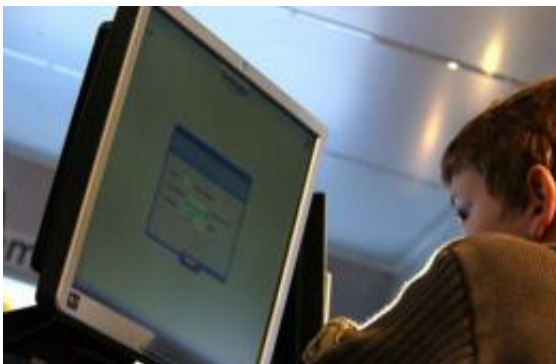


Estonian first graders to learn computer code

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Ave Lauringson from the Tiger Leap Foundation said the project was set up to counter the dwindling number of computer lessons being given in many Estonian schools.

The "teaching materials for all grade levels are almost compiled by now and the interest of schools wishing to join the project since we launched it this week increases every day," Lauringson said.

The foundation is training teachers in September with the goal of letting

them start IT classes in October.

Lauringson said the foundation will use a Microsoft tool that teaches kids how to create web-based games.

"They can become a kind of IT experts themselves at the age of seven," she said.

Estonia, a Baltic state of 1.3 million people that joined the EU in 2004 and the eurozone in 2011, has often been praised for its IT [innovations](#) that have earned it the nickname of E-stonia.

The Microsoft program called Kodu, meaning "home" in Estonian, enables children to create PC and [XBox](#) games via a simple visual programming language.

The project is financed from the state budget and will cost 70,000 euros (\$88,000) this year.

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