



## India-Austria Relations

**For Prelims:** [UNFCCC](#), [UNCLOS](#), [India-Middle East-Europe Corridor](#), [Green Hydrogen Mission](#), [Industry 4.0](#), [European Union](#), [Green Hydrogen Mission](#)

**For Mains:** India-Austria Relations, Bilateral Relations and Diplomatic Milestones

**Source:** [PIB](#)

### Why in News?

The Prime Minister of India paid an official visit to Austria, this was the **first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Austria in 41 years**, marking the 75th year of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

- The visit aimed to elevate bilateral relations to new heights through enhanced cooperation in various sectors, including technology, economy, and global security.

### Note

In June 1955, PM [Jawaharlal Nehru](#) paid a State visit to Austria, roughly one month after it had gained full independence through the conclusion of the **State Treaty**. Nehru's was the first State visit of a foreign leader to newly independent Austria.

### What are the Key Highlights of the Prime Minister's visit to Austria?

- **Support for Indo-Pacific Stability:** Both nations reaffirmed their commitment to a free and open [Indo-Pacific region](#), ensuring maritime security and adhering to international laws such as [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea \(UNCLOS\)](#).
- **Political and Security Cooperation:** Discussions included assessments of developments in Europe and West Asia, with a shared focus on restoring peace and adherence to international law, notably concerning the Ukraine conflict.
  - The leaders welcomed the launch of the [India-Middle East-Europe Corridor \(IMEC\)](#) and Austria's interest to engage with this initiative.
- **Economic Collaboration:** The leaders agreed on a future-oriented economic partnership focusing on **green and digital technologies**, infrastructure, [renewable energy](#), and smart cities.
  - The **first high-level bilateral Business Forum** was convened, promoting partnerships across sectors and encouraging CEO-level interactions to explore new opportunities.
- **Climate Commitments:** Recognizing their commitments under the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#), both countries pledged to collaborate on **renewable energy**, with a specific focus on **Austria's Hydrogen Strategy** and [India's Green Hydrogen Mission](#).

- As parties to the UNFCCC and committed to limiting the [global temperature increase to below 2°C](#), leaders acknowledged the importance of reducing climate change risks.
- They noted the **EU's target for climate neutrality by 2050, Austria's goal for 2040**, and [India's aim for net zero emissions by 2070](#).
- **Technology and Innovation:** Initiatives such as the Start-Up Bridge and exchanges under Austria's Global Incubator Network and India's Start-Up India were highlighted as crucial for fostering innovation and entrepreneurship.
  - They also acknowledged the increasing importance of [digital technologies in industrial processes \(Industry 4.0\)](#), including in the sustainable economy.
- **Cultural Exchanges:** Acknowledging the role of cultural diplomacy, efforts to promote [yoga, Ayurveda](#), and other cultural exchanges were emphasised.
- **Multilateral Cooperation:** Both leaders reiterated their commitment to multilateralism and supported comprehensive reforms of the [United Nations](#). India reiterated its support for **Austria's UNSC candidature for the term 2027-28**, while Austria expressed its support for **India's candidature for the period 2028-29**.
  - India invited Austria to join the [International Solar Alliance \(ISA\)](#), highlighting collaboration in renewable energy and sustainable development.

## How have India-Austria Relations been so Far?

- **Political Relations:** Diplomatic relations established in 1949. 75th year of bilateral relations to be observed from November 2023 - November 2024.
  - India played a significant role in Austria's negotiations with the Soviet Union for independence in 1955.
- **Economic Cooperation:** Austria, one of the richest countries in the [European Union](#), is an important link for India in its relationship with Europe, especially with countries of central and Eastern Europe.
  - The **Indo-Austrian Joint Economic Commission (JEC)** established in 1983 provides a forum for bilateral interaction between the governmental Ministries and Chambers of Commerce and Industry.
  - In 2021, Indian exports to Austria totaled USD 1.29 billion, while imports from Austria were USD 1.18 billion, resulting in a balanced bilateral trade valued at USD 2.47 billion.
    - **By 2022, bilateral trade reached USD 2.84 billion, marking a 14.97% rise from the previous year.**
  - **Key Indian exports:** Electronic goods, apparel, textiles, footwear, rubber articles, vehicles & railway parts
  - **Key Austrian exports to India:** Machinery, mechanical appliances, railway parts, iron and steel
- **Space: Austria's first two satellites, TUGSAT-1/BRITE and UniBRITE, were launched from [India's Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota](#), in 2013.**
- **Culture:** The Indo-Austrian cultural relationship dates back to the 16th century when Balthasar Springer travelled from Tyrol to India in 1505. 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.
  - [Rabindranath Tagore, Nobel Laureate](#), visited Vienna in 1921 and 1926, fostering significant cultural and intellectual exchanges through his lectures on topics like "The Religion of the Forest," emphasising nature, union, and compassion.
  - **Ayurveda and Yoga have gained popularity in Austria**, with numerous Yoga schools in Vienna.

## Austria

- Austria is a country located in southern Central Europe. It **borders eight countries** namely, Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Italy, Switzerland and Lichtenstein.

◦ Austria is a highly mountainous country due to its position within the **Alps mountain range**. The Austrian Alps, also known as the Central Alps, form the country's backbone.

▪ **Capital:** Vienna

▪ **Membership in International Organizations:** Austria has been a member of the **European Union (EU)** since 1995. In addition Austria is also a member of the following organisations: [OECD \(Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development\)](#), [WTO \(World Trade Organization\)](#), [IMF \(International Monetary Funds\)](#), and [WHO \(World Health Organisation\)](#).



**Drishti Mains Question:**

**Q.** Discuss the evolution of India-Austria relations, highlighting the key milestones and areas of cooperation.

**UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)**

**Prelims**

**Q. Consider the following statements: (2023)**

**The 'Stability and Growth Pact' of the European Union is a treaty that**

1. limits the levels of the budgetary deficit of the countries of the European Union
2. makes the countries of the European Union to share their infrastructure facilities
3. enables the countries of the European Union to share their technologies

**How many of the above statements are correct**

- (a)** Only one
- (b)** Only two
- (c)** All three
- (d)** None

**Ans: (a)**

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