

elicited the most interest so far. Further to a request made under the Austrian Presidency, a Canada R&D window on the Community Research and Development Information Service (CORDIS) web site is now ready for launch before the end of October.

A call for tender to reinforce Canada-EU links through the creation of a health telematics network was issued by the European Commission's External Relations Directorate General in September. Commission officials from the Information Society Directorate General responsible for this project will visit Health Canada in November 1999.

Canada will participate in a significant way at the IST 99 Conference in Helsinki, Nov. 22-25, with assistance from Industry Canada, the National Research Council and the Communications Research Centre.

Canada is participating in the Commission's Netd@ys Europe 99 project and will provide information on Canadian connectivity and technical innovations as well as on culture, heritage and geography.

**Business-to-business contacts:** Both sides strongly support the Canada-Europe Round Table (CERT) initiative which is aimed at bringing Canadian and European companies together. With regard to SMEs, Canada continues to expand its "Crossing the Pond" initiative to help such firms extend their operations to Europe. Over the course of the year, the "Crossing the Pond" partners held five "Knowledge Cafés" to put companies directly in touch with value-added service-providers and business experts from key European markets. Executives from more than 250 high-technology companies and organizations participated in the events. The Commission has held discussions with Member State SME organizations to gauge the potential for cooperative SME promotion activities with Canada. The Commission has expressed its readiness to provide funding for a series of regional activities in early 2000 to promote awareness of the euro among Canadian SMEs.

**People to people links:** Parliamentary contacts and visits are described above. A second simulation of the European Parliament (Specque), which brought together more than 100 university students from Canada and Europe, took place in Strasbourg with the active contribution of Canada and the EU. Another similar event is planned for next year in Canada.

The Jean Monnet Chair on European Integration at the University of Montreal pursued its programme of seminars, conferences and round table discussions, contributing to a better understanding of EU-Canada cooperation.

In October 1998, the Commission launched a pilot project called ACADIA which offers young Europeans on the job training in Canadian SME's. Building