

biha

DSB

**JOINT DECLARATION
CONCERNING HEARING LOOPS / INDUCTION LOOPS IN GERMANY**

**German Hearing Loss Association / Deutscher Schwerhörigenbund e.V. (DSB)
German Federal Guild of Hearing Acousticians / Bundesinnung der Hörakustiker KdÖR (biha)**

The German Hearing Loss Association and the German Federal Guild of Hearing Acousticians unequivocally declare their support for the use of Inductions Loops or comparable technologies in public venues.

The same should apply to medical agencies like doctors' offices, hospitals and specialist shops which hard of hearing people must frequent regularly.

Despite a widespread opinion, hearing systems and cochlear implants (CI) are not yet able to fully compensate for an existing hearing loss. Therefore, to ensure adequate communication for higher degrees of hearing loss a direct broadcasting of speech signals to the hearing systems or to the CI is of prime importance. Hearing loops / Induction loops can be of special benefit in public venues.

Whereas today Bluetooth and Wi-Fi are being vigorously marketed and promoted, the classic Induction Loop seems to no longer command attention. With the presently available technologies, however, Bluetooth and Wi-Fi are not suitable for large public venues, or, should they be developed in this direction, are proprietary. They are mainly suitable for use in the private realm or in specific technical laboratory situations. Development is heading in the wrong direction.

Everyone with hearing loss should be able to participate fully in society. In order to facilitate participation in public venues, standardized and easily available technologies are needed that broadcast speech and acoustic signals wirelessly directly to hearing systems. At present, there is still no universal standard for publicly installed broadcasting systems which can connect to hearing aids and to which acoustic signals can be delivered. The same is true for broadcasting systems utilizing smart phones.

Wireless broadcasting using the telecoil / induction coil of the hearing system / CI fulfills the necessary requirements of standardization and common availability. Users of hearing systems with integrated induction coils, also called telecoils / T-Coils, can use Audio Frequency Induction Loop Systems / Hearing Loops without additional receivers, independent of the manufacturer of their hearing systems, and without much preparation or additional installation. Inductive transmission with neckloop and T-Coil is at present a commonly available technical solution for coupling the hearing systems to FM- and Infrared broadcasting systems.

Together we advocate for the full participation of people with disabilities in public life. Therefore, in accord with today's state of the art technology, the technical prerequisites must be created that enable people with disabilities to participate in public life. For hard of hearing people this is especially true with respect to communication and broadcasting of information in public buildings. To this end Inductive transmission via T-Coil is still the technology of choice.

Mainz/Berlin, April 2018

Signed: Marianne Frickel
Federal Guild of Hearing Acousticians KdÖR
President

Signed: Dr. Harald Seidler Dr. Norbert Böttges
German Hearing Loss Association e.V.
President, Vice President

(translated from the German original by Siegfried Karg)