

India - Estonia Bilateral Relations

India has long-standing historical links with Estonia. India recognised the Republic of Estonia on 9th September 1991 and Diplomatic Relations were established on 2nd December of the same year. Since then, the bilateral relations continue to be cordial and friendly. The Embassy of India in Helsinki is concurrently accredited to Estonia. Estonia opened its Embassy in New Delhi in March 2012.

Visit of Vice President:

Vice President visited Estonia during August 20-21, 2019, the first high level visit from India to Estonia since establishment of diplomatic relations. He was accompanied by Shri Sanjay Dhotre, Minister of State (IT), three MPs, senior officials, media and 18 Indian companies. Vice President met President Ms Kersti Kaljulaid, PM Jüri Ratas, President of the Parliament Mr Henn Põlluaas, addressed Estonian Ambassadors at their annual Conference, and addressed members of the Indian Community. Three MOUs were signed during the visit:

- MOU for Cooperation in e-Governance and emerging digital technologies
- MOU for Cooperation in Cyber Security
- MOU for Waiver of Visas for diplomatic passport holders

PM meets Estonia's President on sidelines of UNGA

Our PM met President of Estonia, Ms Kersti Kaljulaid in September 2019 and discussed possibility of cooperation in e-governance, cyber security and innovation.

Foreign Minister's visit to India

Foreign Minister of Estonia, H.E. Mr. Urmas Reinsalu visited India for speaking at Raisina Dialogue in Delhi on 15-16 January 2020. He met EAM and had a brief interaction with PM. EAM and FM Reinsalu discussed enhancing cooperation in digital, cyber domain and ICT. With PM, he discussed proposal for Hackathon to explore digital solutions. FM Reinsalu reiterated Estonia's support for expanding UNSC to reflect today's world.

Exchange of visits:

From Estonia:

- Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Urmas Paet 2012-13 February 2013 to inaugurate Embassy of Estonia.
- Minister for Education and Research H.E. Mr. Jaak Aaviksoo 13-16 October 2013 to attend Cyber Security Conference.
- Minister for Justice H.E. Mr. Hanno Pevkur 9-11 December 2013.
- Minister for Economy and Communications H.E. Mr. Juhan Parts 3-8 February 2014.
- Ms. Urve Palo, Estonia's Minister of IT and Entrepreneurship 8-12 March, 2018.
- On sidelines of the UNGA in New York, 25 September, 2018, EAM met Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Sven Mikser.
- Foreign Minister, Mr. Urmas Reinsalu, 15-16 January 2020.

From India:

- Minister of State for Corporate Affairs Shri Sachin Pilot 15-16 April 2013.

- Smt. Lakshmi Panabaka, Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas 14-16 June 2013.
- Smt. Jayanthi Natarajan, Minister for State for Environment and Forests visited Estonia on 20-22 September 2013.
- Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister of Law & Justice and Electronics & IT 11-15 September, 2016.
- MOS External Affairs (M.J. Akbar) 27-28 May, 2017 and met Mr. Sven Mikser Estonian Foreign Minister.
- Shri K.J. George, Karnataka's Minister of IT, August 2018

Agreements:

- Declaration of Principles of Cooperation between Estonia and India (signed and entered into force on October 15, 1993)
- Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation (signed 15.10.1993 entered into force on October 24, 2004)
- Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation (signed 14.10.1993; entered into force on March 13, 2000)
- Protocol on Bilateral Foreign Office Consultations (signed in August 1995)
- Agreement on Cooperation in Culture, Education, Science, Sports, Arts, Mass Media, Tourism and Youth Affairs (signed October 15, 1993, entered into force on November 11, 1999)
- Agreement on Cooperation in Science & Technology (signed February 5, 1999, entered into force on August 6, 1999)
- Agreement for Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion (DTAA) signed September 19, 2011.
- MOU on Cooperation in Biotechnology and Higher Education signed in October 2013
- MOU on Cooperation on Capacity Building and Related Areas in E-Governance signed February 2014.
- Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons signed 15 November ,2016 effective 1 March, 2017
- MOU for Cooperation in e-Governance and emerging digital technologies August 2019
- MOU for Cooperation in Cyber Security August 2019
- MOU for Waiver of Visas for diplomatic passport holders August 2019

Foreign Office Consultations: The last round was held in Delhi on 7 February 2019, chaired by Secretary (West), MEA and Under Secretary in Estonian Foreign Ministry.

Commercial Relations:

There is significant room for enhanced economic engagement in information technology, cyber security, e-governance and block chain. Total bilateral trade in goods in 2018-19 was 172.53 US\$ million, an increase of 22.5 % from the previous year.

Trade in Goods (source: Department of Commerce, Ministry Commerce & Industry, India)

Financial Year	<i>(In US\$ million)</i>		
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-2019
<i>India's Exports to Estonia</i>	88.82	80.33	64.32
<i>India's Imports from Estonia</i>	94.50	60.54	108.21
Total bilateral trade	183.40	140.87	172.53

Major items of export to Estonia: Machinery and equipment, garments, knitwear, iron & Steel articles of leather; saddles and harness, travel goods, handbags, coffee, tea, spices, footwear and pharmaceutical products.

Major Estonian exports to India: Iron and steel, fertilizers, electrical machinery, paper and paperboard; paper pulp, veneer etc.

Trade in Services (source: Bank of Estonia)

(In EUR million)

Year	2016	2017	2018
Export of Estonia's Services to India	9.9	10.0	8.3
Import of India's Services to Estonia	7.5	7.7	8.8
Total	17.4	17.7	17.1

Foreign Direct Investment

	Value (EUR million)	Sectors represented
Indian FDI in Estonia Source: Bank of Estonia Dec 2018	4.89	Manufacturing; construction; wholesale and retail trade; transportation and storage; accommodation and food service; information and communication
Estonian FDI in India** Source: Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), India Dec 2018	2.17	Information and communication; real estate; human health and social work; unclassified activities

Startup Visa, managed by Estonia's Ministry of the Interior and Startup Estonia, received the most applications from India. **Under this scheme both entrepreneurs from India and startup founders with a viable tech-based business model/product can apply for a startup visa.** India's 10 incubators and 13 startups participated in **Latitude 59** in May 2019 in Tallinn, an event which connects startups to VCs and investors. **Work in Estonia** seeks to introduce Estonia as an attractive living and working destination to potential, talented would-be employees worldwide. They work towards simplifying the process for local companies to employ overseas experts. Nearly 3000 Indians have become e-Residents of Estonia which allows them to set up location, independent business enterprises in Estonia.

India Estonia Business Forum

On 21 August 2019, an Indian business Delegation of 18 companies led by the Confederation of Indian Industry accompanied the Vice President and participated in the India-Estonia Business Forum along with 30 companies from Estonia for B2B meetings to explore possibilities of collaboration. Vice President and Prime Minister Mr Jüri Ratas addressed the Business Forum.

Cultural Relations:

There is a strong interest in Estonia for Indian culture. University of Tartu began teaching Sanskrit in 1837. Several publications on Sanskrit language and literature were published. In recent years several noted Indian musicians and dancers have given performances in Estonia. Tourism from Estonia has received a boost through introduction of e-tourist visa scheme for Estonian nationals from June, 2015. "Amrita" dance school in Tallinn is teaching Indian classical

dances. There are several training centres for Yoga and Meditation run by local experts. Some Indian spiritual leaders have followers and representative centres in Estonia.

Indian Community

There are about 1,195 persons of Indian community in Estonia including 774 citizens and an estimated 421 PIOs in Estonia. There are 211 students pursuing post-graduate and doctoral courses in engineering and science. There are some professionals also. Indian citizens are largely engaged in business and hospitality sector.

Useful Resources:

Embassy of India, Finland website: www.indembhelsinki.gov.in/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/IndiaInFinland

Twitter: [@IndEmbFinEst](https://twitter.com/IndEmbFinEst)

Short film of Gandhi: https://youtu.be/lpzu_x2TNY4

Vaishava Janah Toh song by Estonian singer: <https://youtu.be/cPmsupbQZh8>

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