

**Fourth International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Emotional Geographies  
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**Regional identity and (tourism) development**

Support for regional development often focuses on ‘smart specialization’, specialization in the strong and unique elements of a region. In many regions the further development of tourism is seen as a promising option. Often the idea of ‘smart specialization’ is related to existing, sometimes distinguishing amenities. However, in some regions the available amenities are less unique or less ‘famous’. In those regions an appealing regional identity could be a valuable resource for touristic development. In this session we want to explore whether identities of a region can function as a basis for the (further) development of the touristic sector, and of the region as a whole.

We welcome papers on how (and by who) regional identities are constructed, communicated and contested, how regional identity can be used as a convincing part of the touristic product, how to operationalize and measure regional identity, the measurement of the impact of the use of identity in the touristic product, and on existing successful examples, as well as possible internal or external conflicts.

Abstracts of 300 words max. can be submitted by January 5, 2013 to Dirk Strijker  
([d.strijker@rug.nl](mailto:d.strijker@rug.nl))

The coordinators of this session are both working in the Department of Cultural Geography of Faculty Spatial Sciences of Groningen University. Both try to understand rural and regional development by taking explicitly into account the role of identity.