

ECI Elastic Supplies Its First 100% Recycled Tapes for 2026 FIFA World Cup Jerseys

Taiwan-based manufacturer's warp knit tapes in jerseys for Spain, Germany, Japan, Italy, marking a sustainability milestone dating back to the 2014 World Cup

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- As the 2026 FIFA World Cup kicks off, [ECI Elastic](#) has confirmed it is supplying warp knit tapes for our customer's 2026 World Cup jersey program, and for the first time, those tapes are made from 100% recycled polyester.

The tapes are applied to the hem and collar areas of jerseys worn by national teams including Spain, Germany, Japan, Ukraine, Hungary, and Italy. The

milestone continues a partnership that began at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, where ECI's knit elastic tapes featured across nine national teams, including Germany's championship-winning kit, in what were then recognised as the lightest soccer jerseys ever produced.

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Paul Shen, Senior Sales Director at ECI

The shift to fully recycled material marks how far elite sportswear manufacturing has moved in twelve years. Where the 2014 brief was defined by a single challenge: weight, the 2026 program reflects a new priority: delivering recycled, recyclable inputs without compromising the performance standards elite athletes demand.

"In 2014, the question was how light we could make the jersey. In 2026, the question is how responsibly we can make it, without giving up anything on performance," said



Paul Shen, Senior Marketing Director at ECI Elastic. "Supplying a 100% recycled tape for a stage as demanding as the World Cup proves that recycled materials are no longer a compromise. They're the standard."

Engineered for the most demanding stage in sport

The product at the centre of the program, ECI's 72231-37R, is a [warp knit tape](#) made from 100% GRS (Global Recycled Standard) certified recycled polyester, sourced from post-consumer PET bottles. Warp knit construction achieves stretch and recovery mechanically — through a looped chain structure — rather than chemically, eliminating the need for elastane or spandex. This delivers natural elasticity, a lighter and thinner profile than woven equivalents, and a soft surface suited to direct skin contact at the collar and hem.

Because the tape is a single-fiber product with no elastane or blended yarns, it can be recycled through standard polyester streams at end of life, with no fiber separation required — a feature increasingly critical as brands extend circularity commitments across every garment component, not just shell fabrics.

The placement was deliberate. The collar tape sits against the back of the neck, among the most sensitive areas of skin, and must remain soft through 90-plus minutes of intense activity while holding its shape through repeated laundering. The hem tape provides structure to the jersey's bottom edge — preventing rolling and curling during sliding tackles, aerial challenges, and sprints — while flexing with the athlete and recovering its original form.

Development took approximately six months from initial brief to product approval, followed by a further year before garment styles reached buy-ready status.



ECI Tapes in 2026 World Cup Jerseys Casual Wear



100% Recycled Tapes in 2026 World Cup Jerseys

From World Cup to commercial collections

The R&D team, in-house certified testing laboratory, and vertically integrated production behind the World Cup tapes are the same resources ECI makes available to brands at every level — from national team programs to commercial athleisure. The company manufactures across facilities in Taiwan, Vietnam, and China, with finishing capabilities in Korea and France, and holds OEKO-TEX Standard 100, ISO 9001:2015, and GRS certification across its facilities.

About ECI Elastic

E.C.I. Elastic Co., Ltd. (ECI) is a vertically integrated manufacturer of narrow fabrics, elastic tapes, and trim accessories for the global apparel and footwear industry. With over five decades of manufacturing experience and a fully in-house production chain — from yarn preparation through weaving, knitting, dyeing, finishing, and quality inspection — ECI develops trim solutions for many of the world's leading sportswear and apparel brands. The company holds OEKO-TEX Standard 100, ISO 9001:2015, and Global Recycled Standard (GRS) certifications, and is recognised for its commitment to sustainable, performance-driven manufacturing.

For more information, visit www.ecigroup-global.com.

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