

EU-India relations

India and the EU, both 'unions of diversity', have been strategic partners since 2004. The EU adopted a strategy to strengthen this partnership in 2018, and a common roadmap in 2020 to guide joint action until 2025. In 2022, the two partners resumed negotiations on a free trade agreement. With an EU-India summit due early in 2024, Parliament is expected to adopt a report on EU-India relations during its January I plenary session.

Background

[India](#), the world's most populous country and [biggest democracy](#), is set to become the [third-largest economy](#) in the 2030s. A pluralistic, multi-faith, multilingual and multi-ethnic country located in south Asia, at the heart of the crucial Indo-Pacific region, India's importance is also growing at geopolitical level. In September 2023 [Delhi chaired the G20](#), showcasing its growing international role, and presiding over the launch of the [India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor](#). India is a member of the [BRICS](#) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation ([SCO](#)). It is also part of the [Quad](#) (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue in the Indo-Pacific region) and launched the [International Solar Alliance](#) together with France.

The EU and India celebrated 60 years of bilateral diplomatic relations in 2022. Their [cooperation agreement](#) dates back to 1994 and they have been [strategic partners](#) since 2004. The EU adopted a [strategy on India](#) in 2018. At the last EU-India Summit, held in July 2020 by video-conference, the leaders endorsed a common [roadmap](#) to guide joint action until 2025 and further strengthen the EU-India strategic partnership. The first ever [EU-India leaders' meeting](#) took place in May 2021 in Porto by video-conference, with the participation of leaders of all 27 EU Member States and India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. The leaders agreed to resume trade negotiations and launched an [EU-India Connectivity Partnership](#). In April 2022, during the first visit of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to India, the establishment of an [EU-India Trade and Technology Council](#) was announced. A summit is due to take place early in 2024. The EU and India cooperate in several fields, including [climate change](#), [maritime security](#), [digitalisation](#) and [health](#). The [EU is India's largest trading partner](#) and India's second largest export destination. India is the EU's 10th largest trading partner; in 2021, it accounted for 2.1 % of total EU trade in goods. Negotiations on a bilateral trade and investment agreement ([BTIA](#)) began in 2007, stalled in 2013 and [resumed](#) in June 2022.

European Parliament position

On 12 December 2023, Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) adopted a report with a draft recommendation under [Rule 118](#) of the Rules of Procedure. AFET recommends strengthening the EU-India strategic partnership on the basis of democratic governance and international law, and enhancing its ambition once the EU-India roadmap ends in 2025. The recommendation calls for shared action and leadership in the global arena, on issues such as implementation of the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, and recognises the growing importance of security and defence policy, including maritime security. Underlining the need for stronger, inclusive and rules-based connectivity between the EU and India in the areas of digitalisation, transport, climate, environment, energy and health, the report nevertheless expresses concern at India's deteriorating human rights situation and shrinking civic space. The report invites the EU and India to work together towards safeguarding the democratic and human rights of all citizens, and to place human rights at the heart of their partnership.

Own-initiative report: [2023/2128\(INI\)](#); Committee responsible: AFET; Rapporteur: Alviina Alametsä (Greens/EFA, Finland).

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