



ECDL FOUNDATION LTD

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ECDL Set to Become Official Europe-wide IT Standard

The European Union High Level Group for Employment and Social Dimension of the Information Society (ESDIS) has made a recommendation to the European Commission that the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) be accepted as a Europe-wide basic IT accreditation scheme.

ESDIS was charged with identifying existing programmes that could potentially fulfil the e-Europe Action Plan of March 2000 with one of the specific goals being the establishment of a European diploma for basic information technology skills, with decentralised certification procedures.

“ We are delighted that ESDIS has formally recommended the ECDL programme to the Commission. This is a significant endorsement. We have now established an explicit link between ECDL, as a pan-European tool of IT literacy, and the stated intention of the EU Heads of State to raise digital literacy levels across Europe, which we will continue to foster and develop.” said ECDL Foundation Managing Director David Carpenter

The global governing body of ECDL, The ECDL Foundation, has long promoted ECDL as meeting the objectives of European Commission initiatives under the e-Europe Action Plan 2002, which places significant emphasis on life-long learning as a basic component of the European social model. This latest endorsement cements ECDL's standing and credibility on both a European and international level.

ECDL is the most recognised and accepted IT certification, available in more than 56 countries worldwide. The programme has been developed with inputs from over 30 different computer societies worldwide representing in excess of 200,000 IT professionals across all spheres of activity (including industry, education and government) and enjoys widespread endorsement from educational and governmental bodies across the globe.

The success of the programme is evidenced by the high level of participation in countries such as Sweden, Ireland and Denmark where ECDL uptake is approaching 4% of each country's population. Similar high levels of uptake are also being experienced in countries such as the United Kingdom, Norway, Austria, Italy and Hungary. World-wide, participation in ECDL has exceeded 1.5 million students representing the delivery of some six million tests.

ECDL is currently the only Europe wide basic IT skills accreditation scheme which has gained broad acceptance, with the vast majority of EU Member States promoting the programme. Other similar accreditation schemes exist either to support proprietary products or only at a national level. Most of the latter are integrated in training courses or exist as part of larger national accreditation or diploma arrangements.

"There is a growing demand for individuals to be able to demonstrate that they have the requisite skills to live and work in the new information society. Arising from this has come the Commission's initiative to establish a European wide standard for IT literacy skills. The fact that ECDL has received this high level recommendation for acceptance as the recognised standard is testament to its ability to deliver an IT skills certification that meets the requirements of an evolving e-Europe." said David Carpenter.

ENDS

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