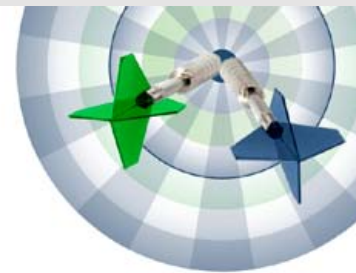


## VAT and the starvation diet

When a reporter asked [Aretha Franklin](#) how she lost 85 lb, she replied that she had learned she wouldn't starve if she had one hot dog instead of two. It's like the phenomenally popular diet from the 1970s - eat whatever you want, but only half as much. Many normal Czechs will soon be going on a forced diet of this same sort. A 19% VAT rate on food and almost everything else will require them to make tough decisions. They might decide to keep buying their favorite products, but in smaller quantities. Pubs and restaurants will inevitably suffer from the drop in disposable income. Czechs will opt to keep their mobile phones, but they might have to use them more sparingly. (A [Facebook protest](#) yesterday called for switching phones off for the entire afternoon.) Of course all that extra VAT money being sucked from the pockets of normal Czechs has to go somewhere, so car dealers can look forward to selling more luxury cars, as the criminal elite learn that they won't starve if they have two Lamborghinis instead of one.



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