



8 March 2021

**Ministry of Justice**  
Dr Anna-Carin Svensson  
Director-General for International Affairs

Ms Salla Saastamoinen  
Acting Director-General

Dear Ms Saastamoinen,

On 21 December, the Swedish Government took the decision to adopt an ordinance limiting the possibilities of travelling from Denmark to Sweden. The decision was taken due to the discovery of a mutation of the SARS-Cov-2-virus in Denmark. The decision by the Government also included restrictions on travel from the United Kingdom for the same reason. On January 21, following reports of a severe outbreak of covid-19 in the Oslo area, the Government took the decision to also limit travel to Sweden from Norway. The decision was taken after a request to do so was put to the Government by the Public Health Agency of Sweden.

On 3 February, following a new request by the Public Health Agency, the Government decided on new ordinances stipulating a demand for a negative test result for Covid-19 as a prerequisite for entering Sweden. The travel restrictions and the demand for a negative test result are, with certain variations to the entry conditions aside from the negative test result, applied to travel to Sweden from outside of the EU, travel from within the EU, and on travel from Denmark and Norway.

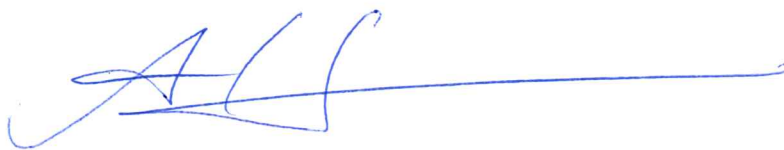
This current pandemic has brought a large strain to people's lives, affected our countries and communities, and brought loss of life and livelihoods. The aim of the Government's actions is to combat the further spread of the SARS-Cov-2-virus, while maintaining as much freedom of movement and trade as possible. The reasons and principles of the Government's decisions are founded solely on epidemiological circumstances and the need to combat the further spread of the SARS-Cov-2-virus. This is also the sole reason for the Government's decision to apply somewhat stricter travel restrictions to Norway and Denmark, the threat of virus mutations in Denmark and the severe outbreak of the virus in Norway.

The combination of great risk and the difficulty in predicting the development of the situation in both Norway and Denmark made it necessary and urgent for the Government to act with resolve. The Government's decisions are all based upon having taken that risk and uncertainty into consideration. It has therefore been necessary to adopt measures that allow for as many scenarios and developments as possible, while at the same time having the option to scale down as gradually as the situation allows. Other measures such as forced quarantine cannot be considered an alternative. Although self-imposed quarantine is a recommendation for everyone arriving in Sweden it is not a viable substitute for travel restrictions for various reasons.

The main focus of the Government's decisions is, and always has been, to combat the spread of the SARS-Cov-2-virus and ultimately save lives. However, great consideration has also been given to upholding the principles of proportionality and free movement. We also have a close dialogue with Denmark and Norway on these issues. Given the special relationship between ourselves and Norway and Denmark, this is of course essential since so many people cross our common borders daily to commute to work, deliver goods or to perform other necessary tasks or objectives of daily life. The Swedish Government has gone to great lengths in trying to accommodate these needs, while trying to achieve a balance in fighting the threat from the virus. All cross-border commuters are allowed entry and can enter Sweden with test results with a longer validity period. Workers who transport goods are exempted from the testing result demands.

Given the great importance that the Government attaches to a functioning single market and the freedom of movement, it is the Government's aim to not have these border measures and travel restrictions in place any longer than what is necessary from an epidemiological standpoint.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'A.C. Svensson', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Anna-Carin Svensson