



**Draft Report on Access to decent and affordable housing for all
(2019/2187(INI))**

**Rapporteur: Kim Van Sparrentak, Committee on Employment and Social
Affairs**

Proposal for amendments of the Federal Chamber of German Architects (BAK)

The Federal Chamber of German Architects (BAK) which represents the interests of Germany's architects, landscape architects, interior architects and urban planners in politics and society (135,000 members) closely follows the initiatives on EU level to target the current housing crisis in European cities.

The BAK broadly welcomes the draft report on access to decent and affordable housing for all by the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs of the European Parliament. Affordable housing construction is a particular concern for German architects, interior designers, landscape architects and urban planners.

For years, the demand for affordable housing has exceeded the supply, especially in the conurbations in European cities. This asymmetry is further exacerbated by international immigration to Europe. Further challenges linked to the effects of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic accelerate the need to develop innovative solutions to tackle the housing crisis that has to be considered in a broader spatial context relating to questions of urban mobility, density, access to public services, work spaces and resilience.

The BAK promotes a holistic approach to housing construction including the fulfilment of ecological, economic and socio-cultural criteria. Any building project should meet qualitative requirements in the sense of a high building culture (Baukultur).

Therefore, the BAK suggests to include the following amendments to the draft report:

- *Insertion of the criteria of quality for housing for all*

The creation of housing implies however, not the question of quantity alone. At the same time, the quality of the apartments in terms of urban development, architecture and functionality, i.e. building culture, must always be kept in mind. Quality should not be a question of affordability and not be reserved for high-income households. A specific reference to quality should thus be inserted:

Draft report N° (1)

“Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure access for all to decent **and qualitative** housing,(...)”

Draft report N° (3)

“Calls on the Member States to prioritise renovation in their recovery and resilience plans in order to contribute to achieving deep renovation of 3 % of the European building stock per year; **Calls on the Member States to always consider the quality of housing in terms of urban development, architecture and functionality, i.e. building culture and to make high-quality housing affordable for all, regardless of their income.**

- ***Inclusion of reference to the spatial context and sustainable urban development***

The creation of decent housing does not only deal with the quality of the building itself. Other aspects are linked to its location in the urban environment and the access to urban infrastructure including mobility, green spaces, working opportunities and schools and child care among others.

Draft report N° (3)

- 3) (...) stresses the importance of reliable data collection on homelessness; **emphasizes that a fair, socio-spatial distribution and the strengthening of well functioning neighbourhoods must be taken into account in urban planning when creating housing. In principle, priority should be given to improvement through refurbishment of the existing building stock of non-residential buildings in favor of new housing construction.**

- **Reference to the “Davos Declaration on Baukultur”**

The “Davos Declaration on Baukultur” adopted by the informal Conference of Culture Ministers in January 2018, which was also signed by the Architects’ Council of Europe (ACE), emphasises the importance of an integrated approach to the built environment in Europe and along with it, the importance of building activity for the greater good.

Berlin, Brussels, September 2020

