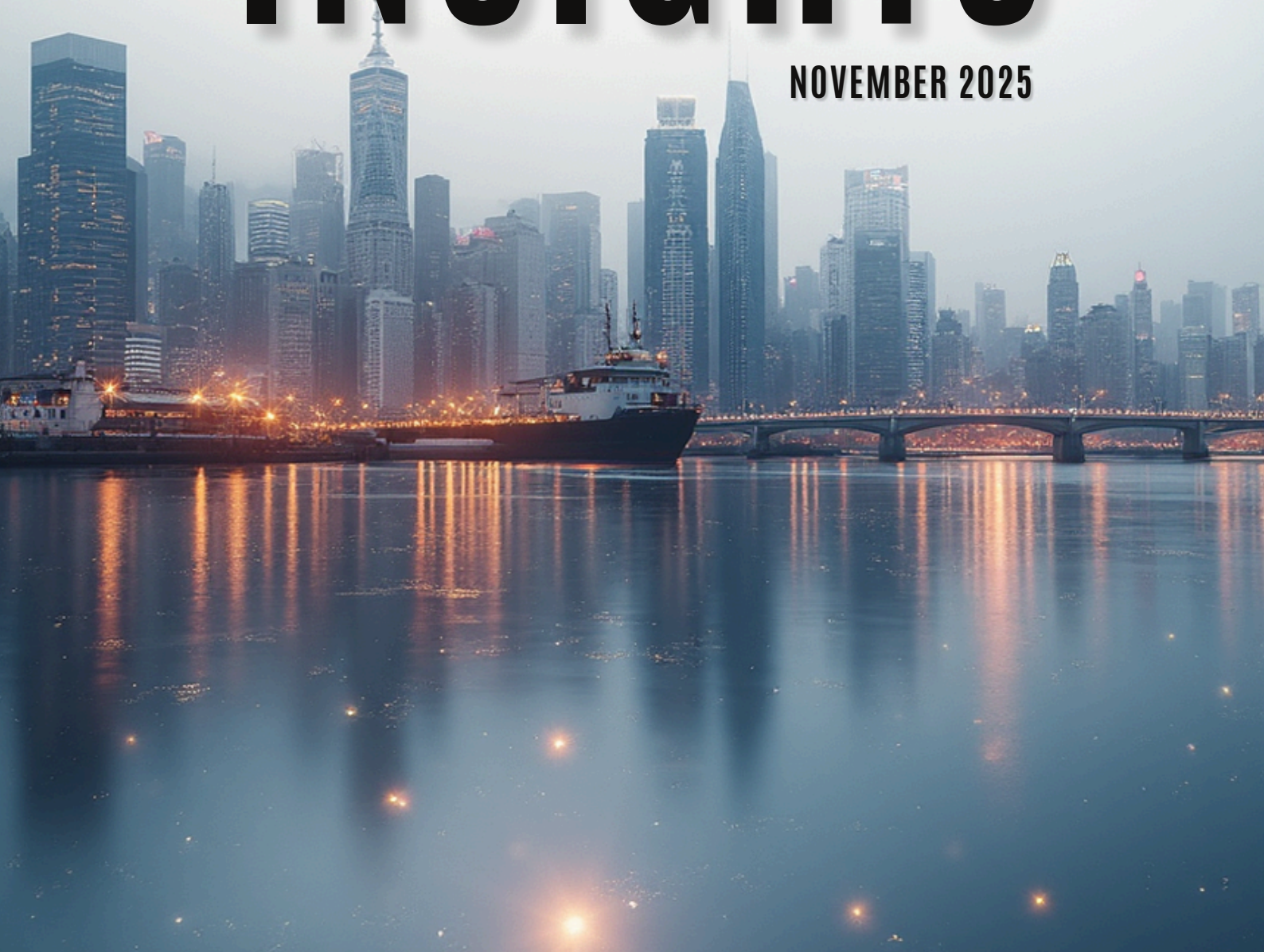


THE COUNCIL OF EU CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE IN INDIA

# EU-INDIA BUSINESS INSIGHTS

NOVEMBER 2025



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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



## **Mr. Rajeev Sharma**

President

**The Council of EU Chambers of  
Commerce in India**

I hope this November edition finds you well and energized as we enter the final months of what has been a productive and inspiring year for our Chamber. Our commitment to strengthening EU–India economic, cultural, and educational collaboration continues to guide our efforts, and I am pleased to share some significant developments from this month.

We recently conducted an impactful outreach programme in Chennai, deepening our engagement with regional industry leaders, diplomatic representatives, and members across South India. Building on this momentum, I am delighted to share that we are now planning to open our Chennai Chapter soon. This new chapter will enhance our regional presence, provide members easier access to Chamber services, and create a stronger platform for local engagement and EU–India business collaboration.

This month also marked a major milestone with the successful hosting of the 5th EU–India Education Summit. The Summit brought together thought leaders, universities, policymakers, and industry experts from both regions to explore new pathways for academic cooperation, innovation, and talent mobility. These discussions reaffirm the importance of education as a cornerstone of EU–India partnership and highlight our shared commitment to preparing the next generation of global leaders.

As always, the active participation of our members and Sector Committees continues to drive the Chamber's growth. Your involvement ensures that our initiatives remain relevant, forward-looking, and responsive to the evolving needs of the EU–India business ecosystem. I encourage you to stay connected and take advantage of the many programs, discussions, and opportunities we have planned in the coming months.

In this edition, you will find our regular insights—including Legal Lexicon, Travel Bytes, and country-focused trade updates—designed to keep you informed and equipped with knowledge that supports your work and interests.

Thank you for your continued trust, engagement, and support. Together, we will continue to strengthen the bridge between the European Union and India through collaboration, dialogue, and shared vision.

# DIRECTOR GENERAL'S DESK



## **Dr. Renu Shome**

Director General

**The Council of EU Chambers of  
Commerce in India**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the November 2025 edition of EU–India Business Insights. As we continue this more frequent and interactive journey together, your engagement remains central to our mission. I encourage you to share your ideas, contribute perspectives, and help shape the evolving narrative of EU–India collaboration. Together, we can strengthen the economic, educational, and cultural bonds that unite our two regions.

This month has been especially eventful for the Chamber. Our outreach programme in Chennai allowed us to engage closely with industry leaders and members in South India, reaffirming the region's growing importance. Building on this momentum, we are pleased to announce that we plan to open our Chennai Chapter soon—offering members enhanced access to Chamber services, deeper local engagement, and expanded networking opportunities.

November also witnessed the successful hosting of the 5th EU–India Education Summit, which brought together distinguished academics, policymakers, and industry stakeholders. Their discussions underscored the increasing importance of innovation-driven partnerships, research collaboration, and talent mobility in shaping the future of EU–India relations. We remain committed to facilitating these conversations and enabling new avenues of engagement across the education and skills ecosystem.

Each edition of this newsletter is designed to inform and inspire—bringing you practical updates through Legal Lexicon, Travel Bytes, sectoral notes, and country-focused trade insights. With contributions from our Sector Committees, we remain committed to delivering content that supports your growth and cross-border linkages.

At The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India, our mission remains steadfast: to foster business, investment, and long-term partnerships between the EU and India. Through knowledge sharing, strategic outreach, and collaborative dialogue, we strive to serve as an active bridge connecting enterprises, institutions, and innovators across borders.

Thank you for your continued trust, participation, and support. We look forward to growing this shared journey with you in the months ahead.

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# EU-INDIA NEWS

## 9th India-EU High Level Dialogue for Migration and Mobility, New Delhi (November 12, 2025)

The 9th India-EU High Level Dialogue for Migration and Mobility (HLDMM) was held in New Delhi on 12 November 2025. The meeting was co-chaired by Shri Prashant Pise, Additional Secretary (Emigration, Policy & Welfare Division), Ministry of External Affairs, and H.E. Mr. Johannes Luchner, Deputy Director-General, Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs in the European Commission. The dialogue was also attended by Heads of Mission and representatives of the Diplomatic Missions of EU Member States in New Delhi, Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), M/o Home Affairs, M/o Health and Family Welfare, M/o Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, M/o Commerce & Industry, M/o Labour & Employment, and M/o Education of India.

The two sides expressed satisfaction with the successful implementation of the India-EU Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (India-EU CAMM) and discussed the initiatives outlined in the Joint Communication on "A New Strategic India-EU Agenda", adopted by the EU Council in September 2025. The two sides discussed the Comprehensive Framework of Cooperation on Mobility and the EU proposal to set up a pilot European Legal Gateway Office in India. This office is proposed to be a one-stop hub to provide information and to support the movement of professionals to the EU, starting with the ICT sector.

Both sides reaffirmed that migration and mobility are important dimensions of the strategic partnership between India and the EU. They exchanged views on further initiatives and steps aimed at realizing the full potential of cooperation in this area.

It was agreed that the next round of HLDMM would be held in Belgium on mutually agreeable dates.

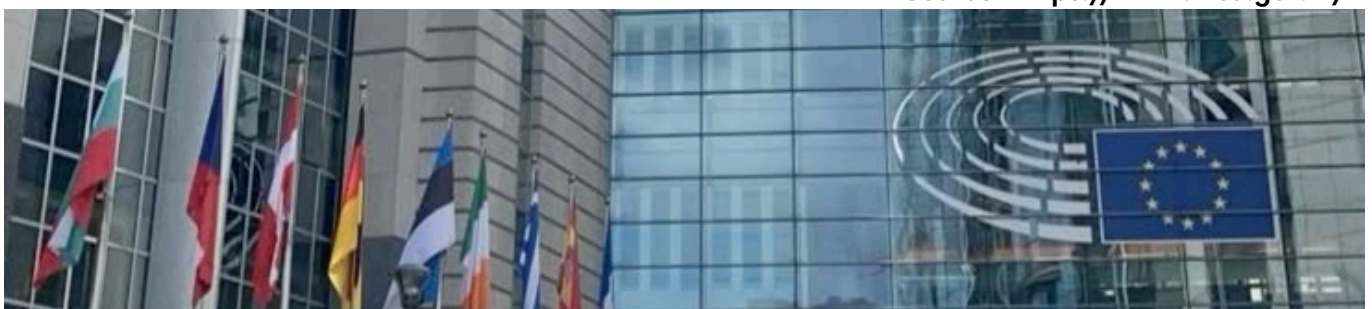


## Joint Press Release on the 11th India - EU Foreign Policy and Security Consultations and the 6th India-EU Strategic Partnership Review Meeting in Brussels (November 25, 2025)

India and the EU held the 11th Foreign Policy and Security Consultations and the 6th Strategic Partnership Review in Brussels on 18–19 November, reviewing the full scope of their partnership as the 2025 Roadmap concludes. Both sides welcomed strong momentum in ties, discussed cooperation on economic security, supply chains, trade and investment, connectivity initiatives including IMEC, and collaboration in technology, innovation, education and research. They reaffirmed the goal of concluding FTA negotiations this year and advancing talks on the Investment Protection and Geographical Indications agreements.

The discussions also covered regional and global security, including the Indo-Pacific, counterterrorism, disaster resilience, and cooperation in multilateral forums. Both sides stressed the need for peace in Ukraine and Gaza and highlighted convergence on global issues ahead of India's 2026 BRICS Chairship. They committed to deepening defense and security cooperation—maritime, cyber, space and non-proliferation—and advancing negotiations on a Security and Defense Partnership. Preparations for a new Joint EU-India Comprehensive Strategic Agenda for the 2026 Summit were also discussed, alongside India's participation in the EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum.

Source- <https://www.mea.gov.in/>



# LEGAL LEXICON

## India's DPDP Act vs Europe's GDPR: What Global Businesses Must Know?

-by Krrishan Singhania (Managing Partner of K Singhania & Co.) & Avni Singhania and Om Singhania

### Introduction: -

As global data flows intensify, businesses today operate in a regulatory environment where privacy is no longer optional but is a core compliance obligation and a competitive differentiator. There are majorly two frameworks that shape the global privacy landscape in India and Europe, i.e. the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (DPDP Act). While both frameworks aim to safeguard individual data privacy, their structure, scope, and practical obligations differ significantly. For multinational organisations, understanding these differences is essential to mitigate legal risk, strategically maintain user trust, and ensure operational continuity.

### Shared Purpose but Distinct Philosophies:-

- The **GDPR**, enacted in 2018, emerged from Europe's constitutional commitment to privacy as a fundamental right. It reflects decades of European legal evolution that builds a broad, citizen-centric regulatory regime, which applies to both digital and non-digital formats of personal data.
- In contrast, India's **DPDP Act** is the country's first comprehensive law dedicated exclusively to digital personal data, i.e., data collected in digital form or digitized from physical records. It reflects a design optimized for India's rapidly growing digital economy, seeking a balance between data protection and innovation without overburdening businesses.

### Territorial Jurisdiction and Applicability: -

- **GDPR** applies to any organisation processing the personal data of EU residents, irrespective of where the organisation is located or where the processing occurs.
- **DPDP Act** applies to processing of digital personal data within India and to entities outside India that offer goods or services to individuals in India.
- This implies that a U.S. company with users in both markets may find itself subject to two different regulators, the European Data Protection Authorities (DPAs) and India's Data Protection Board, resulting in issues pertaining to dual compliance.

### Legal Grounds for Data Processing: -

- Under **GDPR**, organizations can rely on several grounds such as consent, contract necessity, legal obligations, vital interests, public tasks, and legitimate interests.
- Under the **DPDP Act**, the framework is more restrictive: it recognizes primarily consent, plus a limited list of "legitimate uses" (such as legal compliance, employment, or government-mandated functions). Notably, the broad "legitimate interest" basis under GDPR is absent in DPDP.
- For global businesses, this can pose a notable challenge. Activities easily justified under GDPR's legitimate interest such as analytics, profiling, or direct marketing may require explicit, informed, revocable consent when dealing with Indian users.

### Rights of Data Subjects: -

- **GDPR** provides a wide suite of rights: access, rectification, erasure (right to be forgotten), restriction, objection, data portability, and safeguards against automated decision-making.
- **DPDP Act** grants more limited rights: access, correction, erasure, revocation of consent, and grievance redressal. Unlike GDPR, there is no explicit right to data portability, and the rights to restrict or object are more constrained.
- In order to minimize complexity, many global businesses may choose to apply GDPR-like responsiveness even to Indian data subjects, thereby building a unified approach.



# LEGAL LEXICON

## India's DPDP Act vs Europe's GDPR: What Global Businesses Must Know?

### Treatment of Sensitive & Children's Data: -

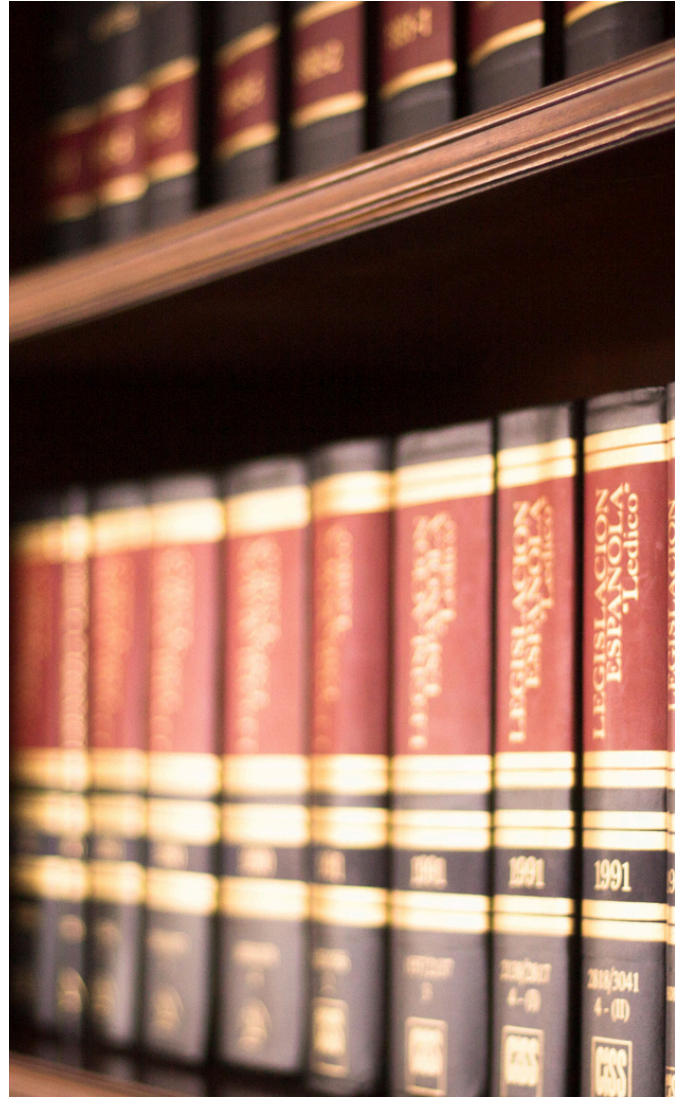
- **GDPR** identifies "special categories" of personal data (such as health, biometric, and racial data) that require stronger safeguards.
- The **DPDP Act**, on the other hand, does not distinguish special categories in the same way but all personal data is treated uniformly.
- On minors, the **DPDP Act** has a firm stance. Processing of personal data of children under 18 years of age requires verifiable parental consent, and behavioural profiling or targeted advertising to children is restricted.
- Businesses handling children's data in India must adopt age verification and parental consent mechanisms, even if they already comply with GDPR.

### Cross-Border Data Transfers: -

- Under **GDPR**, transfers outside the EU are allowed only via approved mechanisms such as adequacy decisions, Standard Contractual Clauses (SCC), or Binding Corporate Rules (BCR).
- The **DPDP Act** takes a default-permissive approach wherein cross-border data transfers are allowed unless a "negative list" of restricted countries is notified by the Indian government.
- While **GDPR** requires robust contractual safeguards for data export, **DPDP** currently gives more flexibility, though that could change, depending on the evolution of India's negative list.

### Accountability, Governance & Penalties: -

- Under **GDPR**, each EU member state has its own DPA. Penalties can reach up to €20 million or 4% of global annual turnover, whichever is higher.
- In India, the Data Protection Board of India (a centralized regulator) oversees compliance, grievances, and penalties. The **DPDP Act** imposes fines up to ₹ 250 crore (~ €27–28 million), depending on the violation.
- Notably, the **DPDP** Board can also mandate remedial or mitigation measures. For repeat offenders, there may be stricter regulatory consequences.



### Compliance Challenges & Operational Gaps:

- **Notice & Consent Management**
  1. Privacy notices must use DPDP specific terminology (e.g., "Data Principal" and "Data Fiduciary") and present clear, informed choices in Indian languages.
  2. Consent must be affirmative and granular; pre-ticked boxes or bundled consent may not be valid.
- **Grievance Redressal**
  1. Companies must appoint a grievance officer in India and provide clear escalation paths to the Data Protection Board.
  2. Maintain structured complaint handling and documentation.

# LEGAL LEXICON

## India's DPDP Act vs Europe's GDPR: What Global Businesses Must Know?



### Conclusion: -

India's **DPDP Act** and Europe's **GDPR** may share the same goal i.e. to develop a strong privacy regime but they diverge significantly in structures, legal bases, individual rights, and enforcement. For global businesses, this means that GDPR compliance alone does not guarantee readiness for India.

Successful global operations in the digital age will require more than a checklist. They will demand strategic alignment, consistent workflows, strong data governance, and proactive investment in compliance infrastructure. Treating the DPDP Act and GDPR not as competing regulations but as complementary components of a universal privacy framework will not only minimize legal risk but will also build trust, credibility, and resilience in a world where data is both a business asset and a deep personal responsibility.

### • Security, DPIAs and Audits

1. While **GDPR** requires Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) for high-risk processing, the **DPDP Act** mandates DPIAs only for "Significant Data Fiduciaries", a tiered risk-based approach should be adopted.
2. All fiduciaries must implement reasonable security safeguards.

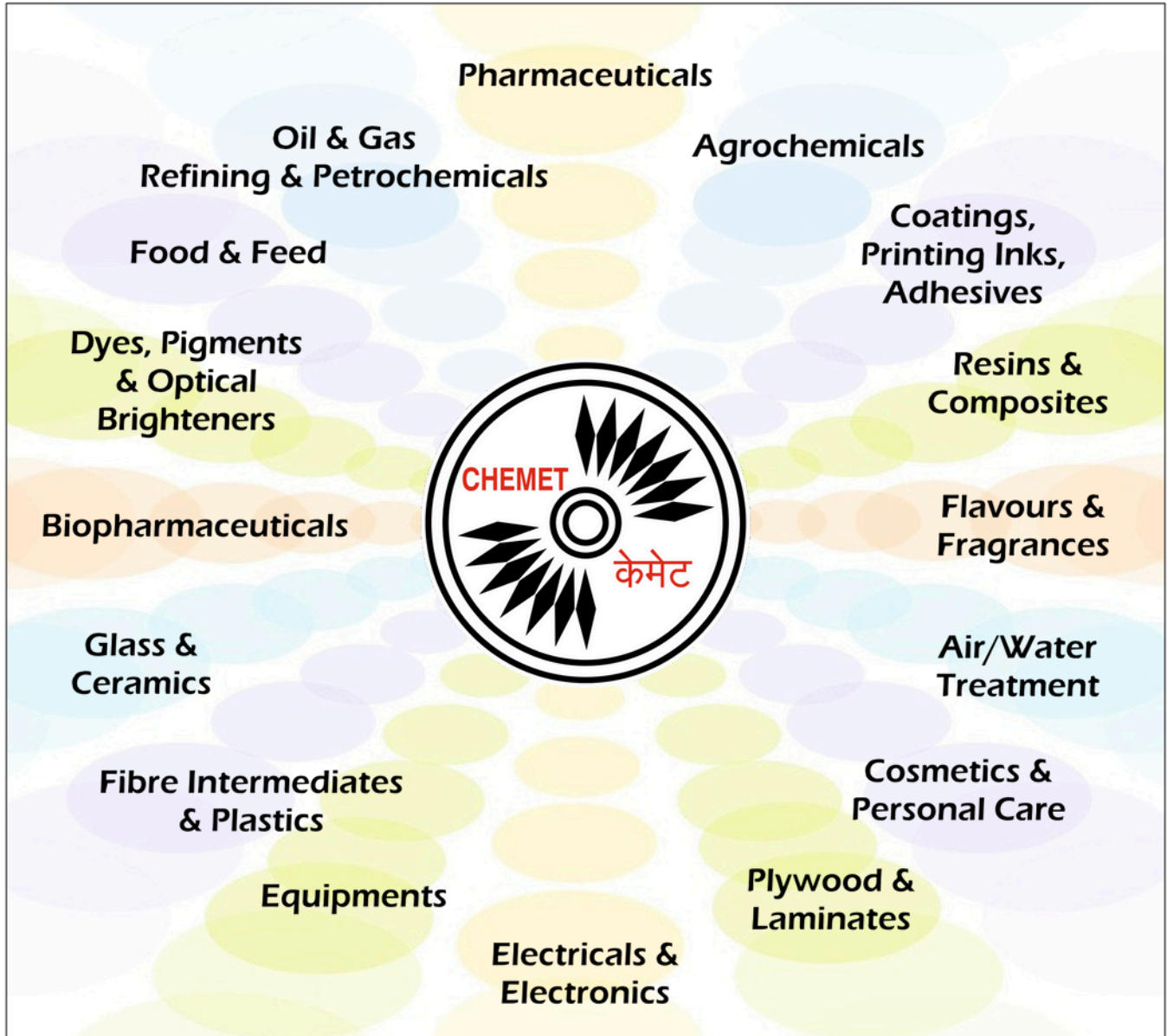
### • Children's Data

1. Robust age checks and parental consent mechanisms are vital.
2. Ensure no targeted behavioral profiling or tracking of minors in India.



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# TRAVEL BYTES



## Europe Winter Travel Costs Drop By Up To 40%, Reveals Cox & Kings Data

Europe is witnessing a major shift in travel trends among Indian tourists, with winter travel costs dropping significantly and the overall experience growing in popularity and satisfaction. Cox & Kings, one of the world's oldest travel companies and a leading Indian brand, has recently published comprehensive analytics showing how much more affordable European travel has become during the off-peak months of November to February. These developments are re-shaping the way Indians discover and explore Europe's 27 Schengen countries.

### PRICE DROPS AND COST SAVINGS

According to Cox & Kings, average package prices to key European destinations—such as Paris, Vienna, and Prague—are 25–40% lower in the winter months compared to the peak tourist season of June to August. For example, a seven-night itinerary covering these cities, which is usually priced between ₹2.3–₹2.6 lakh per person in summer, now drops to around ₹1.5–₹1.8 lakh in winter. This substantial reduction allows a wider segment of Indian travelers to consider Europe as part of their winter holiday plans.

Airfares mirror this trend: round-trip tickets between India and the major hubs of the EU are typically ₹25,000–₹35,000 cheaper in winter. The overall savings add up fast. For a family or group, European holidays now cost about 30–35% less in total when factoring both flights and accommodations. These price drops result from a combination of fewer tourists, high airline competition, special off-season packages, and lower demand for tours and activities.

### RISE OF WINTER TRAVEL

The narrative of Europe as merely a summer destination is changing rapidly. The November–February wedding and holiday period in India now aligns perfectly with Europe's off-season, and Indian honeymooners, families, and adventure seekers are taking full advantage. Cox & Kings reports not only high traveler volume in winter but also remarkably strong satisfaction scores. Their data indicates that Indians rate winter trips to Europe 8–12% higher in terms of enjoyment and authenticity than summer holidays—a change driven by the more local, immersive experiences available in quieter months.

### AUTHENTIC EUROPEAN EXPERIENCES

Winter in Europe offers holiday-makers a closer look at local life. Instead of large, cosmopolitan crowds and hurried sightseeing, travelers enjoy neighborhood cafés, leisurely meals, and small concerts and festivals attended mostly by residents. Cities like Prague, Vienna, and Budapest are transformed by their famous Christmas markets, with historic squares coming alive in a cozy, festive atmosphere. Paris glows under a pale winter sun, and Berlin hosts enchanting open-air concerts even as snow blankets its artistic spaces.

For those interested in warmer weather, southern European cities such as Lisbon, Seville, and Barcelona provide sunlit outdoor pursuits, slow travel, and relaxed café culture. Meanwhile, Northern Europe offers dramatic vistas for those pursuing the Northern Lights in Finland, Norway, and Sweden, along with unique fairytale

# TRAVEL BYTES

landscapes and frozen wonders. These varied destinations fill different niches—from romance and adventure to culinary exploration and Instagram-worthy scenery.

## WHY ARE COSTS LOWER?

### COX & KINGS HIGHLIGHTS SEVERAL DRIVERS:

- Lower tourist volumes mean reduced hotel and package rates.
- Airlines offer competitive off-season deals to fill seats.
- Tour operators bundle activities and experiences for better value.
- Destinations are eager to attract international visitors during periods when capacity otherwise goes unused.

This confluence of affordability and authenticity is encouraging a new kind of Indian traveler—one who values deeper cultural connections, crowd-free attractions, and the chance to experience Europe as locals do.



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## CONCLUSION

Europe's winter travel is quickly gaining momentum among Indian tourists due to giant cost savings and unique experiences. From the enchanted, snowy squares of Central Europe to sun-kissed Mediterranean escapes, Indian travelers are discovering the continent's charm outside the standard summer rush. As companies like Cox & Kings continue to innovate, offer deals, and highlight authentic cultural experiences, winter is set to rival summer as the most sought-after European season for India's outbound travel.

**Sources:** Cox & Kings analytics and statements, Economic Times Travel, Business Standard, India Today, Business Today.

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# COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT

## India-Cyprus Economic and Commercial Partnership: Strategic Growth, Innovation, and Sustainability

### OVERVIEW

The India-Cyprus economic partnership is flourishing, marked by steady increases in bilateral trade, technology-led collaboration, and strong diplomatic ties. Both countries emphasize sustainable development, digital finance, and innovation, carving out new opportunities for mutual benefit. Cyprus emerges as a strategic gateway to Europe for Indian enterprises, while India's global economic ascent complements Cyprus's role as a stable, business-friendly hub in the EU.

### BILATERAL TRADE TRENDS

Between January and July 2025, Cyprus imported €55.4 million worth of goods from India and exported €21.36 million in return, highlighting a trade deficit. India's key exports to Cyprus include organic chemicals, nuclear machinery, ceramics, and pharmaceuticals, with notable growth in high-tech machinery and aluminum. Cypriot exports to India focus on copper, aluminum, iron, and steel. Significant sectors such as machinery and pharmaceuticals exhibit divergent trends, with machinery imports surging and pharmaceutical imports declining.

### ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT AND POLICY

Cyprus maintains price stability with a minor deflation in October 2025. The economy faces structural challenges like high non-performing assets and substantial dependence on imported oil, which constitutes over 85% of its energy mix. Digital infrastructure development remains a priority amid the country's relatively low ranking on the EU Digital Economy and Society Index. External pressures, including the EU sanctions impacting Russian-linked trade channels, inform Cyprus's policy focus on diversification, sustainability, and regional integration.

### INVESTMENT AND BUSINESS

#### COLLABORATION

- Although no major new Indian foreign direct investment was recorded in this period, institutional efforts to deepen financial and business ties intensified.
- The introduction of India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in Cyprus through a memorandum of understanding with Eurobank simplifies cross-border payments, benefiting Indian businesses and diaspora communities.
- Partnerships between Indian startups and Cypriot technology firms bolster collaboration in fields such as artificial intelligence and semiconductor research.



- Eurobank's India-focused desk and upcoming Mumbai representative office underpin growing financial linkages with India.
- Enhanced cooperation spans tourism, legal consulting, fintech, maritime skills development, and renewable energy initiatives, fostering a versatile business landscape.

### INDUSTRY COLLABORATION AND INSIGHTS

Key industry events like the Cyprus Maritime Conference and Limassol Economic Forum have been instrumental in promoting ties in shipping, fintech, and renewable energy sectors. Both countries are supporting joint research efforts and knowledge exchanges aimed at fostering innovation and addressing sectoral skill shortages. The India-Greece-Cyprus Business and Investment Council plays a crucial role in sustaining trilateral cooperation and accelerating project implementation.

### ONGOING TRENDS AND HIGHLIGHTS

Surging imports of machinery and aluminum from India underscore evolving industrial ties. Initiatives to introduce Indian agricultural products, particularly mangoes, in the Cypriot market signal diversification in trade. Wellness tourism, anchored by wellness festivals and Ayurveda promotion, emerges as a promising sector. Digitization and fintech adoption remain fundamental themes, with cross-border remittance facilitation and digital trade agreements advancing bilateral commerce.

### SUSTAINABILITY AND BUSINESS

#### OPPORTUNITIES

- India-Cyprus collaboration in renewable energy focuses on boosting solar and wind capacities to reduce Cyprus's oil dependence.

- Sustainable business practices and green technologies feature prominently in joint ventures and trade promotion.
- Organized wellness and organic product fairs facilitate the market entry of Indian eco-friendly goods.
- Digitization initiatives, particularly in fintech, enhance business resilience and financial inclusivity.
- Environmental programs include joint tree-planting drives and water conservation campaigns, reflecting a strong cultural commitment to sustainability.

### **UNIQUE AREAS OF FOCUS**

A transformative MoU to deploy India's UPI system in Cyprus exemplifies cutting-edge digital financial collaboration. The wellness sector promotes a "Wellness from India" brand, integrating traditional health practices with modern business approaches. Targeted market research and consumer trend mapping are underway to refine export strategies. Pilot projects for Indian mango imports demonstrate practical steps to expand trade. Legal advisory collaborations are building investor confidence and regulatory clarity, strengthening the foundation for scalable investments.

### **CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS**

Cultural diplomacy thrives through events like Diwali celebrations, Indian film festivals, and educational exchanges between universities. Initiatives such as the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" tree-planting program align cultural values with environmental stewardship, nurturing a holistic relationship. These engagements foster community ties and promote sustainable practices while deepening people-to-people connections that complement economic and diplomatic engagement.

### **OUTLOOK AND CONCLUSION**

The India-Cyprus partnership is advancing strategically, bolstered by technology, sustainability, and cultural synergy initiatives. Cyprus's status as Europe's gateway and India's expanding global economic footprint create a dynamic environment for growth. Continued emphasis on green technologies, fintech innovation, and market diversification enhances prospects for long-term bilateral cooperation. Overcoming challenges in regulatory environments and digital capacity will be essential for unlocking the full potential of this multifaceted partnership, which is poised for resilient and inclusive expansion.

**Source: MECR Report - Cyprus**

# COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT

## Estonia-India Economic & Commercial Partnership

### OVERVIEW

Estonia remains a high-performing country within the European Union, distinguished by exceptionally low public debt, recording just 23.2% of GDP as of Q2 2025—the lowest in the bloc and a testament to prudent fiscal governance amidst broader EU debt increases. Despite nominal public debt growth, Estonia's stable macroeconomic environment positions it as a resilient economy capable of maintaining investor confidence, reflected in robust demand for long-term government bonds issued at competitive rates.

### TRADE RELATIONS AND BILATERAL COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY

India and Estonia's bilateral trade relations continue to strengthen, leveraging Estonia's strategic location for EU market access and India's growing international footprint. Business travel and tourism, particularly Finnish visitors to Estonia, faced a decrease in volume, but Estonia remains a valued leisure destination for its neighbors. Bilateral trade dialogue addresses barriers and seeks to expand cooperation across technology, engineering services, and consumer goods sectors.

### ECONOMIC CLIMATE AND POLICY INSIGHTS

Estonia's banking sector experienced normalization in profits as Euribor rates stabilized, supporting continued business growth and steady loan volumes. The country's tax system has achieved global recognition for its competitiveness, transparency, and adaptability, after once again topping the International Tax Competitiveness Index among OECD states. Fiscal policy remains focused on sustaining stability and encouraging innovation-driven enterprises.

### INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN ESTONIA

- Persistent investor enthusiasm for Estonian bonds, with recent issuances oversubscribed sevenfold.
- Active state support for defence-related R&D, particularly in air defence, underwater infrastructure protection, and cybersecurity.
- Government incentives encourage private and institutional investment in innovative sectors, especially clean technology and advanced manufacturing.
- Expanding bilateral projects with India in IT, smart manufacturing, and education foster new investment avenues.
- Strategic location offers leverage for pan-EU distribution and logistics initiatives.



### BUSINESS COLLABORATION AND INDUSTRIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Industry-academia cooperation urged to meet specialist shortages in plastics, rubber, and electronics sectors.
- Joint research initiatives focused on product digitalization and circular economy expertise.
- Indian partnerships targeted at skills development and sectoral innovation.
- Defence sector collaborations secured through European Defence Fund grants for 19 Estonian companies.
- Vocational training expansion to enable workforce sustainability and future-readiness.

### RECENT HIGHLIGHTS AND INDUSTRY TRENDS

Key trends include a notable decline in Finnish tourist visits, balanced by an increase in day trips and cruise arrivals from Finland, suggesting persistent travel interest amid changing patterns. Electricity prices have recently fallen sharply, providing relief to industrial consumers after prior cost increases, and the auto industry faces uncertainty due to weaker sales and revised tax revenue estimates.

### SUSTAINABILITY & GREEN BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

- Enhanced focus on circular economy and environmental compliance in manufacturing.
- Promotion of digital skills in engineering for sustainable product development.
- Incentives for renewable energy investments and decarbonization strategies.
- Collaborative R&D for eco-friendly materials and recycling technologies.
- Vocational training aimed at future-proofing the workforce against environmental shifts.

## **UNIQUE THEMES AND STRATEGIC FOCUS**

This report emphasizes the acute shortage of specialists in plastics, rubber, and high-tech manufacturing, driven by Estonia's rapid digital transformation and tightening environmental regulations. The education sector's limited output of relevant specialists and the urgent need for expanded training and international cooperation mark a critical area for action. Defence sector innovation and cross-border R&D attract targeted state and EU funds, reflecting Estonia's ambitions to lead in strategic security technologies.

## **SOCIETAL, CULTURAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS**

Estonia's evolving business landscape directly impacts cultural exchanges, notably through the changing patterns of tourism and the integration of foreign student specialists, who are crucial but rarely settle locally. The shift toward green industry practices and digital innovation fosters environmental sustainability, but also requires adaptive cultural attitudes and policy support. Bilateral cooperation with India enhances intercultural understanding and opens up new channels for knowledge transfer and shared environmental responsibility.

## **FORWARD OUTLOOK AND ANALYTICAL REVIEW**

Estonia's rise as an EU fiscal role model and leader in tax competitiveness signals strong foundations for future growth and partnership opportunities with India. The country's challenges—workforce shortages, sectoral innovation needs, and shifting travel dynamics—will require ongoing investment in education, digitalization, and bilateral engagement. Looking ahead, sustained R&D, collaborative industry ventures, and agile fiscal policies will underpin Estonia's economic resilience and deepen commercial ties between Estonia and India. Estonia's unique strengths position it not only as an attractive investment destination for Indian enterprises, but also as a forward-thinking partner in technology, sustainability, and cultural exchange.

**Source: MECR Report - Estonia**



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New Delhi



29 Sept-1 Oct 2026  
Mumbai



29 Sept-1 Oct 2026  
Mumbai



# COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT

## India-Finland Commercial Engagement and Emerging Opportunities

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In August 2025, India–Finland bilateral trade remained steady, with Finnish exports to India at €42 million and imports from India at €37.69 million, compared with Finland’s global exports of €5,217.77 million and imports of €5,931.41 million. This profile confirms India as an important but still medium-scale partner, particularly in high-technology and industrial segments. Trade operates fully under the European Union framework in the absence of a dedicated preferential trade agreement, but the month was marked by intensive facilitation of Indian exporters and high-level economic dialogues in Finland’s key innovation hubs.

### TRADE DYNAMICS AND BILATERAL RELATIONS

Finland’s principal exports to India included electric machinery, paper and paperboard, specialized industrial machinery, metalliferous ores, and power-generating equipment, indicating a strong technology- and capital-goods orientation. India’s main exports to Finland consisted of medicinal and pharmaceutical products, apparel, power-generating machinery, textiles, organic chemicals, and a range of manufactured metal and rubber items, reflecting both industrial linkages and growing consumer-oriented trade. The report also identifies petroleum products, road vehicles, metalliferous ores, electric machinery, and general industrial machinery as priority categories where India could expand its share in Finland’s import basket over the short to medium term.

### INVESTMENT LANDSCAPE

- No major greenfield investments or large Finnish divestments were recorded.
- This maintains continuity in investment patterns without structural shifts.
- Mission handled over 50 detailed trade queries from Indian firms in agro-commodities, pharmaceuticals, textiles, engineering products, wellness items, plastics, and drones, providing Finnish partner lists.
- Eleven business visas were issued during the period.
- This signals a modest but meaningful rise in commercial engagement and exploratory visits.
- No flagship tenders above €12 million of direct relevance to Indian companies were highlighted.
- Businesses were directed to national tender portals for emerging opportunities.



- These micro-level activities collectively indicate a widening base of Indian enterprises.
- They lay groundwork for future investments and joint ventures in the Finnish market.

### COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS AND INDUSTRIAL SYNERGIES

Industrial cooperation is anchored in machinery, electrical equipment, and high-value intermediates where Finnish capabilities align with India’s infrastructure and manufacturing expansion. Meetings with companies such as Kempower, Sampo Rosenlew, Demola, and Reorbit demonstrate interest in co-creating solutions in e-mobility infrastructure, agricultural machinery, innovation ecosystems, and new-space technologies. This evolving matrix of commercial partnerships suggests a gradual shift from purely buyer–seller relationships to longer-term technology, R&D, and co-development arrangements.

### ACTIVE INITIATIVES AND INNOVATION HIGHLIGHTS

August saw visible engagement through Helsinki Geoeconomics Week, including thematic discussions positioning India as a partner for future growth in Europe’s North. Outreach in Vaasa and Espoo, including an IBPF luncheon hosted by the Mayor of Espoo, brought together Finnish city authorities, companies, and Indian representatives to explore collaboration in digitalization, clean energy, and smart mobility. CEO-level meetings added concrete sectoral depth by focusing on EV charging networks, modern harvesting and farming solutions, innovation platforms linking students and startups, and scalable satellite-based services.

## **SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES AND GROWTH PROSPECTS**

- Collaboration with Kempower around EV charging solutions directly advances both countries' climate and transport-sector decarbonization objectives.
- Discussions with Sampo Rosenlew and Mahindra Europe point towards more efficient, fuel-saving agricultural machinery, supporting sustainable farming practices in diverse agro-climatic conditions.
- Reorbit's space-tech interest opens opportunities in earth-observation and communications services relevant to climate monitoring, logistics optimisation, and disaster management.
- Agro-based exports such as spices, makhana, coffee, and sustainable wellness products resonate with Finnish consumer preferences for high-quality, responsibly sourced goods.
- By targeting resource-intensive but efficiency-driven segments of Finland's imports, Indian exporters can integrate into greener, technology-rich supply chains.

## **SPECIALIZED AREAS OF EMPHASIS**

A distinctive element of the report is its detailed listing of over 50 individual export enquiries, ranging from food products and agricultural commodities to labware, textiles, plastics, engineering items, and wellness brands, each matched with Finnish importer information. This underlines an unusually strong facilitation and matchmaking function by the mission, aimed at converting scattered interest into durable commercial relationships. Equally noteworthy is the repeated emphasis on geoeconomics and city-level innovation partnerships, signaling that India is being framed not only as a trading partner but as a strategic actor in Finland's debates on supply-chain resilience, clean technologies, and digital transformation.

## **SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

The composition of trade enquiries—especially in wellness products, herbal items, coffee, spices, textiles, and lifestyle goods—reflects the gradual diffusion of Indian cultural and consumption patterns into Finnish markets. At the same time, cooperation in EV infrastructure, efficient agricultural machinery, and climate-relevant space services shows how commercial ties are increasingly intertwined with environmental objectives. This combination of cultural soft power and green technology collaboration enhances mutual familiarity and supports positioning Indian products within Finland's environmentally and socially conscious consumer base.

## **FUTURE PERSPECTIVE AND SUMMARY**

The outlook for India–Finland economic relations is cautiously optimistic, resting on stable trade flows, the absence of regulatory friction, and a deep pool of prospective business leads. Converting identified product opportunities and the active enquiry pipeline into long-term contracts, joint ventures, and co-innovation projects will be crucial for scaling the relationship beyond its current niche size. If sustained, the focus on EVs, agritech, space technologies, and sustainable consumer goods can create high-quality value chains that serve both countries' priorities on green growth, digitalization, and resilience. August 2025 therefore appears as a consolidating phase—marked less by headline deals and more by patient groundwork for a more strategic, innovation-driven and environmentally aligned partnership.

**Source: MECR Report - Finland**

# COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT

## Balancing Openness and Oversight: India-Hungary Economic Relations

### OVERVIEW AND BILATERAL CONTEXT

Hungary remains a small but important economic partner for India, with merchandise trade in October 2025 broadly balanced and anchored in complementary strengths. Hungary's high trade openness, coupled with India's growing demand for technology-intensive imports and export markets, underpins a stable, medium-term partnership.

### TRADE STRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC LINKAGES

India's key exports to Hungary include pharmaceuticals, automotive components, plastics and specialized chemical intermediates, often accounting for notable shares in Hungary's total imports in selected tariff lines. Hungarian exports to India are dominated by higher-technology products such as data-processing units, electrical machinery, carbon-fibre items and technical ceramics, reflecting Hungary's role as a niche supplier of advanced industrial inputs.

### REGULATORY AND INVESTMENT CLIMATE

Hungary's investment regime blends active state promotion of priority sectors with a demanding regulatory environment, including extensive FDI screening in "strategic" areas such as energy, telecom, defence, finance, and key manufacturing segments. Land-ownership limits for non-EU investors, price controls in certain consumer sectors and frequent regulatory changes require Indian investors to factor in longer lead times and careful compliance planning when structuring projects.

### INVESTMENT AND BUSINESS COLLABORATION

Recent large-scale projects in toys, med-tech and defence manufacturing, as well as state-guided restructuring in steel, highlight Hungary's focus on building industrial depth and safeguarding strategic capacities. These moves, while not India-specific, create an ecosystem where Indian firms can plug into sophisticated value chains as component suppliers, technology partners or co-investors in segments like pharmaceuticals, medical devices, defence systems and specialized engineering.



### INVESTMENT AND BUSINESS COLLABORATION – KEY POINTERS

- Hungary's success in attracting major greenfield expansions shows its capability as a hub for export-oriented, high-quality manufacturing that can integrate Indian suppliers and service firms.
- Consolidation of defence-related assets into a unified holding strengthens a platform where Indian defence and engineering companies could explore component or sub-system tie-ups over time.
- Use of targeted grants and incentives in recent projects offers a template for structuring Indo-Hungarian co-investment in advanced manufacturing and life-sciences clusters.
- Government focus on reviving corporate activity through improved SME financing and tax relief may gradually improve entry conditions for Indian SMEs and mid-sized investors.
- Active information dissemination on Indian trade fairs and start-up platforms sustains a pipeline of B2B contacts and potential joint ventures, including in IT, start-ups and manufacturing.

### EMERGING TRENDS, INNOVATION AND POLICY DIRECTION

Hungary's services imports have softened in areas like travel, consulting, R&D and engineering, even as demand for accounting and tax services expands, indicating a rebalancing of external services demand. Policymakers are prioritizing SME credit support, targeted tax changes, regulatory easing and AI-related initiatives to counter weak business sentiment at a time when international institutions expect only modest growth in the near term.

## **SUSTAINABILITY AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES**

Environmental scrutiny has intensified, particularly around battery and heavy-industry projects, with courts willing to suspend or annul permits where compliance is inadequate. This raises the bar for future investments but also favours Indian players able to offer cleaner technologies, strong ESG standards and credible community engagement, especially in EV batteries, advanced materials, clean energy and circular-economy solutions.

## **UNIQUE FOCUS AREAS AND SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS**

The report's distinctive emphasis on food-price inflation and FDI screening highlights how cost-of-living pressures and investment-security concerns now sit at the core of Hungary's domestic and external economic narrative. High cumulative food inflation, currency volatility and regulatory activism on strategic assets have socio-economic implications for households and investors alike, reinforcing the premium on resilient supply chains, stable pricing and politically sensitive business models.

## **OUTLOOK AND CONCLUSION**

Overall, Hungary offers a combination of strong trade integration, recovering tourism and assertive industrial policy, offset by subdued growth prospects, elevated inflation and regulatory complexity. For India, the most promising path forward lies in deepening merchandise trade in pharmaceuticals, chemicals, auto components and prospective high-tech lines, while selectively building co-investment and technology partnerships in med-tech, defence, green energy, digital solutions and agri-business, as and when regulatory predictability improves.

**Source: MECR Report - Hungary**



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# COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT

## India-Ireland Economic Synergy 2025: Advancing Trade, Innovation, and Sustainable Collaboration

### OVERVIEW

The August 2025 economic and commercial report provides a comprehensive analysis of the evolving partnership between India and Ireland. Beyond trade statistics, the report captures trends in investment, technological collaboration, cultural engagement, and policy shifts shaping bilateral relations. This partnership, rooted in shared democratic values and ambitions for technological advancement, has steadily grown, with trade in goods and services reaching nearly €16 billion annually as of 2024-25. The report highlights both strengths—such as rising exchanges in pharmaceuticals, technology, and education—and enduring challenges like global economic headwinds and changing regulatory environments.

### TRADE RELATIONS

Bilateral trade for August 2025 reached €118.19 million, with imports from India at €85.71 million and Irish exports to India at €32.48 million. Although both imports and exports declined compared to August 2024, India remains a key strategic partner for Ireland's diversified import mix, especially in organic chemicals, apparel, and pharmaceuticals. Pulp, plastics, and beverages lead Irish exports to India, with market access shaped by regulatory changes and partnership opportunities.

### ECONOMIC DYNAMICS

Ireland's global trade performance saw a decline for the third consecutive month. Tariff suspensions and steel import quotas allowed competitive access to intermediate goods. In August 2025, regulatory adjustments supported cost relief for manufacturers and maintained bilateral supply chain efficiency. Medical pharmaceutical exports were a substantial segment, though their decline reflected wider global pressures.

### BILATERAL AND INVESTMENT RELATIONS

India retains its appeal for Irish investors, particularly in the technology, pharmaceutical, and MSME sectors. A pivotal hybrid webinar this month focused on MSME partnership and innovation, offering a platform for direct interaction between public and private sector leaders from both nations.

### BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL COLLABORATION

- **Joint Economic Commission (JEC):** India and Ireland have agreed to establish a Joint Economic Commission to boost bilateral trade, investment, and technology ties, serving as a platform for strategic collaboration and sectoral growth.



- **Innovation Initiatives:** Ireland actively participated in India Mobile Congress 2025, showcasing its capabilities in IT, telecom, IoT, and artificial intelligence, and advancing pathways for digital transformation and joint technology ventures
- **Academic and Research Partnerships:** Strategic agreements and MoUs have fostered collaboration between Irish and Indian academic institutions, supporting research exchanges, student mobility, and joint innovation across industries.
- **Industry Events and Forums:** AgriBiz Connect and Vibrant Buildcon India facilitated B2B networking in agriculture, infrastructure, and electronics. These forums drew considerable engagement from both Indian exporters and Irish buyers.
- **Pro-business Environment:** Ireland's open market policies and support for foreign direct investment have attracted over 30 Indian companies in diverse sectors, enhancing knowledge transfer and employment opportunities.

### TRENDS AND ONGOING ENGAGEMENTS

Ireland's interest in Indian MSMEs continues to deepen, with ongoing initiatives enhancing technology transfer, innovation, and business process transformation. Intellectual property regulations in Ireland remain transparent and supportive of trade, while tourism links are reinforced by a steady flow of visas and cultural interaction.

### SUSTAINABILITY AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Eco-friendly Ventures:** Irish and Indian firms are increasingly collaborating on green chemicals, eco-friendly packaging, and sustainable agriculture, riding global ESG trends.
- **Renewable Energy:** Joint ventures in solar and wind energy projects are actively promoted, leveraging India's large-scale needs and Ireland's technical expertise.

- **Sustainable Supply Chains:** Both governments encourage responsible sourcing and biodegradable product usage, setting industry benchmarks for reduced environmental impact.
- **Trade Promotion with Sustainability:** Embassy-backed programs, such as sector-focused webinars and co-funded trade platforms, place sustainability at the center of business strategy and outreach.
- **Long-term Opportunities:** Bilateral ties are expected to yield growth in technology-driven and sustainability-led business sectors, fostering resilient economic linkages and innovation ecosystems.

### UNIQUE FOCUS OF THE REPORT

This month's report presents a distinctive focus on MSME-driven innovation and sectoral digitalization. The Embassy is prioritizing platforms and exchanges that stimulate MSME participation in global value chains, recognizing these enterprises as central to inclusive economic development. Notably, dedicated diplomatic and commercial events have put MSME capabilities—in automation, digital services, and green solutions—in the spotlight, fostering partnerships built on skills sharing, R&D, and mutual capacity-building. This proactive emphasis stands out from previous reports by reflecting the growing consensus that scalable, sustainable MSME engagement is critical to bilateral and EU-wide economic recovery.

### CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The strengthening of India–Ireland commercial relations has been instrumental in driving cultural exchange, tourism, and people-to-people connectivity. Over 800,000 Indians visit or reside (including students and professionals) in Ireland and contribute to the local culture. The flourishing Indian diaspora and student population in Ireland foster vibrant academic, culinary, and artistic networks, while Irish professionals and entrepreneurs increasingly seek opportunities in India's tech and creative sectors. Environmentally, there is visible momentum toward embedding sustainability in all major trade and business collaborations. Joint programs on eco-friendly packaging, renewable energy, and green infrastructure are not only driving commercial benefits but also creating shared frameworks for reducing carbon footprint and promoting global environmental best practices.

### OUTLOOK AND CONCLUSION

The medium-term outlook for India–Ireland economic and commercial relations is robustly optimistic, provided global macroeconomic challenges are well managed. The renewed policy thrust on MSME support, digitization, and green partnerships unlocks significant opportunities for mutual growth. As bilateral diplomatic engagement continues through high-level visits, joint commissions, and sectoral task forces, trade volumes are expected to rise, especially in technology, healthcare, education, and environmental services. The Embassy's collaborative programs remain central to nurturing resilient supply chains and responsible investment, setting the stage for a more integrated and sustainable India–Ireland partnership in the years ahead.

**Source: MECR Report - Ireland**

# COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT

## India-Italy Economic and Commercial Synergy

### OVERVIEW

During October 2025, economic and commercial relations between India and Italy sustained a positive momentum characterized by robust trade, diplomatic engagement, and strategic industrial partnerships. Italy, governed by the EU's unified customs tariffs and regulatory frameworks, continues to impact bilateral exchanges with India through evolving non-tariff measures related to food safety and pesticide regulations. The Indian Consulate in Milan noted increasing Indian participation in trade promotions and visa issuances, signaling strengthened commercial connectivity.

### TRADE DYNAMICS AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

The bilateral trade landscape is characterized by adherence to EU customs duties, evolving technical regulations, and coordinated trade promotion activities, such as Host Fair 2025. Indian exporters engaged with several hundred Italian businesses, thereby augmenting trade volumes. Business visas and commercial visits increased, reflecting deepening trade ties and diplomatic cooperation within EU frameworks.

### INVESTMENT LANDSCAPE

- **Dumarey Automotive Italia** signaled plans to commence manufacturing operations in India, focusing on automotive components.
- **UCIMU association of Italian machine tool and automation manufacturers**, discussed joint ventures with Indian firms.
- **The India-Italy Business Meet** emphasized investment opportunities in India's Global Capability Centers, including sectors such as AI, fintech, and R&D.
- **The Indian Consulate** facilitated connections with Invest India to assist Italian businesses exploring investment prospects.
- **Both sides showcased commitments** to expanding bilateral industrial and technological synergies.

### COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS AND INDUSTRIAL SYNERGIES

Collaborations are growing in advanced manufacturing, robotics, and automation, with recognized potential for technology transfer and R&D cooperation. The automotive and machine tools sectors lead these developments, supported by trade associations aiming to organize further joint initiatives to deepen industrial cooperation.



### STRATEGIC COLLABORATIONS

Bilateral cooperation extends beyond trade to include discussions on joint events, industrial policies, and exploration of emerging sectors. The emphasis remains on innovation and alignment with global economic shifts, illustrated by Italian and Indian exchange offices fostering continuous dialogue about market access and business facilitation.

### CURRENT MARKET DEVELOPMENTS

Regulatory updates in the European Union, particularly concerning health claims on food and pesticide product approvals, mark key ongoing developments. India aligns export and compliance strategies to meet these evolving standards. Meanwhile, burgeoning digital and financial technology investments underscore the dynamism of the bilateral economic environment.

### ACTIVE INITIATIVES AND INNOVATION HIGHLIGHTS

Prominent innovation-related initiatives include India's booming Global Capability Centers hosting over 1,600 centers globally. The bilateral focus is directed towards leveraging India's strengths in AI, fintech, and research, attracting Italian technology investments and cooperation to advance joint economic goals.

### SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES AND GROWTH PROSPECTS

- No immediate technological transfer opportunities emerged in October 2025.
- Investment offerings remain limited regarding Italian company assets divestment.
- Export tenders exceeding USD 5 million were absent for Indian suppliers this month.
- Ongoing EU trade facilitation measures aid bilateral commerce.
- Heightened regulatory focus on sustainable agriculture and food safety offers future business avenues.

## **SPECIALIZED AREAS OF EMPHASIS**

The report places unique focus on draft EU health-related food regulations, pesticide usage policies, and harmonized conformity assessments, highlighting stringent quality and environmental standards affecting bilateral trade. Additionally, the push for automotive manufacturing expansion in India and the spotlight on India's technology-driven Global Capability Centers showcase specialized sectoral priorities.

## **SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

Trade fairs featuring Indian coffee and artisanal products foster cultural exchange, complementing economic ties by enhancing bilateral goodwill. Environmental regulations steer cooperation towards sustainable practices, reflecting mutual commitment to responsible industry and ecological mindfulness, influencing both commercial and cultural domains.

## **SUMMARY**

Looking forward, India-Italy economic relations exhibit resilience and potential, bolstered by expanding trade volumes, industrial partnerships, and growing investments in tech-driven sectors. Regulatory challenges in the EU context necessitate adaptable strategies from Indian exporters. The alignment on sustainability and innovation underscores a comprehensive partnership framework. This month's review attests to a collaborative, evolving relationship promising sustained growth and mutual benefit in the years ahead.

**Source: MECR Report - Italy**



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# CHAMBER'S ACTIVITIES

## OUTREACH PROGRAMME - CHENNAI



The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India organised its outreach programme in Chennai on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2025 held at Welcomhotel by ITC Hotels in collaboration with our associate partner, BVK Group. The session brought together representatives from EU businesses, local industry leaders, and chamber members to strengthen engagement with the Southern business ecosystem. The discussions highlighted opportunities for enhanced EU–India cooperation, particularly in sectors such as technology, manufacturing, and sustainable development.

The programme also served as a platform to understand regional priorities and explore new avenues for collaboration with stakeholders in Tamil Nadu. Valuable insights were shared on emerging business trends, regulatory developments, and investment prospects, helping us shape more targeted initiatives in the coming months. The strong participation and positive feedback reaffirm our commitment to deepening our outreach across key Indian cities.

## 5<sup>TH</sup> EU-INDIA EDUCATION SUMMIT



EU Chamber hosted the 5th EU–India Education Summit in Chennai on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2025, held at Hotel Ramada Plaza, bringing together distinguished representatives from European universities, Indian institutions, education experts, and policymakers. The summit focused on strengthening academic cooperation, expanding mobility programmes, and fostering collaborative research initiatives. Participants shared insights on emerging trends in global education, digital learning, and the evolving skill requirements for future-ready talent.

The discussions also highlighted the importance of institutional partnerships and student exchange frameworks in deepening EU–India educational ties. Stakeholders expressed strong interest in co-developing innovative programmes, enhancing industry–academia connections, and creating new opportunities for capacity-building across both regions. The successful engagement at the Summit reaffirmed the shared commitment to building a more interconnected and future-oriented education ecosystem.

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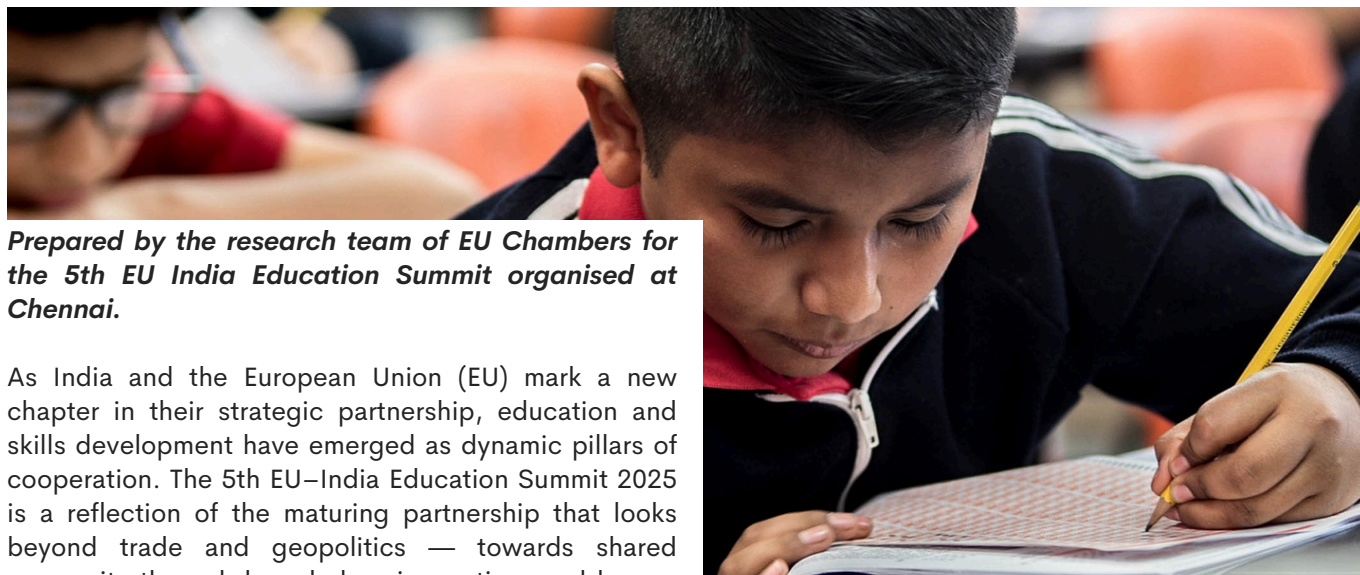
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# 5<sup>TH</sup> EU-INDIA EDUCATION SUMMIT

## BACKGROUND PAPER



*Prepared by the research team of EU Chambers for the 5th EU India Education Summit organised at Chennai.*

As India and the European Union (EU) mark a new chapter in their strategic partnership, education and skills development have emerged as dynamic pillars of cooperation. The 5th EU-India Education Summit 2025 is a reflection of the maturing partnership that looks beyond trade and geopolitics — towards shared prosperity through knowledge, innovation, and human capital.

The context for collaboration is compelling. Europe, home to some of the world's most advanced economies, faces growing demographic shifts with one in five Europeans expected to be over the age of 65 by 2030. This could eventually culminate in a talent gap. India, by contrast, stands at the other end of the spectrum: a young and energetic nation where nearly 65% of the population is under 35. This demographic dividend represents one of the world's largest reservoirs of future-ready talent — but it also places enormous responsibility on India's education and skilling systems to equip its youth for global opportunities.

Beyond individual mobility, structural alignment is taking shape — with over 50 occupational standards now being mapped under the India-EU Skills Dialogue, paving the way for mutual recognition of qualifications and seamless employability.

India's Union Budget 2025-26 further underscored the country's commitment to future ready education. The Ministry of Education's allocation rose by 6.65% to ₹1.28 lakh crore, with targeted funding that reflects clear strategic intent: ₹1,425 crore for the Vigyan Dhara scheme to strengthen scientific temperament and research; ₹500 crore for AI in Education initiatives to integrate artificial intelligence and machine learning into learning systems; and resources to set up 50,000 Atal Tinkering Labs and ensure broadband access for all government secondary schools.

Recently, the Prime Minister launched the Research Development and Innovation (RDI) Scheme Fund, a Rs 1 lakh-crore corpus designed to encourage private sector investment in research and development. The fund aims to create capital availability for projects that carry higher risk but have the potential for large-scale impact. Together, these investments are creating an innovation-driven education ecosystem aligned with India's Viksit Bharat 2047 vision.

These priorities strongly resonate with the EU's own focus on digital transformation, green skills, and inclusive education. The convergence of these agendas marks a powerful moment — where policy intent, technological capabilities, and human aspiration intersect.

With respect to education, the Viksit Bharat Vision 2047 aims to create a developed nation by transforming the education system through a focus on holistic, skill-based, and technology-driven learning. Key components include enhancing digital literacy, empowering teachers with new skills, fostering lifelong learning, and strengthening the link between academia and industry to ensure graduates are future-ready.

"Learning Without Borders" is, therefore, both a metaphor and a mission. It is an ambition to transcend geographical, technological, and institutional boundaries in shaping the workforce of tomorrow. Towards nurturing globally competent citizens who can think, create, and collaborate across frontiers, it is driving growth, both for India and Europe in an interconnected world.

# SESSION 1

## Leading without Borders: Diplomatic and Institutional Leadership for a shared Future

### EDUCATIONAL DIPLOMACY: THE NEW AXIS OF COOPERATION

Over the past decade, education has evolved from a cultural exchange to a central pillar of diplomacy between India and the European Union (EU). The EU–India Strategic Partnership Roadmap 2025 identifies education, research, and innovation as key enablers of long-term collaboration. This growing emphasis reflects a shared understanding that knowledge partnerships are the new engines of geopolitical and economic strength.

For the EU, initiatives like Erasmus+, Horizon Europe and the Team Europe Initiatives powerful instruments of soft power — extending Europe’s influence through intellectual collaboration and capacity building. Erasmus+ alone has supported over 6,000 European students in India-linked programmes and nearly 10,000 Indian students and professionals in EU institutions since 2014. Horizon Europe — the EU’s €95 billion research and innovation framework — has opened new channels for Indian participation, especially in climate, clean energy, and digital technologies. These programmes not only fund mobility and research but also nurture shared values of inclusivity, sustainability, and academic excellence.

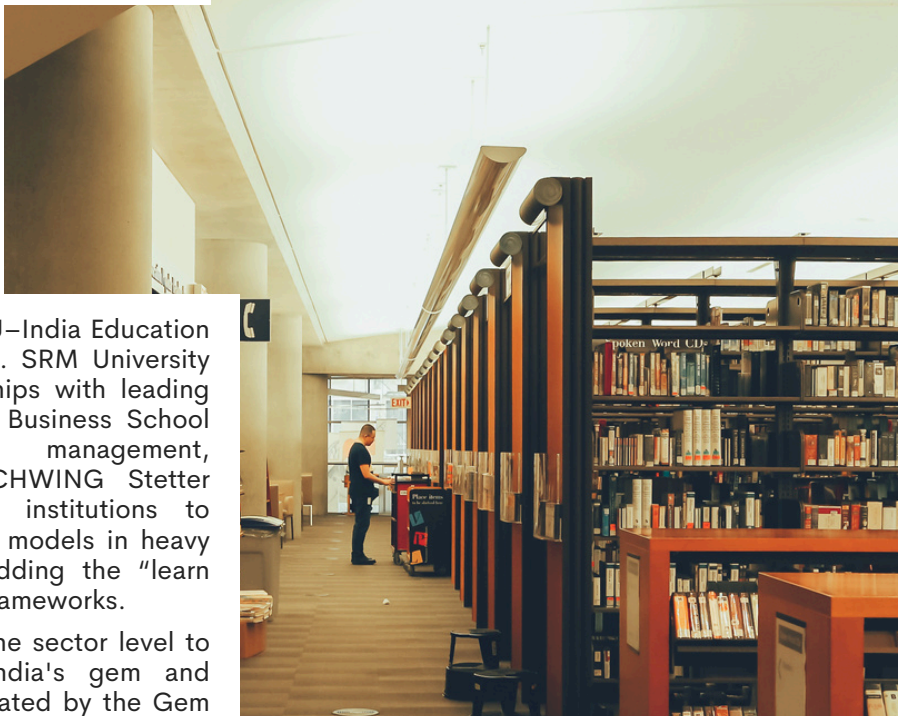
On India’s side, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a paradigm shift. It envisions a globalised education ecosystem built on flexibility, multidisciplinary learning, and international collaboration. NEP 2020 encourages top global universities to establish campuses in India and fosters academic credit transfer and dual degree programmes with foreign institutions. This aligns perfectly with the EU’s goal of promoting learning mobility and cross-border talent flows.

Bilateral frameworks have strengthened above ambitions. France and India have deepened university alliances under the Campus France initiative and the Indo-French Knowledge Summit. Germany’s Skilled Immigration Act and cooperation through DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) have facilitated smoother pathways for Indian graduates in science, engineering, and digital technologies. Meanwhile, the EU Delegation in India — a permanent diplomatic mission established in New Delhi in 1983 — works closely with consulates in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Maharashtra, has intensified education outreach through fairs, alumni networks, and institution-level partnerships. Collectively, these efforts position education not merely as a diplomatic talking point but as a strategic bridge between two knowledge economies.



## INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP: FROM MOUs TO MULTILATERAL MISSIONS

*While governments set the framework, it is universities and institutions that give partnerships life and continuity. Across India, academic linkages with European universities have expanded from memoranda of understandings (MoUs) to collaborative ecosystems.*



Tamil Nadu, the host of this year's EU–India Education Summit, exemplifies this momentum. SRM University has established long-term partnerships with leading French universities such as EDHEC Business School and Audencia, focusing on management, sustainability, and technology. SCHWING Stetter collaborates with local technical institutions to promote German vocational training models in heavy equipment manufacturing — embedding the “learn and earn” model into Indian skilling frameworks.

There is also a concerted effort at the sector level to promote skilling. For instance, India's gem and jewellery skilling is primarily coordinated by the Gem and Jewellery Skill Council of India (GJSCI), a body that develops curriculum, creates occupational standards, and accredits training institutes to meet industry needs. The GJSCI offers training for roles across the sector, including diamond processing, gemstone processing, jewellery manufacturing (like goldsmithing and CAD design), and retailing. They also support entrepreneurship, provide training for trainers, and run Centers of Excellence for high-standard training.

Another important instrument of collaboration is the establishment of Jean Monnet Centres of Excellence (JMCEs) in India. Supported by the EU, these centres — hosted by universities like JNU, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, and Pondicherry University — promote research and teaching in EU studies, global governance, and international relations. JMCEs serve as intellectual bridges, fostering deeper academic and policy understanding between the two regions.

In parallel, EU universities are expanding their physical and digital footprint in India. Education expos organised by EU member states, often under the ‘Study in Europe’ banner, are witnessing record participation. The growth of virtual classrooms, joint online degree programmes, and digital credentialing initiatives has further blurred geographical boundaries — accelerating the “learning without borders” vision.

## EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY: THE NEXT FRONTIER

The convergence of education and technology presents the most exciting frontier for EU–India collaboration. Both regions recognise that future competitiveness depends on digital skills, innovation, and responsible technological governance. India's Union Budget 2025–26 earmarked ₹500 crore to establish a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Artificial

Intelligence for education to boost AI-driven learning and skills development. This funding aims to transform classrooms through adaptive learning platforms, smart labs, and AI-enabled teaching tools. The Vigyan Dhara scheme and the expansion of Atal Tinkering Labs reinforce this focus on experiential learning and innovation at the school level.

Across the EU, the Digital Education Action Plan (2021–2027) mirrors these priorities. It seeks to improve digital literacy, foster ethical use of AI, and support open learning ecosystems across Europe. The EU is also promoting micro-credentials — short, modular courses certified across borders — which could inspire similar models in India.

The opportunity for collaboration lies in co-developing AI ethics frameworks, digital credentialing systems, and joint innovation hubs that link academia, start-ups, and industry. For instance, in Tamil Nadu's growing tech clusters — home to firms like Zoho, Bosch, and Saint-Gobain — EU partners can work with local universities to develop AI research and digital manufacturing labs. Such initiatives not only prepare students for future jobs but also embed ethical and sustainable practices into the use of emerging technologies.

At another level, Indian Global Capability Centers (GCCs) are connecting to India-EU education cooperation through industry-academia partnerships that align curriculum with GCC needs, build a pipeline of skilled talent, and foster collaboration on innovation and sustainability. This connection is a key part of the broader India-EU partnership, which aims to strengthen economic ties through areas like digital transformation, green energy, and higher education mobility.

# LEADERSHIP AT THE SUB-NATIONAL & INDUSTRY LEVELS

**Education diplomacy is increasingly decentralised. Sub-national governments and industries are becoming active participants in EU-India cooperation.**

Tamil Nadu, one of India's most industrialised states, has emerged as a hub for EU-linked education partnerships. The Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation collaborates with EU consulates and companies to integrate global standards into vocational training. Similar models are being replicated in Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Gujarat, where regional universities are tying up with European chambers and firms for industry-led skill programmes.

European companies operating in India — Bosch, Siemens, Airbus, Schneider Electric, Renault-Nissan, and Volvo among them — are playing a critical role in creating education-Industry linkages. Many of these firms run Centres of Excellence (CoE) or apprenticeship models that merge classroom learning with practical exposure, directly aligning with India's Skill India and Make in India missions.

Such an ecosystem reflects a virtuous cycle — industry fuels skilling demand, academia supplies trained talent, and government frameworks ensure long-term sustainability.

## CHALLENGES AND THE WAY AHEAD

Despite significant progress, challenges remain. First, harmonising standards — from credit systems and degree structures to quality benchmarks — is vital for smoother collaboration. Both regions are working toward alignment between the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and India's National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF), but progress must accelerate.

Second, funding mechanisms need expansion. Co-financed research funds and scholarship schemes could scale participation from Tier-2 and Tier-3 institutions, ensuring inclusivity.

Third, student mobility continues to face administrative hurdles. Streamlined visa processing, easier work permits, and multi-entry research visas could make a tangible difference.

To coordinate these efforts, there is a strong case for establishing an EU-India Education and Research Council — a permanent joint body comprising policymakers, academics, and industry leaders. Such a platform could monitor implementation, evaluate impact, and adapt frameworks to emerging needs.

Finally, inclusivity must remain central. Expanding scholarships for women, supporting rural institutions, and bridging digital divides will ensure that "learning without borders" remains not just a policy aspiration but a reality for all learners.



The present era of educational diplomacy and institutional leadership marks a decisive evolution in the EU-India relationship. From classrooms to corporate boardrooms, from India's innovation hubs to Europe's research corridors, both partners are demonstrating that collaboration in education is far from peripheral; it is foundational to building a resilient, skilled, and sustainable global future.

# SESSION 2

## Student to Global Citizen: Policies for Seamless Academic and Professionally Mobility



### FROM MOBILITY TO EMPLOYABILITY: BUILDING THE TALENT BRIDGE

The education partnership between India and the European Union (EU) is no longer confined to academic exchange. It has become a bridge connecting global classrooms to global careers. Both sides are reimagining how skills, education, and employability intersect in an increasingly borderless world.

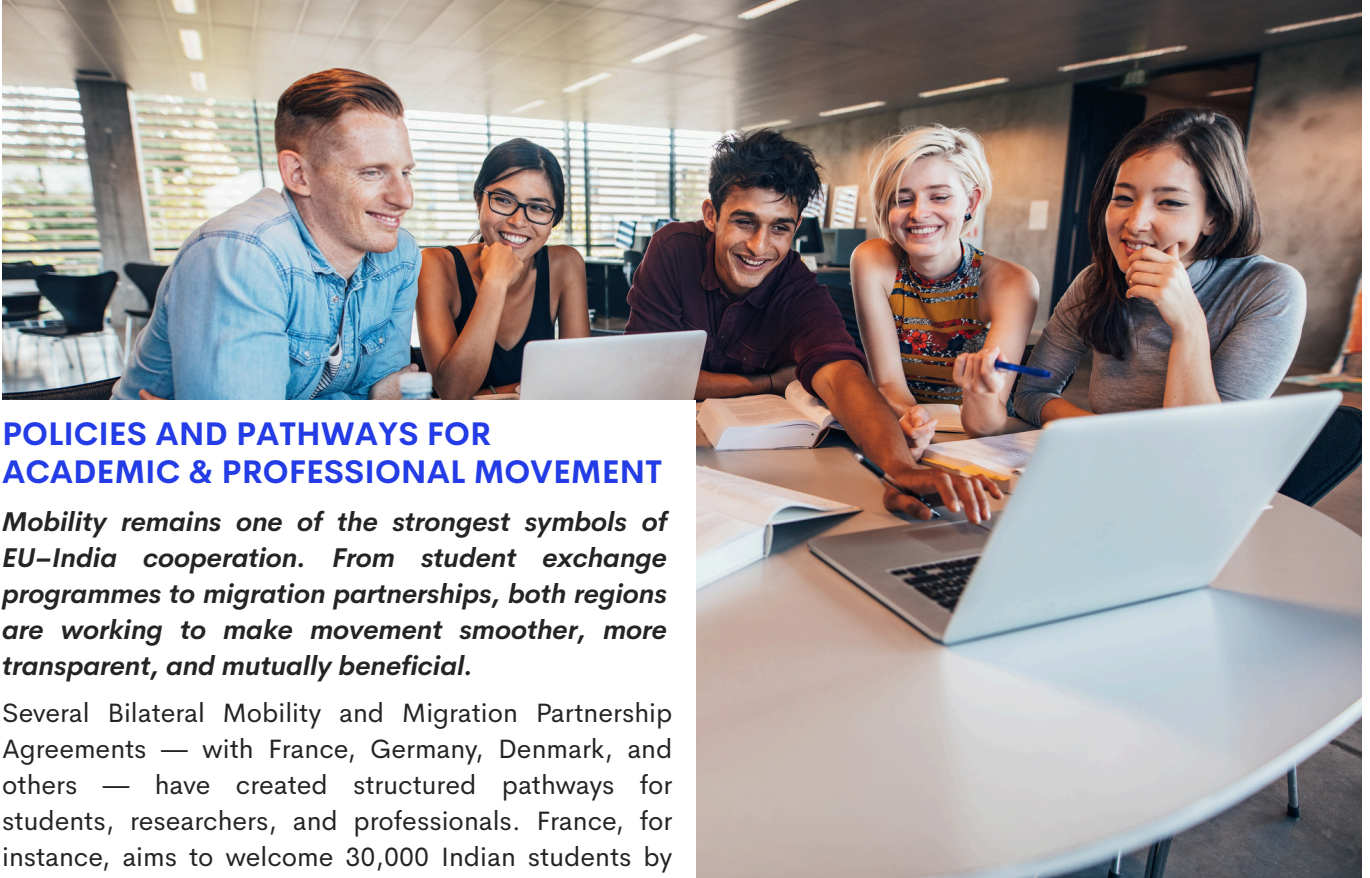
At the heart of this transformation are two complementary frameworks: India's Skill India Mission and the EU's European Skills Agenda. Together, they form a twin engine for global workforce readiness. The Skill India Mission has already trained over 150 million youth across diverse sectors, with a growing focus on digital and green skills. The EU, through its Skills Agenda and the Pact for Skills, is addressing critical labour shortages in sectors such as healthcare, digital technology, and renewable energy — areas where Indian talent can play a transformative role.

To make this talent bridge effective, India and the EU are working to align their qualification frameworks — the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) — enabling

mutual recognition of skills, credentials, and occupational standards. The ongoing India–EU Skills Dialogue, which has already mapped 50 occupational standards, is a major step towards standardising quality benchmarks and making skill certification globally portable.

The demand landscape itself is changing rapidly. Emerging domains like artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), cyber-security, renewable energy, green manufacturing, healthcare, and logistics are driving new career opportunities. The global green transition, coupled with Europe's ageing workforce, is creating a shortage of nearly 6 million skilled workers across key sectors. India's young and tech-savvy population, backed by its rapidly modernising higher education and skilling ecosystems, is well positioned to meet this demand. This is supplemented by India's recent policies to promote skill development.

Moreover, digital tools such as blockchain-based global skill passports and micro credentialing platforms are easing employment transitions. These digital credentials, recognised across borders, can help workers demonstrate verified skills to employers worldwide. Such innovations are reshaping the meaning of "mobility" — from physical relocation to the seamless transfer of talent, trust, and opportunity.



## **POLICIES AND PATHWAYS FOR ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL MOVEMENT**

*Mobility remains one of the strongest symbols of EU–India cooperation. From student exchange programmes to migration partnerships, both regions are working to make movement smoother, more transparent, and mutually beneficial.*

Several Bilateral Mobility and Migration Partnership Agreements — with France, Germany, Denmark, and others — have created structured pathways for students, researchers, and professionals. France, for instance, aims to welcome 30,000 Indian students by 2030, supported by expanded scholarships and post-study work visas. Germany's Opportunity Card system under the Skilled Immigration Act facilitates access for qualified professionals, while Denmark and India are exploring flexible models for circular migration.

Academic mobility, too, is gaining new momentum. Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) between universities and professional bodies are allowing degrees, credits, and qualifications to carry value across borders. This development supports dual-degree and joint-research programmes, enabling students to study part of their curriculum in India and part in Europe without administrative friction.

The experience of cross-border collaboration also extends to research infrastructure and data systems. Just as India's Gati Shakti platform has integrated multi-layered spatial data for infrastructure planning, the EU's European Open Science Cloud is creating interoperable digital spaces for academic research. A potential convergence of these approaches could yield a joint "EduData Commons" — a framework that allows universities and policymakers to share anonymised learning and employability data for better policy decisions.

## **THE LEARNER EXPERIENCE: FROM CAMPUS TO CAREER**

At the centre of all these frameworks are the learners themselves — students who are increasingly shaping global narratives through their academic choices, entrepreneurial spirit, and cultural understanding.

Across Europe, Indian students are thriving in disciplines that define the future — from AI and robotics in Germany to design and sustainable architecture in the Netherlands, and clean energy engineering in France. Many have gone on to become founders, researchers, and policymakers bridging both worlds. Conversely, European students studying in India — through Erasmus+ or institutional partnerships — are engaging with India's unique development challenges, entrepreneurship ecosystems, and social innovation models.

Networks such as Erasmus+ alumni associations, DAAD alumni chapters, and the EU Chambers of Commerce play a vital role in connecting education to employability. These networks mentor new students, facilitate internships, and help graduates navigate the transition from campus to corporate or entrepreneurial life.

Equally important is the evolution of curricula. Both India and the EU are embedding sustainability, diversity, and global citizenship into their education systems. Programmes that blend academic learning with social impact — from rural innovation labs to green energy incubators — are shaping a generation of professionals who see economic success and environmental responsibility as interconnected goals.

The shift is from "student" to "global citizen" encapsulates the true essence of learning without borders: education as a means not just of employment, but of empowerment and shared purpose.

# DIGITAL & HYBRID LEARNING ECOSYSTEMS

The digital revolution is reshaping how education is delivered, consumed, and credentialed — and here, too, India and the EU are natural partners.

The pandemic accelerated the adoption of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Virtual exchange classrooms, and AI-powered adaptive learning platforms. The EU's Digital Education Action Plan (2021–2027) and India's National Digital University initiative both recognise that hybrid learning models will define the next decade of education.

Collaborations are already emerging. Indian EdTech startups are partnering with European universities to deliver micro-degrees in fintech, data science, and climate technology. European institutions are reciprocating by offering joint online certification programs accessible to Indian students and professionals.

A promising area of cooperation lies in AI-enabled learning tools and data-driven pedagogy. The integration of Atal Tinkering Labs in schools and universities with European research frameworks on digital learning could create shared innovation ecosystems where students experiment, prototype, and co-create across continents.

Equally transformative is the emergence of digital universities and virtual mobility programmes. These enable students to experience academic exchange without leaving their home countries — making global learning more inclusive, affordable, and sustainable.

## BRIDGING THE LAST MILE

As education and employability systems converge, the focus must now shift to bridging the last mile — ensuring that the promise of global learning translates into tangible opportunities for all.

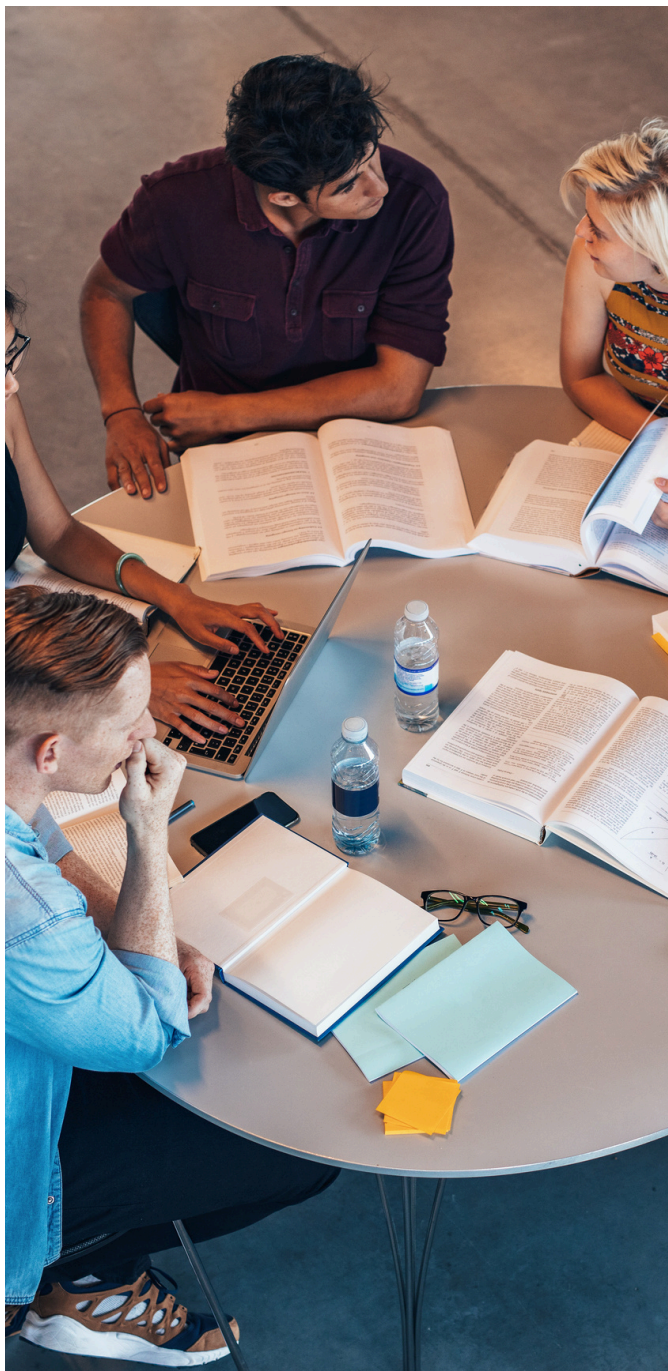
This requires three things:

- Scalable partnerships between EU and Indian universities to expand access beyond elite institutions.
- Integrated career pathways that link academic programmes with internships, apprenticeships, and industry certifications.
- Digital inclusion measures to ensure that students from underrepresented regions and socio-economic backgrounds can participate in global education.

Together, these will make the EU–India Education Corridor not just a pipeline of mobility, but a living ecosystem of shared growth, innovation, and opportunity.



# From vision to Action



***The 5th EU–India Education Summit comes at a pivotal moment in global learning and cooperation. The discussions across the sessions converge on four interconnected themes — diplomacy, technology, employability, and mobility — each reinforcing the other in shaping a future-ready education partnership.***

Diplomacy has evolved beyond treaties and trade to encompass the exchange of ideas, values, and human capital. Education now stands as the new currency of trust between India and the EU — one that enriches societies and strengthens bilateral ties.

Technology is redefining the classroom, from AI-enabled learning and digital universities to cross-continental research powered by data. Both regions are investing in digital literacy and responsible innovation, ensuring that the learners of today are the innovators of tomorrow.

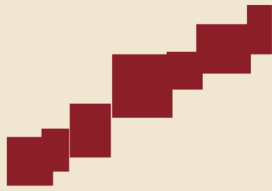
Employability is the bridge between knowledge and opportunity. As India's Skill India Mission and the EU's Skills Agenda align, they are setting new benchmarks for global workforce readiness across green, digital, and creative sectors.

And Mobility — academic, professional, and digital — is transforming students into global citizens, connecting campuses to careers across borders.

To translate this shared vision into lasting impact, three call-to-action priorities are:

1. Establish an EU–India Global Education and Talent Mobility Taskforce to coordinate policies, pathways, and partnerships.
2. Expand co-funding under Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe to support next-generation learning in AI, green technologies, and digital transformation.
3. Create a Public–Private Education Data Exchange, enabling real-time skills analytics and evidence-based policy design.

As both regions stand on the cusp of a new learning paradigm, one truth stands clear: "Learning without borders" is not only an educational goal — it is the foundation for shared progress in the digital, AI-driven, and sustainable future".



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\*Glycemic Index(GI) - Glycemic index is a measure used to determine how much specific foods can affect your blood sugar levels. Lower GI foods may affect your blood sugar levels less. Consuming low-GI and high-fibre foods, along with lifestyle modifications\*\* can help manage blood sugar levels.

\*\*To know more about lifestyle modifications, consult your physician/specialist

# INDIA - EU KEY UPDATES

## TRADE & POLICY DEVELOPEMENT

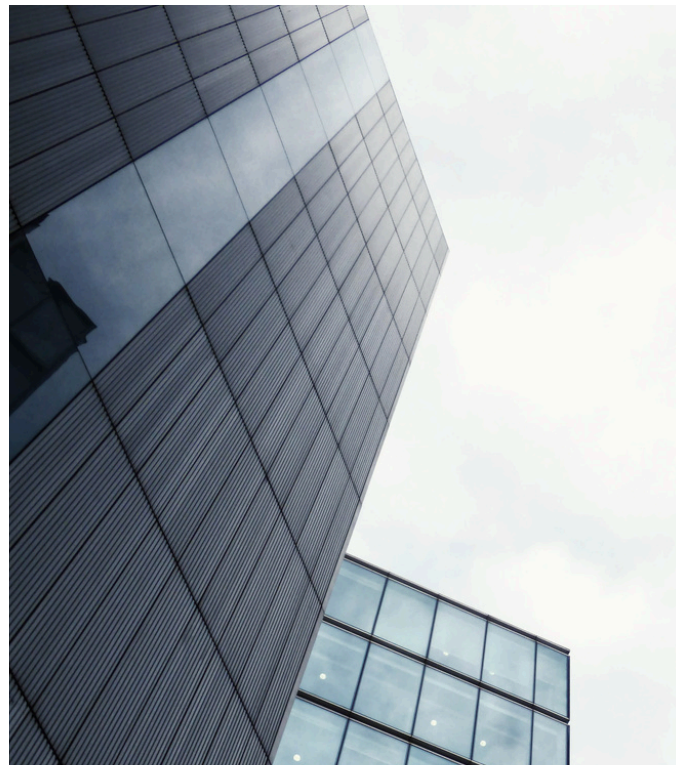
- A senior negotiation team from the European Commission visited New Delhi from 3 – 7 November to advance talks on the proposed India–EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Discussions centred on trade in goods and services, rules of origin, and institutional frameworks. (Press Information Bureau)
- At the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Partnership Summit, Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal announced that India is currently negotiating free trade agreements with the EU, the US, Oman, New Zealand, Peru and others. (The Economic Times)
- During the same summit, EU Industry voices emphasised that India is a secure investment destination ahead of the FTA finalisation. (The Times of India)
- India is seeking tariff relief from the European Union on steel exports as part of ongoing India–EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations, aiming to offset required auto-duty cuts and ease pressure from the EU’s carbon-levy regime. (Moneycontrol)

## MOBILITY & STRATEGIC COOPERATION

- The 9th High-Level Dialogue on Migration & Mobility was held in New Delhi on 14 November. India and the EU discussed a “Comprehensive Framework of Cooperation on Mobility” and a pilot European Legal Gateway Office in India for ICT professionals. (IANS News)
- Bilateral discussions between India and Hungary reinforced the push for a quicker India–EU trade deal, reflecting growing momentum at the member-state level. (Zee Business)
- India is considering introducing visa-on-arrival and streamlined e-visa facilities for medical travellers from the U.S. and multiple EU countries, a move designed to boost its medical-tourism sector and strengthen India–EU connectivity in healthcare services. (The Economic Times)
- V. Anantha Nageswaran, Chief Economic Adviser, emphasised that artificial intelligence must enhance human work—especially in education and healthcare—to deliver scalable, quality services across India’s growth agenda. (financialexpress.com)

## INVESTMENT & INDUSTRY SIGNALS

- European business forums have flagged that Indian states such as Andhra Pradesh are well-positioned to absorb new European investments once the FTA gets completed. (The Times of India)
- Germany–India economic and immigration ties also deepened, signalling broader EU member-state engagement beyond EU-level bodies. (BusinessWorld)
- The European Parliament has dramatically scaled back ESG reporting and due-diligence requirements, a move expected to be viewed favourably by US policymakers. (Bloomberg)



## POLICY & DIPLOMACY

- **India–EU Summit set for January 2026 — FTA push intensifies:** Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal says that India–EU FTA is one of the most difficult and significant FTAs that India is negotiating. He added that over the last three years, a lot of work has been done and he assured that the last phase of negotiations is on, which normally are the most arduous and most difficult.
- **Italy and India chart an expanded strategic partnership:** Italy’s Ambassador emphasised new collaboration priorities — spanning trade, talent mobility, startups, defence, energy transition, connectivity, and people-to-people ties — under the Joint Strategic Action Plan.

# INDIA - EU KEY UPDATES



## TRADE & POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

- **India Seeks Parity on Agri Testing Standards:** India is negotiating mutual recognition of inspection, testing, and quality certification for agricultural goods with the US, EU, UK, Switzerland, ASEAN and others to cut export delays and reduce compliance costs.
- **India Pushes EU for Steel-Tariff Relief in FTA Talks:** India has asked the EU to ease steel tariffs as part of the FTA, arguing that lower duties would help offset reductions in tariff that India is prepared to offer in auto imports.
- **Indian exports diversify amid shifting demand:** Despite a dip in shipments to the US, Indian exporters are finding new growth in Germany and other EU countries and markets across Asia — driven by marine products, automobiles, and gems & jewellery gaining traction.

## INVESTMENT, BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

- **Reliance Retail Brings German Beauty Brand 'Essence' to India:** Reliance Retail has partnered with German cosmetics brand Essence to strengthen its beauty portfolio, marking another European retail entry into India's fast-growing beauty market.
- **Reliance Stops Using Russian Crude at Jamnagar Export Refinery:** To comply with EU sanctions, Reliance has halted the use of Russian crude at its export-only Jamnagar refinery — a move aimed at maintaining seamless access to European markets.

- **Indian Cars Gain Ground in Europe:** European automakers are increasingly exporting India-manufactured cars to the EU, signalling India's rising competitiveness as a global auto production and export hub. (IBEF)
- **India-Germany Deepen Collaboration on Traditional Medicine:** At the 3rd Joint Working Group Meeting in Berlin, India and Germany agreed to expand cooperation on Ayurveda, Yoga, and natural medicine, including standards, research, and practitioner exchange. (IBEF)
- **Dr. Reddy's Gets EU Approval for Key Osteoporosis Biosimilar:** Dr. Reddy's Laboratories received EU marketing authorisation for AVT03, a biosimilar to Prolia/Xgeva, boosting India's pharma footprint in Europe's high-value biologics market.

## DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY & HUMAN RESOURCE COOPERATION

- **UPI-TIPS Linkage Enters Realisation Phase:** The RBI confirmed that linking India's UPI with Europe's TARGET Instant Payment Settlement (TIPS) has moved into the "realisation phase," paving the way for seamless low-cost India-EU cross-border payments.
- **Kerala Facilitates Second-Generation Nurse Migration to Germany:** Kerala's government is supporting large-scale migration of second-generation nurses to Germany through skill-matching and official placement programmes — strengthening India-EU labour mobility.
- **India Plans Visa-On-Arrival for Medical Travellers from EU & US:** India is considering visa-on-arrival and fast-track e-visas for medical travellers from the EU and US to boost medical tourism and strengthen people-to-people health links.

## SUSTAINABILITY & GLOBAL POLICY SIGNALS

**US Exit from COP30 Shifts Climate Leadership to EU & India:** Following the US pullback from COP30, analysts say the onus of driving global climate action will increasingly fall on the EU and India — both advocates of climate finance and green technology transitions.

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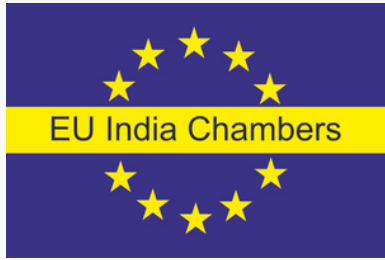
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