fuller understanding of the role of Germany in the shaping of local government, one needs to stress that Germany was the second state on the Continent, where the institution of territorial self-government developed in such a way<sup>3</sup>. Contemporary local government on the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany opts for a lack of uniform construction of communes. This lack of uniformity can be found within the

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<sup>1</sup> J.W. Tkaczyński, *Ustrój Federalny Niemiec – konstrukcja i funkcjonowanie*, Toruń 2008, p. 7–11.

<sup>2</sup> L. Rajca, *Samorząd terytorialny w Europie Zachodniej*, Warszawa 2010, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> J. Korczak, *W Niemczech*, [in:] J. Jeżewski (ed.), *Samorząd terytorialny i administracja w wybranych krajach. Gmina w państwie Europy Zachodniej*, Wrocław 1999, p. 253.

structure of the state in which, for centuries, there formed hundreds of 'small states', creating – at the same time – regional, strongly differentiated forms<sup>4</sup>. K. Miaskowska-Daszkiwicz and J. Kowalik see the shape of the decentralized system in Germany not only in the history of the lands lying on the territory of the today's Republic, but also in the public administration of neighbouring France which formed a good number of features typical of modern administration in the times of the absolute state, that is in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is because of that why various polity-related and legal solutions connected with the area have been appearing until today<sup>5</sup>. The principle of federalism is inseparably connected with that of mutual equal treatment. At the moment when the conflict 'federation-state' arises one should look for a compromise solution, since all conflicts must be considered on the basis of the principle of faithfulness to federation<sup>6</sup>. In the interpretation of Articles. 28, point 1 of the Basic Law, we find some fundamental criteria serving to explain the constitutional order. According to the idea of this article, the order should correspond to the principles of a "republican, democratic and welfare state of law". Any organization of organs of authority – their properties and the decision when a citizen can make use of the right to vote – remains only the matter of individual states<sup>7</sup>. The very fact itself of demarcating boundaries of legislative rights between a federation and states turns out very significant. In order to find the right manner of this 'separation', a criterion of performing the function of authority and administration should be considered, one of securing the status of the individual in the state and their participation in the public life of states and communes, as well<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> A. Jędraszko, *Samorząd terytorialny w Niemczech na przykładzie Stuttgartu*, Warszawa 1994, p. 30–31.

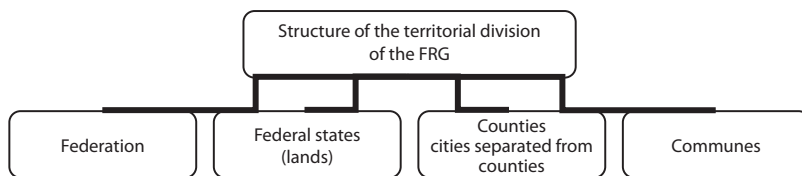
<sup>5</sup> K. Miaskowska-Daszkiwicz, J. Kowalik, *Samorząd terytorialny w Republice Federalnej Niemiec*, [in:] L. Rajca (ed.), *Samorząd terytorialny w Europie Zachodniej*, Warszawa 2010, p. 121.

<sup>6</sup> J. Wąsicki, *System Federalny RFN*, [in:] *Ustrój państwowy Republiki Federalnej Niemiec*, p. 74.

<sup>7</sup> E. Zieliński, *Problemy ustrojowo-polityczne Niemiec*, Warszawa 1999, p. 26.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 85.

The Federal Republic of Germany is now a country with a population of 82 million, occupying territory of 357,027 square kilometres in Central Europe. The German state is a federation consisting of 16 lands, three of which, namely Hamburg, Bremen, Berlin – holding the status of a ‘city-state’. It is against such a background that the structure of territorial division of the FRG is formed:



**Scheme 1.** Structure of the territorial division of the FRG

Source: K. Miaskowska-Daszkiwicz, J. Kowalik, *Samorząd terytorialny w Republice Federalnej Niemiec*, [in:] L. Rajca (ed.), *Samorząd terytorialny w Europie Zachodniej*, Warszawa 2010, p. 129–130. Schema: Author’s own elaboration

The institution which integrates federal administration with the administration of the FRG in the fullest way is the Federal Government which comprises the Federal Chancellor and Federal Ministers. It is obvious that the government functions in compliance with the German constitutional tradition, subordinating itself to the chancellor-based system<sup>9</sup>. The federal government (the chancellor, the ministers), Federal Parliament and the Federal Constitutional Tribunal count as the supreme organs of the state, whereas the Federal President’s Office, the Federal Chancellor’s Office, federal ministries and the Federal Accounting Office – as supreme federal authorities. The main tasks of the federal government include, among others<sup>10</sup>:

- The right of legislative initiative,
- Issuing certain normative acts,

<sup>9</sup> E. Zwierzchowski, *Prawnoustrojowe stanowisko kanclerza RFN*, Katowice 1972, p. 93.

<sup>10</sup> E. Zieliński, *Problemy ustrojowo-polityczne Niemiec*, Warszawa 1999, p. 89.

- Issuing instructions and other internal acts in the scope of administration commissioned to lands and its own administration undertaken in order to execute federal acts,
- Settling differences in opinions between ministers,
- Control over execution of federal acts by individual lands.

As a matter of fact, the FRG has accepted a two-tier local government. A commune is considered the smallest unit of this self-government, and a union of communes constitutes a county. In the light of German law, cities separated from a county make a special category of local government (*Kreisfreiestädte*). In fact, this federal character of the state has introduced varied public administration<sup>11</sup> in individual lands – “subjected to regulations of the laws of individual lands which cannot break principles and resolutions of Basic Law in this respect”<sup>12</sup>. Thus, the state (*Bund*) divided into lands (*Bundesländer*), is subdivided further into regency districts (*Regierungsbezirke*). However, the lands of Saar, Schleswig-Holstein and cities-lands make an exception here. Of course, the above-mentioned division does not exist in all federal lands, although – generally – the level of a regency district is the responsibility of the state administration. We can find a slightly different structure in Bavaria, where the district (*Bezirk*) is the third (following the commune and the county) level of territorial self-government. The districts, in turn, are subdivided into counties (*Landkreise*), with the dual – central-government-local-government – character and local government communes (*Städte/Gemeinden*)<sup>13</sup>.

It is commonly accepted in the FRG that Article. 28 of the Basic Law makes the constitutional basis of the functioning of a local government<sup>14</sup>. It establishes the following:

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<sup>11</sup> K. Miaskowska-Daszkiwicz, J. Kowalik, *Samorząd terytorialny w Republice Federalnej Niemiec*, [in:] L. Rajca (ed.), *Samorząd terytorialny w Europie Zachodniej*, Warszawa 2010, p. 129–130.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 130.

<sup>13</sup> R. Grzeszczak, *Struktura administracji w Niemczech*, Mysłakowice 2006, p. 10.

<sup>14</sup> *Grundgesetz für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, (BGBl.1949, S.1), last amended on 19 July 2009. On the basis of: K. Miaskowska-Daszkiwicz, J. Kowalik, *Samorząd terytorialny w Republice Federalnej Niemiec*, [in:] L. Rajca (ed.), *Samorząd terytorialny w Europie Zachodniej*, Warszawa, p. 130–131.

- The constitutional order of the lands must correspond to the principles of a republican, democratic and welfare state governed by the law in the understanding of this act. In the lands, counties and communes, the nation must have its representative body which comes from common, direct, free, equal and secret elections. In the case of communes, electable organs can be replaced by the commune's assembly.
- Communes must have the right guaranteed to regulate all matters pertaining to the local community, which can be implemented upon their own responsibility and within the frameworks delineated by relevant acts. Also unions of communes have the right to self-govern themselves within the scope of their tasks defined by acts and in compliance with the latter. The guarantee of self-governing includes securing foundations for their own financial responsibility, as well: one of these bases is the right which communes have to collect taxes from the source that corresponds to the economic potential, which is grounded on relevant regulations.
- The federal authorities guarantee that the constitutional order of the federated lands is in agreement with citizens' rights and the regulations of Act 1 and Act 2".

It is worth underlining that Article. 28 of the Basic Law is merely the foundation of the functioning of a local government which undoubtedly remains in a dialectic union with the legal system of individual federated lands, forming – in consequence – a fairly complicated structure<sup>15</sup>. The Union Parliament is generally acknowledged to be the superior organ of the lands, consisting – typically – of one chamber, in which the number of deputies is established through electoral laws. The term of office for MPs amounts to 4 years, with the exception of Saara and Northern Nordrhein-Westfalen, where the terms last 5 years. The deputies in those lands' parliaments are chosen in proportional elections. The main tasks of the parliaments include, among others, nominating the president of ministers

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<sup>15</sup> B. Dolnicki, *Samorząd gminny w Niemczech – zagadnienia ustrojowe*, [in:] S. Michałowski (ed.), *Samorząd terytorialny w III Rzeczypospolitej. Dziesięć lat doświadczeń*, Lublin 2002, p. 434.

(the premier), approving the ministers nominated by the premier, voting acts and also performing the control function with reference to the governments. Executive power lies at the foundation of the land's government, where in such lands-cities as Hamburg and Bremen this power lies in the hands of the Senate. Parliament chooses the premier of the government, while Hamburg and Bremen – differing in their structures as they do – are characterized by the fact that it is the Senate that chooses the Citizens' Assembly. The latter is presided over by two mayors chosen in a secret ballot. In Bremen, one of the mayors is the president of the Senate and the other – the deputy, whereas in Hamburg – which we will take a closer look at later in our considerations – the first mayor bears the title of 'The First Mayor' and the deputy – 'The Second Mayor'<sup>16</sup>.



**Map 1.** The territorial division of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Source: <http://www.loreley-info.com>

<sup>16</sup> E. Zieliński, *Problemy ustrojowo-polityczne Niemiec*, Warszawa 1999, p. 92–93.



### 3. THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF THE FREE HANSEATIC CITY OF HAMBURG. THE CONSTITUTION AND NORMATIVE ACTS

Hamburg is a federal land in the Federal Republic of Germany and – at the same time – one of three cities holding the status of ‘city-state’. In compliance with its constitution accepted on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1952, the form of government was determined invariably as the republican one, based on modified principles of the parliament-cabinet system. In order to realize its tasks, it uses organs of the state government, independent of the administration of the land: the Assembly of Citizens of Hamburg (*Bürgerschaft*) – legislative power, the Senate – executive power and independent organs of the administration of justice. The function of the head of state – following the solutions accepted in Bremen and Berlin – is performed by the Mayor (*Regierender Bürgermeister*). The relationship between central and local state organs should be defined as decentralised. According to the accepted principles of electoral law, there are 121 deputies elected in direct voting for a 4-year term of office, who take their seats in the Assembly of Citizens of Hamburg<sup>17</sup>.

#### THE CONSTITUTION

Before we proceed to take a closer analysis of the Constitution, it is worth recalling the evolution which the Constitution underwent in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Soon after the end of the Second World War Hamburg was granted the status of a land functioning within the British occupational zone. In 1946, the Military Commission nominated Rudolf Petersen – a merchant with no party affiliation – to be the Mayor of the city. A few months afterwards, he was replaced by Max Brauer, whose task was to form and restore executive power in the shortest possible time. In the same year, the occupation authorities established the Assembly of Citizens of Hamburg comprising 81 deputies. While making the choice, there occurred

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<sup>17</sup> K.A. Wojtaszczyk, M. Jarosińska, *Kraje Zwiqzkowe Republiki Federalnej Niemiec*, Warszawa 2001, p. 151.

a series of conflicts, since – following the British model – the members of the Senate were also members of *Bürgerschaft*, which – in consequence – turned out to be in contradiction with the tradition of Hamburg to date. In May 1946, the newly-established Assembly passed – upon the British agreement – a temporary constitution of Hamburg, which – in its main part – did not differ from that of 1921, which was suspended in 1933. At that stage the first Assembly of Citizens of Hamburg was chosen which was legitimized by the democratic support of society. Three years later the newly-chosen chamber decided to meet the challenge of the task posed to it and on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1952 voted a new constitution called – in the initial phase – the organizational status of public authority<sup>18</sup>.

At present, the Constitution of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg (CH), with amendments of 1969, 1971, 1972, 1982, 1986 and those introduced twice in 1996, consists of a preamble and 76 articles grouped in the following chapters: The Foundations of the State (I), Bürgerschaft (II), The Senate (III), Legislation (IV), Administration (V), The Judicature (VI), Budget and Finances (VII). The Final and Transitional Provisions (VIII). According to Article. 3 of the Constitution, Hamburg is a state regarded as a democratic and welfare state of law recognizing the priority of the principle of sovereignty of the nation, in compliance with which it is the nation that wields power directly in elections and – in an indirect form – through electable representatives<sup>19</sup>. K.A. Wojtaszczyk and M. Jarosińska pay particular attention to Article. 4 of the CH, where – by recalling Berlin and Bremen – they acknowledge the overlap of tasks of the state administration and those who are the responsibility of local government in communes to be a specific feature of Hamburg. They also draw attention to the lack of such a differentiation in the case of the catalogue of citizen's rights and liberties, underlining that the legislators followed the assumption that the catalogue had already been included in the Basic Law of the FRG. In the Constitution, freedom of competition and self-assistance of cooperatives were firmly stressed. The city's task is to support and direct

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<sup>18</sup> Ibidem, p. 151–152.

<sup>19</sup> Verfassung der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg Vom 6. Juni 1952 (HmbBL I 100a), zuletzt geändert am 8. Juli 2009 (HmbGVBl. S. 221)

economic processes in such a way as to make it possible for all citizens to satisfy the basic economic needs. Citizens of Hamburg are obliged to act for the good and prosperity of all, based on the principle of mutuality, assistance and support. In the time of crisis they are expected to endeavor to improve the situation. As a result of the changes introduced on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1996, equality of rights of men and women was strongly emphasized.

The Constitution of Hamburg admits introducing changes into its content or annulling its regulations exclusively in the way of passing an act. In accordance with Article 51 of the CH, passing such an act is connected with the requirement of acceptance by the Assembly of a bill upon two readings without introducing amendments with an interval of at least thirteen days, with the secured quorum of three fourths of the number of statutory members. The passing of the act must be voted by two thirds of those present.

Undoubtedly, Hamburg's parliamentary system took its ultimate shape in consequence of the constitution reform of 1996, which resulted in that the organization of the state authorities was brought closer to the principles binding in other parts of the Federation. Through the restriction of the prerogatives of the executive power Parliament was invested with the institutional advantage over the government<sup>20</sup>. The unicameral Assembly of Citizens of Hamburg (*Bürgerschaft*) is the legislative power in Hamburg, and its most significant functions comprise passing acts, including the budget of the city-state, as well as the creation and control of other organs of state authority. In Chapter IV of the CH ("Legislation"), the legislative initiative is split between the Senate, the Citizen's Assembly and the nation within the mode of the so-called people's initiative (*Volksbegehren*). A most vital aspect of Parliament's activity is constituting law. The right of legislative initiative is the responsibility of *Bürgerschaft* and citizens in the way of a referendum. An element that is indispensable to submit a draft bill within the mode of the people's initiative is collecting, during 6 months, 20,000 signatures of citizens who are eligible to vote. If, within 4 months, the Parliament does not pass the bill, the Senate – consistently – imple-

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<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, p. 151–153.

ments the procedure of *Volksbegehren*. In case the minimum of 1/10 of the citizens' support is raised for this initiative, the Assembly of Citizens of Hamburg is obligated to assume its stand towards the issue within up to 3 months. The procedure is continued if after that time the bill is not accepted. In the latter case a referendum is organized in which to pass the majority of votes cast is indispensable (one fourth of all). The creative function of the Parliament finds its reflection in establishing internal organs and also in electing the First Mayor – the head of the land's government. The powers of the legislative body include choosing members of the Counting Chamber, Hamburg Constitutional Tribunal and some other organs. Article. 23a of the CH, on the basis of the Constitution of 1971, took a very firm stand towards the opposition in Parliament. The constitutionally guaranteed position of the latter in Parliament imposes on it the duty of presenting criticism of the programme and the government's works<sup>21</sup>.

Executive power in Hamburg rests in the hands of the Senate, which – at present – consists of the First Mayor and 11 senators, of whom one performs the function of the Second Mayor. The Mayor, with the power of the novelization of the Constitution of 1996, is elected by *Bürgerschaft* and plays the role of the head of the government (the president of ministers). He/She is responsible to the legislative, as well as – on the power of Article. 34 and Article. 35 of the CH – nominates and dismisses the Second Mayor. Although Parliament does not have the right to pass a vote of no confidence for individual ministers, such a display of lack of confidence towards the First Mayor means – at the same time – dissolving the whole government. A motion concerning this option must be supported by a minimum of one fourth of the deputies and also submitted to the Senate and Parliament at least a week before the day of voting. To pass this motion the majority of all deputies' votes are indispensable. Article. 36 of the CH allows for the situation of expressing a vote of no confidence for the government. This right, in the form of a motion, is given to the First Mayor. Voting on this issue cannot take place earlier than a week after. In the case when a vote of no confidence for the government is not passed by the

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<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, p. 156.

majority of deputies, *Bürgerschaft* can, in one month's time following the submission of the motion, take the following steps:

- Choose the new First Mayor out of their members by the statutory majority vote,
- Make a resolution to pass a vote of confidence for the current First Mayor,
- Decide to shorten the chamber's term of office.

If, within 30 days (one month), the Parliament does not take the relevant decisions, the initiative is taken over by the Senate, which – in compliance with the CH, may – during 14 days – dissolves *Bürgerschaft*. In case the Senate is dissolved, it performs its duties until the new government is formed.

Every German citizen entitled to vote can become a member of the government. Article. 39 of the CH provides that members with the institution of *Incompatibilis*. The basic question is to prevent the possibility of joining the mandate of a senator with that of a deputy. By defining thus the content of the Constitution in the above-mentioned situation that can occur, a senator is forced to suspend executing his/her mandate. Performing the function of a senator is also connected with the fact that the person cannot hold other posts or run a professional activity unless the Constitution allows them to do so (upon obtaining approval from the Senate and in agreement with *Bürgerschaft*), the income coming from membership of a management board or a company supervisory board.

In compliance with Article. 42, item 1 of the CH, the First Mayor holds the post of the President of Board of Ministers, managing and controlling the activity of each individual department. He/She performs also the function of the official superior of all employees of the governmental administration. The basic tasks of the First Mayor include representation of the land outside, drawing of international agreements, application of the power of pardon, as well as delineation of the policy of the land, being responsible to the legislative body<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Verfassung der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg Vom 6. Juni 1952 (HmbBL I 100-a), zuletzt geändert am 8. Juli 2009 (HmbGVBl. S. 221)

The organization of the administration on the territory of the land is of a two-rung character and, as the authors stress, in contrast to Berlin, it is regulated by the administrative law dating back to its roots of 1949, including subsequent amendments. In agreement with Article. 4 of the CH, the administrative tasks of the land and those of the commune overlap. The whole area of Hamburg, as established in the Act, is divided into the following 7 boroughs: Hamburg-Mitte, Altona, Eimsbüttel, Hamburg-Nord, Wandsbek, Bergedorf and Harburg. The range of activity of each individual borough comprises tasks determined in the act accepted by *Bürgerschaft*. K.A. Wojtaszczyk and M. Jarosińska drew special attention to the fact that despite the foundations of the administrative system created to facilitate a closer contact between a citizen-inhabitant and the authority, the system of managing in Hamburg must be seen as a most centralist one. By contrast with local governments in other federal lands, the one in Hamburg does not have its own means at its disposal. All the means of financing come from the Assembly of Citizens of Hamburg – the districts do not have their own budgets or an individual tax system. Decisively, the boroughs play the role of administrative units within the territorial division of the land. The administrative organ in a borough is a Borough Assembly presided over by a Municipal Administrator chosen by the Council for a six-year term of office. Formally, the Administrator is appointed by the Senate who – in the end – can reject the candidature proposed by the given candidate's Borough Assembly<sup>23</sup>. The sovereign of the land's authority on the level of a borough are citizens who have their representation in borough assemblies and local councils. At present, there are nearly 17.5 thousand inhabitants who take advantage of this form of citizens' participation in Hamburg. Elections to borough assemblies are held simultaneously with those to the Assembly of Citizens of Hamburg. Although the former does not have the right to govern on its own, its tasks are understood in this way through the co-participation in activities performed by local offices. The Constitution Reform of 1996 made it pos-

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<sup>23</sup> K.A. Wojtaszczyk, M. Jarosińska, *Kraje Związkowe Republiki Federalnej Niemiec*, Warszawa 2001, p. 158–161.

sible (Article. 50 of the CH) for citizens to use three paths of participation in authority: people's initiative, voting and a referendum<sup>24</sup>.



**Map 2.** The Territorial division of Hamburg – the boroughs.

Source:[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/45/Pincerno\\_Hamburger\\_Bezirke\\_2008.png?uselang=de](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/45/Pincerno_Hamburger_Bezirke_2008.png?uselang=de)

#### **4. ELECTORAL LAW. THE PERIOD OF GREAT CHANGES 2004–2011**

The idea of a proportional formula of elections grew out of the conviction that any representation should, by its nature, be a faithful reflection of not only the views of the majority, but also those of a minority of the electorate. The aim of proportional representation is thus a selection of such a legislative body that would reflect the broader part of society. In Hamburg, before the introduction of the new changes into Electoral Law, that was until the 29<sup>th</sup> of February 2004, there had existed a system of

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<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, p. 162.

proportional elections in force, the system itself being based on choosing candidates from a closed list. The new law introduced changes which were important in as much as it is even until today that the Assembly of Citizens of Hamburg have been elected according to the procedure of a proportional system, nevertheless including multi-mandate election districts (constituencies), a district voters register and the land's register. Until 2004, in *Bürgerschaft*, there were 121 deputies taking seats, who were elected from a closed list for a four-year term of office. In those elections the active voting rights were granted to all German citizens who – on the day of the election – had turned 18 years old and for 3 months prior to that day had continued to stay in the city. In the case of the passive right, it was granted to each citizen who had a voting right. At the time of election, each citizen was entitled to cast one vote. The electoral threshold for parties or political groups to reach to be eligible for the allotment of mandates to the Assembly was set at 5% (including both binding and non-binding votes cast). The mandates were allotted according to the Hare/Niemeyer procedure, in proportion to the votes obtained in the whole land. In the case where one party or political group obtained more than half of the votes, yet was entitled to receive fewer than half of the mandates, the given party or group was allotted additional seats in the Assembly. The seats were allotted in the order on the list. Should there be not enough candidates on the list – the remaining seats were not filled<sup>25</sup>.

The new act introduced a proportional system, with the inclusion of multi-mandate constituencies, a district list and a land register. Now, changes to the act can be made in the Assembly, securing a majority of 2/3rds of the votes and not later than 3 months before the end of the term of office. In this period, 2.5% of citizens eligible to vote can submit an application to have a change introduced in the way of a referendum<sup>26</sup>.

Since 2004 there have been 121 deputies taking seats in *Bürgerschaft*, where 71 mandates come from 17 multi-mandate constituencies – the district register, while 50 mandates – from the land's list. The term of office lasts 4 years, although in 2010 the CDU faction and Grüne/GALL advanced

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.wahlrecht.de>

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*.



the proposal to lengthen the term to 5 years. Nevertheless, the project had not been approved before 2011. In compliance with the new Electoral Law, each voter is allotted 10 votes: 5 votes for a candidate from the district register and 5 votes for one from the land's register. The voter can give all the votes (5) to one or more candidates, still he/she cannot give more than 5 votes to candidates in a constituency. In multi-mandate constituencies there are between 3 and 5 seats to be filled in the Assembly. In the case of the land's register, the voter can give all five votes globally to the candidates in it (vote for the register as a whole), or to individual candidates from the list. The mandates are distributed according to the Saint-Laguë procedure. They are allotted to parties and political groups above the 5% election threshold. The distribution is executed by dividing the number of votes given to each party by successive odd numbers. In the case of 'half-numbers' (0.5), they are 'rounded off' to get an integral number. If the number of candidates in the district register is exhausted, the mandates allotted to these candidates pass on to those in the land's register. The order in which the mandates are allotted depends on the number of obtained votes. Out of the quotients calculated in such a way there are chosen as many groups as there are seats to fill. In the case in which a party or a political group obtains more mandates than it is entitled to according to the ratio of the votes given to it, we come to deal with surplus mandates. Parties which have gained an absolute majority in elections automatically obtain a majority in the Assembly<sup>27</sup>.

**Table 1. Differences in the Electoral Law before and after the Reform**

The Electoral Law in force until 2004	The Electoral Law in force after 2004
Proportional system based on election of candidates from a closed list	Proportional system including multi-mandate constituencies, a district register and a land's register
121 deputies electable from a closed list for a four-year term of office	121 deputies, 71 of whom come from 17 multi-mandate constituencies – a district register, while 50 – from the land's list; a four-year term of office

<sup>27</sup> Gesetz über die Wahl zur Hamburgischen Bürgerschaft (BüWG) in der Fassung vom 22. Juli 1986.

The Electoral Law in force until 2004	The Electoral Law in force after 2004
All citizens of Germany who, on the day of elections, were 18 years old and for three months prior to the date had stayed continuously on the territory of the city had the active right to vote in the elections.	All German citizens who, on the day of elections, are 18 years old and for three months prior to the date have stayed continuously on the territory of the city have the active right to vote in the elections.
Mandates distributed according to Hare/Niemeyer procedure	Mandates distributed according to Saint-Laguë procedure
Each voter entitled to cast one vote	Each voter entitled to cast ten votes
The barrage clause – 5% including also non-binding votes	The barrage clause – 5% including only binding votes

Source: Gesetz über die Wahl zur Hamburgischen Bürgerschaft (BüWG) in der Fassung vom 22. Juli 1986.

## 5. AN ANALYSIS OF ELECTIONS TO BÜRGERSCHAFT

For the last 50 years Hamburg – without a doubt – has been a stronghold of Social-Democrats. The SPD (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*) has enjoyed a particular support from harbour workers who are employed in the shipbuilding industry and food processing of imported commodities and condiments<sup>28</sup>. The practical significance of the party on Hamburg's political stage, as the dominating and unchanging one, has also been connected with the existence of the opposition, which – equally for 50 years – has undergone no changes. In consequence of establishments a reversal took place in June 1982, 1986, 2004 and 2008, when the Christian Democratic Union (CDU – *Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands*) gained a slight advantage over the SPD. Until 1982 the FDP (*Freie Demokratische Partei*) had been considered the third political force, however the appearance of the Green-Alternative (GAL) (*Grüne/GAL*) led to a drop of the liberal party into fourth place. The significance of local political

<sup>28</sup> K.A. Wojtaszczyk, M. Jarońska, *Kraje Związkowe Republiki Federalnej Niemiec*, Warszawa 2001, p. 164.

groups and minor parties throughout the fifty years has risen, in particular in the years 1993–2004, when it reached society's support in the neighbourhood of 18% – since 1961 they have not been able to go above the threshold of 5%.

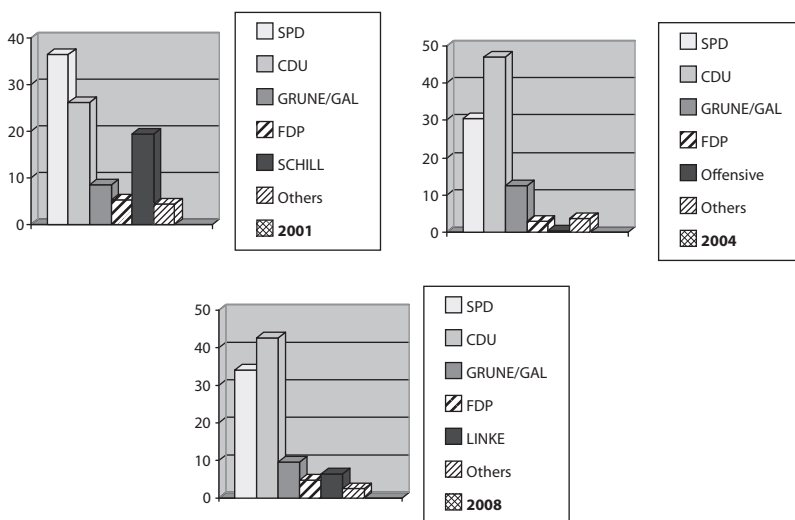
Table 2. Results of the elections of 1957–2011

Year	General turnout in the elections	SPD	CDU	GRÜNE/ GAL	FDP	OTHERS
1957	77.3	53.9	32.2		8.6	5.3
1961	72.3	57.4	29.1		9.6	3.9
1966	69.8	59.0	30.0		6.8	4.2
1970	73.4	55.3	32.8		7.1	4.8
1974	80.4	44.9	40.6		10.9	3.6
1978	76.6	51.5	37.6		4.8	6.1
06/82	77.8	42.7	43.2	7.7	4.9	1.5
12/82	84.0	51.3	38.6	6.8	2.6	0.7
1986	78.8	41.7	41.9	10.4	4.8	1.2
1987	79.5	45.0	40.5	7.0	6.5	1.0
1991	66.1	48.0	35.1	7.2	5.4	4.3
1993	69.6	40.4	25.1	13.5	4.2	16.8
1997	68.7	36.2	30.7	13.9	3.5	15.7
2001	71.0	36.5	26.2	8.6	5.1	23.6
2004	68.7	30.5	47.2	12.3	2.8	7.2
2008	63.5	34.1	42.6	9.6	4.8	8.9
2011	57.3	48.4	21.9	11.2	6.7	11.8

Source: Wahlen zur Bürgerschaft und zu den Bezirksversammlungen am 20. Februar 2011, Statistisches Amt für Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg 2011. [www.statistik-nord.de](http://www.statistik-nord.de). Author's own elaboration

Taking a closer look at the last decade, in 2001, society again decided to trust the social democrats. The SPD got 36.5% of the votes and 46 mandates in the Assembly. The second, sized, political group which acquired 33 mandates and 26.2% of the support was the CDU. The results

of the election drew especial attention to Schill's party of 'government offensive', which – from 14<sup>th</sup> place in the list secured itself third place in the Assembly (19.4%) and 25 mandates. Three years later victory fell not to the social democrats, but to the Christian-Democratic Union. To the CDU's surprise, the party won the election having gained 47.2% of the votes. In February 2004, the election brought along a decisive rise in support for the party by 21%. Apart from the main actors on the political stage, the *Grüne/GAL* party proved very active, achieving the result of 12.3%. The last decade has seen a clear decrease in the popularity of the FDP which – in all subsequent elections – kept getting very poor results. In the years 2004–2011, the party was not able to exceed the 5% threshold.



**Diagram 1.** Results of the elections in the years 2001–2011

Source: Wahlen zur Bürgerschaft und zu den Bezirksversammlungen 2001–2011.

www.statistik-nord.de. Author's own elaboration.

The year 2004 saw – primarily – a 'revolution' within the structure of *Bürgerschaft*. The CDU, by obtaining 63 mandates, became twice as strong in comparison with the preceding term (33 mandates). The SPD gained 41 mandates (in 2001–46 mandates), whereas Grüne/GAL – 17 mandates, which over the last 4 years yielded a rise by 6 seats to the advantage of the

latter. The election campaign of 2004 is said to have been one of the most effective for 50 years. The aim of the campaign was to encourage citizens to take part and cast their votes, which – in consequence – was supposed to improve the turnout that had been waning dramatically since the 1980<sup>s</sup>. The heavy involvement of the media was also meant to make the broadest possible electorate participate, yet – in comparison with 2001 – they cast even fewer votes: the 70% turnout in 2001 went down to 68.7%. Out of the 1,214,935 citizens of Hamburg, there were 834,656 inhabitants who came to vote. The highest percentage of the given votes occurred in 2004, with citizens over 60 years of age (72.9%). In 2001, it was higher and amounted to 73.6%. On the other hand, a drop by 5 percentage points was recorded (2001–75.9%, 2004–70.9%) among voters ranging 45–59 years of age. In both elections (2001 and 2004) the lowest percentage of voters was noted among those in the age group 18–24 years (2001–49.5%, 2004–48.6%).

**Table 3. Average age. The turnout of Elections to Bürgerschaft 2004/2001**

Age group	Turnout		
	2004	2001	Difference
18–24	48.6	49.5	-0.9
25–34	61.0	61.3	-0.3
35–44	68.6	69.5	-0.9
45–59	70.9	75.9	-5.0
Over 60 years of age	72.9	73.6	-0.7
<b>Total turnout</b>	67.7	69.3	-1.6

Source: Wahlen zur Bürgerschaft und zu den Bezirksversammlungen am 29. Februar 2004, Statistisches Amt für Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg 2004. [www.statistik-nord.de](http://www.statistik-nord.de). Author's own elaboration.

In individual boroughs of Hamburg, the behavior of voters displayed a series of visible correlations. In order to provide a description of the basic social structures, people taking advantage of the social aid system, the unemployed, the state of education and incomes subject to taxation per capita were taken into account in the first place. As a result, the SPD lost a large number of votes in boroughs, where the unemployment rate was

relatively high (35.1%). In boroughs boasting of a low unemployment rate the party reached the level of 22.4%. The CDU – obtained 59.1% of the votes in boroughs with low unemployment rates and 39.4% in those, whose inhabitants avail themselves of social aid. Since 2001 the CDU has gained a rise of 17.3 percentage points in this last segment.

**Table 4. Number (in %) of votes given to individual parties/political groups, including people in groups of high and low unemployment rates. The election to Bürgerschaft on the 29th of February 2004**

	SPD	CDU	GRÜNE/ GAL	FDP	Offensive	Pro DM/ Schill
<b>High</b>	35.1	57.1	14.8	2.2	0.7	4.8
<b>Low</b>	22.4	59.1	10.2	3.8	0.3	2.2

**Table 5. Number (in %) of votes given to individual parties/political groups, including people taking advantage of the Social Aid System. The election to Bürgerschaft on The 29th of February 2004**

	SPD	CDU	GRÜNE/ GAL	FDP	Offensive	Pro DM/ Schill
<b>High</b>	35.9	39.4	11.5	2.2	0.8	5.3
<b>Low</b>	22.6	59.3	9.8	3.7	0.3	2.3

Source: Wahlen zur Bürgerschaft und zu den Bezirksversammlungen am 29. Februar 2004, Statistisches Amt für Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg 2004. [www.statistik-nord.de](http://www.statistik-nord.de). Author's own elaboration

The year 2008 brought along another victory for the CDU, the party gaining 42.6% of the votes (it lost 4.6 percentage points in comparison with the preceding election, though). The opposition party SPD gained 3.6% at the same time. The Green-Alternative party (GAL) received 9.6% of the voters' support and – accordingly – took third place in the Assembly. In that election the number of citizens eligible to vote was 1,236,671. The total turnout reached 63.5% (785,243) and – decisively – proved the lowest since 1991. 61.7% of the electorate were people over 60 years of age; 38.2% of the young ranging from 18–24 years old took part in the election to the Assembly. The division of the electorate with respect to gender seems

very interesting: the party which gained the highest number of votes to the Assembly from women in the age group of 18–24 years was the SPD. The votes given to this party by men in this age group were distributed in a similar way – 42.3%. Women over 60 years of age gave the lowest percentage of votes (2.6%) to the Grüne/GAL. The leftish party *Die Linke* was supported by 15.2% of men in the age group of 45–59 years. The CDU enjoyed popularity with both men and women over 60 years of age (M – 50%, W – 56.7%).

The CDU won in 13 out of 17 constituencies, obtaining the highest support in District 13 – *Alstertal-Walddörfer* – 48.2%. In District 9 – *Barmbek-Uhlenhorst-Dulsberg* – the voters were greatly divided. The difference between the votes given to the SPD and the CDU amounted to 0.3%. The SPD triumphed in 4 constituencies: *Hamburg-Mitte*, *Billstedt-Wilhelmsburg-Finkenwerder*, *Altona*, *Stellingen-Eimsbüttel-West*. The Grüne/GAL obtained results exceeding 10% in the following constituencies: 1–11.7%, 3–16.8%, 5–15.7%, 6–11.7%, 8–13.3% and also 9–11.3%. *Die Linke*, in comparison with FDP (*Freie Demokratische Partei*) won in 14 constituencies.

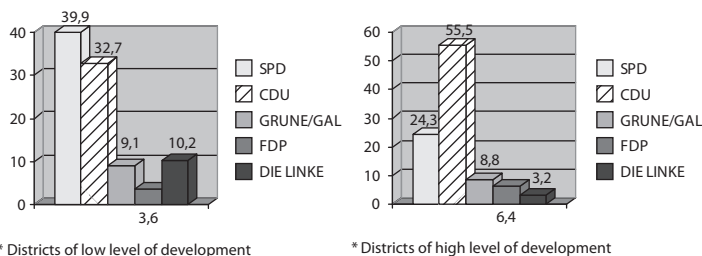
**Table 6. Support for individual parties and political groups in particular constituencies. The election to Bürgerschaft on the 24th of February 2008**

No. of the const.	Mean	CDU	SPD	GRÜNE/ GAL	FDP	Die Linke
1	56.1	29.7	34.9	16.6	5.4	10.7
2	50.8	36.5	39.4	6.7	3.7	9.3
3	68.3	26.5	31.3	23.3	5.5	10.3
4	67.0	46.2	28.6	9.9	8.4	5.8
5	72.7	32.7	28.8	23.5	6.7	7.8
6	63.6	33.5	35.2	16.8	5.1	8.4
7	68.4	43.6	30.5	12.8	6.5	5.4
8	71.4	38.8	28.9	19.2	7.4	5.7
9	61.1	34.0	33.7	16.3	6.1	8.7
10	64.6	40.0	34.2	12.6	5.5	6.6
11	58.6	42.1	33.7	9.5	6.0	7.3

No. of the const.	Mean	CDU	SPD	GRÜNE/ GAL	FDP	Die Linke
12	60.3	39.3	37.2	8.8	5.5	8.5
13	76.7	48.2	27.5	13.0	7.4	3.5
14	62.9	45.0	33.2	8.6	5.5	6.4
15	60.0	43.7	33.9	9.3	4.5	6.8
16	56.4	39.5	36.2	10.3	5.5	8.5
17	58.2	43.7	33.5	9.3	5.7	6.6

Source: Wahlen zur Bürgerschaft und zu den Bezirksversammlungen am 24. Februar 2008, Statistisches Amt für Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg 2008. www.statistik-nord.de. Author's own elaboration.

In prosperous districts victory fell to the CDU which obtained 55.5% of the votes. On the other hand, in 'poorly-developed districts' this party was supported by 32.7% of the inhabitants. The opposition party SPD enjoyed greater popularity in 'poorer districts', obtaining 39.9% of the votes. A similar result in both 'better-developed' and 'poorer' constituencies was achieved by the Grüne/GAL: 9.1% and 8.8%, respectively. The FDP ranked fourth in the 'better-developed' districts (6.4%), while it took third place in those 'poorer' ones – 10.2%.



\*Districts of low level of development

\*Districts of high level of development

### Diagram 2. Poorly – and well-developed. Distribution of votes for individual parties and political groups. The election to Bürgerschaft in 2008

Source: Wahlen zur Bürgerschaft und zu den Bezirksversammlungen am 24. Februar 2008, Statistisches Amt für Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg 2008. www.statistik-nord.de. Author's own elaboration.



The CDU took 56 out of the 121 seats to fill the Assembly of Citizens of Hamburg. The party obtained 25 mandates from the land's register (*Landeslisten*), while the remaining 31 – from the district list (*Wahlkreis*). The second strongest party was the SPD which had 45 mandates, 26 of which came from the district list and 19 – from the land's register. Also the *Grüne/GAL* (12 mandates) and the leftish *Die Linke* (8 mandates) secured seats in the Assembly.

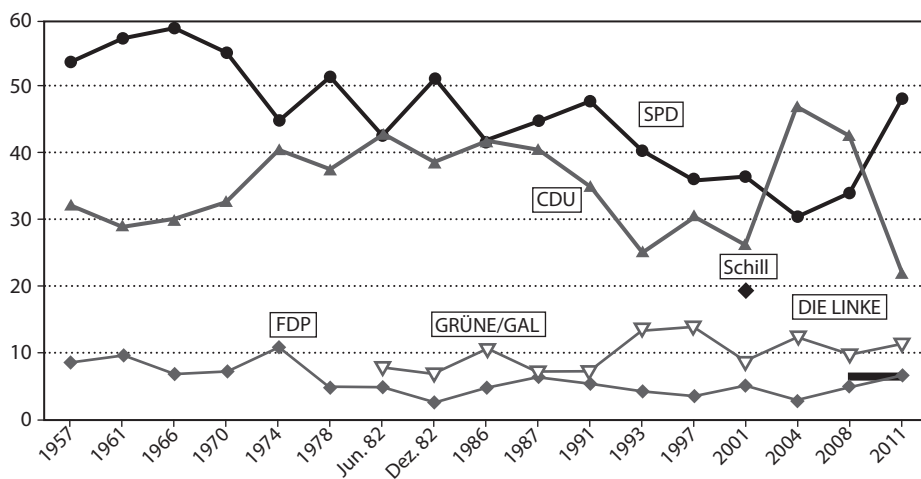
**Table 7. Distribution of mandates including the land's and district lists. The election to *Bürgerschaft* in 2008**

Party	Number of mandates	Land's Register – number of mandates	Districts – number of mandates
CDU	56	25	31
SPD	45	19	26
GRÜNE/GAL	12	1	11
DIE LINKE	8	5	3
TOTAL	121	50	71

Source: Wahlen zur *Bürgerschaft* und zu den Bezirksversammlungen am 24. Februar 2008, Statistisches Amt für Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg 2008. [www.statistik-nord.de](http://www.statistik-nord.de). Author's own elaboration.

The election of 2011, following two terms of CDU's rule, proved victorious to the party which for 50 years had been number one on the political stage. The 'comeback' of the SPD, with the result of 48.4%, was a great surprise to the ruling party. On the other hand, the defeats suffered in 2004 and 2008 had motivated the members of the SPD to act constructively, which in 2011 secured the party the majority of 62 seats in the Assembly. In the same election, the CDU gained 21.9% of the votes, which in comparison with 2008 (42.6%) and 2004 (47.2%) meant a loss of 20.7% and 25.3%, respectively. From 1982 the *Grüne/GAL* had been gaining support within the range between 7 and 14%. The party enjoyed the greatest popularity with the voters in 1993 and 1997 (13.3% and 13.9%, respectively); in 2011, it took third place, with the result of 11.2%. The *Die Linke* ranked fourth, with the 8 seats it won (5 of which came from the land's

register and 3 – from the district list). It is worth paying attention to the election results obtained by the liberals – the FDP – who, had been gaining a 2% support with each successive election since 2004, in which year it amounted to 2.8%, in 2008–4.8% and in 2011–6.7%.



**Diagram 3. Support for individual parties and political groups. Elections to Bürger-schaft – 1957–2011**

Source: Wahlen zur Bürgerschaft und zu den Bezirksversammlungen am 20. Februar 2011.

In the election there were 1,254,638 citizens eligible to vote. The general turnout amounted to 57.3% (718,876). In comparison with the election of 2008 there was a noticeable drop of 6.2%. In the opinions expressed by observers and commentators the election to the Assembly in 2011 raised a great deal of concern caused by the introduction of the new and complicated election law. It was feared (which turned out quite rightly) that there would follow a drop in the turnout. The new system which introduced the possibility of giving 10 votes to two candidates from the district and land's registers discouraged the electorate from voting. In consequence, the lowest turnout since 1957 was recorded. It also follows from the above-presented diagram that there occurred a drop in the turnout in the elec-

tions to the Bundestag and European Parliament, the one for the latter oscillating around 30%<sup>29</sup>.

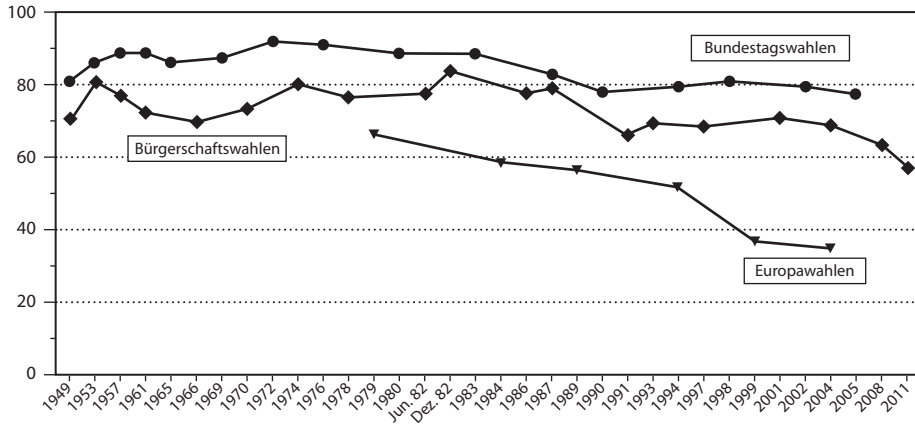


Diagram 4. Turnout for elections to the Bundestag, Bürgerchaft, and the European Parliament in the years 1949–2011

Source: Wahlbeteiligung bei Bundestags-, Bürgerchaft – und Europawahlen in Hamburg seit 1949, Wahlen zur Bürgerchaft und zu den Bezirksversammlungen am 20. Februar 2011, Statistisches Amt für Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg 2011, [www.statistik-nord.de](http://www.statistik-nord.de)

Pre-election discussions had pointed to victory by the SPD, still the result assessed before the election was by 5.4% lower – the CDU obtained the result by 3% higher than the pre-election surveys had indicated.

It is worth devoting slightly more attention, in the present considerations, to the electorate of Hamburg's political stage, which for a decade now has remained constant as regards preferences for some political forces, has grown in the case of some other forces or has been on a considerable decline relating to other players. Among the 5 active groups it is the social democrats of the SPD who have enjoyed an increase in support: since 2004 the number has risen by about 70–80 thousand. In 2004, a decrease could

<sup>29</sup> Wahlbeteiligung bei Bundestags-, Bürgerchaft- und Europawahlen in Hamburg seit 1949.

be noted from 310.4 thousand (2001) to 251.4 thousand (2004), primarily caused by the growth of the electorate of the chief competitor – the CDU. The latter recorded a rise in support by 166.2 thousand in 2004 in comparison with the previous election of 2001. In the election of 2011 the CDU lost over a half of its electorate (2008–331.1 thousand; 2011–152.6 thousand).

**Table 8. Distribution of seats including the land's and district registers. The election of 2011**

Party	Number of mandates	The land's register – number of mandates	Districts– number of mandates
CDU	28	10	18
SPD	62	25	37
GRÜNE/GAL	14	2	12
DIE LINKE	8	5	3
FDP	9	8	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	121	50	71

Source: Wahlen zur Bürgerschaft und zu den Bezirksversammlungen am 20. Februar 2011, Statistisches Amt für Hamburg und Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg 2011. [www.statistik-nord.de](http://www.statistik-nord.de). Author's own elaboration.

In the election held in 2011, the SPD won an absolute majority of seats (62) in Bürgerschaft, having obtained 25 mandates from the land's register and 37 from the district list. The second equally important group was the CDU which got 28 seats, 10 mandates coming from the land's register and 18 from the district one. The Grüne/GAL ranked third, obtaining 12 seats in the Assembly from the district list and 2 mandates – from the land's register.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The generally outlined model which sketches the features of today's party stage in Hamburg is meant to theoretically expose the state of petrification: analyzing the conditions behind the forming of the stage and considering

the principles of organization corresponding to this area, the last half-century has reflected the sense of citizens' devotion to the social democrats. These processes have become, on the one hand, the foundation of firmly grounded beliefs; on the other – they have influenced the new formation of the party stage. The popularity of the SPD (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*) has been the strongest among workers employed in the food processing and shipbuilding industries. It is accepted that the stability of the party stage is visible in the 'local empire' of the SPD which has lasted in Hamburg for 50 years, although one can speak about dramatic 'turns of fortune' and overtaking power by the opposition in the years 1982, 1986, 2004 and 2008. The CDU (*Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands*) should be recognized to be the second political force since 1957, while third place had been taken by the FDP (*Freie Demokratische Partei*) until 1982, superseded by *Grüne/Gal* in that year. The last decade has seen the lowest percentage of citizens' participation in the elections to the Assembly of Citizens of Hamburg *Bürgerschaft*, the Bundestag as well as to the European Parliament. The first major action aimed at altering the new *status quo* was the election campaign of 2004, followed by a series of actions initiated by non-governmental organizations which are active in the territory of Hamburg and all over the Republic. The media were engaged in the election campaign on a much larger scale than before. Their main task was to issue spots on TV and radio, as well as to publish ads in the press. The effectiveness of those was rather low, since the 70% turnout of 2001 dropped to 68.7% in 2004. This proves that a turnout does not depend only on the individual characteristics of people eligible to vote. Institutional solutions accepted and practised in a given system are also significant as regards active and passive approaches towards elections. The new act introduced a proportional system including multi-mandate constituencies, a district list and a land's register, which – in consequence – led to a feeling of disorientation in society. The old procedure, on the basis of which each voter was entitled to give one vote, was replaced by a new one, in which each voter is entitled to cast 10 votes. He/She can give 5 votes to a candidate from the district list, as well as 5 votes to those from the land's register.

In conclusion, one ought to underline the necessity of looking at the stability of the party stage, so characteristic of Hamburg in a both his-

torical and dynamic way. This means – on the one hand – a continuation of the patterns of political behaviours on the part of political activists of the SPD; on the other – it obliges to carry out analyses of their activity and to make endeavours towards working out a method aimed at the improvement of the situation of the low turnout. Conclusions lead to the conviction that despite the clear unity of the party stage, a more and more precise determining of the problem and decreasing the absence among the electorate should be aimed at.