



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on November 12, 2015

Refugee Crisis Prompts Sweden to Introduce Border Controls

The Swedish government announced on November 11 that it would reintroduce border controls to stem the uncontrolled flow of migrants entering the Scandinavian nation. Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Lofven told reporters in Valetta, Malta, the day after the announcement: "when our authorities tell us we cannot guarantee the security and control of our borders, we need to listen."



A report on Aljazeera America news channel noted that about 10,000 refugees arrived in Sweden last week, with 2,000 entering in one day — setting new records. This is remarkable because Sweden's only land borders are with Norway and Finland, far to the north and do not provide easy access to the country. The refugees, mostly Syrians and Iraqis, fled violence and unrest in the Middle East and began entering Europe through Turkey and Greece, migrating northwestward hundreds of miles across Macedonia, Serbia, and Hungary. Most of these migrants headed to Germany and other more prosperous western European countries, where they are seeking to settle permanently.

From Germany, some refugees traveled through Denmark, where the only way to enter Sweden is over the strait known as the Öresund. Migrants and others can cross the strait either by ferry or across the five-mile-long Öresund Bridge from Copenhagen in Denmark to Malmö in Sweden. In accordance with the Schengen Agreement and the Nordic Passport Union, there have usually been no passport inspections when crossing the border over the bridge. However, that will now change as Sweden begins to control those bridge and ferry crossings.

Following the EU's Schengen Agreement rules, Sweden will initially reintroduce the checking of documents at its border for just 10 days. Under the Schengen rules, noted a *Breitbart* report, the Swedish government may continue to impose border controls for up to two months, after which they must open the borders again. However, the agreement does allow a country to reinstate controls temporarily if there is a serious threat to its "public policy or internal security." The European Union must be alerted to any border closures beforehand, and member nations must agree to allow the EU to monitor how the changes are implemented.

A valuable lesson to be learned from the EU's authority to dictate to member states how they may control their borders is that such regional quasi governments mean the end of national sovereignty. This is an important point for Americans to keep in mind when asked to enter into regional arrangements such as the rejected Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP). The SPP was founded in Waco, Texas, on March 23, 2005, by Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin, Mexican President Vicente Fox, and U.S. President George W. Bush.

In 2006, CNN anchor Lou Dobbs argued that the SPP was part of a plan to merge the United States, Canada, and Mexico into a North American Union similar to the European Union. Multiple articles published by *The New American* and by its affiliated organization, The John Birch Society, made exactly



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the same point.

Faced with strong criticism, those seeking to establish the SPP eventually allowed the plan to die. However, the idea itself never died. On February 4, 2011, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper and President Obama announced a new security and prosperity initiative with plans to “pursue a perimeter approach to security in ways that support economic competitiveness, job creation, and prosperity.”

With the United States now facing a border crisis of its own (the Obama administration estimated that 60,000 children unaccompanied by parents or relatives would pour into the United States last year), it is not difficult to imagine how much more difficult it would be to control our borders if we had to answer to a North American authority such as the SPP or a North American Union before tightening restrictions. Fortunately, unlike Sweden and other EU members, we have not yet ceded our sovereignty.

As Sweden began implementing the new border controls, immigration officers stopped a train arriving at Hyllie station in the city of Malmö to check passengers’ identification documents, reported *The Local* — a digital English language newspaper. Police also began checking papers at ferry terminals for vessels arriving from Denmark and Germany, noted the report.

The border crisis that has suddenly reached Sweden’s doors is part of an ongoing influx of refugees who have fled the turmoil in Middle Eastern nations such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria, and the North African nation of Libya. One of the first European leaders to voice concern about the number of migrants entering his country was Hungary’s Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who on September 7 criticized efforts by European Union leaders to impose immigration quotas before the continent’s borders are made secure. Orban said:

As long as we can’t defend Europe’s outer borders, it is not worth talking about how many people we can take in....

The quota system wants to treat the effects before it treats the causes of immigration. The main reason for this is because (the EU) cannot control its outer borders.

To help stem the tide of migrants, Hungary built a 110-mile-long fence along its border with Serbia.

Just two days after Orban’s statement, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, speaking in Strasbourg, France, asked members of the European Parliament to accept 160,000 migrants.

In his speech, Juncker proposed a more centralized approach to handling the refugee crisis, stating:

We need more Europe in our asylum policy. We need more Union in our refugee policy.

A true European refugee and asylum policy requires solidarity to be permanently anchored in our policy approach and our rules. This is why, today, the Commission is also proposing a permanent relocation mechanism, which will allow us to deal with crisis situations more swiftly in the future.

By “solidarity,” Juncker obviously means a uniform, centrally controlled system throughout the EU for processing all asylum requests, thereby denying member states the right to accept or reject migrants who want to cross their borders.

As we can see with Sweden’s situation, however, EU members are already greatly limited by the EU’s Schengen Agreement rules. An important lesson to remember, on either side of the Atlantic, is that the ability to control its borders is one of the key elements of making a sovereign nation sovereign.

Photo of the Öresund Bridge: AP Images



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