

International Migration Between Canada and Mexico: Retrospect and Prospects

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Abstract

This paper briefly surveys the historical background of the movement of people between Canada and Mexico with special focus on the last couple of decades. The volume and characteristics of permanent international migrants between the two countries are analysed. Available data on temporary migrants, students and visitors are examined. The reasons why immigration from Mexico to Canada has been low is explored. On the basis of available evidence, the probable future of migration between Mexico and Canada is discussed.

Résumé

Le présent article décrit brièvement l'histoire des mouvements de personnes entre le Canada et le Mexique – au cours des deux dernières décennies, plus particulièrement. Le volume et les caractéristiques des migrants permanents entre les deux pays sont analysés. Les données disponibles portant sur les migrants temporaires, les étudiants et les visiteurs sont examinées. Les raisons de la faible immigration mexicaine à destination du Canada sont explorées. L'avenir probable de la migration entre le Mexique et le Canada est abordée.

Key Words: Mexico, history, international migration, future, temporary migration

Introduction

The year 1994 may have proven to be an important one for Canada-Mexico relations. It was on January 1, 1994, that the North American Free Trade

Agreement (NAFTA) came into force. Also, the year marked 50 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Canada and Mexico, as members of NAFTA, have become "neighbors" despite the thousands of miles that separate them physically. It is certain that the contacts between the two countries, economically, socially and politically are bound to increase leading to greater interchange of people and ideas. NAFTA itself contains no agreement to open up the borders to people as in the case of the European Community. There is reference to "temporary entry for business persons" — business visitors, traders, investors, and intercompany transferees and professionals. It is, therefore, opportune to examine the international migration aspect between the two countries in retrospect and explore its prospects. Despite Mexico's long, continuing and controversial experience in international migration with the United States, Mexico and Canada have had very limited migration experience with each other.

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In this paper, after a brief survey of the historical background of the movements of people between Canada and Mexico, the postwar period is looked at with special focus on the last couple of decades. The volume and characteristics of permanent international migrants between the two countries are examined with some attention to temporary migrants, students and visitors. A speculative section on the reasons why immigration from Mexico to Canada has been low, despite the fact that Mexico is much less developed than Canada, follows. A brief look at the probable future of migration between Mexico and Canada concludes the paper.

Data Sources

The data for this study comes from a number of sources. The primary areas are: administrative statistics, census statistics, special surveys and historical documents from Canada and Mexico.

Historical Background

Canada-Mexico Migration

The earliest arrivals from Canada to Mexico were the Mennonites who settled in the states of Chihuahua, Zacatecas and Durango. Around 7,000 Mennonites arrived from Germany to Manitoba (Canada) between 1874 and 1880. However, some of them felt that their traditional way of life was

interfered with by the Canadian host society. They wanted to escape from unwelcome impositions and infringements of their perceived rights by emigrating to new frontiers. The waste highlands of Mexico appeared ideal.

In 1921, a group of Mennonites conducted a study on the suitability of settlement in places such as Northern Mexico, Paraguay, Brazil, and the Mississippi Valley in the U.S. In Mexico, they explored the desirability of settling in states such as Sonora, Jalisco, and Nayarit. In February of that year, a delegation of Mennonites met with Mexican President Alvaro Obregon to discuss their intention. President Obregon was enthusiastic at the prospect of acquiring for Mexico large group of enterprising farmers. An agreement between the Mexican government and the Mennonites known as the "Privilegium" (Leonard, 1971:36) was finalized. According to the Privilegium, certain privileges were conferred upon the Mennonites which included no obligation for military service, no compulsion to take an oath, the right to exercise religious freedom without interference, and the authorization to establish schools with German instruction without state interference.

Following the agreement, the Mexican government arranged land for the Mennonites. In the state of Durango, they were introduced to the Governor and given part of the Valle de Guatinmape. Another group settled in Hacienda Bustillos near Chihuahua City, and a colony was founded in Los Jagueyes in the state of Chihuahua with an investment of 1,250,000 pesos as payment for the land (*Ibid*: 45). Altogether, prior to World War II, about 7,000 Mennonites had settled in Mexico, the majority of which were from Canada and the rest from the U.S. and Russia. In 1940, there were 5,838 Canada-born immigrants in Mexico, most of whom are believed to have been Mennonites (Gutierrez and Vazquez, 1994:5).

Mexico-Canada Migration

While Mexico received an important group of Canadian immigrants (the Mennonites), there was minimal migration from Mexico to Canada despite the strong tradition of emigration to the United States. This tradition started after the Treaty of Guadalupe in 1847 between Mexico and the United States and became stronger following the Mexican Revolution of 1910-1921. Higher volumes occurred at times such as during the Great Depression and the Second World War. Apart from the likely return migration of some of the Mennonites to Canada (probably to Manitoba), Mexico is not known to have sent many permanent immigrants to Canada in the pre-war period.

Postwar Period

Canada-Mexico Migration

Flow data based on administrative statistics is not available on the migration of Canadians to Mexico. However, stock data based on the Censuses are available as seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Canada-born Immigrants Counted in Mexican Censuses by Gender, 1950-1990

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
1950	6,102	3,079	3,023
1960	5,631	2,861	2,770
1970	3,352	1,603	1,749
1980	3,264	1,498	1,766
1990	3,011	1,423	1,588

(Source: National Institute for Statistics, Geography and Information, Mexican Population Censuses for various years)

As seen above, the number of Canada-born immigrants in Mexico has declined over the period 1950 to 1990. After the migration of the Mennonites as seen earlier, there has been very little enthusiasm in Canada for migration to Mexico. This is understandable since economic opportunities are limited in a developing country like Mexico, and very few people would want to migrate for economic reasons. Moreover, Mexico has never been known as an immigrant-receiving area, though the country has received refugees from different countries—Russians (including Leon Trotsky), Spaniards, Guatemalans, Nicaraguans, Chileans and others. With the exception of Guatemalans who cross the border to Mexico looking for temporary jobs in the plantations of Chiapas, most immigrants in Mexico are political refugees. In 1980, Canadians in Mexico were only 1.2% of the 268,900 foreign born. In 1990, this was 0.9% of the 340,800 foreign born. The foreign born had increased by 26.7%, but the Canada-born immigrants decreased to 0.8%. On the other hand, for every Canada-born immigrant living in Mexico, there were 48 Americans in 1980 and 65 in 1990.

The following table looks at the distribution of Canada-born immigrants in Mexico by major states based on the 1980 and 1990 censuses.

Two states, Chihuahua and Durango, where the Mennonites started their settlement, attracted a few more Canada-born immigrants. However, it is noticeable that none of the sun-belt states like Veracruz, Jalisco, Guerrero, Nayarit, Oaxaca and others received many Canadians for settlement. It is conceivable that while some Canadians live in Mexico during the winter months as snowbirds, they have not taken up permanent residence. In 1990, there were only 1,000 Canada-born immigrants living in the economically better border states such as Baja California, Coahuila, Chihuahua, Nuevo Leon, Sonora, and Tamaulipas.

Table 2. Canada-born Immigrants in Mexico by Selected States of Residence, 1980 and 1990.

States	1980		1990	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Chihuahua	1,247	38.2	792	26.3
Federal Dt.	506	15.6	406	13.5
Durango	218	6.7	211	7.0
Jalisco	248	7.6	306	10.2
Others	1,045	25.2	1,296	43.0

(Source: National Institute for Statistics, Geography and Information, *Mexican Population Census, 1980 and 1990*, Aguascalientes, Mexico).

Mexico-Canada Migration

In 1974, Mexico joined the Canadian program for seasonal agricultural workers signed in 1966 with the Caribbean countries. Under the program, temporary workers arrived during the harvest season of Canadian crops. In 1982, Mexico was the 15th most important source for temporary workers contributing 596 person years, over 1% of the total (Delaney, 1983:41).

The migrants from Mexico to Canada belong to three categories: landed immigrants (permanent residents), temporary workers, and students. According to administrative flow statistics, during the period 1978 to 1992, only a total of 10,215 landed immigrants came from Mexico. The sex ratio (number of men per 100 women) was 81 indicating that the movement of people from Mexico to Canada was in its initial stages as theorized by Bohning (1984). Normally, when the immigration flow matures, there is almost parity between the number of males and females. Over seven out of ten immigrants fell in the 15-64 age group known as the working age group.

Table 3. Mexico-Born Landed Immigrants, by Age and Gender, 1978-1992

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Men</i>		<i>Women</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>No.</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Percent</i>
0-14	1,387	30.4	1,345	23.8	2,732	26.7
15-64	3,128	68.6	4,214	74.6	7,342	71.9
65+	48	1.0	93	1.6	141	1.4
Total	4,563	100.0	5,652	100.0	10,215	100.0

(Source: Canada Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Special Tabulations, Ottawa)

The vast majority of Mexican immigrants, more than three out of five, belonged to the family class, and somewhat less than one-third were independent immigrants as seen in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Mexico-Born Landed Immigrants by Category, 1978- 1992

<i>Category</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Family class	6,296	61.6
Refugees	760	7.5
Independents	3,159	30.9
Total	10,215	100.0

(Source: Canada Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Special Tabulations, Ottawa)

The level of education of immigrants from Mexico has not been very high by Canadian standards since 53.3% had only secondary education or less. At the other end of the scale, 16% had a bachelor's degree or above and 29.9% had trade qualifications or some university education.

The Mexican immigrants could be grouped into workers (who stated their intention to join the labour force on arrival) and non-workers. It should be kept in mind that true to the nature of all immigrants, a large proportion of the adult "non-workers" change their mind after arrival and attempt to join the labour force. The workers consisted of 47.3% of the arrivals and the remaining non-workers were spouses, dependents and students. The main occupations of the workers on arrival were, in order of importance: farming, horticulture and animal husbandry, clerical, service, natural sciences,

engineering, mathematics, and managers and administrators, as seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Intended Occupations of Mexico-Born Landed Immigrants to Canada, 1978-1992.

<i>Occupations</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Entrepreneurs	46	0.95
Managers/administrators	302	6.26
Natural sciences, engineering, and mathematics	334	6.92
Social sciences	77	1.59
Religion	20	0.41
Teaching	100	2.07
Medicine/health	131	2.71
Artists	166	3.44
Sports/recreation	12	0.25
Clerical	391	8.10
Sales	115	2.38
Service	357	7.39
Farming, horticulture/animal husbandry	470	9.73
Processing	13	0.27
Food/beverage processing	11	0.23
Machining	60	1.24
Fabrication/assembly/repair	143	2.96
Construction	64	1.33
Transport	25	0.52
Material handling	19	0.39
Other	10	0.22
Not classified	1962	40.64
Total	4828	100.00

(Source: Canada Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Special Tabulations, Ottawa)

Two points need be mentioned regarding Table 5. First, an unusually large number (41%) of Mexico-born landed immigrants had not specified their intended occupations. Second, the above occupations reflect either the training immigrants obtained outside Canada or their intentions. In other words, this does not mean that jobs were found in these occupations as is the case with a vast majority of Canadian immigrants in their first few years in Canada.

The following table examines the destination of Mexican immigrants by provinces/regions and major cities in Canada.

Table 6. Intended Destination of Mexico-Born Landed Immigrants by Province/Region and Major Cities, 1978-1992

<i>Region/province/city</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Atlantic*	74	0.7
Quebec	2,264	22.2
Montreal	1,477	14.5
Ontario	4,780	46.8
Toronto	1,580	15.5
Manitoba/Saskatchewan	716	7.0
Alberta/Territories	778	7.7
Calgary	293	2.9
Edmonton	229	2.2
British Columbia	1,595	15.6
Vancouver	1,135	11.1

*The Atlantic region consists of four provinces: Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

(Source: Canada Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Special Tabulations, Ottawa)

Ontario attracted the largest percentage of Mexicans followed by Quebec, British Columbia and the Prairies (Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta). Toronto and Montreal were the main attractions followed by Vancouver. Mexicans immigrating to Vancouver comprised 71% of all immigrants to British Columbia, while 65% of Mexican immigrants who went to Quebec settled in Montreal. Toronto received only one-third of all Mexican immigrants to Ontario, while Calgary took two out of five and Edmonton had less than one-third of these that migrated to Alberta.

Apart from administrative flow data, some census stock data for 1986 and 1991 are also available for those who were born in Mexico.

Table 7. Mexican Born in Canada by Gender and Province of Residence, 1986.

<i>Place of Residence</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Canada	13,845	99.9	6,370	7,475
Atlantic region	80	0.6	50	30
Quebec	1,210	8.7	595	615
Ontario	6,150	44.4	2,780	3,370
Manitoba	3,245	23.4	1,645	1,595
Saskatchewan	275	2.0	150	125
Alberta	1,145	8.3	490	655
British Columbia	1,725	12.5	655	1,075
The Territories	5	---	5	

(Source: Statistics Canada, *Ethnicity, Immigration and Citizenship: The Nation*, Ottawa, 1992, p.12-13).

Table 8. Mexican Born in Canada by Gender and Province of Residence, 1991.

<i>Place of Residence</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Canada	19,400	100.0	8,780	10,615
Atlantic region	130	0.7	65	65
Quebec	1,980	10.2	945	1,035
Ontario	9,730	50.2	4,400	5,330
Manitoba	3,485	18.0	1,740	1,740
Saskatchewan	175	0.9	90	85
Alberta	1,355	7.0	530	825
British Columbia	2,515	12.9	995	1,520
The Territories	30	0.1	15	15

(Source: Statistics Canada, *Immigration and Citizenship: The Nation*, Ottawa, 1992, p.12-13).

These two tables also include those who had come before 1978. Ontario, Manitoba, British Columbia and Quebec are the major magnets of attraction. A surprise is the relatively large number of Mexican-born immigrants found in Manitoba compared to recent immigration trends. This could have happened as a result of the progeny of the Mennonites once settled in Mexico migrating back to Canada using their networks.

Non-Permanent Migrants

The migrants who are not landed immigrants fall into four categories: undocumented short-term visitors, documented visitors, holders of temporary employment visas and students. Data are not available on the first of these four groups. Administrative data for the remaining three from 1980 to 1992 are available. Only the primary documents issued to facilitate their arrival, not renewals, are examined here. Table 9 gives the *average annual* number of primary documents processed for the period.

Table 9. Annual Average Number of Primary Documents for Non-Permanent Migrants from Mexico Processed, 1980 to 1992.

<i>Type of Migrants</i>	<i>1980-84</i>	<i>Annual Average 1985-89</i>	<i>1990-92</i>
Documented visitor	2,645	2,274	1,823
Temporary employment	861	2,655	11,661
Students	716	960	3,909

(Source: Canada Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Special Tabulation, Ottawa)

While the annual average declined for documented visitors, there has been a four-fold increase in those who came for temporary employment or as students between the late 1980s and early 1990s, before NAFTA came into force.

Why Were Migration Levels Low?

Why is the level of immigration to Canada from Mexico so low, despite the significant differences between the two countries' living standards as indicated by per capita income? Canada's per capita income was more than eight times that of Mexico. It needs to be mentioned that no studies are available explaining the low level of migration from Mexico to Canada. Therefore, what can be offered at best is speculation, or to put it in academic terms, untested hypotheses.

A number of possible explanations are offered for the low level of migration from Mexico to Canada. First, as Ravenstein's Law of Migration would say, "as the distance from a certain place increases, there are fewer migrants who

have moved from that place" (as quoted by Bogue, 1969: 756). However, noting the immigration flow into Canada, it becomes obvious that many countries further in distance than Mexico, have sent several thousand immigrants during the postwar period defying Ravenstein's Law. Examples include several countries in Asia and Europe. Therefore, this cannot be offered as the sole explanation for the absence of any significant flows of migrants from Mexico to Canada. Apart from the physical distance between Canada and Mexico, the fact that the United States, where good opportunities existed, blocked a steady stream of immigrants to Canada. There was not any such prosperous country in the middle for Asian immigrants.

The second possible explanation for this low level is the lack of networks of Mexicans in Canada. Canada and Mexico, despite sharing the same continent, have had little contact with each other. The level of trade between the two countries is low, and in 1990, only about 5% of Mexican tourists came from Canada. Very few Mexican tourists visit Canada. This is also true in the academic field. There is no Mexican tradition of pursuing higher studies in Canada unlike Hong Kong, Taiwan or some of the other Asian countries. As was seen already, this has started to change lately and the number of Mexicans arriving for study has increased four-fold within a very short time. Similarly, trade relations are improving between the two countries. Many of these temporary migrants, be they students, workers, business people, tourists or other visitors will discover the economic advantages of living in Canada and some would seek immigration status. The fact that no short-term visa is required for visitors from Mexico to Canada would add momentum to this flow. Many of the visitors would interact with Canadians which would set the foundations of a network that is normally required to foster immigration, both legal and illegal. Often such networks snowball, as observed in the case of several countries from which Canada now receives large numbers of immigrants.

Another reason for the meager level of immigration of Mexicans to Canada is the lack of information on labour market conditions in Canada vis-a-vis the United States, with whom Mexico shares a common border. Physical proximity, daily contacts and media coverage of the U.S. economic and labour market conditions in Mexico, and information from an extensive Hispanic network in the U.S., made it easier for potential emigrants from Mexico to gauge the demand for the type of workers required in the U.S., and obtain a commitment for employment. This is particularly true of the U.S. states where there is a significant Hispanic population settled in businesses and professions. It has been found in refugee studies in Canada that the presence of a certain ethnic group in businesses and professions is

instrumental in finding jobs for newcomers from the same ethnic group (Weirmair, 1971).

The fourth reason for very few immigrants from Mexico to Canada could be the Mexican fear of the Canadian winter. Mexicans often ask Canadians about the severity of the Canadian winter and how people survive such extremely cold temperatures. This is a widespread concern among many Mexicans who do not appreciate even their mild winters in Northern Mexico where homes are not centrally heated. One could say that the fear of winter is based on lack of information of how Canadians live and enjoy the pleasures of winter sports. Much warmer countries than Mexico, such as India and Hong Kong have sent thousands of immigrants to Canada, who seem to be thriving in Canada despite the cold climate. However, the Mexicans' fear of Canadian winters is likely to abate when networks become stronger and more widespread enabling the dissemination of information that the winter is not difficult to survive. Also, Mexican settlement patterns in the U.S. show that cold cities such as Chicago have attracted Mexican immigrants (both documented and undocumented). In a survey project known as Canon Zapata completed in Tijuana's El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, during the period 1988 to 1993, 1 to 3% of potentially undocumented immigrants to the U.S. gave Chicago as their place of intended destination (Bustamante, 1994a).

A fifth reason for lower immigration rates is that potential emigrants from Mexico are fixated on immigration to the Southwestern United States where the weather is similar and strong networks exist. Furthermore, before the Treaty of Gaudeloupe in 1848 (when Mexico lost more than half of its territory to the U.S.), the Southwestern United States belonged to Mexico, and therefore, some Mexicans feel that they have some claim to enjoy the fruits of the prosperity of that area. According to an 1987-88 survey of Mexico's northern border cities, *Frontera Norte*, more than one-third of Mexicans have close relatives on the U.S. side (Bustamante, 1994b). The Mexicans interact continuously and constantly with this area, and the proximity of the region to Mexico often helps to draw even more migrants. In fact, many Mexicans from the South or the interior of Mexico also migrate to this region either legally or illegally. As a result, prospective Mexican emigrants do not even consider the possibility of migrating to Canada, especially if the perception exists of extremely cold Canadian winters.

Finally, the low ratio of qualified professional or technical emigrants who would establish a beachhead (e.g., professionals from India or business immigrants from Hong Kong) could be a factor. Once such a beachhead is

established, the networks help to draw immigrants, especially those who come for social reasons as joining other members of the family.

Future Developments

What does the future hold? Is Mexican immigration to Canada, legal or illegal, likely to increase?

To address this question, it will be helpful to use the framework of Lee's Push-Pull-Obstacles Theory of Migration (Lee, 1966; 48). The theory says that the push and pull factors in the country of origin and destination and the nature of the intervening obstacles would determine the flow of international migrants from one country to another.

Immigration to Canada from Mexico could be looked at from the angle of factors at origin, destination, and intervening obstacles. Since the U.S. is between the two countries, that country's policies will also have relevance.

Examining factors related to Mexico, there are strong push factors in existence. They are the bleak employment situation in Mexico, the low earnings of those employed, the gross inequalities in incomes, and the large number of young people entering the job market every year. Mexican unemployment, despite the low official figures, is estimated to be over one-fifth of its labour force, and there is no expectation or indication that it is poised for an immediate decline despite NAFTA. About a million persons are entering the labour market every year. Equally important, there is a tremendous amount of underemployment in Mexico, and a large percentage of the labour force ekes out a subsistence in the informal sector of the economy.

In terms of per capita income differentials between Canada and Mexico, there is a substantial gap between the two countries. In monetary terms, the difference in per capita income between the two countries would be about eight to one in favour of Canada though in purchasing power parity terms (measured by comparing the same basket of goods and services in both countries), the difference is much less at about three to one (*The Economist*, December 25, 1993: 39). As indicated in many studies, the inequality of incomes in a society also motivates people to migrate. This inequality remains very high in Mexico. According to *The Economist*, 13.5 million Mexicans live in extreme poverty and 23.6 million in poverty (January 1994: 22).

Also, the level of education of the age group usually migrating has been rising in Mexico. Despite a fertility decline between 1970 and 1990, the working age population (15-64 years of age) grew from 50.1% to 57.3%. The age group 20-39 (which is more prone to migration) represents 30% of the population (about 24 million). Also, the level of education that is positively correlated with the tendency to migrate has been rising. In 1980, 26.1% of the population had more than primary school level of education, while in 1990, only 42.5% had achieved this level. Between 1980 and 1990, those who had at least one year of university education more than doubled from 5% to 11.6% (Gutierrez and Vazquez, 1994:1).

The agricultural sector in Mexico is experiencing a major transformation causing a surplus of labour in the rural areas. Under NAFTA, this area is likely to go through a major restructuring phase (Viale, 1993: 25). Should that happen, many workers are bound to move into other sectors in search of jobs. Should Mexico be unable to absorb these surplus workers elsewhere, they are likely to look for greener pastures outside the country. However, it is argued that these changes will be gradual (over a 15-year period) allowing time for adjustment. An employment projection model known as the Hinojosa-Robinson model of 1991 proposes that under NAFTA, 1.4 million Mexicans will be displaced from agriculture (Martin, 1993: 340). The model further projected that 600,000 would leave Mexico over a six-year period at a rate of 100,000 per year. This will be in addition to the regular flow of 200,000 legal and illegal Mexicans arriving in the U.S.

There has been a further development affecting illegal migration of Mexicans to the United States, when early in 1994, the U.S. government announced a two-year border initiative to reduce illegal immigration, deport illegals, and step-up enforcement of employer sanctions. In addition to appointing more border patrol agents, there will be further resources allocated to improvements of the Mexico-U.S. border surveillance program (improved sensors, mobile infra-red scopes, new lighting, fencing etc.) for two areas (San Diego and El Paso) where 65% of illegals enter the U.S. By the end of 1995, the number of border patrol agents working in these areas will more than double (*The Los Angeles Times*, February 3, 1994:1).

Should the U.S. border control (an intervening obstacle in Lee's terminology) be effective, more of the potential undocumented immigrants would seek ways of entering Canada in search of opportunities. As stated before, Canada does not require visas for short-term visitors from Mexico.

Among the pull factors, NAFTA is bound to increase Canadian investments in Mexico. This would promote further interaction between the two countries leading to better information about Canada's labour market and

social amenities. The increasing number of students and temporary workers would create a similar effect. If the permanent immigration flow to a country is examined in terms of the number entering as students or temporary workers, it would be revealed that a significant proportion later applied either from inside or outside the country for permanent resident status. This has been found true for Canada and the United States. NAFTA itself is expected to increase the number of temporary migrants to Canada. As stated in the *Annual Report to Parliament: Immigration Plan 1994*, "The practical effect of NAFTA for citizens of Mexico and Canada is improved access through the addition of free trade provisions to respective markets, as well as access under the general provisions governing temporary entry" (21).

Also, Canada's presence as a potential country of immigration is becoming more known in Mexico. In the Canon Zapata project, during the period 1988 to 1993, 0.3% of Mexicans referred to Canada as their place of intended destination on point of departure as undocumented immigrants. It is not unlikely, therefore, for the number of legal and illegal immigrants from Mexico to go up in the *short run* until NAFTA's economic benefits to Mexico are demonstrated through a higher level of prosperity for the average Mexican.

Regarding Canadian immigration to Mexico, it is conceivable that a certain proportion of the rapidly-aging population of Canada will be attracted to Mexico because of climate, lower cost of living and rise in violence (particularly against tourists) in the U.S. states such as Florida—a haven for Canadian retirees. In Mexico's border cities such as Tijuana, currently up to 3% of the population is U.S.-born, including many retirees (Bustamante, 1994b). Greater interaction between Mexico and Canada as a result of NAFTA would likely increase the emigration of Canadians to Mexico in the *long run*.

Conclusion

In summary, Canada and Mexico, despite being on the same continent but different levels of economic development, have not experienced a significant level of population exchange in the past. The Mennonites from Manitoba migrated to Mexico in the 19th century. In the postwar period, some agricultural workers came to Canada from Mexico on a temporary basis. However, lately there has been a significant increase in the *annual average* number of students and temporary workers in non-agricultural sectors coming to Canada from Mexico. The low level of immigration to Canada from Mexico can be explained by the distance, lack of contact and networks

between the two countries, non-availability of Canadian labour market information in Mexico, the Mexican fear of the Canadian winter, the proximity to and shared history and attractiveness of the United States, and the absence of a surplus of Mexican workers in the professional and technical category in Mexico. However, given the poor employment prospects and low level of per capita income in Mexico and its very uneven distribution, the growth of age groups more prone to emigration, some dislocation in the labour market expected under NAFTA, and the strong re-enforcement of border control by the U.S. could generate more immigration, legal and illegal, to Canada from Mexico in the *short run*.

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