Consulate General of India
<u>Belfast</u>

Overview of India-Northern Ireland Commercial Relations

The India-UK partnership was elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2021. This partnership took a decisive step forward with the signing of the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) on 24 July 2025, which entered into force on 15 July 2026. Under CETA, 99 percent of Indian goods entering the UK and around 90 percent of UK goods entering India now qualify for duty-free access or reduced tariffs. Total UK-India trade, valued at roughly £48 billion in 2025, is projected to grow by a further £25.5 billion a year as the agreement is implemented, with expected annual gains of £4.8 billion to UK GDP and £5.1 billion to India's GDP. Northern Ireland's exporters and investors stand to benefit from this improved market access alongside the rest of the UK, while retaining their unmatched EU-facing advantage.

India- UK Trade Ties

The wider India – UK bilateral trade (both goods and services) stood at £47.2 billion in 2025, an increase of 15.2% or £6.2 billion in current prices from the same period in 2024. Out of the above, India's total imports from the UK amounted to £18.8 billion and India's total exports amounted to £28.4 billion. India was the UK's 10th largest trading partner in this period accounting for 2.5% of UK's total trade.

Trade in Goods: By the end of 2025, total bilateral trade in goods (merchandise) was £17.9 billion, of which India's export to the UK was £11.2 billion while India's import from UK was £6.7 billion. During the same period in 2024, total bilateral trade in goods was £17.3 billion, of which India's export to the UK was £11.0 billion while India's import from UK was £6.3 billion. (Source: Department for Business & Trade, United Kingdom)

Trade in Services: During Q2 in 2025, total bilateral trade in services was £29.3 billion, comprising of India's export of £17.2 billion and India's import of services from the UK of £12.1 billion. During the same period in 2024, total bilateral trade in services was £ 26.5 billion, of which India's export to UK was £15.9 billion and India's import of services from UK was £10.6 billion. (Source: Department for Business and Trade, United Kingdom)

Exports: India's main exports to the UK are articles of textile, fabric, apparel & clothing accessories, medicinal & pharmaceutical products, telecoms & sound equipments, Mechanical power generators, refined oil, Electrical & Electronic equipment, Machinery appliances, Iron & steel, natural or cultured pearls, Gems & Jewellery.

Imports: India's main imports from the UK are non-ferrous metals, metal ores & metal scrap, industrial machinery, transport equipment, beverages & tobacco, electrical machinery and appliances, professional -scientific instruments and chemicals.

India- Northern Ireland Trade and Commercial Ties

Northern Ireland occupies a unique place within the UK under the Windsor Framework, which gives it "dual market access" the ability to trade goods freely with both Great Britain and the European Union at the same time. For Indian companies looking to establish a single base that reaches both markets, this makes Northern Ireland a distinctive proposition among UK and European investment destinations.

As per UK Government reports, businesses and workers in Northern Ireland are set to benefit from the UK's trade deal with India delivering a £50m boost to the local economy. India is a growing market for Northern Ireland businesses, 143 of which exported a total of £65 million in goods there last year– this could grow even more thanks to lower tariffs, fewer barriers to trade, and easier customs. Advanced manufacturing and engineering - which represent approximately 30 per cent of employment in Northern Ireland – stands to benefit from removal or reduction of tariffs. Northern Ireland's medical technology sector will benefit from tariffs on a range of medical devices, between 8.25% to 13.75% being eliminated or halved within ten years. Duties on Irish whiskey will immediately fall from 150% to 75%, dropping further to 40% over ten years. Producers will also be able to use Irish barley or neutral grain spirit and bottle products in transit to India, maximising capability to capitalise on tariff reductions

Northern Ireland's strengths lie in the areas of software and **financial technology**, where Belfast is ranked among the world's leading destinations for fintech and software inward investment; **advanced manufacturing and aerospace**, an industry with over 150 years of history in the region; **life and health sciences**, anchored by strong university research; and **cybersecurity**, where Northern Ireland is the top international investment location for US cyber security firms and is aiming to become one of the world's leading cyber economies. Northern Ireland's **mobile crushing and screening** equipment sector is 40 % of the world's production. Some businesses from Northern Ireland have already invested in India and Indian businesses have been set up in Northern Ireland.

Looking ahead, India-Northern Ireland commercial ties are set to deepen as an extension of the wider India-UK relationship. Northern Ireland's dual market access, competitive costs, skilled workforce, and strengths in technology, life sciences, and advanced manufacturing offer Indian businesses a distinctive route into both the UK and EU markets.

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