



Nepal-EU Tech Forum 2026

EIAS Brussels, 27.04.2026

Event Report

The European Institute for Asian Studies (EIAS) and the Embassy of Nepal in Brussels, committed to promoting Nepal's rising tech sector and to deepening practical engagement with European partners, convened the first Nepal-EU Tech Forum in Brussels on Monday, 27 April 2026.

The **Ambassador of Nepal to the EU, H. E. Sewa Lamsal**, inaugurated the ceremony by embracing dialogue and cooperation between Nepal and the EU, and by recognising the growing role of tech development as a mutual field of cooperation. The speech was reinforced by **Mr Alvis Ancans of DG Connect, EU Commission**, who remarked on the importance of global like-minded partners in an international environment in which the EU is expanding its dialogue partnerships. He proceeded by presenting the EU tech regulatory framework and by welcoming global cooperation and partnerships in the tech sector to foster sustainable technology.

Mr. Sushil Gyewali, CEO of the Investment Board of Nepal, and **Mr. Adesh Khadka, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MoCIT)**, followed by stressing the rise of the digital industry in Nepal, driven by the country's large hydroelectric energy capacity, and underlined the importance of global dialogue to attract investment and build bilateral partnerships that embrace sustainable technology practices and leverage Nepal's competitive strengths.

Mr Anjani Phuyal, CEO of Genese Solutions, delivered a keynote speech on Nepal's digital ecosystem, emphasising the growing role of Artificial Intelligence both in Nepal and in the EU, and acknowledging Nepal's strategic advantages, including a large talent pool and abundant clean energy to complement the EU's digital lead. He concluded by calling attention to the role of the Nepalese diaspora as a bridge to promote EU-Nepal tech dialogue.

Moderated by Niranjana Kunwar of Genese Solution, the **first panel discussion** brought together representatives from AWS, RiskAI Technologies GmbH, RenewMe, and Kimber to discuss investment readiness, cross-border partnerships, and scalable digital infrastructure collaboration between Nepal and Europe. The discussion converged on two interconnected challenges: trust and maturity. Panellists observed that foreign investors perceive Nepal as a high-risk environment and that the small scale of Nepalese startups makes it difficult to attract the capital flows that typically require demonstrated reliability at the enterprise level. On the regulatory side, Nepal's tech ecosystem was acknowledged as still catching up with the EU's more advanced framework, including the AI Act and GDPR compliance, which set the bar for any company seeking to operate in or partner with the European market.

Panellists agreed, however, that this gap represents an opportunity as much as a constraint: Nepal's AI talent pool is well-positioned to bridge the distance between development and deployment, provided that domain expertise and enterprise-level knowledge are actively cultivated. Cloud readiness was identified as a prerequisite for attracting global investment, alongside the need for the Nepalese government to prioritise startup infrastructure. Panellists also stressed that Nepal should resist the temptation to transition prematurely from services to products and instead focus on becoming a leader in vertical AI services, where specialisation rather than scale is the decisive competitive advantage. The panel closed on the shared conviction that Nepal stands on a level playing field in AI development, and that capitalising on this window of opportunity requires, above all, building trust, raising delivery standards, and ensuring that talent is available and visible in the right places.

The **second panel**, featuring representatives of KCL Digital, ABN AMRO Bank, The Whisky Exchange, Proshore Limited, Square Management, and the Nepalese Businessmen Association of Belgium (NEBAB), focused on diaspora engagement, talent mobility, and practical models for cross-border collaboration between Nepal and Europe. The session opened with a presentation by the NEBAB representative, who outlined the scale and entrepreneurial vitality of the Nepalese community in Belgium, numbering between 20,000 and 25,000 people and concentrated notably in the hospitality sector. He proposed reframing the brain drain narrative into one of brain circulation, whereby diaspora knowledge and networks are channelled back into Nepal's economic development through return talent programmes, education initiatives, and soft power strategies such as Nepalese food branding in Europe. The panel discussion that followed centred on the recurring tension between capability and access: panellists agreed that Nepal possesses considerable talent, but that this talent remains insufficiently organised, enabled, and visible to European partners. Cultural distance and differing business expectations were identified as practical barriers to effective collaboration, requiring investment not only in technical skills but in mutual understanding and communication. Panellists stressed the importance of moving beyond the outsourcing model toward genuine partnership, in which Nepalese professionals take ownership of products and projects rather than serving as low-cost engineering resources. Academic exchanges and knowledge-transfer channels were proposed as complementary mechanisms, particularly given the disconnect between Nepal's academic institutions and its private sector. The panel concluded by noting that Nepal is not yet the default tech destination for European companies, but that it is tech-ready, and that strategic positioning, stronger diaspora networks, and a clearer regulatory profile could rapidly change that perception.

The panels were followed by a **key takeaways** session, in which moderated reflections and an open exchange with the audience drew together the main insights emerging from the day's discussions. The forum painted a picture of a relationship rich in untapped potential. Nepal's clean energy capacity, young talent pool, and growing digital ecosystem offer genuine complementarities with the EU's regulatory sophistication and investment capacity. The central challenges identified are trust, visibility, and organisation. If Nepal can consolidate its strengths, align with European standards, and leverage its diaspora as a bridge, the conditions for a substantive and mutually beneficial Nepal-EU technology partnership are well within reach.

The forum then concluded with **closing remarks** by the Ambassador of Nepal to the EU, outlining the follow-up engagements envisioned to sustain and deepen Nepal-EU cooperation in the tech sector.