Summaries

*Justitiële verkenningen* (Judicial explorations) is published eight times a year by the Research and Documentation Centre of the Dutch Ministry of Justice in cooperation with Boom Juridische uitgevers. Each issue focuses on a central theme related to judicial policy. The section Summaries contains abstracts of the internationally most relevant articles of each issue. The central theme of this issue (nr. 3, 2010) is *The Dutch mayor*.

**The forced resignation of Dutch mayors**

*A.F.A. Korsten*

Each of the more than four hundred Dutch municipalities is governed by an executive board led by a mayor. This board of municipal executives is formed by a coalition of political parties reflecting the balance in the general council of elected members. The mayor is a member of the board; he is not elected by the people. The mayor is officially appointed by the national cabinet of ministers, but in fact since recently selected by the local council. In the Netherlands there has been a significant rise in the number of forced resignations by mayors. From 2000 to 2010 more than fifty mayors were forced to resign before the end of their term. The impression that the mayor’s position has recently weakened, is confirmed by case studies. The Dutch mayor is in limbo between being elected and being appointed. In itself this is a major factor contributing to the weakening of Dutch mayors in general. This might give more room than before to private reasons and micro factors causing mayors to resign early. Mayors wishing to survive, should give more attention to signals about ‘strengths and weaknesses’ of their position in a field of political ‘stakeholders’.

**Styles of local leadership; on mayors, role conceptions and expectations**

*N. Karsten, L. Schaap and W.J. Verheul*

In a changing social and political environment, mayors assume quite a few different roles in local government. This is because they face different expectations, held by social and political actors at different times. Based on the distinction between strong and weak mayoral leadership, this article develops a typology of mayoral lead-
ership roles. The authors argue that inherent tensions exist between some of these roles, making it impossible for mayors to fulfill all roles at once. Therefore, political leadership is best conceived as something that is contextually dependent. Mayors continually have to find a temporal balance between different roles, depending on the institutional setting and social and political context in which they operate at that time. Therefore, a caleidoscopic perspective on political leadership may provide valuable insights for mayors on how to develop their own leadership style.

**Learning from Flanders; features of the Flemish mayor to inspire the Dutch debate**

*J. van Ostaaijen*

In this article, the role and functioning of the Flemish mayor is analysed from a Dutch perspective. Three observations are considered noteworthy and discussed elaborately: the role of the mayor in internal local politics, the mayor’s relationship with the local community, and the possible combination of several political mandates. The article shows that mayors can be more political without being directly elected (which is the case both in Flanders and the Netherlands) and that there is considerable room for mayors to give meaning to their job. In showing the similarities and differences between Dutch and Flemish mayors, this article is meant to inspire both policy makers and Dutch mayors and to contribute to the debate about the future of the Dutch mayor.

**The mayor and his task in the field of public order and security**

*A.B. Engberts and H.G.M. Cornelissen*

The article paints the picture of a mayor who is proactive, assumes a directive role, signals and tackles problems, while also playing a binding role in the community. When it comes to matters of public order and safety, the mayor obviously works in close cooperation and consultation with the other parties of the local triangle, e.g. the chief of police and the public prosecutor. Points of improvement are presented as regards the functioning of the triangle as well the mayor’s position in terms of information. The directive role of the mayor can in the near future be embedded, whereby the mayor ‘oversees’ the integral safety policy in his municipality.
The mayor as a security boss
H.J.B. Sackers
Offenders of the law used to be sentenced by the criminal courts of justice. However, the Dutch Government is striving for better and more efficient law enforcement, and is increasingly delegating this enforcement to local authorities, especially to the mayor’s level. For example, to maintain order, not only does the mayor decide on camera surveillance, preventative body search, restraining orders and curfews; he/she is now also allowed to shut down houses and evict people from their homes. New laws are in the making to delegate even more power to local authorities. The question arises whether the position of mayor can and should include the Sheriff Star. After all, he/she is politically accountable, plus it would take Superman to take on this new role as upholder of justice. Meanwhile, legal protection is in a sorry state, and citizens rarely take advantage of their legal protection rights. Adequate judicial control is lacking, and whether orders given out by the mayor based on the new responsibilities actually comply with the European Treaty of Human Rights is something that remains to be seen.

The mayor in times of crisis: switching between managerial courage and reservedness
R. Bron and M. Zannoni
The article aims to illustrate the importance of the mayor in times of disaster and crisis management. The mayor plays a crucial role, even though he is merely one link in the crisis management process. In the Netherlands, the organization and coordination of crisis management is subdivided into 25 safety regions. Recently there has been a strong development towards professionalization of these safety regions and their partners. However, in the case of a local crisis all attention goes to the mayor, whose decisions and actions are critically followed by the media and the public. In order to identify what would constitute a good mayor in times of crisis, the article lists essential points and qualities. In sum, a good mayor in times of crisis should be critical and show managerial courage.