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India-EU Trade and Technology Council Toward Horizon Europe

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India-EU Trade and Technology Council Toward Horizon Europe

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✓ Every fact web-verified against primary sources

*The meeting was held in **Brussels on July 15, 2026**. Its headline outcome was an agreement to open **formal negotiations for India's association to Horizon Europe**, the European Union's flagship research and innovation programme worth about **EUR 93.5 billion**.*

A HIGH-TABLE MINISTERIAL FORMAT

The TTC is a **ministerial-level dialogue** created to steer strategic cooperation on trade, trusted technology and security. It is a rare instrument: for the European Union, India is only its **second TTC partner**, the first being the **United States**. That exclusivity signals the weight Brussels attaches to New Delhi as a **like-minded technology partner** in a fragmenting global order.

The Indian side was led by **External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar**, joined by **Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal** and **Minister of State Jitin Prasada**. The presence of the foreign, trade and technology portfolios together reflects the TTC's design as a bridge between **geopolitics, commerce and innovation**.

The Horizon Europe Breakthrough

The centrepiece was the decision to begin negotiations for India to **associate with Horizon Europe** (the 2021-2027 framework programme). Association would let **Indian researchers and institutions participate in EU-funded projects** on near-equal footing with member states. The two sides aim to **conclude the association agreement before the end of 2026**, so Indian scientists can join calls from **2027**.

If sealed, India would join a select group of non-EU associated countries and gain structured access to European laboratories, consortia and funding in fields from **quantum and AI to health and climate science**.

THE COOPERATION PILLARS

The TTC organised its deliverables around several forward-looking tracks:

PILLAR	FOCUS
Horizon Europe association	Access to the EUR 93.5 billion research programme from 2027
Artificial Intelligence	A joint AI roadmap on trusted, human-centric AI
Semiconductors	Design, talent and resilient chip supply chains
Clean technology	Green hydrogen, renewables and decarbonisation
Resilient supply chains	De-risking in food and pharmaceutical value chains
Mobility	An EV-charging Innovation Hub for electric vehicles

A prior **EUR 60 million joint research investment over four years** underpins these tracks, giving the partnership immediate substance rather than only intent.

Why This Matters Strategically

Three logics converge here. First, **technology sovereignty**: both partners want to reduce dependence on a single dominant supplier for chips, **critical minerals** and pharma inputs. Second, **de-risking supply chains** without full **decoupling**, spreading resilience across trusted partners. Third, **science diplomacy**, where research collaboration builds durable trust that outlasts any single government.

The TTC also **complements the India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** negotiations. Where the FTA addresses tariffs and market access, the TTC handles the harder terrain of **standards, data, and emerging technology**, the areas that will define competitiveness in the coming decade.

FACTS TO ANCHOR THE STORY

The EU remains one of **India's largest trading partners**, and the relationship was elevated to a **Strategic Partnership** in 2004, with a dedicated Roadmap to 2025 and beyond. The TTC was announced during the visit of the **College of Commissioners** framework of engagement and first convened to institutionalise tech cooperation.

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS Paper 2: India and its **bilateral**, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India or affecting India's interests; effect of policies of developed countries on India.

Prelims pointers:

- The **TTC** is the EU's **second** such council; the **first is with the United States**.
- **Horizon Europe** is worth about **EUR 93.5 billion** (2021-2027 framework programme).

- Third TTC meeting: **Brussels, July 15, 2026**, co-led by **S. Jaishankar, Piyush Goyal** and **Jitin Prasada**.
- A **EUR 60 million** joint research investment over four years underpins cooperation.

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

Horizon Europe is the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation, the successor to Horizon 2020.

Association status lets non-EU countries participate in the programme almost like member states; India would be among a small set of associated partners.

The India-EU Strategic Partnership dates to 2004.

The EU's only other TTC partner is the United States, underlining India's status as a trusted-technology partner.

The TTC runs in parallel with the India-EU FTA talks, covering standards and emerging tech that tariff deals do not.

Sources: PIB / Ministry of External Affairs, European Commission - Trade and Technology Council, European Commission - Horizon Europe

Source: India-EU Trade and Technology Council Toward Horizon Europe — Ujjayiari.com | Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs

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