

DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF NEPAL

People-Powered, Democratic, and Inclusive — Working Draft v0.2 (14 September 2025)

This expanded draft centers people's sovereignty through direct democracy, recall, participatory budgeting, radical transparency, and strict anti-corruption architecture—while preserving a workable three-tier federal system.

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Expanded)

- **Preamble**
- **Part I – Foundational Provisions (Arts. 1-12)**
- **Part II – Directive Principles, State Policies & Duties (Arts. 13-24)**
- **Part III – Fundamental Rights (Arts. 25-72, 35A, 36A-36B)**
 - Ch. 1: General Provisions & Remedies
 - Ch. 2: Equality & Non-Discrimination
 - Ch. 3: Civil & Political Rights (incl. Good Administration; Peaceful Protest; Algorithmic Transparency)
 - Ch. 4: Economic, Social & Cultural Rights (Universal Services)
 - Ch. 5: Group-Specific Protections
 - Ch. 6: Environmental Rights
- **Part IV – Representation & Elections (Arts. 73-94)**
- **Part IV-A – Direct Democracy & People's Oversight (Arts. 94A-94N)**
- **Part V – Legislature (Arts. 95-126)**
- **Part VI – Executive (Arts. 127-154)**
- **Part VII – Judiciary & Constitutional Justice (Arts. 155-192; 161-162 added)**
- **Part VIII – Inter-Governmental Relations & Federal Finance (Arts. 193-226)**
- **Part IX – Local Government (Arts. 227-244)**
- **Part X – Public Finance & Integrity (Arts. 245-274)**
- **Part X-A – Political Parties, Campaign Finance & Lobbying (Arts. 274A-274N)**
- **Part XI – Anti-Corruption & Public Accountability (Arts. 275-293)**
- **Part XII – Security, Police & Emergency (Arts. 294-323)**
- **Part XIII – Independent Commissions (Arts. 324-370)**
- **Part XIV – Social Protection & Human Development (Arts. 371-401)**
- **Part XV – Environment, Climate & Natural Resources (Arts. 402-442)**
- **Part XVI – Media, Data & Digital Rights (Arts. 443-463)**
- **Part XVII – International Relations & Treaties (Arts. 464-480)**
- **Part XVIII – Amendment of the Constitution (Arts. 481-489)**
- **Part XIX – Transitional, Savings & Review (Arts. 490-500)**
- **Schedules I-VII** (Powers; Fiscal Sharing; Inclusion Matrix; Non-Derogable Rights; Oaths; Boundaries; Languages)

PREAMBLE

We, the people of Nepal—sovereign, diverse and equal—determined to end discrimination and poverty; to ensure dignity, liberty, justice and fraternity; to protect our mountains, forests and rivers; to secure opportunities for our youth to prosper at home; and to hold all power to account—do hereby adopt and enact this Constitution.

PART I – FOUNDATIONAL PROVISIONS (Arts. 1–12)

Article 1 – The State

- (1) Nepal is an independent, sovereign, secular, inclusive, federal democratic republic.
- (2) Sovereignty and state authority belong to the people and are exercised directly and through their representatives and institutions.

Article 2 – Supremacy of the Constitution

This Constitution is the supreme law; any law or act inconsistent herewith is void.

Article 3 – Territory and Boundaries

The territory of Nepal comprises its internationally recognized boundaries, including airspace and waters.

Article 4 – Official Language and Languages of Nepal

- (1) Nepali in Devanagari script is the official language of the Federation.
- (2) Provinces may adopt additional official languages by law.
- (3) The State shall protect and promote all national languages and ensure mother-tongue education.

Article 5 – National Symbols

As provided by law and Schedule VI.

Article 6 – Capital

The capital of Nepal is Kathmandu, subject to change by federal law by two-thirds majority.

Article 7 – Equal Citizenship

Women and men have equal, independent rights to acquire and confer citizenship to children and spouses as provided by law.

Article 8 – Secularism & Religious Freedom

- (1) The State is secular and protects all religions and beliefs.
- (2) Freedom of religion or belief is guaranteed, subject to rights of others and public order.

Article 9 – Federal Structure

Three levels—federal, provincial and local—operate with autonomy within Schedules I–III.

Article 10 – Inclusive State

Proportional inclusion of women, Dalit, Adivasi/Janajati, Madhesi, Tharu, Muslim, persons with disabilities, geographically disadvantaged and other marginalized groups in state organs.

Article 11 – International Law

Ratified treaties form part of law; courts interpret domestic law consistently with human rights obligations.

Article 12 – Right to Local Self-Government

Local governments are autonomous within competence and accountable to residents.

PART II – DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES, STATE POLICIES & DUTIES (Arts. 13-24)

Article 13 – Directive Principles

Build a just, inclusive society; eradicate poverty; ensure balanced development; protect environment; expand opportunity for youth; eliminate corruption.

Article 14 – Social & Economic Policies

Universal access to basic health, education, water/sanitation; fiscal equalization to poorer units; employment-intensive public works and skills programs.

Article 15 – Youth Opportunity & Innovation

National apprenticeships; dual TVET; start-up procurement windows; support for returnee migrants and remote work.

Article 16 – Equality & Environmental Impact Assessments

EqIA and SEA are mandatory for bills and major projects.

Article 17 – Land & Natural Resources

Equitable access; royalties and benefit-sharing with local communities.

Article 18 – Cultural Policy

Protect languages, scripts, cultures and heritage; mother-tongue instruction supported.

Article 19 – Good Governance

Open budgets, e-procurement, beneficial ownership disclosures, and public participation.

Article 20 – Science, Technology & Digital Transformation

Expand connectivity, protect data, support innovation.

Article 21 – Duties of Citizens

Uphold the Constitution, respect diversity, protect environment, pay taxes, defend the nation as provided by law.

Article 22 – Duties of Public Officials

Integrity, asset disclosures, conflict-of-interest rules; accountability in law and ethics.

Article 23 – National Unity

Promote solidarity, prevent hate speech and incitement to violence, resolve disputes peacefully.

Article 24 – Implementation Targets

Parliament to set benchmarks for inclusion, youth employment, poverty reduction; annual reporting.

PART III – FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS (Arts. 25-72; 35A; 36A-36B)**Chapter 1 – General Provisions & Remedies****Article 25 – Nature of Rights**

Rights are directly enforceable; limitations must be reasonable, necessary and proportionate.

Article 26 – Remedies

Courts may issue writs and structural orders with monitoring for systemic violations.

Article 27 – Non-Derogable Rights

Life, dignity, freedom from torture, slavery, enforced disappearance, retroactive criminalization and discrimination on inherent grounds (Schedule IV).

Article 28 – Equality in Citizenship & Family

Women and men enjoy equal, independent rights in citizenship, marriage, guardianship and property.

Article 29 – Free Legal Aid

Indigent persons receive competent legal aid from first contact with the justice system via a National Legal Aid Authority.

Chapter 2 – Equality & Non-Discrimination**Article 30 – Equality Before Law**

Equal protection and benefit of the law for all.

Article 31 – Prohibition of Discrimination

Discrimination on grounds including caste, ethnicity, language, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, origin or economic status is prohibited; affirmative measures permitted, reviewed every 10 years.

Article 32 – Equality Tribunals

Nationwide Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunals; Supreme Court appellate oversight.

Chapter 3 – Civil & Political Rights**Article 33 – Life & Dignity**

Right to life and dignity.

Article 34 – Liberty, Due Process & Fair Trial

Due process in arrest, detention and trial; coerced confessions inadmissible.

Article 35 – Privacy & Data Protection

Personal privacy and data protected by law.

Article 35A – Right to Good Administration

Timely, impartial administrative action; reasoned decisions; review/appeal; administrative silence deemed refusal subject to appeal.

Article 36 – Expression, Information & Media Freedom

Freedom of expression, press and information; no prior censorship; only proportionate legal limits.

Article 36A – Right to Peaceful Protest & Assembly

Content-neutral regulation; force as last resort; independent review of incidents.

Article 36B – Algorithmic Transparency

Right to explanation, human review and contestation where automated systems materially affect rights or benefits; publish impact assessments with safeguards.

Article 37 – Association & Movement

Rights to association and movement guaranteed.

Article 38 – Religion or Belief

Freedom guaranteed consistent with Article 8.

Article 39 – Political Participation

Right to vote, be a candidate, and participate in public affairs under conditions of equality.

Chapter 4 – Economic, Social & Cultural Rights**Article 40 – Education**

Free and compulsory basic education; progressive free secondary; need-based scholarships for higher education; mother-tongue instruction supported.

Article 41 – Health

Right to basic services and emergency care; universal National Health Insurance with subsidies for the poor.

Article 42 – Work & Social Security

Fair wages, safe conditions, collective bargaining; social protection including old-age, disability, maternity and unemployment benefits.

Article 43 – Housing, Food & Water

Adequate housing, sufficient food, and safe drinking water.

Article 44 – Culture & Language

Communities may preserve and promote language, script and culture.

Chapter 5 – Group-Specific Protections

Article 45 – Women

One-third representation in elected bodies; equal pay; freedom from gender-based violence; reproductive health.

Article 46 – Dalit

Abolition of untouchability; targeted land, housing, education and enterprise measures; representation.

Article 47 – Adivasi/Janajati & Indigenous Peoples

Recognition of identity, languages, customary practices consistent with rights; fair share in state organs and resource benefits.

Article 48 – Madhesi, Tharu, Muslim & Other Minorities

Equal participation and inclusion.

Article 49 – Persons with Disabilities

Accessibility, inclusive education, assistive technology and social protection.

Article 50 – Children & Youth

Children's best interests paramount; youth rights to education, skills, employment and participation via National and local youth councils.

Article 51 – Elderly

Income security and health services.

Article 52 – LGBTQ+ Persons

Equal rights; non-discrimination; legal recognition as provided by law.

Article 53 – Migrant Workers & Returnees

Protection abroad; reintegration, skills recognition and credit access at home.

Chapter 6 – Environmental Rights

Article 54 – Clean Environment & Climate

Right to a clean and healthy environment; GLOF and disaster risk management; polluter-pays; inter-generational equity.

Article 55 – Environmental Information & Participation

Public access to information and participation in environmental decisions.

Article 56 – Remedies

Restoration, compensation and injunctions for environmental harm.

Article 57 – Limitations

Any limitation must meet Article 25(2); Schedule IV rights non-derogable.

Article 58 – Horizontal Application

Equality, labour and environmental rights bind private actors as provided by law.

PART IV – REPRESENTATION & ELECTIONS (Arts. 73-94)

Article 73 – Electoral System

60% FPTP; 40% PR with open lists; Inclusion Matrix in Schedule III applies; $\geq 10\%$ of PR seats for candidates under 35; conscience votes protected on rights/anti-corruption bills.

Article 74 – National Assembly

Provincial balance and inclusion.

Article 75 – Provincial & Local Elections

Mixed systems aligned to inclusion principles.

Article 76 – Election Commission

Independent; enforces inclusion, transparency and may order re-polls.

Article 77 – Political Parties & Candidate Democracy

Internal democracy with competitive leadership elections every four years; open/transparent primaries; full candidate disclosure of assets, taxes, conflicts and donors.

Article 78 – Campaign Finance Basics

Expenditure caps; real-time disclosure; public funding matched to small donors and inclusion; ban on donations from entities with public contracts or foreign control.

Articles 79-94

Delimitation, thresholds, media fairness (incl. online ad transparency), silence periods, dispute resolution.

PART IV-A – DIRECT DEMOCRACY & PEOPLE’S OVERSIGHT (Arts. 94A-94N)

Article 94A – Citizens’ Initiative

1% of voters across at least half the provinces may file a bill; Parliament must vote within six months or it goes to referendum at the next general election cycle.

Article 94B – Recall of Elected Officials

Recall after a one-year grace period; 25% petition threshold; majority with $\geq 40\%$ turnout removes the official; by-election follows; guardrails against repeated vexatious petitions.

Article 94C – Referenda

Mandatory for changes reducing core rights/basic structure; optional via Parliament or citizen initiative; turnout/supermajority rules in law.

Article 94D – Participatory Budgeting & Social Audits

≥5% of local capital budgets via participatory budgeting; annual public hearings and social audits for large projects.

Article 94E – E-Petitions & Right to a Hearing

Threshold e-petitions must be heard within 30 days and answered within 60 days.

Article 94F – People’s Assemblies (Deliberative Mini-Publics)

Representative citizen panels review major bills and publish recommendations prior to final vote.

Article 94G – Right to Information Plus

Proactive publication: line-item budgets, contracts, beneficial ownership, asset declarations, lobbying diaries, court statistics.

Article 94H – Whistleblower & Witness Protection

Independent office ensures anonymity, protection and rewards.

Article 94I – Lobbying & Influence Transparency

Mandatory registry; meeting logs; gift bans; three-year revolving-door rules.

Article 94J – Public Appointments Commission

Merit-based selections for oversight bodies, with open hearings and parliamentary confirmation.

Article 94K – Term Limits

PM: two full terms; Ministers: cumulative 12 years; local executives: two terms.

Article 94L – Unexplained Wealth Orders

Courts may require explanation of disproportionate assets; seizure if unexplained, with due process and appeal.

Article 94M – Community Consent & FPIC

Significant land/culture projects require community consultation and, for indigenous peoples, Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

Article 94N – Protection of Protesters & HR Defenders

Safeguards from surveillance, SLAPPs and harassment; independent oversight of public-order policing.

PART V – LEGISLATURE (Arts. 95–126)

Legislative powers; EqIA and fiscal notes required for all bills; public hearings; citizens’ initiative interface; constructive vote of no-confidence; committee subpoena powers; open data for legislation.

PART VI – EXECUTIVE (Arts. 127–154)

Ceremonial President; Prime Minister with parliamentary confidence; inclusive Council of Ministers; proactive disclosure of cabinet decisions and contract beneficial owners.

PART VII – JUDICIARY & CONSTITUTIONAL JUSTICE (Arts. 155–192)

Supreme Court, High Courts, subordinate courts; permanent Constitutional Bench; specialized Equality and Anti-Corruption Courts; National Legal Aid Authority; **Article 161 – Class Actions & Public Interest Litigation; Article 162 – Time Standards & Digital Courts** (e-filing, virtual hearings, open cause-lists).

PART VIII – INTER-GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS & FEDERAL FINANCE (Arts. 193–226)

Clear exclusive/concurrent/residual powers; Inter-Governmental Council; objective equalization and conditional grants; royalty sharing with community component; binding dispute resolution.

PART IX – LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Arts. 227–244)

Autonomy within competence; mandated transparency; Dalit-woman representation at ward level; ward legal aid desks; participatory planning; social audits; local right of recall for directly elected executives.

PART X – PUBLIC FINANCE & INTEGRITY (Arts. 245–274)

Fiscal rules; Auditor General with full access and public reports; open contracting; citizens' budgets and spending dashboards; taxpayer bill of rights.

PART X-A – POLITICAL PARTIES, CAMPAIGN FINANCE & LOBBYING (Arts. 274A–274N)

Public funding matched to small donors; real-time online disclosure; media fairness and online ad transparency; independent campaign finance regulator; anti-defection reform (conscience votes protected, wholesale switches require re-election); foreign donation ban; audit standards and sanctions.

PART XI – ANTI-CORRUPTION & PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY (Arts. 275-293)

Empowered CIAA; whistleblower protection; asset declarations; conflicts of interest; beneficial ownership registers; integrity pacts; revolving-door limits; lobbying registry.

PART XII – SECURITY, POLICE & EMERGENCY (Arts. 294-323)

Civilian control; provincial police; strict emergency limits with judicial review; non-derogable rights preserved.

PART XIII – INDEPENDENT COMMISSIONS (Arts. 324-370)

NHRC with binding effect absent reasoned rejection; Inclusion & Equality Commission; Natural Resources & Climate Commission; Election Commission; Data Protection Authority; Language & Culture Commission; Information Commission; Auditor General; Public Service Commission.

PART XIV – SOCIAL PROTECTION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (Arts. 371-401)

Social protection floor via digital ID; universal health insurance; equitable school finance; apprenticeships/dual TVET; youth entrepreneurship fund; diaspora bonds and remittance fee caps; independent evaluation.

PART XV – ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE & NATURAL RESOURCES (Arts. 402-442)

Precautionary and polluter-pays principles; national GLOF program; resilient infrastructure; community forestry and PES; sustainable hydropower with environmental flows and resettlement safeguards; air quality and waste management.

PART XVI – MEDIA, DATA & DIGITAL RIGHTS (Arts. 443-463)

Editorial independence; anti-SLAPP; RTI and open data; comprehensive data protection; political ad libraries; platform transparency for state-funded content; cybersecurity and e-governance standards.

PART XVII – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & TREATIES (Arts. 464–480)

Non-alignment; regional cooperation; migrant protection; climate diplomacy; transparent treaty ratification.

PART XVIII – AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION (Arts. 481–489)

Two-thirds in both Houses; provincial consent where powers/boundaries affected; **mandatory referendum** for core clauses; citizen-initiated amendments ($\geq 1\%$ voters) must be tabled or go to referendum.

PART XIX – TRANSITIONAL, SAVINGS & REVIEW (Arts. 490–500)

Continuity of laws; phased implementation; 10-year reviews of affirmative measures; five-year constitutional implementation reviews; transitional justice consistent with human rights; authoritative Nepali text and certified English translation; entry into force and repeal.

SCHEDULES (Outlines)

Schedule I – Federal List

Foreign affairs; defense; currency; international trade; national highways; large hydropower; federal taxation; IP; national standards; immigration; citizenship; statistics.

Schedule II – Provincial List

Provincial police; provincial roads; health and education standards implementation; agriculture extension; provincial taxation; culture and languages; land management within norms.

Schedule III – Concurrent & Local Powers

Local roads; primary health; basic education; WASH; markets; environmental protection; disaster management; social protection delivery; business registration.

Schedule IV – Non-Derogable Rights

Life; dignity; freedom from torture, slavery, enforced disappearance; legality in criminal law; equality on inherent grounds; habeas corpus.

Schedule V – Oaths of Office

Standard oaths.

Schedule VI – National Symbols

Flag, emblem, anthem.

Schedule VII – Inclusion Matrix (Illustrative)

Minimum thresholds across state organs and PR lists for women ($\geq 33\%$), Dalit, Adivasi/Janajati, Madhesi, Tharu, Muslim, disability; youth ($\geq 10\%$ under 35 in PR allocations); provincial adaptations.

IMPLEMENTATION NOTES (Non-binding)

- **People over politicians:** Citizens' initiative, recall, referenda, participatory budgeting and public appointments oversight shift power to the people.
- **Transparency by default:** Beneficial-ownership, lobbying diaries, real-time finance disclosures and open contracting make corruption harder.
- **Youth retention:** Apprenticeships, start-up procurement, diaspora finance and universal services create prospects at home.
- **Time-bound inclusion:** Affirmative measures are data-reviewed every 10 years to sustain fairness and social cohesion.
- **Climate resilience:** Hard-wires mountain risks (GLOF, landslides) and community forestry incentives.