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NEPALI DIASPORA in AUSTRALIA

Sneha Ghimire, Dharmendra P. Lekhak and Akhilesh Upadhyay

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May 2026

Published by:

Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS)

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Cover Photo:

Generated by AI

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Printed at:

Sopan Press Pvt. Ltd.
Dillibazar, Kathmandu,
Tel.: +977-1-4542206
eMail: sopanpress2@gmail.com

Acknowledgements

This report, "Nepali Diaspora in Australia," was supported by the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) as part of its broader engagement on diaspora, trade, and investment linkages between Australia and Nepal. The study was conducted by the Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS) between April 2025 and April 2026, building on DFAT's continued support for evidence-based policy research and people-to-people relations. The views and opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of DFAT or the Australian Government.

The research benefited significantly from the support and engagement of NEPAFE. We are grateful to Dr. Yakindra Timilsena (President, VIC), Mr. Sujan Neupane (Secretary, ACT), Dr. Buddhi R. Chaudhary (Member, SA), Dr. Sita Ram Ghimire (Member, Canberra, ACT), Dr. Sita Tiwari Pokhrel (Member/Public Officer, NSW), and Dr. Yuba Raj Subedi (Member, QLD) for their facilitation, coordination, and outreach support, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions during the survey.

The IIDS team would also like to thank Mr. Devendra Shrestha, Ms. Nikky Khadgi, Mr. Vibhav Pradhan, Mr. Pujan Adhikari, Mr. Aaryan Rijal, Mr. Hem Raj Joshi, Mr. Ashish Pantha, Ms. Aakriti Kafle, Mr. Amesh Pandey, Ms. Anjali Sapkota, Mr. Arnav Pokharel, Ms. Ira Kayastha, Mr. Karan Mahato, Mr. Dharmendra Lekhak, Mr. Mohan Khanal, Ms. Palasha Tuladhar, Ms. Pratistha Rijal, Mr. Shashwat Pokharel, Ms. Shriju Thapa, Ms. Simran Sherchan, Mr. Subin Adhikari, and Ms. Ashila Gurung for their contribution to literature review, data cleaning, data collection, coordination, and analytical support.

The team extends its sincere gratitude to Dr. Biswash Gauchan , Dr. Devendra Gauchan, and Mr. Akhilesh Upadhyay for their valuable insights, technical guidance, and intellectual input throughout the formulation of this report. We also acknowledge Mr. Akhilesh Upadhyay and Ms. Pratistha Rijal for editing the report and for providing peer review, feedback, and constructive comments that strengthened the analytical rigor of the study.

Special thanks to the core research team— Ms. Sneha Ghimire, and Mr. Om Khadka—for work on research design, coordination, analysis, and report writing, under the overall leadership and guidance of the IIDS team.

We also thank Dr. Sita Ram Ghimire of NEPAFE and Ms. Lucky Sherpa for their continued assistance in reaching out to diaspora groups and community leaders whose support significantly contributed to the survey responses and field engagement.

Thanks are also due to Ms. Dilasha Joshi, Ms. Manju Khadka, Ms. Lina Silwal, Mr. Rajan Dhungel, Mr. Anuj Bhandari, Mr. Aashish Bhattarai, among others, for the outreach of the survey.

Not least, the research team is deeply grateful to all survey respondents, interview participants, and focus group discussants who generously shared their time, experiences, and perspectives. Their participation was indispensable in making this report possible. The team also acknowledges all individuals and institutions whose direct and indirect support contributed to the successful completion of this study.

Foreword

Australia and Nepal share close and friendly ties, built on the strength of the people-to-people links between our countries. Australia is now home to more than 210,000 Nepal-born residents, making Nepalis our eighth largest overseas-born population. The diaspora forms a "living bridge" between our two nations, increasing our familiarity and connections with each other.

This report shows the Nepali diaspora to be a diverse community that is well-represented across a wide range of sectors and active in the community. Despite being a relatively new migrant group, it is steadily building influence in a variety of areas, including political representation.

For Australia, our multicultural society is a strength. The different perspectives and influences multiculturalism brings to Australia deeply enriches our society, and it is a powerful asset for building bilateral connections between countries.

For Nepal as well, the extensive diaspora globally can be a great strength. It provides connections all over the world and allows knowledge, skills and capital to be transferred back to Nepal. Australia provides an excellent case study for exploring this subject.

As shown in this report, some Nepalis remain in Australia only temporarily. When they return home, they come back with new experiences and perspectives. Others choose to settle in Australia, but remain connected to Nepal through numerous means – remittances, visiting family and friends, business and investment, as well as celebrating and promoting Nepal and Nepali culture in Australia.

This research highlights areas to explore that can help facilitate and unlock even deeper connections and benefit both countries. I would like to commend IIDS on the production of this important report. I trust it will be useful in guiding thinking around diaspora engagement, both here in Nepal and in Australia.

Simon Ernst

Australian Ambassador to Nepal

Statement from Executive Chair

At IIDS, our work on diaspora engagement is shaped by the understanding that the Nepali diaspora is not just a result of migration, but an important part of Nepal's development journey. Our vision for the "Decade of Nepali Diaspora (2081–2090 BS)" reflects a shift from seeing migration as emigration, to recognising it as connection, contribution, and long-term partnership.

Through continued engagement with diaspora communities, initiatives like the "Magnificent 100+" programme have highlighted individuals whose achievements represent both personal success and the broader potential of the diaspora. These contributions strengthen Nepal's identity, progress, and global presence.

Our earlier study, "Nepali Migrant Dreams in the American Landscape", provided important insights into how Nepalis navigate opportunity, identity, and belonging abroad, while also emphasising the need for more structured, evidence-based approaches to diaspora engagement.

Building on this, the present study focuses on Australia- an increasingly important destination where the Nepali community has grown rapidly over the past decade. What began largely as education-driven migration has evolved into a more settled and economically active population that continues to maintain strong ties with Nepal.

Based on 1,089 survey responses, 18 key informant interviews, and 2 focus group discussions, this report presents a detailed picture of the diaspora's demographic and socio-economic profile, as well as its engagement with both Australia and Nepal. It shows a community that is increasingly integrated and forward-looking, yet still facing structural and institutional barriers when contributing to Nepal's development.

These findings highlight the need for enabling environments that support meaningful diaspora engagement through investment, knowledge exchange, and collaboration. Strengthening this requires not only policy support but also sustained institutional efforts that bridge the gap between aspiration and opportunity.

Looking ahead, the diaspora must be positioned as a vital bridge between Nepal and the wider world. Their skills, networks, and experiences can drive deeper cooperation, stronger economic linkages, and more inclusive development outcomes. At IIDS, we remain committed to advancing research that informs policy and strengthens these connections, with the aim of deepening Nepal-Australia relations in the years to come.

Dr. Biswash Gauchan, FCA
Executive Chair
Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS)

Executive Summary

This report provides an evidence-based assessment of the Nepali diaspora in Australia, examining its demographic profile, socio-economic integration, economic contributions, and potential to strengthen bilateral ties between Nepal and Australia. Drawing on our primary survey data, with 1089 respondents, alongside qualitative insights, this analysis maps diaspora, evaluates its contributions across both countries, and identifies actionable pathways for structured engagement and policy reform.

The Nepali diaspora in Australia has grown rapidly over the past decade, driven primarily by education-led migration. It is a relatively young, well-educated, and economically active community, with strong labour force participation across key sectors including healthcare, information technology, hospitality, and business services. Income levels are largely concentrated within middle-income brackets, reflecting steady upward mobility and integration into the Australian economy.

At the same time, the diaspora maintains strong ties to Nepal through remittances, cultural engagement, and sustained interest in investment and business activities, though financial flows and investments remain disproportionately concentrated in Australia, indicating structural barriers in Nepal related to regulatory complexity, institutional inefficiencies, and limited investment security.

The bilateral economic relationship is fundamentally mobility-driven, with value generated through human capital movement rather than goods trade. While diaspora-driven consumption sustains demand for Nepali products in Australia, digital services and professional linkages represent a more scalable and strategic opportunity for expanding economic engagement.

Key constraints include trade logistics, compliance barriers, limited diaspora engagement mechanisms, and gaps in policy frameworks such as dual citizenship and investment facilitation. Addressing these challenges requires targeted reforms to strengthen institutional coordination, enhance export readiness, and leverage diaspora networks as economic intermediaries.

Overall, the Nepali diaspora in Australia is transitioning into a strategic development partner with the potential to deepen trade, investment, and knowledge exchange, provided that enabling policies and engagement mechanisms are effectively implemented.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABS	–	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACT	–	Australian Capital Territory
AIN	–	Assistant in Nursing
AUD	–	Australian Dollar
B2B	–	Business-to-Business
BPO	–	Business Process Outsourcing
DFAT	–	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
ETF	–	Exchange-Traded Fund
F&B	–	Food and Beverage
FDI	–	Foreign Direct Investment
FGD	–	Focus Group Discussions
FTA	–	Free Trade Agreement
FY	–	Fiscal Year
GDP	–	Gross Domestic Product
HR	–	Human Resources
ICT	–	Information and Communication Technology
IIDS	–	Institute for Integrated Development Studies
IMF	–	International Monetary Fund
IOM	–	International Organisation for Migration
IT	–	Information Technology
KII	–	Key Informant Interviews
NEPAFE	–	Nepalese Association of Agriculture, Forestry & Environment in Australia
NGO	–	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRB	–	Nepal Rastra Bank
NRN	–	Non-Resident Nepali
NRNA	–	Non-Resident Nepali Association
NPR	–	Nepalese Rupee
NSW	–	New South Wales
OSL	–	Occupation Shortage List
PR	–	Permanent Residency
QA	–	Quality Assurance
QLD	–	Queensland
SA	–	South Australia
SAARC	–	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SME	–	Small and Medium Enterprise
SPS	–	Sanitary and Phytosanitary (Measures)
TAS	–	Tasmania
TAFE	–	Technical and Further Education
TIFA	–	Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement
USD	–	United States Dollar
VIC	–	Victoria
WA	–	Western Australia
N	–	Number of respondents

Photo by Aman Shrestha on Unsplash

Introduction

Over the past decade, the Nepali diaspora in Australia has grown rapidly, emerging as one of the most dynamic migrant communities in the country. What began largely through education-driven migration has quickly evolved into a more settled and diverse population, with individuals contributing across a wide range of sectors. This shift reflects not only changing migration patterns but also the increasing role of the diaspora in shaping economic, social, and cultural connections between Nepal and Australia.

Hence, understanding this community and its promise is important at a time when diaspora engagement is increasingly seen as a strategic tool for development. Beyond remittances, Nepalis in Australia are building careers, businesses, and networks that hold the potential to support investment, knowledge exchange, and bilateral collaboration. This study aims to capture these evolving dynamics and highlight areas where stronger, more structured engagement can create mutual benefits for both countries.

Mapping the Nepali Diaspora in Australia

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1960[1], Nepal and Australia have built ties across a range of sectors, including education, development cooperation, trade, investment, and broader people-to-people connections shaped by migration and diaspora linkages. Nepal has become one of Australia's significant source countries for international students, while the Nepali diaspora in Australia has emerged as one of the country's fastest-growing migrant communities[2].

Qualitative analysis and survey data collected by IIDS offer the following insights into this population:

Migration History and Patterns

As of June 2025, the Nepali-born population in Australia reached 213,580, more than four times higher than in 2015[3], and a significant increase from 122,506 recorded in 2021[4]. The growth has been particularly rapid in recent years, with the population rising from around 197,800 in June 2024[5].

Looking further back, this expansion is even more striking. In 2014, the Nepali-born population stood at just 42,900, meaning the community has grown almost fivefold over the past decade. More than half of this population (58.5%) arrived between 2016 and 2021, marking this period as the most critical phase of diaspora formation.

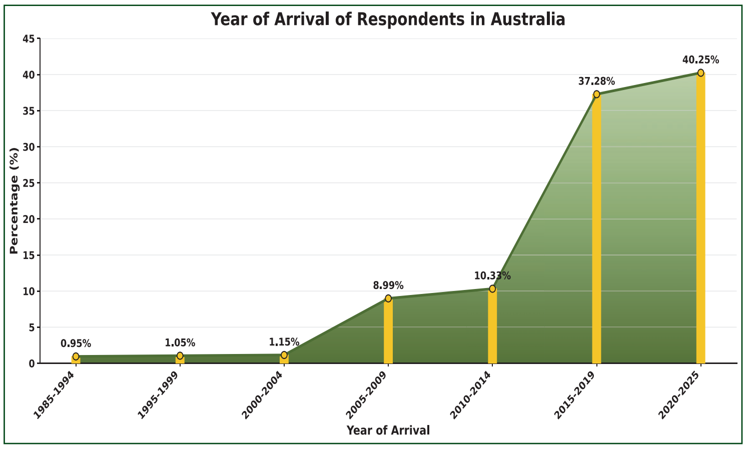
Earlier migration flows were comparatively modest: 18.1% arrived between 2010 and 2015; 19.7% arrived between 2001 and 2010, while only 3.7% settled before 2000 (ABS, 2021) (Table 1 annex).

This broader pattern is also reflected in the IIDS survey data, where a clear majority of respondents reported arriving after 2015, reinforcing the recent and concentrated nature of Nepali migration to Australia.

1. Government of Nepal, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nepal–Australia Relations, March 30, 2025, https://mofa.gov.np/content/1481/nepal-australia-relations/
2. Department of Education, "International Student Numbers by Country"; DFAT, "Nepal Country Brief." https://www.education.gov.au/international-education-data-and-research/international-student-numbers-country-state-and-territory
3. Department of Home Affairs, "Country Profile: Nepal," Australian Government, https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/research-and-statistics/statistics/country-profiles/profiles/nepal.
4. Department of Home Affairs, "Country Profile Nepal." https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/research-and-statistics/statistics/country-profiles/profiles/nepal.
5. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australia's Population by Country of Birth, June 2024, April 30, 2025, https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/australias-population-country-birth/latest-release

Before 1990, only a handful of highly qualified Nepalis – scholarship recipients, graduates of prominent institutions, skilled migrants – had arrived in Australia. During the 90s, Australia opened its doors to South Asian international students, marking a shift in Nepali migration patterns. As one survey respondent observed, from this period onward, an increasing number of Nepalis arrived for studies and "subsequently transitioned to work and permanent residency (PR), particularly through IT, engineering, and professions listed on the Occupation Shortage List (OSL)[6]." (IIDS Survey data)

Figure I : Year of Arrival of Respondents in Australia



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 2 annex)

The pattern of arrival shows a slow beginning followed by a sharp and recent surge in migration. For many years, the number of Nepali arrivals in Australia remained relatively low and gradual. After the mid-2010s, this began to shift. Migration has rapidly expanded since, with a large share of respondents arriving within a short period in recent years. Survey data reveals that while education-led migration was central to temporal clustering, migration pathways have diversified over time. Indeed, Nepalis are now arriving through multiple channels and for various purposes (Table 3).

Table 3: Primary reason for moving to Australia

Primary Reason for Moving to Australia	Percentage (%)
For higher education (e.g., university)	61.16
For family (joining spouse, child, parents, etc.)	22.98
For a new job opportunity (e.g., to begin a new career)	10.73
For vocational or technical training (e.g., TAFE, other training courses)	3.23
For starting or expanding a business	0.28
Other	1.61

Source: IIDS Survey Data

These patterns suggest that the Nepali diaspora in Australia is not a long-established migrant community, but one that has expanded rapidly in a relatively short period and is still in the process of consolidating its social, economic, and institutional presence.

6. The Occupation Shortage List (OSL) identifies occupations in which there is a shortage of skilled workers in the labour market, based on indicators such as employer demand, recruitment difficulty, and labour supply conditions. Australian Government, 2025 Occupation Shortage List Methodology (Canberra: Jobs and Skills Australia, 2025), https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-10/2025_osl_methodology.pdf.

Geographic Distribution and Settlement Patterns

At the same time, survey data suggests a pattern of secondary migration, in which individuals initially settle in policy-favoured locations to maximise residency points, but move to metropolitan centres once visa restrictions are relaxed or permanent residency is obtained. This reflects broader findings in Australian migration literature, with a distinction between policy-driven spatial dispersion and longer-term socio-economic reconcentration in major urban centres (Hugo, 2014; Hugo & Harris, 2016)[7]

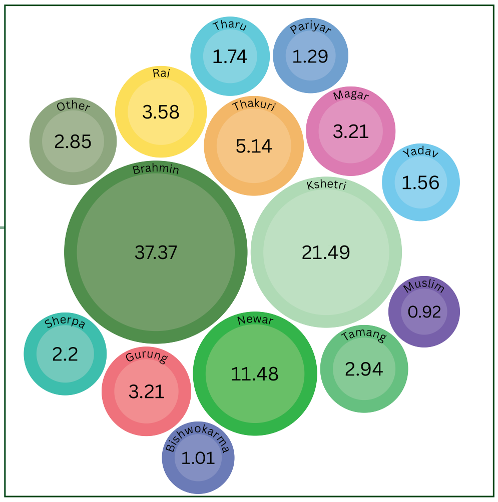
> There remains a pattern of strategic migration to regional hubs[8], driven largely by the prospect of gaining permanent residency points under Australia's immigration system rather than by organic settlement preferences. Under this system, locations outside major cities (such as Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane) are classified as regional areas. Canberra, as one of the key cities included in the points-based framework, has consequently attracted a notable Nepali population (IIDS surveys).

Demographic Profile

Ethnicity, Gender, and Place of Origin

The demographic profile of survey respondents reflects the diversity of Australia's Nepali diaspora and offers valuable insights into the community.

Figure II : Ethnicity of Survey Respondents



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 5 annex)

While Brahmins and Kshetris are the two leading representations among Nepali ethnic groups, survey data reflects that various other ethnic groups are also an integral part of the Nepali social fabric in Australia.

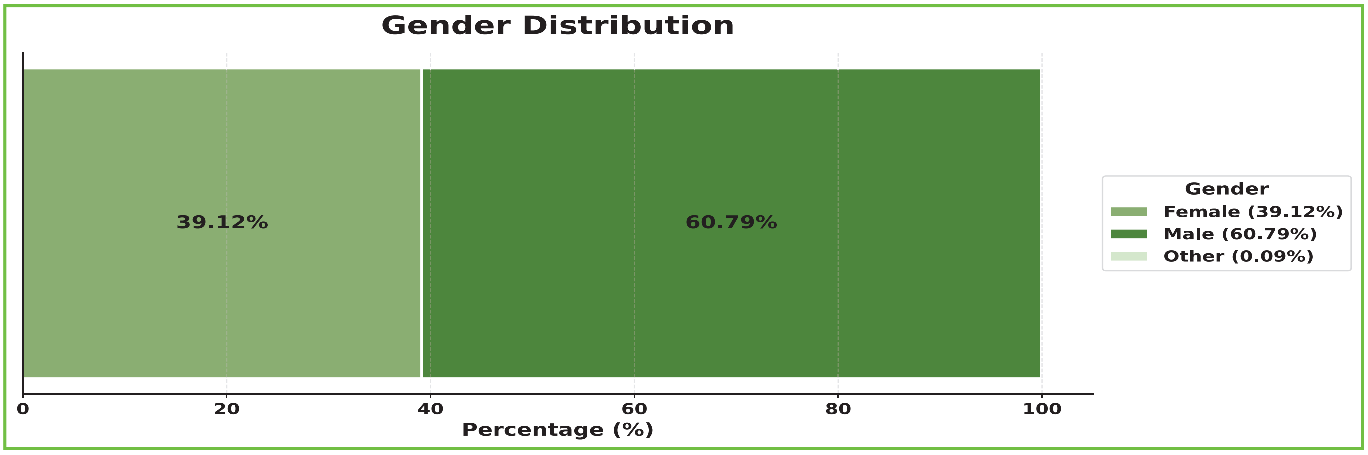
The observed gender distribution in the survey, 60.79% male and 39.12% female, portraits a noticeable gap; however, this is likely influenced by sampling bias rather than fully reflecting the actual population structure.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (end of June 2024), the Nepali-born population in Australia is more balanced, with approximately 54.4% male and 45.6% female[9]. This indicates that while a gender gap still exists, it is not as pronounced as suggested by the survey data. Figures from 2016 census[10], which showed a distribution of 54.9% male and 45.1% female, suggest that migration patterns were previously more male-dominated. This aligns with broader literature on gendered migration trends, even though the gap has gradually narrowed over time.

Indeed, literature contends that initial migration is often male-led, particularly through student or early employment pathways, followed by family reunification or partner migration once settlement conditions stabilise. Survey data reveals that gendered sequencing shapes early settlement experiences, labour market entry, and subsequent household formation (IIDS Survey Data).

7. Graeme Hugo, "Immigrant Settlement in Regional Australia: Patterns and Processes," in Rural Change in Australia: Population, Economy, Environment, ed. Rae Dufty Jones and John Connell (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2014); https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00049182.2015.1020595 Graeme Hugo and Kevin Harris, Population Distribution Effects of Migration in Australia (Canberra: Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2011). https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/research-and-stats/files/migration-chapter-eight.pdf
8. Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Cultural Diversity of Australia"; Regional Australia Institute, A Migration System for Australia's Future. https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/cultural-diversity-australia
9. Australian Government, Department of Home Affairs, Country Profile: Nepal https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/research-and-statistics/statistics/country-profiles/profiles/nepal.
10. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016 Census QuickStats: Nepal (Country of Birth), https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2016/7105_0.

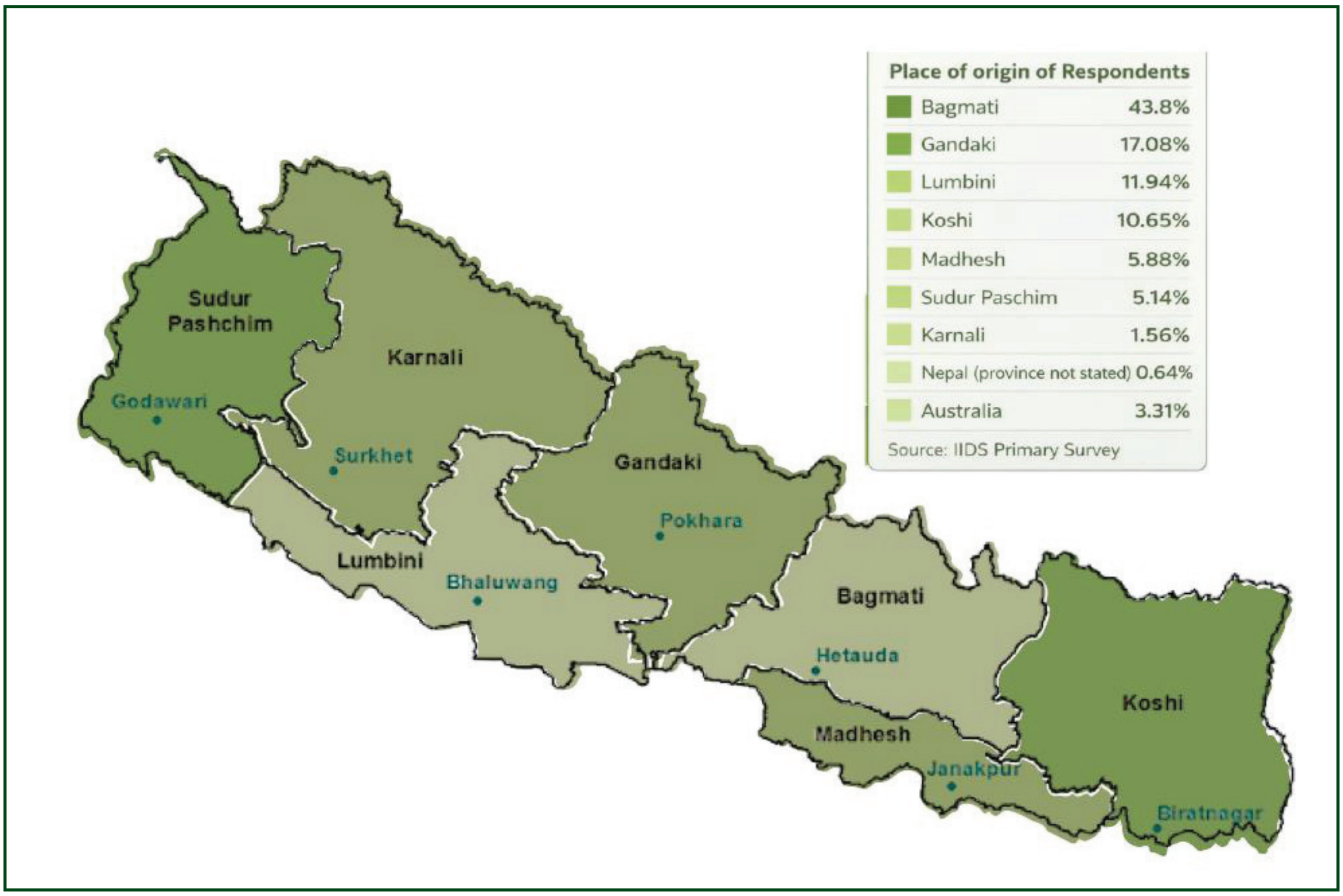
Figure III : Gender Distribution



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 4 annex)

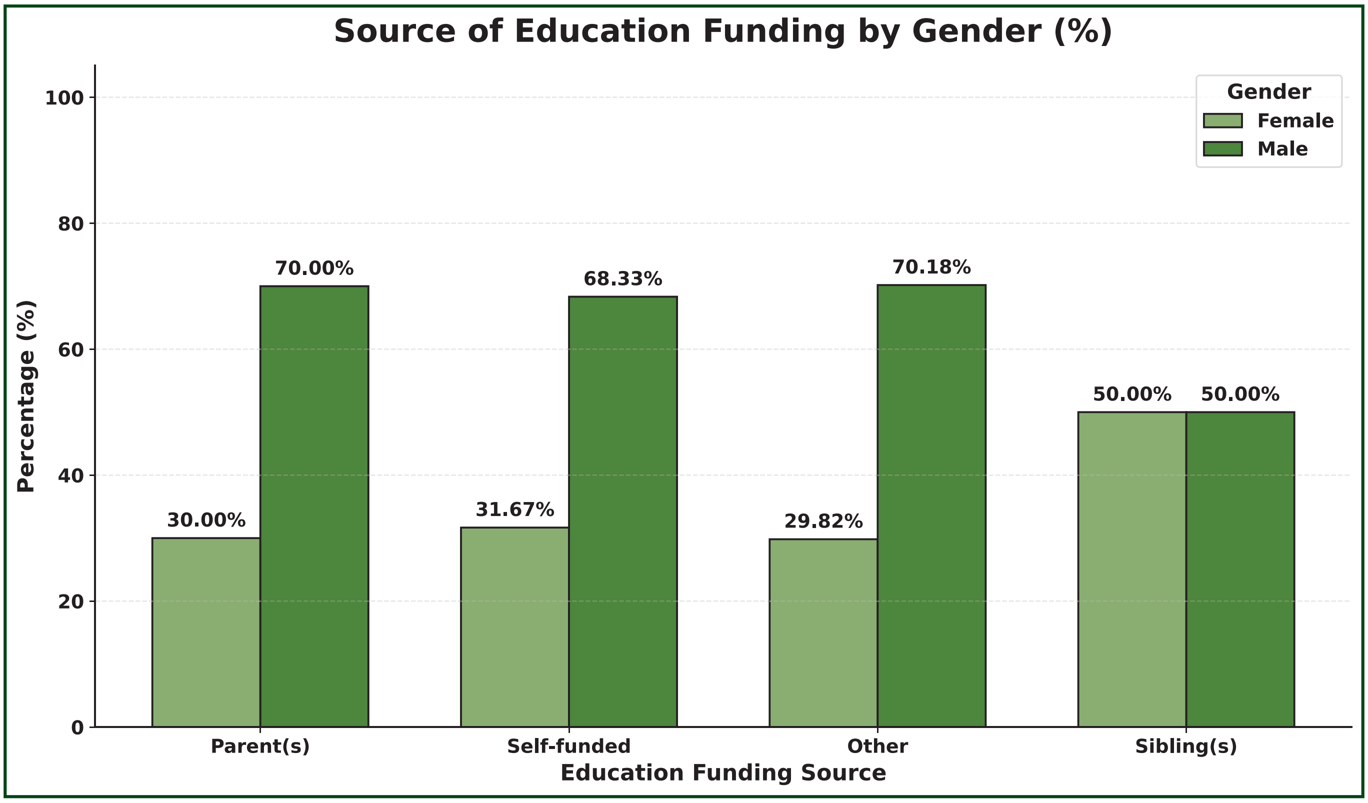
In line with Nepal's population distribution, the highest share of respondents came from Bagmati and the lowest from Karnali. Representation from Madhes province, which ranks second in terms of population density, is low. This pattern may be better explained by provincial differences in income distribution and education levels. However, the correlation between education levels and outmigration patterns in Nepal may need to be studied further to understand this trend.

Figure IV : Place of origin of the Respondents



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 4 annex)

Figure V : Source of income by Gender



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 5 & 7 annex)

The respondent distribution closely mirrors Nepal's income and wealth profile, suggesting that financial standing of the family may play an important role in shaping migration patterns. Nearly half of the survey respondents (47.69%) relied primarily on parental funding for education, and a large share (43.37%) reported that they relied on funds from Nepal to meet their education costs - in the range of NPR 25 lakh to 65 lakh (Tables 7 and 8 annex).

Education, Employment and Income

Table 9 : Current or past enrolment in the Australian education system at the time of Arrival

Enrolment in the Australian Education System	% of respondents Enrolled
Yes	64.83
No	35.17

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Survey data suggests that education is a central driver of Nepali migration to Australia. Before arrival, most respondents already held tertiary qualifications, particularly a bachelor's degree (48.81%) or a master's degree (26.51%) (table 10), showing that the diaspora entered with a relatively strong educational foundation. After migration (table 9), nearly two-thirds (64.83%) enrolled in the Australian education system, most commonly in Information Technology, Nursing and Health Sciences, and Business, Accounting and Finance (table 11).

Table 10 : Highest Level of Education Completed Before Arrival in Australia

Respondents' Highest Level Education at arrival	Percentage (%)
Bachelor's degree	48.81
Master's degree	26.51
Diploma/certificate	12.06
High school	8.84
PhD	2.95

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Photo by Vlad Kutepov on Unsplash

This educational background at arrival closely shapes the academic pathways respondents choose after moving to Australia, as reflected in their initial fields of study.

Table 11 : First Enrolled Degrees in Australia (Initial Course/Degree)

Rank	Respondents Field of study	% of field of Education
1	Information Technology	39.98
2	Nursing/Health Sciences	20.4
3	Business, Accounting & Finance	13.65
4	Engineering	11.78
5	Hospitality & Culinary Arts	5.46
6	Vocational Course	2.87
7	Agriculture	2.16
8	Others	3.7

Source: IIDS Survey Data

The Nepali-born population in Australia is also a highly work-oriented community with strong labour market participation. According to ABS data, around 84.4% are in the labour force, with most engaged in either part-time (45.2%) or full-time work (41.2%), while unemployment remains relatively high at 5.7%[11]. The national unemployment rate of Australia stands at 4.3% in 2026[12]. As a result, the diaspora today reflects both a community in transition and is settled: it is young, growing, and professionally diversified.

Complementing this national perspective, survey-based evidence from the IIDS Primary Survey (Table 12) shows an even higher level of economic activity among respondents. A majority (68.87%) are employed full-time, followed by 19.1% who are working students and 6.15% self-employed. Only 4.04% reported being unemployed, while 1.84% were not in the labour force.

The slightly higher concentration of full-time employment in the survey compared to ABS figures may reflect sample characteristics, as respondents are more likely to be economically active individuals. Nevertheless, both datasets consistently indicate strong labour force participation among the Nepali diaspora in Australia.

Table 12 : Current employment status of respondents in Australia

Current Employment status in Australia	% of Status
Work full-time	68.87
Working student	19.1
Self-employed (own business)	6.15
Unemployed	4.04
Not in the Labour force	1.84

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

11. Australian Bureau of Statistics, "2021 People in Australia Who Were Born in Nepal, Census Country of Birth QuickStats,", https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/7105_AUS.
12. https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release

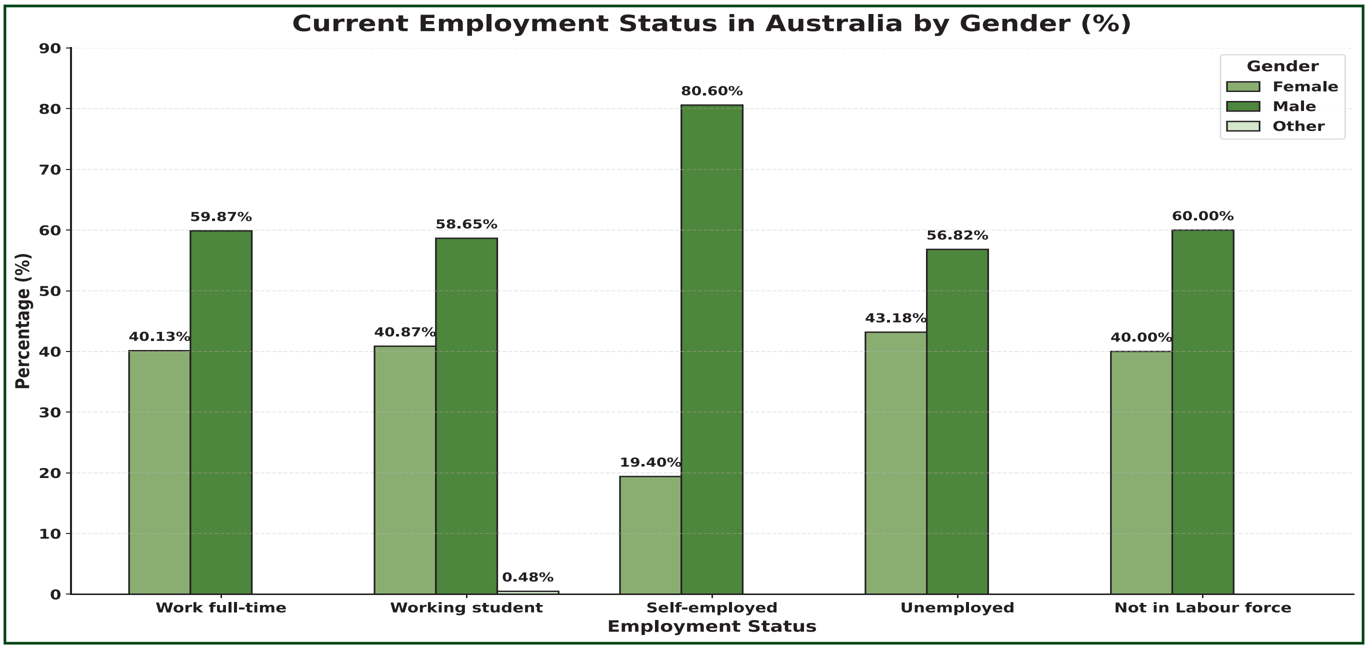
Case Study 1:

Samjhana Uprety, an aspiring public health officer, is currently learning a Bachelor of Health Science at LaTrobe University in Melbourne. While she is academically geared towards revolutionising health promotion and enhancing community wellbeing, Samjhana continues to nurture her passion for storytelling.

In 2021, she made her authorial debut with Timro Ma, which was translated to English in 2024 under the title I Am Yours. The book tracks the stories of Priya and Rahul, whose love blossoms in their teenage years, but is tested by the common Nepali experience of migrating for opportunities. Through her book, Samjhana, provides insight into the Nepali experience, strengthening understanding between Nepalis and Australians. Samjhana has been awarded by the Nepalese Association of Victoria for her outstanding contribution to promoting Nepali art and language


Photo by Samu Uprety

Figure VI : Current Employment Status in Australia by Gender



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 5 & 12)

Table 13 Specific industry or sector that respondents are currently employed

Industry/sector respondent currently employed	Percentage (%) of the sectors
Health and Care	46.65
Computer Engineering, IT and Tech	11.94
Engineering and Built Environment	6.43
Hospitality and Tourism	9.05
Admin and Support Services	6.98
Finance and Business Services	4.32
Trade and Transport	2.85
Others	11.8

Source: IIDS Survey Data

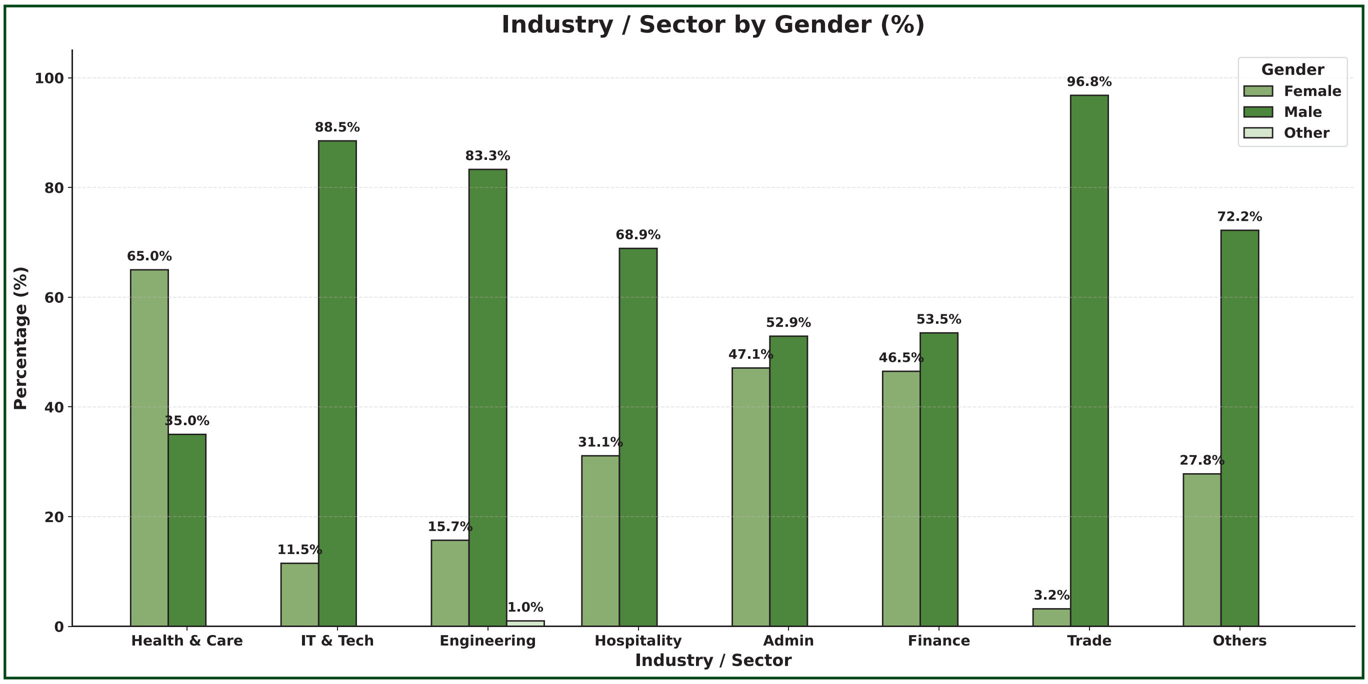
The sectors in which respondents are employed are closely linked to the roles they hold within the workforce. This is reflected in the distribution of positions, with most respondents concentrated in entry to mid-level roles across these industries.

Table 14: Current Employment Position or Professional Role of Respondents

Respondents Employment Role or Positions	Percentage (%)
Mid-level (officer, associate level)	39.61
Entry-level (e.g. junior-level professionals, assistant, trainee, intern)	24
Managerial or administrative level (e.g., department head, project manager, administrator, senior manager)	22.83
Executive/senior managerial level (e.g., CEO, director, advisor, large business owners, university professor)	5.95
Other	7.61

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Figure VII : Industry/ Sectors by Gender



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 5 & 13)

Their employment profile suggests that the Nepali community is not concentrated only in low-entry jobs but is gradually moving across different levels of the labour market.

While a large share remains in entry and mid-level roles, a notable proportion has already moved up to managerial and senior positions, pointing to a diaspora that is steadily building professional stability and upward mobility.

ABS data show that most employed Nepali-born respondents work standard or near full-time, mainly within the 45-to-16-hour weekly ranges[13].

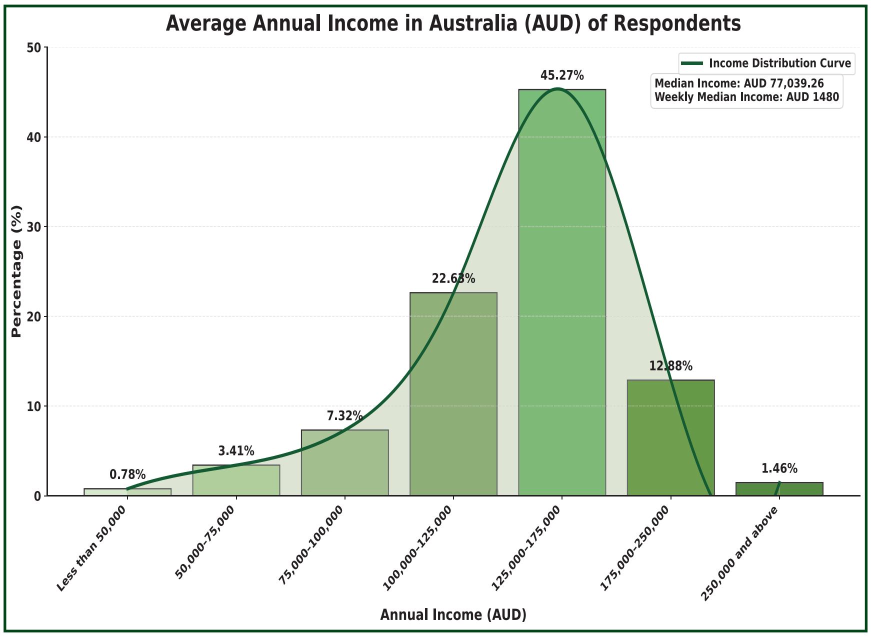
13. Australian Bureau of Statistics. "2021 People in Australia Who Were Born in Nepal, Census Country of Birth QuickStats.". https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/7105_AUS.

Survey findings reflect similar patterns, portraying Nepalis as well-settled and widely perceived as trustworthy, flexible, reliable, and hardworking professionals. Their reputation for being friendly and adaptable has contributed to higher levels of acceptance in sectors such as hospitality and healthcare. A key competitive advantage identified is English-language proficiency, which positions Nepali students and workers as more competitive than some other multicultural communities. Respondents also noted that Nepalis are rarely perceived as reliant on unemployment benefits.

Furthermore, the community has limited engagement with mainstream government services. While this may be partly influenced by the presence of self-employed individuals and entrepreneurs (6.15%), this alone doesn't fully explain the trend. Other factors such as strong labour force participation, financial independence, and reliance on community networks may also contribute to lower interaction with formal support systems.

Finally, Nepalis are often described as having modest or flexible expectations, which further enhances their employability and social acceptance.

Figure VIII : Annual Income in Australia of Respondents



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 15)

Income is concentrated mainly in the middle ranges, with the largest group earning between AUD 65,001 and AUD 120,000 a year, followed by a substantial share in the AUD 45,001 to AUD 65,000 bracket, while both very high and very low-income groups remain smaller (Figure VIII). The estimated median annual income is AUD 77,039.26[14] [15]

The survey-based median weekly income is approximately AUD 1,480[16], which appears higher than the national median reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (AUD 1,425 per week for all employees in August 2024[17] and AUD 2,051.10 by November 2025[18]). This difference is mainly due to how income is measured. The ABS figure reflects individual earnings from employment across the entire workforce, while the survey captures a different mix of respondents and may include people working more hours or in higher-paying roles.

Looking specifically at Nepali-born individuals, ABS Census data (2021) shows a median personal income of AUD 855 per week. When income is considered at a broader level, the median rises to AUD 2,042

14. To identify the median income category, cumulative percentages were examined across income brackets. The cumulative share reaches 31.8% at the \$45,001–\$65,000 range and exceeds the 50th percentile within the \$65,001–\$90,000 bracket, placing the median income in this interval.
15. Median income is estimated from grouped income bands (not exact incomes). Excluding 'Prefer not to say', valid N = 961. Grouped median formula: Median = L + ((N/2 − cf) / f) × w, where L is the lower bound of the median band, cf is cumulative frequency below the median band, f is frequency in the median band, and w is the band width. Here, the median band is \$65,001 to \$90,000 so L = 65,001, w = 24,999, cf = 350, f = 271. Median = 65,001 + ((961/2 − 350)/271) × 24,999 = 77,039 (AUD, approx.)
16. Weekly median income is approximated by converting the grouped median annual income to a weekly figure. Median weekly ≈ Median annual ÷ 52. Using the grouped median annual ≈ AUD 77,039, Median weekly ≈ 77,039/52 = AUD 1,481.52 ≈ AUD 1,480 (nearest \$10).
17. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Employee Earnings, Australia, August 2025, December 12, 2025, https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/employee-earnings/latest-release
18. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, November 2025, February 26, 2026, https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/average-weekly-earnings-australia/nov-2025.

for families and AUD 2,337 at the household level[19]. This pattern shows substantially higher combined earnings at the family and household levels compared to individual income.

Table 15 : Average annual income in Australia (AUD) of respondents

Annual Income (AUD)	% of amount
Less than AUD 9,000	0.78
AUD 9,001 to AUD 30,000	3.41
AUD 30,001 to AUD 45,000	7.32
AUD 45,001 to AUD 65,000	22.63
AUD 65,001 to AUD 120,000	45.27
AUD 120,001 to AUD 250,000	12.88
AUD 250,001 and above	1.46
Prefer not to say	6.24
Median Income	AUD 77,039.26
Weekly Median Income	AUD 1480

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Notably, respondents indicated that while relatively few have so far attained senior leadership positions in professional fields, there has been a noticeable increase among the emerging younger generation. One respondent observed that attendance by Nepalis at national and Australia-wide professional conferences – including those related to agriculture – has increased significantly in recent years. Whereas Nepali representation at such events was previously minimal, it is now increasingly visible, particularly among students and early-career academics.

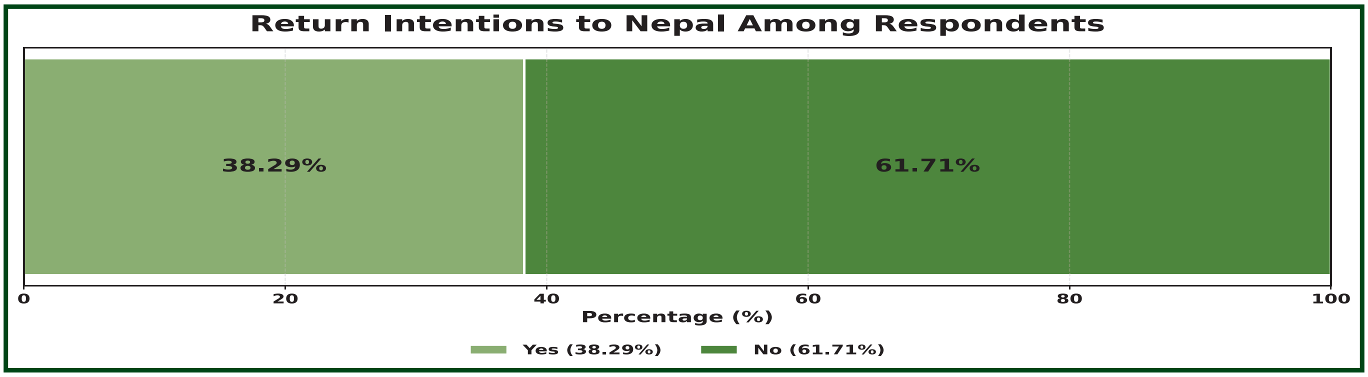
However, respondents also highlighted the role of social media in creating unrealistic expectations that often obscure lived realities. Participants noted that members of the Nepali diaspora frequently share images of material success, such as luxury cars and branded clothing, while rarely acknowledging the long working hours – often exceeding sixty hours per week – spent in physically demanding jobs. As a result, some individuals in Nepal, particularly those facing unemployment, are influenced by these portrayals to sell family land and migrate to Australia, only to encounter significant challenges in securing employment and sending remittances.

Despite these difficulties, participants emphasised that the overall professional presence of the Nepali diaspora, while still relatively limited, is steadily expanding. Many current students are expected to enter professional roles in the coming years, suggesting that the community is at an early yet promising stage of professional development.

19. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), "2021 People in Australia Who Were Born in Nepal, Census Country of Birth QuickStats," QuickStats 2021 Nepal-born Australia https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/7105_AUS

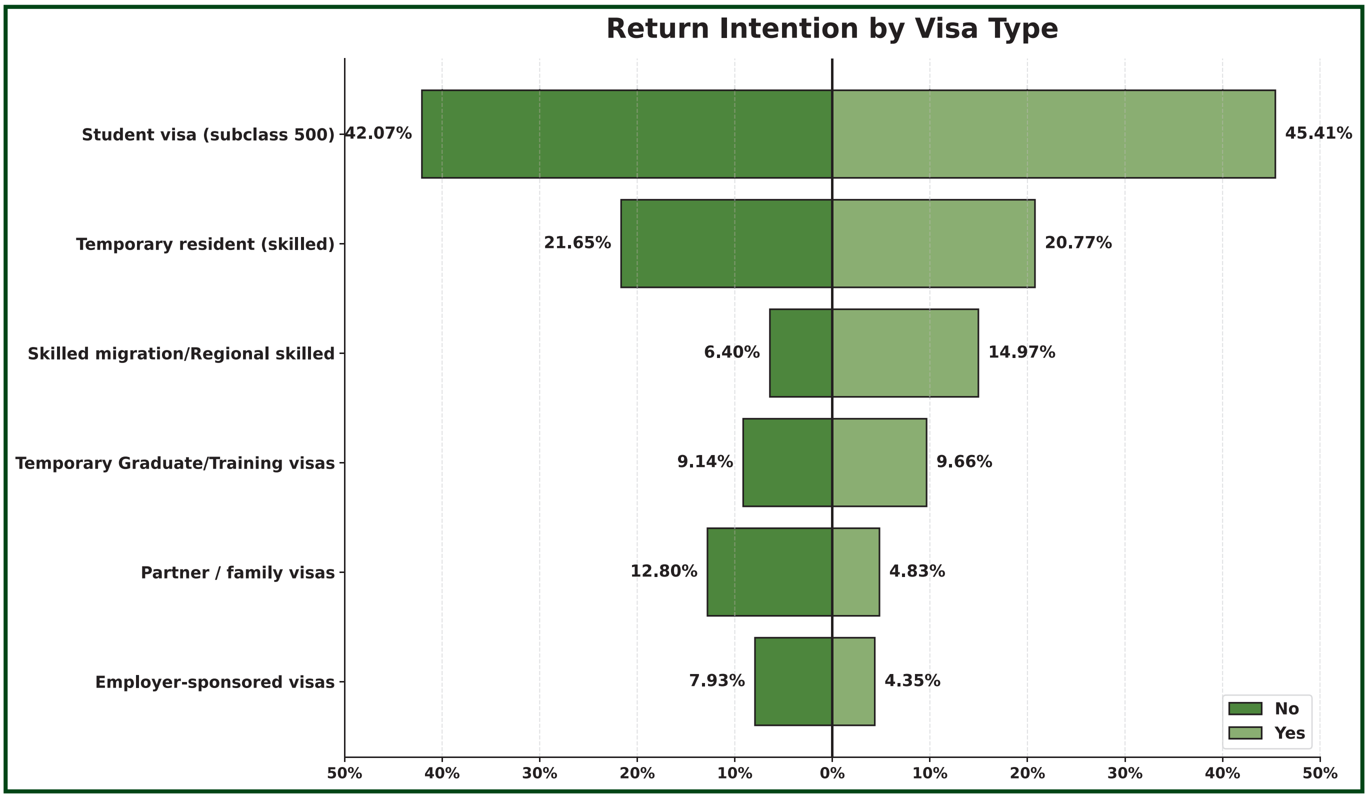
Return Intentions

Figure IX : Return Intentions to Nepal Among Respondents



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 16 annex)

Figure X : Return Intention by Visa Type



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 9 & 16 annex)

Return intentions to Nepal are mixed. Most respondents prefer to stay back in Australia (61.71%) while fewer (38.29%) plan to return. Those less settled, such as the unemployed or not in the labour force, as well as the self-employed, show a greater tendency to return, whereas full-time workers (36.53%) and working students (36.06%) are more likely to remain in Australia (Table 16 annex).

Photo by Sean Robertson on Unsplash

Social and Cultural Integration

Migrant integration is widely understood as a relational and institutional process, shaped by the networks that connect migrants to information, opportunities, and support. Social system networks are often discussed through social capital theory, distinguishing between bonding ties (close connections within the community that provide immediate assistance and emotional security) and bridging ties (connections to wider society and institutions that enable upward mobility, civic participation, and broader belonging). For newer, education-led migrant communities, these networks frequently operate as "settlement infrastructure," compensating for limited familiarity with local systems and helping migrants navigate employment, housing, and administrative requirements during early settlement stages.

Table 17: Areas of Perceived Integration of Nepalis Living in Australia into Australian Society

Area of integration	% of areas
Workforce participation	68.1
Education (as students or professionals)	63.8
Multicultural festivals and events	57.7
Entrepreneurship and business	32.7
Volunteerism or community service	26.5
Other	3.8

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

The Nepali diaspora in Australia contributes not only through employment, education, and business, but also through cultural participation and community life. Survey findings show that 57.7% of respondents identified multicultural festivals and events as an important area of perceived integration into Australian Society (Table 17). This indicates that Nepali identity is being expressed and recognised not only in private community spaces but also in public multicultural settings, where festivals, celebrations, and cultural events can strengthen both visibility and social inclusion.

Table 18 : Participation in Nepali organisations or associations in Australia

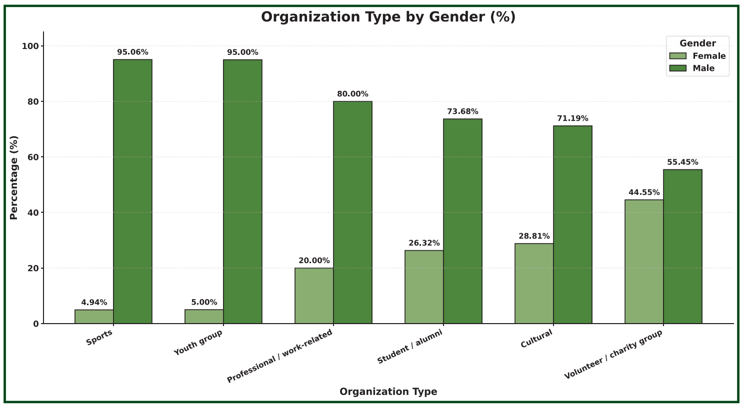
Participation in Organisations or Associations	Percentage (%)
Yes	41.05
No	58.95

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

This cultural contribution is also reflected in organised community participation. Although only 41.05% of respondents reported involvement in Nepali organisations (Table 18), those who do participate are engaged in a wide range of groups, including volunteer or charity groups (43.4 percent), cultural organisations (32.21 percent), professional or work-related groups (29.53 percent), and sports (26.4 percent) (Table 19 annex). Male respondents reported higher participation in Nepali organisations than female respondents, indicating a gender gap in community involvement (Figure XI).

This suggests that diaspora engagement is not limited to formal economic roles, but also extends to community building, cultural continuity, and collective identity formation.

Figure XI : Organisation Type by Gender



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 5 & 20)

The social and cultural integration of the Nepali diaspora in Australia reflects a gradual but meaningful process of finding one's belonging while holding onto one's roots.

Over time, Nepali migrants have moved beyond just settling in and are actively shaping their presence through community life, cultural expression, and everyday interactions. Festivals, shared traditions, and informal networks help maintain a sense of identity, while engagement with broader society allows for connection, recognition, and participation. At the same time, not everyone experiences this journey in the same way, as factors like time, awareness, and personal interest influence how connected individuals feel.

Case study 2:

Bishnu Ghimire is the current President of Shabdamala Nepali Language School – an institution established in the late 2000s that aims to teach Nepali language and, more broadly, Nepali art and culture. Shabdamala Nepali Language

School – which maintains eight branches across Australia – is among dozens of Nepali - language schools that operate across Australian states. The schools cater to second - generation Nepalis, helping them preserve their roots.

Given Australia's multicultural nature, the Australian government generously encourages this initiative, providing economic and other forms of support to these schools.

Photo Credit Shabdamala Nepali Language

A majority of respondents (58.95%) reported no involvement in Nepali organisations in Australia (Table 18). The most commonly cited reasons were lack of interest (41.9%) and time constraints (24.76%), particularly among those balancing work and study commitments. Some respondents also noted limited awareness of existing organisations or explained that they were still relatively new to Australia and had not yet established community connections (Table 20, Annex).

These findings suggest that, although parts of the diaspora remain actively engaged, there is still scope to improve the awareness, accessibility and inclusiveness of Nepali community organisations.

At the same time, most respondents feel they are integrating at a comfortable level, suggesting a sense of stability and acceptance in their day-to-day lives. Beyond just settling in, there are clear signs that Nepalis in Australia are beginning to see themselves as contributors rather than outsiders, with growing involvement in different social and civic spaces. Nevertheless, the variation in participation and perception highlights that this journey is not the same for everyone, with some less connected or engaged than others. This reflects an evolving identity where the diaspora on the one hand is balancing adaptation and maintaining its roots, but also gradually strengthening its presence and voice within the broader society on the other.

Belonging, Identity, and Ties with Nepal

Diaspora-homeland connections can be understood through a progressive ladder of contribution, where the nature and depth of engagement evolve as diaspora communities become more settled and institutionally mature (Adhikari 2022). In the early forming stage, connections to the homeland are primarily through remittances and immediate economic support driven by familial and emotional ties. As communities move into the establishing and established stages, these connections expand from individual support to more organised and collective forms of engagement with the country of origin, and include philanthropic activities and investments. In the more *advanced* and *matured* stages, homeland connections become increasingly strategic, characterised by knowledge and technology transfer and institution-building, where communities leverage skills, professional networks, and transnational experience to contribute to long-term development outcomes.

This framework suggests that maintaining a connection to the homeland is not static but deepens over time as migrants gain stability, resources, and confidence in host societies. Emotional attachment and cultural belonging often remain constant, but the forms of engagement diversify and upscale, moving from personal remittances toward collective, impact-oriented contributions. This theory is particularly useful as it highlights how integration in host countries and connection to the homeland are not opposing processes but mutually reinforcing ones, enabling the diaspora to act as bridges between societies while contributing to development in their countries of origin.

A. Citizenship and Sense of Belonging

Table 21 : Perceived Influence of Dual Citizenship on Nepali Identity and Sense of Belonging

Do you think dual citizenship would influence your Nepali identity and sense of belonging ?	Percentage (%)
Yes	73.04
No	4.32
It would provide legal recognition, but not much affect my identity	1.75
Not Sure	15.58
Not willing to answer	5.7

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Most respondents clearly feel that dual citizenship would strengthen their sense of belonging, suggesting that legal recognition matters beyond just paperwork. It seems to offer a sense of security and acknowledgement, especially for those balancing life across two countries. At the same time, a small group feels that identity is something more personal and not entirely shaped by legal status. Overall, the response shows that while identity remains deeply rooted, formal recognition can still play an important role in how connected people feel.

Respondents highlight that dual citizenship fosters a sense of belonging by enabling economic engagement, encouraging investment, and strengthening long-term ties through reintegration. It creates "fluidity between the two countries." For instance, one respondent shared that if dual citizenship were implemented in Nepal, they would travel frequently between Nepal and Australia after retirement. The respondent further noted, "I could also gain tax benefits in both countries since I will be investing in both. This would also generate employment opportunities in Nepal." Another respondent emphasised that although they hold Australian citizenship, Nepal remains their true home. The respondent said, "I would love to maintain a formal connection with Nepal, not just emotionally but also legally."

Under the current system, many respondents feel that regaining Nepali citizenship is nearly impossible. In this context, the NRN (Non-Resident Nepali) card serves as an alternative identity document issued by the Government of Nepal to recognise individuals of Nepali origin living abroad. It provides certain legal and economic benefits, including the ability to invest funds, establish businesses, and access limited property ownership and inheritance rights in Nepal. However, these benefits are often not clearly communicated or effectively implemented, leading many respondents to view the card as largely symbolic with limited practical value. As a result, many in the diaspora feel restricted: they wish to invest, support family, purchase property, or initiate small projects in Nepal, but without proper legal rights, these activities are risky or complicated.

Respondents also acknowledged that hesitancy around dual citizenship may stem from concerns about political involvement. However, dual citizenship is broadly viewed as a mechanism to strengthen national identity, attract capital inflows, and sustain diaspora engagement, with the possibility of implementing controlled conditions to address concerns

B. Representation

However, most respondents are uncertain about their political aspirations, and a smaller portion focuses more on cultural and social issues.

Table 22 : Political Aspiration and Representation of Nepalis in Australian Politics

Political Aspiration	Percentage (%)
I am unsure	42.15
The community is actively seeking political representation	20.29
Political interest is growing, but more organisation is needed	14.14
There is little political engagement, but potential exists	12.30
The community is more focused on cultural/social issues	10.47
Other	0.65

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Survey data reveals a mixed but evolving picture of political aspiration and representation in Australia. While some respondents believe the community is actively seeking political representation, others acknowledge the need for greater organisation. At the same time, political aspirations within the community appear to be still developing, with the largest group of respondents (42.15%) expressing uncertainty about political representation. While 20.29% believe the community is actively seeking representation and 14.14% see growing interest, a notable share still feels that engagement is limited or more focused on cultural and social issues (Table 22).

Table 23 : Areas Where Nepalis Living in Australia Have the Most Influence in Australia (they believe they have the most influence.)

Areas of Influence	Percentage (%)
Academic and education sectors	18.98
Arts, Culture, and Media	15.56
Australian local community issues	8.28
Australian politics	11.30
Business	15.34
Nepali politics	8.65
Research and Development	11.52
Social welfare programs	10.37

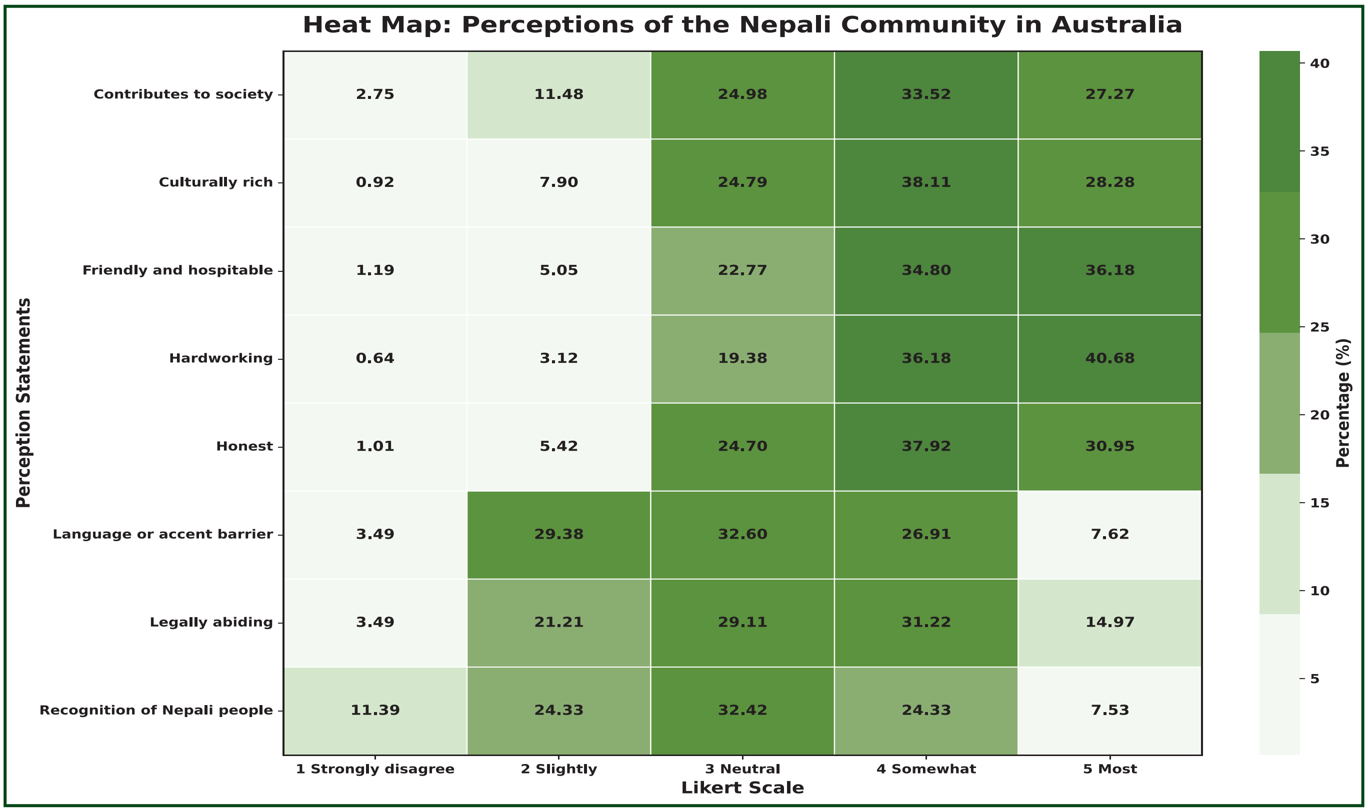
Source: IIDS Primary Survey

The findings show an interesting balance between what Nepalis in Australia feel they contribute to and how they see themselves integrating into society. Many believe they have a strong influence in areas like education (18.98%), business (15.34%), and arts and culture (15.56%), which reflects confidence in their skills, creativity, and professional presence. There is also a sense that they are gradually making their mark in research, social welfare, and even political spaces, both in Australia and back in Nepal. This suggests a community that is not just present but actively contributing in meaningful ways (Table 23).

Together, these perspectives show that while influence is often experienced through routine activities like work and study, influence is felt more strongly in areas where individuals can express their skills, ideas, and identity. It reflects a community that is steadily growing in confidence, contributing in different ways, and finding its place across both social and professional spaces.

Overall, the findings reflect a diaspora that is strongly integrated in education and the workforce, moderately active in cultural and economic spheres, but still in a transitional phase when it comes to political engagement and broader societal influence.

Figure XII : Survey Respondents, Perception Scores of the Nepali Community in Australia



Source: IIDS Survey Data

The heat map shows a generally positive perception of the Nepali community in Australia, with strong agreement on traits like being hardworking, honest, and friendly. Most responses cluster around "somewhat" and "most," especially for hardworking and friendliness, indicating a strong positive image. Cultural richness and contribution to society are also widely acknowledged, though with slightly more neutral responses. In contrast, language or accent barriers stand out as a key challenge, with higher responses in the "neutral" and "somewhat" range. Overall, the findings suggest a well-integrated community with positive social recognition, alongside some communication-related barriers.

C. Maintaining Ties to Nepal

Visiting Nepal serves as a key mechanism for the diaspora to remain connected to their Nepali identity. Most respondents maintain regular ties at home, with 37.74% visiting every 2–3 years and 10.38% visiting at least once a year. However, a sizable share (26.91%) has not yet been able to visit, while 22.22% travel infrequently or rarely, indicating varied levels of physical engagement with Nepal (Table 24).

Table 24 : Frequency of visits to Nepal

Visit frequency	% of visits
Every 2–3 years	37.74
I haven't had the chance to visit yet, but I plan to	26.63
Every 4–5 years	12.49
At least once a year	10.38
Rarely (more than 5 years gap)	9.73
Multiple times in a year	2.75

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

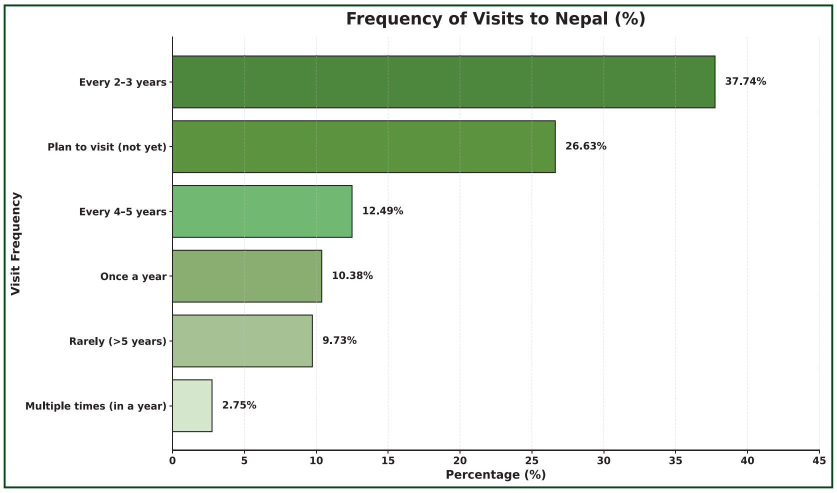
Visits to Nepal are driven by family and social ties. Tourism or leisure and cultural or religious events also feature strongly, while work, business, and practicalities account for comparatively smaller shares (Table 25).

Table 25 : Reasons for visits to Nepal

Reason for Visit	Percentage (%)
Family and friends	50.27
Tourism and leisure	20.63
Cultural or religious events	15.70
Wedding	11.13
Professional work	0.57
Business work	0.63
Medical reasons	0.63
Managing financial or property matters	0.35
Other	0.07

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Figure XIII: Visit Frequency



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 28)

When people do visit Nepal, the reasons are deeply personal and centered around relationships. Spending time with family and friends stands out as the most meaningful motivation, reflecting how strong these bonds remain despite physical distance. Alongside this, visits also serve as a chance to reconnect with culture, attend important life events, or simply take a break and enjoy the familiarity of home. These trips are not just about travel, but about reconnecting with identity, memories, and a sense of belonging (Table 25).

At the same time, these visits are not limited to social connections. Many individuals actively engage with Nepal through leisure and cultural experiences, such as exploring local food, visiting heritage sites, or travelling to different parts of the country. These activities show a continued appreciation for Nepal's culture and environment. To others, even a rediscovery of culture and environment comes from a new perspective. It reflects how connection to home can evolve, becoming both emotional and experiential (Table 25.1).

There is also a clear economic dimension to these visits. Spending patterns indicate that many migrants contribute financially during their time in Nepal, whether through everyday expenses, supporting family, or engaging in local activities. This highlights that maintaining ties is not only about emotional connection but also about continued economic engagement with the home country. In this way, each visit becomes a way of contributing to Nepal, even if small, in meaningful ways (Table 25.2).

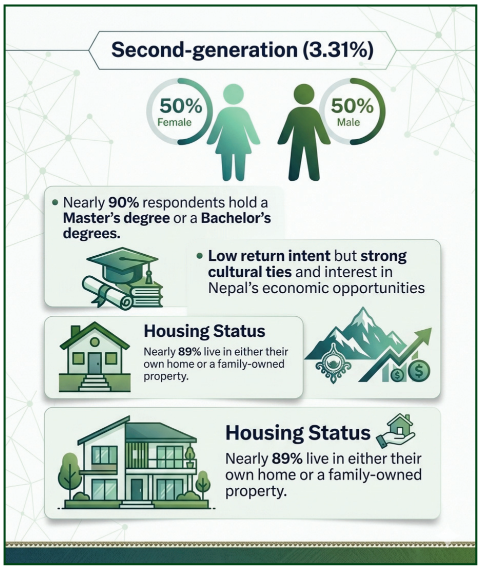
Overall, maintaining ties to Nepal is not a single action but an ongoing process shaped by time, distance, and personal priorities. Whether through planned visits, staying connected with loved ones, or engaging with culture and local experiences, Nepalis in Australia continue to nurture a relationship with their home country. This connection adds depth to their lives abroad, allowing them to carry a sense of home with them while building a future.

The Nepali diaspora in Australia is steadily building a strong and confident presence, growing through work, education, and everyday life while staying closely connected to its cultural roots. Social and cultural integration is clearly moving in a positive direction, with many finding their own ways to engage, contribute, and feel part of the wider community.

At the same time, ties to Nepal remain vibrant and meaningful, shaped by family, identity, and a shared sense of belonging, showing that building a life abroad and staying connected to home can go hand in hand.

Second-generation diaspora, identity, and long-term engagement

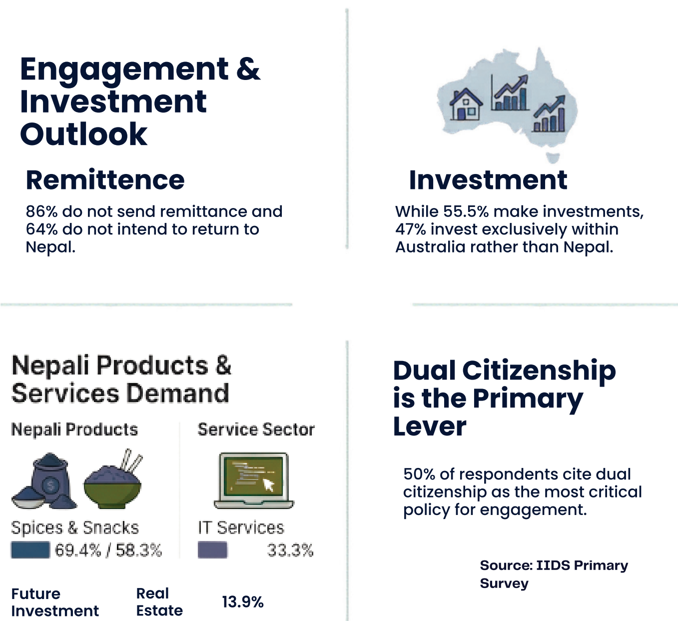
Figure XIV : Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile of Second-Generation Nepali Diaspora



Understanding the second-generation diaspora is important because it reflects the long-term future of diaspora engagement, identity, and transnational connection. Unlike first-generation migrants, they are often more embedded in the host country while still retaining cultural, economic, and emotional ties to Nepal. This makes them especially important for shaping future trade, investment, and policy linkages. Focusing on them helps show how Nepal can sustain diaspora relations beyond remittances and migration alone.

The second-generation respondents appear to be a well-educated and economically established group, with most holding university degrees and many working full-time in professional sectors, and are often living either with parents, with family, or in self-owned homes, suggesting relatively stable household conditions (IIDS Survey Data).

Figure XV: Engagement and Investment Patterns of Nepali Diaspora in Australia



Their employment profile indicates a strong presence in white-collar and managerial roles, pointing to growing professional integration. At the same time, most do not intend to return to Nepal, and very few send remittances, showing that their relationship with Nepal is less centred on direct financial support. However, many who have made investments in Australia also show interest in future investments in areas such as real estate, shares, and technology in Nepal. Their strong demand for Nepali products and interest in service sector opportunities, along with support for measures such as dual citizenship and greater investment security, suggest that this group remains meaningfully connected to Nepal and could be engaged through trade, business, and policy reform rather than traditional remittance channels (IIDS Survey Data). Table 26: Second Generation (Table A1 – A16 annex).

Overall, the second-generation diaspora is well-settled and professionally integrated, with a growing shift toward more forward-looking and sustainable forms of engagement beyond traditional remittances.

Diaspora Investment

Survey data reveals that 34.99% of respondents have made formal financial investments beyond savings. The geographic and sectoral distribution of this capital reveals both significant and structural constraints for Nepal. Of those who have invested, 51.18% have done so exclusively in Australia, 26.25% in both countries, and 22.57% exclusively in Nepal. The majority of diaspora capital is being absorbed by the Australian domestic market, reflecting confidence in Australian institutions rather than a lack of interest in Nepal.

Table 27.a: Diaspora Investment (Nepal and Australia)

Investment	Percentage (%)
Yes	34.99
No	65.01

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Investment Scale

Investment patterns among Nepali diaspora in Australia point to a community that has moved well beyond tentative financial participation. The scale of capital involved – with nearly 60% of investor respondents holding portfolio above AUD 350,000 – suggests confident engagement with Australia's formal financial system, not just modest savings or remittances sent home.

Table 27 : Estimated Value of Diaspora Investments in Australia

Investment Value Range (AUD)	Percentage (%)
Less than 50,000	19.6
50,000 – 100,000	8.8
100,001 – 350,000	12
$350,001 – 750,000	28.8
Above 750,000	30.8

Source: IIDS Survey Data

What's striking is where the concentration lies. The largest share of investors sits at the top end of the distribution, with close to a third holding portfolios above AUD 750,000. This reflects a diaspora actively leveraging Australian financial instruments like mortgages and structured business loans to acquire high-value assets. These are not cash investors parking modest savings; they are participants in a mature, collateralised credit market, taking on debt strategically to build wealth.

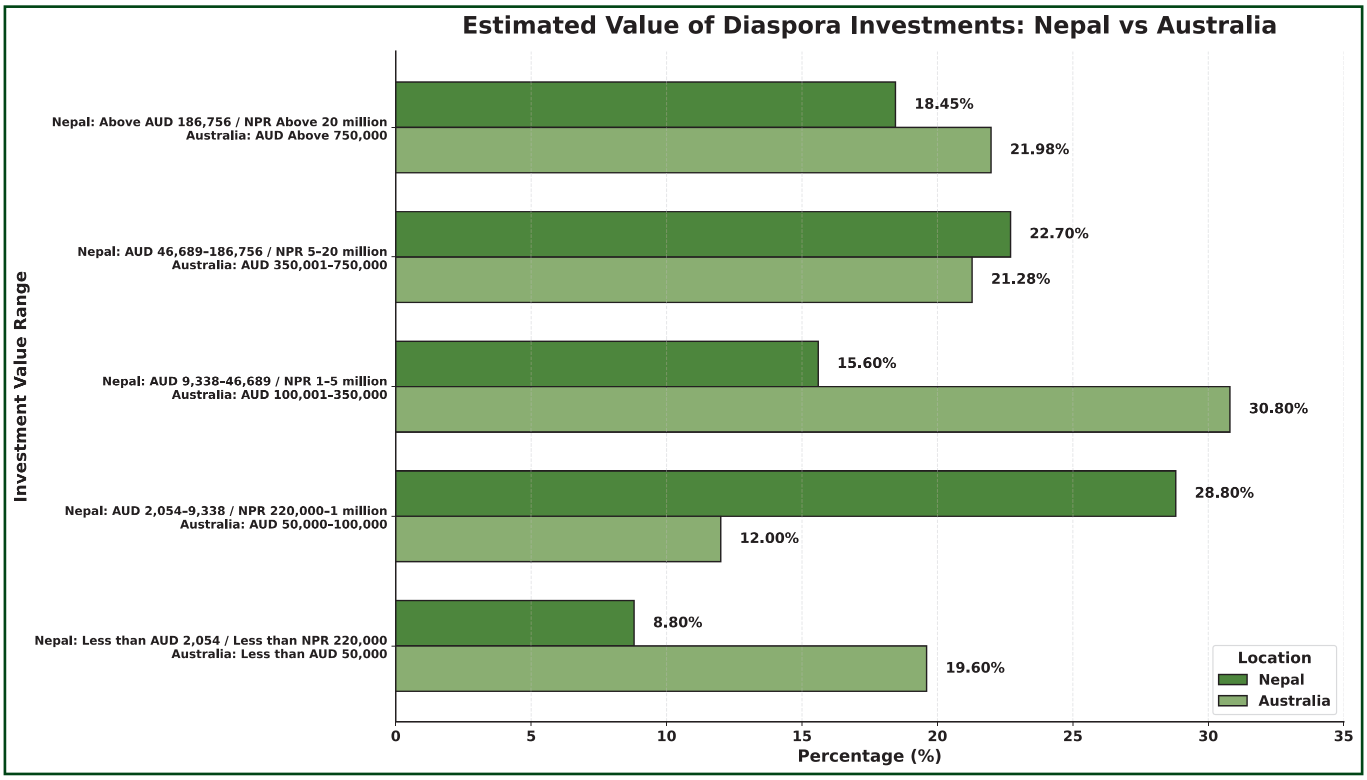
Table 29 : Estimated Value of Diaspora Investments in Nepal in AUD

Investment Amount Range (AUD)	Percentage (%)
Less than 2,054 AUD	15.6
2,054 – 9,338 AUD	21.28
9,338 – 46,689 AUD	22.7
46,689 – 186,756 AUD	21.98
186,756 – 466,890 AUD	10.64
Above 466,890 AUD	7.81

Source: IIDS Survey Data

The picture back in Nepal looks quite different, and in some ways more interesting. Rather than a polarised split between small remittance-funded ventures and a few large players, investment is spread across the middle. Nearly two-thirds of Nepal-directed capital falls between NPR 220,000 and NPR 20 million – a range that maps onto everyday enterprises: SME development, agricultural modernisation, diversified commercial operations. Micro-investors and large-scale players exist at either end, but they are not the dominant story.

Figure XVI : Investment Nepal vs Australia by Respondents



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 27,28 & 29)

The contrast between the two markets is visible in Figure XVI. Australia skews heavily toward the upper brackets; Nepal spreads more evenly across tiers. Together, they tell a coherent story about how the diaspora deploys capital depending on context, leveraging formal finance where available and building from the ground up where it is not. What comes through most clearly is that investment is happening at every scale, in both directions. That breadth, more than any single data point, signals a maturing diaspora economy with genuine long-term potential.

Sectoral Patterns

The specific economic sectors targeted by the diaspora highlight the differing risk appetites mandated by geography. Investments in Australia are concentrated in real estate (56.8%) and financial markets (25.6%), reflecting a preference for transparent, low-risk assets with established collateralisation mechanisms (Table 30)

Table 30 : Respondents' Investment Sectors in Australia (Multiple Responses)

Investment Sector	Percentage (%)
Real Estate / Property Investment	56.8
Stock Market, Banking and Financial Services	25.6
Business or Franchise / Entrepreneurship	16.0
Education and Training	6.6
Logistics and Supply Chain	6.4
Retail and Trade (Shops, Import/Export)	6.1
Construction and Infrastructure	6.0
Tourism and Hospitality	5.7
Food and Beverage (F&B)	5.6
Digital Technology and Innovation	5.2
Handicrafts and Traditional Products	3.2
Agriculture	2.4
Renewable Energy	1.6
Others	4

Source: IIDS Survey Data

However, the investment patterns in Nepal are diversified but risky: stock market and banking (39.01%), real estate (38.30%), agriculture and construction (11.35% each), with smaller shares across education, tourism, digital technology, and renewable energy (Table 31). Respondents are not only focusing on traditional investment avenues but are also actively supporting diverse sectors that contribute to Nepal's broader economic development, even if these involve greater operational complexity and risk.

Table 31: Respondents' Investment Sectors in Nepal (Multiple Responses)

Investment Sector	Percentage (%)
Stock Market, Banking, and Finance	39.01
Real Estate / Property Investment	38.30
Agriculture	11.35
Construction and Infrastructure	11.35
Education and Training	7.09
Tourism and Hospitality	6.38
Food and Beverage (F&B)	5.67
Business or Franchise	4.96
Digital Technology and Innovation	4.26
Renewable Energy	3.55
Retail and Trade (Shops, Import)	2.84
Logistics and Supply Chain	2.13
Handicrafts and Traditional Products	1.42
Manufacturing and Industry	1.42
Other	3.55

Source: IIDS Survey Data

This sectoral distribution shows that the diaspora perceives Nepal as possessing somewhat broader and more diverse opportunity space across multiple productive and operational sectors. While investment preferences are still relatively concentrated in areas such as finance and real estate, there is also visible engagement across sectors like agriculture, construction, education, and tourism. This indicates a degree of diversification.

If Australia appears to be viewed more so through the lens of static asset appreciation, Nepal is seen as an emerging market ripe for entrepreneurial development in clean energy, specialized tourism, and digital outsourcing. However, as the data subsequently proves, the actual execution of these operational investments in Nepal is deeply paralysed by systemic institutional failures.

Investment Barriers in Nepal

The fundamental barrier to diaspora investment in Nepal is not a shortage of capital or viable opportunities but an institutional unpredictability. On the other hand, Australia's investment environment succeeds because of accessible financing (65.42%), system transparency (53.75%), and political stability (30.42%), which allow investors to model risk and conduct due diligence without relying on personal or political networks (Table 32).

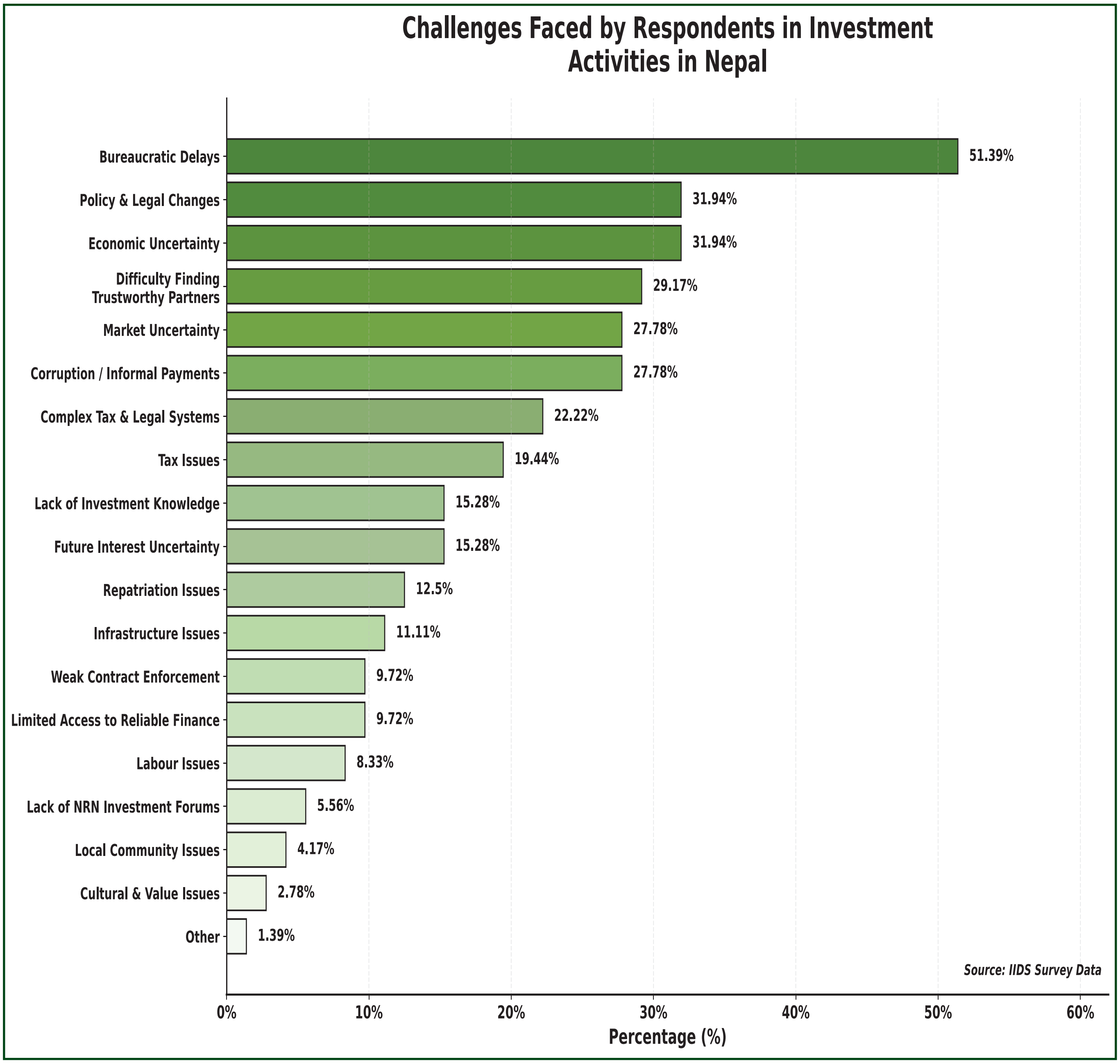
Table 32: Factors Encouraging Investment Among Respondents in Australia (Multiple Responses)

Factor	Percentage (%)
Accessible financing and loan options	65.42
Transparent Australian financial system	53.75
Political stability	30.42
Easy and accessible digital platforms and remote management tools	20.83
Easy access to financial advice and government resources	15.83
Diaspora networks or investment groups	9.58
Positive past experience and good returns	8.75
Consistent year-round customer base (locals and tourists)	7.92
Ease of sending money / international transactions	7.92
Support from friends, family, and the Nepali community	7.50
Labour accessibility	2.92
Other	0.83

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Qualitative responses reinforce this picture. Respondents consistently describe the Australian process as documented and predictable – one in which mortgage amortisation, expected yields, and tax liabilities can all be calculated before a decision is made. The institutional framework removes anxiety from the equation, and capital flows accordingly.

Figure XVII : Challenges Faced by Respondents in Investment Activities in Nepal (Multiple Responses)



Source: IIDS Survey Data(Table 33 annex)

Nepal, by contrast, is characterised by high perceived opportunity and low execution feasibility. Bureaucratic delays are the single most cited barrier at 51.39%, followed by economic uncertainty and policy or legal changes (both 31.94%), difficulty in finding trustworthy partners (29.17%), and market uncertainty and corruption or informal payments (both 27.78%). Complex tax and legal systems add a further 22.22%, with tax issues specifically cited by 19.44%, reflecting a pattern where fiscal unpredictability compounds, rather than merely accompanying the broader governance problem. Weak contract enforcement (9.72%) and repatriation difficulties (12.50%) close the loop: capital that enters Nepal cannot easily be extracted, enforced against, or defended through formal legal channels.

Qualitative feedback confirms what the numbers suggest. Respondents point not to a shortage of viable sectors – hydropower, tourism, IT, agriculture, and real estate all feature prominently as opportunities – but to the daily operational reality of engaging with unpredictable tax authorities, shifting municipal regulations, and bureaucratic processes that resist calculation. For an overseas investor who cannot be physically present to manage these relationships, the risk is not just financial but also operational: every interaction with the Nepali state requires local intermediaries, relational networks, and political navigation that cannot be replicated from Sydney or Melbourne.

The practical result is a defensive retreat into real estate. Purchasing land protects capital from inflation while bypassing the bureaucratic apparatus almost entirely. It is rational at the individual level, but economically sterile. Land banking generates no employment, no technology transfer, and no productive spillovers into the broader economy. The diaspora's capital reaches Nepal, but in a form that accumulates rather than circulates.

Case Study 3:

Photo Credit : Rikma Khadka

Rikma Khadka, accompanied by her husband Biraj, moved to Australia in 2014 for a diploma and bachelor's in nursing. While Rikma pursued her degrees, Biraj started doing different jobs and hosting Nepali events during the weekends. The couple's lives took a turn when they visited Nepal for a vacation only to have their flight back cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. They used this opportunity to travel across Nepal and found themselves deeply drawn to Biraj's ancestral village in Dolakha, where they chose to settle and build the Methang Permaculture Farm and Homestay. After receiving hands-on farming training and self-learning basic veterinary care, Biraj and Rikma are now advocates for sustainable farming and rural tourism.

Policy Levers and Forward Investment Intent

Policy preferences reveal that diaspora investment in Nepal is conditional rather than absent. The data points overwhelmingly toward three categories of reform: legal recognition, institutional security, and administrative simplification.

Table 34: Policies That Would Encourage More Investment in Nepal (Multiple Responses)

Policy Measures	Percentage (%)
Clear Land Ownership & Property Rights	24.70
Diaspora Bonds / Special FDI Schemes	13.77
Dual Citizenship	66.39
Easier Repatriation of Funds	21.30
Public-Private Partnership Incentives	12.03
Investment Security Guarantees	32.69
Legal Protection Mechanisms	12.86
One-Stop Service Centers	21.49

Policy Measures	Percentage (%)
Regular Engagement Forums	6.24
Simplified & Fast-Track Investment Process	12.86
Sector-Specific Investment Guidance	6.43
Tax Incentives for Diaspora	19.28
Other	0.64

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Dual citizenship is the single most supported measure at 66.39%, a margin that far exceeds every other option and warrants its own interpretation. Respondents consistently framed citizenship not as a matter of identity but as a practical instrument: it determines land ownership and transfer rights, capital mobility, legacy planning, and the ability to collateralise assets. Without it, diaspora investors operate in Nepal with fewer enforceable rights than a resident national, making long-term capital commitments structurally riskier. Investment security guarantees follow at 32.69%, clear land ownership and property rights at 24.7%, one-stop service centres at 21.49%, and easier repatriation of funds at 21.3%. All of these point at the same underlying problem: the absence of a predictable, rule-based framework that allows investors to calculate and manage risk without relying on personal or political networks.

Qualitative submissions add texture to these priorities. Respondents call for two-way capital accounts that allow funds to move in and out of Nepal with the same predictability available in Australia; a single-window service that consolidates approvals, documentation, and information into one accessible platform; fully digital transaction systems for property and SME investments that diaspora members can navigate remotely; and independent oversight mechanisms that would make government commitments credible rather than contingent. Several respondents point to Southeast Asian economies – particularly in IT services and outsourcing – as precedents for what Nepal could achieve with the right regulatory infrastructure and a sustained government commitment to the sector.

Table 35: Where Respondents Plan to Invest in the Next 5 Years (Multiple Responses)

Types of Investment in Future	Percentage (%) of future sector investments
Business or franchise	34.99
Real estate (property investment) and housing	40.50
Shares and ETFs (stock market)	24.52
Starting a tech company	8.72
Other	3.12

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Looking ahead, the diaspora's investment priorities are ambitious but grounded. Real estate leads at 40.50%, followed closely by business and franchise ventures, reflecting a community with the financial confidence to commit to substantial, longer-term assets.

More telling is what sits at the edges. A quarter of respondents plan to move into shares and ETFs, signaling a growing appetite for diversified wealth-building. And while only around one in twelve expressed interest in starting a technology company, that cohort deserves more attention than its size implies as these are precisely the risk-tolerant, growth-oriented investors Nepal's productive economy needs.

The sharpest insight may be this: those planning to invest in both Nepal and Australia simultaneously are the most entrepreneurially active of all. Dual-market exposure, it turns out, does not dilute investment intent – it deepens it.

Table 36: : Planned Location and Investment Type Considered in the Future (Multiple Responses)

Planned investment location	% Business or franchise	% Real estate and housing	% Shares and ETFs	% Starting a tech company	% Other
Only in Nepal	18.97	70.69	31.03	5.17	1.72
Only in Australia	16.98	79.25	5.66	0.00	1.89
In both Nepal and Australia	33.33	70.37	32.10	6.17	7.41
Not specified	42.67	58.67	36.00	1.33	5.33

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Overall, diaspora investment interest in Nepal is clearly present, but it depends on having stronger legal clarity, security, and simpler processes in place. With the right policies, this interest can translate into meaningful investment across sectors, especially from those already active across both Nepal and Australia.

Case Study 4 :

After six years in Australia, Sushil Pandit decided it was time to return and give back to his home country. Like many Nepali students in Australia, Pandit had worked while studying. Through his work, he developed a keen interest in hotel management, which he refined at the Meridian International School in Sydney. Upon his return, Sushil set out to open a restaurant. In 2017, he inaugurated Hotel Jayashree – a restaurant in Gaindakot that exclusively serves traditional Nepali cuisine. The restaurant, which continues to grow in prominence and popularity, has allowed Sushil to effectively utilise the skills and knowledge he nurtured in Australia to promote his Nepali heritage.

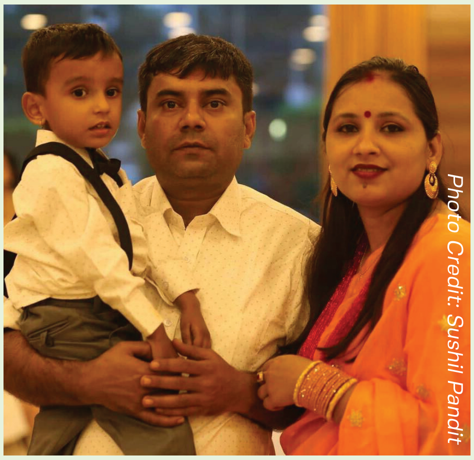


Photo Credit: Sushil Pandit

Remittances

Remittances[20] remain a key mechanism through which the Nepali diaspora in Australia contributes to Nepal's economy, supporting household welfare, consumption, education, healthcare, and local economic stability. This pattern is not unique to Australia but reflects the broader role of the global Nepali diaspora, whose financial transfers continue to form one of the most important links between migration and Nepal's development.

Indeed, according to the World Bank's World Development Indicators, personal remittances received by Nepal were estimated at around 26.2% (25% to 27%) of GDP in 2024[21], confirming that remittance inflows continue to play a very significant macroeconomic role. Nepal received USD 10.86 billion in remittances in FY 2023/24 – a 14.5%[22] increase on the previous year, according to the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) data.

The scale of these inflows becomes even more apparent when viewed in relation to Nepal's external sector, with remittances estimated to be around 7.6 times larger than total exports[23]. This highlights the extent to which the country's external stability is supported not by trade, but by labour mobility and income transfers from abroad.

20. This definition of 'remittance' is consistent with use of the term by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) (IMF 2009a; Pant 2008). While the Nepal Living Standards Survey (1995/96, 2003/2004, 2010/11 and 2022/23) considers cash or in-kind transfers from both within and outside Nepal as remittances, the paper uses only data on the remittances received by the households in Nepal from outside the country and uses 'internal remittances' to refer to remittances transferred within Nepal.
21. World Bank, World Development Indicators: Personal Remittances, Received (% of GDP), Nepal, 2024
22. Nepal Rastra Bank, Current Macroeconomic and Financial Situation of Nepal (Based on Annual Data of FY 2023/24) (Kathmandu: NRB, 2024).
23. Nepal Rastra Bank, Current Macroeconomic and Financial Situation of Nepal (Based on Annual Data of FY 2024/25) (Kathmandu: NRB, 2025).

Beyond their scale, remittances play a central role in shaping Nepal's macroeconomic stability. According to the World Bank's Nepal Development Update, strong remittance inflows have been a key factor behind improvements in the country's external position, with the current account surplus rising to 6.7% of GDP[24] in FY 2024/25, up from 3.9% in the previous year.

Within this broader context, Australia has emerged as a notable remittance corridor for Nepal. According to the Nepal Living Standards Survey (NLSS IV), Australia accounts for approximately a 6.1%[25] share of the total remittance. In terms of scale, this corresponds to 1.5 million remittance transactions, with a mean remittance size of NPR 436,868 and a total remittance amount exceeding NPR 64 billion (around USD 486 million or AUD 744 million[26]), highlighting the growing economic importance of the Nepal-Australia migration relationship.

While the Australian corridor is growing in significance, it is worth noting that the 6.1% figure captures share of total remittance value rather than frequency of transactions alone.

Table 37 : Respondents who send Remittance and Frequency of Remittance Transfers to Nepal from Australia

Remittance	Percentage (%)
Yes	66.94
No	33.06
Remittance Frequency to Nepal	Percentage (%)
Monthly	9.05
Quarterly	11.11
Semi-annual	5.08
Annually	7
Occasionally	50.07
Emergencies Based	17.7

Source: IIDS Survey Data

This is supported by IIDS survey findings. A significant majority of respondents (66.94%) send remittances to Nepal, indicating strong financial ties with their home country. Most respondents who remit money to Nepal tend to send moderate amounts rather than very large transfers. As shown in Table 37, remittance behaviour is largely irregular, with over half of respondents (50.07%) sending money occasionally, followed by emergency-based transfers (17.7%). Regular transfers such as monthly (9.05%) and quarterly (11.11%) are comparatively less common, suggesting that remittances are often need-based rather than fixed or scheduled.

Table 38 : Remittance Sent to Nepal Last Year by Respondents from Australia

Remittance Amount Last Year (AUD)	Percentage (%)
AUD 1,000 – 5,000	44.86
AUD 5,001 – 10,000	32.78
AUD 10,001 – 20,000	12.75
AUD 20,001 – 50,000	6.86
AUD 50,001 – 100,000	1.92
More than AUD 100,000	0.82

Source: IIDS Survey Data

24. World Bank, Nepal Development Update (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2025), https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nepal/publication/nepaldevelopmentupdate.

25. Government of Nepal, National Statistics Office, Nepal Living Standards Survey IV 2022/23: Statistical Report (Kathmandu: NSO, 2024), 279, Table 16.7, https://data.nsonepal.gov.np/dataset/b6c3c19b-4b15-44bf-8653-1571e76dad14/resource/e2d52301-1c25-498b-8732-4326c62a2372/download/nlss-iv.pdf

26. Exchange rates approximated using average 2023–2024 rates: 1 USD ≈ 1.53 AUD and 1 USD ≈ NPR 130.8. See Reserve Bank of Australia, Exchange Rates, https://www.rba.gov.au/statistics/frequency/exchange-rates.html; and Nepal Rastra Bank, Foreign Exchange Rates, https://www.nrb.org.np.

In terms of amount (Table 38), remittances are generally moderate in size. The most common range is AUD 1,000 to 5,000 (44.86%), followed by AUD 5,001 to 10,000 (32.78%). Higher-value transfers above AUD 20,000 are relatively uncommon, and amounts exceeding AUD 50,000 are rare.

Taken together, these patterns suggest that remittances from Australia are typically sent in 'practical' amounts and are often driven by specific needs rather than regular financial commitments. This reflects a flexible form of financial support, where migrants respond to family requirements rather than following fixed remittance schedules.

According to survey findings, remittances are mostly used for household and family support, while smaller shares go toward loan repayment, investment, cultural activities, and education.

Table 39 : Primary Purposes of Remittances Sent to Nepal (Multiple Responses)

Primary Purpose of Remittance	Percentage (%)
Household and family support (food, health, parents, emergencies)	59.47
Loan repayment and financial obligations	10.52
Education expense	5.60
Investment and asset building (business, land, housing, shares)	9.53
Cultural, religious, and charitable activities	10.52
Other purposes	4.36

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Remittance Patterns

The survey reveals that remittance behaviour among Nepali migrants in Australia is shaped by a range of socio-economic and demographic factors, including gender, family situation, age, and length of residence. While remittance sending is common across groups, the frequency, amount, and pattern of transfers vary in ways that reflect both household responsibilities and migrants' settlement experiences in Australia.

Gender

- Both men and women most remit occasionally, though this pattern is slightly stronger among women.
- Men are somewhat more likely to remit on a regular monthly or quarterly basis.
- Women are more concentrated in lower remittance brackets, while men appear more represented in higher value ranges.
- For both groups, the most common remittance amounts fall within the AUD 1,000–10,000 range and are typically sent flexibly rather than on fixed schedules.

This pattern is plausible considering the remittance literature.

Family Situation

- Remittances are most common among respondents living with a spouse or nuclear family.
- Non-senders are more likely to live alone or with extended family members.

Age

- The largest share of remittance senders falls within the 18–39 age group.
- Across age categories, the most common remittance amounts are AUD 1,000–5,000 and AUD 5,001–10,000.

Length of Residence

- Respondents who have lived in Australia for less than 10 years make up the largest share of remittance senders.
- These groups most commonly send moderate amounts in the AUD 1,000–10,000 range.
- Longer term residents show similar remittance patterns, though they represent a smaller share of respondents.

Remittance Channels

Remittance channels assume significance given their role in shaping how quickly, safely, and affordably migrant earnings reach households in Nepal. They also influence Nepal's broader economy, since efficient formal channels can strengthen foreign exchange inflows, improve financial inclusion, and make diaspora contributions more reliable and development oriented.

Table 40 : Methods Used by Respondents to Transfer Money to Nepal (Multiple Responses)

Method of Sending Remittance	Percentage (%)**27
Formal channels (banks and financial institutions)	84.64
Informal channels (friends, relatives, community networks)	29.22

Source: IIDS Survey Data

IIDS surveys show that most respondents rely on formal financial channels, with 84.64% sending remittances through banks or financial institutions. However, informal methods ("Hundi") are still used by nearly one-third of respondents (29.22%), suggesting that personal networks such as friends, relatives, or community contacts continue to play a supplementary role in transferring money to Nepal.

When compared with national-level evidence from the Nepal Living Standards Survey (NLSS IV), a broadly similar pattern emerges, although with some variation. NLSS data shows that overall 75.0% of remittances are sent through formal financial institutions, while informal channels such as hundi (2.0%), self-transfer (14.3%), and transfers via friends (4.5%) continue to be used. In the case of Australia specifically, formal channel usage is even higher at 90.9%, although hundi use (5.5%) is still present[28].

The relatively high reliance on formal channels observed in the survey may require careful interpretation. It is possible that informal usage is somewhat underreported, as respondents may be less willing to disclose the use of unofficial or legally ambiguous channels in a formal survey setting.

As such, while the findings point towards a growing preference for formal remittance systems, informal practices are likely to remain embedded within diaspora networks, particularly due to convenience, trust, and accessibility.

Remittance behaviour is broadly consistent across genders. Around 85.2% of men and 83.6% of women send money through banks, confirming that formal financial channels are the dominant method for both groups. Informal methods are used by roughly one-fifth of both genders (showing that personal transfer networks remain relevant). Interestingly, women appear slightly more likely to rely on community-based channels (6.49%) than men (5.14%). Sending cash with friends or relatives is uncommon for both genders, staying below 5%.

**27. Note: Percentages exceed 100% because respondents were allowed to select multiple remittance channels. This means some individuals use both formal and informal methods simultaneously, depending on factors such as convenience, cost, and urgency

28. Government of Nepal, Central Bureau of Statistics, Nepal Living Standards Survey 2022 to 2023 (NLSS IV) (Kathmandu: CBS, 2024), https://data.nsonepal.gov.np/dataset/b6c3c19b-4b15-44bf-8653-1571e76dad14/resource/e2d52301-1c25-498b-8732-4326c62a2372/download/nlss-iv.pdf

Remittance Encouragement

Given the significance of remittances in Nepal-Australia relations, it is important for both the Nepali and Australian governments to strengthen and leverage the factors that facilitate these flows, particularly by encouraging formal remittance channels and discouraging informal transfer methods. IIDS findings suggest that the strongest factor encouraging remittance transfers is reducing remittance costs (52.34%), followed closely by more secure and transparent transfer systems (48.70%). Other important motivations include diaspora incentives (39.87%) and the ability to directly support family expenses (32.08%), while investment opportunities (21.43%) and other factors (4.42%) play a comparatively smaller role.

Table 41: Factors Encouraging Increased Remittance Transfers to Nepal (Multiple Responses)

Combined Factor	Percentage (%)
Reduced remittance costs (transaction and digital fees)	52.34
More secure, transparent, and user-friendly systems	48.70
Ability to directly support family expenses	32.08
Investment opportunities in productive sectors	21.43
Incentives for diaspora senders (loyalty bonuses, diaspora schemes)	39.87
Other	4.42

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Case Study 5:

Dr. Bishnu Lamichhane works at the nexus of applied and computational mathematics in science, technology, and engineering, currently serving as Associate Professor at The University of Newcastle's School of Information and Physical Sciences. His academic career has spanned several countries, beginning with schooling in Gorkha, Nepal; followed by bachelor's and master's degrees from Tribhuvan University, Nepal; a master's degree from the University of Kaiserslautern, Germany; a PhD from the University of Stuttgart, Germany; and post-doctoral positions at Aston University, United Kingdom, and Australian National University. As an Associate Professor at the University of Newcastle, Dr. Lamichhane is deeply engaged with the Australian academic space, serving in various mathematics societies and boards. He actively collaborates with academics worldwide – including from Germany, the United Kingdom, Austria, South Africa, and India – advancing Australia's strong global academic reputation and impact metrics.

Economic Linkages

The Nepali diaspora in Australia contributes to both Australian and Nepali economies through labour force participation, income generation, entrepreneurship, investment, remittances, and skills transfer. This section maps the key economic linkages and identifies barriers and opportunities for deeper bilateral engagement.

Demographic Foundations and Human Capital Accumulation

The diaspora's investment capacity is grounded in its professional profile. Nepalis in Australia have largely transitioned from student visas to skilled independent, employer-sponsored, and permanent residency pathways, concentrated in healthcare, aged care, engineering, and digital technology. Early-career IT and computer engineering professionals earn above AUD 65,000; mid-to-senior professionals exceed AUD 160,000. Nursing professionals enter the high-income bracket from the outset of their careers.

This professional success directly underpins investment activity. Surplus capital – the product of high earnings and sector concentration – provides the foundation for the diaspora to function as a transnational economic bridge (Kuznetsov, 2006; World Bank, 2019). Survey data confirms the relationship: respondents earning above AUD 90,001 show an investment participation rate of 35.7%, and those holding master's degrees have the highest investment rate among all education levels, followed by PhD holders. Higher income and education together expand both the means and the confidence to invest.

Australia-Nepal Trade and Investment Corridor

The Australia-Nepal economic relationship diverges from the conventional bilateral trade of goods and services frameworks. It is fundamentally mobility-driven, in that values flow not from merchandise but from the unilateral movement of Nepali human capital into Australia, and the subsequent accumulation and transnational deployment of financial capital, market knowledge, and professional networks by the diaspora. As this community transitions further from a predominantly transient student population to a settled, high-income permanent resident base, its economic behaviour is shifting from basic remittance transfers to Nepal toward asset acquisition, entrepreneurial investment, and cross-border business engagement in Australia.

Case Study 6:

Govinda Pandey, PHD. After building a 25 year international career in Australia and Japan, Govinda Pandey has become a strong example of how diaspora expertise can support Nepal's economic growth.

As the CEO of Rockfield Technologies Australia Pty Ltd, he has worked across engineering, academia, and technology, gaining exposure to innovation driven ecosystems.

Dr Pandey promotes knowledge-based investment in Nepal. Through his networks, he helps connect Australian investors with opportunities in infrastructure, energy, and technology sectors.

His work also encourages joint ventures between Nepali and international firms, improving standards and competitiveness. In addition, his collaboration with institutions such as Industrial Enterprise Development Institute Nepal highlights the importance of skills development and policy learning.

Dr Pandey's journey shows how diaspora professionals can contribute beyond finance by enabling trade linkages, technology transfer, and long-term investment in Nepal.

Photo Credit: Govinda Pandey

The Services-Driven Trade Paradox

Total bilateral trade between Australia and Nepal stands at AUD 4.9 billion[29], but merchandise goods account for just AUD 168 million, meaning that Australia's service exports to Nepal – dominated by education-related travel, including tuition and travel expenses for Nepali students – generates the bulk of Nepal's structural deficit of AUD 4.15 billion (Table 31). Nepal's service exports (tourism and diaspora return travel) represent only a small fraction of this outflow.

Table 47 : Nepal-Australia Trade Overview in AUD million, 2024

Trade Component	Goods	Services	Total
Nepal's exports to Australia	18	341	359
Nepal's imports from Australia	150	4,360	4,510
Total two-way trade	168	4,701	4,865
Nepal's Trade Deficit	(132)	(4,019)	(4,150)

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

With India alone absorbing over 40% of Nepal's total merchandise exports, Nepal is a structurally small goods exporter globally. Nonetheless, within this constrained export base, as of FY 2024/25,

29. Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS]. (2025). International Investment Position, Australia: Supplementary Statistics [Dataset]. In International Trade. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/international-trade/international-investment-position-australia-supplementary-statistics/2024#data-downloads

Australia ranks 9th as a goods export destination for Nepal and 7th as an import source, accounting for approximately AUD 150 million in goods supplied to Nepal.[30] On both sides of the balance of payments account, Australia sits well within Nepal's top ten trading partners, making the bilateral goods relationship more significant than its absolute volume might suggest. The low overall merchandise trade between the two countries therefore may reflect Nepal's limited export capacity much more than any other barrier.


Photo by Mayte Baque on Unsplash

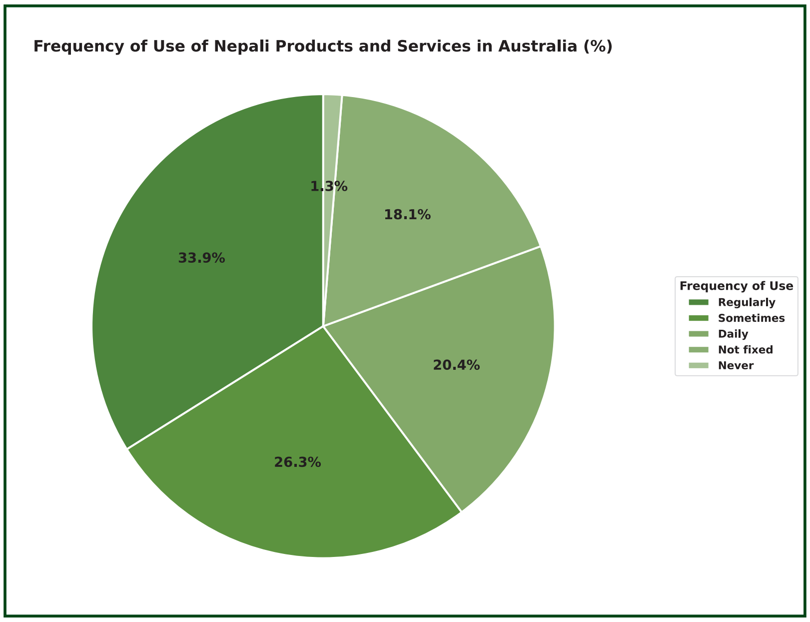
In addition, business-to-business (B2B) trading infrastructure between Nepal and Australia remains absent. As the current 'Australia-Nepal trade and investment corridor' was built by students migrating for education rather than by firms establishing supply chains, this corridor is primarily made up of retail-and-mobility-based trade rather than wholesale-and-production-based trade. What is distinctive about this corridor, however, is that diaspora linkages create a structural opening to address Nepal's export constraints. Through sustained consumer demand, direct market intelligence, and commercially motivated importers and investors, the Nepali diaspora in Australia represents a unique and enabling constituency as compared to Nepali communities elsewhere. Addressing the bilateral trade deficit therefore depends as much on the diaspora's capacity to generate demand for Nepali goods and channel investment capital back to Nepal as much as it does on state-to-state frameworks.

Diaspora Consumption and Retail Engagement

Despite the trade imbalance between Australia and Nepal, the diaspora's consumption of Nepali goods sustains a meaningful micro-economy within Australia. Although the growing demand for Nepali merchandise in Australia is not universal across Australia's demographics, it is almost entirely sustained by the Nepali diaspora's desire for cultural retention and ethnic dietary staples. Respondents involved in trade and export activities noted that demand for certain Nepali products in Australia closely mirrors demand within Nepal itself. Despite the Nepali diaspora in Australia being significantly smaller than the population in Nepal, comparable shipment volumes are being sent to both markets. For instance, the Nepali instant noodle brand Wai Wai has shifted from being a 'recognised only by Nepalis' product to a broader South Asian and multicultural snack, especially in areas with prominent Asian grocery stores. Another major factor for this shift is the increasing visibility of online channels and specialized Nepali and South Asian stores in major cities.

30. Ibid

Figure XVI : Frequency of use of Nepali product and Services in Australia



Source: IIDS Survey Data (Table 48)

Survey responses suggest that over 80% of respondents spend AUD 100-1,000 per month on Nepali products and services, with demand growing consistently over the past six years (Table 48 annex). Nepal's merchandise exports, mainly concentrated around processed foods, textiles, carpets, and beverages, have also more than doubled from approximately AUD 8 million to AUD 18 million in these years,[31] (Table 47). This growth is heavily sustained by a vibrant student community now exceeding 70,000[32] – spanning Higher Education and VET enrolments – alongside working professionals, permanent residents, second-generation diaspora, and visiting family members. Nepal is currently the third largest source of international students in Australia. As this consumer base expands, it offers a high-growth diaspora-driven export market for Nepal. For Australia, this provides expanded localised business activity, employment within ethnic enclaves, and diversification of suburban retail markets.

Specific Product Demand

Driven by the diaspora's consumption of familiar dietary staples and an intentional culinary cultural retention, the demand for Nepali snacks and condiments - including flattened rice (Chiura), savoury snacks, Wai Wai noodles, traditional pickles (Achar), spices like Timmur (Nepali pepper), cumin, and coriander, instant snack mixes and crisps, and Nepali alcoholic beverages - is higher amongst other South Asian options. The demand for commodities such as Nepali woollen felt and textile products, pashmina shawls, and hemp-based bags and clothing is also high (Table 50).

Table 50 : Top 5 Bilateral Export Categories: Nepal vs. Australia

Rank	Exports from Nepal to Australia[33]	Exports from Australia to Nepal[34]
1	Processed food, cereals & pasta products	Oilseeds, pulses & cereal grains
2	Prepared foods, sauces & condiments	Mineral fuels, oils & lubricants
3	Textiles, garments & apparel	Machinery, mechanical & electrical equipment
4	Felt, carpets & floor coverings	Electronics, ICT & communication equipment
5	Beverages (alcoholic & non-alcoholic)	Chemicals, pharmaceuticals & medical supplies

31. Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS]. (2025). Trade, investment and economic statistics [Dataset]. In Trade time series data. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. https://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/trade-and-investment-data-information-and-publications/trade-statistics

32. Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS]. (2026). International Student Data for the year-to-date (YTD) January 2026 [Dataset]. In International Education Data and Research. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). https://www.education.gov.au/international-education-data-and-research/international-student-monthly-summary-and-data-tables

33 The Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies [MoICS]. (2025). Nepal Foreign Trade Statistics [Dataset]. Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, Government of Nepal.

34 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). (2025b). Trade, investment and economic statistics [Dataset]. In Trade time series data. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. https://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/trade-and-investment-data-information-and-publications/trade-statistics

Trade Barriers and Reform: Evidence, Perception, and Priority

The survey, KII interviews, and FGDs conducted for this study surfaced a consistent set of complaints about the barriers Nepali exporters and diaspora importers face when moving goods into the Australian market. These are presented in the box below as reported by participants, without editorial modification. They represent the lived experience of operators within this corridor and carry evidential weight as indicators of where friction is concentrated.

That said, not all perceptions reflect the regulatory reality on the Australian side. Several of the most frequently cited barriers rest on misunderstandings and/or a general lack of awareness. Advocacy resources directed at the wrong levers will not move the needle. The analytical section that follows the box confirms what is accurate, corrects what is not, and identifies where the real reform priorities lie.

TRADE BARRIERS AS REPORTED BY NEPALI EXPORTERS AND DIASPORA: SURVEY, KII AND FGD FINDINGS

The barriers listed below represent the views of the respondents and KII/FGD participants. They are presented here as reported, not as IIDS/author's positions.

A. Logistics and Transit: Nepal's landlocked geography requires overland transit to Kolkata (approximately 15 days), then maritime shipping through Singapore or Malaysia (20–30 days). Total delivery times reach approximately 60 days. Customs clearance at Kolkata, even after Nepali clearance, adds USD 2,000–3,000 per container in freight costs.

B. Capital Lock-up: Maintaining stock continuity requires importers to hold 12–13 containers' worth of goods across warehouse, transit, and pre-shipment stages, locking up significant working capital.

C. Customs Discrepancies: Participants reported that while the Australian import process is relatively transparent, Nepali customs involves complex procedures, long delays, and inconsistent application of rules that slow down export operations.

D. Biosecurity Compliance: Australia's sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards were cited as requiring multiple rounds of product refinement. Root crops were reported to require laboratory inspections conducted in India. Meat and dairy products — including Sukuti (dried meat) and Churpi (milk chew) — are effectively barred from formal import, prompting some local production in Australia, though consumers note quality differences.

E. Intensive Processing Demands: High-demand products such as whole grains, lentils, and Chiura were reported to require two to three rounds of refinement to pass Australian inspection standards.

F. Grey Market Activity: Unmet demand for packaged snacks has produced informal import channels that bypass regulatory oversight and taxation, signalling both the strength of diaspora demand and the inadequacy of current formal supply chains.

G. Reform Proposals Raised by Participants: Respondents most frequently proposed: an FTA with Australia; faster Nepali customs reform; Australian Government technical assistance; and FMD-free country certification for Nepal as priority interventions.

IIDS ANALYSIS: SEPARATING EVIDENCE FROM ASSUMPTION

- **On Biosecurity Compliance and Laboratory Testing:** The characterisation that root crop inspections must be conducted in India due to absent domestic accreditation is partially accurate but importantly incomplete. KII findings indicate that accredited testing facilities do exist within Nepal; the practical constraint is that inspection costs in Nepal are significantly higher than in India, making cross-border testing the commercially rational choice for most exporters. The reform implication is therefore different from what is commonly assumed: the priority is not to build infrastructure from scratch, but to reduce the cost and improve the commercial viability of in-country testing — through subsidisation, co-investment, or a cost-sharing arrangement between Nepal's government and export industry bodies.
- **On the Prohibition of Meat and Dairy Products:** The effective bar on Nepali meat and dairy products — which prevents Sukuti and Churpi from entering Australia through formal channels — is accurate and structural. Australia requires meat and dairy imports to originate from countries recognised by WOAH as free from foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), without vaccination. Nepal is not on Australia's FMD-free country list. Achieving this status is a national-level veterinary surveillance process governed by WOAH protocols, requiring sustained multi-year investment. For the current scale of Sukuti and Churpi exports, this calculus is unlikely to hold. A more practical near-term response is the local manufacturing model already emerging within the diaspora community in Australia — and support for diaspora entrepreneurs investing in compliant local production facilities.
- **On the FTA Proposal:** The FTA argument rests on a misconception about Nepal's current trade access. As a Least Developed Country, Nepal already benefits from Duty-Free Quota-Free (DFQF) access to the Australian market — and this does not automatically change even as Nepal graduates from LDC classification. An FTA would primarily benefit Australian exporters gaining improved access to Nepal's domestic market. The barriers preventing Nepali goods from reaching scale in Australia are not tariff barriers — they are compliance, logistics, and market-readiness constraints that no trade agreement resolves. Advocacy energy directed at an FTA is therefore misdirected.
- **What Is Accurate and Actionable:** Three bottlenecks are well-evidenced and reform-amenable: the logistics and transit chain (genuinely long and costly, driven by Nepal's geography and Kolkata port dependencies); Nepali customs unpredictability (corroborated consistently across KIIs and exporter testimony); and the absence of export-ready packaging and English-language labelling compliant with the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code. Paired with the cost of in-country testing, these four constraints constitute the real reform agenda and are the basis for the policy priorities in Section V.

Linking Human Capital to Digital Services Trade

An alternative pathway for narrowing Nepal's trade deficit may be through digital service exports. Survey data shows strong Australian demand for Nepal-sourced IT and software (38.20%), accounting and financial services (30.30%), customer service and call centre work (27.00%), and digital marketing (24.15%) (Table 51). Unlike merchandise trade, digital exports bypass the 60-day logistics chain, SPS regulations, and freight costs.

Table 51 : High-Demand Nepali Professional Services in Australia (Multiple Response)

Service Category	Percentage (%)
Information Technology and Software	38.20
Accounting and Financial Services	30.30
Customer Service and Call Centre	27.00
Digital Marketing and Content	24.15
Cybersecurity and QA Testing	20.75

Service Category	Percentage (%)
Academic and Research Assistance	20.66
Business Process Outsourcing (BPO)	16.62
Interior and Architecture Design	10.93
Language and Translation Services	10.19
Video Editing, Graphic Design, Animation	9.37
Other	8.36
Virtual Assistance and Administrative	3.67

Source: IIDS Survey Data

The large number of Nepali diaspora in the IT and healthcare sectors are particularly well-placed to act as commercial bridges between Australian demand and Nepali capacity. An IT manager in Sydney who secures software development, QA testing, or cybersecurity contracts, and channels the work to a Kathmandu-based team will, in effect, generate high-value digital service exports for Nepal without a shipping container, a biosecurity inspection, or a 60-day transit window. Digital exports will override much of the friction present in merchandise trade and also align directly with Nepal's existing comparative advantage: its young, technically literate workforce and a significant cost differential as compared to Australian labour markets.

The Nepali diaspora's concentration in Australia's nursing, aged care, and health administration sectors also represent the scope to reform policies in the healthcare sector. Diaspora health professionals possess direct knowledge of Australian clinical standards, institutional expectations, and workforce requirements. This knowledge can be channelled back into Nepal through investment in nursing colleges, aged-care training facilities, and medical research infrastructure to restructure the circular pipeline of migration, standardise the quality of Nepali skilled labour exports and generate transnational research and professional linkages, all while potentially addressing the issue of brain-drain.

Overall

The Nepali diaspora in Australia has both the financial capacity and the willingness to invest, but the destination of that capital depends heavily on institutional trust. Nepal is seen as a place of genuine opportunity but unacceptable operational risk – not from lack of trust, but from concerns about regulatory unpredictability, delays, and the difficulty of managing investments remotely. Diaspora capital is therefore present but cautious, channeled toward safer assets rather than the productive ventures that would generate broader economic returns.

Remittances remain the most immediate and consistent expression of the diaspora's economic connection to Nepal, grounded in family obligation, responsive to life stage, and increasingly routed through formal channels. The potential to convert a share of these flows into structured investment instruments is real but currently unrealised.

The trade corridor, meanwhile, functions differently from a conventional bilateral exchange. It is diaspora-consumption-led, sustained by cultural attachment rather than commercial infrastructure. The binding constraint is not demand – that is demonstrably strong – but supply-side readiness: the compliance gaps, logistics costs, packaging deficits that prevent even popular products from reaching scale. The diaspora, as the most market-literate actor in this corridor, is the most credible agent for closing that gap.

Consolidated Policy Priorities

The Nepal–Australia economic relationship remains underdeveloped relative to the size and economic contribution of the Nepali diaspora in Australia. Strengthening this relationship will require coordinated efforts from the Governments of Nepal and Australia, DFAT, bilateral institutions, and the diaspora community, particularly in the areas of trade, investment, and remittances.

A. **Conceptualise Dual Citizenship Frameworks:** Dual citizenship is the single most demanded policy reform among over 66% (Table 34) of respondents. In this context, the Government of Nepal could consider undertaking a broader review of existing diaspora engagement mechanisms, including the Non-Resident Nepali (NRN), to assess their effectiveness, strengths, and limitations in supporting long-term diaspora participation. Such a review could explore practical pathways to strengthen economic, professional, and institutional engagement between Nepal and its diaspora communities, particularly in high-diaspora countries such as Australia.

B. **Reduce Remittance Transfer Costs Through Formal Channel Incentives:** Australia accounts for around 6.1% of Nepal's total remittances, amounting to approximately USD 749.6 million in 2023. However, an estimated 29.22% (Table 40) of Nepali migrants continue to use informal transfer methods, meaning that a portion of remittance flows remains outside formal financial systems and lacks transparency.

   In line with the G20 commitment to reduce average remittance costs to below 3%, there may be scope for governments, commercial banks, fintech firms, and Nepali financial institutions to explore measures that improve the affordability, accessibility, and efficiency of formal remittance channels within the Nepal–Australia corridor. Through broader engagement in financial inclusion initiatives, economic cooperation, and institutional partnerships, bilateral stakeholders may also support efforts to strengthen more transparent, secure, and efficient remittance systems over time.

C. **Strengthen the Foreign Investment Single-Window System:** Nepal's ongoing efforts to develop a centralised foreign investment single window should be accelerated and brought to full operational functionality – integrating investment approvals, business registrations, tax compliance property transaction documentation, and legal processes into a single digital platform. The system should apply across all sectors, ensuring consistency, reducing administrative fragmentation, and improving transparency. This would lower transaction costs, minimise delays, and strengthen investor confidence.

D. **Differentiated Diaspora Financing Instruments:** Remittance flows from advanced economies such as Australia differ significantly in nature and potential from those originating in the Middle East or Malaysia. It is therefore recommended to design targeted diaspora financing instruments such as diaspora bonds and other investment products, tailored to the income profiles and investment preferences of diaspora in advanced economies. Such instruments can mobilize long-term capital for national development while deepening diaspora engagement.

   Diaspora community organisations should work with Nepali financial institutions to develop structured remittance-to-investment products: sector-specific matching funds that convert regular remittances into equity positions in vetted SMEs; cooperative investment vehicles that pool diaspora capital for projects above individual thresholds; and direct linkages between remittance senders and specific productive projects that provide transparency and accountability.

E. **Strengthen the Active Role of Chamber-Based Platforms in Trade and Investment Facilitation :** Nepal should seek to strengthen chamber-based platforms so that they play a more active and structured role in facilitating trade and investment with Australia across all sectors. These platforms should move beyond passive networking and focus on business matchmaking, investment facilitation, and regular trade engagement. They can support firms by providing market insights and connecting investors with credible partners. Stronger coordination with government and private sector actors will help make bilateral engagement more consistent and results-driven.

F. **Strengthening Nepal–Australia Economic Diplomacy and Bilateral Relations:** The Embassy of Nepal in Canberra serves as a key institutional bridge between Nepal and Australia, supporting diplomatic relations, trade and investment, diaspora engagement, education cooperation, tourism promotion, and consular services, while contributing to the broader bilateral partnership between the two countries. Current activities remain largely centred on consular functions, alongside continued emphasis on other areas of engagement.

   As economic ties and diaspora linkages continue to develop, there is scope to further strengthen the Embassy's engagement in economic areas, including facilitating trade-related interactions, providing general support to businesses, and maintaining links with diaspora professionals. This could also complement and support existing bilateral frameworks, such as the Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement (TIFA), by contributing to more sustained and practical economic engagement.

G. **Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA):** To unlock the full potential of diaspora-led investment and bilateral business activity, Nepal should prioritize the negotiation and execution of a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) with Australia. A well-structured DTAA would reduce fiscal barriers, enhance investor confidence, and facilitate cross-border trade and capital flows.

H. **Enhancing Connectivity:** Direct Air Links: Australia has consistently ranked among Nepal's top tourist source countries over the past decade, with a significant share comprising individuals of Nepali origin. As the Nepali diaspora in Australia approaches a critical demographic threshold and visitor numbers continue to rise, there is a strong case for initiating direct air connectivity between the two countries. Direct flights would significantly enhance the flow of people, goods, services, capital, and knowledge, thereby strengthening bilateral ties.

Conclusion

The Nepali diaspora in Australia is not only a migrant community but also a strategic bridge between the two countries. Its contribution can extend far beyond remittances into trade, investment, research, education, innovation, and cultural diplomacy. Realising this potential requires a more structured engagement model supported by legal reform, institutional coordination, and practical platforms for participation.

By aligning the efforts of governments, embassies, institutions, businesses, and diaspora organisations, Nepal and Australia can build a more durable and mutually beneficial partnership. Such an approach would strengthen bilateral ties while ensuring that the diaspora plays a meaningful role in Nepal's long-term socio-economic development.

Research Methodology and Approach

This study was conducted between March 2025 and April 2026 by the Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS), with guidance from a steering committee that included representatives from both IIDS and the Australian Embassy in Nepal. The aim of the study is to provide an initial understanding of the experiences and contributions of the Nepali diaspora in Australia.

The research followed a mixed-method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods. A total of 1,089 respondents participated in the survey between May 2025 and January 2026. In addition, 15 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were carried out, along with two Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving 15 participants in total. These were conducted both online and in person, and the research team received appropriate training to ensure ethical and consistent data collection.

To add more depth to the findings, selected case studies and profiles were included, capturing personal experiences of diaspora members across different life stages and migration pathways.

The sample includes participants from all Australian states and territories, along with some Nepal-based individuals connected to Australia. Ethical standards were maintained throughout, including informed consent, confidentiality, and secure data handling.

However, the study has some limitations. The sample may not fully represent the entire diaspora, as more active and well-connected individuals were more likely to participate. The online survey format may also have excluded those with limited digital access or literacy. Additionally, the use of English (and mixed language in interviews) may have influenced how participants understood and expressed their experiences.

Overall, the findings offer a useful snapshot of the Nepali diaspora in Australia, but further research would be needed to capture a more complete picture.

> Therefore, the findings presented in this report provide only a snapshot of the diaspora landscape. The report should be regarded as a foundational step in understanding the Nepali diaspora in Australia, with recognition that more extensive and nuanced research may be necessary to capture the full spectrum of experiences and viewpoints.

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Annexes

Table 1: Distribution of Nepali Diaspora Arrival in Australia

Year of arrival All people	Born in Nepal	%Born in Nepal	Born overseas	%Born overseas	Year of Arrival	% of Total Population
Before 1951	0	0	70,483	1		
1951 - 1960	0	0	274,018	3.9		
1961 - 1970	10	0	558,641	7.9		
1971 - 1980	49	0	545,150	7.7	Until 1980	1.80
1981 - 1990	228	0.2	787,899	11.2	1981–1990	0.20
1991 - 2000	2,070	1.7	793,266	11.3	1991–2000	1.70
2001 - 2010	24,167	19.7	1,557,332	22.1	2001–2010	19.70
2011 - 2015	22,148	18.1	1,019,922	14.5	2011–2015	18.10
2016 - 2021	71,718	58.5	1,265,544	18	2016–2021	58.50

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2021). Census of population and housing (https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/research-and-statistics/statistics/country-profiles/profiles/nepal)

Table 2 : Year of Arrival of Respondents in Australia

Year of Arrival	Percentage (%)
1985–1994	0.95
1995–1999	1.05
2000–2004	1.15
2005–2009	8.99
2010–2014	10.33
2015–2019	37.28
2020–2025	40.25

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 4: Gender Distribution

Gender	Percentage (%) of Gender Distributions
Female	39.12
Male	60.79
Other	0.09

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 5 : Ethnicity of Survey Respondents

Ethnicity	Percentage (%)
Brahmin	37.37
Kshetri	21.49
Newar	11.48
Thakuri	5.14
Rai	3.58
Gurung	3.21

Ethnicity	Percentage (%)
Magar	3.21
Tamang	2.94
Sherpa	2.20
Tharu	1.74
Yadav	1.56
Pariyar	1.29
Bishwokarma	1.01
Muslim	0.92
Other	2.85

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Table 6 : Place of origin of Respondents

Place of origin	Percentage (%) of Respondents
Bagmati	43.8
Gandaki	17.08
Lumbini	11.94
Koshi	10.65
Madhesh	5.88
Sudurpashchim	5.14
Karnali	1.56
Nepal (province not stated)	0.64
Australia	3.31

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 7 : Primary Sources of Funding for Education in Australia

Primary source of education funding	Percentage (%)
Parent(s)	47.69
Self	42.08
Other	7.99
Sibling(s)	2.24

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 8 : Total study cost funded from Nepal

Total Study Cost Funded from Nepal	Percentage (%)
NPR 5 lakh -25 lakh	34.68
NPR 25 lakh -65 lakh	43.37
NPR 65 lakh -1 crore	8.58
NPR 1 crore and above	1.33
Not willing to answer	11.82

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 13.a: Industry / Sector

Industry / sector	Included responses (grouped under this category)
Health and Care	Allied health services (physio, psychology, etc.), aged care and disability services, childcare, Nurses, Doctors, AIN, Sonographer, Pharmacist, Dental Assistant, Health Research
IT and Tech	Computer engineering and IT related field, Telecommunication
Engineering and Built Environment	Engineering and architecture
Hospitality and Tourism	Travel, tourism and hospitality, Chef, Barista, Bakery, Pizza making, Cafe, Restaurant, Fast food, Bar, Food and Beverage (F and B)
Admin and Support Services	Administrative and support services, Cleaning, Security industry, Postal services
Trade and Transport	Trade and transport, Logistics, Supply chain
Finance and Business Services	Finance, banking, insurance, accounting and auditing, Accountancy firms, Taxation, Business development, Human resources (HR)
Education and Research	Education (schools, TAFEs, universities), Scientific and technical research, University
Construction and Property Services	Construction
Manufacturing and Production	Manufacturing, Food technology
Media and Creative	Media, broadcasting and publishing, Arts and entertainment, Creative and performing arts, Museums and libraries, Sports and recreation
Public Sector and Community	Public and social services, Australian Police, Non government organisations (NGOs)
Legal and Consulting	Legal services and consulting services, Migration agent or migration consultant, Private legal practice
Real Estate	Real estate
Agriculture	Agriculture, Agriculture consultant, Marine farming
Retail and Sales	Retail, Supermarket, Retail sales assistant, Customer service, Sales, Sales management, Marketing and sales, Grocery

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 16 : Return intentions to Nepal among respondents

Intend to return to Nepal	% of intentions
Yes	38.29
No	61.71

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 19 : Types of Organisations or associations Nepali respondents are involved

Note: Multiple responses are permitted. Percentages are calculated using total respondents.

Types of Organisations or Associations	(%) of organisation and Associations Involved
Volunteer or charity group	43.4
Cultural	32.21
Professional or work-related	29.53
Sports	26.4

Types of Organisations or Associations	(%) of organisation and Associations Involved
Political or advocacy group	14.77
Student or alumni	10.96
Religious	10.29
Business or entrepreneur network	7.83
Language or literary group	7.83
Women's group	6.26
Youth group	5.59
Music	2.91
Other	4.25

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 20 : Reasons for not being involved in Nepali Organisations

Reason for non-participation	% reasons for not being involved
Not interested in Nepali organisations	41.9
Lack of time due to work	24.76
Not aware of Nepali organisations in Australia	14.02
Lack of time due to study	9.65
New to Australia and not yet connected	5.92
Others	3.27

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 25.1 : Types of Leisure and Travel Activities Undertaken in Nepal

Types of Leisure and Activities	Percentage (%)
Local food and culinary experiences	19.40
Shopping, souvenirs, handicrafts, clothing	17.83
Visiting heritage or religious sites	15.33
Trekking or hiking or sightseeing	14.46
Nature tours, jungle safari	10.49
Wellness or spiritual retreats, yoga, meditation	5.76
Adventure sports, paragliding, rafting	5.54
Volunteering or community work	5.05
Mountain flight, scenic Everest flight	2.94
Mountaineering or climbing expeditions	2.83
Other	0.38

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 25.2: Approximate Spending During the Last Visit to Nepal

Money Spend During Last Visit to Nepal (NPR)	Percentage (%)
Less than NPR 1–3 lakhs	22.38
NPR 3–7 lakhs	37.5
NPR 7–11 lakhs	26.61
NPR 11–15 lakhs	6.45
More than NPR 15 lakhs	7.06

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 26: : Second Generation (Table A1 – A16)

Table A1: Demographic Profile of Respondents		
Category	Details	Percentage (%)
Generation	Second Generation	3.31
Age Distribution	Age 32	16.67
	Age 25	13.89
	Age 28	11.11
Gender	Male	50
	Female	50

Table A2: Ethnic Composition	
Ethnic Group	Percentage (%)
Tamang	19.44
Newar	16.67
Kshetri	16.67
Brahman	13.89
Sherpa	13.89
others	19.44

Table A3: Educational Attainment	
Education Level	Percentage (%)
Master's Degree	50.00
Bachelor's Degree	38.89
Others	11.11

Table A4: Geographic Distribution in Australia	
State / Territory	Percentage (%)
New South Wales (NSW)	75.00
Queensland (QLD)	10.00
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	5.00
South Australia (SA)	5.00
Victoria (VIC)	2.50
Western Australia (WA)	2.50

Table A5: Household & Housing Status		
Category	Details	Percentage (%)
Living Arrangement	With Parents	50.00
	With Partner/Spouse & Children	19.44
Housing	Own House	41.67
	Family-Owned House	47.22

Table A6: Employment Profile		
	Details	Percentage (%)
Employment Type	Full-time	66.67
	Working Students	16.67
Sector	Engineering & Architecture	16.67
	Finance & Accounting	12.11
	Administrative Services	12.16

	Information Technology	12.00
Position Level	Managerial/Admin	44.44
	Executive/Senior Management	13.89

Table A7: Income Distribution

Income Range (AUD)	Percentage (%)
120,001 – 160,000	27.78
Others	72.22

Table A8: Return Intention to Nepal

Response	Percentage (%)
Do Not Intend to Return	63.89
Willing to Return	8.33
Undecided	2.78

Table A9: Remittance Behaviour

Category	Percentage (%)
Do Not Send Remittance	86.11
Send Remittance	13.89

Table A10: Investment Behaviour

Category	Details	Percentage (%)
Made Investments	Yes	55.56
Investment Location	Australia Only	47.22
	Nepal Only	5.56
	Both Countries	2.78

Table A11: Investment Sectors

Sector	Percentage (%)
Real Estate / Property	~2
Stock Market / Financial	~25
Food & Beverage	5.56
Logistics & Supply Chain	5.56
Retail Trade	2.78
Digital Technology	2.78

Table A12: Investment Value

Investment Range (AUD)	%
< 50,000	13.89
350,001 – 550,000	11.11
> 1,000,000	2.78

Table A13: Future Investment Plans (Next 5 Years)

Sector	Percentage (%)
Real Estate	13.89
Shares / ETFs	8.33
Technology	2.78
Business / Franchise	2.78

Table A14: Demand for Nepali Products	
Product	Percentage (%)
Nepali Spices	69.44
Snacks	58.33
Pickles	30.56
Wool / Textiles	27.78
Herbal Tea / Ayurveda	22.22
Chiura	22.22
Handicrafts	16.67

Table A15: Service Sector Opportunities	
Service	Percentage (%)
IT Services	33.33
BPO	27.78
Video Editing / Design	27.78
Academic / Research	19.44
Digital Marketing	19.44
Cybersecurity / QA	19.44

Table A16: Policy Recommendations for Engagement		
Policy		Percentage (%)
Dual Citizenship		50.00
Investment Security Guarantees		27.78
Fast-track Investment Process		19.44
Public-Private Partnerships		16.67
Land Ownership / Repatriation Clarity		13.89

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 28 : Estimated Value of Diaspora Investments in Nepal in NPR

Investment Amount Range (NPR)	Percentage (%)
Less than 220,000 (२ लाख २० हजार भन्दा कम)	15.60
220,000 – 1 million (२.२ लाख – १० लाख)	21.28
1 million – 5 million (१० – ५० लाख)	22.70
5 million – 20 million (५० लाख – ३ करोड)	21.98
Above 20 million (३ करोड)	18.45

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 33 : Challenges Faced by Respondents in Investment Activities in Nepal (Multiple Responses)

Challenges Faced	Percentage (%)
Bureaucratic Delays	51.39
Cultural & Value Issues	2.78
Complex Tax & Legal Systems	22.22
Lack of Investment Knowledge	15.28
Difficulty Finding Trustworthy Partners	29.17
Economic Uncertainty	31.94
Market Uncertainty	27.78

Policy & Legal Changes	31.94
Corruption / Informal Payments	27.78
Infrastructure Issues	11.11
Lack of NRN Investment Forums	5.56
Limited Access to Reliable Finance	9.72
Labour Issues	8.33
Weak Contract Enforcement	9.72
Repatriation Issues	12.50
Local Community Issues	4.17
Tax Issues	19.44
Future Interest Uncertainty	15.28
Other	1.39

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Table 42: Professional Services Provided by Nepalis in High Demand in Australia (Multiple Responses)

Professional Services Provided by Nepalis in High Demand in Australia	Percentage (%)
Information Technology and Digital Services (IT, cybersecurity, digital marketing)	83.10
Business and Financial Services (accounting, BPO, virtual assistance, customer support/call centers)	77.59
Creative and Media Services (video editing, graphic design, animation)	9.37
Professional and Knowledge Services (academic and research assistance, language and translation services)	30.85
Design and Architecture Services (interior and architectural design)	10.93
Other	8.36

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Table 43: Areas Where Nepalis Diaspora Can Contribute to Nepal's Development (Multiple Responses)

Areas of Contribution to Nepal's Development	Percentage (%)
Health & Social Development	63.27
Economic & Investment Activities	62.44
Academic & Research	61.53
Tourism	49.95
Skills Transfer	48.03
Infrastructure & Environmental Development	41.05
Technology & Innovation	31.59
Others	0.83

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Table 48 : Frequency of Use of Nepali Products and Services in Australia

Frequency of Use	Percentage (%)
Regularly	33.86
Sometimes	26.35
Daily	20.41
Other (specific products/entries)	18.09
Never	1.30

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Table 49 : Monthly Spending on Nepali Products and Services

Monthly Spending Range (AUD)	Percentage (%)
Less than 100	11.28
100 – 500	47.06
500 – 1000	33.55
1000 – 2000	6.34
2000 – 3000	1.30
Above 3000	0.47

Source: IIDS Survey Data

Table 52: Additional Financial Support Arranged in Nepal for Education in Australia

Additional funding required from Nepal	Percentage (%)
Yes	44.58
No	55.42

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 53: Additional Financial Support Arranged in Nepal for Education in Australia

Additional Financial Support	Percentage (%)
Part-time job in Australia	34.84
Government financial aid or grant	13.24
Family or relatives in Australia	12.75
University scholarship	11.59
Full-time job in Australia	9.76
Multiple part-time jobs in Australia	9.30
Personal savings in Australia	6.39
Loan from Australian bank	0.83
Other (please specify)	1.29

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

Table 54: Proportion of Income Earned in Australia Used to Fund Education

Income Earned in Australia Used to Fund Education (AUD)	Percentage (%)
Less than AUD 5,000	10.08
AUD 5,000 to 10,000	12.19
AUD 10,001 to 20,000	23.93
AUD 20,001 to 30,000	13.33
AUD 30,001 to 50,000	19.21
More than AUD 50,000	21.26

Source: IIDS Primary Survey

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