

Over 150 Migrants Detained in Karelia This Week

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Migrants with bicycles at the international border crossing at Salla, Finnish Lapland. **Jussi Nukari / IMAGO / TACC**

In the past week, at least 150 migrants with expired Russian visas have been detained in the republic of Karelia while heading to the Finnish border, [according](#) to the RBC news website.

The governor of Karelia's press secretary, Marina Kabatyuk, told RBC most of the migrants had been detained after Nov. 18.

The migrants are now in detention centers. "Their fate will be decided by the court. They face a fine and forced expulsion from Russia," Kabatyuk told RBC.

The Finnish government [closed](#) the country's four southernmost border crossings with Russia at midnight on Nov. 18 in response to a sudden influx of asylum seekers from the Middle East and North Africa.

Related article: [Finland Shuttles 4 Russian Border Crossings to Curb Asylum Seekers](#)

Helsinki [accused](#) Moscow of deliberately allowing migrants to enter Finland without the correct travel documents, suggesting it was a tactic to destabilize the country.

"We deeply regret that the Finnish leadership has chosen to deliberately move away from what used to be good relations," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters when asked about Finland's comments.

Karelia's Governor Artur Parfenchikov [posted](#) on Telegram that the regional emergencies ministry had set up a heating point for migrants at one of the closed checkpoints on the night of the 19th, but it had since been disbanded and the groups of refugees had left the border area.

"It is very difficult to sensibly explain the position of our Western neighbors, who create such situations by violating their own migration policies," he added.

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3