

Russia to Transport Dozens of Migrants to Last Open Finnish Border Checkpoint

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The Russian-Finnish border in the Murmansk region. Lev Fedoseyev / TASS

Russian authorities will transport 55 asylum seekers who were waiting to cross the now-closed Salla border crossing with Finland to the last open crossing in the north of the Murmansk region, its governor announced Friday.

Another 200 foreign nationals who were unable to cross the border have decided to stay in Russia and will be provided with a bus connection to St. Petersburg, according to Murmansk Governor Andrei Chibis.

The announcement comes just one day after the Murmansk region <u>declared</u> a heightened state of readiness after Finland said it would close all but one border crossing between the two countries.

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Finland accuses Russia of allowing undocumented migrants — primarily from the Middle East and Africa — to cross their common border in a destabilization ploy.

Helsinki joined NATO this year, ending decades of non-alignment, in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Chibis said on Friday that the situation at all border crossings with Finland — including at Lotta, the only functioning crossing — was "under control."

"Together with law enforcement agencies we have taken all necessary measures," the governor <u>wrote</u> on Telegram.

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