The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Italy Lists Criteria for Increasing Local Investment

By Guennadi Moukine

April 28, 2013



The Italian Embassy's guide for investors in Russia, published last year. **Guennadi Moukine**

Transparency in business procedures, cheaper domestic travel and road signs in English would bring more tourists and foreign investors to Russia, Italian Ambassador Antonio Zanardi Landi said on Friday.

While large investments become successful and receive government support and recognition, small businesses often go unnoticed and become lost in the idiosyncrasies of local government's rules and bylaws, in his view.

"It is not easy for a foreigner to start a small business here. If you can't create, for example, 5,000 jobs in the region, you are perceived as an unimportant factor," Landi said in an interview.

"Transparency and simplification of procedures would go a long way in helping small

investors in regional Russia. It would also make it easier for small exporters to access the Russian market," he added.

Last year, the Italian Embassy published a guide for Italian investors in the Russian Federation, which is available on their website.

Some regional administrations also take steps in this direction. Vologda Governor Oleg Kuvshinnikov established a local development corporation — an organization where foreign investors can find answers and support for their projects.

Landi said that because of certain cultural similarities and a historically cordial atmosphere between the governments, Italians usually had a positive experience in Russia. Italian companies like appliance maker Indesit and chocolatier Ferrero Rocher are very happy with their investments.

While Italian businesses are doing well here, Italians are actively seeking investment in their country's economy.

Earlier this month, the Italian embassy in Moscow ran a workshop on foreign investment in Italy. The deputy director of the Bank of Italy, Salvatore Rossi, provided a summary of the current economic climate in Italy within the context of the sovereign debt crisis of other European Union countries. He said the country was seeking foreign investments to promote financial stability and economic growth.

Innocenzi Botti, who runs the national agency for the attraction of business investments and development, or Invitalia, and Giuseppe Arcucci, director of Inward Investment, presented opportunities for investors in logistics, tourism, energy and biotechnologies sectors.

"The Italian economy is depressed at the moment — domestic demand is low and manufacturing firms are not selling enough product to stimulate growth," Landi said. "Some companies have lost a lot of value and this is why now is a good time to invest," he added.

Alexander Moiseyev, Kaspersky Lab's spokesman for business operation in Europe said their investment in Italy was very profitable. The Italian branch of the company provides tech support and runs training seminars from two locations in Rome and Milan and currently has an annual turnover of 50 million euro.

Even though it looks like Russians don't invest much, they actually do," said Vincenzo Trani, a financier from General Invest investment company. "They invest by living in the country or planning their retirement there. They invest because they love Italy and the life style that the country offers," he added.

According to data published by Russia's Trade Mission in Italy, bilateral trade between the two countries hit $45.8 billion in 2012, with Italy supplying $13.4 billion worth of goods and Russia selling goods worth $32.4 billion on the Italian market.

Contact the author at g.moukine@imedia.ru

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2013/04/28/italy-lists-criteria-for-increasing-local-investment-a23661