



EUROPEAN UNION CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE  
**NEWSLETTER**

ALBERTA

CARLETON

DALHOUSIE

Message from the EUCE Network Coordinator

Joan DeBardeleben and Natasha Joukovskaia, Carleton University

It is with great excitement that we introduce the three Canadian EU Centres of Excellence (EUCes) in receipt of the European Union's funding for the period from 2013 until 2016. The new EUCes span the country from central Canada to the East coast and are based at the University of Alberta (Edmonton), Carleton University (Ottawa), and Dalhousie University (Halifax). For Carleton and Dalhousie Universities, this round of funding is an extension of EUCE activities initiated in previous years. Carleton's EUCE also continues serving as Canadian EUCE Network Coordinator, the designation it first received in 2006. The University of Alberta is a new member of the worldwide EUCE family. The goal of the Centres is to promote a **better understanding and knowledge of the EU** in Canada. In addition to **strengthening EU studies** at their respective universities through research and curriculum development, the EUCes offer **outreach activities for non-academic audiences**, such as public lectures, policy workshops, live webinars, high-school presentations, and online informational materials accessible to the general public. EUCes also facilitate **people-to-people contacts and academic links** between the EU and Canada by bringing European visiting scholars to their universities and supporting research visits of Canadian students and scholars to Europe. Finally, the Canadian EUCes **collaborate and share resources** among themselves as well as with EUCes around the world, including those in the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and, most recently, in Russia, Hong-Kong, and Macao. Pages 2–3 of this newsletter provide profiles of each Canadian EUCE as well as information on the scholars leading them. We hope you enjoy reading the inaugural issue of the new funding cycle 2013–2016!

IN THIS ISSUE

- EUCE: Centre Profiles....2
- Carleton University
- Dalhousie University
- Alberta University
  
- Spotlight on:
- EUCE Directors.....3
  
- Feature Article (continued)
- .....4-5
  
- Commentary.....6
  
- EUCE News and
- Upcoming Events.....7

The European Citizens' Initiative,  
 Participatory Democracy and Canada

By Marcel Sangsari, Carleton University

The world's first transnational, digital right of initiative, the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) took effect on April 1, 2012, when the EU Regulation No 211/2011 on the citizens' initiative entered into force. The ECI gives citizens within European Union (EU) Member States the right to call on the European Commission to propose new, or change existing, EU legislation.

For an ECI to be considered, the subject matter must be within the Commission's legislative competence, and organizers must gather at a minimum one million signatures (0.2 per-

cent of the EU's population of 502 million) from at least ¼ of EU Member States (currently seven) in one year. This article introduces the ECI and its early record, which has been marked by several difficulties. It argues that despite its rocky start, the ECI represents a novel first step towards a more inclusive and democratic Europe, noble goals which should be supported by EU institutions and civil society organizations (CSOs). Characterized by a multi-level system of governance, and facing similar questions on the "democratic deficit" and on public engagement in the . . . *Continued on page 4*

[carleton.ca/euce-network-canada](http://carleton.ca/euce-network-canada)

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## PROFILES: EUROPEAN UNION CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

### **EUCE—Centre for European Studies, Carleton University**

[www.carleton.ca/ces](http://www.carleton.ca/ces)



The Centre for European Studies (CES) at Carleton University was established in October 2000. Since 2006 it has maintained its designation as a European Union Centre of Excellence (EUCE) and as Network Coordinator for all Canadian EUCEs. The approach of CES is inter-disciplinary, involving a mandate of furthering the study of the European Union at Carleton University, in the Ottawa area, and in other parts of Ontario. The Centre is housed jointly in the Institute of European, Russian and Eurasian Studies and the Department of Political Science. The Centre's research and outreach activities centre around four interdisciplinary themes: (1) The EU as Global Actor and EU-Canada Relations; (2) Citizenship and Social Integration; (3) Innovation in Environmental Policy in Europe and Canada; (4) The Political Economy of European Integration. Each research group organizes public lectures and conferences, invites visiting scholars, holds research seminars, and generates scholarly publications. Carleton's EUCE engages topics on the bilateral EU-Canada agenda and provides the public and the Canadian policy community with expert analyses of current issues. This expertise is offered in the form of policy workshops, public lectures, downloadable policy briefs and podcasts. Outreach to Ontario high-school students and teachers is realized through the EULearning Project, which includes an interactive educational website, lesson plans, and in-class teaching. In addition, the Centre will create electronic linkages between Canadian and European classrooms and host a virtual research seminar linking scholars from EU centres around the globe.

### **EUCE—Dalhousie University**

[www.dal.ca](http://www.dal.ca)



The EUCE was established at Dalhousie University in 2006. The Centre's programme for 2013-2015 examines a set of pressing policy themes affecting Europe and Canada today, with a particular emphasis on the implications for the Maritime Provinces. These themes include environmental and energy security; international trade; health care delivery; and the connection between migration and security. By comparing Europe and Canada, the goal is to highlight relevant lessons that the two partners across the Atlantic can learn from each other. The EUCE at Dalhousie involves faculty members from multiple departments within the Faculties of Arts and Social Science, Health Professions, Law, and Science, and two specialized research entities—the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies and the Marine and Environmental Law Institute. Research and outreach activities consist of workshops and roundtables, public lectures and videoconferences, a web-based media strategy to facilitate public access, academic conferences, and publications. The EUCE draws upon its many contacts, at EUCEs within Canada and globally, as well as in Member States, to bring EU visiting scholars to Dalhousie in support of the various outreach initiatives. It also facilitates visits of Canadian students and faculty to EU member organizations and universities, to provide opportunities to gain invaluable first-hand experience and knowledge.

### **EUCE—University of Alberta**

[www.ualberta.ca](http://www.ualberta.ca)



EUCE at the University of Alberta will begin its preparatory phase in June 2013 and launch programming in October 2013. The EUCE generates multidisciplinary collaboration among the Faculty of Arts (political science, history, sociology, anthropology), the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies (humanities), the Institute for Public Economics, the Faculty of Law, Helmholtz-Alberta Initiative (science and engineering), and the Canadian Circumpolar Institute (natural and social science). Activities are linked to five interdisciplinary policy themes: (1) Multiculturalism and minority rights; (2) Sovereignty, governance and citizenship; (3) Democratic development and stabilization in the post-communist member states and the Western Balkans; (4) Energy and the environment; and (5) The North. EUCE activities include visiting speakers, policy briefs and working papers across these themes. High-level policy seminars hosted with the Helmholtz-Alberta Initiative will bring industry, government, and scientists together into dialogue on climate change, energy and environmental policy, and Canada-EU relations. With the Canadian Circumpolar Institute, outreach activities on Canada-EU relations and Arctic strategy will take advantage of Canada's chairmanship of the Arctic Council starting in 2014. The EUCE will also work collaboratively with Alberta school teachers and the University's Faculty of Education experts to develop online curriculum materials on the EU for use in grade 11 classrooms.

## SPOTLIGHT ON: EUCE DIRECTORS

### Joan DeBardeleben, Carleton University

**Joan DeBardeleben** is Chancellor's Professor in the Institute of European, Russian and Eurasian Studies at Carleton University and holds a Jean Monnet Chair in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood Relations. She is Director of the Canada–Europe Transatlantic Dialogue and of Carleton University's EU Centre of Excellence, as well as President of the European Community Studies Association-Canada (ECSA-C). She has written extensively on the EU's relations with its eastern neighbours, and topics related to federalism, environmental politics, elections, and public opinion in Eastern Europe and Russia. Her current research projects deal with the role of values, interests, and governance structures in the EU-Russian relationship, also with attention to the role of EU Member State approaches. Her most recent edited volumes include (with Crina Viju) *Economic Crisis in Europe: What It Means for the EU and Russia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); (with Achim Hurrelmann) *Transnational Europe: Promise, Paradox, Limits* (2011); *The Boundaries of EU Enlargement: Finding a Place for Neighbours* (2008); and (with Jon H. Pammett) *Activating the Citizenship: Dilemmas of Citizen Participation in Europe and Canada* (2009). DeBardeleben has been visiting researcher at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (Berlin) and the Mannheim Center for European Social Research (Germany).



### Ruben Zaiotti, Dalhousie University



**Ruben Zaiotti** is Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science and Director of the European Union Centre of Excellence (EUCE) at Dalhousie University (Canada). He holds a PhD from the University of Toronto, a Master of Studies from the University of Oxford, and a BA from the University of Bologna. His main areas of interest are international security, border control, migration policy, and European Union politics. He is currently working on two research projects. The first looks at the transatlantic partnership over issues of homeland security. The second examines the challenges of European Union foreign policy after the signing of the Lisbon Treaty. Recent publications include the monograph *Cultures of Border Control: Schengen and the Evolution of European Frontiers* with University of Chicago Press and articles for *Review of International Studies*, *Journal of European Integration*, *European Security*, *International Journal of Refugee Law*, and *Cultures & Conflicts*.

### Lori Thorlakson, Alberta University

**Lori Thorlakson** is Associate Professor and Jean Monnet Chair in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta. She researches democracy and party competition in the European Union and multi-level systems. Her work has been published in journals including the *European Journal of Political Research*, the *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *West European Politics*, *Party Politics*, and the *Journal of European Public Policy*. Professor Thorlakson holds a PhD from the London School of Economics. Before coming to the University of Alberta in 2008 she was a lecturer at the University of Nottingham and a postdoctoral fellow at the European University Institute in Florence. Dr. Thorlakson's recent publications include "Patterns of Party Integration, Influence and Autonomy in Seven Federations," *Party Politics* (March 2009) and "An Institutional Explanation of Party System Congruence: Evidence from six federations," *European Journal of Political Research* (January 2007).



... Continued from page 1

political arena, Canada should learn from the EU's experience and consider the introduction of an ECI-like instrument of participatory democracy.

There is an academic debate over whether a "democratic deficit" exists between the institutions and citizens in the EU's political system (see for example Moravcsik, 2002; and Follesdal and Hix, 2006). An underlying concern is with the EU's electoral, institutional, and consultation processes which, it may be argued, are not able to provide the necessary democratic legitimacy for its policy-making. The ECI can help bridge the gap between the EU and its citizens. Fritz Scharpf (1999) differentiated between the concepts of input legitimacy ("governance by the people") and output legitimacy ("governance for the people"). The ECI could improve the EU's input legitimacy, which may, in turn, lead to better output legitimacy, and could equally help reverse trends toward low voter turnout and low citizen engagement with EU policy-making, given the media and political attention that may be placed on ECIs.<sup>1</sup>

The ECI was first included in the Treaty of Lisbon (Art. 11.4), which entered into force in December 2009.<sup>2</sup> Detailed requirements are set out in the aforementioned implementing Regulation; the seven step process for ECI organizers is available on the Commission's official online register for the ECI: [ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/welcome](http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/welcome). Should the required signature thresholds be met, organizers will be invited to explain their initiative to the Commission and to a public hearing at the European Parliament. Under Lisbon, the Commission remains the sole EU body able to initiate legislation. A successful ECI does not oblige the Commission to propose legislation; however, the moral weight behind the voice of 1 million citizens would make it difficult for the EU to ignore. The ECI thus gives citizens the same right as the European Parliament and Member States to recommend legis-

lative measures for the Union, and is an "agenda-setting mechanism...in the realm of participatory democracy as opposed to a more binding form of direct democracy"—such as "ballot-box" initiatives and referendums—that is the practice in countries such as Switzerland or in the State of California (European Citizen Action Service, 2011).

Eleven months on, the new instrument has met with several difficulties—including challenges associated with the set-up of a system for online signature collection that respects the strict data protection and other Regulation requirements—which has delayed ECI organizers in starting their online campaigns. The early record may shed light on where improvements could make the ECI a more citizen-friendly tool, and this will be useful for the review of the ECI Regulation in 2015. The ECI provides organizers with substantial scope to influence the EU in any area where the Commission has a legal base to act under the Treaties, while treaty amendments are ineligible. As of mid-March 2013, the Commission registered 15 ECIs, but only ten have started to collect online signatures. Three ECIs have collected over 100,000 statements of support, including "Water and sanitation are a human right!..." which has garnered nearly 1.26 million signatures (while the required 1 million threshold has been reached, country thresholds in the required minimum of seven EU Member States have not). A wide-range of subjects are covered in the registered initiatives, among them: an initiative that proposes increased funding for exchange programs, a call for a Single Communication Tariff Act, an initiative to protect media pluralism across the EU, a request to suspend the EU's climate and energy package, and an initiative demanding the right for EU citizens to be able to vote in their country of residence regardless of their nationality. Two ECIs were withdrawn by organizers, while eight initiatives were refused registration, as the Commission deemed them not to have fulfilled conditions of the Reg-

ulation. It is premature to judge the Commission's early registration record, but it is clear that organizers should seek legal advice before proposing their ECI to the Commission, as the language and legal base used could make the difference between whether or not an ECI is registered.

To address early difficulties with the ECI, the Commission offered, in an exceptional measure, to temporarily host online collection systems in its Datacentre in Luxembourg, as well as an extension to the period of collection for ECIs registered before November 1, 2012 until November 1, 2013. While these are positive measures, organizers and CSOs see the need for the Commission to provide further supportive infrastructure and assistance to ensure that EU citizens are afforded the genuine opportunity to utilize their new right. In "ECI 1.01 Training Camp Report: Brief" (2012), Bruno Kaufmann suggests that revisions to the Regulation should include measures to provide better training, education, and support from EU institutions and CSOs, the development of a mutual understanding as to the necessary preparations, pre-assessments, and strategic readiness for a successful ECI, including the need for fundraising, and consideration of providing some financing for citizens.

Although it sounds relatively simple to achieve the one million signature threshold, this complex task involves collecting an average of 2,740 signatures a day! A successful campaign requires coordinated efforts before and after the one year allowed to collect signatures (ECAS 2011). Fortunately, the digital age is making it possible for individuals to efficiently and affordably connect across borders. Social media can be a cost-effective way to promote ECIs, and online forums, such as [initiative.eu](http://initiative.eu), can federate would-be organizers of ECIs. Funding can be rapidly transferred between countries by ECI organizers. Should a topic resonate well enough, resources could in fact materialize *ad hoc* through crowd-sourced funding (the collection of small

## FEATURE ARTICLE

amounts of money from large numbers of people, often before a product is made or an initiative is launched). In short, the capability for mass transnational collaboration facilitated by information communications technologies and innovative thinking and methods is within reach for EU citizens wishing to make use of the ECI!

Citizens are demanding institutions that respond to their needs, and jurisdictions have responded with new collaborative and direct forms of citizen engagement and the opening up of their democratic institutions. Some examples include the crowd-sourced drafting of Iceland's new Constitution and of law-making in Finland, and the White House's "We the People" petition initiative and President Obama's measures to make freely accessible public sector data and research. Several regimes in the Middle East and North Africa have conceded to similar trends facilitated by connectivity during the Arab Spring. These movements suggest that more inclusive and participatory institutions, and open governments where transparency and accountability are the norm, are becoming expected.

In this context, ECIs may drive forward measures in the EU that could either strengthen the Union or weaken it. Citizens could supplant institutional paralysis, by proposing action in important areas, for example, in pressuring EU politicians to adopt a financial transactions tax, as recently suggested by European parliament President, Martin Schulz (Mahony, 2012). That said, the average EU citizen is not yet aware of the ECI, and EU institutions would do well to inform citizens across the Union of their new right. The 2013 European Year of Citizens and the 2014 EU Parliamentary elections provide excellent opportunities in that regard.

The ECI could be considered in Canada—also a multi-level system of government—as a way to address the democratic deficit between citizens and elected officials and a general lack of engagement in politics. Canada's seldom-used (legally-binding) referenda have more often been driv-

en by political leaders than by citizens. Moreover, existing initiative legislation in Canada sets out such demanding requirements that initiatives are rarely brought to a referendum. For example, the only initiative that has ever succeeded under British Columbia's *Recall and Initiative Act* was on the recall of the harmonized sales tax, due to the demanding requirements of BC's legislation (i.e., the need to achieve 10 percent support of constituents in each riding across the province). For its part, the new minority Parti Québécois (PQ) government made a campaign pledge to introduce citizens' initiative legislation for Québec, which could lead to a third referendum on Quebec separation. While PQ Premier Pauline Marois has not yet introduced legislation or any details, the PQ platform states that it would call a referendum when it gets the support of 15 percent of the electorate, the equivalent of 850,000 Quebecers.

An ECI-like instrument of participatory democracy could catalyze greater democratic participation and open the door to involve citizens who in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are more likely to cluster temporarily around issues that appeal to them and join action campaigns than to join a political party. The digital element could be inviting for younger, technology-savvy generations. Developed correctly, such a tool at the federal (trans-provincial/territorial), the provincial/territorial or the municipal level would be an intriguing policy experiment. There are risks to not developing the tool correctly, as well as in a case where politicians do not pay serious attention to its implementation. In Canada, as in Europe, such situations may serve to increase citizens' distrust in, frustration with, and alienation from their democratic institutions.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Moravcsik (2002) argues that low citizen engagement results from a lack of interest in the EU's main powers—trade liberalization, agricultural policy, and technical regulation, etc.—rather than a deficiency in its institutions. Regardless of the source of citizens' lack of interest, the ECI does at a minimum provide a new avenue for

citizens to enter the EU's political arena, and through attention given to it, it could generate wider and deeper citizen interest in EU policies and their affects on them.

<sup>2</sup> A right to a citizens' initiative was first proposed to the European Constitutional Convention and included in the 2003 Draft Constitutional Treaty. For more on the history of the ECI in the Treaty of Lisbon see here: [citizens-initiative.eu/?page\\_id=2](http://citizens-initiative.eu/?page_id=2)

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## Borderline Europe: Schengen and enlargement anxiety

By Ruben Zaiotti, EUCE Director, Dalhousie University

The doom and gloom that currently pervades the Old Continent has rendered its citizens and politicians particularly jittery. It is not surprising, then, that even the Schengen border control regime, often hailed as one of the most successful stories of European integration, is under strain. Of late, some Schengen members (e.g. France, Denmark) have loudly moaned about the regime's alleged shortcomings and called for its overhaul. This sense of unease has also affected the present debate about Schengen's expansion. Romania and Bulgaria, who joined the EU in 2007, also want to join Europe's free travel area. Despite having met the necessary legal and technical requirements, their Schengen membership is still pending. The main bone of contention is well known: some EU Member States (the most vocal being the Netherlands) seriously question the candidates' capacities to uphold Schengen's standards.

In particular, the persistent high levels of corruption and organized crime in the two South-Eastern European countries are phenomena believed to affect their ability to manage what would become *de facto* Europe's borders. The degree to which Romania and Bulgaria have made actual progress towards overcoming these problems is a matter of debate. The convergence of the two candidate countries' reputation and Schengen members' domestic politics is a plausible explanation for the current tensions in the Schengen regime. However, the bleak conclusion that the regime is entering into an inward looking phase of retrenchment with limited prospects for future enlargements is premature. The current dispute over the accession of Romania and Bulgaria is not unique in the history of the Schengen regime. Italy's membership bid in the 1990s, for example, turned out to be a politically charged saga that lasted for almost a decade. Instead, this dispute can be considered as the latest symptomatic example of an enduring tension within the Schengen regime, namely the dilemma between an in-built propensity to constantly expand in order to uphold the claim that Schengen is a success story of European integration and the fear of losing this very status because of overstretching and the general fear of the unknown that the admission of new and untested members entails.<sup>1</sup>

This inherent tension is expressed in *enlargement anxiety*. As a psychological condition, anxiety is the

result of high levels of uncertainty and overcommitment that an individual might face in his/her everyday life. One of the ways in which anxiety manifests itself is through resentment, which typically takes the form of overly critical language and bullying against a designated scapegoat. From a psychological perspective, the function of resentment is to temporarily release in relatively controlled manner all or part of the tension affecting an individual. Seen in this light, the Romania and Bulgaria affair is not just a cruel rite of passage, in which the two countries are enduring series of humiliating tests in order to become 'proper' members of the club. It is also a sort of cathartic process in which current Schengen members, by vocally expressing their misgivings about the candidates, assuage their fears and are persuaded to accept the new round of club's expansion. The Romanian and Bulgarian governments can only hope that this healing exercise quickly runs its course, so that Schengen's chronic anxiety can be channeled against somebody else...

### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>To read Prof. Zaiotti's article elaborating on this point, please see Zaiotti, Ruben. "Performing Schengen: Myths, Rituals and the Making of European Territoriality beyond Europe?" *Review of International Studies* 37, 2 (2011): 537-556.

This commentary is a shortened version of an article originally posted on Professor Zaiotti's Zaiotti's blog *Schengenalia*. To read other posts from this blog please visit [schengenalia.com](http://schengenalia.com)



## EUCE-CANADA NEWS

### CARLETON UNIVERSITY

In February 2013, EUCE scholars Joan DeBardeleben and Crina Viju published their book entitled *Economic Crisis in Europe: What it means for the EU and Russia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). This interdisciplinary text probes the economic and political impact of both the 2008-09 financial-economic crisis and the subsequent sovereign debt crisis in Europe ([www.palgrave.com/products/title.aspx?pid=572359](http://www.palgrave.com/products/title.aspx?pid=572359)).

April 10, 2013, Carleton: ***EU Climate Policies – Insights for Canada***. This lecture featured Oliver Geden and Severin Fischer from the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP).

April 4, 2013, Carleton: ***European Perspectives Lecture Series—French-German Relations since the Élysée Treaty***. A conversation between the Ambassadors of France and Germany, moderated by journalist Roger Smith.

March 28, 2013, Algoma University, Salt St. Marie: ***Regional Outreach Program—The Euro Crisis: A Never Ending Story?*** Talk by Professor Achim Hurrelmann (Carleton University).

March 28, 2013, University of Ottawa: ***Regional Outreach Program—The European Banking Union: Does Centralization Facilitate the Effective Supervision of Transnational Financial Institutions?*** Presentation by Professor Tobias H. Troeger (University of Frankfurt).

March 19, 2013, Carleton: ***From Berlusconi to Monti: A look at Italian Politics and Society***. Lecture by Professor Giovanni Orsina (LUISS-Guido Carli University, Rome).

March 5, 2013, Carleton: ***Are You Thinking of Choosing Europe for Your Graduate Studies?*** Information session conducted by PromoDoc Ambassadors with the assistance of the Embassies of France, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the Delegation of the European Union.

February 26, 2013, Carleton: ***European Integration and the Changing System of Parliaments***. Research seminar featuring Professor Arthur Benz (Technische Universität Darmstadt, Germany).

February 13, 2013, Carleton: ***European Perspectives Lecture Series—The Eurozone Crisis and Its Implications for Transatlantic Relations***. Speech by Michael Link, German Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office and the Commissioner for Franco-German Cooperation.

January 21, 2013, Carleton: ***Europe: Still a Continent of Multiculturalism?*** Roundtable discussion with Valérie Amiraux (Université de Montréal), Phil Triadafilopoulos, (University of Toronto), and Robert Gould (Carleton University).

### DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

February 21, 2013, Dalhousie University: ***Guest Lecture Series—EU-Russia and Canadian Energy Security: Northern Governance or Brinkmanship?*** Dr. Amelia Hadfield (Vrije Universiteit Brussels/Institute for European Studies).

### UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

The EUCE at the University of Alberta will begin its preparatory phase in June 2013 and launch programming across a range of research, outreach, and exchange activities in October 2013.

#### COMING SOON: 2013 Canada-Europe Business Lecture, Carleton University

Professor **Alison Konrad** will examine the status of women in business leadership around the world, focusing on comparisons between Europe and North America. Dr. Konrad will identify factors linked to the progress of women's business leadership as well as prospects for the next generation of women leaders.

April 16, 2013, 5:00-6:30pm, Roberson Hall, Senate Room 608. (*note: light refreshments will be served starting at 4:30pm*). To register please visit [carleton.ca/ces](http://carleton.ca/ces)

**For a complete list of events, please visit  
[carleton.ca/euce-network-canada](http://carleton.ca/euce-network-canada)**



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