

# Italy Honors Vladimir Region Governor

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Vladimir region Governor Nikolai Vinogradov receiving the Order of the Star of Italy from the ambassador.

The Italian Embassy held a ceremony Friday to recognize Vladimir region Governor Nikolai Vinogradov for his contributions to the development of Russian-Italian ties and Italian investment projects in the region.

Vinogradov received the Order of the Star of Italy from Italian Ambassador Antonio Zanardi Landi.

Italian confectionery company Ferrero started its first production line in the Vladimir region in November 2009 and later expanded the plant. The unit manufactures Kinder chocolates and Raffaello, among other products.

As of December, Ferrero had invested 250 million euros (\$335 million) in the Vladimir region.

Landi said Vinogradov is the first Russian governor to receive an Italian award.

Other Russians who have received the award include theater director Yury Lyubimov, translator of Italian poetry Yevgeny Solonovich and diplomat Konstantin Totsky.

The Order of the Star of Italy was established to honor achievements in the development of friendly relations and cooperation between Italy and other countries.

Italy is the seventh-largest foreign investor in the Vladimir region. Germany, Turkey and the Netherlands hold the top three spots, respectively.

The Vladimir region is 80 kilometers east of Moscow and has a population of 1.4 million. Investment in the region in 2012 was estimated to be 63 billion rubles (\$2.1 billion), the regional administration's website indicates.

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