

Take In Your Undies for Euro-2012

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KIEV — Ukrainians will be asked not to appear scantily clad or hang out underwear to dry on their apartment balconies under a plan aimed at sparing blushes during the Euro-2012 football tournament in Kiev.

With apartment space at a premium, city dwellers in high-rise blocks traditionally use their balconies to hang out their washing and store sledges, skis and other bric-a-brac. In the summer, many apartment-dwellers relax on their balconies in sandals and bathrobes — often wearing a lot less.

Kiev now fears that its plans for a "Switch On Ukraine" campaign to showcase the beauty of its four stadium cities during the European championships it is co-hosting in June 2012 will throw a spotlight on these informal habits and earn ridicule.

"Here we are planning to spend colossal amounts on lighting up buildings. But imagine we then have Uncle Vasya out in his underpants on the balcony and there are bowls around the place, sledges and skis — and we will be illuminating all this too," Kiev's main architect, Sergei Tselovalnik, said.

Tselovalnik, quoted by URA-inform news agency, is now urging the government to stop anyone living within half a kilometer of a Euro-2012 game venue from making an unsightly spectacle of themselves on their balconies.

Lawyers see a problem, however. "Apartments are private property. I can't imagine police going into apartments to force people to take in washing from the line or bring in old sledges," lawyer Tetyana Montyan told URA-inform.

Apart from Kiev, Lviv, Kharkiv and Donetsk have been chosen as game venues for Euro-2012, which Ukraine will co-host with neighboring Poland.

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