

FSB Stops Refugees in Barents Sea

By [The Barents Observer](#)

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Devkhina Zavod Bay in the Pechenga Fjord [pro-arctic.ru](#)

Today marks what is likely the first-ever attempt by individuals to enter Schengen Europe via the Barents Sea.

The attempt occurred on Oct. 8, 2019, but first became known to the public today as the [verdict](#) from the Pechenga District Court was announced by the Murmansk region prosecutor's office.

Three Syrian citizens boarded a small motorboat in Devkhina Zavod Bay in the Pechenga Fjord and departed toward the maritime border with Norway. While at sea, the motorboat was stopped by Russian FSB coast guards and the three passengers were arrested.

In court, all three pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy to get to Norway without proper permission and documents.

Liinakhamari (Devkhina Zavod Bay) in the Pechenga Fjord is the westernmost fjord on Russia's

Kola Peninsula and the only place between Murmansk and the state border where civilians can reach the coast without entering military restricted areas.

Liinakhamari is a restricted border area, but not under military naval authority.

By sea, the distance from Liinakhamari to the Russian-Norwegian border in Grense Jakobselv is some 35 kilometers (19 nautical miles).

Never have any migrants succeeded in entering Norway in the north via the sea.

Two of the Syrian citizens were sentenced to 10 months imprisonment in a penal colony, while the third was sentenced to eight months.

Following the migrant crisis in autumn 2015, when some 5,500 people entered northern Norway from Russia, there have been several attempts by third-country residents to make it over the 200-kilometer land border.

Many were arrested on the Russian side, particularly in the summer and autumn of 2017.

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