

# City maps, read out loud

AccessibleMaps are 'talking city maps' offering geographic information online and on mobile phone to persons with visual impairments. The description of the city environment is read out loud by a synthetic voice.

«AccessibleMap contributes to the information society. Persons with visual impairments are given the chance to participate in new media, information and communication technologies in the form of web-based city maps.»

(Klaus HÖCKNER)

<b>Name:</b>	<b>AccessibleMap</b>
<b>Organisation:</b>	Hilfsgemeinschaft der Blinden & Sehschwachen   CEIT Alanova
<b>Country/region of origin:</b>	Austria
<b>Beneficiaries targeted:</b>	Blind and visually impaired persons.
<b>Approach/model/solution:</b>	Online maps made accessible

## FACTS & FIGURES

- Tested in the city of Vienna
- Approximately 160 people were interviewed online to collect the user requirements

## PROBLEMS TARGETED

Until now, maps and city maps available on the internet were not accessible to persons with visual impairments. To enable the independent usage of online and mobile city maps and to convey an idea of one's surroundings or current location, this online and mobile application was developed.

## PROJECT

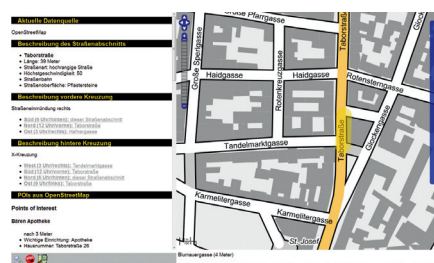
A prototype of the 'talking city map' for Vienna has been launched. The spoken description of the map gives an idea of what a street looks like, how long it is, and what infrastructure, shops, and parks are nearby. The tool can be used to prepare for an upcoming trip or, via the mobile application, to get detailed information about one's surroundings while walking through the city. Currently the spoken voice is only available in German but it is planned to implement more languages at a later stage.

## CURRENT SITUATION & OUTLOOK

Data from OpenStreetMap and Open Government Data of the City of Vienna is used. It is translated into spoken text, such as 'a park on the right' or 'a shoe store on the left'. As long as there is sufficient detailed data available, the tool has the potential to be implemented worldwide. AccessibleMap was developed in cooperation with the following organisations:

- Compass Verlag GesmbH
- Positec Technologie Entwicklungs GesmbH
- Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften - GIScience Institut

The project was funded by the BMVIT (Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology) between 2011-2013.



Screenshot of the web-based AccessibleMap.

**CONTACT** Mrs. Julia NEUSCHMID  
 CEIT ALANOVA gemeinnützige GmbH  
 j.neuschmid@ceit.at  
 Mr. Klaus HÖCKNER  
 Hilfsgemeinschaft der Blinden & Sehschwachen  
 hoeckner@hilfsgemeinschaft.at

## EXPERT VOTING



Top marks from:

- Business voters

Top marks for:

- targeting persons with physical disabilities

Nominated by: Hilfsgemeinschaft/CEIT Alanova