

## **Embassy of India Helsinki**

### **India – Finland Bilateral Relations**

Finland and India have traditionally enjoyed warm and friendly relations. In recent years, bilateral relations have acquired diversity with collaboration in research, innovation, and investments by both sides. The Indian community in Finland is vibrant and well-placed. Indian culture and yoga are very popular in Finland. 2019 marks 70 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

#### **High-level visits - Prime Ministers**

- Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru Finland in 1957
- Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi in 1983.
- Prime Minister Pt. Manmohan Singh in 2006.
- Mr. Vieno Johannes Sukselainen in 1960 - First Prime Minister of Finland
- Prime Minister Mr. Kalevi Sorsa in 1984.
- Prime Minister Mr. Matti Vanhanen visited India in March 2006, February 2008 and February 2010 (last two occasions to attend Delhi Sustainable Development Summit).
- Prime Minister Mr. Juha Sipilä: Feb 2016 (for Make in India week)

#### **Presidential Visits**

- President of Finland Mr. Urho Kekkonen in 1965
- President Mr. Mauno Koivisto in 1987
- President Mr. Martti Ahtisaari in 1996.
- President Mrs. Tarja Halonen in January 2007, February 2009 and February 2012 to attend the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit.
- President Shri V.V. Giri in 1971
- President Shri R. Venkataraman in 1988.
- President Shri Pranab Mukherjee: October 2014

President Shri Pranab Mukherjee, paid a State Visit to Finland on 14-16 October 2014 accompanied by Minister of State for Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises, four Members of Parliament, Officials, academicians and a business delegation. Agreements for cooperation in New and Renewable Energy, Biotechnology, Civil Nuclear Research, Meteorology, Healthcare and Education were signed during the visit.

Former Prime Minister Mr. Juha Sipilä visited India from 12 to 14 February, 2016 to participate in the "Make in India Week" in Mumbai along with a business delegation.

On 17 April 2018, PM interacted with his counterparts from five Nordic countries, at the first India-Nordic Summit in Stockholm. PM Juha Sipilä of Finland participated in the Summit and had a bilateral meeting with our PM during which ongoing bilateral cooperation was reviewed. Both sides agreed to cooperate in areas such as energy, vocational education, space and enhance ongoing levels of trade and investment.

#### **Parliamentary Exchanges**

- Mr. Eero Heinäluoma, Speaker of Parliament visited India in April, 2012.
- Mr. G.S. Dhillon, Speaker (Lok Sabha) visited Finland in 1957
- Mr. Balram Jhakar, Speaker (Lok Sabha) in 1986
- Mr. P.A. Sangma, Speaker (Lok Sabha) in 1997
- Mr. Manohar Joshi, Speaker (Lok Sabha) in 2003
- Mr. Somnath Chatterjee, Speaker (Lok Sabha) in June 2006.
- Ms. Sumitra Mahajan, Speaker (Lok Sabha) on 17-18 June, 2018.

#### **Foreign Minister's Visits**

Dr. Erkki Tuomioja, Foreign Minister, visited India in May 2013. Shri Jaswant Singh, External Affairs Minister visited Finland in December 1999 for the 12th EU Troika Ministerial Meeting.

Mr. Timo Soini, Foreign Minister of Finland visited India from 22-24 November, 2017 for fourth Global Conference on Cyber Security (GCCS) in New Delhi.

### **Visit of External Affairs Minister**

External Affairs Minister of India Dr S. Jaishankar visited Finland from 19 to 21 September 2019 on the occasion of 70 Years of diplomatic relation and 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. He met President Mr Sauli Niinistö, Prime Minister Mr Antti Rinne, Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr Pekka Haavisto, Foreign Affairs Committee and Ms Tuula Haatainen, First Deputy Speaker of Parliament. At the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, he spoke about "India and the World: Priorities of India's Foreign Policy". Along with FM Pekka Haavisto, he unveiled the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Helsinki.

In November 2019, Mr. Pekka Haavisto, Finland's Foreign Minister visited India. He inaugurated a new factory of KONE elevators in Chennai and met EAM and Finance Minister.

### **Speaker's visit:**

Ms. Sumitra Mahajan, Hon'ble Speaker Lok Sabha was in Helsinki, Finland on June 17-18, 2018 accompanied by six members of Parliament and officials met Mrs. Paula Risikko, Speaker of Finland Parliament and interacted with members of the Indian community.

Minister of Employment, Mr. Timo Harakka, visited India on 18-22 November 2019 to explore opportunities in Smart Mobility, Digitalization and AI. He visited Delhi and Bengaluru and participated in the Bengaluru Tech Summit. He was accompanied by 16 companies from engineering, finance and design sectors. One important focus area of his visit was to promote Talent Boost, a program which seeks to attract foreign talent to Finland, particularly in tech-based industries.

### **Ministerial visits since 2016:**

- Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of State (IC) for Power, Coal, New and Renewable Energy and Mines visited Finland 3-5 November, 2016.,
- Mr. Kimmo Tiilikainen, Minister of Housing, Energy and the Environment visited India 3-5 October, 2017 and April 2018
- Shri M.J. Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Finland 5-7 November, 2017.
- Ms. Anne Berner, Minister for Transport and Communications visited India 13-14 November, 2017.
- Karnataka's Minister of IT, biotech and S & T, Shri K J George visited Finland 26 August 2018.
- Ms. Anne-Mari Virolainen, Finland's Minister of Trade and Development visited India 29 November - 2 December 2018 accompanied by 25 companies.
- Dr. S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister 19-20 September 2019
- Mr. Pekka Haavisto, Finland's Foreign Minister visited India from 4-6 November 2019. He met EAM and Finance Minister.
- Minister of Employment, Mr. Timo Harakka visited India from 19-22 November 2019.

### **Foreign Office Consultations**

Discussions on bilateral matters, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest are held regularly. The 10<sup>th</sup> FOC was in Helsinki on 4 March 2019 led by Secretary (West) and Finland's Permanent Secretary of State.

### **Bilateral Agreements:**

- Trade Agreement (1967); replaced by Economic Cooperation Agreement signed in March 2010.
- Setting up India-Finland Joint Commission (1974).
- Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation (1983); amended January 2010.
- Cultural Agreement (1983).
- Memorandum of Understanding on Textiles (1993).

- Air Services Agreement signed 1995, modified in May 2006.
- Bilateral agreement on Promotion & Protection of Investments signed 2002 – Expired.
- Agreement for Cooperation in Science & Technology 2008.
- MoU for cooperation on Information Security January 2010.
- MoU for Cooperation in Road Transport May 10, 2010.
- Social Security Agreement June 2012 and implemented w.e.f. August 1, 2014.
- Arrangement for Cooperation in Nuclear and Radiation Safety Regulation October 2014.
- MoU for cooperation in Renewable Energy October 2014.
- MoU for cooperation in Biotechnology in October 2014 – Renewed Nov 2018.
- Implementing Arrangement for cooperation in Atmospheric Environment in October 2014.
- Gainful Occupation for Family Members of Members of a Diplomatic Mission or Consular Post on 1st August, 2016.
- Agreement for visa waiver for diplomatic passport holders on 6 November, 2017.
- MoU on Establishment of ICCR Chair of Indian Culture and Society, 20 August, 2018.
- MoU for cooperation in Cyber Security – Jan 2019.
- MoU for cooperation in space launch and peaceful uses of outer space – Jan 2019.
- MoU for cooperation in vocational education Training – March 2019.
- MOU for R&D Cooperation between DST India and Business Finland - August 2019
- MOU for Cooperation in Tourism between Ministry of Tourism, India and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Finland, November 2019
- Joint Declaration of Intent between Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, India and Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Finland for Cooperation in Digitalization, November 2019
- MOU for Cooperation in Defence Production, Procurement, R&D of Defence Equipment, January 2020.

### **Economic and Commercial Relations**

India's trade in goods with Finland crossed US\$ One billion (Euros 870 million) and is in Finland's favour. Trade in services is growing and crossed US\$ 1.5 billion (Euros 1.3 billion) with many Indian IT companies positioned in Finland. Finland is India's 61<sup>st</sup> largest trade partner globally, and the 10<sup>th</sup> largest within the EU (Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India 2018). India is Finland's 26<sup>th</sup> largest trade partner globally, and the fifth largest within Asia (Finnish Customs 2018).

**Main export items from India:** Electronic goods, mineral fuels and mineral oils, ready-made garments, cotton including accessories, pharmaceuticals & fine chemicals, articles of iron and steel, machinery and instrument, coffee, rubber, iron and steel, organic chemicals and nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances and parts thereof.

**Major imports of India from Finland:** Electrical machinery and equipment, nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances, paper and paper board, iron and steel, pulp of wood or of other fibrous cellulosic material, pulp and waste paper, vehicles and transport equipment etc.

<b>Trade in Goods in EUR million</b>			
<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Exports to Finland	328.77	341.58	354.85
Imports from Finland	520.91	538.23	544.23
<b>Total Trade in Goods</b>	<b>849.68</b>	<b>879.81</b>	<b>899.08</b>

Source: Finnish Customs

<b>Trade in Services in EUR million</b>			
<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Exports (Finland to India)</b>	477	773	529
<b>Imports (India to Finland)</b>	541	607	656

<b>Total Services Trade</b>	1,018	1,380	1,185
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Source: Statistics Finland

### **Investments:**

Finnish companies invested US\$ 438 million between April, 2000 to December, 2018. Within the EU, Finland ranks 12<sup>th</sup> among countries investing in India.

(Source: DPIIT, Government of India 2018)

India's investments in Finland have crossed US\$ One billion including acquisitions. Motherson Sumi Systems (MSSL) acquired PKC Group (\$ 620 million). Trivitron Healthcare, acquired Ani Labsystems. Mahindra Holidays and Resorts invested in the 'Holiday Club Resorts Oy'. Infosys, India acquired Finland's Fluido Oy.

About 35 Indian companies, mainly in the software and consultancy sector are active in Finland. More than 100 Finnish companies have operations in India, including through investments. Nokia, Kone, Wartsila, UPM, Fortum, Metso, Huhtamaki, Salcomp, Ahlstrom, etc. have set-up their manufacturing facilities in India. Finnish IT companies Tieto and F-Secure have established operations in India. Nokia has offices in Gurgaon, Bangalore, Mumbai and Chennai, and a Global R&D center in Bengaluru with 3000 employees. A JV between Numaligarh Refinery Ltd., Finnish companies, Fortum and Chempolis is building a biorefinery in Assam.

### **R &D and Technology cooperation**

There are ongoing bilateral programs for industrial R & D cooperation supported by India's Department of Science and Technology and Department of Biotechnology; and the counterpart Finnish organisations. DST India and Academy of Finland have issued joint call for mobility of researchers. Finnish Meteorological Institute and Indian Meteorological Department, TERI and others in India, are doing joint studies about climate change, air quality, air pollution etc in India. Three Finnish commercial and micro-satellites were launched in 2017 & 2018 through ISRO. Indian start-ups participated in SLUSH in Helsinki in 2017 and 2018, one of the world's largest events to connect start-ups with investors. India-Finland Tech Hub was inaugurated in December 2018 as an online market entry guide for startups from both countries.

Under the Talent Boost in 2019, of 1865 specialist work permits issued, 1060 were from India (the highest) with most of specialists from the IT sector. India is a focus country under Finland's Talent Boost programme which seeks to attract specialists, especially from IT sector for employment in Finland.

### **Cultural Relations**

Finland is very receptive to Indian culture. There are several Indian dance schools and Yoga schools. Cultural events are organised regularly by Indian Associations and other cultural organisations promoting Indian dance and music (both classical as well as contemporary). Finnish India Society has been active since 1956. Embassy has been organising International Day of Yoga for three years and annual cultural festival "India Day" since 2016. The fourth edition held on 18 August 2019 in Kaisaniemi Park, Helsinki with 15000 participating. Next edition is on 23 August 2020.

A lifesize statue of Mahatma Gandhi gifted by ICCR to Government of Finland was unveiled by EAM and Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto on 20 September 2019 to mark Gandhi's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

### **Tourism**

In 2018, 21,239 Finnish tourists visited India especially to Goa and Kerala, though other destinations are becoming popular. There are direct Finnair flights from Helsinki to New Delhi, E- Tourist Visa scheme is available since 1 January 2010 for Finnish citizens has enhanced mobility. India Tourist Office organises Road Shows in Helsinki regularly and participates in the annual Tourism Fair MATKA in Helsinki every year.

### **Indian Community:**

There are 11,775 persons of Indian origin. (5159 NRIs and 6616 PIOs in Finland) (source: Govt. of Finland, 2018). They live in mostly in Helsinki and suburbs. Nearly 11 registered Indian Associations are active and celebrate Indian festivals and promote Indian culture. In recent years, many Indian professionals joined Finnish high-tech and IT companies like Nokia and Indian IT companies. There are a some Indian/PIO academics working in Finnish universities. There are 900 Indian students pursuing Masters and Doctoral programmes in Computer Science, ICT, Engineering and biotech. Since August 2017, non-EU students are being charged a tuition fee. Finnish universities offer some scholarships. 154 Finnish Citizenships were granted in 2018.

**Useful Resources:**

Embassy of India, Finland website: [www.indembhelsinki.gov.in](http://www.indembhelsinki.gov.in)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/IndiaInFinland>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/IndEmbFinEst>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3vbQsHzjBbw-Glg5Xe5TEQ>

Gandhi Short Film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=heQ3B1bMokY&t=138s>

Gandhi Vaishnav Jan Toh: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmSVn63SDu0>

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