



EUROPEAN COMPUTER DRIVING LICENCE FOUNDATION

Bits & Bytes

Edition 2
August 2002

Lithuania

- Teachers from all over Lithuania were trained and assessed on the usage of software, word processing, presentation software, usage of basic Internet and e-mail services by the Competence Development Centre (CDC), Lietuvos Telekomas. The 300 best-achieving teachers were invited after the training course to take free tests for the start-level of the European Computer Driving Licences. 211 of the teachers passed all four start-level ECDL tests.

Italy

- A certification that tests your IT skills. Recognised by the European Union and essential if you are looking for a job. Franco Filippazzi, CEO at ECDL Italy explains that *"It is necessary to have basic computer skills in order to find job today in any field, and to have a certification, recognised by the European Union, gives any employer the guarantee that you have the necessary skills. According to a survey carried out in Norway in the 2001, companies lose approximately 150 working hours a year because of computer problems due to insufficient PC knowledge by an individual employee"*. In Italy already 100,000 people have received their ECDL certification, and worldwide that figure is just over 2 million. The Ministry of Education has established the ECDL as an accepted course at Universities where you can add the certification to your formal credits.

Germany

- The German Federal Department for Military Technology and Procurement in Dresden has installed a learning platform for the implementation and evaluation of e-soldiers learning services being offered in various sectors and is examining its potential uses in the German Federal Army environment in general. The German Federal Army computer centre in Strausberg is now in a position to offer an online course for the European Computer Driving Licence - ECDL).

Scotland

- Staff at Ikea Edinburgh have rushed to take advantage of the furniture superstore's offer of free ECDL training by snapping up all the places in one day. The tuition is part of a bid to boost staff motivation and retention. *"The idea came from undertaking employee's personal development plans,"* explains Neil Crowson, training manager at Ikea in Edinburgh. *"We aim to look at the whole person and found staff wanted to learn IT skills and we wanted to show that we support staff development."*

Croatia

- The first ECDL test centre in Croatia was opened in Zagreb. Croatia has similar problems as much of Europe used to have, only that these problems are set in the environment of the economic restructuring process. All the neighbouring countries have joined the ECDL programme and have been training their population according to that programme.

United Kingdom

- The European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL), the international computer skills qualification promoted in the UK by the BCS, has achieved an impressive 95 per cent satisfaction rate among recipients of the certificate. The poll, conducted by the BCS, approached 10,000 UK holders of ECDL to gauge their satisfaction with the programme leading to the qualification. *"Apart from a gratifying 95 per cent satisfaction rating, almost two-thirds of those polled chose ECDL because of its broad recognition as a qualification. "In addition, 97 per cent said they would recommend ECDL to family, friends and colleagues, and 87 per cent were interested in an ECDL Advanced qualification. Significantly, 89 per cent paid less than £100 to complete and qualify. ECDL has therefore proved its appeal and affordability to those wishing to gain recognised computer skills qualifications,"*said Bayley

Italy

- Milan, 15 February 2002 - ECDL is now available for the disabled which makes it an IT certification accessible for all. The objective of this initiative is to introduce people with disabilities to positions within the workplace that demand computer literacy.

Germany

- The Stormarn media centre in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany is the first institution in the state to offer the European computer driving licence (ECDL). This nationally and internationally recognised certificate confirms the holder's practical computer skills. This pilot project, which is aimed at schoolchildren only, is being supported financially by the Lions Club.

United Kingdom

- Consignia staff who were due to be made redundant last month was awarded European Computer Driving Licence qualifications at Truro College. The purpose of the staff doing the ECDL was to give the students some skills that are in demand in the current job market rather than relying on transferable skills from their current situation.

United Kingdom

- DBS, which acts as a support network for independent financial advisors (IFAs) delivers ECDL course to 140 staff. "The next stage will be to roll the training out to DBS's 7.000 strong membership base of IFAs" explains Alison Smith, an IT trainer at DBS.

Northern Ireland

- Coleg Menai is working in conjunction with the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) in Northern Ireland to provide a session for a group of deaf students to take their ECDL at the college.

Switzerland

- The in-service training for teachers of the Canton Bern was the first Swiss Office for teachers' further education to integrate the ECDL in their program: The Informatik Volksschule in Rütli/Zollikofen is ECDL-certified since February 2001 and offers courses and certifications for the ICT further education of teachers.

Belgium

- The VDAB, (Flemish Public Service for Unemployed) offers 4000 job seekers the opportunity to get an ECDL. On June 25th, the Flemish Minister of Labor Renaat Landuyt handed out the ECDL to a group of job seekers. According to Landuyt, the ECDL will prove their computer skills when looking for a job everywhere in Europe.

Switzerland

- In Switzerland, more and more employment offices have decided to integrate the ECDL into their programme for unemployed people. Since June 15, unemployed people have the possibility to acquire the ECDL on favorable terms while undergoing special training for the employment market.

Hungary

- In Hungary computer literacy skills has become an indispensable component of a well-rounded education, and equal opportunity must be provided for the handicapped to receive appropriate training as well. This training program is the first to incorporate a special teaching methodology and existing technology such as screen reader, speech synthesiser and optical character recognition software into a curriculum tailored for the blind and visually impaired. Three visually impaired young participants in the pilot training program have successfully passed the ECDL START modules on July 25, 2002.

Nigeria

- Mr. Ameafula, Head of Marketing at the E-learning Centre, informed IT World last week in Abuja, that possession of the ICDL is a proof that one can operate the computer effectively as it is being done worldwide. He explained that the ICDL is the ideal solution for those looking for new jobs or those professionals aiming for promotions. He argued that, most universities and colleges all over the world, including South Africa and Nigeria give recognition and credit for the ICDL, saying that the ICDL is recognised in over 75 countries and territories.

Germany

- Course for the European Computer Driving Licence - or ECDL for short - are now being run under the auspices of the Federal German Minister Edelgard Bulmahn. These consist of seven learning modules, which test basic, IT skills. A CD-ROM guides the user through the programme. On successful completion of the test, one of 850 ECDL test centres can issue a recognised certificate. It is now up to individuals to show their initiative.

South Africa

- IT certification bodies report that the demand for IT training certification is down by as much as 46% compared to a year ago. However, the number of students obtaining an International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) has doubled over the same period.

Jordan

- Jordan has embarked on an ambitious, long-range plan to become an information-age society. The Ministry of Education has decided on the International Computer Driving License (ICDL) course and tests as the criteria for qualifying teachers as being computer-literate.

Belgium

- The European summit in Lisbon (March 2000) spoke of "lifelong learning" and considered that Europe should be the region of the world most strongly committed to the "knowledge society". Since then, the Member States have implemented different strategies to move in this direction. In Belgium, regionalisation means differentiated policies, even if they are pursuing the same purpose: allowing the maximum number of citizens access to the technologies of information, the famous "ICT (Information and Communication Technologies)". To get there, there are a number of options. Among these there is the internationally recognised "European Computer Driving Licence" (ECDL).

Sweden

- In Sweden, last year's shortage of trained medical secretaries will be gone this summer. The introduction of the Skriv.net project has really put forward the problems involved and made the actual role of the medical secretary clearer. The project has been able to increase the competence level of the group thanks to money from the EU and from the local community. The project includes basic knowledge of the Swedish and English languages and the completion of the European Computer Driving Licence. 20 of the secretaries involved in this project have completed their computer certification this spring and another 24 will do so in the autumn.

Norway

- In Norway, The home PC deal that started off three years ago at Eid Energi included one specific demand - all employees that wanted a home PC needed to know how to use it. The course that was connected with the home PC deal was aimed to end with an ECDL certification. Eid Energi bought the whole course including courseware, classes and the possibility to sit the exams. Eid Energi demanded that staff complete at least four of the ECDL modules. Each module ends with an exam, and most of the employees have now finished the whole program (7 modules). *"I would like to encourage other companies to set these demands on their employees. Everybody uses PC's nowadays and no profession would like to lag behind in this development."* said Bernt Nilsen, CEO of ECDL Norway.

Norway

- Teachers have better ICT skills than their students. *"The real ITC competence in schools has been tested and evaluated". It is now shown that the teachers know more about IT than their students",* says Bernt Nilsen, CEO, ECDL Norway (Datakortet). *"This shows that the students are in need of more training, and the importance of the possibility to certify the actual ICT competence of students and teachers" he ends.*

Italy

- The European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) has been approved to be the reference for basic computer needs at the universities of Italy. On the 22nd of March 2002 the Ministry of Education and the Headmasters Organisation of the Italian Universities signed the agreement which confirms that the students will receive official university credit by completing the ECDL.

United Kingdom

- The technical infrastructure within organisations of vastly differing sizes is generally no longer a barrier to e-learning. Not so long ago, if courses were not available on CD-ROM, then smaller clients could not consider this of training solution. Nowadays the reduction in bandwidth required to run courses, coupled with the low-cost accessibility of the internet for corporate use, has meant that anyone, from a small supermarket chain to a multi-national corporation can have access to top-quality e-learning. The Nationwide Trust, UK, a subsidiary of the Nationwide Building Society, initially implemented a small ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence) pilot of just 30 staff. However, it soon had over 100 employees wanting to do the course and the number keeps rising. Jon White, a training consultant within the Trust, explained: "*One chap even took his ECDL on holiday and telephoned at the end of the week to say he'd completed it and when could he sit the test*".

Sweden

- The Swedish government re-started the ECDL project for employees in February. A package of training, home studies, teacher support and an easier way to do the exams has made more people start their IT skills studies and certify their knowledge. "*Take time for the computer driving licence (ECDL) it is a good investment for the future*" is the message from the people who are responsible for the training program.

Ireland

- In Ireland, when students Daragh Sheridan (23) and Neil Coleman (20) finish exams later this month, they'll turn into administrators themselves – even employing some of their own lecturers – for a unique course aimed at providing help to football players who have recently been released from their British clubs. As well as sessions on diet and personal motivation, part of the residential course involves intensive ECDL classes to ensure that participants get the very best grounding in basic IT skills.