

Hungary considers 'hamburger tax': ministry

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Hungary's government said Friday it is considering a novel way of tightening the public belt -- the introduction of a "hamburger tax".

"The ministries concerned are examining the effects of the introduction of a so-called 'hamburger tax'," Economy Minister Gyorgy Matolcsy said on the Hungarian parliament's website, in a reply to an opposition lawmaker's inquiry.

Food-related [health problems](#), which were on the rise among adults and children, were primarily due to an [overconsumption](#) of salt and fat, he noted.

"To reverse this process, various ministries are looking into the possible economic effects of such a [tax](#)," Matolcsi said.

"But the concerned products and the amount and further use of the revenues from the tax are still unknown."

Driven by a need to reduce the public deficit and sovereign debt in one of the most severely indebted countries of eastern Europe, Hungary's government has demonstrated a certain creativity in introducing unorthodox taxes, sparking rows with foreign firms.

If the "hamburger tax" is approved, fast food chains in Hungary might however lodge a complaint for discrimination.

Any law cracking down on salt and fat in food should then also target

Hungarian cuisine, itself filled with such delicious yet heavy dishes as goulash, cottage cheese dumplings and paprika pork knuckles.

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