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[EICC Study Report to be released on 19 March in Brussels](#)

The long awaited release of the EICC Study Report titled “**Indian Companies in the European Union: Reigniting Economic Growth**” will take place on Tuesday, the 19 March in Brussels. The Report Launch will be followed by a Cocktail. Chamber's Chairman Mr. Geoffrey Van Orden and Indian Ambassador Mr. Dinkar Khullar will address the Launching function. The Chamber has invited selected business leaders, journalists and European Commission officials to attend.

The Study has been commissioned by the Europe India Chamber of Commerce in the background of some extraordinary developments such as the current economic crisis in Europe, the Free Trade Agreement negotiations between EU and India, increasing number of M&A and joint venture by Indian companies in Europe; corporations in Europe increasingly seeing Indian companies as competitors and partners for enhancing competitiveness of their value chain and a source of new energy and dreams for Europe's economic development. The report provides valuable insights into the patterns and trends of the emergence of Indian companies in the European FDI market and their services in the host country in developing trade, technology, and employment. The Report also illustrates issues of concerns of Indian investors in Europe and makes a case why it is important to make EU-India economic cooperation “inseparable” under the current global economic environment.

The Report is authored by Mr. Adith Charlie, a freelance economic journalist in India.

The Chamber will issue a Press Release during the Launch of the Report and will be made available on request.

[EICC Trade & Investment Partnership Summit \(TIPS\) on 16 October in Brussels](#)

Business collaboration through accelerating trade and investment between EU and India will be at the top of the EICC Trade and Investment Partnership Summit (TIPS) agenda when a major business event takes place in the European Parliament in Brussels on 16 October 2013. The business Summit titled as “**Dynamics of EU-India Relations in a Changing Europe: Challenges and Opportunities for Accelerating Trade and Investment**” will also mark the 50 years of India's engagement with the EU. In the event of EU-India FTA negotiation concluding soon, Indian and European companies now will have much greater opportunity to invest and develop business relationships. After the successful Global India

Business Meeting in Antwerp in 2012 in which EICC was the main collaborator with Horasis, TIPS will be the largest business event in the context of India and European business relations of 2013 in Europe and will provide the highest level platform for a concrete and constructive dialogue in the context of improving trade and investment between EU and India and will offer Indian and European companies to build their collaboration. The EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht has been invited to address the summit.

The TIPS will seek to bridge trade and economic divide between the two countries will bring policy makers, industrialists, business leaders, and high representatives of the European Commission and heads of trade bodies. The summit will attempt to build better and innovative relationship by exploring the dynamics of changing Europe through discussion and exchange of ideas among high profile business leaders, experts from wide range of discipline from Europe and India. The summit will be panel focused with insights into addressing core issues pertaining to inbound / outbound investment from India to Europe and vice versa that invariably affect EU-India trade relations. The event will also discuss the broader side of the trade related issues such as regulatory and legal framework, taxation policies and other incentives in India and Europe. The TIPS will make comprehensive overview of India-EU relations in content and context and will suggests ways to give it a strategic dimension. The summit will serve as a key platform offering an unparalleled access to a full spectrum of more than 150 industry leaders, business executives, policy makers, representatives of the European Commission to share their views on issues related to trade and investment. The summit will provide an opportunity for the delegates to access important presentations to engage in discussions and network with specialists across a range of topical issues and suggests ways to give it a strategic dimension. Industrial sectors that will be discussed in depth for bilateral cooperation include Pharmaceuticals, Renewable Energy, Infrastructure and Retail.

The summit is receiving huge interest and the chamber has received confirmation from several business leaders who will attend the summit. The Chamber is collaborating with Friends of Europe, an independent think tank for EU policy analysis and debate to hold a session on strategic issues dealing with EU-India relations. The Chamber is also in discussion with the European Business Technology Centre (EBTC) for collaboration.

The chamber is inviting conceptual or empirical presentations, and/or country context case studies in the context the theme of the summit to enable business leaders, participants, trade specialists and practitioners to understand the dimension of EU-India trade and economic relation. The submission should be sent via email (as a word doc attachment) to the Secretary General of the Chamber on mail ID: info@eiccglobal.eu Deadline for Abstract Submission is August 15th, 2013.

RBI prescribes holding co for new private banks; sets 49% FDI cap

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 22 February issued final guidelines for setting up new private sector banks, allowing all eligible corporate houses and non-finance companies into the banking sector.

Under the guidelines issued today, all private and public sector entities and groups, including non-banking financial companies, are eligible for a banking licence, provided they set up a wholly-owned non-operative financial holding company (NOFHC) for operating the banking company.

The guidelines issued by the RBI fixed the initial minimum paid-up voting equity capital for a new bank at Rs 500 crore. RBI also set a 49 per cent limit for foreign holding in a new private bank for the first 5 years, after which it will be as per the extant policy.

To be eligible for a banking licence, these entities/ groups, however, should have sound credentials and integrity. They should also be financially sound with a successful track record of 10 years. For this purpose, RBI may seek feedback from other regulators and enforcement and investigative agencies.

The NOFHC should be wholly owned by the promoter / promoter group and the holding company would exclusively hold the bank as well as all other financial services entities of the group. The NOFHC would initially hold a minimum of 40 per cent of the paid-up voting equity capital with a lock-in period of five years. This would be brought down to 15 per cent within 12 years.

The bank should get its shares listed on the stock exchanges within three years of the commencement of business. All such banks will be governed by the provisions of the relevant Acts, statutes and directives, prudential regulations and other guidelines/instructions issued by the RBI and other regulators.

The NOFHC should be registered as a non-banking finance company (NBFC) with the RBI and will be governed by a separate set of directions issued by the central bank.

Under the draft guidelines, at least 50 per cent of the directors of the NOFHC should be independent directors. The corporate structure should not in any way impede effective supervision of the bank and the NOFHC on a consolidated basis by RBI.

The prudential norms will be applied to NOFHC, both on stand-alone as well as on a consolidated basis, and the norms would be on similar lines as that of the bank. The NOFHC and the bank should not have any exposure to the promoter group. The bank should not invest in the equity /debt capital instruments of any financial entities held by the NOFHC.

The business plan should be realistic and viable and should address how the bank proposes to achieve financial inclusion.

Other conditions include: The board of the bank should have a majority of independent directors; should open at least 25 per cent of its branches in unbanked rural centres (population up to 9,999 as per the latest census); and comply with the priority sector lending targets and sub-targets as applicable to the existing domestic banks.

Banks promoted by groups having 40 per cent or more assets/income from non-financial business will require RBI's prior approval for raising paid-up voting equity capital beyond Rs1,000 crore for every block of Rs500 crore.

Non-compliance of terms and conditions will attract penal measures, including cancellation of license of the bank. Existing NBFCs, if considered eligible, may be permitted to promote a new bank or convert themselves into banks.

RBI has set up a committee, which will initially screen all applications. Thereafter, the applications will be referred to a high level advisory committee, which will be constituted shortly.

The committee will submit its recommendations to the RBI after which RBI will decide on issuing an in-principle approval for setting up of a bank. The validity of the in-principle approval will be one year.

India Poised to be the Leading International Trading Hub for Rough Diamonds

Shri Anand Sharma, Union Minister of Commerce, Industry and Textiles has unveiled a Task Group report to make India an International Trading hub for rough diamonds. The task group on diamonds was constituted by the Minister of Commerce, Industries and Textiles under the Chairmanship of Director General of Foreign Trade, Dr. Anup K. Pujari keeping in view the slump in exports of diamonds from India through the last few quarters.

Some of the recommendations in report include setting up of a Special Notified Zone for import and trading of rough diamonds, permission to import cut and polished diamonds duty free up to the extent of 15% of the average of previous 3 years' exports and reducing the rate of computation of profit under Benign Assessment Procedure (BAP) from 6% to 2.5%, amongst others.

Commenting on the report, Shri Sharma mentioned that "The conscience of the Indian diamond sector and the commitment of Indian government for clean and responsible diamond trading are really high. Some mischievous and malicious elements of late have been trying to malign the perception of the Indian Diamond Sector, which the Indian Government will not allow. India is the largest diamond cutting and polishing center in the world, committed to continuing as a responsible and active member of the Kimberley Process Certification System by implementing all its regulations. Very few countries are having such an impeccable record and the world would not have been able to reach less than 1% trading of conflict diamonds, if India would not have vouched for the same so steadfastly."

The task group which comprised of members, both from the Government and Industry, did an extensive review of the issues related to the trade facilitation, taxation, fiscal measures and promotional matters related to the Indian diamond industry in line with such practices prevalent at other global diamond centres. This report is of great importance to the Government as India currently enjoys the status of the foremost hub for manufacturing of diamonds in the world. Diamond Exports is also a major contributor to the merchandise exports of the country. It also employs a large number of people from the underprivileged section of the society in India.

Shri Sharma appreciated the suggestions of the Task Group to help India retain its primacy as a trading hub, committed to take up the recommendations, which have been put forward with the concerned departments of the Govt. in a time bound manner so as to decrease the transaction cost of exports, simplify the compliance of the trade with taxation authorities and benefit the trade with the natural resources that is emanating out of India. The Minister also noted that the Ministry had already issued the necessary orders to implement certain pertinent demands of the industry immediately after the same have been demanded by the industry, like granting of bonded warehouse facility for diamonds which had been necessitated due to the imposition of 2% import duty on cut & polished diamonds.

Some of the salient recommendations of the task group are: Reducing the rate of computation of profit under Benign Assessment Procedure (BAP) from 6% to 2.5%; 15% duty free re-import quota for import of cut and polished diamonds; Setting up of a Special Notified Zone for import and trading of rough diamonds; Establishment of a USD 3-5 billion fund for banks to refinance their dollar loans to the industry; Extending the 2% interest subvention scheme to the industry, as most diamond manufacturing companies do not fall under the current scheme; Continuation of the system of Honorary Valuation Panels for the diamond sector; Defining a beneficiation policy for diamonds mined in India; Setting up of a Rs 200 crore Technological Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS); Establishment of a fund in partnership with the industry for generic promotion of diamonds and promotion of diamonds; Other procedural related suggestions to reduce transaction costs of exports.

The industry commended the proactive role of the government in trying to solve the industry specific issues and anticipates that the recommendations will be implemented within the specified time period as to be decided by the government.

Indian technology companies sharpen focus on patents

India's software exporters are trying to transform themselves from extravagantly staffed body shops doing grunt work by stepping up their intellectual property (IP) efforts as well as taking advantage of the opportunities that trends and technologies such as social media, mobiles and cloud computing offer. By trying to generate more revenue from so-called non-linear or non-headcount-related businesses, these companies are trying to shield themselves from the risks that these technologies present to traditional off shoring and delivery models.

Among the effects of this trend is a concerted effort to file for patents, with IT companies trying to earn more with fewer employees as cloud computing alters the future of traditional information technology (IT) outsourcing with a pay-per-use or subscription model.

Other initiatives include automation, templates for industry segments that can be re-used with minimal customization, re-use of assets and codes, platform solutions and tools such as Six Sigma, besides value-added services such as analytics and IP.

India's largest software exporter Tata Consultancy Services Ltd (TCS) increased its intellectual property rights (IPRs) activity by filing 460 patents in several countries in fiscal 2012, according to its annual report. The company had filed a total 855 patent applications as of 31 March last year, of which 72 were granted. Infosys Ltd's fiscal 2012 annual report said it filed 474 unique patent applications, while Wipro Ltd registered 101 patents, 18 copyrights and 11 designs as on 31 March 2012.

Indian IT services firms “have maxed out their current business models”, said Ray Wang, principal analyst and chief executive of Constellation Research Inc.

By applying differentiated IP creation, enabling Big Data (analysing the mountains of information that companies generate) business models, delivering innovation value chains and leading partner ecosystems, Indian IT services firms can create new, high-volume, high-value opportunities to fend off margin threats and become truly global players, Wang said in his 21 January report.

TCS, for instance, which has more than 250,000 employees, has invested in various non-linear opportunities such as software products, platform-based BPO (business process outsourcing) and software as a service, or SaaS, while focusing on unit-priced contracts.

A platform-based BPO allows for sharing of a technology solution with other firms. It helps cut costs since companies pay only for every invoice processed.

A case in point is TCS’ deal with the UK’s Pearl Group, for which it developed a life and pension’s platform that it re-engineered for the UK market. The company also sharpened its focus on non-linear revenue initiatives with a cloud-based initiative for small and medium enterprises called iON, and a platform-based BPO.

The company has stepped up “end-to-end services”, TCS chief executive officer and managing director N. Chandrasekaran said in an interview on 14 January. “We are also investing a lot in the mobility business,” he said, without giving any numbers.

Infosys’ product efforts are centered on Finacle, its core banking solution. The company, according to Wang, has built its InfosysEdge platforms for a wide range of markets.

The concept starts with mapping a client’s business problem and pairing that with measurable outcomes. It then incubates, co-creates and partners to deliver differentiated IP built with its services and industry domain expertise. Solutions are delivered using a cloud platform.

Recent wins, according to Wang, include OSG Corp. of Japan’s selection of Infosys CommerceEdge for its eCommerce portal; Infosys TalentEdge being selected for billing and payroll at Hudson; a partnership agreement with WPP for Infosys BrandEdge; and Bharti Airtel Ltd using Infosys WalletEdge for Airtel Money.

“Outsourcing on platforms is a massive paradigm shift for the industry and a huge, huge opportunity. IT spend is roughly 2-3% of a firm’s revenue. The trend that we are addressing today is some 20%—you can take any business process and start. On paper, we have 20-30 platforms, five of which are revenue earning,” said Kris Gopalakrishnan, co-chairman of Infosys.

Wipro is differentiating IP creation through its service productization network. Sample products include DMS Telecom, WiproDigital, SaaSify, NetOxygen, Medicare Advantage and Wipro’s Mobile Devices Certification Lab. Similarly, in the BPO space, Wipro offers transaction-based pricing (i.e., for processing, payment per invoice, claim, etc.).

Wipro, according to Wang’s report, has also enabled customers to create smart energy meters, 3D cinemascop smart TVs, portable dishwashers, point-of-sale and workforce management terminals, high-performance computers, industrial-grade wireless routers and base station controllers.

Tech Mahindra Ltd and Mahindra Satyam Ltd (to merge on 21 March), jointly unveiled with a client a unified business transformation platform that brings the power of convergence of multiple technologies such as networks, mobility, analytics, cloud and security, said Wang.

L&T InfoTech applies Big Data to social analytics that makes use of natural language processing tools and sentiment analysis to offer a categorization framework to classify social media reactions.

"IT services firms must secure software and IP assets soon—or face a bidding war with the mega-software vendors for engineering, product, sales and marketing talent. Mergers and acquisitions (M&As) must be accelerated in order to catch up," said Wang.

A January report by India Ratings and Research, an India Fitch Ratings Ltd company, expects M&A activity to continue in the IT sector in 2013. It said the preferred destinations were European countries, West Asia and Asia-Pacific regions such as India, Singapore and Australia, and the acquisition targets are likely to be companies with offerings in solutions in analytics, cloud computing, and mobile services.

By 2015, the IT outsourcing landscape will see a whole new set of platforms, said Sid Pai, partner, global resourcing and India operations, at Information Services Group, a research and advisory services company. To be sure, "while we are seeing a push in so-called non-linear space, it has not yet translated into real business," said Pai.

"Nobody has invested sufficiently for developing a software asset with significant applications. Most of them will be largely mobile platforms in enterprises and there will also be a set of new players who will pose a threat to traditional outsourcing models since there will be a change in the balance of delivery," Pai added.

For instance, with the help of cloud computing, Google Inc., the world's biggest online search engine, and Amazon.com Inc., the world's largest online retailer, are more than nibbling at the IT outsourcing pie. They are increasingly hosting the IT infrastructure of large enterprises and especially small- and medium-size businesses at their own data centres, and reducing the IT costs of clients by at least 40%.

Still, offshoring will not die. It will only metamorphose, according to a 25 January report by Credit Suisse Securities Research and Analytics. "While cost advantages of offshoring have reduced, they are still significant. India's market share is still less than 10%, and its penetration in Europe is especially low. However, offshore companies have constantly metamorphosed since the early 1990s and will continue to do so," the report stated.

Sourcing managers must consider the opportunities and risks presented by the convergence of social, information, mobile and cloud when re-evaluating sourcing options, delivery models and vendors, said a 28 January report by research firm Gartner Inc.

Growing cloud adoption will force sourcing managers to reconsider sourcing governance techniques and contracting practices, said the report, adding that revised mobile strategies, such as BYOD (bring-your-own-device, or organizations allowing employees to bring their own smartphones, laptops to work and access company information and applications on them) and mobile applications availability, will expand IT service sourcing requirements as users demand new services.

India, EU need to operationalise political will for FTA, says German Ambassador Steiner

India and the European Union should operationalise their "political will" to resolve the difficult but "surmountable" issues in concluding the free trade pact between both sides, German Ambassador Michael Steiner has said.

Emphasising that both sides cannot continue negotiations "forever" on the agreement, Steiner said that April meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin provides a good opportunity to decide on the issues.

"It is difficult but it is reachable. You know, last many things have been solved. The negotiators have done quite some work and most of the issues are either solved or we all know how a solution looks like.

"There are some outstanding issues which are also surmountable. So, therefore if we have the political will we can overcome it. But we need to assemble and operationalise this political will," Steiner told the news agency in an interview here.

Discussions on finalising a free trade agreement between India and the EU has been going for around six years but both sides still have differences over various issues, including those related to duties on automobiles and wines.

India and the 27-nation European Union have been negotiating a comprehensive free trade pact -- Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) -- since June 2007. Germany is a key player in the bloc.

Stating that compromise is required from all sides, Steiner said that negotiations between India and the EU on free trade pact cannot go on forever.

"... Why because in India we have elections that makes strong actions, of course as we all know, more difficult. And Europeans, on their side, will have to put their energy in other big projects," he said.

According to him, Europe would be starting negotiations for free trade pacts with the US and Japan.

"There will be free trade negotiations between Europe and the US starting. This consumes a lot of negotiating power. In addition to that, there is the plan that we have to start negotiations between Europe and Japan," he said. In response to a query on major issues delaying the pact, the Ambassador said there is yet to be a consensus on tariffs on cars besides some issues related to the insurance sector.

"I think it can be solved. We need to have some sign from the Indian side on the issue of level of participation in the field of insurance companies. This is an important part," he added. Noting that negotiations are going on constantly, Steiner said, "I think that what needs to happen is that we have full clarity in the next month where to close the deal and we need to close relatively rapidly".

According to Steiner, the upcoming bilateral talks provide a fantastic opportunity to decide on the free trade pact. "I think that is a golden opportunity to assess where we are and also agree on how do we finalise this issue. We have certain elements that will help us on the way to bring this to a close," he said.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh would be travelling to Germany in April to discuss ways to enhance strategic co-operation between the two countries in various areas, including energy and infrastructure.

India needs to reduce regulatory uncertainty to boost growth: OECD

Bringing down FDI barriers and reducing regulatory uncertainty to attract more private investments will help boost India's economic growth, according to OECD, a Paris-based body.

It says that there should be further reforms in financial sector such as promoting entry of new pvt banks, establishing plan to phase out priority lending. Suggesting various measures to boost India's growth, OECD has said there should be further reforms in the financial sector such as promoting entry of new private banks and establishing a plan to phase out priority lending.

Faced with slowing growth, Indian government in recent times has initiated various reform measures including relaxation in FDI for aviation and retail segments.

India is expected to see a growth rate of 5-5.5 per cent in current fiscal.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a grouping of mostly rich countries, said in a report released here that "trade and FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) barriers remain high in some key sectors, impairing productivity improvements". It stressed on the need for reducing such barriers.

As per OECD, "regulatory uncertainty" should be reduced to promote more private sector investment.

"Reforms to further promote the development of a dynamic and efficient financial sector are needed to support investment and growth," the report said.

According to OECD, the government has eased some FDI barriers, allowing minority foreign ownership in the aviation sector and up to 51 per cent foreign ownership in multi-brand retail subject to restrictions such as approval by state governments and local procurement provisions.

The country should further ease FDI restrictions in aviation, multi-brand retail and other sectors, said the OECD report on economic policy reforms and growth.

"...Further trade and investment liberalisation is needed to strengthen competition and encourage the diffusion of more advanced technology and management practices," it added.

On financial sector reforms, OECD said that bank portfolio restrictions should be relaxed, including a gradual reduction in share of government bonds held by banks and establishing a plan to phase out priority lending.

Also, the government has to "allow greater participation by foreign investors in the financial services sector and promote the entry of new private banks".

Besides, OECD said effective infrastructure-related regulations should be promoted.

Severe infrastructure bottlenecks endure, particularly in the energy and transport sectors, the report noted.

The government should also "streamline land acquisition processes, including through improved land registration, to reduce costs and delays," it added.

France looks to India to boost its sagging economy

Though France and India have advanced fairly significantly in their negotiations on both the Areva nuclear reactors and the Dassault Rafale combat aircraft, France is looking at India to help boost its sagging economy in several other sectors, notably manufacturing.

Since 2010, France has been steadily losing its edge in manufacturing and this trend accelerated in 2012, recording a jump of 42 percent in the closing of manufacturing units in the country, which numbered at 1087 units eliminating over 24,000 jobs, according to a study by Trendeo, a consultancy.

This trend is set to continue in 2013 as well as a number of very large French companies, including automobile manufacturer Peugeot, which has said that it would close down its plant at Aulnay-sous-bois in suburban Paris, eliminating over 2800 jobs. Hollande had promised during his campaign that the government would ensure that the plant would not be shut down.

However, nearly a year after his victory, the situation at the plant remains the same, with the workers opposed to a rehabilitation plan proposed by Peugeot. Yesterday, the car maker announced its biggest loss ever for a year - at 5 bn euros - indicating the seriousness of the situation for Peugeot.

Other major job losses could come from other leading names such as the flag carrier Air France, white goods maker SEB etc. However, Trendeo says that while Peugeot, Air France and SEB do make the headlines, a large majority of the factory closures go unreported in the media as they concern companies employing less than 100 persons and often less than 10. The only sectors that have created jobs in France include green technology, construction, space and aeronautics, says Trendeo.

Faced with this situation at home, Hollande will exhort Indian businesses to come and invest in France and outline the various incentives and subsidies proposed by the French government to attract businesses. Informed sources say that this message would be at the top of Hollande's agenda when he addresses the Indian business community, first in Delhi, and then in Mumbai.

But his message is expected to be received with a generous pinch of salt as France is currently engaged in a very high-profile battle with the steel giant, ArcelorMittal, over the fate of its factories in France. French Industry Minister Arnaud Montebourg has been engaged in a frontal battle with Mittal over the Florange

foundry in Lorraine in eastern France where ArcelorMittal would like to shed some 630 jobs in order to make its operations in France sustainable.

Montebourg threatened nationalisation of the plant in order to save it, even though he was dressed down by Prime Minister Jean Marc Ayrault and who announced a deal of sorts with Mittal in December. However, the deal does not seem to have satisfied the workers who continue to protest.

Indian industry is already reticent to invest in France due to its cumbersome laws governing hiring and firing and very heavy social charges attached to each job created. It would be hence upon Hollande and his delegation comprising of several investment agencies to convince that doing business in France is not only attractive financially for the Indians but that the government has made doing business in France a simpler, more flexible and transparent process.

Britain PM David Cameron seeks 'special' relationship with India

British Prime Minister David Cameron on 18 February began his India visit seeking a "special relationship" between the two countries, saying it is "about the future and not the past" for which sky is the limit.

"I want Britain and India to have a special relationship...this is a relationship about the future, not the past," Cameron said in his first public engagement here - an interaction with the staff of Hindustan Unilever, the Indian unit of British consumer products' giant, Unilever.

Describing India as one of the "great phenomena" of the century, Cameron, who is on a three-day visit to India, his second since assuming office in May 2010, said the enormous growth of the country is going to make it the third largest economy by 2030.

"I am heading the biggest-ever business delegation to leave British shores. India's rise is going to be one of the great phenomena of the century and it is incredibly impressive to see the vibrancy of your democracy, the great strength of your diversity and the enormous power of your economy that is going to be one of the top three economies by 2030," he said.

"As far as I am concerned, sky is the limit. It's about business, economy and trade. But it is also about culture, politics, and diplomacy. India is going to be one of the leading nations in this century and we will be partners and that's why I am here today," he said.

Britain wants to be India's partner of choice, the visiting premier said, adding the two countries have a lot in common such as history, language, culture. "You are the largest democracy in the world, and we are the oldest," he said. He also said both India and Britain face the extraordinary challenge of fighting terrorism.

"I am bringing with me the Premier League, top universities, museums - we want to tie up in so many different ways with your culture, your companies, your businesses, your people," Cameron said.

Cameron visited Delhi for talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on a range of issues. The Indian side during the talks is likely to seek more information from Britain on alleged kickbacks in the Rs.3,600 crore VVIP chopper deal.

Britain has 1.5 million persons of Indian origin and that strengthens our ties, he said, adding his 100-member business delegation comprises Indian businesses and parliamentarians of Indian origin.

The business relationship between the two nations is already strong with Britain being the biggest European investor here, said Cameron, adding half of Indian investments in Europe is in UK.

"We see the power and the growth of your economy and we see amazing opportunities. For instance, I am looking to speak to your government whether we can open a new corridor between Mumbai and Bangalore of growing towns and development and working around that with you," he said.

The British Prime Minister said he wanted his country's companies to help India develop new cities and districts along a 1,000 km corridor between Mumbai and Bangalore, generating investment projects worth up to \$25 billion.

Cameron said he wanted British firms to work with the Indian and British governments to develop nine districts to link Mumbai, India's financial capital, with Bangalore, its technology hub.

"With me I've got architects, planners and finance experts who can work out the complete solution," he said. "It would unleash India's potential along the 1,000 km stretch from Mumbai to Bangalore, transforming lives and putting British businesses in prime position to secure valuable commercial deals."

On the issue of Indian students in Britain, he said there is no limit on the number of Indian students who can come and study in universities there and also no cap on the length of time they can stay and work.

Dublin summit for EU Employment Ministers focuses on addressing ICT skills gap

Addressing the ICT skills gap will be a crucial part of the EU's employment strategy, given projections that there could be up to 700,000 unfilled vacancies in the EU by 2015, the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Richard Bruton TD told a special meeting of Employment Ministers in Dublin.

Minister Richard Bruton was speaking during the 2-day Informal Employment and Social Policy Council which he co-chaired with Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton TD.

Job creation in Europe is a top priority of the Irish Presidency of the Council of the EU. Jobs growth in the ICT sector is forecast to run at 7.6% over the next decade, more than double the overall rate of job-creation forecast.

In Dublin over the past two days Employment Ministers agreed that ensuring adequate skills supply to fill vacancies in the ICT sector will be a crucial part of growing jobs in the EU. They also discussed lessons from national initiatives taken in the ICT skills area, as well as specific case studies including measures taken in Ireland under the ICT Action Plan jointly launched by Minister Bruton with Minister Quinn in January 2012 as part of the Action Plan for Jobs.

Speaking after the meeting, Minister Richard Bruton said:

"Reflecting our domestic priorities, the Irish Government has identified job-creation as a top priority during our Presidency of the Council of the EU. In recent years through the Action Plan for Jobs and Pathways to Work initiatives we have made significant changes to the Irish economy to support job-creation. Many of the challenges we have faced in Ireland are common across the EU, such as for example the ICT skills gap. Skills mismatches in the EU have increased markedly during the crisis. We need to strengthen cooperation on existing Community policies, instruments and processes so as to enable Member States to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their national skills systems, benchmark them internationally and develop policies to transform better skills into better jobs.

Continuing, the Minister said, "Ireland's experience in addressing the skills gap under the ICT Action Plan, which saw collaboration between Government, State agencies, the education sector and enterprise, provides a valuable model for other member states. Governments need to adopt the right skills strategies in order to bridge the gap between employers' needs and the education system and to make ICT qualifications and careers more attractive to first-time students and those re-skilling and also to improve on the low percentage of women working in the ICT sector."

Minister Bruton intends to take forward the deliberations from this workshop to the launch of a Grand Coalition for digital jobs in Brussels on 4th March next at which he has been invited to deliver a key note address. The Grand Coalition will involve the four Commissioners responsible for Employment, the Digital Agenda, Education, and Enterprise in a multi-stakeholder partnership seeking to reduce the gap between supply and demand for ICT practitioners in Europe. This ensures that the conclusions of this workshop have an immediate audience and path forward for action.

During the Irish Presidency of the Council of the EU, Minister Bruton is responsible for chairing or co-chairing meetings of the Trade, Competitiveness and EPSCO (Employment and Social Policy) Councils. The Minister is involved in hosting three Informal Ministerial Council meetings in Dublin during the Presidency. The EPSCO Informal was the first of these and will be followed by a Trade Council Informal in Dublin on 17-18 April and a Competitiveness Council Informal on 1-3 May.

In his role as co-Chair of the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council of the EU (EPSCO), Minister Richard Bruton held a special informal meeting of EPSCO in Dublin for Employment Ministers from the other EU Member States to discuss and develop a number of key job creation measures.

On the first day of the meeting, Ministers heard a summary of the Social Troika discussions conducted by Minister Richard Bruton with the representatives of European employer and trade union bodies as well as Minister Joan Burton's meeting with the Social Platform representatives of European-wide social NGOs. Subsequently, three parallel workshops enabled Ministers to explore issues relating to active inclusion for jobless households, the employment and skills opportunities in the ICT area and the labour market engagement of older women.

During the event, Minister Richard Bruton held a workshop for EU Employment Ministers focussing on ICT jobs and skills. The event discussed priorities for action focussed on reducing the ICT skills gap and enhancing the competitiveness of the sector at national and European level. While vacancies in the ICT sector continue to increase, the number of graduates from computing sciences and from maths, science and engineering programmes is actually declining. Ministers heard scene-setting presentations from Mr Detlef Eckert, Director, Employment Policy, Directorate-General for Employment Social Affairs & Inclusion, European Commission, and from Peter O'Neill, County General Manager, IBM Ireland, as well as software entrepreneur Jarlath Dooley, Director, Version 1.

Ministers were also presented with short case-studies on German and Irish skills strategies, highlighting lessons learnt and priorities for action focused on reducing the ICT skills gap and enhancing the competitiveness of the sector at national level. Minister Bruton also chaired a meeting of representatives of European employer and trade union bodies focussing on the theme of "Getting people back to work: the contribution of skills development to finding and remaining in employment". The meeting discussed how best to combine vocational education with practical work experience, the difficulties that small businesses face in developing their human resources and the contribution that training networks such as Skillnets can make in that regard, and the contribution that proposed new tools of reinforced economic governance can make to advancing a reform agenda in areas such as the development of quality traineeships and better skills policies.

EC mulls package for ArcelorMittal's French, Belgian operations

ArcelorMittal on 20 February agreed to put on hold its plan to cut jobs and shut plants across Europe until June after the Industrial Commissioner of the 27-nation European Union assured it of a bailout plan for its French and Belgian operations by summer.

The European Commission on 20 February said that the breakthrough came after Industrial Commissioner Antonio Tajani held a meeting with ArcelorMittal's chairman Lakshmi Mittal and requested him to put all restructuring plans in Europe on hold as the body plans to bring out a bailout plan by June to help keep two blast furnaces operating, though at a reduced capacity.

Blaming a slump in demand and overcapacity in Europe, the Luxemburg-based steelmaker has been shutting blast furnaces and cutting jobs across Europe, but mainly in France, Spain, Poland and Belgium.

In December 2012, ArcelorMittal, the world's largest steel maker, had to write down the value of its European business by about \$4.3 billion.

Earlier this month it reported a massive net loss of \$3.72 billion for 2012 as the eurozone debt crisis continued to ravage the region, with steel manufacturers bearing the brunt of it.

The European steel industry employs around 360,000 people at about 500 plants, even as steel demand has slumped by 30 per cent since 2007, while global production declined from 22 per cent to 12 per cent between 2001 and 2011.

After idling two furnaces at Florange in France for fourteen months, it closed them down in October, leading to 630 job losses.

It also plans to close a coke plant and six production lines at its Liege facility in Belgium, and has temporarily closed a blast furnace at Schiffange and cut production at Rodange in Luxembourg.

But its plans had met with fierce protests and criticism from political parties in these countries, especially in France, which threatened to nationalise its operations in Florange.

Under the proposed bailout plan, the French and Belgian governments will pump in €180 million into Florange and €140 million into Liege and the workers affected by the reduction in capacity will have the option to move to other sites.

"I emphasise the importance of the action plan we are preparing, which will contain useful measures for the steel sector. I invite member states, industry and trade unions to work together," said Tajani.

Penal tariffs on Chinese solar products could risk 242,000 European jobs

If the European Union (EU) goes ahead with its intent to impose punitive anti-dumping tariffs on Chinese solar products, it could result in job losses of up to 242,000 over three years in the EU, a German study revealed recently.

The EU, which is struggling with unemployment level of around 11 per cent, may suffer further as many downstream operations using solar panels may come to a stand still.

The study was presented by independent economic research agency Prognos at a hearing with the European Commission (EC) arranged by Germany's Alliance for Affordable Solar Energy (AFASE), which represents over 160 companies in the European photovoltaic (PV) installation and servicing industry.

Last September the EC started anti-dumping proceedings against China in order to investigate if the prices of Chinese manufactured PV wafers, cells and modules are being dumped. Later in November, the commission also commenced another proceeding against alleged illegal Chinese subsidies to solar panel makers.

The study revealed that if anti-dumping duties were imposed, these would increase the prices for Chinese PV products and result in increased cost of solar installations. That would adversely affect the viability of these installations and shrink their demand in the European PV market.

This would translate into large job losses in the EU, the extent of which would depend on the amount of duties levied.

The report analyses three situations with anti-dumping tariffs of 20 per cent, 35 per cent and 60 per cent for the three-year period from 2013-2015.

Prognos estimates that with a tariff of 20 per cent, the demand for PV will decrease to 70 per cent, with a 35 per cent tariff it will go down to 50 per cent and with 60 per cent duty it will reduce to 45 per cent.

According to the report, an anti-dumping tariff of 35 per cent and above could have some positive effect on the production of solar products in the EU as their relative position in the market improves which will lead to some increase in employment and value addition.

However, these gains would be dwarfed by the impact of loss of demand for solar products.

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An anti-dumping duty of 20 per cent would result in 115,600 job losses in the EU in the first year and 175,500 by the third year, while a tariff of 60 per cent would raise the job losses to an estimated 193,700 in the first year and reach 242,000 by the third year.

Estimated losses in monetary terms would be €7.8 billion in the first year to €10.2 billion in the third, in case of the maximum 60 per cent duty scenario.

On the contrary, job increases as a result of increased production of PV in Europe are expected to be 17-20 per cent of the jobs lost. Additional value added due to higher production might range between 10 to 20 per cent of the loss in value, Prognosis said.

Germany is likely to become the biggest victim with estimated job losses of 84,700 by 2015, followed by the UK with 38,600, Italy 20,100 and France 19,300.

The prices of Chinese solar panels were up to 45 per cent cheaper last year compared with the panels produced by some European manufactures, according to Thorsten Preugschas, chief executive of Soventix, a German company that builds solar installations.

The US-imposed duties on solar products from China over the next five years would protect US manufacturers from low-priced imports, currently estimated at approximately \$28 billion in 2011 due to government incentives for solar energy.

However, PV manufacturers in Europe say unfair practices have already caused thousands of job losses. They claim in the US the prices for consumers were stable or had even decreased even after the imposition of tariffs on Chinese solar products.

Data Protection: European Parliament's Industry committee backs uniform data protection rules

The European Commission on 20 February welcomed the adoption of an opinion by the European Parliament's Industry, Research and Energy Committee (ITRE) on the Commission's proposals to reform the EU's data protection rules which date back to 1995 (see IP/12/46 and IP/13/57). The vote on the Committee's opinion, drafted by Member of the European Parliament Seán Kelly, is the latest step towards a swift adoption of the proposed legislation. The Committee's opinion – which covers the draft general Data Protection Regulation – will now be submitted to the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee (LIBE), which will consolidate all the amendments submitted so far and vote on its own report at the end of April.

"Today's vote by the European Parliament's Industry Committee is an important signal that industry needs uniform and clear data protection rules to take advantage of our Digital Single Market," said Vice-President Viviane Reding, the EU's Justice Commissioner. "I thank the ITRE Committee and, in particular the rapporteur, MEP Seán Kelly, for their swift work. This reform is good for business in Europe: one data protection law for one continent, a regulatory one-stop shop with one national data protection authority in charge and a mechanism allowing the European Commission to act as a backstop and ensure consistent application of the rules. This will ensure effective protection of people's personal data and help to boost economic growth, innovation and job creation in Europe."

The ITRE Committee backed the main innovations of the Commission's data protection reform:

- The need to replace the current 1995 Data Protection Directive with a directly applicable Regulation that covers the processing of personal data. A single set of rules on data protection, valid across the EU will remove unnecessary administrative requirements for companies and can save businesses around €2.3 billion a year.
- The need to have a "one-stop shop" for companies that operate in several EU countries. The Commission's proposal is cutting red tape by introducing a one-stop shop for businesses to deal with regulators. In the future, companies will only have to deal with the data protection authorities in the EU country in which they have their main establishment: one interlocutor, not 27 (or more).

- The need for a consistency mechanism that will ensure a uniform application of the EU rules. The European Commission is putting an end to regulatory fragmentation and inconsistent application of the rules to help accelerate the Digital Single Market. The consistency mechanism in the proposed Data Protection Regulation is crucial to ensure the Commission is there as a backstop when regulators can't agree a common line. Companies welcome this (see MEMO/13/86).

- The need to pay special attention to Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) which are the backbone of Europe's economy (99% of all European businesses are SMEs). The Commission's proposal already provides for a number of exemptions for SMEs (below 250 employees): for example an exemption from the need to appoint a data protection officer or the duty to put together documentation on their data processing activities. The ITRE Committee voted to expand this approach.

Next steps: Following the ITRE Committee's opinion, the Employment (EMPL) Committee is due to vote on its own opinion on the reform proposals. The LIBE Committee (which is the lead Committee) will then vote on its own report at the end of April.

The European Commission will continue to work very closely with the European Parliament and with the Council to support the co-legislators in their endeavour to achieve a political agreement on the data protection reform by the end of the Irish Presidency. The next discussion by Ministers of the proposed data protection rules is set for the upcoming Justice Council on 8 March.

The vote in the ITRE Committee follows the publication of the draft reports on the reform of the EU's data protection rules by the LIBE Committee's rapporteurs on 10 January 2013 (IP/13/4). In their reports, Jan-Philipp Albrecht, rapporteur for the proposed Data Protection Regulation and Dimitrios Droutsas, rapporteur for the proposed Data Protection Directive for the law enforcement sector, expressed their full support for a coherent and robust data protection framework with strong and enforceable rights for individuals. They also stressed the need to advance negotiations swiftly on both instruments at the same time. Four European Parliament Committees (IMCO, ITRE, JURI and EMPL) are providing opinions on the General Data Protection Regulation and the JURI Committee is providing an opinion on the Data Protection Directive for the law enforcement sector to the LIBE Committee.

In the digital age, the collection and storage of personal information are essential. Data is used by all businesses – from insurance firms and banks to social media sites and search engines. In a globalised world, the transfer of data to third countries has become an important factor in daily life. There are no borders online and cloud computing means data may be sent from Berlin to be processed in Boston and stored in Bangalore.

Today, 72% of Internet users are worried that they give away too much personal data. They feel they are not in complete control of their data. Fading trust in online services and tools holds back the growth of the digital economy and Europe's digital single market.

To address these concerns, the European Commission proposed, on 25 January 2012, a comprehensive reform of the EU's 1995 data protection rules to strengthen online privacy rights and boost Europe's digital economy. The Commission's proposals update and modernise the principles enshrined in the 1995 Data Protection Directive to bring them into the digital age. They include a proposal for a Regulation setting out a general EU framework for data protection and a proposal for a Directive on protecting personal data processed for the purposes of prevention, detection, investigation or prosecution of criminal offences and related judicial activities.

The right to the protection of personal data is explicitly recognised by Article 8 of the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights and by the Lisbon Treaty. The Treaty provides a legal basis for rules on data protection for all activities within the scope of EU law under Article 16 (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union).

The EU's free trade agreements – where are we?

(From a Statement of the European Commission issued on 18 February 2013 in Brussels)

Over the next two years, 90% of world demand will be generated outside the EU. That's why it is a key priority for the EU to open up more market opportunities for European businesses by negotiating new Free

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Trade Agreements with key countries. If we were to complete all our current free trade talks tomorrow, we'd be adding to the EU economy 2.2% to our GDP, or €275 billion. This is equivalent to adding a country as big as Austria or Denmark to the EU economy. In terms of jobs, they could generate 2.2 million new jobs or 1% of the EU total workforce. Here is an overview of the most important free trade deals currently under negotiation or under consideration.

Forthcoming negotiations or under consideration

High-Level Working Group for Growth and Jobs and launch of negotiations with the United States of America - The EU and US have decided on 13 February 2013 to initiate the internal procedures necessary to launch negotiations on a **Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership**, based on the recommendations of the High Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth. In terms of size, the EU-US trade relationship is the biggest in the world, with around €2 billion of goods and services traded every day between the European Union and the United States. The EU and the US economies account together for about half the entire world GDP and for nearly a third of world trade flows. **Mandate to open trade negotiations with Japan** - On 29 November 2012, the EU Member States mandated the Commission to open free trade negotiations with Japan.

An FTA could increase the EU's GDP by almost one percentage point and boost EU exports to Japan by one third. 400,000 additional jobs are expected as a result of this deal - in the EU alone. The Commission is fully aware of concerns among certain Member States, notably related to non-tariff barriers in Japan. This is exactly why the Commission agreed with Japan— even before potential negotiations started - that Europe can 'pull the plug' on negotiations after one year if Japan does not show evidence of removing certain non-tariff barriers in that 12 month period.

Japan is the EU's second biggest trading partner in Asia, after China. Together the EU and Japan account for more than a third of world GDP.

Southern Mediterranean (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia) - In December 2011 the Council adopted negotiating directives for Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTAs) with Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia, to "upgrade" the current trade agreements with these countries. The Council agreed on 29 November that the Commission could start negotiations with Morocco soon.

On-going negotiations

Canada - Negotiations for an EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) started in May 2009 and are now in their final stretch. EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht and Canadian Trade Minister Ed Fast met in Ottawa on 6-7 February 2013. Progress was made but there are still some important gaps to be bridged before an agreement is reached. Both sides' chief negotiators are expected to meet again in the coming weeks to prepare to the extent possible the way towards political conclusion. Canada is the EU's eleventh most important trading partner whereas the EU is Canada's second-largest trading partner, after the United States. The value of bilateral trade in goods between the EU and Canada was €52.5 billion in 2011. An economic study jointly released by the EU and Canada in October 2008 showed that a comprehensive trade agreement could increase two-way bilateral trade by another €25.7 billion.

In the ASEAN region, the EU is currently also negotiating a Free Trade Agreement with **Malaysia** (launched in May 2010) and **Vietnam** (launched in June 2012). The EU's door remains open to start negotiations with other partners in the region and hopes one day to complete these agreements with a region-to-regional trade agreement.

Eastern Neighbourhood – The EU is currently negotiating Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area as part of Association Agreements with Georgia, Armenia and Moldova.

India – Talks started in 2007. Substantive progress was achieved so far and there is a renewed momentum recently with the contours of a deal emerging. Now both sides need to go the final mile to put the package together.

Mercosur - After more than two years of technical work, the EU estimates that it is now time to proceed to the exchange of market access offers if we want to give a renewed impetus to this negotiation with the objective of concluding a balanced and ambitious trade agreement.

Gulf Cooperation Council - Negotiations for a free trade agreement were suspended by the Gulf Cooperation Council in 2008. Informal contacts between negotiators continue to take place.

African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) – Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) are trade and development partnerships between the EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP), based on the Cotonou Agreement (2000). EPA negotiations started in 2002 and have now been concluded with three regions, which have initialed (and then signed and ratified) an agreement: the Caribbean (CARIFORUM), the Pacific (only country currently involved: Papua New Guinea), and Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA - Zimbabwe, Mauritius, Madagascar, Seychelles). Negotiations are entering a decisive phase in the SADC EPA Group. Progress is uneven in the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa.

The EU therefore has 9 trade negotiations under way and several more trade and development negotiations (EPAs) on going.
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Free Trade Agreements finished but not yet entered into force

Singapore – The negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the European Union and Singapore have been concluded on 16 December 2012. This agreement is the EU's second ambitious agreement with a key Asian trading partner, after the EU-Korea FTA, and the first with a member of the 10-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Once fully implemented, the deal will open up markets on both sides in a number of sectors, including banking, insurance and other financial services industries. Both the EU and Singapore will now seek endorsement from their respective political authorities and envisage initialing the draft agreement in spring 2013. Singapore is the EU's largest trading partner in South-East Asia. EU-Singapore trade in goods and services each grew by roughly 40% between 2009 and 2011

Peru and Colombia – The European Parliament gave its consent on the trade Agreement with Peru and Colombia on 11 December 2012. It's expected that, once fully implemented, the deal will result in total tariff saving of more than €500mio per year. On the EU side the procedure allowing for a provisional application of the agreement could be finalised by January 2013. The European Parliament is scheduled to vote on the agreement during its plenary session in December 2012. The EU is the second largest trading partner of the Andean region after the US. Trade with the EU was worth 14.3% of the total trade of the Andean Community in 2010.

Central America (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama) - The Association Agreement between the European Union and Central America has been adopted by the European Parliament on 11 December 2012. Once ratified, this agreement will open up markets on both sides; help establish a stable business and investment environment. The Agreement is also meant to reinforce regional economic integration in Central America. In 2010, bilateral trade in goods between Central America and the European Union was worth €12 billion. Adoption by the parliament of its position on the Association is expected by the end of 2012. In parallel, Central America partners have to ratify the Agreement, they are likely to do so in March 2013.

Ukraine – The EU and Ukraine have concluded the negotiations for a deep and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) in December 2011. The next step will be the signature of the Agreement by the Council, once the political conditions are met.

There are also 5 Economic Partnership Agreements with **African, Caribbean and Pacific States** that have been negotiated but they have not yet entered into force. These are Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Southern African Development Community, Ghana and Eastern African Community.

The EU has finished negotiating 9 trade agreements that have yet to enter into force
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Free Trade Agreements already in force

South Korea, in force since 1 July 2011 - This agreement is the first of a new generation of free trade agreements that went further than ever before at lifting trade barriers and making it easier for European

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and Korean companies to do business together. As the FTA has lowered import tariffs for European products at the Korean border, it's estimated that EU firms have already made cash savings of €350 million in duties after just 9 months – from boost in sales of European wine to high-quality fashion products.

Mexico - Since the entry into force in October 2000 of this comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, total bilateral trade has doubled, passing from €21.7 billion in 2000 to €40.1 billion in 2011. At his recent visit to Mexico in November 2012, EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht called for an upgrade of the current FTA.

South Africa - South Africa is the EU's largest trading partner in Africa. The Trade, Development and Co-operation Agreement, in force since 2000, has established a free trade area that covers 90% of bilateral trade between the EU and South Africa. The liberalisation schedules were completed by 2012.

Chile - The EU and Chile concluded an Association Agreement in 2002, which included a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement that entered into force in February 2003. The EU-Chile Free Trade Agreement is broad and comprehensive and covers all the areas of EU-Chile trade relations. EU is Chile's second largest source of imports, after the USA. The EU is also Chile's third largest export market, after the recent rise of China as an important export market for the EU.

On top of these "classic" free trade deals, Free Trade Agreements are a core component of many Association Agreements as well as Customs Unions (Andorra, San Marino, Turkey). Hence the EU also has free trade deals in force with a number of countries in Europe (Faroe Islands, Norway, Iceland, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Croatia, Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia) and the Southern Mediterranean (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia) and 3 with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (Caribbean, Pacific and Eastern and Southern Africa).

The EU therefore has 28 trade agreements already in force. This does not include Syria as the trade provisions are not applied.
