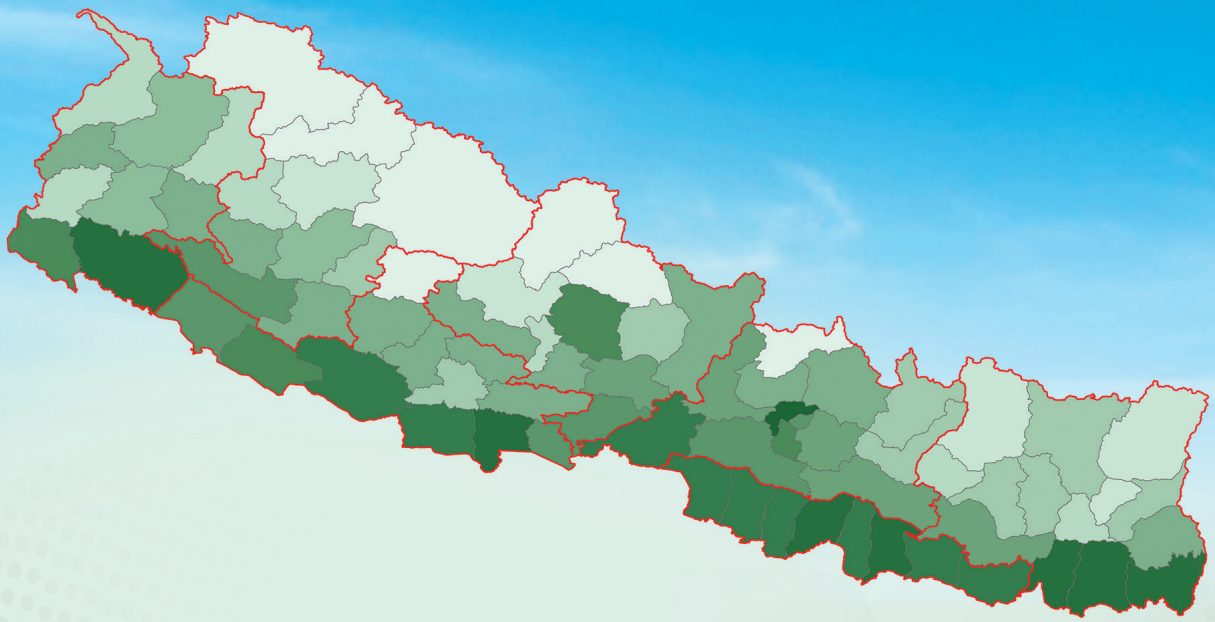
Thematic Report-I

National Population and Housing Census 2021

Population Composition of Nepal



Government of Nepal
Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers
National Statistics Office
Thapathali, Kathmandu

MY CENSUS
MY PARTICIPATION
NATIONAL POPULATION CENSUS 2021

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PREFACE

It is with great pleasure and a sense of duty that the National Statistics Office present this analytical report on the **"Population Composition of Nepal".** Drawing upon the comprehensive data collected through the 2021 Population and Housing Census, this report offers a detailed examination of the demographic landscape of the country.

The census stands as a cornerstone of our statistical endeavours, providing invaluable insights into the evolving characteristics of our population over time. By comparing and contrasting the findings from this census with those of previous enumerations, we gain a nuanced understanding of the trends shaping our society.

This report delves into various aspects of population composition, including age and sex structure and distribution across the country, caste and ethnic diversity, household characteristics, urban-rural dynamics, migration patterns among others. Through rigorous analysis and interpretation, the authors have aimed to shed light on the factors driving demographic changes and their implications for policymaking, planning, and resource allocation. In particular, the findings on population age-sex structure and its effect on realizing a demographic dividend have profound implications for sustaining socio-economic development of the country. The decrease in the relative number of children, existing youth- bulge, rapid increase in the number of aged people, and a rise in the economic support ratios, have each affected the structure, type and size of both the population and households.

It is worth noting that the successful execution of the census and the subsequent development of this report would not have been possible without the concerted efforts of numerous individuals and organizations. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated census team of the NSO, authors from the Central Department of Population Studies, Tribhuvan University, data analysts, and technical reviewers and editors who contributed to the meticulous preparation of this report. Furthermore, I would like to express my appreciation to the government agencies of all the tiers, development partners, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and other stakeholders who have demonstrated unwavering support for our statistical endeavors. Their collaboration has been instrumental in ensuring the reliability and relevance of the findings from the census.

As we navigate the complexities of mega-trends including rapidly demographic shifts, informed decision-making relies heavily on robust and up-to-date demographic information. It is my sincere hope that this report serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, researchers, civil society organizations, and all stakeholders committed to promoting the well-being and prosperity of the country.

Finally, I humbly invite readers to engage with the insights presented in this report, to explore the nuances of population composition and demographic shifts, and to join us in harnessing the power of data for the greater good of Nepal.

Toyam Raya
Chief Statistician

February 2024

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ABBREVIATIONS

CDPS	Central Department of Population Studies
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
DDI	demographic dividend index
GDP	gross domestic product
HH	household
KMC	Kathmandu Metropolitan City
LGBTI	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex
na	not available
NAR	net attendance ratio
NEET	not in employment, education, or training
NPHC	National Population and Housing Census
NSO	National Statistic Office
Pop.	population
RCC	reinforced cement concrete
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SRB	sex ratio at birth
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

GLOSSARY

Absentee population: An individual absent from the household and currently living abroad for more than six months before the census date and has possibility to return.

Age: The number of years lived as at their last birthday; i.e.in reference to census night.

Age-sex pyramid: This visualizes the composition of the population in terms of its age and sex. It indicates the growth rate of the population and the nature of the population in terms of working and non-working sections.

Ageing index: The ratio of population aged 65 years and above (or 60 years and above) to every 100 children aged 0-14 years.

Average household size: Average number of usually resident population of households. Total population of a specific area divided by the total number of households of that area provides average household size.

Child dependency ratio: The ratio of the population of 0−14 year olds to the total working population (15-64 year olds, or 15-59 year olds.

Coverage error: Error caused by a failure to adequately cover all components of the population being studied, which results in differences between the targeted population and the enumerated population.

***de facto population*:** All persons physically present in the country or area at the reference (census) date.

de jure population: All usual residents, whether they were physically present at the reference date**.**

Demographic dividend: The economic growth brought on by a change in the structure of a country's population, usually a result of a fall in fertility and mortality rates, consequently, fall in dependency ratio. The demographic dividend happens due to the increase in the working population's productivity, which boosts per capita income.

Demographic resilience: The ability of populations to resist and recover from alterations in their demographic structures, usually with concomitant change in population size (Capdevila et al., 2020:776)

Density: Number of persons usually residing per square kilometre of land area.

Dependency ratio: The ratio of dependent population aged 0-14 years and 65 (or 60) years and above to the total working population aged 15-64 (or to 59) years multiplied by 100.

Disability: Any restriction or lack (resulting from impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. It is a limitation in regard to the kind or number of activities a person can do due to long-term physical condition, mental condition or health problem.

Economically active persons: Persons aged 10 years and above who are engaged in economic activities.

Economic activity: An economic activity is a process based on inputs, leads to the manufacture of a good or the provision of a service.

Economically active population: All persons above a specified age who furnish the supply of labour to produce economic goods and services (employed and unemployed, including those seeking work for the first time) during a specified time reference period.

Employee: Persons who have worked for six months or more or 3 to 5 months and are available for work.

Employment: Persons in employment are those of working age who, during a short reference period, were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit. They comprise employed persons "at work", "not at work" due to temporary absence from a job, or to working-time arrangements.

Household: A group of people who normally live together and share a common kitchen.

Level of educational attainment: The highest level of school or college passed.

Literacy: The ability to read and write a letter in any language. Literacy status assessments are made for persons of 5 years and above.

Literacy rate: The proportion of the population aged five years and above who are able to read and write in any language with understanding and able to do simple arithmetic.

Median age: The age that divides a population in two parts of equal size.

NEET: Persons aged 15-24 years who are not in education, employment, or training. It is the proportion of people aged 15–24 per 100 people of the same age.

Occupation: The kind of work performed in a job. The concept of occupation is defined as a "set of jobs whose main tasks and duties are characterized by a high degree of similarity." A person may be associated with an occupation through the main job currently held, a second job, a future job or a job previously held.

Old age dependency ratio: The ratio of the population aged 65 years and above to the total population aged 15-64 years.

Population census: The process of collecting, compiling, evaluating, analysing, and publishing demographic, economic and social data pertaining to all persons in a country or territory.

Population composition: The description of the population characteristics in terms of factors such as their age, sex, marital status, education, occupation, and relationship to the head of household.

Population distribution: The patterns of settlement and dispersal of a population.

Population growth rate: The average annual rate of change of population size during a specified period usually expressed as a percentage per annum. The growth rate is calculated using exponential growth function based on two consecutive censuses which indicates increase in population in every infinitesimal point of time.

Population momentum: The tendency for population growth to continue beyond the time that replacement-level fertility has been achieved because of the relatively high concentration of people in the childbearing years.

Population pyramid: These graphically display a population's age and sex composition. Horizontal bars present the numbers or proportions of males and females in each age group. The sum of all the age-sex groups in the population pyramid equals 100 percent of the population.

Potential support ratio: The number of people aged 15–64 years per one older person aged 65 or older. This ratio describes the burden placed on the working population (the unemployed and children are not considered in this measure) by the non-working elderly population.

Sex ratio: The ratio of males to females in a given population, usually expressed as the number of males for every 100 females.

Sex ratio at birth: The number of male live births per 100 female live births.

Unemployment: Persons in unemployment are those of working age who were not in employment, carried out activities to seek employment during a specified recent period but were currently available to take up employment given the opportunity.

Usually economically active population: All persons above 10 years of age whose activity status, as determined in terms of the total number of weeks or days during a long specified period (such as preceding 12 months or calendar year) who were either employed or unemployed.

Working-age population: Persons aged 15-64 years − although the age range varies from country to country.

संक्षिप्त विश्लेषण

१. पृष्ठभूमि

वि.सं. २०७८ को राष्ट्रिय जनगणना नेपालको बाह्रौं र संघीय प्रणालीपश्चात्को पहिलो जनगणना हो। विश्वव्यापी रूपमा फैलिएको कोभिड -१९ महामारीको कारण यो जनगणना पूर्वनिर्धारित समय तालिकाभन्दा केहीपछि आयोजना भएकाले विगतको भन्दा यसपटकको जनगणनाको अन्तराल १०.४२ वर्ष हुन गएको छ। राष्ट्रको सामाजिक, आर्थिक विकास योजना तयार गर्न, आवश्यक नीति तथा योजना बनाउन र यसको समग्र प्रगति अनुगमन तथा मूल्याङ्कन गर्न आवश्यक पर्ने आधारभूत तथ्याङ्कको ठुलो हिस्सा राष्ट्रिय जनगणनाबाट नै उपलब्ध हुँदै आएकोले पनि जनगणनाको विशेष महत्त्व रहेको छ। राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०७८ लाई अझ विशेष मान्न सकिन्छ किनभने यसले दिगो विकास राष्ट्रिय लक्ष्यका ५९ मुख्य सूचक तथा उपसूचकहरूको बारेमा जानकारी प्रदान गर्दछ।

हरेक दश वर्षको अन्तरालमा जनगणना गर्नु भनेको देशको संविधान र संयुक्त राष्ट्रसंघ दुवैले आवश्यक मानेको विश्वव्यापी अभ्यास हो। नेपालको संविधानको धारा २८१ मा "नेपाल सरकारले महिला तथा दलित समुदायको विशेष अधिकारको कार्यान्वयन र त्यसबाट पर्नसक्ने प्रभावको मूल्याङ्कन र समीक्षालाई मानव विकास सूचकाङ्कका आधारमा प्रत्येक दश वर्षमा हुने राष्ट्रिय जनगणनासँगै गर्नेछ" भनी उल्लेख पनि गरेको छ (नेपालको संविधान, २०१५)। संविधानमा भएको यस व्यवस्थाबाट पनि जनगणनाको महत्त्व झल्कन्छ।

जनसङ्ख्या संरचना जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय विकासको परिणाम हो। जन्म, मृत्यु र बसाइँसराइ, यी तीन कारक तत्वहरूले जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय संरचनालाई प्रभाव पार्दछ र यिनैकै दरमा हुने परिवर्तनको परिणामस्वरूप जनसङ्ख्याको आकार, संरचना र वितरण परिवर्तन हुन्छ। जनसङ्ख्या संरचना शब्दले मानिसहरूका विभिन्न समूहहरूलाई तिनीहरूको परिवार वा पारिवारिक संरचनाका साथै तिनीहरूको अद्वितीय सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक, आर्थिक, जनसांख्यिकीय र आवासीय पहिचानलाई जनाउँछ। नेपालले विगत दुई दशकदेखि जनसङ्ख्याको संरचनामा परिवर्तनको अनुभव गर्न थालेको छ। संकुचन हुँदै गएको आश्रित अनुपात र बालबालिकाको सङ्ख्या, सक्रिय उमेरको जनसङ्ख्या विस्तारका साथै भविष्यको जनसङ्ख्या

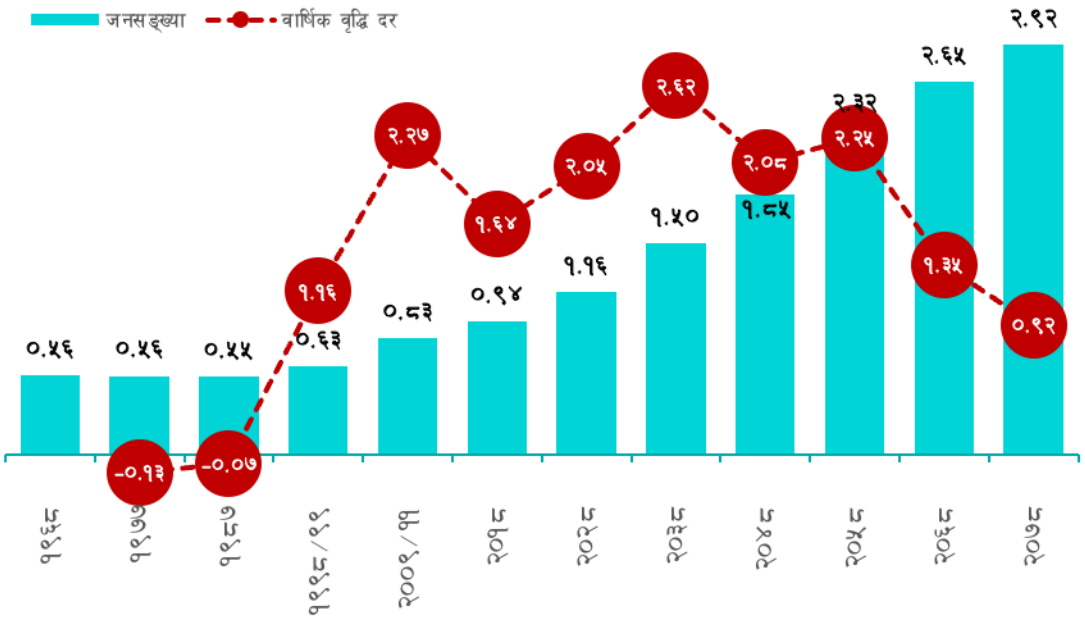
गतिलाई उजागर गर्ने कार्यमा हालको जनगणना एक कोसेढुङ्गा हो। नीतिनिर्माता, योजनाविद् र शिक्षाविद्हरूका लागि आगामी दिनको विकास नीति र योजना कस्तो हुने भन्ने चिन्ताको विषय बनेको छ। जनगणना एक मात्र यस्तो तथ्याङ्कीय स्रोत हो जसले स्थानीय क्षेत्रहरू र जनसाङ्ख्यकीय उपसमूहहरूको बारेमा विस्तृत जानकारी दिन सक्छ र जुन समयमै, सही र सान्दर्भिक तथ्याङ्कहरू उत्पादन गर्न महत्त्वपूर्ण हुन्छ। यसबाहेक, आर्थिक र सामाजिक वृद्धि, प्रशासनिक कार्य वा वैज्ञानिक अध्ययनको लागि योजना सञ्चालन गर्न, जनसङ्ख्याको आकार, वितरण र संरचनाको सटीक र बृहत् तथ्याङ्क आवश्यक पर्छ।

२. जनसङ्ख्याको संरचना

२.१ जनसङ्ख्याको आकार, वृद्धि र वितरण

राष्ट्रिय जनगणना वि.सं. २०७८ अनुसार नेपालको जनसङ्ख्या २,९१,६४,५७८ रहेको छ जुन वि.सं. २०६८ को जनगणनाको तुलनामा २६ लाख ७० हजारले बढी देखिन्छ। वि.सं. १९६८ देखि २०७८ सम्म ११० वर्षको अवधिमा जनसङ्ख्या ५६ लाखबाट बढेर २ करोड ९२ लाख पुगेको जनगणनाको तथ्याङ्कले देखाएको छ। वि.सं. २०५८ र २०६८ को अवधिमा जनसङ्ख्या ३,३४३,०८१ ले बढ्यो भने २०६८ र २०७८ को अवधिमा २,६७०,०७० ले बढेको छ। जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर पनि विगत दुई दशकदेखि विशेषगरी वि.सं. २०५८ देखि निकै घटेको देखिन्छ। नेपालमा वि.सं. १९६८ देखि २०७८ सम्म जनसङ्ख्याको आकार ५ गुणाले बढेको छ। जनगणनाको नतिजाअनुसार जनगणना अवधिको वार्षिक औसत जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर ०.९२ प्रतिशत रहेको छ जुन वि.सं. २०६८ मा १.३५ प्रतिशत थियो। वि.सं. २०६८ मा जनसङ्ख्या दोब्बर हुन लाग्ने समय ५१ वर्ष रहेको थियो। अहिले वि.सं. २०७८ मा यो अवधि बढेर ७५ वर्ष पुगेको छ। जनघनत्व पनि विगत ११० वर्षमा ५ गुणाभन्दा बढीले वृद्धि भएको छ। वि.सं. १९६८ मा नेपालको जनघनत्व प्रति वर्ग किलोमिटर ३८ जना व्यक्ति मात्र थियो जो वि.सं. २०७८ मा बढेर १९८ जना प्रतिवर्ग किलोमिटर रहेको छ।

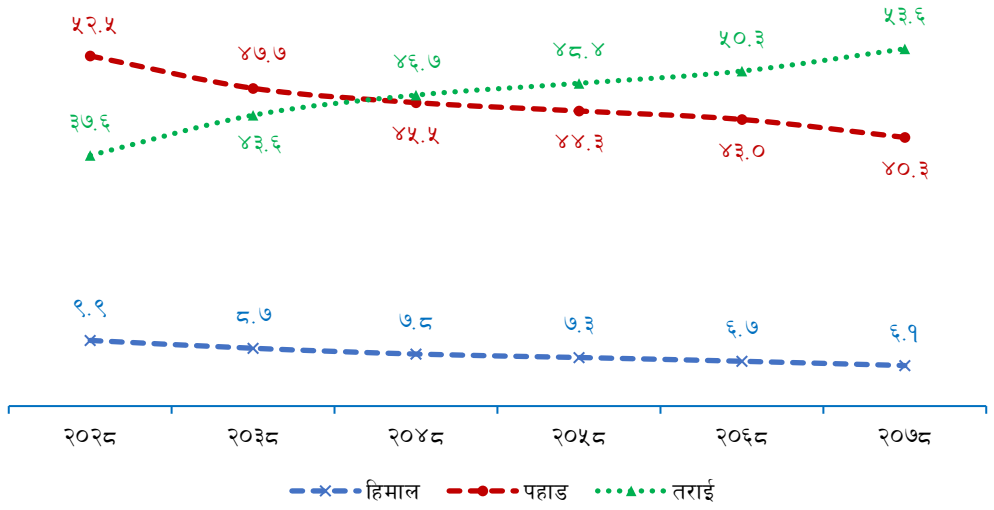
चित्र १: नेपालको जनसङ्ख्या (करोडमा) र वार्षिक वृद्धिदर (%),
राष्ट्रिय जनगणना १९६८—२०७८



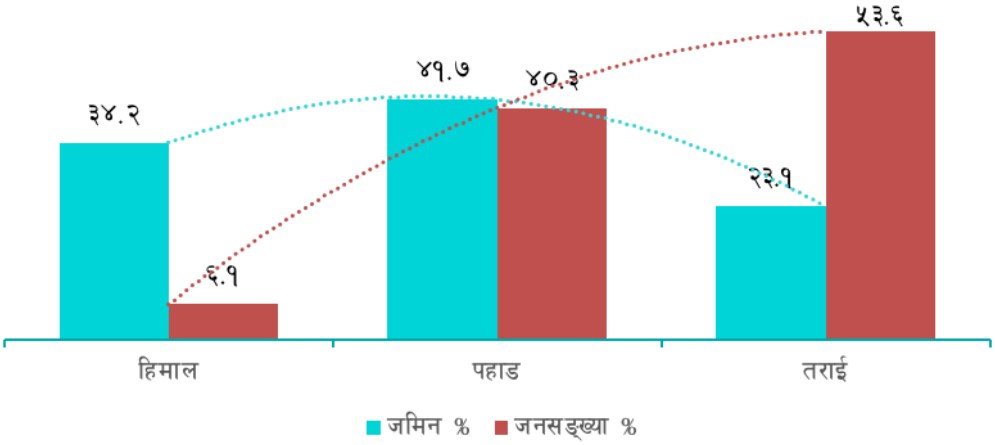
२.२ स्थानीय संरचनाअनुसार जनसङ्ख्याको वितरण, वृद्धिदर र जनघनत्व

स्थानीय संरचनामा भौगोलिक क्षेत्रलाई हेर्दा जनसङ्ख्या वितरण असमान रहेको पाइन्छ। भौगोलिक रूपमा नेपालको प्रमुख क्षेत्र हिमाल र पहाड (लगभग ७९ प्रतिशत क्षेत्रफल) ले ओगटेको छ, भने मात्र २१ प्रतिशत तराईले ओगटेको छ। जनसङ्ख्याको प्रतिशत हेर्ने हो भने वि.सं. २०३८ मा नेपालको कुल जनसङ्ख्यामा तराईको जनसङ्ख्या ३८ प्रतिशत थियो जुन वि.सं. २०७८ मा बढेर लगभग ५४ प्रतिशत पुगेको छ। हिमाली क्षेत्रमा सोही अवधिमा कुल जनसङ्ख्याको ९.९ प्रतिशत थियो जुन वि.सं. २०७८ मा घटेर ६.१ प्रतिशत पुगेको छ भने पहाडमा पनि यस अवधिमा जनसङ्ख्या घटेको अनुभव गरेको पाइन्छ। राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०७८ को नतिजाअनुसार नेपालमा वि.सं. २०६८ देखि २०७८ को अवधिमा हिमाली क्षेत्रमा जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर ऋणात्मक (-०.०५) रहेको छ र पहाडमा पनि निकै कम (०.३०%) रहेको छ। तराईमा भने जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर १.५४ प्रतिशत रहेको छ जुन विगत केही दशकहरूदेखि निरन्तर रूपमा घट्दै आएको पाइन्छ।

चित्र २: जनगणनाअनुसार भौगोलिक क्षेत्रको जनसङ्ख्या वितरणमा परिवर्तन, जनगणना २०२८—२०७८



चित्र ३ : भौगोलिक क्षेत्रअनुसार क्षेत्रफल र जनसङ्ख्याको प्रतिशत

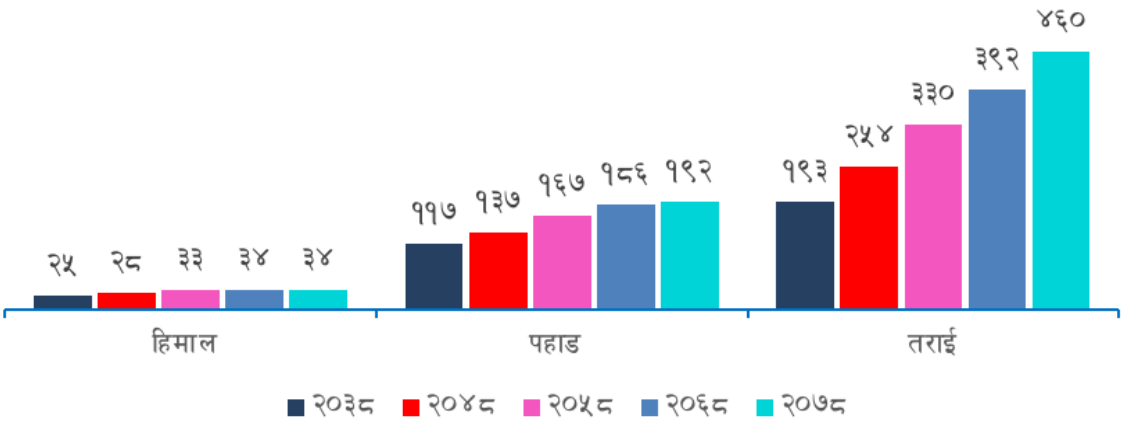


प्रदेशको हकमा मधेश र बागमती प्रदेशमा सबैभन्दा बढी झण्डै २१ प्रतिशत जनसङ्ख्या रहेको छ भने सबैभन्दा कम कर्णाली प्रदेश (५.७९%) मा छ। गत दश वर्षको अवधिमा सबैभन्दा धेरै लुम्बिनी प्रदेशमा १३.८ प्रतिशत र सबैभन्दा कम गण्डकी प्रदेशमा २.६ प्रतिशतले जनसङ्ख्या थप भएको पाइन्छ। विगत एक दशकको जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर हेर्दा लुम्बिनी (१.२४ %) र मधेस (१.२%)

प्रदेशमा वार्षिक जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर एक प्रतिशतभन्दा बढी रहेको पाइन्छ भने सबैभन्दा कम सुदूरपश्चिम प्रदेशमा (०.५%) रहेको छ।

नेपालको वार्षिक जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर घट्दै गए पनि जनसङ्ख्याको आकार भने बढिरहेको छ, फलस्वरूप जनघनत्व पनि बढिरहेको छ। जनघनत्व भन्नाले प्रति वर्गकिलोमिटर क्षेत्रमा बसोबास गर्ने मानिसको सङ्ख्या हो। नेपालको समग्र जनघनत्व वि.सं. २०७८ मा १९८ जना प्रति वर्गकिलोमिटर रहेको छ जुन वि.सं. २०६८ मा १८० जना थियो। भौगोलिक क्षेत्रअनुसार तराईमा सबैभन्दा बढी (४६० जना) र सबैभन्दा कम हिमाली क्षेत्रमा (३४ जना) छ भने पहाडमा १९२ जना रहेको छ। प्रदेशको हकमा सबैभन्दा बढी मधेस प्रदेशमा (६३३ जना) छ भने बागमतीमा ३०१ जना रहेको छ। विगतका नतिजाहरू केलाउँदा मधेस प्रदेशमा जनघनत्व निरन्तर बढ्दै गएको छ। वि.सं. २०६८ (५५९ जना) को तुलनामा २०७८ मा जनघनत्व प्रति वर्गकिलोमिटर ७४ जनाले बढेको छ।

चित्र ४: भौगोलिक क्षेत्रअनुसार जनघनत्व, राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०३८—२०७८



जिल्लागत रूपमा जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर हेर्ने हो भने अधिकांश हिमाली र पहाडी क्षेत्रका ३४ जिल्लाहरूको वार्षिक जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर ऋणात्मक रहेको छ भने तराईका सबै जिल्लाहरूको जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर धनात्मक रहेको छ। देशको नयाँ प्रशासनिक संरचनाअनुसार हाल देशमा ७५३ स्थानीय तह रहेका छन् जसमा ४६० गाउँपालिका र २९३ नगरपालिका रहेका छन्। वि.सं. २०६८ को जनगणनाको समयमा ५८ ओटा मात्र नगरपालिका थियो। संघीय संरचनापछि स्थानीय तहलाई नगरपालिका र गाउँपालिकामा गरिएको वर्गीकरणको आधारमा २०६८ सालको जनसङ्ख्यालाई समायोजन गरिएको तथ्याङ्क यस प्रतिवेदनमा प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ। राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०७८ ले झण्डै दुईतिहाइ (६६%)

जनसङ्ख्या नगरपालिकाहरूमा बसोबास गरेको देखाएको छ। तीमध्ये ६ महानगरपालिका, ११ उपमहानगरपालिका र बाँकी नगरपालिकाहरू रहेका छन्। जनसङ्ख्याको सबैभन्दा बढी हिस्सा काठमाडौँ महानगरपालिकामा रहेको छ जुन कुल जनसङ्ख्याको ३ प्रतिशत छ, त्यसपछि पोखरा (१.३%) र ललितपुर (१%) महानगरपालिकामा रहेको छ। काठमाडौँ देशको सबैभन्दा ठुलो महानगर भए पनि जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर भने ऋणात्मक (-१.१८%) रहेको पाइएको छ।

डोल्पा जिल्लाका दुई स्थानीय तह ठुलीभेरी र त्रिपुरासुन्दरी नगरपालिकामा २०६८ र २०७८ को जनगणनामा जनसङ्ख्या सबैभन्दा कम थियो। ठुलीभेरी नगरपालिकामा प्रति वर्गकिलोमिटर करिब २३ जना र त्रिपुरासुन्दरी नगरपालिकामा प्रति वर्गकिलोमिटर ३१ जना रहेकाले २०२१ मा दुवै नगरपालिकाको घनत्व अत्यन्त न्यून रहेको छ।

जिल्लास्तरको जनसङ्ख्या वितरणलाई हेर्दा पनि काठमाडौँमा नै सबैभन्दा बढी जनसङ्ख्या (७%) र सबैभन्दा कम मनाङमा ०.०१ प्रतिशत अर्थात् ५,६५८ रहेको छ। काठमाडौँ महानगर सबै प्रकारका सेवासुविधा तथा व्यापार र व्यवसायहरूको लागि केन्द्रविन्दु बनेको छ। काठमाडौँका धेरै बासिन्दाहरू महानगरबाहिर र वरपरका मुख्य बस्तीहरूमा बसोबास गर्ने गरेको पाइएको छ। दिनमा उनीहरू व्यापार व्यवसायको लागि महानगर आउने गर्छन् र राति आफ्नो वासस्थान फर्कने गर्छन्। सबैभन्दा बढी ऋणात्मक वार्षिक वृद्धिदर रामेछापमा (-१.६७%) रहेको छ।

जिल्लाअनुसार देशको सबैभन्दा बढी जनघनत्व (५,१६९ जना) काठमाडौँ जिल्लामा पाइएको छ, त्यसपछि भक्तपुर (३,६३१ जना) र ललितपुर (१,४३३ जना) जिल्लामा रहेको छ। नेपालको सबैभन्दा कम जनघनत्व भएका जिल्लाहरूमा मनाङ (३ जना), मुस्ताङ (४ जना) र डोल्पा (५ जना) पर्दछन्।

२.३ ग्रामीण तथा सहरीसहरी क्षेत्रगत वर्गीकरणअनुसार जनसङ्ख्या संरचना

ग्रामीण तथा सहरी क्षेत्रको श्रेणीगत वर्गीकरण विधिलाई संयुक्त राष्ट्रसङ्घीय तथ्याङ्क आयोगको बैठकले विश्वव्यापी रूपमा सहरी र ग्रामीण क्षेत्रलाई वर्गीकरण अनुसार जनसङ्ख्या (Population), जनघनत्व (Population Density), बसोबास क्षेत्र (Built-up Area) र सहरी क्षेत्रको श्रेणीगत विशेषताको निरन्तरता (Contiguity) जस्ता चार आधारमा ग्रामीण तथा सहरी क्षेत्र वर्गीकरण गरिएको छ। यस परिभाषाअनुसार सहरी क्षेत्रको लागि न्यूनतम ३ देखि १५ भन्दा बढी व्यक्ति/हेक्टर जनघनत्व र ५,००० भन्दा बढी

जनसङ्ख्यासहित ४ ग्रिडको निकटताको विशेषतायुक्त, शहरोन्मुख क्षेत्रको लागि ३ देखि १५ व्यक्ति/हेक्टरका बिचमा जनघनत्व र जनसङ्ख्याको न्यूनतम सीमाविना ८ ग्रिडको निकटताको विशेषतायुक्त र ग्रामीण क्षेत्रको लागि ३ व्यक्ति/हेक्टर वा सोभन्दा कम जनघनत्व र ५,००० भन्दा बढी जनसङ्ख्या नभई ८ ग्रिडको निकटताको विशेषतायुक्त हुनुपर्ने रहेको छ। विगतमा गाउँपालिका र नगरपालिकालामा बसोबास गर्ने जनसङ्ख्यालाई क्रमशः ग्रामीण र सहरी जनसङ्ख्या मानिदै आएको थियो।

नेपालको सन्दर्भमा ग्रामीण तथा सहरी क्षेत्रमा वर्गीकरणको नतिजाअनुसार २०७८ मा सहरी जनसङ्ख्या २७.०७ रहेको देखिन्छ। जुन जनगणना २०६८ अनुसार २२.३१ प्रतिशत रहेको थियो। त्यसैगरी, सहरोन्मुख जनसङ्ख्या ३९.७५ प्रतिशत र ग्रामीण जनसङ्ख्या ३३.१९ प्रतिशतमा रहेको छ। विशेषताका आधारमा शहरोन्मुख क्षेत्र भए पनि सहरीक्षेत्र मानिएको स्थानमा अझै पनि जनसङ्ख्याको ठुलो हिस्सा रहेको देखिन्छ। ग्रामीण जनसङ्ख्या अझै पनि एकतिहाइ छ, जबकि प्रवृत्तिका आधारमा ग्रामीण क्षेत्रबाट सहरोन्मुख र सहरी क्षेत्रमा बसाइँसराइले जनसङ्ख्यालाई सहरी क्षेत्रमा व्यवस्थापन गर्न कठिनाइ भएको र ग्रामीण क्षेत्रमा बसाइँसराइ कम गर्न दबाब परेको देखिएको छ ।

क्षेत्रगत रूरूपमा हेर्दा हिमाली क्षेत्रमा बढी ग्रामीण जनसङ्ख्या (८७.९%) छन् भने सहरी जनसङ्ख्या पहाडी क्षेत्रमा देखिन्छ (३५.६%) र तराईमा दुईतिहाई जनसङ्ख्या शहरोन्मुख क्षेत्रमा बसोबास गर्दछन्। त्यस्तै, प्रदेशका आधारमा हेर्दा बागमती प्रदेशमा बढी सहरी जनसङ्ख्या छन् (५६%), सुदूरपश्चिम तथा कर्णालीमा ग्रामीण जनसङ्ख्या बढी देखिएको छ। साथै मधेस तथा लुम्बिनीमा सहरोन्मुख जनसङ्ख्या बढी छन्। त्यस्तै, गण्डकी प्रदेशमा भने आधा जनसङ्ख्या ग्रामीण र आधा जनसङ्ख्या सहरोन्मुख तथा सहरमा बसोबास गर्दछन् ।

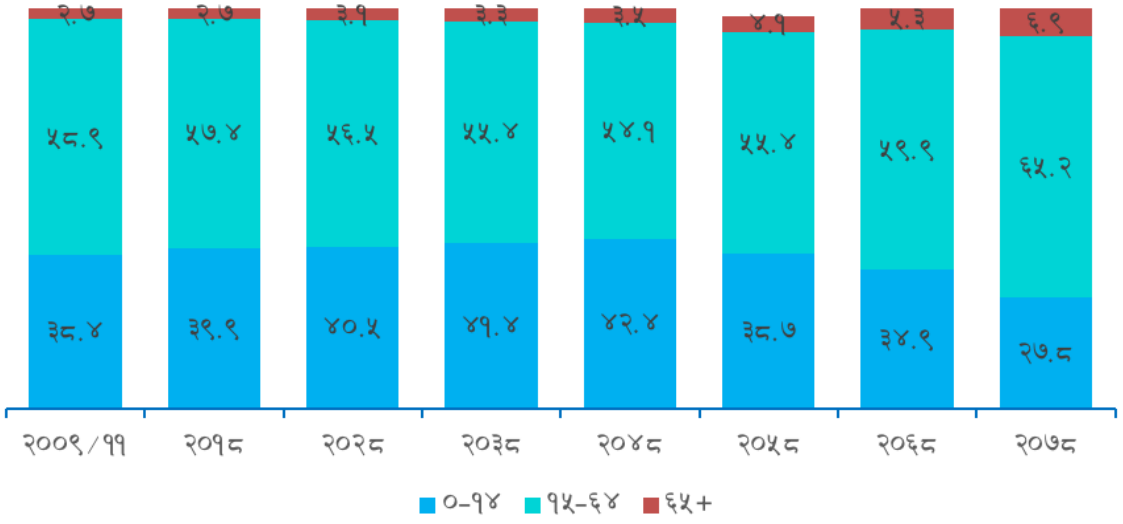
२.४ जनसङ्ख्याको उमेर र लैङ्गिक संरचना

राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०७८ को कोसेढुङ्गा भनेको उमेर र लैङ्गिक संरचनामा उल्लेखनीय परिवर्तन हो, जसले नेपालमा भएको जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय परिवर्तनलाई उजागर गर्दछ। नेपालको जनसङ्ख्याको उमेर संरचना जनसङ्ख्याको फराकिलो आधार (०-४ वर्ष) बाट बिस्तारै परिवर्तन हुँदै गइरहेको छ। अहिले यो उमेर समूह त्यति फराकिलो नभएको र फराकिलो भाग वि.सं. २०३८ र २०७८ बिच १५-१९ वर्षको उमेर समूहमा सर्दैछ। यसअनुसार १५ वर्षदेखि माथिको जनसङ्ख्याको प्रतिशत पनि अघिल्लो

दशकहरूको तुलनामा क्रमशः बढ्दै गएको छ। बागमती, गण्डकी, कोशी र लुम्बिनीजस्ता प्रदेश, पहाडी क्षेत्र र सहरी क्षेत्रमा यो परिवर्तन बढी देखिएको छ। प्रजननदर र मृत्युदर घट्नु र आयुमा वृद्धि भएको कारणले यसरी जनसङ्ख्याको संरचनामा आएको परिवर्तन हो भन्न सकिन्छ।

राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०७८ अनुसार बालबालिकाको जनसङ्ख्या (०-१४ वर्ष) २८ प्रतिशत, काम गर्ने उमेर समूहको (१५-६४ वर्ष) ६५ प्रतिशत र वृद्ध जनसङ्ख्याको (६५ वर्ष देखि माथि) ७ प्रतिशत गणना गरेको छ। वि.सं. २०६८ देखि बालबालिकाको अनुपात घट्दै गएको देखिन्छ। उदाहरणका लागि वि.सं. २०४८ मा बालबालिकाको जनसङ्ख्या ४२.४ प्रतिशत, वि.सं. २०५८ मा ३८.७ प्रतिशत, २०६८ मा ३४.९ प्रतिशत थियो। अर्कोतर्फ, काम गर्ने उमेरको जनसङ्ख्या वि.सं. २०४८ मा ५४.१ प्रतिशत थियो, जुन वि.सं. २०६८ को जनगणनामा बढेर ६० प्रतिशत पुगेको छ। तथापि, वृद्ध जनसङ्ख्या भने वि.स. २००९/११ देखि निरन्तर बढ्दै गएको छ।

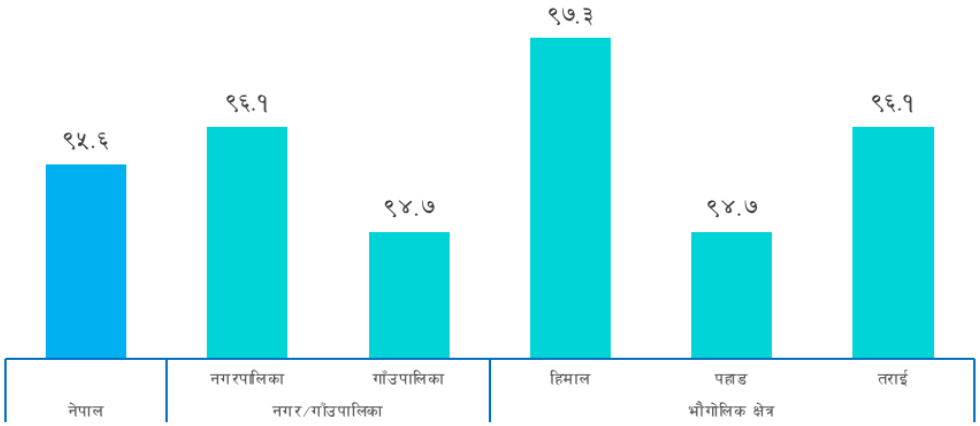
चित्र ५: नेपालमा जनसङ्ख्याको तीन फराकिलो उमेर वितरण (६५+), राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २००९/११—२०७८



२.५ लैङ्गिक अनुपात

राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०७८ काअनुसार नेपालको कुल लैङ्गिक अनुपात ९६ पुरूष प्रति १०० महिला छन्। यो उमेर समूह ०-४ (११२) मा उच्चतम र २५-४४ (८५) मा सबैभन्दा कम रहेको छ। प्रदेशगत रूपमा हेर्दा लैङ्गिक अनुपात सबैभन्दा बढी मधेसमा (१००.५) र बागमतीमा (९९.३६) छ भने सबैभन्दा कम सुदूरपश्चिममा (८९.५१) छ। मधेस प्रदेशबाहेक अन्य सबै प्रदेशमा लैङ्गिक अनुपात १०० भन्दा कम रहेको छ। विशेषगरी गण्डकी, सुदूरपश्चिम र लुम्बिनीमा पुरूषको तुलनामा महिलाको सङ्ख्या बढी रहेको देखाउँछ। जिल्लाहरूमध्ये सबैभन्दा बढी लैङ्गिक अनुपात मनाङ (१२९) त्यसपछि मुस्ताङमा (१२२) र सबैभन्दा कम प्युठानमा (८१) रहेको छ। नगरपालिकामध्ये लैङ्गिक अनुपात सबैभन्दा बढी वीरगन्जमा (१०९) रहेको छ। उच्च लैङ्गिक अनुपात भएका दश नगरपालिकामध्ये सातमा अझै पनि १०० वा सोभन्दा कमको लैङ्गिक अनुपातले राष्ट्रको समग्र कम लैङ्गिक अनुपातलाई दर्शाउँछ।

चित्र ६: भौगोलिक क्षेत्र र नगरपालिका/गाँउपालिकाहरूमा लैङ्गिक अनुपात



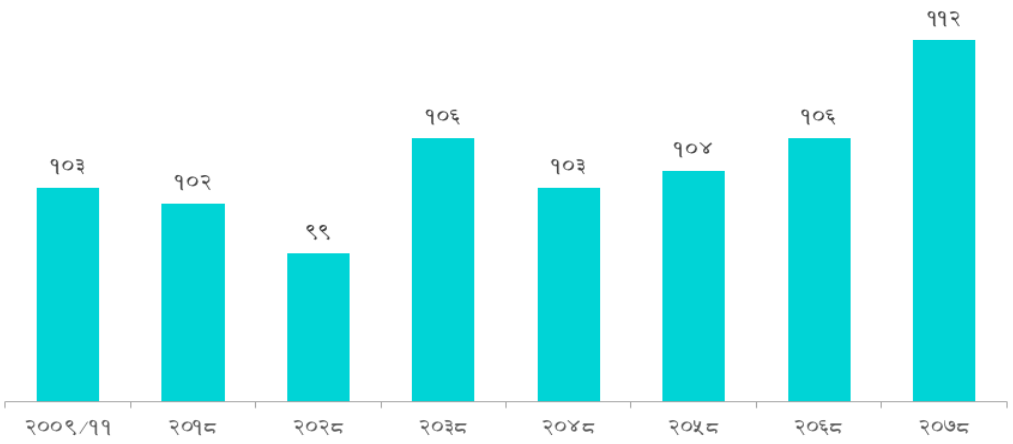
२.६ जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपात

जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपात देशको जनसाङ्ख्यकीय परिवर्तनलाई सूचित गर्ने एक महत्त्वपूर्ण सूचक हो। वि.सं. २०७८ को जनगणनामा गत १२ महिनामा १५ देखि ४९ वर्षका विवाहित महिलाले जन्माएका जीवित बच्चाहरूको लैङ्गिक अनुपातलाई ११२ देखिन्छ अर्थात् यसले प्रति १०० छोरीहरूमा ११२ छोराहरू जन्मन्छन् भन्ने जनाउँछ र यो प्राकृतिक जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपातभन्दा धेरै उच्च

छ। वैज्ञानिक तथ्यअनुसार कुनै पनि समाजमा प्राकृतिकतवरले बच्चा जन्मदा प्रति १०० छोरीमा १०५ देखि १०७ जनासम्म छोराहरूको जन्म हुन्छ। तर, जन्मिसकेपछि सामाजिक परिवेशअनुसार समान हेरचाह र लालनपालन पाएमा प्रकृतिसँग जुध्न सक्ने र रोगप्रतिरोधी क्षमता छोरामा भन्दा छोरीमा र उमेर बढ्दै जाँदा मर्ने सम्भावना छोरामा बढी हुने भएकाले छोराको सङ्ख्या घट्दै जान्छ र वयस्क उमेर हुँदा नहुँदै लैङ्गिक अनुपात समान हुन आउँछ। तर, आज आएर जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपातको अन्तर प्राकृतिक अन्तरभन्दा निकै बढी हुन थालेकाले चिन्ताको विषय बनेको छ।

वि.सं. २०४८ भन्दा पहिले, जबदेखि जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपात बढ्न थाल्यो, सो अनुपात अपेक्षाकृत कम थियो र एक स्पष्ट प्रवृत्तिको थियो। वि.सं. २०६८ र २०७८ को बिचमा, यो १०६ बाट ११२ मा जाँदै उल्लेखनीय रूपमा वृद्धि भयो। यस परिणामले महिला जन्ममा आएको ठुलो कमी देखाउँदछ जुन छोराहरूको लागि परिवारको पूर्वाग्रहको कारण हुनसक्छ। छोराको प्राथमिकता पितृसत्तात्मक समाजमा सामान्य छ र यसले ठुला परिवारहरूबाट एकल परिवारहरूतिर सर्ने परिणामको रूपमा प्रकट हुनुको साथै परिवारको आकार पनि समयसँगै सानो हुँदै जान सक्छ भन्ने देखाउँछ। जन्मको समयमा हुने लिङ्ग अनुपातको वर्तमान स्तर एसियाली धेरै देशहरूभन्दा नेपालमा धेरै उच्च छ। यो भारत (१०८) भन्दा ४ व्यक्ति बढी हो। जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपात जापान (१०५) र बंगलादेश (१०५) मा सामान्य छ भने चीन (११२) मा उच्च रहेको छ।

चित्र ७: जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपात, राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २००९/११—२०७८



वि.सं. २०६८ मा जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपात १०६ थियो जुन जनगणना २००९/११ को जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपात (१०३) बाट धेरै बढेको पाइन्छ। अझ जिल्लास्तरको जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपात हेर्दा मधेश प्रदेशका जिल्लाहरूमा जस्तै धनुषा (१३३), सिराहा (१२८) र अर्घाखाँची (१२४) सबैभन्दा बढी छ र सबैभन्दा कम मुस्ताङ (९२) र रोल्पा (९७) जिल्लामा रहेको छ। मुस्ताङ, रोल्पा, इलाम, ओखलढुंगा, धनकुटा, हुम्ला र मनाङबाहेक नेपालका सबै जिल्लामा छोरीभन्दा छोराको सङ्ख्या बढी छ। विशेषगरी मधेस, सुदूरपश्चिमको तराई क्षेत्र र गण्डकी र लुम्बिनीको पहाडी क्षेत्रमा उक्त अनुपात बढी रहेको छ।

तालिका १: जिल्ला अनुसार जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपात

जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपात	समूहमा पर्ने जिल्ला
१२१ -१३३	धनुषा, सिराहा, अर्घाखाँची र सप्तरी, (४ जिल्ला)
११६ -१२०	कञ्चनपुर, कैलाली, पर्वत, डोटी, महोत्तरी, डडेलधुरा, पर्सा, तनहुँ काठमाडौं र सर्लाही (१० जिल्ला)
११२-११५	मुगु, तेह्रथुम, बैतडी, नवलपरासी पूर्व, जुम्ला, दार्चुला, दोलखा, पाल्पा, चितवन, भक्तपुर, सुर्खेत, बर्दिया, सिन्धुपाल्चोक, बाँके, गोरखा र कालिकोट, (१६ जिल्ला)
१०८ -१११	रामेछाप, नवलपरासी पश्चिम, म्याग्दी, झापा, कास्की, ललितपुर, रूपन्देही, बझाङ, रूकुम पूर्व, दाङ सोलुखुम्बु, संखुवासभा, काभ्रेपलाञ्चोक, रूकुम पश्चिम, प्युठान, खोटाङ, गुल्मी, सल्यान, रसुवा, बारा र रौतहट, (२१ जिल्ला)
१०५-१०७	उदयपुर, बाजुरा लमजुङ, भोजपुर, दैलेख, सुनसरी, पाँचथर, सिन्धुली, कपिलवस्तु बाग्लुङ डोल्पा, नुवाकोट, मकवानपुर र स्याङ्जा (१४ जिल्ला)
१०१ -१०४	मोरङ, अछाम, जाजरकोट, धादिङ र ताप्लेजुङ (५ जिल्ला)
≤१००	मनाङ, हुम्ला, धनकुटा, ओखलढुंगा, इलाम, रोल्पा र मुस्ताङ (७ जिल्ला)

२.७ मध्यिका उमेर (Median age)

वि.सं. २०७८ को जनगणनाअनुसार जनसङ्ख्यालाई दुई समान भागमा विभाजन गर्ने तथ्याङ्कीय औजार मध्यिकाको आधारमा नेपालमा जनसङ्ख्याको मध्यिका उमेर २६ वर्ष पुगेको छ। जहाँ पुरूषको (२५ वर्ष) मध्यिका उमेर महिलाको (२७ वर्ष) भन्दा तुलनात्मक रूपमा कम छ। वि.सं. २००९/११ देखि २०६८ सम्म मध्यिका उमेरमा २ वर्षको अनुपातमा लगातार बढ्दै गइरहेको देखिन्छ तर वि.सं. २०६८ र २०७८ को बिचमा ४ वर्षको वृद्धिसँगै हालको मध्यम उमेर २६ वर्ष पुगेको छ। भौगोलिक क्षेत्रका आधारमा गण्डकी र बागमती प्रदेशका पहाडी तथा हिमाली भेगमा उच्च मध्यिका उमेरको जनसङ्ख्या रहेको छ भने मधेससहित कर्णाली र सुदूरपश्चिम प्रदेशका पहाडी तथा हिमाली भेगमा कम मध्यिका उमेर रहेको छ। मध्यिका उमेर परिवारको विपन्नताबाट सम्पन्नताको वृद्धिसँगै बढ्दै गएको देखिन्छ जसले राम्रो आर्थिक स्थिति भएमा मानिस लामो समयसम्म बाँच्ने सक्ने सङ्केत गर्दछ।

३. जनसङ्ख्याको सामाजिक संरचना

सामाजिक संरचनाअन्तर्गत परिवारको आकार, शिक्षा, जात, जाति, धर्म, भाषा, अपाङ्गता, परिवारमा अनुपस्थित जनसङ्ख्या, जन्मस्थान, अन्य लिङ्गीको जनसङ्ख्या र वैवाहिक स्थितिको संरचनालाई समेटिएको छ। वि.सं. २००९/११ र २०७८ को बिचमा, परिवारको औसत आकार ५.४ जनाबाट ४.४ जनामा घटेको छ।

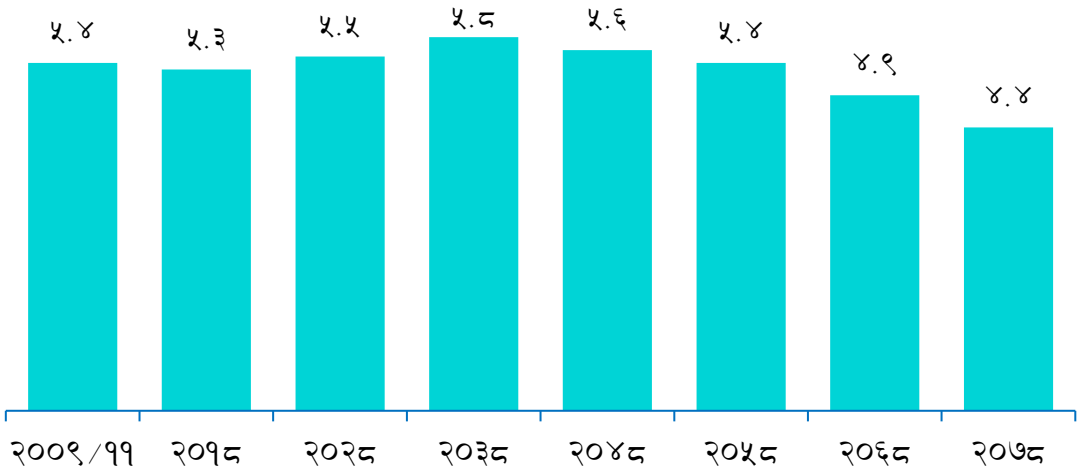
३.१ परिवारको संरचना

नेपालमा परम्परागत रूपमा संयुक्त र विस्तारित पारिवारिक संस्कृति छ। तर, आजकल प्रजनन सङ्क्रमणको अवस्था र सामाजिक-आर्थिक रूपान्तरणसँगै पारिवारिक संरचना एकल परिवारतर्फ अघि बढिरहेको छ। जनगणना २०७८ मा एकल परिवार ४०,०१,४५१ देखिएको छ जसमा १,३४,७३,२६७ जनसङ्ख्या बसोबास गर्दछ यसअनुसार देशको कुल परिवारको लगभग ६० प्रतिशत र कुल जनसङ्ख्याको ४६.२ प्रतिशत ओगटेको छ। संस्थागत परिवारको रूपमा तोकिएका ६,०९६ घरपरिवारहरू पनि छन् जहाँ कुल जनसङ्ख्याको लगभग एक प्रतिशत (२,३९,०९८) व्यक्तिहरू बसोबास गरिरहेका छन्।

संस्थागत परिवारहरूलाई विश्लेषणबाट बाहिर राख्दा, कुल ६६,६०,८४१ परिवारमा कुल जनसङ्ख्या २,८९,२५,४८० रहने छ। कुल जनसङ्ख्याको झण्डै ५३.० प्रतिशत जनसङ्ख्या संयुक्त र विस्तारित परिवारमा बस्दै आएका छन्। एकल परिवारमा बस्ने जनसङ्ख्या गाउँपालिकामा ४५.९ प्रतिशत र नगरपालिकामा ४६.९ प्रतिशत रहेको छ। भौगोलिक क्षेत्रअनुसार एकल परिवारमा बस्ने जनसङ्ख्या पहाडमा सबैभन्दा बढी (५१.३%) र तराईमा सबैभन्दा कम (४३%) छ। प्रदेशगत रूपमा हेर्दा एकल परिवारमा बस्ने जनसङ्ख्या सबैभन्दा बढी बागमती (५२.१%) त्यसपछि गण्डकी (५०.१%) र सबैभन्दा कम मधेस (४०.८%), सुदूरपश्चिम (४४.३%) र कर्णाली (४९.७%) मा रहेको छ।

वि.सं. २००९/११ मा ५.४ औसत परिवार आकार रहेकोमा २०७८ मा ४.४ मा झरेको छ। प्रदेशगतरूपमा औसत परिवार आकार सबैभन्दा बढी मधेस प्रदेशमा (५.३) र सबैभन्दा कम गण्डकी प्रदेशमा (३.७) रहेको छ।

चित्र ८: औसत परिवारको आकार

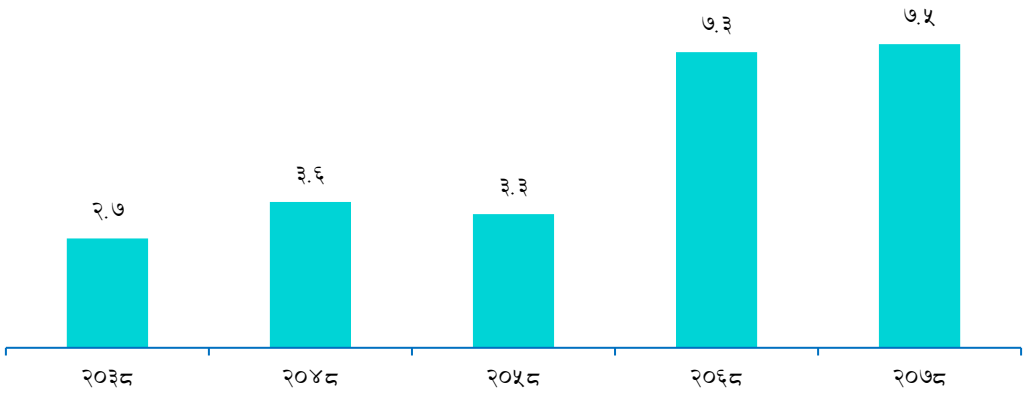


३.२ विदेशी नागरिक र विदेशमा अक्सर बसोबास गर्ने जनसङ्ख्या

कुल जनसङ्ख्या (२,९१,६४,५७८) मा विदेशमा जन्मेको जनसङ्ख्या २.५ प्रतिशत रहेको छ भने विदेशमा जन्मेको मध्ये भारतमा मात्र जन्मेको जनसङ्ख्या ९७ प्रतिशत देखिएको छ। वि.सं. २०७८ को जनगणनामा कुन देशको नागरिक हो भनी प्रश्न सोधिएको थियो। नतिजाअनुसार विदेशी नागरिकहरू कुल जनसङ्ख्याको ०.५ प्रतिशत छन् यसमध्ये ९७ प्रतिशत भारतीय नागरिकहरू छन्। त्यसैगरी

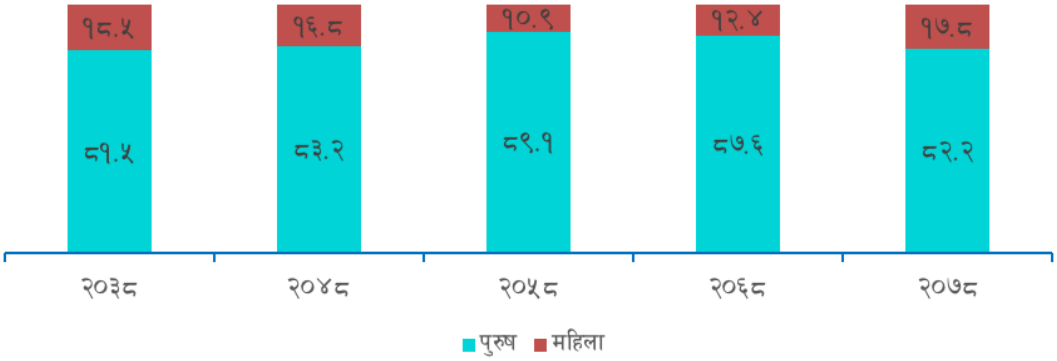
राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०७८ ले कुल जनसङ्ख्याको ७.५ प्रतिशतको अनुपातमा अनुपस्थित विदेश जनसङ्ख्यालाई गणना गरेको छ जुन लगभग वि.सं. २०६८ (७.३%) को बराबर छ।

चित्र ९: अनुपस्थित विदेशको जनसङ्ख्या (प्रतिशतमा), राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०३८—२०७८

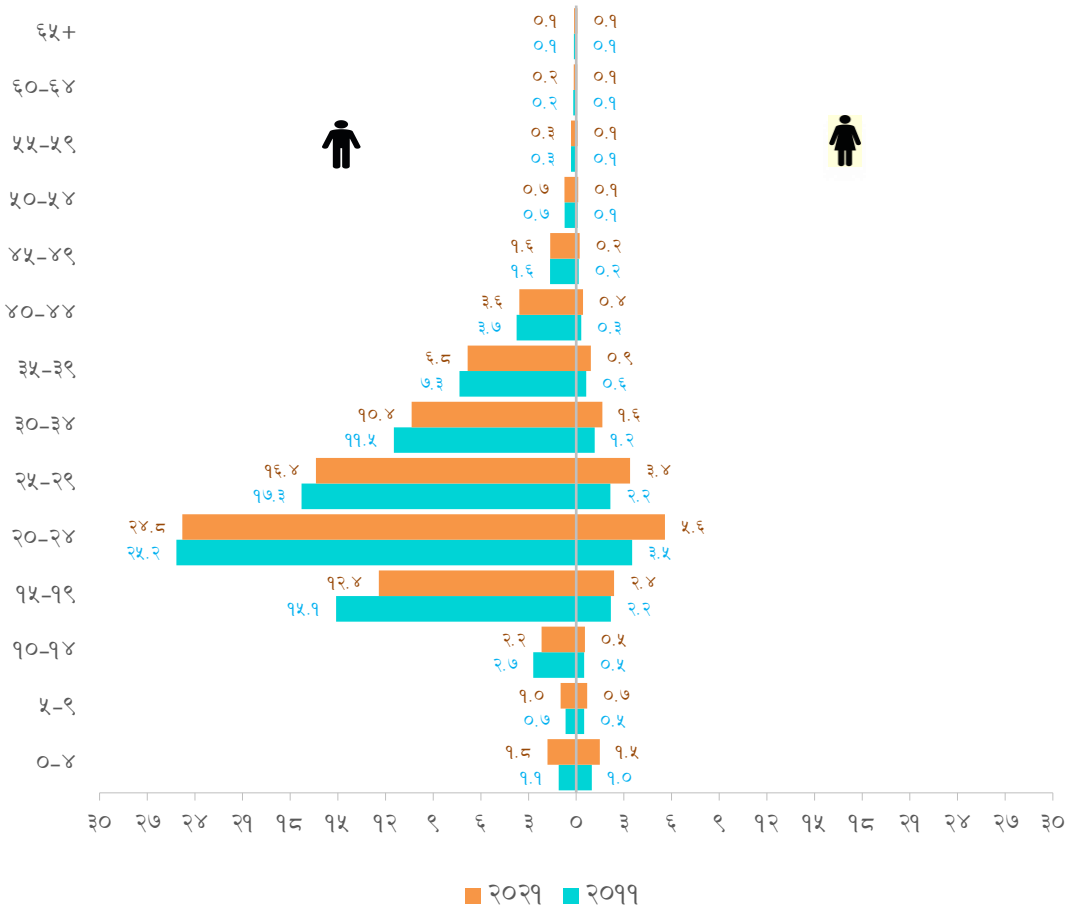


यद्यपि पछिल्लो १० वर्षमा अनुपस्थित जनसङ्ख्या २,६९,०९८ ले बढेको छ (वि.सं. २०७८ मा २१,९०,५९२ र २०६८ मा १९,२१,४९४)। अनुपस्थित जनसङ्ख्यामा पुरूष ८२.२ प्रतिशत र बाँकी १७.८ प्रतिशत महिला छन्। वि.सं. २०६८ को तुलनामा वि.सं. २०७८ को जनगणनामा महिलाको सङ्ख्या केही बढेको छ। उमेरअनुसार ८६ प्रतिशत अनुपस्थित जनसङ्ख्यामा प्रायः १५-३९ वर्षका युवाहरू छन् भने यी उमेरहरूमा पनि २०-२४ वर्ष उमेर समूहले मात्र कुल २९ प्रतिशत ओगटेको छ।

चित्र १०: लैङ्गिक बनोटअनुसार अनुपस्थित जनसङ्ख्या, राष्ट्रिय जनगणना १९८१—२०२१



चित्र ११: लैङ्गिक बनोटअनुसार अनुपस्थित जनसङ्ख्या पिरामिड



३.३ जातजाति तथा भाषा

वि.सं. १९६८ को पहिलो जनगणनादेखि नै जातजातिसम्बन्धी तथ्याङ्कहरू सङ्कलन गरिएको भए तापनि २०४८ को जनगणना अघिसम्म सार्वजनिक गरिएको थिएन। प्रत्येक जनगणनामा जातजातिका समूहको सङ्ख्या बढ्दै गएको छ। वि.सं. २०६८ मा यो सङ्ख्या १२३ थियो भने अहिले बढेर १४२ समूहमा पुगेको छ। जनसङ्ख्याको आकारमा नुराङ जाति सबैभन्दा कम (३६ जना) देखि लिएर क्षेत्री (१६.५%) को उच्चतम जनसङ्ख्या ४७,९६,९९५ सम्म रहेको छ। क्षेत्री र पहाडी ब्राह्मणहरूको जनसङ्ख्या वि.सं. २०४८ पछिका सबै जनगणनाहरूमा सबैभन्दा बढी छ। मगर, थारू, तामाङ, नेवार, राई र गुरूङहरूले क्षेत्री र पहाडी ब्राह्मणहरूलाई पछ्याउँदै आएका छन्। तर वि.सं. २०६८ र २०७८ को बिच यिनीहरूको जनसङ्ख्या अनुपात भने घटेको देखिन्छ। अर्कोतर्फ

जनसङ्ख्याको हिसाबले १५ ठूला समूहभित्र पर्ने विश्वकर्मा, मुस्लिम, परियार, ठकुरी, यादव, मिजार र तेलीको जनसङ्ख्या अनुपात भने वि.सं. २०६८ देखि २०७८ बिचमा बढेको देखिन्छ।

जातजातिको आधारमा हेर्दा कुनै पनि एक जात वा जातिको जनसङ्ख्या १७ प्रतिशत भन्दा बढी छैन। त्यसमा पनि ११ ओटा जात वा जातिहरूको जनसङ्ख्या १००० भन्दा कम छ र नुराङ जातिको जनसङ्ख्या ३६ जना मात्र छ। एक हजारभन्दा कम जनसङ्ख्या हुनेहरू अन्यमा कलार, फ्री, कोचे, तोप्केगोला, राउटे, वालुङ, ल्होमी, सुरेल र कुसुण्डा पर्दछन्। त्यस्तै, यो १४२ जात वा जातिलाई सामुदायिक रूपमा वर्गीकरण गरी मुख्य पाँच समुहमा विभाजित गरिएको छ (तालिका ३.१८ र एनेक्स ९ हेर्नुहोस्)। जसअनुसार सवैभन्दा बढी पहाडी समूहका जनसङ्ख्या छन् (४६.२%), त्यसपछि जनजाति समूहका छन् (३५%) र दलितसमूहको जनसङ्ख्या १३.४ प्रतिशत छन्। त्यसको अलावा धार्मिक तथा भाषिक समूहको जनसङ्ख्या ४.९ प्रतिशत छन् जहाँ मुसलमान सवैभन्दा बढी देखिएको छ।

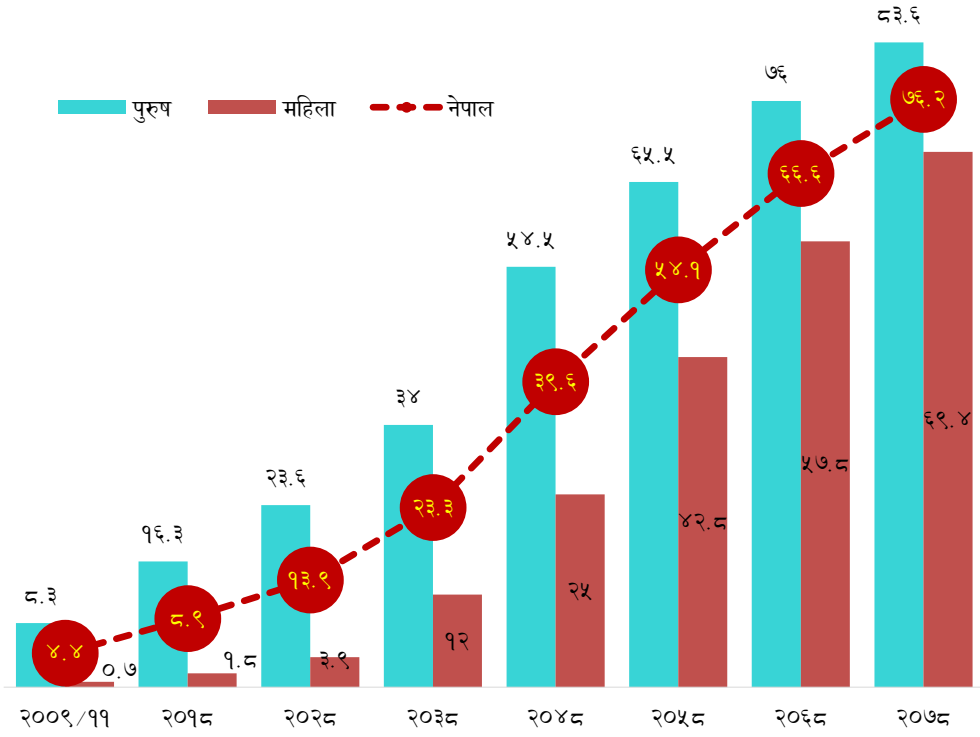
वि.सं. २०७८ को जनगणनाअनुसार देशको सबैभन्दा बढी जनसङ्ख्या (४४.८६%) ले नेपाली भाषालाई आफ्नो मातृभाषाको रूपमा पहिचान गर्दछन्। मैथिली (११.०५%) मातृभाषाको रूपमा बोलिने दोस्रो सबैभन्दा प्रमुख भाषा हो, त्यसपछि भोजपुरी (६.२४%) र थारू (५.८८%) पर्दछन्। वि.सं. २००९/११ को जनगणना यतादेखि नै विभिन्न धर्म मान्ने व्यक्तिहरूको सङ्ख्या संकलन गरिएको छ। वि.सं. २०६८ र २०७८ को जनगणनामा १० विभिन्न धर्मको गणना गरिएको थियो। हिन्दु धर्म सबैभन्दा बढी प्रतिशत जनसङ्ख्या (८१.१९%) ले अपनाएको देखिन्छ भने त्यसपछि बौद्ध (८.२१%), इस्लाम (५.०९%) र किराँत (३.१७%) धर्म मान्नेहरूको जनसङ्ख्या रहेको छ जुन हिन्दुहरूको अनुपातभन्दा निकै कम रहेको छ।

३.४ शैक्षिक स्थिति

राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०७८ ले ५ वर्ष वा माथिका कुल जनसङ्ख्याको ७६.२ प्रतिशत जनसङ्ख्या साक्षर रहेको देखाएको छ जसमा ८३.६ प्रतिशत पुरूषहरू र ६९.४ प्रतिशत महिलाहरू रहेका छ। वि.सं. २०६८ को तुलनामा समग्र साक्षरतादर ९.६ प्रतिशतले बढेको देखिन्छ। नगरपालिकामा साक्षरतादर ७८.५ प्रतिशत र गाउँपालिकामा साक्षरतादर ७१.९ प्रतिशत रहेको छ। भौगोलिक क्षेत्रहरूमध्ये पहाडमा सबैभन्दा बढी साक्षरता (८०.९%) छ भने हिमाल र तराईमा लगभग बराबर

(७३%) छ। यी क्षेत्रहरूमा लैङ्गिक अन्तर हेर्ने हो भने हिमालमा सबैभन्दा बढी (१६.३%) अन्तर पाइएको छ। यसैगरी बागमती प्रदेशमा सबैभन्दा बढी (८२.१%) र सबैभन्दा कम मधेस प्रदेशमा (६३.५%) साक्षरतादर रहेको छ। साक्षरतामा सबैभन्दा बढी लैङ्गिक असमानता मधेसमा (१७.८%) र सुदूरपश्चिममा (१७.२%) देखिएको छ।

चित्र १२: नेपालमा साक्षरतादर, राष्ट्रिय जनगणना १९५२/५४—२०२१



वि.सं. २०६८ को ९१ प्रतिशतको तुलनामा २०७८ मा ५ वर्ष वा सोभन्दा माथिका ९३ प्रतिशतले कुनै न कुनै रूपमा विद्यालय शिक्षा पूरा गरेका छन्। वि.सं. २०७८ मा झण्डै आधा जनसङ्ख्या (४८.५%) ले आधारभूत शिक्षा पूरा गरेका छन् जसमध्ये २८.७ प्रतिशतले तल्लो आधारभूत शिक्षा (कक्षा १-५) र १९.९ प्रतिशतले उच्च आधारभूत शिक्षा लिएका छन्। वि.सं. २०७८ मा माध्यमिक शिक्षा पूरा गर्नेहरूको प्रतिशत वि.सं. २०६८ को तुलनामा लगभग १० प्रतिशतले बढेको छ।

वि.सं. २०६८ र २०७८ को दुबै जनगणनाहरूमा सबै तहको शिक्षा प्राप्ति गर्नेहरूको हिसाबले पुरूषको सङ्ख्या महिलाको भन्दा बढी छ। दुवै जनगणनाहरूमा, स्नातकोत्तर र त्यसभन्दा माथिका शैक्षिक उपलब्धिहरू हासिल गर्नेहरूमा पुरूष-महिलाबिच असमानता छन्। यद्यपि, २०६८ को तुलनामा २०७८ मा लैङ्गिक अन्तर घटेको देखिन्छ।

३.५ वैवाहिक

वि.सं. २०७८ को जनगणनाअनुसार १० वर्ष वा सोभन्दा माथिका २,३९,५८,८६८ जना मध्ये ३३.१ प्रतिशत जनसङ्ख्या अविवाहित छन् जसमध्ये पुरूषको प्रतिशत महिलाको भन्दा १० प्रतिशतले बढी देखिएको छ (पुरूषहरूको लगभग ३८% र महिलाहरूको २८%)। त्यस्तै, १० वर्ष वा सोभन्दा माथिका सम्पूर्ण जनसङ्ख्यामा ५९.१ प्रतिशत पुरूष र ६४.३ प्रतिशत महिला विवाहित छन्। त्यसैगरी, सम्बन्ध विच्छेद भएका र छुट्टिएका व्यक्तिहरू ०.६ प्रतिशत र विधवा वा विधुर ५ प्रतिशत छन्। विवाहित भई विधवा/विधुर, छुट्टिएका र सम्बन्धविच्छेद भएका महिलाको प्रतिशत पुरूषहरूको भन्दा बढी रहेको छ।

उमेरको आधारमा वैवाहिक स्थितिको तथ्याङ्क प्रयोग गरेर अप्रत्यक्ष विधिद्वारा पहिलो विवाहको औसत उमेर अनुमानित गरिन्छ, जसलाई विवाहको औसत उमेर (Singulate mean age at marriage -SMAM) भनिन्छ। यो विधि सन् १९५३ मा जोन हजनलद्वारा विकसित गरिएको थियो (Shryock et al., 1976: 167) । विवाहको औसत उमेर (SMAM) भनेको पहिलो विवाहअघि महिला र पुरूषहरूको समूहले विवाह नगरी बिताएको औसत समयावधि हो। यो क्रमिक उमेर समूहहरूमा पुरूष वा महिलाहरूको अनुपातबाट व्युत्पन्न गरिन्छ। यसले ५० वर्ष पुग्नुअघि १५ वर्ष वा सोभन्दा माथिका महिला वा पुरूषको विवाहको औसत उमेर भन्ने जनाउँछ। हालको SMAM पुरूषहरूको लागि २५.५ वर्ष र महिलाहरूको लागि २१.८ वर्ष छ र महिलाको तुलनामा पुरूषको करिब पाँच वर्ष बढी रहेको छ। वि.सं. २०३८ देखि २०२१ सम्म हेर्दा SMAM बिस्तारै बढ्दै गएको देखिन्छ जुन पुरूष र महिला दुवैमा लागु हुन्छ।

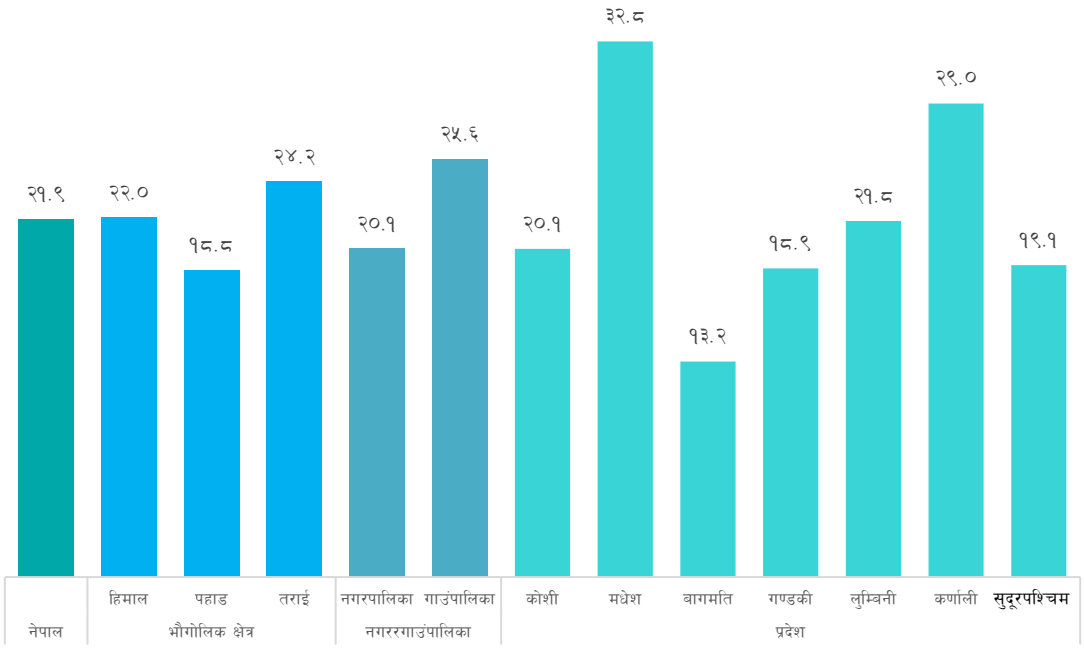
नेपालको विभिन्न क्षेत्रहरूबिच SMAM मा उल्लेखनीय रूपमा भिन्नता देखिँदैन। यो लगभग २५ वर्षको दायरामा पर्दछ। तर, यो गाउँपालिकाको तुलनामा नगरपालिकामा अलि बढी छ र तराईको तुलनामा पहाडमा अपेक्षाकृत उच्च छ। यसैगरी कोशी, बागमती र गण्डकीमा अन्य प्रदेशहरूको तुलनामा बढी

छ। समान प्रवृत्तिको तथ्याङ्क पुरूष र महिला दुवैमा लागु हुन्छ। लैङ्गिक लैङ्गिक अन्तर पनि सबै क्षेत्रमा समान छ। यद्यपि लैङ्गिक अन्तर कर्णाली र सुदूरपश्चिममा सबैभन्दा कम छ जहाँ करिब दुई वर्षको अन्तर छ।

नेपालमा पुरूष र महिला दुवैका लागि कानुनी विवाहको उमेर २० वर्ष भएता पनि कहिलेकाहीं मानिसहरूले त्यो उमेरभन्दा पहिले अर्थात १८ वर्षअघि नै विवाह गर्ने गरेको देखिन्छ। जसले १८ वर्षको उमेर नपुग्दै विवाह गरेका छन् त्यस्ता विवाहलाई बालविवाह मानिन्छ। यसले एक वा दुवै परिवारलाई असर गर्न सक्छ, यद्यपि यो अनुसन्धानले मुख्यतया २० देखि २४ वर्ष उमेरका महिलाहरू जसले १८ वर्षभन्दा पहिले नै विवाह गरेका छन्, त्यस्ता बालविवाहको बारेमा विश्लेषण गरिएको छ। उक्त बालविवाह हाल नेपालमा २१.९ प्रतिशत छन् ।

विशेषगरी, बालविवाह नगरपालिका क्षेत्रहरू (२०.१%) भन्दा गाउँपालिका क्षेत्रमा (२५.६%) छ प्रतिशत बिन्दुले बढी देखिएको छ। भौगोलिक क्षेत्रअनुसार सबैभन्दा धेरै तराईमा रहेको छ (२४.२%) र पहाडमा सबैभन्दा कम (१८.८%) तर हिमाली क्षेत्रको बालविवाहभन्दा थोरै कम छ (२२.०%)। प्रदेशअनुसार बालविवाह सबैभन्दा बढी मधेसमा (३२.८%), त्यसपछि कर्णाली (२९.०%) र सबैभन्दा कम बागमती (१३.२%) र गण्डकी (१८.९%) प्रदेशमा छ। तराई क्षेत्र र मधेस प्रदेश दुवैमा बालविवाहको उच्च दरले मधेसी समुदायमा बालविवाहको अत्यधिक उच्च घटनाहरू भएको देखिन्छ। यस्तो न्यून हुनु सामाजिक आर्थिक विकासका साथै शिक्षाको न्यून स्तर, उच्च प्रजनन क्षमता, उच्च मातृ मृत्युदर र अन्य कारकहरूको सङ्केत हो।

चित्र १३: २० देखि २४ वर्ष उमेरका महिलाहरूमा बालविवाहको प्रचलन



३.६ अपाङ्गता

वि.सं. २०७८ को जनगणनामा देशभित्र अक्सर बसोबास गर्ने सबै व्यक्तिहरूको अपाङ्गतासम्बन्धी विवरण संकलनका लागि १२ प्रकारका अपाङ्गतासहितको प्रश्न सोधिएको थियो। यसअनुसार वि.सं. २०७८ मा कुल जनसङ्ख्याको २.२ प्रतिशतमा कुनै न कुनै प्रकारको अपाङ्गता रहेको देखिएको छ जुन वि.सं. २०५८ मा ०.४ प्रतिशत र वि.सं. २०६८ मा १.९ प्रतिशत रहेको थियो। यो प्रतिशतमा महिला (१.१%) भन्दा पुरूष (१.२%) बढी छन् भने सबै भौगोलिक क्षेत्र, प्रदेश र ग्रामीण/सहरी नगरपालिकाहरूमा लगभग समान छ। तर, लैङ्गिक भिन्नताअनुसार कर्णालीमा पुरूषहरूको प्रतिशत बढी रहेको छ (४%)।

३.७ यौनिक तथा लैङ्गिक

जनगणनाको इतिहासमा पहिलोपटक, राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०७८ ले अन्य लिङ्गी (यौनिक तथा लैङ्गिक अल्पसंख्यक) को जनसङ्ख्या गणना गरेको छ। यो गणना घर तथा परिवार सूचीकरणको क्रममा परिवारमा अक्सर बसोबास गर्नेमध्ये अन्य लिङ्गी (यौनिक तथा लैङ्गिक अल्पसंख्यक) सम्बन्धी विवरण

संकलन गरिएको थियो। त्यसैले अन्य लिङ्गी (यौनिक तथा लैङ्गिक अल्पसंख्यक) को व्यक्तिगत विशेषताहरू विश्लेषण गर्न सकिँदैन। वि.सं. २०७८ को जनगणनाअनुसार नेपालमा अन्य लिङ्गीको जनसङ्ख्या २,९२८ रहेको छ। अन्य लिङ्गी (यौनिक तथा लैङ्गिक अल्पसंख्यक) को कुल सङ्ख्यामध्ये अधिकांश (७२%) नगरपालिकामा गणना गरिएको थियो। भौगोलिक क्षेत्रमध्ये पहाडमा सबैभन्दा बढी (४८%) र प्रदेशमध्ये बागमतीमा सबैभन्दा बढी (३२.५%) र कर्णालीमा सबैभन्दा कम (२.८%) रहेको छ।

४. जनसङ्ख्याको आर्थिक संरचना

४.१ रोजगारी र आर्थिक रूपले सक्रिय जनसङ्ख्या

दश वर्ष वा माथिका कुल जनसङ्ख्याको लगभग दुईतिहाइ (६५.६%) आर्थिक रूपमा सक्रिय जनसङ्ख्या रहेको छ। आर्थिक रूपमा सक्रिय पुरूषहरू ७१ प्रतिशत छन् जुन महिलाहरूको तुलनामा लगभग ११ प्रतिशत (६०.४%) ले बढी हो। यो नगरपालिकामा (६३.२%) भन्दा गाउँपालिकामा बसोवास गर्नेहरूमा बढी (७०.६%) छ। पहाडी क्षेत्रमा आर्थिक रूपमा सक्रिय जनसङ्ख्या ७४ प्रतिशत रहेको छ, जुन तराईमा (६२.५%) भन्दा १२ प्रतिशतले बढी रहेको पाइएको छ। प्रदेशगत रूपमा हेर्दा कर्णालीमा आर्थिक रूपमा सक्रिय जनसङ्ख्या सबैभन्दा बढी (७२%) छ भने त्यसपछि कोशीमा (७१.१%) छ र सबैभन्दा कम मधेशमा (५७.३%) रहेको छ। मधेशमा लैङ्गिक अन्तर बढी छ जहाँ पुरूषको (६७.३%) महिलाको (४७.६%) भन्दा १९.७ प्रतिशत बढी छ। त्यस्तै, तराईमा महिलाको तुलनामा १४.५ प्रतिशतले पुरूष बढी छन्।

राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०७८ अनुसार नेपालमा १० वर्ष वा सोभन्दा माथिका जनसङ्ख्यामा विगत १२ महिनामा ६ महिना वा सोभन्दा बढी समय काम गर्ने वा काम खोज्ने आर्थिक रूपमा सक्रिय व्यक्ति ९३ प्रतिशत छन्। आर्थिक रूपले सक्रियमध्ये रोजगारीमा रहेका पुरूषहरू (९३.८%) महिलाहरू (९२%) भन्दा अलि बढी छन्। रोजगारीको अनुपात सबै भौगोलिक क्षेत्रहरू, नगर/गाँउपालिकाहरू र प्रदेशहरूमा लगभग समान छ। तर मधेसमा महिलाको तुलनामा रोजगारीमा रहेका पुरूषहरू ६ प्रतिशतले बढी छन्।

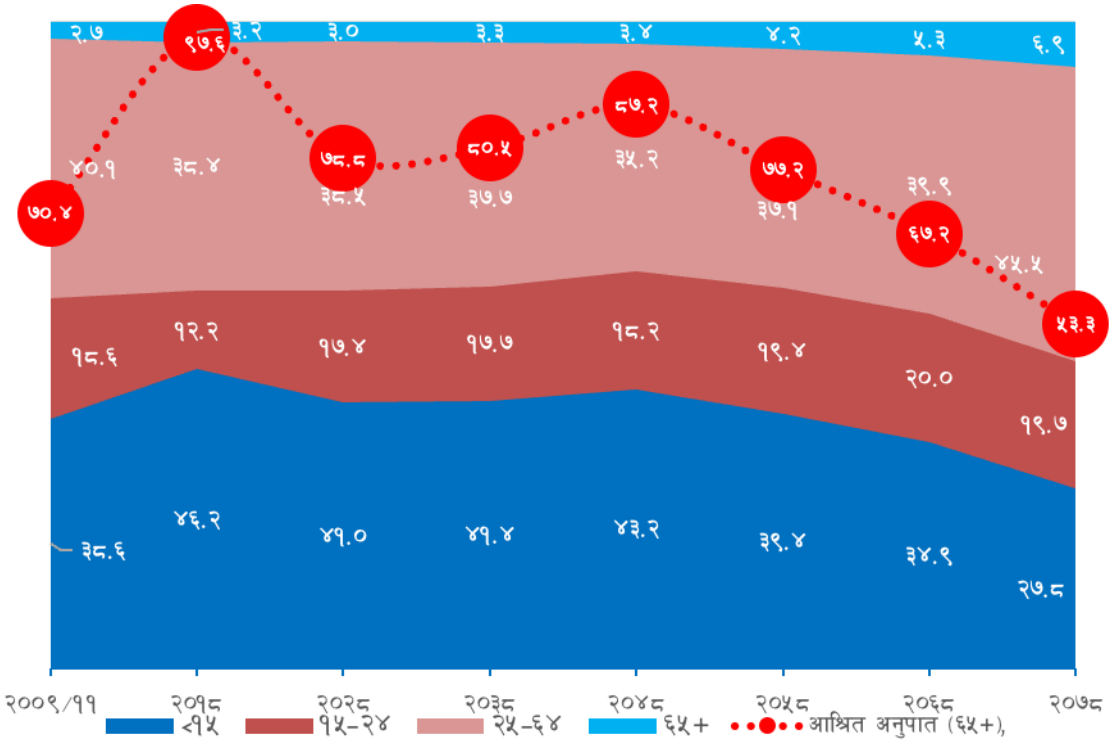
४.२ आश्रित अनुपात

यस पटकको जनगणनादेखि आश्रित अनुपात अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय तथ्याङ्कसँग तुलना गर्नका लागि ६५ वर्ष वा सोभन्दा माथिको जनसङ्ख्यालाई वृद्ध जनसङ्ख्या मानिएको छ जुन अघिल्लो जनगणनाहरूमा ६० वर्ष वा सोभन्दा माथिको जनसङ्ख्यालाई वृद्ध जनसङ्ख्याका रूपमा प्रस्तुत गरिएको थियो।

जनसङ्ख्याको १५ देखि ६४ वर्ष उमेर समूहलाई सक्रिय जनसङ्ख्या र ० देखि १४ वर्ष र ६५ वर्ष वा सोभन्दा माथिको उमेर समूहकालाई आश्रित जनसङ्ख्या भन्ने गरिएको छ। आश्रित अनुपातको आधारमा काम गर्ने सक्रिय उमेर समूहमा बालबालिका वा वृद्धवृद्धाको बोझ कस्तो छ भनेर बुझ्न सकिन्छ। साथै जनसङ्ख्याको उमेर संरचनाअनुसार बालबालिका वा सक्रिय उमेर समूहमा कसको बाहुल्यता छ बुझ्न सकिन्छ। यो अनुपातलाई तीन तरिका (बाल-आश्रित अनुपात, वृद्ध-आश्रित अनुपात र कुल-आश्रित अनुपात) ले प्रस्तुत गर्ने चलन छ ।

कुल-आश्रित अनुपात भन्नाले १५ देखि ६४ वर्षका सक्रिय उमेर समूहका प्रतिसय जनसङ्ख्यामा ६५ वर्ष वा सोभन्दा माथिको उमेरका वृद्धवृद्धाको सङ्ख्या र १५ वर्ष मुनिका बालबालिकाको सङ्ख्या नै कुल-आश्रित अनुपात हो। वि.सं. २०७८ मा कुल आश्रित अनुपात ५३.३ रहेको छ। जसअनुसार नेपालमा प्रति १०० काम गर्ने उमेर समूह (१५-६४) मा कुल-आश्रित अनुपात लगभग ५३ जना रहेको छ। त्यसैगरी बाल-आश्रित अनुपात ४२.६ र वृद्ध-आश्रित अनुपात १०.६ रहेको छ। कुल-आश्रित अनुपात वि.सं. २०४८ बाट (८७.२) बाट लगातार घट्दै गइरहेको देखिन्छ। घरपरिवारको सम्पन्नताअनुसार विपन्नबाट सम्पन्न हुँदै जाँदा आश्रित अनुपात पनि घट्दै गएको देखिन्छ। आश्रित अनुपात सबैभन्दा बढी मधेस (६५.२%) र कर्णालीमा (६१.९%) छ भने सबैभन्दा कम बागमतीमा (४१.५%) छ।

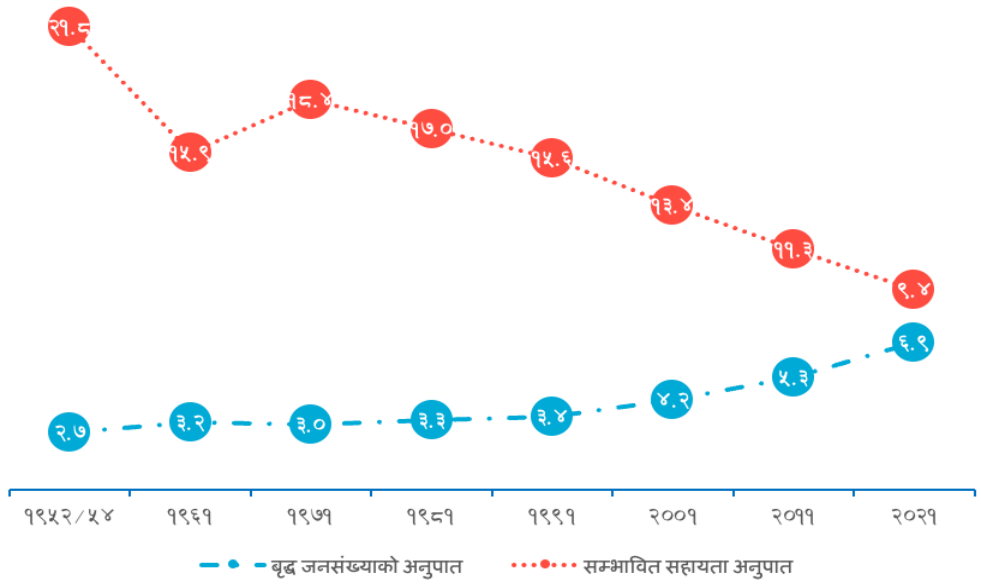
चित्र १४: नेपालमा चार फराकिलो उमेर वितरण, र आश्रित अनुपात (६५+), राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २००९/११—२०७८



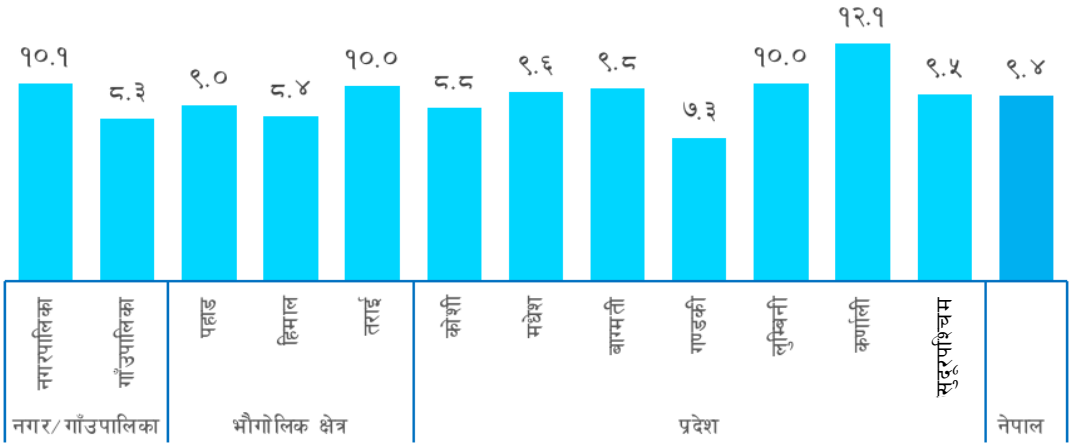
४.३ सम्भावित सहायता अनुपात (Potential Support ratio)

सम्भावित सहायता अनुपात भन्नाले ६५ वर्ष वा सोभन्दा माथिका प्रति वृद्धवृद्धामा काम गर्नसक्ने १५ देखि ६४ वर्षको जनसङ्ख्यालाई बुझाउँछ। उक्त अनुपात वि.सं. २००९/११ र २०७८ बिच २१.८ बाट ९.४ मा घट्यो। यो अनुपात कर्णालीमा सबैभन्दा बढी (१२.१) छ त्यसपछि लुम्बिनी (१०) र सबैभन्दा कम गण्डकीमा (७.३) छ। गाउँपालिका क्षेत्रको ८.३ को तुलनामा नगरपालिका क्षेत्रमा सम्भावित सहायता अनुपात १०.१ छ। यो अनुपात जिल्लामा सबैभन्दा बढी डोल्पा (१८.३) त्यसपछि जुम्ला (१५.६) र सबैभन्दा कम गोरखा (५.४) र रामेछाप (५.५) मा रहेको छ। आर्थिक स्थितिको अवस्था सबैभन्दा विपन्नबाट सबैभन्दा सम्पन्नसम्मको वृद्धिसँगै सम्भावित सहायता अनुपात पनि बढ्दै गएको पाइन्छ।

चित्र १५: सम्भावित सहायता अनुपात र वृद्ध जनसङ्ख्याको अनुपात (६५+), राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २००९/११—२०७८



चित्र १६: नगर/गाउँपालिका, भौगोलिक क्षेत्र र प्रदेशअनुसार (६५+), सम्भावित सहायता अनुपात

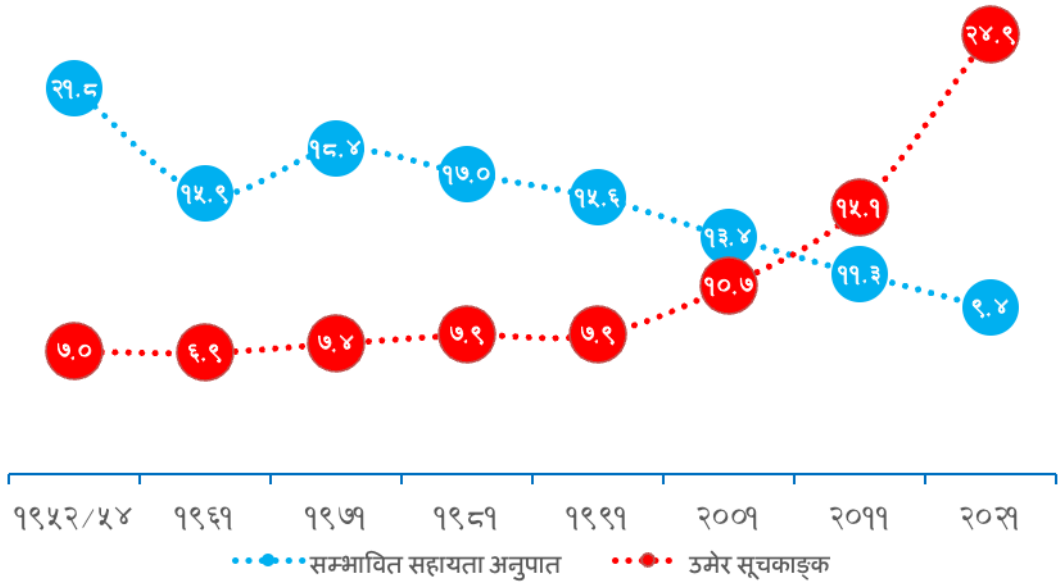


बुढ्यौलीउन्मुख सूचक उमेर ६० वर्ष वा सोभन्दा माथिको जनसङ्ख्यालाई बालबालिका जनसङ्ख्याको प्रतिशतका रूपमा गणना गरी बुढ्यौलीउन्मुख सूचकाङ्क पत्ता लगाइन्छ। अहिले समग्र बुढ्यौली उन्मुख सूचकाङ्क ३६.७ प्रतिशत छ र यो वर्षैदेखि निरन्तर बढिरहेको छ तर जनगणना २०६८ (२३.३%) र जनगणना २०७८ (३६.७%) को बिचमा उल्लेखनीय रूपमा वृद्धि भएको पाइन्छ। यसले एकातिर

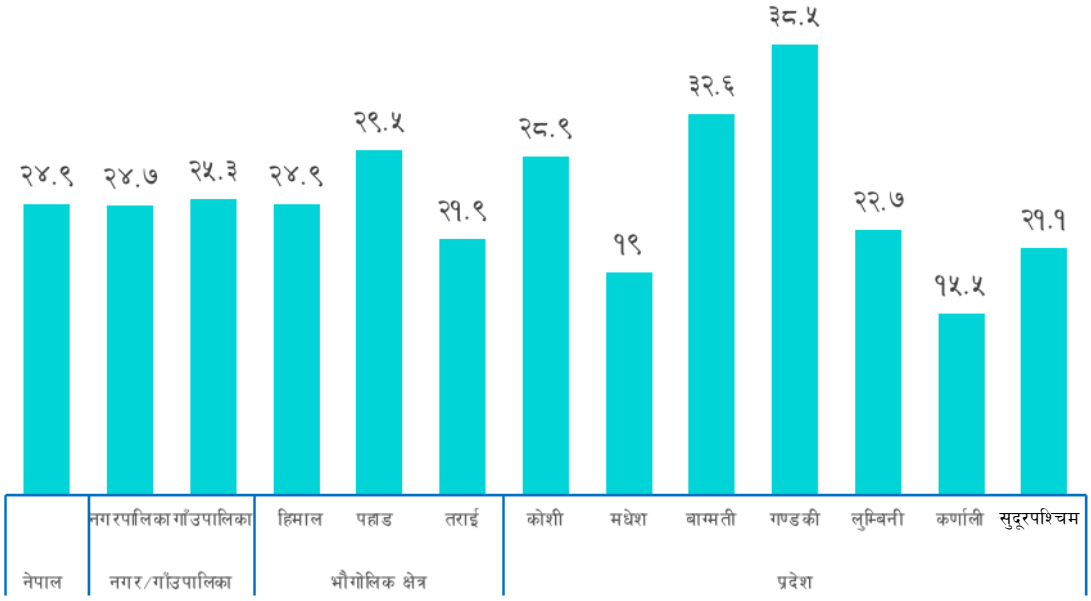
वृद्धावस्थाको जनसङ्ख्यामा वृद्धि भएको सङ्केत गर्छ भने अर्कोतर्फ ०-१४ वर्ष उमेर समूहको जनसङ्ख्या घट्दै गएको देखाउँछ।

यहाँ ६५ वर्ष वा माथिको उमेर समूहलाई विचार गर्दा २०७८ मा समग्र बुढ्यौलीउन्मुख सूचकाङ्क २४.९ छ। यो गण्डकीमा (३८.५) उच्चतम छ, त्यसपछि बागमतीमा (३२.६) र कर्णालीमा (१५.५) सबैभन्दा कम छ। जिल्लाअनुसार बुढ्यौलीउन्मुख सूचकाङ्क सबैभन्दा बढी मनाङमा (६४.४) रहेको छ त्यसपछि लमजुङमा (५२.७) र सबैभन्दा कम डोल्पा (११.२) र जाजरकोटमा (११.८) रहेको छ। बुढ्यौलीउन्मुख सूचकाङ्क धेरै कम भएका, १५ भन्दा पनि कम भएका अन्य जिल्लामा मुगु, कालिकोट, जुम्ला र हुम्ला पर्दछन्।

चित्र १७: उमेर सूचकाङ्क तथा सम्भावित सहायता अनुपात (६५+), राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २००९/११—२०७८



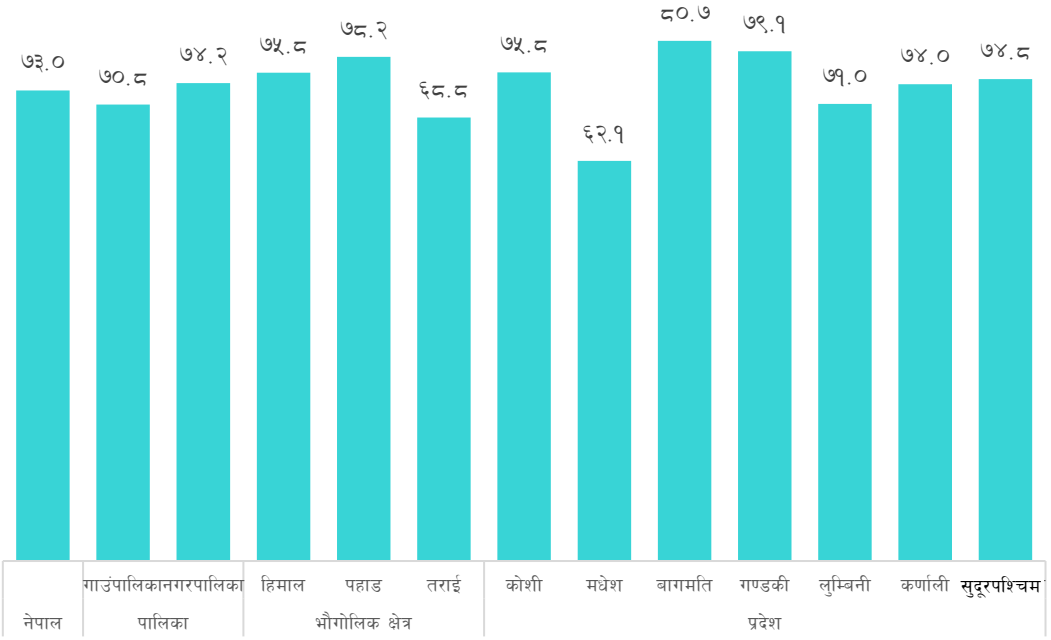
चित्र १८: नगर/गाउँपालिका, भौगोलिक क्षेत्र र प्रदेशअनुसार उमेरको सूचकाङ्क



४.३ जनसाङ्ख्यकीय लाभांश

जनसाङ्ख्यक लाभांशलाई जनसङ्ख्याको उमेर संरचनामा भएको परिवर्तनको परिणामस्वरूप आर्थिक वृद्धिको सम्भावनाको रूपमा हेरिएको हुन्छ। नेपालमा जनसाङ्ख्यक लाभांश सूचकाङ्क गणना गर्दा सशक्तीकरण, शिक्षा, रोजगारको आधारमा तयार गरिएको छ। सोअनुसार २०७८ मा ७३.० रहेको छ। यो गाउँपालिका क्षेत्रहरूको (७०.८) तुलनामा नगरपालिका क्षेत्रहरूमा (७४.२) बढी र पहाडमा उच्चतम (७८.२) तथा तराईमा सबैभन्दा कम (६८.८) रहेको छ। प्रदेशहरूमध्ये सबैभन्दा बढी बागमती (८०.७) र गण्डकीमा (७९.१) र सबैभन्दा कम मधेसमा (६२.१) रहेको छ। जिल्लाहरूमध्ये जनसाङ्ख्यक लाभांश सबैभन्दा बढी काठमाडौं (८५.२), ललितपुर (८३.९) र भक्तपुरमा (८३.७) र सबैभन्दा कम रौतहटमा (५७.२) रहेको छ। जनसाङ्ख्यकीय लाभांश आर्थिक अवस्थाको सबैभन्दा गरिबबाट सबैभन्दा धनीमा बढ्दै गएको पाइन्छ तर घट्दो निर्भरता अनुपातसँगै भने जनसाङ्ख्यक लाभांश बढ्दै गएको देखिन्छ।

चित्र १९: जनसाङ्ख्यिक लाभांश सूचकाङ्क तथा आश्रित अनुपात



५. नीतिगत सुधारका लागि सुझाव

विगत छ दशकदेखि निरन्तर रूपमा जनसङ्ख्या नीति निर्माणको लागि गरेको प्रयासबाट आजको जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय अवस्था उपलब्धि सम्भव भएको हो र अपेक्षाअनुरूप उपलब्धि पनि हासिल गर्न सफल भएको देखिन्छ। यस जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय संरचनात्मक परिवर्तनपश्चात् अबको जनसङ्ख्या नीति कस्तो हुनुपर्दछ भन्ने विषय थप पेचिलोपूर्ण भएको छ। राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०७८ ले जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय जानकारीको वास्तविक तथ्य प्रदान गरी प्रभावकारी नीति निर्माणमा आवश्यक भूमिका निर्वाह गरेको छ। यिनै तथ्याङ्कअनुरूप सरकारले आवश्यक निर्णय गर्ने आधार पनि प्राप्त गरेको छ। जनसङ्ख्याको आकार साथै तिनीहरू कहाँ र कसरी बसेका छन्, सरकार र अन्य सम्बन्धित निकायहरूको लागि सधैं चासोको विषय हुनुपर्दछ। जनसाङ्ख्यिक लाभांशबाट अधिकतम फाइदा प्राप्त गर्न सरकारले जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय कारकहरूलाई ध्यानमा राखी नीतिहरू लागु गरेमा दिगो विकासका लक्ष्यहरू हासिल गर्ने अवसर प्रदान हुनसक्दछ। अतः राष्ट्रिय जनगणना २०७८ को नतिजाको आधारमा जनसङ्ख्या संरचनाको विश्लेषणबाट देहायका नीतिगत सुझावहरू प्रस्ताव गरिएको छ।

१. जनसङ्ख्याको आकार, वृद्धि र वितरणको सन्दर्भमा देशको परिवर्तनशील जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय संरचनामा दुईओटा महत्त्वपूर्ण नीतिगत प्रभावहरू छन्। पहिलो, हामीले देशको जनसङ्ख्या नियन्त्रणमा राख्न ६० वर्षदेखि गरेका प्रयासका कारण अहिले वार्षिक ०.९२ प्रतिशतको जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर हासिल गर्न सफल भएका छौं जसले नेपालको जनसङ्ख्या सुस्त गतिमा अगाडि बढिरहेको सङ्केत गर्दछ। नेपालको हालको जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर विश्वव्यापी जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर (०.९०%) र एसिया (०.८०%) को भन्दा अलि बढी छ। यो लगभग भारत र बंगलादेशको बराबर छ तर पूर्वी एसियाली देशहरू जस्तै थाइल्याण्ड, जापान, कोरिया र चीनभन्दा चाहिं धेरै उच्च छ। त्यसैले अबको चरण भनेको नेपालको जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय नीतिमा पुनर्विचार गर्नु हो। तसर्थ, नेपालको जनसङ्ख्या नीतिलाई अगाडि बढाएर गहन बहस र पुनर्विचार गर्न जरूरी छ। देशमा रहेका लोपोन्मुख समूहहरूको लोप नहुने अधिकारमा ध्यान दिएर जनसङ्ख्या व्यवस्थापन नीतिहरू सुधार गर्नुपर्दछ।

२. जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय संरचनामा भएको परिवर्तनले गर्दा जनसङ्ख्याको क्षेत्रीय वितरणमा परिवर्तन आएको छ। तराईमा जनसङ्ख्याको अनुपात निरन्तर बढ्दै गएको छ तर हिमाल र पहाडमा भने घट्दै गएको छ। हिमाली र पहाडी जिल्लाहरूमा जनसङ्ख्या घटनु र तराई वा मधेसका जिल्लाहरूमा बढनु भनेको जनसङ्ख्याको ढाँचाको प्रवृत्तिको परिणाम हो र जनसङ्ख्या वितरणमा क्षेत्रीय असन्तुलनले धेरै सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक र आर्थिक विकास नीतिहरूको प्रभाव रहेको हुन्छ। जनसङ्ख्याको यो अनुमानित क्षेत्रीय असन्तुलनलाई व्यवस्थित गर्नको लागि एक व्यावहारिक प्रमाणमा-आधारित "जनसङ्ख्या पुनर्वितरण नीति", जसले जनसङ्ख्याको क्षेत्रीय वितरणको सन्तुलनलाई समर्थन गर्ने वातावरणलाई बढावा दिन सक्षम हुनसक्छ।

३. नेपालमा जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय संरचना परिवर्तन हुँदै गइरहेको छ, जसमा सहरीकरण, बढ्दो जनसङ्ख्याको वृद्धावस्था, बढ्दो अनुपस्थिति र गाउँपालिका र नगरपालिका क्षेत्रको जनसङ्ख्या, विशेषगरी पहाडी र हिमाली क्षेत्रमा, यसको संरचनामा परिवर्तन हुँदै गइरहेको छ। जबसम्म मानिसहरू सामाजिक अन्तरक्रियामा सक्रिय र संलग्न हुन्छन्, यस्तो निश्चित हुने गर्छन्। तसर्थ, यसको रणनीतिक समाधान यी तत्वहरूमध्ये कुनै एकमा मात्र हुने सम्बोधनको आधारमा हुन सक्दैन बरू यसको लागि संयुक्त राष्ट्रसंघका महासचिवद्वारा उल्लिखित पाँच बृहत्तर प्रवृत्तिहरूको अन्तरक्रियालाई विचार गर्नुपर्ने हुन्छ। जसमा बसाइँसराइ, सहरीकरण, जलवायु परिवर्तन र असमानतासँगै जनसङ्ख्याको वृद्धावस्था पनि एक हो।

४. युवा जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिको फाइदा र बेफाइदा दुवै हुन्छ। युवा जनसङ्ख्याको सम्भाव्यतालाई पूर्ण रूपमा उपयोग गर्ने सही नीति र कार्यक्रमहरू बनाउनको लागि, यसको निरन्तर वृद्धिको फाइदा लिनुपर्ने कुरा महत्त्वपूर्ण हुन आउँछ। "जनसाङ्ख्यिक लाभांशको उपयोगको अवसर" ले सामाजिक र आर्थिक उन्नति प्रवर्धन गर्ने र अन्ततः जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय लाभांश प्राप्त गर्ने अवसर प्रदान गर्दछ। युवा मानव संसाधनलाई सुदृढ गरी सामाजिक विकासका लक्ष्यहरू हासिलको अनुगमन गर्न यस जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय-सम्पत्ति समूहका लागि नीतिहरू लागु गरिनुपर्छ। जनसाङ्ख्यिक लाभांश प्राप्तिका लागि राष्ट्रलाई भविष्यमा चाहिने प्रतिभाशाली, प्रशिक्षित, प्रभावकारी र स्वस्थ जनशक्ति तयारीका लागि शिक्षा र स्वास्थ्यमा लगानी गर्न आवश्यक छ। यसैगरी बढ्दो श्रमशक्तिको प्रतिक्रिया स्वरूप काम गर्ने उमेर र रोजगारी सृजनाको क्षमता भएका मानिसहरूको अनुपातमा विस्तार गर्नुपर्दछ।

५. विदेशमा बस्ने अनुपस्थित जनसङ्ख्याको तथ्याङ्कले स्पष्ट रूपमा के देखाउँछ भने बाह्य बसाइँ वर्षौंदेखि निरन्तर बढिरहेको छ। यो प्रवृत्तिले परिवारको संरचनामा परिवर्तन ल्याएको छ र विदेशमा बस्ने अनुपस्थित रहेकाहरूको परिवार, क्षेत्र र जिल्लाहरूमा आश्रितहरूको उच्च अनुपात पाइन्छ। यसले अनुपस्थित रहेकाहरूको परिवारमा बसेका व्यक्तिहरू धेरै हदसम्म आश्रितहरू रहेको सङ्केत गर्छ जुन नीतिनिर्माताहरूका लागि गम्भीर चासोको विषय हुनुपर्छ। विदेश पलायनले परिवारमा छाडिएका व्यक्तिहरू, विशेषगरी बालबालिका, वृद्धवृद्धा र महिलामा परेको असर पहिचान गरी त्यसलाई सम्बोधन गर्ने नीति तर्जुमा गर्ने बेला आएको छ।

६. नेपाल बुढ्यौली समाजतर्फ अग्रसर छ र जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धि मध्यम गतिमा छ। तसर्थ, राष्ट्रले द्रुत रूपमा बुढ्यौली वा "बुढ्यौली समाज" को चुनौतीहरूको लागि तयार हुनुपर्छ, यद्यपि यिनीहरूले जनसङ्ख्याको धेरै सानो प्रतिशतलाई प्रतिनिधित्व गर्छन्। उमेर ६५ वर्षदेखि माथिका मानिसहरूको सङ्ख्या छिटो विस्तार हुँदैछन् त्यसैले उनीहरूको कल्याणकारीको लागि बुढ्यौलीमैत्री नीति चाहिन्छ। उनीहरूको जनसङ्ख्याको ढाँचाहरू बुझ्न र यसका आधारभूत कारणहरूको लागि नीतिनिर्माताहरूलाई सही जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय तथ्याङ्कको आवश्यक पर्दछ।

७. नेपालमा अहिले जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपात ११२ भनेको अत्यन्त उच्च हो जुन प्राकृतिक स्तर र एसियाली धेरै देशहरूभन्दा धेरै उच्च छ। तसर्थ यसले भविष्यमा हुने महिला जनसङ्ख्याको कमीलाई संकेत गर्दछ, विशेषगरी भारतीय सीमा नजिकका क्षेत्रहरूमा। घट्दो प्रजनन दरले जन्मपूर्व लिङ्ग चयनको माग बढाउन सक्छ। जन्मदाको लैङ्गिक अनुपात परिवर्तन गर्नुको मुख्य लक्ष्य महिला सशक्तीकरण र बालिका तथा महिलामाथि हुने भेदभाव अन्त्य गरी छोरालाई

प्राथमिकता दिने प्रवृत्तिबाट दम्पतीहरूलाई बाहिर निकाल्नु हो। बालविवाह रोक्न र शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, रोजगारीलगायतका सबै क्षेत्रमा लैङ्गिक असमानता अन्त्य गर्न महिला सशक्तीकरण र बालिका तथा महिलामाथि हुने सबै प्रकारका भेदभावको अन्त्य गर्नु जरूरी छ। विशेषगरी मधेस, कर्णाली र सुदूरपश्चिमका जिल्लाहरूको लागि यस नीतिमा जोड दिनुपर्छ।

८. वर्तमान जनसङ्ख्याको संरचनामा आएको परिवर्तनको कारणले गर्दा भएको जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय लचिलोपनालाई कम गर्नको लागि अपेक्षित जनसाङ्ख्यिक लाभांश प्राप्त गर्नु आवश्यक हुन्छ। मधेस प्रदेश र लुम्बिनी प्रदेशको तराई क्षेत्रका अन्य जिल्लाहरू जस्ता न्यून कार्यसम्पादन भएका क्षेत्रहरूमा जनसाङ्ख्यिक लाभांश प्राप्त गर्नको लागि र आफ्नो क्षमता अभिवृद्धि गर्न सशक्तीकरण, शिक्षा, रोजगारी र तालिममा लगानी गर्नेतर्फ ध्यान दिनु आवश्यक हुन्छ।

९. जनसङ्ख्या परिवर्तन कुनै पनि देशको लागि अवसर र चुनौती दुवै हुन सक्छ। समयमै गरिने र उचित प्रमाणमा-आधारित योजना, विकास कार्यको अनुगमन र जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय परिवर्तन भनेको सामाजिक-आर्थिक विकासको सम्बन्धमा सबैभन्दा महत्त्वपूर्ण मुद्दा हो। त्यसैले जनगणनाहरूको अन्तराल बिचमा पनि भरपर्दो र सही तथ्याङ्कको आवश्यकता पर्दछ। धेरै स्थानीय तहहरूमा "जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय जाँच" प्रणाली सिर्जना गर्न संस्थाहरूलाई प्रशिक्षित जनसङ्ख्याविदहरू आवश्यक पर्दछ, जसले जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय विकासको आवश्यकतालाई सूचित गर्दछ। जनसाङ्ख्यिकीय गतिशीलता बुझ्न सार्वजनिक क्षेत्रका कर्मचारीहरूको लागि तालिम र सिप विकासका कार्यक्रमहरू उनीहरूको रणनीतिक र नीति योजनामा मद्दत गर्न थप महत्त्वपूर्ण हुनेछन्।

निष्कर्षमा, जनसङ्ख्याका समस्या र चुनौतीहरू समाधान गर्न सीपमूलक शिक्षा, रोजगारी सिर्जना, ग्रामीण पूर्वाधार विकास, विद्यालय, अस्पताल वा स्वास्थ्य चौकी निर्माण गर्ने लगायतका उपायहरू अवलम्बन गर्नुपर्ने हुन्छ। अर्कोतर्फ क्षेत्रीय असमानता र जनसङ्ख्याको असमान वितरण समाधान गर्न योजनाबद्ध सहरीकरण र विकासको माध्यमबाट सङ्घीयतालाई थप सुदृढीकरण गर्नुपर्ने देखिन्छ।

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nepal's twelfth National Population and Housing Census was carried out in 2021. It was the first census following the promulgation of the federal democratic Constitution in 2015.

A. Census results

The results from the 2021 census show that there has been a shift in Nepal's population structure in recent decades. The current census represents a turning point in understanding future demographic dynamics due to the declining dependency ratio, particularly for young people, and an increase in the working age and old age populations. The annual rate of population growth slowed to only 0.92 percent in the 2021 period. This has major implications that need to be considered by the country's decision-makers, planners, and programme designers in terms of development planning.

Nepal's annual population growth rate has decreased from 2.25 percent in 2001 to 1.35 percent in 2011 and to 0.92 percent in 2021 with the population increasing by 3,343,081 between 2001 and 2011 and by only 2,670,074 from 2011 to 2021. This decreasing growth rate is also reflected in the fact that, the population doubling rate was only 51 years in 2011, while it increased to 75 years at the 2021 annual growth rate. The total population was counted as 29,164,578 in 2021.

The 2021 census found a negative growth rate since 2011 of -0.05 percent a year in the mountain zone and only 0.30 percent in the hill zone while in the Tarai zone population grew by 1.54 percent a year reflecting that these southern plains area of the country is experiencing rapid population growth as in the past few decades. These differing growth rates are reflected in the fact that the Tarai's population has increased from 37.6 percent of the country's total population in 1971 to 53.6 percent in 2021, while the proportion of the population in the Mountain fell from 9.9 percent in 1971 to 6.1 percent in 2021 and of the Hill fell from 52.5 percent in 1971 to 40.3 percent in 2021.

The continued growth of the overall population has resulted in the population density increasing from 180 to 198 people/km^2 between 2011 and 2021. In 2021 the highest population density was in the Tarai (460), followed by the Hill (192) and the Mountain (34). The highest density was in the Madhesh province (633), followed by Bagmati province (301). Madhesh's population density grew from 559 in 2011 to 633 in 2021.

Amongst the country's 753 municipalities, Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) continued to have the largest share of the total population in 2021 (3.0%), followed by Pokhara (1.8%), Bhaktapur (1.3%) and Lalitpur (1.0%) metropolitan city. Despite this the 2021 census found that KMC had a negative annual growth rate of -1.18 percent. This area continues to serve as the

country's predominant centre for commerce, industry, production, and services, with many families are now moving out to outside KMC to live while commuting to their workplaces in KMC.

In this way, urbanization is growing continuously in Nepal. The 2021 census found about 2/3rd of the total population is residing in urban areas (peri-urban and urban areas). However, mountain and Hill are still rural population dominated zone, whereas Tarai is overwhelmingly urban population dominated zone. The degree of urbanization is relatively lower in Karnali and Sudurpashchim but high in Madhesh, Bagmati, Lumbini and Koshi provinces.

Average household size has decreased from 5.5 in 1952−54 to 4.4 in 2021 reflecting a tendency to live in nuclear families that 60 percent of the total households in Nepal occupied by nuclear family. In 2021, only Madhesh province households had above an average household size (5.3).

Two and a half percent (2.6%) of the 2021 population of 29.2 million were recorded as foreign-born, with 97.4 percent of them being born in India, while only 0.5 percent of the population were recorded as foreign citizens.

The 2021 census found that 15.3 percent of the population had been absent from home at the time of enumeration, living abroad or elsewhere in Nepal away from their places of enumeration. Among them, 7.5 percent were living abroad − almost the same as in 2011 (7.3%). However, the number absent from home had significantly increased from 1,921,429 in 2011 to 2,190,592 in 2021. Most of the absentee population were males (82.2%), although the proportion of females has increased from 12.4 percent in 2011 to 17.8 percent in 2021. Fifteen to thirty-nine year olds absentees made up almost 84.7 percent and that with 20 to 24 year olds accounting for about 30.4 percent.

Kshetri and Hill Brahmins have comprised the highest proportion of the population since, followed by Magars, Tharus, Tamangs, Bishwakarma, Musalman and Newar. Other groups among the 15 largest population included the Yadav, Rai Pariyar, Gurung, Thakuri, Mijar and Teli.

The 2021 census found that 83.6 percent of males and 69.4 percent of females aged 5 years and above were literate − a 9.6 percentage points increase from 2011. About 78.5 percent of people in the urban municipalities (metropolitan cities, sub-metropolitan cities, and urban municipalities) and 71.9 percent of people in the rural municipalities were literate. By ecological zone, the hill region had the highest literacy rate (80.9%), followed by Tarai (73.1%) and the mountain had the lowest literacy rate (72.8%). By province, Bagmati had the highest literacy rate (82.1%) followed by Gandaki (81.7%) with Madhesh having the lowest rate (63.5%). The largest gender gaps in the literacy rate were in Madhesh (17.8%) and Sudurpaschim province (17.2%).

Child marriage is one of the harmful practices in the society. The 2021 census found that 21.9 percent of women aged 20−24 years had been married before 18 years of age. Bagmati province had the fewest child marriages (13.2%) while Madhesh (32.8%) and Karnali (29.0%) had the most. The child marriage rates were negatively correlated with wealth quintiles, with more child marriage amongst lower wealth quintile populations.

The 2001, 2011 and 2021 censuses gathered data on the incidence of disability using the definition as classified by the Nepal government. The prevalence of disability in 2021 was 2.2 percent, which is an increase from the 1.9 percent in 2011. In 2021 slightly more males (1.2%) than females (1.0%) were identified as having a disability. The overall incidence was the same by ecological zones, provinces, and rural and urban municipalities, but in exception, Karnali had a slightly high incidence of disability amongst males, that is 3.5 percent.

The 2021 census recorded 2,928 lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons. However, this data was only collected through the household listing and not through the individual questionnaires meaning that data on individual LGBTI characteristics were not collected. Seventy-two percent of the recorded LGBTI persons were in urban municipalities, 48 percent in the Hill (48.0%) and 32.7 percent in Bagmati. The least incidence was in Karnali (2.8%, or 81 persons) and in the mountain zone (4.5%).

About two-thirds (65.6%) of all persons aged 10 years and over were economically active. More males (71.3%) were economically active than females (60.4%). Persons in rural municipalities were more likely to be economically active (70.6%) than persons in urban municipalities (63.2%). More persons were economically active in the Mountain (74.3%) than in the Tarai (62.5%). By province, Karnali had the highest proportion of economically active persons (72.0%), followed by Koshi (71.1%), with Madhesh having the lowest rate (57.3%). The gender difference was most pronounced in Madhesh with the proportion of economically active males (67.3%) being 19.7 percentage points more than females (47.6%) in line with the concurrent difference between males and females in the Tarai of 14.5 percentage points.

The 2021 census found, among total economically active persons aged 10 years and above, 70.4 percent were usually economically active and among them 93.0 percent of persons had been employed during the last 12 months. The rate was the same for most areas of the country except the Madhesh where six percentage points more men were working than women.

The declining mortality and fertility rates and dependency ratio has changed the structure of Nepal's demographic pyramid. The age structure has been changing since 1981 with the large number of infants and children at the start of the period transforming into a large number of 15–19 year olds later. The 2021 census has seen an increase in persons aged 15 years and above. This change has been most pronounced in Bagmati, Gandaki, Koshi, and Lumbini provinces and in the Hill and urban municipalities.

The 2021 census recorded 95.6 males for every 100 females in the population. The difference was the most pronounced in the 0–4 years age group (112 males per 100 females) and the least in the 25–34 age group (83.9 males). By province, it was the highest in Madhesh (100.5) and Bagmati (99.4) and the least in Sudurpaschim (89.5). All except Madhesh province's sex ratios were less than 100 males per 100 females, with significantly more females than males in Gandaki, Sudurpaschim and Lumbini provinces. The ratio was the highest amongst the 77 districts in Manang (129) and the lowest in Pyuthan (81). Birgunj Metropolitan City was the urban municipality with the highest sex ratio (109).

One of the key consequences of a country's demographic transition is the sex ratio at birth. Nepal's sex ratio at birth has increased from 103 males to 100 females in 1952−54 to 106 males in 2011 and 112 males in 2021. The 2021 ratio is significantly higher than the 'natural' sex ratio at birth of 105 and demonstrates a higher tendency of missing females at birth in Nepal. The ratio was highest in the Madhesh districts like Dhanusha (133), Siraha (128), Arghakhanchi (124), and Saptari (123). The ratio was lowest by district in Mustang (92) and Rolpa (97) and then Ilam, Okhaldhunga, Dhankuta, and Humla each have 99 and Manang has 100. While in all the other 75 districts the number of male births outnumbered female births. Madhesh and Sudurpaschim provinces, the Tarai zone, and the mountain districts such as Gandaki also had higher sex ratio at birth.

The 2021 census found Nepal's median age to be 26, with males slightly younger than females (25 vs 27 years). From 1952−54 to 2011, the median age increased by about two years at each census, and then by four years from 2011 to 2021. In 2021, the hill and mountain districts of Gandaki and Bagmati provinces had a greater median age than the hill and mountain districts of Karnali and Sudurpaschim provinces. The median age tends to rise as wealth quintiles rise from lowest to highest, demonstrating that higher economic status is associated with a higher median age.

Over the years, the number of children (0–14 year olds) has been declining while the number of working age (15–64 year olds) and older persons (65 years+) has increased. In 2021, children made up 27.8 percent of the population, 15 to 64 year olds 65.2 percent, and over-65 year olds 6.9 percent resulting in a dependency ratio of 53.3 percent, which is significantly less than the 67.2 percent in 2011. The demographic window of opportunity opens when this ratio is 60 dependents or less to every 100 working-age people. So, Nepal overall has already entered the demographic window and is anticipating a demographic dividend. The 7 percent of over 65s shows that Nepal is an ageing society.

By ecological zone, the dependency ratio is highest in the Mountain (60.0%), and lowest in the Hill (49.0%). Madhesh (65.2%) and Karnali (61.9%) are the provinces with the highest dependency ratios and so have yet to enter the demographic window of opportunity. The ratio

is well within the threshold in Bagmati (41.6%), Gandaki (49.4%) and Koshi (50.0%) provinces. Nine districts had dependency ratios of 68 percent or more, with the majority being in Karnali and Sudurpaschim and a few in Madhesh.

The potential support ratio (older persons to working persons[1]) has decreased from 21.8 in 1952−1954 to 9.4 in 2021 indicating that there only 9.4 working age persons (potential supporters) for each old age person. In 2021, Karnali had the highest support ratio (12.1), followed by Lumbini (10.0) and Gandaki (7.3). The populations of urban municipalities had a significantly higher support ratio (10.1) than their counterparts in rural municipalities (8.3). Dolpa (18.3) and Jumla (15.6) were the districts with the highest support ratios while Gorkha (5.4) and Ramechhap (5.5) had the lowest. And the potential support ratio increased as with increasing wealth quintile.

Nepal's overall ageing index[2] for 2021 stood at 24.9 with Gandaki having the highest value (38.5) followed by Bagmati (32.6), and Karnali having the lowest index (15.5). By district, Manang (64.4) had the highest value followed by Lamjung (52.7), while Dolpa (11.2) and Jajarkot (11.8) had the lowest value of ageing index. Similarly, Mugu, Kalikot, Jumla and Humla also having ageing indexes of less than 15.

Wealth index and the demographic dividend are strongly correlated. In 2021, the demographic window of opportunity:

- had not been entered in Lumbini and Madhesh provinces and other Tarai districts, which were the areas where other socioeconomic development indices were less than average;
- was more evident in urban than rural municipalities; and
- had been entered in Kathmandu district, Bagmati province and the hill ecological zone.

Policy suggestions

The growing working age population offers potential benefits. Facilitating policies and programmes needed to fully use the potential of the increasing working age population. This demographic window of opportunity provides a great potential for the country's social and economic advancement. Enhanced investments in education and health are needed to produce skilled, educated, and healthy human resources to reap the demographic dividend.

The shifting demographics point to the need for extensive discussions and focused research to identify the best course of action for future population policies and to maximize the potential of demographic change. There is a need for more evidence-based population management

[1] The ratio of 65 years and older persons to the working population of 15−64 year olds.
[2] The ratio of 65 year olds and above to 0-14 year olds.

policies, including a population redistribution policy to address the depopulation in many hill and mountain areas and the regional population imbalances. Attention is also needed to preserve the endangered population groups.

A policy needs formulating and implementing to support the more balanced distribution of population across the country, in terms of ecological zone, rural-urban, and province. Measures need taking to address the challenges in depopulated areas by fostering employment, developing infrastructure, and building more schools and health facilities there. It is also crucial to alleviate regional inequalities and spread population more evenly by fully implementing federalism and planned urbanization and development. Extensive local development programmes are needed to build the capacity of and provide opportunities for young people.

The census found a larger proportion of dependent persons in the families, regions, and districts that had absentees living abroad. This suggests that those left behind are primarily dependents, which raises severe concerns for planners and policymakers. It is necessary to determine how migration affects the left-behind populations (children, the elderly, and women), and to develop policies to address this issue.

The pace of population growth in Nepal has slowed down. The proportion of children (0−14 year olds) is shrinking while the proportion of working age (15−64 years) and old persons (65 years+) is expanding. Even though the number of persons aged 65 years is still only a relatively small proportion of the population (6.9% in 2021), their number is expanding rapidly (with an ageing index of 24.9), and Nepal is becoming an 'ageing society'. The census found a substantial deficit in the number of female births, with 114 males to every 100 female live births. Son preference is a major cause of this. It is very important, in order to prevent child marriage and abolish gender disparity in all areas, including education, health and employment, to empower women and end all forms of discrimination against girls and particularly in Madhesh, Karnali, Sudurpashchim and Lumbini provinces.

It is essential to mitigate demographic resilience to realize the anticipated demographic dividend. This will entail substantial investments in empowerment, education, employment, and training to increase the capacity of young people, particularly in Madhesh province and the Tarai districts of Lumbini province.

Finally, institutions need trained demographers at the local level to create a 'demographic check' system. Training and skill development programmes are needed for public sector employees to enable them to better understand demographic dynamics to inform their strategic and policy planning.

RESULTS OF KEY INDICATORS, NEPAL 2021 CENSUS

Indicators	Nepal	Koshi	Madhesh	Bagmati	Gandaki	Lumbini	Karnali	Sudur-pashchim
Population size, growth, and distribution								
Total population	**29,164,578**	**4,961,412**	**6,114,600**	**6,116,866**	**2,466,427**	**5,122,078**	**1,688,412**	**2,694,783**
Annual growth rate (%)	0.92	0.86	1.19	0.97	0.25	1.24	0.70	0.52
Doubling time (years)	75	81	58	71	277	56	99	133
Population density	198	192	633	301	115	230	60	138
Urban and rural municipalities								
Urban municipalities	66.2	62.4	73.0	77.3	65.8	55.2	52.1	62.4
Rural municipalities	33.8	37.6	27.0	22.7	34.2	44.8	47.9	37.6
Ecological zones								
Mountain	6.1	7.7	na	7.9	0.8	na	25.3	17.1
Hill	40.3	30.3	na	80.4	83.9	23.3	74.7	30.3
Tarai	53.6	61.9	100.0	11.8	15.3	76.7	na	52.6
Socioeconomic composition								
Average household size	4.4	4.2	5.3	3.9	3.7	4.5	4.6	4.7
Place of birth:								
• Nepal (%)	97.4	97.1	96.1	98.5	98.2	96.3	97.1	96.1
• India (%)	2.4	2.8	3.9	1.3	1.6	3.6	2.8	3.999.6
Nepali citizen (%)	99.5	99.6	99.6	99.2	99.5	99.6	100.0	99.8
Absentee population (%)	15.3							
• Living in Nepal (%)	7.8	7.0	3.1	11.7	14.7	6.3	7.2	7.8
• Living abroad (%)	7.5	6.9	5.0	6.5	11.6	8.2	5.6	12.7
% Nepali lang. speakers	44.9	45.3	5.8	56.0	73.4	50.8	88.8	42.4
% Hindu religion	81.2	67.4	84.2	72.0	82.2	88.3	94.7	97.4
Literacy rate (%)	76.2	79.7	63.5	82.1	81.7	78.1	76.1	76.2
• Male (%)	83.6	86.1	72.5	88.3	88.8	85.2	83.3	85.4
• Female (%)	69.4	73.6	54.7	76.0	75.3	71.7	69.4	68.2
Child marriage (%)	21.9	20.1	32.8	13.2	18.9	21.8	29.0	19.1
Disability %	2.2	2.4	2.1	2.0	2.9	2.4	3.1	2.6
Number of LGBTI	2928	304	729	956	228	432	81	198
Economically active pop.	65.5	71.1	57.3	65.8	66.5	65.9	72.0	70.4
Age-sex composition								
• Sex ratio	96	95	101	99	90	92	95	90
• Sex ratio at birth	112	106	118	111	111	110	109	116
• Median age (years)	26	28	23	29	29	25	22	24
• % of pop. aged 0–14	27.8	26.0	33.2	22.1	23.9	28.5	33.1	31.0
• % of pop. aged 15–64	65.2	66.5	60.5	70.6	66.9	65.0	61.8	62.4
• % of pop. aged 65+	6.9	7.5	6.3	7.2	9.2	6.5	5.1	6.6
• Dependency ratio(60+)	61.4	59.3	73.3	48.8	59.3	61.5	69.7	67.9
• Dependency ratio(65+)	53.3	50.4	65.2	41.5	49.4	53.8	61.9	60.2
• Support ratio	9.4	8.8	9.6	9.8	7.3	10.0	12.1	9.5
• Ageing index (60+)	36.7	43.2	27.6	48.3	56.0	33.5	24.1	30.5
• Ageing index (65+)	24.9	28.9	19.0	32.6	38.5	22.7	15.5	21.1
• DDI	73.0	75.8	62.1	80.7	79.1	71.0	754.0	74.8

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

A country's census data is of greater value nationally, regionally, and internationally if it can be compared with the results of other countries' censuses that were carried out at approximately the same time. Therefore, countries should strive to carry out their censuses in the first or second years of decades (Mrkić, 2020). Nepal's latest census was accordingly carried out in 2021.

Nepal has seen a large change in the constituent parts of its population over the past two decades, particularly in terms of fertility and mortality. The total fertility rate (TFR)[3] has decreased from 4.6 in 1996 to 2.1 in 2022 and the infant mortality rate has decreased from 78 in 1996 to 28 per 1000 live births in 2022 (MoHP et al., 2023). The decreased fertility and mortality led to the country's population growth rate decreasing from 2.25 percent in 2001, to 1.35 percent in 2011 and 0.92 percent annually in 2021. This is the result of sustained population management efforts over the past six decades. A popular saying in modern Nepal is that two children are a gift from Go[4]d − and this has been achieved.

The results of the 2021 Nepal Population and Housing Census (NPHC) 2021 show a significant shift in the country's demographics. The shifting demographic composition will affect all future social and economic policies for the nation. A major national goal is to deepen the understanding of the changing population structure in order to inform policies to regulate population linking with development in order to maximize the positive impacts of the demographic dividend, which now exists in many areas of Nepal. This population composition report provides valuable information on Nepal's population and its changing composition and the implications of this based on the data of the 2021 and past censuses.

1.2 The 2021 Nepal Population and Housing Census

Censuses are an essential tool for gathering data to inform policymaking, for planning, and for monitoring progress, and accordingly for bettering people's lives. Understanding population size, demographics, and socioeconomic features across administrative, geographic and population categories require access to the necessary data. Census data is also used to produce population projections and estimates in intercensal periods.

[3] See the glossary at the front of the report for the definitions of technical terms like this.

[4] दुई सन्तान ईश्वरको वरदान

Nepal conducts population and housing censuses every ten years in line with Article 281 of the country's Constitution that says: "The Government of Nepal shall appraise and review the implementation of the special rights of the women and Dalit community and impacts thereof based on the human development index concurrent with a national census to be held every ten years" (MoLJPA, 2015).

Nepal conducted its most recent census in 2021 after it elected a federal government. This census was completed after several delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was initially planned to be carried out from 8−22 June 2021 (25 Jeth to 8 Ashadh 8 BS 2078) but was actually carried out from 11−25 November 2021 (BS 25 Kartik to 9 Mangsir 2078). This delay resulted in the 2021 census being carried out more than 10 years (10.42 years) after the 2011 census.

The 2021 census data provides essential information for the Government of Nepal to monitor its progress on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on 'leaving no one behind'.

1.3 About the thematic report: methods and process

Evidence-based planning and decision-making are essential for the efficient management of social and economic issues and the governance of modern societies. Nepal's ten-yearly housing and population censuses are the primary source of comprehensive data disaggregated by local areas, demographic sub-groups, and social identities. This information is crucial for producing timely, accurate, and relevant statistics. Comprehensive statistics on the size, composition and distribution of the population are needed to plan for economic and social growth, and to carry out administrative work and scientific studies.

For the first time in Nepal, a series of thematic reports are being produced to present the findings of the 2021 census. This initial report covers the composition of the population. These thematic reports provide accessible in-depth analysis on policy consequences.

- The 2021 census was the first census conducted under the new federal system of governance. This report provides wide ranging information for the wide spectrum of data consumers in the nation at the national and local levels.
- The 2021 census is the first census to be in line with the SDGs after Nepal signed up to the 2030 SDG agenda. In order to attain the highest level of international comparability and to meet the needs of the country both within regions and globally, this report typically covered disaggregated variables such as age, sex, geographic location, disability, literacy, and caste and ethnicity.
- The public's ability and willingness to provide correct information on demographic composition is one of the subjects covered in this report.

The composition of the population is a result of demographic change. The three major factors of migration, mortality and fertility are influencing the country's demographic change. Volume, magnitude, and exponential growth rate are used to evaluate changes in population size. Population makeup informs the distribution of the population in terms of various groups according to their family or household structure as well as their unique social, cultural, economic, demographic, and residential identities. Where necessary, data are further disaggregated by sex as well as geographic factors including province, ecological zone, districts, and by urban and rural municipality areas (see Map 1.1).

The 2021 census made its urban-rural division by sub-dividing the country's 753 local levels into:

- 'urban municipalities' comprising all 6 metropolitan cities, the 11 sub-metropolitan cities and the 276 urban municipalities (Nepali: *nagarpalikas*); and
- 'rural municipalities' comprising all 460 rural municipalities (Nepali: *gaunpalikas*).

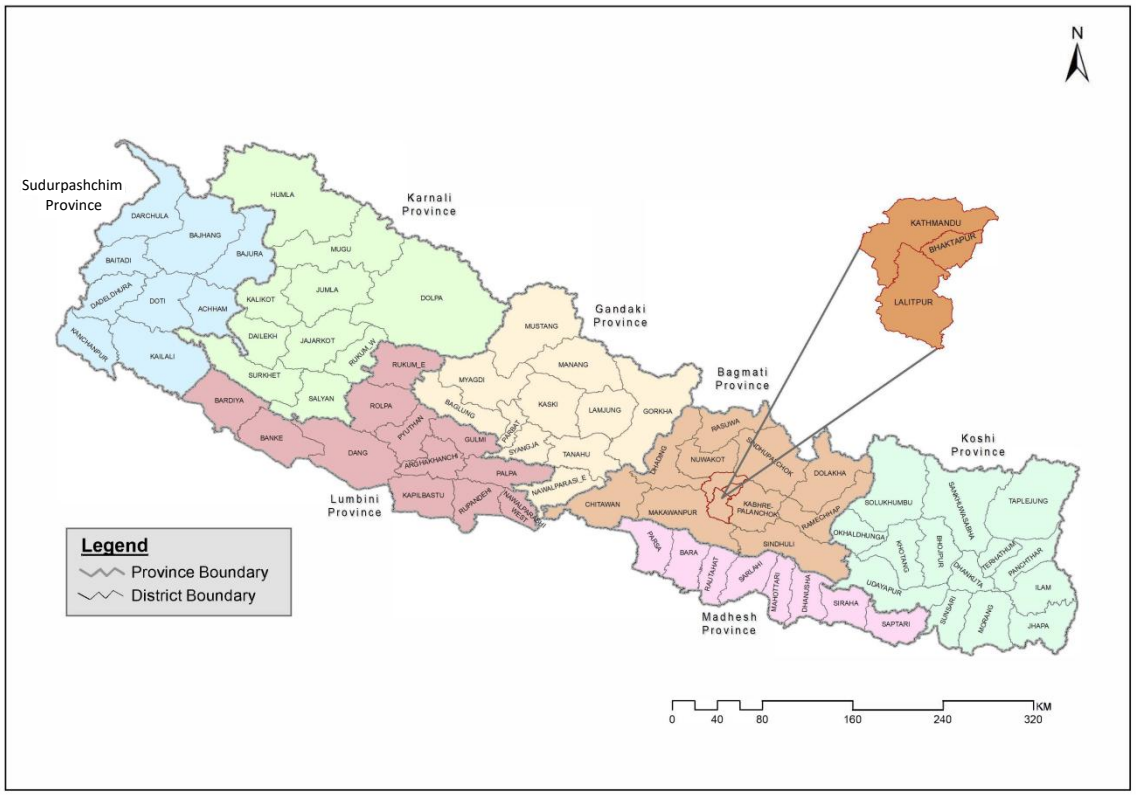
It is often instructive to compare the results of current censuses with those of the previous one if comparable statistics are available from both censuses. The population classification used in this report is shown in Table 1.1.

This report compares the data from the 2021 census with the results from previous censuses ranging back to the first census of 1952−54 depending upon the availability of comparable data. Illustration and interpretation of the data provides trend and patterns of population composition.

Table 1.1: Analytical structure of population composition, 2021 census

Broad composition	Composition and categories
Residential status (geographical and administrative areas)	**Ecological zones (3)** Mountain, Hill, Tarai **Provinces (7)** Koshi, Madhesh, Bagmati, Gandaki, Lumbini, Karnali, Sudurpaschim **Rural-urban** • Urban municipalities (metropolitan cities, sub-metropolitan cities, and urban municipalities), • rural municipalities (rural municipalities) **District** 77 districts
Social and cultural	**Household size** **Place of birth** Ecological zone, province, district **Citizenship** Nepali, foreign citizen **Absentee population** **Caste and ethnicity (142)** **Language (124)** **Religion (10)** **Literacy** Illiterate, literate **Education** Primary, basic (lower and upper), secondary, higher than secondary
	Marital status and child marriage Unmarried, married, widow/widower, divorced, separated **Disability** Disability
Age and sex structure	**Age** Single year, five-year, three broad age groups, dependency ratio, ageing, support ratio, demographic dividend index **Sex** Male, female, LGBTI, sex ratio, sex ratio at birth
Economic	**Economic activity** Economically active, economically not active **Employment** Employed, unemployed

Map 1.1: Nepal's provinces and districts, 2021



1.4 Method of computing indices

1.4.1 Computation of the wealth index

Indicators of socioeconomic status can be calculated using a variety of techniques. The worldwide Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) computes a wealth index to show the status of household assets, services, and amenities (Rutstein & Staveteig, 2014, MoHP et al. 2023). The 2021 census wealth index was calculated using census data on the characteristics of households, utilities, and amenities. The wealth index was calculated using 17 variables comprising 9 household characteristics, 4 utilities, and 4 amenities. The eight variables were transformed into dichotomous values as they are categorical while the remainder were already in binary results (Table 1.2). The weights to define the index are calculated through Principal Component Analysis (PCA). This is a common way of constructing a wealth index (Davila et al., 2014).

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) is to reduce dimensionality that identifies a set of orthogonal axes, called principal components, that capture the maximum variance in the data. The principal components are linear combinations of the original variables in the dataset and

are ordered in decreasing order of importance. The total variance captured by all the principal components is equal to the total variance in the original dataset. The first principal component captures the most variation in the data, reflecting household wealth when using PCA to census microdata on household wealth. The largest variance maintained from the indicators is better explained by the first principal component than by subsequent components. The first component is empirically shown to relate to spending and consumption, whereas higher-order components are not (McKenzie, 2005). This PCA-generated score is used as the households' wealth composite score and is one of the criteria used in this report to show how different population compositions can vary. Because this is the population census data and hence, the sample adequacy test, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO) test, is not required.

Table 1.2: Management of variables used for calculating the wealth index, 2021 census

Indicators and response categories	Coding scheme
1. Foundations 1. Mud bonded brick or stone, 2. Cement bonded brick or stone, 3. RCC pillar, 4. Bamboo or wood pillar, 5. Other	2 or 3 = 1; Otherwise = 0
2. Outer walls 1. Mud bonded brick or stone, 2. Cement bonded brick or stone, 3. Wood/planks, 4. Bamboo, 5. Unbaked brick, 6. Jasta/galvanized tin, 7. Prefab, 8. Other	2 or 7 = 1; Otherwise = 0
3. House roof materials 1. Galvanised iron, 2. RCC, 3. Thatch or straw, 4. Tile/khapada/jhigati, 5. Stone or slate, 6. Wood/planks, 7. Mud, 8. Other	1, 2, 4 or 5 = 1; Otherwise = 0
4. House floor materials 1. Mud, 2. Wooden planks/bamboo, 3. Brick/stone, 4. Ceramic tiles, 5.RCC, 6. Other	3, 4, 5 = 1; Otherwise =0
5. Main source of drinking water 1. Tap/piped in house, 2. Tap/piped outside house, 3. Tubewell/handpump, 4. Well/kuwa-covered, 5. Well/kuwa-uncovered, 6. Spout, 7. River/stream, 8. Jar/bottle, 9. Other	1, 2, 3, 4 or 8 = 1; Otherwise = 0
6. Usual fuel for cooking 1. Wood/firewood, 2. LP Gas, 3. Electricity, 4. Cow dung, 5. Biogas, 6. Kerosene, 7. Other	2, 3 or 5=1; Otherwise = 0
7. Usual source of light 1. Electricity, 2. Solar, 3. Kerosene, 4. Biogas, 5. Other	1, 2 or 4 = 1; Otherwise = 0
8. Toilet facility 1. Flush toilet flushing to public sewerage, 2. Flush to septic tank, 3. Ordinary toilet, 4. Public toilet, 5. No toilet	1 or 2 = 1; Otherwise = 0
a. Television	Yes = 1, No = 0

Indicators and response categories		Coding scheme
9. Household assets (9)	b. Landline phone	Yes = 1, No = 0
	c. Smart mobile	Yes = 1, No = 0
	d. Computer/laptop	Yes = 1, No = 0
	e. Internet at home	Yes = 1, No = 0
	f. Car, jeep or van	Yes = 1, No = 0
	g. Motorcycle or scooter	Yes = 1, No = 0
	h. Refrigerator	Yes = 1, No = 0
	i. Washing machine	Yes = 1, No = 0

The composite score was further classified to assign families to one of five wealth quintiles, with the lowest (first) quintile being the poorest families and the highest (fifth) quintile the richest in terms of housing facilities and assets. Although the five household wealth quintiles were evenly divided, it is not anticipated that the population will be similarly dispersed. This is done to separate families into distinct socioeconomic groups and to display a population's level of wealth. Since the wealth quintiles are based on household level data, the same level wealth status is applied to all members of each household.

1.4.2 Computation of the demographic dividend index

Countries' varying socioeconomic, demographic, and governmental systems mean that it is difficult to construct a common demographic dividend index (DDI) to assess the performance of demographic dividends. Such an index will probably require a wide range of demographic, economic, and governance data that may not be available for all nations. And the facts that are accessible may not be comparable. However, many initiatives have been taken to create DDIs to monitor the performance of demographic dividends. Many case studies have been carried out on using the demographic dividend index in sub-Saharan African and Southern and Western Asian nations (Canning et al., 2015; UNFPA, 2015a; UNFPA, 2015b; UNFPA, 2014; Zhang et al., 2016).

Zhang et al. (2016) developed the Demographic Dividend Index to design and manage United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) development initiatives using information from the 2011 Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) Nepali census. This approach adheres to the demographic dividend concept of the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council (WEF/GAC, 2014). This framework focuses on the three investment areas of empowerment, education, and employment, which are referred to as the 3Es. These areas combine to help people realize their potential, increase their wealth, and contribute to development (Zhang et al., 2016: 2,376).

This study used 2021 census microdata to generate a demographic dividend index (DDI) to highlight national and subnational performance on key demographic dividend-related human capital metrics. The 3E indicators are as follows:

- *Empowerment*: It is measured in terms of child marriage ratio (CMR). The ratio of women aged 18 to 24 years who married before turning 18 is defined as CMR.
- *Education*: It is measured in terms of secondary school net attendance ratio (NAR). It is the ratio of students between the ages of 11 and 15 years who attended secondary school
- *Employment*: It is measured in terms of the proportion of 15-24 year olds who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) per hundred 15–24 year olds. This study defined NEETs as the number of 15−24 year olds who were not actively enrolled in school, who were economically inactive or had worked for less than six months in the year while looking for work, and who had a reason other than education for not working.

These three indicators can be given values from 1 to 100 as they are expressed as percentages. However, due to their opposing directions and inverse relationships with DDI values, child marriage and NEET must be converted into positive numbers by subtracting from 100. Finally, the DDI was computed as the geometric mean of the three scores for all sub-national levels of interest.

1.5 Organization of this report

This report has seven chapters with Chapter 2 covering data quality. Chapter 3 covers the evolution of the country's population, the rate of increase, and geographic dispersion from 1911 to 2021 and examines the current population's social and economic makeup. Chapter 4 presents the analysis on age and sex composition while Chapter 5 discusses the demographic dividend and the age structure transition. The final chapter (Chapter 6) presents the overall results and conclusions with a focus on the consequences for policymaking.

2. DATA QUALITY

2.1 Data quality in Nepal's censuses

Nepal's National Statistics Office (NSO) carries out a population census every ten years. The main goals and scope of the censuses haven't changed over time, but the strategy and contents have changed along with changes in technology and client expectations. The demand for more extensive and accurate demographic and socioeconomic data from the census has increased recently to track progress towards the achievement of the SDGs and other national and international development frameworks.

Population censuses provide disaggregated data for assessing the status of populations across a range of variables. The accuracy of census data is an important consideration. It is challenging to carry out censuses and some census data will inevitably be flawed (United Nations, 2010) and mistakes can occur at any stage of the census process.

UNDESA (2017) says that measuring these errors is very necessary. Such errors can result from the omission or duplication of individuals or housing units and the faulty reporting and recording of the characteristics of individuals, households, and housing units. This source also says: "Nations are encouraged to adopt demographic analysis as a part of their overall census assessment process." Demographic analysis is a good method for evaluating the quality of census data.

However, many national statistical institutes finding it challenging to conduct population and housing censuses due to issues such as decreased participation and the rising costs of data collection. Response rates have declined due to public concern over data security and privacy concerns (UNSD, 2019). This source says that it has become more difficult and expensive to locate people and invite them to participate in conventional data gathering because of demographic and socioeconomic changes. This challenges the ability of national statistical institutes to deliver accurate, timely and cost-effective census results.

Reliable census data is a very important source of local national socio-demographic data. For the 2021 census, Nepal's national statistical institute the NSO (previously called the Central Bureau of Statistics) endeavoured to ensure data accuracy at every stage of the process, from designing the census to collecting and processing the data. The 2021 Census was conducted in November 2022 by NSO Nepal under the theme of 'My Census, My Participation'. This was Nepal's twelfth housing and population census.

The population counts of the 2021 census may have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic because of the shorter follow-up period, but NSO endeavoured to ensure the accuracy of the data and participation by producing an enumeration map, a local and national programme to

increase awareness of the issue, public service announcements on data collection, and pre-census advertisements encouraging participation in videos in the country's main languages.

The progress of fieldwork was tracked via mobile apps, a help line was available for field quality monitoring, and technical assistance was provided to enumerators. Monitoring and supervision were conducted from the central office. Each operator was required to correct mistakes after entry using a different consistency checking tool in the post-census activities (NSO, 2023c). Computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI) for the first time in the history of the nation's censuses in six of KMC's municipalities.

Post enumeration surveys and demographic analysis are employed to assess the quality of census data. Post enumeration surveys have been carried out for every census since 2001. The post enumeration survey study, which was carried out for the first time by a third party – the Labour Studies Programme of Tribhuvan University, reported a 2.6 percent omission rate for the 2021 census. This rate is one percentage point less than for the 2011 census and a half the reported omission rate for the 2001 census of 5.3 percent (Figure 2.1) (NSO 2023c), showing a significant improvement. The lower omission rate is likely to have made the 2021 census more accurate than the preceding censuses, although there were still significant difficulties.

NSO (2023c) also reports that the net omission rates varied by residential status, with a higher rate in urban than rural locations (3.0% vs 1.9%). And the difference was more marked in the Kathmandu Valley with a net omission rate of 4.4% with its urban municipalities having 4.5 percent and its rural municipalities a less than one percent (0.9%) net omission rate. The net omission rate varied by province from around 3 percent in Sudurpaschim and Lumbini to less than 2 percent in Koshi and Madhesh.

Figure 2.1: Net omission rate by census year, 2001–2021 censuses



Source: NSO (2023c), Table 3.4.

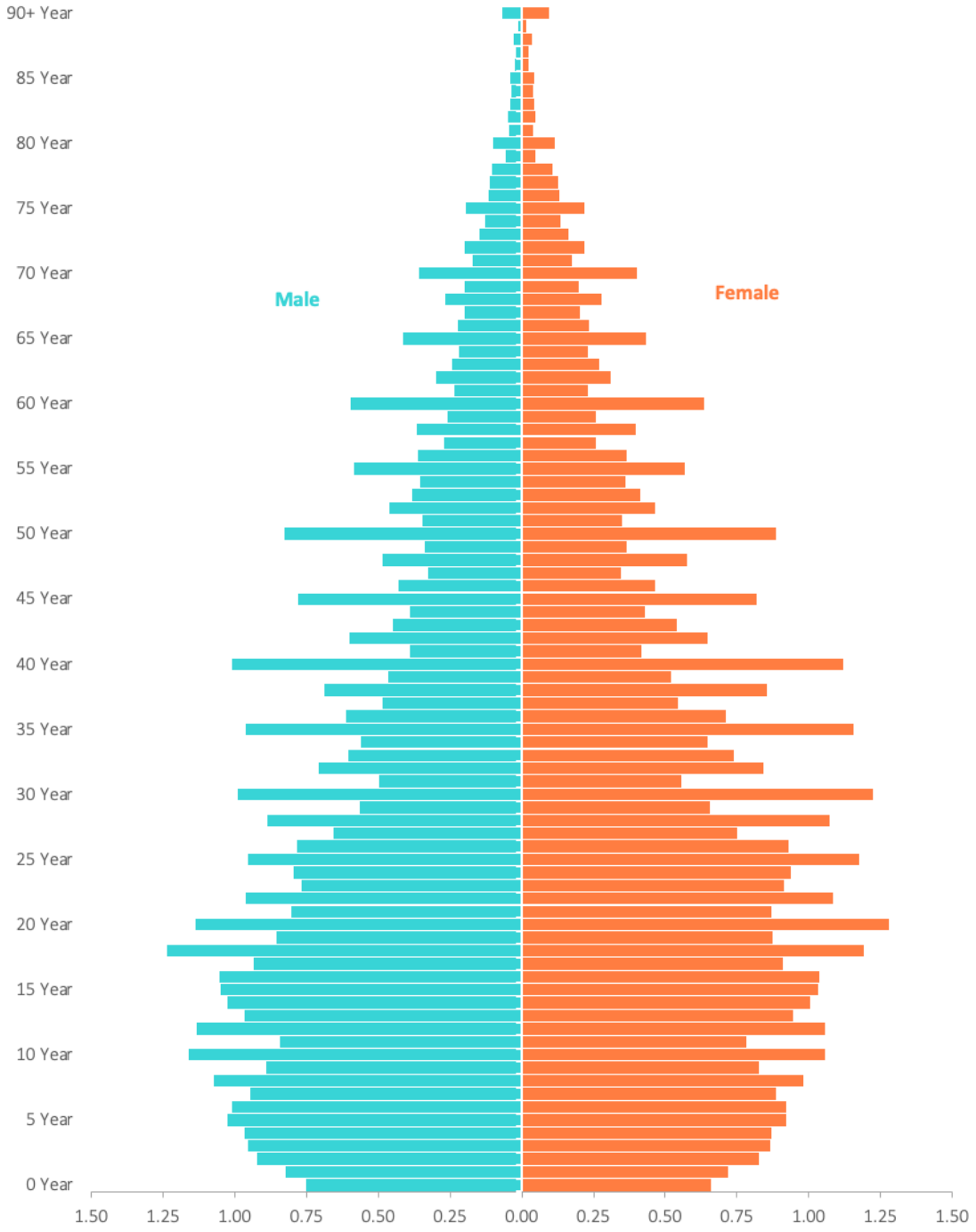
Demographic analysis is a different method for determining net coverage errors based on age, either by single years or age groups, and sex. The accuracy of age-related census data is an important factor. There is a good chance that some ages provided by respondents may not be accurately recorded. According to Ewbank (1981), age misreporting is one of demography's most challenging issues and Shryock and Siegel (1976) say that the absence of an age question makes censuses invalid.

The 2021 census collected age information by asking for respondents' dates of birth and their completed ages. The head of households often answered questions about all family members in the 2021 census assuming they knew their members' ages. Reviewing the data is crucial before looking at other items to spot any potential age-reporting problems as other estimations may be impacted. Respondents' ages are crucial information to analyse a number of indicators, including estimates of marriage, mortality, and fertility.

Age information is typically recorded in one-year increments, five-year age groups, and shortened age groups that sub-divide ages 0 and 1−4 (Johnson et al., 2022). Problems with age reporting accuracy are usually due to respondents rounding their ages or years of birth to end with the digits 0 or 5 or even numbers, age under statement (e.g. to avoid military service), age over statement (e.g. to achieve prestige), and the under- or over-stating of women's ages depending on societal norms about childbearing. The distribution of single ages in 2021 is shown in Figure 2.2. The age piling in the graphic shows an emphasis mostly on the numbers ending in 0 and 5. Nearly 27 percent of ages reporting errors were observed, with the age group 40–44 years having the highest age reporting error (33.9%) (NSO, 2023c). Males in this age bracket were found to have a high rate of age misreporting.

Note that errors in age reporting in census data can appear due to misstating ages to qualify for government benefits, heaping at particular digits, and not reporting of age (Yadav et al. 2020).

Figure 2.2: Single year age and sex distribution of population (% in total), 2021 census



Source: Annex 1.

Demographers have developed a number of methods to assess the veracity of age data. The use of one of these methods, age heaping indices, identifies the level of 'preference' or 'avoidance' for specific ages in age reporting. Depending on the availability of age-disaggregated data, this report has used the following methods can be used to address age reporting issues:

- The Whipple Index measures the degree of heaping on age digits ending in 0 and 5 (Shryock and Siegel, 1976).
- The Myers Index (1940 and 1954) estimates the population reporting by each ending digit and looks at the sum of the reported deviations.
- The United Nations Age Sex Accuracy Index extends age-sex ratio analysis by observing deviations of the observed age sex ratio from the ones expected for each five-year age group and combines results into a single score.

2.2 Whipple Index

The Whipple Index is the most used and simplest way of calculating the accuracy of census age data. It is a summary measure of age heaping on ages ending in 0 or 5 to assess regional and national differences in age reporting. It only assesses preference for ages with the prefixes 0 and 5 and no other numbers. The single-year age included in the index ranges from 23 to 62 years. The ratio of reported ages ending in 0 or 5 to one-fifth of the entire sample is calculated by adding up the number of people in this age range. It ranges from 100 (which indicate no preference for ages ending in 0 and 5) to 500 (which indicate full disclosure of ages ending in 0 and 5).

This method has been used in Nepal since the 1971 census to assess the quality of age data. The results of the application of the Whipple Index on the six censuses since then are presented in Table 2.1. The 98 point decrease from the 1971 to the 2021 census indicates a significant improvement in the reporting of age data. The 1971 result showed more age heaping for females' ages while the 2021 results show no difference by sex. The quality of data is still rough in 2021 although this is an improvement from the 'very rough' in previous censuses.

Table 2.1: Whipple Index scores by sex for 1971-2021 censuses

Sex	Census years					
	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	2021
Male	240	248	196	206	191	149
Female	253	255	209	207	186	149
Both sex	247	251	202	206	189	149

Source: Adhikary (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 3.15; NSO (2023a).
Note: Quality of data rating:

1. Highly accurate	Less than 105	4. Rough	125-174.9
2. Fairly accurate	105-109.9	5. Very rough	175 and over
3. Approximate	110-124.9		

2.3 Myers Index

The Myers Index gives an overall score for age accuracy by assessing the preference and avoidance for ages ending in each of the digits from 0 to 9 to prevent the index from being skewed, as more ages tend to end in 0 than 1 to 9 due to the higher level of mortality at age 0.

The theoretical range of the Myers Index is 0−90, where '0' denotes the absence of age heaping and '90' the extreme circumstance in which all reported ages end in the same digit. Positive scores show the degree of digit preference while negative scores indicate understatements. The tendency is for digits ending in 0 and 5 to be preferred while other digits like 1, 4, 6, 8, and 9 tend to be understated.

The Myers Index was calculated at 24.3 for the 1971 Census compared to only 9.9 for the 2021 census (Table 2.2) – a large improvement. And the index has scored significantly higher for females than males for the 1971, 1981 and 1991 censuses. The difference has been smaller since then and was only 0.5 points for the 2021 census. Birth dates entered into the census may aid in reducing biases brought on by digit preference.

Table 2.2: Myers Index scores by sex for 1971−2021 censuses

Sex	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	2021
Male	23.3	23.8	15.8	18.3	15.7	9.6
Female	25.3	25.6	18.1	19.1	15.6	10.1
Both sex	24.3	24.7	16.9	18.7	15.6	9.9

Source: Adhikary (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 3.16; NSO (2023a).

The scores for ages 0−9 year olds for the 1981−2021 censuses show:

- a high level of preference for ages 0 and 5;
- a lesser level of preference for ages 2 and 8;
- understatements for ages 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 9; and
- a similar pattern for males and females except for the preference to age females 0 (Table 2.3 and Figure 2.3).

Table 2.3: Myers Index scores of age digit preference by sex for 0–9 year olds, 1981–2021 censuses

Digits	Male					Female				
	1981	1991	2001	2011	2021	1981	1991	2001	2011	2021
0	12.7	7.5	8.6	7.5	4.8	14.8	9.6	9.5	7.7	5.1
1	-4.0	-2.5	-3.5	-3.5	-2.4	-4.3	-3.4	-3.9	-3.7	-2.7
2	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.5	0.4	0.6	1.0	0.8	0.5	0.3
3	-4.5	-3.1	-3.2	-2.7	-1.3	-4.6	-3.5	-3.2	-2.2	-0.9
4	-3.8	-2.4	-2.7	-2.3	-1.4	-3.8	-2.6	-2.7	-2.0	-1.4
5	9.9	7.2	7.5	6.4	3.1	9.6	7.3	7.3	6.1	3.2
6	-2.1	-1.6	-1.6	-1.3	-0.5	-2.8	-2.0	-1.8	-1.4	-0.6
7	-4.2	-2.5	-3.0	-2.2	-1.9	-4.7	-3.1	-3.1	-2.4	-2.2
8	0.5	0.7	1.2	1.3	1.3	0.7	0.7	1.5	1.3	1.5
9	-5.1	-3.8	-4.1	-3.7	-2.1	-5.4	-4.0	-4.3	-3.8	-2.3

Source: Adhikary (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 3.17; NSO (3023a).

Figure 2.3: Myers Index scores of age digit preference by sex, 2021 census



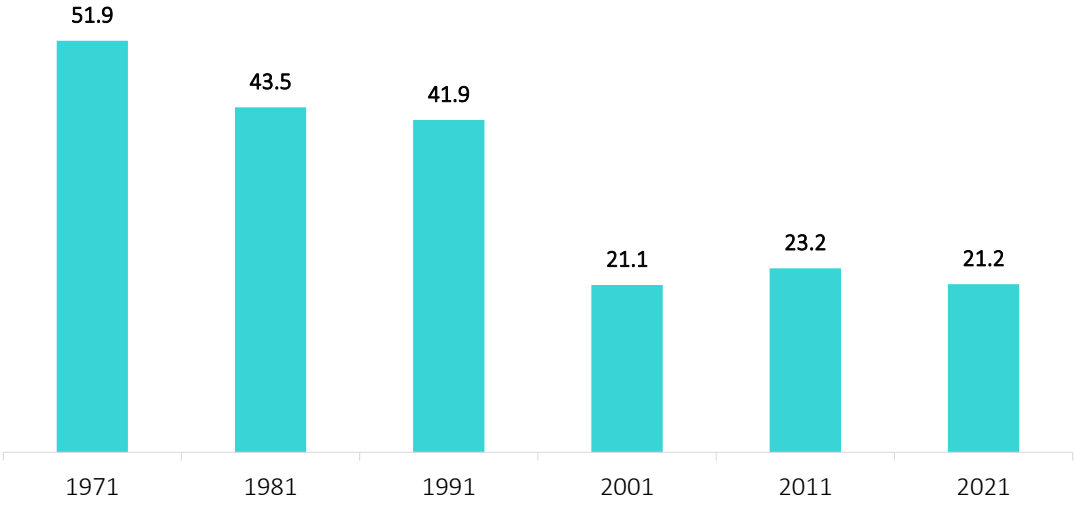
Source: Table 3.17; NSO (2023a).

2.4 United Nations Age-Sex Accuracy Index

The Myers and Whipple indices calculate age preference according to single years of age. The United Nations Age-Sex Accuracy Index is a combined measure of the correctness of age and sex data based on five-year age groups. It employs age ratios and sex ratios at the same time to measure the probable degree of mistakes in age and sex reporting. This score has also been calculated to evaluate the accuracy of age data since the 1971 Census.

The results were scored as highly inaccurate in the 1971, 1981 and 1991 censuses, while they improved with a halving of the score in the 2011, 2011 and 2021 censuses although they were still inaccurate (Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4: UN Age-Sex Accuracy Index scores for 1971–2021 censuses



Source: Adhikary (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Figure 3.11; NSO (2023).
Quality of age data: Accurate: Under 20; inaccurate: 20–40; highly inaccurate: over 40

3. POPULATION SIZE, GROWTH AND DISTRIBUTION

3.1 Population size, growth, and density

Every census gives a complete count of the population of a nation at a given time. The three main components of populations are their size, distribution, and density. The first part of this section deals with the size of Nepal's population and its trends and density.

Table 3.1 presents the trend of Nepal's population size and intercensal growth and population doubling time from the first census in 1911 to the 2021 census across all 12 censuses. This shows Nepal's population increasing from 5.6 million in 1911 to 29.2 million in 2021 – a more than five times increase. The population density also increased by more than five times from 38 persons/km^2 in 1911 to 198 persons/km^2 in 2021. The 2021 census recorded a population of 29,164,578, which is 2.67 million people more than the previous 2011 census. The average annual growth in population decreased from 1.35 percent in the 2011 census period to 0.92 percent in 2021.

The size of the population decreased by one percentage point in both the 1911−1920 and 1920−1930 periods. The declines from 5,638,749 in 1911 to 5,573,788 in 1920 is generally attributed to the high mortality rate from the 1917 influenza epidemic, the huge casualties incurred by Gurkha troops in the First World War, and under-enumeration in the 1920 census (Kansakar, 1980).

The 1942 census was the first Nepal census that measured an increase in the country's population – adding 751,075 people due to the annual growth rate of 1.16 percent in the previous ten years. The continuation of this growth rate would have led to the population doubling in the next 60 years. This growth was unexpected as thousands of Nepalis were absent serving in foreign armies in World War II while thousands were killed by the devastating earthquake of 1934. Kansakar (1980) attributes the growth mainly to massive undercounts in the 1930 census.

The 1952−54 census recorded a population of 8,256,625, which was a 1.97 million increase from the 1941−42 census. This was Nepal's first census following the country's first transition to democracy in 1951. Most of the guidelines recommended by the United Nations were followed for carrying out the 1952−54 census making the results more trustworthy than previous censuses (Kansakar, 1980) although it was carried out across two periods − in 1952 and 1954. Nepal's sixth census was carried out in 1961, since then a census has been carried out in every ten years and the most recent one in 2021.

Table 3.1: Population size, growth rate, and doubling time, Nepal 1911–2021 censuses

Census year	Total population	Population change	Annual growth rate (exponential)	Doubling time	Density persons/km^2
1911	5,638,749	na	na	na	38
1920	5,573,788	-64,961	-0.13	na	38
1930	5,532,574	-41,214	-0.07	na	38
1941−42	6,283,649	751,075	1.16	60	43
1952−54	8,256,625	1,972,976	2.27	31	56
1961	9,412,996	1,156,371	1.64	42	64
1971	11,555,983	2,142,987	2.05	34	79
1981	15,022,839	3,466,856	2.62	26	102
1991	18,491,097	3,468,258	2.08	33	126
2001	23,151,423	4,660,326	2.25	31	157
2011	26,494,504	3,343,081	1.35	51	180
2021	29,164,578	2,670,074	0.92	75	198

Source: Pathak and Lamichhane (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 2.1; NSO (2023a), Table 15.

The population increased from 9,412,996 in 1961 to 11,555,983 in 1971 with a 2.05 percent annual growth between the two censuses that would have led to a doubling of the population in 34 years. The 1952−54, 1971, 1981, and 2001 censuses all recorded more than 2 percent annual growth rates with the 1981 census recording the highest rate (2.6%) (Figure 3.1). The sharp decline in mortality rates without a commensurate drop in fertility was the main cause of the large growth in Nepal's population (CBS 1987).

The 1991 census was the first census to report on social inclusion following the return of parliamentary democracy in 1990 (CBS, 2014). It had a wider and more in-depth coverage of issues. The 1991 census recorded a population of 18,491,097 and a growth rate of 2.08 percent a year that represents a doubling rate of 33 years. Note that doubling times assume constant growth rates over decades, which is very unlikely, and so should not be used to project future population sizes. However, doubling times are a useful indicator of how quickly populations are expanding (Haupt, Kane, & Haub, 2011).

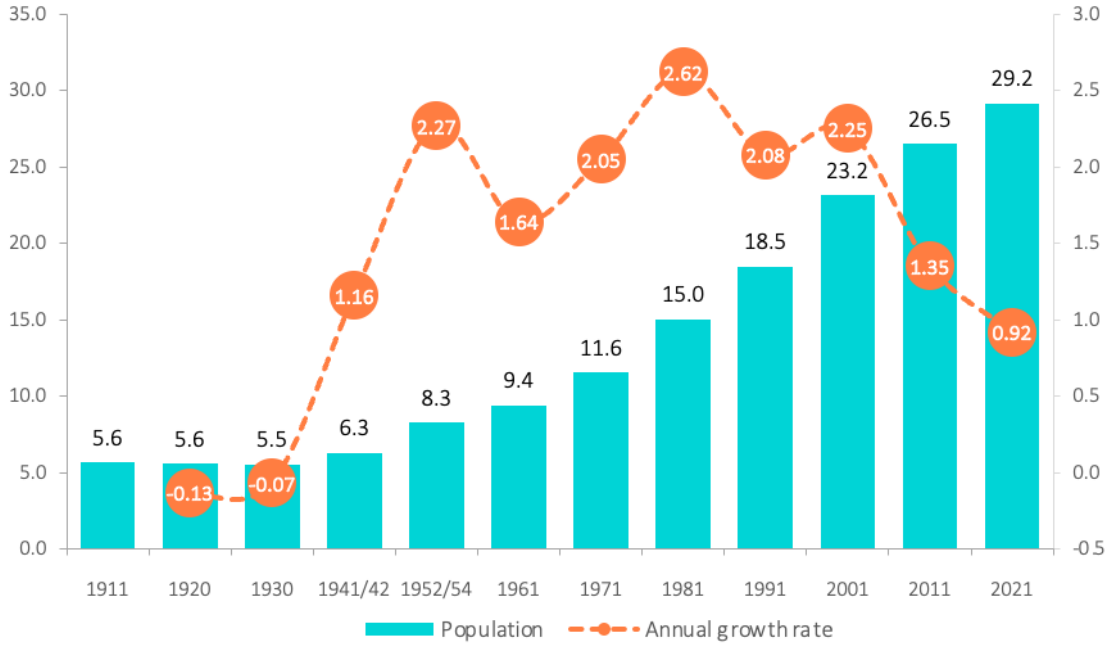
Nepal's censuses have been referred to as the Nepal Population and Housing Census (NPHC) since 2001, when its conceptual framework was updated, and housing characteristics were added. The 2001 census recorded a population of 23,151,423 which represented a 2.25 percent annual increase over the previous ten years and a doubling time of 31 years, which was two years less than 1991 doubling rate.

The 2011 census marked a century of census-taking in Nepal and was the eleventh census since 1911. The growth rate, which had been high between the 1952−54 and 2001 censuses began to decline at the 2011 census. The population of Nepal has increased by 5.2 times during last 110

years (1911 – 2021). The 2021 census reported the lowest annual growth rate since 1941–42 (0.92%) showing a net addition of 2,670,074 individuals since 2011 and a doubling rate of 75 years, which is the longest theoretical doubling rate of any of Nepal's censuses.

The slowing population growth recorded by the 2011 and 2021 censuses has been due to declines in the birth and death rates and migratory outflow. However, even if fertility rates fell further, the population would likely continue to grow due to the current age structure which will propel future population increases. Most importantly, the momentum of past growth means that it is unlikely that the total population will grow significantly higher in the future.

Figure 3.1: Nepal's population (in millions) and annual growth rates (%), 1911–2021 censuses



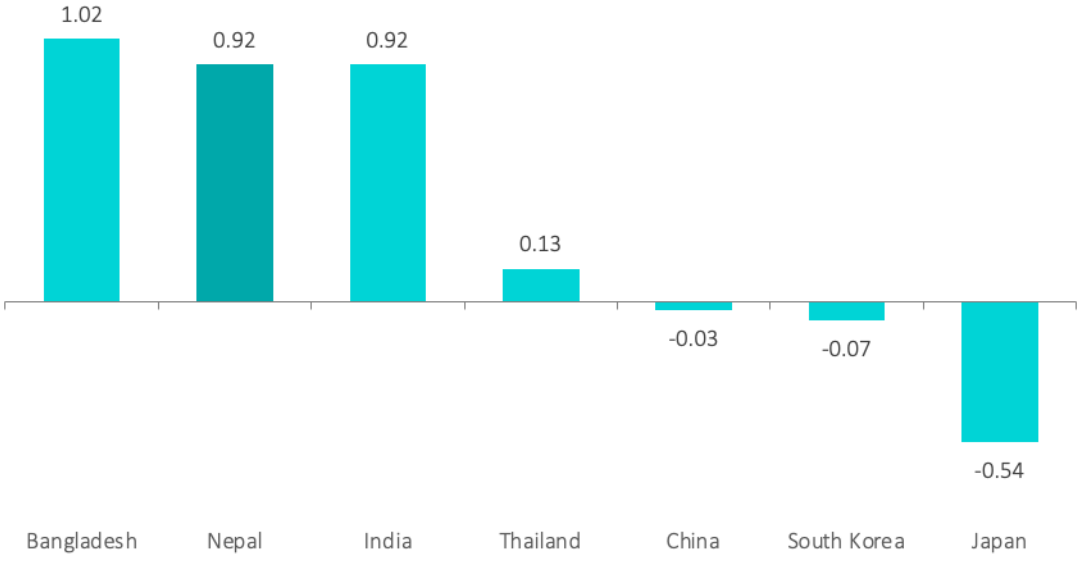
Source: Pathak and Lamichhane (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 2.1; NSO (2023a), Table 15.

The current Global population growth rate is 0.90 percent a year while it is 0.80 percent in Asia with the highest rate in Niger (3.7% per annum) and the lowest in the Marshall Islands (-3.31%).[5,6] Nepal's current growth rate is thus a little more than the global average and the same as India (Figure 3.2). Bangladesh has a slightly higher population growth rate (1.02%), which is however much lower than in the other Asian countries of Thailand, China, South Korea and Japan, with the latter three having negative growth rates (Figure 3.2).

[5] https://www.prb.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/2022-World-Population-Data-Sheet-Booklet.pdf

[6] https://ourworldindata.org/population-growth

Figure 3.2: Annual population growth rates of selected Asian countries, 2023-2024



Source: ESCAP (2023), except for Nepal, which is from NSO (2023a).

3.2 Spatial distribution

3.2.1 Size, growth, and density of population by ecological zone

Population distribution and density are closely interrelated. This section covers the population size, growth, and density by the country's three ecological zones – the Mountain, the Hills and the Tarai southern plains (Table 3.2). The population living in the Tarai has increased by more than four times from 4.3 million in 1971 to 15.6 million in 2021 growing by almost 2 million every 10 years. The number of people living in the Mountain and Hills grew from 7.2 million in 1971 to 13.5 million in 2021 – less than doubling over the same period.

Table 3.2: Distribution of population size and growth by ecological region, 1971–2021 censuses

	Mountain	Hill	Mountain & Hill	Tarai	Nepal
Populations					
1971	1,138,610	6,071,407	7,210,017	4,345,966	11,555,983
1981	1,302,896	7,163,115	8,466,011	6,556,828	15,022,839
1991	1,443,130	8,419,889	9,863,019	8,628,078	18,491,097
2001	1,687,859	10,251,111	11,938,970	11,212,453	23,151,423
2011	1,781,792	11,394,007	13,175,799	13,318,705	26,494,504
2021	1,772,948	11,757,624	13,530,572	15,634,006	29,164,578
Intercensal changes					
1971-1981	164,286	1,091,708	1,255,994	2,210,862	3,466,856
1981-1991	140,234	1,256,774	1,397,008	2,071,250	3,468,258
1991-2001	244,729	1,831,222	2,075,951	2,584,375	4,660,326
2001-2011	93,933	1,142,896	1,236,829	2,106,252	3,343,081
2011-2021	-8,844	363,617	354,773	2,315,301	2,670,074
Average annual growth rates					
1971-1981	1.35	1.65	1.61	4.11	2.62
1981-1991	1.02	1.61	1.52	2.75	2.08
1991-2001	1.57	1.97	1.91	2.62	2.25
2001-2011	0.54	1.06	0.99	1.72	1.35
2011-2021	-0.05	0.30	0.25	1.54	0.92

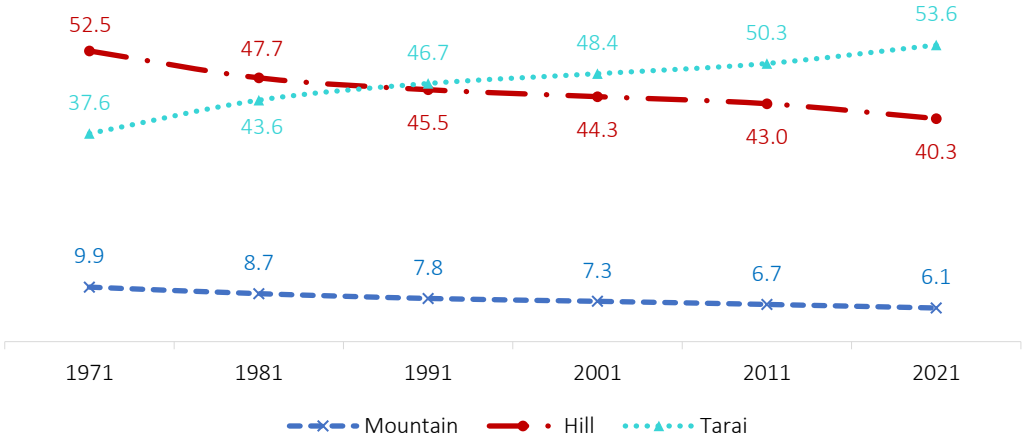
Source: Pathak and Lamichhane (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 2.2 and 2.9; NSO (2023a), Table 15.

The 2021 census found that the population had rapidly expanded in the Tarai, expanded in the Hill and decreased in the Mountain (Figure 3.3). The 1971 census recorded the majority of Nepal's population in the Hill (52.5%) with 40.3 percent in the Terai and the other 9.9 percent in the Mountain. The large changes over 50 years saw the 2021 census recording the majority in the Tarai (53.6%) and only 40.3 percent in the Hills and 6.1 percent in the Mountain.

The trend since 1971 has been as follows (see Table 3.2 & Figure 3.3):

- The rate of population growth in the Mountain was slightly more than 1 percent until 2001, after which it fell to almost 1 percent in 2011 and then to -0.54 percent in 2021.
- The population of the Hill increased by only 0.31 percent a year between 2011 and 2021.
- The population growth rate of the Tarai has been 1.54 percent a year.

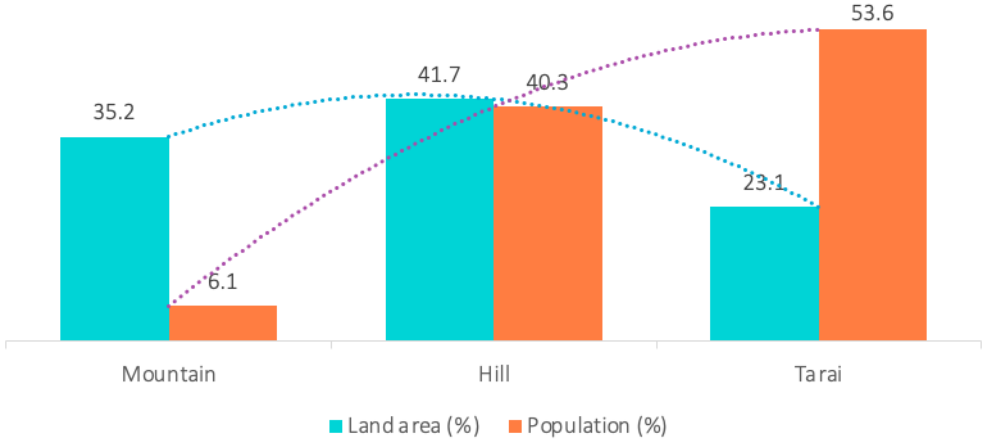
Figure 3.3: Regional shift in population distribution (%), 1971-2021 censuses



Source: Pathak and Lamichhane (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 2.2 and 2.9; NSO (2023a), Table 15.

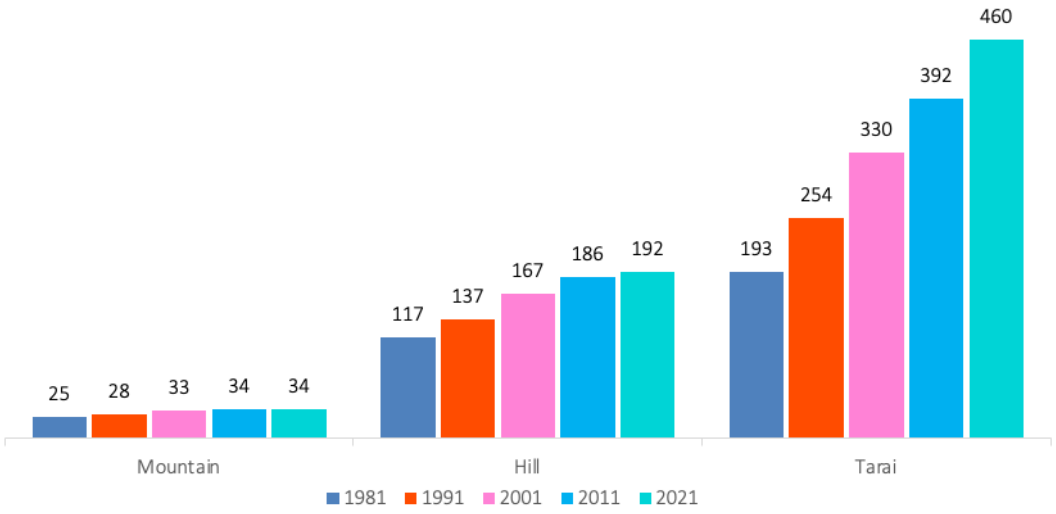
Nepal's Mountain make up 35.2 percent and the Tarai 23.1 percent of the country's land area (Figure 3.4). However, the 2021 census found that the Tarai was home to 53.6 percent of the population and the Mountain to only 6.1 percent of the population. The changing distribution of the population has been due to migration within the nation shifting to areas with more fertile land and with better employment, education, and healthcare opportunities. While Nepal's population has grown by about 15 percentage points over the past 40 years (Figure 3.1), the population density in Tarai has increased by 2.4 times during 1981 to 2021 while there has been much slower growth in the Hill and Mountain (Figure 3.5). These changes are of major concern to politicians, planners, and policy makers.

Figure 3.4: Percentage of land area versus population by ecological zone, 2021 census



Source: NSO (2023a), Table 15.

Figure 3.5: Population density by ecological zone, 1981–2021 censuses



Source: Source: Pathak and Lamichhane (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 2.15; NSO (2023a), Table 15.

3.2.2 Size, growth, and density of population by provinces

The 2021 census was the first census after Nepal's adoption of a federal system of governance in 2015 and the division of the country into seven provinces.

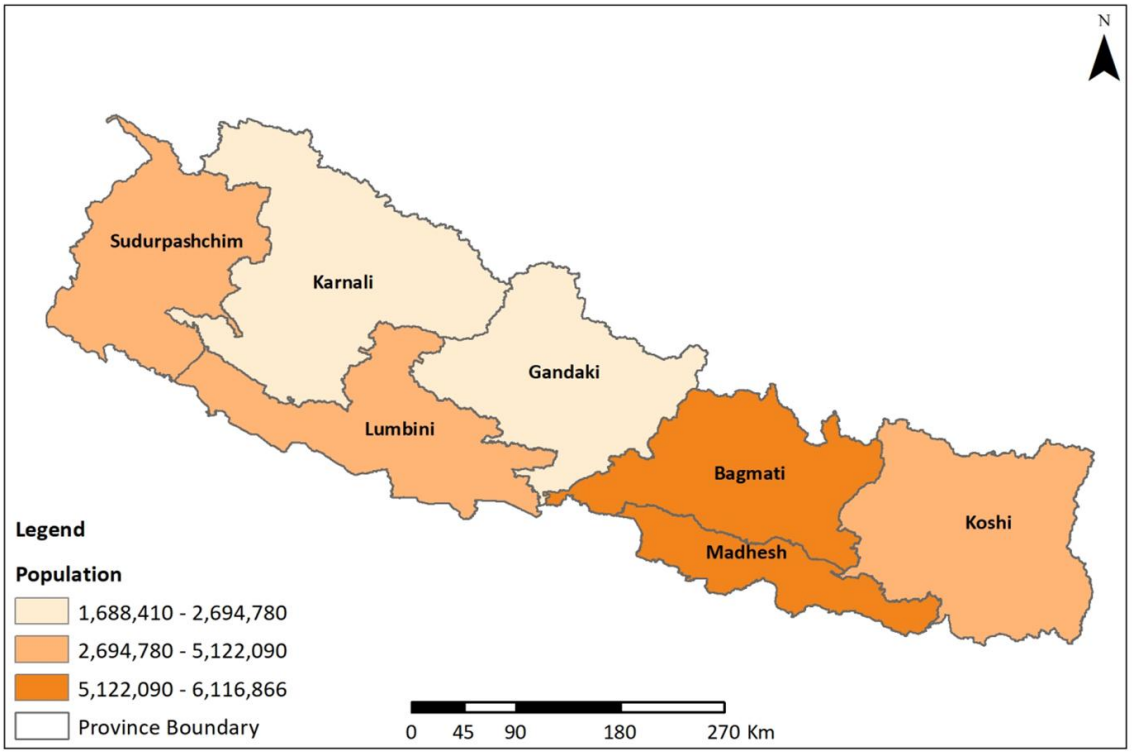
Table 3.3 gives the population size, growth, and doubling time by province for the 2011 and 2021 censuses. The share of population was almost equal among Madhesh (20.4%) and Bagmati (20.9%), Koshi (17.1%) and Lumbini (17.0%), and Gandaki (9.0%) and Sudurpaschim (9.6%), whereas it was lowest in Karnali (5.9%) in 2011 (NSO, 2023b). It is worthy to note that share of population among provinces has not changed prominently during the intercensal period (2011-2021). Only three provinces—Madhesh, Bagmati, and Lumbini—seem to have a little increase in population share; all the other provinces are seeing a drop in population. While Madhesh and Lumbini have above one percent intercensal growth rates, Koshi, Bagmati, Gandaki, Karnali, and Sudurpaschim have below one percent. Madhesh is the province with the highest density of population per km^2 in 2011 and 2021. Additionally, Map 3.1's province-level population distribution, Map 3.2's annual population growth rate, and Map 3.3's density are all visible. Karnali is at the bottom in terms of population share (5.8%) and density (60), while Gandaki has the lowest intercensal growth rate (0.25% annually).

Table 3.3: Population size, growth rate and density by province, 2011 and 2021 censuses

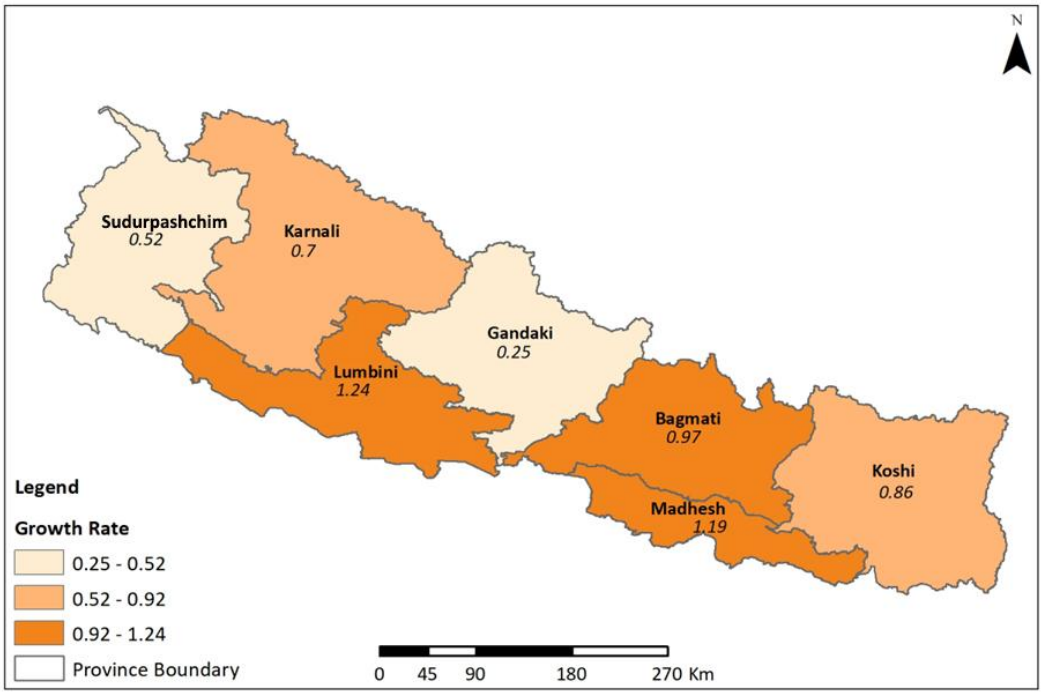
Province	Population		Percentage		Annual growth rate (%)	Doubling time (year)	Density	
	2011	2021	2011	2021			2011	2021
Koshi	4,534,943	4,961,412	17.12	17.01	0.86	81	175	192
Madhesh	5,404,145	6,114,600	20.40	20.97	1.19	58	559	633
Bagmati	5,529,452	6,116,866	20.87	20.97	0.97	71	272	301
Gandaki	2,403,757	2,466,427	9.07	8.46	0.25	277	112	115
Lumbini	4,499,272	5,122,078	16.98	17.56	1.24	56	202	230
Karnali	1,570,418	1,688,412	5.93	5.79	0.70	99	56	60
Sudurpashchim	2,552,517	2,694,783	9.63	9.24	0.52	133	131	138
Nepal	**26,494,504**	**29,164,578**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**0.92**	**75**	**180**	**198**

Source: NSO (2023b), Table 26, 33 & 39.

Map 3.1: Population distribution by province, 2021 census



Map 3.2: Annual population growth rate by province, 2021 census



Map 3.3: Population density by prov ince (km^2), 2021 census

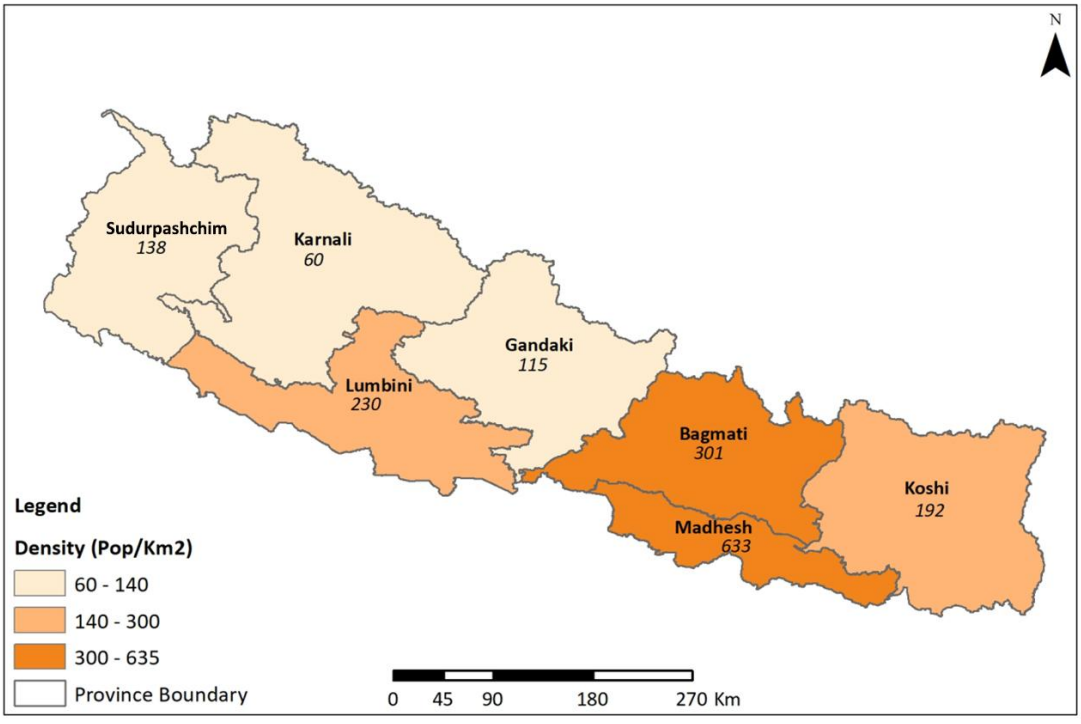


Figure 3.6 and Table 3.4 show the distribution of the population by wealth quintile nationally and by province in the 2021 census. There is no clear pattern nationally but there is a pattern by provinces across the five wealth quintiles. The 2021 results show Bagmati having by far the largest percentage of its population in the highest wealth quintile (41.0%) followed by Gandaki (27.8%). More than a half of the population of Karnali (52.3%) came in the lowest quintile followed by Sudurpashchim (32.8%).

Figure 3.6: Distribution of population by wealth quintile, 2021 census

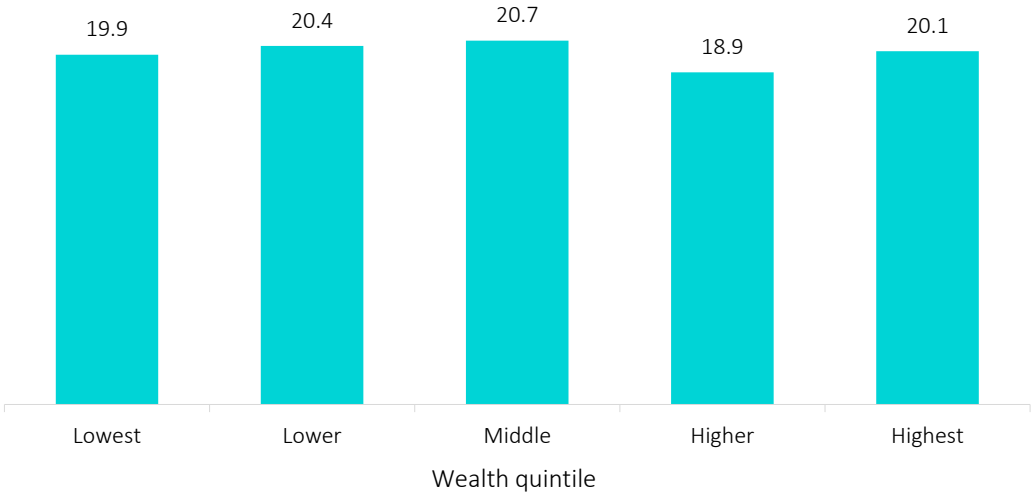


Table 3.4 Population distribution by province and wealth quintile, 2021 census

Area	Lowest	Lower	Middle	Higher	Highest
Koshi	19.3	22.8	20.3	19.0	18.5
Madhesh	23.7	21.5	26.4	19.2	9.2
Bagmati	8.1	10.8	16.5	23.6	41.0
Gandaki	11.3	20.1	20.1	20.6	27.8
Lumbini	16.5	22.1	24.2	19.8	14.4
Karnali	52.3	28.9	9.3	5.5	4.0
Sudurpashchim	32.8	27.1	18.7	12.7	8.7
Nepal	**19.9**	**20.4**	**20.7**	**18.9**	**20.1**

3.2.3 Demographic trends by urban–rural municipalities

Nepal underwent a massive state reorganization in the wake of the 2015 ratification of a new constitution. According to new federal constitution there are three tiers of government − the

central federal government, seven provincial governments. The country is also divided into 77 districts. The government classified a specific region either as "rural municipality or urban municipality" on 10 March 2017. By merging and remerging rural VDCs and their wards, many rural VDCs were transformed into urban municipalities. Reclassifying such rural agricultural regions as urban areas, according to Muzzini and Aparicio (2013), has had a substantial impact on the increase in the number of urban units over the succeeding five years (2013–2016). There are altogether 6 metropolitan cities, 11 sub-metropolitan cities and 276 urban municipalities and 460 rural municipalities (a total of 753 local levels). The municipalities are further broken down into 6,743 wards.

The results in Table 3.5 shows an increase in the proportion of the population living in urban municipalities from 63.2 percent in 2011 to 66.2 percent in 2021. One of the reasons for the increasing proportion of urban residents is that the government has included many previously rural administrative divisions into urban municipalities. The combined population growth rate of the three types of urban municipalities in 2021 was 1.4 percent compared to only 0.1 percent for the rural municipalities.

Table 3.5: Urban–rural population sizes, proportion, growth rates and densities, 2011 and 2021 censuses

Urban/rural municipalities	Population		Percentage		Growth rates 2021	Density 2021
	2011	2021	2011	2021		
Urban municipalities	16,740,732	19,296,788	63.2	66.2	1.4	373
Rural municipalities	9,753,772	9,867,790	36.8	33.8	0.1	105
Nepal	**26,494,504**	**29,164,578**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**0.92**	**198**

Source: NSO (2023b).

MoUD (2017) attributes Nepal's rapid urbanization to:

- the demographic transition where more people are joining than leaving the labour force;
- a spatial transition brought on by the increased in rural–urban migration; and
- a financial transition caused by the waning traditional subsistence economy, the declining contribution of agriculture to GDP, and the search for alternative sources of income.

Choe and Pradhan (2010) say that new urban development and the enlargement of municipal boundaries are key factors in urban growth.

Nepal's urban municipalities with the largest populations in 2021 are listed in Table 3.6. The populations of all these municipalities except one grew between 2011 and 2021. The exception was Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC), which however remained as the most populated area

with a population of 862,400. And Lalitpur Metropolitan City's growth rate was close to zero (0.03%) for the same reasons as for KMC.

The negative growth rate of KMC (-1.18%) recorded by the 2021 census are explained by the following:

- In previous decades KMC developed into the country's main hub of trade, business, and all forms of production and services, and subsequently became the country's main centre of social and economic prosperity. This has been accompanied by large increases in the cost of living, land, homes, and rent. The rapid development of KMC and the increasing living costs there has led to many people relocating beyond KMC into other areas of Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur districts and commuting into KMC for their work.
- The most important annual festivals of Dashain and Tihar had just ended when the 2021 census was conducted in November 2023 meaning that a number of people who had returned to their ancestral villages for the festivals may not have returned to their places of work in KMC when the census was held. This is supported by the findings of the post-enumeration survey, which found a substantial population undercount for KMC (4.4%) (NSO, 2023c).

Amongst the ten largest cities, the 2021 census found that Itahari Sub-Metropolitan City had the highest growth rate in 2021 (3.25%), followed by Dhangadhi Sub-Metropolitan City (2.85%); while KMC had by far the highest population density (17,440/km^2) followed by Lalitpur Metropolitan City (8,142). High intercensal growth rates mark Itahari, Dhangadhi, Ghorahi, Bharatpur and Pokhara as fast growing cities.

Table 3.6: Ten largest metropolitan and sub-metropolitan cities in terms of size, growth rate and density, 2011 and 2021 censuses

Metropolitan cities	Population		Percentage		Annual growth rate (%)	Density /km^2 (2021)
	2011	2021	2011	2021		
Kathmandu Metropolitan City	975,453	862,400	3.7	3.0	-1.18	17,440
Pokhara Metropolitan City	402,995	513,504	1.5	1.8	2.33	1,106
Bharatpur Metropolitan City	280,502	369,268	1.1	1.3	2.64	853
Lalitpur Metropolitan City	284,922	294,098	1.1	1.0	0.30	8,142
Birgunj Metropolitan City	240,922	272,382	0.9	0.9	1.18	2,062
Biratnagar Metropolitan City	214,663	243,927	0.8	0.8	1.23	3,168
Ghorahi Sub-Metropolitan City	156,164	200,530	0.6	0.7	2.40	384

Metropolitan cities	Population		Percentage		Annual growth rate (%)	Density /km² (2021)
	2011	2021	2011	2021		
Dhangadhi Sub-Metropolitan City	147,741	198,792	0.6	0.7	2.85	759
Itahari Sub-Metropolitan City	140,517	197,241	0.5	0.7	3.25	2,103
Janakpurdham Sub-Metropolitan city	162,172	194,556	0.6	0.7	1.75	2,115

Source: NSO (2023b), Annex 5.

Amongst the ten urban municipalities with the lowest populations in 2021 (see Table 3.7) two urban municipalities from Dolpa district had the lowest populations in both the 2011 and 2021 censuses despite having positive growth rates − Thuli Bheri Urban Municipality and Tripurasundari Municipality. Five of these ten districts had negative population growth rates.

Table 3.7: Ten smallest urban municipalities in terms of population size, growth rate and density, 2011 and 2021 censuses

Urban municipalities	Population		Percentage		Growth rate	Pop. density
	2011	2021	2011	2021	2011-2021	2021
Thuli Bheri Urban Municipality, Dolpa	8,370	9,861	0.03	0.03	1.57	23
Tripurasundari Urban Municipality, Dolpa	10,104	12,233	0.04	0.04	1.83	31
Madi Urban Municipality, Sankhuwasabha	14,470	13,273	0.05	0.05	-0.83	121
Laligurans Urban Municipality, Terhathum	16,934	15,329	0.06	0.05	-0.96	170
Dharmadevi Urban Municipality, Sankhuwasabha	18,235	16,053	0.07	0.06	-1.22	121
Jiri Urban Municipality, Dolakha	15,515	16,109	0.06	0.06	0.36	76
Tila Gufa Urban Municipality, Kalikot	15,766	16,197	0.06	0.06	0.26	62
Panchkhapan Urban Municipality, Sankhuwasabha	17,521	16,348	0.07	0.06	-0.67	110
Rainas Urban Municipality, Lamjung	18,527	17,402	0.07	0.06	-0.60	242
Raskot Urban Municipality, Kalikot	16,272	17,425	00.6	0.06	0.66	292

Source: NSO (2023b), Annex 5.

The 10 largest rural municipalities (municipalities) in 2021 in terms of population size, growth rate, and density are shown in Table 3.8. The most populated rural municipality was Baijanath Rural Municipality in of the Banke district in 2021, which had increased by 15,054 people since 2011. These ten municipalities had strong intercensal growth rates of 0.94 percent to 2.33 percent.

Table 3.8: Ten largest rural municipalities by population size, growth rate and density, 2011 and 2021 censuses

Rural municipalities	Population		Annual growth rate	Density
	2011	2021		
Baijanath rural municipality, Banke	54,418	69,472	2.34	490
Rapti Sonari Rural Municipality, Banke	59,946	66,445	0.99	64
Khajura Rural Municipality, Banke	50,961	62,789	2.00	616
Mayadevi Rural Municipality, Rupendehi	47,156	56,170	1.68	775
Gaidahawa Rural Municipality, Rupendehi	47,565	56,149	1.59	580
Mayadevi Rural Municipality, Kapilvastu	48,218	55,972	1.43	632
Kamal Rural Municipality, Jhapa	44,365	53,984	1.87	515
Buddhashanti Rural Municipality, Jhapa	41,585	53,010	2.33	664
Suddhodhan Rural Municipality, Kapilvastu	45,201	52,861	1.50	577
Badhaiyatal Rural Municipality, Bardiya	47,868	52,818	0.94	459

Source: NSO (2023b), Annex 5.

Amongst the ten smallest rural municipalities by population, Narpa Bhumi Rural Municipality, Manang, had the lowest population in 2021 (538) with a negative growth rate of -2.94 percent. Six of the ten smallest rural municipalities had negative growth rates in 2021 as a result of either high out-migration and/or falling birth rates (Table 3.9).

Table 3.9: Ten smallest rural municipalities in terms of population size and its growth rate and density, 2011 and 2021 censuses

Rural municipalities	Population		Growth rate	Density
	2011	2021		
Narpa Bhumi Rural Municipality, Manang	538	396	-2.94	0.47
Chame Rural Municipality, Manang	1,129	1,276	1.17	1.6
Lho-Ghekar Damodarkunda Rural Municipality, Mustang	1,423	1,292	-0.93	1
Lomanthang Rural Municipality, Mustang	1,899	1,430	-2.72	2
Manang Disyang Rural Municipality, Manang	2,222	1,595	-3.18	2
Naso Rural Municipality, Manang	1,938	1,671	-1.42	2

Rural municipalities	Population		Growth rate	Density
	2011	2021		
Chharka Tansong Rural Municipality, Dolpa	1,451	1,672	1.36	5
Baragung Muktichhetra Rural Municipality, Mustang	2,330	2,036	-1.29	2
Dolpo Buddha Rural Municipality, Dolpa	2,126	2,420	1.24	6
Jagdulla Rural Municipality, Dolpa	2,273	2,575	1.20	31

Source: NSO (2023b), Annex 5.

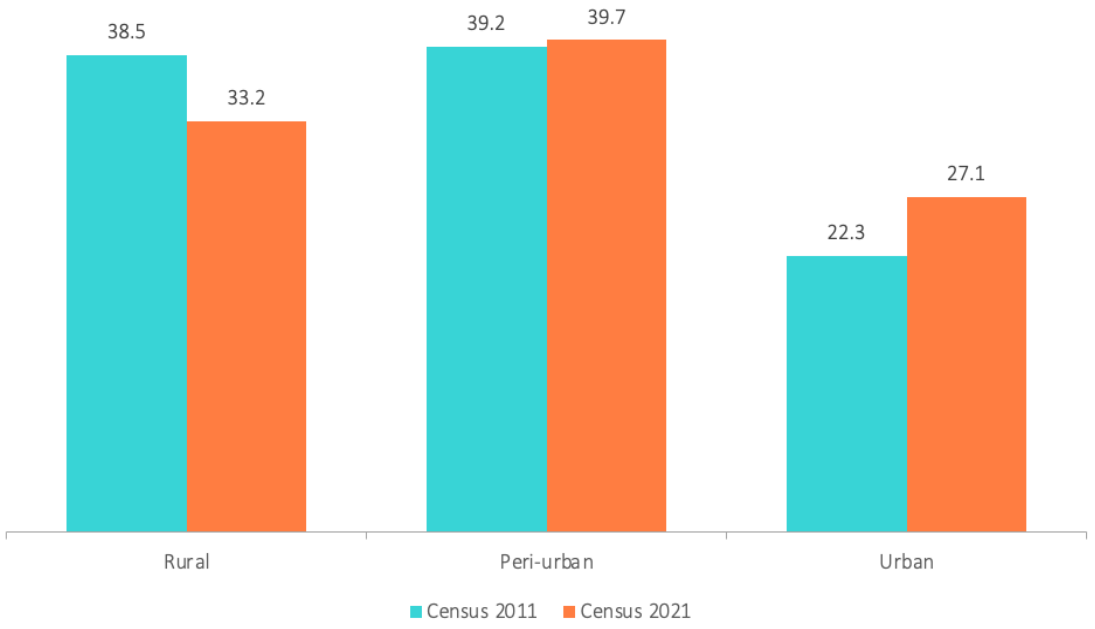
3.2.4 Population trends and patterns by urban–rural areas

Out of 753 municipalities, 293 are urban municipalities which includes 6 metropolitan and 11 sub-metropolitan cities and 276 urban municipalities, while 460 are rural municipalities. Classification of urban- rural municipalities has policy challenge that many wards in metropolitan, sub-metropolitan, and urban municipal areas have rural characteristics, and, on the other hand, many rural municipalities have emerging market centres and small towns, which affects the contextual analysis to redefine the dimensions of urbanization in Nepal (NSO, 2024). Therefore, the Degree of Urbanization (DEGURBA) Technical Working Group has reclassified the rural and urban clusters based on population density in wards into three categories. They include – rural cluster, peri-urban and urban areas by defining as follows:

> **Urban Areas** are characterized by population density minimum 3 up to over 15 ppHa and population over 5,000, with 4-point contiguity.
>
> **Peri-Urban Areas** are characterized by density between 3 - 15 ppHa and no minimum population threshold, with 8-point contiguity.
>
> **Rural Clusters** are characterized by density 3 ppHa or below and population no more than 5,000 with 8-point contiguity.

The NSO has classified the population according to these three redefined categories of rural-urban areas only for two latest censuses. The trend in population between two censuses is shown in Figure 3.7. The data indicates that the rural clusters of the country bears only one-third share (33.2%) of the population in the country in 2021, which is about 5 percentage points lower than that in 2011 (38.5%). There is no significant change in population living in peri-urban areas between 2011 and 2021 census. However, population share in urban areas increased by about 5 percentage points between two censuses, increased from 22.3 percent in 2011 to 27.1 percent in 2021.

Figure 3.7: Population trend in rural, peri-urban and urban areas, 2011 and 2021 census



Source: NSO (2024), Table 7.

Looking at ecological zones, the highest percentage of mountain (87.9%) and hill population (55.1%) live in rural areas, whereas the highest percentage of Tarai population live in peri-urban areas (66.7%) (Table 3.10). Moreover, among those who reside in urban areas, Hill has the highest share (35.6%). When taking peri-urban and urban together, Mountain and Hill are rural population dominated zone, even though urban population is slightly less than half in hill. However, Tarai is overwhelmingly urban population dominated zone.

Occupancy of Kathmandu valley city is clearly dominant that Bagmati is the only province where majority of province population reside in urban areas (56%) (Table 3.10). Most of the Madhesh (73.5%) and Lumbini (52.2%) population reside in peri-urban population. For Karnali (80.1%) and Sudurpaschim (56.2%) provinces, most of their population live in rural clusters. When peri-urban and urban areas are considered as urban area together, urban population is dominant in Koshi, Madhesh, Bagmati and Lumbini provinces; half reside in rural and another half reside in urban areas in Gandaki province; and rural population is dominant in Karnali and Sudurpashchim, while it is overwhelming in Karnali.

Table 3.10: Population distribution by rural, peri-urban, and urban areas, by ecological zone and provinces, 2021 censuses

Areas	Rural	Peri-urban	Urban	Total	
				Percent	N
Nepal	33.2	39.7	27.1	100.0	
N (Population 2021)	9,600,393	11,496,375	7,828,712		28,925,480
Ecological zone					
Mountain	87.9		12.1	100.0	1,718,145
Hill	55.1	9.3	35.6	100.0	11,578,139
Tarai	10.9	66.7	22.4	100.0	15,629,196
Province					
Koshi	36.1	41.2	22.7	100.0	4,928,086
Madhesh	5.8	73.5	20.6	100.0	6,100,697
Bagmati	29.7	14.3	56.0	100.0	6,021,003
Gandaki	50.9	23.1	26.0	100.0	2,436,521
Lumbini	31.2	52.2	16.5	100.0	5,085,232
Karnali	80.1	4.3	15.5	100.0	1,675,204
Sudurpaschim	56.2	31.0	12.9	100.0	2,678,737

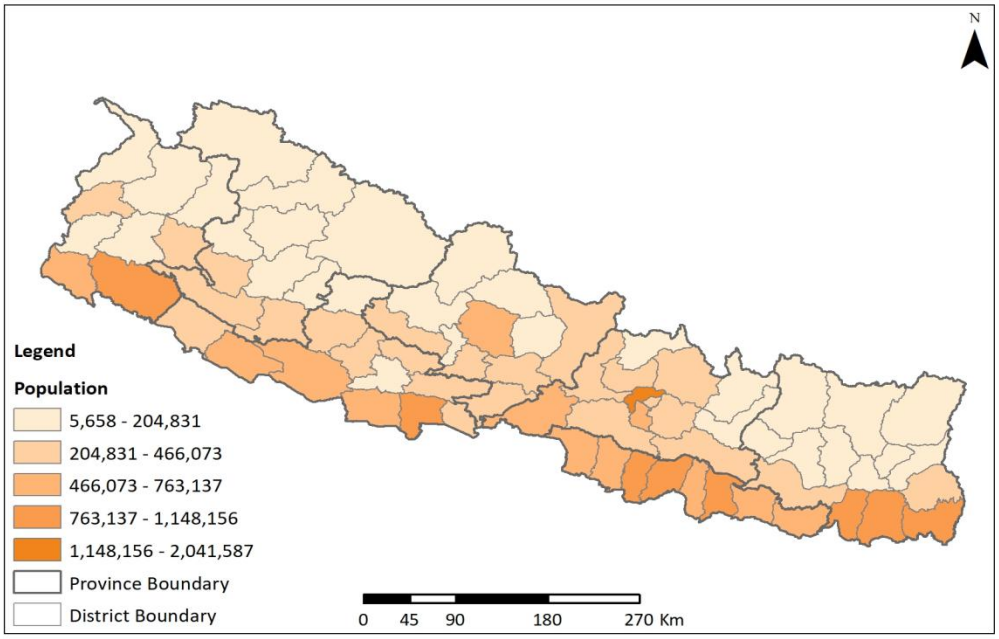
Source: NSO (2024), Table 7 and 8 and Annex 1.

3.2.5 Population size, growth, and density by districts

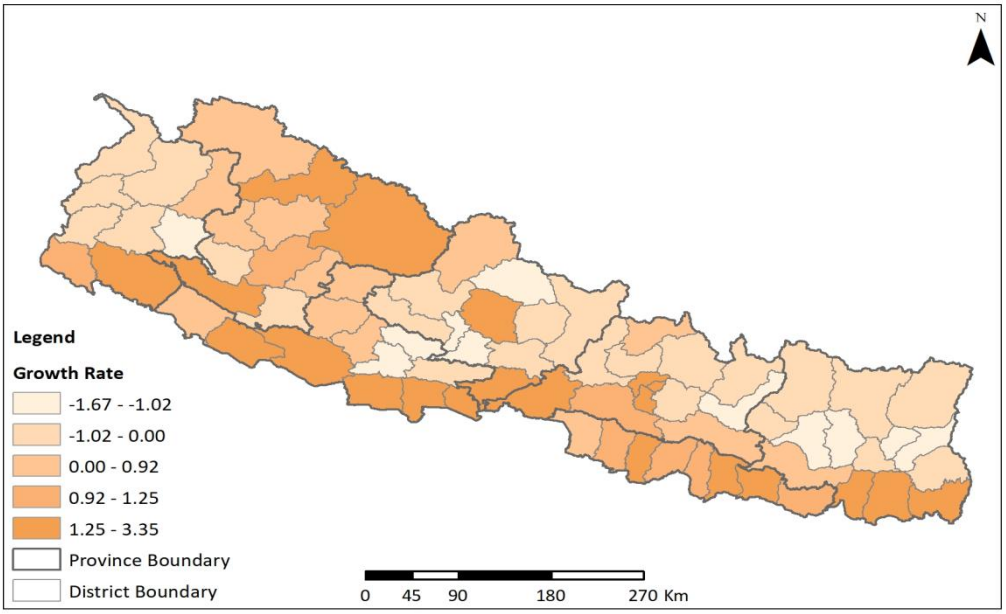
The 2021 census found that Kathmandu district had the highest population (2,041,587) or 7 percent of the total population amongst Nepal's 77 districts (Map 3.4 and Annex 2). Morang was the second-most populous district (3.9%), followed by Rupandehi (3.8%) and Jhapa (3.4%). Bhaktapur District had the highest annual intercensal population growth rate (3.3%), followed by Rupandehi District (2.3%) and Chitwan (2.1%).

The annual population growth rate by district is shown on Map 3.5 (Annex 3). The 2011 census found that the population growth rate was negative in 27 districts while the 2021 census was negative in 34 districts – all mountain or hill districts. Manang, Mustang, Dolpa, Rasuwa, and Humla districts had the smallest populations among Nepal's 77 districts. Manang district had the lowest population (5,658). The districts with the lowest annual growth rates were Ramechhap (-1.7%), Khotang (-1.6%) and Manang (-1.4%).

Map 3.4: Population distribution by district, 2021 census



Map 3.5: Annual population growth rate by district, 2021 census



The 2021 census recorded an overall population density of 198 people/km^2 for the whole country. Among the 77 districts, Kathmandu district had the highest population density (5,169/km^2, followed by Bhaktapur (3,631) and Lalitpur (1,433). The least populated districts were Manang (3), Mustang (4), and Dolpa (5) (Map 3.6, Annex 4).

Map 3.6: Population density by district, 2021 census

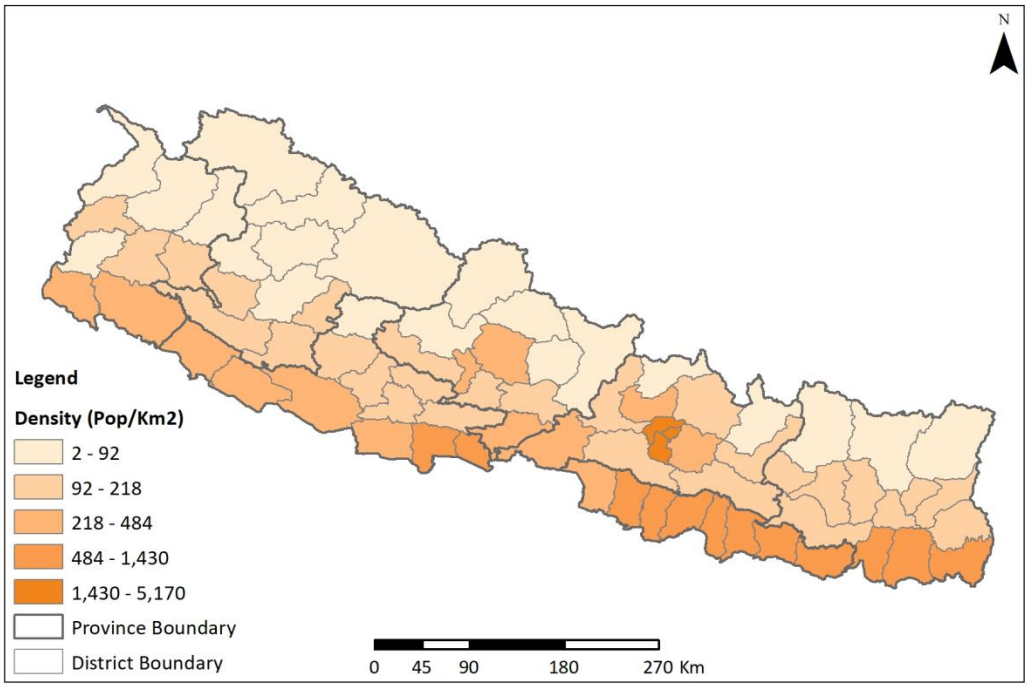


Table 3.11 shows the distribution of districts by population size since 1971. The population of Nepal is growing, however at a slower rate. About 21 districts, which had populations of less than 500,000 in 1971, have seen population of more than 500,000 over the past 50 years. In 1971, 41 districts had a population of 10,000 to 199,999, but by 2021, the number of districts with this population has almost halved. The table also indicates the number of districts where the population is concentrated. Regarding share of population, the size of 100,000 to 199,999 comprised of the highest share of the population in 1971 (50.2%) and 1981 (29.5%), which shifted to 200,000 to 299,999 size in 1991 (27.2%) and 2001 (34.0%) and to 500,000 and above size in 2011 (51.7%) and 2021 (60.4%).

Table 3.11: Distribution of districts and share of population by size, 1971–2021 censuses

Size of population	Number of districts						Percentage of population					
	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	2021	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	2021
500,000 or more	-	1	5	14	18	21	-	3.6	16.3	18.2	51.7	60.4
400,000-499,999	-	3	9	4	6	4	-	8.9	21.7	7.1	10.4	6.1
300,000-399,999	7	10	6	11	6	7	19.4	23.3	11.3	18.4	7.6	8.3
200,000-299,999	12	18	20	23	19	15	23.8	28.6	27.2	34.0	18.2	12.6
100,000-199,999	41	28	25	16	20	22	50.2	29.5	20.8	14.1	11.4	11.4
90,000-99,999	2	4	2	-	-	-	1.7	2.5	1.0	-	-	-
80,000-89,999	2	3	-	1	-	1	1.5	1.8	0.5	0.5	-	0.3

Size of population	Number of districts						Percentage of population					
	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	2021	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	2021
70,000-79,999	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	0.5	0.4	-	-	-
60,000-69,999	3	1	1	-	-	1	1.7	0.5	-	-	-	0.2
50,000-59,999	1	-	-	-	2	2	0.5	-	-	-	0.4	0.4
40,000-49,999	-	1	-	3	1	2	-	0.3	-	2.4	0.2	0.3
30,000-39,999	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	0.2	0.6	-	0.1	-
20,000-29,999	3	2	1	1	-	-	0.7	0.3	0.1	1.0	-	-
10,000-19,000	3	1	1	1	1	1	0.4	0.1	0.1	2.7	0.1	0.1
Below 10,000	1	1	1	1	1	1	0.1	0.1	0.0	1.6	0.0	0.0
Total	75	75	75	75	75	77	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Pathak and Lamichhane (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table, 2.6; NPHC 2021.
Note: There were 75 districts in Nepal until 2015 and 77 thereafter.

3.3 Social composition

This section analyses the census findings on the makeup of Nepal's population in terms of household size, place of birth, nationality, absentee populations and eight other social factors.

3.3.1 Family structure and household size

Family structure

Based on data collected in Census 2021, family structure in this section is broadly classified into three types, nuclear, joint/extended, and institutional family. Nuclear family is defined here as a family with – i) married couple without children, ii) a married couple with one or more unmarried children, iii) a father with one or more unmarried children, iv) a mother with one or more unmarried children, or v) single person family (disregarding sex). Joint or extended family includes all types of families that have more than two generations and/or two or more couples with or without children. Institutional family includes official personnel residing at official house (offices, quarters, etc.).

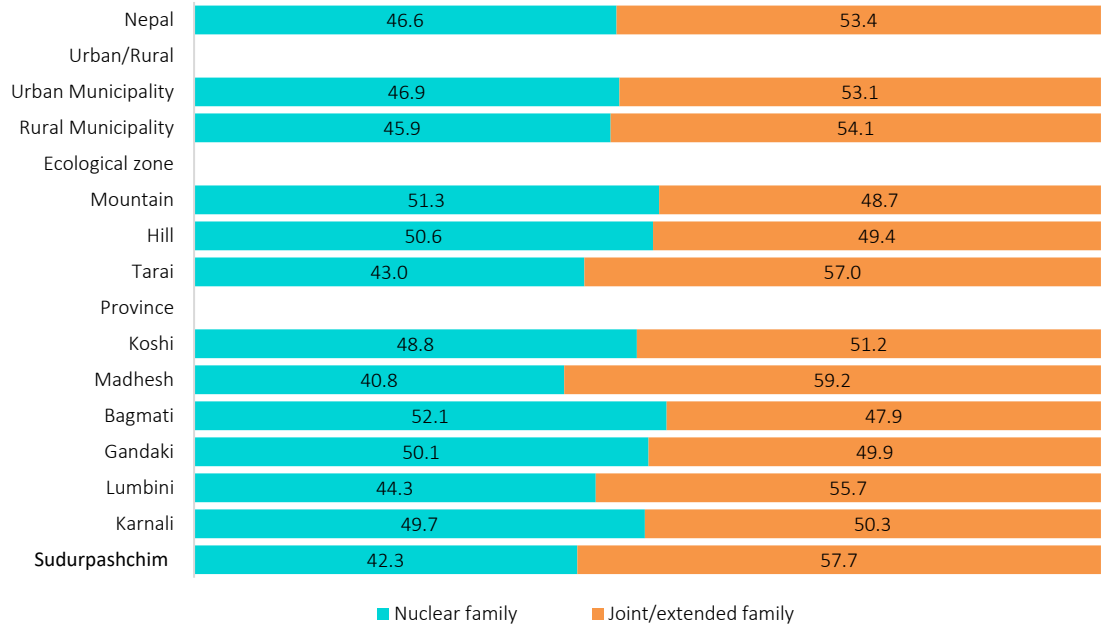
Nepal has traditionally joint and extended family culture. These days, however, along with fertility transition and socio-economic transformation, the family structure has been transforming towards nuclear family. Census 2021 recorded that 46.2 percent (13,473,267) of the total population are living in nuclear family by occupying 60 percent (4,001,451) of the total households (6,666,937) (Table 3.12). On the other hand, 53 percent (15,452,213) of the total population are living in extended family by occupying about 40 percent (2,659,390) of total households. Also, 2021 census recorded 6,096 institutional households where 239,098 populations are living.

Table 3.12: Distribution of population and households by family structure, 2021 census

Family structure	Household		Population	
	N	%	N	%
Nuclear family	4,001,451	60.0	13,473,267	46.2
Extended family	2,659,390	39.9	15,452,213	53.0
Institutional	6,096	0.1	239,098	0.8
Total	**6,666,937**	**100.0**	**29,164,578**	**100.0**

When institutional households are excluded from the analysis, a total population would be 28,925,480 living in a total of 6,660,841 households. Of the total population, almost 47 percent population are living in nuclear family and 53.4 percent in joint/extended family (Figure 3.8). Population living in nuclear family is slightly higher in urban than rural municipalities, which is almost 47 percent in urban and 46 percent in rural municipalities. Population living in nuclear family is highest in mountain (51.3%) and the lowest in Tarai (43%). Looking at provinces, population living in nuclear family is highest in Bagmati (52.1%), followed by Gandaki (50.1%) and the lowest in Madhesh (40.8%), Sudurpashchim (42.3%) and Lumbini (44.3%).

Figure 3.8: Percent of population by type of family by urban/rural municipality, ecological zone, and province, 2021 census

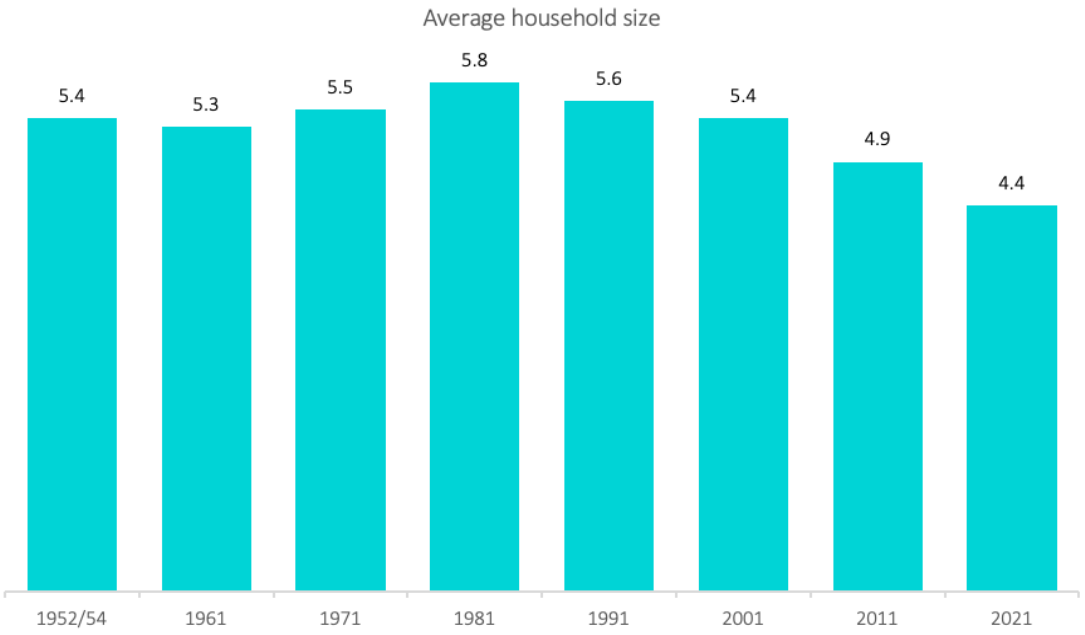


Note: Institutional family is excluded.

3.3.2 Household sizes

The average household size in Nepal reduced from 5.4 in 1952−54 to 4.4 individuals in 2021 (Figure 3.9). Economic growth usually leads to declined fertility, smaller household sizes and more nuclear families. Bongaarts (2001) says that increased urbanization, industrialization, and levels of education are all primary factors in explaining the reduced size of households.

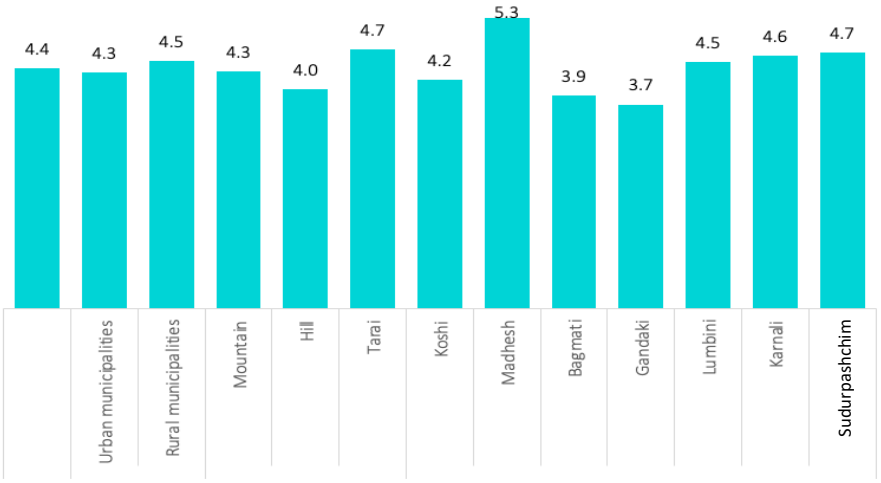
Figure 3.9: Average household size, 1952−1954 to 2021 censuses



Source: Pokhrel (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 7.4; NPHC 2021.

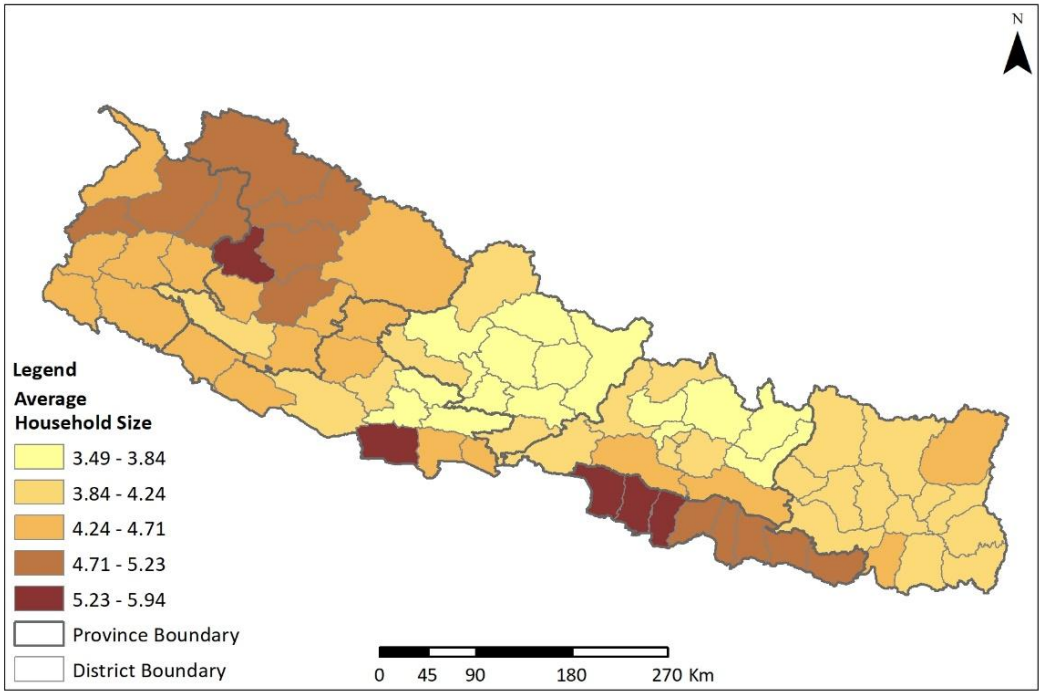
- Figure 3.10 shows the household size by urban−rural municipalities, ecological zone and province. Urban municipalities had slightly smaller households (4.3) than rural municipalities (4.5).
- Hill households were smaller (4.0) than Mountain and Tarai households (4.3 and 4.7). Typically, Tarai's household size is relatively larger, which may be due to the shift in population distribution from Mountain/Hill to Tarai over the period.
- The smallest households were in Gandaki and Bagmati (3.7 and 3.9 persons) while the largest were in Madhesh (5.3), followed by Sudurpashchim (4.7). The larger households in Madhesh could be due to the relatively high fertility there. MoHP et al. (2023) reported that Madhesh had the highest total fertility rate (2.7%) in 2021of all seven provinces.

Figure 3.10 Average household size by urban–rural municipalities, ecological zones and provinces, 2021 census



The 2021 census found a substantial variation in the average household size across Nepal's 77 districts ranging from 5.9 people in Rautahat to only 3.5 people in Gorkha and Dolakha districts (Map 3.7). Nine districts had more than five people per household − Mahottari, Sarlahi, Rautahat, Bara, and Parsa in Madhesh, Kapilbastu in Lumbini, and Jajarkot, Kalikot, and Mugu in Karnali (see Annex 5).

Map 3.7: Average household size by district, 2021 census



3.3.3 Birth places

The 2021 census counted persons born in Nepal as 'native-born' and those born in India and other countries as foreign-born. The 2021 census counted 734,663 (2.5%) of the total population of 29,164,578 as foreign born, which is considerably more than the 1.8 percent in the 2011 census (Table 3.13).

Table 3.13: Distribution of population by place of birth and sex, 2021 census

Place of birth	Native-born		Foreign born				Total population
	N	%	India	%	Other countries	%	
Nepal	**28,420,333**	**97.4**	**713,973**	**2.4**	**20,565**	**0.07**	**29,164,578**
Male	14,062,658	98.7	175,930	1.2	10,847	0.08	14,253,551
Female	14,357,675	96.3	538,043	3.6	9,718	0.07	14,911,027
Urban-rural							
Urban municipalities	18,784,366	97.3	489,169	2.5	17,219	0.09	19,296,788
Male	9,297,646	98.3	145,528	1.5	8,836	0.09	9,454,545
Female	9,486,720	96.4	343,641	3.5	8,383	0.09	9,842,243
Rural municipalities	9,635,967	97.7	224,804	2.3	3,346	0.03	9,867,790
Male	4,765,012	99.3	30,402	0.6	2,011	0.04	4,799,006
Female	4,870,955	96.1	194,402	3.8	1,335	0.03	5,068,784
Ecological zone							
Mountain	1,765,996	99.6	5,926	0.3	589	0.03	1,772,948
Male	870,499	99.6	3,262	0.4	294	0.03	874,260
Female	895,497	99.6	2,664	0.3	295	0.03	898,688
Hill	11,624,395	98.9	116,914	1.0	11,200	0.10	11,757,624
Male	5,646,526	98.8	62,575	1.1	6,038	0.11	5,717,247
Female	5,977,869	99.0	54,339	0.9	5,162	0.09	6,040,377
Tarai	15,029,942	96.1	591,133	3.8	8,776	0.06	15,634,006
Male	7,545,633	98.5	110,093	1.4	4,515	0.06	7,662,044
Female	7,484,309	93.9	481,040	6.0	4,261	0.05	7,971,962
Province							
Koshi	4,816,286	97.1	138,173	2.8	5,328	0.11	4,961,412
Male	2,372,636	98.2	40,979	1.7	3,059	0.13	2,417,328
Female	2,443,650	96.1	97,194	3.8	2,269	0.09	2,544,084
Madhesh	5,877,432	96.1	236,148	3.9	436	0.01	6,114,600
Male	3,049,364	99.5	15,903	0.5	181	0.01	3,065,751
Female	2,828,068	92.8	220,245	7.2	255	0.01	3,048,849
Bagmati	6,025,689	98.5	81,390	1.3	8,935	0.15	6,116,866
Male	2,998,058	98.3	45,776	1.5	4,459	0.15	3,048,684
Female	3,027,631	98.7	35,614	1.2	4,476	0.15	3,068,182
Gandaki	2,421,434	98.2	39,070	1.6	2,937	0.12	2,466,427
Male	1,147,205	98.0	20,663	1.8	1,672	0.14	1,170,833
Female	1,274,229	98.4	18,407	1.4	1,265	0.10	1,295,594
Lumbini	4,932,868	96.3	184,637	3.6	2,509	0.05	5,122,078

Place of birth	Native-born		Foreign born				Total population
	N	%	India	%	Other countries	%	
Male	2,414,726	98.4	37,632	1.5	1,232	0.05	2,454,408
Female	2,518,142	94.4	147,005	5.5	1,277	0.05	2,667,670
Karnali	4,816,286	97.1	138,173	2.8	5,328	0.11	1,688,412
Male	2,372,636	98.2	40,979	1.7	3,059	0.13	823,761
Female	2,443,650	96.1	97,194	3.8	2,269	0.09	864,651
Sudurpashchim	5,877,432	96.1	236,148	3.9	436	0.01	2,694,783
Male	3,049,364	99.5	15,903	0.5	181	0.01	1,272,786
Female	2,828,068	92.8	220,245	7.2	255	0.01	1,421,997

Source: NSO (2023a), Table 28 and 29.

Note: The 9,582 whose 'birthplace was not stated' is not shown.

Most of the foreign born population were born in India − 2.4 out of 2.5 percent. Thus, more than 90 percent of the population who were born abroad were born in India − mainly caused by Nepali men marrying Indian women. This is reflected in the 2021 census results that almost three times as many females as males (3.7% vs. 1.3%) were foreign-born and that about 6.0 percent of females in the Tarai and 7.2 percent of females in each Madhesh and Sudurpaschim and 5.5 percent in Lumbini province were foreign born, which is nearly twice the national average for females.

3.3.4 Nationality

Nepal's censuses have gathered data on citizenship or nationality since 1961. This data indicates the presence of migrants. The 2021 census found 137,218 of the recorded people were foreign citizens, 97 percent of whom (132,781) were Indians (Table 3.14). Thus, nearly 99.5 percent of the total population of 29.2 million were Nepali citizens while 0.5 percent were Indian citizens and only 0.02 percent were citizens of other countries.

Furthermore, the urban municipalities had more Indian citizens (0.57%) than the rural municipalities (0.23%) while Indian citizens made up 0.48 percent of the population in the Tarai region and 0.79 percent in Bagmati province (Table 3.14).

Table 3.14: Distribution of population according to country of citizenship, 2021 census

Area	Nepal	%	India	%	Other country	%	Total
Nepal	**29,027,171**	**99.5**	**132,781**	**0.5**	**4,437**	**0.02**	**29,164,578**
Male	14,177,720	99.5	73,243	0.5	2,480	0.02	14,253,551
Female	14,849,451	99.6	59,538	0.4	1,957	0.01	14,911,027
Urban-rural							
Urban municipalities	19,182,996	99.4	109904	0.6	3,702	0.02	19,296,788
Male	9,387,637	99.3	64,793	0.7	2,010	0.02	9,454,545
Female	9,795,359	99.5	45,111	0.5	1,692	0.02	9,842,243
Rural municipalities	9,844,175	99.8	22,877	0.2	735	0.01	9,867,790

Area	Nepal	%	India	%	Other country	%	Total
Male	4,790,083	99.8	8,450	0.2	470	0.01	4,799,006
Female	5,054,092	99.7	14,427	0.3	265	0.01	5,068,784
Ecological zone							
Mountain	1,770,473	99.9	2,119	0.1	355	0.02	1772948
Male	872,145	99.8	1,953	0.2	161	0.02	874260
Female	898,328	100.0	166	0.0	194	0.02	898,688
Hill	11,699,111	99.5	54,839	0.5	3,508	0.03	11,757,624
Male	5,676,935	99.3	38,252	0.7	1,963	0.03	5,717,247
Female	6,022,176	99.7	16,587	0.3	1,545	0.03	6,040,377
Tarai	15,557,587	99.5	75,823	0.5	574	0.00	15,634,006
Male	7,628,640	99.6	33,038	0.4	356	0.00	7,662,044
Female	7,928,947	99.5	42,785	0.5	218	0.00	7,971,962
Province							
Koshi	4,942,158	99.6	19,019	0.4	228	0.00	4,961,412
Male	2,405,833	99.5	11,378	0.5	115	0.00	2,417,328
Female	2,536,325	99.7	7,641	0.3	113	0.00	2,544,084
Madhesh	6,087,176	99.6	27,307	0.4	114	0.00	6,114,600
Male	3,059,884	99.8	5,809	0.2	56	0.00	3,065,751
Female	3,027,292	99.3	21,498	0.7	58	0.00	3,048,849
Bagmati	6,065,096	99.2	48,361	0.8	3,256	0.05	6,116,866
Male	3,013,401	98.8	33,462	1.1	1,732	0.06	3,048,684
Female	3,051,695	99.5	14,899	0.5	1,524	0.05	3,068,182
Gandaki	2,453,472	99.5	12,321	0.5	612	0.02	2,466,427
Male	1,161,386	99.2	8,988	0.8	447	0.04	1,170,833
Female	1,292,086	99.7	3,333	0.3	165	0.01	1,295,594
Lumbini	5,103,243	99.6	18,681	0.4	150	0.00	5,122,078
Male	2,445,019	99.6	9,306	0.4	80	0.00	2,454,408
Female	2,658,224	99.6	9,375	0.4	70	0.00	2,667,670
Karnali	1,687,699	100.0	691	0.0	22	0.00	1,688,412
Male	823,301	99.9	448	0.1	12	0.00	823,761
Female	864,398	100.0	243	0.0	10	0.00	864,651
Sudurpashchim	2,688,327	99.8	6,401	0.2	55	0.00	2,694,783
Male	1,268,896	99.7	3,852	0.3	38	0.00	1,272,786
Female	1,419,431	99.8	2,549	0.2	17	0.00	1,421,997

Source: NSO (2023a), Table 20.

3.3.5 Absentee population

Another type of migration data relates to absentee populations, which refers to persons who have been living away from their homes in the country or abroad for more than six months prior to the census. The 1920 census was the first Nepal census to gather migration-related data; and only counted male migrants.

The 2021 census recorded 2,445,483 households with absentees, which is about 37 percent of all Nepal's households (NSO, 2023a). Among the households with absentees, 889,522 of them (13% of all households) had absentees residing in Nepal, while 1,555,961 households (23%) had absentees residing abroad. In terms of population, the 2021 census found that 15.3 percent of the total population (4,457,828) had been absent for more than six months from their households at the time of enumeration (Table 3.15), of which 7.8 percent were living in the country (2,267,236) and 7.5 percent abroad (2,190,592).

There were more absentee people in rural municipalities (18.3%) than in urban municipalities (13.7%); and about 11 percent of absentees in rural municipalities (12.6% males, 9.5% females) were said to be living in Nepal and about 7 percent (12.8% male and 2.2% female) abroad. About 22 percent (26.3% male and 17% female) absentees were absent in mountain zone which is largest among the three ecological zone. Tarai had the lowest proportion of absentee population (10.8%). Whereas the proportion living in abroad is highest in Hill (13.8%).

Gandaki province had the largest absentee population in 2021 (26.3%) followed by Sudurpaschim (20.5%) and Bagmati (18.2%). Sudurpashchim had the highest proportion (12.7%) of absentees residing abroad (including India) while Gandaki (14.7%) and Bagmati (11.7%) had the highest proportions residing in Nepal.

Table 3.15: Absent population living within the country and living abroad (as % of total population) by sex, 2021 census

Area	Total absent within & outside Nepal			Absent population living in Nepal[a]			Absent population living abroad[b]		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Nepal	**15.3**	**21.7**	**9.1**	**7.8**	**9.1**	**6.5**	**7.5**	**12.6**	**2.6**
Number	4,457,828	3,094,610	1,363,218	2,267,236	1,294,935	972,301	2,190,592	1,799,675	390,917
Urban-rural									
Urban municipalities	13.7	19.9	7.9	6.1	7.3	5.0	7.6	12.6	2.9
Rural municipalities	18.3	25.3	11.6	11.0	12.6	9.5	7.3	12.8	2.2
Ecological zone									
Mountain	21.6	26.3	17.0	15.0	17.0	13.2	6.5	9.4	3.8
Hill	20.3	27.3	13.8	11.9	13.5	10.4	8.4	13.8	3.4
Tarai	10.8	17.0	4.8	3.8	4.9	2.8	6.9	12.1	1.9
Province									
Koshi	13.9	19.9	8.3	7.0	8.0	6.0	6.9	11.9	2.2
Madhesh	8.1	13.5	2.6	3.1	3.9	2.2	5.0	9.5	0.4
Bagmati	18.2	22.0	14.4	11.7	12.8	10.6	6.5	9.2	3.8
Gandaki	26.3	37.2	16.5	14.7	16.7	12.9	11.6	20.5	3.6
Lumbini	14.5	22.8	6.9	6.3	7.9	4.9	8.2	15.0	2.0
Karnali	12.8	18.1	7.7	7.2	8.7	5.7	5.6	9.4	2.0
Sudurpashchim	20.5	30.3	11.8	7.8	10.3	5.6	12.7	20.1	6.2

Source: NSO (2023a), Table 14.

Notes: a. Absent population living in Nepal is a rate calculated as [absentees ÷ (absentees within country + native population)] × 100. b. Absent population living abroad is a ratio of the absentee population to the total population.

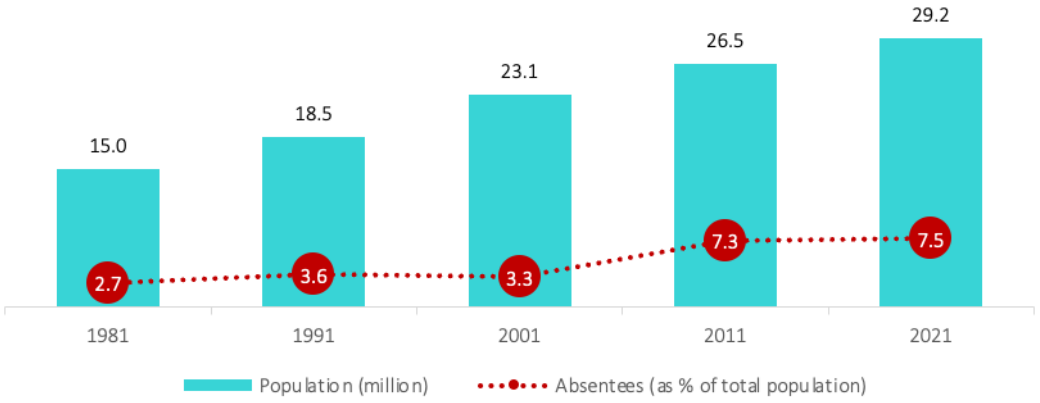
As of 2020, the Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) had authorized labour migration of Nepali citizens to 110 countries (MoLESS, 2020). Nepal's census data shows an increasing trend of absentee populations since 1981 (Table 3.16). Subsequently, about eight percent of the total population enumerated in the 2021 census were absentees living abroad (Table 3.16 and Figure 3.11). Nepal's censuses recorded a dramatic increase between 2001 and 2011 in the absentee population living abroad from 3.3 percent in 2001 to 7.3 percent in 2011 but only a small increase from 2011 to 2021. Sex variation in absentee population is wider throughout the censuses. Male absentees were more than $4/5^{th}$ and females were less than $1/5^{th}$ in 1981 and 1991. The share of female absentees considerably declined to around $1/10^{th}$ in 2001 (10.9%) and 2011 (12.4%) and again increased to slightly less than $1/5^{th}$ in 2021 (17.8%).

Table 3.16: Distribution of absentee population living abroad, 1952−54 −2021 censuses

Census year	Total populations	Absent	Absentees as % of total	Males		Females	
				No.	%	No.	%
1952-54	8,256,625	198,120	2.4	173619	87.6	24501	12.4
1961	9,412,996	328,470	3.5	NA	NA	NA	NA
1971	11,555,983	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
1981	15,022,839	402,977	2.7	328,448	81.5	74,529	18.5
1991	18,491,097	658,290	3.6	548,002	83.2	118,288	18.0
2001	23,151,423	762,181	3.3	679,489	89.2	82,712	10.9
2011	26,494,504	1,921,494	7.3	1,684,029	87.6	237,400	12.4
2021	29,164,578	2,190,592	7.5	1,799,675	82.2	390,917	17.8

Source: Khatiwada (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 9.3; NSO (2023a), Table 14.

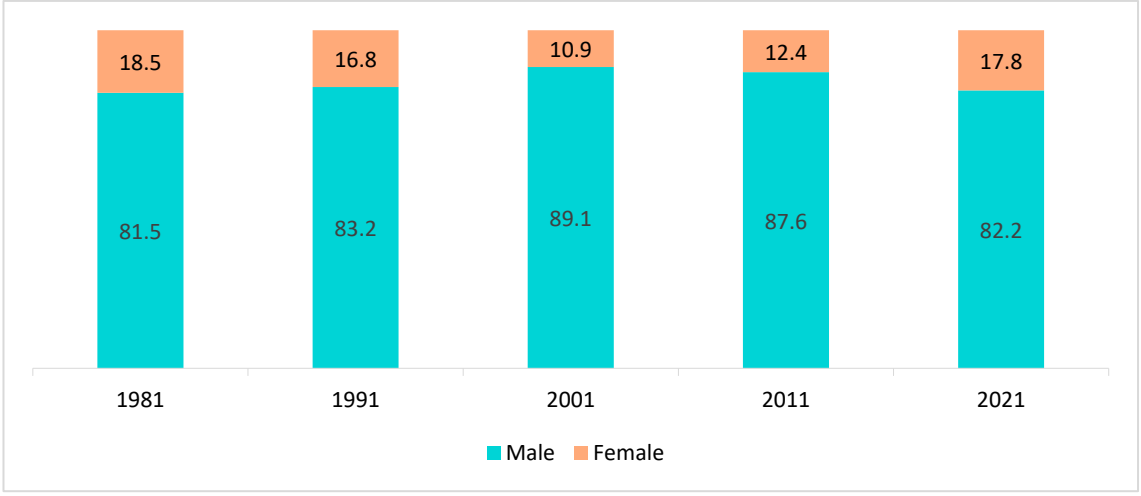
Figure 3.11: Absentee population abroad versus total population (in millions), 1981-2021 censuses



Source: Khatiwada (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 9.3; NSO (2023a), Table 14.

Since the first census when absentee data was collected (1952−54), male absentees have always outnumbered female absentees although the ratio declined in 2021. Women make up a growing portion of the absentee workforce, increasing from only 10.9 percent in 2001 to 17.8 percent in 2021 (Figure 3.12). A major reason for the fewer women absentees is the restrictions placed on women working abroad as domestic workers in an effort to reduce vulnerabilities like long working hours, physical abuse, and economic exploitation (MoLESS 2020).

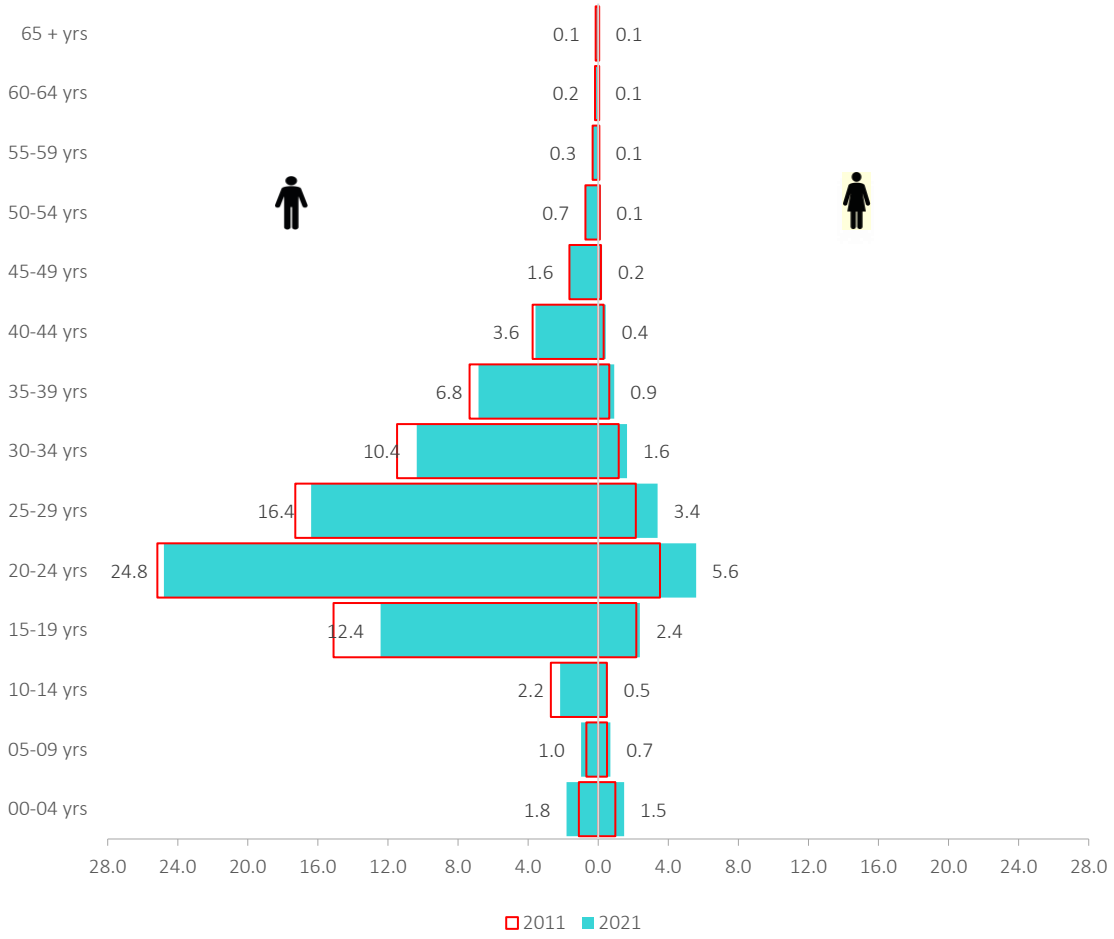
Figure 3.12: The trend of absentee population abroad by sex, 1971−2021 censuses



Source: Khatiwada (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 9.3; NSO (2023a), Table 14.

Over the years, more and more work permits have been issued to Nepalis to work abroad. Many of these labour migrants are 20–24 year olds with 24.8 percent of males and 5.6 percent of females (Figure 3.13).

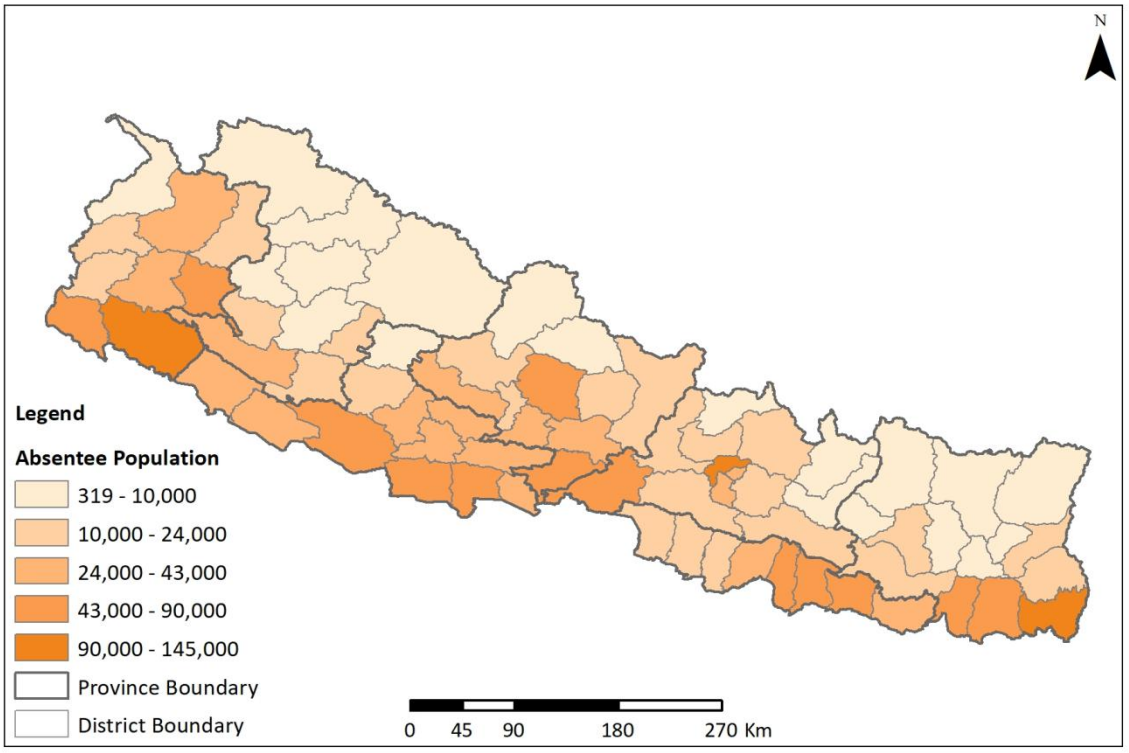
Figure 3.13: Absentee population abroad pyramid, 2011 and 2021 censuses



Source: Annex 7 and 8.

Map 3.8 displays the absent populations abroad by district. In 2021 Kathmandu district had the highest proportion of absentees (6.6%), followed by Jhapa (4.2%) and Morang (3.5%). Manang district had the lowest proportion of absentees (0.01%) followed by Dolpa (0.02%) (See Annex 6 for more census findings on this subject).

Map 3.8: Population absent abroad by district, 2021 census



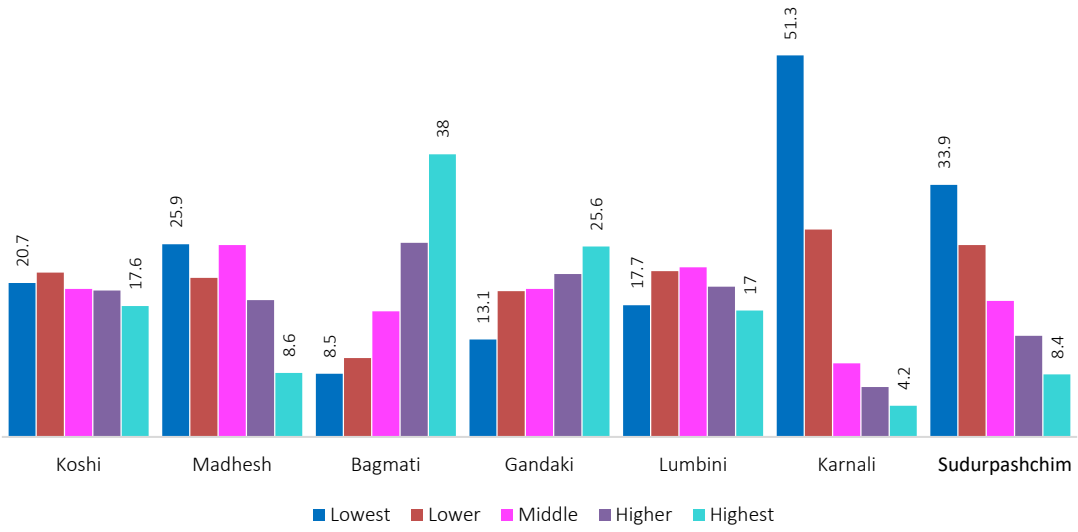
The 2021 census data show the following relations between absenteeism abroad and wealth quintile:

- Absenteeism abroad was highest in Karnali (51.3%) and Sudurpaschim (33.9%) in households from the lowest wealth quintiles, while in Bagmati province absence abroad was highest (38.0%) among the highest quintile households (Table 3.17 and Figure 3.14).
- The majority of the missing population abroad in rural municipalities were from the lowest quintile households; while, in urban municipalities the absentee population was higher in the highest quintile households (27.4%).
- While analysis by ecological zones shows an almost equal spread of abroad absentees by wealth quintile in Tarai and hill households, most mountain absentees came from the lowest-income households.

Table 3.17: Absentee population abroad by wealth quintile, by province, urban-rural municipalities and ecological zone, census 2021

Area	Lowest	Lower	Middle	Higher	Highest	N	Total
Province							
Koshi	20.7	22.1	19.9	19.7	17.6	343,034	100.0
Madhesh	25.9	21.4	25.8	18.4	8.6	304,286	100.0
Bagmati	8.5	10.6	16.9	26.1	38.0	397,930	100.0
Gandaki	13.1	19.6	19.9	21.9	25.6	286,593	100.0
Lumbini	17.7	22.3	22.8	20.2	17.0	420,906	100.0
Karnali	51.3	27.9	9.9	6.7	4.2	94,320	100.0
Sudurpashchim	33.9	25.8	18.3	13.6	8.4	343,523	100.0
Urban-rural							
Urban municipalities	14.1	15.1	19.0	24.3	27.4	1,468,517	100.0
Rural municipalities	32.8	29.1	22.1	11.2	4.8	722,075	100.0
Ecological zone							
Mountain	41.6	28.1	20.2	7.5	2.7	116,060	100.0
Hill	20.7	21.1	16.3	18.2	23.7	990,723	100.0
Tarai	17.3	17.4	23.3	23.2	18.8	1,083,809	100.0
Nepal	**20.3**	**19.7**	**20.0**	**20.0**	**20.0**	**2,190,592**	**100.0**

Figure 3.14: Absentee population (abroad) by province and wealth quintile, 2021 census



3.3.6 Caste and ethnicity

Statistics on the caste and ethnicity of the population have been gathered since the first census in 1911; and these findings were made public for the first time in the 1991 census. A summary

of the population by the general caste and ethnic groupings is given in Table 3.18. A total of 59 castes and ethnicities were recorded in the 1991 census, 98 in the 2001 census, 125 in the 2011 census, and 142 in the 2021 census. The current study divided the 142 caste and ethnic groups into caste, Dalit, Janajati (ethnic group), and religious/linguistic groups. Caste, Dalits, and Janajatis are further divided into hill and Madhesh/Tarai groups.

The 2021 census found that, with the exception of religious and linguistic groups, number of caste/ethnicity has increased in every social category, caste groups. The number of groups of the Madhesh/Tarai caste increased more than two-times and Madhesh/Tarai and Janajati groups have almost tripled between 1991 and 2021.

Table 3.18: Number of caste and ethnic groups (1991–2021) and distribution of population by broader caste/ethnic groups for 2011 and 2021 censuses

Social groups	No. caste & ethnic groups				Population 2011		Population 2021	
	1991	2001	2011	2021	N	%	N	%
Caste groups	20	35	44	44	12,208,343	46.1	13,513,950	46.2
Hill castes	4	4	4	4	8,278,401	31.2	8,782,687	30.1
Madhesh/Tarai castes	16	31	40	40	3,929,942	14.8	4,682,277	16.1
Dalits	10	15	15	22	3,319,413	12.5	3,862,271	13.4
Hill Dalits	5	5	5	5	2,151,626	8.1	2,506,612	8.6
Madhesh/Tarai Dalits	5	10	10	17	1,167,787	4.4	1,392,378	4.8
Janajatis	26	45	63	73	9,486,414	35.8	10,206,303	35.0
Mountain/Hill Janajatis	20	31	48	55	7,125,835	26.9	7,610,379	26.1
Tarai Janajatis	6	14	15	18	2,360,579	8.9	2,608,191	8.9
Religious & linguistic groups	3	3	3	3	1,198,013	4.5	1,434,323	4.9
Musalman	1	1	1	1	1,164,255	4.4	1,418,677	4.9
Bangali	1	1	1	1	26,582	0.1	13,800	0.1
Panjabi/Sikh	1	1	1	1	7,176	0.0	1,846	0.0
Foreigners/other/not stated					282,321	1.1	147,731	0.5
Total count	**59***	**98***	**125***	**142***	**26,494,504**	**100.0**	**29,164,578**	**100.0**

Source: The classification adapted from Gurung (1998); Acharya and Subba (2008); CBS (2011); Bennett and Parajuli (2013); Gurung (2014: Population Monograph, CBS); Gurung et al. (2014); National Dalit Commission (2014); and Gurung et al. (2020).

Note: * Foreigners, not stated and others are not included in the total. See Annex 9 for details.

Out of 142 caste and ethnic groups recorded in 2021 census were also included in the 2011 census and the remaining 17 caste and ethnic groups were newly included in the 2021 census. The 17 newly included groups were Ranatharu, Bhumihar, Bankariya, Surel, Chumba/Nubri, Phri, Mugal/Mugum, Pun, Rauniyar, Baniyan, Gondh/Gond, Karmarong, Khatik, Beldar, Chai/Khulaut, Done, and Kewarat (NSO 2023d, Annex 9). Table 3.19 lists the 15 castes and ethnic groupings with the highest populations in the 2011 and 2021 censuses. See Annex 9 for the populations of all 142 groups broken down by broader social classification.

Kshetris made up the largest proportion of the population in 2021 (16.4%), followed by Hill Brahmans (11.3%), Magars (6.9%), Tharus (6.2%), and Tamangs (5.6%). The proportion of the population made up of Kshetris, Hill Brahmins, Magars, Tharus, Tamangs, and Newars dropped slightly between the 2011 and 2021 censuses while the proportion of Bishwokarmas (Kami), Musalman, Yadavs, and Pariyars (Damai/Dholi) grew.

Table 3.19: The caste and ethnic groups with the largest populations in the 2011 and 2021 censuses

S.N.	Caste/ethnicity	Population		Percentage	
		2011	2021	2011	2021
1	Kshetri	4,398,053	4,796,995	16.60	16.45
2	Hill Brahman	3,226,903	3,292,373	12.18	11.29
3	Magar	1,887,733	2,013,498	7.12	6.90
4	Tharu	1,737,470	1,807,124	6.56	6.20
5	Tamang	1,539,830	1,639,866	5.81	5.62
6	Bishwokarma (called Kami in 2011)	1,258,554	1,470,010	4.75	5.04
7	Musalman	1,164,255	1,418,677	4.39	4.86
8	Newa: (Newar)	1,321,933	1,341,363	4.99	4.60
9	Yadav	1,054,458	1,228,581	3.98	4.21
10	Rai	620,004	640,674	2.34	2.20
11	Pariyar (Damai/Dholi in 2011)	472,862	565,932	1.78	1.94
12	Gurung	522,641	543,790	1.97	1.86
13	Thakuri	425,623	494,470	1.61	1.70
14	Mijar (Sarki in 2011)	374,816	452,229	1.41	1.55
15	Teli	369,688	431,347	1.40	1.48

Source: Gurung (2014: Population Monograph, CBS); NSO (2023d), Table 2

The caste and ethnic groups with less than 1,000 persons in 2021 are listed in Table 3.20. Three of these groups have fewer than 500 inhabitants − Nurang (36), Bankariya (180), and Kusunda (253).

Table 3.20: Distribution of caste/ethnicity with less than 1000 population size, 2011 and 2021 censuses

S.N.	Less than 1000 population	2011	2021
1	Kalar	1,077	931
2	Phri	*na*	921
3	Koche	1,635	847
4	Topkegola	1,523	642
5	Raute	618	566
6	Walung	1,249	481
7	Lhomi	1,614	355
8	Surel	*na*	318
9	Kusunda	273	253
10	Bankariya	*na*	180
11	Nurang	278	36

Source: Gurung (2014: Population Monograph, CBS); NSO (2023d), Annex 9.
Note: *na* – no data available.

3.3.7 Languages

The 2021 census identified the ancestral languages, mother tongues and second languages of the population. This study only examines the reported mother tongues. The number of languages listed for Nepal's censuses has increased from 31 in 1991 to 92 in 2001 and 123 in the 2011 Census. The 2021 census grouped 12 foreign languages together as 'foreign languages' and added 13 new languages. The added languages were Bhote, Lowa, Chum/Nubri, Baragung, Nar-Phu, Ranatharu, Karmarong, Mugali, Tichhurong Poike, Sadri, Done, Munda/Mudiyari, and Kewarat (NSO, 2023d). Thus, a total of 124 different languages were listed as mother tongues in the 2021 census (Annex 10).

Table 3.21 lists the 15 languages with the highest number of mother tongue speakers in the 2021 census. Annex 10 provides the numbers of the mother tongue speakers in 2021 for all 124 languages. In 2021 the highest proportion of the population identified Nepali as their mother tongue (44.9% followed by Maithili (11.0%), Bhojpuri (6.2%) and Tharu (5.9%). Among these most common languages, the proportion of Awadhi speakers increased by 1.1 percentage points compared to 2011 while the proportion of Maithili speakers dropped by 0.7 percentage points and the proportion of Tamang, Nepalbhasha (Newari), Magar Dhut, and Doteli speakers also decreased.

Table 3.21: Top 10 languages spoken as mother tongue in Nepal, 2011 and 2021 censuses

S.N.	Language	2011	2021
1	Nepali	44.6	44.9
2	Maithili	11.7	11.0
3	Bhojpuri	6.0	6.2
4	Tharu	5.8	5.9
5	Tamang	5.1	4.9
6	Bajjika	3.0	3.9
7	Awadhi	1.9	3.0
8	Nepalbhasha (Newari)	3.2	3.0
9	Magar Dhut	3.0	2.8
10	Doteli	3.0	1.7

Source: Yadav (2014: Population Monograph, CBS); NSO (2023d), Table 11.

3.3.8 Religion

The religions that Nepal's population identify with have been tracked since the 1952−54 census. The 2011 and 2021 censuses listed ten religions. The majority of the populations identified as Hindus (81.19%), followed by Buddhists (8.21%), Muslims (5.09%) and Kirat (3.17%). The 2021 census found a slightly reduced proportion of Hindus, Buddhists, and Prakriti religion followers, while the proportion of Muslims, Kirats, Christians, and Bon followers increased (Table 3.22).

Table 3.22: Proportions of the population identifying with listed religions, 2011 and 2021 censuses

S.N.	Religion	2011	2021
1	Hindu	81.34	81.19
2	Buddhist	9.04	8.21
3	Islam	4.39	5.09
4	Kirat	3.05	3.17
5	Christian	1.42	1.76
6	Prakriti (Animism)	0.46	0.35
7	Bon	0.05	0.23
8	Jain	0.01	0.01
9	Bahai	0.00	0.00
10	Sikh	0.00	0.01
11	Unstated	0.23	*na*
	Total population	**26,494,504**	**29,164,578**

Source: Dahal (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 10; NSO (2023d), Table 14.
Note: *na* – no data available.

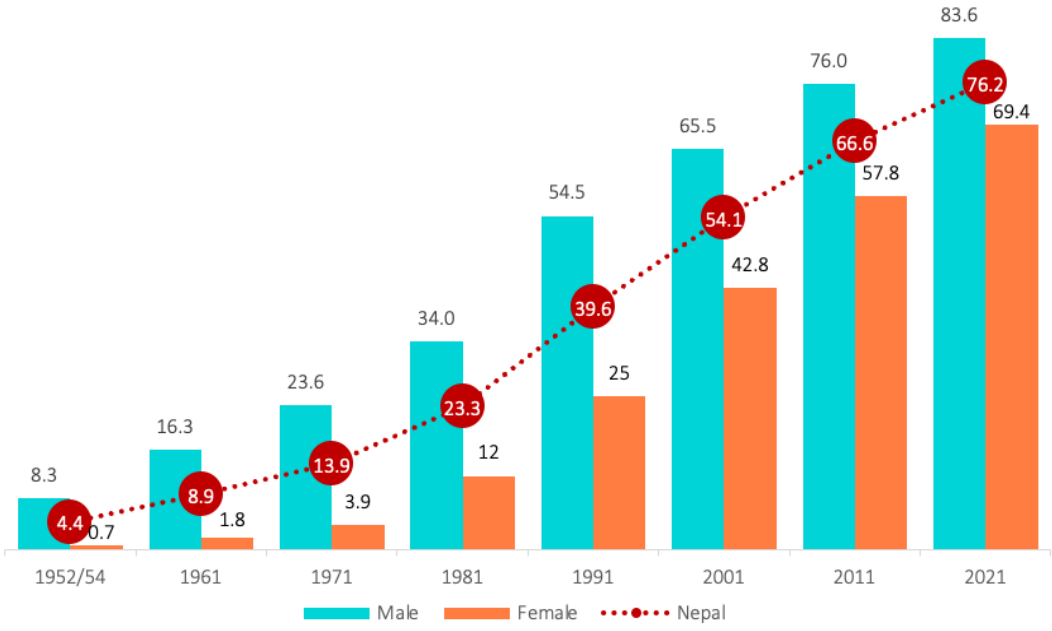
3.3.9 Literacy and education

Levels of literacy

The literacy level of Nepal's population has been measured since the 1952−1954 census, although the definition has changed. The 1952−1954, 1961 and 1971 censuses defined literacy as the capacity to read and write in any language. The 1981 census defined it as being able to read and write in any language with comprehension. Since 1991 the definition of literacy has been the ability to read and write with comprehension in any language and carry out simple mathematical operations. The reference age group of 6 years and older in 2001 changed to 5 years and above in 2011 and 2021.

The 1952−1954 census reported that only 4.4 percent of the population were literate (Figure 3.15). The 2021 census found that 76.2 percent of the population 5 years and older were literate. Male literacy improved from 76.0 percent in 2011 to 83.6 percent in 2021 while female literacy improved from 57.8 percent in 2011 to 69.4 percent in 2021, showing the continuing significant gender disparity.

Figure 3.15: Literacy rate in Nepal (5 year and above), 1952−54 to 2021 censuses



Source: CBS (1977), Table 93; GC & Shrestha (2014: Population Monograph, CBS); NSO (2023a), Table 24.
Note: From 1952/56 to 2001 census the literacy rate referred to population aged 6 years and above, while for census from 2011 to 2021 it was 5 years and above.

Distribution of literacy − The 2021 census reported that 78.5 percent of persons living in urban municipalities and 72.1 percent living in rural municipalities were literate (Table 3.23). By ecological zone the Hill had the largest literacy rate (80.9%) with 87.9 percent of men and 74.3

percent of women literate. Among the provinces Gandaki had the highest literacy rate (82.1%) while Madhesh had the lowest overall rate (63.5%) and the lowest female literacy rate (63.5%). The low rate of female literacy in Madhesh shows that many girls and women are excluded from education in this province. These results show that significant efforts are still needed to achieve SDG 4 (See detailed in Annex 11).

Table 3.23: Distribution of the population according to literacy level by sex (5 years and over), 2021 census

Area	Male		Female		Total	
	Population	Literacy rate	Population	Literacy rate	Population (5 yrs +)	Literacy rate
Nepal	**12,963,026**	**83.6**	**13,762,269**	**69.4**	**26,725,295**	**76.2**
Urban-rural						
Urban municipalities	8,630,222	85.4	9,119,465	71.9	17,749,687	78.5
Rural municipalities	4,332,804	79.8	4,642,804	64.4	8,975,608	71.9
Ecological zone						
Mountain	793,736	81.1	824,718	64.8	1,618,454	72.8
Hill	5,254,080	87.9	5,625,554	74.3	10,879,634	80.9
Tarai	6,915,210	80.5	7,311,997	66.1	14,227,207	73.1
Provinces						
Koshi	2,218,709	86.1	2,359,731	73.6	4,578,440	79.7
Madhesh	2,722,401	72.5	2,751,077	54.7	5,473,478	63.5
Bagmati	2,837,341	88.3	2,881,047	76.0	5,718,388	82.1
Gandaki	1,080,724	88.8	1,216,773	75.3	2,297,497	81.7
Lumbini	2,223,630	85.2	2,458,607	71.7	4,682,237	78.1
Karnali	735,203	83.3	784,408	69.4	1,519,611	76.1
Sudurpashchim	1,145,018	85.4	1,310,626	68.2	2,455,644	76.2

Source: NSO (2023a), Table 24; Annex 11.

The 2021 census found that the level of literacy increased by wealth quintile in urban and rural municipalities and across all three ecological zones and all seven provinces with no exceptions (Table 3.24). This shows that higher household incomes correlate with higher literacy levels. The lowest level of literacy was amongst the lowest wealth quintile households in Madhesh (47.7%).

Table 3.24: Literacy rate by wealth quintile by urban-rural municipalities, ecological zones and provinces, 2021 census

Area	Wealth quintile					
	Lowest	Lower	Middle	Higher	Highest	All
Nepal	62.0	71.2	74.3	82.8	90.0	76.1
Urban-rural						
Urban municipalities	60.1	70.0	74.5	83.5	90.2	78.3
Rural municipalities	63.6	72.5	74.0	80.0	87.1	71.7
Ecological zone						
Mountain	66.9	74.3	75.5	83.6	89.3	72.4
Hill	68.5	76.7	80.0	86.6	90.8	80.7
Tarai	54.4	65.4	71.3	80.7	89.1	73.0
Province						
Koshi	66.9	76.4	79.9	84.9	90.8	79.6
Madhesh	47.7	58.4	65.2	75.1	85.5	63.5
Bagmati	59.2	69.1	74.8	85.1	90.4	81.8
Gandaki	63.5	75.7	79.4	86.5	90.7	81.5
Lumbini	65.6	74.4	76.2	83.4	90.2	77.9
Karnali	70.3	78.3	84.1	89.9	92.1	75.9
Sudurpashchim	69.1	75.1	78.2	83.9	89.1	76.1
Total	**62.0**	**71.2**	**74.3**	**82.8**	**90.0**	**76.1**

Educational attainment

Education attainment in terms of attendance in school level education (below School Leaving Certificate [SLC]/Secondary Education Exam [SEE]) among persons aged 5-25 years is an important indicator to inform the level of educational attainment. Table 3.25 provides information on school attendance in three categories – currently attending, ever attended and never attended. Overall, almost 71 percent of 5-25 year olds were currently attending school education at the time of the 2021 census with slightly more males than females (36.7% male, 34.0% female). A further 21.2 percent had ever attended after having completed or dropped out from the school. The remaining 8.1 percent had never attended any formal school education.

The educational attendance rate in 2021 was consistently high across both rural and urban municipalities, the ecological zones and provinces (Table 3.25). It was slightly higher in urban than in rural municipalities and in the Hill compared to the Tarai. By province the attendance rate was highest in Gandaki (41.1% for males and 37.3% for females) and lowest in Madhesh (32.8% for males and 29.3% for females). On the other hand, the proportion of 5-25 years who had never attended any level of school education was lowest in the Hill (about 3%) and highest in the Tarai (11.6%) and highest in Madhesh (19.6%) and lowest in Gandaki (1.0%). These results

clearly show that the Tarai zone and Madhesh province have the lowest level of school attendance.

Table 3.25: School attendance among 5-25 year olds by sex, urban-rural municipality, ecological zone and province, 2021 census

Area	Currently attending		Ever attended		Never attended		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	%	N
Nepal	36.7	34.0	10.3	10.9	3.4	4.7	100.0	9,298,303
Urban-rural								
Urban municipalities	37.6	34.1	9.9	10.3	3.4	4.6	100.0	5,826,264
Rural municipalities	35.1	33.7	11.0	11.9	3.4	4.8	100.0	3,472,039
Ecological belt								
Mountain	38.2	37.5	9.5	9.9	2.0	2.9	100.0	610,656
Hill	39.1	36.6	10.4	10.9	1.3	1.6	100.0	3,335,142
Tarai	35.0	31.9	10.4	11.1	4.8	6.8	100.0	5,352,505
Province								
Koshi	36.8	34.9	11.7	11.9	2.1	2.7	100.0	1,475,944
Madhesh	32.8	29.3	9.1	9.2	8.1	11.5	100.0	2,362,563
Bagmati	39.9	36.1	11.0	9.7	1.6	1.7	100.0	1,480,905
Gandaki	41.1	37.3	9.4	10.4	0.9	1.0	100.0	640,953
Lumbini	35.9	33.5	11.7	13.4	2.3	3.3	100.0	1,735,195
Karnali	38.6	37.4	9.2	10.8	1.6	2.3	100.0	628,872
Sudurpashchim	38.4	37.2	9.0	11.7	1.4	2.2	100.0	973,871

The 2021 census findings on the distribution of the population aged 5 years and older by educational attainment are shown in Table 3.26. In 2021, about 93 percent of 5 year olds and older had completed some form of schooling, compared to about 91 percent in 2011. In 2021, nearly half the reference age group (48.6) had completed basic education, of which 28.7 percent had completed lower basic education (Grades 1–5) and 19.9 percent upper basic education. The proportion of 5-year-olds and older who had completed secondary education grew from 28.1 percent in 2011 to 37.7 percent in 2021. And the 2011 and 2021 censuses found significantly more males than females completing all levels, with the largest male-female disparity at the postgraduate and higher level; although the gender gap decreased from 2011 to 2021.

Table 3.26: Distribution of the population aged 5 years and above by completed educational level, 2011 and 2021 censuses

Educational level	2011				2021			
	Male	Female	Total N	Column %	Male	Female	Total N	Column %
Early childhood	53.5	46.5	639,031	4.0	54.0	46.0	896,546	4.4
Basic education (Grades 1-8)	53.7	46.3	9,551,637	59.3	53.4	46.6	9,927,063	48.6
Lower basic (1-5)	53.5	46.5	6,285,124	39.0	53.3	46.7	5,855,732	28.7
Upper basic (6-8)	54.2	45.8	3,266,513	20.3	53.7	46.3	4,071,331	19.9
Secondary (Grades 9-12)	56.8	43.2	4,529,975	28.1	52.8	47.2	7,688,714	37.7
Lower sec. (9-10)	55.9	44.1	1,857,368	11.5	53.3	46.7	3,148,180	15.4
Higher sec. (11-12)	57.5	42.5	1,636,159	16.6	52.5	47.5	1,939,631	22.2
Above secondary	69.1	30.9	616,176	3.8	58.1	41.9	1,371,761	6.7
Graduate & equivalent	67.0	33.0	457,744	2.8	55.4	44.6	930,176	4.6
Postgraduate +	75.0	25.0	158,432	1.0	63.7	36.3	441,585	2.2
Other								
Other	55.0	45.0	17,141	0.1	41.3	58.7	17,761	0.1
Non-formal, no level	46.2	53.8	668,117	4.2	35.0	65.0	357,592	1.8
Level not stated	53.3	46.7	76,442	0.5	44.1	55.9	148,687	0.7
Nepal	**54.9**	**45.1**	**16,098,519**	**100.0**	**53.1**	**46.9**	**20,408,124**	**100.0**

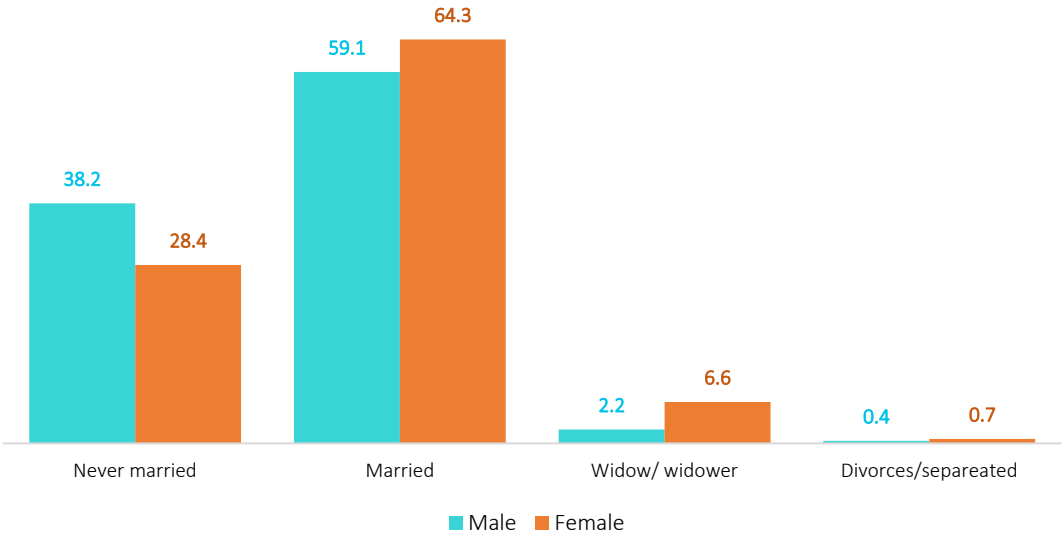
3.3.10 Marital status

Marital status remains an important demographic characteristic. There is a direct correlation between marriage and fertility as well as an indirect one with other demographic, social, and economic aspects. The marital status of people 10 years of age and older was categorized in the 2021 census as either never married or unmarried, married, widowed/widower, separated, or divorced. As of 2021 census about 59.1 percent of males and 64.3 percent of females were married while 0.7 percent were divorced or separated and 6.6 percent widows or widowers (Figure 3.15). More females than males had ever been married (married, widowed/widower, separated, divorced). About 33 percent of them had never been married and ten percentage points more males than females had never been married (38.2% males, 28.4% females).

The 2021 census found the following among 10 year olds and older:

- 59.1 of males and 64.3 percent of females were married while 0.7 percent were divorced or separated and 6.6 percent widows or widowers (Figure 3.16).
- More females than males had ever been married (married, widowed/widower, separated, divorced)
- About 33 percent of them had never been married and ten percentage points more males than females had never been married (38.2% males, 28.4% females).

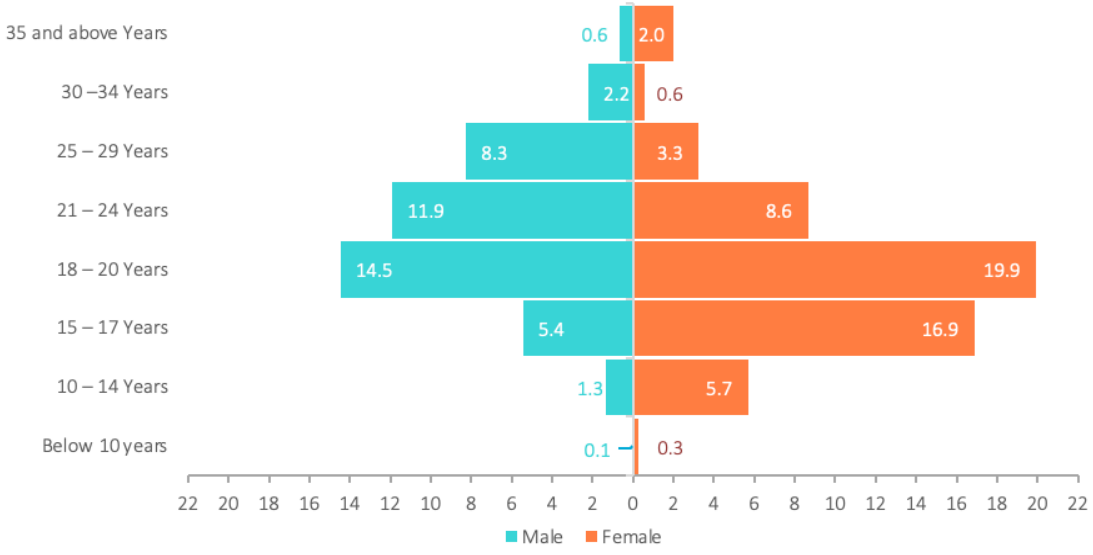
Figure 3.16: Marital status in Nepal, 2021 census



Source: NPHC (2023a), Table 21.

In terms of the simple average of the reported age at first marriage, the 2021 census found that significantly more females than males had married before the age of 20, while more males had married after the age of 20 (Figure 3.17). Amongst females, 5.7 percent had first married at aged 10–14 years, 16.9 percent at age 15–17 years and 19.9 percent at age 18–20 years.

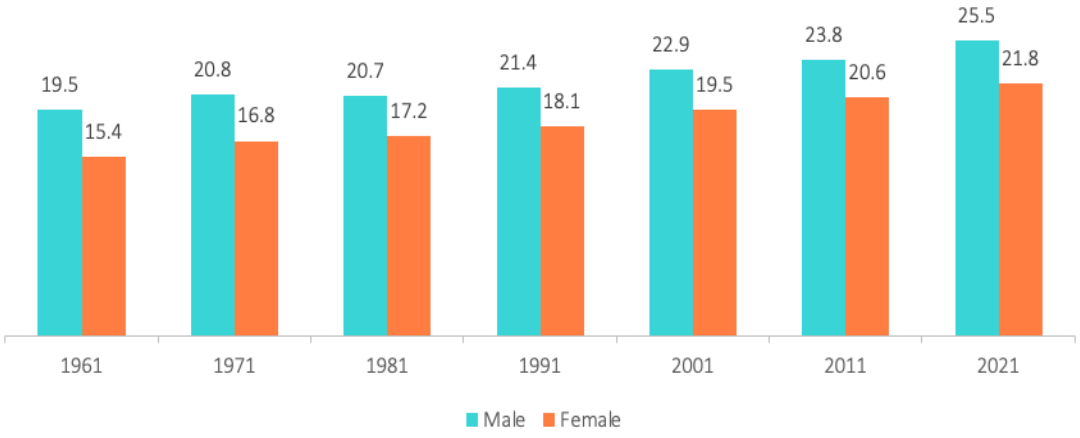
Figure 3.17: Age-sex pyramid of age at first marriage, 2021 census



Source: NSO (2023a), Table 22.

The mean age at first marriage is approximated by an indirect method using data on marital status by age, which is called singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM). The method was developed by John Hajnal in 1953 (Shryock et al., 1976: 167). SMAM is the mean number of years lived by a cohort of women and men before their first marriage. It is derived from the proportion of males or females in successive age groups. It considers the mean age at marriage of females or males aged 15 years and above before they attain the age of 50. The current SMAM is 25.5 for males and 21.8 for females (Figure 3.18). The SMAM is five points higher for males than females. The SMAM has been gradually increasing over the years when looking through 1961 to 2021, which applies to both males and females.

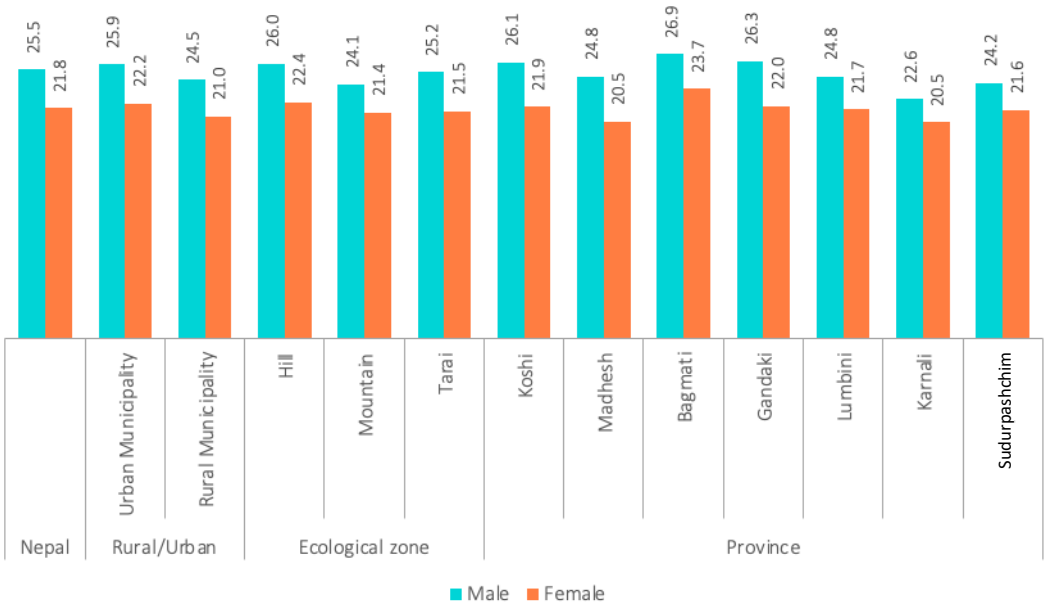
Figure 3.18: Singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM) by sex, 1961-2021 censuses



Source: Bajracharya & Bhandari (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Figure 4.3; NSO (2023c).

The SMAM does not seem to be significantly vary between the areas displayed in Figure 3.19. It ranges around 25 years. However, it is slightly higher in urban municipalities than its rural counterparts. Hill has relatively higher SMAM than in mountain and Tarai. Koshi, Bagmati and Gandaki have relatively higher SMAM than other provinces. The same pattern applies to both males and females. Gender gap is also similar to all areas. It is, however, closest in Karnali and Sudurpaschim where the gap is only about two years.

Figure 3.19: Singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM) by sex and by rural/urban municipality, ecological zone, and province, 2021 census



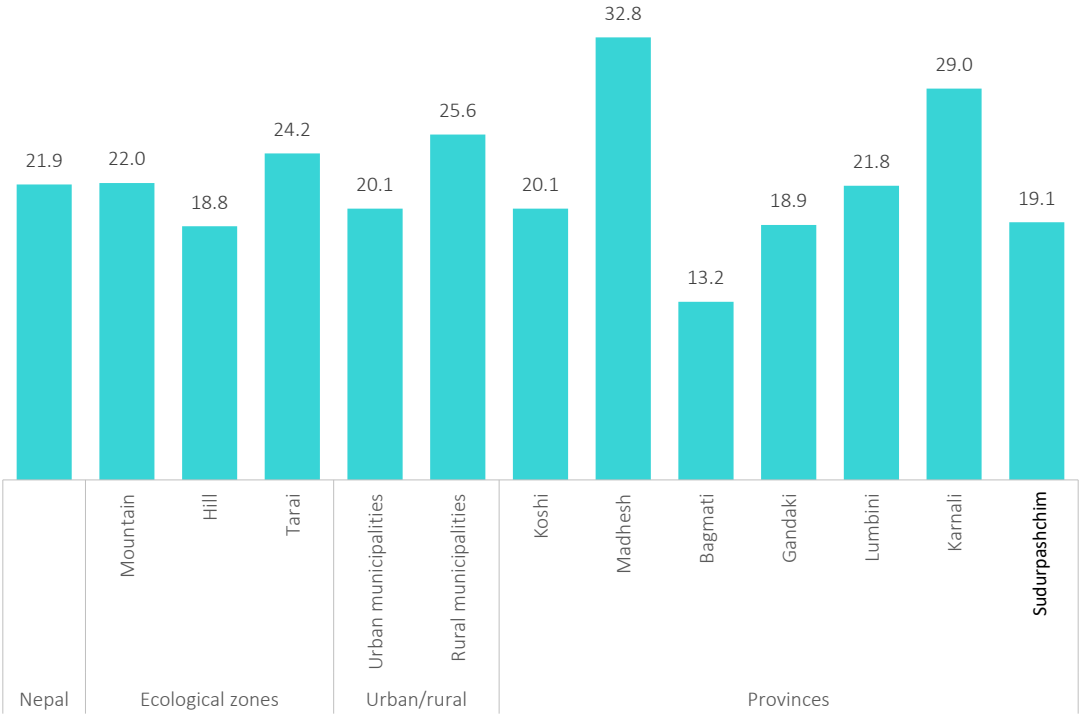
3.3.11 Child marriage

Although 20 years is the legal minimum age for marriage in Nepal for both males and females, the 2021 census considered child marriage to be where 20 to 24 years old women had married before turning 18. The 2021 census found that 21.9 percent of 20−24 year old women had married before they were 18 years old (Figure 3.20). This rate is slightly less than in India (23.3%) (UNFPA, 2022) and considerably lower than in Bangladesh (51%).[7]

The 2021 census found that child marriage was almost six percentage points higher in rural (25.6%) than urban municipalities (20.1%) (Figure 3.20). By ecological zone, it was more common in the Tarai (24.2%) and less common in the HIll (18.8%). The provinces with the highest rates of child marriage in 2021 were Madhesh (32.8%) and Karnali (29.0%), whereas it is the lowest in Bagmati (13.2%). The Madhesi communities have a high incidence of child marriage. It is a sign of lower socioeconomic development and lower levels of education, higher fertility, and high maternal mortality.

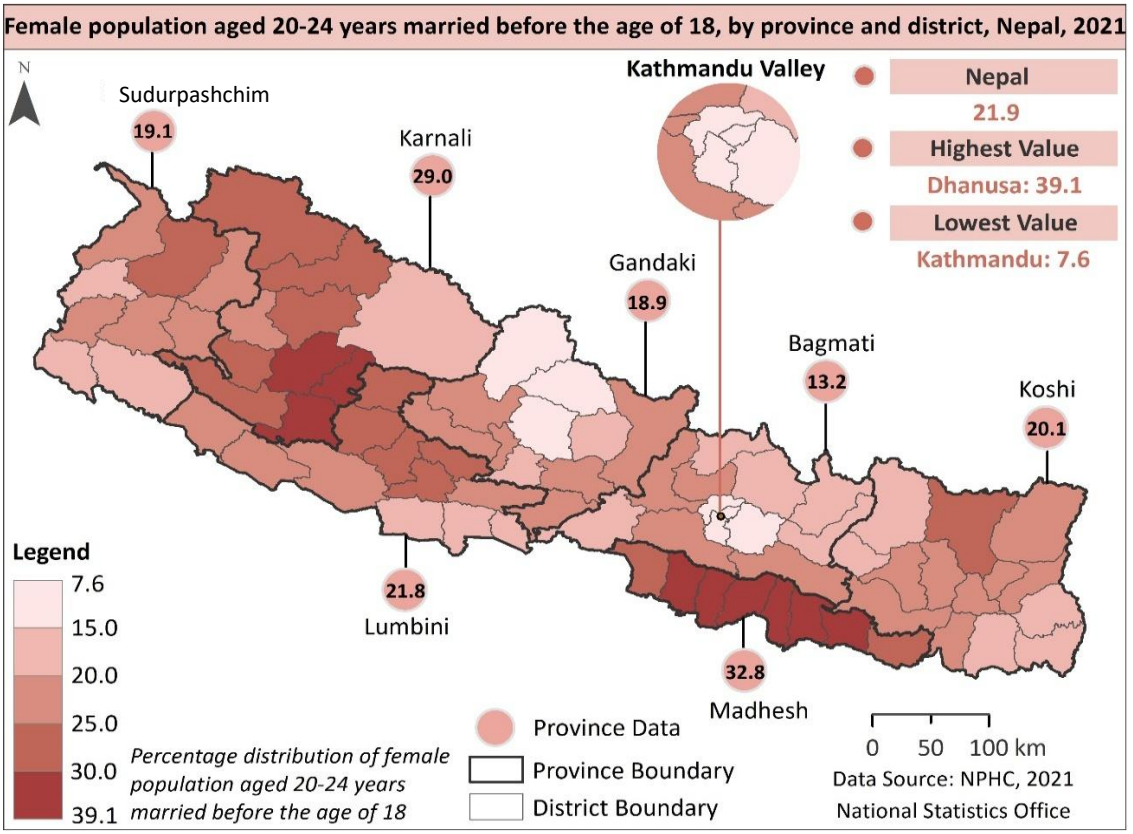
[7] https://bangladesh.unfpa.org/en/topics/child-marriage-2

Figure 3.20: Prevalence of child marriage among women aged 20-24 years, 2021 census



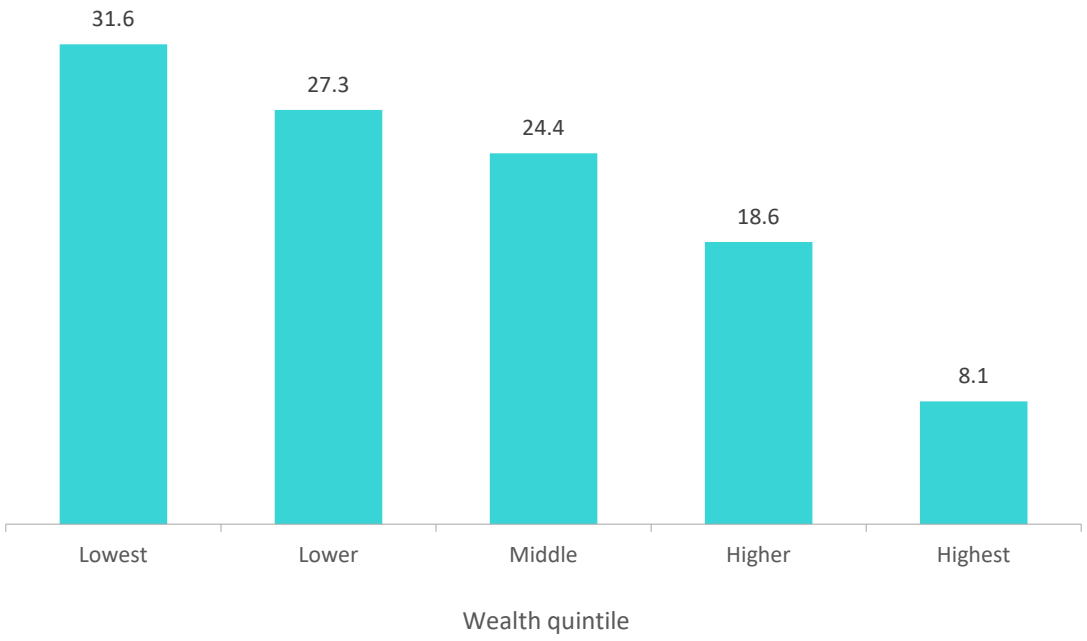
There is much evidence linking illiteracy to underage marriage in Madhesh province. The districts with the highest rates of child marriage were in Dhanusa (39.1%) and Rautahat (37.4%) in Madhesh (Annex 12). The prevalence of child marriage is lowest in Kathmandu (7.6%) and then Lalitpur (8.5%) and Bhaktapur (8.6%). There are 39 districts with a prevalence of child marriage above national average (21.9%) and 36 districts with a prevalence below national average (Map 3.9, Annex 12).

Map 3.9: Prevalence of child marriage among 20-24 year old women by district, 2021 census



Poverty is a major contributor to child marriage with child marriage being more prevalent amongst the lowest wealth quintile and the lowest prevalence amongst the highest quintile (Figure 3.21). The 2021 census found twice as much child marriage in lowest quintile compared to highest quintile households (31.6% vs 8.1%). Thus, women in the lowest quintile are four times more likely to marry before turning 18 than women in the highest quintile.

Figure 3.21: Prevalence of child marriage by wealth quintile, 2021 census



3.3.12 Disability

Disability can be defined in different ways related to physical and mental conditions that restrict a person's senses, activities, and range of motion. A direct question on disability was included in Nepal's population census for the first time in 1971 and subsequently in the 1981 census. The 1991 census did not cover disability, while the 2001, 2011 and 2021 censuses did.

However, no official records on the disability findings are available for the 1971 and 1981 censuses. They are available for the subsequent censuses, for their differing range of types of disabilities:

- The 2001 census defined five types of disabilities (physical disability, blindness, deafness, mental retardation, and multiple disabilities),
- The 2011 census defined eight types of disabilities (physical disability, blindness or low vision, deafness or hard of hearing, deafness and blindness, speech issues, mental disability, intellectual disability, and multiple disabilities).
- The 2021 census defined the 12 types of disabilities of physical disability, low vision, blindness, deafness, hard of hearing, deaf and blindness, speech impairment, psychosocial disability, intellectual disability, haemophilia, autism, and multiple impairments.

The 2001 census reported 0.4 percent of the total population as having a disability while the 2011 census reported that 1.9 percent of the population as having a disability. The proportion

increased again with the 2021 census reporting 2.2 percent of persons with a disability of which 54.2 percent were male and 45.8 percent female (Table 3.27).

Table 3.27: Distribution of persons with a disability, 2001–2021 censuses

	Population			Percentage with a disability		
	2001	2011	2021	2001	2011	2021
Males	47,162	290,086	354,889	0.2	1.1	1.2
Females	56,633	233,235	299,893	0.2	0.9	1.0
Both	103,795	513,321	654,782	0.4	1.9	2.2
Nepal	**23,151,423**	**26,494,504**	**29,164,578**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: NSO (2023a) Table 23; Khanal (2014: Population Monograph, CBS) Table 9.3.

The 2021 census found the incidence of disability to be higher in rural than urban municipality areas, in the Mountain than in the Hill and Tarai, and in Gandaki and Karnali provinces (Table 3.28). It also found that males were are more likely than females to have a disability all seven provinces, all three ecological zones, and in urban and rural municipalities. Karnali had the highest rate of male disability (3.5%).

Table 3.28: Distribution of population with a disability, 2021 census

Area and sex	Total			Male			Female		
	Total pop.	Persons with a disability	%	Total pop.	Persons with disability	%	Total pop.	Person with disability	%
Urban-rural									
Urban municipalities	19,296,788	390,729	2.0	9,454,545	211,053	2.2	9,842,243	179,676	1.8
Rural municipalities	9,867,790	257,015	2.6	4,799,006	140,248	2.9	5,068,784	116,767	2.3
Ecological zones									
Mountain	1,772,948	50,970	2.9	874,260	27,911	3.2	898,688	23,059	2.6
Hill	11,757,624	296,795	2.5	5,717,247	159,433	2.8	6,040,377	137,362	2.3
Tarai	15,634,006	299,979	1.9	7,662,044	163,957	2.1	7,971,962	136,022	1.7
Provinces									
Koshi	4,961,412	117,219	2.4	2,417,328	63,208	2.6	2,544,084	54,011	2.1
Madhesh	6,114,600	91,400	1.5	3,065,751	51,940	1.7	3,048,849	39,460	1.3
Bagmati	6,116,866	124,100	2.0	3,048,684	65,888	2.2	3,068,182	58,212	1.9
Gandaki	2,466,427	72,330	2.9	1,170,833	38,647	3.3	1,295,594	33,683	2.6
Lumbini	5,122,078	120,414	2.4	2,454,408	65,399	2.7	2,667,670	55,015	2.1
Karnali	1,688,412	52,604	3.1	823,761	29,240	3.5	864,651	23,364	2.7
Sudurpashchim	2,694,783	69,677	2.6	1,272,786	36,979	2.9	1,421,997	32,698	2.3

Source: NSO (2023a), Table 23.

3.3.13 LGBTI

For the first time, the 2011 census counted 1,500 persons as other gender, but this result was not made public. The 2021 census classified gender as those with a marginalized sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or sex characteristics as 'others beside males and females. The 2021 census collected the data with this category, but only in the household listing and not from the main questionnaire. Thus, only the total count of population with this category is available but not details of individuals. According to the finding, the 2021 census counted 2,928 persons who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex persons (LGBTI) (Table 3.29). The most other gender persons were reported from urban municipalities, the Hill, and Bagmati province.

Table 3.29: Spatial distribution of other gender (LGBTI) persons, 2021 census

Spatial distribution	Number	% among total LGBTI
Urban-rural		
Urban municipalities	2,118	72.3
Rural municipalities	810	27.7
Ecological zone		
Mountain	132	4.5
Hill	1,406	48.0
Tarai	1,390	47.5
Province		
Koshi	304	10.4
Madhesh	729	24.9
Bagmati	956	32.7
Gandaki	228	7.8
Lumbini	432	14.8
Karnali	81	2.8
Sudurpashchim	198	6.8
Nepal	**2,928**	**100.0**

3.4 The economically active population

The 2021 census collected information on the economic activities of the population aged 10 years and above by classifying them into economically active, usually economically active and employed persons that are defined as follows:

Economically active persons: Persons aged 10 years and above who are engaged in economic activities.

Economic activity: An economic activity is a process based on inputs, leads to the manufacture of a good or the provision of a service.

Economically active population: All persons above a specified age who furnish the supply of labour to produce economic goods and services (employed and unemployed, including those seeking work for the first time) during a specified time reference period.

Employment: Persons in employment are those of working age who, during a short reference period, were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit. They comprise employed persons "at work", "not at work" due to temporary absence from a job, or to working-time arrangements.

The 2021 census found that 15,689,777 of the 23,900,789 ten years and above population were economically active (Table 3.30), of which 11,038,105 were 'usually economically active' (Table 3.31). And 10,270,447 of the usually economically active population were counted as employed as they were engaged in activities to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit – defined as having had a job for six months or more or had worked three to five months and had been available for work during the last 12 months (Table 3.32).

About two-thirds (65.6%) of the population 10 year olds and above were economically active (Table 3.30). Economically engaged males made up 71.3 percent of the population; about 11 percentage points more than females (60.4%). More people who lived in rural municipalities (70.6%) were economically active than the people in urban municipalities (63.2%) while the Mountain had the highest proportion of economically active people (74.3%) compared to 68.4 percent in the Hill and 62.5 percent in the Tarai (62.5%).

Across the seven provinces, Karnali had the highest percentage of economically active people (72%), followed by Koshi (71.1%), with the lowest proportion in Madhesh (57.3%). Madhesh and the Tarai had the highest gender gap with 67.3 percent of males and only 47.6 percent of females in Madhesh province and 70 percent of males but only 55.5 percent of females in the Tarai being economically active (Table 3.30).

Table 3.30: Distribution of economically active persons aged 10 years and above, 2021 census

Area	Male	Female	Total	N*
Nepal	71.3	60.4	65.6	
n (Economically active)	(8,196,508)	(7,493,269)	(15,689,777)	23,900,789
N (Population aged 10+ years)	11,493,836	12,406,953	23,900,789	
Urban-rural				
Urban municipalities	69.7	57.1	63.2	15,939,118
Rural municipalities	74.5	66.9	70.6	7,961,671
Ecological zone				
Mountain	75.9	72.7	74.3	1,437,097
Hill	72.3	64.9	68.4	9,843,315
Tarai	70.0	55.5	62.5	12,620,377
Province				
Koshi	76.5	66.1	71.1	4,123,718
Madhesh	67.3	47.6	57.3	4,765,323
Bagmati	70.7	59.0	64.8	5,257,239
Gandaki	69.7	63.7	66.5	2,069,449

Area	Male	Female	Total	N*
Lumbini	71.3	61.2	65.9	4,173,170
Karnali	73.6	70.5	72.0	1,331,660
Sudurpashchim	72.3	68.8	70.4	2,180,230

Note: * 'Economic activity not stated' not included in this table.
Source: NSO (2023a), Table 40.

Among the economically active population (15,689,777), the 2021 census reports that 70.4 percent were 'usually economically active' meaning that they had worked or looked for work for six months or more during the past 12 months (Table 3.31). Overall, many more males (78.6%) than females (61.3%) were usually economically active, while the total proportions were almost the same in urban and rural municipalities. The Tarai (68.6%) had a slightly lower proportion of usually economically persons than the mountain and hill zones while Madhesh (66.1%) and Sudurpashchim (65.8%) provinces had lower proportions than the other five provinces. The 2021 census identified a large gender gap in the usually economically active population in the rural and urban municipalities, ecological zones and provinces. The male to female gap was the widest in Madhesh (78.6% vs 48.8%) and Lumbini provinces (76.9% vs 58.9%).

Table 3.31: Percentage of usually economically active population aged 10 years and above, 2021 censuses

Area	Male	Female	Total	N*
Nepal	78.6	61.3	70.4	
n (Usually economically active)	(6,444,015)	(4,594,090)	(11,038,105)	15,689,777
N (Total economically active)	8,196,508	7,493,269	15,689,777	
Urban-rural				
Urban municipalities	79.9	60.6	70.8	10,071,948
Rural municipalities	76.2	62.6	69.5	5,617,829
Ecological zones				
Mountain	75.0	67.1	71.1	1,067,163
Hill	78.6	65.7	72.2	6,735,049
Tarai	79.1	56.4	68.6	7,887,565
Provinces				
Koshi	80.2	64.9	72.8	2,932,209
Madhesh	78.6	48.8	66.1	2,730,447
Bagmati	82.6	66.7	75.3	3,404,823
Gandaki	78.1	65.6	71.7	1,376,396
Lumbini	76.9	58.9	68.0	2,752,196
Karnali	74.5	65.2	69.8	958,643
Sudurpashchim	71.8	60.4	65.8	1,535,063

Note: * 'Economic activity not stated' not included in this table.
Source: NSO (2023a), Table 40.

The 2021 census found that 93.8 percent of the population aged 10 years and above who were usually economically active had been employed in the previous 12 months (Table 3.32). The gender gap was relatively small as 93.8 percent of males compared to 92 percent of females.

The employment rate was almost the same in the rural and the urban municipalities, the three ecological zones, and the seven provinces. However, the Madhesh had a significant gender gap with six percentage points more men working than women.

Table 3.32: Proportion employed among 10 year olds and above who were usually economically active, 2021 census

Area	Male	Female	Total	N*
Nepal	93.8	92.0	93.0	
n (Employed)	(6,043,087)	(4,227,360)	(10,270,447)	11,038,105
N (Usually economically active)	6,444,015	4,594,090	11,038,105	
Urban-rural				
Urban municipalities	93.8	91.0	92.7	7,134,611
Rural municipalities	93.8	93.7	93.8	3,903,494
Ecological zone				
Mountain	93.7	94.5	94.1	758,555
Hill	93.9	93.3	93.6	4,865,136
Tarai	93.7	90.2	92.4	5,414,414
Province				
Koshi	95.3	94.2	94.8	2,134,891
Madhesh	93.6	87.5	91.7	1,803,838
Bagmati	94.7	93.1	94.1	2,562,263
Gandaki	92.6	92.5	92.6	986,520
Lumbini	92.7	90.8	91.9	1,872,211
Karnali	92.4	92.6	92.5	668,715
Sudurpashchim	92.2	91.9	92.0	1,009,667

Note: * 'Economic activity not stated' not included in this table.

Source: NSO (2023a), Table 40.

4. AGE AND SEX COMPOSITION

4.1 Age and sex composition

The median age of a population is the age that splits the population into two half and indicates if populations are young or old. The 2021 census found that Nepal's population had a median age of 26 years (Table 4.1). In comparison, in 2020, the median age of Japan's population was 48.4 years[8], while China's was 38.4 years in 2020[9] and India's 28.4 years in 2020[10]. Nepal's population is thus significantly younger than the populations of China and Japan and a little younger than India's population.

The demographic dividend is something Nepal has plenty of time and chances to benefit from. The median (average) age of Nepal's population did not seem to be consistent till 1981, however, it consistently increased from 1991 to 2021. Reasons for inconsistencies before 1991 demand for further investigation. The median age was 18.9 years in 1991 census, which increased by 7 years during last three decades (Table 4.1). The 2021 census recorded males as having a lower median age (25 years) than females (27 years). A lower median age has been recorded for males in all of these censuses.

Table 4.1: Median age of Nepal's population of Nepal, 1952–54 to 2021 censuses

Census year	Male	Female	Total
1952–54	20.0	21.8	21.0
1961	22.4	24.1	23.2
1971	22.3	23.2	22.8
1971	19.8	20.7	20.3
1981	19.5	20.3	19.9
1991	18.4	19.4	18.9
2001	19.0	20.0	20.0
2011	21.3	23.1	22.3
2021	25.0	27.0	26.0

Source: Adhikary (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 3.19; CBS (1977), Table 13.

This study has identified seven age groups, some overlapping, as representing the main stages of life (see Table 4.2). Infants and children aged 0–4 years require the most rigorous health care to ensure their physical development. The proportion of Nepal's population under five years old

[8] https://knoema.com/atlas/Japan/topics/Demographics/Age/Median-age-of-population

[9] https://knoema.com/atlas/China/topics/Demographics/Age/Median-age-of-population

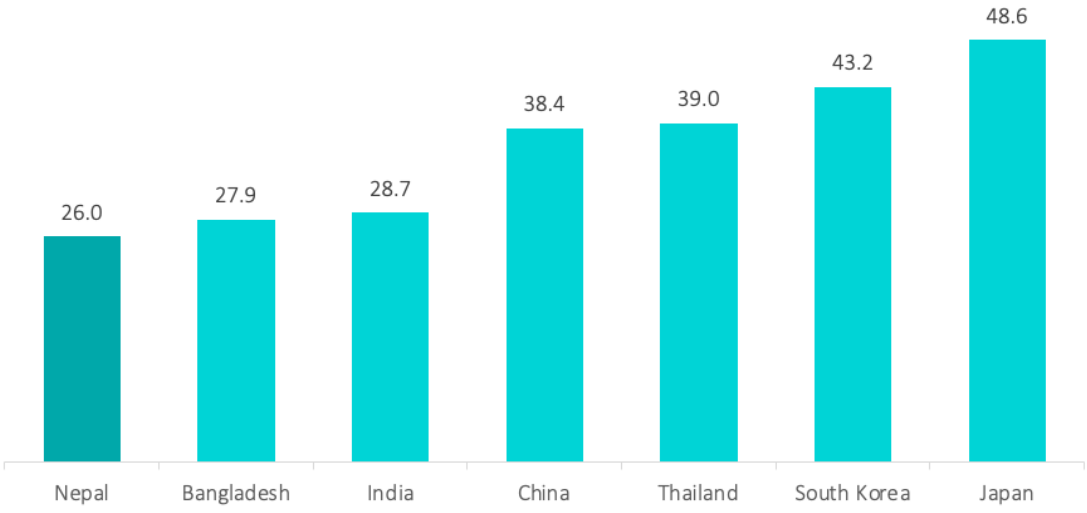
[10] https://knoema.com/atlas/India/topics/Demographics/Age/Median-age-of-population

decreased from 9.7 percent in 2011 to 8.4 percent in 2021. The 2021 census found that this age group had the very high sex ratio of 112 males to 100 females. The lack of females in this age group demonstrates the strong son preference in Nepali society.

The proportion of 0 to 14 year olds in the population fell by almost seven percentage points from 34.9 percent in 2011 to 27.8 percent in 2021.

The proportion of 5−24 year olds decreased by nearly six percentage points from 45.2 percent in 2011 to 39.2 percent in 2021. This age group covers the stage of physical, mental, and educational growth.

Figure 4.1: Median age of population by selected Asian countries, 2023 and 2021 census



Source: https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/median-age

The total female population expanded by around 1.2 million between 2011 and 2021, making up 53.4 percent of the population with a sex ratio of only 89 males per 100 females. This means that there are more females than males in this age range. In 2021, 28.8 percent of adults in this age group, increased by nearly three percentage points from 2011.

Adult (25−44 years) and middle-aged (45−64 years) populations are the most productive. If this population is effectively used in the development process, the nation will eventually benefit from the demographic dividend. The population of those 65 and older also grew by roughly two percentage points between 2011 and 2021 showing that Nepal's population is ageing.

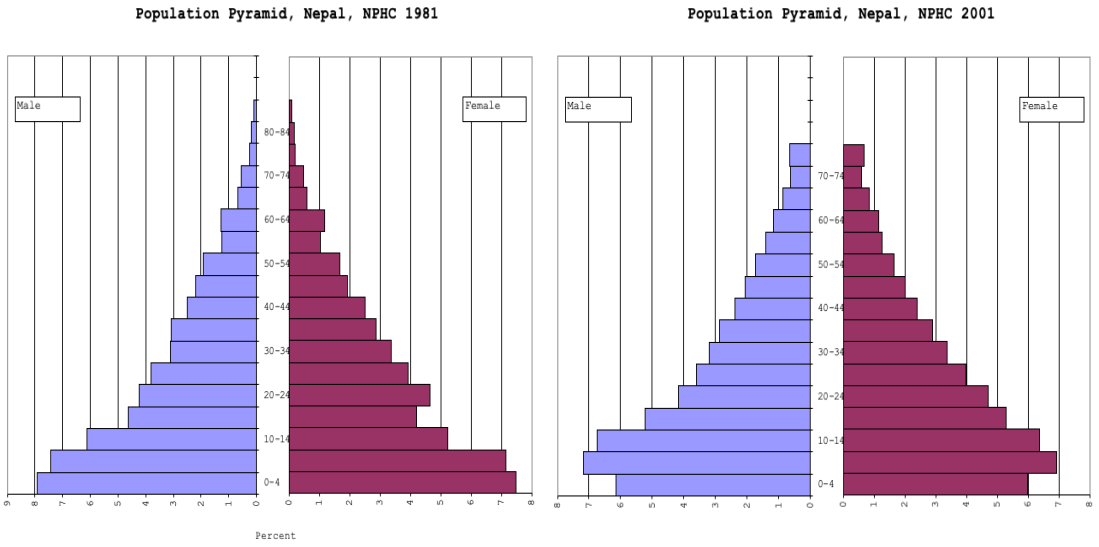
Table 4.2: Distribution of population and sex ratio by main age groups, 2011-2021 censuses

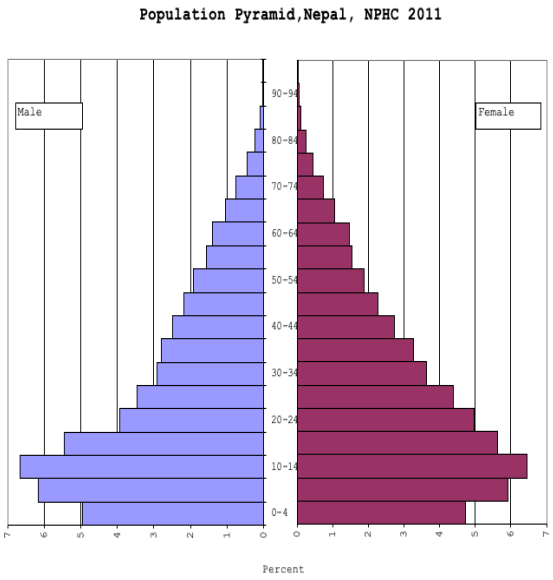
Ages	Age groups	2011		2021		Sex ratio M: F	
		N	%	N	%	2011	2021
0-4	Young children	2,567,963	9.7	2,439,283	8.4	105	112
0-14	Children	9,248,246	34.9	8,115,575	27.8	104	109
5-24	School, college, training age children and young persons	11,970,334	45.2	11,425,756	39.2	97	101
15-49	Childbearing age persons Females:	13,268,109 (7,117,526)	50.1	15,581,889 (8,232,181)	53.4	86	89
25-44	Highly productive adults	6,805,099	25.7	8,396,385	28.8	83	85
45-64	Middle age productive adults	3,753,525	14.2	4,881,440	16.7	98	95
65+	Old persons	1,397,583	5.3	2,021,714	6.9	99	94

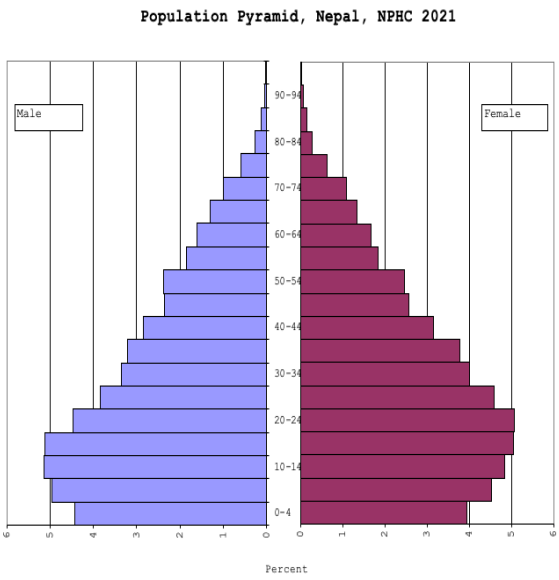
Source: CBS (2012), Table 15. NSO (2023a), Table 17.

Figure 4.2 shows Nepal's population pyramids for 1981, 2001, 2011 and 2021 (it is to note here that the 1991 census has not been used because that is not significant different from 2001 census) (Annex 13 and 14). The shape of the pyramid changes over the period with the wider portion moving from the 0–4 years age group to the 15–19 years age group. The bottom halves of the pyramids have changed from a concave shape in 1981 to a convex shape in 2021.

Figure 4.2: Nepal's population pyramids, 1981, 2001, 2011 and 2021 censuses





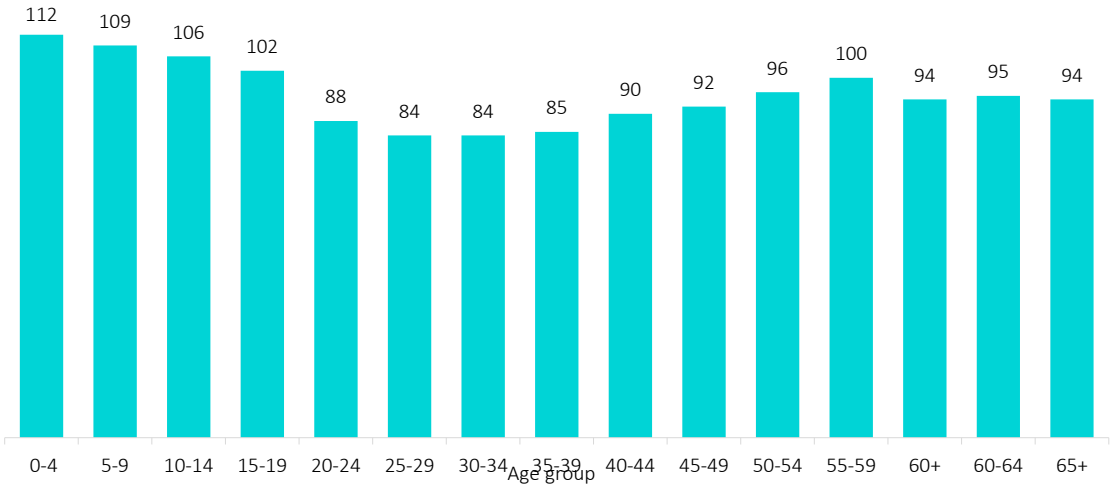


The sex ratio is the proportion of males to females in the population. The 1952−54 and 1961 censuses found the same sex ratios of 97 males to every 100 females. Males were in the majority in the 1971 and 1981 censuses with ratios of 101 and 105 respectively. The 1991 and 2001 censuses subsequently recorded an equal number of males and females (100) while the proportion of males to females subsequently decreased with sex ratios of 94 in 2011 and 96 in 2021 (Table 4.3). It is not unexpected that more men than women are migrating to other countries to work as foreign labourers these days from Nepal. This is confirmed by the age group sex ratios in 2021 (Figure 4.3 and Table 4.3).

The sex ratio in 2021 was between 84−88 males for every 100 females for 20 to 39 year olds. It then steadily increased to parity (100) at 55−59 years old, subsequently declining in the older age groups. The lesser number of males of working age is mostly explained by many men working outside Nepal. The greater number of females than males is also explained by the greater life expectancy of women (the life expectancy is 72 for females against 69 for males[11]). However, males are more males than females in the 0−19 years age groups (Figure 4.3).

[11] https://www.prb.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/2023-World-Population-Data-Sheet-Booklet.pdf

Figure 4.3: Sex ratios by age group, 2021 census



Source: Adhikary (2014: Population Monograph, CBS) Table 3.3; NSO (2023a), Table 18.

Table 4.3: Sex ratios by five-year age groups, Nepal, 1952–54 to 2021 censuses

Age groups	Census years							
	1952–54	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	2021
0-4	98	98	94	106	103	103	105	112
5-9	103	103	103	104	104	103	104	109
10-14	114	114	118	117	108	106	103	106
15-19	102	102	110	110	96	99	97	102
20-24	88	86	93	91	85	88	79	88
25-29	89	90	96	96	89	91	79	84
30-34	89	91	91	92	92	95	80	84
35-39	100	104	108	107	101	99	86	85
40-44	89	89	98	100	95	99	91	90
45-49	102	101	114	114	104	104	96	92
50-54	92	92	104	115	106	105	101	96
55-59	102	100	107	119	116	112	102	100
60+	**80**	**83**	**89**	**111**	**103**	**102**	**98**	**94**
60-64	76	80	89	109	100	101	95	95
65+	**84**	**86**	**95**	**113**	**105**	**102**	**99**	**94**
Nepal	**97**	**97**	**101**	**105**	**100**	**100**	**94**	**96**

Source: Adhikary (2014: Population Monograph, CBS) Table 3.3; NSO (2023a), Table 18.

4.2 The distribution of age and sex by ecological zone

The 2021 census found that the Hill zone had the highest median age (27 years), which was two years higher than the 25 years in the Mountain and Tarai (Table 4.4). The data shows the median age rising in almost all cases from the lowest to the highest quintiles, suggesting that longer life

expectancy is correlated with higher socioeconomic status (Miladinov, 2020). The highest median age was amongst the highest wealth quintile population in the Hill zone and Bagmati province (31 and 32 years). However, it is quite unusual for Gandaki that median age is highest for lowest wealth quintile and the association pattern also did not follow properly.

Table 4.4: Median age by wealth quintile, by urban-rural, ecological zone and province, 2021 census

Area	Lowest	Lower	Middle	Higher	Highest	Total
Nepal	**23.0**	**24.0**	**25.0**	**25.0**	**30.0**	**26.0**
Urban-rural						
Urban municipalities	23.0	24.0	25.0	25.0	30.0	26.0
Rural municipalities	23.0	24.0	25.0	26.0	28.0	25.0
Ecological zone						
Mountain	22.0	24.0	28.0	27.0	29.0	25.0
Hill	24.0	25.0	28.0	26.0	31.0	27.0
Tarai	22.0	23.0	24.0	25.0	29.0	25.0
Provinces						
Koshi	26.0	26.0	27.0	28.0	31.0	28.0
Madhesh	21.0	22.0	22.0	24.0	26.0	23.0
Bagmati	28.0	27.0	28.0	26.0	32.0	29.0
Gandaki	33.0	29.0	29.0	26.0	30.0	29.0
Lumbini	24.0	24.0	25.0	25.0	28.0	25.0
Karnali	21.0	22.0	24.0	23.0	27.0	22.0
Sudurpashchim	21.0	23.0	24.0	25.0	28.0	23.0

Population pyramids show the age distribution of populations and the pyramids of three ecological zones are displayed in Figure 4.4 to 4.7 (Annex 15-20). The Hill population pyramid is almost the same as the pyramid of the whole country (Figure 4.2 and 4.5) while the Tarai's pyramid has a wider base in the younger age groups indicating the higher fertility rate in this area (Figures 4.5 and 4.6). The pyramid for the Mountain zone indicates a slightly lower fertility rate than in the Tarai and the proportion of older people is relatively lower in Mountain (Figure 4.4). The proportion of 15 years and above persons is higher in the Hill than in the other two zones (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.4: Mountain zone population pyramid, 2021 census

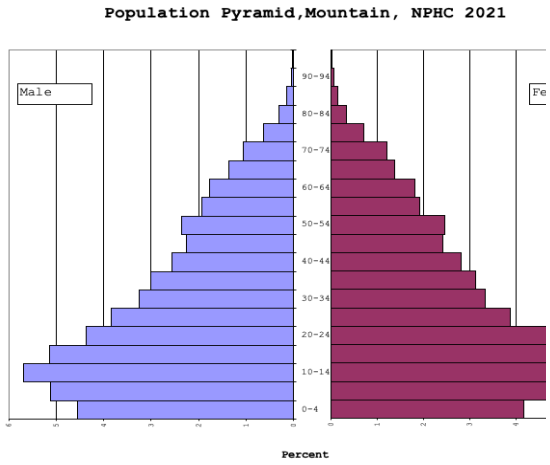


Figure 4.5: Hill zone population pyramid, 2021 census

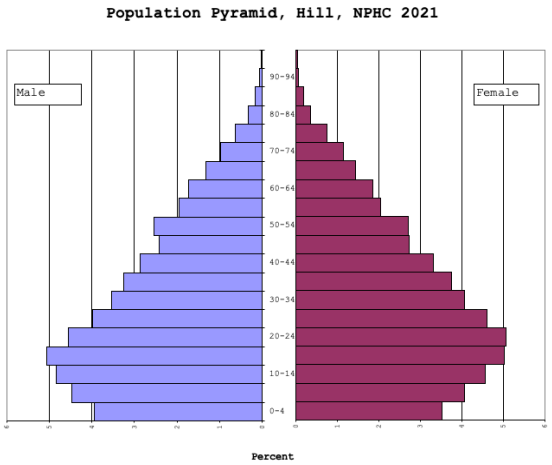
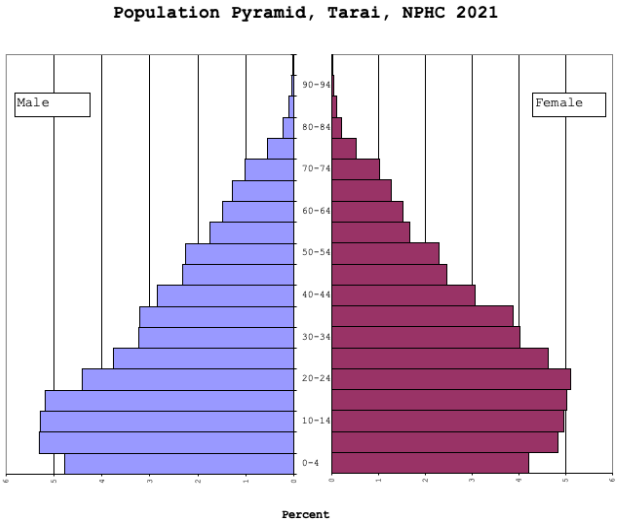
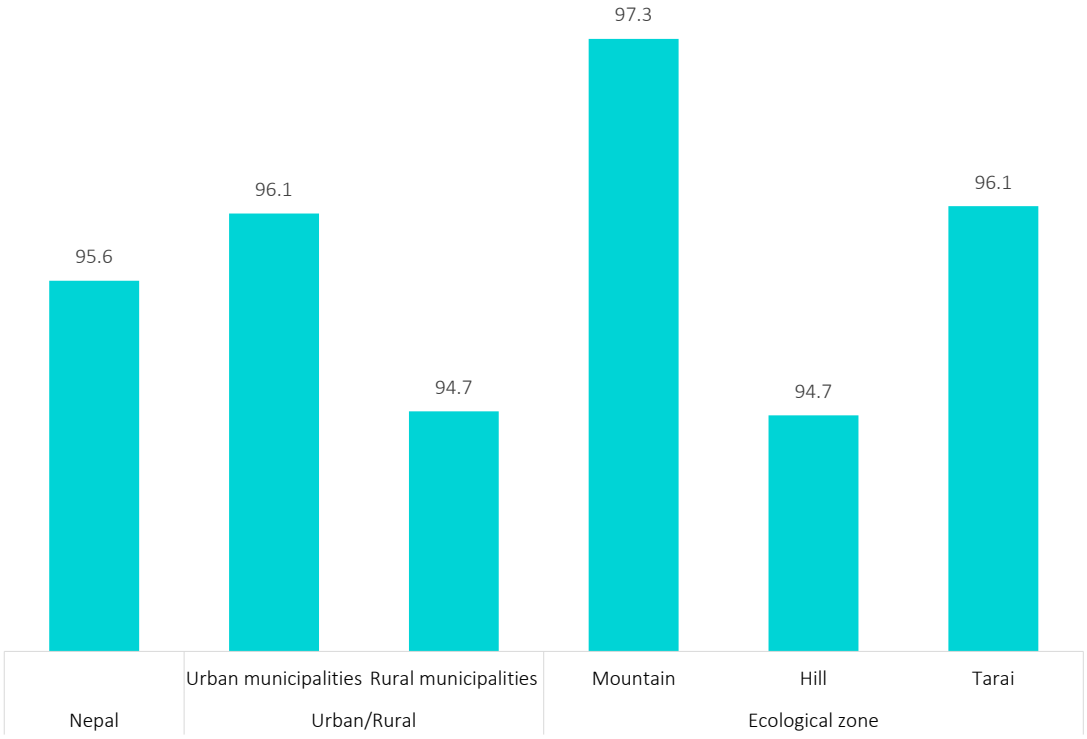


Figure 4.6: Tarai zone population pyramid, 2021 census



The 2021 census found that the sex ratio was lowest in the Hills zone at 94.7 males to every 100 females, which is below the national average of 95.6, indicating that this area has a younger population than the mountain and Tarai zones. It was also lower in rural than urban areas at 94.7 vs 96.1 taking the three types of urban municipalities (metropolitan cities, sub-metropolitan cities, and municipalities) and the one type of rural municipality (Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7: Sex ratio by ecological zone and urban-rural areas, 2021 census



4.3 Province-specific age and sex composition

The 2021 census found that the median age was the highest in Bagmati and Gandaki at 29 years among Nepal's seven provinces. It was the lowest in Karnali at 22 years, followed by Sudurpashchim and Madhesh at 23 years (Table 4.4). And all except one provinces' median age increased from the lowest to the highest wealth quintiles with the exception of Gandaki where the lowest quintile had the highest median age (33 years), not only in Gandaki but in all provinces.

The age-sex pyramids at Figures 4.8 to 4.14 (Annex 21-34) show the age distribution for all provinces in 2011 and 2021. The population pyramid is constructive meaning that the population is gradually transitioning in all provinces. Base of pyramids have been narrowing, indicating falling birth rate, and declining young population. Middle part of the pyramid is expanding, and the thickness is climbing up with aged, which indicates median age is still low but increasing and working age population is increasing, and ultimately old-age population is also increasing. Similar pattern of age and sex structure can be observed for all provinces even though the extent and speed vary. However, length of bar at middle of the pyramids on the male side (left) are

quite shorter than the female side for all provinces, except Bagmati. This indicates more male out-migration than female for work in the middle ages.

Figure 4.8: Population pyramid, Koshi province, 2011 and 2021 censuses

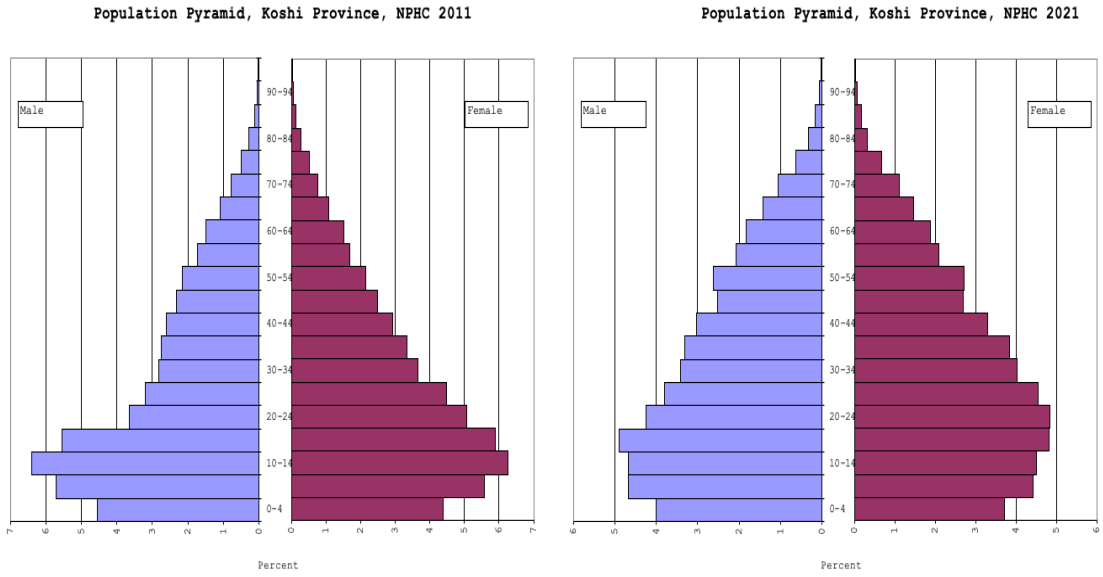


Figure 4.9: Population pyramid, Madhesh province, 2011 and 2021 censuses

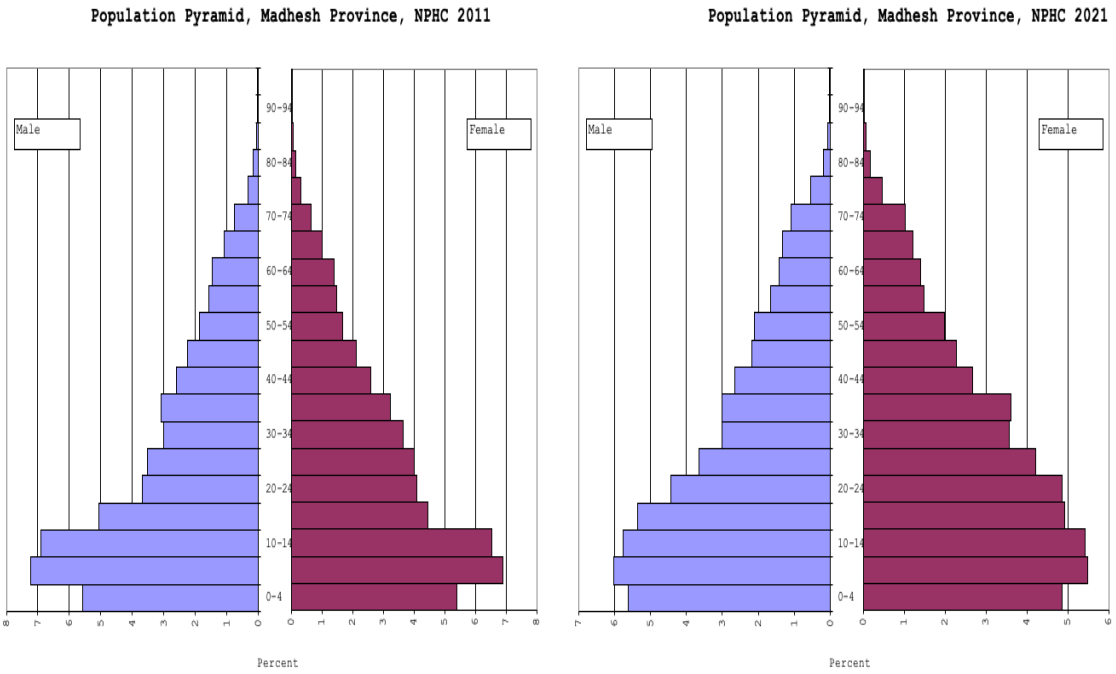


Figure 4.10: Population pyramid, Bagmati province, 2011 and 2021 censuses

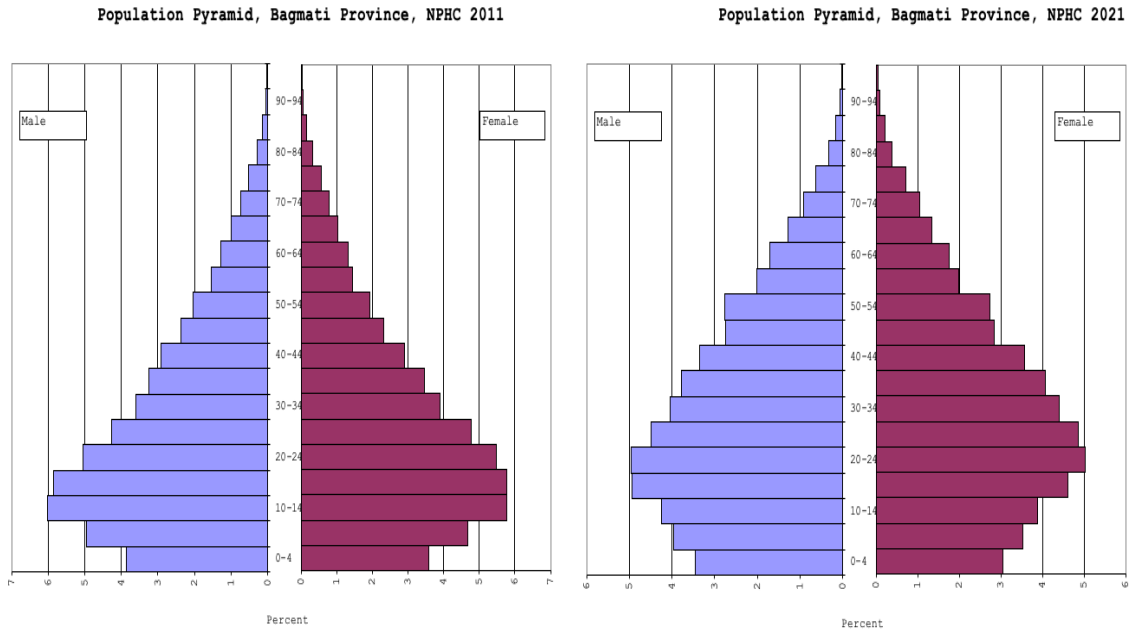


Figure 4.11: Population pyramid, Gandaki province, 2011 and 2021 censuses

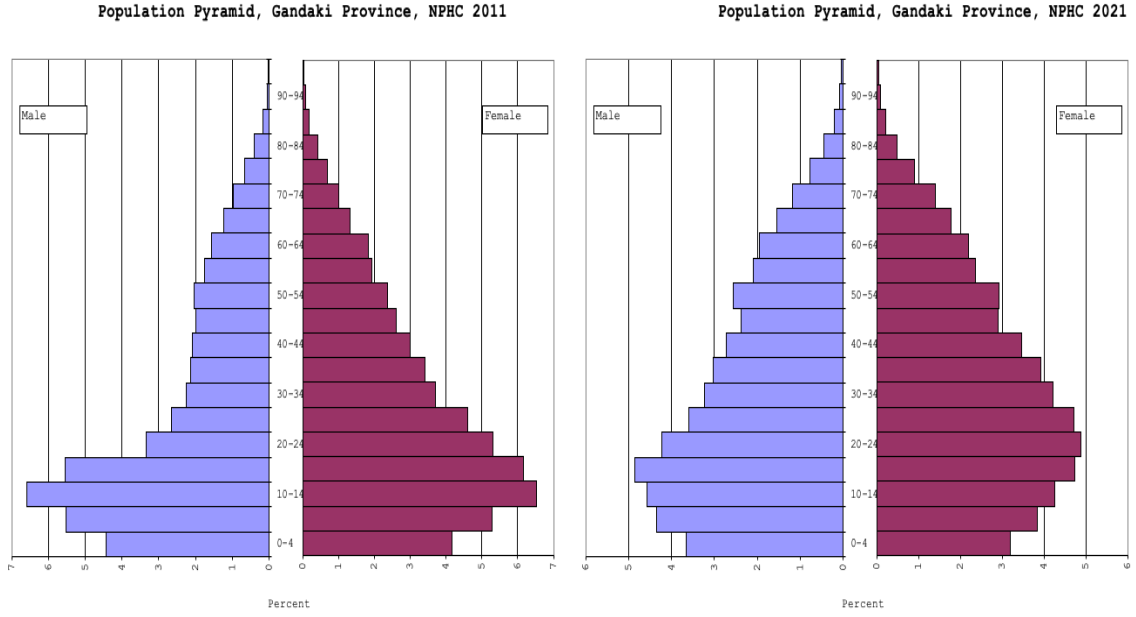


Figure 4.12: Population pyramid, Lumbini province, 2011 and 2021 censuses

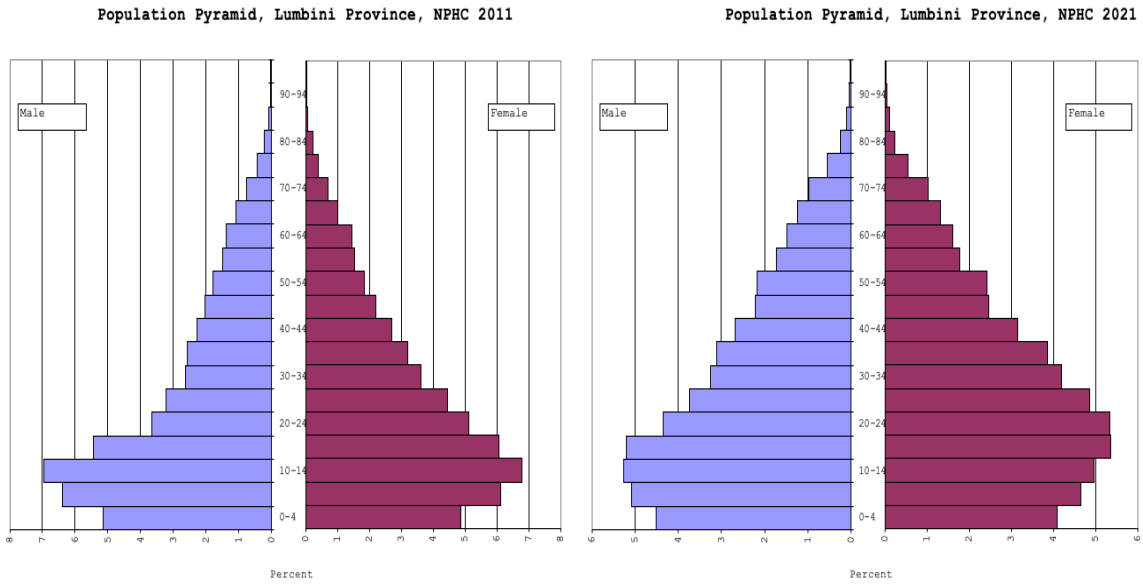


Figure 4.13: Population pyramid, Karnali province, 2011 and 2021 censuses

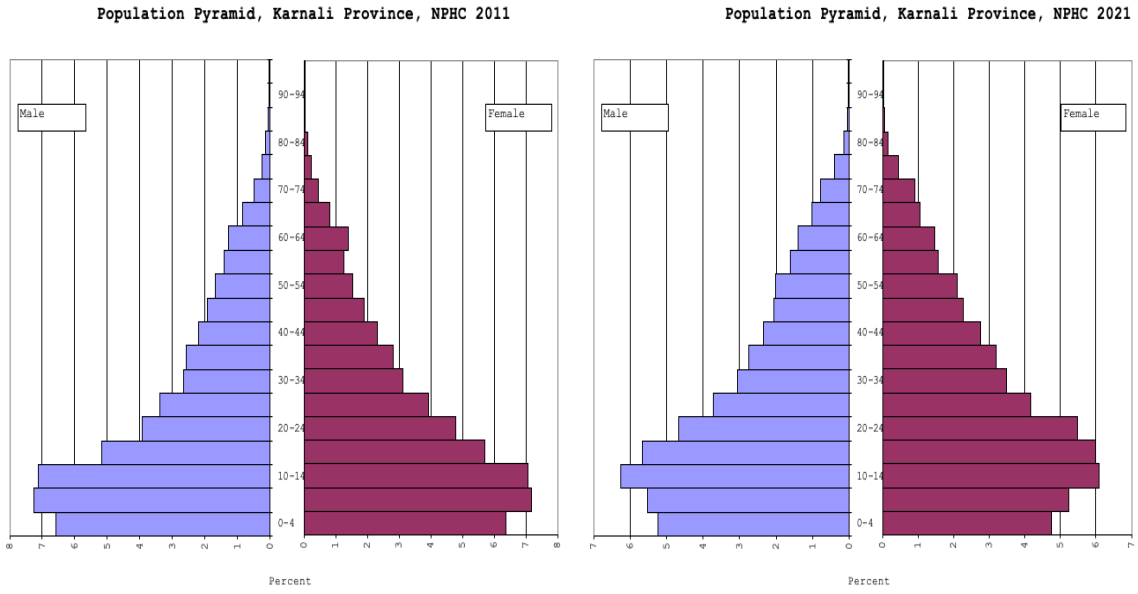
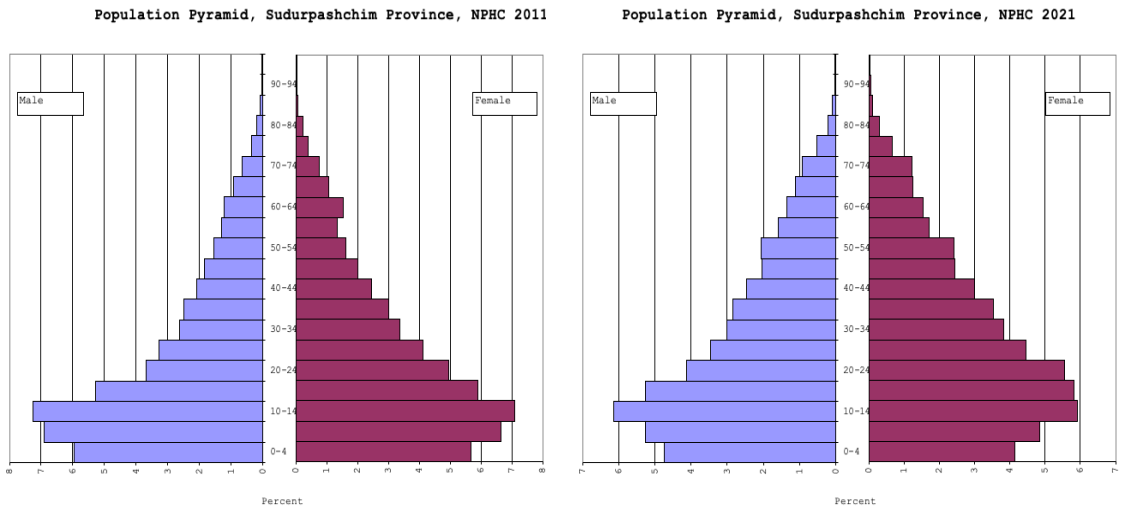
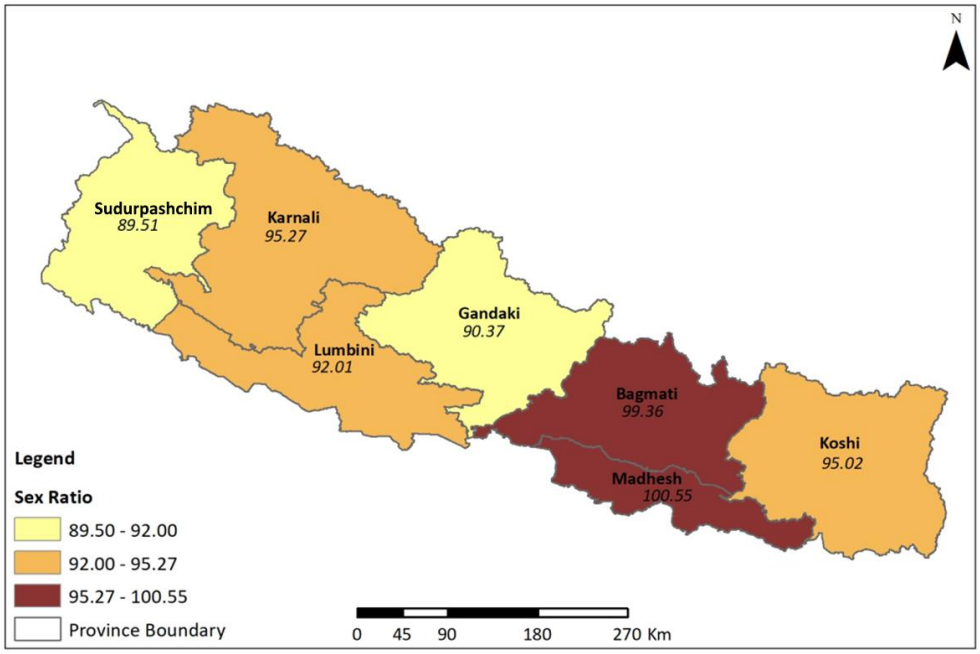


Figure 4.14: Population pyramid, Sudurpashchim province, 2011 and 2021 censuses



The 2021 census found that Madhesh province had the highest sex ratio with 101 males for every 100 females, followed by Bagmati (99), Koshi and Karnali (95 each), Lumbini (92), Gandaki, and Sudurpashchim (90 each) (Map 4.1). Thus, all of Nepal's provinces except Madhesh had sex ratios of less than 100 males to every 100 females as reflected in the overall sex ratio for the country of 96. Gandaki, Sudurpaschim, and Lumbini had many less males than females.

Map 4.1: Sex ratio by province, 2021 census



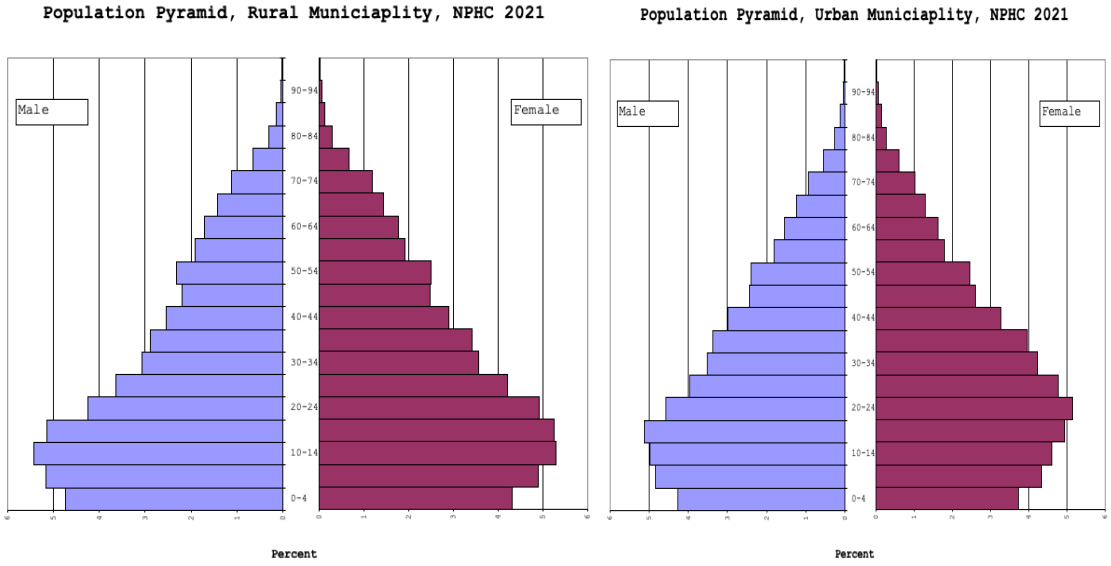
4.4 Age and sex composition in the rural and urban municipalities

The 2021 census found that the population in the rural municipalities had a one year younger median age than the population in urban municipalities (25 vs 26 years) (see Table 4.4). The median age was proportionately correlated with wealth quintiles being higher in the higher quintiles and lower in the lower quintiles in both categories.

The 2021 population pyramid for the population of Nepal's rural municipalities shows the largest population by five-year age range as 10−14 year olds while it was in the 15−24 years age range in urban municipalities (Figure 4.15, Annex 35 and 36). This suggests that fertility is declining more quickly in urban than rural municipalities. The proportions of younger population were falling as age rises in urban municipalities, whereas they are declining considerably quicker in rural municipalities.

The pyramids also show more elderly persons in urban than in rural municipalities. The population pyramid's bottom half has a convex shape for the population in urban municipalities, while this is not the case in the rural municipalities. This indicates that urban municipality areas have experienced a greater drop in fertility and mortality and a rise in life expectancy during this period.

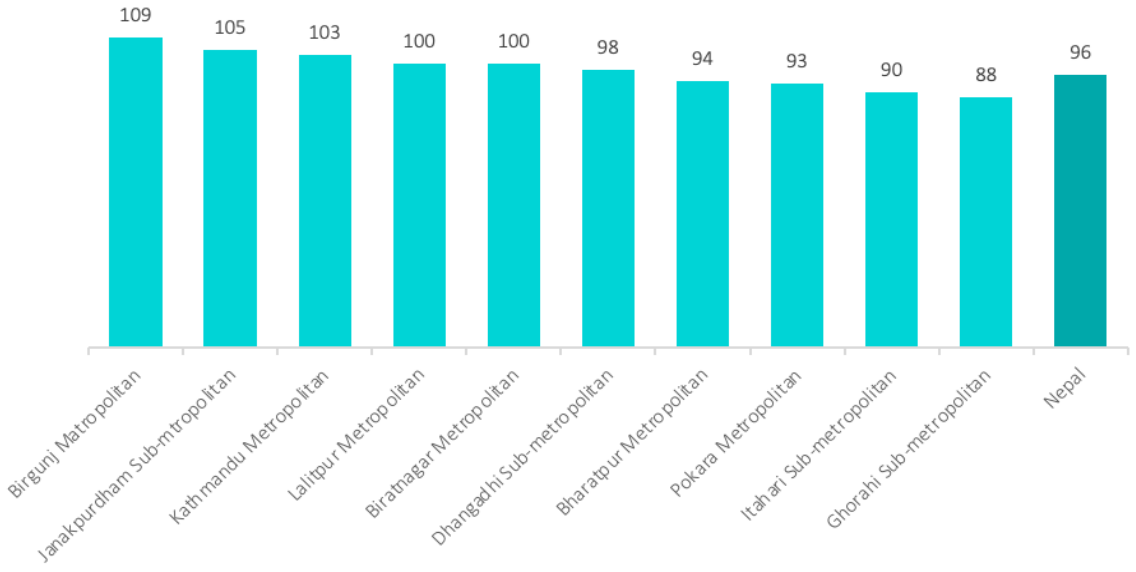
Figure 4.15: Population pyramid for rural and urban municipalities, 2021 census



The 2021 census identified the ten urban municipalities with the highest sex ratios (males: females) ranging from Birgunj Metropolitan City (109) to Ghorahi Sub-Metropolitan City (88) (Figure 4.16). Seven of these municipalities had sex ratios of 100 or less. The sex ratio in four of

these municipalities (Pokhara, Bharatpur, Ghorahi, and Itahari) was below the national average of 96.

Figure 4.16: Top ten urban municipalities in terms of sex ratio in Nepal, 2021 census



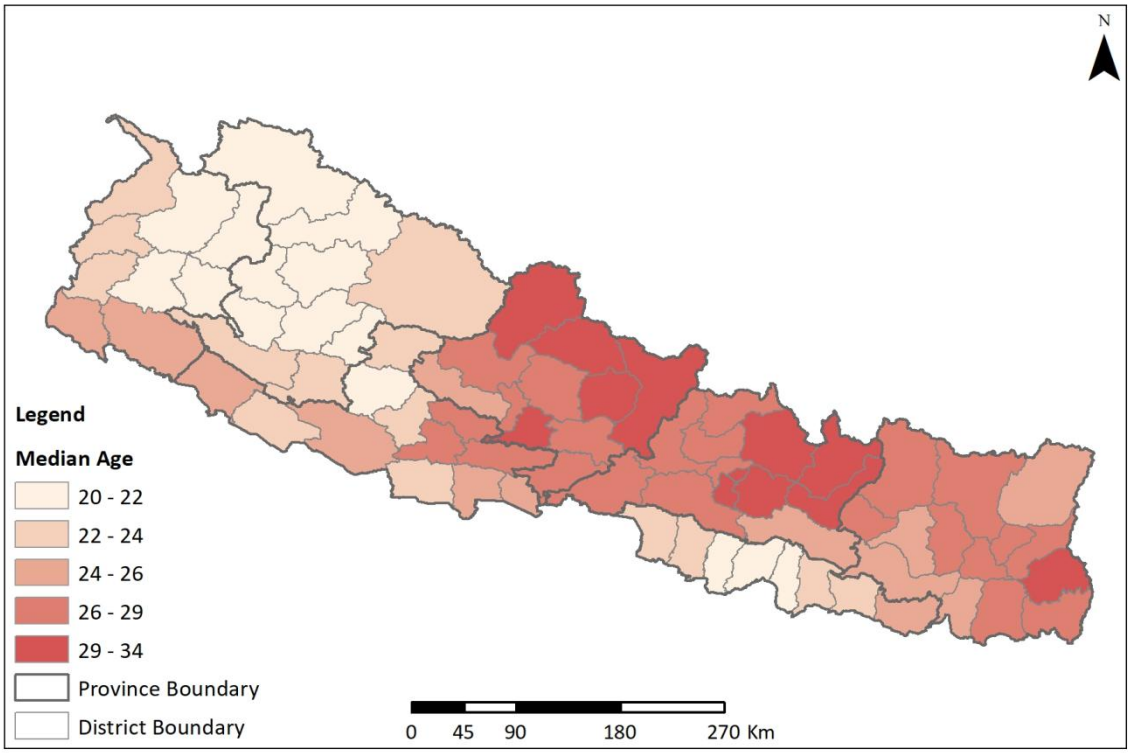
4.5 Age and sex composition by district

Median age – The 2021 census found that among Nepal's 77 districts:

- Manang (34 years) and Lamjung (32 years) districts had the highest median age
- Ramechhap, Gorkha, and Syangja (31 years), and Ilam, Dolakha, Sindhupalchok, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Kavrepalanchok, and Mustang (30 years) also had high median ages.
- The districts with the lowest median ages were Rautahat, Jajarkot, Kalikot, Bajhang, Doti, and Achham (20 years); Mugu, Dailekh and Bajura (21 years); and Mahottari, Sarlahi, Rolpa, Humla, Jumla and Rukum (West) (22 years). (Map 4.2 and Annex 37).

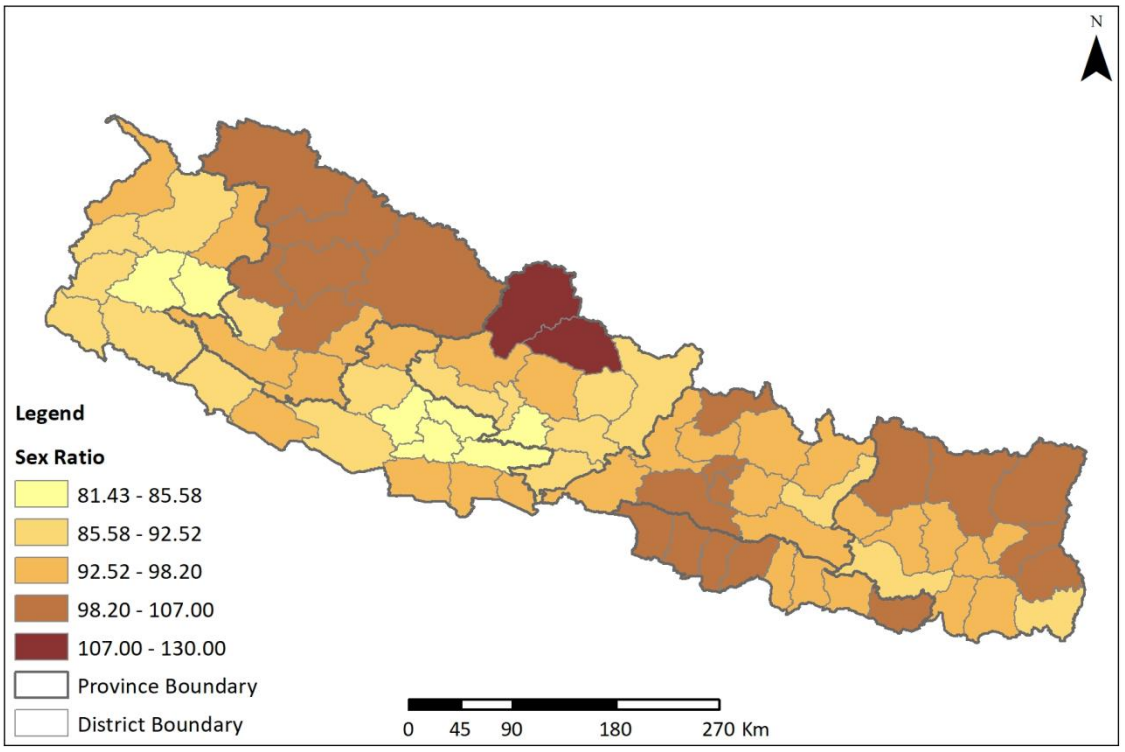
The census overall found higher median ages in the hill and mountain districts of Gandaki and Bagmati provinces, while lower median ages were more prevalent in the hill and mountain districts of Karnali and Sudurpaschim provinces and the Tarai region of Madhesh province.

Map 4.2: Median age by district, 2021 census



Sex ratio − Manang had the highest sex ratio (129 males to every 100 females), followed by Mustang (122) (Map 4.3 and Annex 38). The lowest sex ratios were in Pyuthan (81), Gulmi (83), Arghakhanchi and Doti (84 each).

Map 4.3: Sex ratio by district, 2021 census



4.6 Sex ratio at birth

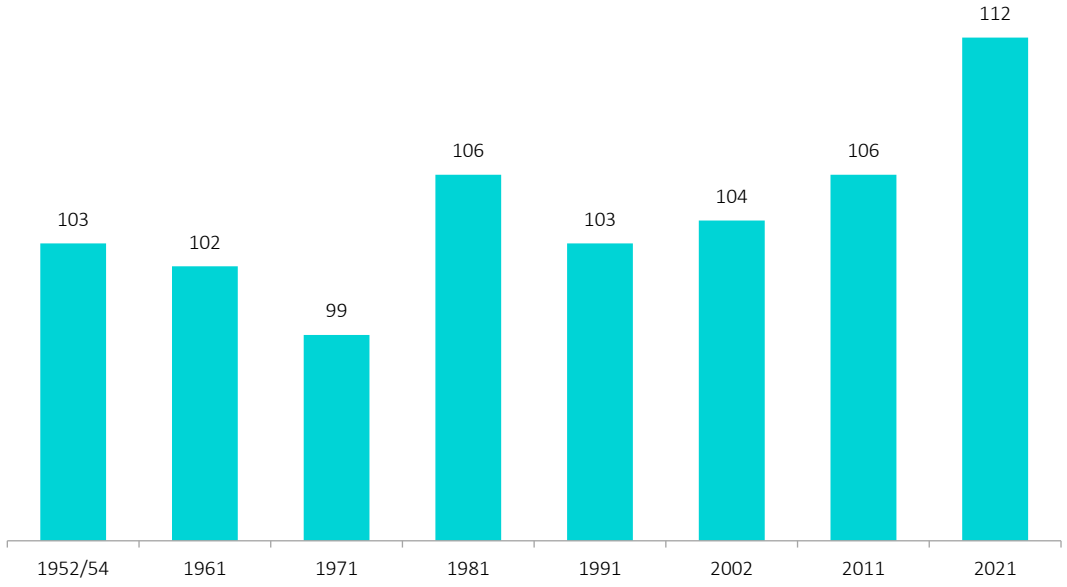
Sex ratio at birth, as defined as the number of males per 100 female live births[12], is considered as 105 in a natural setting where no interventions exist. It is a strong indicator to indicate presence of parental preference for an either of a sex of birth of a child. This phenomenon commonly exhibits into a son preference in a patriarchal society where son is valued over daughter. Decreasing fertility levels are expected to increase sex selection and thus sex ratio at birth bias, since desiring fewer children increases the risk families to remain sonless, which is called as "fertility squeeze effect" (Guilmoto, 2009). The result is that more parents prefer to have son in upcoming birth usually at lower birth order. Son preference and parental sex selection against females have resulted in significant sex ratio at birth imbalances that have been well documented in several Asian countries, including India and China (Dubuc & Sivia, 2018). Parental sex selection against females has largely resulted from foetal sex determination (mainly ultra-sound), followed by the abortion of female foetuses, sex-selective abortion. More recently, it has also become technically possible through advances in medically assisted reproduction techniques, in particular in vitro fertilisation combined with pre-fertilisation selection of male

[12] Sex ratio at birth is calculated as the ratio of males per 100 females among livebirths during last 12 months preceding the enumeration.

spermatozoa (sperm sorting) or preimplantation genetic diagnosis and selection of male embryos (Carrera et al., 1998 & Mayor, 2001 cited in Dubuc & Sivia, 2018).

Nepali society is predominantly patrilineal and patrilocal, which is linked with son preference. Sons are regarded as economic assets and are highly sought after for continuing the family name, providing elderly care to parents, bringing a daughter-in-law into the family and are integral to performing Hindu rituals such as funeral rites (Brunson, 2010; Channon et al., 2021). On the other hand, fertility in Nepal has been squeezed to replacement level, 2.1 per woman in 2022 (MoHP et al., 2023). In this context, parental preference for sex selection may be prominent these days in Nepal. Channon et al. (2021) argues that Nepal is experiencing increasing number of sex-selective abortion. At the result, the census 2021 observed a much higher sex ratio at birth in Nepal, that is 112 males per 100 female live births (Figure 4.17), much higher than its natural level. Prior to 1991, since when it started to rise, the SRB was relatively lower and had a discernible trend. Between 2011 and 2021, it considerably grew, going from 106 to 112. The results show a large deficit in female births, which may be due to the family's predilection for sons. The son preference is common in patriarchal societies and manifests itself because of the shifting from large families towards nuclear ones. Family size may be getting smaller over time, according to evidence from the preceding chapter (see Section 3.3.1).

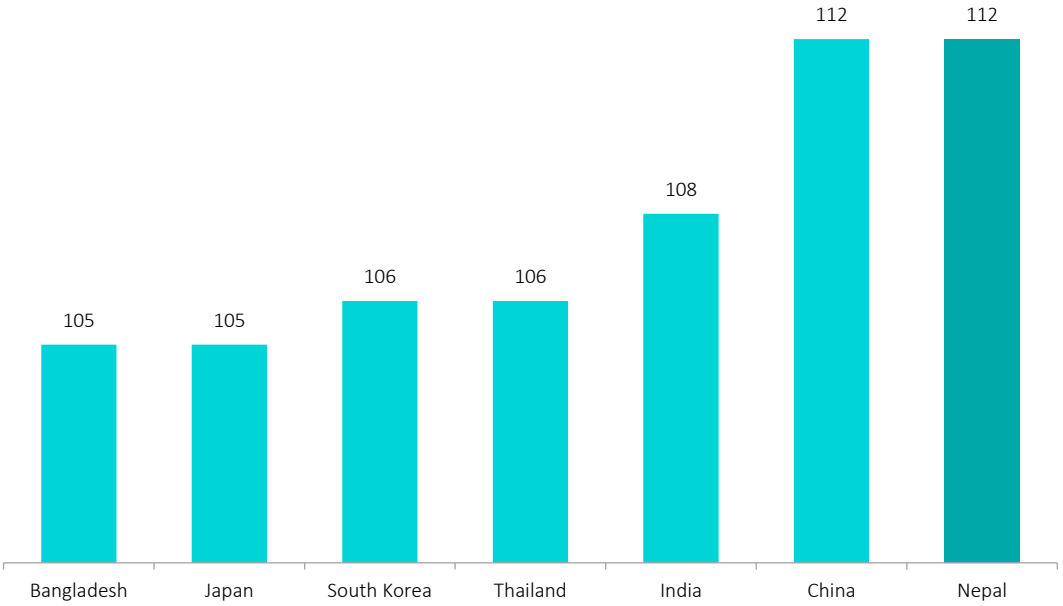
Figure 4.17: Sex ratios at birth, 1952–54 to 2021 censuses



Source: Adhikary (2014: Population Monograph, CBS); NSO (2023a), Table 17.

The current level of sex ratio at birth is considerably higher than many Asian countries. It is four persons higher than in India (108) and equal to China (112). It is normal in Japan (105) and Bangladesh (105) (Figure 4.18).

Figure 4.18: Sex ratio at birth in selected Asian countries, 2021 and 2021 (Nepal) census



Source: https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/sex-ratio-at-birth.

The 2021 census found that the urban municipalities had a much higher average sex ratio at birth (114) than the rural municipalities (109) (Figure 4.19). Looking at sex ratio at birth according to ecological zones and provinces, it somehow coincides with variation according to municipalities. The Tarai ecological zone (114), Madhesh province (118) and Sudurpashchim province (116) had the highest sex ratios at birth. Koshi had the lowest ratio, 106 boys to every 100 girls, far below the national average (112). Channon et al. (2021) indicates the link between sex ratio at birth and sex-selective abortions and argue that as fertility falls, urbanization increases, and access to sex identification technology increases it is likely that the prevalence of sex-selective abortions in Nepal will further increase. They also found that a higher sex ratio at birth is also linked with higher levels of infant mortality among females than males, which suggests that Madhesh and Sudurpaschim provinces could have higher levels of female than male infant mortality.

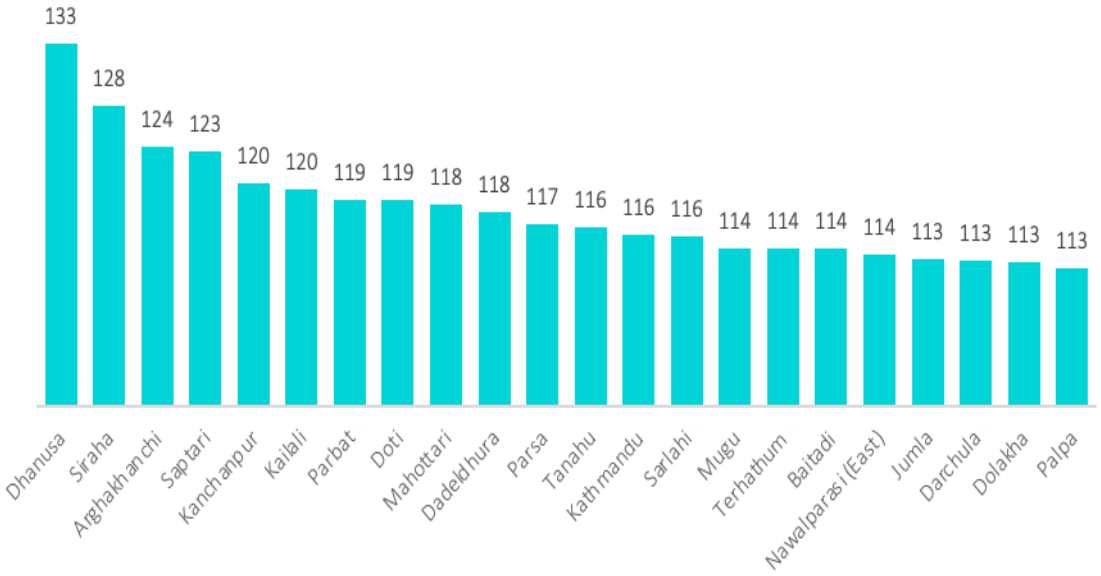
Figure 4.19: Sex ratio at birth by rural and urban municipality, ecological zone & province, 2021 census



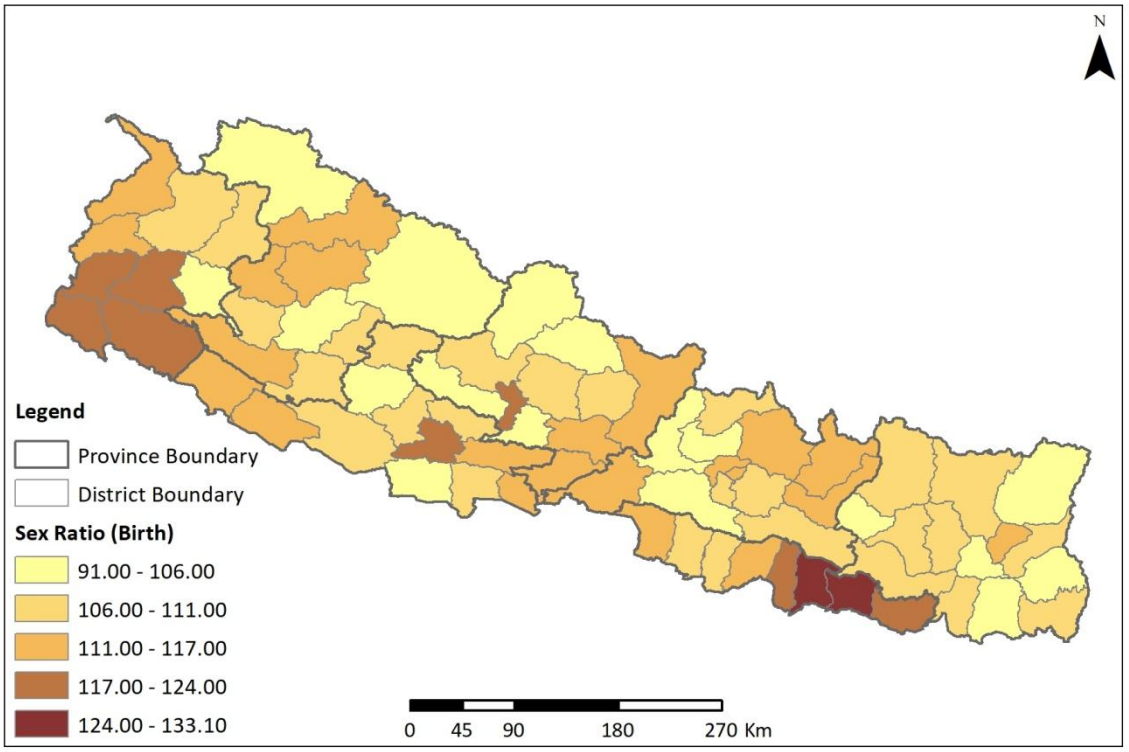
The 2021 census identified 22 districts as having higher sex ratios at birth than the national average (Figure 4.20 and Annex 39). Dhanusha had the highest sex ratio at birth (133), which was 21 more than the national average (112). Siraha (128), Arghakhanchi (124), Saptari (123), Kailali and Kanchanpur (120 each), Parbat and Doti (119 each), and Mahottari and Dadeldhura (118 each) were the districts with the next highest such ratios. These 10 districts had the highest sex ratios at birth. There are 47 districts with sex ratio at birth lower than the national average. On the other hand, the ten districts with the lowest sex ratio at birth were Mustang (92), Rolpa (97), Ilam, Okhaldhunga, Dhankuta, and Humla (99 each), Manang (100), Taplejung (101), and Dhading and Jajarkot (103 each) (Annex 39).

The Madhesh province districts, the Sudurpaschim Tarai districts, and the mountain districts of Gandaki and Bagmati and Lumbini had higher sex ratios at birth in 2021 (Map 4.4). Most of these districts are connected to big cities like Kathmandu, Chitawan and Pokhara within country and to India through the open border, regular seasonal movement, and other forms of business migration. This suggests that, although it hasn't been proven by research, the populations in these places are more likely to have higher levels of son preference and ways of achieving it. The relatively easy access to medical facilities to identify the sex of foetuses and for sex-selective abortions make the execution of son preference feasible in these and other areas. Sex selective abortion is largely doable for a couple who can relatively easily reach such facilities.

Figure 4.20: Districts of Nepal with sex ratios at birth above the national average, 2021 census



Map 4.4: Sex ratio at birth by district, 2021 census



5. AGE STRUCTURE TRANSITION AND DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND

Nepal's population started to grow as the country's mortality and fertility rates began to decline after 1991. The total fertility rate dropped from 6.4 live births per woman of childbearing age in 1981 to 4.6 in 1996 and 2.1 in 2022, while infant mortality has dropped from 172 deaths per 1000 live births in 1971 to 78 in 1996 and to 28 in 2022 (MoHP et al., 2023). The significantly decreased fertility and mortality is mostly attributable to improved health facilities, increased investment in education, and overall socioeconomic development (Khadka et al., 2015; Adhikari, 2010; Karki and GC, 2008). The 2021 census found that the population had grown by only 0.92 percent annually since 2011 compared to 1.35 percent in 2002−2011 and 2.25 percent in 1992−2001. Nepal's population has now entered a phase of demographic transition where the rate of population growth will be slow going forward.

This transition has a number of demographic ramifications. All age structure of population — children (0-14), working age people (15-64) and older persons (65+) – is changing. Despite the increasing number of over 65-year-olds, the dependency ratio has drastically decreased. This structural transformation creates 'demographic windows of opportunity' that can widen opportunities through a demographic dividend, although major policy issues must be addressed for this dividend to be realised. Mitigating demographic resilience to maximize demographic dividend is the primary task of the nation in the context of changing demographic structure. This chapter covers the changing demographic structure, potential, and situation of the demographic dividend according to the findings of the 2021 census.

5.1 Age structure and demographic change

Age structural transition is the change from a young to an older population with the working age population growing faster than the number of children and older persons (UNDESA, 2021). All these shifts combine cyclical variations in the age distribution with a tendency toward ageing populations. Due to the pressure on support systems for older persons and the slowing or negative growth of the labour force provide opportunities and challenges for increased investments in human and physical capital to support economic growth (Mason, Lee, & Jiang, 2016). Population ageing is affecting many nations. Traditionally, ageing societies is one where the percentage of people over 65 years of age make up at least seven percent of the population. An 'aged society' is one where the proportion of over 65s reaches 14 percent.

According to calculations made by the Population Council, Nepal will become an ageing society around 2028 – another 11 years counting from 2017, and an aged society around 2054 – another 37 years counting from 2017 (NPC & UNICEF, 2017). It is estimated that Nepal's population will

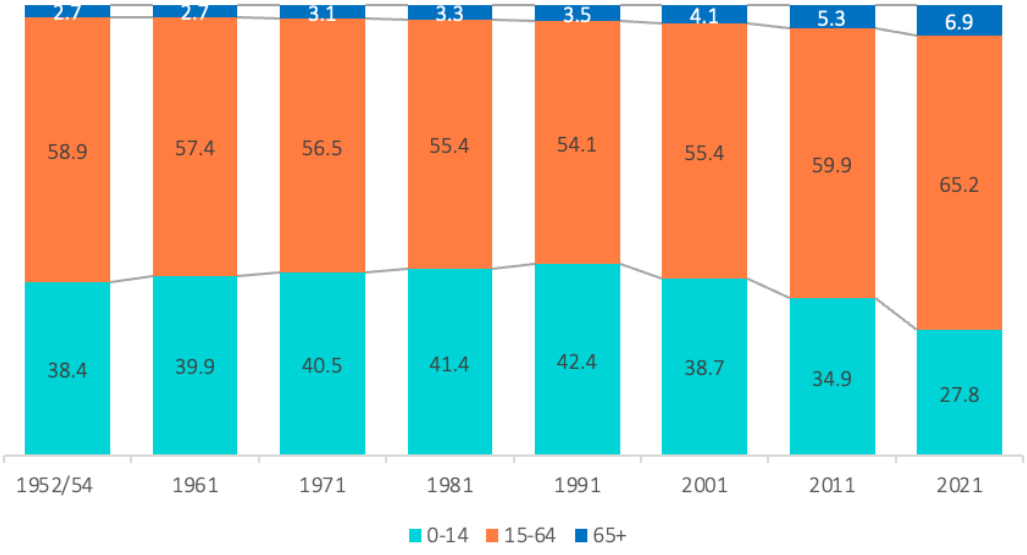
transition from an ageing society to an aged society in 26 years. This rate of ageing is very rapid and is almost comparable to what happened in Japan in 24 years between 1970 and 1994 (NPC & UNICEF, 2017). And women outnumber males at older ages as they tend to live longer than men.

In previous census reports and monographs, old age was defined as sixty years of age and older in Nepal. However, 65 years plus is the international norm for old age. Therefore, for international comparability, this study defined older persons as those 65 years and older. Accordingly, this study adopted the age range of 15−64 years for working age persons and 0-14 years for child population to estimate the dependency ratio. This breakdown results in Nepal's population comprising 27.8 percent of 0−14 year olds, 65.2 percent of 15−64 year olds and 6.9 percent 65 years and above in 2021 (Figure 5.1).

The population trend using the differing age ranges for working and old persons is as follows:

- The percentage of persons of working age (15−64 years) decreased from 58.9 percent in 1952−54 to 54.1 percent in 1991 and then climbed to 65.2 percent in 2021.
- The percentage of persons aged 65 years and above has increased from 2.7 in 1952−54 to 4.1 percent in and 2001 and then increased rapidly to 6.9 percent in 2021 showing that Nepal has almost reached the 7 percent of 65 years and older persons to be classified as an ageing society.

Figure 5.1: Nepal's population in broad age ranges (using 65 years + for aged), 1952−54 to 2021 censuses



Source: Calculated from CBS (1977), Chapter 2, Table 11; CBS (1987), Table 4; CBS (1993), Table 5; CBS (2002), Table 1; Adhikari (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 3.20; NSO (2023a), Table 18.

5.2 Dependency ratios

A greater number of persons of working age should result in a lower dependency ratio and improved economic performance. A high dependence ratio is reflected in supporting more children and older persons that puts a heavier strain on the economically active population and the economy. For instance, a high young dependence ratio entails more spending on education and child health care.

Overall dependency ratio − In 2021, the overall dependency ratio was reported as 53.3 children and old persons (65 years +) to every 100 working age persons (15–64 years), with children accounting for 42.7 percent and old persons 10.6 percent of the population (Table 5.1). The overall dependency ratio climbed from 70.4 children and old persons to every 100 persons of working age in 1952−54 to 87.2 percent in 1991. It then declined to 53.3 percent in 2021 decreasing by 34 percentage points.

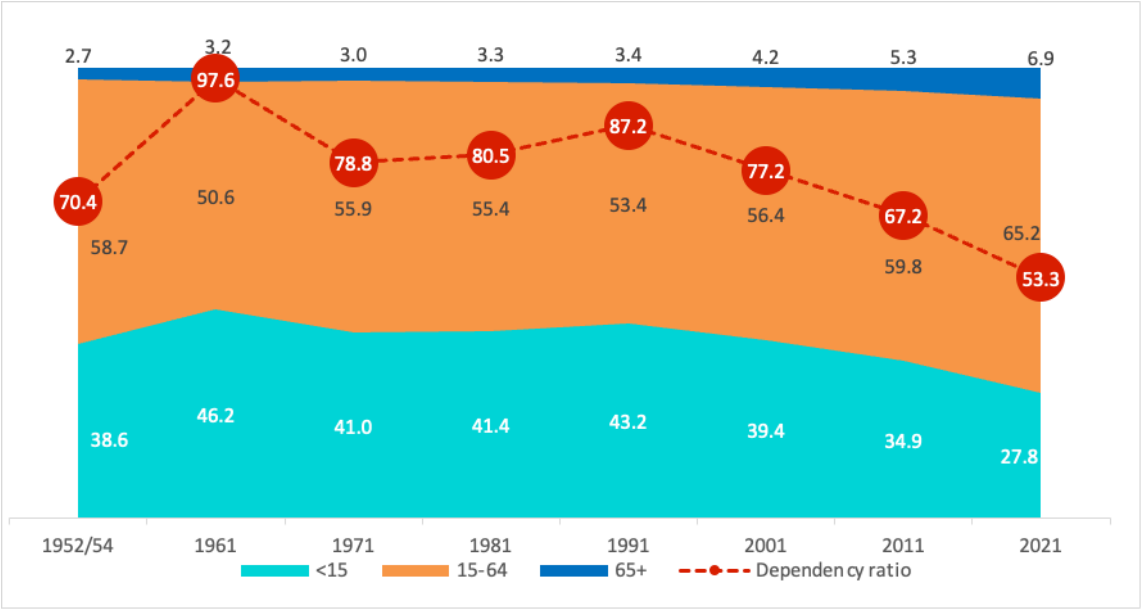
In contrast, the child dependency ratio increased from 65.8 children to every 100 persons of working age in 1952−54 to 80.9 in 1991 and then decreased to 42.7 in 2021. And the old-age dependency ratio has steadily increased doubling from 4.6 old persons to every 100 persons of working age in 1952−54 to 10.6 in 2021. The trends in population proportion and dependency ratio over the years suggest that the turning point was 1991, and the point of shift to the current population structure was 2021 (Figure 5.2).

Table 5.1: Trend in child, old age and overall dependency ratios in Nepal (65+), 1952−54 to 2021 censuses

Census year	Age 0-14	Age 15-64	Age 65+	Total population	Child dependency ratio	Old-age dependency ratio	Overall dependency ratio
1952−54	3,165,645	4,811,358	220,542	8,197,545	65.8	4.6	70.4
1961	3,746,465	4,103,102	258,075	8,107,642	91.3	6.3	97.6
1971	4,604,074	6,273,141	340,927	11,218,142	73.4	5.4	78.8
1981	6,211,972	8,321,301	489,566	15,022,839	74.7	5.9	80.5
1991	7,786,377	9,641,179	616,292	18,043,848	80.8	6.4	87.2
2001	8,948,587	12,831,876	956,471	22,736,934	69.7	7.5	77.2
2011	9,248,246	15,848,675	1,397,583	26,494,504	58.4	8.8	67.2
2021	8,115,575	19,027,289	2,021,714	29,164,578	42.7	10.6	53.3

Source: Adhikary (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 3.20; NSO (2023a), Table 18.

Figure 5.2: Proportions of population in main age ranges and overall dependency ratio in Nepal, 1952–54 to 2021 censuses

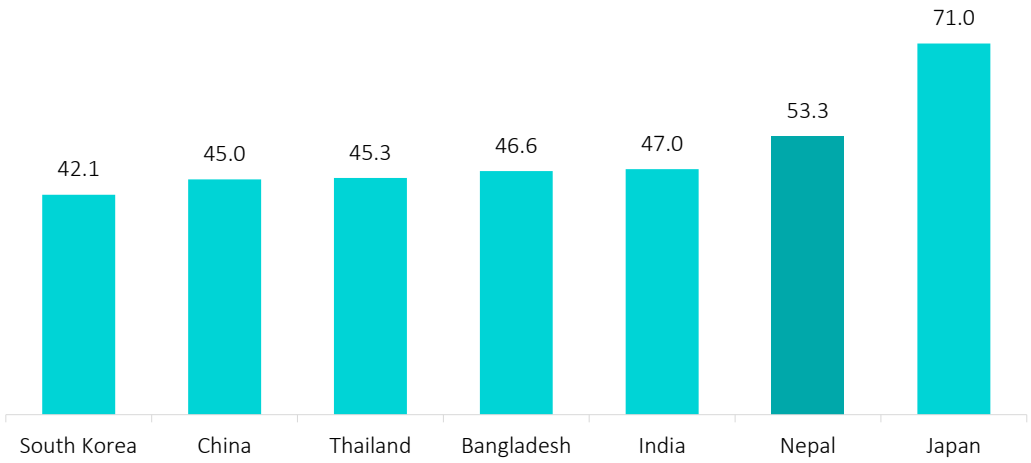


Source: Calculated from CBS (1977), Chapter 2, Table 11; CBS (1987), Table 4; CBS (1993), Table 5; CBS (2002), Table 1; Adhikary (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 3.20; NSO (2023a), Table 18.
Note: Working age is considered as 15-64 year olds and old age as 65+ years.

The dependency ratio is quite high in Nepal compared to some Asian countries, except Japan (Figure 5.3). It is high even compared to South Asian countries like India (47.0%) and Bangladesh (46.6%). In case of Japan, the dependency ratio is considerably high that is 71.0 percent. This is an example of the fact that population of Japan has already completed its transition. The dependency ratio in Japan fell to 43 percent in 1991 and it climbed gradually to 71 percent in 2022[13].

[13] https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Japan/Age_dependency_ratio/

Figure 5.3: Dependency ratio in selected Asian countries



Source: Calculated from ESCAP (2023) except Nepal, which is from 2021 census.
Note: Working age is considered as 15-64 and old age as 65+ years.

The 2021 census data shows a progressively higher dependency ratio of children and elderly persons to persons of working age from the highest to the lowest wealth quintile by ecological zone, urban-rural municipalities and provinces in all cases with no exceptions (Table 5.2). Nationally the dependency ratio is only 47 for the highest quintile while it is 80.3 for the lowest quintile population.

Table 5.2: Dependency ratio by province and wealth quintile, 2021 census

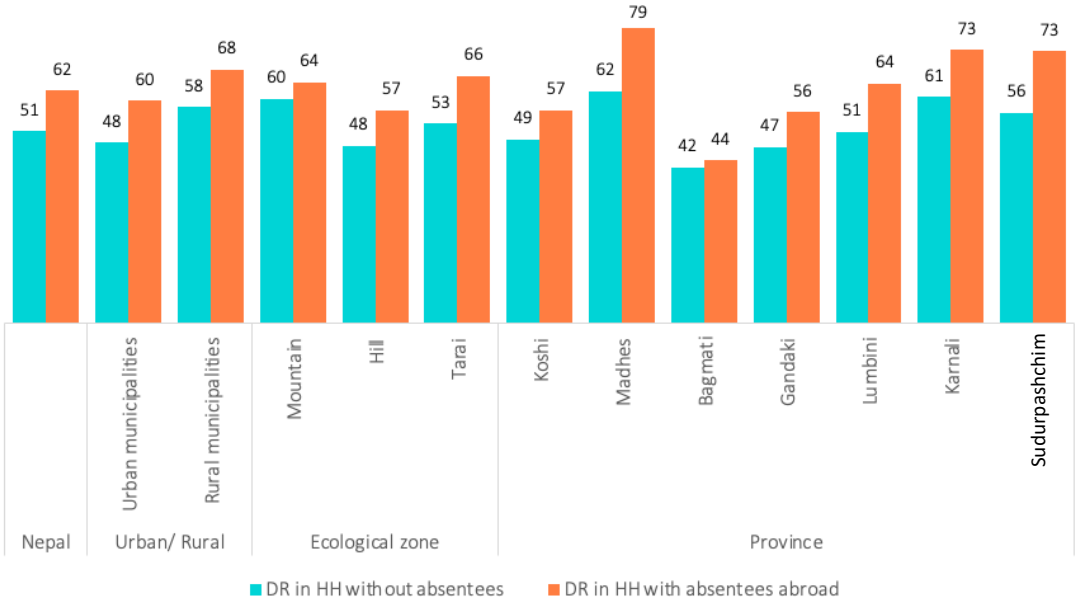
Area	Lowest	Lower	Middle	Higher	Highest	Total
Nepal	**80.3**	**67.8**	**63.7**	**54.5**	**47.0**	**53.3**
Ecological zone						
Mountain	81.4	68.3	62.1	53.7	46.6	60.0
Hill	81.6	66.7	58.4	46.7	43.2	49.0
Tarai	78.8	68.7	66.6	59.0	50.9	55.9
Urban-rural						
Urban municipalities	79.5	67.1	62.6	53.1	46.5	50.2
Rural municipalities	81.1	68.5	65.5	59.9	51.9	59.7
Province						
Koshi	74.4	61.5	58.1	54.9	51.1	50.4
Madhesh	83.6	76.7	74.9	66.5	55.1	65.2
Bagmati	79.9	63.4	55.9	43.9	42.4	41.6
Gandaki	85.5	68.2	62.3	54.6	48.5	49.4
Lumbini	76.3	67.6	63.3	56.4	49.1	53.8
Karnali	78.7	66.7	59.5	55.1	46.7	61.9
Sudurpashchim	86.2	67.0	61.4	56.2	50.4	60.2

Note: Working age is considered as 15-64 years and old age as 65+ years.

The overall dependency ratio is much higher in the Mountain (60.0%) than in the Hill (49.0%), less in the urban that the rural municipalities (50.2% vs 59.7%) and by province is highest in Madhesh (65.2%) and less in Bagmati by 23 percentage points (41.6%).

Dependency ratios with and without absentees – The influence of migration (absentees living abroad) on family composition in terms of dependents, children, and the population of old persons left behind is shown by comparing the dependency ratio in homes with and without absentees living abroad. The 2021 census data shows a higher dependency ratio in homes with at least one absentee abroad (62) compared to households without (55) (Figure 5.4). This difference is evident for rural and urban municipalities, all three ecological zones and all seven provinces. The difference in the dependency ratio of with and without absentees is the greatest in the Tarai zone and Madhesh province. The ratio in the Madhesh is 17 percentage points higher in households with absentees in Madhesh compared to households without. In contrast there is only a two percentage point difference in households with and without absentees in Bagmati, which has the lowest dependency ratio.

Figure 5.4: Dependency ratio in households with and without absentees living abroad by urban-rural municipality, ecological zone and province, 2021 census

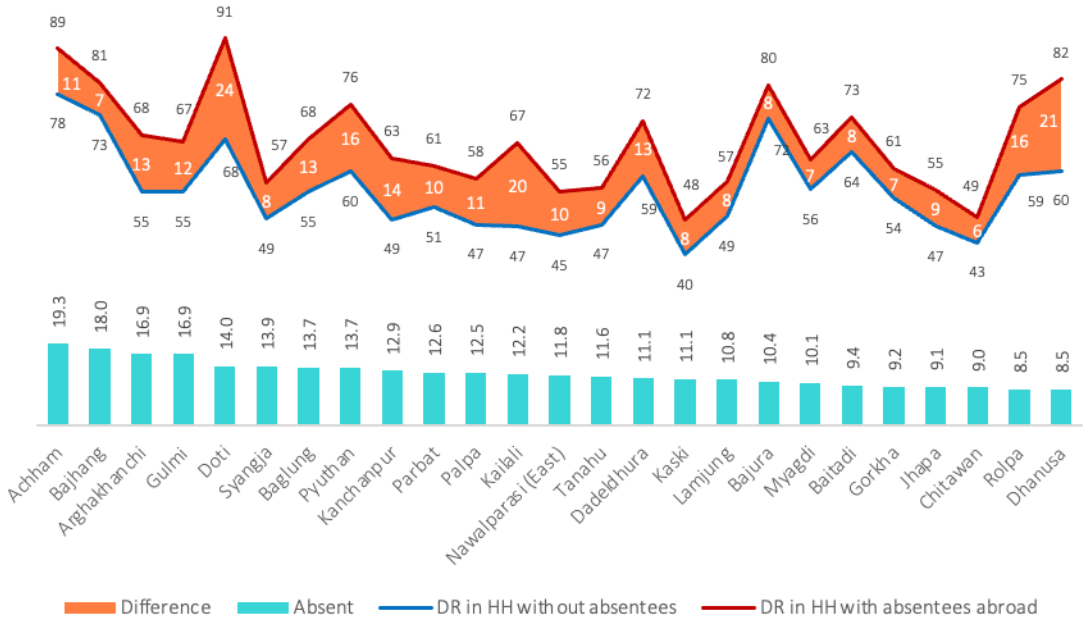


Note: Working age is considered as 15-64 years and old age as 65+ years.

Looking at the percentage of absentees abroad for the district, it is also possible to see the difference in dependency ratio between households with and without absentees abroad. The difference in dependency ratio between households with and without district-wide absentees

who are abroad is inversely correlated with that difference. Figure 5.5 shows the level of dependency ratio for households with and without absentees abroad for the 25 districts that have the most households with absentees living abroad. Doti (24), Dhanusa (21) and Kailali (20) have the largest dependency ratio gaps with a difference of at least six points in these districts between the households with and without absentees abroad (see Annex 40). The result indicates that the higher the absentees abroad in a district the higher the dependency ratios.

Figure 5.5: Dependency ratio in households with absentees abroad and without absentees in the 25 districts, 2021 census

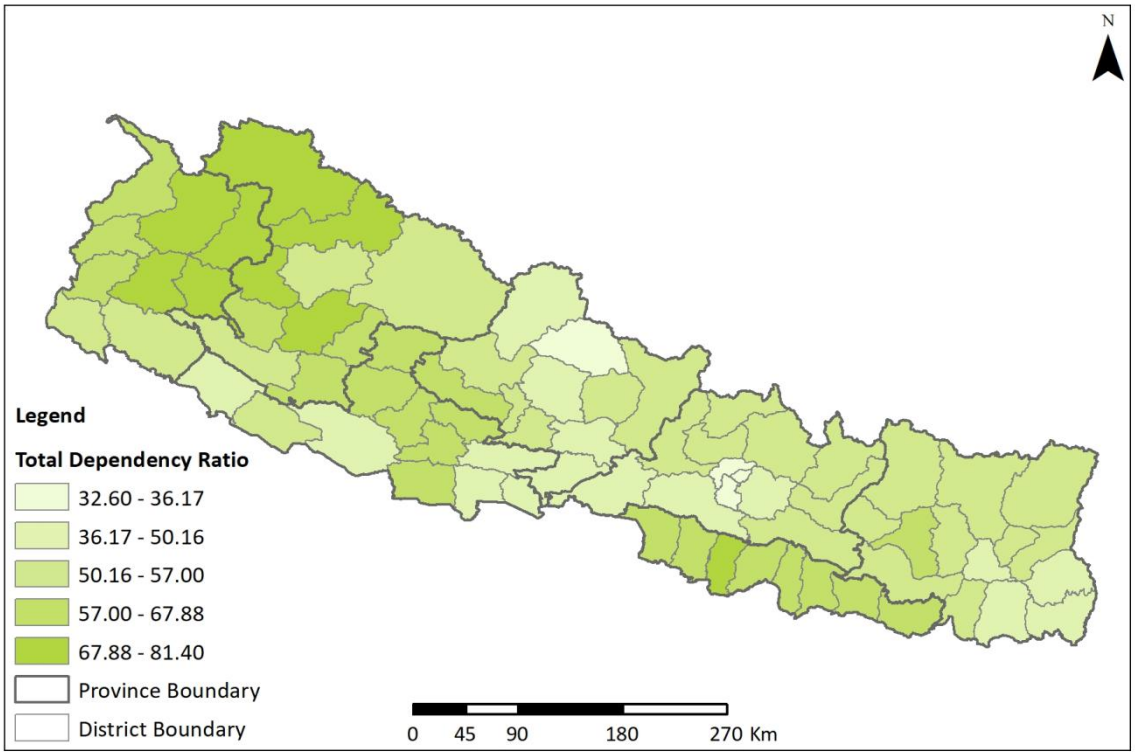


Note: Working age is considered as 15-64 years and old age as 65+ years.

Dependency ratios by district – Analysis of the 2021 census data by district shows that Manang had the lowest dependency ratio of children and old persons to persons of working age (33) followed by Kathmandu (34), Lalitpur (35), Bhaktapur (36), Kaki (42), Ilam and Mustang (43 each), Chitawan (44), Kavrepalanchok (45), and Makwanpur (48) (Map 5.1 and Annex 41).

The districts with the highest total dependency ratios measured are the same districts of Achham (81), Bajhang and Doti (75 each), Rautahat (74), Bajura (73), Kalikot and Mugu (72 each), Jajarkot and Humla (71 each) and Mahottari (68) (Annex 41).

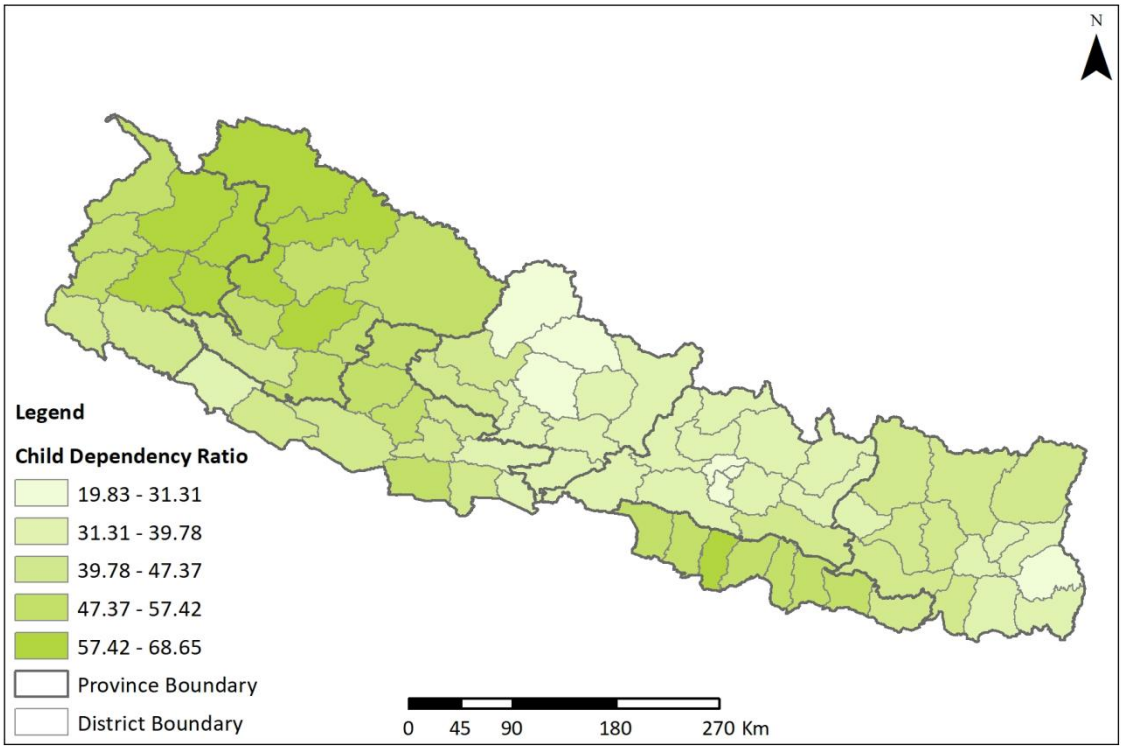
Map 5.1: Overall dependency ratio by districts, 2021 census



Note: Working age is considered as 15-64 and old age as 65+ years.

Child dependency ratio – Among the 10 districts with lowest child dependency ratios, Manang had the lowest ratio (20) followed by Lalitpur and Kathmandu (26 each), Bhaktapur (28), Kaski, Ilam and Mustang (31 each), and Kavrepalanchok and Lamjung (33 each) (Map 5.2 and Annex 41). The 10 districts with the highest child dependency ratio include Achham (69) followed by Doti (64), Rautahat, Kalikot, Jajarkot and Mugu (64 each), and Bajhang, Bajura, Humla and Dailekh with 57 to 63.

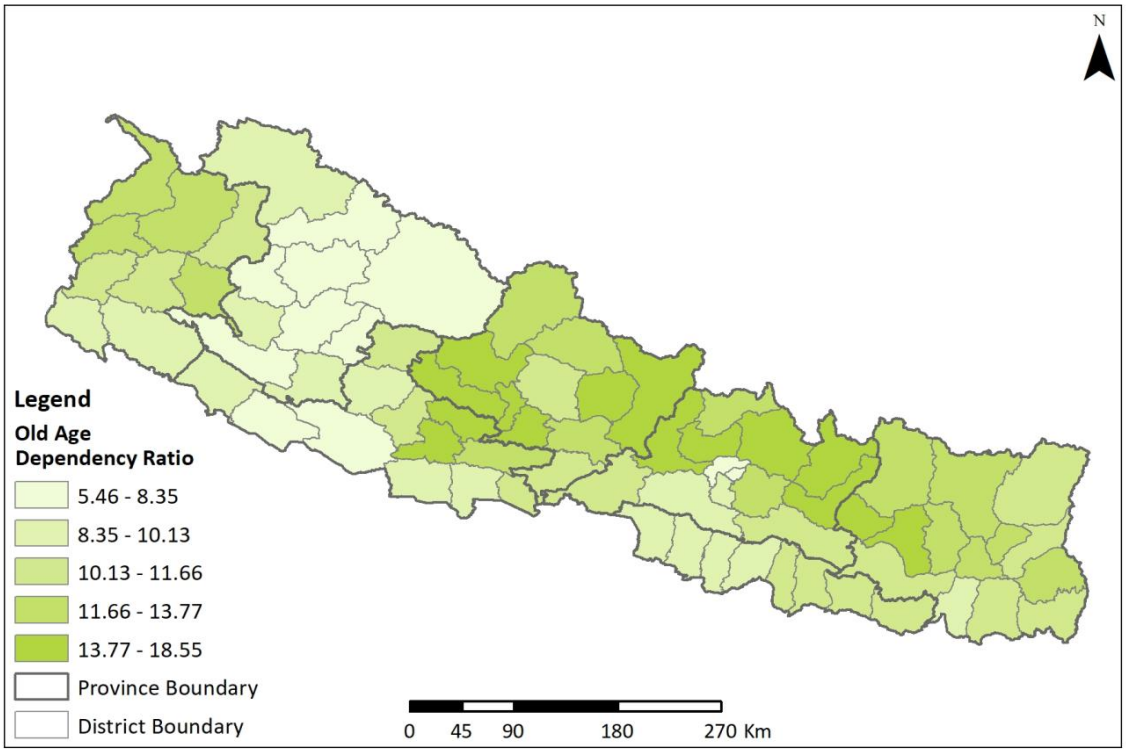
Map 5.2: Child dependency ratio by district, 2021 census



Note: Working age is considered as 15-64 years and old age as 65+ years.

Old age dependency ratios − Dolpa (5), Jumla (6), Jajarkot (7), Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Mugu, Kalikot, Banke, Rukum (West), and Surkhet (8 each) were the districts with the lowest old age dependency ratios of the number of 65 years and older persons to every hundred 15−64 year olds (Map 5.3 and Annex 41). The districts with the highest old age dependency ratio were Gorkha (19), Ramechhap (18), Lamjung (18), Syangja (17), Dolakha (16), Parbat, Myagdi, Gulmi, and Sindhupalchok (16), and Dhading (15).

Map 5.3: Old age dependency ratio by district, 2021 census



5.3 Potential support ratios

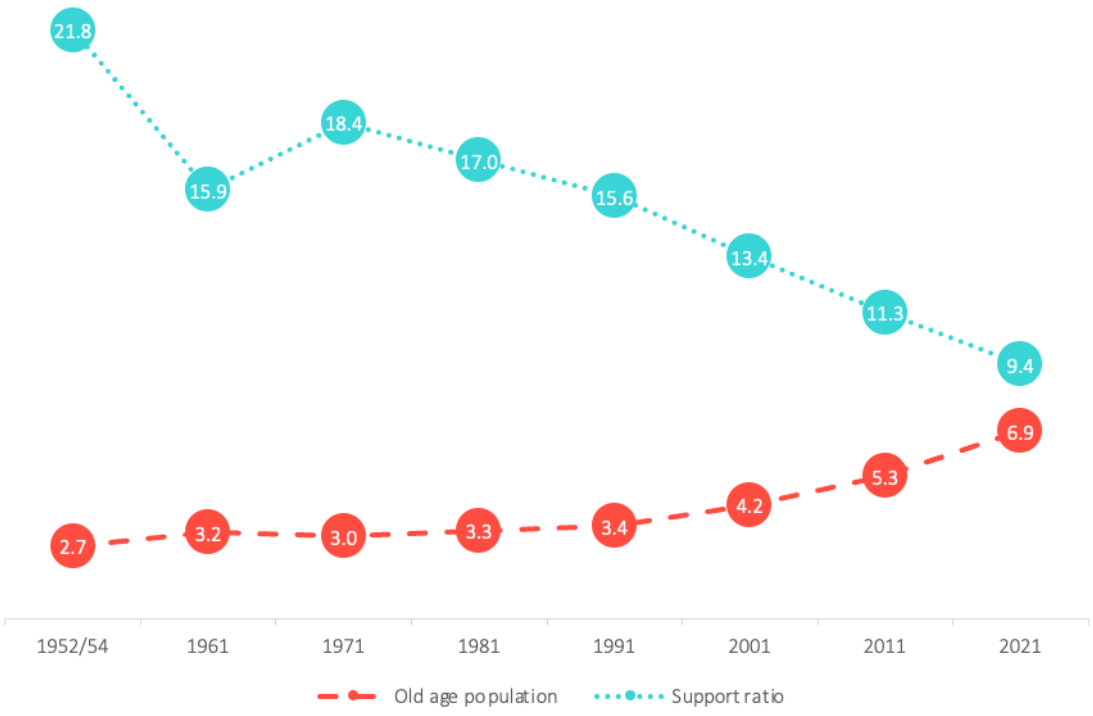
The age distribution of populations across the world are changing with most couples having fewer children and people living longer. This leads to a multi-decade-long increase in the proportion of older persons. In many high-income countries that have been changing their population age structures for hundreds of years (Mason, Lee, Abrigo, & Lee, 2017). Nepal is also getting close to the "middle" of the stage of this process.

Consumption and labour income is correlated with age profiles. Since it accounts for large age-related changes in both the amount of resources people claim through consumption and the amount of labour they provide, the support ratio as estimated here is an improvement over methods that were previously used.

Potential support ratio − The prospective/potential support ratio (PSR), which is also known as the old-age support ratio, is the number of people aged 15−64 years for every person 65 years or older. This ratio (which excludes children and unemployed persons) demonstrates the burden that the non-working population and old persons places on the working population. As a population ages, the potential support ratio tends to fall.

The census data shows Nepal's potential support ratio decreasing from 21.8 in 1952–54 to 9.4 in 2021 showing that there are now about 9.4 working age people potentially able to support each old person (65 years+) (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6: Potential support ratio and proportion of old age population, 1952–54 to 2021 censuses



Source: Calculated from CBS (1977), Chapter 2, Table 11; CBS (1987), Table 4; CBS (1993), Table 5; CBS (2002), Table 1; Adhikary (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 3.20; NSO (2023a), Table 18.

The old-age support ratio provides a rough idea of the population's potential ability to provide financial and social support for its old persons. Variations in the support ratio are influenced by variations in the mortality and fertility rates and to a lesser extent by net migration. The support ratio relates the working-age population to the entire population, whereas the dependency ratio relates the dependent age groups (children and old persons) to the working-age population.

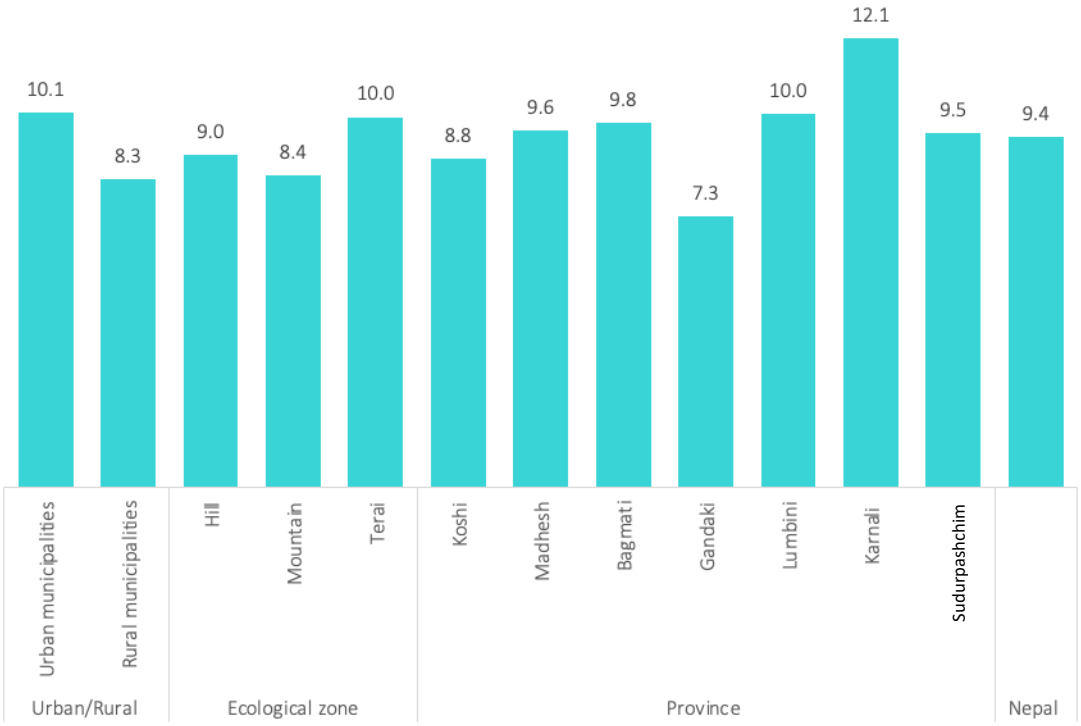
The 2021 census data shows that:

- Karnali (12.1) had the highest potential support ratio among Nepal's provinces, followed by Lumbini (10), Bagmati (9.8), Madhesh (9.6), Sudurpashchim (9.5), and Koshi (8.8),

with Gandaki (7.3) having the lowest potential support ratio with just seven persons to support every old person.

- Nepal's urban municipalities had the higher potential support ratio of 10.1 compared to the 8.3 in rural municipalities.
- The Tarai ecological zone had the highest potential support ratio (10) (Figure 5.7).

Figure 5.7: Potential support ratio by urban-rural municipality, ecological zone and province, 2021 census



Note: Working age is considered as 15-64 years and old age as 65+ years.

The 2021 census data on the relationship between the potential support ratio and the five wealth quintiles of the population shows the lowest quintile having the lowest support ratio (7.7) while the second highest and highest quintiles have the most working age persons who can support elderly dependants (Figure 5.8). This result is consistent with the support ratios for urban and rural municipalities, which show that the urban municipalities have more supporters than the rural counterparts, as the urban settlers are more likely to be wealthier (see Figure 5.7).

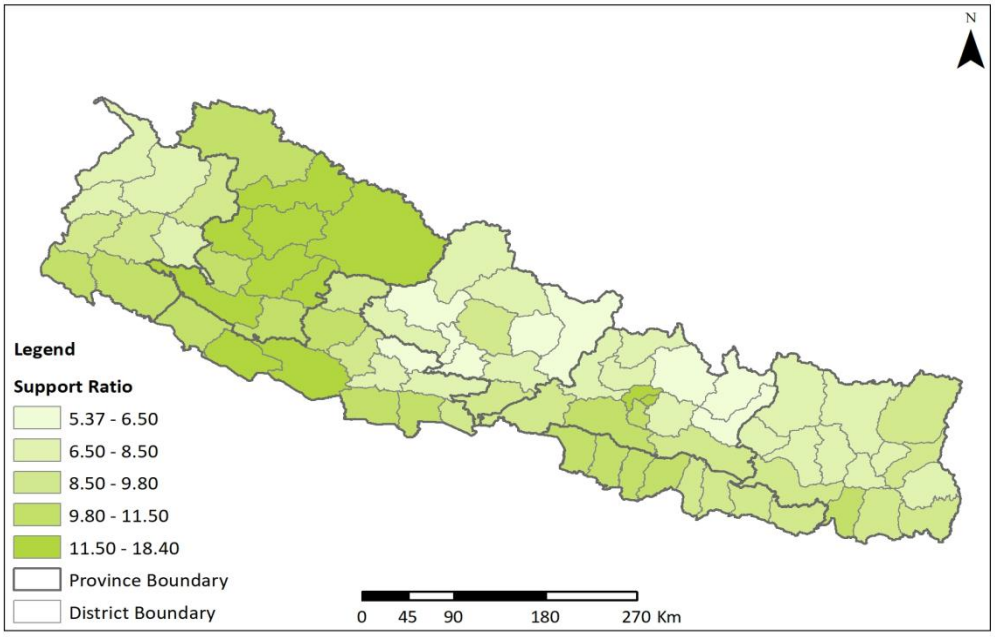
Figure 5.8: Potential support ratio by wealth quintile, 2021 census



Note: Working age is considered as 15-64 years and old age as 65+ years.

The districts with the highest potential support ratios in 2021 were Dolpa (18.3), Jumla (15.6), Jajarkot (13.4), Kathmandu (13.2), Bhaktapur (12.5), Mugu and Kalikot (12.3 each) and Banke, Rukum (West) and Surkhet (12.1 each) (Map 5.4 and Annex 42). Most of these are located in Karnali province. The lowest potential support ratios were in Gorkha (5.4), Ramechhap (5.5), Lamjung (5.7), Syangja (5.8), Dolakha (5.9), Parbat (6.2), Myagdi and Gulmi (6.3 each), Sindhupalchok (6.4) and Arghakhanchi (6.6).

Map 5.4: Potential support ratio by district, 2021 census



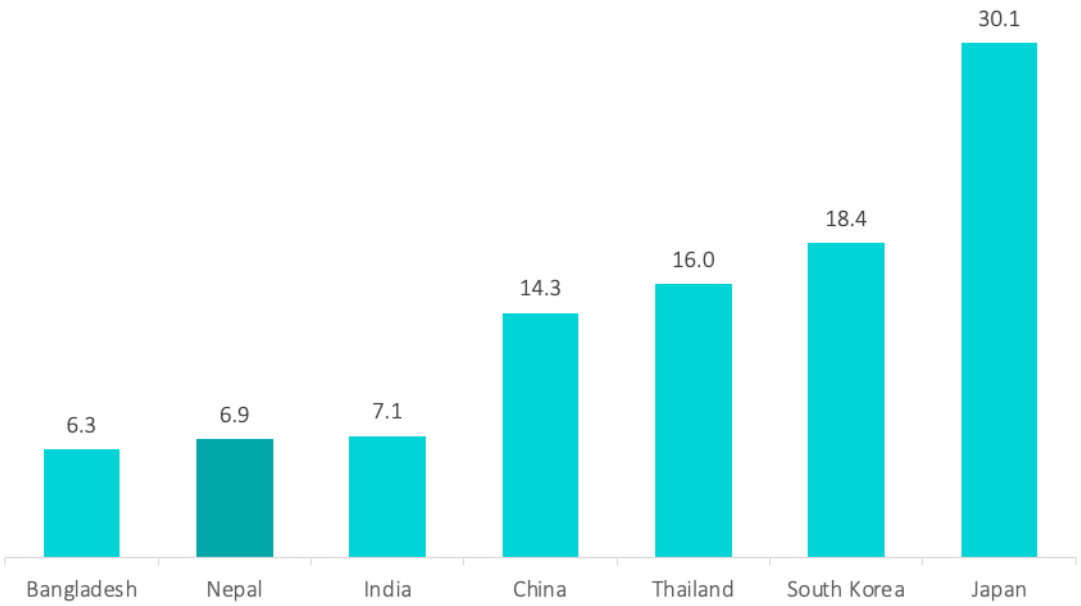
Note: Working age is defined as 15-64 years and old age as 65+ years.

5.4 Ageing

Proportion of older population aged 65 years and above is one of the indicators of ageing population. As shown in Figure 5.6, older population was only 2.7 in 1952-54, which slowly increased to 3.4 until 1991. After 1991, its increment is slightly faster than before and also gradual and reached to 6.9 in 2021, with an almost 7 percent.

With seven percent of its population aged 65 years and above Nepal has become an ageing society. India is also an ageing society (7.1%) while Bangladesh has not yet crossed the threshold at 6.3 percent (Figure 5.9). The other Asian countries of China, Thailand, South Korea and Japan are aged societies with Japan having the highest proportion of old persons in the world in 2021 (30.1%).[14]

Figure 5.9: Percentage of old age population in selected Asian countries, 2023-24



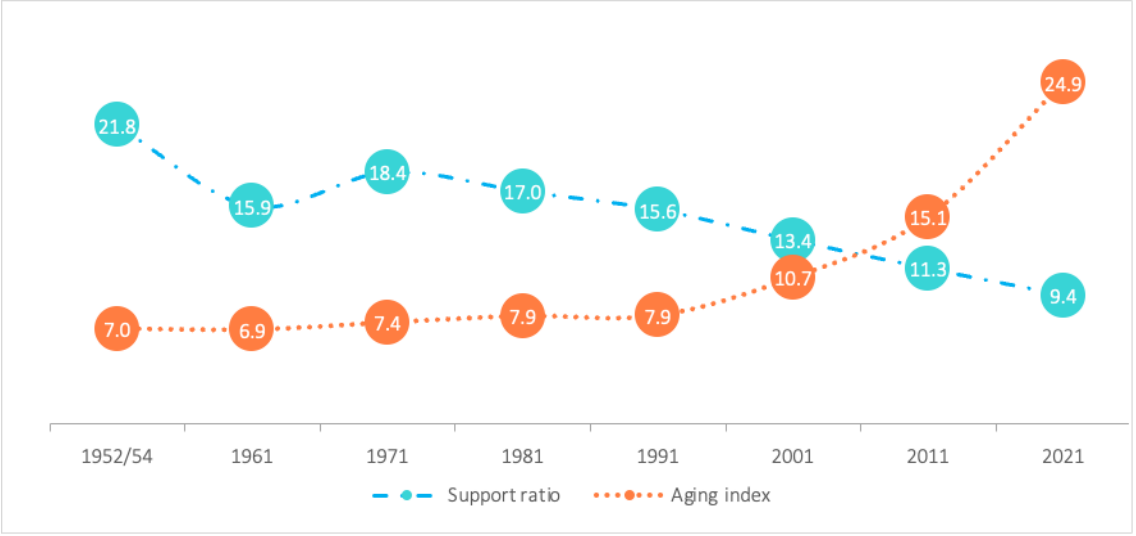
Source: ESCAP (2023) except for Nepal, which is from NPHC 2021.

Ageing index is another indicator of understanding ageing population. It is defined as the number of older persons of 65 years and above per 100 young population of less than 15 years old. It describes how old a population is in terms of the ratio of old to young persons in a population; and so, the older the population the higher the index is. With this definition, Nepal's general ageing index is 24.9 percent indicating Nepal has 25 older population per 100 younger

[14] https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2023/01/2023wsr-fullreport.pdf

population of less than 15 years old (Figure 5.10). With a similar trend of share of older population in Figure 5.6, ageing index is also increasing over the years (Figure 5.10). However, increment is quite faster after 1991 that it increased by more than three times between 1991 (7.9%) and 2021 (24.9). The ageing index score is linked with the potential support ratio that shows the expected decreasing support ratio and increasing ageing index over the last 70 years.

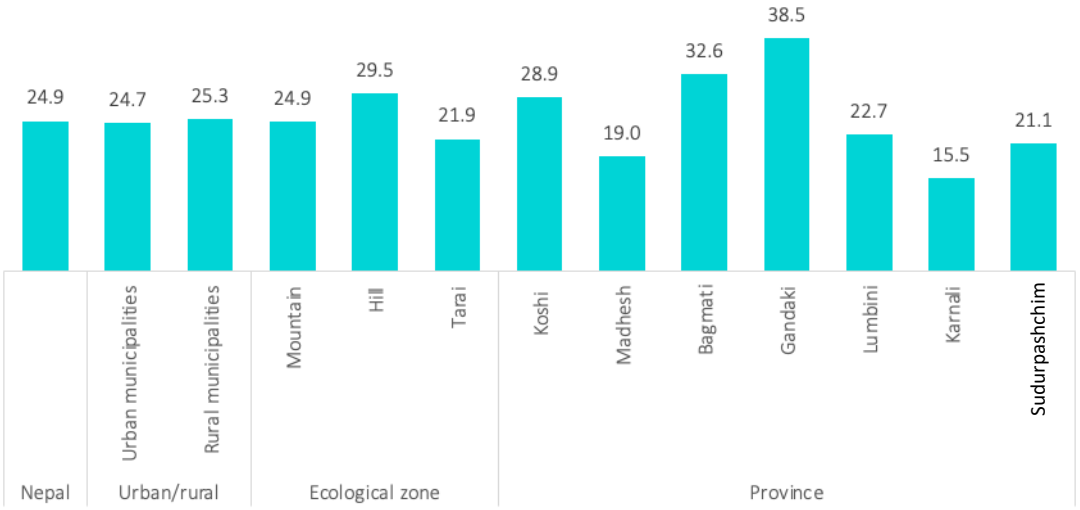
Figure 5.10: Ageing index versus potential support ratio (65+), Census 1952–54 to 2021 censuses



Source: Calculated from CBS (1977), Chapter 2, Table 11; CBS (1987), Table 4; CBS (1993), Table 5; CBS (2002), Table 1; Adhikary (2014: Population Monograph, CBS), Table 3.20; NSO (2023a), Table 18.

In terms of spatial differentiation, the ageing index was almost the same in the urban and rural municipalities, and highest in the Hill ecological zone (29.5%) reflecting that the Hill zone had a more ageing population than the Mountain and Tarai (Figure 5.11). Province-wise, it was highest in Gandaki (38.5%) and Bagmati provinces (32.6%), and lowest in Karnali (15.5%).

Figure 5.11: Ageing index by urban-rural municipality, ecological zone and province, 2021 census



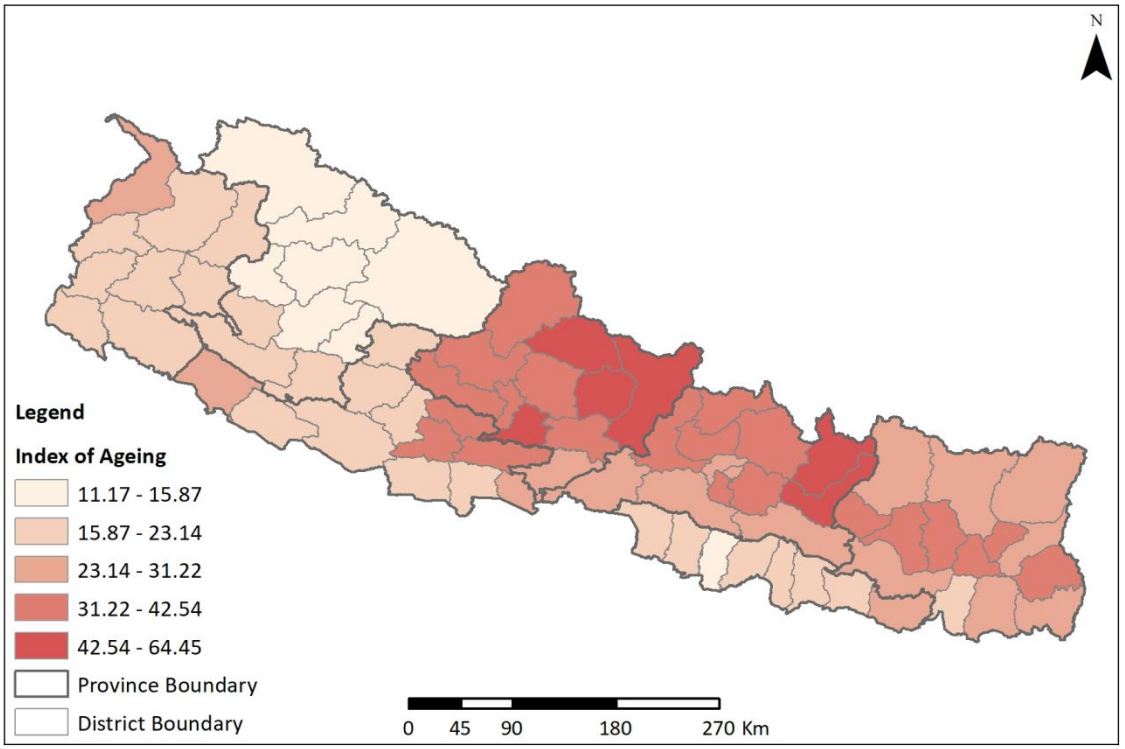
The part of the population in the highest wealth quintile had the highest ageing index score while no relationship is evident for the other wealth quintiles with the ageing index scores (Figure 5.12).

Figure 5.12: Ageing index by wealth quintiles, 2021 census



Manang had the highest ageing index score (64) in 2021, followed by Lamjung (53), Gorkha and Syangja (51 each), Ramechhap (50), Dolakha (46), Sindhupalchok (43), Parbat (42), Nuwakot (40) and Myagdi (39), (Map 5.5 and Annex 43). And the districts with the lowest ageing index scores in 2021 were Dolpa (11), Jajarkot (12), Kalikot, Mugu and Jumla (13 each), Humla (15), Rautahat and Rukum (West) (16 each) and Doti and Dailekh (17 each), are the same districts as had the lowest ratios of old age population to children. The latter districts are all in Karnali or Madhesh provinces.

Map 5.5: Ageing index scores by district, 2021 census



5.5 Demographic dividend performance

A demographic dividend occurs when a country's economic growth accelerates due to a demographic shift or transition that is caused by declining fertility and death rates. This normally results in a decreased dependency ratio and an increase in the number of working age persons, which should increase productivity. A nation must undergo a demographic transition with the concomitant changes in age structure to benefit from a demographic dividend. The analysis in this study shows that Nepal has already undergone such a demographic transition (see above sections 5.1 to 5.4). However, it is difficult to estimate how much of a demographic dividend Nepal is benefiting from.

A UN projection (UNDESA, 2004) estimated that Nepal would enter the demographic window of opportunity in 2030 when its dependency ratio reached 53.6, and that the window would close 35 years later in 2065. However, NPC & UNICEF (2017) says that the demographic window of opportunity opens when there are roughly 60 dependent children and old persons for every 100 persons of working age. In 2021 Nepal had 53.3 dependents for every 100 people of working age, showing that it entered its demographic window of opportunity in about 2016.

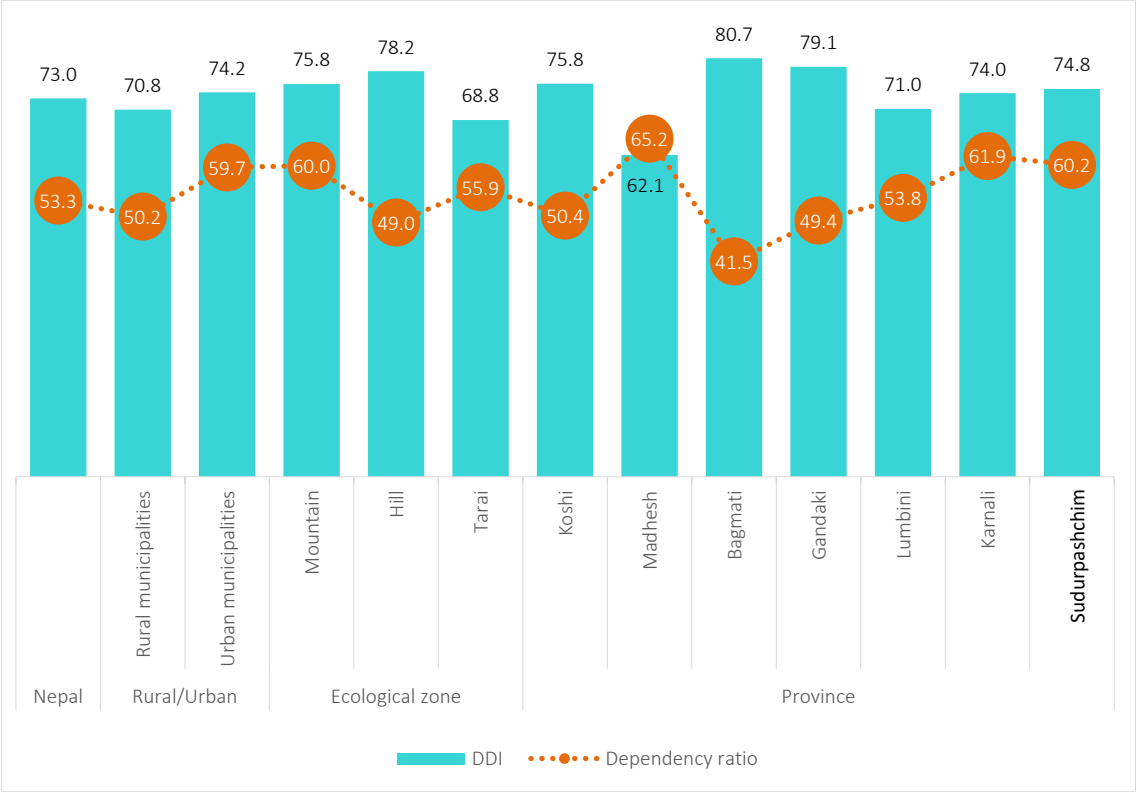
This study used the Demographic Dividend Index (DDI) to measure the progress of the demographic dividend in Nepal. This index was developed by Zhang et al. (2016) and is explained above in Section 1.4.2. It is a geometric mean of the three indicators of the child marriage ratio (representing empowerment), the net enrolment ratio in secondary education, and the proportion of 15–24 year olds not in employment, education or training (NEET). The score can range from 1 to 100 with the highest value indicating the maximum realisation of the demographic dividend.

The dependency ratio is also an important indicator related to the situation of the demographic window of opportunity with a lower dependency ratio indicating the presence of a demographic window of opportunity. The demographic dividend index and dependency ratio have an inverse relationship between them. However, the estimation and discussion of the demographic dividend in this report informs only the results provided by the method of Zhang et al. (2012), which is entirely based on the 2021 census data.

Nepal's dependency ratio in 2021 was 53.3 and the DDI score 73.0 (Figure 5.13), suggesting the country has attained some level of demographic dividend and has already entered the demographic window of opportunity. In terms of the scores for the different parts of the country:

- The urban municipalities (74.2) had a higher DDI score than rural municipalities (70.8).
- The Hill (78.2) and Mountain (75.8) zones had a higher score than the Tarai (68.8) which had a high dependency ratio (55.9).
- Among the seven provinces, Bagmati had the highest DDI (80.7) with lowest dependency ratio (41.5) followed by Gandaki (a DDI of 79.1) and Koshi (a DDI of 75.8), while Madhesh (62.1) and Lumbini (71.0) had the lowest DDIs. As expected, the Madhesh had the highest dependency ratio (65.2) showing that this province is far away from enjoying a demographic dividend (Table 5.3).

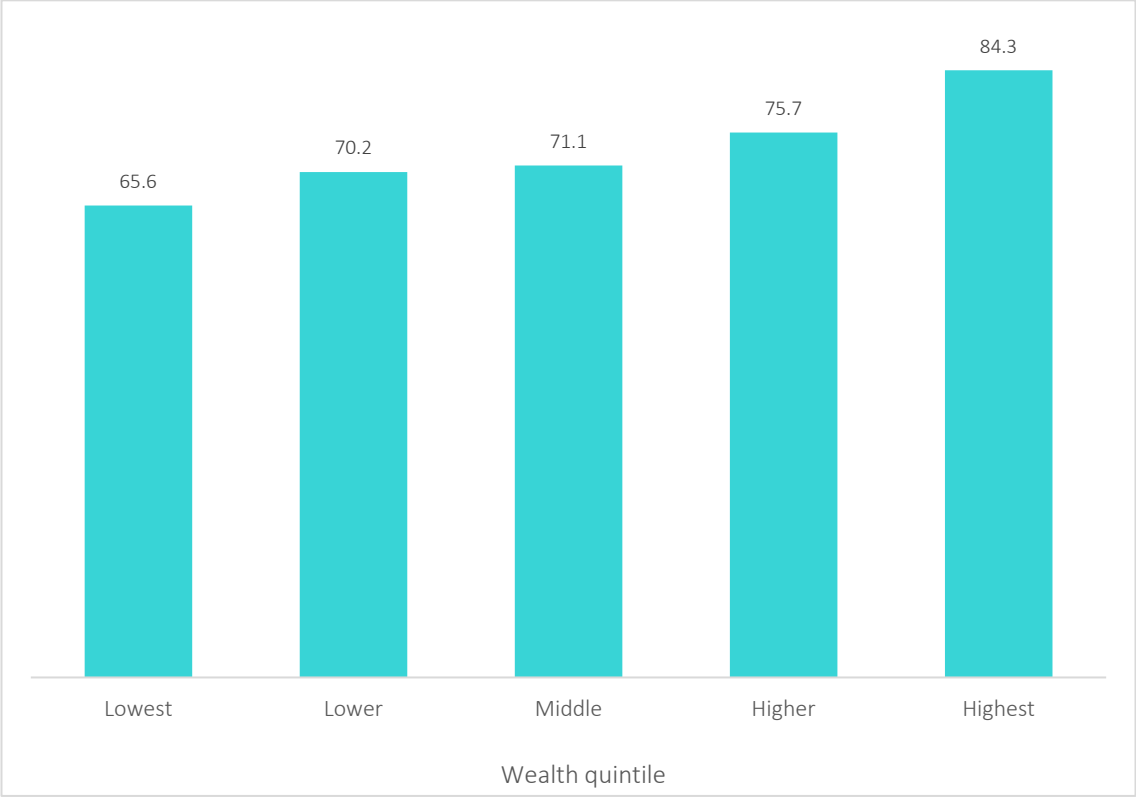
Figure 5.13: Demographic dividend index and dependency ratio scores, 2021 census



The data indicate that, except for the rural-urban municipalities, there is a somewhat negative association between the demographic dividend and dependency ratio, with the dependency ratio dropping as the demographic dividend increases. In most of the ecological zones and provinces, the dependency ratio has decreased as the demographic dividend has grown (Figure 5.13).

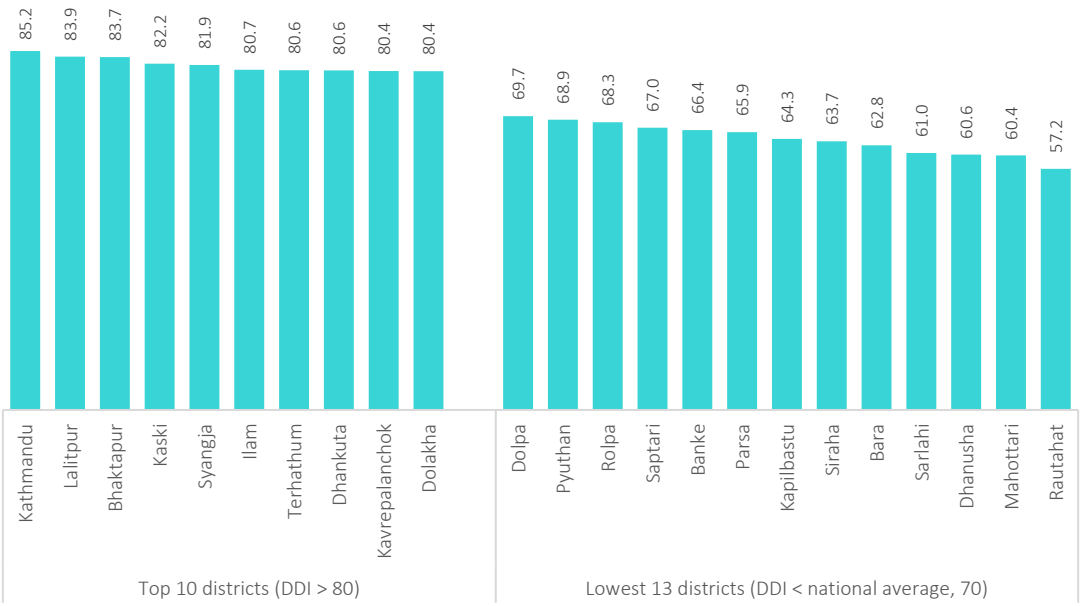
The data indicates a somehow positive relationship between wealth quintile and demographic dividend with the DDI score increasing from the lowest (65.6) to the highest wealth quintile (84.3) (Figure 5.14).

Figure 5.14: Demographic dividend index versus wealth quintile, 2021 census

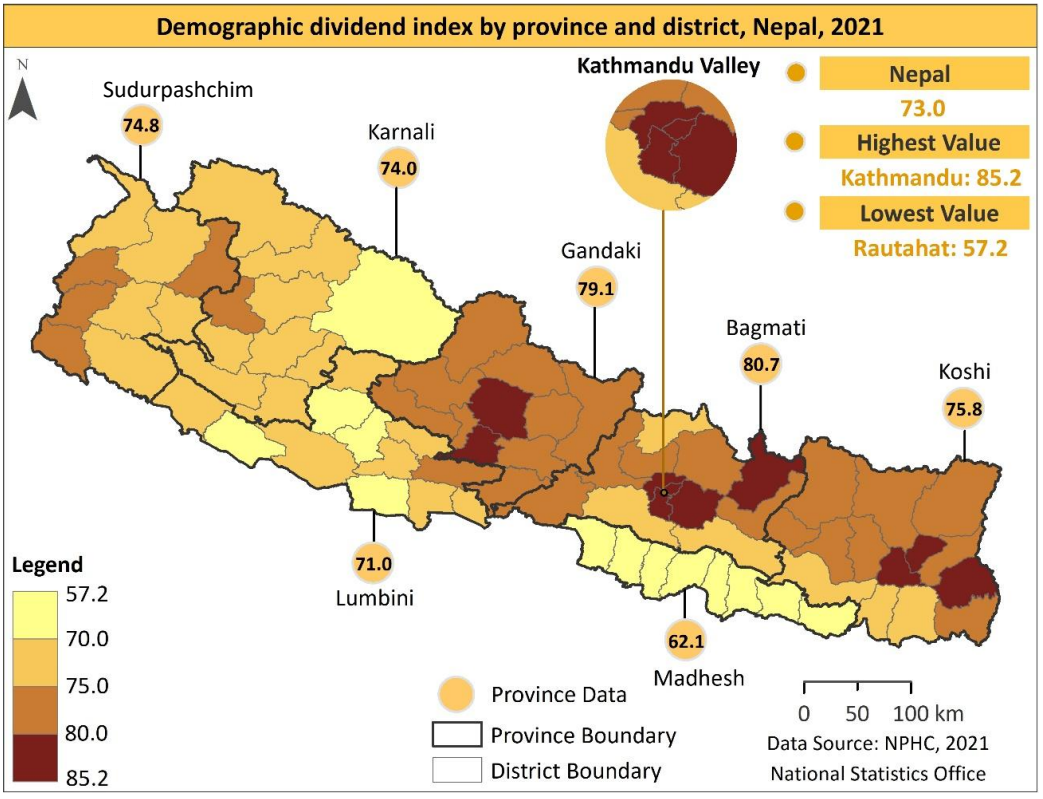


There are 10 districts with the highest DDI scores, above 80, all in Koshi, Bagmati, and Gandaki provinces, while most districts with the lowest scores are in Madhesh, Lumbini and Karnali provinces. Kathmandu district had the highest DDI score at 85.2. The next highest scores were for Lalitpur (83.9), Bhaktapur (83.7), Kaski (82.2), Syangja (81.9), Ilam (80.7), Tehrathum (80.6), Dhankuta (80.6), Kavrepalanchok (80.4), and Dolakha (80.4). On the other hand, there are 13 districts having low DDI score, below national average. The district with the lowest DDI score was Rautahat (57.2) followed by Mahottari (60.4), Dhanusa (60.6) and Sarlahi (61.0) (Figure 5.15, Map 5.6 and Annex 44).

Figure 5.15: Top 10 districts with DDI>80 and lowest 13 districts with DDI<national average (70), 2021 census



Map 5.6: Demographic dividend index by province and district, 2021 census



6. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Major conclusions

Nepal has been experiencing a demographic transition since around the year 1991. The 2021 census has observed a less than one annual population growth rate (0.92%), which is almost equal to the growth rate of global (0.90%) and India (0.92%) population, and by which the country revealed a shifting population structure. Changes in population age structure led to changes the proportion of consumer and producer. That is declining dependency ratio, particularly for children, and an increasing working age and old-age population and increase the window of opportunity. The shifting population structure is mainly reflected into the declining dependency ratio, particularly for children, and an increasing working age and old-age population. The change in population structure is mainly due to significant decline in fertility and mortality during the last 40 years, the TFR was 6.4 in 1981 which is now 2.1 per woman in reproductive age in 2022, the infant mortality dropped from 172 deaths per 1000 live births in 1971 to 28 in 2022 (MoHP et al., 2023). Fertility decline is also associated with decline in household size, which was 5.8 in 1981 and dropped to 4.4 in 2021, and considerably high proportion of population living in nuclear family (about 48%). The decline in fertility and mortality is mostly attributed to its socio-economic development correlates. All these changes have clearly indicated the trajectory of future population growth in association with appropriate reproductive health policies and programmes targeting to manage fertility and mortality.

This section highlights the shift in population structure in terms of population size, composition and distribution brought up by evolving demographic transition in the country observed by the 2021 census. The following paragraphs are devoted to this shift in population structure and its demographic consequences and then drawing policy implications.

6.1.1 Regional shift in population

Since 1991 census, share of population of ecological zones has been continuously shifting towards an unequal distribution. The 2021 census clearly demonstrated an imbalanced regional distribution of population in terms of size, growth and density. Mountain has negative population growth (-0.05%), hill also has far below the national average (0.3%), and there are 34 districts mostly in mountain and some in hill districts that have negative growth rate. In contrast, Tarai has considerably high population growth rate (1.54%) with a residence of majority of the total population (54%) which has only 23 percent of the total land area of the country. In this way, there has been increased depopulation in mountain and some hill districts in one hand and expanding share of population in Tarai districts.

Imbalanced population distribution also comes from the share of population residing in urban and rural municipalities. About 2/3rd of the total population is residing in urban municipalities and urban areas (peri-urban and urban areas). Growing urbanization is common in the developing countries that everybody wants to reside in a place where basic services, facilities and opportunities exist. Increased residents in urban municipalities have been fuelled mainly by internal migration and designating urban municipality of many rural areas. Increased residents in urban municipalities are also due to its association with increased population share in Tarai. It is because 150 out of 293 urban municipalities are in Tarai and, among them, 3 out of 6 metropolitan cities and 10 out of 11 sub-metropolitan cities are in Tarai. On the other hand, about 90 percent of population in Tarai reside in peri-urban and urban areas. Among the provinces, Karnali and Sudurpaschim are less urbanized provinces.

The evidence clearly suggests that a regional imbalance in population has been growing in Nepal. The regional imbalance is coupled with the increased residents of urban municipalities. This is a serious challenge for population management in the future of the country. It has numerous implications of socio-economic development and population management for both sides, depopulation, and more population. A simple example is that most of the fertile lands may have been left unproductive in depopulated areas and encroachment of fertile lands may have been increased in populated areas. Therefore, there is an urgent need for the policy makers and planners in order to manage current situation of depopulation and more population in one hand, and to manage for the balanced population distribution in the future on the other. To this end, rethinking of new policies and plans regarding population and development is the only way to mitigate demographic resilience.

6.1.2 Demography of diversity

Nepal is rich in its population diversity. The diversity in population is mainly in terms of social and culture and residence. Geographical, administrative and the rural/urban municipality divisions represent the residential diversity that have been discussed above. Caste and ethnicity and languages largely represent social and cultural diversity which is discussed briefly here based on caste and ethnic and linguistic diversity. In Nepal, identification of caste and ethnicity publicly began in 1991 along with restoration of democracy in the country. The number caste and ethnicity were 59 in 1991, which increased to 142 in the 2021 census. Since the first modern census 1952-54, language has been continuously identified and making it public. The number of languages were 31 in 1991 and now it comes to 124 in 2021. Identification of caste and ethnicity and languages has been increasing continuously in every census. Linguists are in opinion of that increment in linguistic groups is almost at the optimum level, which indicates there is low chance of further increment in the number. However, based on application with a demand of identification of new caste and ethnicity submitted to the NSO (before conducting census 2021),

it is expected that increment of the number of caste and ethnic groups may be continued for some later censuses in the future.

There are 53 caste and ethnic groups who have less than 10 thousand population, 32 groups with less than 5 thousand and 11 groups with less than 1,000 population. Similarly, there are 23 languages with less than 1,000 speakers, 15 languages with less than 500 speakers, and even 2 languages with less than 100 speakers. The main concern regarding caste and ethnic and linguistic diversity in the country, therefore, is that these diversities largely based on a few populations. Most of these groups are endangered and vulnerable for extinction in terms of number of population as well as in terms of their identity. Retaining a beauty of this diversity by preserving and protecting them from extinction is the most challenging issue for policy makers and planners. Another challenging issue is that in such a higher level of the diversity, it is difficult is to identify and target them for the inclusive development policies and programs.

6.1.3 Absentee population

Absentee population both living within, and outside country have been increasing every census indicating increased internal and international migration (out-migration for work and study) over the years. Proportion of both absentees living within country and living abroad is almost equal. In the past, female absentees are fewer, however, it has been increasing. People migrate for opportunities or with opportunities. The most striking issue regarding absentees abroad is that they are skilled, educated, and able-bodied population that are the most valued resource to increase the productivity of the country to gain the demographic dividend.

6.1.4 Age structure, demographic dividend, and ageing

The main consequence of current demographic transition in Nepal is age structure transition. With a decline in fertility to a replacement level (2.1) and infant mortality to 28 deaths per 1000 live births and, in turn, slowing population growth, age structure consequently has been gradually shifting upward and heading towards a stable population structure. Child population of less than 15 years old has been squeezing, fell below 30 percent (27.8%) for the first time in the history. Expectedly, it is going to be declined continuously for some more years, because every year roughly 600,000 child population enter 15 years of age in one hand, and the number of births is declining in its way. As a result, the working age population (15-64 years) is expanding continuously and has reached to a share of a considerable majority (65.2%) of the total population. It is expected that this working age population going to be increasing continuously for some more years. It is because the rate of entry into this age groups is much more dominant over the exit of them to the old-age category (roughly less than 150,000 per year). Similarly, the old-age population (65 years and above) is also gradually increasing over the years and reached to almost 7 percent in 2021 census. Increase in old-age population will be continue as the entry from lower ages is continue and the life expectancy at birth is also increasing over the years.

The population of Nepal is still young with an intermediate age (median age of 26 years), like other South Asian countries like India and Bangladesh and far below China, Thailand, and Japan. The changing population structure has been producing a declining dependency ratio, that is 53 dependents (<15 + 65+ years) per 100 working age population (15-64 years). The dependency ratio falling below 60 indicates that the country has entered a "demographic window of opportunity". If we interpolate the time between two censuses, 2011 and 2021 with dependency ratio of 67 percent and 53 percent respectively, the year of beginning "demographic windows of opportunity" would be roughly around 2017. Accordingly, Nepal has been experiencing a population structure that is highly potential for economic development. According to UN (2004), Nepal is in "window phase" among three phases (pre-window, window, and post-window phase)[15]. According to Global Data Lab (GDL), Nepal is in "early-window" phase[16] (Crombach & Smits, 2022: 179). Typically, the period of demographic windows of opportunity would be about 50 to 60 years, depending upon country's socio-economic situation and its progress. If we assume an average period for Nepal as around 55 years of window period, it will be open for next 49 years (6 years has already passed), until 2072. The window phase is influenced by three major factors – job creation, human capital building, and good governance (Zuber et al., 2017). The window of opportunity can be translated into economic growth, thereby demographic dividend, only if the high share of working age population have sufficient employment opportunities (Crombach & Smits, 2022), which is a big challenge for the country.

Evidence suggests that a growing number of areas of the country are entering the demographic window of opportunity. However, the country faces many policy challenges to make the most of the potential boost to its economy. Further demographic and economic analyses are needed to inform what level of demographic dividend Nepal can attain. This report is an attempt to estimate an index to inform primarily to what extent the country has attained the demographic dividend. The index clearly indicates the demographic dividend performance differs by location, province, and district.

As the old age population of Nepal reached to 7 percent in 2021 census, the country has entered a "ageing society". Increment of old-age population over the years is gradual but the pace is slow. However, ageing index indicates that the ageing in Nepal is a bit faster since 2001 (10.7%), which increased to 15.1 in 2011 and to 24.9 older population per 100 younger population of less than 15 years old in 2021. Ageing as an outcome of demographic change is also one of the

[15] UN (2004) distinguishes three phases of demographic window of opportunity – pre-window (>=30% of under 15 years population), window (<30% of under 15 years and <15% of 65+ population), and post-window phase (>=15% of 65+ years population).

[16] GDL distinguishes six phases: traditional phase (>40% of under 15 and <15% of 65+); pre-window (30-40% of under 15 and <15% of 65+); early-window (25-30% of under 15 and <15% of 65+); mid-window (20-25% of under 15 and <15% of 65+); late-window (<20% of under 15 and <15% of 65+); and post-window (>15% of 65+ population).

important policy concerns. It has two main concerns. First, over the years the potential support ratio has been declining gradually since 1971 (18.1%), which is now only 9.4 potential supporters of working age (15-64 years) per one old-age person. Second, out-migration for work (absentee abroad) from the district is associated with higher dependency ratio (old and child dependents) in the district, which indicates the left behinds are mainly dependents.

6.1.5 Child marriage

Singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM) demonstrated that males have been marrying at age of 25.5 years and the females at age of 21.8 years, four years earlier than males, according to the Nepal 2021 census. The evidence of child marriage somewhat contradicts with the SMAM. Child marriage (marriage before 18) among women aged 20-24 years is still high in Nepal (21.9%) and much higher in Madhesh province (32.8%). The current prevalence of chid marriage is another challenge for Nepal regarding discrimination against women. It is one of the harmful practices that should be eliminated to achieve "ending gender-based violence and other harmful practices".

6.1.6 Sex ratio at birth

Nepal has considerably high sex ratio at birth, 112 boys to every 100 girls live births. It is even higher in some regions like Madhesh and Sudurpaschim province. This is much higher than many other Asian and South Asia countries such as Japan, Korea, Thailand, India, and Bangladesh. This is mainly due to the presence of strong parental preference for a son over daughter during birth and is a result of patriarchal and patrilineal value in the society. As the fertility has been declined to a replacement level and the tendency of Nepalese couple is heading towards a small family norm, particularly nuclear family, couple may have increased feeling of insecurity of being sonless and thereby preferred son in their family (Guilmoto, 2009). The evidence of rise in sex ratio at birth is also due to post-natal gender discrimination among children (UNFPA, 2012). Son preference and parental sex selection of son over females have resulted in significant sex ratio at birth imbalances in several Asian countries, including India and China (Dubuc & Sivia, 2018). The impact of such high sex ratio at birth will have future population and marriage imbalances.

6.2 Major policy implications

The 2021 census provides important information, especially on the population's size, structure, and distribution, that should be used to guide Nepal's policy priorities. The country's ongoing population shift presents both opportunities and challenges. The following policy recommendations are offered in light of the results of the 2021 census and the findings of the current study:

- The country's changing demographic structure has two important policy ramifications. The annual population growth rate of 0.92 percent indicates the slowing rate of population growth. The growth rate has been achieved quite earlier than targeted, 1.1 percent to be achieved by 2034 (MoHP, 2015). The population momentum has taken a different course. So, the policy till the date must be revised in a way to mitigate the current demographic shift. The depopulation in many Mountain and Hill areas and the concentration of high population in Tarai districts that lead to a regional imbalance that has social, cultural, and economic development policy implications. A strong 'population redistribution policy' could foster more balanced regional as well as rural-urban population distribution. To this end, population management policies must be improved by paying attention to regional and rural-urban balance in population distribution. Measures need to be taken to create employment, develop infrastructure, and build schools and health facilities and to maximize the implementation of federalism through planned urbanization and development. Local development programs must concentrate on providing opportunities for young people to divert pressure from growing cities, particularly the Kathmandu Valley.
- The census data shows an increasing number of Nepalis resident abroad. This has resulted in a higher proportion of dependants left behind in many households, regions, and districts, which is a serious concern for policy makers to address them accordingly.
- The diversity of the population must be protected and preserved. Population management policy should ensure smaller groups to be protected by providing the "right of endangered population groups not to be extinct" for the sustainable beauty of a country and the planet that lie in the colourful diversity of its people.
- Every year many young people are entering the labour force. Polices are needed to take advantage of the 'youth bulge'. The demographic window of opportunity offers a chance for social and economic advancement towards realizing the demographic dividend. The nation may effectively capitalize on this opportunity and enjoy the demographic benefits in the form of rapid human development and economic progress if the appropriate policies are put in place and the necessary expenditures are made to support the young population.
- This requires large investments in education and health to provide competent, and healthy human resources and create job to maximize the healthy and competent human resources. This would be the only way to harness the demographic dividend in the country. Low performing areas of demographic dividend need to receive attention for investment in empowerment, education, employment, and training to increase their capacities to realize the demographic dividend, especially Madhesh province and the Tarai areas of Lumbini province.

- We are getting older. We have entered an ageing society and heading towards “aged population”. Ageing index indicates that the ageing process of Nepali population seems to be a bit faster. Policy and plans need to be developed by paying attention to the increased spending mental and physical health of aged population in one hand and increase and diversify the social security system to the aged population in an integrated way on the other.
- Paying attention to the higher sex ratio at birth, the main goal of the policy should be to reduce sex preference during childbirth, specifically son preference. This can be achieved by launching advocacy programs for men, women and the community and empowering women to end discrimination against girls and women. This effort aims to prevent child marriage and abolish gender disparity in birth, education, health and employment in the country and the regions such as Madhesh, Karnali, and Sudurpaschim provinces.
- Timely and suitable evidence-based planning and monitoring of demographic changes is crucial with relation to socio-economic development. For this data needs to be produced regularly between the consecutive censuses too. Institutions need trained demographers to create a demographic check system at all levels across the country. Public sector employees need training and skill development on comprehending demographic changes in their area of strategic and policy planning.

In the conclusion, Nepal’s demographic structure is transforming through including urbanization, ageing, increased absenteeism, and the depopulation of the rural Hill and Mountain. A strategic solution cannot be based on addressing just one of these elements; but must consider the interaction of five mega-trends of population ageing, migration, urbanization, climate change and inequality (UN 2020).

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Single year of age of population by sex, 2021 census

Age by year	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
0	191,842	0.66	219,317	0.75	411,159	1.41
1	209,981	0.72	240,488	0.82	450,469	1.54
2	241,294	0.83	269,561	0.92	510,855	1.75
3	252,510	0.87	278,785	0.96	531,295	1.82
4	253,131	0.87	282,374	0.97	535,505	1.84
5	269,216	0.92	299,149	1.03	568,365	1.95
6	268,359	0.92	294,386	1.01	562,745	1.93
7	258,021	0.88	276,257	0.95	534,278	1.83
8	286,398	0.98	313,330	1.07	599,728	2.06
9	241,028	0.83	260,283	0.89	501,311	1.72
10	307,987	1.06	338,785	1.16	646,772	2.22
11	228,735	0.78	246,281	0.84	475,016	1.63
12	308,668	1.06	330,149	1.13	638,817	2.19
13	275,172	0.94	281,718	0.97	556,890	1.91
14	293,349	1.01	299,021	1.03	592,370	2.03
15	301,378	1.03	305,750	1.05	607,128	2.08
16	302,206	1.04	306,773	1.05	608,979	2.09
17	265,803	0.91	272,098	0.93	537,901	1.84
18	347,802	1.19	360,584	1.24	708,386	2.43
19	254,692	0.87	249,318	0.85	504,010	1.73
20	373,473	1.28	331,157	1.14	704,630	2.42
21	253,194	0.87	233,905	0.80	487,099	1.67
22	315,694	1.08	280,879	0.96	596,573	2.05
23	266,665	0.91	223,481	0.77	490,146	1.68
24	273,016	0.94	231,596	0.79	504,612	1.73
25	342,705	1.18	278,628	0.96	621,333	2.13
26	270,852	0.93	228,955	0.79	499,807	1.71
27	219,359	0.75	191,529	0.66	410,888	1.41
28	312,667	1.07	258,447	0.89	571,114	1.96
29	191,524	0.66	164,683	0.56	356,207	1.22
30	356,890	1.22	288,325	0.99	645,215	2.21
31	162,568	0.56	144,654	0.50	307,222	1.05
32	246,067	0.84	206,137	0.71	452,204	1.55
33	214,930	0.74	176,264	0.60	391,194	1.34
34	188,281	0.65	163,596	0.56	351,877	1.21
35	337,657	1.16	280,538	0.96	618,195	2.12
36	207,204	0.71	178,760	0.61	385,964	1.32
37	158,909	0.54	141,832	0.49	300,741	1.03
38	248,749	0.85	200,207	0.69	448,956	1.54
39	152,042	0.52	135,594	0.46	287,636	0.99

Age by year	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
40	326,933	1.12	294,351	1.01	621,284	2.13
41	121,300	0.42	114,250	0.39	235,550	0.81
42	188,314	0.65	175,424	0.60	363,738	1.25
43	157,253	0.54	131,071	0.45	288,324	0.99
44	125,539	0.43	113,397	0.39	238,936	0.82
45	238,926	0.82	226,847	0.78	465,773	1.60
46	135,628	0.47	124,940	0.43	260,568	0.89
47	100,334	0.34	95,430	0.33	195,764	0.67
48	167,577	0.57	141,181	0.48	308,758	1.06
49	106,050	0.36	99,127	0.34	205,177	0.70
50	258,058	0.88	241,544	0.83	499,602	1.71
51	101,788	0.35	101,180	0.35	202,968	0.70
52	135,860	0.47	135,091	0.46	270,951	0.93
53	120,348	0.41	110,873	0.38	231,221	0.79
54	105,304	0.36	103,806	0.36	209,110	0.72
55	166,013	0.57	170,720	0.59	336,733	1.15
56	106,545	0.37	106,193	0.36	212,738	0.73
57	75,505	0.26	78,684	0.27	154,189	0.53
58	115,271	0.40	106,457	0.37	221,728	0.76
59	75,052	0.26	75,504	0.26	150,556	0.52
60	185,522	0.64	174,137	0.60	359,659	1.23
61	67,512	0.23	68,970	0.24	136,482	0.47
62	90,458	0.31	87,610	0.30	178,068	0.61
63	79,025	0.27	71,064	0.24	150,089	0.51
64	67,125	0.23	64,181	0.22	131,306	0.45
65	126,465	0.43	120,479	0.41	246,944	0.85
66	67,851	0.23	65,222	0.22	133,073	0.46
67	58,848	0.20	58,086	0.20	116,934	0.40
68	80,839	0.28	77,257	0.26	158,096	0.54
69	57,926	0.20	58,645	0.20	116,571	0.40
70	116,609	0.40	104,076	0.36	220,685	0.76
71	51,238	0.18	49,781	0.17	101,019	0.35
72	63,086	0.22	58,484	0.20	121,570	0.42
73	47,246	0.16	42,721	0.15	89,967	0.31
74	39,137	0.13	36,992	0.13	76,129	0.26
75	63,363	0.22	57,240	0.20	120,603	0.41
76	37,802	0.13	33,985	0.12	71,787	0.25
77	36,501	0.13	32,970	0.11	69,471	0.24
78	30,765	0.11	30,739	0.11	61,504	0.21
79	13,774	0.05	16,064	0.06	29,838	0.10
80	33,130	0.11	29,104	0.10	62,234	0.21
81	11,771	0.04	12,778	0.04	24,549	0.08
82	14,323	0.05	14,046	0.05	28,369	0.10
83	12,913	0.04	11,740	0.04	24,653	0.08

Age by year	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
84	11,104	0.04	10,647	0.04	21,751	0.07
85	13,084	0.04	11,959	0.04	25,043	0.09
86	7,255	0.02	7,253	0.02	14,508	0.05
87	6,597	0.02	5,739	0.02	12,336	0.04
88	9,958	0.03	7,967	0.03	17,925	0.06
89	4,545	0.02	3,970	0.01	8,515	0.03
90+	27,639	0.09	20,001	0.07	47,640	0.16
Total	**14,911,027**	**51.13**	**14,253,551**	**48.87**	**29,164,578**	**100.00**

Annex 2: Population size and rank by district in 2011 and 2021, 2021 census

Districts	2011	Rank
Kathmandu	1,744,240	1
Morang	965,370	2
Rupandehi	880,196	3
Jhapa	812,650	4
Kailali	775,709	5
Sarlahi	769,729	6
Sunsari	763,487	7
Dhanusha	754,777	8
Bara	687,708	9
Rautahat	686,722	10
Saptari	639,284	11
Siraha	637,328	12
Mahottari	627,580	13
Parsa	601,017	14
Chitawan	579,984	15
Kapilbastu	571,936	16
Dang	552,583	17
Kaski	492,098	18
Banke	491,313	19
Lalitpur	468,132	20
Kanchanpur	451,248	21
Bardiya	426,576	22
Makwanpur	420,477	23
Kavrepalanchok	381,937	24
Surkhet	350,804	25
Dhading	336,067	26
Nawalparasi (West)	331,904	27
Tanahu	323,288	28
Udayapur	317,532	29

District	2021	Rank
Kathmandu	2,041,587	1
Morang	1,148,156	2
Rupandehi	1,121,957	3
Jhapa	998,054	4
Sunsari	926,962	5
Kailali	904,666	6
Dhanusha	867,747	7
Sarlahi	862,470	8
Rautahat	813,573	9
Bara	763,137	10
Siraha	739,953	11
Chitawan	719,859	12
Mahottari	706,994	13
Saptari	706,255	14
Kapilbastu	682,961	15
Dang	674,993	16
Parsa	654,471	17
Banke	603,194	18
Kaski	600,051	19
Lalitpur	551,667	20
Kanchanpur	513,757	21
Makwanpur	466,073	22
Bardiya	459,900	23
Bhaktapur	432,132	24
Surkhet	415,126	25
Nawalparasi (West)	386,868	26
Nawalparasi (East)	378,079	27
Kavrepalanchok	364,039	28
Udayapur	340,721	29

Districts	2011	Rank
Nawalparasi (East)	311,604	30
Bhaktapur	304,651	31
Sindhuli	296,192	32
Ilam	290,254	33
Syangja	289,148	34
Sindhupalchok	287,798	35
Gulmi	280,160	36
Nuwakot	277,471	37
Gorkha	271,061	38
Baglung	268,613	39
Dailekh	261,770	40
Palpa	261,180	41
Achham	257,477	42
Baitadi	250,898	43
Salyan	242,444	44
Pyuthan	228,102	45
Rolpa	224,506	46
Doti	211,746	47
Khotang	206,312	48
Ramechhap	202,646	49
Arghakhanchi	197,632	50
Bajhang	195,159	51
Panchthar	191,817	52
Dolakha	186,557	53
Bhojpur	182,459	54
Jajarkot	171,304	55
Lamjung	167,724	56
Dhankuta	163,412	57
Sankhuwasabha	158,742	58
Rukum (West)	155,383	59
Okhaldhunga	147,984	60
Parbat	146,590	61
Dadeldhura	142,094	62
Kalikot	136,948	63
Bajura	134,912	64
Darchula	133,274	65
Taplejung	127,461	66
Myagdi	113,641	67
Jumla	108,921	68
Solukhumbu	105,886	69
Tehrathum	101,577	70
Mugu	55,286	71

District	2021	Rank
Dhading	325,710	30
Tanahu	321,153	31
Sindhuli	300,026	32
Ilam	279,534	33
Nuwakot	263,391	34
Sindhupalchok	262,624	35
Syangja	253,024	36
Dailekh	252,313	37
Gorkha	251,027	38
Baglung	249,211	39
Gulmi	246,494	40
Palpa	245,027	41
Baitadi	242,157	42
Salyan	238,515	43
Rolpa	234,793	44
Pyuthan	232,019	45
Achham	228,852	46
Doti	204,831	47
Jajarkot	189,360	48
Bajhang	189,085	49
Arghakhanchi	177,086	50
Khotang	175,298	51
Dolakha	172,767	52
Panchthar	172,400	53
Ramechhap	170,302	54
Rukum (West)	166,740	55
Sankhuwasabha	158,041	56
Bhojpur	157,923	57
Lamjung	155,852	58
Dhankuta	150,599	59
Kalikot	145,292	60
Dadeldhura	139,602	61
Okhaldhunga	139,552	62
Bajura	138,523	63
Darchula	133,310	64
Parbat	130,887	65
Taplejung	120,590	66
Jumla	118,349	67
Myagdi	107,033	68
Solukhumbu	104,851	69
Tehrathum	88,731	70
Mugu	64,549	71

Districts	2011	Rank
Rukum (East)	53,184	72
Humla	50,858	73
Rasuwa	43,300	74
Dolpa	36,700	75
Mustang	13,452	76
Manang	6,538	77

District	2021	Rank
Rukum (East)	56,786	72
Humla	55,394	73
Rasuwa	46,689	74
Dolpa	42,774	75
Mustang	14,452	76
Manang	5,658	77

Annex 3: Population growth rates by district, 2021 census

Negative growth rate districts		
SN	District	Growth rate
1	Ramechhap	-1.67
2	Khotang	-1.56
3	Bhojpur	-1.39
4	Manang	-1.39
5	Terhathum	-1.30
6	Syangja	-1.28
7	Gulmi	-1.23
8	Achham	-1.13
9	Parbat	-1.09
10	Arghakhanchi	-1.05
11	Panchthar	-1.02
12	Sindhupalchok	-0.88
13	Dhankuta	-0.78
14	Dolakha	-0.74
15	Gorkha	-0.74
16	Baglung	-0.72
17	Lamjung	-0.70
18	Palpa	-0.61
19	Myagdi	-0.57
20	Okhaldhunga	-0.56
21	Taplejung	-0.53
22	Nuwakot	-0.50
23	Kavrepalanchok	-0.46

Positive growth rate districts		
SN	District	Growth rate
35	Darchula	0.00
36	Sindhuli	0.12
37	Pyuthan	0.16
38	Bajura	0.25
39	Rolpa	0.43
40	Kalikot	0.57
41	Rukum (East)	0.63
42	Udayapur	0.68
43	Rukum (West)	0.68
44	Mustang	0.69
45	Rasuwa	0.72
46	Bardiya	0.72
47	Jumla	0.80
48	Parsa	0.82
49	Humla	0.82
50	Saptari	0.96
51	Jajarkot	0.96
52	Makwanpur	0.99
53	Bara	1.00
54	Sarlahi	1.09
55	Mahottari	1.14
56	Kanchanpur	1.25
57	Dhanusa	1.34

Negative growth rate districts		
SN	District	Growth rate
24	Ilam	-0.36
25	Dailekh	-0.35
26	Baitadi	-0.34
27	Doti	-0.32
28	Dhading	-0.30
29	Bajhang	-0.30
30	Dadeldhura	-0.17
31	Salyan	-0.16
32	Solukhumbu	-0.09
33	Tanahu	-0.06
34	Sankhuwasabha	-0.04

Positive growth rate districts		
SN	District	Growth rate
58	Siraha	1.43
59	Nawalparasi (West)	1.47
60	Dolpa	1.47
61	Kailali	1.48
62	Mugu	1.49
63	Kathmandu	1.51
64	Lalitpur	1.58
65	Surkhet	1.62
66	Rautahat	1.63
67	Morang	1.66
68	Kapilbastu	1.70
69	Sunsari	1.86
70	Nawalparasi (East)	1.86
71	Kaski	1.90
72	Dang	1.92
73	Jhapa	1.97
74	Banke	1.97
75	Chitawan	2.07
76	Rupandehi	2.33
77	Bhaktapur	3.35

Annex 4: Population density by district, 2021 census

Districts	Population density
Taplejung	33
Sankhuwasabha	45
Solukhumbu	32
Okhaldhunga	130
Khotang	110
Bhojpur	105
Dhankuta	169
Tehrathum	131
Panchthar	139
Ilam	164
Jhapa	621
Morang	619
Sunsari	737
Udayapur	165
Saptari	518
Siraha	623
Dhanusa	735
Mahottari	706
Sarlahi	685
Rautahat	723
Bara	641
Parsa	484
Dolakha	79
Sindhupalchok	103
Rasuwa	30
Dhading	169
Nuwakot	235
Kathmandu	5,169
Bhaktapur	3,631
Lalitpur	1,433
Kavrepalanchok	261
Ramechhap	110
Sindhuli	120
Makwanpur	192
Chitawan	325
Gorkha	70
Manang	3
Mustang	4
Myagdi	47

Districts	Population density
Kaski	297
Lamjung	92
Tanahu	208
Nawalparasi (East)	265
Syangja	217
Parbat	265
Baglung	140
Rukum (East)	34
Rolpa	125
Pyuthan	177
Gulmi	215
Arghakhanchi	148
Palpa	178
Nawalparasi (West)	527
Rupandehi	825
Kapilbastu	393
Dang	228
Banke	258
Bardiya	227
Dolpa	5
Mugu	18
Humla	10
Jumla	47
Kalikot	83
Dailekh	168
Jajarkot	85
Rukum (West)	137
Salyan	163
Surkhet	169
Bajura	63
Bajhang	55
Darchula	57
Baitadi	159
Dadeldhura	91
Doti	101
Achham	136
Kailali	280
Kanchanpur	319
Nepal	198

Annex 5: Average household size by district, 2021 census

District	Household size		District	Household size
Taplejung	4.34		Kaski	3.74
Sankhuwasabha	4.03		Lamjung	3.53
Solukhumbu	3.98		Tanahu	3.63
Okhaldhunga	4.07		Nawalparasi (East)	4.03
Khotang	4.20		Syangja	3.67
Bhojpur	4.09		Parbat	3.62
Dhankuta	4.00		Baglung	3.88
Tehrathum	4.06		Rukum (East)	4.41
Panchthar	4.06		Rolpa	4.50
Ilam	3.96		Pyuthan	4.13
Jhapa	4.07		Gulmi	3.73
Morang	4.22		Arghakhanchi	3.65
Sunsari	4.36		Palpa	3.77
Udayapur	4.20		Nawalparasi (West)	4.68
Saptari	4.81		Rupandehi	4.71
Siraha	4.98		Kapilbastu	5.60
Dhanusa	4.90		Dang	4.16
Mahottari	5.13		Banke	4.66
Sarlahi	5.23		Bardiya	4.33
Rautahat	5.94		Dolpa	4.55
Bara	5.81		Mugu	5.19
Parsa	5.79		Humla	4.93
Dolakha	3.49		Jumla	4.84
Sindhupalchok	3.66		Kalikot	5.43
Rasuwa	4.19		Dailekh	4.62
Dhading	3.89		Jajarkot	5.05
Nuwakot	3.84		Rukum (West)	4.47
Kathmandu	3.75		Salyan	4.36
Bhaktapur	3.98		Surkhet	4.24
Lalitpur	3.93		Bajura	4.94
Kavrepalanchok	3.98		Bajhang	4.97
Ramechhap	3.66		Darchula	4.69
Sindhuli	4.33		Baitadi	4.90
Makwanpur	4.41		Dadeldhura	4.48
Chitawan	4.01		Doti	4.53
Gorkha	3.49		Achham	4.61
Manang	3.60		Kailali	4.62
Mustang	3.93		Kanchanpur	4.62
Myagdi	3.71			

Annex 6: Number and percent of households with absentees and absentees living abroad by sex by district, 2021 census

Area	Households		Both sexes		Males		Females	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Taplejung	4,847	0.31	6,237	0.28	5,374	0.30	863	0.22
Sankhuwasabha	6,369	0.41	7,904	0.36	6,858	0.38	1,046	0.27
Solukhumbu	3,740	0.24	4,948	0.23	3,593	0.20	1,355	0.35
Okhaldhunga	5,453	0.35	7,449	0.34	6,258	0.35	1,191	0.30
Khotang	8,855	0.57	11,207	0.51	10,090	0.56	1,117	0.29
Bhojpur	7,216	0.46	9,109	0.42	8,065	0.45	1,044	0.27
Dhankuta	7,979	0.51	9,592	0.44	8,461	0.47	1,131	0.29
Tehrathum	4,680	0.30	5,772	0.26	5,221	0.29	551	0.14
Panchthar	9,455	0.61	11,701	0.53	10,326	0.57	1,375	0.35
Ilam	14,795	0.95	18,845	0.86	14,949	0.83	3,896	1.00
Jhapa	69,824	4.49	91,314	4.17	73,025	4.06	18,289	4.68
Morang	60,757	3.90	75,868	3.46	63,847	3.55	12,021	3.08
Sunsari	48,412	3.11	62,071	2.83	52,049	2.89	10,022	2.56
Udayapur	17,510	1.13	21,017	0.96	18,515	1.03	2,502	0.64
Saptari	28,783	1.85	33,510	1.53	32,338	1.80	1,172	0.30
Siraha	47,935	3.08	56,491	2.58	55,530	3.09	961	0.25
Dhanusa	61,000	3.92	73,688	3.36	71,920	4.00	1,768	0.45
Mahottari	42,436	2.73	52,674	2.40	51,070	2.84	1,604	0.41
Sarlahi	29,054	1.87	35,084	1.60	32,669	1.82	2,415	0.62
Rautahat	18,995	1.22	23,892	1.09	22,645	1.26	1,247	0.32
Bara	14,472	0.93	17,357	0.79	15,824	0.88	1,533	0.39
Parsa	9,340	0.60	11,590	0.53	10,431	0.58	1,159	0.30
Dolakha	6,708	0.43	9,100	0.42	6,797	0.38	2,303	0.59
Sindhupalchok	12,759	0.82	17,532	0.80	11,154	0.62	6,378	1.63
Rasuwa	1,810	0.12	2,302	0.11	1,329	0.07	973	0.25
Dhading	14,930	0.96	19,063	0.87	15,859	0.88	3,204	0.82
Nuwakot	11,996	0.77	15,608	0.71	12,162	0.68	3,446	0.88
Kathmandu	97,099	6.24	144,884	6.61	92,944	5.16	51,940	13.29
Bhaktapur	17,293	1.11	24,039	1.10	15,972	0.89	8,067	2.06
Lalitpur	24,149	1.55	36,874	1.68	23,294	1.29	13,580	3.47

Area	Households		Both sexes		Males		Females	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Kavrepalanchok	15,096	0.97	19,858	0.91	14,812	0.82	5,046	1.29
Ramechhap	7,353	0.47	9,853	0.45	7,875	0.44	1,978	0.51
Sindhuli	11,280	0.72	13,733	0.63	12,013	0.67	1,720	0.44
Makwanpur	15,894	1.02	20,020	0.91	15,254	0.85	4,766	1.22
Chitawan	46,861	3.01	65,064	2.97	50,655	2.81	14,409	3.69
Gorkha	17,384	1.12	23,068	1.05	19,325	1.07	3,743	0.96
Manang	211	0.01	319	0.01	205	0.01	114	0.03
Mustang	757	0.05	1,207	0.06	747	0.04	460	0.12
Myagdi	8,320	0.53	10,766	0.49	8,961	0.50	1,805	0.46
Kaski	45,499	2.92	66,327	3.03	50,594	2.81	15,733	4.02
Lamjung	13,044	0.84	16,871	0.77	14,762	0.82	2,109	0.54
Tanahu	29,026	1.87	37,372	1.71	33,339	1.85	4,033	1.03
Nawalparasi (East)	33,454	2.15	44,771	2.04	38,152	2.12	6,619	1.69
Syangja	25,518	1.64	35,289	1.61	31,292	1.74	3,997	1.02
Parbat	11,772	0.76	16,446	0.75	14,114	0.78	2,332	0.60
Baglung	22,925	1.47	34,157	1.56	28,297	1.57	5,860	1.50
Rukum (East)	2,532	0.16	3,108	0.14	2,864	0.16	244	0.06
Rolpa	15,028	0.97	20,024	0.91	17,812	0.99	2,212	0.57
Pyuthan	23,197	1.49	31,720	1.45	29,015	1.61	2,705	0.69
Gulmi	27,183	1.75	41,550	1.90	35,479	1.97	6,071	1.55
Arghakhanchi	20,364	1.31	29,934	1.37	26,270	1.46	3,664	0.94
Palpa	22,955	1.48	30,698	1.40	27,786	1.54	2,912	0.74
Nawalparasi (West)	21,924	1.41	27,942	1.28	24,570	1.37	3,372	0.86
Rupandehi	58,935	3.79	79,818	3.64	67,233	3.74	12,585	3.22
Kapilbastu	31,072	2.00	43,881	2.00	39,273	2.18	4,608	1.18
Dang	41,798	2.69	53,394	2.44	47,199	2.62	6,195	1.58
Banke	22,492	1.45	29,594	1.35	25,697	1.43	3,897	1.00
Bardiya	20,593	1.32	29,243	1.33	24,472	1.36	4,771	1.22
Dolpa	324	0.02	430	0.02	327	0.02	103	0.03
Mugu	730	0.05	1,116	0.05	870	0.05	246	0.06
Humla	525	0.03	796	0.04	514	0.03	282	0.07
Jumla	1,592	0.10	2,703	0.12	1,987	0.11	716	0.18
Kalikot	2,746	0.18	5,586	0.25	3,923	0.22	1,663	0.43

Area	Households		Both sexes		Males		Females	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Dailekh	12,249	0.79	19,343	0.88	16,235	0.90	3,108	0.80
Jajarkot	3,791	0.24	6,136	0.28	4,724	0.26	1,412	0.36
Rukum (West)	7,231	0.46	10,193	0.47	8,518	0.47	1,675	0.43
Salyan	12,800	0.82	17,024	0.78	14,745	0.82	2,279	0.58
Surkhet	20,740	1.33	30,993	1.41	25,435	1.41	5,558	1.42
Bajura	6,182	0.40	14,339	0.65	9,621	0.53	4,718	1.21
Bajhang	12,593	0.81	34,093	1.56	22,170	1.23	11,923	3.05
Darchula	5,088	0.33	7,448	0.34	6,342	0.35	1,106	0.28
Baitadi	13,117	0.84	22,821	1.04	18,581	1.03	4,240	1.08
Dadeldhura	9,233	0.59	15,518	0.71	12,689	0.71	2,829	0.72
Doti	17,629	1.13	28,574	1.30	23,759	1.32	4,815	1.23
Achham	19,409	1.25	44,167	2.02	31,056	1.73	13,111	3.35
Kailali	52,807	3.39	110,328	5.04	79,947	4.44	30,381	7.77
Kanchanpur	36,057	2.32	66,235	3.02	51,596	2.87	14,639	3.74

Annex 7: Percentage distribution of absentees abroad by age and sex, 2021 census

Age group	Total absentee population	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
00-04	70,958	38,935	1.78	32,023	1.46
05-09	36,074	21,167	0.97	14,907	0.68
10-14	58,832	46,971	2.14	11,861	0.54
15-19	319,596	268,221	12.24	51,375	2.35
20-24	655,716	535,082	24.43	120,634	5.51
25-29	426,925	353,684	16.15	73,241	3.34
30-34	259,178	223,610	10.21	35,568	1.62
35-39	167,325	147,518	6.73	19,807	0.90
40-44	86,593	77,294	3.53	9,299	0.42
45-49	40,073	35,424	1.62	4,649	0.21
50-54	18,846	16,043	0.73	2,803	0.13
55-59	8,932	7,107	0.32	1,825	0.08
60-64	4,969	3,449	0.16	1,520	0.07
65+	4,690	2,999	0.14	1,691	0.08
All ages	**2,190,592**	**1,799,675**	**82.15**	**390,917**	**17.85**

Annex 8: Percentage distribution of absentees living within country by age and sex, 2021 census

Age group	Total absentee population	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	40,061	21,262	1.11	18,799	0.98
5-9	22,557	12,926	0.67	9,631	0.50
10-14	61,460	51,943	2.70	9,517	0.50
15-19	332,167	290,293	15.11	41,874	2.18
20-24	551,290	483,548	25.17	67,742	3.53
25-29	373,596	332,275	17.29	41,321	2.15
30-34	243,045	220,612	11.48	22,433	1.17
35-39	153,183	141,113	7.34	12,070	0.63
40-44	78,026	71,999	3.75	6,027	0.31
45-49	34,666	31,605	1.64	3,061	0.16
50-54	15,818	14,076	0.73	1,742	0.09
55-59	7,379	6,211	0.32	1,168	0.06
60-64	4,492	3,512	0.18	980	0.05
65-69	2,018	1,521	0.08	497	0.03
70-74	937	667	0.03	270	0.01
75+	799	522	0.03	277	0.01
All ages	**1,921,494**	**1,684,085**	**87.64**	**237,409**	**12.36**

Annex 9: Number and percent of population by caste and ethnic groups and sex, 2021 census

SN	Caste/ethnicity	Pop_2021	Percent
A. Hill Caste		**8,782,687**	**30.12**
1	Kshetri	4,796,995	16.45
2	Brahman - Hill	3,292,373	11.29
3	Thakuri	494,470	1.70
4	Sanyasi/Dasnami	198,849	0.68
B. Madhesh/Tarai Caste		**4,682,277**	**16.06**
5	Yadav	1,228,581	4.21
6	Teli	431,347	1.48
7	Koiri/Kushwaha	355,707	1.22
8	Kurmi	277,786	0.95
9	Brahman - Tarai	217,774	0.75
10	Mallaha	207,006	0.71
11	Kewat	184,298	0.63
12	Kanu	152,868	0.52
13	Hajam/Thakur	136,487	0.47
14	Kalwar	134,914	0.46
15	Nuniya	108,723	0.37
16	Sudhi	107,380	0.37
17	Lohar	100,680	0.35
18	Bin	96,974	0.33
19	Kumhar	95,724	0.33
20	Sonar	93,380	0.32
21	Haluwai	71,796	0.25
22	Baraee	68,011	0.23
23	Kahar	59,882	0.21
24	Baniyan	53,655	0.18
25	Kathabaniyan	52,466	0.18
26	Badhaee/Badhee	52,437	0.18
27	Rajput	46,577	0.16
28	Amat	46,471	0.16
29	Lodh	39,872	0.14
30	Gaderi/Bhediyar	35,497	0.12
31	Marwadi	33,803	0.12
32	Kayastha	33,502	0.11
33	Bhumihar	32,199	0.11
34	Rajbhar	29,240	0.10
35	Rauniyar	27,258	0.09
36	Mali	19,605	0.07
37	Rajdhob	15,391	0.05
38	Dhunia	15,033	0.05
39	Dev	7,418	0.03
40	Chai/Khulaut	4,805	0.02
41	Beldar	3,037	0.01
42	Kamar	2,532	0.01
43	Done	2,125	0.01
44	Nurang	36	0.00
C. Hill Dalit		**2,506,612**	**8.59**
45	Bishwokarma	1,470,010	5.04
46	Pariyar	565,932	1.94
47	Mijar	452,229	1.55
48	Badi	11,470	0.04
49	Gaine	6,971	0.02
D. Madhesh/Tarai Dalit		**1,392,378**	**4.78**
50	Chamar/Harijan/Ram	393,255	1.35
51	Musahar	264,974	0.91
52	Dusadh/Pasawan/Pasi	250,977	0.86
53	Tatma/Tatwa	126,018	0.43
54	Khatwe	124,062	0.43
55	Dhobi	101,089	0.35
56	Bantar/Sardar	61,687	0.21
57	Kori	20,670	0.07
58	Dom	19,901	0.07
59	Khatik	9,152	0.03
60	Sarbaria	5,793	0.02
61	Dhankar/Dharikar	4,090	0.01
62	Halkhor	2,929	0.01
63	Natuwa	2,896	0.01
64	Dhandi	2,339	0.01
65	Chidimar	1,615	0.01
66	Kalar	931	0.00
E. Mountain/Hill Janajati		**7,610,379**	**26.05**
67	Magar	2,013,498	6.90
68	Tamang	1,639,866	5.62
69	Newa: (Newar)	1,341,363	4.60
70	Rai	640,674	2.20
71	Gurung	543,790	1.86
72	Yakthung/Limbu	414,704	1.42
73	Sherpa	130,637	0.45
74	Kumal	129,702	0.44
75	Gharti/Bhujel	120,245	0.41
76	Majhi	111,352	0.38
77	Chepang/Praja	84,364	0.29
78	Sunuwar	78,910	0.27
79	Ghale	35,434	0.12
80	Kulung	33,388	0.11
81	Thami	32,743	0.11
82	Darai	18,695	0.06
83	Yakkha	17,460	0.06
84	Bhote	15,818	0.05
85	Bantawa	15,719	0.05

SN	Caste/ethnicity	Pop_2021	Percent
86	Pahari	15,015	0.05
87	Chamling	12,178	0.04
88	Chhantyal/Chhantel	11,963	0.04
89	Thakali	11,741	0.04
90	Bote	11,258	0.04
91	Pun	9,827	0.03
92	Hyolmo/Yholmopa	9,819	0.03
93	Yamphu	9,111	0.03
94	Baram/Baramu	7,859	0.03
95	Nachhiring	7,300	0.03
96	Bahing	6,547	0.02
97	Thulung	6,239	0.02
98	Jirel	6,031	0.02
99	Khaling	5,889	0.02
100	Aathpahariya	5,878	0.02
101	Dolpo	5,818	0.02
102	Mewahang	5,727	0.02
103	Byasi/Sauka	5,718	0.02
104	Dura	5,581	0.02
105	Raji	5,125	0.02
106	Sampang	4,841	0.02
107	Chumba/Nubri	4,414	0.02
108	Lepcha	3,578	0.01
109	Hayu	3,069	0.01
110	Loharung	2,598	0.01
111	Mugal/Mugum	2,124	0.01
112	Karmarong	1,663	0.01
113	Lhopa	1,390	0.00
114	Fri	921	0.00
115	Topkegola	642	0.00
116	Raute	566	0.00
117	Walung	481	0.00
118	Lhomi	355	0.00
119	Surel	318	0.00
120	Kusunda	253	0.00
121	Bankariya	180	0.00
F. Tarai Janajati		**2,608,191**	**8.94**
122	Tharu	1,807,124	6.20
123	Dhanuk	252,105	0.86
124	Rajbansi	132,564	0.45
125	Ranatharu	83,308	0.29
126	Danuwar	82,784	0.28
127	Santhal	57,310	0.20
128	Oraon/Kudukh	46,840	0.16
129	Gangai	41,446	0.14
130	Dhimal	25,643	0.09
131	Khawas	22,551	0.08
132	Tajpuriya	20,989	0.07
133	Gondh/Gond	12,267	0.04
134	Kewarat	8,809	0.03
135	Meche	5,193	0.02
136	Munda	3,589	0.01
137	Pattharkatta/Kushwadiya	3,343	0.01
138	Kisan	1,479	0.01
139	Koche	847	0.00
G. Religions/Linguistic groups		**1,434,323**	**4.92**
140	Musalman	1,418,677	4.86
141	Bangali	13,800	0.05
142	Punjabi/Sikh	1,846	0.01
H. Others			
143	Foreigner	137,407	0.47
144	Others	5,888	0.02
145	NS	4,436	0.02
Grand total		**29,164,578**	**100.00**

Annex 10: Mother tongue, 2021 census

Mother tongue	Speakers	%
All mother tongues	**29,164,578**	**100.00**
Nepali	13,084,457	44.86
Maithili	3,222,389	11.05
Bhojpuri	1,820,795	6.24
Tharu	1,714,091	5.88
Tamang	1,423,075	4.88
Bajjika	1,133,764	3.89
Awadhi	864,276	2.96
Nepalbhasha (Newari)	863,380	2.96
Magar Dhut	810,315	2.78
Doteli	494,864	1.70
Urdu	413,785	1.42
Yakthung/Limbu	350,436	1.20
Gurung	328,074	1.12
Magahi	230,117	0.79
Baitadeli	152,666	0.52
Rai	144,512	0.50
Achhami	141,444	0.48
Bantawa	138,003	0.47
Rajbanshi	130,163	0.45
Sherpa	117,896	0.40
Khash	117,511	0.40
Bajhangi	99,631	0.34
Hindi	98,399	0.34
Magar Kham	91,753	0.31
Chamling	89,037	0.31
Ranatharu	77,766	0.27
Chepang	58,392	0.20
Bajureli	56,486	0.19
Santhali	53,677	0.18
Danuwar	49,992	0.17
Darchuleli	45,649	0.16
Urao/Urau	38,873	0.13
Kulung	37,912	0.13
Angika	35,952	0.12
Majhi	32,917	0.11
Sunuwar	32,708	0.11
Thami	26,805	0.09
Ganagai	26,281	0.09
Thulung	24,405	0.08
Bangla	23,774	0.08
Ghale	23,049	0.08
Sampang	21,597	0.07

Mother tongue	Speakers	%
Puma	6,763	0.02
Pahari	5,946	0.02
Athpahariya	5,580	0.02
Dungmali	5,403	0.02
Jirel	5,167	0.02
Tibetan	5,053	0.02
Dailekhi	4,989	0.02
Chum/Nubri	4,284	0.01
Chhantyal	4,282	0.01
Raji	4,247	0.01
Thakali	4,220	0.01
Meche	4,203	0.01
Koyee	4,152	0.01
Loharung	3,884	0.01
Kewarat	3,469	0.01
Dolpali	3,244	0.01
Done	3,100	0.01
Mugali	2,834	0.01
Jero/Jerung	2,817	0.01
Karmarong	2,619	0.01
Chhintang	2,564	0.01
Lhopa	2,348	0.01
Lapcha	2,240	0.01
Munda/Mudiyari	2,107	0.01
Manange	2,022	0.01
Chhiling	2,011	0.01
Dura	1,991	0.01
Tilung	1,969	0.01
Sign Language	1,784	0.01
Byansi	1,706	0.01
Balkura/Baram	1,539	0.01
Baragung	1,536	0.01
Sadri	1,347	0
English	1,323	0
Magar Kaike	1,225	0
Sonaha	1,182	0
Hayu/Vayu	1,133	0
Kisan	1,004	0
Punjabi	871	0
Dhuleli	786	0
Khamchi (Raute)	741	0
Lungkhim	702	0
Lowa	624	0

Mother tongue	Speakers	%
Marwadi	21,333	0.07
Dadeldhuri	21,300	0.07
Dhimal	20,583	0.07
Tajpuriya	20,349	0.07
Kumal	18,435	0.06
Khaling	16,514	0.06
Musalman	16,252	0.06
Wambule	15,285	0.05
Bahing/Bayung	14,449	0.05
Yakkha	14,241	0.05
Sanskrit	13,906	0.05
Bhujel	13,086	0.04
Bhote	12,895	0.04
Darai	12,156	0.04
Yamphu/Yamphe	10,744	0.04
Nachhiring	9,906	0.03
Hyolmo/Yholmo	9,658	0.03
Dumi	8,638	0.03
Jumli	8,338	0.03
Bote	7,687	0.03
Mewahang	7,428	0.03

Mother tongue	Speakers	%
Kagate	611	0
Waling/Walung	545	0
Nar-Phu	428	0
Lhomi	413	0
Tichhurong Poike	410	0
Kurmali	397	0
Koche	332	0
Sindhi	291	0
Phangduwali	247	0
Belhare	177	0
Surel	174	0
Malpande	161	0
Khariya	132	0
Sadhani	122	0
Hariyanwi	114	0
Sam	106	0
Bankariya	86	0
Kusunda	23	0
Others	4,201	0.01
Not stated	346	0

Note: Newly reported language information has undergone a thorough review process involving stakeholders and subject experts. Some of the foreign languages published in census 2011 census have been included under “Other language” category in 2021 census due to very few number of speakers. The published data is derived from respondents' responses and conclusive findings obtained from expert reviews.

Annex 11: Literacy rate by district (5 years+), 2021 census

Area	Total		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Taplejung	110,370	82.2	55,530	88.2	54,840	76.2
Sankhuwasabha	146,105	79.7	73,380	86.4	72,725	72.9
Solukhumbu	96,528	76.9	48,441	84.3	48,087	69.5
Okhaldhunga	129,593	73.9	62,954	81.6	66,639	66.6
Khotang	160,882	76.0	79,196	83.6	81,686	68.6
Bhojpur	145,695	78.9	71,909	86.1	73,786	71.8
Dhankuta	139,893	81.4	68,325	88.2	71,568	74.9
Tehrathum	81,982	81.9	40,046	89.3	41,936	75.0
Panchthar	158,424	82.3	78,552	88.7	79,872	76.0
Ilam	261,492	83.4	130,192	88.7	131,300	78.1
Jhapa	925,015	82.8	440,501	88.6	484,514	77.6
Morang	1,060,535	78.6	512,069	85.1	548,466	72.6
Sunsari	848,936	78.1	408,260	84.6	440,676	72.1
Udayapur	312,990	77.2	149,354	84.1	163,636	70.9
Saptari	639,351	67.7	315,154	78.2	324,197	57.5
Siraha	660,735	65.1	320,175	74.8	340,560	56.0
Dhanusa	772,010	65.2	376,239	74.6	395,771	56.3
Mahottari	631,664	59.8	308,940	68.4	322,724	51.6
Sarlahi	775,410	60.3	389,149	68.2	386,261	52.3
Rautahat	716,200	57.8	358,335	66.0	357,865	49.5
Bara	685,509	64.5	348,877	73.1	336,632	55.6
Parsa	592,599	69.1	305,532	77.7	287,067	60.0
Dolakha	160,858	72.3	77,505	81.1	83,353	64.2
Sindhupalchok	243,758	68.0	119,259	75.3	124,499	61.1
Rasuwa	42,719	69.6	22,023	76.2	20,696	62.6
Dhading	301,687	72.4	146,517	79.3	155,170	65.9
Nuwakot	244,383	69.1	119,062	76.9	125,321	61.6
Kathmandu	1,926,174	89.2	973,638	94.2	952,536	84.2
Bhaktapur	404,125	88.0	203,351	94.1	200,774	81.7
Lalitpur	521,265	88.1	260,866	93.4	260,399	82.7
Kavrepalanchok	339,440	75.7	165,867	84.1	173,573	67.6
Ramechhap	159,274	68.1	75,154	77.9	84,120	59.4
Sindhuli	275,899	72.6	134,612	80.0	141,287	65.5
Makwanpur	429,414	77.8	214,758	84.0	214,656	71.6
Chitawan	669,392	83.7	324,729	88.9	344,663	78.7
Gorkha	234,195	72.5	109,347	80.6	124,848	65.3
Manang	5,379	78.4	3,055	86.7	2,324	67.3
Mustang	13,689	75.3	7,548	83.7	6,141	64.8
Myagdi	99,025	79.8	47,933	87.9	51,092	72.3
Kaski	562,838	87.9	272,702	93.6	290,136	82.6
Lamjung	146,546	77.5	69,073	85.7	77,473	70.3
Tanahu	299,248	81.8	138,447	89.2	160,801	75.4

Area	Total		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Nawalparasi (East)	349,586	82.5	162,631	88.8	186,955	76.9
Syangja	236,382	81.8	107,838	89.9	128,544	74.9
Parbat	121,631	80.2	56,709	88.3	64,922	73.2
Baglung	228,978	80.1	105,441	87.4	123,537	73.8
Rukum (East)	51,170	71.4	24,584	79.7	26,586	63.7
Rolpa	210,714	75.7	97,453	84.0	113,261	68.5
Pyuthan	210,494	80.2	92,881	87.9	117,613	74.0
Gulmi	226,675	80.4	101,591	88.0	125,084	74.1
Arghakhanchi	162,593	80.1	72,818	87.8	89,775	73.8
Palpa	227,126	83.7	103,283	90.5	123,843	78.0
Nawalparasi (West)	355,735	78.0	171,876	86.3	183,859	70.2
Rupandehi	1,030,270	81.3	501,978	88.4	528,292	74.5
Kapilbastu	614,334	71.9	299,627	79.7	314,707	64.4
Dang	621,657	81.4	292,436	87.9	329,221	75.7
Banke	548,821	73.4	267,947	79.6	280,874	67.5
Bardiya	422,648	76.9	197,156	83.0	225,492	71.6
Dolpa	39,136	67.1	19,552	75.4	19,584	58.8
Mugu	57,609	68.1	28,852	77.3	28,757	58.9
Humla	49,325	63.9	24,763	73.4	24,562	54.3
Jumla	107,647	70.5	53,523	79.3	54,124	61.8
Kalikot	128,678	72.8	63,528	79.9	65,150	65.9
Dailekh	225,508	75.6	106,835	83.1	118,673	68.8
Jajarkot	167,750	75.6	83,005	81.4	84,745	69.9
Rukum (West)	150,201	75.8	72,256	82.6	77,945	69.5
Salyan	215,417	77.4	102,832	85.0	112,585	70.4
Surkhet	378,340	82.8	180,057	89.3	198,283	76.8
Bajura	123,900	71.3	59,464	79.9	64,436	63.4
Bajhang	170,413	70.6	78,713	82.9	91,700	60.0
Darchula	122,340	77.8	58,600	87.4	63,740	69.0
Baitadi	219,006	76.8	101,488	87.8	117,518	67.4
Dadeldhura	126,692	78.2	58,942	89.1	67,750	68.7
Doti	182,722	70.8	81,848	82.9	100,874	60.9
Achham	203,771	72.7	92,364	82.8	111,407	64.3
Kailali	834,407	77.6	395,502	85.2	438,905	70.8
Kanchanpur	472,393	79.7	218,097	87.9	254,296	72.6

Annex 12: Women married before age 18 years among 20–24 year olds, by district, 2021 census

SN	Districts	Child marriage ratio	SN	Districts	Child marriage ratio
1	Taplejung	23.2	40	Kaski	12.1
2	Sankhuwasabha	27.2	41	Lamjung	19.4
3	Solukhumbu	15.7	42	Tanahu	23.0
4	Okhaldhunga	19.4	43	Nawalparasi (East)	20.5
5	Khotang	24.0	44	Syangja	18.2
6	Bhojpur	23.6	45	Parbat	21.8
7	Dhankuta	21.9	46	Baglung	23.3
8	Terhathum	24.8	47	Rukum (East)	26.5
9	Panchthar	23.6	48	Rolpa	27.6
10	Ilam	18.8	49	Pyuthan	28.6
11	Jhapa	17.0	50	Gulmi	25.7
12	Morang	19.2	51	Arghakhanchi	28.0
13	Sunsari	20.1	52	Palpa	23.0
14	Udayapur	23.3	53	Nawalparasi (West)	16.5
15	Saptari	25.9	54	Rupandehi	16.9
16	Siraha	33.7	55	Kapilbastu	19.4
17	Dhanusa	39.1	56	Dang	24.4
18	Mahottari	34.5	57	Banke	24.0
19	Sarlahi	31.5	58	Bardiya	21.9
20	Rautahat	37.4	59	Dolpa	18.8
21	Bara	30.2	60	Mugu	28.1
22	Parsa	27.0	61	Humla	26.1
23	Dolakha	16.0	62	Jumla	26.0
24	Sindhupalchok	18.7	63	Kalikot	21.3
25	Rasuwa	16.2	64	Dailekh	27.5
26	Dhading	22.5	65	Jajarkot	32.4
27	Nuwakot	20.5	66	Rukum (West)	32.8
28	Kathmandu	7.6	67	Salyan	34.7
29	Bhaktapur	8.6	68	Surkhet	28.2
30	Lalitpur	8.5	69	Bajura	20.8
31	Kavrepalanchok	14.7	70	Bajhang	25.2
32	Ramechhap	17.8	71	Darchula	24.6
33	Sindhuli	22.0	72	Baitadi	20.0
34	Makwanpur	20.2	73	Dadeldhura	21.5
35	Chitawan	17.5	74	Doti	21.8
36	Gorkha	21.4	75	Achham	22.0
37	Manang	13.0	76	Kailali	17.2
38	Mustang	13.7	77	Kanchanpur	15.7
39	Myagdi	24.4			

Annex 13: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Nepal's population, 2021 census

Age groups (years)	Totals	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	2,439,283	1,290,525	4.42	1,148,758	3.94
5-9	2,766,427	1,443,405	4.95	1,323,022	4.54
10-14	2,909,865	1,495,954	5.13	1,413,911	4.85
15-19	2,966,404	1,494,523	5.12	1,471,881	5.05
20-24	2,783,060	1,301,018	4.46	1,482,042	5.08
25-29	2,459,349	1,122,242	3.85	1,337,107	4.58
30-34	2,147,712	978,976	3.36	1,168,736	4.01
35-39	2,041,492	936,931	3.21	1,104,561	3.79
40-44	1,747,832	828,493	2.84	919,339	3.15
45-49	1,436,040	687,525	2.36	748,515	2.57
50-54	1,413,852	692,494	2.37	721,358	2.47
55-59	1,075,944	537,558	1.84	538,386	1.85
60-64	955,604	465,962	1.60	489,642	1.68
65-69	771,618	379,689	1.30	391,929	1.34
70-74	609,370	292,054	1.00	317,316	1.09
75-79	353,203	170,998	0.59	182,205	0.62
80-84	161,556	78,315	0.27	83,241	0.29
85-89	78,327	36,888	0.13	41,439	0.14
90-94	30,406	13,191	0.05	17,215	0.06
95+	17,234	6,810	0.02	10,424	0.04
All ages	**29,164,578**	**14,253,551**	**48.87**	**14,911,027**	**51.13**

Annex 14: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Nepal's population, 2011 census

Age groups (years)	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	2,567,963	1,314,957	4.96	1,253,006	4.73
5-9	3,204,859	1,635,176	6.17	1,569,683	5.92
10-14	3,475,424	1,764,630	6.66	1,710,794	6.46
15-19	2,931,980	1,443,191	5.45	1,488,789	5.62
20-24	2,358,071	1,043,981	3.94	1,314,090	4.96
25-29	2,079,354	917,243	3.46	1,162,111	4.39
30-34	1,735,305	770,577	2.91	964,728	3.64
35-39	1,604,319	740,200	2.79	864,119	3.26
40-44	1,386,121	660,290	2.49	725,831	2.74
45-49	1,172,959	575,101	2.17	597,858	2.26
50-54	1,005,476	505,864	1.91	499,612	1.89
55-59	818,263	412,892	1.56	405,371	1.53
60-64	756,827	368,451	1.39	388,376	1.47
65-69	554,449	277,782	1.05	276,667	1.04

Age groups (years)	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
70-74	395,153	199,610	0.75	195,543	0.74
75-79	235,135	117,358	0.44	117,777	0.44
80-84	128,777	62,787	0.24	65,990	0.25
85-89	52,526	25,810	0.10	26,716	0.10
90-94	20,335	8,940	0.03	11,395	0.04
95+	11,208	4,201	0.02	7,007	0.03
All ages	**26,494,504**	**12,849,041**	**48.50**	**13,645,463**	**51.50**

Annex 15: Five-year age group and sex distribution of mountain zone population, 2021 census

Age groups	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	154,494	80,524	4.54	73,970	4.17
5-9	177,911	90,587	5.11	87,324	4.93
10-14	200,201	100,663	5.68	99,538	5.61
15-19	187,196	90,917	5.13	96,279	5.43
20-24	162,485	77,272	4.36	85,213	4.81
25-29	136,792	68,070	3.84	68,722	3.88
30-34	116,963	57,644	3.25	59,319	3.35
35-39	108,757	53,138	3.00	55,619	3.14
40-44	95,495	45,313	2.56	50,182	2.83
45-49	82,858	39,795	2.24	43,063	2.43
50-54	85,379	41,723	2.35	43,656	2.46
55-59	68,362	34,310	1.94	34,052	1.92
60-64	63,683	31,271	1.76	32,412	1.83
65-69	48,905	24,279	1.37	24,626	1.39
70-74	40,353	18,775	1.06	21,578	1.22
75-79	23,682	11,095	0.63	12,587	0.71
80-84	11,472	5,473	0.31	5,999	0.34
85-89	5,215	2,355	0.13	2,860	0.16
90-94	1,859	716	0.04	1,143	0.06
95+	886	340	0.02	546	0.03
Total	**1,772,948**	**874,260**	**49.31**	**898,688**	**50.69**

Annex 16: Five-year age group and sex distribution of mountain zone, 2011 census

Age groups	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	202,139	102,314	5.74	99,825	5.60
5-9	235,253	117,662	6.60	117,591	6.60
10-14	243,663	121,934	6.84	121,729	6.83
15-19	193,154	93,061	5.22	100,093	5.62
20-24	140,318	61,507	3.45	78,811	4.42
25-29	121,146	55,099	3.09	66,047	3.71
30-34	99,749	45,378	2.55	54,371	3.05
35-39	96,114	44,887	2.52	51,227	2.88
40-44	87,657	41,656	2.34	46,001	2.58
45-49	78,363	38,556	2.16	39,807	2.23
50-54	70,348	35,511	1.99	34,837	1.96
55-59	57,049	29,530	1.66	27,519	1.54
60-64	55,793	26,327	1.48	29,466	1.65
65-69	39,140	19,141	1.07	19,999	1.12
70-74	28,706	13,859	0.78	14,847	0.83
75-79	17,641	8,655	0.49	8,986	0.50
80-84	9,941	4,854	0.27	5,087	0.29
85-89	3,883	1,942	0.11	1,941	0.11
90-94	1,154	519	0.03	635	0.04
95+	581	200	0.01	381	0.02
All ages	**1,781,792**	**862,592**	**48.41**	**919,200**	**51.59**

Annex 17: Five-year age group and sex distribution of hill zone population, 2021 census

Age groups	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	877,990	463,167	3.94	414,823	3.53
5-9	1,003,713	524,548	4.46	479,165	4.08
10-14	1,105,998	568,487	4.84	537,511	4.57
15-19	1,184,235	593,888	5.05	590,347	5.02
20-24	1,132,282	535,107	4.55	597,175	5.08
25-29	1,010,564	468,013	3.98	542,551	4.61
30-34	894,389	415,167	3.53	479,222	4.08
35-39	824,631	382,560	3.25	442,071	3.76
40-44	727,015	337,419	2.87	389,596	3.31
45-49	606,140	285,221	2.43	320,919	2.73
50-54	616,256	297,508	2.53	318,748	2.71
55-59	471,446	230,271	1.96	241,175	2.05
60-64	421,649	203,753	1.73	217,896	1.85
65-69	324,575	155,954	1.33	168,621	1.43
70-74	250,619	115,427	0.98	135,192	1.15

Age groups	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
75-79	162,522	74,768	0.64	87,754	0.75
80-84	81,090	38,452	0.33	42,638	0.36
85-89	40,427	18,525	0.16	21,902	0.19
90-94	15,097	6,388	0.05	8,709	0.07
95+	6,986	2,624	0.02	4,362	0.04
All ages	**11,757,624**	**5,717,247**	**48.63**	**6,040,377**	**51.37**

Annex 18: Five-year age group and sex distribution of hill zone population, 2011 census

Age groups	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	1,049,323	540,032	4.74	509,291	4.47
5-9	1,291,431	657,185	5.77	634,246	5.57
10-14	1,471,390	742,164	6.51	729,226	6.40
15-19	1,314,790	632,209	5.55	682,581	5.99
20-24	1,064,882	464,312	4.08	600,570	5.27
25-29	899,900	389,744	3.42	510,156	4.48
30-34	734,635	324,358	2.85	410,277	3.60
35-39	671,988	300,292	2.64	371,696	3.26
40-44	598,367	277,900	2.44	320,467	2.81
45-49	507,139	240,867	2.11	266,272	2.34
50-54	451,830	222,600	1.95	229,230	2.01
55-59	356,967	177,381	1.56	179,586	1.58
60-64	326,564	154,254	1.35	172,310	1.51
65-69	244,155	118,494	1.04	125,661	1.10
70-74	179,320	87,716	0.77	91,604	0.80
75-79	120,185	58,420	0.51	61,765	0.54
80-84	68,033	32,382	0.28	35,651	0.31
85-89	28,976	14,056	0.12	14,920	0.13
90-94	9,999	4,293	0.04	5,706	0.05
95+	4,133	1,408	0.01	2,725	0.02
All ages	**11,394,007**	**5,440,067**	**47.74**	**5,953,940**	**52.26**

Annex 19: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Tarai zone population, 2021 census

Age groups	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	1,406,799	746,834	4.78	659,965	4.22
5-9	1,584,803	828,270	5.30	756,533	4.84
10-14	1,603,666	826,804	5.29	776,862	4.97
15-19	1,594,973	809,718	5.18	785,255	5.02
20-24	1,488,293	688,639	4.40	799,654	5.11
25-29	1,311,993	586,159	3.75	725,834	4.64
30-34	1,136,360	506,165	3.24	630,195	4.03
35-39	1,108,104	501,233	3.21	606,871	3.88
40-44	925,322	445,761	2.85	479,561	3.07
45-49	747,042	362,509	2.32	384,533	2.46
50-54	712,217	353,263	2.26	358,954	2.30
55-59	536,136	272,977	1.75	263,159	1.68
60-64	470,272	230,938	1.48	239,334	1.53
65-69	398,138	199,456	1.28	198,682	1.27
70-74	318,398	157,852	1.01	160,546	1.03
75-79	166,999	85,135	0.54	81,864	0.52
80-84	68,994	34,390	0.22	34,604	0.22
85-89	32,685	16,008	0.10	16,677	0.11
90-94	13,450	6,087	0.04	7,363	0.05
95+	9,362	3,846	0.02	5,516	0.04
All ages	**15,634,006**	**7,662,044**	**49.01**	**7,971,962**	**50.99**

Annex 20: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Tarai zone population, 2011 census

Age groups	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	1,316,501	672,611	5.05	643,890	4.83
5-9	1,678,175	860,329	6.46	817,846	6.14
10-14	1,760,371	900,532	6.76	859,839	6.46
15-19	1,424,036	717,921	5.39	706,115	5.30
20-24	1,152,871	518,162	3.89	634,709	4.77
25-29.	1,058,308	472,400	3.55	585,908	4.40
30-34	900,921	400,841	3.01	500,080	3.75
35-39	836,217	395,021	2.97	441,196	3.31
40-44	700,097	340,734	2.56	359,363	2.70
45-49	587,457	295,678	2.22	291,779	2.19
50-54	483,298	247,753	1.86	235,545	1.77
55-59	404,247	205,981	1.55	198,266	1.49
60-64	374,470	187,870	1.41	186,600	1.40
65-69	271,154	140,147	1.05	131,007	0.98

Age groups	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
70-74	187,127	98,035	0.74	89,092	0.67
75-79	97,309	50,283	0.38	47,026	0.35
80-84	50,803	25,551	0.19	25,252	0.19
85-89	19,667	9,812	0.07	9,855	0.07
90-94	9,182	4,128	0.03	5,054	0.04
95+	6,494	2,593	0.02	3,901	0.03
All ages	**13,318,705**	**6,546,382**	**49.15**	**6,772,323**	**50.85**

Annex 21: Five-year age and sex distribution of Koshi province, 2021 census

Age groups	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	382,972	198,619	4.00	184,353	3.72
5-9	451,346	231,574	4.67	219,772	4.43
10-14	455,058	231,545	4.67	223,513	4.51
15-19	481,880	242,715	4.89	239,165	4.82
20-24	451,234	210,760	4.25	240,474	4.85
25-29	414,446	188,651	3.80	225,795	4.55
30-34	368,650	168,852	3.40	199,798	4.03
35-39	355,201	164,216	3.31	190,985	3.85
40-44	313,769	149,827	3.02	163,942	3.30
45-49	258,216	124,887	2.52	133,329	2.69
50-54	265,648	130,429	2.63	135,219	2.73
55-59	206,528	102,458	2.07	104,070	2.10
60-64	183,593	90,215	1.82	93,378	1.88
65-69	144,070	71,011	1.43	73,059	1.47
70-74	107,228	52,509	1.06	54,719	1.10
75-79	64,506	31,480	0.63	33,026	0.67
80-84	31,939	16,083	0.32	15,856	0.32
85-89	16,726	7,908	0.16	8,818	0.18
90-94	5,756	2,587	0.05	3,169	0.06
95+	2,646	1,002	0.02	1,644	0.03
All ages	**4,961,412**	**2,417,328**	**48.72**	**2,544,084**	**51.28**

Annex 22: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Koshi province population, 2011 census

Age group	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	405,288	206,299	4.55	198,989	4.39
5-9	512,242	259,269	5.72	252,973	5.58
10-14	573,502	290,128	6.40	283,374	6.25
15-19	518,706	251,595	5.55	267,111	5.89
20-24	395,398	165,683	3.65	229,715	5.07
25-29	348,459	145,291	3.20	203,168	4.48
30-34	293,686	127,777	2.82	165,909	3.66
35-39	275,096	124,181	2.74	150,915	3.33
40-44	250,903	118,300	2.61	132,603	2.92
45-49	218,334	105,762	2.33	112,572	2.48
50-54	195,316	97,640	2.15	97,676	2.15
55-59	154,982	78,093	1.72	76,889	1.70
60-64	136,209	67,726	1.49	68,483	1.51
65-69	97,757	49,419	1.09	48,338	1.07
70-74	70,219	35,977	0.79	34,242	0.76
75-79	45,694	22,754	0.50	22,940	0.51
80-84	25,221	12,487	0.28	12,734	0.28
85-89	11,518	5,534	0.12	5,984	0.13
90-94	4,268	1,817	0.04	2,451	0.05
95+	2,145	804	0.02	1,341	0.03
All ages	**4,534,943**	**2,166,536**	**47.77**	**2,368,407**	**52.23**

Annex 23: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Madhesh province population, 2021 census

Age group	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	641,122	343,350	5.62	297,772	4.87
5-9	703,465	367,293	6.01	336,172	5.50
10-14	683,655	352,252	5.76	331,403	5.42
15-19	628,716	327,285	5.35	301,431	4.93
20-24	568,137	270,626	4.43	297,511	4.87
25-29	480,982	222,693	3.64	258,289	4.22
30-34	402,234	183,710	3.00	218,524	3.57
35-39	405,662	184,460	3.02	221,202	3.62
40-44	325,657	162,490	2.66	163,167	2.67
45-49	272,956	133,759	2.19	139,197	2.28
50-54	250,054	128,977	2.11	121,077	1.98
55-59	192,853	101,572	1.66	91,281	1.49
60-64	173,483	87,346	1.43	86,137	1.41

Age group	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
65-69	155,640	80,973	1.32	74,667	1.22
70-74	129,392	66,137	1.08	63,255	1.03
75-79	61,647	33,110	0.54	28,537	0.47
80-84	21,453	11,136	0.18	10,317	0.17
85-89	9,594	4,930	0.08	4,664	0.08
90-94	4,112	1,971	0.03	2,141	0.04
95+	3,786	1,681	0.03	2,105	0.03
All ages	**6,114,600**	**3,065,751**	**50.14**	**3,048,849**	**49.86**

Annex 24: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Madhesh province population, 2011 census

Age group		Male		Female	
	Total	N	%	N	%
0-4	593,502	301,095	5.57	292,407	5.41
5-9	762,986	390,671	7.23	372,315	6.89
10-14	727,207	373,530	6.91	353,677	6.54
15-19	514,792	273,758	5.07	241,034	4.46
20-24	419,984	199,166	3.69	220,818	4.09
25-29	407,190	190,241	3.52	216,949	4.01
30-34	359,614	163,007	3.02	196,607	3.64
35-39	340,815	166,190	3.08	174,625	3.23
40-44	280,648	141,078	2.61	139,570	2.58
45-49	236,496	122,020	2.26	114,476	2.12
50-54	190,506	100,687	1.86	89,819	1.66
55-59	164,747	85,312	1.58	79,435	1.47
60-64	154,444	79,402	1.47	75,042	1.39
65-69	112,460	58,571	1.08	53,889	1.00
70-74	76,977	41,318	0.76	35,659	0.66
75-79	34,709	18,267	0.34	16,442	0.30
80-84	15,739	8,191	0.15	7,548	0.14
85-89	5,491	2,822	0.05	2,669	0.05
90-94	2,969	1,400	0.03	1,569	0.03
95+	2,869	1,212	0.02	1,657	0.03
All ages	**5,404,145**	**2,717,938**	**50.29**	**2,686,207**	**49.71**

Annex 25: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Bagmati province population, 2021 census

Age	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	398,478	211,343	3.46	187,135	3.06
5-9	457,697	242,253	3.96	215,444	3.52
10-14	497,539	259,593	4.24	237,946	3.89
15-19	583,970	301,870	4.94	282,100	4.61
20-24	610,209	302,751	4.95	307,458	5.03
25-29	571,993	275,104	4.50	296,889	4.85
30-34	516,535	247,202	4.04	269,333	4.40
35-39	479,801	230,882	3.77	248,919	4.07
40-44	423,815	205,375	3.36	218,440	3.57
45-49	341,815	167,748	2.74	174,067	2.85
50-54	336,416	168,504	2.75	167,912	2.75
55-59	244,749	123,202	2.01	121,547	1.99
60-64	212,098	104,661	1.71	107,437	1.76
65-69	160,866	78,818	1.29	82,048	1.34
70-74	119,931	56,246	0.92	63,685	1.04
75-79	82,345	38,017	0.62	44,328	0.72
80-84	42,456	19,553	0.32	22,903	0.37
85-89	23,660	10,478	0.17	13,182	0.22
90-94	8,574	3,602	0.06	4,972	0.08
95+	3,919	1,482	0.02	2,437	0.04
All ages	**6,116,866**	**3,048,684**	**49.84**	**3,068,182**	**50.16**

Annex 26: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Bagmati province population, 2011 census

Age group	Total population	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	411,780	214,078	3.87	197,702	3.58
5-9	533,516	274,366	4.96	259,150	4.69
10-14	651,509	332,593	6.01	318,916	5.77
15-19	642,741	323,364	5.85	319,377	5.78
20-24	582,617	279,324	5.05	303,293	5.49
25-29	500,887	236,419	4.28	264,468	4.78
30-34	414,595	198,710	3.59	215,885	3.90
35-39	370,200	178,883	3.24	191,317	3.46
40-44	321,075	160,676	2.91	160,399	2.90
45-49	259,890	131,566	2.38	128,324	2.32
50-54	220,108	112,953	2.04	107,155	1.94
55-59	164,547	84,634	1.53	79,913	1.45
60-64	143,829	70,235	1.27	73,594	1.33

Age group	Total population	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
65-69	112,261	55,296	1.00	56,965	1.03
70-74	83,703	40,228	0.73	43,475	0.79
75-79	59,639	28,374	0.51	31,265	0.57
80-84	33,512	15,608	0.28	17,904	0.32
85-89	15,480	7,267	0.13	8,213	0.15
90-94	5,361	2,279	0.04	3,082	0.06
95+	2,202	780	0.01	1,422	0.03
All ages	**5,529,452**	**2,747,633**	**49.69**	**2,781,819**	**50.31**

Annex 27: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Gandaki province population, 2021 census

Age	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	168,930	90,109	3.65	78,821	3.20
5-9	202,023	107,325	4.35	94,698	3.84
10-14	217,815	112,774	4.57	105,041	4.26
15-19	236,245	119,627	4.85	116,618	4.73
20-24	224,870	104,438	4.23	120,432	4.88
25-29	205,009	88,570	3.59	116,439	4.72
30-34	183,622	79,759	3.23	103,863	4.21
35-39	171,335	74,724	3.03	96,611	3.92
40-44	152,433	66,888	2.71	85,545	3.47
45-49	129,993	58,568	2.37	71,425	2.90
50-54	135,065	62,964	2.55	72,101	2.92
55-59	109,980	51,726	2.10	58,254	2.36
60-64	102,190	47,867	1.94	54,323	2.20
65-69	82,040	38,318	1.55	43,722	1.77
70-74	63,625	29,097	1.18	34,528	1.40
75-79	41,393	19,216	0.78	22,177	0.90
80-84	22,787	11,044	0.45	11,743	0.48
85-89	10,514	5,001	0.20	5,513	0.22
90-94	4,309	1,907	0.08	2,402	0.10
95+	2,249	911	0.04	1,338	0.05
All ages	**2,466,427**	**1,170,833**	**47.47**	**1,295,594**	**52.53**

Annex 28: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Gandaki province population, 2011 census

Age group	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	206,710	106,677	4.44	100,033	4.16
5-9	259,731	132,505	5.51	127,226	5.29
10-14	314,819	158,243	6.58	156,576	6.51
15-19	281,450	133,141	5.54	148,309	6.17
20-24	208,217	80,411	3.35	127,806	5.32
25-29	174,413	63,781	2.65	110,632	4.60
30-34	143,309	54,017	2.25	89,292	3.71
35-39	133,543	51,419	2.14	82,124	3.42
40-44	122,281	50,374	2.10	71,907	2.99
45-49	110,218	47,609	1.98	62,609	2.60
50-54	105,657	48,872	2.03	56,785	2.36
55-59	88,211	42,128	1.75	46,083	1.92
60-64	81,649	37,461	1.56	44,188	1.84
65-69	61,605	29,620	1.23	31,985	1.33
70-74	47,567	23,472	0.98	24,095	1.00
75-79	32,447	15,993	0.67	16,454	0.68
80-84	19,719	9,416	0.39	10,303	0.43
85-89	8,075	3,974	0.17	4,101	0.17
90-94	3,016	1,319	0.05	1,697	0.07
95+	1,120	376	0.02	744	0.03
Total	**2,403,757**	**1,090,808**	**45.38**	**1,312,949**	**54.62**

Annex 29: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Lumbini province population, 2021 census

Age	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	439,841	230,778	4.51	209,063	4.08
5-9	497,938	259,850	5.07	238,088	4.65
10-14	523,078	268,902	5.25	254,176	4.96
15-19	540,900	266,043	5.19	274,857	5.37
20-24	496,646	222,524	4.34	274,122	5.35
25-29	440,485	191,156	3.73	249,329	4.87
30-34	381,940	166,688	3.25	215,252	4.20
35-39	357,093	159,440	3.11	197,653	3.86
40-44	298,968	137,684	2.69	161,284	3.15
45-49	239,702	112,979	2.21	126,723	2.47
50-54	236,368	111,759	2.18	124,609	2.43
55-59	179,360	88,491	1.73	90,869	1.77
60-64	158,359	76,171	1.49	82,188	1.60
65-69	130,920	63,584	1.24	67,336	1.31

Age	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
70-74	102,466	49,769	0.97	52,697	1.03
75-79	56,426	28,123	0.55	28,303	0.55
80-84	24,157	12,144	0.24	12,013	0.23
85-89	10,467	5,256	0.10	5,211	0.10
90-94	4,294	1,967	0.04	2,327	0.05
95+	2,670	1,100	0.02	1,570	0.03
All ages	**5,122,078**	**2,454,408**	**47.92**	**2,667,670**	**52.08**

Annex 30: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Lumbini province population, 2011 census

Age group	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	450,662	231,661	5.15	219,001	4.87
5-9	563,237	287,690	6.39	275,547	6.12
10-14	619,272	313,245	6.96	306,027	6.80
15-19	517,451	244,877	5.44	272,574	6.06
20-24	394,490	163,995	3.64	230,495	5.12
25-29	344,857	144,680	3.22	200,177	4.45
30-34	280,981	118,462	2.63	162,519	3.61
35-39	259,416	115,297	2.56	144,119	3.20
40-44	223,668	101,850	2.26	121,818	2.71
45-49	190,089	91,244	2.03	98,845	2.20
50-54	163,175	80,372	1.79	82,803	1.84
55-59	136,655	67,481	1.50	69,174	1.54
60-64	127,907	62,188	1.38	65,719	1.46
65-69	94,118	48,274	1.07	45,844	1.02
70-74	65,372	34,115	0.76	31,257	0.69
75-79	36,227	18,983	0.42	17,244	0.38
80-84	19,934	10,094	0.22	9,840	0.22
85-89	7,105	3,752	0.08	3,353	0.07
90-94	2,935	1,393	0.03	1,542	0.03
95+	1,721	663	0.01	1,058	0.02
Total	**4,499,272**	**2,140,316**	**47.57**	**2,358,956**	**52.43**

Annex 31: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Karnali province population, 2021 census

Age	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	168,801	88,558	5.25	80,243	4.75
5-9	181,718	93,345	5.53	88,373	5.23
10-14	208,372	105,671	6.26	102,701	6.08
15-19	196,744	95,552	5.66	101,192	5.99
20-24	171,261	78,794	4.67	92,467	5.48
25-29	133,332	62,847	3.72	70,485	4.17
30-34	110,629	51,760	3.07	58,869	3.49
35-39	100,490	46,602	2.76	53,888	3.19
40-44	86,139	39,691	2.35	46,448	2.75
45-49	73,055	34,930	2.07	38,125	2.26
50-54	69,706	34,094	2.02	35,612	2.11
55-59	53,683	27,094	1.60	26,589	1.57
60-64	47,987	23,430	1.39	24,557	1.45
65-69	34,780	17,196	1.02	17,584	1.04
70-74	28,770	13,352	0.79	15,418	0.91
75-79	14,453	6,790	0.40	7,663	0.45
80-84	5,250	2,605	0.15	2,645	0.16
85-89	2,004	978	0.06	1,026	0.06
90-94	742	283	0.02	459	0.03
95+	496	189	0.01	307	0.02
All ages	**1,688,412**	**823,761**	**48.79**	**864,651**	**51.21**

Annex 32: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Karnali province population, 2011 census

Age group	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	203,416	103,321	6.58	100,095	6.37
5-9	226,920	114,115	7.27	112,805	7.18
10-14	223,112	111,912	7.13	111,200	7.08
15-19	170,925	81,383	5.18	89,542	5.70
20-24	136,661	61,487	3.92	75,174	4.79
25-29	114,750	53,130	3.38	61,620	3.92
30-34	90,548	41,735	2.66	48,813	3.11
35-39	84,539	40,374	2.57	44,165	2.81
40-44	71,061	34,507	2.20	36,554	2.33
45-49	59,941	30,001	1.91	29,940	1.91
50-54	50,529	26,239	1.67	24,290	1.55
55-59	41,565	21,932	1.40	19,633	1.25

Age group	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
60-64	42,271	20,119	1.28	22,152	1.41
65-69	25,797	12,983	0.83	12,814	0.82
70-74	14,799	7,637	0.49	7,162	0.46
75-79	7,546	4,036	0.26	3,510	0.22
80-84	3,978	2,011	0.13	1,967	0.13
85-89	1,321	714	0.05	607	0.04
90-94	442	193	0.01	249	0.02
95+	297	94	0.01	203	0.01
All ages	**1,570,418**	**767923**	**48.90**	**802,495**	**51.10**

Annex 33: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Sudurpaschim province population, 2021 census

Age	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	239,139	127,768	4.74	111,371	4.13
5-9	272,240	141,765	5.26	130,475	4.84
10-14	324,348	165,217	6.13	159,131	5.91
15-19	297,949	141,431	5.25	156,518	5.81
20-24	260,703	111,125	4.12	149,578	5.55
25-29	213,102	93,221	3.46	119,881	4.45
30-34	184,102	81,005	3.01	103,097	3.83
35-39	171,910	76,607	2.84	95,303	3.54
40-44	147,051	66,538	2.47	80,513	2.99
45-49	120,303	54,654	2.03	65,649	2.44
50-54	120,595	55,767	2.07	64,828	2.41
55-59	88,791	43,015	1.60	45,776	1.70
60-64	77,894	36,272	1.35	41,622	1.54
65-69	63,302	29,789	1.11	33,513	1.24
70-74	57,958	24,944	0.93	33,014	1.23
75-79	32,433	14,262	0.53	18,171	0.67
80-84	13,514	5,750	0.21	7,764	0.29
85-89	5,362	2,337	0.09	3,025	0.11
90-94	2,619	874	0.03	1,745	0.06
95+	1,468	445	0.02	1,023	0.04
All ages	**2,694,783**	**1,272,786**	**47.23**	**1,421,997**	**52.77**

Annex 34: Five-year age group and sex distribution of Sudurpaschim province population, 2011 census

Age group	Total	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
0-4	296,605	151,826	5.95	144,779	5.67
5-9	346,227	176,560	6.92	169,667	6.65
10-14	366,003	184,979	7.25	181,024	7.09
15-19	285,915	135,073	5.29	150,842	5.91
20-24	220,704	93,915	3.68	126,789	4.97
25-29	188,798	83,701	3.28	105,097	4.12
30-34	152,572	66,869	2.62	85,703	3.36
35-39	140,710	63,856	2.50	76,854	3.01
40-44	116,485	53,505	2.10	62,980	2.47
45-49	97,991	46,899	1.84	51,092	2.00
50-54	80,185	39,101	1.53	41,084	1.61
55-59	67,556	33,312	1.31	34,244	1.34
60-64	70,518	31,320	1.23	39,198	1.54
65-69	50,451	23,619	0.93	26,832	1.05
70-74	36,516	16,863	0.66	19,653	0.77
75-79	18,873	8,951	0.35	9,922	0.39
80-84	10,674	4,980	0.20	5,694	0.22
85-89	3,536	1,747	0.07	1,789	0.07
90-94	1,344	539	0.02	805	0.03
95+	854	272	0.01	582	0.02
All age	**2,552,517**	**1,217,887**	**47.71**	**1,334,630**	**52.29**

Annex 35: Five-year age and sex distribution of rural municipalities, 2021 census

Age group	Total	Male	%	Female	%
0-4	892,182	466,202	9.7	425,980	8.4
5-9	992,350	508,969	10.6	483,381	9.5
10-14	1,057,826	535,036	11.1	522,790	10.3
15-19	1,025,447	507,464	10.6	517,983	10.2
20-24	904,653	418,352	8.7	486,301	9.6
25-29	776,022	359,291	7.5	416,731	8.2
30-34	654,612	301,925	6.3	352,687	7.0
35-39	622,048	284,636	5.9	337,412	6.7
40-44	537,999	251,130	5.2	286,869	5.7
45-49	461,613	216,332	4.5	245,281	4.8
50-54	475,792	228,930	4.8	246,862	4.9
55-59	377,612	187,908	3.9	189,704	3.7
60-64	344,385	168,234	3.5	176,151	3.5

Age group	Total	Male	%	Female	%
65-69	283,783	140,663	2.9	143,120	2.8
70-74	227,837	109,832	2.3	118,005	2.3
75-79	131,172	64,715	1.3	66,457	1.3
80-84	58,780	29,121	0.6	29,659	0.6
85-89	27,001	13,083	0.3	13,918	0.3
90-94	10,523	4,644	0.1	5,879	0.1
95+	6,153	2,539	0.1	3,614	0.1
All ages	**9,867,790**	**4,799,006**	**100.0**	**5,068,784**	**100.0**

Annex 36: Five-year age and sex distribution of urban municipalities, 2021 census

Age group	Total	Male	%	Female	%
0-4	1,547,101	824,323	8.7	722,778	7.3
5-9	1,774,077	934,436	9.9	839,641	8.5
10-14	1,852,039	960,918	10.2	891,121	9.1
15-19	1,940,957	987,059	10.4	953,898	9.7
20-24	1,878,407	882,666	9.3	995,741	10.1
25-29	1,683,327	762,951	8.1	920,376	9.4
30-34	1,493,100	677,051	7.2	816,049	8.3
35-39	1,419,444	652,295	6.9	767,149	7.8
40-44	1,209,833	577,363	6.1	632,470	6.4
45-49	974,427	471,193	5.0	503,234	5.1
50-54	938,060	463,564	4.9	474,496	4.8
55-59	698,332	349,650	3.7	348,682	3.5
60-64	611,219	297,728	3.1	313,491	3.2
65-69	487,835	239,026	2.5	248,809	2.5
70-74	381,533	182,222	1.9	199,311	2.0
75-79	222,031	106,283	1.1	115,748	1.2
80-84	102,776	49,194	0.5	53,582	0.5
85-89	51,326	23,805	0.3	27,521	0.3
90-94	19,883	8,547	0.1	11,336	0.1
95+	11,081	4,271	0.0	6,810	0.1
All ages	**19,296,788**	**9,454,545**	**100.0**	**9,842,243**	**100.0**

Annex 37: Median age by province and district, 2021 census

Provinces & districts	Median age
Koshi	**28**
Taplejung	25
Sankhuwasabha	27
Solukhumbu	27
Okhaldhunga	28
Khotang	26
Bhojpur	27
Dhankuta	29
Tehrathum	28
Panchthar	27
Ilam	30
Jhapa	29
Morang	28
Sunsari	26
Udayapur	26
Madhesh	**23**
Saptari	25
Siraha	23
Dhanusa	23
Mahottari	22
Sarlahi	22
Rautahat	20
Bara	23
Parsa	23
Bagmati	**29**
Dolakha	30
Sindhupalchok	30
Rasuwa	27
Dhading	28

Provinces & districts	Median age
Nuwakot	29
Kathmandu	29
Bhaktapur	30
Lalitpur	30
Kavrepalanchok	30
Ramechhap	31
Sindhuli	25
Makwanpur	27
Chitawan	28
Gandaki	**29**
Gorkha	31
Manang	34
Mustang	30
Myagdi	28
Kaski	29
Lamjung	32
Tanahu	29
Nawalparasi (East)	28
Syangja	31
Parbat	29
Baglung	26
Lumbini	**25**
Rukum (East)	23
Rolpa	22
Pyuthan	23
Gulmi	28
Arghakhanchi	27
Palpa	28
Nawalparasi (West)	26

Provinces & districts	Median age
Rupandehi	25
Kapilbastu	23
Dang	25
Banke	24
Bardiya	26
Karnali	**22**
Dolpa	23
Mugu	21
Humla	22
Jumla	22
Kalikot	20
Dailekh	21
Jajarkot	20
Rukum (West)	22
Salyan	23
Surkhet	24
Sudurpaschim	**24**
Bajura	21
Bajhang	20
Darchula	24
Baitadi	23
Dadeldhura	23
Doti	20
Achham	20
Kailali	25
Kanchanpur	25
Nepal	**26**

Annex 38: Sex ratio by province and district, 2021 census

Provinces & districts	Sex ratio
Koshi	**95**
Taplejung	102
Sankhuwasabha	101
Solukhumbu	101
Okhaldhunga	95
Khotang	98
Bhojpur	98
Dhankuta	96
Tehrathum	97
Panchthar	99
Ilam	100
Jhapa	92
Morang	94
Sunsari	94
Udayapur	93
Madhesh	**101**
Saptari	99
Siraha	97
Dhanusha	98
Mahottari	98
Sarlahi	102
Rautahat	101
Bara	104
Parsa	107
Bagmati	**99**
Dolakha	94
Sindhupalchok	97
Rasuwa	106
Dhading	95
Nuwakot	96
Kathmandu	103
Bhaktapur	102
Lalitpur	101
Kavrepalanchok	97
Ramechhap	90
Sindhuli	96
Makwanpur	101
Chitawan	96
Gandaki	**90**
Gorkha	89
Manang	129
Mustang	122
Myagdi	95

Provinces & districts	Sex ratio
Kaski	95
Lamjung	91
Tanahu	88
Nawalparasi (East)	89
Syangja	86
Parbat	89
Baglung	87
Lumbini	**92**
Rukum (East)	94
Rolpa	88
Pyuthan	81
Gulmi	83
Arghakhanchi	84
Palpa	85
Nawalparasi (West)	95
Rupandehi	96
Kapilbastu	96
Dang	90
Banke	97
Bardiya	89
Karnali	**95**
Dolpa	100
Mugu	101
Humla	101
Jumla	100
Kalikot	99
Dailekh	92
Jajarkot	99
Rukum (West)	95
Salyan	93
Surkhet	93
Sudurpaschim	**90**
Bajura	94
Bajhang	88
Darchula	94
Baitadi	89
Dadeldhura	89
Doti	84
Achham	85
Kailali	92
Kanchanpur	88
Nepal	**96**

Annex 39: Sex ratio at birth by district, 2021 census

Districts	Sex ratio at birth		Districts	Sex ratio at birth
Dhanusa	133		Dang	110
Siraha	128		Solukhumbu	109
Arghakhanchi	124		Sankhuwasabha	109
Saptari	123		Kavrepalanchok	109
Kanchanpur	120		Rukum (West)	109
Kailali	120		Pyuthan	109
Parbat	119		Khotang	108
Doti	119		Gulmi	108
Mahottari	118		Salyan	108
Dadeldhura	118		Rasuwa	108
Parsa	117		Bara	108
Tanahu	116		Rautahat	108
Kathmandu	116		Udayapur	107
Sarlahi	116		Bajura	107
Mugu	114		Lamjung	107
Terhathum	114		Bhojpur	107
Baitadi	114		Dailekh	107
Nawalparasi (East)	114		Sunsari	106
Jumla	113		Panchthar	106
Darchula	113		Sindhuli	106
Dolakha	113		Kapilbastu	106
Palpa	113		Baglung	106
Chitawan	112		Dolpa	106
Bhaktapur	112		Nuwakot	106
Surkhet	112		Makwanpur	105
Bardiya	112		Syangja	105
Sindhupalchok	112		Morang	104
Banke	112		Achham	104
Gorkha	112		Jajarkot	103
Kalikot	112		Dhading	103
Ramechhap	111		Taplejung	101
Nawalparasi (West)	111		Manang	100
Myagdi	111		Humla	99
Jhapa	111		Dhankuta	99
Lalitpur	110		Okhaldhunga	99
Kaski	110		Ilam	99
Rupandehi	110		Rolpa	97
Bajhang	110		Mustang	92
Rukum (East)	110			

Annex 40: Dependency ratios in households with and without absentees abroad by district sorted by absentees, 2021 census

Districts	Absent abroad	Dependency ratios in HHs *without* absentees abroad	Dependency ratio in HHs *with* absentees abroad
Achham	19.3	78.1	88.8
Bajhang	18.0	73.3	80.8
Arghakhanchi	16.9	55.0	68.5
Gulmi	16.9	55.1	66.9
Doti	14.0	67.6	91.2
Syangja	13.9	48.8	57.3
Baglung	13.7	55.1	67.7
Pyuthan	13.7	59.9	75.8
Kanchanpur	12.9	48.5	62.9
Parbat	12.6	51.5	61.2
Palpa	12.5	47.4	58.1
Kailali	12.2	46.9	66.7
Nawalparasi (East)	11.8	44.7	55.2
Tanahu	11.6	47.4	56.0
Dadeldhura	11.1	58.9	71.8
Kaski	11.1	40.2	48.4
Lamjung	10.8	49.3	57.4
Bajura	10.4	72.4	80.3
Myagdi	10.1	55.7	62.6
Baitadi	9.4	64.4	72.6
Gorkha	9.2	53.5	60.6
Jhapa	9.1	46.9	55.5
Chitawan	9.0	43.1	49.0
Rolpa	8.5	59.1	75.2
Dhanusha	8.5	60.1	81.6
Mustang	8.4	39.4	37.0
Dang	7.9	45.6	61.1
Dailekh	7.7	63.8	83.0
Siraha	7.6	59.4	81.2
Surkhet	7.5	52.6	70.5
Mahottari	7.5	62.3	82.6
Nawalparasi (West)	7.2	48.0	57.0
Salyan	7.1	54.5	69.0
Rupandehi	7.1	48.0	57.4
Kathmandu	7.1	34.1	35.5
Panchthar	6.8	51.2	54.7
Ilam	6.7	42.5	47.4
Sunsari	6.7	48.4	60.3

Districts	Absent abroad	Dependency ratios in HHs *without* absentees abroad	Dependency ratio in HHs *with* absentees abroad
Lalitpur	6.7	35.6	35.5
Sindhupalchok	6.7	52.6	54.0
Morang	6.6	47.3	57.6
Terhathum	6.5	50.9	55.8
Kapilbastu	6.4	60.8	73.1
Khotang	6.4	59.4	60.2
Dhankuta	6.4	48.4	55.3
Bardiya	6.4	45.9	62.4
Udayapur	6.2	53.1	60.7
Rukum (West)	6.1	58.8	72.9
Nuwakot	5.9	52.4	54.9
Dhading	5.9	53.9	58.7
Ramechhap	5.8	54.5	56.6
Bhojpur	5.8	55.7	57.6
Manang	5.6	36.1	37.9
Darchula	5.6	59.9	68.9
Bhaktapur	5.6	36.7	35.8
Rukum (East)	5.5	59.0	68.5
Kavrepalanchok	5.5	45.6	45.8
Okhaldhunga	5.3	52.7	58.3
Dolakha	5.3	53.6	54.9
Taplejung	5.2	54.0	54.8
Sankhuwasabha	5.0	55.0	59.5
Rasuwa	4.9	54.7	50.1
Banke	4.9	53.8	64.0
Saptari	4.7	56.1	73.8
Solukhumbu	4.7	54.5	50.3
Sindhuli	4.6	53.8	57.7
Makwanpur	4.3	48.7	49.0
Sarlahi	4.1	62.3	73.5
Kalikot	3.8	72.2	73.7
Jajarkot	3.2	70.7	80.2
Rautahat	2.9	71.7	89.8
Jumla	2.3	56.9	65.2
Bara	2.3	62.2	68.2
Parsa	1.8	60.8	65.1
Mugu	1.7	71.7	67.0
Humla	1.4	71.9	52.2
Dolpa	1.0	55.7	44.6

Annex 41: Dependency ratio by provinces and districts, 2021 census

District name	Total dependency ratio	Child dependency ratio	Old-age dependency ratio
Nepal	**53.28**	**42.65**	**10.63**
Koshi	**50.38**	**39.08**	**11.30**
Taplejung	53.41	42.65	10.75
Sankhuwasabha	53.99	41.60	12.39
Solukhumbu	53.78	41.16	12.63
Okhaldhunga	53.26	38.28	14.99
Khotang	58.97	44.43	14.54
Bhojpur	55.35	41.58	13.77
Dhankuta	49.07	36.48	12.59
Tehrathum	51.54	38.81	12.73
Panchthar	51.33	39.78	11.54
Ilam	43.22	31.08	12.14
Jhapa	48.78	37.27	11.51
Morang	49.00	38.31	10.70
Sunsari	50.53	41.03	9.50
Udayapur	54.22	43.23	11.00
Madhesh	**65.23**	**54.81**	**10.42**
Saptari	59.03	47.37	11.66
Siraha	65.83	54.91	10.92
Dhanusha	66.70	55.71	10.99
Mahottari	67.88	57.11	10.77
Sarlahi	64.15	54.04	10.11
Rautahat	74.06	63.95	10.11
Bara	62.74	53.28	9.46
Parsa	60.81	51.52	9.29
Bagmati	**41.55**	**31.33**	**10.22**
Dolakha	53.20	36.34	16.87
Sindhupalchok	52.51	36.84	15.67
Rasuwa	52.20	39.24	12.96
Dhading	54.20	39.10	15.10
Nuwakot	52.00	37.14	14.86
Kathmandu	33.94	26.37	7.57
Bhaktapur	36.17	28.14	8.03
Lalitpur	35.34	26.10	9.23
Kavrepalanchok	44.88	32.61	12.27
Ramechhap	54.35	36.16	18.20
Sindhuli	53.79	42.72	11.07
Makwanpur	47.68	37.94	9.75
Chitawan	44.04	33.56	10.48
Gandaki	**49.41**	**35.67**	**13.75**
Gorkha	54.94	36.38	18.55
Manang	32.60	19.83	12.77

District name	Total dependency ratio	Child dependency ratio	Old-age dependency ratio
Mustang	43.46	31.31	12.15
Myagdi	56.10	40.23	15.87
Kaski	41.74	31.27	10.48
Lamjung	50.88	33.33	17.55
Tanahu	49.49	35.93	13.56
Nawalparasi (east)	47.96	37.30	10.66
Syangja	51.64	34.30	17.34
Parbat	54.09	38.07	16.02
Baglung	58.72	44.21	14.52
Lumbini	**53.82**	**43.87**	**9.95**
Rukum (east)	60.68	50.03	10.65
Rolpa	62.68	52.75	9.93
Pyuthan	65.21	54.14	11.07
Gulmi	59.56	43.70	15.86
Arghakhanchi	59.90	44.83	15.07
Palpa	50.16	37.24	12.92
Nawalparasi (west)	49.57	39.30	10.26
Rupandehi	49.57	40.57	9.00
Kapilbastu	63.37	53.24	10.13
Dang	48.62	40.27	8.35
Banke	54.65	46.41	8.24
Bardiya	48.22	38.86	9.36
Karnali	**61.88**	**53.58**	**8.29**
Dolpa	54.38	48.92	5.46
Mugu	71.64	63.53	8.12
Humla	70.87	61.69	9.18
Jumla	56.59	50.17	6.42
Kalikot	71.96	63.84	8.13
Dailekh	67.21	57.42	9.79
Jajarkot	71.07	63.58	7.49
Rukum (west)	60.37	52.10	8.27
Salyan	57.01	48.21	8.81
Surkhet	55.04	46.75	8.29
Sudurpaschim	**60.17**	**49.67**	**10.50**
Bajura	73.31	62.47	10.84
Bajhang	75.33	63.39	11.94
Darchula	60.63	48.53	12.10
Baitadi	66.09	54.08	12.01
Dadeldhura	61.77	50.61	11.15
Doti	74.85	64.04	10.81
Achham	81.39	68.65	12.74
Kailali	51.09	41.69	9.39
Kanchanpur	52.25	42.48	9.77

Annex 42: Potential support ratio (persons aged 15-64 years per older persons aged 65+) by sex and district, 2021 census

Districts	Support ratio		
	Total	Male	Female
Taplejung	9.3	9.3	9.3
Sankhuwasabha	8.1	8.3	7.8
Solukhumbu	7.9	8.2	7.7
Okhaldhunga	6.7	6.8	6.5
Khotang	6.9	6.8	7.0
Bhojpur	7.3	7.3	7.2
Dhankuta	7.9	7.8	8.0
Terhathum	7.9	7.9	7.8
Panchthar	8.7	8.4	8.9
Ilam	8.2	7.7	8.8
Jhapa	8.7	8.3	9.1
Morang	9.3	9.0	9.7
Sunsari	10.5	10.4	10.7
Udayapur	9.1	8.8	9.4
Saptari	8.6	8.2	8.9
Siraha	9.2	8.3	10.1
Dhanusha	9.1	7.9	10.4
Mahottari	9.3	8.3	10.5
Sarlahi	9.9	9.5	10.3
Rautahat	9.9	9.7	10.1
Bara	10.6	10.3	10.9
Parsa	10.8	10.5	11.0
Dolakha	5.9	6.0	5.8
Sindhupalchok	6.4	6.3	6.5
Rasuwa	7.7	7.9	7.5
Dhading	6.6	6.4	6.8
Nuwakot	6.7	6.6	6.8
Kathmandu	13.2	14.4	12.2
Bhaktapur	12.5	13.8	11.4
Lalitpur	10.8	11.8	10.1
Kavrepalanchok	8.2	8.5	7.9
Ramechhap	5.5	5.7	5.3
Sindhuli	9.0	9.2	8.9
Makwanpur	10.3	10.7	9.9
Chitawan	9.5	9.4	9.7
Gorkha	5.4	5.1	5.6
Manang	7.8	10.9	5.5
Mustang	8.2	9.5	7.0
Myagdi	6.3	6.6	6.0

Districts	Support ratio		
	Total	Male	Female
Kaski	9.5	10.2	9.0
Lamjung	5.7	5.5	5.9
Tanahu	7.4	7.1	7.6
Nawalparasi (East)	9.4	8.7	10.0
Syangja	5.8	5.5	6.0
Parbat	6.2	6.0	6.4
Baglung	6.9	6.5	7.3
Rukum (East)	9.4	9.3	9.5
Rolpa	10.1	9.8	10.3
Pyuthan	9.0	8.1	9.8
Gulmi	6.3	5.6	6.9
Arghakhanchi	6.6	5.7	7.5
Palpa	7.7	7.5	8.0
Nawalparasi (West)	9.7	9.1	10.4
Rupandehi	11.1	10.7	11.6
Kapilbastu	9.9	9.1	10.7
Dang	12.0	11.3	12.6
Banke	12.1	11.8	12.5
Bardiya	10.7	9.8	11.6
Dolpa	18.3	19.3	17.4
Mugu	12.3	12.6	12.1
Humla	10.9	11.4	10.5
Jumla	15.6	15.4	15.7
Kalikot	12.3	12.2	12.4
Dailekh	10.2	9.9	10.5
Jajarkot	13.4	13.5	13.2
Rukum (West)	12.1	11.8	12.4
Salyan	11.4	11.1	11.6
Surkhet	12.1	12.0	12.1
Bajura	9.2	9.4	9.1
Bajhang	8.4	9.4	7.7
Darchula	8.3	8.2	8.3
Baitadi	8.3	8.7	8.1
Dadeldhura	9.0	9.7	8.5
Doti	9.3	9.6	9.0
Achham	7.8	8.3	7.5
Kailali	10.6	10.7	10.6
Kanchanpur	10.2	9.7	10.7

Annex 43: Index of ageing by province and district based on 65+ years, 2021 census

District name	Index of ageing
Nepal	**24.91**
Koshi	**28.92**
Taplejung	25.21
Sankhuwasabha	29.78
Solukhumbu	30.68
Okhaldhunga	39.15
Khotang	32.72
Bhojpur	33.12
Dhankuta	34.51
Tehrathum	32.80
Panchthar	29.01
Ilam	39.06
Jhapa	30.88
Morang	27.92
Sunsari	23.14
Udayapur	25.45
Madhesh	**19.01**
Saptari	24.62
Siraha	19.89
Dhanusha	19.74
Mahottari	18.85
Sarlahi	18.71
Rautahat	15.81
Bara	17.76
Parsa	18.03
Bagmati	**32.63**
Dolakha	46.42
Sindhupalchok	42.54
Rasuwa	33.02
Dhading	38.61
Nuwakot	40.00
Kathmandu	28.71
Bhaktapur	28.53
Lalitpur	35.36
Kavrepalanchok	37.61
Ramechhap	50.32
Sindhuli	25.90
Makwanpur	25.69
Chitawan	31.22
Gandaki	**38.54**
Gorkha	50.99
Manang	64.42
Mustang	38.81
Myagdi	39.45
Kaski	33.52
Lamjung	52.66
Tanahu	37.74
Nawalparasi (east)	28.59
Syangja	50.56
Parbat	42.10
Baglung	32.84
Lumbini	**22.69**
Rukum (east)	21.30
Rolpa	18.82
Pyuthan	20.45
Gulmi	36.29
Arghakhanchi	33.62
Palpa	34.70
Nawalparasi (west)	26.11
Rupandehi	22.18
Kapilbastu	19.03
Dang	20.74
Banke	17.75
Bardiya	24.09
Karnali	**15.48**
Dolpa	11.17

District name	Index of ageing
Mugu	12.78
Humla	14.88
Jumla	12.79
Kalikot	12.73
Dailekh	17.05
Jajarkot	11.78
Rukum (west)	15.87
Salyan	18.27
Surkhet	17.73
Sudurpaschim	**21.14**
Bajura	17.36

District name	Index of ageing
Bajhang	18.83
Darchula	24.93
Baitadi	22.21
Dadeldhura	22.03
Doti	16.88
Achham	18.56
Kailali	22.53
Kanchanpur	22.99

Annex 44: Demographic dividend index by district, 2021 census

SN	District	DDI	SN	District	DDI	SN	District	DDI
1	Taplejung	78.1	27	Nuwakot	76.3	53	Nawalparasi (West)	70.8
2	Sankhuwasabha	77.3	28	Kathmandu	85.2	54	Rupandehi	72.5
3	Solukhumbu	78.9	29	Bhaktapur	83.7	55	Kapilbastu	64.3
4	Okhaldhunga	77.2	30	Lalitpur	83.9	56	Dang	74.4
5	Khotang	79.5	31	Kavrepalanchok	80.4	57	Banke	66.4
6	Bhojpur	77.6	32	Ramechhap	78.1	58	Bardiya	73.7
7	Dhankuta	80.6	33	Sindhuli	75.0	59	Dolpa	69.7
8	Tehrathum	80.6	34	Makwanpur	73.0	60	Mugu	71.8
9	Panchthar	78.8	35	Chitawan	78.2	61	Humla	71.4
10	Ilam	80.7	36	Gorkha	77.3	62	Jumla	73.0
11	Jhapa	77.4	37	Manang	75.6	63	Kalikot	77.1
12	Morang	73.7	38	Mustang	76.6	64	Dailekh	74.8
13	Sunsari	71.6	39	Myagdi	78.4	65	Jajarkot	74.1
14	Udayapur	74.2	40	Kaski	82.2	66	Rukum (West)	72.6
15	Saptari	67.0	41	Lamjung	79.2	67	Salyan	73.2
16	Siraha	63.7	42	Tanahu	78.3	68	Surkhet	74.6
17	Dhanusha	60.6	43	Nawalparasi (East)	76.8	69	Bajura	75.2
18	Mahottari	60.4	44	Syangja	81.9	70	Bajhang	73.2
19	Sarlahi	61.0	45	Parbat	78.5	71	Darchula	74.4
20	Rautahat	57.2	46	Baglung	75.4	72	Baitadi	76.4
21	Bara	62.8	47	Rukum (East)	72.2	73	Dadeldhura	75.2
22	Parsa	65.9	48	Rolpa	68.3	74	Doti	71.3
23	Dolakha	80.4	49	Pyuthan	68.9	75	Achham	74.6
24	Sindhupalchok	77.1	50	Gulmi	72.9	76	Kailali	74.4
25	Rasuwa	74.7	51	Arghakhanchi	73.6	77	Kanchanpur	76.8
26	Dhading	76.6	52	Palpa	79.4			

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