

# *FOCUS on INDIA*



The  
Federal Government



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# 1.

*India – a democratic partner  
of Germany for stability and  
security*

For many years now, India has been experiencing a dynamic **transformation process** affecting politics, business and society alike. The world's most populous country is rapidly becoming a central and active shaper of international politics and of our globalised, collaborative economic order. It already plays a key role in the global efforts to protect our climate, the environment and biodiversity and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

India has a stabilising influence in a region where the global order based on the principles of the UN Charter and international law is facing considerable pressure. The geopolitical lines of conflict in the Indo-Pacific and the high economic dynamics in the region will play a significant role in **shaping the international order** of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this process, India has expressed a clear **aspiration to shape future developments** and aspires also to promote the interests of developing countries throughout the world as “the voice of the Global South”.

The Indian **economy** has been growing faster than all other major economies for years. Consistent forecasts indicate that India will be the world's third-largest economy before 2030, in part also bolstered by its population growth. This is flanked by considerable success in **tackling poverty**. The potential of India's domestic market is growing quickly as a result of rising prosperity among the population. In spheres such as information technology, digital public infrastructure and space travel, India's industry has gained a foothold as a global **engine of innovation**.

The dynamic economic growth and the rise in prosperity go hand in hand with a rapid increase in energy needs and mounting consumption. Against this backdrop, the priority of India's energy policy is ensuring a reliable energy supply

for the booming Indian economy and the growing population. India is already the world's third largest emitter of greenhouse gases, without any sign of a turnaround in rising emissions. At the same time, India is already heavily affected by the impacts of the climate crisis. India is therefore pursuing ambitious goals in the area of **developing renewable energies and environmental protection**. India wants to shape its growth in a manner that is as climate neutral, climate resilient and sustainable as possible, in order to achieve the joint goals of the Paris Agreement and to protect the environment. However, it still counts on coal as one of the main fuels to meet its growing energy needs. Germany is cooperating with India in the area of green and sustainable development.

The 2024 parliamentary elections in India impressively demonstrated the vitality of the world's largest democracy. The Bharatiya Janata Party managed to win a relative majority of the votes and was able to form a government once again, while the opposition emerged from the elections stronger. Nationalist movements based on religious ideology remain influential in India. In their extreme forms they also call for restrictions on the civil liberties set down in the country's constitution. We also take these tendencies into account in shaping our partnership with India. That also applies to divergent positions on foreign policy issues of crucial importance to Germany. At the same time, we can glean important insights from India's perspective on Germany's positions.



**The German Government is pursuing the following priority goals with a focus on India:**

- We want to promote a new perspective on India which centres on the great opportunities and potential of further intensifying our bilateral relations.
- We want to assert our interests more effectively in an increasingly complex global environment by cooperating closely with India as one of our global partners, and to make use of India's prominent role in the so-called Global South in shaping our foreign policy.
- We want to be a reliable security partner for India. This includes exchange and cooperation on arms-related issues.
- We want to work with India towards achieving the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Biodiversity Framework.
- We want to profit more from India's innovative strength as well as its technological, economic and skilled labour potential, in order to be better able to respond to geo-economic challenges.
- We want to intensify the German Government's systematic engagement with India in all its facets and foster a stronger perception of India commensurate with its significance in the spheres of business, academia and society.
- We want to create the framework conditions necessary to enable us to shape our relations with India more coherently and take them to a new level. To this end, we want to strengthen coordination with stakeholders in Germany and Europe.

The above-mentioned factors show that India's role and development will become even more important for Germany and for Europe in the future. We should, to an even greater degree than we have done up to now, view cooperation with India as an **opportunity to achieve our own objectives**. Expanding our relations with India is, on the one hand, a worthwhile investment in a global partner with whom we share key interests and a similar understanding of

fundamental principles in international politics. On the other hand, there are a range of issues in various policy areas on which our two countries hold divergent positions but nonetheless engage in dialogue with each other. In this context, both sides respect the fact that some decisions in the other country are taken differently than in their own, but that each country is a functioning democracy characterised by the separation of powers.

The German Government has a keen interest in deepening the **strategic partnership** with India, as set down in the coalition agreement. Our aim is to thoroughly modernise the partnership in the 25<sup>th</sup> year of its existence and to rapidly and energetically impart a new quality to our bilateral relations.

A central component of this is intensifying our **security cooperation** – both in the continuous efforts to find strategic convergence on key foreign and security policy challenges and through practical cooperation between our armed forces as well as reliable armaments cooperation.

With the **Green and Sustainable Development Partnership**, Germany and India have created a stable platform on which to jointly address global issues concerning the future such as tackling the climate crisis, the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, preserving our natural resources and biodiversity, and establishing a circular economy.

At the same time, the continuation of our strategic partnership into the future will require a **shift in the perception of India** in Germany in the realm of politics as well as in German business, academia and among the general public. The optimistic view of the future held by many stakeholders in politics, business and civil society in India, particularly among the up-and-coming younger generation, can serve as an example for us. The German Government can benefit from the perspectives and insights of our Indian partners and their privileged access to countries of the so-called Global South when shaping and implementing its foreign policy interests across the entire spectrum.

We will only succeed in all this by intensifying **exchange across society as a whole**, which we as the German Government intend to foster. An in-depth understanding of India and its political tradition, culture and history is an indispensable prerequisite for this. We consider preparing the ground for academia, civil society, cultural institutions and young people in this area to be part of our India policy. The rapidly growing community of Indian people in Germany is building a valuable bridge leading to a better understanding of India in Germany and also has the potential to transport a positive image of Germany to India.

Only by working together will we be able to bring about a change in the perception of India in Germany. To this end, the German Government plans to strengthen **coordination** between the federal ministries as well as consultation with the German federal states, the Bundestag and key players from the worlds of business, academia and society.

We consistently anchor our policy on India in the aims and principles of the **European Union's common policy on India**.

The Federal Government will include the projects described here in the relevant ministerial budgets within the federal budget, should **funds** not already have been allocated to them, within the framework of the applicable budget and financial plans. Given the considerable demands on our public finances at present, these tasks should be financed at no additional cost to the overall federal budget.

# 2.

*India and Germany in the world:  
bilateral relations and the  
strategic partnership*



Since 2000 we have been connected with India through a **strategic partnership**, building on close and amicable relations. Since 2011, the vibrancy of this partnership has been maintained through regular **intergovernmental consultations** between the German and the Indian governments. This format is the central work

mechanism of our bilateral relations and serves as an important source of impetus for deepening our cooperation further and expanding it to embrace new areas. With this in mind, we want to use the intergovernmental consultations in October 2024 to further develop our cooperation with India.

### 2.1. *Foreign policy*

India's **weight in the international political arena** is increasing continuously: as the world's most populous country and a stable democracy, through its aspiration to represent the interests of developing countries in formats such as the G20 as the voice of the Global South, and as a heavyweight in multilateral formats such as the expanded BRICS group and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. Cooperation with the United States, Australia and Japan within the context of the Quad is also becoming increasingly important for India's foreign policy.

In the **Indo-Pacific**, India works to uphold freedom, openness and security and takes a constructive approach with regard to its potential to shape the region and the wider area in order to maintain the balance. India is particularly concerned about China's growing outreach in the Indo-Pacific.

We want to do justice to India's growing influence by continuing fruitful high-level **dialogue formats** such as the consultations between the German and Indian foreign and defence ministries and dovetailing them more closely.

We want to benefit from India's diverse expertise as a central player in international politics

with a prominent position among the countries of the so-called Global South. In order to sound out further cooperation potential, we want to expand **expert dialogue** on regional subjects and on cross-cutting issues such as climate action and climate resilience, the United Nations, cybersecurity and combating terrorism, and supplement this with additional topics. In future, our missions abroad should interact more closely at local level with their Indian colleagues.

By expanding our dialogue formats with the Indian Government, we want to broaden the framework to enable us to build bridges by conducting **dialogue in a spirit of trust** and identify options for joint initiatives, particularly in fields where direct security interests are affected. That also applies to issues on which Germany and India have divergent positions and priorities. The German Government consistently addresses the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and its global impact in talks with the Indian side. It welcomes the Indian Government's repeatedly expressed willingness to work to bring about a peaceful end to the war. India can make an important contribution here thanks to the special influence it brings to bear in the international community.

**Multilateral cooperation** with India is becoming particularly important for Germany. Concrete measures will be described in Chapter 4.

The exchange between players from the spheres of business, academia, the media and civil society makes an indispensable contribution to the intensity and depth of our relations with India. We want to incorporate the views of leading figures

from Germany and India on new global political and economic challenges and their ideas on how to tackle them into our dialogue in a structured manner and establish an **Indo-German dialogue forum** to this end. Recommendations from the forum should be presented to the government representatives during the Indo-German inter-governmental consultations and enrich them with constructive ideas.

## 2.2. Security and defence policy

The **rules-based international order** is under pressure in the Indo-Pacific and in India's direct neighbourhood. Germany and India share the common goal of defending this order and its principles. In an environment marked by fundamental shifts of power, exertion of economic and political pressure and new arms dynamics in the region, India is asserting its mounting aspirations to shape developments.

In order to underscore the German Government's security engagement, the **Bundeswehr** is demonstrating a more frequent **presence in the Indo-Pacific region** and expanding its cooperation with the Indian Armed Forces. As part of regular deployments of Bundeswehr units in the Indo-Pacific and joint manoeuvres with close partners, the German Government will place cooperation between the German and Indian armed forces on a more permanent footing. In addition, we want to intensify military training ties by ramping up the secondment of training course participants.

### Bundeswehr Indo-Pacific Deployment 2024

Following the first port visit of a German navy frigate in 2022, the frigate Baden-Württemberg and the replenishment ship Frankfurt am Main will take part in a port visit in Goa and participate in a manoeuvre lasting several days together with the Indian navy.

In August 2024, the German air force participated in the Indian air force's *Tarang Shakti* exercise with several combat and transport aircraft.

This is one of a range of different activities conducted by the Bundeswehr with close partners in the Indo-Pacific.



The German Government aims to conclude an **agreement on reciprocal logistical support of the armed forces** with India in order to facilitate deployments of the Bundeswehr in the Indo-Pacific in future. A liaison officer is to be seconded to the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region in New Delhi.

Germany wants to be a reliable **security partner**. That includes exchange and cooperation on arms-related issues. We want India to rely more

strongly on German arms companies as partners in future, not least so that it can free itself further from its arms-related orientation towards Russia. The German Government will therefore expand its **arms cooperation** with India, continue to improve the reliability and predictability of arms export control procedures, and promote and support cooperation between German and Indian arms companies. The German Government will make relevant decisions on the basis of the applicable national and European guidelines.

### *2.3. Development cooperation policy, climate and environmental policy*

India has a key role to play in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the realisation of the **Sustainable Development Goals** enshrined in it.

India is also an indispensable partner for Germany in the area of **climate action and environmental protection**. Only by working together with India, as the world's third largest emitter of greenhouse gases, can we achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement and specifically the goal to keep global warming below 1.5°C. As early as 2030, India's emissions could far exceed those of the European Union if no additional efforts are made to implement steadfast climate action and a resolute energy transition. That includes a move away from fossil fuels, tapping India's vast potential in the area of renewable energy and green hydrogen.

At the same time, India is heavily affected by the impacts of the **climate crisis**, such as extreme heat, droughts and floods as well as failed harvests. **Adaptation to climate change** therefore plays a central role in India's nationally

determined contribution (NDC). India intends to draft a National Adaptation Plan by 2025. The livelihoods of the rural population depend on agriculture. The pressure on **ecosystems** and natural resources such as forests, water and soil is already very high due to the growing need for resources, intensive farming, rapid urbanisation and industrialisation, and is exacerbated by the climate crisis. The climate crisis also makes urban areas extremely vulnerable. Some Indian cities rank among the places with the highest levels of air pollution in the world.

As home to a huge variety of different species, India has global significance when it comes to protecting **biodiversity**. It is home to around seven percent of global biodiversity. India's engagement for the restoration of forests within the framework of the Bonn Challenge as well as for biodiversity conservation at a national level and in negotiations within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity is therefore of global importance.

In 2022, with the bilateral **Partnership for Green and Sustainable Development**, we worked with India to create a strategic framework for ambitious climate action and climate resilience, biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. Through regular meetings at the level of the competent ministers from Germany and India as well as through supporting research cooperation projects and civil society initiatives, we want to focus on ensuring **progress with regard to implementation** and dynamically develop the partnership. That applies particularly to areas in which Germany and India currently have differing priorities. The German Government is placing its entire future bilateral engagement with India in this field under the umbrella of the partnership. That includes, within the context of Indo-German **development cooperation**, promoting a sustainable and inclusive energy transition and attractive cities for all, and strengthening climate resilience in rural areas. Projects of the International Climate Initiative (ICI) implemented in India, one of the key countries of the initiative, are another priority. Initial achievements of the Green and Sustainable Development Partnership include the Lighthouse Initiative on Agroecology and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources, the partnership for renewable energies, and cooperation on forest conservation and reforestation. Successful development cooperation projects to promote sustainable and inclusive urbanisation and mobility in cities within the context of the Partnership for Green Urban Mobility focus on expanding local public transport.

In order to join forces with India to tackle the **climate crisis** and be in a position to achieve the gradual decarbonisation of the economy this requires, developing energy generation from renewable energy sources is a priority of our cooperation which we intend to intensify further. India's enormous potential for solar and wind energy has, despite impressive dynamic

expansion, so far not been fully exhausted. In dialogue with India we therefore want to advocate ambitious goals to tackle the climate crisis which reflect our common objective to achieve **energy security** and economic development but which in the medium term also involve the necessary and socially compatible phasing-out of fossil fuels.

To overcome the climate crisis we are working with India within the context of the Partnership for Green and Sustainable Development on other crucial **issues of the future** such as innovative renewable energy technologies and the transmission and storage of renewable energies, the fair transformation of the coal industry, the shape of carbon markets, adaptive social security, agro-ecological, climate-resilient agriculture and sustainable supply chains and food systems as well as the management of wetlands, mangroves and other ecosystems. Against this backdrop, working with India on strengthening the circular economy and on marine protection through the prevention and management of plastic waste is already a priority of our cooperation. Moreover, we support vocational training courses in the area of future technologies (green skills), particularly for women.

In the **Green Hydrogen Task Force**, German and Indian experts are jointly compiling a roadmap to promote the market ramp-up of this fuel of the future, which we intend to implement rigorously.

With the creation of a **platform for investment in renewable energies** we want to work with India to elaborate tailor-made solutions for the rapid expansion of renewable energy in India and mobilisation of the capital required to do so. We also want to open up additional opportunities for India to become better integrated into global value chains in the production of

renewable energies and related technologies by involving private investors and development banks, industry and international organisations.

We want to gradually develop the **focus of our cooperation** with India in the direction of joint support for third parties and make available to interested countries our expertise in the spheres of sustainable economic development, the fight against climate change, the energy transition and environmental protection which has been built over many decades of cooperation. To this end we want to expand **triangular cooperation** with India, with a focus on Africa. We also want to consider joint projects with India in the Pacific island states. Strengthening the rights and fundamental freedoms particularly of women, children and marginalised groups of society remains an important guiding principle across all sectors.

We want to use the **Berlin Climate and Security Conference** as a forum for exchange with India in order to benefit from India's rich experience and creative solutions and utilise them on a global scale when drafting innovative approaches to dealing with the serious impact of the climate crisis on peace and security.

In implementing the German Government's Feminist Foreign Policy and the Feminist

Development Policy of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, we also want to anchor the **dialogue on gender equality and women-led development** as a cross-cutting issue more firmly in bilateral cooperation with India than has been the case until now. Issues such as social security and social cohesion, creating better opportunities and strengthening food security will also be addressed in the context of cooperation.

We will continuously develop existing dialogue formats such as the **intergovernmental negotiations on development cooperation**, the **Indo-German Environment Forum** and the **Indo-German Energy Forum** within the framework of the Partnership for Green and Sustainable Development. We want to revive the **Indo-German climate working group** to facilitate dialogue with India on the critical questions of climate policy in institutionalised form. In other Indo-German working groups, focusing on urban development, green urban mobility, agroecology and resource conservation as well as biodiversity, among other topics, we will continue dialogue with India in order to implement our prime policy objectives. In addition, we want to supplement this exchange with a structured dialogue among technical experts from the fields of academia and research also against the backdrop of development cooperation priorities.

## 2.4. *Legal and justice system*

Preserving the democratic order set down in the constitutions of Germany and India is of prime importance. We maintain an ongoing and open dialogue with India on these common values. In this context, both sides also address developments which give them cause for concern with respect to the protection of individual fundamental rights. Within the framework of the Universal Periodic Review in the United Nations Human Rights Council, the German Government proposed recommendations with regard to the regulation of non-governmental organisations and the strengthening of the National Human Rights Commission among other issues. Strengthening women and other marginalised groups is part of our project work in India, not least to foster the political participation of women at municipal level, through courses on women's rights in the case of sexual violence and abuse and to promote women as entrepreneurs. In many cases, measures to protect natural

resources place a special focus on locally affected marginalised groups. The German Government also addresses **human rights issues** in bilateral talks. They are likewise the subject of the human rights dialogue between the EU and India.

The German Government expressly welcomes the consultations between the Federal Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court of India. They foster **dialogue on fundamental legal issues, the protection of democratic fundamental rights, legal relations between states** and topical specialist issues.

Due to the rapidly growing number of Indian students, employees and employers and their families in Germany as well as increasingly close professional and private contacts, we want to expand **dialogue on consular issues** with the involvement of national authorities in order to facilitate intensive exchange within our societies.

## 2.5. *Civil society contacts*

Contacts between the civil societies of Germany and India, many of which have grown over many decades, form a central pillar of bilateral relations with India. We are committed to ensuring that **civil society engagement** can continue to make a valuable contribution towards strengthening our bilateral relations. We want to expand opportunities for interaction between young people from Germany and India through exchange programmes. We want to strengthen the

alumni networks of schools, higher education, academia, culture and the media.

We want to use the Indo-German **Environment Forum** to support the civil society dialogue on environmental issues alongside the political and economic dialogues.

## 2.6. *Economy, trade and agriculture*

India's economy is innovative and growing at a dynamic pace. In just a few years, India is expected to become the world's third-largest economy. This development provides huge opportunities for **diversifying our economic and foreign trade relations** with Asia. The resilience of German companies' supply chains will be boosted by closer economic ties with India. We therefore want to work with India to reduce the obstacles to trade and investment and strengthen our economic links. In particular, this includes strengthening the open, rules-based multilateral trade system with the WTO at its centre. The preservation and further development of this organisation will require enhanced joint and constructive efforts.

The German Government will strive to overcome structural challenges which make it difficult for German companies to enter the Indian market. Especially the fast pace at which renewable energies are being expanded in India offers great **potential for cooperation**, as does a future green hydrogen economy and closer cooperation on critical raw materials. India's high-performance digital economy, its software industry as well as its space technology provide German industry with many opportunities. India has developed technologically interesting solutions in the field of digital payment systems.

The potential for a much greater volume of bilateral trade, as well as for even more German and Indian direct investment, is evident. The **Asia-Pacific Conference of German Business** being held in New Delhi in October 2024 will send an important message from India to the entire Indo-Pacific region.

With six branches in India and a liaison office in Germany, the **Indo-German Chamber of Commerce**, which is the largest chamber of commerce abroad thanks to the membership of more than 4000 German and Indian organisations and individuals, plays a key role in the cultivation and steady expansion of our economic relations with India. The chamber of commerce asks German companies on a regular basis about the conditions for trade with Indian partners and direct investment in India.

With its branches in Mumbai and New Delhi, the state-owned marketing agency **Germany Trade & Invest** offers interested companies important information and services which facilitate their entry into the Indian and German markets.

Due to the protection they provide from economic and political risks, the German Government's **export credit guarantees** enable and facilitate the export plans of German companies in foreign markets. In light of the importance of the market in India and in the region for Germany's export industry, we will open a **financing competence centre** at the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce. This centre will be the fourth of its kind, alongside the existing ones in Singapore, Abidjan and Dubai. From Mumbai, German exporters, but in particular Indian importers and local banks, are to receive advice on the products of export credit guarantees and on the structuring of export financing. Moreover, the export credit agencies of the two countries are planning the signing of a **reinsurance agreement**. The aim is to improve the financing options for cooperation projects between German and Indian companies with regard to exports and investment in both directions.

Through an enhanced dialogue within the framework of the **High-Level Fast Track Mechanism**, we want to provide greater support for German companies in India in future when it comes to the mediation of concrete individual cases.

There is potential for a more intensive exchange on many issues that will shape the future of the **agricultural and food industries**, including in the sphere of the ecological production and marketing of agricultural products as well as digitalisation in agriculture. We want to adapt existing bilateral formats, such as the working group focusing on agriculture, food and consumer protection, to deal with these new challenges. In future, we would also like to continue practical research projects, for example on sustainable farming systems for small-scale Indian farmers, on the climate and environmental impact of agroecological practices or on food for India's urban population.

Alongside a free trade agreement between the European Union and India, which is looked at in greater detail in Chapter 3, we want to expand our **bilateral relations** quickly and comprehensively and to further enhance the framework for this. To this end, we want to work together to expand strategic areas of cooperation, such as solar supply chains, green hydrogen and e-mobility. To achieve this, we intend to conduct an even more intensive dialogue with India on areas, especially in innovative and critical spheres, which are suitable for enhanced cooperation. Furthermore,

we want to collaborate with India to create the conditions for a more intensive exchange among **small and medium-sized enterprises**, with a view to exploiting the full potential of economic relations between Germany and India. The German Government will, among other things, continue its successful Partnering in Business with Germany programme with India. Moreover, we are engaged in an intensive exchange with India on **social and employment policy** and want to deepen the dialogue on working conditions in global supply chains. We are seeking a joint declaration of intent on this.

The German Government wants to foster the innovative strength of German and Indian companies by way of joint Indo-German funding programmes for companies and research institutions. In order to promote investment in innovations in a targeted manner, we are keen to foster closer networking between start-up ecosystems. To achieve this, **uniform points of contact** are to be set up as operational units in selected international ecosystems – including India. In addition to this, we want to expand the **German Accelerator for start-up companies** in India and are aiming to open a German Accelerator office in India.

The German Government also regards initiatives launched by the **federal states** as having promising potential for promoting economic cooperation with India and expects positive impetus for German business cooperation projects with India in future.



## 2.7. Academic relations, research, culture and education

**Cultural, academic and educational exchange** is traditionally a core component of our bilateral relations. In the sphere of research and cutting-edge technology, India is experiencing rapid development and has long since established itself as a location for research, innovation and development for global companies. Today, India is home to more than 100 start-up unicorns and the number of patent registrations from India has increased five-fold in the last 15 years. Close exchange in the form of partnerships and research cooperation projects between universities and companies is therefore of great value to our knowledge-based society and economy.

Indian students have been the largest group of foreign students at German universities since 2023. We are very keen to see them successfully complete their studies and remain in the German labour market. We want to further increase the number of Indian students in Germany, as well as the number of German students at universities in India. Hundreds of university partnerships, the regular exchange of academics as well as numerous **research cooperation projects** form a solid basis for this founded on academic freedom. Indo-German cooperation in the research field has grown substantially in both magnitude and significance during the last few years. One outstanding example of this is the cooperation within the framework of the international accelerator facility FAIR in Darmstadt. The cooperation at the DESY research centre in Hamburg is also considered to be a very successful and strategic partnership, which could be considerably expanded in the coming years.

The **German Academic Exchange Service** (DAAD) plays an important role in fostering academic exchange. Indo-German university partnerships are to be further strengthened through additional measures. The Indian university landscape has opened up to international universities. Against this background, the German Government would welcome the establishment of an international campus by a German university in India.

To ensure that research and innovation can provide convincing responses to the major challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the academic and business communities must cooperate even more closely at international level. The aim of both countries is therefore to steadily expand their academic and technological cooperation as a main pillar of their strategic partnership. The **Indo-German Science and Technology Centre** (IGSTC), the only body of this kind in the world, is expected to make an important contribution towards this goal. We intend to further strengthen the German Centre for Research and Innovation in New Delhi as a platform for this.

We want to maintain the strong presence of the branches of the **Goethe-Institut** and Goethe-Zentrum in a total of ten locations around India. Known in India under the name Max Müller Bhavan, they provide an active cultural exchange and dialogue. Within the framework of Indo-German cooperation to recruit skilled workers, the Goethe-Institut branches in India play an outstanding role in enabling people to learn German, acquire relevant language certificates and fostering preintegration.

We are supporting a total of 57 **partner schools** in India which provide intensive German courses. We want to take advantage of the great potential that learning German as a foreign language at an early age offers when it comes to recruiting skilled workers. We will continue to promote the **German school** in New Delhi and support its planned restructuring and reorganisation.

We want to work with India to further promote key technologies and sectors for the future such as artificial intelligence, environmental technologies, energy technologies, digital and space technologies as well as semiconductors. This will strengthen our strategic and technological sovereignty as well as economic resilience – even though India is competing with us in some of these spheres. We want to set ambitious targets for this with India in a **roadmap for innovation and technology**.

In 2023, India became the fourth nation to successfully land a spacecraft on the moon. This historic event highlights the outstanding capabilities of India's space research and industry. In light of this, we are interested in stepping up the **exchange between the German Space Agency at**

**the German Aerospace Center and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).**

Indian studies has a rich tradition at German universities and we want to build on this. To date, however, interdisciplinary research and policy advice on today's India, encompassing political and economic aspects, has not existed in Germany on a scale which does justice to India's growing importance to Germany. The German Government is therefore encouraging the development of **expertise on India** at state educational institutions as well as in the sphere of policy advice. More extensive journalistic reporting from India can also help foster understanding of India in Germany.

The German **vocational training system** has met with considerable interest in India. There is therefore long-standing cooperation on international vocational training with the aim of ensuring that the largest possible number of young people have the qualifications to succeed in their careers, shaping the vocational training system to meet needs and ensuring that teaching staff are better qualified.

## 2.8. Skilled immigration and visas

Individual, personal exchanges in both directions between people in Germany and India is a key aspect of our relations. The rise by around 25% between 2022 and 2023 in the number of Indians working in Germany in jobs subject to compulsory social insurance contributions is a very positive development. With the **Migration and Mobility Agreement**, Germany and India have considerably expanded opportunities for the increased mobility and fair migration of skilled workers, students, trainees, researchers and journalists between the two countries. A joint working group on mobility and migration issues was set up under the agreement. The German Government has placed cooperation on repatriation on a new, viable basis with the agreement, thus helping to limit irregular migration.

The revised **Skilled Immigration Act** creates much broader and simplified requirements for training, studying or working in Germany.

In close coordination with the Indian Government, we are seeking to greatly expand the **recruitment of skilled workers** from India and to help achieve this with concrete strategic measures. The German Government's key measures and projects are bundled and set out in the **India Skilled Labour Strategy**, which was drawn up by several ministries. This strategy is to be presented at the Indo-German intergovernmental consultations in October 2024. Key elements concern aspects of publicity, recruitment, matching, the recognition of professional qualifications, language instruction as well as the integration of skilled workers and their families. What is more, we are creating an increasingly **modern visa procedure** with the aim of speeding up and simplifying the process. We have already drastically

reduced waiting times for applicants in India and intend to keep them short in future with organisational measures and the digitalisation of the application procedure.

We want to work with the Indian Government to ensure that the principles of ethical, **fair and long-term labour migration**, as set out for example in the Global Skills Partnerships, are also upheld when it comes to skilled migration from India. To anchor their application in the recruitment of skilled workers by the private sector, the German Government has taken the initial step of establishing the Fair Recruitment Healthcare Germany quality seal for the care sector.

The German Government welcomes initiatives by the federal states and municipalities as well as the **private sector** on recruiting skilled workers and intends to support them. The fact that the Skilled Immigration Act has made it easier for persons with private foreign vocational qualifications to come to Germany has laid the initial groundwork for this.

Furthermore, the Indian **diaspora** in Germany, with whom the German Government works closely, plays a key role in attracting skilled workers.

## 2.9. *The German federal states as partners of the Indian states*

Germany and India are both federal states. Numerous German federal states and municipalities have established close contacts with Indian States and local authorities and have set up the first **town and state twinning programmes**.

These partnerships serve the specific goals of the federal states, such as recruiting skilled workers, promoting economic exchange or strengthening the cooperation between German and Indian universities. They make a major contribution towards bilateral cooperation and the intensification of economic and civil society contacts.

The German Embassy in New Delhi and the consulates-general in Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata and Mumbai will step up their dialogue with Indian states to encourage cooperation projects in the spheres of **investment promotion, cultural exchange and vocational training**.

### **Town and state partnerships with India**



Bavaria and the Indian State of Karnataka established a regional partnership back in 2007. Baden-Württemberg launched its partnership with Maharashtra in 2015. North Rhine-Westphalia concluded a cooperation agreement with West Bengal in 2019. Other federal states are considering partnerships with Indian states.

A number of cities have partnerships with Indian municipalities. There has been a partnership between the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen and Pune in Maharashtra state since 1976. Karlsruhe also has a partnership with Pune. Stuttgart has been partnered with Mumbai since 1968 and Herrsching am Ammersee with Chatra in Jharkhand State since 1994. In 2008, Esslingen transformed its friendly relations with Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu state into a town twinning.

## 2.10. Parliamentary contacts

Germany and India share a tradition of parliamentarianism and federal systems. This shared tradition fosters a direct exchange of views and experiences between parliamentarians, especially within the framework of the **German-Indian Parliamentary Friendship Group** of the German Bundestag. It is an important element which serves to deepen understanding of India in Germany and vice versa. With their experience, members of parliament have an impact on many aspects of society via their constituencies and can consolidate the significance of our close

partnership there. At the same time, they are a key source of impetus for government action.

We expressly welcome contacts between members of the parliaments of the federal states and members of state legislative assemblies in India.

The work of the **political foundations** helps to strengthen the shared values with India and to foster closer contacts between parties and civil society actors.

# 3.

## *The European Union's relations with India*

Our policy on India is embedded in the **Common Foreign and Security Policy as well as the European Union's trade policy**. We strongly advocate intensifying cooperation between the EU and India. We therefore expressly welcome the fact that the EU is focusing on the challenges of the future in its relations with India with the EU-India Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025. In Brussels, the German Government is calling for EU bodies to address India systematically and on a regular basis.

In times of growing geopolitical challenges, protectionist tendencies and the risk of further fragmentation of the global economy, a comprehensive **free trade agreement** between the EU and India is of particular importance to both sides. It will take the partnership between the EU and India to the next level. For such an agreement would strengthen the EU as a global player over all, especially in the Indo-Pacific, facilitate the diversification of our economic relations and make global supply chains much more resilient. The German Government therefore supports the swift conclusion of an ambitious and balanced free trade agreement as well as the Investment Protection Agreement and the Geographical Indications Agreement, which are being negotiated in parallel.

In order to address the Indian Government's concerns about trade policy in light of the EU's **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)**, we intend to call within the EU for a constructive dialogue with India which focuses on economic incentives for climate action measures, thus promoting the clean production of industrial products in states outside the EU.

The German Government welcomes the joint **Trade and Technology Council** set up by the EU and India to foster closer cooperation in the fields of trade, technology and security, thus also

further strengthening Europe's strategic autonomy. The council is helping the EU and India to intensify their strategic partnership and, among other things, to develop shared responses to the complex challenges of the digital transformation and the shaping of resilient global value chains. The German Government is calling for this format to be used more strategically with the close involvement of the EU member states.

The German Government favours closer **security and defence cooperation** between the EU and India. We are advocating that, as part of the process of implementing the Strategic Compass with India, talks on security and defence partnership are commenced and speedily concluded.

The German Government regards the EU and India as key partners, which are making a key contribution towards preserving **maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region**. It is therefore calling for European cooperation within the context of the EU's Coordinated Maritime Presence in the North Western Indian Ocean to be strengthened. Within the framework of the EU's Critical Maritime Routes Indo-Pacific (CRIMARIO) project, which Germany supports, partner countries in the region are receiving assistance to expand their capabilities to protect their maritime areas. The cooperation potential of the EU's EUNAVFOR Aspides mission with the Indian marine mission to secure the sea routes in the Red Sea and in the Arabian Sea has not yet been fully exploited.

We welcome the decision in 2021 to resume the **EU-India Human Rights Dialogue** and stress its importance as a key instrument in strengthening basic values and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The German Government is pressing for regular sessions of the Dialogue Forum and is playing an active role in the preparations of the talks. We are seeking

### 3. THE EUROPEAN UNION'S RELATIONS WITH INDIA

a central role for the European External Action Service in the coordination of our position on human rights issues.

The German Government supports projects which create reliable and crisis-proof links for people and business between Europe and India by developing high-quality, efficient and sustainable infrastructure. Together with the EU, the German Government – as a founding member of the **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)** – will work with determination to fully implement the Corridor.

With the **Global Gateway**, the EU and its member states are making a substantial contribution towards closing the global investment gap. In cooperation with India, we want to use this to offer partner countries a fair and transparent alternative. In India itself, several Gateway projects are currently being implemented, including the construction of underground lines in Surat and Ahmedabad as well as the rehabilitation of infrastructure for climate-sensitive urban planning.



# 4.

## *Cooperation with India in multilateral forums*

Germany is working to strengthen the international order on the basis of international law, the Charter of the **United Nations** and human rights. Reform of the United Nations is of particular importance to us. We want to make the organisation fit for the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and make it possible for it to perform its prime task of preserving and restoring peace more effectively.

The most important building block to this end is the joint call by Germany and India along with Brazil and Japan (G4) for a modern **UN Security Council** and for it to be enlarged to include additional permanent and non-permanent members. Building on existing dialogue formats, we want to enter into an even closer exchange with India on key UN issues in order to identify suitable areas where we can meaningfully step up our cooperation. We are aware that India has different priorities to Germany with regard to many of the issues addressed within the United Nations and that cooperation is most likely to bear fruit in those spheres where the interests of Germany and India converge.

We intend, for example, to expand our bilateral exchange with India on issues relating to international **climate negotiations (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNFCCC)** as well as those of the G20 on climate action issues at all levels with the aim of also moving closer on issues such as financing, technological cooperation and raising ambitions. The German Government will play a bigger role in the **International Solar Alliance**.

We are also committed to strengthening multilateral players in **global health**, in particular the World Health Organization (WHO), with a view to strengthening its core mandate and cooperating in the field of sustainable finance.

In order to advance solutions for the global challenges of **environmental protection**, we want to remain engaged with India in a close exchange in international bodies such as the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

India concluded its successful **G20 Presidency** in 2023, whose motto was “One Earth, One Family, One Future” with the historic decision at the summit in New Delhi in September 2023 to include the African Union in the format, thus strengthening Africa’s voice on the international stage. The German Government supported this decision from the outset. Also significant was the agreement on the Green Development Pact for a sustainable future, in which the G20 members expressed their commitment to urgently combat our planet’s crises such as the climate crisis, the massive biodiversity loss and environmental pollution. We also want to build on the priorities of India’s G20 Presidency in our bilateral cooperation with India. We are focusing on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, fostering sustainable lifestyles and development shaped by women and marginalised groups, combating future pandemics or preparing for global health risks, as well as reforming the multilateral development banks. In the World Bank, we will continue the reform path embarked upon, which has India’s support, to jointly mobilise more funding for the protection of global public goods and transboundary challenges. We want to ensure a sustainable, resilient and inclusive working world of the future by continuing to support India’s commitment to a Global Skills Framework.

During Germany’s Presidency of the **Group of Seven (G7)** in 2022, we invited India as a partner country to the summit in Elmau and, in particular, adopted a statement on strengthening the resilience of democracies together with India and other partner countries and G7 member states.

Germany and India have different opinions on some aspects of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means as well as on arms control. However, we are working well together, for example within the framework of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and the Australia Group. The actions of the German Government are guided by Germany's obligations under the guidelines of the international export control regimes, which help to **strengthen non-proliferation**. Germany supports India's desire to accede to the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

We expressly welcome India's interest in joining the **International Energy Agency** (IEA) and the German Government will support the process closely and constructively.

Germany is also working with India in a spirit of mutual trust in **regional multilateral forums**. As a dialogue partner in the **Indian Ocean Rim Association** (IORA) of the Indian Ocean littoral states, Germany supports shared interests such as maritime security, the expansion of trade and investment as well as disaster risk management in the region.

In agreement with the German Government Policy Guidelines for the Indo-Pacific, Germany is intensifying its engagement in regional initiatives. At the invitation of the Indian Government, we are making a substantial **contribution towards the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative** (IPOI) and will focus on helping to strengthen the resilience of Pacific island states against loss and damage caused by the climate crisis.

# 5.

## *Coordinating Germany's policy on India*

Given their federal structures and the separation of competences among the various levels, the **political systems** of Germany and India are comparable. The two countries also have a diverse society in common. The comprehensive intensification of our strategic partnership with India can therefore only be realised by involving the federal ministries, the federal states and municipalities, members of parliament, as well as stakeholders from business, academia and society.

We see the broad range of players and levels of cooperation as a great strength. It opens up a variety of opportunities for bringing together partners on both sides. **Greater coordination** is required to use this potential systematically. This would create the opportunity in future for all players to provide input for the preparation of the Indo-German Intergovernmental Consultations.

The German Government will enhance existing coordination structures among the **federal ministries** and establish a regular exchange **with India at state secretary level**.

The German Government will involve the **federal states and municipalities** more closely in the strategic orientation of our policy on India. We will expand the existing exchange format at expert level to this end.

The German Government will demonstrate that it recognises the importance of an in-depth exchange with **business associations and companies** by convening a regular meeting at expert level. We will also step up the exchange with **civil society players** within the framework of the round table.

The German Government maintains a coordination group for **scientific cooperation** with India and actively supports the interests of German partner institutions in order to foster cooperation among institutions from the German and Indian university and research landscape as well as the establishment of new partnerships.

**Our aim** is to comprehensively examine the issues of our cooperation with India and to identify and implement needs-based and **sustainable solutions** by involving all relevant players.

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