

The Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities

Draft Proposal for the Renewal of the Leipzig Charter under the German EU Council Presidency, Version 3/9/2019

Position Paper of the Federal Chamber of German Architects (BAK), December 2019

The Federal Chamber of German Architects (Bundesarchitektenkammer - BAK) is the federal association of the 16 Chambers of Architects of the German Länder. It represents the interests of Germany's architects, landscape architects, interior architects and urban planners in politics and society (134,000 members).

The Federal Chamber of German Architects broadly welcomes the renewal of the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities under the German EU Council Presidency in 2020. The BAK strongly agrees that it is necessary to further consolidate the commitment to sustainable European cities and to a Europe of regional diversity.

Europe needs strong, liveable cities and regions. They can only fulfil their function as a medium for social change and economic growth if we succeed in promoting affordable, high quality residential construction with mixed use in order to maintain the social balance within and between cities, make possible cultural diversity, and ensure high quality of design and construction as well as high environmental quality.

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, emphasised the importance of an integrated approach to the built environment in Europe. High quality architecture and strategic integrated planning are fundamental to achieve a high quality Baukultur in Europe. The expertise and competences of architects of all disciplines and urban planners are indispensable for this process.

Therefore, the BAK recommends to make a reference to the Davos Declaration and to include the term "architecture" into section B "The European City as a Common Basis", paragraph 3 of the draft Leipzig Charter, where the notion of Baukultur is explained:

"Good urban planning (...), urban design and high quality architecture should be reinforced to achieve compact, socially and economically mixed cities (...)."

As it is developed in the text that Baukultur can be understood as "every human activity shaping the built environment", it should be stated that architecture is an essential part of this process.

