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BILATERAL RELATIONS

INDIA - GREECE

INTRODUCTION

India and Greece share a long-standing and friendly relationship based on historical, cultural and civilisational links. Contacts between the two countries can be traced back nearly 2,500 years, including commercial and intellectual exchanges between ancient India and Greece. The interaction between Greek and Indian traditions is also reflected in the development of Gandhara art, which incorporated elements of both Greek and Indian artistic traditions. Modern diplomatic relations between India and Greece were established in May 1950, laying the foundation for sustained political, economic and cultural cooperation.

Over the decades, India–Greece relations have expanded across political, economic, defence, shipping, connectivity, technology, education, culture and people-to-people exchanges. A major milestone came during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Athens on 25 August 2023, when the two countries elevated their bilateral relationship to a Strategic Partnership. The partnership focuses on strengthening cooperation in areas such as trade and investment, defence and security, infrastructure, agriculture, technology, skills, shipping and connectivity, while also promoting cooperation on regional and global issues.

The strategic relationship has gained further momentum through high-level exchanges and new areas of cooperation. In February 2026, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis visited India for the second time, and the two leaders reviewed the progress of the Strategic Partnership, with particular emphasis on connectivity, defence, talent mobility and shipping. Both sides also noted the potential for expanding connectivity through the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) and welcomed new opportunities for trade and investment.



HISTORY

India and Greece share historical contacts going back nearly 2,500 years. Ancient links developed through trade, cultural exchanges and the movement of ideas between the Indian subcontinent and the Greek world. The expedition of Alexander to north-western India in 326 BC brought the two civilisations into direct contact. Greek accounts also refer to the Mauryan period, including the presence of the Greek ambassador Megasthenes at the court of Chandragupta Maurya. The development of Gandhara art is regarded as an important example of the interaction between Greek and Indian artistic traditions.

Modern diplomatic relations between India and Greece were established in May 1950. Greece opened its Embassy in New Delhi in the same year, while India established its Embassy in Athens in 1978. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations, the two countries have maintained friendly relations and developed cooperation in political, economic, defence, cultural and technological fields.

During the 1990s, bilateral relations received further momentum through political and defence cooperation. Greece supported India on several important international issues, while India supported Greece on issues of particular importance to it, including the Cyprus question and maritime matters. Following India's 1998 nuclear tests, Greece maintained a supportive approach, and the Greek Defence Minister visited India in December 1998, when an MoU on Defence Cooperation was signed.

The relationship expanded through a series of institutional agreements and high-level exchanges. Cooperation developed in areas including economic, scientific and technical cooperation, culture, tourism, defence, agriculture, science and technology, renewable energy and education. Foreign Office Consultations have also provided an institutional mechanism for regular discussions between the two countries.

A major milestone came with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Greece on 25 August 2023, the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Greece in 40 years. During the visit, India and Greece decided to elevate their relations to a Strategic Partnership, giving new momentum to cooperation in defence, security, trade and investment, infrastructure, technology, shipping, agriculture, education, culture and people-to-people ties.

The partnership has continued to deepen through high-level exchanges. Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis visited India in February 2024, marking the first visit by a Greek Head of Government to India in 15 years, while his second visit to India took place in February 2026. These exchanges have further strengthened cooperation in connectivity, defence, shipping, trade, investment and talent mobility, reflecting the transformation of the historical relationship into a broad-based Strategic Partnership.

CULTURAL RELATIONS

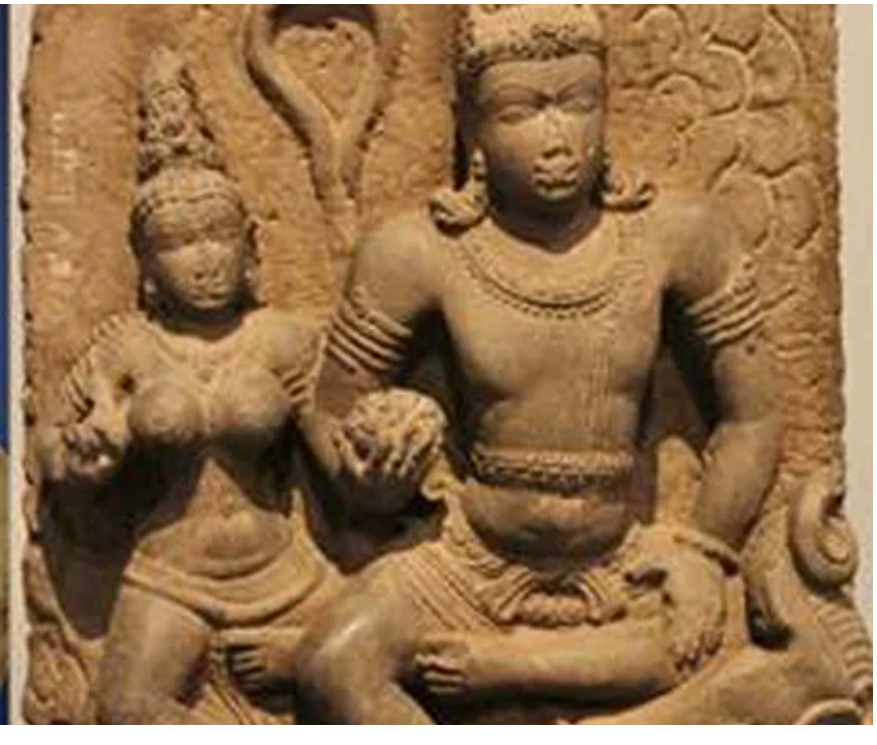
India and Greece share deep cultural and civilisational connections dating back nearly 2,500 years. Historical interaction between the two civilisations developed through trade, exchange of ideas and cultural contacts. The influence of Greek and Indian traditions can be seen particularly in Gandhara art, which is regarded as a fusion of Greek and Indian artistic influences. These historical links continue to provide an important foundation for contemporary cultural relations between the two countries.

Contemporary cultural cooperation covers education, academic exchanges, arts, music, literature and the promotion of each country's cultural heritage. In March 2022, India and Greece signed a Cultural and Educational Exchange Programme for 2022–2026, providing an institutional framework for strengthening cooperation in these fields. During the visit of the Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture to Greece in January 2023, discussions were also held with the Greek Minister of Culture and Sports on further developing bilateral cultural cooperation.

Academic and intellectual exchanges are an important component of the relationship. During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Athens in August 2023, he met Greek academicians working on Indian religions, philosophy, Sanskrit and Hindi. The discussions explored possibilities for greater collaboration between Indian and Greek universities and for strengthening the study of Indian culture and civilisation in Greece.

Music and performing arts also contribute to people-to-people relations. During the 2023 visit, Prime Minister Modi met Greek researcher and musician Konstantinos Kalaitzis, who has a strong interest in Indian music and culture. The meeting discussed possibilities for further popularising Indian culture in Greece, reflecting the growing interest in Indian artistic traditions among Greek audiences.





ECONOMIC RELATIONS

India and Greece have developed steadily expanding economic relations, supported by the Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation Agreement signed in 1983 and the elevation of bilateral ties to a Strategic Partnership in 2023. Bilateral trade has grown substantially in recent years. According to the Ministry of External Affairs, trade reached about US$1.94 billion in 2022–23, compared with US$1.38 billion in 2021–22. The two countries are seeking to further expand commercial engagement through greater trade, investment and business-to-business cooperation.

India's major exports to Greece include aluminium, organic chemicals, fish and crustaceans, iron and steel, plastics, textiles and clothing, electrical machinery, automobiles and automobile components, pharmaceuticals and medical instruments. Greece exports to India products such as aluminium foil, mineral fuels and oils, sulphur, cement, machinery, chemicals, fruits and nuts, copper scrap, electrical equipment, marble and travertine, and ships and boats. This trade reflects complementary strengths in manufacturing, industrial goods, agriculture and maritime-related sectors.

Investment and business cooperation are emerging as important components of the economic relationship. India and Greece have sought to promote cooperation in areas including infrastructure, shipping, renewable energy, agriculture, technology, tourism and logistics. The bilateral framework includes a Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPA) signed in 2007, which provides an institutional basis for encouraging investment between the two countries.
The elevation of India–Greece relations to a Strategic Partnership in 2023 has created additional opportunities for economic cooperation. Both sides have emphasised expanding trade and investment, improving connectivity and strengthening cooperation in shipping and infrastructure. The India–Greece–Cyprus Business and Investment Council, launched in Mumbai in February 2025, also provides a platform for promoting business partnerships and investment opportunities among the three countries.

The economic relationship is further supported by cooperation in new and renewable energy, tourism, agriculture, shipping and connectivity. With Greece's strategic location in the Mediterranean and India's growing role as a major economic and manufacturing centre, both countries see considerable potential for expanding commercial links and integrating their businesses into wider regional and global supply chains. The two countries are also exploring greater cooperation in shipping, logistics and connectivity, taking advantage of Greece’s strategic position in the Mediterranean. The India–Greece–Cyprus Business and Investment Council, launched in Mumbai in February 2025, provides an additional platform for promoting business partnerships and investment. Both sides are working to facilitate greater participation of Indian and Greek companies in each other’s markets.



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

India and Greece elevated their bilateral relations to a Strategic Partnership in August 2023 during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official visit to Athens. The decision marked a significant transformation in the traditionally warm relationship between the two countries and aimed to strengthen cooperation across political, security and economic spheres. Both sides also identified Greece's potential role as a gateway for India to Europe as an important element of the emerging strategic relationship.

The Strategic Partnership has expanded cooperation in defence and security, trade and investment, shipping, infrastructure, technology, connectivity, agriculture, education and people-to-people relations. Defence cooperation has received greater institutional attention, including the establishment of a Joint Working Group in 2024, while maritime cooperation benefits from Greece's strategic location in the Mediterranean.

Connectivity is an important component of the partnership, particularly through the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). India and Greece have discussed expanding connectivity and cooperation in shipping and logistics, with Greece's geographical position offering opportunities for stronger links between India and European markets. In February 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis reviewed the progress of the Strategic Partnership and identified connectivity, defence, talent mobility and shipping as key areas for further cooperation.

Economic cooperation is another major pillar of the Strategic Partnership. India and Greece have sought to expand bilateral trade and investment, with the two sides working towards greater business engagement and improved connectivity. During Prime Minister Mitsotakis's 2024 visit to India, both leaders welcomed progress towards the objective of doubling bilateral trade by 2030 and identified new opportunities in agriculture and other sectors.

The Strategic Partnership also has a broader regional and global dimension. India and Greece cooperate on maritime security, regional stability, counter-terrorism and issues of common interest in the Indo-Pacific and Mediterranean regions. The continuing high-level engagement demonstrates that the partnership is evolving from its historical and cultural foundations into a comprehensive relationship covering security, economic growth, connectivity, technology and people-to-people ties The partnership is supported by institutional mechanisms including Foreign Office Consultations, the Joint Economic Committee and a newly established dialogue between the National Security Council authorities of the two countries. These mechanisms provide regular platforms for discussing political, economic, security and strategic issues and help translate the decisions of the leadership into practical cooperation.

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TRADE & INVESTMENT

India and Greece have developed steadily growing trade and investment relations, supported by the Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation Agreement of 1983 and the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPA) of 2007. Bilateral trade increased from about US$1.38 billion in 2021–22 to US$1.94 billion in 2022–23, reflecting the expanding commercial relationship between the two countries.

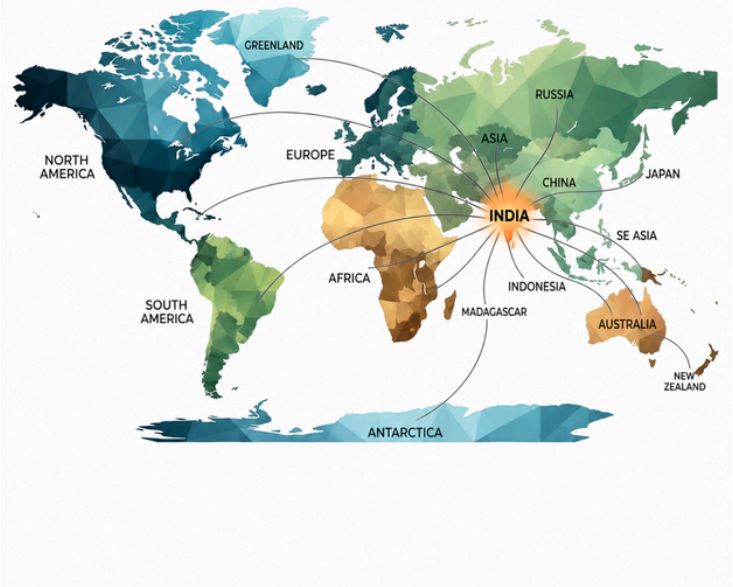
India's principal exports to Greece include aluminium, organic chemicals, fish and crustaceans, iron and steel, plastics, textiles and clothing, electrical machinery, automobiles and automobile components, pharmaceuticals, medical instruments, leather goods and carpets. Greek exports to India include aluminium foil, mineral fuels and oils, sulphur, cement, machinery, chemicals, fruits and nuts, copper scrap, electrical equipment, marble and travertine, and ships and boats. These trade flows reflect complementary strengths in manufacturing, industrial products, agriculture and maritime sectors.

Investment cooperation is an important emerging component of the bilateral economic relationship. India and Greece are promoting investment opportunities in infrastructure, shipping, renewable energy, agriculture, technology, tourism and logistics. The BIPA signed in 2007 provides an institutional framework for encouraging and protecting investments between the two countries and creating a more favourable environment for business engagement.

The elevation of India–Greece relations to a Strategic Partnership in 2023 has provided additional momentum to trade and investment cooperation. Both countries have emphasised greater business-to-business engagement and connectivity, particularly in shipping and logistics. The India–Greece–Cyprus Business and Investment Council, launched in Mumbai in February 2025, has further created a platform to identify investment opportunities and facilitate stronger commercial partnerships.

The two countries also see significant potential for expanding economic cooperation through improved connectivity between India and Europe. Greece's strategic geographical position in the Mediterranean and its maritime capabilities offer opportunities for Indian businesses in shipping, logistics and supply-chain connectivity. Cooperation through the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) is expected to provide further possibilities for strengthening trade routes, investment and economic integration between India and European markets. Both countries are encouraging greater participation of their companies in each other's markets and exploring new areas of investment. Cooperation in start-ups, digital technologies, renewable energy and infrastructure offers further scope for strengthening economic ties.

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