



Council of the  
European Union

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From: Finnish delegation

To: Working Party on Frontiers/Mixed Committee  
(EU-Iceland/Liechtenstein/Norway/Switzerland)

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Subject: Temporary reintroduction of border controls at the Finnish internal borders in accordance with Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2016/399 on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code)

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Delegations will find attached a copy of a letter received by the General Secretariat of the Council on 29 November 2023 regarding the temporary reintroduction of border controls by Finland at Eastern land border from 30 November 2023 to 13 December 2023.



Ministry of the Interior  
Finland

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**E-MAIL**

Helsinki, 28 November 2023

Mr Margaritis Schinas  
Vice-President of the  
European Commission

Ms Ylva Johansson  
Commissioner for Home Affairs  
European Commission

Ms Thérèse Blanchet  
Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union

EU Delegations of Member States and Schengen countries

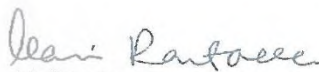
Dear Colleagues,

Previously, on 16 and 22 November 2023 the Finnish government decided to temporarily restrict border traffic and to concentrate the possibility to apply for international protection at the eastern land border between Finland and Russia. This was done in order to mitigate the intentional instrumentalisation of migrants and to safeguard public order and national security. Since the entry into force of the restrictions authorities of the Russian Federation have continued to actively contribute to migrants arriving to the border crossing point of Raja-Jooseppi which was the only to remain open. The Russian authorities provide crucial aid for the phenomenon to fuel itself. International criminal organisations are apparently involved in the activity and social media platforms continue to instigate the phenomenon through active marketing.

The situation persists and the Finnish authorities have indications that there is potential for the phenomenon to intensify. Due to this estimation and continued threat to public order and national security the Government has decided based on section 16 of the Border Guard Act on further restrictions of entry into Finland from Russia in order to mitigate the situation. As of 30 November 2023, border crossing points of Vaalimaa, Nuijamaa, Imatra, Niirala, Vartiuss, Kuusamo, Salla and Raja-Jooseppi will be closed to all traffic. The possibility to apply for international protection will be concentrated to the border crossing points for maritime and air traffic as stipulated in sections 6 and 8 of the government degree 901/2006. During this time, it is not possible to submit applications for international protection at the land border between Finland and Russia. The new restrictions will enter into force on 30 November 2023 at 00.00 and will remain in force until 13 December 2023. Finland has informed Russia on the decision with a verbal note.

Concentrating the possibility to apply for international protection will be done only as to the extent necessary to manage the situation. Particular attention is paid to providing help to vulnerable persons. Finland continues to assess the effectiveness, necessity and proportionality of the measures taken at the external border with Russia in light of the development of the phenomenon and will adjust its response accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

  
Mari Rantanen  
Minister of the Interior

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