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PAA Conference Abstract  
Poster Session

Guess Who's Coming To Dinner: Canada and the United States Set the Table for International Migration Data

A cooperative effort between Statistics Canada, the U.S. Bureau of the Census and Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI) was formed in November 2001. This joint cooperation is known as the North American Migration Working Group (NAMWG). The mission of the group is to promote awareness and knowledge of the patterns, causes, and consequences of migratory behavior affecting Canada, the United States, and Mexico through a central forum in which experts from the North American statistical agencies formally exchange ideas on current and future approaches to measuring international migration.

One NAMWG project is to produce special tabulations using the most recent rounds of census data indicating the magnitude, direction, and timing of migration, and select socioeconomic characteristics of Canadians, Mexicans, and of the U.S. population present in each of the other North American countries (e.g., Canadians in Mexico, Mexicans in the U.S.). These tables reflect the diverse ways of classifying international migration, and underscore the importance of joint cooperation across these three countries. Such tabulations permit the analyst to assess the feasibility of matching concepts, terminology, and definitions relevant to the measurement of international migration across the countries. These special tabulations thus serve as a catalyst for longer-term goals of data sharing among the three countries, of formulating consistent concepts, terminology, and definitions, and of analyzing the data with regard to trends and differentiations in international migration. This paper will focus on the special tabulations produced from both the Canadian and U.S. censuses.

*Migration between the United States and Canada*, a broad-based study jointly conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau and Statistics Canada, was published some thirteen years ago. It used data from the 1980 U.S. census and 1981 Canadian census to describe migratory movements between Canada and the United States from the late nineteenth century to the time of publication. It also discussed various characteristics of these migrants. Among its findings, the study highlighted the longstanding importance of a demographic phenomenon that had been stimulated by sizable population exchanges between the two nations, particularly during the first half of the twentieth century. However, except for a few specific periods in the past century when the number of U.S. migrants increased, migratory movements between the two nations consisted primarily of Canadians. An updated study, *Canadians in the United States and Americans in Canada: A Demographic and Socio-Economic Profile*, using data from the 1990 U.S. census and the 1991 Canadian census was published in March, 2001.

The previous studies served as the framework for these special tabulations and therefore, two general questions are addressed. The first is: How extensive is the migration between the two North American countries? In other words, how many Canadians have moved to the United States and how many of the U.S. population have moved to Canada? To answer these questions, we will determine the total number of migrants present in each country based on place of birth and not on nationality or ancestry.

The second question is: Who are these migrants present in Canada and the United States? To answer this, we will produce profiles of each country's migrant population. The profiles will feature demographic characteristics such as age, sex, and marital status. They also will highlight socioeconomic characteristics such as educational level, income, occupation, and industry.

Census data from the U.S. censuses of 1990 and 2000 and the Canadian censuses of 1991 and 2001 will serve as principal references for answering both questions.