

Port of Antwerp-Bruges & India

A strategic trade partnership with growing potential

India is one of the world's most important growth markets. With **1.45 billion inhabitants** and its position as the world's **4th-largest economy** in 2025, India's economic and geopolitical influence is growing. For Belgium and Port of Antwerp-Bruges, India is a strategic partner in trade, logistics, energy and port development.

With negotiations on the India-EU FTA concluded earlier this year, the Dialogue takes place at a pivotal moment in India-EU economic relations, opening new opportunities for trade, investment and closer economic cooperation.

As a key gateway to Europe for Indian trade and industry, Port of Antwerp-Bruges has a longstanding relationship with India that extends beyond cargo flows to port development, training and capacity building, and cooperation on future energy supply chains. The event underscores the role of ports in enabling trade and connectivity and provides further momentum for strengthening economic ties between India and Belgium.

1. Belgium-India in key figures

Indicator	Figure
Diplomatic relations	since 1947
Total Belgium-India trade in goods	€9.4 billion in 2025
Belgian exports to India	almost €4 billion
Belgian imports from India	just over €5.4 billion
Belgium as EU exporter to India	#4
Belgium as EU importer from India	#7
Main trade flows	
Diamonds · machinery · chemicals · pharmaceuticals · base metals · plastics · medical instruments · mineral products · textiles · manufactured goods	

2. India & Port of Antwerp-Bruges

India-related cargo via Port of Antwerp-Bruges	6.3 million tonnes in 2025
Breakbulk	India is #3 partner
Containers	India is #7 partner
Local presence	Representation in Mumbai since 2006
Cargo segments	
Containers · steel and project cargo · chemicals · pharmaceuticals · machinery · food · textiles · manufactured goods	

3. More than cargo

The relationship with India goes beyond cargo flows.

Port of Antwerp-Bruges International

- supports Indian ports with expertise in port management, digitalisation, nautical operations and sustainability;
- explores investment and co-investment opportunities in Indian port projects.

APEC-Antwerp/Flanders Port Training Center

- trains Indian port professionals;
- strengthens knowledge exchange and capacity building;
- has worked with JNPA since **2015** through the JNPA-APEC Training and Consultancy Foundation.

4. Long-standing engagement with India

Port of Antwerp-Bruges has built a strong and long-standing relationship with India, organising at least one business roadshow or mission to the country each year, often combined with a high-level networking event.

Key milestones include:

- 2013–2014 Flemish Masters exhibition in Mumbai
- 2015 Shashi Kiran Shetty, Executive Chairman of Allcargo, awarded the title of Commander in the Order of Leopold II
- 2017 State Visit to India by H.M. King Philippe and H.M. Queen Mathilde
- 2024 Port mission to Mumbai, New Delhi and Ahmedabad with a delegation from the Antwerp-Bruges port community
- 2025 Excellence through Sangam gala during the Belgian Economic Mission to India led by HRH Princess Astrid
- January 2026 Energy Transition Roadshow led by Tom Hautekiet, Chief Business Development & Transition Officer, Port of Antwerp-Bruges
- September 2026 Official visit of Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever to India
- October 2026 Participation of H.E. Ms Annick De Ridder, Flemish Minister for Mobility, Public Works, Ports and Sport, in Sagarmanthan – The Great Oceans Dialogue
- 1–5 February 2027 Multisectoral Port of Antwerp-Bruges mission to India with companies from the port community, anticipating new trade and business opportunities resulting from the EU-India FTA

The **EU-India Free Trade Agreement** can become an important growth driver. Negotiations were concluded on **27 January 2026**, and the ratification process is ongoing.

Potential impact

- EU and India combined: market of around **2 billion people**
- EU-India trade in goods: **€120 billion** in 2024
- EU goods exports to India could potentially double by **2032**

India is a strategic growth market for Port of Antwerp-Bruges. With strong cargo flows, twenty years of local presence in Mumbai, expertise in port development and new opportunities through the EU-India Free Trade Agreement, Port of Antwerp-Bruges is well positioned as a European gateway for the India-Europe relationship of tomorrow.