

Sweden to Stop Railway Service Over Refugee Crisis



Stockholm, December 22 (RHC)-- Sweden's state-owned railway operator SJ has said it would halt its passenger services to and from Denmark because it is unable to carry out the identity checks demanded by the government to stem an influx of refugees.

SJ said in a statement on Monday that it did not have the capacity to carry out checks on passengers quick enough, many of them daily commuters, entering Sweden from Denmark across the Oresund bridge, and "chooses to cancel its departures until there is a working solution in place."

Beginning January 4th, transport companies will be fined if they carry passengers into Sweden without a photo ID. Oresundstag, a commuter railway service company with trains linking the two countries, said it would remain in operation after January, but scale back rush-hour traffic to allow time for identity checks.

Sweden has received 150,000 asylum seekers so far this year, prompting the government to secure an exemption from the European Union's open-border Schengen agreement and pass a law requiring identity checks on all public transport entering the country.

The European Union interior ministers in September imposed a plan to resettle 160,000 refugees across the EU countries. Germany has threatened legal action against member countries that refuse to accept the plan.

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