



Culture and Tourism



Canadian dance company La La La Human Steps will be participating in this year's celebrations in Thessaloniki.

Canadians in Europe's Cultural Capital

Europe named Thessaloniki its Cultural Capital for 1997. Canada has responded by making the Greek city its cultural capital in Europe for the year as well.

A Cultural Capital always draws important and exciting performers and events. This year will be no exception. Canada expects to have the second largest number of participants in events during the year, reflecting the importance of Canada's cultural ties to Europe.

Plans are in place to bring as many Canadian musicians and dance companies of international stature as possible to Thessaloniki. Many will also perform in other Greek cities and in Italy as well as other countries in the region.

These projects are made possible by the generosity of Canadian businesses in Greece and the Greek-Canadian community. Canada and Greece have long-standing ties through generations of migration. Those links have been strengthened with the commercial success of a number of leading Canadian businesses in the Greek market. Support for Thessaloniki as Cultural Capital of Europe demonstrates Canada's interest in culture and in its partnership with Greece.

Advancing by Degrees

Since 1990, Canada and the European Union have been improving student mobility. One major step forward has involved processes that allow for the assessment of diplomas and academic accreditation. Information on Canadian college and university degrees and programs now appears on all major international databases such as TRACE and the World Academic Database.

Academic mobility is also increased by the work of the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials. This non-governmental organization offers a central service to recognize and assess qualifications from institutions outside of Canada.

The EU and Canada have launched the Agreement Establishing a Co-operative Program in Higher Education and Training. Nineteen projects were selected as a result of this program. They will link institutions on both sides of the Atlantic enabling more than 900 students to take part in exchanges over three years.



The 1996-97 Youth Perspectives Conference entitled "Canada and Europe" recently brought together students from both geographic areas to debate the latest trends in international affairs. The meeting took place in Herstmonceux Castle, in Hailsham, England, currently the property of Canada's Queen's University.

Creating Cultural Ties in a Dynamic World

Europe and Canada have expanded cultural relations greatly in the last decade. Canada has underlined this development by designating international cultural relations as a pillar of Canadian foreign policy and by recognizing the impacts of the technological revolution that has enabled new forms of cultural expression to develop.

Cultural exchanges encourage better understanding of other national cultures. They are also good business. As Canada moves from a resource-based economy to one that depends on knowledge, cultural industries offer significant export opportunities. Canada is already an important exporter of television programs, many of which are seen in Europe.

However, Canada sees culture as far more than a business opportunity. Canada is co-operating with European partners on cultural issues. It agrees on the need to maintain strong national culture in the face of rising cultural homogeneity and the loss of national identity. Both partners know that it is possible to balance respect for the importance of national cultures with a continued openness to international influences.

Dr. Norman Bethune

In 1996, Spain marked the 60th anniversary of the beginning of its civil war. It was also the 60th anniversary of the arrival in Spain of Dr. Norman Bethune, a Canadian doctor with a strong humanitarian interest.

After arriving in Spain, Dr. Bethune created the Canadian Blood Transfusion Service. This was the first mobile blood service in the world designed to save lives in wartime. Until he left Spain at the end of 1937, Dr. Bethune followed the fighting to bring this service to the wounded.



Dr. Norman Bethune giving soldier a blood transfusion during the Spanish Civil War.

In October 1996, the Canadian Embassy in Madrid held a series of events to honour the doctor. Large numbers of people attended conferences, a book launch and screenings of films, such as "Bethune" with Canadian actor Donald Sutherland in the lead role.

Tourism



Since 1991, European travel to Canada has risen sharply.

From Germany

↑ 54%

From France

↑ 40%

From the U.K.

↑ 21%

All of Europe

↑ 29%

