

Electoral success of the Left Party in Germany at the federal and state level: the case of Hamburg.

Die LINKE is a new, radical left party in Germany, which established itself as a party of social justice, protest against capitalism and pacifism. Contrary to its predecessor, the party of democratic socialism – PDS, die LINKE got firmly rooted not only in East German states but also in the West, and thereby it guaranteed itself electoral support. This thesis examines the reasons for electoral success of die LINKE at federal level in the elections to federal parliament (*Bundestag*) in 2009, as well as success in state elections held in 2007-2011. This statement is supported by the chapter about the history and the current achievement of the party in Hamburg. At the beginning of the thesis, historical context is examined in order to compare the success of the party and its predecessors. The next part explains electoral results of the party and indicates main factors of the success: changed political, social and economic situation in Germany, transformation of party membership and electorate as well as the character of the party. The case of Hamburg serves as an explanation of differences between state and federal level. Theoretical analysis is supported also empirically – with the survey made in Hamburg. The thesis presents complex picture of the party with its electoral achievements in the last 5 years on both federal and state level.