

# Challenging the FTAA, NAFTA & the WTO: A Community Research Toolkit



ARTWORK BY: RINI TEMPLETON, [WWW.RINIART.ORG](http://WWW.RINIART.ORG)



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## Introduction

Job loss and environmental injustice are a daily reality for many of our communities. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), first implemented in 1994, has been a major force in creating a climate for companies to enter & exit communities with little concern for job loss and the toxic legacy left in their wake in the search for higher profits at the expense of basic human rights.

As we enter this ten-year anniversary of the NAFTA, communities across the hemisphere are calling for an end to the agreement and challenging the proposal for the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA), that would expand NAFTA to include all countries of the western hemisphere except Cuba.



The health, well-being, and sustainability of low-income communities and communities of color in the U.S., Canada & Mexico have been sacrificed to privatization and deregulation. NAFTA has ravaged border cities like El Paso, Texas home to one of the largest Latino populations in the country. African American workers in the denim belt of the Southeast who were dependent on the textile sector have watched the industry disappear almost over-night as companies find it more profitable to close their doors and relocate to lower-wage countries. Contrary to suggestions that Mexican workers would benefit from NAFTA, they have instead witnessed the value of their wages decline over 20% in the manufacturing sector while experiencing a 50% rise in poverty.

This guide has been created to provide individuals and organizations resources for locating community-specific information that reflects the ways corporate-led globalization affects them at the local level. For questions regarding this guide please contact the DataCenter's Economic Justice program at (510) 835-4692 ext. 315, [brenda@datacenter.org](mailto:brenda@datacenter.org), [www.datacenter.org](http://www.datacenter.org).

## Acknowledgements

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## About This Guide

Creating a comprehensive picture of the ways in which neo-liberal trade policy affects your community means combining information from a number of different sources. This guide is organized by research topic and contains web sites of government agencies, policy think tanks and community groups that highlight local information useful to understanding & assessing the scope & impact of these trade policies locally. Where possible we have included sites that organize information by zip code.

## What is the FTAA & NAFTA?

### Timeline

1992	1994	1995	1999	2003
U.S., Mexico & Canada sign NAFTA	NAFTA implemented Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico calling NAFTA a "death sentence" for Mexico's indigenous people	WTO replaces GATT	WTO meetings disrupted in Seattle	WTO meets in Cancun FTAA meets in Miami

### NAFTA

The North American Free Trade Agreement between the U.S., Mexico & Canada gives companies within these countries preferential access to each other's markets. The agreement includes phasing out "tariffs" or taxes and a reduction of "non-tariff barriers" within 5 to 15 years. Investment rules also became "liberalized" meaning companies from one NAFTA country had more "rights" to invest in another NAFTA country than before. One impact of NAFTA was initially felt when companies from the U.S. and Canada closed their factory doors and moved production to Mexico in search of cheaper labor costs. This created a flux of assembly factories or *maquilas* along the US/Mexico border, inundating an already fragile infrastructure with heavy pollution and low-wage work. Today these workers have again been displaced as companies follow yet more opportunities to move in search of cheaper labor costs created by global trade policy.

### FTAA

The Free Trade Agreement of the Americas is an extension of NAFTA to all the countries in the Western Hemisphere except Cuba. This agreement is currently in negotiations. The U.S. has the goal of reaching agreement by 2005, despite resistance from countries in the Caribbean and South America who argue that they are not yet ready for the major instability that such an agreement will create for their peoples.

### The World Trade Organization (WTO)

The World Trade Organization is the global organizational body created to oversee and arbitrate international trade policy. This organization, by no means an unbiased body, is the result of years of planning through the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), a series of negotiations that sought to make trade and foreign direct investment easier for corporations by limiting the regulatory powers of national, state and local governments.

## Getting A State & National Economic Picture

When researching the impact of trade policy locally it is often useful to compare your city or community with state & national economic indicators like unemployment rates & wage levels. Looking at economic indicators at a broader level may also help you detect trends in your hometown and across the country.

### National

#### Economic Policy Institute

[http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/webfeatures\\_indicators](http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/webfeatures_indicators)

Frequently updated analysis on economic indicators in U.S. Includes: Trade, Jobs, Income and Gross Domestic Product

#### U.S. Census Bureau: Census 2000

<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>

National information on employment income, poverty, housing, population demographics and more



### State

#### Economic Policy Institute

[http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/datazone\\_states\\_usmap\\_index](http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/datazone_states_usmap_index)

State at a glance info, contains decade long comparisons over time: median family income, income inequality, poverty rate, wages, unemployment, jobs paying poverty level wages

#### National Priorities Project

<http://www.nationalpriorities.org/budget/sos2003/index.html>

Select your state to view information on the amount Federal Government contributes to your state budget, a "needs" snapshot showing poverty, health insurance & affordable housing information, living wage for the state; and information on tax cuts for the wealthy & spending for the military.

#### U.S. Census Bureau: Census 2000: State & County QuickFacts

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/>

Click on your state to see information on population, demographics, per capita income, poverty levels and number of businesses owned by people of color & women. Includes comparisons between state & national figures.

## Tracking Trade Legislation & Disputes

Tracking trade legislation allows you to see where your elected officials stand on trade issues. You can also track trade disputes within NAFTA. NAFTA set up a system (Chapter 11) that allows investors to sue other NAFTA countries that companies feels are blocking their "rights" within the agreement. The disputes are heard by a special tribunal which decides whether the government must compensate the investor for losses incurred. Unlike the WTO, which allows only governments to bring disputes against other governments, NAFTA extends these privileges to investors. It is highly likely the FTAA will build upon this NAFTA precedent.

### How did your rep vote on key trade issues in Congress?

#### Public Citizen

<http://www.citizen.org/congress/voting/>

Public Citizen monitors a number of different types of legislation, including trade issues. Click the Congressional session then enter your zip code to see how your representative voted.



#### NAFTA Disputes

<http://naftalaw.org>

A complete list of all the legal documents which have been made publicly available in any NAFTA dispute involving Mexico, Canada or the U.S.

#### WTO Disputes

World Trade Organization Dispute Gateway Site

[http://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/dispu\\_e/dispu\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/dispu_e/dispu_e.htm)

Provides information on WTO disputes chronologically and by subject

### How did your Senator Vote on Fast Track?

Teamsters

<http://www.teamster.org/governmt/tradeissues/fasttrack/senator.pdf>

## Researching NAFTA Job Losses In Your Community



Documenting NAFTA-related job losses can be tricky without using community surveys. If you need numbers quickly you can use NAFTA-Transitional Adjustment Assistance figures from the Department of Labor. These tables list companies that laid-off workers because of NAFTA & were rewarded assistance. These numbers do not capture the entire number of jobs lost however, as it only shows those who have petitioned for the assistance. You can get a better picture by also looking at the mass layoffs that occurred in your communities during the time period. While you cannot receive information on whether or not the layoffs were NAFTA-related you *can* get a sense as to which industries were hit hardest and when.

### North American Development Bank Los Angeles Office & the US Community & Investment Program

[http://naid.spsr.ucla.edu/NADBANK/NDB\\_COLD\\_FUSION\\_ROOT/index.cfm](http://naid.spsr.ucla.edu/NADBANK/NDB_COLD_FUSION_ROOT/index.cfm)

Data on NAFTA-TAA awards, unemployment figures over-time & county business patterns by county and SIC code

### Department of Labor, NAFTA-Transitional Adjustment Assistance Cases

[http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/taa/nafta\\_search\\_form.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/taa/nafta_search_form.cfm)

Scroll down to search by state, SIC code or company name. The site is updated weekly and lists awards since 1997.

### Bureau of Labor Statistics- Mass Layoff Statistics

<http://www.bls.gov/mls/home.htm>

Select current monthly data or look into the archives for past years to compare over time. You can also request data for a specific area by emailing the department. Be sure to be specific about the city, county and years you would like the information.

They will not release company-specific information. Email request to [mlsinfo@bls.gov](mailto:mlsinfo@bls.gov)

### Jobs With Justice & Economic Policy Institute

<http://www.jwj.org/global/FTAA01/NAFTAreports.htm>

State Reports On NAFTA Job Loss After Seven Years, 1994-2001

## News Searches

If you have access to a **Lexis Nexis** database ([www.lexis.com](http://www.lexis.com)) you can enter a power search using the search string, "job loss and NAFTA and \_(your town)\_". This will most likely bring up a number of articles you can sift through and tally up numbers – usually big lay-offs receive some press that gives the amount of workers who lost their job.

## Mexico-Specific Job Loss

Mexican workers have not benefited from NAFTA. Rather poverty has risen by over 50% during the first four years of NAFTA and wages in the manufacturing sector have declined. (Source: *NAFTA At Seven*, EPI Briefing Paper, 4/2001; *Seven Years Under NAFTA*, Institute for Policy Studies, August 2001)

## Instituto Nacional De Estadística Geografía y Informática (INEGI)

<http://www.inegi.gob.mx/difusion/ingles/portadai.html>

Mexican federal agency responsible for integrating statistical and geographic information. Contains information on employment, wages, demographics and more.



## Uncovering Environmental Injustice & Health Impacts

Similar to documenting job loss from NAFTA & trade policies, researching environmental injustice & health impacts in your community means piecing together a lot of different information.

By using the Environmental Scorecards you can see which companies are the biggest polluters in your region and then run a news search on Lexis Nexis or on Google to locate any articles that show if they were proponents or benefactors of NAFTA. You can also run a search on the NAFTA-TAA database (see job loss section) to see if the company comes up as having laid-off workers due to NAFTA. This shows that the company not only laid-off workers due to NAFTA but may have also left a toxic legacy in its wake.



### The Center for Disease Control's National Center for Health Statistics

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/>

Scroll down to see breakdowns of health data by state. The state profiles link takes you to a section that offers a state-by-state breakdown on air quality. This includes a table with a percentage of people living in counties not meeting EPA air quality standards.

### Environmental Defense Scorecard

<http://www.scorecard.org>

Find detailed reports on chemicals released by more than 20,000 industrial facilities in the US (air pollutants, toxic chemical releases, animal waste from factory farms). Search by company and location (city, zip, county, state, etc.). Maps. Includes rankings of plant compared to its industry. Regulatory controls on specific chemicals and information on the health effects of the chemicals.

## Right-to-Know Network (RTKNET) Databases

<http://www.rtk.net>

The Right to Know Network (RTK) provides free access to government information on toxic releases, toxic spills, Risk Management Plans, housing, superfund sites and other environmental results of manufacturing/industry. You can search by company, industry or geographic area. Databases go back a number of years. Once on the homepage, click DATABASES to the left of the screen, now you need to decide which databases to search. A MASTER search will search all of the databases simultaneously by geographic area, facility or industry. RTK NET was started in 1989 in support of the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA), which mandated public access to the Toxic Release Inventory.

## Southwest: Border Health

<http://bphc.hrsa.gov/bphc/borderhealth/region.htm>

The Health Resources and Services Administration of the US Dept of Health and Human Services has a **Border Health Home Page** which gives statistics on low rates of access to health care, border demographics and information on respiratory illnesses that are common due to air pollution from industry in many border towns.

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## *Create your own NAFTA- Polluter Fact Sheet*

Using the research you collect on NAFTA in your community you can build your own NAFTA Polluter Fact Sheet

## NAFTA Polluters

Company	Proponent of/ Benefits from NAFTA	Toxic Legacy Job Loss/ Environmental Destruction To Our Community
Name of company here	✓	# ____ of NAFTA-related job losses Released ____ tons of carbon monoxide into air

To dig up more information on a particular corporation or individual you can visit DataCenter's web guides *Researching Individuals & Researching Corporations* at [http://www.datacenter.org/research/web\\_res.htm](http://www.datacenter.org/research/web_res.htm)

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## Privatization of Public Services

The FTAA will contain “a series of commitments” that seek to create the climate for the privatization of public services.<sup>1</sup> Many of the social safety nets provided by our government come under fire as private companies seek to gain profit from providing these services.

Housing, Demographics, Hunger, Income & Poverty Levels  
National Priorities Project

<http://database.nationalpriorities.org/> Click on *Issue Search* to create customized tables by state on spending for social safety nets.



Water, Energy, Prison, Healthcare, Social Services & Education  
Polaris Institute

[http://www.polarisinstitute.org/corp\\_profiles/public\\_service\\_gats/corp\\_profiles\\_ps\\_gats.html](http://www.polarisinstitute.org/corp_profiles/public_service_gats/corp_profiles_ps_gats.html)

Company profiles on corporations looking to gain from privatization of public services. Includes companies looking to gain from privatization of: water, energy, prisons, healthcare, social services, education, postal service.

## Finding Region-Specific Industry Information

If you know the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code for an industry that is in your area then you can enter it on databases like the North American Development Bank site given below and see official estimates of the number of jobs lost due to NAFTA. The way SIC codes work is that the first two digits are the major industry group, the third is the industry group (more specific) and the fourth is the actual industry. This system has now been updated to the North American Industry Classification System (although many databases have not yet converted), if you need to convert your SIC code into a NAIC code you can visit the NAICS Association page listed below.

### **SICCODE.COM, The Worldwide Business Directory**

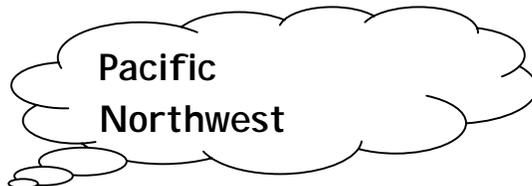
<http://www.siccode.com/>

Lists SIC codes by industry category, includes agriculture, forestry, fishing; mining; wholesale trade; retail trade; construction; finance, insurance, real estate; manufacturing; services; transportation & public utilities; public administration

### **North American Development Bank Los Angeles Office & the US Community & Investment Program**

[http://naid.spsr.ucla.edu/NADBANK/NDB\\_COLD\\_FUSION\\_ROOT/index.cfm](http://naid.spsr.ucla.edu/NADBANK/NDB_COLD_FUSION_ROOT/index.cfm)

Data on NAFTA-TAA awards, unemployment figures over-time & county business patterns by county and SIC code



### **Timber Industry (SIC Codes 0800-0851)**

#### **Endgame**

<http://www.endgame.org/gtt-arm.html>

Timber company profiles, articles on the links between trade agreements and the timber industry, information on trade flows, and information on subsidies, corporate welfare and taxes



**Textile Industry** (SIC Codes between 2200 & 2300) &  
**Apparel Manufacturing** (SIC Code between 2300-2400)

**Mass Layoff Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics**

<http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost?ml>

Scroll down to Textiles and select, then select "Retrieve Data" to create a table showing the amount of layoffs for this industry from 1995 to 2001. Information given on a national basis.

**North American Development Bank Los Angeles Office & the US Community & Investment Program**

[http://naid.sppsr.ucla.edu/NADBANK/NDB\\_COLD\\_FUSION\\_ROOT/index.cfm](http://naid.sppsr.ucla.edu/NADBANK/NDB_COLD_FUSION_ROOT/index.cfm)

Data on NAFTA-TAA awards, SIC codes for textile mills and apparel and other textile products are between 2200 & 2300

**Military Industrial Complex**

**National Priorities Project**

<http://www.nationalpriorities.org/>

Click on NPP Database (on left side of page). Select issue search then select "military" to retrieve information on Department of Defense procurement contracts & salaries; active, inactive military & civilian employees (salaries & wages); cost of nuclear weapons & military in terms of individual income taxes.

## Militarism & Migration



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NAFTA has increased the movement of capital and placed more barriers on people. The U.S./Mexico border has seen a rise of militarism through Operation Safeguard, Operation Gatekeeper, and Operation Hold the Line-- coinciding with the implementation of NAFTA. There is currently twenty-six times more border patrol agents stationed at the U.S./Mexican border than at the U.S. border with Canada<sup>2</sup>. (TRAC INS) At the same time private vigilante hate groups are spreading in the region, contributing to a highly militarized zone.



Source: Migration Information Source use of EPA map <http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?ID=32>

### Researching National Border Patrol Strategy

Department of Homeland Security

<http://www.immigration.gov/graphics/shared/lawenfor/bpatrol/strategy.htm>

Lists description of each border plan.

### Globalization & Migration Sheet/ Border Action Network

<http://www.borderaction.org/globalization.html>

Information on the connections between so-called "free trade" agreements like NAFTA & FTAA and migration

### **Migration Information Source**

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?ID=32>

Scroll down to read information on migrant death count in border region.

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/USFocus/statemap.cfm>

Click on state to see migration numbers with demographic & socio-economic characteristics.

### **TracINS**

<http://trac.syr.edu/tracins/findings/01/district.html>

Find detailed maps, ranking tables, and individual district tables about the United States as a whole, and 90 federal judicial districts. Breakdown of data is per district per state.

### **Mexico Migration Project**

<http://www.pop.upenn.edu/mexmig/research/overview.htm>

Data on # of Border Patrol officers, Linewatch hours, Apprehensions, Deportations, U.S./Mexico Import & Exports, Trade Balance, Contract Labor and more for years 1900-1998. Must register (free) to access data. Click on Databases then Datafiles then select Downloads on left side of screen. Data available in Excel format under datafile "NATLHIST".

### **Migrant Deaths**

*Death At the Border: The Efficacy and "Unintended" Consequences of U.S. Immigration Control Policy, 1993-2000*, Wayne Cornelius, The Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, November, 2000

<http://www.ccis-ucsd.org/PUBLICATIONS/wrkg27.PDF>

### **Searching for State-Specific Data**

#### **TracINS**

<http://trac.syr.edu/tracins/findings/01/district.html>

Find detailed maps, ranking tables, and individual district tables about the United States as a whole, and 90 federal judicial districts. Breakdown of data is per district per state.

### **Researching U.S./Mexico Border Operations**

#### **Militarism On the Border**

The Southwest has been particularly hard hit by trade policies like NAFTA while at the same time experiencing an increasingly militarized border. Homeland Security is planning on beefing up the number of patrol agents on the northern border, while simultaneously expanding the already over-militarized border with Mexico. At present there is 1 agent for every 1,000 feet on the U.S./Mexico border versus 1 for every 16 miles on the Canadian border. (Source: TracINS <http://trac.syr.edu>)

## Arizona

- Operation Safeguard & Operation Triple Strike

### INS Fact Sheet on Operation Safeguard

<http://www.immigration.gov/graphics/publicaffairs/factsheets/Arizona.pdf>

### Border Patrol, Deming Site

<http://www.geocities.com/Pentagon/7070/Safeguard.htm>

Border Patrol site. Background information on Operation Safeguard.



### The Rise of Vigilante Hate Groups On the Border

#### Border Action Network

*Hate Or Heroism: Vigilantes on the Arizona-Mexico Border*

<http://www.borderaction.org/BAN-Vigilante.pdf>

#### Anti-Defamation League

*Border Disputes: Armed Vigilantes In Arizona*

<http://www.adl.org/extremism/arizona/arizona-border.pdf>

## Texas

- Operation Hold the Line

## New Mexico

- Operation Hold the Line

### U.S. Border Patrol, Deming, New Mexico

<http://www.geocities.com/Pentagon/7070/history.htm>

Border Patrol site. Includes information on programs, strategies such as tracking techniques & air operatives.

## California

- Operation Gatekeeper

### The California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation's Border Project

[www.stopgatekeeper.org](http://www.stopgatekeeper.org)

Contains information on the strategy of Gatekeeper, apprehension statistics for entire southwest, human rights abuses, migrant deaths, vigilantes

## Northern Border & Coasts

Department of Homeland Security is in final stages of completion of a plan to curb "illegal" migration at these points of entry

## Youth & the Privatization of Education

The General Agreement in Trade and Services (GATS) being negotiated in the World Trade Organization places public education in jeopardy as companies seek to make a profit from providing our young people with what should be a basic human right, free education.



### Education- State Spending National Priorities Project

<http://database.nationalpriorities.org/>

Click on *Issue Search* to create customized tables of your state's spending over-time in education programs. (Includes data on bilingual education, migrant education & class size reduction)

### Privatization of Education Polaris Institute

[http://www.polarisinstitute.org/polaris\\_project/corp\\_campaigns/corp\\_campaigns\\_sylvain.html](http://www.polarisinstitute.org/polaris_project/corp_campaigns/corp_campaigns_sylvain.html)

Highlights groups & companies that are pushing for the privatization of education

## Popular Education Tools

### John F. Henning Center for International Labor Relations

Understanding the Free Trade Agreement of the America's

[http://henningcenter.berkeley.edu/projects/ftaa/ftaa\\_curriculum.pdf](http://henningcenter.berkeley.edu/projects/ftaa/ftaa_curriculum.pdf)

Curriculum to accompany film Trade Secrets

### Polaris Institute

[http://www.polarisinstitute.org/edu\\_tools/edu\\_index.html](http://www.polarisinstitute.org/edu_tools/edu_index.html)

Games for understanding the FTAA & WTO.

### United for A Fair Economy

[http://www.faireconomy.org/econ/workshops/growing\\_divide.html](http://www.faireconomy.org/econ/workshops/growing_divide.html)

"The Growing Divide: Inequality & the Roots of Economic Insecurity" workshop

<http://www.faireconomy.org/econ/RWG/index.html> Racial Wealth Gap Education

Project

## Calendar of Actions

**October 11 & 12<sup>th</sup>, 2003**  
Border-wide Protests,  
U.S./ Mexico Border

**November 17-21<sup>st</sup> 2003**  
FTAA Ministerial, Miami



## Community Networks and Other Resources

### COMPA- Convergence of Popular Movements of the Americas

<http://www.composite.org/English/indexing.htm>

COMPA is a broad-based, autonomous, diverse, and democratic movement that spans the Americas. Through COMPA, women and men from different organized sectors struggle together to construct alternatives to neo-liberal globalization, towards a new society. The North American region includes community-based organizations such as Southwest Public Worker's Union and Kensington Welfare Rights Union.

### ACERCA- Action for Community & Ecology in the Regions of Central America FTAA Action Packet

<http://www.asej.org/ACERCA/actionpack/index.shtml>

Includes information on the FTAA, sample press releases, sound bites, public service announcements & more to aid in your organizing efforts.

### Public Citizen- Global Trade Watch

<http://www.citizen.org/trade/>

Contains information links to draft texts of FTAA, articles on the environmental and investment effects of FTAA

### Alliance for Responsible Trade

<http://www.art-us.org/>

The Alliance for Responsible Trade (ART) is a national network of labor, family-farm, religious, women's, environmental, development and research organizations that promotes equitable and sustainable trade and development.

<sup>1</sup> Public Citizen, "FTAA & Services" <http://www.citizen.org/trade/ftaa/Services/>

<sup>2</sup> Trac INS, National Profile & Enforcement Trends Over Time,  
<http://trac.syr.edu/tracins/findings/national/USCounty01G.html> )