

**International Conference on
India and EU in the Indo-Pacific: Strategies, Opportunities and Challenges**

Jointly Organised by

**Manipal Centre for European Studies, *Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence*
and Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, Department of Geopolitics and International Relations, MAHE
Manipal
in association with
Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) India**

3-4 November 2023

Throughout history, oceanic/maritime regions have emerged as areas that shape regional and global dynamics along with the already existing political and security architecture. The dynamics we witness in these regions today resemble the history. The challenges that the nations encounter, and those which occur and emanate from the **Indo-Pacific region**, underline the emergence of a new theatre for geopolitical competition. The Indo-Pacific region has solidified its presence in the global political discourse through multilateral and minilateral initiatives, security arrangements and strategic partnerships. It has, simultaneously emerged as a **zone for—contestations, conflicts, and cooperation**.

Juxtaposed to dominant literature, the dynamics and the evolving strategic environment of the Indo-Pacific region has always played a crucial role in formulating India's foreign policy. As a result, India outlines the **importance of partnerships with middle powers and small island nations** in order to increase its presence in the region. For instance, India has extended its collaboration with the European Union (EU) in the Indo-Pacific region.

Before the adoption of the **EU's Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific** in 2021, New Delhi's collaboration was restricted to only France and the UK. Since the EU is India's third-largest trading partner with an estimated €87.9 billion in goods trade (2021), and the second-largest market for Indian exports accounting for 10 percent of total Indian exports, the cooperation is key to India's geoeconomic vision. The EU is also an important investor in India with almost €76 billion in foreign direct investments (FDI) and about 6,000 companies, providing almost 2 million jobs, operating across various sectors in the country. However, both Brussels and New Delhi are now making efforts to expand their trade dominated relations to include geopolitical, geoeconomic and strategic interests which includes the Indo-Pacific.

Whilst the Indo-Pacific region provides both actors with a theatre of opportunities to leverage their strategic partnership in addressing the new strategic environment, it also come with numerous challenges. In this context, the region becomes essential for addressing **global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity conservation, and health resilience**.

The **two-day international conference** intends to raise, discuss, and deliberate upon India and the EU's strategic vision, opportunities, and challenges for improving regional cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

