

Sweden defies European Union on gambling

Sweden has officially refused to meet long-standing European Union calls to open the country's lucrative gambling market to non-Swedish companies. The Swedish government says while it intends to consider the demands, no changes to local law will be implemented.

The government goes on to say it sees the lone Swedish exception to EU gambling laws as acceptable. In June the Commission demanded that Sweden scrap rules forbidding foreign firms from entering the Swedish betting market – an industry forecast to be worth over USD 5 billion dollars this year.

The Commission is also seeking the removal of a ban on foreign gambling companies' advertising in Sweden. The Swedish government's refusal to meet Commission demands could result in legal action against Sweden for violation of the EU's Treaty of Rome.

The EU has long sought to open Sweden's gambling market to foreign competition, and the government's current position continues the line of previous administrations.