The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia to Launch Pilot Project to Fingerprint Visa Applicants

September 28, 2014



Russian embassies and consulates in four countries will soon launch a pilot project requiring visa applicants to submit their fingerprints, Interfax reported Sunday, citing the Foreign Ministry's consular division.

Starting in January 2015, Russian consulates in Britain, Denmark, Myanmar and Namibia will begin implementing fingerprinting technology, the report said.

The initiative will help determine the feasibility of collecting biometric data at other Russian diplomatic and consular facilities, according to Yevgeny Ivanov, the director of the Foreign Ministry's consular department.

Ivanov said that the project had been under consideration for several years and that it was not intended to indicate a tightening of requirements for Russian visa applicants.

He added that Schengen countries are set to begin collecting the biometric data of Russian visa applicants next year.

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