

## **THE INFLUENCE OF THE PRESIDENCY OF LATVIA AT THE EU COUNCIL ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN THE REGIONS OF LATVIA**

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**Abstract.** *The objective of this Publication is to analyse the influence of the Presidency of Latvia at the EU Council on the indicators of the tourism industry in the regions of Latvia. Taking into consideration the geopolitical situation created as a result of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, Latvia, especially its regions, experienced a substantial drop in the tourism indicators in 2014. For example, the occupancy rate of overnight accommodations in Riga – in 2013 the average occupancy rate was 63%, but in 2014 – only 58.66%, in the regions of Latvia – in 2013 the average occupancy rate was 52.75%, but in 2014 – 49.3%. Therefore the tourism industry looked with hope towards the anticipated Presidency of Latvia at the EU Council in the first half-year of 2015. In the preparation process of the Publication the available articles and experience of other countries and the data of inquiry of the entrepreneurs of overnight accommodations and catering industry in the regions of Latvia were analysed. The results of the research reveal similar tendencies between the experience of the presidency period in Latvia and Lithuania and can serve as basis for improvement of the situation during presidency of other countries.*

**Keywords:** *tourism, Presidency at the EU Council, development of tourism in regions.*