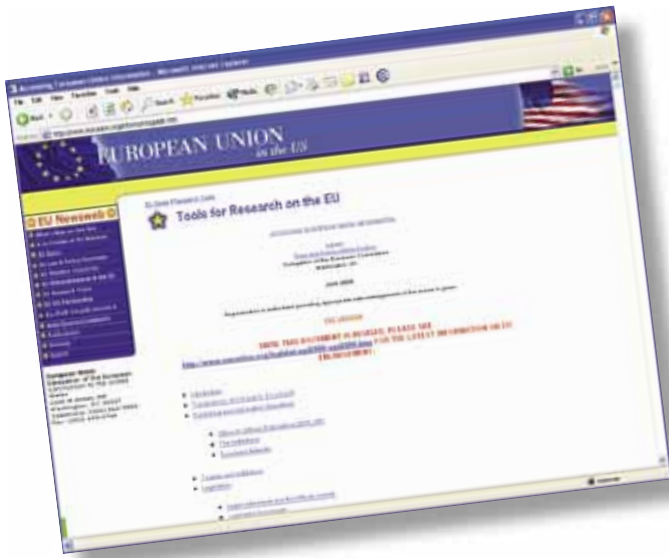


# Eye on the Web

LINKS TO THE RESOURCES ON THE INTERNET

## International Governmental Organizations: Part III



This column concludes a three-part focus on international governmental organizations (IGOs). Part I introduced readers to major Web resources of the United Nations (UN), Part II focused on specialized agencies of the UN, and Part III will cast its net beyond both the UN family and the stricter definitions of an IGO. Provided below is information about the following organizations and their Web-based resources: European Union, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, World Trade Organization (WTO), Group of Eight (G7/G8).

Next issue's Eye on the Web column will return to a domestic focus and highlight Web-based archival resources. As always, your suggestions for future columns are appreciated. Amanda's e-mail address is listed at the end of this article.

### European Union

**EUROPA: Gateway to the European Union** <[www.europa.eu.int/](http://www.europa.eu.int/)>

**Accessing European Union Information** <[www.eurunion.org/infores/resguide.htm](http://www.eurunion.org/infores/resguide.htm)>

According to the Europa Web site, the European Union (EU) is a "family of democratic European countries, committed to working together for peace and prosperity." An exercise in the pooling of national sovereignty, the EU is unlike any other current governmental organization. Its present form was established with the Treaty on European Union (Maastricht Treaty) in 1992, although it can trace its roots back to 1946. A historical overview of the EU can be found on the Europa Web site by selecting "EU at a Glance" and then "History" from the resulting side panel. Currently, the EU has 25 member states and four candidate countries. All member states designate representatives to sit on the council of the EU, the main legislative body. The council shares the power to legislate with the European Parliament, whose members are elected by the citizens of member states. The European Com-

mission acts as the executive branch of government but plays a much larger role in the legislative process than the executive branches of government in Canada or the United States. The commission works with the Court of Justice to enforce European law. Finally, the Court of Auditors acts as the financial watchdog of the EU. A complex and unique institution, librarians often feel challenged when assisting users with the identification of and access to EU information. Europa's goal is to simplify that process, and improvements to this end are continuing. At present, the site is geared to citizens of EU member states. However, the "Activities" link from the main page provides an excellent starting point for seekers of EU information on either side of the Atlantic. A broad list of subject categories is provided and includes everything from Agriculture to Culture and Food Safety to Transport. Following these links will

provide users with relevant legislative materials, links to online Commission publications and an often rich array of free statistical information made available by Eurostat, the EU's statistical office. Tracing specific legislation as it progresses through the EU system can be complicated for the uninitiated. Use the "Documents" section of the main Europa Web site and refer to the online guide produced by library staff at the Washington, DC Delegation of the European Commission (linked above). Government librarians that attended the conference for European Documentation Centres (EDCs) and European Reference Centres (ERCs) in May were pleased to learn that improvements to the Europa internal search engine and the consolidation of legislative databases will be realized throughout the next few years.

By Amanda Wakaruk

## Delegation of the European Commission to Canada <<http://www.delcan.cec.eu.int/en/>>

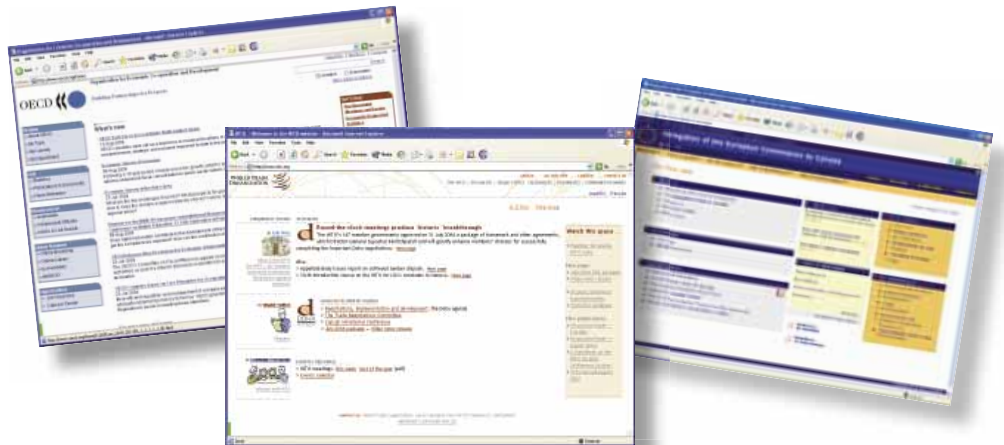
This diplomatic mission's Web site provides quick and easy access to documentation relevant to Canada-EU relations. The full-text of EU-Canada agreements, declarations and statements can be found by following the "Official Documents" link from the main Web page. In addition, the "Press & Information" link provides access to speeches, press releases, newsletters and other announcements dating back to 2003.

## Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) <[www.oecd.org/](http://www.oecd.org/)>

The OECD replaced the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) in 1961, a body formed to administer U.S. and Canadian aid under the Marshall Plan following The Second World War. Today, the OECD focuses on building the economies of its member countries through discussion, development and refinement of economic and social policies. Its 30 members (including Canada) are committed to market economies and pluralistic democracies and produce two thirds of the world's goods and services. The work of the OECD covers many subject areas, including population ageing, energy, environment, science, technology, governance, development, economics and education. Access to information about the mass of publications and statistical resources produced by the organization often thought of as a think tank is available through both the internal search engine and the navigational links, found on the top right and left of the homepage. Similar to the Europa Web site mentioned earlier, the hierarchical links generally prove more useful for introductory users than the search engine. Advanced users with an understanding of OECD activities may benefit from the advanced search option, which allows for searching by provenance and date range. While most documents, including policy briefs and reports, are available for free online, few publications are afforded the same access.

## World Trade Organization (WTO) <[www.wto.org/](http://www.wto.org/)>

The WTO is the successor of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), both of which were created to negotiate agreements around issues of international trade and commerce. Today, the WTO is a related organization to the UN family, has 147 member countries and is responsible for handling trade disputes, monitoring national trade policies and administering agreements on goods, services and intellectual property. The full text of the agreements and decisions on disputes can be found by following the "Documents" link from the top right of the homepage. Do not miss the "Documents - Official Documents" link that takes users to the official WTO documentation database and allows for searching by country, document type or number, and date range (to name only a few options). The "Resources" link also provides access to a wealth of material, including a statistical database that allows users to extract times series of import and export values for EITHER goods OR services by country and trading partner (note: trading partners are limited to the world, the EU and "extra regional trade"). The "Resources - Publications" link provides access to an online bookstore that has a separate access point for free online publications. Don't miss the "Bibliography Database," practically hidden under "Resources - Economic Research & Analysis." This database provides access to the full text of selected papers and reports and, what's more, offers a simplified search option that allows for intuitive subject navigation with sub-categories and explanatory notes about each major heading.



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**Group of Eight (G8)**  
[formerly Group of 7 or G7]  
<[www.g8.utoronto.ca/](http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/)>

The G8 membership is made up of the heads of state or government from the eight most industrialized countries: France, United States, Britain, Germany, Japan, Italy, Canada and Russia. In addition, an observer from the European Commission has attended G8 summit meetings since 1978. Heads of state from the first six countries listed above formed the membership of the initial summit held in 1975. Canada joined in 1976, creating the title Group of Seven or G7. Russia began participating in 1997 and obtained full membership status in 2002, changing the title to the Group of Eight or G8. Annual summits are the main activity of the group and serve as a vehicle for policy discussions around economic, political and security issues. In addition, regular and ad-hoc ministerial meetings continue throughout the year with federal ministers responsible for finance, trade, security (terrorism), environment, employment and justice, to name a few. The G8 Web site, provided and maintained by the University of Toronto Library and the G8 Research Group at the University of Toronto, provides intuitive first level access to documents emanating from the summits and meetings noted above. As the breadth of online coverage varies, it is important to note the collection finding aid provided by the G7/G8 Research Collection in the John W. Graham Library Trinity College, University of Toronto, linked from the main page under the heading "Archives." The Web site also provides access to a variety of academic publications produced by the G8 Research Group, its sponsors, and related organizations.



## IGO Resources for Librarians

International Intergovernmental Organizations (Northwestern University)

Provides an alphabetical list, with links, of IGOs.

<[www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/resource/internat/igo.html](http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/resource/internat/igo.html)>

Intl-Doc: the Librarians' IGO Listserv

This listserv was set up to facilitate the exchange of information concerning the publication and information dissemination policies of IGOs.

<[www.library.uiuc.edu/doc/idtf/intl-doc.htm](http://www.library.uiuc.edu/doc/idtf/intl-doc.htm)>

International Information: Documents, Publications and Electronic Information of International Governmental Organizations. 2nd ed. Edited by Peter I. Hajnal. Englewood, Co.: Libraries Unlimited, 1997.

International Document Task Force (IDTF), Government Documents Roundtable, American Library Association

<[www.library.uiuc.edu/doc/idtf/home.htm](http://www.library.uiuc.edu/doc/idtf/home.htm)>

LIS2137: International Organizations

This is the Web site for a course offered by the Faculty of Information Studies at the University of Toronto. The course focuses on the production and dissemination of IGO materials. It is updated annually and includes extensive reading lists.

<[www.fis.utoronto.ca/courses/LIS/2137/index.html](http://www.fis.utoronto.ca/courses/LIS/2137/index.html)>

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