

Danish Minister for Immigration,
Integration and Housing

The European Commission



**Ministry of Immigration,
Integration and Housing**

Dear Commissioner Avramopoulos,

As I informed you of by letter of 2 February 2016, the Danish Government has decided to prolong the border control at the Danish internal borders from 3 February 2016 until 23 February 2016.

The decision to prolong the border control was made in accordance with Article 23 and 25 of Regulation (EU) No 1051/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2013 amending Regulation (EC) No. 562/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council of 15 March 2006 establishing a Community Code on the rules of governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Border Code).

On 3 February 2016, you asked to receive any relevant information and in particular figures demonstrating the need and the proportionality of the decision to reintroduce temporary border control. Your request was followed up by letter of 8 February 2016 where you also invite me to share any information on the concrete implementation of the controls at the internal borders and their effects.

In Europe, the numbers of asylum seekers are still historically high, and according to Frontex, there is an ongoing pressure on Europe's external borders. Our neighboring countries to the North have prolonged their temporary border controls and still have ID-controls at their internal borders in order to reduce the numbers of asylum seekers. These measures have – as mentioned before – left Denmark with a serious risk to public policy and internal security if the Danish border control were to be lifted at this point.

Since my letter of 20 January 2016, there has been no change in the police efforts in the border areas. Thus, the border controls consist of spot checks based on continuous observation of traffic across the border. The controls are targeted towards passengers on the ferries to Rødby and Gedser and towards persons and vehicles crossing the Danish-German border in Southern Jutland. The situation is monitored closely, and the control effort is adjusted accordingly to ensure public order and internal security.

There has not been registered a change in the normal traffic patterns that can be directly attributed to the temporary border controls.

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From 6 September 2015, where vast groups of immigrants and asylum seekers began to cross the Danish-German borders, until 7 February, the Danish Police assesses that a total of approximately 93,500 immigrants and asylum seekers have entered Denmark. From 4 January until 31 January, more than 1,750 people have entered Denmark and approximately 149,500 people have been checked at border crossings. In that same period, 613 people have been refused entry and 89 people have been charged with human trafficking. The Danish Police has not since 4 January reported any build-up of illegal immigrants anywhere in the country.

As mentioned in my letter of 20 January 2016, Denmark received a historical high number of asylum seekers in 2015. In November alone, Denmark received around 5,100 asylum seekers including around 500 unaccompanied minor asylum seekers. Since November 2015 the number of asylum seekers has decreased. In January 2016, Denmark received around 1,600 asylum seekers including around 300 unaccompanied minor asylum seekers. Even though the number of asylum seekers has decreased since the introduction of temporary border controls, the number of asylum seekers seems to remain at a relatively high level.

Up until the Swedish decision to temporarily introduce border control on the Danish-Swedish border, the influx of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers into Sweden was very high. Even though the influx of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers into Denmark in January 2016 seems somewhat high, it is not as high as the influx into Sweden in late 2015. Moreover, the Danish border control seems generally to have reduced the number of asylum seekers and migrants entering Denmark.

The Danish Government is as you know monitoring the situation at the borders very closely to secure that the scope and duration of the border control will not exceed what is strictly necessary to respond to the serious threat.

It is still the opinion of the Danish Government that the Danish border control does not exceed what is strictly necessary in this situation. The border control is deemed to have had a preventive effect as the above figures give grounds to believe that fewer asylum seekers and migrants have a desire to travel through Denmark. In this regard, the border control has resulted in maintaining public policy and internal security in Denmark.

Yours sincerely,



Inger Støjberg