

Ministry of External Affairs
Europe West Divisions

India-EU Bilateral Brief

India-EU relations date back to 1962, when India became one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with the European Economic Community, the precursor of the European Union (EU). The relationship focused initially on trade and economic cooperation but later expanded through a Cooperation Agreement signed in 1994, which broad-based the relationship to include Ministerial meetings and a political dialogue. Today, these ties have expanded to include a wide range of issues including, political and security issues, trade and investment, climate change and clean energy, sustainable urbanisation and environment, information and communications technology, research and innovation, space and nuclear, health, agriculture and food security and education and culture.

High Level Engagements

2. India-EU Summits: The practice of holding Summit level engagements goes back to 28 June 2000, when the first such meeting took place in Lisbon. The relationship was upgraded to a "Strategic Partnership" during the 5th India-EU Summit held at The Hague in 2004. Since then 15 such meetings have been held.
3. The 15th India-EU Summit was held in virtual mode on 15 July 2020. The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and on the EU side by President of the European Council Charles Michel and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen. It saw adoption of a wide ranging joint statement and an India-EU Strategic Partnership Roadmap for 2025. The Agreement on S&T Cooperation was extended for a further period of 5 years and the two sides issued a Joint Declaration on Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy. The Summit also decided to establish a High Level Dialogue on Trade and Investment at the level of CIM and EU Commissioner for Trade.
4. India-EU Leaders' Meeting: In continuation of the highly successful 15th India-EU Summit, India-EU Leaders' Meeting was held on 08 May 2021. The meeting was held in a hybrid format in Porto, Portugal with the participation of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, leaders of all the 27 EU Member States as well as the President of the European Council Charles Michel and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen. EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar and the EU HRVP Josep Borrell also attended the Meeting. During the meeting, the leaders expressed their desire to further strengthen the India-EU Strategic Partnership based on a shared commitment to democracy, fundamental freedoms, rule of law and multilateralism.

The important outcomes of the meeting include resumption of negotiations for balanced and comprehensive free trade and investment agreements and also an agreement on Geographical Indications; announcement of dedicated dialogues on WTO issues, regulatory cooperation, market access issues and supply chain resilience; launching of an ambitious and comprehensive 'Connectivity Partnership'; enhancing bilateral cooperation on digital and emerging technologies such as 5G, AI, Quantum and High-Performance Computing; India-EU Leaders Meeting set a significant milestone by providing a new direction to the Strategic Partnership and also by giving a fresh impetus for implementing the ambitious India-EU Roadmap 2025 adopted at the 15th India-EU Summit held in July 2020.

Political and Security Dialogues

5. The last India-EU Foreign Policy and Security Consultations were held in Brussels in October 2021. The meeting was chaired by Secretary(West) on the Indian side and by Deputy Secretary General for Political Affairs, European External Action Service (EEAS) from the EU side. The 3rd India-EU Strategic Partnership Review Meeting was held last in Brussels in October 2021, which was chaired by Secretary(West) on the Indian side and by Deputy Secretary-General for Global and economic Issues at the European External Action Service (EEAS) from the EU side.

Trade & Investment

6. The EU is India's largest trading partner for goods with trade of Euro 88.1 billion in 2021 (increase of 35% over 2020) and services trade of around Euro 35 billion in 2020. (Source: Eurostat)

7. The EU's share in foreign investment inflows to India more than doubled from 8% to 18% in the last decade making the EU India's largest source of FDI. During April 2000 to September 2020, FDI inflows from the EU to India totaled USD 86.82 billion (Source: DPIIT). Indian investments in the EU are estimated at around Euro 50 billion. India and EU have also established an Investment Facilitation Mechanism (IFM) in 2017 under which Invest India has created a single window entry point for EU companies proposing to invest in India.

8. Trade and Economic issues are also discussed through the India-EU Joint Commission led by Commerce Secretary and EU's Director General for Trade. The last Meeting took place on 14 July 2017. There are also Joint Working Groups/Technical Working Groups on Sanitary/Phyto-Sanitary measures (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT); on Agriculture and Marine Products; on Plant Health; on Animal Health, on Textiles; on IPR; on Macro-Economic and Financial Services Dialogue and on Pharmaceuticals, Bio-technology and Medical Devices.

Science & Technology

9. S&T cooperation is carried out under a Cooperation Agreement which was renewed for a further period of 5 years in July 2020. The cooperation is reviewed by a Joint Steering Committee.

Space Cooperation

10. ISRO has a long standing cooperation with the EU since the 1970s. ISRO and European Space Agency are working towards enhancing cooperation in Earth Observation. A Joint Working Group identifies cooperation opportunities under various themes such as earth science, space science, space technology and integrated applications.

Information and Communications Technology

11. The India- EU JWG on ICT cooperation held its latest Meeting virtually on 19 April 2021. At the 15th Summit, in July 2020, the two sides also decided to establish a Joint Task Force on Artificial Intelligence, which was launched on 24 June 2021.

Energy

12. Energy cooperation is carried out under the India-EU Energy panel which was constituted in 2004 and is co-chaired by Secretary(West), MEA and EU's Director General for Energy. The last meeting of the Energy Panel was held on 1 December 2021 in New Delhi.

Climate Change and Environment

13. An EU India Climate Change Dialogue was established under the Clean Energy and Climate Partnership established during the 13th India-EU Summit in 2016. The first meeting of the Climate Change Dialogue was held on 28 April 2021.

Migration and Mobility:

14. The India-EU Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (CAMM) provides a framework for cooperation on joint objectives, recommendations and actions. In the last HLDMM held on 10 July 2019 in New Delhi, both sides agreed to explore possibilities to move forward through a comprehensive partnership on migration and mobility.

Connectivity

15. India and the EU Connectivity Partnership was announced during the India-EU Leaders' Meeting held on 08 May 2021. The partnership is focused on outlining the

norms, standards and principles that underpin the approach of India and the EU to Connectivity as a whole. It also outlines various areas of cooperation on Connectivity between India and EU, and includes India-EU partnership in third countries on Connectivity.

Parliamentary Interaction

16. A delegation from the European Parliament including members from the International Trade Committee (INTA) visited India in April 2022. A virtual meeting between Speaker of Lok Sabha and President of the European Parliament was held on 13 January 2021. The European Parliament constituted a Delegation for Relations with India in 2007. A bilateral delegation comprising 13 Members of the European Parliament visited India from 28 October– 2 November 2018, where they met the Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha (Lower House), and the Ministers of Commerce, Power, Housing and Urban Affairs. Earlier; a 7-member Indian parliamentary delegation led by Speaker, Lok Sabha (Lower House) visited Brussels in June 2015.

Culture & Education

17. India-EU Joint Declarations of 2010 cover cooperation in the fields of education & training, and multilingualism. Senior official meetings review periodically initiatives and cooperation in the field of education and languages. Indian students avail Erasmus+ scholarship for studies in EU countries.

18. India and the EU have a dialogue on culture to discuss cooperation in the field of cultural exchanges. In this context, festivals of culture (e.g. Europalia-India festival), exchanges on heritage such as yoga & ayurveda, and other activities are taken up between the two sides.

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