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## Local alcohol ban works in Geneva

A nighttime ban on the sale of alcohol in Geneva has led to a marked decrease in the number of youths admitted to hospital with alcohol intoxication. However, attempts by authorities in other towns in Switzerland to curb the consumption of alcohol among the younger generation have proved less effective.

It is a familiar sight in many cities and towns across Switzerland: young people gather outside railway stations, in underground passageways and in parks, a six-pack of beer under their arm or a bottle of cheap spirits in their hand.

The general public often feel threatened and disturbed by youths who spend the evening drinking, partying and possibly leaving behind a pile of rubbish on the ground and graffiti on the walls. Many local authorities have been trying to tackle the problem - with limited success.

The canton of Geneva appears to be an exception, as a ban on selling alcohol between 9pm and 7am has had a considerable impact. A study published recently by the Federal Statistics Office found that the measure, introduced in the Geneva area five years ago, had led to a drastic reduction in cases of alcohol intoxication. Based on figures from 2005 to 2007, the number of people aged between 16 and 29 who were taken to hospital after excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages had dropped by more than a third. Experts have noted a decline in first aid cases, in particular among the ten to 15-year-old age group in Geneva.

Addiction experts hope the example of Geneva will be followed elsewhere.

*from swissinfo*

*If you want the rainbow  
you have to put up  
with the rain*

## The City of Geneva

The City of Geneva is the most populous city of Romandie. The metropolitan area has 1,240,000 residents, according to a 2007 census.

Geneva is a global city, a financial centre, and a worldwide centre for diplomacy and the most important international co-operation centre with New York because of the presence of numerous international organizations, including the headquarters of many of the agencies of the United Nations and the Red Cross. It is also the place where the Geneva Conventions were signed, which chiefly concern the treatment of wartime non-combatants and prisoners of war.

Geneva has been described as the third European financial centre after London and Zurich, and the world's eighth most important financial centre by the Global Financial Centres Index, ahead of Frankfurt and Sydney. A 2009 survey by Mercer found Geneva to have the third-highest quality of life of any city in the world. The city has been referred to as the world's most compact metropolis.

Geneva's economy is mainly services oriented. The city has an important and old finance sector, which is specialized in private banking (managing assets of about 1 trillion US\$) and financing of international trade. It is also an important centre of commodity trade.

Geneva hosts the international headquarters of many companies, and many multinational companies like Caterpillar, Dupont, Procter & Gamble have their European headquarters in the city. Hewlett Packard has its Europe, Africa, and Middle East headquarters in Meyrin, near Geneva. There is a long tradition of watchmaking. Two major international producers of flavours and fragrances, Firmenich and Givaudan, have their headquarters and main production facilities in Geneva.

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