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Uncertainty and Mixture in Urban Design

Abstract

Mixture is an essential component of urban life and thus also an important factor for the quality of urban design concepts. Urban mixtures arise as a result of different influences, in particular economic, legal and social conditions. In addition, the idea of a desirable urban mix depends on time and culture. Therefore, a clear cut and reliable definition of the term “urban mixture” is not within reach.

In view of these restrictions, an alternative approach is proposed: Urban design concepts try to establish frameworks and conditions for developments, which in their entirety can not be predicted and determined beforehand. To a certain extent they are subject to indeterminacy and uncertainty. To deal with this conditions urban designers use specialised design tools. They allow to ascertain important conditions – at the same time, they enable adjustments due to external forces and future necessities.

The particular potential of these tools lays in their ability to integrate different actors and their goals in an overarching conceptual framework. Thus, they are able to initiate and influence different forms of urban mixture. In conclusion, it will be discussed how these tools can be applied to landscape architecture projects.

Keywords

Urban Mixture, Indeterminacy, Uncertainty, Design Tools, Urban Design Concepts