

Danish Minister of Immigration and Integration



Ministry of Immigration and Integration

Dear Commissioner Avramopoulos,

Schengen is one of the most cherished achievements of European integration, and the Danish Government supports the goal of returning to an area without internal border controls as soon as possible.

However, the current threats to the public order and internal security caused by terrorists who are using the possibility to move freely within the Schengen territory to plan, prepare and execute terrorist attacks do not allow us to get “back to Schengen” at this point in time.

In this context, it is considered that the large number of irregular migrants and failed asylum seekers present in our neighbouring countries that are waiting to be returned to their country of origin or transit poses a real security threat, as there is a risk that some terrorist group will exploit their vulnerable situation.

It is the assessment of the Center for Terror Analysis (CTA) under the Danish Security and Intelligence Service that ISIL and other militant Islamist groups may still exploit refugee and migrant routes to bring persons to Europe to commit acts of terrorism in Europe.

Furthermore, CTA assesses that there may be individuals among refugees and migrants who have arrived in Europe and Denmark who can pose a terror threat either because of a direct link to militant Islamist groups abroad or due to radicalisation. In addition, there remains a threat from foreign fighters returning from Syria/Iraq and from radicalised individuals in neighbouring states.

The persistent and significant threat to our public order and internal security caused by militant Islamists who are able to exploit the free mobility within the Schengen area, e.g. by preparing attacks in one Member State from the territory of a neighbouring Member State, is a grave concern for the Danish Government.

In a number of cases in Europe, terrorist attacks have been planned in one country but executed in another. We have also seen examples of this kind of attack planning against Denmark.

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Against this backdrop, the Danish Government considers the temporary internal border controls as an effective measure to address these threats to the public order and internal security, and it is also found – after careful consideration - that alternative measures such as e.g. intensified police checks in the border areas would not achieve the same effect.

Therefore, the Danish Government has decided, in accordance with the provisions in Article 25 and 27 of Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of 9 March 2016 (Schengen Borders Code) to temporarily reintroduce border controls at the internal borders with Germany due to the severe threat to our public order and internal security.

The border control may extend to all internal borders, including land-, sea- and air borders, whereby the specific border sections and border crossing points are determined by the Danish National Police. However, the border control will initially focus on the Danish-German land border and the Danish ports with ferry connection to Germany.

The reintroduction of border control at the Danish internal borders will be carried out for 6 months as from 12 November 2018.

Please rest assured that the scope of the internal border checks will continue to be limited to what is strictly necessary to respond to the threat to our public order and internal security. Furthermore, the scope of the internal border checks will be subject to regular review and organised in a manner which ensures that obstacles to the free movement of persons and goods are kept to an absolute minimum.

In this context, the Danish Police authorities will continue to have a close cooperation with its German counterparts. This cooperative framework has been, and will continue to be, a central platform for information exchange and discussions on the effects of internal border control.

In accordance with the Schengen Borders Code, the Danish Government will notify the other Member States about this decision.

Yours sincerely,



Inger Støjberg