

Poland bans junk food in schools

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Poland on Thursday banned junk food in schools from January next year to trim rising rates of childhood obesity.

Around 17 percent of children in Poland suffer from obesity, according to a UNICEF study published last year.

Lawmakers were nearly unanimous in imposing the ban, with 426 voting in favour in the 460-seat lower house of parliament.

Under the new measure, the health ministry will have to draw up a detailed list of foodstuffs approved for distribution in schools nationwide.

Products not on the list will not be allowed. Targets include potato chips, soda, burgers, candy bars and fattening processed foods.

The ban aims to "prevent obesity and pre-obesity in children and teenagers" a government statement said.

It was drafted by the PSL Polish Peasants' Party, the junior coalition partner in the centre-right government and representing the country's large farming sector.

Worldwide obesity has nearly doubled since 1980, according to the World Health Organization.

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