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ACCESS FOR ALL

Aleš Švigelj

ales.svigelj@fa.uni-lj.si

University of Ljubljana, Faculty of architecture

Accessibility is a fundamental element of inclusive spatial design and a precondition for equal participation in society. People interact with space in different ways, and many face barriers due to mobility, sensory or communication impairments. Universal design therefore emphasizes the creation of environments that can be used independently, safely and with dignity by the largest possible number of people, including wheelchair users, people who are blind or visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, elderly persons, parents with strollers and others with temporary or permanent limitations.

Accessibility must begin in exterior public spaces. Parking areas require marked and widened spaces without slopes, located near building entrances. Public transport stops must be positioned for easy access and supplemented with tactile guidance for people who are blind or visually impaired. Pavements should be continuous, non-slip and safely connected to main routes. Proper lighting increases visibility and reduces the risk of accidents in low-light conditions.

Access to buildings must be barrier-free. Entrances should have minimal level changes, doors wide enough for wheelchairs and sufficient manoeuvring space. Ramps must be correctly dimensioned, with a safe slope, non-slip surface and protective rails. For safe orientation, tactile surfaces, contrasting markings and fences guide movement and define path edges, especially important for blind and visually impaired users. Staircases require handrails, detectable warning surfaces and visible edge markings.

Interior accessibility enables independent and safe use of public buildings. Control devices and switches need to be installed at reachable heights. Reception areas must allow equal interaction for wheelchair users. Information and orientation systems should be available in multiple formats: tactile signs for blind users, readable fonts and contrast for visually impaired persons, and induction loops or FM systems for people who are hard of hearing. Accessible sanitary facilities require adequate turning space, support handles and outward-opening doors. Elevators must include visual and auditory signals and accessible control panels.

Creating accessible environments does not benefit only people with disabilities, it improves spatial quality for everyone. Clear organisation, safe surfaces and logical movement flows reduce risks and increase comfort for all users. Accessibility is not an addition but an essential part of responsible and human-centred design. Spaces that are accessible, safe and understandable promote equality, independence and participation in everyday life, reflecting the principles of universal design and social inclusion.