

METROPOLIS NORTH AMERICA

- Metropolis North America is a network of academics, government officials, think tanks, civil society organizations that are encouraging policy research on migration and diversity within North America.
- We encourage members of our network to collaborate on policy-relevant empirical research and knowledge transfer activities that facilitate the use of this research by decision-makers in government and civil society.
- The following text elaborates a set of specific topics upon which members of the network have agreed to focus their research and knowledge transfer activities.

The Metropolis North America Research Agenda

Metropolis North America has been established with a secretariat in Mexico City under the auspices of the Centre for Research on North America (CISAN) at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). Its principal partners are: Citizenship and Immigration Canada through the International Metropolis Project, the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL), and the U.S. Departments of Homeland Security/Citizenship and Immigration Services

MANDATE

The objectives of Metropolis North America are to:

- A. Produce research and encourage the participation of academics and their institutions in conducting migration-related research which is pertinent, but not limited, to NAFTA countries;
- B. Promote and utilize the research by soliciting the participation of their respective national and sub-national governments, research institutions, civil society and where appropriate, participation from other countries;
- C. Cooperate through scholarship in supporting a mutual learning environment within the areas of government responsible for the delivery of migration programs.

Metropolis North America has a strong policy-research mandate which will include collaborative studies on migration and their dissemination to both a policy and academic audiences.

The project will seek wide dissemination and uptake of its research through publications, websites, and small conferences and seminars.

Overall, Metropolis North America seeks to enhance our understanding of migration within the North American countries. We will emphasize empirical work on North America as the unit of analysis as opposed to the more common studies of migration between pairs of the NAFTA countries. It is in looking at North America as unit of analysis that Metropolis North America will make its distinctive contribution. Being an empirical research project, it is not engaged in political advocacy.

In cooperation with the academic and government representatives of Canada, Mexico and the United States, Metropolis North America will aim to organize an annual conference for the purpose of exchanging scholarly research to inform the development of policy on the management of migration in the NAFTA context.

RESEARCH AGENDA:

The following research agenda indicates the scope of the initial work of Metropolis North America. It will not only serve as a guide to our affiliated researchers and for our conferences, but will help define the project and its objectives. This agenda will be subject to revisions in the future.

1. The Effect of the Creation of NAFTA on the Socio-economic Situation as it relates to migration amongst three member countries

- a. A comparison of the pre-NAFTA and post-NAFTA socio-economic indicators for each country as they relate to migration. Is there a NAFTA effect?
- b. How has NAFTA affected migration flows? [NAFTA: does it facilitate migration or does it hinder mobility of the workforce?]
- c. Development of statistics on migration within North America

2. The economic and social impact on migratory flows in North America given the recent economic downturn

- a) The economic impact of the recession for migrants
- b) What social and economic impacts are resulting from the decreasing levels of remittances across N.A. (particularly in Mexico)
- c) What kinds of “new policy directions” in migration are being contemplated because of the economic crisis?
- d) How does North America compare to other world regions with regard to its responses to the recession specifically regarding migration policy?

3. Labour Trends and Impact:

- a. Trends in occupations, specializations and mechanisms used to fill employment needs
- b. Evolution in employment conditions (before and after influx of temporary foreign workers)

- c. Regional trade agreements and mobility provisions/visa regimes
- d. An analysis of the labour market needs, demographic trends and the educational offer of each country

4. Temporary Foreign Worker Impacts:

- a. Family impact of seasonal, long term and permanent absence of the wage earners
- b. The economic and social impact of temporary migration programs on sending countries. The effect of these programs at:
 - ❖ *The national level: GDP, poverty, unemployment, health indicators*
 - ❖ *The local and regional level: socio-economic and cultural effects*
 - ❖ *The individual level: career of temporary workers and impact temporary workers' families*
 - ❖ *Social Remittances: Skills and Knowledge transfer across borders*
- c. A comparison of the use (by temporary workers and their families) of local services, public spaces, and other community and recreational facilities in both the host and the home countries
- d. A comparison of the interactions by temporary foreign workers with local community groups in host countries (type, quality and quantity)
- e. Medium and long-term success indicators for individuals who have worked as temporary foreign workers
- f. An analysis on the integration of foreign workers in the host societies and their rights

4. Managing Border Security and Circular Migration

- a. Illegal Migration/undocumented workers: flows, stocks, trends, effects on the economy, on communities, on migrant families
- b. Driving forces of changes in job location and by categories or status of migrants, i.e. temporary, permanent and undocumented

- c. The impact of the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP)¹ on North American discussions, on the movement of people and national immigration policy debates
- d. Alternative screening regimes at the borders (internal and external): smart borders, traveler pre-clearance (e.g. SENTRI/NEXUS programs), prescreening mechanisms, exchanges on immigration and visa criteria
- e. Profiling at the borders
- f. Circular migration within North America and the management of this phenomenon
- g. What role do we expect border security will have on future flows

5. Social impact of migration on local communities and integration of the migrant community into the host societies

- a. On local perceptions and attitudes about immigration, diversity, and integration
- b. On schools and on extracurricular, recreational and social activities, use of public space including changes and adaptation
- c. On local governments' policies, programs, laws and laws enforcement activities
- d. On crime, homelessness and unemployment
- e. On health and community services
- f. On existing minorities' inter-ethnic and inter-racial relations
- g. On the media (editorials' foci, diversity, inclusion and coverage of related issues)
- h. Cross-border citizens and the application of human rights
- i. A North American perspective on migrants' classes i.e. skilled workers, family reunifications and refugee claimants
- j. Social and ethno-cultural organization

6. Migration and development

¹ The Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP) was launched in March of 2005 as a trilateral effort to increase security and enhance prosperity among the United States, Canada and Mexico through greater cooperation and information sharing.

- a. Remittances: who pays whom? An analysis of financial and human costs related to remittances for both the host and the sending countries
- b. The social impact on the host countries and the sending countries
- c. Success indicators for migration and development programs
- d. How development patterns in urbanization are influenced by fluctuations in North American migration trends
- e. Climate changes and Migration

7. Impact of Family Immigration

- a. Nature of family movements – who is bringing whom, where do they live/move, and do they stay permanently?
- b. Contribution and impact of permanent family migration on the receiving country labor market – what is the contribution of family migrants and how does it differ from labor migration?
- c. Impact of family migration on local social services and education systems
- d. Family separation – migration – unaccompanied minors