

Embassy of India Tallinn

India-Estonia Bilateral Relations

India's contact with Estonia goes back several centuries. Estonian seafarer A. J. Von Krusen Stern visited Madras and Calcutta in 1797. The "*PühhapäiwaWahhe-luggemissed*" ("Sunday Intermediary Readings") of Otto W. Masing (1818) was the first written work in Estonian to refer to India. At the University of Tartu, several publications in Sanskrit were published in the early 1800s. Sanskrit was being taught there in 1837.

India recognised the Republic of Estonia in September 1991, a month after it declared its independence from the Soviet Union. Diplomatic relations were established in December 1991. Bilateral relations are cordial and friendly. The Embassy of India in Tallinn was opened on 28 December, 2021 headed by a Cd'A a.i. Since 1991, Embassy of India, Helsinki (Finland) was concurrently accredited to Estonia. The first Resident Ambassador Shri Ajaneesh Kumar, presented his credentials on 26 April, 2022.

Government of Estonia opened its Embassy in New Delhi headed by a C.d'A in February 2012, with the first resident Ambassador presenting his credentials on 22 February, 2013.

High level engagement

- Prime Minister Shri P.V.Narasimha Rao and President of Estonia Mr. Lennart-Georg Meri met in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.
- Prime Minister of Estonia, Mr. Andrus Ansip visited India for a private visit from 16-17 July, 2012 enroute to Afghanistan.
- President Mr. Lennart-Georg Meri made a State visit to India in February 1999.
- Vice President Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, visited Estonia on 20-21 August, 2019.

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi met Estonia's President Ms. Kersti Kaljulaid on the sidelines of UNGA in New York in September 2019.

Visit of Vice President

Vice President of India visited Tallinn, Estonia on 20-21 August, 2019. This was the first high level visit from India to Estonia since the establishment of diplomatic relations. He was accompanied by Shri Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre, Minister of State (IT), three MPs, senior officials and 18 companies. Vice President met President of Estonia Ms Kersti Kaljulaid, PM Jüri Ratas, President of the Riigikogu (Parliament) Mr. Henn Põlluaas, leader of India-Estonia Parliamentary Group Mr. Sven Sester and addressed Estonian Ambassadors and senior diplomats at their annual Heads of Mission Conference. He also addressed members of the Indian Community. Vice President and Estonian PM jointly addressed a Business Forum. Following MOUs were signed during the visit of Vice President:

- 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

Visits of Estonian Foreign Ministers to India

- Mr. Trivimi Velliste October 1993
- Mr. Urmas Paet November 2008
- Mr. Urmas Paet February 2013 (to inaugurate Embassy of Estonia)
- Mr. Urmas Reinsalu, 15-16 January, 2020

Visits of Indian Foreign Ministers to Estonia

- MOS(EA) Shri Salman Khurshid in August 1995
- MOS (EA) Shri Digvijay Singh in November 2003
- MOS(EA), Smt. Preneet Kaur in March 2011.
- MOS External Affairs (MJA) 27-28 May, 2017
- MOS(MJA) met Mr. Sven Mikser, Foreign Minister in September 2017 in New York

- MoS(EA) Gen. V.K. Singh met Foreign Minister, Mr. Sven Mikser in November 2017 in Myanmar on the sidelines of ASEM.
- External Affairs Minister (EAM) Smt. Sushma Swaraj met Mr. Sven Mikser, Foreign Minister on 25 September, 2018 in New York.
- External Affairs Minister (EAM) Dr. S. Jaishankar met Mr. Urmas Reinsalu on 23 September, 2022 on the sidelines of UNGA in New York.

Other Ministerial Visits from Estonia

- Minister for Education and Research, Mr. Jaak Aaviksoo from 28 September – 1 October, 2012.
- Minister for Education and Research Mr. Aaviksoo visited India in October 2013.
- Minister for Justice, Mr. Hanno Pevkur on 9-11 December, 2013.
- Minister for Economic Affairs and Communications, Mr. Juhan Parts on 3-8 February 2015.
- Minister of IT and Entrepreneurship, Ms. Urve Palo on 8-12 March, 2018

Other Ministerial Visits from India

- Karnataka's Minister of IT, Bio-Tech, S&T and Industries, Shri K.J. George visited on 28 August, 2018.
- Minister for Law and Justice & IT, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad on 11-13 September, 2016.
- Minister of State for Environment and Forests, Smt. Jayanthi Natarajan on 20-22 September, 2013.
- MOS Petroleum and Natural Gas, Smt. Lakshmi Panabaka (with a delegation from ONGC and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd.) in June, 2013
- MOS Corporate Affairs, Shri Sachin Pilot in April 2013
- Minister of Communications and IT, Shri Kapil Sibal on 19 September, 2011
- Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises, Shri Praful Patel in October 2011

Parliamentary Contacts

- Speaker of Lok Sabha, Shri Somnath Chatterjee met President (Speaker) of Estonian Parliament (Riigikogu), Mr. Toomas Varek in June 2006.
- Minister of Parliamentary Affairs Shri P.K.Bansal and MPs visited Estonia in June 2011.
- President (Speaker) of Parliament (Riigikogu) Mrs. Ene Ergma led a 10-member Parliamentary Group to India in April 2010.
- An 11-member delegation led by Mr. Marko Mihkelson, Chairman of External Affairs Committee of Estonian Parliament visited India in March 2012.
- Chair of India-Estonia Parliamentary Group, Mr. Sven Sester and three other MPs visited India in Jan-Feb 2020.

Foreign Office Consultation

A Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) was signed in August 1995. So far 11 FOCs have been held, alternately in Tallinn and New Delhi. The 11th FOC was held in Tallinn on 25 November 2021, with Mrs Reenat Sandhu, Secretary (West) and Mr. Rein Tammsaar, Under Secretary for Political Affairs as co-chairs.

Bilateral Agreements

- Declaration of Principles of Cooperation
- Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation
- Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation
- Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations
- Agreement on Cooperation in the Spheres of Culture, Education, Science, Sports, Arts, Mass Media, Tourism and Youth Affairs
- Agreement on Cooperation in Science & Technology
- Joint Business Council Agreement between FICCI & Estonian Chamber of Commerce
- Agreement for Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion (DTAA)
- MOU on Cooperation in Biotechnology and Higher Education
- MOU on Cooperation on Capacity Building etc in e-Governance

- Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons
- 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
- Mutual Recognition of Vaccine Certificate (MRVC) through exchange of Note Verbales

Estonia-India Business Forum:

On 21 August, 2019 an Indian business delegation of 18 companies led by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) which visited Tallinn as part of the Vice President of India's delegation, participated in the Estonia-India Business Forum. They were from engineering, ICT, hospitality and other sectors. The delegation was joined at the Business Forum by 30 companies from Estonia for B2B meetings to explore possibilities of collaboration. Vice President and Prime Minister of Estonia, Mr. Juri Ratas addressed the Business Forum.

UN Security Council

Both India and Estonia served together in the UNSC as non-permanent members in the year 2021. While Estonia was non-permanent member for the term 2020-21, India is for the term 2021-22. Both countries closely cooperated with each other on issues of mutual interest.

Bilateral Trade

Trade in Goods

(In EUR million)

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 (upto July 2022)
India's Exports to Estonia	32.87	31.87	45.61	30.35	41.00	52.80

India's Imports from Estonia	57.75	86.44	54.19	65.23	98.30	19.20
Total bilateral trade	90.62	118.31	99.80	95.58	139.30	72

Source: Statistics Estonia Source: Statistics Estonia

Major Estonian imports from India include machinery and equipment, garments, knit wear, iron & steel articles of leather; saddles and harness, travel goods, hand bags, 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.

Trade in Services

(In EUR million)

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 upto July
India's imports from Estonia	10.0	8.4	14.6	7.7	15.60	10.1
India's exports to Estonia	7.7	8.9	9.4	8.1	11.80	8.9
Total	17.7	17.3	24.0	15.8	27.40	19

Source: Statistics Estonia Source: Statistics Estonia

Indian Investment in Estonia

Reliance Industrial Investments and Holdings Ltd. (RIIHL), a wholly-owned unit of Reliance Industries, has set up a company in Estonia called Jio Estonia OU in November 2018. The firm will look into software development and provide consultancy for existing and future technology initiatives pursued by the group and its subsidiaries. Indian FDI in Estonia as on June 2022 stands at Euro 6.2 million (Statistics Estonia).

Estonian Investment in India

The amount of FDI equity inflows from Estonia to India from till June 2022 was US\$ 3.54 million.

E-Governance

Ministry of IT and Electronics India (MEITY) has signed an MoU with e-Governance Academy for capacity building programme. In August 2019, an MOU for cooperation in e-governance and emerging digital technologies was signed between METIY and Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs & Communications. Since 2011, several officials and other private bodies from India have availed training programs in the e-Governance Academy in Estonia.

Cooperation in Innovative & Start-up Technologies

Indian entrepreneurs and founders of Start-ups have been benefited from Start-up visas issued by the Estonian government. A NASSCOM business delegation visited Estonia on 23 May 2019 for an introduction to the ICT and Start-up eco-system.

A delegation comprising 13 Start-ups and 10 incubators from India participated in Estonia's Start-up conference 'Latitude 59' in May 2019, supported by our Mission, Embassy of Estonia in India, and Start-up Estonia.

Cyber Security

DG CERT-In, Dr Sanjay Bahl led a cyber security business delegation to Estonia from 27-28 November, 2017. CERT-In and Information System Authority (RIS) of Estonia signed an MOU for cooperation in Cyber Security in August 2019.

e-Residency and Start-up Visa

As per latest information available, approximately 3000 Indians have become e-residents and set up nearly 700 companies in Estonia availing e-Residency and Start-up visas. In 2019, India was among the top 3 recipients of Start-up Visa with 124 given for employees and 40 for founders.

Culture

ICCR sponsored troupes perform in Estonia regularly. Some of the cultural programmes organized by the Embassy in recent years are:

- Bihu Dance Group in July 2011.

- Mamata Shankar dance Group in March 2012.
- Ranganiketan dance group from Manipur in June 2012.
- Hindustani classical music concert by Ms. Ashwani Deshpande, on 5 June, 2018*
- Kathak dance troupe, ANART Academy in 19 June, 2018.(ICCR)*
- Ghatam Suresh's MRittika Carnatic Classical Music Instrumental concert on 24 August, 2018. (ICCR)*
- Akkarai sisters – Violin Classical Music concert on 22 September 2018*.
- Kanchana sisters - Carnatic Classical Music Concert on 27 May 2019*
- A biogenesis Band from Nagaland in August 2019 (ICCR)*

**Organised as part of Estonia's celebrations of Centenary of Independence.*

Bharatanatyam school “Amrita” in Tallinn is active for nearly 30 years.

Several yoga and meditation courses and schools are run by local experts. International Day of Yoga (IDY) has been regularly celebrated by the Embassy. In June 2018 and 2019, IDY was celebrated in Tallinn and Tartu. In 2021, International Day of Yoga was celebrated at Kadrioru Park in Tallinn in cooperation with the Art of Living. In 2022, as its first cultural activity, the newly opened Resident Mission in Tallinn celebrated IDY in front of Kumu Museum, Kadriorg Park on 18 June in Tallinn and on 19 June in Tartu in the A Le Coq Sports complex.

Indian Studies

Tartu University established in 1632 started Sanskrit studies in 1837. While the Oriental Studies Department continues to be in existence, Sanskrit is not taught anymore. Embassy presented many text books and documents including in Pali and Sanskrit.

Indian Community

As per the latest data, there are 1504 Indian citizens in Estonia holding temporary or long term residence permit: While 119 persons are on study visa, 248 are on employment visa. They are largely engaged as professionals in ICT industry, business and hospitality sectors.

An Indian Association of Estonia has been formally constituted on 8 September, 2022.

There are a few Indian Restaurants (Little India, Matka, Chakra, Maharaja, Ginger, Elewant, Spice, Banana Leaf, Akbana Indian, etc.) in the capital city. Some also have their branches in Tartu and other cities of Estonia.

Indian Students in Estonia

There are nearly 119 Indian students pursuing studies mainly in postgraduate and doctoral programmes in educational institutions in Estonia. 'Study in Estonia' is actively promoting Estonia as a destination for higher education for Indian students.

Opening of the Resident Mission in Tallinn

The first Resident Mission of India was opened on 28 December, 2021 by Shri Manoj Sharma, Cd'A a. i. Shri Ajaneesh Kumar, Ambassador assumed charge of the Mission on 11 March 2022. He presented his credentials to H.E. Mr. Alar Karis, Hon'ble President of the Republic of Estonia on 26 April, 2022.
