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## Chemical foul play in EURO 2012 football shirts

In a few short 3 days, Europe's best football players kick-off the European football championship in jerseys containing harmful and toxic substances new findings by BEUC members<sup>1</sup> reveal.

Having tested 9 official EURO 2012 shirts, all were found to have worrying levels of chemical content. Lead, a heavy metal, is found in 6<sup>2</sup> out of 9 tested shirts. In kits from Spain and Germany, lead exceeds recommended levels for children products. Ronaldo, van Persie and their teammates from Portugal and the Netherlands will play in shirts containing nickel. Host country Poland's shirt should be banned outright from shops as it contains an organotin compound (used to prevent sweat odour) in higher doses than legal limit. *[Please read BEUC press release PR 2012/020 'Chemicals in EURO 2012 shirts' with an amendment and explanation on the term "legal limit" as well as our new Questions & Answers Information Sheet on the test results.]* Organotin can be toxic to the nervous system. Nonylphenol – which can disrupt the endocrine system and is banned from wastewater because of its harmful effect on the environment – was found in Spain and Italy shirts.

Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, commented:

"Football fans pay up to €90 for the shirt of their favourite team. The least they should expect is to have a quality and safe product. It is inexplicable that heavy metals are used in mass consumer products. It is clearly foul play by manufacturers to use substances harmful to both people and the environment."

"Our members' test results are a sad reminder that Europe's chemicals legislation is unfit for the purpose of banning dangerous substances from consumer products. The upcoming review of REACH, Europe's chemicals legislation, efforts to deal with 'chemical cocktail' effects and plans to deal with endocrine disrupting chemicals give the EU ample opportunity to be on the offensive against harmful chemicals."

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<sup>1</sup> The research has been conducted by BEUC members: Altroconsumo (Italy), DECO (Portugal) and OCU (Spain). The teams were: Poland, Spain, Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Italy, France, The Netherlands and Portugal.

<sup>2</sup> Spain, Germany, Ukraine, Russia, France and Italy