



Assistance in travel preparations for attending drupa 2012

(and help planning to attend or exhibit at drupa 2016)

Introduction to drupa 2012

as preparation for drupa 2016

A thousand people write or blog about drupa 2012. But we prefer to already begin preparing for the excitement of experiencing the exhibitor list for drupa 2016. The following report is for people thinking about attending, or exhibiting at, drupa 2016. But we also intend our notes to help people attending drupa 2012.

This report is intended to offer tips and assistance over and above what is available on the drupa web site itself.

FLAAR has plenty of experience in travel planning, about 20 years actually. And since all the PR blitz, blogs and blurbs about drupa are (at least in the months before the expo) based on commercial PR releases, we would like to offer something a bit different.

This report was initiated by Ximena Matus (Assistant Editor and Technical Writer at FLAAR Reports) and Nicholas Hellmuth (Senior Review Editor). This report will be updated every 48 hours during the first week of the expo.

The wide-angle photographs are taken with a 21-megapixel Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III and a special 17mm tilt-shift architectural lens. The close-up photos were taken by Ximena with her Nikon digital camera.



Getting to drupa directly from the airport

The main airport for Duesseldorf is logically Duesseldorf (DUS). There are several ways to get to drupa from the airport:

- **drupa-special bus** direct from airport, straight to drupa Messe.
- **S1** (getting to S1 by Sky Train), then change in Hauptbahnhof to U78.
- **S11**, go to Hauptbahnhof and switch to U78
- **taxi**

In the main terminal at Duesseldorf airport, there is a Sky Train to the S1 line. Follow the signs to Sky Train.

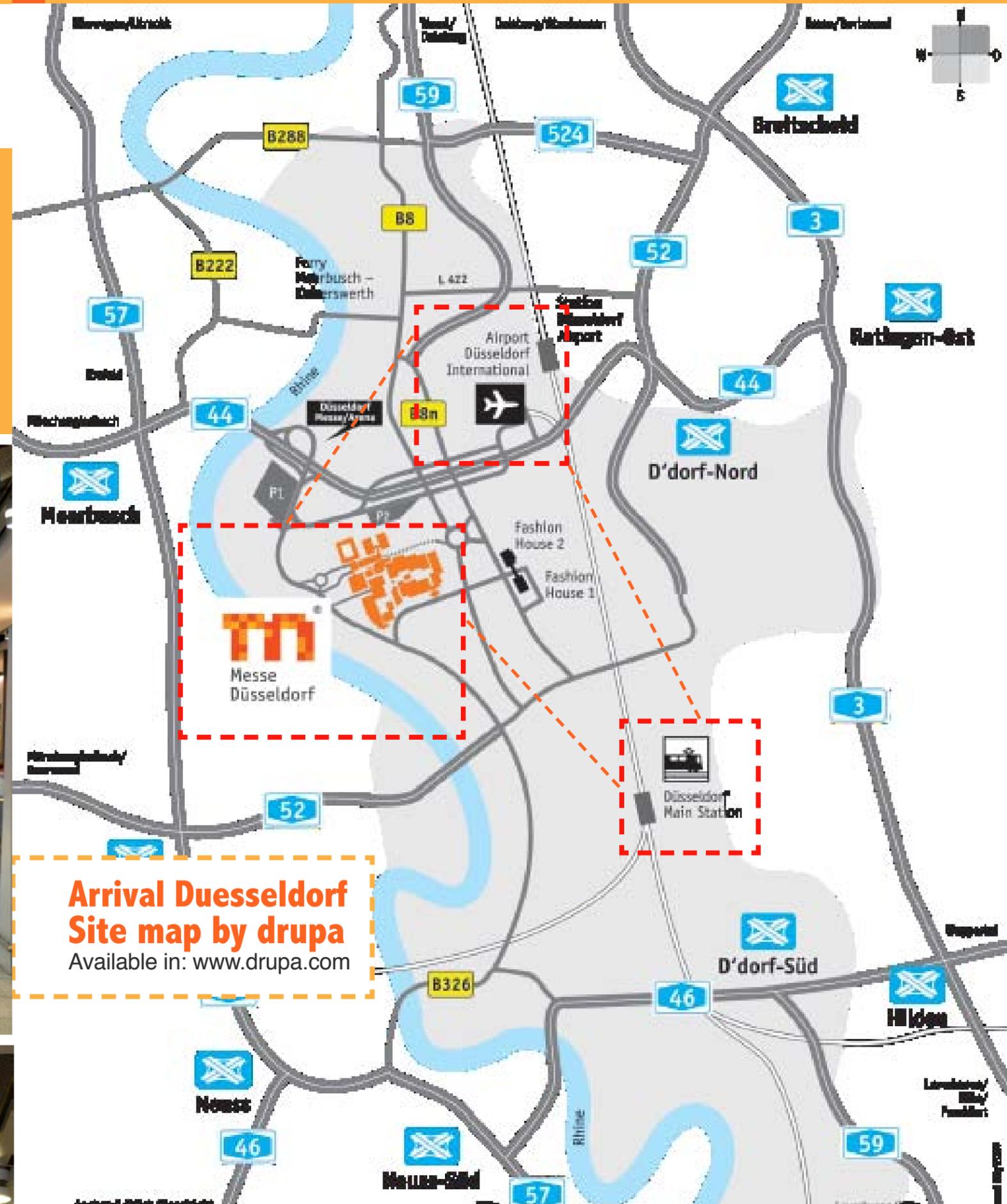
And there is a downward angled ramp to the underground S11 station. The airport is end-of-the-line for S11.

Normally you would take the S11 into the main train station (Hauptbahnhof) and switch to the U78 and go back out to the Messe Ost or Messe Nord (end of U78 line).

Actually the expo area is not far from the airport, so it is quicker to take the airport bus to drupa, or take a cab. Using S11 and U78 you waste lots of time going all the way to the city center main train station.

If you have a paid visitor pass for drupa, evidently that covers your public transportation within the local network.

U means underground, or what would be sub-way or metro in other countries.
 S-Bahn means surface, what would be called a trolley in some cities.
 S-Bahn also go underground. U-Bahn also go above ground. And all share some lines with trains.



Arrival Duesseldorf Site map by drupa
 Available in: www.drupa.com

Airport bus

The airport bus leaves the Messe area directly across the street from the end-of-the-line of U78 (Messe Nord).



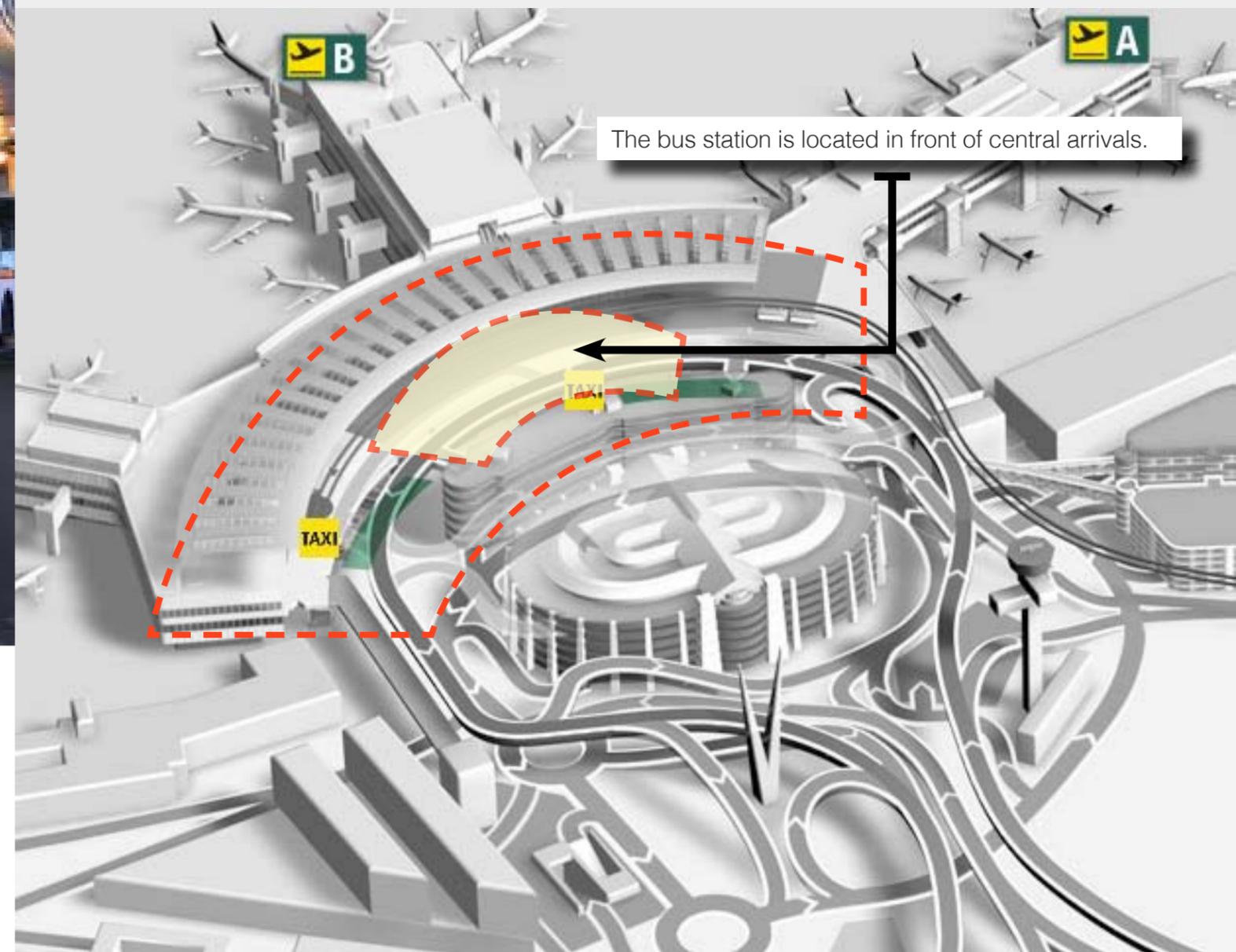
It takes less than 10 minutes to get to the airport if there is no traffic. Buses are relatively (surprisingly) frequent. But if you think you may wait too long, then simply take a cab. The airport is not far away.

It makes more sense to go straight to drupa Messe; store you baggage there; and then continue to your hotel in the evening.

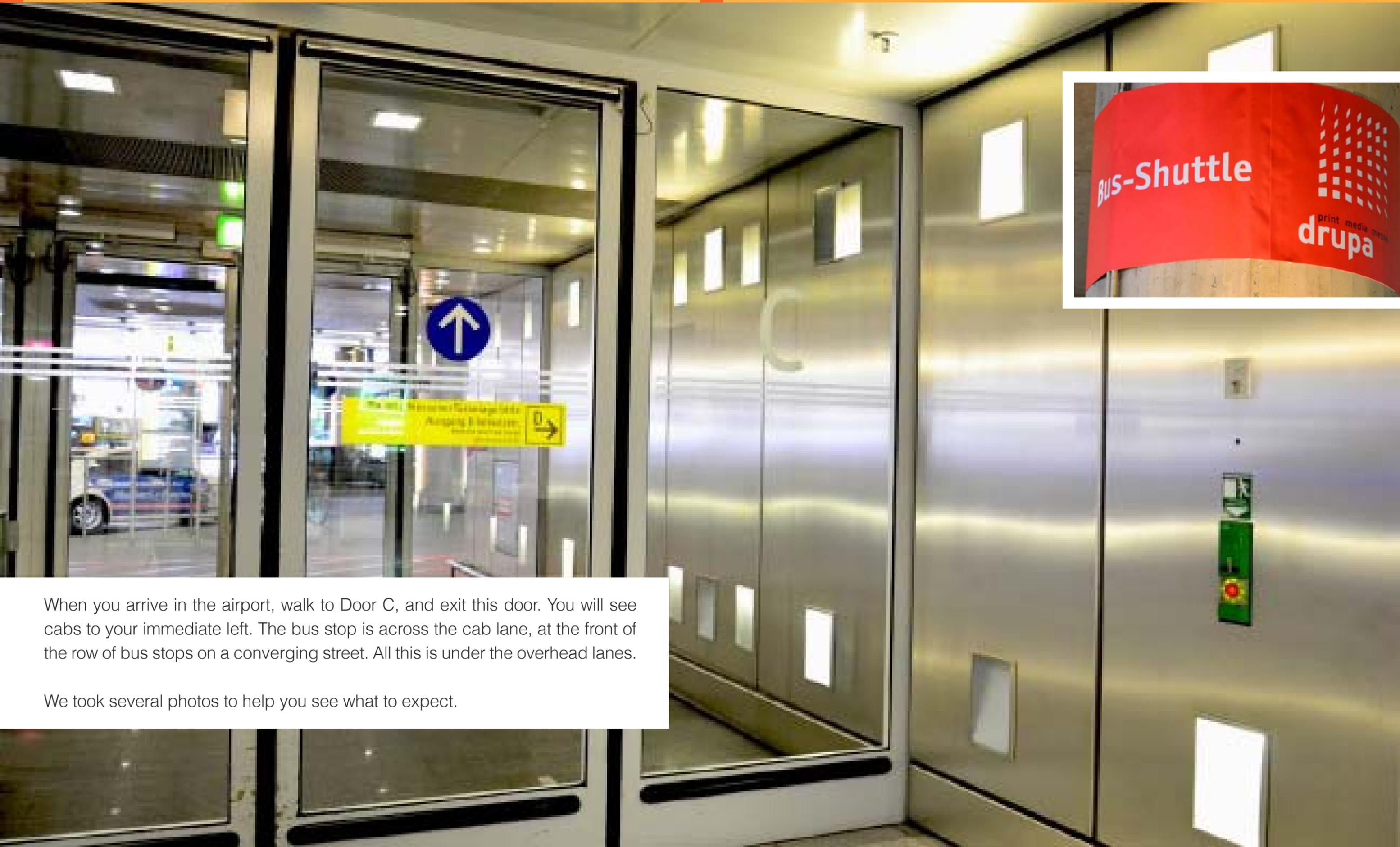
Duesseldorf International Airport map
Available at: www.duesseldorf-international.de



In this overview map of the Duesseldorf International Airport you'll find the area where the bus and taxi area is located. There you'll find the drupa bus station.



The bus station is located in front of central arrivals.



When you arrive in the airport, walk to Door C, and exit this door. You will see cabs to your immediate left. The bus stop is across the cab lane, at the front of the row of bus stops on a converging street. All this is under the overhead lanes.

We took several photos to help you see what to expect.



S11 route

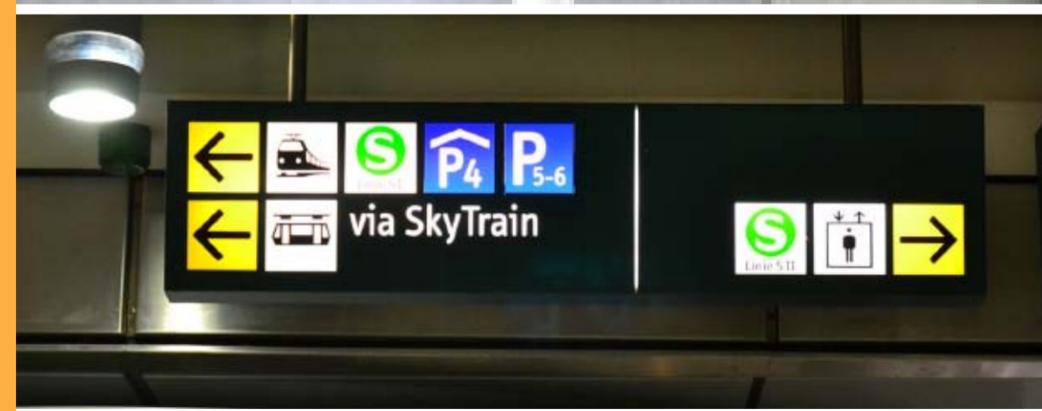
Within the airport there is a ramp down to the S11 station. Although S11 is a surface trolley-like system, it often runs below ground.

The airport is the end-station, so the train tends to be waiting for you. Often it will sit in the station for 20 minutes waiting for its official time to depart. But of course it may be that you arrive just as it is ready to pull away.

Your “free” ticket on public transportation is valid on U-Bahn, S-Bahn, and RE (Regional Zug). Your Drupa pass is NOT valid on ICE trains. It is probably not valid on an IC train either, though German conductors on IC level trains are lenient during drupa-time and will unlikely fine you if you are on an IC train.

But I would not recommend trying to bluff a conductor on an ICE train with a drupa pass.

There is not much checking of tickets on S-Bahn or U-Bahn on the normal drupa-area routes. But the conductor on a train is more likely to check and more often.



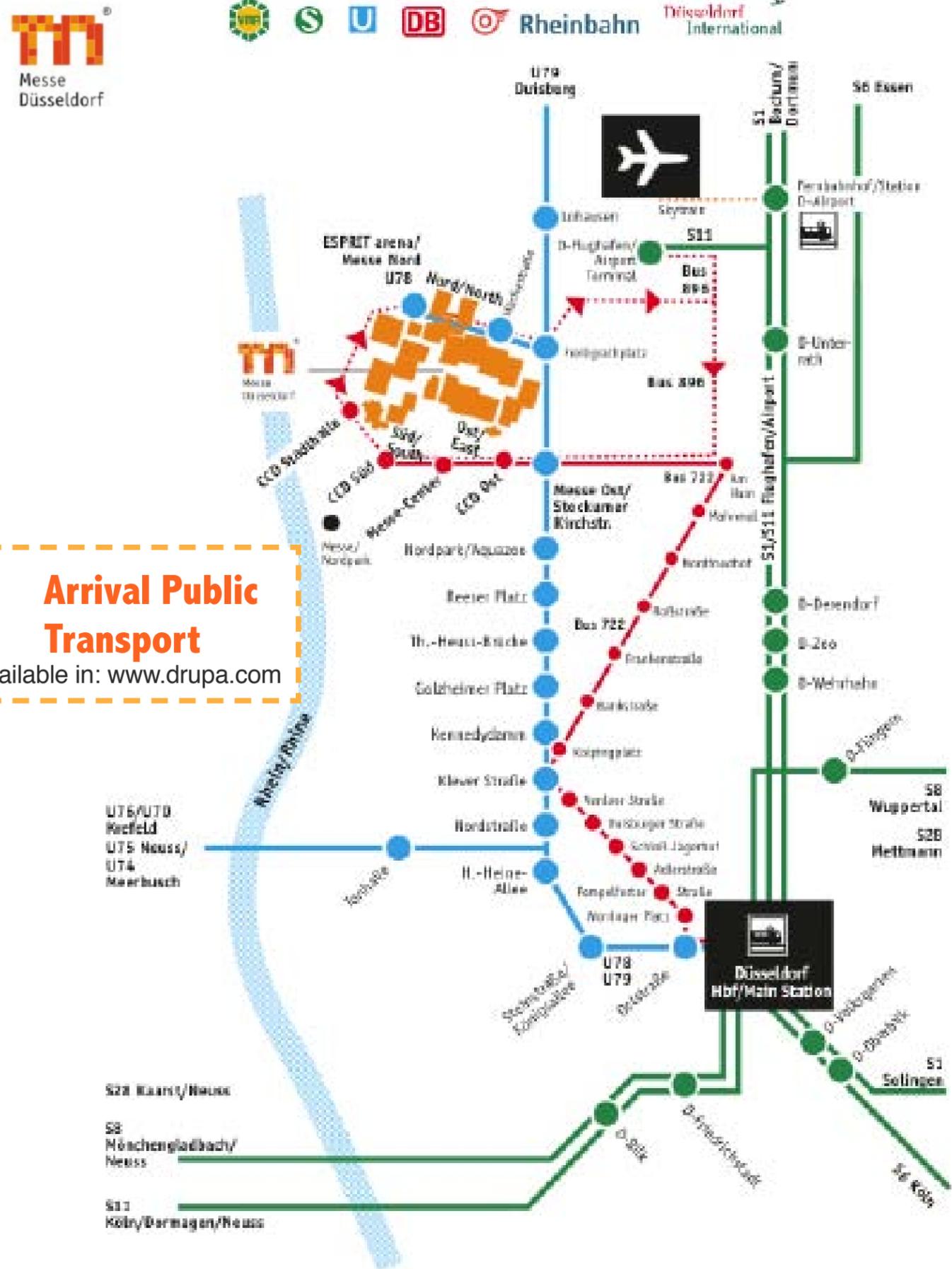
Getting back to your hotel

There are two places to get onto the U78 tram: at the end-station (between Halls 7 and 8) and at one of the stations out on the main street (a brief hike from the Drupa entrance).

If you try to get onto the tram at the main street, you will find it is totally full and they will not even open the doors.

So get onto the tram at the end-station (Messe Nord), the main entrance between Halls 7 and 8a/8b.





If your hotel is in Cologne (Koeln)

Since hotels in Duesseldorf are over-priced (and sold out nonetheless), most people stay in Cologne. The city is beautiful so it's a nice place to stay. But... it is not as easy to get to Cologne.

First take U78 from Messe Nord to Duesseldorf Hauptbahnhof. Then you face reality: there are ICE trains there are RE trains, there are IC trains. And there are Sbahn trains (trams).

Your drupa ticket is not valid on ICE, though I doubt the conductors would throw you off the train onto the tracks.

Other snag is that local trains are often delayed. And when delayed they often switch tracks. Mine was scheduled for Gleis 16 and 20 minutes later switched to Geis 4, quite a hike away.

Also train station escalators are often not functional. So I had to haul my ton-heavy suitcase up all the steps. And

20 minutes later, carry it down, run through the entire station to Gleis 4, and then carry it up the steps. My suitcases exceed the weight allowance of any and every airline in the world, so at age 68 to be able to carry them up and down (while having a heavy backpack on my back) suggests that my constant travel to expos around the world has my muscles trained.

But once you get to Cologne you can enjoy scores of great places to have dinner and you can walk around and enjoy the local ambiente.

Of course you will be wasting 90 minutes coming and 90 minutes going (train time, subway time, and waiting-at-the-station-time).

I wonder if the drupa organizers calculate how much business time is utterly wasted by the attendees and booth personnel due to lack of hotels in Duesseldorf?



Another way to get to Cologne from drupa is via airport

You can take the free bus to the airport terminal. Walk about 100 meters to the left (through the airport). Then go down the ramp to S11 (end-station) and take this to Cologne Hauptbahnhof.

The advantage of this route is lack of crowds. If you take U78, you get scrunched, first on the segment out of the expo center, and then a second time when you change in Duesseldorf.



If you have baggage, there is not space in the U78 or the trains out of Duesseldorf to be comfortable if you have baggage (the trains have steps that you have to climb up into the car, and there is no space in the aisle of a train to park your luggage during a trip).

The downside of the S11 route is the slow speed of S-Bahn (and it stops every 10 minutes at another station). It takes 82 minutes from Cologne to the airport, or reverse. But the advantage is that you have plenty of space. Every time I could use my computer in comfort during this time. On U78 it is so cramped you can't really even take your cell phone out and use it, much less your iPad!

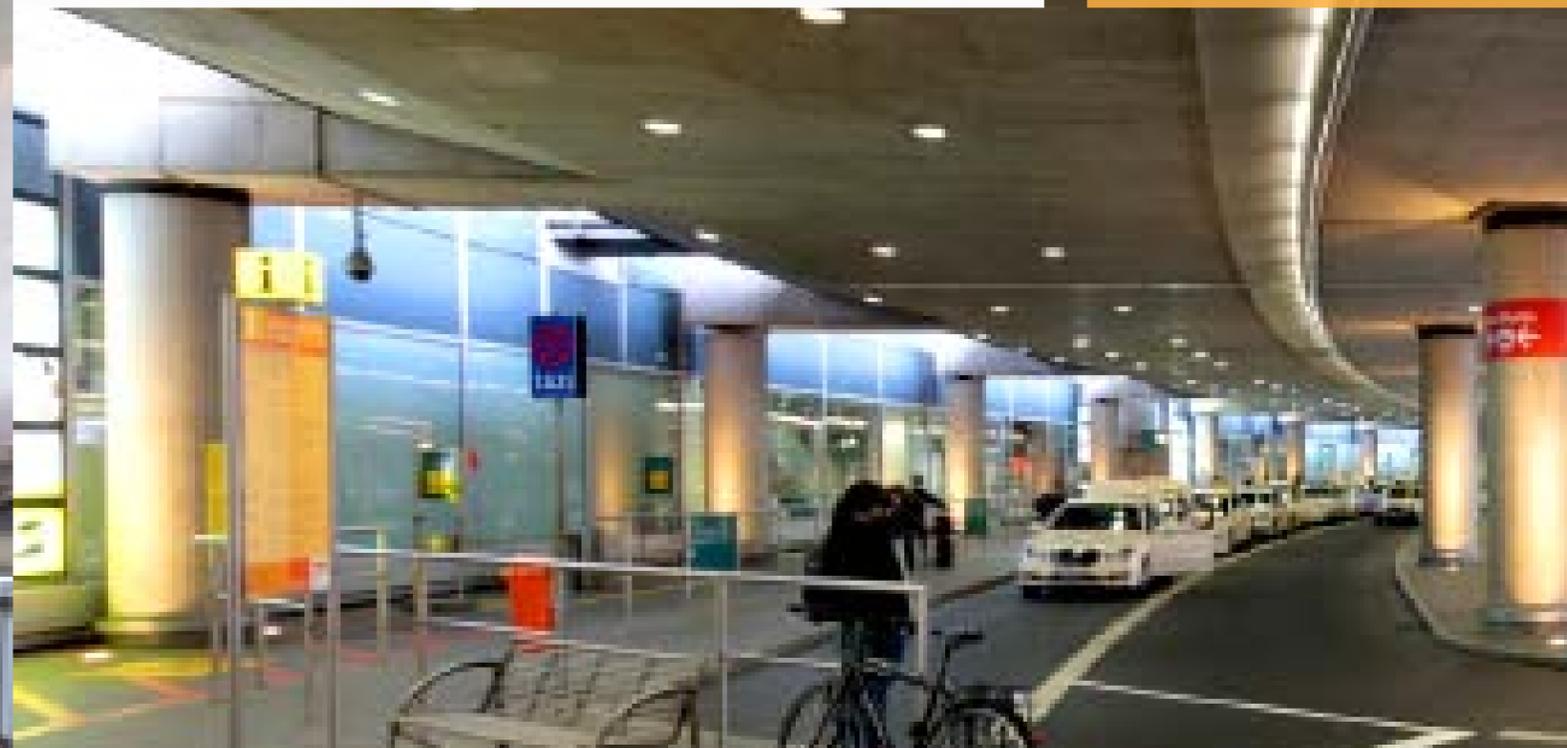
Getting to the (Duesseldorf) airport via train (from Cologne)

The train from Cologne to the Duesseldorf airport is twice the speed of the S11 (and many fewer stops).

The web site is www.bahn.com

Be aware that trains are often delayed.

Do not assume that your train will be on time. Same with S-Bahn. But S-Bahn are more consistently on time than trains.



What about the Cologne airport?

If you stay in Cologne (because hotels are sold out in Duesseldorf) consider flying in and out the Koeln airport rather than the Duesseldorf airport. There is a tram or train from the Cologne airport to Cologne train station (in the center of the city).

But, if your flight arrives in the early morning, and your schedule is tight, the advantage of flying into Duesseldorf is that you can go straight to the expo area direct from the Duesseldorf airport via bus. It takes only 10 minutes (or less). You would need to check your baggage at the entrance to the Messe (or have a friend who had a booth with a closet).