



Press release  
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## Europe celebrates Human Rights with a sour cocktail

Cutting, wasting, indebting are the ingredients that ruin Human Rights party for young Europeans.

In a moment in world history when movements all over the planet push for more rights, the Human Rights situation in Europe is deteriorating. It is in these conditions that Active and its campaign Human Rights Generation commemorate Human Rights Day:

“Europe will be part of the Human Rights celebration cheering with a unique cocktail,” says Andrea Lavesson, President of Active – sobriety, friendship and peace. “A cocktail made of three special ingredients: ever increasing debt burden on young Europeans, spending cuts on education, training, social services and adults wasting the money we still have.”

In Europe, children and young people’s well-being and capacity to learn are negatively affected by the crisis. Lack of prospects for young people is characteristic in many countries, as worsening labor market conditions have severe negative impact on youth in particular.

At the same time decision-makers choose to cut spending on programs that support children and young people. For instance, the German “savings package” requires 37% of the savings be taken from social spending.

Mrs. Navanethem Pillay, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights speaks of global successes in 2011 to obtain “freedom from want and freedom from fear”.

“In Europe, however, decision-makers increase want and fear among young people,” says Andrea Lavesson, from Active. “We have looked into a number of issues with Human Rights Generation, and what we found is this sour tasting cocktail, that ruins every party, that ruins all the fun, like alcohol usually does.”

Through public events all over Europe, Human Rights Generation has brought attention to the fact that the European Commission has spent €7.5 million for private jets, cocktail parties, and luxury holidays. The two seats of the European Parliament in Brussels and Strasbourg cost €210 million every year. Corruption costs the EU €120 billion yearly. Or the social costs of alcohol harm amount to €125 billion in the EU, each year.

“Corruption is a big reason why more and more young people turn away from society,” says Kristina Sperkova, coordinator of Human Rights Generation. “When they do get active and take to the streets, they face inappropriate violence of police, from Spain to Iceland, from Greece to Germany.”

“In Europe today we see millions of children and young people living in poverty, for example 9 million children who grow up with alcohol addicted parents. We see huge alcohol harm, disproportionately hitting young people. But tough, comprehensive action against this is absent,” explains Kristina, from Human Rights Generation.

“The Human Rights situation for young Europeans is not getting better. It is deteriorating,” concludes Andrea Lavesson, from Active. “Instead of the poisonous cocktail for us, we do need better ingredients like cost-effective political measures against alcohol harm and corruption, investment into youth and our creativity and future ability to build Europe and repay the debts.”

Note to the editor:

Human Rights through eyes of young Europeans. See the movie clips by clicking on the titles:

Pull out - plug in



Visa to opportunities



Digging out dreams



Voices vs. batons



Our future (is) broke



**Human Rights Generation (HRG)** campaign's main aim is to focus on human rights issues in European countries. HRG takes up issues that specifically concern and affect youth. HRG identifies problems and their impact on the livelihood and future of the young generation and finds creative and innovative means to bring about change.

**Active- sobriety, friendship and peace** is a non - governmental organisation gathering European youth temperance organisations working for a democratic diverse and peaceful world free from alcohol and other drugs where an individual can live up to her full potential. Active has more than 25 000 members in 26 European countries.