

## **Canada–European Union Relations**

- The European Union (EU) comprises 15 member states: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.
- The EU is Canada's second most important trading partner and a key investment partner. It is a principal player in international political and socio-economic issues.
- Apart from their historical and demographic ties, Canada and the EU share a common dedication to democratic political values. They work closely together in responding to global issues. They also share common interests in ensuring a liberalized global trading regime.
- Canada and the EU have adopted agreements on co-operation in a wide range of areas.
- Since 1996, when Canada and the European Union signed the Political Declaration and Action Plan, their already close relations have strengthened. Consultations at different levels are held on many issues, including human rights, northern co-operation, and trade and economic issues.
- Canada and the EU hold regular meetings at the prime ministerial and ministerial levels. The Canada–EU Summit is held every six months to coincide with the EU's rotating presidency.
- At the December 2000 summit held in Ottawa, Canada's Prime Minister and European leaders renewed the Canada–EU Higher Education and Training Agreement and adopted joint statements on security and defence, on justice and home affairs, on development assistance co-operation, and on the Galileo satellite navigation project, which will provide global positioning signals by 2007. At the previous summit, held in June 2000 in Lisbon, leaders issued joint statements on peace building and conflict prevention and on the World Trade Organization.
- At the political and expert levels, Canada and the EU regularly discuss political and regional issues of common concern. These include human rights, small arms, nuclear non-proliferation, the Middle East, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia. As well, trade consultations are held each year.