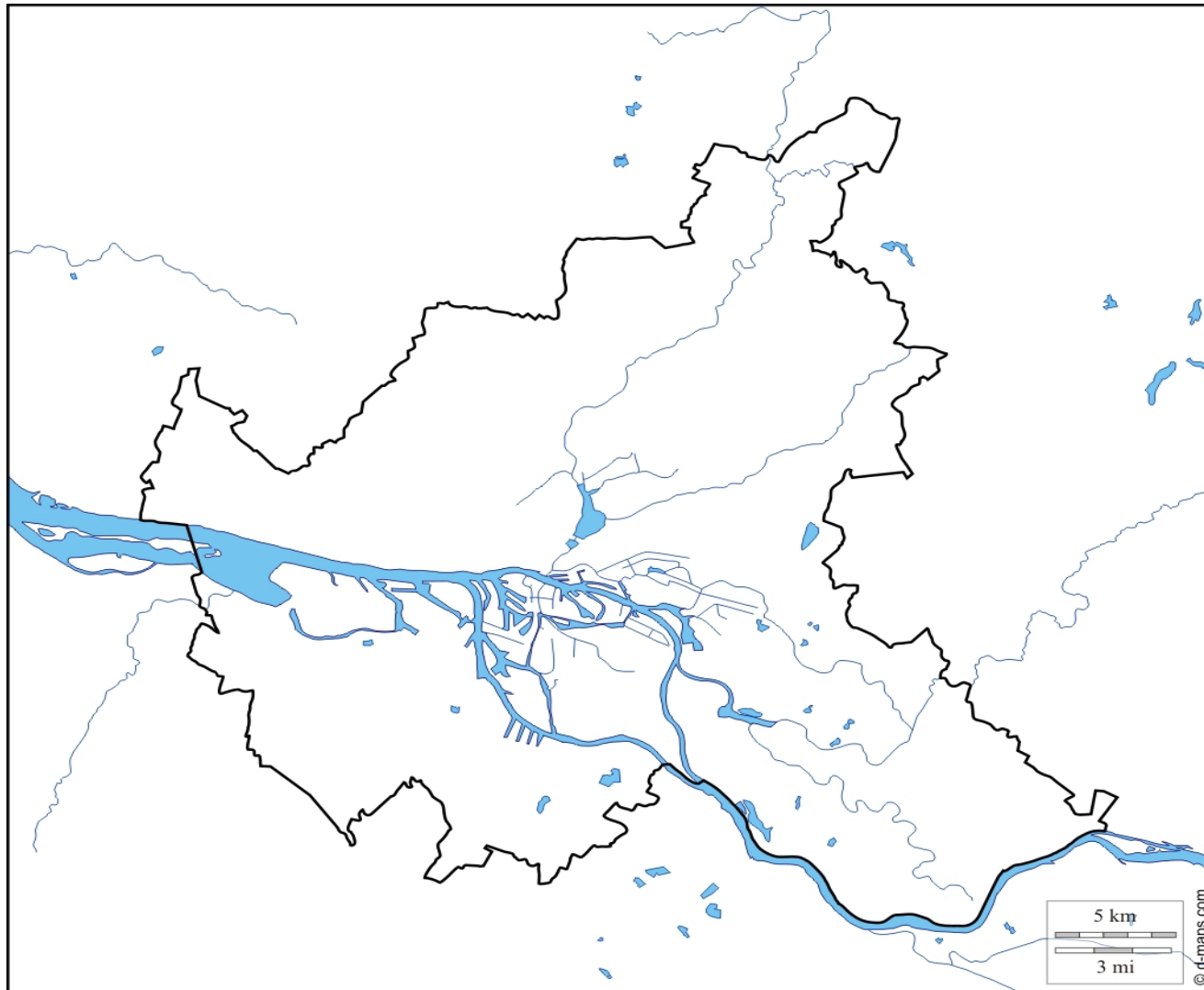


On the way to identifying major trends of health policy in a German city state

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Issues & Problem

- In cities and city states in Germany, inspite of numerous health-related activities, policy observers often have the impression that health is treated as a „weak“ topic, struggling to compete with other interests & perspectives
- In order to strengthen health, new ways are needed to understand the dynamics of urban health policy

Approach

Exploring the Parliamentary database of Hamburg (city state):

- What is the scope of this database?
- How is health represented there & which topics are covered?
- Which trends can be observed over time?

Methods & Data

Amongst other informations, the *Hamburg Parliamentary Database* contains:

- formal criteria (e.g., election period, date, document type, author or editor)
- key words, incl. health, ~ policy, ~ system etc.
- full text versions of documents

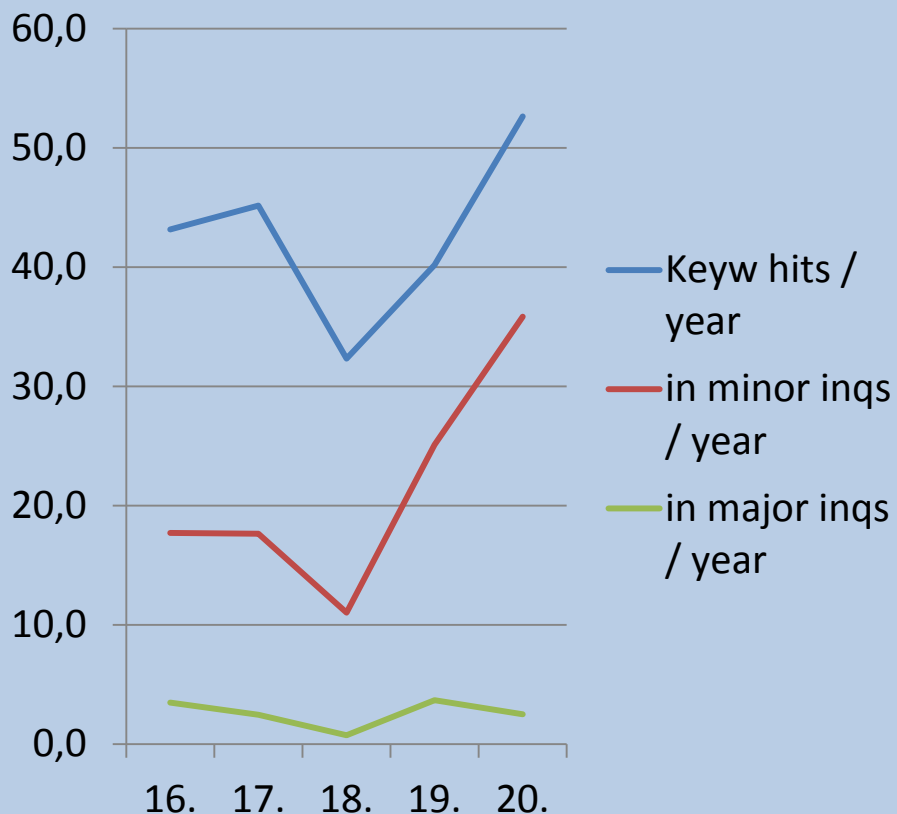
Database searches were done to:

- establish the number of documents per legislation period
- identifying numbers of documents closely related to health by combining selected health-related key words & then narrowing search results down to major or minor parliamentary inquiries
- identify numbers documents at least generally related to health by doing free text searches

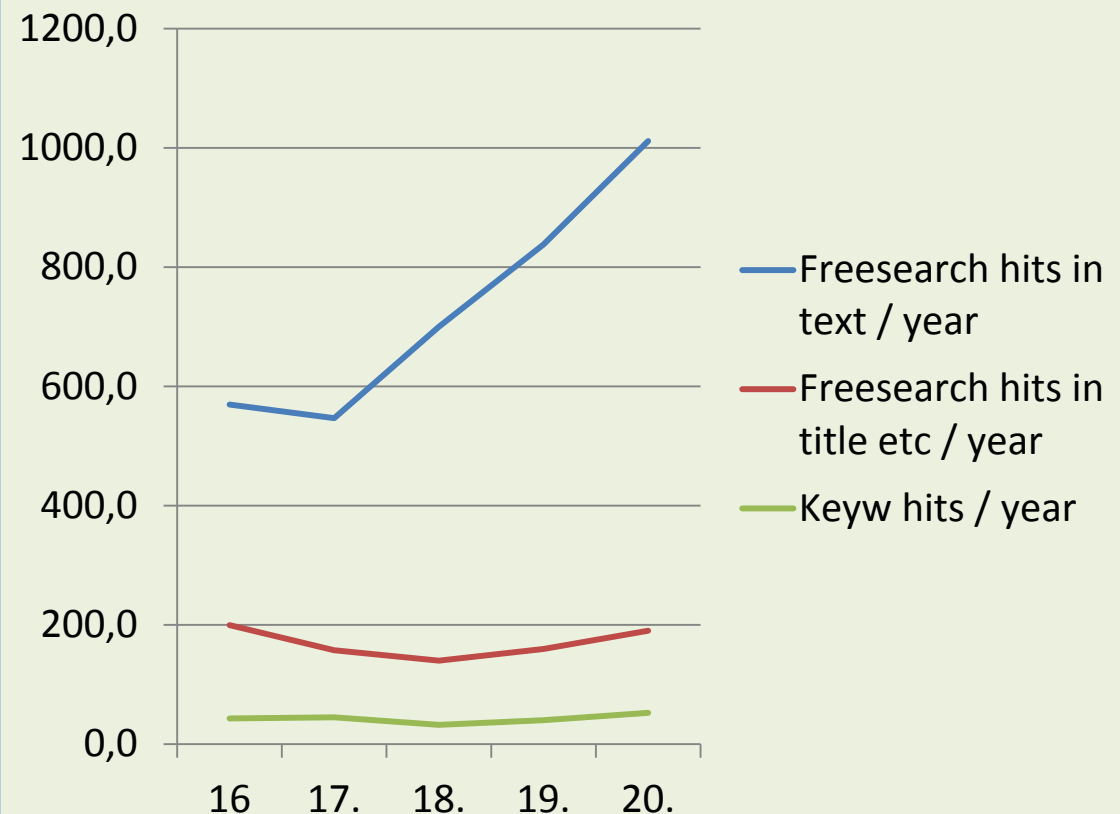
Results for the 5 full legislative periods (1997-2015)

- > 47.000 documents
- > 13.000 documents with “at least loosely health-related” information
- ~ 800 documents „closely related to health“, incl. 46 Major inquiries

“Closely health-related” docs / year [keyword-based]



“At least loosely health-related” docs / year [freesearch-based]



Note: Unequal lengths of legislative periods not reflected in these prelim diagrams

Conclusions

- There is a treasure of documents dealing with health and health policy issues, including nearly 50 major parliamentary inquiries tagged with health-related keywords
- This hitherto underutilized source for local & regional health policy calls for exchange and cooperation across localities
- More detailed analysis based on this source is expected to demonstrate major trends of health policy in Hamburg and help understanding the dynamics of local health policy, incl. the „rise“ and fall“ of specific topics
- Health as a “weak“ topic: in political debate, a better understanding of these dynamics should help strengthen the case for health