

# S'pore draws \$11.8b in fixed asset investments in 2021

## Projects secured set to create over 17,000 jobs over next 5 years, with 70% for PMETs

**Choo Yun Ting**  
Business Correspondent

Singapore attracted \$11.8 billion in fixed asset investments last year, bolstered by large manufacturing projects from semiconductor and biotech firms despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The projects secured last year are expected to create 17,376 new jobs over the next five years, with about 70 per cent of these for PMETs (professionals, managers, executives and technicians).

A majority of these jobs are expected to be taken up by locals.

Investments from semiconductor and biotech companies accounted for over half the commitments secured, which exceeded the Singapore Economic Develop-

ment Board's (EDB) medium- to long-term yearly target of between \$8 billion and \$10 billion.

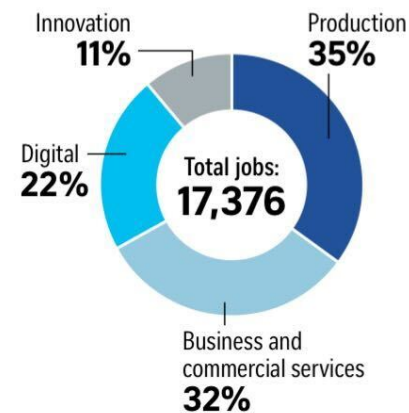
New investments were also seen across sectors such as agri-food, chemicals and materials, as well as electronics, the EDB said during its annual year-in-review briefing, which was held virtually yesterday.

EDB chairman Beh Swan Gin said that Singapore drew strong investment commitment numbers last year which are in line with its targets despite disruptions brought on by the pandemic.

"I think this really reaffirms Singapore's standing as the preferred location in Asia for companies to site their regional headquarters and global headquarter activities. It also speaks to our role as a critical node of... global supply chains of major industries," said Dr Beh.

The amount of investments

### Expected jobs from 2021 investments



Source: EDB STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

drawn last year was lower than in 2020, when Singapore attracted a 12-year high of \$17.2 billion in fixed asset investments, driven by large capital investments from the electronics and chemicals sectors.

The numbers in 2020 were

"quite exceptional and we did not expect to repeat that in 2021", added Dr Beh.

EDB managing director Jacqueline Poh, who took on the post last October, noted that Singapore saw a number of large investments by semiconductor firms last year to meet the heightened demand from the global chip shortage.

Singapore continues to see good interest from semiconductor companies for new investments or expanded operations, Dr Beh said. The biotech and medtech sectors, digital economy and green economy are other areas where the country expects to see strong investments.

Growth in the digital economy contributed significantly to total business expenditure (TBE) commitments last year.

The Republic drew \$5.2 billion in TBE per annum last year, lower than the \$6.8 billion TBE per year garnered in 2020 but still within EDB's medium- to long-term target of \$5 billion to \$7 billion.

When fully implemented, the commitments secured last year are expected to create 17,376 jobs in the coming years, with a projected contribution of \$16.8 billion in value-added per annum.

Value-added refers to the direct contribution made by a company to Singapore's gross domestic product. EDB's medium- to long-term target is between \$12 billion and \$14 billion of expected value-added per annum.

The job creation figure of 17,376 last year is within EDB's aim of 16,000 to 18,000.

New job opportunities generated include roles such as cyber-security specialists, automation engineers and process technicians. About 35 per cent of the jobs created are production roles, 32 per cent in business and commercial services, 22 per cent in digital roles and the remaining 11 per cent in innovation.

Ms Poh acknowledged that the global economic climate remains uncertain this year, and global competition for investments will remain intense.

But Asia will continue to be the fastest growing source of final demand for the next 10 years and be a major driver for global growth.

As connectivity improves, Singapore expects to continue securing growth on account of its reputation, tech ecosystem and growing talent pool, she added.

yuntingc@sph.com.sg

SEE THE BIG STORY • A6&7