

ROSTOCK CITY

It has about 200,000 inhabitants including around 6500 migrants of which most are from the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Vietnam. Universities such as the University of Rostock, the oldest university of Northern Europe, and the University of Music and Drama (Hochschule für Musik und Theater, HMT), attract many students from other parts of Germany and abroad. The University of Music and Drama founded in 1994 contributes to a large part to the city's cultural life with its thrilling calendar of events. It combines tradition and modernity in a perfect way not only in its architecture, but also in the courses offered which range from classical music to pop and world music, from music education to musicology, drama and multimedia.

The city of Rostock has existed since 1218 and looks back to nearly 800 years of history determined by commerce, harbour, shipbuilding, shipping, and fishing.

The Kunsthalle, the Volkstheater, the Theater am Stadthafen, the Institut Français, the Max-Samuel House, the Waldemarhof, the Familienzentrum Lütten Klein, and the Jugendkulturzentrum Mau are only some examples of the vivid cultural life of the city. Tourists come to Rostock to visit not only the marvellous beaches on the Baltic coast around Rostock, but also the largest Christmas market in Northern Germany and the Hanse Sail Rostock, a sailing festival held annually in August.

Only a few people in Rostock still know Plattdüütsch or Low German, a regional dialect of the Western German languages spoken mainly in Northern Germany and the eastern part of the Netherlands, but also in Northern Poland, the Kaliningrad Oblast of Russia, and a part of southern Lithuania.¹ In the context of this project, we heard this dialect at the concert of the Duo Ossenkopp and the shanty choir Breitling (101126-Duo Ossenkopp_Plattdeutsch). The number seven is attributed to Rostock and the following poem, originally in Plattdüütsch, shows why:

Söben Toern to Sint Marien Kark,
Söben Straten bi den groten Mark,
Söben Doern, so da gaen to Lande,
Söben Kopmannsbrüggen bi dem Strande,
Söben Toern, so up dat Rathaus stan,
Söben Klocken, so dakliken slan,
Söben Linnenböm up den Rosengoern:
Dat syn de Rostocker Kennewohn.²

Seven towers of Saint Mary Church,
Seven streets next to the big market,
seven gates which lead to the country,
seven trader bridges at the beach,
seven towers which are on the townhall,
seven bells [of the seven churches] which toll at the same time,
seven linden trees in the Rosengarten,
these are the emblems of Rostock.

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Low_German, last access 11.12.2010

² <http://www.seventowers.de/>, last access 11.12.2010

However, one can not only listen to the sound of church bells, but also to the carillon at the Universitätsplatz every Saturday at 12 am. Impressive is further the sound of the astronomical clock in the Marienkirche (e.g. 101130.Marienkirche.Astron.clock.4pm). This clock still has its original mediaeval clockwork from 1472 which still precisely functions. Its five clockworks are wound up every day.³

Street noises are made up of traffic including the specific sound of Rostock's trams and around the train station of the sound of arriving and leaving trains. At the Götheplatz one can experience a junction of cars and other vehicles and afterwards enjoy the contrast of silence and sounds of nature in the Lindenpark, one of Rostock's parks alongside the Rosengarten, the Schwanenteich, the Botanical Garden and others.

Especially in the shopping street Kröpeliner Straße in the city centre, but also in the former fishing town Warnemünde street musicians play the whole year long. Many of them come from former Russian countries, Slovakia or the Czech Republic (e.g. 101113-Breite Straße.Street Musician, 101113-Kröpeliner Straße, C&A.Street Musicians, 101130.KröpStrasse.street musicians2saxofonists from Latvia).



Roma musicians from Kosice playing in Kröpeliner Straße,
13.11.2010 (photo: soundscapes team)

The Kröpeliner Tor Vorstadt (KTV) district is known for its vivid night life and for being an attractive district for students and migrants. It also accommodates the migrants' meeting center Waldemarhof. Medieval and artistic flair can be experienced in Rostock's Altstadt that includes sounds coming from the HMT. The Südstadt district is next to the city centre another area determined by university life. Sport activities are carried out in the Hansa district where the Ostseestadion is known for big football games. The Gartenstadt district includes the natural space of the Barnstorfer wood and the Rostock zoo. Alongside the river Warnow to the former fishing town Warnemünde, another of Rostock's districts, one passes the fishing harbour (Fischereihafen) and other suburban districts such as Lütten Klein, Groß Klein and Lichtenhagen.

Barbara Alge

³ <http://www.astronomischeuhr.de/en/files/vorwort.htm>, last access 11.12.2010