



Example 8 **Navigation System for Impaired People at the New Berlin Main Railway Station**
 City (country) **Berlin (Germany)**

good practice for people with ...	kind of vehicle	kind of measure/approach
... motor impairment ... visual impairment ... hearing impairment	city bus tram underground local train long-distance train	engineering/technology approach organisational/operational support

Project description

In May 2006 the new main Berlin station and five more new stations were put into operation. The barrier-free design of these stations was an important goal that was realised with the cooperation of different stakeholders. Together the Berlin association of blind and visually impaired people (Allgemeiner Blinden- und Sehbehindertenverein Berlin, ABSV, <http://www.absv.de/>), the main architect of the station, Deutsche Bahn AG, the Berlin city administration, and the regional representative for handicapped people, designed a station that meets the needs of people with reduced mobility.

The navigation system connects all levels and facilitates for people with reduced mobility. It is composed of guidance stripes that are integrated into the floor and can be sensed with the white cane. Special attention blocks made of blistered tiles in the station and of corrugated tiles on the platforms indicate stairs, elevators, intersections and changings of direction. The system includes six panorama-elevators, two more elevators to reach the two outer platforms and 15 special staircases. 770 metres of guidance stripes were laid at the station and another 5.5 kilometres on the platforms. Information pillars are located in front of each panorama elevator and give spoken information about the elevator and its position. Additionally, the spoken announcements include information on the platforms that are served by the elevator and on services that can be reached. Handrails are available on each of the stairs that are included in the system. They have information in Braille and thus further ease the orientation of blind people.

The new main station in Berlin was planned to be autonomously usable for people with reduced mobility. The ABSV offers training to be better able to make use of the system. Additionally, the mobility service of the Deutsche Bahn AG and the local station mission is prepared to support people with reduced mobility.

Comparable systems were also installed at other newly built stations in Berlin: Südkreuz, Gesundbrunnen, Potsdamer Platz, Lichterfelde-Süd and Jungfernheide. The navigation systems at the new stations are not perfect by far, but they provide basic conditions to enable people with reduced mobility to move on their own in the stations.

Source:
 ABSV Berlin: Berlin Hauptbahnhof Orientierungshilfen für Blinde und Sehbehinderte (de), <http://www.absv.de/hauptbahnhof/download.htm> (22/10/2007)