

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

