



What is the significance of New York's border with Canada?

How integrated are the economies of Southern Ontario and Western New York?

What does it mean to be in a binational region in a globalized world?

The Region's Edge

Recent months have seen the emergence of "America 2050," a national conversation to address the economic, infrastructural, environmental and cultural challenges and opportunities accompanying national growth by mid-century. Central to the concept is the importance of ten mega-regions expected to accommodate and drive economic growth. Western New York's inclusion in the Midwest Mega-Region introduces opportunities to better leverage close ties with Southern Ontario and suggests the potential of refocusing regional—and perhaps state—interests northward for maximum economic advantage.



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The New York Metropolitan Area's status as hub of the Northeast Mega-Region is well known. Less common knowledge is Buffalo Niagara's location in the Midwest Mega-Region and within the orbit of one of North America's strongest economic engines. This "Greater Golden Horseshoe" extends from the environs of Toronto southward along the Niagara Peninsula of Southern Ontario and eastward along the New York Thruway to east of Rochester.

The region's close economic, social and political ties with Canada offer policymakers and business leaders an exceptional, though unexploited, foundation for renewed economic development. Strategic reconsideration of the international border as a front—rather than side or rear—door could supplement traditional focus eastward and southward to Albany and Washington for economic, investment and policy attention.



How integrated are the economies of Southern Ontario and Western New York?

Preliminary data from the Region's Edge initiative, an Institute research and policy effort launched in July 2006, reinforces the significance of Buffalo Niagara's binationalism. Findings demonstrate that economic, social and political life in Western New York and Southern Ontario are deeply integrated. For example:



Goods



People



Capital



Information

What does it mean to be a binational region in a globalized world?

Regional, State and Federal policymakers can capitalize on the integrated nature of Southern Ontario and Western New York in addressing Upstate's ongoing economic development challenges. Targeted investments in transportation and infrastructure, such as high-speed rail connecting Buffalo Niagara to Toronto, could open new markets for cross-border employment, trade and cultural exchange. Establishing a regulatory environment favorable to emergence and expansion of binational businesses would sustain economic growth. Sharing high-tech capabilities and jointly preparing disaster response systems for the binational region would streamline cross-border interaction while safeguarding state, provincial and national interests. Such policy opportunities and a broader reorientation offer a new horizon for the region's future vitality.

For more information:

<http://www.america2050.org>

<http://www.pir.gov.on.ca>



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