Regional initiatives are proliferating across Europe, bringing socio-spatial narratives with transformational and innovative capacities in the spheres of politics, ecology, technology, space and identity. However, regional concepts of these newly emerging regions do not immediately fit into the traditional concept of a regional territory (counties, provinces, federal regions) and questions have been raised about their meaning, impact and added value. This study focuses on two case studies of emerging regional processes in the Netherlands: within the province of North Brabant and the cross-border top-technology region ELAt (Eindhoven-Leuven-Aachen-Triangle). The study addresses these regions from a relational perspective in order to gain insights in the conditions that lead to meaningful collaborations, what the meaning of the region has within such collaborations and what role planning plays within such regional initiatives.