Chandrawat
& Partners



BILATERAL RELATIONS

INDIA - GERMANY

www.chandrawatpartners.co

INTRODUCTION

India and Germany share a close, long-standing and multifaceted bilateral relationship, with Germany regarded as one of India's most important partners in Europe. India was among the early countries to establish diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Germany after the Second World War, and the two countries marked the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2021. Their relationship has developed across political, economic, technological, educational, scientific and cultural spheres, supported by regular high-level exchanges and cooperation on regional and global issues.

The relationship acquired a strategic dimension in May 2000 with the establishment of the India–Germany Strategic Partnership. This partnership was further institutionalised through the Intergovernmental Consultations (IGC) mechanism launched in 2011, which enables the two governments to review the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation and identify new areas of engagement. India and Germany have subsequently expanded cooperation in trade and investment, manufacturing, innovation, science and technology, renewable energy, infrastructure, skill development, education, health and security.
India and Germany also cooperate closely on issues of global importance, including sustainable development, climate change, energy security, multilateralism and reform of international institutions. In recent years, the partnership has gained further importance in areas such as defence and security, green and sustainable development, digitalisation, emerging technologies, mobility and resilient supply chains.



HISTORY

India–Germany relations have historical roots extending well before the establishment of modern diplomatic relations. Contacts between India and German territories developed through trade and intellectual exchanges, while German scholars played an important role in the study of Indian languages, literature, philosophy and culture. German Indology developed significantly from the nineteenth century, with scholars such as Max Müller and others contributing to the study and publication of Indian texts, including Sanskrit literature. These intellectual and cultural links provided an important foundation for closer relations between the two countries in the modern era.

India and the Federal Republic of Germany established diplomatic relations in 1951, making India one of the early countries to establish diplomatic ties with West Germany after the Second World War. During the following decades, relations developed on the basis of mutual respect and cooperation in political, economic, scientific, technological and cultural fields. The 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations was marked in 2001, when both sides agreed to strengthen regular high-level interaction, including annual summit-level contacts.

A major turning point came in May 2000, when India and Germany adopted the Agenda for Indo-German Partnership in the 21st Century, giving the bilateral relationship a strategic dimension. The strategic partnership provided a broader framework for cooperation in political, economic, scientific and technological affairs and reflected the growing convergence between the two countries on international issues. In 2007, India and Germany further reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening this strategic and global partnership and expanding cooperation on issues such as climate change, energy security, terrorism, international crime and United Nations reform.

The relationship was further institutionalised in 2011 with the establishment of the Intergovernmental Consultations (IGC) at the level of Heads of Government. The mechanism enabled ministers from both countries to review cooperation across different sectors and identify new areas of engagement. The 2011–12 period also saw the celebration of the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations through the “German Year in India” and “Days of India in Germany”, highlighting trade and investment, science and technology, education and culture.
In the 2020s, India–Germany relations expanded into newer areas including green and sustainable development, renewable energy, migration and mobility, health, agro-ecology, innovation and technology. The 6th Intergovernmental Consultations held in Berlin in May 2022 resulted in several agreements and a Joint Declaration of Intent on a Green and Sustainable Development Partnership. In 2025, India and Germany marked 25 years of their strategic partnership, while both sides emphasised the importance of shaping the relationship for the next 25 years.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

India and Germany enjoy a close and comprehensive bilateral relationship and are among each other's important partners. Diplomatic relations were established in 1951, and the two countries celebrated 75 years of diplomatic relations in 2026. The relationship has developed on the basis of shared democratic values, mutual respect and cooperation across political, economic, technological, educational, environmental and security spheres. Germany's importance as a major European power and India's growing role in the Indo-Pacific have given the partnership increasing strategic significance.

The relationship was elevated to a Strategic Partnership in May 2000 and further strengthened through the Intergovernmental Consultations (IGC) mechanism established in 2011. Through this mechanism, the two governments regularly review bilateral cooperation and identify new areas of engagement. The partnership now covers trade and investment, defence and security, science and technology, innovation, education, skilled mobility, renewable energy and sustainable development.

In recent years, India–Germany cooperation has expanded into emerging and strategic sectors. During Chancellor Friedrich Merz's visit to India in January 2026, both sides agreed to deepen cooperation in defence industrial cooperation, critical and emerging technologies, semiconductors, critical minerals, telecommunications, trade and investment, education, green development and mobility. New mechanisms were also announced for Indo-Pacific cooperation and foreign-policy and security dialogue.

The partnership also has a strong global dimension. India and Germany cooperate on climate change, clean energy, sustainable development, multilateralism and international peace and security. In September 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chancellor Friedrich Merz reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the Strategic Partnership, particularly in trade and investment, advanced technologies, clean energy, defence, education and talent mobility, while continuing coordination on regional and global issues.

India and Germany have also developed a strong institutional framework for regular political dialogue. The Intergovernmental Consultations provide a platform for both governments to review cooperation across multiple sectors, while regular consultations and high-level visits have helped maintain momentum in the Strategic Partnership. The partnership has increasingly focused on strengthening economic cooperation, defence and security, science and technology, education, innovation and sustainable development.
In 2026, the relationship received further momentum with the visit of German Chancellor Friedrich Merz to India in January. The two countries agreed to deepen cooperation in defence industrial cooperation, semiconductors, critical minerals, telecommunications, green energy, higher education, skills and mobility.



STRATEGIC TIES

India and Germany have maintained a Strategic Partnership since May 2000, which was further strengthened through the establishment of the Intergovernmental Consultations (IGC) in 2011. The partnership has expanded beyond traditional economic cooperation to encompass defence and security, trade and investment, climate and sustainable development, science and technology, education, innovation and skilled mobility. In 2025, the two countries marked 25 years of their Strategic Partnership, while 2026 marks the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations. Both sides have reaffirmed their commitment to further deepening and diversifying the partnership.

The strategic dimension of the relationship has gained particular importance in defence and security, critical and emerging technologies and the Indo-Pacific. During Chancellor Friedrich Merz's visit to India in January 2026, India and Germany agreed to strengthen bilateral defence industrial cooperation, semiconductor cooperation, critical minerals, telecommunications and digital technologies. They also established a Track 1.5 Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue and a dedicated bilateral dialogue mechanism on the Indo-Pacific.

Green and sustainable development has emerged as another major pillar of the strategic partnership. The two countries have expanded cooperation in renewable energy, green hydrogen, climate-resilient infrastructure and energy transition. In January 2026, Germany announced new funding commitments of €1.24 billion under the Green and Sustainable Development Partnership, supporting areas such as renewable energy, green hydrogen, electric public transport and climate-resilient urban infrastructure
.
Technology, research and human-resource cooperation are also central to the strategic relationship. India and Germany are cooperating in semiconductors, advanced technologies, digitalisation, science and research, higher education and skilled mobility. The 2026 agreements included an Indo-German Semiconductor Ecosystem Partnership, cooperation on bioeconomy research, extension of the Indo-German Science and Technology Centre, a 10-year roadmap for higher education and initiatives for ethical and sustainable recruitment of skilled healthcare professionals.

The strategic partnership also has an important global and multilateral dimension. India and Germany consult on regional and international developments and cooperate in promoting global peace, stability, sustainable development and a rules-based international order. In June 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chancellor Merz reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation in trade and investment, defence and security, green and sustainable development, technology, innovation, education and mobility, demonstrating the broad and increasingly strategic character of India–Germany relations.



CULTURAL & EDUCATION COOPERATION

India and Germany maintain extensive cooperation in culture and education, with people-to-people exchanges forming an important pillar of the bilateral relationship. Cultural cooperation includes museums, heritage preservation, music, language, sports and academic exchanges. The two countries have promoted cooperation between Indian and German museums, including the National Museum, National Gallery of Modern Art and Indian Museum Kolkata with German institutions such as the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation and Humboldt Forum. India has also established academic chairs in areas such as Indian music at German universities, while the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) supports cultural and academic exchanges.

Education and research constitute another major area of Indo-German cooperation. Both countries have developed partnerships between universities and research institutions, including joint research programmes, student exchanges, collaborative projects and joint and dual-degree programmes. The Indo-German Science and Technology Centre has supported collaborative research, while the German Academic Exchange Service and Indian institutions have promoted higher-education partnerships. In January 2026, India and Germany adopted an Indo-German Roadmap on Higher Education and agreed to deepen institutional linkages, including cooperation between Indian Institutes of Technology and German technical universities.

Language cooperation also contributes significantly to cultural understanding. Germany supports the teaching of German in India through institutions and programmes associated with the Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan, while India promotes modern Indian languages in Germany. Both sides have recognised that language learning strengthens cultural understanding as well as educational and economic ties. Cooperation in vocational education and skilling has also expanded, including initiatives for renewable-energy training and professional development.

People-to-people relations have gained further momentum through youth exchanges, student mobility, skilled professionals and tourism. In 2026, the two governments welcomed growing exchanges of students, researchers, artists and skilled professionals and agreed to strengthen cooperation in education, research, vocational training, culture and youth exchanges. They also welcomed a new framework for global skills partnerships and initiatives aimed at facilitating ethical and sustainable mobility of skilled workers. Germany and India also cooperate through student and faculty exchanges, joint research programmes and academic partnerships. These initiatives have strengthened institutional links between universities and encouraged greater mobility of students and researchers between the two countries.

TRADE & INVESTMENT

Germany is one of India's most important economic partners in Europe, with substantial bilateral trade and investment ties. India and Germany have developed a strong economic partnership covering manufacturing, engineering, automobiles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, information technology, renewable energy and other high-value sectors. According to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, during April 2025–January 2026, India's exports to Germany reached approximately US$9.44 billion, compared with US$8.63 billion during the corresponding period of the previous year, registering growth of about 9.4%.

Trade between the two countries is supported by complementary economic strengths. India exports a wide range of engineering goods, electrical and electronic products, pharmaceuticals, textiles and garments, chemicals and other manufactured goods to Germany, while German exports to India include machinery, electrical equipment, transport equipment, chemicals and advanced industrial products. The two countries are seeking to further expand trade by promoting greater market access, technology cooperation, industrial partnerships and integration into global value chains.

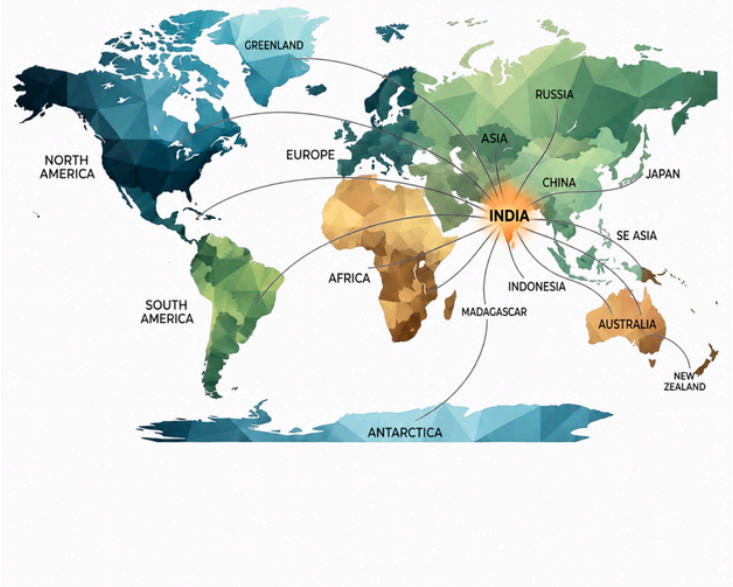
Investment is another important pillar of the bilateral economic relationship. German companies have invested significantly in India, particularly in manufacturing, automotive, engineering, chemicals, renewable energy and advanced technologies. The Make in India Mittelstand (MIIM) programme of the Embassy of India in Germany has facilitated German small and medium-sized enterprises seeking to establish or expand operations in India; the programme was facilitating 218 companies with declared investments of more than €1.74 billion in the latest MEA bilateral brief.

Indian investment in Germany has also expanded, with more than 215 Indian companies operating in the country. These companies are active not only in trading but also in manufacturing, research and development, innovation and value-chain activities, particularly in sectors such as information technology, automobiles, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology and manufacturing. Both governments have established Fast Track Mechanisms to address issues faced by investors and facilitate a more favourable business environment.

In 2026, India and Germany further strengthened their economic cooperation by agreeing to establish a Chief Executive Officers' Forum integrated with the Joint India–Germany Economic and Investment Committee. The initiative aims to deepen cooperation in trade, industry, investment, energy, sustainability, tourism, health, vocational education, research and development, innovation, logistics, start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises. This reflects the two countries' objective of building a more diversified, technology-driven and resilient economic partnership.



SERVING CLIENTS WORLDWIDE



Chandrawat & Partners

The information contained herein is of a general nature. Although we endeavor to provide accurate and timely information, there can be no guarantee that such information is accurate as of the date it is received or that it will continue to be accurate in the future. The information is not offered as an advice on any matter, and no one should act or fail to act based on such information without appropriate legal advice after a thorough examination of the particular situation. The information does not make us responsible or liable for any errors and/or omissions, whether it is now or in the future. We do not assume any responsibility and/or liability for any consequences.

The Bar Council of India does not permit advertisement or solicitation by advocates in any form or manner. The information may be provided to user on request or otherwise. The information contained in it is entirely determined by the user voluntarily and any transmission or use does not establish any lawyer client relationship.

Key Contact



Surendra Singh Chandrawat

Global Managing Partner

surendra@chandrawatpartners.com

+91 99939 85763

Connect Surendra on

LinkedIn WhatsApp

Chandrawat & Partners is a leading and rapidly growing full-service law firm providing high quality professional, legal and corporate services to foreign and local clients, representing worldwide companies and individuals in a wide range of practice areas and sectors.

Copyright © 2027 I All rights reserved I Chandrawat & Partners I Email: enquiries@chandrawatpartners.com I Website: www.chandrawatpartners.co

Follow us on: LinkedIn twitter facebook Instagram