Mahesh Kushwaha

Ph.D. Candidate in International Security, School of Law and Government, Dublin City University | Non-Resident Fellow, CESIF-Nepal

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EDUCATION

Dublin City University (DCU) — Dublin, Ireland
Ph.D. in Political Science / School of Law and Government — 09/2025 – Present
Thesis: Securitisation of the Nepal-India Border: Identity, Nationalism, and Geopolitics at Nepal's Southern Border

University of Glasgow, Dublin City University & Charles University in Prague — UK, Ireland & Czech Republic
Erasmus Mundus International Master in Security, Intelligence & Strategic Studies (IMSISS) — 09/2021 – 08/2023
Grade: Distinction | **Concentration:** Security and Technology | **Dissertation:** Securitization of Citizenship in Nepal (Awarded the Mo Dabo Prize for Best Dissertation)

Soka University of America — Aliso Viejo, California, USA
B.A. in Liberal Arts (International Studies) — 08/2015 – 05/2019
GPA: 3.9/4.0 | **Thesis:** Constitution, Citizenship, and Statelessness: A Comparative Case Study of Nepal

Institut Catholique de Paris — Paris, France
Study Abroad Program — 09/2017 – 12/2017

ACADEMIC, TEACHING & RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Dublin City University (DCU) — Dublin, Ireland
Tutor, Introduction to International Relations and Security — 09/2026 – Present
Lecturer / Module Instructor, Research Design & Methods — 01/2026 – 08/2026
Core Organizing Committee Member, 9th Annual South Asia Conference (Ireland India Institute) — 12/2025 – 04/2026

- Served as sole instructor for *Research Design & Methods*, designing weekly lectures, assessment criteria, and grading rubrics while supervising undergraduate student projects.
- Facilitated undergraduate tutorials and seminar discussions for *Introduction to International Relations and Security*.
- Coordinated conference planning, abstract submissions, Eventbrite registration, participant communications, and panel administration for the 9th Annual South Asia Conference.

Southasia Institute of Advanced Studies (SIAS) — Kathmandu, Nepal
Visiting Research Secondment (FEMENA Project) — 06/2026 – 08/2026

- Completed a three-month doctoral research secondment examining border security and cross-border mobility in the India–Nepal border region, engaging in scholarly exchange with researchers and policy practitioners.

Centre for Social Innovation and Foreign Policy (CESIF) — Kathmandu / Lalitpur, Nepal
Non-Resident Fellow — 08/2025 – Present
Research Fellow — 01/2024 – 07/2025
Junior Research Fellow — 12/2019 – 07/2021

- Led and authored major research reports on *AI and Diplomacy in Nepal*, *Nepali Youths in the Russian Army*, and *Chinese Engagement in Nepal's Infrastructure*.
- Coordinated an 8-member field team and GESI specialists across two Nepal–India border points; conducted 20+ qualitative interviews, supervised quality control, coded 200+ interviews, and co-authored the final report funded by The Asia Foundation and presented to senior Nepal Army officials.
- Conducted electoral and constituency-level analysis across Nepal's 165 constituencies and executed a Delphi forecasting study interviewing 30 senior multidisciplinary experts for *Vision 2030*.
- Authored 20+ monthly political and foreign affairs analyses and 85 weekly political news digests.

Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP) — New Delhi, India
Research Placement, Foreign Policy and Security — 04/2023 – 06/2023

- Supported the *Sambandh Regional Connectivity Initiative* focusing on India–Nepal cross-border issues; prepared concept notes, literature reviews, and datasets, and published a featured analytical piece in the *Sambandh Scholars Speak* series.

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), Nepal Office — Kathmandu, Nepal
Consultant Researcher, Interpreter & Moderator — 03/2020 – 08/2021
Summer Intern — 06/2018 – 08/2018

- Conducted desk research on *"Feminism and Women's Movement in Asia and the Pacific: Major Trends and Issues"* and interpreted, moderated, and reported national and regional dialogues on democratic transition, youth in politics, and gender policy.

Soka University of America — Aliso Viejo, California, USA
University Research Assistant — 01/2016 – 11/2019

- Edited book and journal manuscripts on internal migration, autonomy, armed conflict, and paramilitary groups for Dr. Shane Barter; researched Nepal's Maoist insurgency and political transition for Dr. Rumela Sen; coordinated the Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies (WCAAS 2018) for the Pacific Basin Research Center.

Marvellous English Boarding School — Kathmandu, Nepal
Middle School Teacher — 04/2013 – 07/2015

- Taught Mathematics, Science, and Social Science to grades 7 and 8.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS & PUBLIC COMMENTARY

SELECTED RESEARCH REPORTS & BOOK CHAPTERS

- **Kushwaha, Mahesh**, Rajib Neupane, and Arya Khanal (2025). *Artificial Intelligence and Diplomacy: A Case for Nepal's AI Diplomacy*. Research Report, Centre for Social Innovation and Foreign Policy (CESIF-Nepal).
- **Kushwaha, Mahesh** (2025). *China's Engagement in Nepal's Infrastructure: Status, Issues, and Challenges*. Research Report, CESIF-Nepal.
- **Kushwaha, Mahesh** (2024). *Nepali Youths in the Russian Army: A Precarious Path for Nepal's Foreign Policy and National Security*. Research Report, CESIF-Nepal.
- Barter, Shane J. and **Mahesh Kushwaha** (2022). "Civil War and Peace in the Asia-Pacific." In *Politics of the Asia-Pacific*. University of Toronto Press.

- Khanal, Ajaya Bhadra, **Mahesh Kushwaha**, and Sumeera Shrestha (2022). "People's Perceptions, Experiences and GESI Dynamics of Nepal-India Border." In *Nepal-India Cross Border Relations in the Contemporary Context*. CESIF-Nepal.
- Barter, Shane J. and **Mahesh Kushwaha** (2020). "Pakistan Christian Crisis" and "Iraq Muslim Crisis." In *Religious Violence Today: Faith and Conflict in the Modern World*, edited by Michael Jerryson. ABC–CLIO.

SELECTED OP-EDS & POLICY COMMENTARY

- **Kushwaha, Mahesh** (2026). "Why past struggles alone no longer appeal to the Madheshi youth today." *The Kathmandu Post*, October 25, 2026.
- **Kushwaha, Mahesh** (2026). "Nepal floods: The Himalaya are not a blank canvas for grand infrastructure." *The Indian Express*, August 31, 2026.
- **Kushwaha, Mahesh** (2026). "A tricky social media polarisation is emerging in Nepal. How will the government handle it?" *The Kathmandu Post*, April 5, 2026.
- **Kushwaha, Mahesh** (2026). "The anti-corruption wave in Nepal is costing China its BRI advantage." *The Indian Express*, January 7, 2026.
- **Kushwaha, Mahesh** (2025). "Nepal's Gen Z protests are not just about social media. They are fighting for the country's future." *The Indian Express*, September 9, 2025.
- **Kushwaha, Mahesh** (2024). "Ram Mandir Inauguration and its Ram-ifications for Nepal" and "Darjeeling Revisited." *myRepublica*.
- **Kushwaha, Mahesh** (2023). "Nepali Migrant Workers in India: A Rite of Passage to Adulthood." Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP), New Delhi.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- **Kushwaha, Mahesh** (2026). "Securitization of the Nepal–India Border." Paper presented at the *Fez Border Studies II Conference*, Fez, Morocco (May 2026), and the *9th Annual South Asia Conference*, Ireland India Institute, Dublin City University, Ireland (April 2026).
- **Kushwaha, Mahesh** (2018–2019). "Political Exclusion & Statelessness: Constitution, Ethnicity, and Citizenship in Nepal." Paper presented at the *South Asian Studies Association (SASA) Conference*, Claremont McKenna College, California (2019), and the *Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies (WCAAS)*, Soka University of America, California (2018).

HONOURS, FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

- **Best Dissertation: Mo Dabo Prize** (2023) — IMSISS Consortium, University of Glasgow
- **Erasmus Mundus Scholarship for Joint Master's Degree** (2021–2023) — European Commission
- **Plural+ Prevention of Xenophobia Award**
- **Undergraduate Full Financial Aid** (2015–2019) — Soka University of America
- **Excellence in Research Award** (2018) — Soka University of America
- **Pacific Basin Research Center (PBRC) Junior Scholar** (2017–2019) — Soka University of America
- **Summer Internship Grant ($2,000)** (2018) & **PBRC Summer Grant ($2,000)** (2016) — Soka University of America
- **Learning Cluster Travel Grant (Malaysia and Singapore)** (2017) — Soka University of America

- **Opportunity Funding Recipient** (2014) — United States Education Foundation (USEF) / Fulbright Commission

SPECIALIZED TRAININGS & WORKSHOPS

- **Human Security Workshop** (November 2022) — Human Security Collective, The Hague, Netherlands
- **Strategic Intelligence Analysis** (August 2022) — Ostbayerische Technische Hochschule (OTH) Regensburg
- **Political Management Training** (June – September 2021) — SocDem Asia
- **Gender Mainstreaming Training** (July 1–10, 2018) — Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

TECHNICAL SKILLS & LANGUAGES

CATEGORY	PROFICIENCIES
RESEARCH & DATA TOOLS	NVivo, R, QGIS, Python, STATA, MS Office
LANGUAGES	Bhojpuri (Mother-tongue), English (Fluent), Nepali (Fluent), Hindi (Fluent), French (Conversational)