

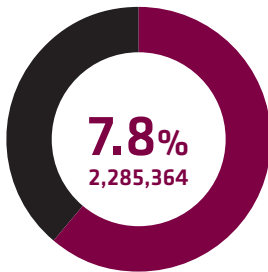


Diaspora engagement mapping NEPAL

Facts & figures

Emigration

% of emigrants in total population

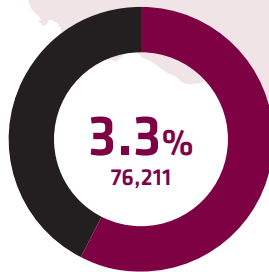


♂ 61.2%
♀ 38.8%



Remittances as a share of GDP: **29.9%**
Remittances inflow (USD million): **8,643**

% of which in the EU



♂ 57.7%
♀ 42.3%

Top countries of destination

Malaysia	578,082
India	533,646
Saudi Arabia	490,965
Qatar	254,340
United States	114,120

Political rights



Dual citizenship¹



Right to vote in national elections for citizens residing abroad²



Terminology: Nepal terms their diaspora as 'Non-resident Nepalis' (NRN).

This refers to a person who acquired citizenship of a foreign country and who resided in a country outside the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and who was previously a citizen of Nepal or his/her parents/grandparents were citizens of Nepal.

¹ https://www.multiplecitizenship.com/wscl/ws_NEPAL.html

² Nepal's Supreme Court ruled, in 2018, that legal and constitutional provisions did not make it mandatory for citizens to remain in the country to exercise their voting right. The court ordered the government to ensure external voting rights for all Nepalis living abroad either through postal or electronic means. However, it is yet to be implemented <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/ensure-voting-rights-for-nepalis-living-abroad-supreme-court-tells-government/>

2008: Non-Resident Nepali Act³



Provides legal provisions to motivate non-resident Nepalis to take part in the all-round development of Nepal. The Act includes the rights to open a bank account or invest using convertible foreign currency, to repatriate money, to purchase land or property, and to run any industry or business that they have invested in. It also exempts non-resident Nepalis (NRN) from tax on any amount which is sent to social religious, academic, cultural, charitable, sports or natural calamity rescue-related institutions. The Act also facilitates diaspora engagement through the issuance of NRN Citizen cards. Cardholders do not need to obtain visas and can receive many of the same benefits as citizens in social, cultural and economic aspects.

Overview of the policy and legislative framework



- 2012** ● **The Foreign Employment Policy⁴** was formulated to give direction for the effective management of foreign employment and to make the process of migration safe and accessible in addressing problems related to foreign employment. It promotes the use of resources acquired abroad for investments in Nepal through a favourable policy environment, promoting investment of workers' remittances in the industrial sector, community development projects and local infrastructure development programmes, with co-financing and investment from the Government of Nepal.
- 2016** ● **NRN Citizenship Provision⁵:** In 2016, the Constitution of Nepal was amended to include an NRN Citizenship Provision. This enabled NRN to enjoy the economic, social and cultural rights as provided for by federal law.
- 2016** ▼
2019 ● **Fiscal Year 2016/17-Fiscal Year 2018/19:** The Fourteenth Development Plan⁶ addressed foreign employment, its contribution to the economy and development of the country, internal and cross-border movement, private sector engagement in broad areas of economic development, the role of the diaspora in the promotion of Nepali products, and economic diplomacy. The Fifteenth Development Plan, endorsed in March 2020, will cover FY2019/20 to FY2023/24.

» Trends:

For over 10 years Nepal has acknowledged the contribution that diaspora can make to development. Remittances contribute to nearly 30% of the country's GDP. NRNs have been making important contributions to Nepal's development process and the creation of the Brain Gain Centre in 2019 has helped institutionalise this. The promulgation of the new constitution and successful holding of elections have ushered in a new era of peace and stability. As a result, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Pradeep Gyawali, said in 2018 that it was essential to have "an enhanced level of economic partnership with NRNs, diaspora and private sector".⁷ Nepal also plans to send more skilled migrants abroad to meet international labour market demand.

3 <http://www.nepalimmigration.gov.np/post/non-resident-nepalese-act-2064>

4 https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-kathmandu/documents/policy/wcms_539895.pdf

5 https://constituteproject.org/constitution/Nepal_2016.pdf

6 14th Development Plan <https://www.npc.gov.np/images/category/14th-plan-full-document.pdf> (In Nepali) 15th Development Plan Approach Paper, 2019, https://www.npc.gov.np/images/category/15th_Plan_Approach_Paper2.pdf (in Nepali)

7 'Nepal Foreign Minister Pradeep Gyawali's Speech on 'Role of Nepali Diaspora for Development Policies'', 2018, <https://www.npi-nrna.org/2018/11/22/speech-by-hon-pradeep-kumar-gyawali-minister-for-foreign-affairs-on-the-theme-role-of-nepali-diaspora-for-development-policies/>

Achievements:

Nepal plays an active role in the regional labour migration processes in order to advocate for its migrant workers and in doing so build trust in the destination countries. There has been an enabling environment for the diaspora since 2008, which has allowed initiatives like the Non-Resident Nepali Association to grow as well as resulted in the creation of the Brain Gain Centre. These have had an impact on policymaking and socio-economic development in Nepal.

Obstacles



- **Government incentives:** Even though the government has been active in reaching out to NRNs, the diaspora mostly returns to Nepal through their own personal connections rather than because of any incentive from the government. They either come in through volunteering organisations, such as the Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), through the NRNA, or through their own personal connections to their place of birth, ancestral town or district. There are also no formal government programmes for attracting Nepalese nationals who have emigrated to return or to facilitate the reintegration of returnees.
- **Government coordination:** There is still no proper coordination and initiative from the government to involve the diaspora in the development of specific sectors. As a result, most volunteers work outside of the government system with no proper mapping or clear process of identifying where the demand for the diaspora is. Migration governance and policymaking are often spread across several ministries and departments.

SPOTLIGHT: effective practices



Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA), 2003

The NRNA is an association committed to creating a global network of Nepali migrants and streamlining their energy and resources to make the diaspora a catalyst of economic and social transformation in Nepal.⁸ Over time, the NRNA has emerged as the central organisation for Nepali migrants. The NRNA has established National Coordination Councils (NCCs) in 80 countries with 70,000 members as of 2019. The NRNA has also launched a global ID campaign to build a unified system to register members and provide services/discounts to them.⁹ Key sectors of engagement include economic development, foreign direct investment, human capital formation and development, technology transfer and climate change financing.

<https://www.nrna.org>

⁸ NRNA Vision 2020 and Beyond Final Report, 2017, NRNA, <https://nrna.org/Portals/0/Vision%202020final%20report.pdf?ver=2018-02-01-104845-657>

⁹ https://nrna.org/Portals/0/id_card_global.pdf.



Nepal Policy Institute (NPI), 2016

NETWORKS + RESEARCH

The NPI is an international think-tank and knowledge platform dedicated to the people-centred and sustainable development of Nepal and Nepali people, including diaspora Nepali. In 2019, the NPI and NRNA organised an event in Thailand where diaspora professionals, experts, academics, entrepreneurs and NRN leaders interacted with the National Planning Commission (NPC) team on identifying the role of diaspora in transforming development planning and policies of Nepal. During the programme, a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding between NPC and NPI was proposed; this is likely to be signed soon.¹⁰

<https://www.npi-nrna.org/>

INFRASTRUCTURE + ENERGY

Ujyalo Nepal, 2017

This scheme has been promoted by NRNA and is aimed at replacing traditional electric bulbs in Nepal with LED lights, which could have a significant impact on energy savings. The NRNA has teamed up with the Nepal Electricity Authority and its target is to replace 10,000,000 traditional bulbs with LED lights.

https://nrna.org/committee-taskforce/ujyalo_nepal

SKILLS TRANSFER

Brain Gain Centre, 2019

The government opened a unit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs aiming at fostering partnership with Nepali experts and professionals overseas. Prior to the centre's opening, Nepali professionals abroad were invited to register with the centre's database; more than 450 registered within a month.

<https://mofa.gov.np/bgc/>

¹⁰ 'MoU between NPC and NPI in the Offing', 2019, <https://www.npi-nrna.org/2019/06/04/mou-between-npc-and-npi-in-the-offing/>
<https://www.npi-nrna.org/2019/06/04/mou-between-npc-and-npi-in-the-offing/>

Annex:

List of Actors

Diaspora related institutions



- **At regional level**

International Organisation for Migration <https://nepal.iom.int/>

Established in 1951, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is the UN Migration Agency and the leading inter-governmental organisation in the field of migration. Nepal became an IOM member state in 2006. In 2007, the Government of Nepal and IOM signed a cooperation agreement to encourage cooperation and the delivery of services to Nepal, which is a country of origin, transit and destination of migration.

- **National institutions**

- At ministerial level

Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security https://moless.gov.np/?page_id=218

The Ministry formulates, plans, implements, monitors and evaluates labour and employment related policies.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs <https://mofa.gov.np>

The Ministry has a dedicated division for diaspora engagement to organise diaspora-related activities.

- At sub-ministerial level

Department of Consular Services <https://nepalconsular.gov.np/en/>

The department liaises with Nepali missions abroad to coordinate on issues pertaining to the Nepali working there. They work together on the provision of legal assistance, compensation and insurance. Established under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the department also deals with diaspora-related matters.

Department of Foreign Employment <http://www.dofe.gov.np/Home.aspx>

Established under the Ministry of Labour, the department conducts work related to the labour agreements with foreign employers in destination countries, cooperates with national and international organisations, and coordinates on foreign employment and international immigration. It also tracks and maintains data on Nepali migrants.

Diaspora organisations in Europe



Diaspora engagement is mostly through the NRNA's NCCs in various parts of the world, including Europe. NCC Germany, NCC Switzerland and NCC Italy are among the more active. In the NRNA's current executive committee, two vice-presidents are from Europe.

British Gurkha Welfare Society UK 2003 <http://www.bgws.org/>

Development activities

The society campaigns for those Gurkha veterans who retired before 1997 to receive pensions equal to the British and Commonwealth Soldiers they fought alongside. The BGWS seeks to improve the situation of Gurkhas in both the UK and in Nepal.

Greater Rushmoor Nepali Community UK 2004 <http://grncommunity.com/>

The principal objectives of the organisation are to address any welfare issue related to the Rushmoor Borough Nepali Community, maintain Nepali culture and actively involve the Nepali community to integrate with the wider community.

Kirat Rai Yayokkkha (KRYUK) UK 2004 <http://kryuk.org/>

Development activities

The Kirat ethnic group founded this organisation of Gurkhas. At present, several ethnic groups in Nepal, including the Rai and Yakkha, claim that they are Kirat. However, most of the documents regarding the activities of the organisation are in the Nepali language.

Naya Yuva UK <https://www.facebook.com/Nayayuva.org>

Development activities

This is a voluntary organisation in the UK established with the aim of helping Nepali youth and implementing development projects in Nepal.

Nepal Samaj e.v., Germany 2007 <http://www.nepalisamaj.org/index.html>

The Nepali Samaj association was founded in Darmstadt and has been located in Frankfurt since 2007. It is an association that unites Nepalis in the Rhine-Main area through culture and tradition. At the same time, it supports Nepalese who come to Germany to make it easier for them to settle in and also aims to bring the tradition and culture of Nepal closer to German citizens.

Written by: **Dr Ronojoy Sen**
Edited by: **EUDiF**
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