

Agnieszka Kuszewska-Bohnert

Jagiellonian University, Poland

**SECURITY, DEMOCRATIC VALUES, (GREEN) ECONOMY:
EXPLORING THE PARADIGM SHIFT IN GERMANY'S POLICY
TOWARDS INDIA** <https://doi.org/10.2478/ppsr-2025-0004>

► Received: 26 September 2024 ► Accepted: 8 April 2025

Author

Agnieszka Kuszewska-Bohnert, is a political scientist and Associate Professor at the Institute of the Middle and Far East, Faculty of International and Political Studies at Jagiellonian University in Krakow. Her research and teaching focus on international relations, conflict and security studies, political, security, economic, and social challenges in South Asia and its relations with Europe (in particular Poland and Germany). She has a track record of training Polish companies on doing business in India. She is the (co-)author of six books and numerous research articles and has been a visiting professor or delivered guest lectures at many universities, including Jawaharlal Nehru University, University of Calcutta, University of Rostock, Heidelberg University, University of Greifswald and University of Leipzig.

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8888-8566> agnieszka.kuszewska@uj.edu.pl**Abstract**

This article examines how evolving security architectures are driving paradigm shifts within geostrategic state behaviour. Arguing that Germany-India relations are deeply impacted by these shifting geopolitical dynamics – specifically, the rise of multipolarity and increased global and regional security threats – the study traces the rationale behind the two actors' actions and explores how the interactions between them are manifested in a reconceptualisation of German foreign policy. Employing a systemic-empirical approach and presenting a qualitative case analysis, it contributes to the study of international relations between key European and Asian actors amid transformations in the global system. The author argues for the growing significance of India within German policy objectives by studying their gradual evolution with a particular focus on security, democratic values, and (green) economy – factors considered central and evolving in the bilateral relationship. By contextualising these political trajectories bilaterally and globally, the study unpacks how the policy vis-à-vis India may serve as an exemplification of the Germany's renewed self-conception in the Zeitenwende era: a combination of civilian power projection and a more realist orientation.

Keywords

Germany's foreign policy, Germany-India relations, paradigm shift

Acknowledgments

The publication has been supported by a grant from the Faculty of International and Political Studies under the Strategic Programme Excellence Initiative at Jagiellonian University. The grant facilitated the conduct of research during the internship at the University of Rostock. The author wishes to extend her gratitude to the anonymous reviewers, whose invaluable comments have contributed to enhancing the quality of the paper.

Introduction

In the third decade of the 21st century, the global security architecture is experiencing substantial shifts, prompting leaders to undertake a comprehensive review of their foreign and security policies. In the context of geostrategic flux, the world order necessitates paradigm shifts, encompassing the reconstruction of multilateral and bilateral relations, as articulated by key decision-makers in numerous countries. Such pronounced responses have become an integral part of the current geostrategic reality, with potentially far-reaching implications for bilateral and multilateral interactions. The rise of two Asian powers, China and India, has led to the re-emergence of Asia at the centre of global politics and economics, ushering in a significant structural shift in world affairs (Ganguly, Pardesi, Thompson 2023, 201). Since the beginning of the 21st century, EU-India relations have grown considerably, primarily through economic cooperation. Germany has emerged as a leading European investor in India and continues to be the primary provider of technical assistance within the EU – alongside its role as a major trading partner (Sachdeva 2019, 296, 302–303, 315). While these trade-related features remain crucial, the increasingly complex, multi-faceted relationship between Europe and India has gained prominence. India is widely touted as an emerging world power with a commitment to a multipolar world order, with which cooperation should be developed. Despite experiencing democratic regression under the rule of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP, Indian People's Party) (Pillai, Lindberg 2021, 20–21), India remains committed to upholding its international image and status as the world's largest democracy. It presents itself as a voice of Global South, and a “mother of Democracy” with “human centric worldview” (BJP Manifesto, 2024, 10, 35).

This study argues that following the post-2022 security dynamics, India's importance as a political and economic partner in Asia has further enhanced: India has become a critical player in the current balance of power, essential for any comprehensive analysis of international dynamics, geostrategic paradigm shifts and great power politics. It is noticeable in Germany's foreign policy which is characterised by an intricate balancing act between its traditional role as a civilian power and a more assertive *Realpolitik* approach. Accordingly, Berlin's interactions with India provide an interesting case study in exploration of new geostrategic realities when it comes to the paradigm shifts brought about by the rapidly changing international security environment. In recent years, there has been a marked increase in the involvement of German political, strategic and business leaders in fostering relations with New Delhi. This suggests that German policymakers are laying the groundwork for a long-term strategy towards India.

This paper proposes a multidimensional, case study approach examining interactions between European and Asian countries, particularly in the context of shifting international dynamics. It argues that this analysis will illuminate key issues surrounding the balance of power and foster a deeper understanding of rising powers' interests and perceptions of global order. Specifically, the study investigates Germany's relationship with India, focusing on three selected and interconnected aspects – security, democratic values, and (green) economic considerations – within the framework of both states' evolving roles in the international security architecture. This selection is predicated on the author's assumption that, given a world facing diverse threats (i.e. democratic backsliding, autocratisation and – its potentially negative results on climate change management and

bolstering of transactionalist – and hard power tendencies in global politics), these three aspects are of primary importance to shape comprehensive, economically and socio-politically beneficial relations, based on partnership rather than on coercion or one-sided domination.

The following research questions guide this study: (1) What motivates Germany's increased political engagement with India? (2) How are security issues, democratic values, and (green) economic interactions intertwined within Germany's policy aimed at achieving its goals amidst challenging geostrategic realities? (3) How can we conceptualise and assess a paradigm shift in German-Indian relations?

This study employs a systemic empirical approach and presents a qualitative case analysis exploring the causal mechanisms of Germany's policy towards India, considering bilateral and global correlations. Discursive and normative frameworks are central to the investigation, which recognises Germany's dual approach – balancing a commitment to normative values (such as democratic governance and human rights) with a more realist assessment of geopolitical dynamics – and examines how strategic interests are framed, contested, and negotiated within German policy towards India.

Paradigm shift in evolving security dynamics: the case of Germany

The dynamic evolution of the security landscape is a key concept in the comprehension of today's international order. Remarkable paradigm shifts, which remain an important feature of the study of international relations, characterise this emerging system. They include a change in the principles, strategies, and practices that have traditionally guided the country's approach to its foreign and security policy, encompassing a plethora of military and non-military issues.

The global security landscape is increasingly complex and threatened by numerous transnational challenges, including new or escalating conflicts, terrorism, mass migration, the impacts of climate change, and related multi-faceted consequences. Addressing these complex challenges requires a critical examination of evolving security paradigms and demands investigation based on empirical evidence – specifically identifying how key events and phenomena directly shape foreign policy objectives. Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 exemplifies this shift, prompting a significant political reassessment across Europe, including Germany, and fundamentally altering perceptions of future security threats.

German foreign and security policy has been shaped by its post-World War II history, and has emphasised pacifism, multilateralism, and a strong alliance with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the European Union (EU). Remembering its tragic past, in the decades after the Second World War, Germany (Western part) gradually confronted the past, officially rejected all aspects of Nazi policies, and anchored itself in Western democracies with their fundamental normative principles. The Federal Republic consolidated its image as a civilian power (*Zivilmacht*), pursuing a foreign policy focused on prioritising diplomacy, encouraging integration, economic prosperity, and relying on aid, trade, scientific cooperation, the promotion of multilateralism, and peaceful solutions. This combination of historically inherited burdens and a calculated policy rooted in economic self-interest shaped German strategic culture, leading naturally to scepticism about military power and pacifism as foreign policy – a sentiment that remains prevalent.

The ongoing debates surrounding these issues are central to discussions within Germany, reflecting its assumed key role in shaping the future of Europe (Münkler 2025, 59) and beyond, as the international order transitions.

In December 2021, Olaf Scholz was inaugurated as Germany's chancellor, formally taking power after Angela Merkel's 16-year leadership. In the coalition agreement of December 2021, the *Ampel* (traffic light) coalition of the SPD (Social Democratic Party of Germany), Alliance 90/The Greens, and FDP (Free Democratic Party) acknowledged Germany's special global responsibility for Europe and the world, pledged to deepen security and development partnerships and defend values of freedom, democracy and human rights. To address current major challenges, such as climate change and the preservation of democracy, the necessity to cooperate with democratic partners was highlighted (Koalitionsvertrag 2021, 104).

The actual impetus for a conceptual change in German security policy did not come until Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022.¹ The invasion proved that the Western strategy towards Russia, based on wealth creation through the purchase of cheap Russian gas, which further empowered the Russian kleptocratic elite and which continued after the annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of the war in Donbas in April 2014, was a geostrategic mistake. In the aftermath of this attack, the term *Zeitenwende* became a catchword of Chancellor Scholz's narrative. On 27 February 2022, three days after Russia's attack on Ukraine, Chancellor Scholz gave a landmark speech to a special session of the Bundestag in which he unequivocally criticised Russian aggression and called Vladimir Putin a warmonger (Die Bundesregierung 2022b). It was a fundamental realignment of German military and foreign policy, which, based on historically inherited reluctance towards hard power, shifted towards arms deliveries to Ukraine and an increase in the defence budget (Scholz 2023). It signifies the growing tensions between civil power ideals and more realist approach necessitated by geopolitical realities. The long-awaited National Security Strategy (*Nationale Sicherheitsstrategie*), unveiled in 2023, reiterated that Germany's foreign and security policy is committed to a free international order based on international law. Such an approach is reflected in Germany's Indo-Pacific policy, where India's growing role is acknowledged.

Security, democratic values, (green) economy: political trademarks of Germany's strategy towards India

When Narendra Modi won India's elections in June 2024 (often termed Modi 3.0), Olaf Scholz expressed commitment to deepen German-Indian relations, hoping that New Delhi's geostrategic priorities regarding the cooperation with the EU, in particular with Germany, will remain unchanged. The multidimensional aspect of India-Germany relations is acknowledged by researchers. For example, Rajendra K. Jain (2025) examined the dynamics of bilateral Indo-German relations since 1947 in the monograph titled "India and Germany in a Turbulent World: Perceptions, Perspectives, Prospects". In the study combining historical analysis with current political, strategic and economic dimensions, he argued that India and Germany have substantially strengthened their relations as they have more overlapping than conflicting interests, the latter being for example relations

¹ In her memoir titled "Freedom", Angela Merkel (2024, 444) admits that this day marked a turning point in European history after the end of the Cold War.

with Russia and India's neutrality on Putin's invasion of Ukraine. Christian Wagner (2024, 5) highlighted India's significant rise in status in German and European foreign policy, fuelled, as he believed, by India's economic dynamism and the West's reassessment of China not just as a partner but as a competitor and systemic rival.

Given the geostrategic shifts and security challenges of recent years, the German strategy towards India, at least at the declaratory level, can be assessed as the most complex and multidimensional in the modern history of Indo-German relations. Berlin's approach originates in the assumption that in the evolving international order, India is a challenging, yet indispensable partner for the West. As hypothesised by the author of this study, the elements of this strategy – namely security, democratic values, and the (green) economy – may collectively be referred to as the political trademarks of Germany-India interactions. These are conceptualised in Table 1 and discussed in the following sections in bilateral and global contexts.

Table 1. Germany's India Policy – Conceptualisation of Study Areas

Germany's India-oriented political trademarks			
CON-TEXT	SECURITY	DEMOCRATIC VALUES	(GREEN) ECONOMY
Bilateral context	▪ The reorientation of political objectives in Berlin and New Delhi and its impact on the significance of bilateral interaction at the discursive and practical levels; ▪ Joint military exercises (multilateralism); ▪ The bilateral submarine deal as potential enhancer of Germany's role in Indian defence.	▪ Declarative support for values-based multilateral order; ▪ The challenges of democratic backsliding in India in German discourse; ▪ India's firm response to German (Western) criticism.	▪ Economic partnership programmes: bilateral trade, objectives and future targets; India perceived as stable investment destination; ▪ Initiatives and cooperation programmes in the field of the green economy and support for India's transition to sustainable energy sources; ▪ The importance of the green economy as part of Germany's security policy and as a tool for developing Indo-German relations.
Global context	▪ Chinese revisionism and its potential implications for the democratic world: the impact of the Chinese factor on India's role in Germany's strategy; ▪ The role of Germany and India in the Indo-Pacific strategy.	▪ The role of values in German politics in a changing world order, ▪ India's self-image of <i>vishwa guru</i>, <i>vishwa bandhu</i>, and aspirations of being the voice of Global South, ▪ The multidimensional challenges of the global regression of democracy.	▪ Climate change and its impact on India: supra-regional effects and their international perception; ▪ Germany as an international actor taking global initiatives to address climate change; ▪ Chinese and American factors in Germany's economic relations with India; ▪ Participation of both countries in international initiatives, such as the India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC).

Source: Author's analysis.

Security

Bilateral context

Diplomatic relations between New Delhi and Bonn were established in May 1951 when a consulate in Bombay and a legion in Bonn were opened (Jain 2025, 5), but the security dimension of mutual relations lagged behind economic ties due to India's much less strategically substantial role on a global stage and Germany's cautious post-World War II defence engagement policy and focus on Western (NATO, EU) commitments. The gradual change came with the evolving global order of the 21st century, with India entering the global stage as an ambitious and growingly crucial player. Ummu Salma Bava (2007, 7) noted that "India has to project itself as a confident and dynamic country that is ready to play a larger role to ensure stability, security and peace in the world".²

India and Germany have been linked by a strategic partnership since 2000, but it took another decade to meaningfully develop the relationship. The Indo-German Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC), alternating between Germany and India, have been taking place every two years since 2011. In early 2020s, the strengthening of strategic defence ties with India can be seen as a noteworthy element of Germany's strategic reorientation driven to a large extent by the aim to counterbalance China's assertiveness and enhance Berlin's presence in the Indo-Pacific region. Both countries highlight the significance of a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific and recognise centrality of ASEAN. In 2021, India and Germany marked the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. During the 6th IGC in May 2022, they acknowledged the Policy Guidelines for the Indo-Pacific of the German Federal Government, the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative enunciated by India. Germany and India highlight the unimpeded commerce and freedom of navigation in accordance with International Law, notably the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982, in all maritime domains including in the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. Both sides welcomed the port call by the German Navy frigate "Bayern" in Mumbai in January 2022 as an important development in Germany's increasing involvement in the Indo-Pacific region (Die Bundesregierung 2022a).

In 2023, German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius visited India to boost the previously very limited bilateral defence cooperation. The aim was to facilitate security cooperation and arms deals with India by treating it as a strategic partner, like Australia or Japan. It was highlighted that India needs to modernise and diversify its weapons procurement: "It's looking for additional technology and Germany has a very strong and robust defence industry" (Vaid 2024). In March 2024, German ambassador to India, Philipp Ackermann confirmed that there is a "clear political will" in Berlin to improve defence ties with New Delhi, as part of the "huge paradigm shift" to increase defence cooperation with India through military visits, exercises, arms sales, co-production of advanced military hardware, and other areas such as cyber cooperation (Pandit 2024). The defence secretaries of both countries held talks in Berlin in February which included potential areas of cooperation development and the security situation in the Indo-Pacific. "In this world we need

² In 2012, Ummu Salma Bava was awarded the Federal Cross of Merit (*Bundesverdienstkreuz*), Germany's highest civilian honour, in recognition of her services to Germany-India relations.

friends and allies – just like India and Germany”, wrote Scholz on his social media platform X during the meeting with Narendra Modi on 25 October, as they were co-chairing the 7th edition of IGC in New Delhi.

Joint exercises are included in boosted bilateral security cooperation and represent the multilateralism-oriented approach both countries officially declare. The German air force (*Luftwaffe*) was scheduled to take part in multilateral drills hosted by the Indian air force in August 2024, along with France, the US, and other countries. The drills included participation of German aircraft, including the Tornado jets, Eurofighters, midair refuelling tankers, and military transport planes. In October 2024, a German naval frigate and a combat support ship were scheduled to visit India’s state of Goa (Vaid 2024).

Realising that India wants to upgrade its naval presence in Asia, Germany wants to establish itself as a major player in India’s defence sector. Under the Indian Navy military acquisition project, known as Project-75(I), the submarines are to be constructed in India in partnership with a foreign defence manufacturer or manufacturers. In June 2023, German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius made a strong case for the Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems (TKMS) offer when he visited India and held high level talks with his counterpart, Rajnath Singh. Soon after, India’s state-own Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) and TKMS signed a Memorandum of Understanding to support the co-production in India of submarines of six advanced air-independent propulsion-capable diesel-electric submarines. An Indian-German team would jointly produce six submarines costing around \$5 billion (420 billion Indian rupees). Pistorius emphasised that this deal could become a “flagship project” in bilateral relations because “India is an important, not to say the most important, strategic partner for Europe and also for Germany” (Rajagopalan 2023). Enhanced Indo-German military cooperation, including other branches of the navy and air force (as envisaged by Pistorius), could reduce India’s dependence on Russia³ and counter the growing influence of China and Pakistan in the Indian Ocean. In August 2024, the Indian Ministry of Defence approved the construction of six submarines by MDL in cooperation with Germany, thus upgrading bilateral relations. It is worth mentioning that Thyssenkrupp has a history of cooperation with the Indian Navy. Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft, a former shipbuilder now owned by TKMS, built four sophisticated submarines for India following the contract signed by the Indian government on 11 December 1981. Two were built in the German city of Kiel and two in Mumbai (then Bombay). The first of the two submarines (INS Sishkumar and INS Shakunth) were commissioned in Kiel in September 1986 and arrived in Bombay in February 1987 (Jain 2023, 45).

The need to enhance the strategic relationship to a new level was confirmed by the German government on 16 October 2024, when Berlin adopted a 27-page key strategic document titled “Focus on India” (2024). It described India as “rapidly becoming a central and active shaper of international politics and of our globalised, collaborative economic order”. The strategic objectives outlined in the document aligned with Germany’s post-

³ This remains challenging. A report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute shows that although there has been a decrease in the number of orders and deliveries, Russia is still India’s most important supplier of weapons, making up 36% of the country’s total imports. In 2024, India was the second-largest importer of major weapons (George et al 2025).

2022 *Zeitenwende* policy shift. Moreover, all three of the issues highlighted in this article – security, democratic features and the green economy – were identified in the “Focus on India” as key to the proposed bilateral dynamic.

Germany has declared itself to be a reliable security partner for India, including the exchange and cooperation on arms-related issues. Berlin expressed its commitment to collaborating with India to achieve the objectives of the Paris Climate Agreement, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Global Biodiversity Framework, and to capitalising on India’s innovative capabilities, technological, economic, and skilled labour potential (Focus on India 2024, 4).

The document correctly postulated that the political systems of both countries, characterised by federal structures involving the separation of competences, necessitate a multi-dimensional approach in the shaping of bilateral strategic partnership. This approach should encompass the involvement of federal ministries, federal states, and municipalities, members of parliament, as well as stakeholders from business, academia, and society. The efficacy of this approach adopted by Germany, as compared to that of the Modi administration, will become observable over time. The Modi administration has been criticised for its centralisation of power and its undermining of independent institutions, factors which are considered by some to be primary sources of India’s success as a democratic country (Guha 2024, 62).

Global context

Being a major geopolitical and economic challenger to China in the region and beyond, India has the potential to emerge as a key player in the global dynamics, marked by the US-China rivalry and Russia’s hawkish policies. The impact of Chinese assertiveness and the perception of Beijing as a systemic rival in Western narratives has affected German policy. Berlin views India, which is embroiled in high-risk border disputes and remains concerned about China’s revisionist policies, as a regional power that could counterbalance China’s influence. Seeing it as an instrument for Chinese geostrategic influence, New Delhi declined to participate in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and perceives Beijing’s policy as a threat to its territorial integrity and security. Germany’s geostrategic objectives are directed to enhance bilateral partnership and transform it into key element in the security dynamics in the Indo-Pacific strategy, marking it a noteworthy shift in German security policy.

Germany’s Focus on India (2024) looks at new perspectives of its relations with India in a global context. It acknowledges India’s role in the Indo-Pacific region and its aspirations of being a voice of the Global South and potential to shape the region to maintain balance (i.e. by containing China) and rules-based order. Berlin, therefore, aims to “assert its interests more effectively in an increasingly complex global environment by cooperating closely with India and to make use of India’s prominent role in the Global South in shaping Germany’s foreign policy”. Germany’s Thyssenkrupp deal with India (*vide supra*) may support the strategy intended to enhance India’s capabilities in the context of the Chinese Navy’s increasing presence in the Indian Ocean and throughout South Asia. India aims to become a global maritime power, which was confirmed by Narendra Modi in January 2025 during the launch of two Indian-made warships and a submarine.

Democratic values

Bilateral context

India and Germany often emphasise that their political systems are based on shared democratic values: the rule of law and a pluralistic and open society in which civil liberties and rights are respected. These values are intertwined in multi-dimensional aspects of bilateral cooperation and are officially invoked at every occasion. For example, in the Joint Statement published after the 3rd IGC held in New Delhi on 5 October 2015, both countries acknowledged that “Indo-German cooperation is founded on common democratic principles, marked by trust and mutual respect and geared towards building stability, prosperity and sustainable development through closer dialogue and cooperation in security, enhanced trade and investment, partnerships in manufacturing, skilling, clean energy, infrastructure, innovation and education” (MEA 2015).

On 24 October 2019, when the fifth round of the IGC was held, India was declared by Berlin as a partner for the challenges of tomorrow. The then German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas emphasised at the German Bundestag that, in the world with many conflicts, India, as the country committed to rules based international order, is a partner for Germany in a world the most important anchor of stability in South Asia (Federal Foreign Office, 2019). India signed up for the Alliance for Multilateralism, an initiative launched on 2 April 2019 by the French and German Foreign Ministers, to strengthen cooperation of the countries that are convinced that multilateralism founded on respect for international law is the only reliable guarantee for international stability and peace. These declarations are an important factor in the development of bilateral relations. Germany and India regularly declare that they share common interests in promoting a rules-based international order. Among the global areas of cooperation climate change, counter-terrorism, and the United Nations reform are of significant importance. India seeks for international community's approval to join the United Nations Security Council as a permanent member. It would confirm its ambitious goal to receive a status of a key global player. Importantly, Germany shares these goals; the enlargement and reform of the Security Council, with Germany willing to become a permanent member, is a long-standing position of the German administration.

German analysts sometimes take a critical look at the challenges to democracy in India. The *Heinrich Böll Stiftung* (Foundation; HBS), analyses these problems and provides information about current dynamics in India. In 2019, while referring to Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 as “a step towards undoing the Indian secular democracy”, the HBS informed about the protests against this law held in India and in Germany and analysed the policies of the ruling BJP with its majoritarian ideology of *Hindutva*, highlighting that it has significantly polarised the Indian society and deepened the fault lines along religious identities (Dabhade 2019). The analysts emphasised that, apart from the polarising policies and escalating religious conflicts, the high unemployment and declining economy was making even the BJP voters doubt the promises of “good times” made by the party's leadership (Bertram 2020). On the occasion of the 2024 elections the HBS enumerated a non-transparent political funding system in India as an obstacle to equitable democracy, as it tends to disproportionately favour entrenched privileged classes and political actors at the expense of those from historically marginalised, under-represented and/or

economically disadvantaged communities (Sethi 2024). The analysts (Luckscheiter et al. 2024) argued that the results showed that voters were against the increasingly authoritarian tendencies that the BJP had shown over the past term. Highlighting the crackdown on several critical media houses and the loss of foreign funding licences for many civil society organisations, which effectively shut them down, they concluded that this was reflected in India's increasingly poor performance in several international rankings of democratic indicators. Despite critical voices, the HBS has watched India's electoral process with considerable admiration, describing the elections in its dossier as "democracy in action".

The Bertelsmann Foundation also looks with concern at the Hindu nationalist agenda championed by Narendra Modi, believing that such a majoritarian project threatens the cohesion of Indian society – and the trust of foreign countries. In a context of weak social cohesion, Hindu nationalist aspirations are a dangerous proposition. Rather than strengthening cohesion, they deepen divisions in Indian society.

In March 2024, the Deputy Head of Mission at the German Embassy, George Enzweiler, was summoned by India's Ministry of Foreign Affairs following the comments on the arrest of New Delhi's Chief Minister, Arvind Kejriwal, an influential politician and a fierce critic of Narendra Modi, on bribery charges. The opposition in India accused the ruling elites of political motivations. Kejriwal, who represents the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which aimed to challenge the BJP in the elections, was seen as a victim of the BJP government's vengefulness. In response to the arrest, the German Foreign Ministry spokesman had rightly said that the presumption of innocence was a central element of the rule of law and must apply to Kejriwal who had the right to a fair and impartial trial. Indian MEA replied that German foreign ministry spokesperson's remarks were a "blatant interference in India's internal matters", which was immediately highlighted by the mainstream media in India (NDTV 2024). The Focus on India (2024) which shifts more towards the politics of realism refers to India as "democratic partner of Germany for stability and security".

Global context

In March 2018, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier delivered a speech at Delhi University, in which he accentuated the beyond bilateral significance of both countries' democratic systems and values. Noting that "India's democracy is different from the one we know in Germany", he referred to "rifts, scars and divisions that run deep in Indian society" and "painful imperfections of democratic governance" in an extraordinarily diverse India, but also expressed confidence that India's and Germany's strong democratic systems are built to adapt to changing conditions and meet new challenges. He portrayed India as a "like-minded partner for constructive and multilateral co-operation, and as a champion of stability in the wider Indo-Pacific region".

International discourses have noted the challenges to India's democracy and pluralist polity that Steinmeier so delicately mentioned. Human rights watchdogs and various non-governmental organisations (Freedom House, the Gothenburg-based Varieties of Democracy V-Dem, The Economist Democracy Index, Human Rights Watch, Reporters without Borders, etc.) regularly document democratic backsliding in India under the rule of Narendra Modi. For example, the V-Dem in its annual reports repeatedly lists India (since 2018 classified as electoral autocracy, along with Pakistan, Bangladesh, Russia, The Philippines, and Turkey) among the countries that have significantly regressed in terms of

democracy in its reports, pointing out that “India, with 18% of the world’s population, accounts for about half of the population living in autocratizing countries”. The report ranks the Indian government among the worst offenders in the state-led intensification of media censorship, adding that “intimidation of political opponents and people protesting government policies, as well as silencing of dissent in academia are now prevalent” (V-Dem 2024, 6, 10, 13, 16, 24). In their Press Freedom Index (2024), Reporters without Borders place India on 159 position (out of 180 countries), highlighting that “with violence against journalists, highly concentrated media ownership, and political alignment, press freedom is in crisis in ‘the world’s largest democracy’”.

Notably, the Modi administration, referring to India’s spiritual superiority and civilisational pedagogy (de Estrada 2023, 448) and projecting itself internationally as a *vishwa guru* (a world teacher) rejects any Western criticism of its democracy and the functioning of its institutions, branding it as external interference in India’s internal affairs. Democracy has become more “culturally rooted”, said External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar (author of two books with titles that speak for themselves: “The India Way” and “Why Bharat Matters”) in September 2021 (The Hindu 2021). His diplomatic efforts, with the full support and close cooperation and backing of Narendra Modi, are aimed at convincing the international community that India is a unique “civilisational state” that is re-emerging on the world stage. India’s leadership is deeply engaged in a policy of greater nationalist assertiveness, in which critics are dismissed and international indicators of Indian democracy are denigrated. At the same time, India aims to become a leading power, asserting its global relevance and building its position of a *vishwa bandhu* – a friend to the world with globally acknowledged contributions. According to the BJP, India aims to pursue a multi-vector diplomacy and collaboration as a trusted global partner (BJP Manifesto, 2024). Thus, long-lasting “Russian realism” is the Indian leadership’s explanation for its cooperation with Russia, even after Putin’s invasion of Ukraine.

Meanwhile, balancing between promoting of democratic values/civilian power capabilities and pursuing a politics of realism, German (and other Western) politicians refrain from open criticism of Narendra Modi’s policies. Like their other European partners, such as the French, German leaders make enormous efforts to combine these two opposing approaches and integrate the tension between democratic ideals and pragmatic objective to develop strategic ties with India. Despite openly calling the war in Ukraine an aggression in violation of international law, they try to show recognition for Indian security concerns, in particular the relationship between New Delhi and Moscow. In 2023, Philipp Ackermann, the German ambassador to India, said he understood why India was buying large quantities of cheap oil from Russia. Given Berlin’s (and Western) diplomatic pliancy is understandable from a pragmatic, realist, and interest-driven perspective – a view distinct from normative considerations – it is crucial to emphasise that India’s core strategic objectives could be undermined if New Delhi pursues an uncompromising nationalist path. This would involve suppressing the voices of dissent and overlooking the fundamental importance of accountability, criticism, and pluralism as essential foundations of democracy.

*(Green) economy**Bilateral issues*

In 2011, India celebrated a “Year of Germany” to mark 60 years of bilateral diplomatic relations. In that year, India was Germany’s 23rd largest trading partner. The bilateral trade volume in the calendar year 2011 registered a growth of 18.7% and was estimated at €18.4 billion as compared to €15.5 billion in 2010 (Tiwari 2012,19). Today Germany aims to become India’s most significant trading partners in Europe. German companies like Siemens, Volkswagen, and BASF have substantial operations in India, while Indian IT firms like Infosys and TCS have a presence in Germany. Sectors such as automobiles, machinery, chemicals, and information technology make up the bilateral trade between the two countries. India’s growing middle class makes it an important market for German products, especially in the automotive, machinery and engineering industries. Although the trend is growing, India is not among Germany’s key trading partners. German imports from India amounted to \$10.4 billion (€9,52 billion) or 2.3% of India’s overall exports in 2022. German exports to India amounted to \$13.9 billion (€12,7 billion) or 1.9% of India’s overall imports in 2022 (Federal Statistical Office of Germany 2024, 10). To compare, in 2023, China remained Germany’s most important trading partner (€254.5 billion imports and exports combined), followed by the United States and the Netherlands. In 2023, Germany is the 12th largest trading partner for India and constitutes about 1% of Germany’s total foreign trade. Germany constitutes over 2.24% of India’s foreign trade. The balance of trade has been in favour of Germany (MEA 2023).

India and the European Union share a deep interest on the issues of climate change and sustainable development with Clean Energy and Climate Partnership and many related statements signed (Rattani 2020, 198). Germany has made significant efforts to assume the role of a leader in international climate policy with its climate policy approach related to the international role as a civilian power which supports a justice oriented transition. Clean energy is at the core of Germany-India economic relations in the context of climate diplomacy, as reflected by the establishment of numerous initiatives taken in the last decade, including the Indo-German Working Group on Climate Change within the framework of the Indo-German Environment Forum. In the Joint Statement on Climate Change and Energy Technology Cooperation signed on 5 October 2015, two months before the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris, both countries declared to “continue to intensify their cooperation in developing climate-friendly and sustainable solutions for India’s expanding energy needs” and to forge an Indo-German Climate and Renewable Alliance – “a comprehensive partnership to harness technology, innovation and finance in order to make affordable, clean and renewable energy accessible to all and to foster climate change mitigation efforts in both countries” (Bundesregierung 2015, Jayaram 2021, 216). The analysts from the German Council on Foreign Relations have drawn attention to the developmental challenges in India’s climate policy and thoroughly studied the often aligned priorities of both countries. They have highlighted, for example, that “Germany’s interest in decarbonization and green industrial policy aligns with India’s interest in promoting domestic green industrialization” (Fahimi et al. 2024).

During the 6th IGC on 2 May 2022 in Berlin, Germany and India signed a series of bilateral agreements that will provide the South Asian partner with €10 billion (\$10.5 bil-

lion) in aid by 2030 to promote the use of clean energy. The 2022 Partnership for Green and Sustainable Development which engages German Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action and Indian Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and focuses on the expansion of renewable energy capacities, sustainable urban development, and green mobility, was a crucial part of the Joint Statement. To enhance long-term collaboration, a proposition was put forth to establish a green and sustainable development partnership, and to put into effect initiatives at bilateral, regional, and global scales, coupled with investments in collaborative research and technology. It was stated that the bilateral cooperation would cover a just energy transition, a massive scaling-up of renewable energy, green grids and storage, energy efficiency and low-emission energy systems, conservation, protection and sustainable use of natural resources, protection of the environment and biodiversity, combating marine litter (in particular plastics), and sustainable consumption. The announcement also included promotion of cooperation regarding technological innovation and backing of private investment for stimulating photovoltaic energy production and creating a green hydrogen economy. Both sides declared the intent to strengthen cooperation in production, utilisation, storage and distribution of green hydrogen. They agreed to (1) “Develop an Indo-German Green Hydrogen Roadmap based on the inputs by the Indo-German Green Hydrogen Task Force supported by the Indo-German Energy Forum (IGEF), (2) Establish an Indo-German Renewable Energy Partnership focusing on innovative solar energy and other renewables, including the associated challenges for electricity grids, storage and market design to facilitate a just energy transition”. Moreover, Germany expressed its intention to provide financial and technical cooperation including concessional loans of up to 1 billion EUR from 2020 to 2025 “depending on high quality project preparation and the availability of funds” (Die Bundesregierung 2022a).

The 2023 National Security Strategy emphasised that global climate, environmental, food, and resource policies are crucial elements of Germany’s security policy. Germany remains an advocate of increased support for the affected countries, assuming that “climate and transformation partnerships are key to finding equitable solutions that are tailored to specific countries” (Die Bundesregierung 2023, 64). Joint efforts on green technologies and fostering sustainable development are consistent with climate goals declared by Germany and India. The green economy, which is crucial in addressing global challenges such as climate change, environmental degradation, and social inequalities (fair access to economic opportunities and the creation of new jobs are key issues for India), could become a key pillar of the relationship. Joint initiatives and dialogues on sustainable urban development, energy transition and climate policy are common topics in German policy vis-à-vis India. Moreover, Germany’s expertise in renewable energy and India’s large-scale solar and wind energy projects provide an important platform for cooperation.

Global context

In a global context, multi-dimensional rivalry between India and China is likely to remain a crucial element of geostrategic reality that impacts India’s economic policy towards Europe. To counter China’s BRI, New Delhi may become a key participant in an infrastructure project that aims to connect India to Europe via the Middle East and bolster economic integration. Known as the India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC), it consists of two parts: the eastern corridor linking India to the Persian Gulf and the

northern corridor connecting the Persian Gulf to Europe, which could make India the bridge between the East and the West. It envisions a network of railways, gas pipelines and cables for electricity and digital connectivity. It may rebalance the EU's trade relations with China, draw India closer to the West and boost its position in international trade and connectivity vis-à-vis Beijing. The IMEC, which includes the European Union, France, Germany, India, Italy, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States, was announced on the sidelines of the G20 summit in New Delhi in September 2023. It is worthy of note that Xi Jinping did not attend the summit for the first time since becoming China's leader, as he did not wish to elevate India's global position. The instability in the Middle East (the war in Gaza) poses a challenge to this multilateral connectivity project. The Israeli-Hamas war has questioned the inclusion of the strategic Israeli port of Haifa (operated by the Adani Group, an Indian conglomerate) in the project.

The impact of climate change and climate-induced disasters on India and South Asia is likely to remain profound and detrimental. This impact has both regional as well as supra-regional effect and impacts the international perception of green economy initiatives with India, which has economy vulnerable to climate crisis and concurrently plays a key role in hitting global climate change targets (Mehta 2023). Additionally, the American factor in Germany's (green) economy relations with India is set to remain significant, particularly in light of the anticipated unpredictability of Donald Trump's economic and security policies following his re-election as American president in November 2024. A potential shift in his approach to climate change policies could offer an impetus to strengthen Germany-India relations in this domain.

Conclusions

This study has illuminated how the broader recognition of the changing global environment and the need for a more responsive role in international security, not only in Europe but also in the Indo-Pacific area, is reflected in German security policy. Focusing on selected aspects of Germany-India relations, the paper sought to explore how relations with India are embedded in Berlin's overall foreign policy reorientation and which features of these interactions are relevant to the paradigm shift. By discussing the selected pillars of this strategy – security, democratic values, and the (green) economy – the study was structured in such a way as to address the issue holistically, while at the same time highlighting the selected aspects of bilateral relations, which the author assumes as crucial and prospective. In this way, the article showed that the enhanced diplomatic efforts towards India present an exemplification of Germany's renewed self-conception in the era of *Zeitenwende*: a combination of civilian power and a more *Realpolitik* approach.

Recognising and unpacking the political trademarks of Germany's policy towards India led to the following conclusions. First, a paradigm shift in bilateral relations can be conceptualised and assessed with reference to rapidly evolving global security landscape and both countries' desire to shape it. These changes motivate Berlin's need for an increased strategic engagement with India. Challenges such as India's response to Russian aggression in Ukraine conditioned by historically rooted alliance between New Delhi and Moscow appear to have been diplomatically sidelined. Second, Germany's strategy is intrinsically linked. Security concerns, opportunities within the (green) economy, and

commitment to democratic values and norms are all interwoven. Despite this emphasis on values, realist objectives increasingly drive German policy.

Third, in the global context, strengthening ties with India offers Germany a stronger presence in the Indo-Pacific to promote global stability and security by counterbalancing authoritarian China and Russia. German leadership assumes that strengthening relations with India provides significant benefits for Berlin, including diversifying its economic relationships and reducing reliance on China. Fourth, even within this more pragmatic approach, Germany is likely to consistently balance principles and interests. Berlin expects democracy to remain a central pillar of the bilateral relationship, providing an essential normative framework for cooperation and reaffirming both countries' commitment to a rules-based international order.

Against the backdrop of heightened geopolitical uncertainty and evolving rivalries with authoritarian states, Germany's intensified diplomatic engagement with India represents a prudent exploration of strategic opportunities. The intensification of security ties is likely to involve further collaboration in defence production, technology transfer, and joint military exercises – signalling a shift towards a more assertive and active German foreign policy characterised by bolstered defence capabilities and a more cautious strategic approach to China.

Looking ahead, this strategy holds the potential to strengthen and solidify India's engagement with Western partners while gradually weaning New Delhi off its military dependence on Russian military equipment and fostering a more resilient and equitable security environment. In the context of (green) economic interactions, notwithstanding growing global geopolitical tensions, Germany and India should continue cooperation aimed at supporting an economy-wide green transformation, unlocking investment opportunities in India's rapidly transforming infrastructure – a cornerstone of German strategy since 2015.

Transforming this cooperation into a robust, multi-dimensional strategic partnership aligns with the German leadership commitment to enhancing its role in global governance through, among other things, an intensified collaboration with democratic states. Despite challenges stemming from Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist policies, India's multifaceted diversity and democracy continue to represent pivotal strengths, serving as vital international assets and a cohesive force in the bilateral relationship with Germany. Only time will tell whether the India-Germany interaction, promoted as a "partnership of shared values and regional and multilateral interests", will translate into a sustained values-based cooperation that would benefit Indian society and not merely nourish the elites, as was the case with the Russian oligarchy. Some Indian billionaires (for example Gautam Adani) are close to the BJP and Narendra Modi, and are the exponents of the crony capitalism, a system that links wealth accumulation with access to state-controlled resources, thereby perpetuating social inequalities.

Change and continuity characterise Germany's foreign and security policy, which is grappling with the difficult challenge of combining a more realist approach with its historically shaped identity based on civilian power ideals. The visible shift towards pragmatic realism dictated by current global security threats is exemplified by Germany's more proactive foreign policy, including increased security cooperation with India, which is seen as a strategically crucial Asian partner. The significantly increased diplomatic efforts, combined with the various initiatives underscoring India's significance in bilateral eco-

nomic and security ties, outlined in this article, indicate that India is being a notable reference point in Germany's paradigm shift. Since this overarching intensification is relatively new (especially in defence/security ties), a more comprehensive evaluation of Germany's efforts to balance *Realpolitik* and normative approaches in relations with India can be conducted in the coming years.

References

- Aggarwal V. (2023). The Rise in Economic Inequality in India in Recent Years. *International Journal of Management and Development Studies*. Vol. 12. No. 12, 1–10.
- Altenburg T. (2006). Entwicklungszusammenarbeit im Gesamtkontext der Deutsch-Indischen Kooperation: eine Portfolioanalyse. Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik. Bonn: Wydawnictwo
- Bava U. S. (2007). New Powers for Global Change? India's Role in the Emerging World Order. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, FES Briefing Paper 4, March 2007.
- Bertram C. (2019). Säkulares Indien unter Beschuss - Berliner Inder/innen solidarisieren sich mit Protestwelle in Indien. *Heinrich Böll Stiftung*, 17 January. Available at: <https://www.boell.de/de/2020/01/17/saekulares-indien-unter-beschuss-berliner-inderinnen-solidarisieren-sich-mit> [Accessed on 12.07.2024].
- BJP Manifesto (2024). BJP Manifesto. Bharatiya Janata Party. Modi ki Guarantee 2024. Available at: <https://www.bjp.org/bjp-manifesto-2024> [Accessed on 27.02.2025].
- Bosch T., Vinke K. (2022). Integrating Climate in Germany's National Security Strategy How to Avoid Being Derailed by Russia's Aggression, (DGAP Policy Brief, 27). Forschungsinstitut der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik, September. Berlin, Available at: <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-86656-5> [Accessed on 13.09.2024].
- Bunde T et al. (2020). 'Zeitenwende, Wendezeiten'. Special Edition of the Munich Security Report on German Foreign and Security Policy, October 2020. Available at: https://securityconference.org/assets/01_Bilder_Inhalte/03_Medien/02_Publikationen/MSG_Germany_Report_10-2020_Engl.pdf
- Bundesregierung (2015). Indo-German joint statement on climate change and energy technology cooperation. *Bundesregierung*. Available at: <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/service/archive/archive/indo-german-joint-statement-on-climate-change-and-energy-technology-cooperation-605406> [Accessed on 25.02.2025].
- Dabhade N. (2019). Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019: A step towards undoing the Indian secular democracy. *Heinrich Böll Stiftung*, 23 December. Available at: <https://in.boell.org/en/2019/12/23/citizenship-amendment-act-2019-step-towards-undoing-indian-secular-democracy> [Accessed on 16.08.2024].
- de Estrada K.S. (2023). What is a *vishwaguru*? Indian civilizational pedagogy as a transformative global imperative. *International Affairs*. Vol. 99. No. 2, 433–455.
- Die Bundesregierung (2022a) Joint Statement 6th German-Indian Inter-Governmental Consultations Berlin, *Die Bundesregierung*, 2 May. Available at: <https://www.bundesregierung.de/resource/blob/2196306/2029884/ef9976fc9ac337ec51a38219e21b80cd/2022-05-02-joint-statement-6th-german-indian-inter-governmental-consultations-ger-ind-en-data.pdf?download=1> [Accessed on 27.02.2025].

- Die Bundesregierung (2022b). Regierungserklärung von Bundeskanzler Olaf Scholz am 27. Februar 2022. *Die Bundesregierung*. Available at: <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/aktuelles/regierungserklaerung-von-bundeskanzler-olaf-scholz-am-27-februar-2022-2008356> [Accessed on 12.09.2024].
- Die Bundesregierung (2023). Wehrhaft. Resilient, Nachhaltig. Integrierte Sicherheit für Deutschland. Nationale Sicherheitsstrategie, Die Bundesregierung. Available at: <https://www.nationalesicherheitsstrategie.de/> [Accessed on 12.07.2024].
- Fahimi A., Mookherjee P., Vinke K., Bosch T. (2024). Toward an Indo-German Green Strategic Partnership. Aligning Partnership Agreements with Foreign Policy Goals. DGAP Policy Brief, 04 June. Available at: <https://dgap.org/en/research/publications/toward-indo-german-green-strategic-partnership> [Accessed on 15.10.2024].
- Federal Foreign Office (2019). India: a partner for the challenges of tomorrow. Federal Foreign Office, 30 October. Available at: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/laenderinformationen/indien-node/intergovernmental-consultations/2262146> [Accessed on 10.09.2024].
- Federal Ministry of Defence (2023). Defence Policy Guidelines 2023. Federal Ministry of Defence. Bundeswehr. Available at: <https://www.bmvg.de/resource/blob/5702804/7ee6065595ceb56b8bd13cbf44659582/defence-policy-guidelines-2023-data.pdf> [Accessed on 12.07.2024].
- Federal Statistical Office of Germany (2024). India. Statistical Country Profile. Edition 08/2024, 5 August. Federal Statistical Office of Germany (Destatis). Available at: https://www.destatis.de/EN/Themes/Countries-Regions/International-Statistics/Country-Profiles/india.pdf?__blob=publicationFile [Accessed on 15.09.2024].
- Focus on India (2024) Federal Foreign Office, Berlin. Available at: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/resource/blob/2680288/8909ac2c501ab85d55deff7d1b8b75d/241016-fokus-indien-data.pdf> [Accessed on 04.03.2025].
- Ganguly Š., Pardesi M. S., Thompson W. R. (2023). *The Sino-Indian Rivalry: Implications for Global Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- George M., Djokic K., Hussain Z., Wezeman P. D., Wezeman S. T. (2025). Trends in International Arms Transfers. SIPRI Fact Sheet. March 2025, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Available at: https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2025-03/fs_2503_at_2024_0.pdf [Accessed on 08.03.2025].
- Guha R. (2024). India's Feet of Clay. How Modi's Supremacy Will Hinder His Country's Rise. *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 103. No. 2, 58–73.
- Hasse N. (2023). German defence minister: 'We woke up in another world', *Deutsche Welle*, 6 May. Available at: <https://www.dw.com/en/german-defense-minister-we-woke-up-in-another-world/video-65826179> [Accessed on 14.07.2024].
- Heusgen Ch. (2023). Führung und Verantwortung. Angela Merkels Außenpolitik und Deutschlands künftige Rolle in der Welt. München: Siedler Verlag.
- Holländer M, Tepel, R (2009). Entwicklungszusammenarbeit mit Indien: Plädoyer für ein substanzielles deutsches Engagement. Südasienbüro Bonn.
- Jain J. K. (2023). India and Germany. In: Jain R. K. (ed.). *India and Europe in a Changing World Context, Confrontation, Cooperation*. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 19–63.
- Jain R. K. (2025). *India and Germany in a Turbulent World: Perceptions, Perspectives, Prospects*. Oxon-New York: Routledge.

- Jayaram D. (2021) India's Climate Diplomacy Towards the EU: From Copenhagen to Paris and Beyond. In: Gieg P., Lowinger T., Pietzko M., Zürn A., Salma Bava U., Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet G. (eds.) EU-India Relations The Strategic Partnership in the Light of the European Union Global Strategy. Cham: Springer, 201–226.
- Jürgenmeyer C (2009). Die indische Demokratie – eine 'funktionierende Anarchie'. In: von Hauff M. (ed.) Indien. Herausforderungen und Perspektiven. Marburg: Metropolis-Verlag, 73–92.
- Koalitionsvertrag (2021). Koalitionsvertrag 2021–2025 zwischen der SPD, BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN und FDP. Available at <https://www.spd.de/koalitionsvertrag2021> [Accessed on 12.07.2024].
- Luckscheiter J., Yog Shah S., Rahman M. Z. (2024). Indiens Wahlen 2024: Eine neue politische Landschaft tut sich auf. Heinrich Böll Stiftung, 12 June. Available at: <https://www.boell.de/de/2024/06/12/indiens-wahlen-2024-eine-neue-politische-landschaft-tut-sich-auf> [Accessed on 12.08.2024].
- Mathur A. (2024). The Structural Challenge for Modi 3.0's Global Messaging. *The Diplomat*, 11 June. Available at: <https://thediplomat.com/2024/06/the-structural-challenge-for-modi-3-0s-global-messaging/> [Accessed on 02.09.2024].
- MEA (2015). Joint Statement - Third India Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC) in New Delhi, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 5 October. Available at: <https://www.mea.gov.in/incoming-visit-detail.htm?25887/Joint+Statement++Third+India+Germany+InterGovernmental+Consultations+IG-C+in+New+Delhi+October+05+2015> [Accessed on 10.09.2024].
- MEA (2023). India-Germany bilateral brief. *Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India*, 16 August. Available at: https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Germany_Brief.pdf
- Mehta V. (2023). India holds the key to hitting global climate change targets. Here's why. World Economic Forum, 19 January. Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/01/india-holds-the-key-to-hitting-global-climate-change-targets-here-s-why/> [Accessed on 19.10.2024].
- Merkel A. (2024). Freiheit. Erinnerungen 1954-2021. Köln: Kiepenheuer&Witsch.
- Münkler H. (2025). Macht im Umbruch. Deutschlands Rolle in Europa und die Herausforderungen des 21. Jahrhunderts. Berlin: Rowohlt.
- NDTV (2024). 'Blatant Interference': India Protests Germany's Remarks On Arvind Kejriwal. *NDTV*, 24 March. Available at: <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/india-says-germanys-comment-on-arvind-kejriwals-arrest-blatant-interference-in-internal-matters-5295329> [Accessed on 14.07.2024].
- Pandit R. (2024). Clear political will in Berlin now to boost defence ties with India: German envoy. *The Times of India*, 4 March. Available at: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/clear-political-will-in-berlin-now-to-boost-defence-ties-with-india-german-envoy/articleshow/108186121.cms> [Accessed on 19.07.2024].
- Pillai S., Linberg, S. I. (2021). Democracy broken down: India. V-Dem, Democracy Report. Available at: https://v-dem.net/documents/12/dr_2021.pdf [Accessed on 19.09.2024].
- Press Freedom Index (2024) India. Reporters without Borders. Available at: <https://rsf.org/en/country/india> [Accessed on 26.02.2025].

- Rajagopalan R. P. (2023). Can Germany help India overcome its submarine troubles? *The Diplomat*, 12 June. Available at: <https://thediplomat.com/2023/06/can-germany-help-india-overcome-its-submarine-troubles/> [Accessed on 16.08.2024].
- Rattani. V. (2020). India, the European Union and Climate Change: The Paris Agreement and After, in: Jain R. (ed.) *India and the European Union in a Turbulent World*. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 187–203.
- Sachdeva G. (2019) EU–India Economic Relations and FTA Negotiations, in: Sachdeva G. (ed.) *Challenges in Europe: Indian perspectives*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 291–320.
- Scholz O. (2023). The Global Zeitenwende. How to Avoid a New Cold War in a Multipolar Era. *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 102. No. 1, 22–38.
- Sethi N. (2024). How India's Politics is Funded and Why it Needs to Change. Heinrich Böll Stiftung, 22 May. Available at <https://in.boell.org/en/2024/05/22/how-indias-politics-funded-and-why-it-needs-change> [Accessed on 12.07.2024].
- Steinmeier F.-W. (2018). Speech by Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier. Delhi University, March 23. Available at: https://www.bundespraesident.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Reden/2018/03/180323-Indien-Universitaet-Englisch-2.pdf?__blob=publicationFile [Accessed on 02.03.2025].
- The Hindu (2021). India a civilisation state reappearing on global stage: Jaishankar. *The Hindu*, 16 September. Available at: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-a-civilisation-state-reappearing-on-global-stage-jaishankar/article36486698.ece> [Accessed on 12.09.2024].
- Tiwari R. (2012). Bilateral Business Defies Financial Crisis and Economic Slowdown. *Indo-German Economy*, 1 May, 56(2): 19–21.
- Vaid D. (2024). India, Germany push to boost defence ties. *Deutsche Welle*, 25 March. Available at: <https://www.dw.com/en/india-germany-push-to-boost-defense-ties/a-68662072> [Accessed on 14.08.2024].
- V-Dem (2024). Democracy Report 2024: Democracy Winning and Losing at the Ballot. *Varieties of Democracy*. Available at: https://v-dem.net/documents/43/v-dem_dr2024_lowres.pdf [Accessed on 13.07.2024].
- Wagner Ch. (2024). Introduction: India as a Partner of German Foreign Policy. In Wagner Ch. (ed.) *India as a Partner of German Foreign Policy*. SWP Research Paper 17, Berlin, 5–8.