



Norway to close its consulate in Murmansk

Description

default watermark



The city of Murmansk. (Thomas Nilsen / The Independent Barents Observer)

In the wake of the meltdown in bilateral relations, Norway will close its general consulate in Murmansk on July 1, said Foreign Minister Anniken Huitfeldt.

“The frames within which the General Consulate is promoting Norwegian interests have over time been significantly reduced [and] we can no have regular operations when there is almost no activity,” Huitfeldt says.

The closure is temporary, but there are little prospects for improvement and the closure could be long-term, she explains.

In the [press release](#) issued on Wednesday, the Norwegian Foreign Ministry highlights the special circumstances in Murmansk.

“Murmansk is a special region with a strong military presence [which] affects the situation in the region and the frames of our work.”

According to Huitfeldt, there is a challenging situation also for the Norwegian Embassy in Moscow and the General Consulate in St. Petersburg, “but the situation in Murmansk is quite another one.”

In early March, the Norwegian Foreign Ministry confirmed to the Barents Observer that the embassy in Moscow, as well as the general consulates in Murmansk and St. Petersburg [would remain open](#), but that they would operate with a higher level of alert.

“Measures have been taken to strengthen preparedness in case of a worsening of the situation,” the ministry said.

Norway had recently appointed a new general consul to Murmansk. In a comment, diplomat Hanne Meldgaard [told the Barents Observer](#) that “the consulate will continue to work for mutual cooperation, but the circumstances will decide details and outcome of those efforts.”

Meldgaard would have become the 12th consul general at Norway’s northernmost diplomatic mission. She would have taken over after Astrid Nærum who has been in charge for the last two years. That takeover is now unlikely to happen.

Norway opened the general consulate in Murmansk in 1993. At that time, bilateral relations were developing rapidly and Murmansk was seen as an attractive hub for investments and cross-border cooperation. At the same time, Russia opened a general consulate in Kirkenes.

Category

1. News
2. Politics

Tags

1. Barents Observer
2. diplomacy
3. Murmansk
4. War in Ukraine

Date Created

2022/06/10

Author

krestiaarctictoday-com