

India-Romania relations

India and Romania established diplomatic relations in 1948, and raised it to Ambassadorial level in 1968. However, contacts between the two countries and civilizations pre-date this. Transylvania born philologist Alexander Csoma de Koros travelled to India in 1820, and lived for many years in Zanskar and Calcutta (he is buried in Darjeeling). Romania's national poet Mihai Eminescu was attracted to Indian languages and literature and translated a book on Sanskrit grammar into Romanian from German. Eminent Romanian philosophers and poets, like Bogdan Hasdeu, George Cosbuc, and Lucian Blaga, were deeply influenced by their encounter with Indian thought, and this found reflection in their works, Prince Carol II toured India for five months in 1920. Rabindranath Tagore visited Romania in 1926 and received a doctorate *honoris causa* from the University of Bucharest. Mircea Eliade spent four year (1928-1932) studying philosophy and Sanskrit at Calcutta University. The sculptor Constantin Brancusi was inspired by Indian motifs and visited India in 1937 to execute a commission for the Maharaja of Indore.

Political Relations

Bilateral political relations between India and Romania are warm and friendly. The establishment and deepening of democracy in Romania since the 1989 Revolution which overthrew the communist regime, has brought the two countries closer together in terms of values and aspirations. India and Romania have in the past supported each other on multilateral issues and worked in tandem at the UN. Foreign Office Consultations have been instituted to review bilateral relations. The last round of FOC, at DG level, was held in Bucharest on December 14, 2012. The earlier round at Secretary (West)'s level was held in New Delhi in June 2009.

During the visit of Romanian President Basescu to India in October 2006, the Romanian side proposed that a document entitled 'Joint Declaration for Extensive Partnership' be negotiated for signature during the next VVIP visit. This was signed during the visit of the Romanian Foreign Minister to India from March 7-8, 2013.

Bilateral Visits

The state visit of President Traian Basescu to India in October 2006 created many opportunities for enhanced co-operation and understanding and was a turning point in our bilateral relations. Wide ranging discussions were held with the Indian leadership covering almost all aspects of bilateral relations. President Basescu was believed to have been deeply impressed by the reception he received in India as also by the evidence of India's economic transformation. He visited New Delhi, Agra and Mumbai.

The 17th Session of the India-Romania Joint Economic Commission co-chaired by MOS(C&I) Mr. Jyotiraditya M. Scindia and Romanian Minister for Economy, Trade and Business Environment Mr. Ion Ariton was held on February 1-2, 2012 in Bucharest and was preceded by the JWG on Petroleum & Natural Gas and JWG on SMEs.

H.E. Mr. Titus Corlatean, Romanian Foreign Minister visited India from March 6-8, 2013

and met EAM and MOS(PK). An Agreement on Extended Partnership was also signed. In addition the DTAA was also signed during his visit. He visited Delhi again from November 11-13,2013 for participation in 11th ASEM Foreign Minister's meeting and met EAM.

Mrs. Grapini, Minister delegate for SMEs/Business Environment/Tourism visited India from April 19-21,2013. She called on MOS for Textiles Ms. Purneswari . An agreement on Cooperation in the field of Textiles was also signed with Secretary (Textiles) Mrs. Zohra Chatterjee.

Mr. Sorin Encutescu (SE), State Counsellor for Defence & Security Issues (Deputy NSA) in the PM's Office visited India from 23-29 November 2014 and interacted with Deputy NSA, Secretary (Defence Production) in MOD and other senior officials in MOD.

The last significant visit from MEA to Romania was that of Smt Preneet Kaur, Minister of State for External Affairs, who visited Romania for bilateral consultations in April 2010. The only high level visit that has taken place from India to Romania in the last decade is that of the then Vice-President Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat in October 2005.

Minister of State in the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Mrs. Krishna Raj paid a goodwill visit to Romania, 12-16 November 2016 and had wide ranging discussions with Romanian Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Education and Scientific Research, Youth and Sport, Labour, Family, Social Protection & Elderly. She also had a very fruitful meeting with the President of the National Roma Agency of Romania, Mr. Daniel Vasile.

The last high-level visit to Romania from India was on 18-20 September, 2018 when Vice President (VP) of India Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu visited Romania. VP visited Romania at the invitation of the President of the Senate of Romania – Mr. Calin Popescu Tariceanu – after a gap of 13 years. The visit coincided with the 70th year of establishment of our diplomatic relations, centenary year of birth of modern Romania and 5th year of signing of the 'Framework Agreement on Extended Partnership Cooperation,' between our two countries. VP had separate meetings with the Romanian leaders including President, PM, President of the Chamber of Deputies of Parliament. Acknowledging the increased interest in Ayurveda in Romania, VP inaugurated an AYUSH Information Cell and also released a book on Ayurveda. Prior to this, in 2005, our then Vice President Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat had visited Romania.

Foreign Minister of Romania Mr. Teodor Viorel Melescanu paid an official visit to India on 24 -27 November 2018. He held bilateral meetings with the EAM Smt. Sushma Swaraj on 26 Nov 2018. During the visit, Romania formally opened its Honorary Consulate in Chennai.

Parliamentary Visits

An Indian Parliamentary delegation led by Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Health and Family Welfare visited Romania in June 2003. President Shri Pranab Mukherjee was part of this delegation. Romanian Senate President Vacaroiu led a multi-party delegation to India in December 2003.

The Romanian Parliament has created its friendship group for India. Mrs. Ana Birchall, Chairperson of Romania-India Parliamentary Friendship Group visited India from April 22-25, 2013.

An all party parliamentary delegation led by Mr.Zgonea, President of the Chamber of Deputies of Parliament of Romania visited India during December 6-12, 2014. He called on the Vice President of India, Speaker of Lok Sabha, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Urban Development, MOS for External Affairs(VK), MOS for Commerce and Industry.

Trade and Economic Cooperation:

Historical background – Bilateral cooperation in the past covered projects in India in petroleum, petrochemicals, power and metallurgy. Romania was involved in projects in oil refinery at Guwahati and Bihar, the thermal power plant in Singareni, the Mangalore palletising plant, the Durgapur agglomeration plant and the Hyderabad tractor plant. From 1959-1992, bilateral trade with Romania was conducted on the basis of a clearing system. In 1993, an Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation envisaging mutual MFN treatment and trade in hard currency was concluded. Existing bilateral institutional mechanisms to promote trade and economic cooperation emanate from the Joint Economic Committee at the Government level which replaced the Joint Commission and Joint Business Council [JBC] at the level of businessmen.

Bilateral Trade between India and Romania:

India-Romania trade which declined in the 1990s revived after 2003. Following the worldwide recession, there was a decline in bilateral trade in 2009-10 from which it has been recovering slowly. However, there exists considerable potential for increase in the bilateral trade which is hovering around US\$ 600-800 mn mark. India-Romania trade statistics over the last three years is as follows:

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
TOTAL	661.7	713.3	565.0	575.0	810.62
Export	286.1	416.8	255.7	257.6	398.90
Import	375.6	296.5	309.3	317.4	411.72
Balance	-89.5	120.3	-53.6	-59.8	-12.22

(Department of Commerce, Govt. of India statistics in US\$ million)

Main Indian exports to Romania included vehicles other than railway or tramway, electrical machinery and equipment, nuclear reactors, boilers, electrical machinery and equipment, iron and steel, plastic and articles thereof, residues and waste from the food industries, pharmaceutical products, organic chemicals, rubber and articles thereof.

Main Indian imports from Romania during the above mentioned period were nuclear reactors, boilers and machinery, edible vegetables and certain roots and tubers, inorganic chemicals, organic or inorganic compounds of precious metals, vehicles other than railway or

tramway rolling stock, organic chemicals, electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof, articles of iron or steel, optical, photographic cinematographic measuring, checking precision, medical or surgical installations, iron and steel, rubber and articles thereof.

Specific sectors/products that have been identified for focus are pharmaceuticals including nutraceuticals and nature-based medicines and medical devices, agriculture and agricultural products and devices, automobiles and parts thereof, engineering goods, iron and steel, chemicals, rubber etc. there is potential for import of laser-based technology into India especially in the medical and avionics industries, IT and software, oil exploration and drilling including erection and maintenance of oil rigs offshore.

Indian Investments in Romania:

Major companies like Wipro (IT services and hydraulic cylinders manufacturing with over 1000 employees), Genpact (2700 employees with offices in Bucharest and Cluj-Napoca), SunPharma (formerly Ranbaxy under name of Terapia SA in Romania, in Cluj-Napoca, 780 employees), Dr.Reddy's Labs (trading office in Bucharest with 90 employees, turnover of over US\$ 21 mn), UCO Raymonds (Textile Plant located in Giurgiu County in collaboration with Belgian UCO on 50/50 investment basis, with 170 employees, production of over 7 mn meters of denim /year), Sunwave Pharma (trading in natural medical products with 320 employees and annual turnover of Euro 21 mn), Thakral Group (IT infrastructure with 1000 seating capacity, also into retailing consumer products to multinational chains, Talent Development through customized training for industry clients), FERCO Group (forest and wood produce export to over 28 countries, Ports, logistics, handling and shipping, annual turnover of US\$ 65 mn), Prodigy (IT software company), Prime Healthcare (trading in medical devices for ICU and Emergency departments in hospitals). Indian-owned capital from Nigeria renovated a metallurgy plant, Transdanube Industries in Oltenita (in agri-sector in south of Bucharest). Evaluserve also has offices in Bucharest and Cluj-Napoca. Other Indian Businessmen own a number of medium-sized establishments in electronics, textiles, trading, restaurant, real estate and construction, handicrafts, yoga and wellness centers in Romania.

Arcelor-Mittal has considerable investments from Europe into Romania. In 2001, the Sidex Steel Plant in Galati was acquired by Shri Laxmi Mittal's Ispat-LNM Holdings (now Arcelor-Mittal SA) for US\$ 65 million. In 2003, Mittal Steel also acquired the "Tepro" company in Iasi, "Siderurgica" steel mill at Hunedoara (for \$ 43 million) and the "Petrotub" pipe-making unit at Roman (for \$ 83 million). The company recently invested Euro 3 mn to upgrade its plant in Galati to increase energy efficiency and to reduce production costs. Its total investments in Romania have since crossed US\$ 100 mn. The company, which once contributed about 5% of Romania's GDP, has since reduced production to about 1/3rd of its highest production due to fall in demand for steel worldwide.

In 2012, Suzlon Group subsidiary, Repower Systems, contracted with P.E.Deus Ex S.R.L. a project company of WSB International GmbH, to supply wind turbines (capacity of 3.2 MW each), for a wind farm project. The company has also founded REpower Systems DTE Romania SRL, a Romanian subsidiary headquartered in Bucharest, marking the company's entry into the Romanian market. Asmita S.A., the Romanian subsidiary of an Indian company, invested Euro 10 million in property and construction in Bucharest in 2005. GHCL Limited, India's leading producer of soda ash acquired a majority stake in S.C.Bega Upsom S.A., the leading soda ash

manufacturer in Romanian through its international subsidiary with a controlling stake of 65% in the Romanian firm at US\$ 19.5 million. However, the GHCL-Upsom plant has been inoperative since the beginning of 2010. Indian cinema multiplex operator CineGrand invested US\$ 1.2 mn in Cine Grand Botosani in Uvertura Mall in July 2013.

Romanian investments in India:

Cumulative FDI inflows from Romania into India during April 2000 to May 2015 were in the range of US\$ 7.01 million. Romania ranks 81st in terms of FDI inflows into India. Romanian companies such as Altantia SPA (Infrastructure like roads, bridges, Railways, tunnels, pipelines, Ports, Harbours etc), Saira Seats SAS (specialized parts of railways), Simest SPA (Railway fixtures and fittings), Summer Conf SRL (textiles), Hanna Instruments Romania SRL (Scientific medical and surgical instruments), Omnia Profesional SRL (Data Processing, software and Consultancy), FSS Activ Group SRL (Data Processing, Software), STX RO Electroturlicea SRL (electrical installations), Mihaela Carmen Popa (Tourism), Jan Joost Kotte (Aluminum), Christina Veronica Garlasu (Drugs, Medicines and allied products), have all invested in India. A Turkish owned ball bearings manufacturing company, Rulmentul Berlad, (URB Group), has invested Euro 50 million to set up a factory in Rajasthan with a capacity to manufacture over 1000 tonnes a year, with a turnover of \$200 million in the next 5 years. The products are for use in Steel industry, Mining, Power, Oil, Railways etc. This will be the 4th facility of the company, with others located in Turkey, Hungary and Romania.

JECs and JWG:

The 17th session of the India-Romania Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation (JEC) was held in Bucharest on 1-2 February, 2012, after a hiatus of eight years. The Indian delegation was led by Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia. The Romanian side was led by H.E. Mr. Ion Ariton, Minister of Economy, Trade and Business Environment. Both sides agreed to encourage joint ventures and bilateral investments in energy, infrastructure, environment, renewable energy, chemicals and petrochemicals, automotives, engineering goods, machinery and instruments, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, agriculture and new technologies, and the SME sector. Both sides agreed to improve the bilateral legal framework through signing of the new text of the Convention for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and prevent tax evasion.

Coinciding with the JEC, two Joint Working Groups – one on Oil & Natural Gas (3rd) and the other on SMEs (1st) – were also held in Bucharest. The JWG on Oil & Gas envisaged cooperation in upstream and downstream hydrocarbon sector including in training, capacity building and research and development, supply of equipment for exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbon and other technical assistance. A Protocol for the third JWG on Oil and Natural Gas was signed by the two co-Chairmen. The JWG on SMEs agreed on information sharing, facilitating institutional cooperation; business and trade delegations to explore joint-ventures, technology transfer and investment opportunities. A 11-member business delegation led by FICCI representing oil and natural gas, power equipment, IT, alternative energy, textiles, pharmaceuticals, supply chain management, tourism, transportation sectors also accompanied the JEC delegation and held B2B meetings with members of the Romanian Chamber of Commerce.

The 18th Session of the India-Romania Joint Economic Committee (JEC) was held in New Delhi on 7th April, 2017. A 17-member delegation led by Mr. Christian Dima, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Business Environment, Commerce and Entrepreneurship from the Romanian side and a 15-member delegation led by Ms Rita Teaotia, Commerce Secretary of the Government of India from the Indian side had fruitful interactions. The Joint Protocol signed by the two officials after the meeting covered cooperation in the areas of bilateral investment and trade relations, Oil & Gas, Transportation (including Shipping, Railways and Civil Aviation), Aerospace Industry (including maintenance and overhaul of aircraft engines – both defence and civil), Agriculture, Science & Technology, Banking & Insurance, Textiles, IT & Communication, Tourism, MSME, New & Renewable Energy), and Mining & Metallurgy. The meeting also covered subjects such as global, regional and domestic situations and the India-EU BTIA negotiations. The visiting delegation also paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mrs. Nirmala Sitharaman, Hon'ble Minister for Commerce & Industry.

Other visits:

Ms Maria Grapini, Romanian Minister-delegate for SMEs, Business Environment and Tourism, visited India in April 2013 during which an MoU on Textiles was signed.

A Textiles delegation led by Joint Secretary (Exports), Ministry of Textiles, visited Bucharest in June 2013 as a follow up on the MoU. During the visit, the first meeting of the India-Romania Joint Working Group (JWG), was held in which both sides agreed that the JWG would be the institutional forum for trade facilitation in textiles sector between India and Romania. A Protocol of the meeting was signed by both sides on the occasion.

A 12 member delegation from Association of Indian Industries, Mumbai visited Bucharest in April 2014 to participate in the General Assembly Meeting of WTC. Representatives from WTC associations of other Indian cities also took part in the meeting. The delegation also held meetings with local Chambers of Commerce and signed MOU for cooperation

A 5 member delegation led by Health Minister of Romania Dr. Nicolae Banicioiu visited India during in January,2015 to attend PHARMEXCIL Buyer-Seller meet alongside VIBRANT GUJARAT 2015 in Ahmedabad. During the visit, he interacted with the officials of PHARMEXCIL, Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry, visited production units and Public Healthcare Centers in Mumbai. Agreements with Indian Pharma majors like Cipla, McLeods, Aurobindo and Ranbaxy were also signed. A delegation of 26 members from Indian Pharmaceutical companies led by PHARMEXCIL visited Bucharest from 18-22 February 2015 and met over 20 local entrepreneurs in the field of medicine and medical devices in a B2B arranged by the Mission.

Agreements

An MOU between India and Romania on Cooperation in the Field of Tourism, an MOU between Petroleum-Gas University, Ploiesti and Pandit Deen Dayal Petroleum University, Gandhinagar and 3 MOUs of Bucharest Chamber of Commerce each with CII, ASSOCHAM and PHDCCI were signed during the visit of Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Hon'ble Vice President of India to Romania on 18-20 September, 2018. The Joint Statement on establishing an Extensive

Partnership and the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement was signed during FM Corlatean's visit on March 8, 2013. The MOUs on Cooperation in the field of Textiles was signed during the visit of Mrs. Maria Grapini, Romanian Minister Delegate for Business Environment, Tourism and SMEs to India from April 22-24,2013. The MoU between the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board of India and National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control of Romania for the Exchange of Information and Co-operation in the field of Regulation of Nuclear Activities for Peaceful Purposes was signed between India and Romania in Vienna on September 19, 2012. Agreements for Cooperation in the field of S&T, Maritime Transport and Air Services Agreement are under consideration.

Bilateral cooperation under ITEC/PCFD Programme

Candidates from different fields from Romania have been going to India under the ITEC scheme to attend different training modules. Till date Romania has used 108 ITEC slots. Romania has been allotted 07 slots during 2018-2019 of which one has been utilized.

Since 1993, 8 Romanian diplomats have attended the Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) in Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi, last being in 2003.

ICCR scholarships have been utilized successfully by Romanians studying Indian dance, classical and popular music, Classical dances, Hindi, Film TV technology and other academic subjects.

Cultural Cooperation

India and Romania signed a Cultural Agreement in 1957, which provided for cooperation in culture, science, education, literature and arts. Following this Agreement, Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) were formulated and implemented. More recently, cultural exchanges have also been facilitated via sources outside the official framework for bilateral cooperation. A new CEP (Programme of Cooperation in the fields of Culture, Education, Youth and Sports) between India and Romania for the years 2011-2015 was signed in Bucharest in March 2011. A Romanian ballet troupe visited India in early 2012. Sahitya Akademi has published from Romania under the CEP between the two countries: (i) *Sach Leta Hai Aakar* & (ii) *Jhonpri Wale aur Anya Kahania*.

Embassy of India, Bucharest collaborated with local cultural groups such as Rabindra Nath Tagore Cultural Centre, Bucharest to organise "Namaste India" festival, which was held at Village Museum, Bucharest from May 23-25,2014. The event has become an annual affair and has become extremely popular with Romanian and expatriate Indian community.

During May 26-28, 2014 Embassy of India organised three cultural performances in Bucharest by ICCR sponsored Rajasthani Folk Dance Group with the help of sponsorships provided by local Indian companies.

"Kalpana"- An ICCR sponsored painting exhibition of works from 14 famous figurative artists from India was organized at Art Museum, Ploiesti from November 14-20, 2014.

Three ICCR sponsored groups visited Romania in 2017 – Meera Das, Odissi, Punjab Police, Bhangra and Mahuya Mukherjee classical music. They organized a series of performances in various cities of Romania. The Embassy of India, Bucharest, collaborated with local cultural groups such as Rabindra Nath Tagore Cultural Centre, Bucharest to organise the “Namaste India” festival, which was held at the Village Museum, Bucharest from in June 2017. The event was extremely popular with Romanian and the expatriate Indian community. The Indian block-buster film ‘Bahubali 2 – The Conclusion’ was screened in Cluj-Napoca on 8 June 2017. Romania became the first country outside India where the film was screened with the participation of the Director and Producer of the film. An Indian Sari and Cuisine Show was organised at India House in March 2017, and was followed by an event titled ‘Indian Sari meets the Romanian Blouse’ at India House in June 2017, featuring both the Indian and Romanian costumes and textiles. Yoga is increasingly popular in Romania, and free yoga sessions have regularly been offered by a trained teacher. A 5-member Kuchipudi dance troupe from India led by veteran dancer Vyjayanthi Kashi performed in various cities in Romania during 3-11 July 2018 as a part of the 10th Namaste India programme. Performance also included that of a 3-member flute, santoor and tabla players led by Bhaskar Das.

The 4th International Day of Yoga was celebrated for the first time in the Parliament building of Romania on 23rd June, 2018. The IDY was also celebrated in the cities of Galati and Chisinau on 17th June, in Brasov on 19th June, in Timisoara on 20th June and in the city of Tirana on 21st June, 2018.

The 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi was celebrated on 2 October 2018 at the World Trade Centre, Hotel Pullman, Bucharest. The programme included a special video presentation on Mahatma Gandhi, speeches by the invited dignitaries and release of a commemorative postage stamp.

The birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was celebrated on 31 Oct 2018 in Bucharest by organizing a talk and a film on the life of Sardar Patel at the Embassy premises.

The Embassy of India participated in the sixth edition of Asia Fest at Romexpo, Bucharest and organized an exhibition of traditional Indian textiles including products by the Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC) from 16 – 18 November 2018 as part of the celebrations of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

A book on ‘Meditation’ in Romanian language was released on Wednesday, 21 November 2018, at the Embassy of India Chancery premises (46, Blvd. Aviatorilor, Bucharest, Romania).

The Embassy of India participated in the Annual Multicultural Charity Bazaar organized by the International Women's Association (IWA) at Romeexpo, Bucharest on 9 December 2018. More than 55 diplomatic missions and international communities had participated in the event.

The Embassy of India participated in a Conference held at Bucharest on 13 December 2018 to celebrate the 70 years of India-Romania Diplomatic Relations organized by the Romanian Diplomatic Institute (IDR) and the Romanian Institute for the Study of the Asia-Pacific (RISAP).

Indian Community

The Indian community in Romania, including PIOs and their families, numbers around 1053 (around 865 Indian citizens and 188 OCI Cardholders). There are students about 110 Indian students attending courses in Romanian institutions, mainly pursuing medicine on a self-financing basis at Timisoara, Oradea, Bucharest, and Iasi. Others are businessmen, professionals and technical specialists. There are four Indian restaurants in Bucharest, one in Timisoara and one in Galati.

Useful Resources

Website: www.eoibucharest.gov.in

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

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