
Regions have gained importance over the last decades. Old regions have picked up momentum while novel forms of municipal co-operation and multi-level governance have generated new regions. This paper examines the extent to which some new regions in the Netherlands have become familiar to the population, based on evidence from an analysis of newspaper articles. The study focused on the reports about several old and new regions within the borders of the traditional region of Noord-Brabant, a Dutch province with a well-established identity. In the dynamic constellation of Noord-Brabant, news reports hinted at the institutionalisation of some of the new regions that have become meaningful places outside the administrative context in which they were originally created. The institutionalisation of some new regions did not result in a de-institutionalisation of older regions in the same area but in a more complex layering of the identities of these regions with respect to each other.

Key words: regional identity, new regions, institutionalisation, content analysis, newspapers, Netherlands, Noord-Brabant