

Embassy of India Helsinki

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.

There have been regular exchanges of visits at Ministerial level including:

From Estonia:

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

From India:

- Minister of State for Corporate Affairs Shri Sachin Pilot visited in 15-16 April 2013.
- Smt. Lakshmi Panabaka, Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas visited on 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 visited Estonia on 11-15 September, 2016.
- MOS External Affairs (M.J. Akbar) visited Estonia from 27-28 May, 2017 and met Mr. Sven Mikser Estonian Foreign Minister.
- MOS(MJA) met Mr. Sven Mikser at New York on 21 September, 2017
- MoS(EA) Gen. V.K. Singh met Estonian Foreign Minister, Mr. Sven Mikser on 20 November, 2017 at Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on the sidelines of the ASEM Meeting.

Agreements:

- Declaration of Principles of Cooperation between the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of India (signed and entered into force on October 15, 1993)

- Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation (signed on 15.10.1993 entered into force on October 24, 2004)
- Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation (signed on 14.10.1993; entered into force on March 13, 2000)
- Protocol on Bilateral Foreign Office Consultations (signed in August 1995)
- Agreement on Cooperation in the Spheres of Culture, Education, Science, Sports, Arts, Mass Media, Tourism and Youth Affairs (signed on October 15, 1993, entered into force on November 11, 1999)
- Agreement on Cooperation in the Fields of Science & Technology (signed on February 5, 1999, entered into force on August 6, 1999)
- Joint Business Council Agreement between FICCI & Estonian Chamber of Commerce.
- The Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion (DTAA) was signed on September 19, 2011.
- An MOU on Cooperation in the field of Biotechnology and Higher Education was signed in October 2013
- An MOU on Cooperation on Capacity Building and Other Related Areas in the Field of E-Governance signed in February 2014.
- Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons was signed on 15 November, 2016 and became effective on 1 March, 2017

Foreign Office Consultations:

The last India-Estonia Foreign Office Consultations were held in Estonia on 26th August, 2016. Next one is due in Delhi in 2019.

Commercial Relations:

Bilateral commercial relations are good, but there is significant room for enhanced economic engagement in information technology, cyber security, e-governance and block chain.

Bilateral trade has not been stable over last three to five years due to diversion of trade via other countries of the European Union to achieve economies of scale. The turnover also depends on the comparative prices of Estonian pulp and paper as compared to other countries. The data for last 3 years is below:

(In US\$ million)

Financial Year	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
India's Exports to Estonia	63.68	97.50	80.33
India's Imports from Estonia	142.04	102.47	60.54
Total bilateral trade	205.72	199.96	140.86

Source: Ministry of Commerce, Government of India

Major items of export to Estonia from India include 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 include: Iron and steel, fertilizers, electrical machinery, paper and paperboard; paper pulp, veneer etc.

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 Gurus also have their followers and representative centres in Estonia.

Indian Community

There are about 918 persons of Indian community in Estonia including 518 citizens and an estimated 400 PIOs in Estonia. There are 186 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.indianembassy.fi

<https://www.facebook.com/IndiaInFinland>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/IndEmbFinEst>
