

Russians 3rd Biggest Real Estate Buyers in Italy

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Houses in Positano, Italy.

Russians make up the third-largest group of foreigners who buy real estate in Italy, after Germans and Brits, and Moscow's souring relations with the West seem to have had no bearing on the rising number of Russian tourists, the Italian ambassador to Russia said in an interview published Thursday.

The share of Russians among foreign real-estate owners increased from a mere 2 percent in 2005 to 13 percent last year, Ambassador Cesare Maria Ragaglini told Interfax.

"As far as regulations go, Italy is a very progressive country and Russians are guaranteed the same rights as Italians," Ragaglini was quoted as saying. He added that the rules were not going to change despite Western sanctions brought against Moscow for its policies in Ukraine.

The number of Russians visiting Italy increased by 18 percent in the first three months of this

year, Ragaglini told Interfax, presumably comparing to the same period in 2013. The number of visas issued to Russians has also increased by about 14 percent, he said.

Ragaglini said that the cooling of Russia's relations with the West was unlikely to affect the flow of tourists, though the Ukrainian crisis and weakening of the ruble might.

He credited Italy's practice of issuing tourist visas faster than many other nations with the continued flow of vacationers, adding: "I think a majority of Russians would not turn down a vacation in Italy," Interfax reported.

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