




**ROYAL NORWEGIAN  
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SECURITY**

*The Minister of Justice, Public Security and Immigration*

European Commission  
European Parliament  
General Secretary of the Council

Your ref.

Our ref.  
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### **Reintroduction of temporary controls at the Norwegian internal borders**

The Norwegian Police Security Service (PST) continuously monitors and evaluates trends and developments nationally and abroad. In its annual threat assessment for 2018, the PST concludes that it is possible that extreme Islamists may attempt to commit a terrorist attack in Norway in the course of 2018. Since the publishing of the annual threat assessment, no changes has been made to this conclusion.

According to the Europol, the overall terrorist threat to the security of the EU remains acute, and as stated in the European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report for 2018, new terrorist attacks in the EU following the patterns of indiscriminate killings, attacks on symbols of Western lifestyle and attacks on symbols of authority are highly likely.

Recent history has shown that terrorists have used the possibility to move freely within the Schengen territory to plan, prepare and execute terrorist attacks. The attack in Amsterdam on 31 August – in which two people were wounded by an Afghan refugee holding a German residence permit – is an example of this.

Even though the terrorist organisation ISIL has lost its central position in Syria and Iraq, and main parts of its territory, its enemy image and propaganda lives on also in the West. In the view of the PST, ISIL will maintain its message to sympathisers in the West of attacking targets in Western countries by simple means and methods. This view is also reflected in the twenty-second report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team to the UN Security Council of 27 July this year. Furthermore, the continued pressure on foreign terrorist fighters in Syria – lastly with the announced

demilitarisation of Idlib – could encourage these persons to return to Europe. Should they manage to leave the area, and if they return to Europe, they could exploit the freedom of movement to conduct terrorist attacks in Norway.

Although the number of irregular migrants arriving in Norway remains low, and the number of illegal border crossings into the EU continues to decrease, the number of applications for international protection received by the EU countries remains stable (Frontex - FRAN Quarterly - Q2 2018). Furthermore, while the number of detected cases of illegal stay in the EU so far in 2018 have been below the numbers of 2017, there have been a marked increase in the use of fraudulent documents. According to the FRAN Quarterly Q2 2018, the second quarter of 2018 saw the highest number of document fraud users seen in any quarter since the second half of 2015. This scenario was, according to the FRAN Quarterly Q2 2018, mainly caused by the rise in the number of fraudulent documents detected on intra-EU/Schengen movements, which registered a maximum peak since the beginning of 2013. This underscores that establishing the identity of irregular migrants remains a challenge.

It is therefore the assessment of the Norwegian authorities that a potential for significant secondary movements into Norway of migrants with an unclear identity still remains. It should also be considered that terrorists could potentially exploit irregular migratory movements to enter into the European Union.

Norway strongly supports restoring the functioning of the Schengen area as an area without internal border control. However, in light of the above, the Norwegian Government has decided, in accordance with the provisions of Articles 25 and 27 of Regulation (EU) 2016/399 (Schengen Borders Code), to temporarily reintroduce border control at the Norwegian internal borders for six months from 12. November 2018. The temporary reintroduction of internal border control is an exceptional measure of last resort. As such, the carrying out of internal border controls beyond 11. November 2018 will be limited in scope, both geographically and operationally, to what is strictly necessary to prevent the possible threats to internal security and public policy.

The controls will, as today, be limited to ports with ferry connections to Denmark, Sweden and Germany. The controls will be targeted and based on risk assessment. The relevant authorities will regularly examine and re-evaluate the operational and geographical scope of the controls. It is our assessment that, through this approach, the negative consequences on the free movement of persons and on the internal market will be kept to a minimum.

In accordance with the Commission recommendation on proportionate police checks and police cooperation in the Schengen area of 12 May 2017, Norway has been carrying out, and will continue to carry out, intensified police checks in the areas of the Østfold region bordering on Sweden. The Norwegian and Swedish police authorities have a

good bilateral cooperation. However, this measures cannot fully substitute internal border control in the Norwegian ports with ferry connections to Denmark, Germany and Sweden, as it does not provide for the possibility to perform controls based on screening of passenger lists.

The Norwegian police authorities have a longstanding close cooperation with its Nordic 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.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Tor Mikkell Wara.

Tor Mikkell Wara