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## GERMANY LAUNCHES NATIONAL ANTI-OBESITY DRIVE

BERLIN (AFP) - The German government on Wednesday unveiled a bundle of measures and incentives to whip millions of overweight adults and children into shape.

The 30-million-euro (47-million-dollar) programme running for the next two years is intended to improve the well-being, productivity and quality of life of Germans, the health ministry said.

"This can only work if we anchor healthy behaviour and prevention in our social values, which is something that has been important to us for a long time," Health Minister Ulla Schmidt said in a statement.

About 37 million adults and two million children and teenagers are overweight, according to official figures. Some 1.4 million young Germans show symptoms of an eating disorder.

The health ministry said that illnesses due to poor nutrition and a lack of exercise were costing the state 70 billion euros a year, compounding the problems created by Germany's fast-aging population.

The "In Shape" program involves education on healthy eating and sports, tougher standards for school lunches, and voluntary measures for the sweets industry to stop targeting advertising at children under 12, and for clothing companies to stop using "obviously anorexic models."

And computer game manufacturers are being encouraged to develop products that make players move about.

The opposition Greens acknowledged that Germany had a problem with unhealthy living but called the measures by the left-right government "a smorgasbord of bureaucratic activities without any concrete action."



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