

## **Project Title:**

### **Tracking the U.S.–Mexico Border Economy**

Draft proposal for a collaborative study by the  
Network of Border Economics/Red de la Economía Fronteriza

## **GOALS:**

Following the El Paso meeting on December 4, 1998, the NOBE/RED Committee on Indicators identified the following project goals to guide the conceptual framework development for a set of border (transborder) indicators:

1. Building a set of indices as a basis for understanding the border economy (i.e., expanding knowledge about the border region's economy);
2. Building a basis for decision-making in the border region (relevant for public investment, policy recommendations, public-private initiatives etc.);
3. Designing a mechanism for measuring variability within the border region;
4. Creating a basis for comparison of the border region with the rest of the national territory.

The overarching goal and a prerequisite for accomplishment of specific goals 1 through 4 is:

- **Establishment of a comparable set of data on each side of the border** (including six Mexican border states and four U.S. border states).

## **WHO ARE THE END-USERS?**

- Border scholars
- Economists in government and non-government organizations
- Public-private partnerships
- Policy and decision-makers
- Private sector

## **SCOPE**

- Border Counties/Municipios

- Selected metropolitan areas
- Border states

## **TASKS**

1. Identify what exactly is intended to be measured and for which purpose;
2. Depending on (1) develop a conceptual framework for border indicators;
3. Identify spatial units (scale) for each group of indicators (state, metropolitan areas, border counties/ municipios);
4. Identify existing data on each side of the border in support of intended indicators;
5. Identify needs for adjustment/alteration of existing methodologies in data collection (for the purpose of making data/indicators comparable);
6. Design additional set of indicators to reflect specific needs resulting from the border context or/and specific needs of end-users;
7. Identify types of data needed in support of new (additional) indicators.

## **Proposed List of Indicators**

### **I Economic Performance Measures**

#### **Employment**

- Long-term employment growth
- Short-term employment growth
- Employment growth in manufacturing
- Employment growth in TCPU (transportation, communications and public utilities)
- Employment in FIRE (Finance, insurance and real estate)

#### **Distribution of Jobs**

- Concentration in manufacturing (as % of all jobs)
- Concentration in TCPU
- Concentration in FIRE
- Concentration in agriculture

#### **Earnings and Job Quality**

- Average annual pay
- Average annual pay growth
- Average hourly wage (in manufacturing)
- Average hourly wage (in services)

### **Industrial production**

- Gross Regional Product
- Value of manufacturing production
- Value of agricultural production

### **Participation in Global Markets**

- Value of exported merchandise (per capita)
- Share of manufactured goods in total merchandise exports

### **Business Vitality**

- New companies
- Change in new companies
- New business job growth
- Business closings

### **Business Environment**

- Gross private investment
- Government spending
- Capacity utilization rates
- Utility costs

### **Housing**

- Residential construction

## **II Development Capacity**

## **Human Development Index**

- Per capita income
- Price level
- Adult literacy
- Life expectancy at birth
- Gross educational enrollment (at 1, 2 and 3 levels)

## **Technology Resources**

- Ph.D. scientists and engineers
- Science/engineering graduate students
- Patents issued
- University research and development

## **Financial resources**

- Commercial bank deposits

## **Infrastructure resources**

- Highway investment
- Energy costs

# **III Environmental, Social and Health Conditions**

## **Poverty Index**

- % of people not expected to survive 40 years of age
- % of adults that are illiterate
- % of people without access to safe water
- % of people without access to health services
- % of moderately and severely underweight children

## **Quality of Life**

- Crime rate (per 100,000 people)
- Cost of living
- Cost of housing (urban housing costs)
- Physicians per 100,000 people
- Hospital beds
- Public transportation
- Air quality