

# *The Americas Lead the World in Obesity*

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Quito, August 27 (EFE-RHC) -- The countries of the Americas have the highest obesity rate in the world, said Ecuador's representative to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) on Tuesday.

"Obesity, overweight affects at least one in two adults and there are already some countries where it is three in four," PAHO's Gina Tambini said in a meeting with reporters in Quito. She said that the countries where the situation is the most critical include Mexico, Chile and the nations of the Caribbean.

Meanwhile, Michel Guinand, a public policy official with UNICEF, said that concern about the problem "is high in Ecuador." Data from the national meeting of Health and Nutrition 2011-2013 show that two out of three Ecuadorians between ages 19 and 59 are overweight or obese.

Changes in eating habits, especially increasing the consumption of processed products and junk food, along with low levels of physical activity, have resulted in the overweight problem among the public, according to Ecuador's Health Ministry.

The government is implementing various policies to maintain good health among the public and, in terms of nutrition, it is currently demanding food labeling so that sugar, salt and fat levels can be more readily determined for each product by consumers.

This week, Quito will host the international conference on food labeling and fiscal policies regarding healthy nutrition and the prevention of obesity.

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