

# CHAPTER 9

## INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP IN NEPAL

Padma Prasad Khatiwada, PhD\*

### Abstract

*International migration in Nepal started with the recruitment of physically strong youth by the British Army. Recently, Nepal has observed a rapid increase of absent population over census periods. In the 2001 census, 762,181 persons were reported to be absent. The figure went up to 1,921,494, more than doubled in 2011. The emigration rate for 2011 is estimated at 10.77 per thousand populations, whereas the immigration rate for the same period stands at 0.46 per thousand populations. The gross migration rate and the net migration rate are respectively calculated as 11.23 and -10.32 per thousand populations. Data on both the foreign-born population and foreign citizens indicate a fluctuating trend, which may pose questions about the reliability of these data. In 1961, the percentage of the foreign born population was nearly 4.1% of the total population, it decreased to 1.6% in 1981 and increased to 2.4% in 1991, 2.7% in 2001 and 1.8% in 2011. The number of foreign citizens, as recorded by various censuses, shows a fluctuating trend. Foreign citizens in 1961 were 1.2% of the total population, which increased to over 3% in 1981, before declining to 0.5% from 1991, the same figure as recorded in 2011. Data on international migration largely depends on the government's policies towards employment in foreign countries. So far the government has adopted a policy to encourage youth to work abroad, hoping that they will find employment there and provide remittance for the country's overall development. However, whether youth get employed abroad or within the country needs to be an informed choice and the government needs to act as a facilitator.*

### 9.1 Introduction

Migration and development are closely interlinked. Migration can contribute to human development, especially if the rights of movers are improved (UNDP, 2009). In the Nepalese context, both women and men's migration to India, or other countries, can help reduce poverty, largely depending on the benefits they (and their families) obtain from migration and the costs they have to bear. Migrant workers face many obstacles during the migration process and in their destination countries. Some of the most important obstacles that decrease migrants' potential benefits and increase their costs are low levels of skills and hence lower salaries, and poor professional development opportunities in their destination countries. Other factors include: high interests rates paid for loans from local moneylenders or relatives; migrants' low awareness and/or misinformation about the foreign country they are going to; their earning potential; their rights and obligations; the migration related procedures they have to follow; corruption at all levels of the migration cycle, for example by recruiting agents and sub-agents in Nepal; and other forms of exploitation, including gender-based violence (GBV), primarily an issue for female migrant workers. Overall, migrants working abroad are involved in the activities popularly known as the 4Ds (difficult, dangerous, dirty and demeaning) (Connell, 1993; Martin, 1996; UNFPA, 2006).

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\* Lecturer, Population Studies, Padma Kanya Multiple Campus, Tribhuvan University

Utilising mainly 2011 census information, this chapter attempts to establish evidence based on facts and figures to support the issues, concerns and observations mentioned above about international migration in Nepal. The historical legacy of migrating for employment in Nepal is covered briefly to provide a link to theoretical literature both universal as well as for the Nepalese context. For the first time information on migration, including the absent population, foreign born population and foreign citizens, and the basis of measurement of gross and net migration, using international migration data, are detailed in a census report. Certain policy issues are considered to review their implications on Nepal's international migration.

### 9.2 Historical context

International migration in Nepal started with the recruitment of physically strong young people by then powerful countries. Slowly it became a livelihood strategy for a large part of the rural population in Nepal. Later on it became a "Lahure"<sup>1</sup> culture, that is, "In the 19th Century, Nepali (Gurkhas) were recruited to serve in the British Army and British India, while recently, during the latter part of the 1990s, Nepali began to migrate increasingly to the Gulf countries for work" (Seddon et al., 2002). As a result, an estimated five million Nepali are employed in foreign countries, of which around 40% leave for India, while the remaining 60% go overseas, primarily to the Gulf countries, Malaysia, Lebanon and the Republic of Korea. Women account for around 9% of overseas migrants. Around one third of the population benefits from remittances. The latter accounts for 15.5 to 25% of Nepal's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (NIDS, 2010).

Emigration by the hill people of Nepal has become more than a historical tradition and legacy. It is now an essential strategy of household sustenance and survival, a situation of economic dependency without which a significant portion of the Nepalese population, particularly in the hills would be unable to exist. British forceful recruitment hindered the initial development of the agricultural economy and migration caused further labour shortages in rural Nepal.

Over 200,000 of the country's male youths were recruited during the period of the First World War. After the demarcation and delineation of the Nepal/India international border under the provision of the Sugauli Treaty in 1861, and the existence of the High Himalayas as a natural boundary between Nepal and China, Nepal emerged as a politically established state (Kansakar, 2003). The British East India Company started recruiting Nepali from among the Gorkhali prisoners of war in 1815. As a result, the Nepalese hill people, in particular, went to Lahore, the capital of Punjab, to join the army of Sikh king Ranjit Singh. From that time Nepalese hill people serving in foreign armies were called "Lahure". In order to make the process easier, the British Government encouraged the Gorkhales to migrate to India along with their families and to also establish settlements in various parts of India. This is the main reasons for the extension of Nepalese inhabitants in various northern parts of India even today, such as in Darjeeling, Sikkim, Assam, and Ahmedabad. In the 19th century the rate of emigration of the Nepalese hill people to Bengal, Assam, Burma, Bhutan, and Sikkim further escalated.

The Mutiny War, India's first war of independence in 1857, launched by the Indians against the British Government was suppressed by the British for which the then Nepali Rana regime is said to have assisted, providing 12,000 of the Nepalese Army to the British in India in 1861. In return, the British Government gave the territory of the far Western Tarai – Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur - back to Nepal (Shrestha, B.N. 2012).

The first civil code of Nepal in 1862, declared by Janga Bahadur Rana, put a provision in place that foreigners residing in Nepal could purchase and sell land, which resulted in large-scale migration of Indian businessmen and entrepreneurs to Nepal, and was followed by migration of tillers as well.

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1 The word Lahure is also interchangeably used as Recrute, that is, an army who used to be recruited by British Raj in the service from the city Lahore, which is now the first biggest city of Punjab and the second biggest of Pakistan.

In 1942 during World War II, a large number of Nepalese settled in Myanmar fled into India and Nepal. Many of them lost their lives on the way, very few came back to their place of origin and a few settled underground. There are still settlements of Nepalese inhabitants in Myanmar and the nearby country of Thailand as well.

Various migration related policies, laws and coercive measures are responsible for the lack of appropriate migration management. Due to this migrants, especially those who settled in more remote areas of Nepal, have deprived the Nepali people of various socio-economic and development opportunities.

*Nepalese emigration to India has hindered Nepal to implement effective policy to control immigration from India. Emigration was primarily induced by the State apparatus through oppressive land and labour policies, agricultural indebtedness, and recruitment by the British Army (KC, 1999: 21).*

For example, in the 19th Century, the Nepalese government deliberately invited Indian immigrants to the Tarai for agricultural colonisation (KC, 1998: 64). This encouraged Indian immigrants to extend their business and influence over the simple and uneducated Nepalese. The ‘extension of an Indian railway to the Nepalese border by the last decade of the 19th century brought Indian traders and businessmen’. They assumed a dominant posture over the simple and uneducated Nepalese. The Nepalese accepted the spread of Indian immigrants over Nepal in terms of trade and business, seeing it as an opportunity to gain access to goods and new markets. Although the Nepalese benefited, Indian immigrants occupied most of the main markets leaving the Nepalese behind.

With the establishment of joint industrial ventures in the Tarai in the 1930s, more Indian industrial labourers came to Nepal for work in factories (Conway, et al., 1982). This discouraged and deprived Nepalese of employment in these factories, who were treated as less efficient and skilled personnel to be employed in factories.

### 9.2.1 1950 Nepal-India treaty

The 1950 Treaty signed between Nepal and India on Peace and Friendship is said to have given more benefits to Indian nationals than the Nepalese. However, the Nepalese has not categorically identified which points of the Treaty are unequal. Article 6 of the Treaty states, ‘nationals of the other, in its territory, national treatment with regard to participation in industrial and economic development of such territory’. Similarly, Article 7 grants, ‘on a reciprocal basis, to the nationals of one country in the territory of the other the same privileges on the matter of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, movement and other privileges of similar nature and afford[s] the Nepalese nationals in Nepal protection from unrestricted competition’ (KC, 1998: 65).

The 1950 Nepal-India Treaty is the fundamental basis of the relationship between the two countries. Many opinions have been voiced regarding this treaty, especially by Nepalese academics, political parties and social activists. They are of the opinion that it ‘should be revised in order to put the relationship between the two countries on a more realistic footing.’ The provision in the Nepal India Treaty of 1950 in Article VII encouraged large-scale immigration of Indians to Nepal.

## 9.3 Data sources and methods

The census is a major source of migration data. Two questions in particular provide invaluable data on migration. The first is the question about ‘Place of birth’. The second is the question as to whether all the members of the family are currently residing at home. The query ‘place of birth’ is the basic and universal question for every migration study and provides information mainly on ‘non-migrant’, ‘in-migrant’, and ‘immigrant’. Question No. 16 of Schedule 2 questionnaire asks, ‘Where is the birthplace of the respondent?’ Options for answering this question include ‘same district’ and ‘different district’. Follow up questions for those responding to ‘different district’ are related to ‘VDC/Municipality’ as well as ‘foreign country’. Additional questions are asked as a follow up related to duration of residence in a current place (Question No. 17), reasons for stay in a current place

(Question No. 18), and place of residence 5 years previously (Question No. 19). Similarly, the status of presence at home at the time of enumeration gives information on 'absent population', that is, abroad and 'out-migration', that is, internal migration. The particular question for this information is in Schedule 1, Question No. 13 that states the list of 'absent population in a given household'. Question No. 14 further specifies this list of absent population by sex, age, educational attainment, duration of absence, reasons for absence and the destination country.

### 9.3.1 Migration data in different censuses

The 1952/54 census, which is regarded as the benchmark of the modern scientific census in Nepal, contains data on out-migration, both internal and international. In an explanatory chapter regarding the 1952/54 Census, S.M. Joshi states that 8.6% of the absentee population was internal migration, as compared to 91.4% external migration (Joshi, 1957:83-86). Of the total absentee population, 67.3% was recorded for Central Hill and 27.2% for Eastern Hill, both areas of heavy Gorkha recruitment.

The 1961 census collected data on both internal and international migration on the basis of citizenship and place of birth. The data on foreign citizens is available for India, China, Pakistan, other countries and those that are unstated. The data by place of birth and by sex are categorised into native-born and foreign-born. For native-born, data are available by sex and by districts and regions, but the data on the foreign-born population are only available by sex for the category as a whole. The country of birth for foreign-born populations includes India, Pakistan, China, Myanmar and Malaya. Only three countries were listed as options for foreign citizens, India, China and Pakistan. As regards to the absentee population, the census indicates that destination countries are India, Malaysia, Myanmar, China and Pakistan.

The 1971 census was conducted after the political division of the country into 14 zones and 75 administrative districts. The censuses of 1952/54 and 1961 had only 35 administrative districts divided into 54 census districts in 1952/54 and 55 districts in 1961. The 1971 census collected data on migration only for the de-jure population (those populations that are counted according to their regular or legal residence) and not the de-facto population, when the population is enumerated where they spend the night on the day enumerated.

The 1981 census collected migration data by sex, and broad age groups (0-15 years, 15-59 years and 60 years and above). Additional information was collected on the foreign-born population including: a) duration of stay in Nepal, b) duration of stay in present place of residence, and c) reason for stay in the present place of residence. Regarding the reason for stay in the present place of residence for the foreign-born population, categories included: a) trade and commerce, b) agriculture, c) service, d) study/training, e) marital relations, and f) others/unstated. As for the data collected on birthplace, only two countries are mentioned, India and China. The rest were put into two categories, other Asian and others/not stated. The tables on citizenship included 4 categories a) Nepali, b) Indian, c) Chinese, and d) others/unstated. The data collected on the categories of citizenship above were 97.68%, 0.78%, 0.05% and 2.39% of the total population respectively. One of the notable features of the 1981 census was the data on the absentee population (10 years and above) within and outside the country, a total of 187,795 persons.

Among the total absentee population, 2.28% were absent due to trade and commerce, 8.97% for agriculture, 30.30% were absent for service, 7.15% were absent for study, 2.47% for marital relations and others or unstated were reported at 48.82%. As for destination countries, India, China, other Asian countries and others were included as categories. Data on the absentee population, and destination abroad by age and sex is available in the household tables. Age is categorised by 5 year age groups.

The only country specified in the destination countries is India, while others have been categorised as: a) South Asia, b) other Asian, c) Arab countries, d) Europe, e) North America, f) others, and g) not stated. Categories for reasons absent include: a) agriculture, b) trade, c) employment, d) education/training, e) dependency, f) others, and g) not stated. In the table on duration of absence, the periods have been grouped into 11 categories as less than one year, 1-2 years, 3-5 years, 6-10 years, 16-20 years, 21-25 years, 26-30 years, 31-40 years, and 40 years and above.

In the 1991 census of Nepal, migration data is available by birth-place, citizenship, and by region and countries of destination for the absentee population. Migration is referenced in three sections of the census. Migration data is available by sex and in five year age groups, in addition to destination country. The countries of foreign-born population have been broadly categorised into five groups as: a) SAARC countries, b) other Asian countries, c) European countries, d) other countries, and e) countries not stated. Data on specific countries are available for SAARC countries only, including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Bhutan. Sri Lanka and the Maldives are grouped together. No data is available for individual countries for the other groups. Data on the foreign-born population is categorised as duration of residence, education and marital status. The period of duration of residence of the foreign-born population has been categorised into 7 groups as: a) below six months, b) six months to one year, c) one to five years, d) five to ten years, e) eleven to fifteen years, f) fifteen or more years, and g) not stated. Another table with duration of residence contains the major occupation of the foreign-born population by sex, and includes: a) professional/technical, b) administrative, c) clerical, d) sales, e) service, f) farming and fishing, g) production and labour, h) other occupation, and i) not stated.

In the 2001 census, data on migration were collected from complete enumeration and sample enumeration (see Table 9.1). Place of birth was enumerated under the sample schedule by native born and foreign born. Similarly, duration of residence in place and its reasons were also included under the sample schedule. Absentee population by sex, duration of absence and reasons were included under the complete enumeration. This included the absentee population within the country and destination abroad by sex. The age at time of absence and citizenship were also included in the complete enumeration.

As in 2001, migration data from the 2011 census is obtained from both complete enumeration (Form 1) and sample enumeration (Form 2). Form 1 has two categories of questionnaires, that is, a household questionnaire, (questions 1 -14) and an individual questionnaire (questions 1 – 15). Information on absent population by households is obtained through Question No. 13 under household category. Similarly, Q. No. 14 gives information on absentee population by age and sex, as well as their status of education, duration of stay abroad (in years), purpose or reasons for going abroad and the destination country. This attempt to identify the absent population by age group and level of education is the first exercise of its kind in the history of census taking in Nepal. The purpose or the reasons for migration are close-ended questions, that is, ‘trade’, ‘private job’, ‘institutional job’, ‘study’, ‘conflict’, ‘dependent’, ‘other’ and ‘don’t know’. The reason ‘conflict’ has been added for the first time in the census history is in light of the armed conflict that occurred in Nepal from 1996 to 2006, until the formal initiation of conflict transformation and peace building among the conflicting parties, the CPN (Maoists) and other political parties, as well as the then monarchy and the government. Form 1 also provides categories of the households of non-migrants, and absentees in terms of ‘internal’ and ‘international.’

Foreign countries that the absent population is going to are categorised in terms of India, other SAARC countries, ASEAN countries<sup>2</sup>, the Middle East, other Asian countries, European Union countries, other European countries, North American countries (USA and Canada), South American/Caribbean countries, African countries, Pacific regions and others. This categorisation carried out for analysing the 2011 census migration data is the first attempt of its kind.

Question No. 16 specified in Form 2 of the sample enumeration schedule addresses the place of birth. The categories specified are ‘same district’, ‘different district’ and ‘abroad’. Thus, this question provides information on ‘internal migration’, that is, ‘in-migration’ and ‘out-migration’, and ‘immigration’, that is, ‘foreign born population’ and ‘foreign citizens’. Similarly, question No. 19 provides information on residence 5 years before, seeking information on those staying in same district, different districts or abroad.

Information on citizenship is collected from Form 1 of the individual schedule, Question No. 11. This question is asked as to which country the person is a citizen of. The options given are ‘Nepal’, ‘India’, ‘China’ and

<sup>2</sup> Among them, huge number of Nepalese are in Malaysia followed by South Korea and other countries (Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Philippines, Vietnam, Myanmar, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos).

'Other'. Citizenship of the population by countries is available by sex and age. Similarly, countries of foreign citizens include: India, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives, other countries of Asia, Europe, North America, South America, Africa and Australia/New Zealand.

This chapter primarily uses census data collected in different periods, while facts and figures are mainly updated by data from the 2011 census. Previous censuses have been quoted to compare and contrast figures in order to analyse the level, trend and pattern of international migration. Where relevant, information from surveys, particularly two NLSS reports (2004 and 2011), as well as data on foreign labour migration updated by the Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) have also been analysed. Finally, policy documents have been reviewed concisely to determine policy implications.

### 9.4 Review of literature

Although migration is a phenomenon that has taken place since the history of mankind, its theoretical interpretation is found in the 'laws of migration' first defined by Ravenstein (1885). His conclusion was that migration and distance; migration by slopes; stream and counter stream; urban-rural difference in the propensity to migrate and the predominance of females among short distance migrants, usually prevails in migration studies. Similarly, technology and migration and the dominance of economic motives, taken from the general conclusions of his second paper (Ravenstein, 1889), may not prevail everywhere.

Ravenstein's seven laws of migration were later interpreted in an extensive way by Stouffer (1960) and Lee (1966). Stouffer introduced intervening opportunities and competitive migrants, whereas Lee introduced migration relationships between origin and destination, associated with the area of origin, destination, intervening obstacles, and personal factors. Lee reformulated Ravenstein's theory to give more emphasis to internal (or push) factors and outlined the impact that intervening obstacles have on the migration process, arguing that variables such as distance, physical and political barriers, and having dependents can impede or even prevent migration.

Within a framework of total human movement, migrations can be divided into two categories: 1) those which involve complete spatial displacement of the daily/weekly reciprocal movement patterns of the migrant (total displacement migrations), and 2) those which involve displacement of only part of the everyday reciprocal movements of migrants (partial displacement migrations). In this connection, Zapf's (1946) inverse distance law, based on the mathematical statistics, refers to the fact that many types of migration data studied in physical and social sciences can be approximated.

Even though migration creates unemployment and induces informal sector growth, this behaviour is economically rational and utility-maximizing in the context of the Harris-Todaro model (Todaro, 1969). As long as migrating economic agents have complete and accurate information concerning rural and urban wage rates and the probabilities of obtaining employment, they will make an expected income-maximizing decision. Migration as a social process is defined more as the 'hypothesis of mobility transition', a concept developed first by Zelinsky in 1971. He developed a five phase model of mobility transition, phase one being the pre-modern traditionally society, phase two early transitional society, phase three late transitional society, phase four advanced society, and finally phase five future super-advanced society.

Migration systems theory as pioneered by the Nigerian geographer Akin Mabogunje (1970) has been the most comprehensive attempt at integrating both first (endogenous) and second order (contextual) migration system feedbacks to date, as well as world-systems developed by Immanuel Wallerstein in the 1970s and 1980s.

Sam Stouffer and his associates first identified relative deprivation as one of the main indicators for migration in their wartime study "The American Soldier" (1960). To them, relative deprivation occurs where individuals or groups subjectively perceive themselves as unfairly disadvantaged over others perceived as having similar attributes and deserving similar rewards (their reference groups).

The differential characteristics of streams of migration are regarded as the consequences of social and cultural constraints upon the head of a household. Migration is a large concern for policy makers because flows of population can significantly affect local political, social, economic, and ecological structures for both sending and receiving areas (DaVanzo, 1981). Regional economists, demographers, sociologists and geographers have made numerous contributions to migration studies since 1960 (Greenwood 1969, 1975). Many early economic studies used aggregated data to treat migration as an equilibrating mechanism that minimises geographic wages and employment differentials, while later studies have shifted to a microeconomic approach to study why individuals and families move (DaVanzo 1981).

Judson, D.H. (1990) attempted to develop a formal theory of decision making in human migration. Other examinations of the decision making process had several shortcomings, such as examining residential preferences without reference to other constraints impacting on the migration decision, which are addressed in this chapter. Furthermore, the links between migration decision-making and aggregate rates of migration have been left unspecified or it has been assumed that detailed micro data are needed to apply decision-making frameworks to migration data. Judson's paper aims to re-examine these issues within migration decision theory, and presents conclusions that suggest that decision theory has a much broader application to migration data than previously specified.

Hampton (2007) said that many actual decision-making problems incorporate higher-order structures, involving interdependencies between different stimuli, actions, and subsequent rewards. It is not known whether brain regions implicated in decision making, such as ventromedial prefrontal cortex, employ a stored model of the task structure to guide choice (model-based decision making) or merely learn action or state values without assuming higher-order structures, as in standard reinforcement learning.

#### **9.4.1 Application of theories in the Nepalese context**

Population migration can be both a solution and problem globally. It creates opportunities for migrants to gain knowledge and skills and, thereby earn money. However, migration may pose problems to a host community due to the heavy inflow of newcomers associated with intolerance and crime. This remained a characteristic phenomenon during the 10 year long armed conflict period in Nepal. Although very few studies focusing on the nature of forced migration have been undertaken in Nepal, Khatiwada (2008) studied migration by contextualising the mass exodus of conflict affected people during the conflict period as a dichotomy of migration in terms of voluntary and forced.

Nepalese migration trends did not remain within the limited scope of classical push and pull factors; it got a paradigm shift from the voluntary forced dichotomy to the post conflict relative deprivation, decision-making and livelihood approach.

Traditionally, studies of migration were confined to the Marxist, capitalist, social, cultural, religious, developmental and economic approaches in the realm of mainly the push and pull factors. Several ebbs and flows have occurred during the last 100 years of human mobility. As a result, approaches to migration studies can be analysed as a shift from traditional Marxist/capitalist to legal, social-development, political economy and security approaches (Khatiwada, 2011). Prior to armed conflict or during armed conflict, three main approaches were linked to increasing migration – the legal institutional approaches, social development, and the security approaches mainly on humanitarian grounds due to rural areas of Nepal being hit hard during the conflict. The trend of going abroad to countries in the Gulf and Malaysia, for example, for employment increased in Nepal during the armed conflict period primarily influenced by the security approach. In the post conflict period, the political economy approach has a direct link with relative deprivation, and a shift in decision-making and livelihood.

After the post conflict period, there has been a realisation by people that they have been relatively denied opportunities to participate in politics, state affairs and many other sectors of state building. The state could

not address the growing aspirations of people and this impacted on the level and trend of migration as a form of foreign labour. This trend did not only touched the areas of relative deprivation but also caused a huge shift in decision-making. Previously, male heads of households were the decision makers about migration in a family, whereas many females began to lead the households during the armed conflict and this shift also had a direct impact on migration. As a result, more and more females made their own decisions to go abroad for employment. Livelihood has been the main push factors for these people to go abroad to earn money and improve their well-being.

#### 9.4.2 Review of quality of census data on migration

The Centre for Economic Development and Administration (CEDA) reviewed the quality of the census data of 1971 in 1971. The study remarked that owing to the frequent changes in district boundaries, census questionnaires and definitions, a comparative study and analysis of census data of Nepal, at both the national and district levels, has become virtually impossible since 1961. The authors recommended adjusting the 1971 census according to the changes in the district boundaries resulting from the Second Amendment of the Constitution (CEDA, 1973). However, their recommendations were not implemented as the Nepalese scholars on migration argue.

New Era (2000) and KC (2008) reviewed the contents of the census data relating to migration (see Table 9.1) that shows that migration data were collected from the very beginning of census taking. While information on the absentee population, both abroad and within the country, was available by sex from the very beginning of the census, information on place of birth and citizenship by sex was only included from 1961. The 1971 census added the duration of residence and the 1981 census further added the reasons for absence or residence. However, the 1991 census omitted the information on the duration of residence in present place and reasons for absence. The questions related to migration were again changed in the 2001 census of Nepal. The “place of birth” and “citizenship” questions were included but the question on “residence one year ago” was replaced by “residence five years ago”. Since 2001, information on “duration of residence” and “main reason of staying” at the present place of residence was also collected. Regarding emigration, “absent from the household and ‘who have gone abroad” was collected from each household counted in the census (KC, 2008).

**Table 9.1: Migration related questions in census schedules, census years 1952/54-2011**

SN	Description of questions	1952 /54	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001		2011	
							Complete	Sample	Complete	Sample
1.	Place of birth		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y
2.	Native born		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y
3.	Foreign born		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y
4.	Duration of residence in Nepal (foreign born)				Y	Y				
5.	Duration of residence in present place				Y			Y		Y
6.	Reason for residence in present place				Y	Y		Y		Y
7.	Place of residence at fixed prior date									Y
8.	Absentee population	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y		Y	
9.	By age, sex				Y		Y		Y	
10.	By VDC/ Municipality								Y	



SN	Description of questions	1952 /54	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001		2011	
							Complete	Sample	Complete	Sample
11.	By education								Y	
12.	Duration of absence					Y	Y		Y	
13.	Reason for absence				Y		Y		Y	
14.	Absent within country but other district	Y	Y		Y				Y	
15.	Destination abroad by sex	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y		Y	
16.	Age at time of absence					Y	Y		Y	
17.	Citizenship		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	
18.	Nepalese by sex, age		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	
19.	Non-Nepalese by sex, age		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	

Source: *New Era, 2000; KC, 2008*

Note: Y = Yes; blank = No (not included/implied).

Khatiwada (2008) submitted a report on the issues of the population census of 2011 to the CBS, recommending that migration, the core component bringing changes in overall political, social, economic and cultural issues, needs to be internalised from a broader perspective. Stressing that collecting data only on lifetime migration cannot generate a great deal of information on issues related to migration, it was suggested that migration data based on typologies, such as permanent and temporary, voluntary and forced (types by voluntary and forced), migration and conflict, migration and trafficking, HIV/AIDS migration and development and migration and politics, be collected.

Some modifications in migration questions based on the recommendations above have been reflected in the 2011 census such as 'conflict' has been placed as a close-ended reason for migration in the questionnaire. Furthermore a couple of questions related to migration such as place of residence at a fixed prior date, migration information by VDC/Municipality, absent within country but other district, and educational status of absent population have also been included. (see Table 9.1).

### 9.4.3 Data availability in census report, 2011

Table 9.2 presents the data available on international migration in the census report. Whereas the data on absent household and population are available in Table 11 of the National Reports I and II, the report also provides information on population by citizenship (see Table 23). Similarly, population by place of birth, and population aged 5 years and above, residing in enumerated area by residence 5 years ago, are also available in this report in Volume III, Tables No. 1 and 5, respectively.

**Table 9.2: Data availability on international migration in the census report, 2011**

SN	International migration contents	Sources			
		National report I	National report II	District report	VDC/ Municipality report (by district)
1.	Absent household and population	Table 11		Table 15	Table 1.10
2.	Population absent from households by sex, age at departure and country of destination			Table 16	
3.	Population absent from households by sex, age at departure and reason for absence			Table 17	
4.	Population absent from households by sex, age at departure, reason for absence and country of destination			Table 18	
5.	Absent population from household by sex, duration of absence and age at departure			Table 19	
6.	Population absent from household by sex, level of education and age at departure			Table 20	
7.	Population by citizenship (Individual)	Table 23; Table 9			
8.	Population by place of birth, sex and five year age groups (Individual)		Table 1, Table 21		
9.	Population aged 5 years and above, residing in enumerated area 5 years ago		Table 5		
10.	Foreign born population by country of birth, sex and age groups		Table 25		
11.	Foreign born population by length of stay in Nepal, sex and age groups		Table 26		
12.	Foreign born population by main reason of stay in Nepal, sex and age groups		Table 27		
13.	Population aged 5 years and above, residing in enumerated area by residence 5 years ago, sex and 5 year age groups		Table 28		
14.	Population 5 years and above by place of residence prior to 5 years in different districts other than the enumeration district, by sex and 5 year age groups		Table 29		
15.	Population 5 years and above by country of residence prior to 5 years in foreign country from the date of enumeration, sex and age groups		Table 30		

Source: CBS, 2014.

## 9.5 International migration rates

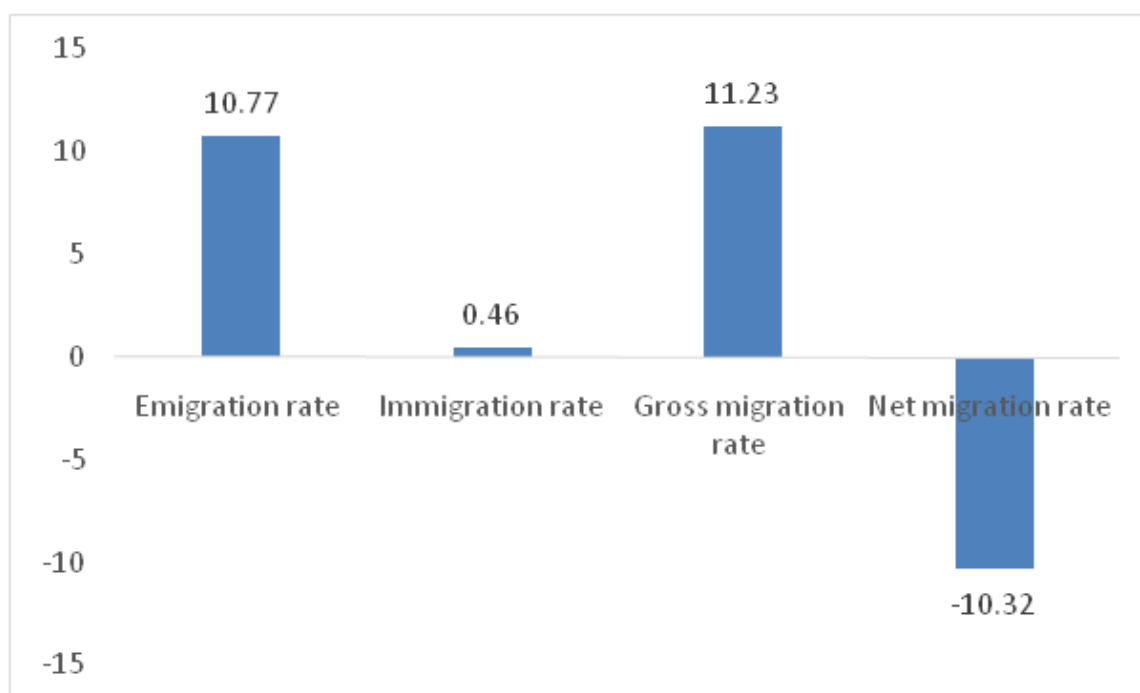
Calculating migration rates is a recent trend worldwide, corresponding to the growing mobility observed in relation to foreign employment. However, no authentic data for calculation are available. PRB (2006) has introduced the concept of calculating immigration and emigration rates. However, it does not categorically specify the sources of

data to use, whether census or vital statistics or other data. For the first time, CBS has used the absent population to calculate the emigration rate and foreign-born population to calculate the immigration rate.

### 9.5.1 Emigration rate (unadjusted)

The emigration rate is defined as the number of emigrants over a given period, divided by the persons-years lived of the departure country, per 1,000 persons (based on midyear population). It is expressed as number of emigrants per 1,000 populations (PRB, 2006). The emigration rate for 2011 is estimated at 10.77 per thousand populations.

**Figure 9.1: International migration rate, Nepal, 2011**



Source: CBS (2014)

### 9.5.2 Immigration rate (unadjusted)

The immigration rate is defined as the number of immigrants over a given period, divided by the person-years lived by the population of the receiving country over that period (mid-year population), expressed as number of immigrants per 1,000 populations (PRB, 2006). The immigration rate from NPHC 2011 data stands at 0.46 per thousand populations.

### 9.5.3 Gross migration rate(unadjusted)

The number of immigrants plus the number of emigrants over a period, divided by the person-years lived by the population (mid-year population) of the receiving country over that period is known as the gross migration rate. It is expressed as the gross number of migrants per 1,000 populations (PRB, 2006). The gross migration rate for 2011 is estimated at 11.23 per thousand populations.

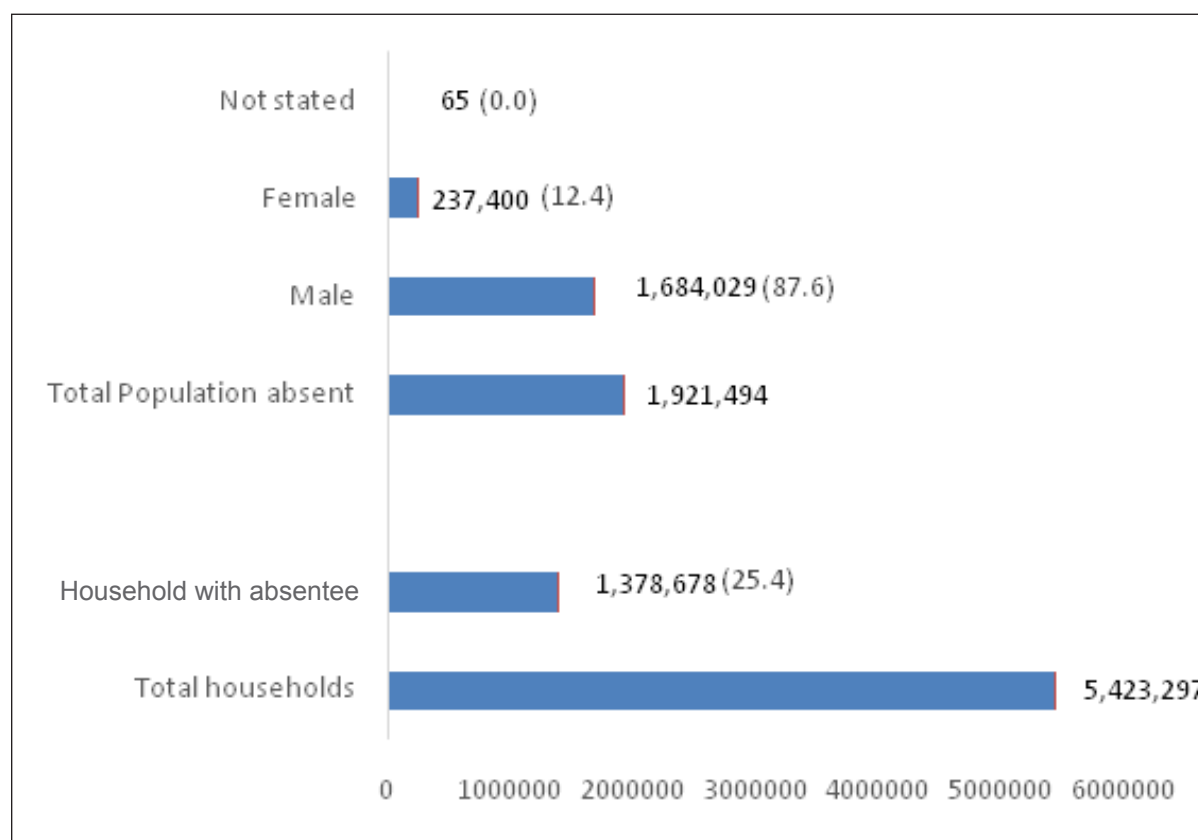
### 9.5.4 Net migration rate (unadjusted)

The number of immigrants minus the number of emigrants over a period, divided by the person-years lived by the population (mid-year population) of the receiving country over that period, is known as the net migration rate. It is expressed as the net number of migrants per 1,000 populations (PRB, 2006). The net migration rate for 2011 is estimated at -10.32 per thousand populations.

### 9.6 Absent population

Data on the absent population are available only after the 1942 census, which recorded 87,722 people as absent which is 1.4% of the total population. This number increased to 328,470 in 1961, 3.4% of the total population. Emigration data for the 1971 census are not available.

**Figure 9.2: Number and percent of households with at least one member absent and absent population by sex, Nepal, 2011**



Source: CBS, 2014

The 1981 census recorded an absent population of 402,977, 2.6% of the total population, which increased to 762,181 in 2001, 3.2% of the total population. In 2011, the total number of absent population was reported to be 1,921,494, 7.3% of the total population. This analysis shows that the absent population in Nepal is growing rapidly.

**Table 9.3: Absent population, Nepal, 1911 – 2011**

Year	Total	Absent	%	Male	%	Female	%
1911	5,638,749	NA		NA		NA	
1920	5,573,788	NA		NA		NA	
1930	5,532,574	NA		NA		NA	
1942	6,283,649	87,722	1.4	NA		NA	
1952/54	8,256,625	198,120	2.3	173,619	87.6	24,501	12.4
1961	9,412,996	328,470	3.4	NA		NA	
1971	11,555,983	NA		NA		NA	
1981	15,022,839	402,977	2.6	328,448	81.5	74,529	18.5
1991	18,491,097	658,290	3.4	548,002	83.2	118,288	16.8
2001	23,151,423	762,181	3.2	679,489	89.2	82,712	10.8
2011	26,494,504	1,921,494	7.3	1,684,029	87.6	237,400	12.4

Source: CBS, 2003, KC, 2008, Table 16, District Report, CBS, 2014.

According to every census record, male absentees are predominantly higher (87.6% in the census of 2011) than females (12.4%), in the same census. However, the trend of female absentees has also begun to increase, from 11% in 2001 to 12% in 2011.

### 9.6.1 Absent population

The 2011 census also recorded households with absent populations. The data revealed that, one in every four households (25.42%; 1.38 million households) reported that at least one member of their household was absent or living out of the country.

### 9.6.2 Destination

The percentage of absent population going to India sharply decreased in 2011, from 77% in 2001 to 38% in 2011. However, the volume of absent population going to India has increased, from 589,050 in 2001 to 722,256 in 2011, which is an increment of 1.2%. One of the reasons for the dramatic percentage decrease is the growing number of youths tending to go to other countries. Among the total absentees in India, 605,869 (83.9%) were males whereas 116,362 (16.1%) were females.

A total of 1,178,926 people went to other countries except India, approximately over three-fifths (61.4%). Among them, 1,062,755 (90.1%) were males and the remaining 116,171 (9.9%) were females. The status of destination of the remaining 20,312 (1.1%) of absentees is not known of which 4,865 (24%) are females.

**Table 9.4: Population absent from households and destination abroad by sex, Nepal, 1981-2011**

Year	Total absent population	India						Other countries					
		Total		Male		Female		Total		Male		Female	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1981	402,977	375,196	93.1	307,946	82.1	67,290	17.9	27,781	6.9	20,277	73	7,504	27
1991	658,290	587,243	89.2	492,079	83.8	95,164	16.2	40,481	12.8	32,477	80.2	8,004	19.8
2001	762,181	589,050	77.3	520,500	88.4	68,550	11.6	173,131	22.7	158,989	91.8	14,162	8.2
2011	1,921,494	722,255	37.6	605,869	83.9	116,362	16.1	1,178,926	61.4	1,062,755	90.1	116,171	9.9

Not stated					
Total		Male		Female	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
-	-	-	-	-	-
30,566	4.6	23,446	76.2	7,120	23.3
-	-	-	-	-	-
20,312	1.1	15,447	76	4,865	24

Source: CBS, 2002, KC, 2008, Table 16, District Report, CBS, 2014.

### 9.6.3 Age sex structure by destination

More than 76% of the total absent population are in the age group 15- 34 years, followed by 14% in the age group 35-54 years. A proportionately larger percentage of female absentees (14.1%) are under 15 years of age, compared to males (5%) in the same age range.

Over two-fifths (40.5%) of absentees' duration of stay in their destination country is 1-2 years, followed by 3-5 years (22.5%) and 6-9 years (7.8%). Almost the same is true for male and female migrants. Among the absentees, the highest proportion (45.1%) of the absent population is in the age group 15 to 24 years (see Table 9.5).

**Table 9.5: Population absent from households and destination abroad by age at departure and duration of years, Nepal, 2011**

Duration (years)	Total absent population		Age at departure									
			Under 14		15-34		35-54		55 and above		Age not stated	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Both sexes</b>												
< 1	283,488	14.8	14,259	5.0	213,722	75.4	49,240	17.4	3,945	1.4	2,322	0.8
1 – 2	777,765	40.5	31,273	4.0	608,975	78.3	124,240	16	6,774	0.9	6,503	0.8
3 – 5	432,866	22.5	22,384	5.2	340,568	78.7	63,396	14.7	2,354	0.5	4,164	1
6 – 9	149,101	7.8	14,992	10.1	113,830	76.4	16,877	11.3	748	0.5	2,654	1.8
10-24	193,600	10.1	22,733	11.7	149,312	77.1	17,496	9	896	0.5	3,163	1.6
25-49	35,904	1.9	6,532	18.2	26,623	74.2	1,796	5	208	0.5	745	2.1
50+	2,431	0.1	448	18.4	1,719	70.8	182	7.5	10	0.4	72	3
Not Stated	46,339	2.4	8,527	18.4	18,635	40.2	3,746	8.1	371	0.8	15,060	32.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,921,494</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>121,148</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>1,473,384</b>	<b>76.6</b>	<b>276,973</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>15,306</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>34,683</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>Male</b>												
< 1	254,735	15.1	9,551	3.7	194,439	76.3	45,831	18	3,077	1.2	1,837	0.7

Duration (years)	Total absent population		Age at departure									
			Under 14		15-34		35-54		55 and above		Age not stated	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1 - 2	688,326	40.9	20,710	3	541,658	78.7	115,275	16.7	5,507	0.8	5,176	0.8
3 - 5	375,779	22.3	14,586	3.9	298,018	79.3	58,190	15.5	1,883	0.5	3,102	0.8
6 - 9	127,184	7.6	10,415	8.2	99,264	78.1	15,199	11.9	591	0.5	1,715	1.3
10-24	169,033	10	18,271	10.8	132,356	78.3	15,540	9.2	740	0.5	2,126	1.3
25-49	33,022	2	6,106	18.5	24,594	74.4	1,558	4.7	181	0.5	583	1.8
50+	2,141	0.1	392	18.3	1,538	71.8	156	7.3	6	0.3	49	2.3
Not Stated	33,809	2	4,866	14.4	15,873	46.9	3,336	9.8	270	0.8	9,464	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,684,029</b>	<b>87.6</b>	<b>84,897</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1,307,740</b>	<b>77.7</b>	<b>255,085</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>12,255</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>24,052</b>	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Female</b>												
< 1 Year	28,741	1.7	4,707	16.4	19,274	67	3,408	11.9	868	3	484	1.7
1 - 2	89,410	5.3	10,561	11.8	67,298	75.3	8,957	10	1,267	1.5	1,327	1.5
3 - 5	57,071	3.4	7,797	13.7	42,537	74.6	5,204	9.1	471	0.8	1,062	1.9
6 - 9	21,915	1.3	4,577	20.9	14,565	66.5	1,677	7.7	157	0.7	939	4.3
10-24	24,564	1.5	4,462	18.2	16,953	69	1,956	8	156	0.6	1,037	4.2
25-49	2,882	0.2	426	14.8	2,029	70.4	238	8.3	27	0.9	162	5.6
50+	290	0	56	19.3	181	62.4	26	8.9	4	1.3	23	7.9
Not Stated	12,527	0.7	3,660	29.2	2,761	22.1	409	3.2	101	0.8	5,596	44.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>237,400</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>36,246</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>165,598</b>	<b>69.8</b>	<b>21,875</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>3,051</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>10,630</b>	<b>4.5</b>

Source: National Population Census 2011, District Report, CBS, 2014

Table 9.6: Population absent from household by sex, age at departure and country of destination

Age group	Absent population destined to																													
	Total		India		Other countries		Other SAARC countries (Except India)		ASEAN countries		Middle East countries		Other Asian countries		European Union countries		Other European countries		North American countries (USA & Canada)		South American/Caribbean countries		African countries		Pacific Ocean region countries		Others		Not Stated	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Both Sexes</b>																														
All Ages	1,921,494		722,255	37.6	1,199,239	62.4	12,068		249,889		721,791		44,566		58,882		3,691		48,077		2,315		5,124		27,366		5,158		20,312	
00-14	121,148		105,006	86.7	16,142	13.3	185		962		523		1,642		4,802		275		4,125		131		161		1,080		164		2,092	
15-24	867,496		362,118	41.7	505,378	58.3	4,870		120,436		287,838		16,639		27,344		1,516		20,696		756		1,719		15,158		2,123		6,283	
25-34	605,888		139,104	23.0	466,784	77.0	4,030		91,983		298,357		18,813		17,529		1,383		15,723		873		2,171		9,442		1,971		4,509	
35-44	227,356		63,087	27.7	164,269	72.3	2,258		30,666		112,037		5,479		4,452		372		4,470		308		817		1,029		683		1,698	
45-54	49,617		26,249	52.9	23,368	47.1	565		3,149		15,158		804		1,550		53		1,235		56		169		140		115		374	
55-64	11,636		8,544	73.4	3,092	26.6	47		181		972		243		993		7		437		12		22		47		17		114	
65+	3,670		2,282	62.2	1,388	37.8	5		30		171		73		780		2		218		4		2		38		14		51	
Not Stated	34,683		15,865	45.7	18,818	54.3	108		2,482		6,735		873		1,432		83		1,173		175		63		432		71		5,191	
<b>Male</b>																														
All Ages	1,684,029		605,869	36.0	1,078,160	64.0	11,009		244,429		673,104		33,223		38,912		3,016		30,519		1,889		4,307		17,768		4,537		15,447	
00-14	84,897		75,905	89.4	8,992	10.6	131		612		449		894		2,488		155		2,162		82		95		556		101		1,267	
15-24	762,772		313,338	41.1	449,434	58.9	4,124		117,698		264,505		11,641		18,451		1,259		13,130		594		1,369		9,631		1,850		5,182	
25-34	544,968		117,998	21.7	426,970	78.3	3,838		90,213		280,144		14,750		12,138		1,170		10,137		748		1,889		6,403		1,773		3,767	
35-44	210,060		56,221	26.8	153,839	73.2	2,215		30,283		106,086		4,592		3,089		329		3,297		277		737		830		625		1,479	
45-54	45,025		23,506	52.2	21,519	47.8	558		3,099		14,614		631		1,008		48		847		52		153		85		109		315	
55-64	9,584		7,386	77.1	2,198	22.9	46		165		938		169		488		5		241		7		19		25		12		83	
65+	2,671		1,776	66.5	895	33.5	3		25		149		41		497		0		109		3		2		18		11		37	
Not Stated	24,052		9,739	40.5	14,313	59.5	94		2,334		6,219		505		753		50		596		126		43		220		56		3,317	
<b>Female</b>																														
All Ages	237,400		116,364	49.0	121,036		1,059		5,452		48,656		11,342		19,967		675		17,558		426		817		9,598		621		4,865	
00-14	36,246		29,096	80.3	7,150		54		350		74		748		2,314		120		1,963		49		66		524		63		825	
15-24	104,704		48,770	46.6	55,934		746		2,737		23,327		4,997		8,891		257		7,566		162		350		5,527		273		1,101	
25-34	60,894		21,102	34.7	39,792		192		1,764		18,197		4,063		5,391		213		5,586		125		282		3,039		198		742	
35-44	17,287		6,866	39.7	10,421		43		382		5,943		887		1,363		43		1,173		31		80		199		58		219	
45-54	4,588		2,741	59.7	1,847		7		50		543		173		541		5		388		4		16		55		6		59	
55-64	2,052		1,158	56.4	894		1		16		34		74		505		2		196		5		3		22		5		31	
65+	999		506	50.7	493		2		5		22		32		283		2		109		1		0		20		3		14	
Not Stated	10,630		6,125	57.6	4,505		14		148		516		368		679		33		577		49		20		212		15		1,874	

Source: National Population Census 2011, District Report, CBS, 2014



A larger percentage of absentees (58.3%) went to to ASEAN Member State Countries and the Middle East, only 41.7% went to India. An overwhelming majority of migrant children under 15 years of age (86.7%) went to India. Apart from India, more men, 673,104 (35%) of males go to the Middle East. A similar pattern is observed for females as well, 48,656 (20.5%) went to the Middle East compared to 19,967 (8.4%) who went to European Union countries.

Census, surveys and individual research on migration are also concerned with the types of people migrating to different parts of the globe. The Nepal Living Standards Survey (NLSS) 2010/11 presented data on the absentee population by their current location, in terms of development regions, ecological zones, place of residence, and other analytical domains, such as the consumption quintile. According to the consumption quintile, the majority of the first and second poorest people (62 and 51% respectively) are believed to be outside the country, whereas the majority of the third (53.3%), fourth (62.8%) and fifth (65.1%) categories are migrating within Nepal. Similarly, some attempts have been made by Gurung to determine the country of destination by type of person, G (2014). He stated that the 'A' category of people, in terms of wealth, can afford to go to the USA, the UK, Australia and Canada, whereas the 'E' category of people chose the neighbouring country of India, while the 'F' category of people cannot even afford to migrate to India. The financial cost of migration is a major determinant in explaining who goes where.

#### 9.6.4 Source areas

Districts including Gulmi, Arghakhanchi, and Pyuthan reported the highest proportion of their population being absent (staying abroad) (CBS, 2012). Whereas Gulmi had the highest proportion of households with an absent member (54.1%), Kathmandu district had the largest number of absentees, that is, 99,805. However, Gulmi again had the highest proportion (20.9%) of absent population followed by Syangja (17.5%) and Kaski (11.6%). Remaining districts with the top 10 absent populations are Nawalparasi (10.2%), Jhapa (9.9%), Kailali (8.1%), Dhanusa (8%), Morang (7.3%), and Rupandehi (7.1%).

**Table 9.7: Major areas of origin of absent population**

10 districts having most absentee households	No. of total households	Households having migrants	% of total households	10 districts having most absentee population	Total population	Migrant population	% of the total population
Gulmi	64,887	35,131	54.1	Gulmi	280,160	58,561	20.9
Arghakhanchi	46,826	25,266	54.0	Syangja	289,148	50,476	17.5
Pyuthan	47,716	24,124	50.6	Kaski	492,098	57,305	11.6
Syangja	68,856	34,207	49.7	Nawalparasi	643,508	65,335	10.2
Baglung	61,482	29,133	47.4	Jhapa	812,650	80,625	9.9
Palpa	59,260	27,010	45.6	Kailali	775,709	62,644	8.1
Tanahu	78,286	34,119	43.6	Dhanusa	754,777	60,400	8
Parbat	35,698	15,422	43.2	Morang	965,370	70,462	7.3
Myagdi	27,727	11,439	41.3	Rupandehi	880,196	62,904	7.1
Rolpa	43,735	17,047	39.0	Kathmandu	1,744,240	99,805	5.7

Source: National Population Census 2011, District Report, CBS, 2014

By sub-regions, the highest number of absentees (21.9% of absentees and 42.8% of households) were found in Western Hill and Far-Western Hill (32.9%) for households, and Eastern Tarai (14.2%) for number of absentees. Among female absentees, the largest number (44,283) was from Western Hill (see Table 9.8).

**Table 9.8: Source areas of absent population from Nepal, 2011**

Area	Total	Households with absentee		Sex of absentees							
				Total		Male		Female		Not stated	
				No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Nepal	5,423,297	1,378,678	25.4	1,921,494	100.0	1,684,029	87.6	237,400	12.4	65	0.003
Eastern Mountain	84,844	21,572	25.4	27,608	1.4	25,179	91.2	2,429	8.8	0	0.000
Eastern Hill	346,373	101,196	29.2	128,671	6.7	118,098	91.8	10,572	8.2	1	0.001
Eastern Tarai	799,526	210,248	26.3	273,591	14.2	245,342	89.7	28,231	10.3	18	0.007
Central Mountain	122,034	23,788	19.5	32,961	1.7	23,537	71.4	9,424	28.6	0	0.000
Central Hill	1,014,765	168,263	16.6	228,818	11.9	180,844	79.0	47,972	21.0	2	0.001
Central Tarai	825,439	158,500	19.2	202,677	10.5	191,021	94.2	11,629	5.7	27	0.013
Western Mountain	4,753	1,032	21.7	1,704	0.1	1,152	67.6	552	32.4	0	0.000
Western Hill	676,987	289,486	42.8	420,099	21.9	375,812	89.5	44,283	10.5	4	0.001
Western Tarai	383,859	115,301	30.0	158,031	8.2	141,538	89.6	16,491	10.4	2	0.001
Mid-Western Mountain	68,802	3,512	5.1	5,387	0.3	4,162	77.3	1,225	22.7	0	0.000
Mid-Western Hill	332,025	88,312	26.6	126,311	6.6	112,596	89.1	13,714	10.9	1	0.001
Mid-Western Tarai	294,187	66,499	22.6	89,563	4.7	79,937	89.3	9,624	10.7	2	0.002
Far-Western Mountain	83,265	19,351	23.2	37,763	2.0	28,292	74.9	9,471	25.1	0	0.000
Far-Western Hill	161,891	53,208	32.9	87,268	4.5	73,205	83.9	14,063	16.1	0	0.000
Far-Western Tarai	224,547	58,410	26.0	101,042	5.3	83,314	82.5	17,720	17.5	8	0.008

Source: National Population Census 2011, District Report, CBS, 2014

### 9.6.5 Reasons for absence

Nearly three quarters (71%) of the total absentees were found leaving their respective places of origin in search of employment; private jobs followed by one in every ten absentees leaving for institutional jobs. While more males (75.4%) were destined for private jobs, almost one third (32.2%) of female absentees were found to be dependents. Proportionately more females (14.2%) were found to go abroad to study than males (5.8%).

Although the role of armed conflict, which challenged the overall personal security of youths for various reasons in villages, was a major factor especially for migration, this was expressed as a factor by a nominal number of the absentees' families (0.1%). Those going abroad for business purposes were also nominal (0.6%) with a marginal variation between males (0.6%) and females (0.8%).

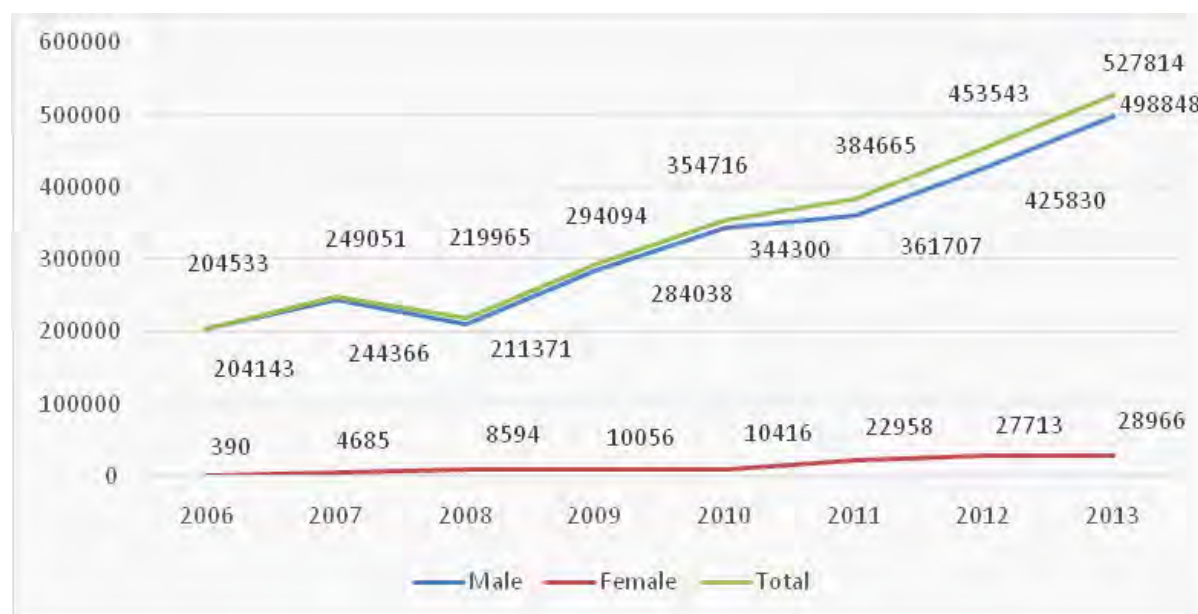
**Table 9.9: Distribution of population absent from household by sex, age at departure and reason for absence, 2011**

Reasons	Both sexes		Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Business	11685	0.6	9773	0.6	1911	0.8
Private job	1,364,602	71.0	1,270,568	75.4	93,993	39.6
Institutional job	192,484	10.0	181,952	10.8	10,529	4.4
Study	110,564	5.8	76,886	4.6	33,678	14.2
Conflict	2,643	0.1	2,249	0.1	394	0.2
Dependent	131,109	6.8	54,764	3.3	76,341	32.2
Others	26,681	1.4	20,230	1.2	6,451	2.7
Not stated	81,726	4.3	67,607	4	14,103	5.9

Source: National Population Census 2011, District Report, CBS, 2014

## 9.7 Foreign labour migration

The Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) under the Ministry of Labour regularly updates the number of people going abroad by taking individual and institutional permission, as well as by sex and destination countries.

**Figure 9.3: Labour migrants going abroad by taking official permission (DOFE, 2014)**

Source: <http://www.dofe.gov.np/new/pages/details/35> (Accessed on 15 August 2014)

The number of labour migrants by taking official permission until 15 August 2014 is 3,489,365, which is more than 13% of the total population (see Figure 9.3).

The number of female migrants going abroad has also significantly increased during this period, from 82,712 (10.8%) in 2001, to 237,400 (12.4%) in 2011. The Nepal Living Standard Survey recorded that approximately 37% of the total population migrated. Of the migrants, the proportion of females has increased from 21.6% in 2003/04 to 38% in 2010/11 (CBS, 2011).

**Table 9.10: Annual figure of labour migrants to abroad by taking official permission, 2006 – 2013 (DoFE, 2014)**

Year	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1994 -2005	758,675				758,675	21.7
2006 - 2014 (August 15)	2,615,287	95.8	115,403	4.2	2,730,690	78.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,373,962</b>	<b>96.7</b>	<b>115,403</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3,489,365</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: <http://www.dofe.gov.np/new/pages/details/35> (Accessed on 15 August 2014)

The updated data on labour migration abroad, collected by the DoFE, shows an increasing trend. Up until 2006, only 0.2 million people had gone abroad. This figure increased to 0.38 million in 2011, with a proportionately higher number of females (22,958). In 2013, the annual labour migrants increased to 0.52 million, of whom 28,966 were females.

## 9.8 Foreign born population

Countries included for the foreign born population for almost all censuses since 1961 are India, China, Bangladesh, Bhutan, other Asians, other European countries and other countries.

### 9.8.1 Trend of foreign born population in Nepal

Information on both foreign-born populations and foreign citizens are available from the 1961 census. The figures collected so far by the various censuses of Nepal indicate a fluctuating trend, which may also pose questions on the reliability of these data. Whereas initially in 1961, the percentage of foreign born population of the total population was nearly 4%, it decreased to 1.6% in 1981, before increasing to 2.4% in 1991, 2.7% in 2001 and 1.8% in 2011.

**Table 9.11: Foreign born population and foreign citizens in Nepal, 1961-2011**

Year	Total population	Foreign-born population	% of total population	Foreign citizens	% of total population	Foreign citizen as % of foreign-born
1961	9412996	337,620	3.6	110,061	1.2	32.6
1971	11,555,983	337,448	2.9	136,477	1.8	40.4
1981	15,022,839	234,039	1.6	483,019	3.2	206.4
1991	18,491,097	439,488	2.4	90,427	0.5	20.6
2001	23,151,423	608,092	2.7	116,571	0.6	19.2
2011	26,253,828*	479,625	1.8	138,910	0.5	29.0

\*Non-institutional population.

Source: CBS, 2003

The figures on foreign citizens as recorded by various censuses also show a fluctuating trend. Foreign citizens in 1961 were 1.2 % of the total population, which increased to over 3% in 1981 before declining to 0.5% in 1991, remaining the same in 2011 (see Table 9.11).

The census records show a smaller number of foreign citizens in comparison to foreign-born populations. For

example, in the census of 1961 there were 110,061 foreign citizens, almost one third (32.6%) of the foreign born population. This trend decreased to 138,910 foreign citizens, 29% of the total foreign-born population in 2001. However, unexpectedly, the 1981 census showed a larger number of foreign citizens (283,019) in comparison to the corresponding figure of foreign-born population at 234,039.

## 9.8.2 Countries of birth

The census of 2011 recorded the foreign born population in terms of identified, 479,625, which is a decrease from 608,090 in 2001. Of this population, an overwhelming majority (70.6%) were females.

**Table 9.12: Foreign born population in Nepal**

Sexes	Foreign born population	
	Number	Percent
Both sexes	479,625	65.8
Male	141,165	29.4
Female	338,460	70.6

Source: National Population and Housing Census 2011, CBS

Table 9.13 below shows the trend of immigration in Nepal by countries of birth. Immigration is largely dominated by persons whose birthplace is India, over 90% as recorded in every census. In 1961, 324,159 of the foreign born population were from India. This figure increased to 449,149 in 2011, 94% of the total foreign-born population. This heavy domination is due to the open border between Nepal and India and the official and non-official social, cultural and economic ties that have prevailed between these countries historically.

A fluctuating trend observed in foreign-born populations, is mainly from China, on the northern border of Nepal. The 1961 census recorded the foreign born population at 13,231, excluding India which made up approximately 4% of the country's population. This figure increased to 24,493 in 2001 and decreased to 20,430 in 2011, which is 4.3% of the country's total non-institutional population.

**Table 9.13: Trends of foreign born population in Nepal by countries of birth, 1961-2011**

Country of birth	Sex	Year											
		1961		1971		1981		1991		2001		2011	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total foreign born population	Both	337,620	100.0	337,448	100.0	234,039	100.0	439,488	100.0	608,092	100.0	479,625	100.0
	Male			123,480	36.6	71,555	30.6	123,560	28.1	183,037	30.1	141,165	29.4
	Female			213,968	63.4	162,484	69.4	315,828	71.9	425,055	69.9	338,460	70.6
India	Both	324,159	96	322,718	95.6	222,278	95	418,982	95.3	583,599	96	449,149	93.6
	Male			115,606	35.8	65,285	29.4	113,405	27.1	171,224	29.3	129,057	28.7
	Female			207,112	64.2	156,993	70.6	305,577	72.9	412,375	70.7	320,092	71.3
Other countries	Both	13,231	3.9	14,236	4.2	10,308	4.4	20,506	4.7	24,493	4	20,430	4.3
	Male			7,613	53.5	5,555	53.9	10,155	49.5	11,813	48.2	9,006	44.1
	Female			6,623	46.5	4,753	46.1	10,251	50	12,680	51.8	11,423	55.9
Not stated	Both	230	0.07	494	0.15	1,453	0.62					10,046	2.09
	Male			261	52.8	715	49.2					3,102	30.9
	Female			233	47.2	738	50.8					6,945	69.1

Source: Individual Table 21, and 25, District Report, CBS, 2014.

### 9.8.3 Age sex structure

For the first time in the history of census undertakings, the 2011 census report published in 2014, has categorised other countries of foreign born populations in terms of other SAARC countries, ASEAN countries, Middle East, other Asian countries, European Union countries, other European countries, North American countries (USA and Canada), South American/Caribbean countries, African countries, Pacific regions and others.

Of the overwhelming majority of the foreign born population from India (93.6%), over 80% are in the age group 15-59. The same age group dominates the foreign born population from other countries as well.

**Table 9.14: Foreign born population by age sex structure and countries of birth, Nepal, 2011**

Age group	Total foreign born population	Population born in													
		India		Other SAARC countries		Other Asian countries		European countries		USA/ Canada		Other countries		Countries not stated	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Both Sexes</b>															
Total	479,625	449,149	93.6	3,371	0.7	10,289	2.1	2,296	0.5	616	0.1	3,858	0.8	10,046	2.1
00 - 14	47,082	43,158	9.6	195	5.8	1,578	15.3	368	16	348	56.5	405	10.5	1,029	10.2
15 - 59	382,374	359,506	80	2,807	83.3	7,335	71.3	1,724	0.5	203	33	2,916	75.6	7,882	78.5
60+	50,169	46,484	10.3	369	10.9	1,375	13.4	204	0.4	65	10.6	536	13.9	1,135	11.3
<b>Male</b>															
Total	141,165	129,057	28.7	1,515	1.1	4,897	3.5	868	0.6	266	0.2	1,460	1	3,102	2.2
00 - 14	24,743	22,686	17.6	118	7.8	832	17	205	23.6	108	40.6	255	17.5	541	17.4
15 - 59	103,611	95,063	73.7	1,252	82.6	3,409	69.6	566	65.2	118	44.4	970	66.4	2,235	72.1
60+	12,811	11,308	8.8	145	9.6	658	13.4	97	11.2	41	15.4	235	16.1	326	10.5
<b>Female</b>															
Total	338,460	320,092	94.6	1,856	0.5	5,393	1.6	1,428	0.4	350	0.1	2,398	0.7	6,945	2.1
00 - 14	22,339	20,472	6.4	78	4.2	747	13.9	163	11.4	240	68.6	151	6.3	488	7
15 - 59	278,763	264,444	82.6	1,555	83.8	3,927	72.8	1,158	81.1	86	24.6	1,946	81.2	5,648	81.3
60+	37,358	35,176	11	223	12	717	13.3	107	7.5	24	6.9	301	12.6	809	11.6

Source: Individual Table 21, and 25, District Report, CBS, 2014.

### 9.8.4 Length of stay

The majority of the foreign-born population stay in Nepal for more than a decade (54%), followed by 1-5 years (17.3%) and 6-10 years (14.7%). Fewer males (47.7%) tend to live in Nepal more than 10 years than females (56.6%), which indicates that marriage is the main reason for staying in Nepal for females.

**Table 9.15: Foreign-born population by length of stay in Nepal, sex and age groups**

Age group & sex	Total foreign born population		Length of stay (years)										
			<1		1 - 5		6 - 10		>10 years		Not stated		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
<b>Nepal</b>													
Both Sexes	479,625	100.0	12,054	2.5	82,885	17.3	70,280	14.7	258,922	54.0	55,485	11.6	
Male	141,165	29.4	5,100	3.6	32,213	22.8	25,081	17.8	67,289	47.7	11,481	8.1	
Female	338,460	70.6	6,954	2.1	50,671	15.0	45,198	13.4	191,633	56.6	44,004	13.0	

Age group & sex	Total foreign born population		Length of stay (years)									
			<1		1 - 5		6 - 10		>10 years		Not stated	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Ecological Belt</b>												
Mountain	4,002	0.8	249	6.2	1,021	25.5	518	12.9	1,638	40.9	577	14.4
Hill	98,580	20.6	4,457	4.5	27,101	27.5	20,349	20.6	39,426	40.0	7,247	7.4
Tarai	377,042	78.6	7,348	1.9	54,762	14.5	49,413	13.1	217,858	57.8	47,661	12.6
<b>Development regions</b>												
EDR	117,880	24.6	3,100	2.6	19,077	16.2	16,148	13.7	68,349	58.0	11,205	9.5
CDR	193,689	40.4	4,397	2.3	32,690	16.9	29,562	15.3	104,044	53.7	22,996	11.9
WDR	115,834	24.2	2,885	2.5	19,394	16.7	17,334	15	62,727	54.2	13,494	11.6
MWDR	29,390	6.1	821	2.8	6,009	20.4	3,953	13.5	13,576	46.2	5,031	17.1
FWDR	22,832	4.8	851	3.7	5,715	25	3,282	14.4	10,225	44.8	2,760	12.1

Source: Individual Table 21, and 25, District Report, CBS, 2014.

By Ecological Zones, the majority of the foreign born population (57.8%) settled in the Tarai for more than 10 years, whereas the respective figure for Mountain and Hill were 41 and 40% respectively. By Development Region, the majority of the foreign born population who stayed more than 10 years was in Eastern Development Region (58%), followed by Central Development Region (53.7%) and Western Development Region (54.2%); the same duration period for Mid Western Development Region and Far Western Development Region were 46 and 45% respectively.

### 9.8.5 Reasons for stay

The main reason for staying in Nepal was found to be marriage (45.8%), which was predominant among females (63.8%), followed by dependents (17%) and business (7.3%). The reasons for staying due to agriculture (5.6%), business (7.3%) and services (6.3%) were lower.

**Table 9.16: Foreign-born population by reasons for stay in Nepal**

Main reason for stay	Total		Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Agriculture	27,010	5.6	14,049	10.0	12,961	3.8
Business	34,829	7.3	27,942	19.8	6,887	2.0
Service	30,382	6.3	25,706	18.2	4,675	1.4
Study	20,921	4.4	10,981	7.8	9,940	2.9
Marriage	219,527	45.8	3,590	2.5	215,936	63.8
Dependent	81,721	17.0	36,411	25.8	45,310	13.4
Conflict	1,825	0.4	977	0.7	848	0.3
Others	14,582	3.0	9,023	6.4	5,559	38.1
Not stated	48,828	10.2	12,485	8.8	36,343	74.4
Total	479,625	100.0	141,165	100.0	338,460	70.6

Source: Individual Table 21, and 25, District Report, CBS, 2014.

## 9.9 Foreign citizens

Of the total 138,910 foreign citizens, the overwhelming majority (87%) were from India, followed by China (2.1%) and other countries (11.1%), with almost a similar composition between males and females, as well as Ecological Zones and Development Regions. The percentage of Chinese was 2.1. The lowest number of foreign citizens (1.3%) were residing in the Mountain, the majority, (56.5%), were in the Tarai, followed by Hill (42.2%).

**Table 9.17: Foreign citizens by countries of birth, and current place of residence Nepal, 2011**

Area and sex	Foreign citizens							
	Total		India		China		Others	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Nepal</b>								
Both Sex	138,910	100.0	120,891	87.0	2,572	2.1	15,447	11.1
Male	70,038	50.4	63,759	91.0	1,225	1.9	5,054	7.2
Female	68,872	49.6	57,132	83.0	1,347	2.4	10,393	15.1
<b>Ecological Belt</b>								
<b>Mountain</b>								
Both Sex	1,869	1.3	757	40.5	260	34.3	852	45.6
Male	760	40.7	396	52.1	194	49	170	22.4
Female	1,109	59.3	361	32.6	66	18.3	682	61.5
<b>Hill</b>								
Both Sex	58,558	42.2	50,356	86.0	1,971	3.9	6,231	10.6
Male	38,091	65.0	35,010	91.9	914	2.6	2,167	5.7
Female	20,467	35.0	15,346	75.0	1,057	6.9	4,064	19.9
<b>Tarai</b>								
Both Sex	78,483	56.5	69,778	88.9	341	0.5	8,364	10.7
Male	31,187	39.7	28,353	90.9	117	0.4	2,717	8.7
Female	47,296	60.3	41,425	87.6	224	0.5	5,647	11.9
<b>Development Region</b>								
<b>Eastern Dev. Region</b>								
Both Sex	29,524	21.3	23,311	79	196	0.8	6,017	20.4
Male	12,460	42.2	10,416	83.6	70	0.7	1,974	15.8
Female	17,064	57.8	12,895	75.6	126	1	4,043	23.7
<b>Central Dev. Region</b>								
Both Sex	77,591	55.9	69,107	89.1	2,012	2.9	6,472	8.3
Male	40,323	52.0	37,071	91.9	936	2.5	2,316	5.7
Female	37,268	48.0	32,036	86	1,076	3.4	4,156	11.2
<b>Western Dev. Region</b>								
Both Sex	19,551	14.1	17,676	90.4	191	1.1	1,684	8.6
Male	11,118	56.9	10,507	94.5	98	0.9	513	4.6
Female	8,433	43.1	7,169	85	93	1.3	1,171	13.9
<b>Mid-Western Dev. Region</b>								
Both Sex	5,108	3.7	4,389	85.9	42	1	677	13.3
Male	2,368	46.4	2,195	92.7	24	1.1	149	6.3
Female	2,740	53.6	2,194	80.1	18	0.8	528	19.3
<b>Far-Western Dev. Region</b>								
Both Sex	7,136	5.1	6,408	89.8	131	2	597	8.4
Male	3,769	52.8	3,570	94.7	97	2.7	102	2.7
Female	3,367	47.2	2,838	84.3	34	1.2	495	14.7

Source: Table 9; Table 23, National Report, CBS, 2014



By Development Regions, the highest number of foreign citizens was found in Central Development Region (55.9%), followed by Eastern Development Region (21.3%) and Western Development Region (14.1%). Mid Western Development Region had the lowest number of foreign citizens at 3.7%, whereas Far Western Development Region had the highest at 5%.

## 9.10 Conclusion

International migration in Nepal began with the recruitment of physically strong youth by the British Army. Family migration connected to this was observed as a latter trend, particularly in the northern parts of India. After the 1990s, Nepali began to migrate increasingly to Gulf countries and Malaysia for employment. An estimated five million Nepali are employed in foreign countries, of which around 40% leave for India. Such a huge number of Nepalese in India in an almost undocumented situation, is the outcome of the 1950 Treaty signed between Nepal and India on Peace and Friendship. This Treaty has implications not only for population mobility between these countries, but on political, social and cultural grounds, and now stands as a fundamental basis of the relationship between the two countries.

Censuses particularly from 1950 onward, and some national level surveys such as the NLSS, are the major sources of migration data in Nepal. Both these sources include two major questions to obtain information on migration. Whereas place of birth is administered in order to obtain information on foreign-born populations, immigration, and non-migration, status of presence is another question that provides information on the absent population, that is abroad and 'out-migration', or internal migration.

Since the 1952/54 census, data on the absent population is available in Nepal whereas for the foreign born population, migration data are available from the 1961 census onwards. Almost all these censuses have collected migration information in terms of sex, and broad age groups (0-15 years, 15-59 years and 60 years and above). Since the 2001 census, data on migration were collected by complete enumeration and sample enumeration. Whereas place of birth was enumerated by sample schedule for native born and foreign born in both the 2001 and 2011 censuses, information on the absent population by households was obtained through complete enumeration.

Calculating migration rates is a new initiative by the CBS from the 2011 census onwards. Accordingly, the emigration rate for 2011 is estimated at 10.77 per thousand populations, whereas the immigration rate for the same period stands at 0.46 per thousand populations. The gross migration rate and net migration rate are respectively calculated as 11.23 and -10.32 per thousand populations.

Nepal has observed the largely growing phenomena of an absent population over the census periods. Whereas the 2001 census recorded that there were an absent population of 762,181, the 2011 census identified more than double this figure, that is, 1,921,494 absent people, 7.3% of the total population.

The 2011 census also kept records of the absent households. One in every four households in Nepal (25.4 %; 1.38 million households) reported that at least one member of its household is absent or is living out of the country. This analysis shows that the absent population in Nepal is growing rapidly.

Although the percentage of absent population going to India has sharply decreased in 2011, from 77% in 2001 to 38% in 2011, this decreasing trend is the outcome of the growing number of absentees going to other countries. An overwhelming majority of these absentees (76 %) are in the age group 15- 34 years followed by 14% in the age group 35-54 years. The number of absentee males under 15 years of age is 5%, while the corresponding figure for females is proportionately higher at 14.1%.

Whereas Gulmi had the highest proportion of households with absent members (54.1%), Kathmandu district had the largest number of absentees, at 99,805. Nearly three quarters (71%) of total absentees were found leaving

their respective places of origin in search of private jobs, followed by 1 in every 10 for institutional jobs. While more males (75.4%) were looking for private jobs, almost one third (32.2%) of female absentees were found to be dependents.

Data on both foreign-born population and foreign citizens are available from the 1961 census. The figures collected so far by the various censuses of Nepal indicate a fluctuating trend, which may also pose questions about the reliability of these data. Initially in 1961, the percentage of foreign-born population of the total population, was nearly 4%. This decreased to 1.6% in 1981 and increased to 2.4% in 1991, 2.7% in 2001 and again decreased to 1.8% in 2011.

The figures of foreign citizens recorded by various censuses also show a fluctuating trend. Foreign citizens in 1961 accounted for 1.2 % of the total population, which increased to over 3% in 1981 before declining to 0.5% in 1991, remaining the same in 2011.

Immigration is largely dominated by people born in India, over 90% as recorded in every census. The foreign born population from other countries is mainly from China, standing on the northern border of Nepal, although this follows a fluctuating trend.

### 9.11 Policy implications

#### Acts, regulations and rules

Policy formulation regarding international migration in Nepal started with the 1985 Foreign Employment Act. Since then, there have been considerable shifts in policy regimes that govern migration to and from Nepal. The main legislative frameworks for foreign labour migration are briefly summarised below.

The preamble of the Labour Act, 1992 stated the need for timely provisions relating to labour by making provisions for the rights, interests, facilities and safety of workers and employees working in enterprises of various sectors and service, remuneration and welfare arrangements, arrangements relating to health, sanitation and safety and those relating to committees and officers and other miscellaneous government powers (KC, 2003).

The Labour Rules 1993, exercised the powers conferred in the Labour Act, 2049 B.S.. It lays down rules regarding the following: employment, security of profession and service, remuneration and welfare arrangements, arrangements relating to health, sanitation and safety, and those relating to committees and officers and other miscellaneous government powers.

The Immigration Act 1992, felt the need to regulate as well as control the entry of foreigners into the Kingdom of Nepal for the first time, particularly their arrival and departure from the country, and to manage the arrival and departure of Nepalese citizens. The Immigration Rules 1994 framed by the government aimed to exercise powers conferred in the Immigration Act of 2049 B.S.. It lays down rules for provisions for relationship visas, and conduct and terms to be upheld at the time of entrance and departure in and out of Nepal and other miscellaneous rules.

The Foreign Employment Act, 2007 was designed to amend and consolidate laws relating to foreign employment. In its preamble, it is written that: 'Whereas, it is expedient to amend and consolidate laws relating to foreign employment in order to make foreign employment business safe, managed and decent and protect the rights and interests of the people', (GoN, 2007).

The Foreign Employment Rules 2008 were framed to implement the power conferred by Section 85 of the Foreign Employment Act, 2064 (2008). It sets out rules for provisions concerning the selection of institution or worker,

provisions relating to license, provisions relating to prior approval and selection of workers, provisions relating to training, fund, board, tribunal, and other miscellaneous rules.

The first amendment of the Foreign Employment Rules of 2008 was made in 2011. In 2012, the Foreign Employment Tribunal Rules 2012 were introduced in accordance with Article 85 of the Foreign Employment Act 2007. In the same year, the Foreign Employment Policy of 2012 was passed by parliament on February 24, 2012. The policy has been formulated to give direction for the effective management of foreign employment, and to make the process of migration safe and accessible by overcoming the shortcomings of the prevailing Acts and Rules in addressing issues related to foreign employment (GoN, 2014).

The main government agencies responsible for foreign employment are the Ministry of Labour and Transport Management (MOLTM), DOFE, and the Foreign Employment Promotion Board (FEPB). The FEPB, chaired by the Labour Minister, is formed of representatives from private sectors, (recruiting agencies, orientation agencies, trade unions, etc.).

### **Memorandum of understanding (MOUs)**

The Nepal government has signed memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with Japan (2003, 2010), Korea (2010), United Arab Emirates (2007), Bahrain (2008) and Qatar (2005) to date. Three countries, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Lebanon and Israel are destinations for MWs under conditions applied by the Government of Nepal. Major conditions applied are related to family members, working conditions and types of activities. (NIDS, 2012). However, the signing of these MoUs with migrant receiving countries lack to mention the scope/type of work (to be identified beforehand); the minimum wage; safety mechanisms, especially for women migrant workers (such as accommodation, communication mechanisms to nearest Nepali missions); yearly monitoring mechanisms in destination; and a review of MoUs at regular intervals.

### **Recruiting agencies**

About 930 recruiting agencies provide services to migrant workers. Their main role is concentrated on the facilitation of the migration process, (application, preparation for visa documents, plane tickets, and sending migrants to destinations). Although trainings, orientations and health certificates are also their responsibilities, these have, unfortunately been treated as formalities and have not been dealt with as seriously as they deserve. As a result, there is information on dozens of return cases from labour receiving countries, due to people failing health check-ups, although this is also carried out in Nepal prior to migrants' departure.

Data on international migration largely depends on government's policies towards labour work in foreign countries. So far the government has adopted a policy that encourages youths to look for labour work abroad, hoping that their employment there will bring remittance for the country's overall development. However, whether a person is employed abroad or within the country needs to be an informed choice of the citizen him/herself and the government needs to act as a facilitator.

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