

services, slated for 1998. This will create abundant opportunities in France and throughout the EU. Canadian service suppliers are already seeking out partnering prospects among the new competitors of France Télécom. The growing integration of computer and telephone (CTI) (a field in which Canada shines) makes liberalization in this sector

all the more interesting for foreign suppliers in both fields.

New synergies will appear in several sectors that are to be liberalized Europe-wide, opening the way for business and alliance-building opportunities, not only for European firms but for their foreign competitors as well.

Figure 1. 1996 French Economic Data

Gross domestic product: US\$1.548 billion

GDP per capita: US\$26,445

Real GDP growth rate: 1.3%

Inflation rate: 2.1%

Unemployment rate: 12.5% (September 1997)

National public debt: 45% of GDP

Public sector deficit: 3.5% of GDP

Exports: \$367 billion

Imports: \$351 billion

Figure 2. EMU* Convergence Progress

	Inflation (CPI)	Interest rates (long-term)	Deficit/ GDP	Debt/ GDP
Upper limit	2.7	9.1	3.0	60.0
Germany	1.3	6.2	4.0	60.8
France	2.1	6.3	4.0	56.4
Italy	4.1	9.6	6.6	123.4
United Kingdom	3.0	7.7	4.6	56.2
Spain	3.6	8.8	4.4	69.3
Netherlands	1.4	6.1	2.6	78.7
Belgium	1.9	6.5	3.3	130.6
Sweden	1.1	8.1	3.9	78.1
Austria	1.9	6.3	4.3	71.7
Denmark	2.3	7.2	1.4	70.2
Finland	1.1	7.0	3.3	51.3
Greece	8.2	—	7.9	110.6
Portugal	2.9	8.7	4.0	71.7
Ireland	2.1	7.3	1.6	74.7
Luxembourg	1.5	6.5	0.9	7.8

* European Monetary Union

