

The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) Project

With its Indo-Pacific Strategy, France supports the development of transport and connectivity infrastructures in the region. It has signed the IMEC Memorandum of Understanding, with plans to connect India with Europe, with a point of entry at the Port of Marseille. Since the creation of the IMEC in the margins of the New Delhi G20 in September 2023, the development of this Corridor has built on the vitality of France and India's strategic bilateral partnership. Beyond its economic and environmental ambitions, the IMEC has positioned itself as a major geographic lever, offering a strategic alternative to existing routes and bolstering stability and cooperation between the countries involved in a complex international environment.

A far-reaching strategic project

The IMEC aims to redefine trade routes connecting Asia with Europe by creating a new logistical India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor ensuring the interconnection of these areas, via maritime routes and railways, via the Arabic Peninsula. Against a backdrop marked by growing international competition and tougher climate goals, the IMEC has a dual aim: i) to bolster regional integration of economic players in these regions, by paving the way for new economic opportunities; and ii) to accelerate decarbonization of these trade routes to better tackle future strategic and economic challenges.

Over the long term, the IMEC aims to diversify existing trade routes between India, the Middle East and Europe, with the aim of strengthening resilience by ensuring redundant supply chains. The route provides for several points of interconnection in India, the Middle East, in addition to the Suez Canal, and in the Mediterranean. France is also exploring the feasibility of alternative connections, in addition to the initial route between India and the Arabic Peninsula. It encourages the other IMEC signatories to look at this Corridor as an inclusive connectivity network whose benefits will help irrigate the hinterlands of several countries.

A project of national interest

France actively supports this project in concrete terms via various cooperation formats. It named a Special Envoy for the IMEC in November 2023, reflecting its high-level implication and engagement. The Special Envoy for IMEC aims to coordinate the efforts of various French players involved in the project and to take negotiations forward with the signatories of the MoU and the other partner countries. Making the most of French industrial expertise in the development phase of this Corridor will make the IMEC a project of national interest aiming to increase France's economic footprint in the areas concerned, while promoting connectivity, sustainable growth pathways and access to clean energy. It is a strategic project for Marseille and will strengthen its position as an important logistical, maritime and digital hub.

The IMEC is a lever for the diversification of strategic supply chains: it is expected to bolster economic and energy security of the areas concerned. It generates trade opportunities for companies in logistics sectors (operators of port and airport facilities and railway and road networks) and energy and digital sectors. This project should also help develop strategic partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region.

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