

**Brief Embassy Report on Bilateral Relations – ITJ Division, DGCI&S,
Kolkata.
India-Austria Bilateral Relation**

A. Introduction

1. Indian Trade Journal (ITJ) division of the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIS) brings out weekly publication on Embassy Profile Report providing information on recent policy changes and happenings in other countries that may be of interest to the Indian trading community. This is the Embassy Profile Report for 13.08.2025 depicting the Embassy of Austria.

2. Diplomatic relations between Austria and India were established in May 1949 by India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Austria's first post-world war II Chancellor Leopold. Historically, Indo-Austrian ties have been particularly strong and India intervened in June 1953 in Austria's favour during negotiations with the Soviet Union on the Austrian State Treaty. India also supported Austria on the UN-South Tyrol conventions. The main institutional mechanism at the governmental level between India and Austria are the Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) and the Joint Economic Commission (JEC).

3. Recent Ministerial level engagements and visits

i) External Affairs Minister (EAM) Dr. S. Jaishankar visited Austria from 31st December 2022 to 3rd January 2023.

ii) Austrian Foreign Minister, Mr. Alexander Schallenberg visited India from 19-21 March, 2022. In 2022, the two Foreign Ministers have also met in Munich on 18th February 2022, in Bratislava on 02nd June 2022, on the sidelines of the GLOBSEC Forum, in New York on 20th September 2022 on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. In 2023 the two foreign Ministers also met on the sidelines of EU-Indo Pacific Ministerial forum held in Stockholm and of 78th Session of UNGA in New York.

iii) Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari visited Austria to participate in INTERALPIN 2023 Fair in Innsbruck at the invitation of Ms. Leonore Gewessler, Minister of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology from 18-21 April 2023.

iv) Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Housing and Urban Affairs, Shri Hardeep Singh Puri visited Vienna for India-OPEC dialogue on 08-09 November 2023. He also had meeting with Mr. Haitham Al-Ghais, Secretary General, and OPEC.

v) Minister of State for External Affairs & Culture, H.E Ms. Meenakshi Lekhi transited through

Austria on 2nd December 2023 during her official visit to Budapest and Bulgaria from 29th November to 1st December 2023.

vi) Federal Minister Martin Kocher paid a working visit to India from February 19th to 23rd, 2024. He was accompanied by 38 Austrian companies. In New Delhi, he had bilateral meeting Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry and participated in the Raisina Dialogue and took part in CII's Europe Business & Sustainability Conclave. India- Austria start up bridge was also launched during the visit.

B. Commercial Relations (Trade and Foreign Investment) – Recent facts & figures

4. As a trading country partner of India and as per latest compiled and available statistics with DGCI&S, India's exports to Austria during 2024-25 have been recorded at 1405.70 million USD and India's imports from Austria during the same reference period stands at 960.61 million USD with a resultant trade balance surplus of 445.09 million USD.

Export-Import statistics from 2020-21 to 2024-25

(USD Million)

Year	Total trade	Import	Export
2020-21	1076.17	623.10	453.07
2021-22	1389.45	825.13	564.32
2022-23	2099.27	837.63	1261.64
2023-24	2058.64	922.23	1136.41
2024-25	2366.31	960.61	1405.70

(Source: Department of Commerce, India)

India's key exports to Austria: Electronic Goods, Apparels, Textile, Footwear, Rubber articles, Vehicles & Railways parts, Electrical machinery and Mechanical appliances.

India's key imports from Austria: Machinery, Mechanical appliances, Railway parts, Iron and Steel.

5. According to Austrian National Bank, India received cumulative direct investment of 733 million Euros in 2023. Cumulative FDI from India to Austria reached about 1.159 billion Euros in 2023.

6. To foster innovation and entrepreneurship between the countries, India-Austria Startup Bridge was launched in February 2024.

C. Other Major Areas of Co-operation:

Several bilateral agreements/MoUs have been signed with Austria both at inter-government level as well as between institutions, providing the framework for wide-ranging cooperation.

➤ Following are the Agreements which are currently in force:

- (i) MoU on Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement (Signed during meeting of EAM and FM in Stockholm on 13th May 2023).
- ii) MoU on Joint Declaration on a Working Holiday (Signed during the visit of EAM in January 2023).
- iii) MoU on Gainful occupation for family members of Diplomatic staff (Signed during the visit of EAM in January 2023).
- iv) MoU on Exemption of visa requirements for diplomatic passports holders (Signed during meeting of EAM and FM in Stockholm on 13th May 2023).
- v) MoU on Cultural Cooperation for the years 2022-26 (Signed during the visit of EAM in January 2023).

➤ **Culture:** The Indo-Austrian cultural relations have a long tradition dating back to 16th century when Balthasar Springer travelled from Tyrol in 1505 to India along with the third Portuguese fleet. The Austrian tradition of Indology began in a period renowned for its distinguished philologist and archaeologist between 1825-1920. The teaching of Sanskrit at Vienna University started in 1845 and a high point was reached in 1880 with the foundation of an independent chair for Indology. Following a brief interruption between 1938-1955, the Chair became an independent department, now known as Institute for South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies at University of Vienna.

➤ The visit of India's philosopher-poet and Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore twice to Vienna – in 1921 and 1926 was one of the crucial bridges of cultural and intellectual exchange between India and Austria. Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's famous lecture in 1921 "The religion of the forest" portrayed the value of getting closer to nature and learning union and compassion.

➤ Reputed artists of India and Austria have performed in each other's countries for the past several decades. These include - Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, Zakir Hussain, Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia, Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Anushka Shankar. Maestro Zubin Mehta continues to be associated with Vienna Philharmonic and delivered New Year performances at the famous Music Verein, including the concert in September 2022. Several Bollywood films are being filmed in Austria, given its scenic locales.

- There is a lot of interest in contemporary Indian literature and theatre in Austria. Ayurveda, the Indian traditional system of medicine has been widely acknowledged and practiced in Austria. The holistic approach of Yoga in health care and wellbeing has led many Austrians to embrace Yoga and is testified by the presence of many Yoga schools in Vienna and other Austrian cities.
- **Indian community:** There are an estimated over 31,000 Indians living in Austria. They are roughly evenly divided between NRIs and PIOs. There are over 450 Indian students pursuing their higher education in Austria.

Source: www.mea.gov.in