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### **A Comparison of Census Geographic Areas of Canada and the United States**

by

Carolyn Weiss  
*Geography Division  
Statistics Canada*

Michael Ratcliffe  
and  
Nancy Torrieri  
*Geography Division  
U.S. Bureau of the Census*

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Geo-Help  
Geography Division  
Statistics Canada  
Jean Talon Building, 3rd floor  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6

Telephone: (613) 951-3889  
FAX: (613) 951-0569  
Internet: [geohelp@statcan.ca](mailto:geohelp@statcan.ca)

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## ABSTRACT

The Geography Divisions of Statistics Canada and the U.S. Bureau of the Census have commenced a cooperative research program in order to foster an improved and expanded perspective on geographic areas and their relevance. One of the major objectives is to determine a common geographic area to form a geostatistical basis for cross-border research, analysis and mapping.

This report, which represents the first stage of the research, provides a list of comparable pairs of Canadian and U.S. standard geographic areas based on current definitions. Statistics Canada and the U.S. Bureau of the Census have two basic types of standard geographic entities: legislative/administrative areas (called "legal" entities in the U.S.) and statistical areas.

The preliminary pairing of geographic areas are based on face-value definitions only. The definitions are based on the June 4, 1991 Census of Population and Housing for Canada and the April 1, 1990 Census of Population and Housing for the U.S.A. The important aspect is the overall *conceptual* comparability, not the precise numerical thresholds used for delineating the areas.

Data users should use this report as a general guide to compare the census geographic areas of Canada and the United States, and should be aware that differences in settlement patterns and population levels preclude a precise one-to-one relationship between conceptually similar areas. The geographic areas compared in this report provide a framework for further empirical research and analysis.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Geography Divisions of Statistics Canada and the U.S. Bureau of the Census have commenced a cooperative research program in order to foster an improved and expanded perspective on geographic areas and their relevance. One of the major objectives is to determine a common geographic area to form a geostatistical basis for cross-border research, analysis and mapping.

This report, which represents the first stage of the research, provides a list of comparable pairs of Canadian and U.S. standard geographic areas based on current definitions. The second stage will focus on detailed profiles of the paired geographic areas, including more detailed definitions, population and land area data, and problems of comparison. Essentially this work will determine whether a "best comparable area" for cross-border analysis currently exists, or whether further research on modifying existing areas or creating new areas is necessary.

## 2. PAIRING OF GEOGRAPHIC AREAS

Statistics Canada and the U.S. Bureau of the Census have two basic types of standard geographic entities: legislative/administrative areas (called "legal" entities in the U.S.) and statistical areas. The first type comprises areas defined by federal and provincial/state statutes; the second type are areas defined by Statistics Canada/U.S. Bureau of the Census (sometimes in cooperation with local officials) for the purposes of collecting and disseminating census data.

The preliminary pairing of geographic areas are based on face-value definitions only. The definitions are based on the June 4, 1991 Census of Population and Housing for Canada and the April 1, 1990 Census of Population and Housing for the U.S.A. The important aspect is the overall *conceptual* comparability, not the precise numerical thresholds used for delineating the areas.

The counts for the U.S. geographic areas described below pertain to the 50 states and the District of Columbia only.<sup>1</sup> Appendices 1 through 5 include diagrams and lists of the Canadian and U.S. geographic areas.

### Nation

**Canada.** Comprises 10 provinces and 2 territories.

**U.S.A.** Comprises 50 states and the District of Columbia.

### Region

**Canada.** A major grouping of provinces. There are 6 regions: Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies, British Columbia and the Territories.

**U.S.A.** A major grouping of states. There are 4 regions: Northeast, Midwest, South and West.

### Division

**Canada.** There is no Canadian equivalent.

**U.S.A.** Subgroups of states within regions. There are 9 divisions: New England, Middle Atlantic, South Atlantic, East South Central, West South Central, East North Central, West North Central, Pacific and Mountain.

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<sup>1</sup>Officially, the "United States" consists of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Six other areas, collectively referred to as "Puerto Rico and the Outlying Areas", are treated as "state equivalents" in U.S. census data presentations (American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands of the United States).

## Province / State

**Province.** The major political divisions of Canada. From a statistical point of view, the Territories are equivalent to provinces (i.e., a basic unit for which data are tabulated and cross-classified). There are 10 provinces and 2 territories.

**State.** The primary legal/governmental divisions of the United States. The District of Columbia is treated as a statistical equivalent of a state for census purposes. The 50 states and the District of Columbia constitute the United States.

## Subprovincial Region / State Economic Area & Economic Subregion

**Subprovincial Region (SPR).** A grouping of complete census divisions. Prince Edward Island and the two Territories each consist of one SPR. SPRs coincide with the current Labour Force Survey (LFS) economic regions, except in British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec.

SPRs are designated by law in Quebec and British Columbia. In the other provinces, the regions were created by agreement between Statistics Canada and the province/territory. SPRs are used primarily for disseminating economic data.

There are 68 subprovincial regions in Canada.

**State Economic Area & Economic Subregion (SEA & ESR).** A homogeneous grouping of contiguous counties. The 501 SEAs observe state lines; the 119 ESRs permit combinations of SEAs across state lines. These entities, which were defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census and other agencies between 1950 and 1970, are no longer in use.

## Agricultural Region

**Canada.** A contiguous group of census divisions except in Saskatchewan. In Saskatchewan, agricultural regions are groupings of census consolidated subdivisions, but these groupings do not necessarily respect census division boundaries. In the Prairie provinces, agricultural regions are commonly referred to as crop districts. Agricultural regions have not been defined for Prince Edward Island, Yukon Territory and Northwest Territories.

There are 77 agricultural regions in Canada.

**U.S.A.** There is no U.S. equivalent.

## Census Division / County

**Census Division (CD).** A geographic area established by provincial law that is an intermediate area between the census subdivision and the province (e.g., division, county, regional district, regional municipality). In Newfoundland, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, provincial law does not provide for this administrative area. Therefore CDs have been created by Statistics Canada in cooperation with these provinces.

There are 11 CD types: Division (census), Communauté urbaine, County, District, District municipality, Metropolitan municipality, Municipalité régionale de comté, Region, Regional district, Regional municipality, and United counties.

There are 290 census divisions in Canada.

**County.** The primary legal divisions of most states. The primary legal divisions in some states are: *boroughs* in Alaska; *parishes* in Louisiana; and *independent cities* (incorporated places that legally are not part of any county) in Maryland, Missouri, Nevada and Virginia. For the unorganized portions of Alaska, the U.S. Bureau of the Census and Alaska state officials define *census areas*, which are treated as the equivalent of a borough for the purpose of presenting census data. In Montana, a portion of Yellowstone National Park is not within any county and is considered an equivalent for census purposes.

There are 3,141 counties and county equivalents in the United States.

## Census Consolidated Subdivision

**Canada.** A grouping of contiguous census subdivisions. In some cases, a large CSD can form a CCS on its own. CCSs are used primarily for disseminating Census of Agriculture data.

There are 2,630 census consolidated subdivisions in Canada.

**U.S.A.** There is no U.S. equivalent.

## Census Subdivision / County Subdivision

**Census Subdivision (CSD).** A municipality as determined by provincial legislation (such as city, town, village), or its equivalent (e.g., Indian reserve, Indian settlement and unorganized territory). In Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and British Columbia, other types of CSDs have been created by Statistics Canada in cooperation with the provinces as equivalents for municipalities.

Indian settlements are recognized as CSDs by Statistics Canada in cooperation with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and with provincial/territorial authorities.

There are 37 CSD types (see Appendix 3) and 6,006 census subdivisions in Canada.

**County Subdivision.** A division of a county or county equivalent. There are two major types: minor civil divisions (MCD) and census county divisions (CCD). A state has either MCD coverage or CCD coverage; it cannot have both. Some MCD states contain unorganized territories.

A *minor civil division* is determined by state law, and is the legal and administrative subdivision of a county. MCDs may be called towns, townships, election districts, or other names depending upon the state. There are 29,295 MCDs in 28 states and the District of Columbia.

A *census county division* is defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census in conjunction with state and local officials in states where MCDs do not exist or are inadequate for reporting subcounty statistics. CCD boundaries frequently coincide with census tract or block numbering area (BNA) boundaries. There are 5,581 CCDs in 21 states.

A *census subarea*, similar to a CCD, is defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census and state officials to subdivide Alaska's boroughs and census areas. There are 40 census subareas in Alaska.

The U.S. Bureau of the Census establishes *unorganized territories* in counties that are not entirely covered by MCDs. There are 282 unorganized territories in 8 states.

In total, there are 35,198 county subdivisions and statistically equivalent areas in the United States.

**NOTE:** A few U.S. geographic entities appear conceptually close to some of the Canadian CSDs.

**Incorporated Place.** Concentrations of population (such as cities, towns, villages and boroughs), with legally prescribed boundaries, powers and functions. Incorporated places never cross state lines. There are 19,289 incorporated places in the United States. (In Hawaii, the city of Honolulu is coextensive with Honolulu County. In agreement with Hawaiian law, the U.S. Bureau of the Census reports data for the separate communities in Honolulu County that the state has identified as census designated places, but does not display the city in its products.)

Incorporated places are comparable to the Canadian CSD types: *borough, city - cité, town, ville and village*.

**American Indian Reservation (AIR).** An area established by treaty, statute, and/or executive or court order. The U.S. Bureau of the Census receives boundary information for reservations from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and state governments. There are 310 American Indian reservations (298 federal and 12 state) in the United States.

**Tribal Jurisdiction Statistical Area (TJSA).** Defined by tribal officials in Oklahoma to designate parts of the state outside of a reservation with American Indian population over which they have jurisdiction. There are 17 TJSAs.

**Tribal Designated Statistical Area (TDSA).** Located outside of reservations or trust lands, TDSAs are defined by tribal officials to encompass local area with American Indian population over which they have jurisdiction. There are 19 TDSAs.

AIRs, TJSAs and TDSAs may be comparable to the Canadian CSD types: *Indian government district, Indian reserve, Indian settlement, Northern hamlet, Northern village, Terres réservées, Village cri and Village naskapi.*

**Alaska Native Village Statistical Area (ANVSA).** Represent the populated parts of Alaska Native villages and are defined by Alaska Native Regional Corporations or appropriate officials. There are 217 ANVSAs.

**Alaska Native Regional Corporation (ANRC).** A corporate entity established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1972 to conduct both business and nonprofit affairs of Alaska Natives. ANRC boundaries were established by the Department of the Interior in cooperation with Alaska Natives. There are 12 ANRCs covering the entire state except for the Annette Islands Reserve.

ANVSAs and ANRCs may be comparable to Canadian CSD types: *Hamlet, Settlement and Village nordique.*

## Census Metropolitan Area / Metropolitan Statistical Area

**Census Metropolitan Area (CMA).** A very large urban area, together with adjacent urban and rural areas that have a high degree of economic and social integration with that urban area. A CMA is comprised of one or more contiguous census subdivisions (CSD). CMAs are defined by Statistics Canada.

A CMA is delineated around an urban area (called the urbanized core and having a population of at least 100,000, based on the previous census). Census subdivisions are included in the CMA on the basis of decennial place-of-work commuting data. Once an area becomes a CMA, it is retained in the program even if its population subsequently declines.

There are 25 CMAs in Canada.

**Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).** An area consisting of one or more contiguous counties (cities and towns in New England) that contain a core area with a large population nucleus, as well as adjacent communities having a high degree of economic and social integration with that core. The core area must include a city with a population of 50,000 or more, or an urbanized area (UA). If a MSA qualifies on the basis of a UA (and no city of 50,000), the total MSA population must be at least 100,000 (75,000 in New England). Counties with substantial proportions of their population in the UA(s) are the central counties of the MSA; contiguous counties are added on the basis of a combination of commuting rates into the central counties and measures of metropolitan character such as population density and percentage of population that is urban.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) defines new MSAs and revises definitions of existing MSAs by applying published metropolitan area standards to decennial census data. New MSAs can be defined during the intercensal period based on population estimates or special censuses; these must, however, be confirmed with data from the next decennial census.

There are 264 MSAs in the United States.

**NOTE:** The term **Metropolitan Area** refers collectively to Metropolitan Statistical Areas, Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Areas, Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas, and New England County Metropolitan Areas.

The **New England County Metropolitan Area (NECMA)** provides an alternative to the city- and town-based metropolitan areas in New England for data users who desire a county-defined set of metropolitan areas. The NECMA for a MSA or CMSA includes: (1) the county containing the first-named city in the metropolitan area title (this county may include the first-named cities of other MSAs or CMSAs); and (2) each additional county having at least half of its population in the



MSA/CMSA whose first-named cities are in the county identified in step 1. NECMAs are not defined for PMSAs. There are 16 NECMAs in the six New England states.

## Census Agglomeration

**Canada.** A large urban area, together with adjacent urban and rural areas that have a high degree of economic and social integration with that urban area. A CA is comprised of one or more contiguous census subdivisions (CSD). CAs are defined by Statistics Canada.

A CA is delineated around an urban area (called the urbanized core and having a population of at least 10,000, based on the previous census). Census subdivisions are included in the CA on the basis of decennial place-of-work commuting data. If a CA's urbanized core population falls below 10,000, it is deleted from the CA program. However, if a CA attains an urbanized core population of at least 100,000, based on the previous census, it becomes a census metropolitan area (CMA).

There are 115 census agglomerations in Canada.

**U.S.A.** There is no U.S. equivalent.

**NOTE:** Although there is no U.S. equivalent as a separate entity, some of the MSAs with smaller populations are conceptually similar to the larger Canadian CAs.

## Consolidated Census Metropolitan Area / Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area

**Consolidated Census Metropolitan Area (CCMA).** Consolidation occurs when adjacent CMAs or CAs are socially and economically integrated, specifically when the total commuting interchange between the two is equal to at least 35% of the employed labour force living in the smaller CMA or CA, based on the previous census. After consolidation, the original CMA and CA become a *primary* CMA (PCMA) and *primary* CA (PCA) respectively within the consolidated CMA. CCMA's are defined solely by Statistics Canada.

There are 12 CCMA's in Canada.

**Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA).** An area that meets the requirements to qualify as a MSA and has a population of one million or more becomes a CMSA if component parts are recognized as Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas (PMSA).

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) defines new CMSA's and revises definitions of existing CMSA's by applying published metropolitan area standards to decennial census data.

There are 20 CMSA's in the United States.

## Consolidated Census Agglomeration

**Canada.** Consolidation occurs when adjacent CAs are socially and economically integrated, specifically when the total commuting interchange between the two is equal to at least 35% of the employed labour force living in the smaller CA, based on the previous census. After consolidation, the original CA becomes a PCA within the consolidated CA. CCAs are defined solely by Statistics Canada.

There are 2 consolidated CAs in Canada.

**U.S.A.** There is no U.S. equivalent. (See special note under Census Agglomeration.)

## Primary Census Metropolitan Area / Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area

**Primary Census Metropolitan Area (PCMA).** A subregion within a larger *consolidated* CMA. After consolidation, the original CMA becomes a PCMA within the consolidated CMA. PCMA's are defined solely by Statistics Canada.

A *regular* CMA is free-standing; it is either not adjacent to or not sufficiently related to another CMA or CA to be consolidated.

There are 12 PCMA's in Canada.

**Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area (PMSA).** If an area meets the requirements to qualify as a MSA and has a population of one million or more, one or more PMSAs may be defined within it if statistical criteria are met and local opinion also is in favour. A PMSA consists of a large urbanized county, or a cluster of such counties (cities and towns in New England) that have substantial commuting interchange. When one or more PMSAs have been recognized, the balance of the original, larger area becomes an additional PMSA; the larger area of which they are component parts then is designated a CMSA.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) defines new PMSAs and revises definitions of existing PMSAs by applying published metropolitan area standards to decennial census data.

There are 71 PMSAs in the United States.

## Primary Census Agglomeration

**Canada.** A subregion within a larger *consolidated* CMA or CA. After consolidation, the original CA becomes a PCA within the consolidated CMA or CA. PCAs are defined solely by Statistics Canada.

A *regular* CA is free-standing; it is either not adjacent to or not sufficiently related to another CMA or CA to be consolidated.

There are 21 PCAs in Canada.

**U.S.A.** There is no U.S. equivalent. (See special note under Census Agglomeration.)

## CMA/CA Parts

**Canada.** The parts, which are defined solely by Statistics Canada, distinguish between central and peripheral urban and rural areas within a CMA or CA. There are three CMA/CA parts:

**Urbanized core.** A large urban area around which a CMA or CA is delineated. The urbanized core must have a population (based on the previous census) of at least 100,000 in the case of a CMA, or between 10,000 and 99,999 in the case of a CA.

**Urban fringe.** An urban area within a CMA or CA, but outside the urbanized core.

**Rural fringe.** All territory within a CMA or CA lying outside urban areas.

**U.S.A.** The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) designates *central cities* under the metropolitan area standards, and the U.S. Bureau of the Census presents data for MSAs, CMSAs, PMSAs, central cities, urbanized areas, urban fringe, other urban places, and rural. These areas, however, are not delineated specifically as "metropolitan area parts". (There are 525 central cities in the United States.)

## Extended City

**Canada.** There is no Canadian equivalent.

**U.S.A.** An incorporated place or consolidated city with either 25% of its land area or at least 25 square miles classified as sparsely settled (i.e., its "extended" or rural portion). The sparsely settled area must consist of at least one group of one or more contiguous census blocks. Each group must be at least 5 square miles in land area, and have an overall population density of less than 100 persons per square mile.

There are 280 extended cities (including 4 extended consolidated cities) in 36 states of the United States.

## Urban Area / Urbanized Area

**Urban Area (UA).** An area containing a dense concentration of population. It must have a population of at least 1,000 and a density of at least 400 persons per square kilometre, based on the previous census. Urban areas are comprised of complete enumeration areas. UAs separated by gaps of less than two kilometres (road distance) are combined to form a single urban area. UAs are defined solely by Statistics Canada.

All territory lying outside urban areas is considered rural. Taken together, urban and rural areas cover all of Canada.

There are 893 UAs in Canada.

**Urbanized Area (UA).** An area comprising a *central place(s)* and the adjacent densely settled surrounding territory that together have a minimum population of 50,000 people. The densely settled surrounding territory generally reflects an area of continuous residential development with an overall population density of at least 1,000 persons per square mile. UAs are defined solely by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

"Urban" consists of all territory and population in urbanized areas, and in places (both incorporated places and census designated places) of 2,500 or more persons outside urbanized areas. All other territory is considered rural.

There are 396 UAs (which contain 544 central places) in the United States.

## Census Tract

**Canada.** A permanent, small neighbourhood-like or rural community-like area established in large urban centres with the help of local specialists interested in urban and social science research.

Census tracts are delineated jointly by a local committee and Statistics Canada. The population must be between 2,500 and 8,000, with a preferred average of 4,000 persons (except for those CTs in central business districts, in other major commercial and industrial zones, or in peripheral rural or urban areas that may have either a lower or higher population). Also, when first delineated or subsequently subdivided, CTs must be as socio-economically homogenous and compact in shape as possible, and follow permanent, easily recognizable physical features.

All CMAs and CAs in Canada containing a CSD having a population of 50,000 or more at the previous census are eligible for a census tract program. Census tracts cover all 25 CMAs and 14 of the 115 CAs.

There are 4,068 CTs in Canada.

**U.S.A.** Small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county or county equivalent. The population ranges between 2,500 and 8,000 persons, with an optimum population of 4,000. Census tracts are relatively uniform in social and economic characteristics at the time they are established. Census tracts are delineated for all metropolitan areas and other densely populated counties by local Census Statistical Areas Committees following the U.S. Bureau of the Census' guidelines.

A county or county equivalent has either census tracts or block numbering areas (BNA). Census tracts exist in all 50 states and the District of Columbia – with complete coverage for 6 states (California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, New Jersey and Rhode Island), and the District of Columbia.

There are 49,961 CTs in the United States.

## Provincial Census Tract / Block Numbering Area

**Provincial Census Tract (PCT).** A permanent, small urban neighbourhood-like or rural community-like area established outside those CMAs and CAs having a census tract program. PCTs encompass populations between 3,000 and 8,000, with a preferred average of 5,000 persons. When possible, PCT boundaries follow permanent physical features. When originally delineated, PCTs in some provinces were based on boundaries suggested by provincial authorities.

Provincial census tracts cover 101 CAs and the remaining areas not covered by CTs. Taken together, CTs and PCTs cover all of Canada. (The PCT program will be dropped for the 1996 Census.)

There are 1,815 PCTs in Canada.

**Block Numbering Area (BNA).** A small, statistical subdivision of a county or county equivalent for grouping and numbering census blocks in counties for which census tracts have not been established. BNAs are defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census and state agencies, using guidelines similar to those for delineating census tracts. BNAs contain between 600 and 3,000 housing units (approximately 1,500 to 8,000 persons), with an optimum of 1,500 housing units (about 4,000 persons). BNAs cover parts of 44 states.

There are 11,270 BNAs in the United States.

## Enumeration Area / Enumeration District

**Enumeration Area (EA).** The geographic area canvassed by one census representative. The number of dwellings in an EA generally varies between a maximum of 375 in large urban areas to a minimum of 125 in rural areas. An EA always respects higher level geographic areas recognized by the census, and is the smallest geographic area for which census data are available. EAs are defined solely by Statistics Canada.

There are 45,995 EAs in Canada.

**Enumeration District (ED).** The ED, an area assigned to one census enumerator for canvassing and must not cross the boundary of any legal or statistical area, is no longer in use. The ED has been replaced by the block group (BG), although BGs tend to be larger than EDs.

## Block Group

**Canada.** There is no Canadian equivalent.

**U.S.A.** A grouping of contiguous census blocks within a census tract or BNA. A block group comprises all census blocks that share the same first digit of their identifying numbers within a census tract or BNA. Census tracts and block numbering areas consist of one or more BGs (9 are possible). The block group is the smallest geographic area for which the U.S. Bureau of the Census tabulates data collected from only a sample of households.

There are 225,876 BGs in the United States.

## Census Block

**Canada.** There is no Canadian equivalent.

**U.S.A.** An area bounded by roads, streets, rivers, legal boundaries and other features. Census blocks always respect census tract, BNA and county boundaries. They provide coverage for the entire country, and are the smallest geographic area for which the U.S. Bureau of the Census tabulates data collected from all persons, housing units and group quarters.

There are 6,961,148 census blocks in the United States.

## Places

**Canada.** There is no Canadian entity referred to as a "place", except **unincorporated places (UP)**, which are *quasi-standard* geographic entities. They are not areas as no boundaries are delineated around them.

An unincorporated place is a cluster of five or more occupied dwellings in rural areas, locally known by a specific name, but not having a local government or legal limits.

**U.S.A.** A place generally includes a significant cluster of people. Its boundaries may extend across higher-level geographic areas, but never crosses a state boundary. "Place" is a generic term for a variety of legal entities known as cities, boroughs, towns and villages (with the exception of towns in New England, New York and Wisconsin, and boroughs in New York and Alaska), as well as for census designated places.

There are two major types of places: incorporated places and census designated places.

**Incorporated Place.** See special note under Census Subdivision/County Subdivision for the definition of incorporated place, and similarities between incorporated places and certain types of Canadian census subdivisions (CSD).

**Consolidated City.** A consolidated government is a unit of local government for which the functions of an incorporated place and its county or minor civil division (MCD) have merged. The legal aspects of this action may result in both the primary incorporated place and the county or MCD continuing to exist as legal entities, even though the county or MCD performs few or no governmental functions and has few or no elected officials. When this occurs, and when one or more other incorporated places

in the county or MCD continue to function as separate governments (even though they are included in the consolidated government), the primary incorporated place is referred to as a consolidated city. There are 6 consolidated cities in the United States.

**Census Designated Place (CDP).** Densely settled concentrations of population that are identifiable by name, but are not legally incorporated as places. The U.S. Bureau of the Census defines CDPs in cooperation with state and local officials following established criteria as the statistical counterparts of incorporated places. CDP minimum population sizes are: 2,500 persons inside urbanized areas (UA); 1,000 persons outside UAs (except for Alaska, where the minimum is 25 persons); 300 persons in Hawaii; and 250 persons on American Indian reservations, if outside a UA. CDPs never cross state lines, and all states have CDPs. There are 4,146 CDPs in the United States.

## **Federal Electoral District / Congressional District**

**Federal Electoral District (FED).** Any place or territorial area entitled to return a member to serve in the House of Commons. FED legal limits and descriptions are the responsibility of the Chief Electoral Officer, and usually are revised every 10 years using the results of the decennial census.

The 1987 Representation Order is the most current one, and is based on 1981 Census population data.

There are 295 FEDs in Canada.

**Congressional District (CD).** A political unit defined by state officials or courts for electing members of the U.S. House of Representatives. Redistricting takes place using the results of each decennial census.

There are 435 CDs in the United States.

## **3. SUMMARY**

Comparative analysis of demographic data for Canada and the United States must occur within some geographic context, whether at larger scales such as the national or provincial/state levels, or smaller scales such as the census tract level. An understanding of these geographic areas is useful and necessary for successful analysis to ensure that the information being studied is indeed comparable.

This report presents pairs of census geographic areas that are relatively similar in concept and/or definition. The degree of similarity in concept or definition, however, can vary between two paired geographic areas. For example, although the U.S. Bureau of the Census' and Statistics Canada's urban area and place definitions appear similar conceptually, their respective criteria contain slight differences that diminish complete comparability. On the other hand, census tracts in both nations are similar in concept, definition and criteria – and perhaps represent a best comparable geographic unit for analysis. Furthermore, some of the paired areas can vary considerably in population size and areal extent. Census divisions in Canada are conceptually similar to counties in the United States, but tend to cover much larger land areas than most counties, especially those in the eastern portion of the United States. Comparative analyses of geographic areas in terms of population size and land area are beyond the scope of this presentation, but will be discussed and analyzed in subsequent reports.

The census geographic areas of Canada and the United States are defined according to objective criteria to represent population settlement patterns, as well as to meet data tabulation needs for each nation. Although some of the definitions provided in this report contain references to the criteria used to define specific geographic areas, we have not attempted to provide detailed criteria for all areas. The criteria used to define some areas, such as metropolitan areas, are too complex to discuss adequately in a document of this nature. Data users requiring details regarding criteria for specific areas may contact the respective organization responsible for developing these definitions.

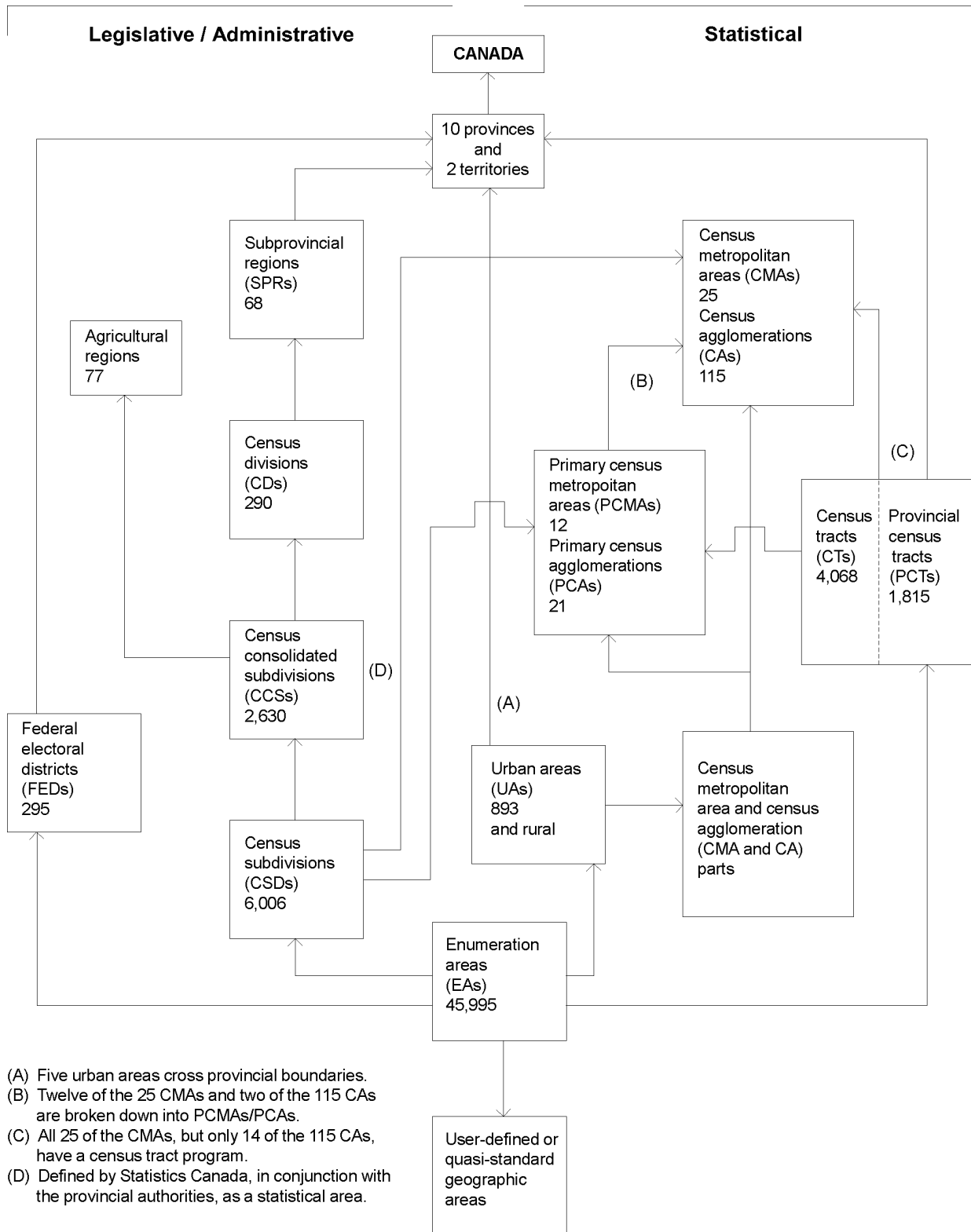
Data users should use this report as a general guide to compare the census geographic areas of Canada and the United States, and should be aware that differences in settlement patterns and population levels

preclude a precise one-to-one relationship between conceptually similar areas. The geographic areas compared in this report provide a framework for further empirical research and analysis.

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## Hierarchy of Standard Geographic Areas (Canada)



Appendix 2

**Census Geographic Areas (Canada)**

Geographic Unit	CANADA	Nfld.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	N.W.T.
Federal electoral district	295	7	4	11	10	75	99	14	14	26	32	1	2
Subprovincial region	68	4	1	5	5	16	5	8	6	8	8	1	1
Census division	290	10	3	18	15	99	49	23	18	19	30	1	5
Division (census)	74	10	–	–	–	4	–	23	18	19	–	–	–
Communauté urbaine	3	–	–	–	–	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
County	60	–	3	18	15	–	24	–	–	–	–	–	–
District	10	–	–	–	–	–	10	–	–	–	–	–	–
District municipality	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Metropolitan municipality	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Municipalité régionale de comté	92	–	–	–	–	92	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Region	7	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	5
Regional district	29	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	29	–	–
Regional municipality	10	–	–	–	–	–	10	–	–	–	–	–	–
United counties	3	–	–	–	–	–	3	–	–	–	–	–	–
Census consolidated subdivision	2,630	87	69	54	150	1,153	526	127	302	73	83	1	5
Census subdivision	6,006	404	126	118	287	1,637	951	293	953	438	691	36	72
Agricultural region	77	3	–	5	4	12	5	12	20	8	8	–	–
Census metropolitan area	25	1	–	1	1	<u>6</u>	<u>10</u>	1	2	2	2	–	–
Census agglomeration	115	4	2	4	<u>5</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	21	1	1
Primary census metropolitan area	12	1	–	–	–	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>	–	–	2	1	–	–
Primary census agglomeration	21	1	–	2	–	4	8	–	–	3	3	–	–
Census tract	4,068	40	–	75	67	1,052	1,731	156	98	385	464	–	–
Provincial census tract	1,815	84	26	117	98	491	410	91	146	161	179	5	7
Urban area	893	42	7	38	<u>36</u>	<u>222</u>	<u>246</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>99</u>	92	1	4
Enumeration area	45,995	1,155	249	1,442	1,266	10,912	15,119	2,030	2,799	4,602	6,162	97	162
Street Network File	342	2	–	3	16	116	113	9	5	4	74	–	–
Block-face	763,626	4,345	–	9,096	15,353	175,929	312,280	32,766	21,003	73,085	119,769	–	–
Forward sortation area	1,384	28	7	51	34	363	503	55	44	118	173	3	5
Postal code	640,963	6,826	2,666	17,871	13,172	163,971	235,949	22,007	20,487	58,616	98,091	781	526

Note: Underlined numbers indicate that those CMAs, CAs, PCMAs and urban areas crossing provincial limits are counted in both provinces.

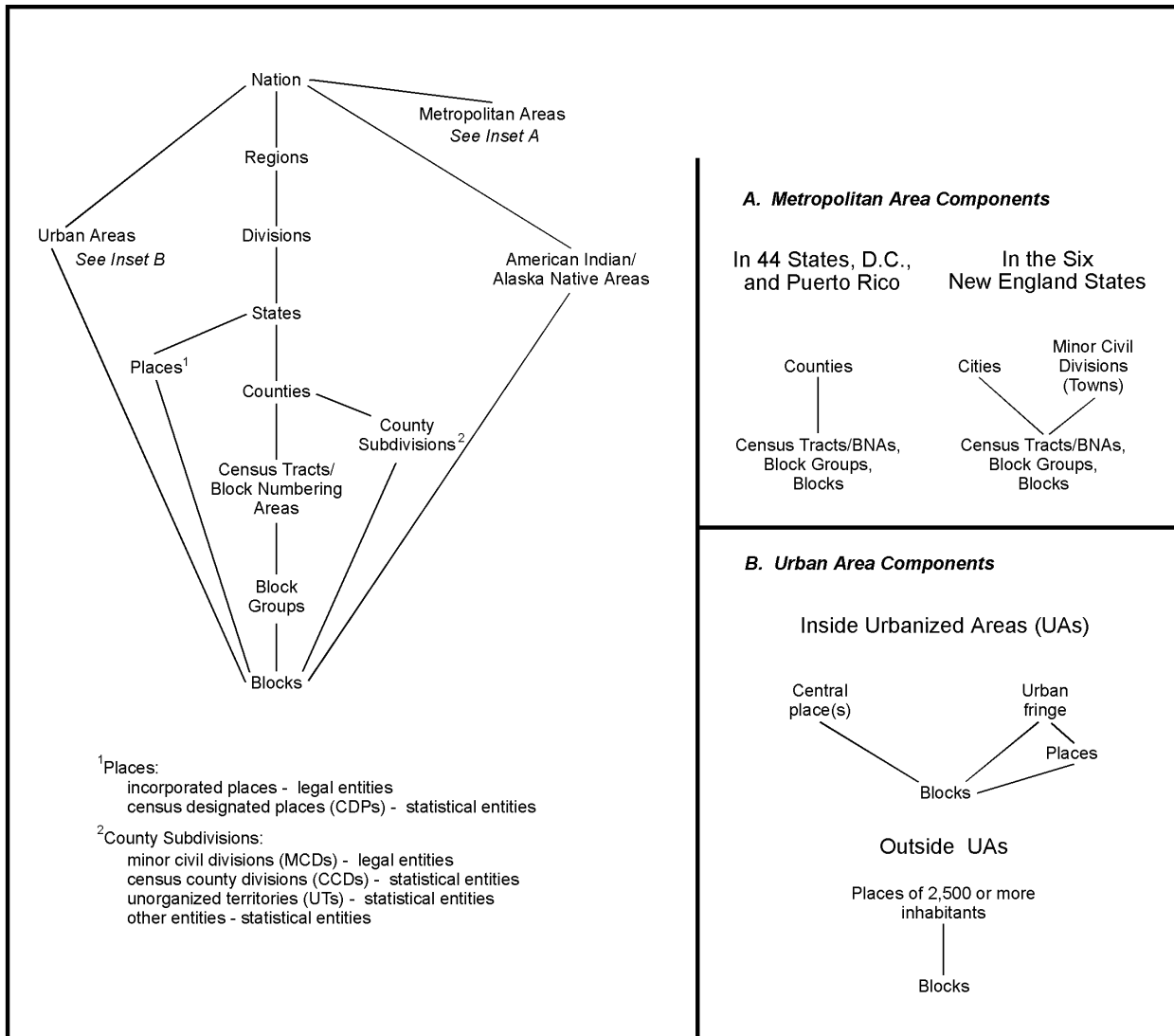


Appendix 3

**Census Subdivision Types (Canada)**

CSD Types	CANADA	Nfld.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	N.W.T.
<b>TOTAL</b>	6,006	404	126	118	287	1,637	951	293	953	438	691	36	72
BOR Borough	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
C City / Cité	141	3	1	3	6	2	51	5	13	16	39	1	1
CM County (municipality)	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	-	-	-
COM Community	184	139	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CT Canton (municipalité de)	103	-	-	-	-	103	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CU Cantons unis (municipalité de)	10	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DM District municipality	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	48	-	-
HAM Hamlet	38	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	35
ID Improvement district	22	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	19	-	-	-
IGD Indian government district	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
LGD Local government district	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	-	-	-	-	-
LOT Township and royalty	68	-	68	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MD Municipal district	35	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	23	-	-	-
NH Northern hamlet	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	-	-	-	-
NV Northern village	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-
P Paroisse (municipalité de)	406	-	-	-	-	406	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PAR Parish	151	-	-	-	151	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R Indian reserve / Réserve indienne	917	1	4	23	19	27	128	74	104	63	468	4	2
RM Rural municipality	403	-	-	-	-	-	-	105	298	-	-	-	-
RV Resort village	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	-	-	-	-
SA Special area	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
SCM Subdivision of county municipality	41	-	-	41	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SD Sans désignation (municipalité)	485	-	-	-	-	485	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
S-E Indian settlement / Établissement indien	27	-	-	-	-	3	9	4	1	-	3	7	-
SET Settlement	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	22
SRD Subdivision of regional district	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	-	-
SUN Subdivision of unorganized	90	90	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SV Summer village	54	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	54	-	-	-
T Town	706	171	8	39	27	-	148	35	146	109	15	3	5
TP Township	475	-	-	-	-	-	475	-	-	-	-	-	-
TR Terres réservées	9	-	-	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
UNO Unorganized / Non organisé	155	-	-	-	-	117	20	10	2	-	-	1	5
V Ville	255	-	-	-	-	255	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
VC Village cri	8	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
VK Village naskapi	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
VL Village	934	-	-	-	84	197	116	39	325	121	46	4	2
VN Village nordique	14	-	-	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

## Hierarchy of Geographic Areas (U.S.A.)



Appendix 5

**Geographic Entities (U.S.A.)**

<b>Legal / Administrative Entities</b>	<b>1980 Number</b>	<b>1990 Number</b>
United States	1	1
States and statistically equivalent entities	51	51
States	50	50
District of Columbia	1	1
Counties and statistically equivalent entities	3,137	3,141
Minor civil divisions (MCDs)	29,369	29,295
governmentally functioning MCDs	NA	16,994
places treated as MCD-equivalents <sup>1</sup>	4,504	4,533
Incorporated places	19,097	19,289
Consolidated cities	–	6
American Indian reservations	277	310
American Indian entities with trust lands	36	48
Tribal entities consisting only of trust lands	1	4
Alaska Native villages (ANVs)	209	–
Alaska Native Regional Corporations (ANRCs)	12	12
Congressional districts	435	435
Voting districts (Election precincts)	36,361	147,266
School districts	16,075	14,422
Neighborhoods	27,942	–
ZIP Codes	37,000E	29,469 <sup>2</sup>
tabulated portions	NA	36,932

– = Not applicable    NA = Not available    E = Estimate

<sup>1</sup>Includes multiple records for places in more than one county.

<sup>2</sup>Represents the residential ZIP Codes for which the Census Bureau tabulated data, not the total number of ZIP Codes used by the U.S. Postal Service.

## Appendix 5 (Cont'd)

**Geographic Entities (U.S.A.)**

<b>Statistical Entities</b>	<b>1980 Number</b>	<b>1990 Number</b>
Regions	4	4
Divisions	9	9
Metropolitan areas		
Metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs)	–	264
Consolidated metropolitan statistical areas (CMSAs)	–	20
Primary metropolitan statistical areas (PMSAs)	–	71
New England county metropolitan areas (NECMAs)	13	16
Standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSAs)	318	–
Standard consolidated statistical areas (SCSAs)	16	–
Counties in metropolitan areas	730 <sup>1</sup>	754 <sup>1</sup>
Central cities	429	525
Urbanized areas	366	396
Counties containing all or part of a UA	657	744
Counties containing more than one UA	80	113
Central places	431	544
Alaska Native village statistical areas (ANVSAs)	–	217
Tribal designated statistical areas (TDSAs)	–	19
Tribal jurisdiction statistical areas (TJSAs)	–	17
County subdivisions	5,826	5,903
Census county divisions (CCDs)	5,512	5,581
Unorganized territories (UTs)	273	282
Other statistically equivalent areas	41	40
Census designated places (CDPs)	3,432	4,146
Census tracts and block numbering areas	46,541	61,231
Census tracts	43,226	49,961
Counties with census tracts	911 <sup>2</sup>	1,092
Block numbering areas (BNAs)	3,315	11,270
Counties with BNAs	–	2,049
tabulated portions (STF 1)	NA	142,000E
tabulated portions (P.L. 94-171 files)	NA	296,289
Enumeration districts	99,135	–
Block groups	154,456	225,876
tabulated portions (STF 1)	195,564	357,429
tabulated portions (P.L. 94-171 files)	NA	526,031
Blocks	2,458,070	6,961,148
tabulated portions	2,529,750	–
Traffic analysis zones	160,000E	200,000E

– = Not applicable    NA = Not available    E = Estimate

<sup>1</sup>Includes 31 partial counties (in New England) in 1980 and 27 in 1990; does not include the portion of Crawford County, Missouri in the St. Louis MSA (1990).

<sup>2</sup>In addition, La Paz County (Arizona) was part of Yuma County in 1980.

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1993-1     ***A Comparison of Census Geographic Areas of Canada and the United States***, Carolyn Weiss, Michael Ratcliffe and Nancy Torrieri (November 1993)