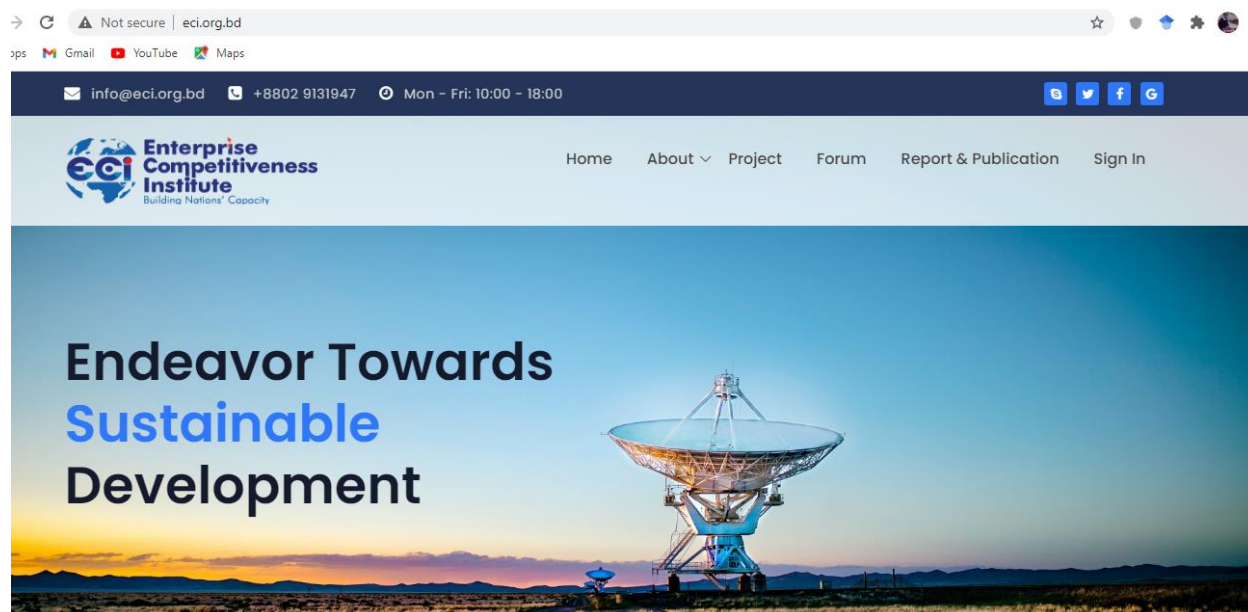




ECI Newsletter (Issue 2; April 15 to May 10, 2021)

~ a publication of ECI



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Editorial

Observing the present scenario of the pandemic nCOVID 19, and the great expansion of emerging technology at pre COVID and possible development after post COVID, the Enterprise Competitiveness Institute (ECI) thinks business, trade, investment- these inevitable issues will remain one of the prime focuses. We have already circulated the maiden issue of the newsletter. To do this, we have excerpted the information from different sources, especially from newspapers and we will deliver the newsletter in a bi-monthly fashion. During this month, we have arranged an important webinar on Intellectual Property Rights issue (*Webinar on General Concept of Intellectual Property (IP) and The Importance IP for the University*) and we have also planned to arrange an international symposium focusing on regional integration. The team ECI comprises very few energetic and dedicated members who have underscores this holistic initiatives.

We also invite and appreciate your constructive opinion and guidelines so that we can improve, gradually. To encourage this effort, you are kindly requested share your opinion with us and please visit the website (www.eci.org.bd) and send your opinion: info@eci.org.bd

TEAM ECI

~ **Mr. Nafees imtiaz Islam**

Deputy Director, IQAC, DIU

~ **Mr. Kamanashis Kundu**

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NATIONAL

Chittagong port turns 134

- The history of Chittagong Port, one of the oldest natural ports in the subcontinent, dates back to the 4th century BC, the area was called 'Shetgang' where Arab, Chinese, European and Turkish traders settled.
- "Chittagong sea port obtained 58th position among the ports of the world regarding the handling of containers.

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'FY'22 budget focus should be on higher spending'

- The upcoming budget should contain effective measures to deal with the pandemic fallouts.
- The present rate of vaccinations will take at least 10 years to cover all its population.
- If we target to collect revenue in the next fiscal at a rate of 45 per cent higher than the one ;set for the current fiscal, it will never be achievable.

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68pc of businesses yet to receive any stimulus: SANEM

- Insufficient allocation, lengthy procedure, difficulty in bank-related services, and lack of information about the procedure left 68 per cent of businesses unable to avail the government's stimulus package.

- The central bank and monetary institutions must formulate strict guidelines for the banking sector to ensure that loans are disbursed to small and micro-enterprises.

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Inward remittance flow witnesses 39pc growth in 10 months

- Expatriate Bangladeshis sent US \$20,672 million remittances
- Expatriate Bangladeshis sent \$2,067 million remittances in April of the current fiscal 2020-21, which was \$1,093 million (remittances) during the month of April in 2019-20 financial year

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Attracting FDI more crucial than ever:experts

- Bangladesh needs to amend tax rules, simplify business procedures and ensure facilities for international investors to attract foreign direct investment.
- Syed Nasim Manzur, managing director of Apex Footwear, alleged that the local tax system was not business-friendly, making it a significant obstacle to transforming Bangladesh into a manufacturing country.
- Nihad Kabir, president of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said: "If we want to bring FDI, we have to cooperate with the Bida and the country's businessmen. That way, both sides will be able to identify weaknesses to attract FDIs."

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Incentive spending on remittance may go up

- The government now plans to set aside Tk 4,000 crore for the next fiscal year to help the economy absorb the shock stemming from the coronavirus pandemic.
- Remittance inflow surged 89 per cent year-on-year to \$2.06 billion in April as the migrant workers transferred a whopping amount of funds ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr.

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Banks can form start-up fund with 1.0pc of their net profits

- Currently, the number of startups is more than 1,000 and is estimated to grow multifold in tandem with the digital ecosystem, according to a LightCastle Partners report.
- To provide start-up entrepreneurs with loans, all the scheduled banks have been asked to keep 1.0 per cent of their net profits for the next five years from 2021.
- Under the existing provisions, entrepreneurs aged between minimum 21 years and maximum 45 years will be eligible to get a loan of maximum Tk 10 million from the fund with the highest interest rate at 4.0 percent.

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Covid-19 turns 24.5m people new poor: Survey

- As many as 24.5 million (2 crore 45 lakh) people have newly become poor due to the Covid-19 pandemic, a latest survey has revealed.
- Till March this year, some 59 per cent of new poor people live in the city while 44 per cent of new poor people live in the villages.

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Progress in business climate laudable, but further improvement needed

- According to a Jetro survey of 876 respondents in 2020, some 36.6 percent of the Japanese companies in China are going to expand their business in the next one to two years.
- The procurement of funds in Bangladesh is another challenge. Foreign companies face difficulties in procuring funds in Bangladesh, and the only way is to inject capital from the parent company. Under the circumstances, business expansion is hard to make. In this connection, working capital loans from the parent company should be more relaxed.

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Japanese firms want to expand despite pandemic: survey

- The pandemic is showing no signs of abating but still 41.8 percent of Japanese companies in Bangladesh during 2020 wanted to expand business in the next two years.
- According to the Jetro report, 9 percent of the companies in Bangladesh have already recovered from the pandemic's effects, 31.3 percent expect to return to normalcy in the first half of 2021 and 34.3 per cent in the second half.

- For 2020, 16 percent expect an increase in operating profit over 2019, down 17.1 percentage points from 33.1 per cent in 2019.

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E-trading for middle class

- Being operated by the e-Commerce Association of Bangladesh (e-CAB) Digital agent, the TCB products are sold to the middle class families through eight organisations at fair prices.
- The sale of food products like rice at 'lower' price on truck-based Open Market Sale (OMS) through TCB has been a decades-old operation.

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New LPG price does satisfy none

- The BERC has fixed the price of a 12kg cylinder marketed by LP Gas Limited, a state entity, at Tk 591. But the price of the same has been fixed at Tk 975 marketed by private companies.
- The attention of the government and the energy regulator is now mainly concentrated on natural gas and petroleum products.

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WB to provide \$250 m as loan to help create jobs

- The total World Bank financing under the Programmatic Jobs Development Policy Credit series stands at \$750 million.
- The World Bank will provide US\$250 million as loan to help Bangladesh create more and better jobs, recover faster from the Covid-19 pandemic, and build resilience to future crises.
- "The Covid-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on the poor and vulnerable population," said Mercy Tembon, the statement said, quoting the WB Country Director.
-
- Bangladesh currently has the largest ongoing IDA programme totalling over \$14 billion.

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South Korea suspends visas for Bangladeshis

- South Korea has imposed suspension on visas for Bangladeshi nationals as the number of Covid-19 positive cases are increasing among the passengers from the country.

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Time to focus on collective mobilisation of Zakat

- Being an obligatory duty to all Muslims who are well-off physically, mentally and wealthily, it requires proper calculation to determine the payable amount of Zakat.
- It is important to note that Zakat is not a state tax. Tax paid by any Zakat payer is included in his or her annual spending.

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Making the most of Export Development Fund

- The Export Development Fund is a pre-shipment incentive aimed at preparing, facilitating and supporting exporters to penetrate the global market.
- Exporters of the manufacturing sector can now avail loans at 1.75 per cent instead of the previous rate of 2.0 per cent, according to a central bank notice. Banks which are the operatives of the fund will receive the fund from the Bangladesh Bank at 0.75 percent interest rate and will be allowed to charge a maximum of 1.75 per cent in interest from borrowers.

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Why container freight rates have surged

- Shipping rates are a major component of trade costs, so the new hike poses an additional challenge to the world economy as it struggles to recover from the worst global crisis since the Great Depression.
- The increase in demand was stronger than expected and not met with a sufficient supply of shipping capacity," the UNCTAD policy brief says, adding that the subsequent shortage of empty containers "is unprecedented.

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16m become new poor in Bangladesh

- Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director of Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), presented the key findings of the study at a virtual dialogue jointly organised by the CPD and Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS).
- Over 3 percent of the labour force lost jobs while 16.38 million people became newly poor amid the pandemic, according to a new study.
- The urban informal sector has lost about 1.08 million jobs, which was over 8 percent of total urban employment at the level of 2016-17 fiscal.
- Many of the workers in the informal sectors that generate 87 percent of the employment did not get the financial aid of the stimulus funds.

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Education should be skill-oriented

- Universities should mainly focus on teaching, research and entrepreneurship development.
- The country's graduates are struggling to secure jobs as the conventional education system lacks skill-orientation in line with industry demands.

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Woes of the migrant workers

- One of the sectors hit hardest by the pandemic is the migrant workers' sector.
- The pandemic-compelled lockdown has caused job opportunities to shrink, adding to the number of unemployed and pushing more people below the poverty line.

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Expatriate income, reserves increase to Bill 45 billion

- In the outgoing April, the expatriates sent a total of 206 crore dollars. In the first two days of May, the income came to 15 crore 40 lakh dollars.
- By international standards, a country must have at least three months' worth of foreign exchange reserves to cover import costs.

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Extended lockdown impacts rice harvesting in Bangladesh

- Bangladesh reeled from a new wave of infections that has forced the country into an extended lockdown until 5 May, hampering rice harvesting due to a shortage of labour.
- India's five per cent broken parboiled variety fell to \$374-\$379 per tonne, from last week's \$386-\$390. Vietnam's five per cent broken rice narrowed to \$485-\$490 per tonne on Thursday, the lowest since 10 December, from last week's \$485-\$495.

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RMG workers entangled in debt, says study

- Due to the coronavirus outbreak in 2020, around 35 per cent of workers in the readymade garment sector saw a wage cut.

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Seize the hour on the vaccine front

- Bangladesh's primary choice had been the Oxford-AstraZeneca, produced by the Serum Institute of India. So far 10.3 million doses have come from India, a part of it as a gift from the government of that country. The news that the health ministry has an agreement almost ready for import or local production of the Sputnik-V vaccine is heartening.
- The government deserves recognition for the first steps it took to combat the virus with timely import and for making it available to the people at no cost.

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Business confidence hits rock bottom: survey

- Business confidence in Bangladesh plunged to 41.39 points for the April to June quarter, the lowest level in a year, as an alarming surge in coronavirus infections has deepened uncertainty and threatened the economic recovery, according to a new survey.
- About 68 per cent of the surveyed firms are yet to receive any stimulus package. Like in the previous three rounds of the survey, the major areas of challenges include a lack of stimulus package, lengthy procedure and difficulty in bank-related services. No major improvements were observed in these indicators.

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Drawing increased support from foreign investors

- The country saw net inflows of foreign direct investment amounting to \$2.88 billion in 2019, down about 20 per cent from a year earlier, according to Bangladesh Bank statistics.
- Although Bangladesh advanced eight notches to 168th out of 190 countries in this year's ranking, the progress is not good enough to win the confidence of foreign businesses.

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Improve ease of doing business

- "Investors always want to know the ranking before making any investment and in that context we need to improve in the ranking," said Md Billal Hossain, additional secretary to BIDA.

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Macroeconomic stance, revenue mobilization for FY22 budget

- Despite reeling from the shocks of the Covid-19 pandemic, total revenue collection posted a respectable growth of 8.6 per cent during the July-December period of FY21, thanks to a whopping 40.2 per cent growth in non-tax revenue earnings.

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Budget FY22: Deficit financing and public spending

- During the current fiscal year (FY21), the government has raised the allocation for the health sector. The budget deficit was financed mainly by domestic borrowing, although foreign borrowing also exhibited a considerable increase during July-December of FY21.
- Social safety net programmes targeting the poor, new poor, marginalised people and people with limited income which were implemented during the first lockdown in March-May, 2020 and the following periods, have played an important role in mitigating people's sufferings.

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Bangladeshi researchers named in Asian Scientist 100 list

- Asian Scientist, a Singapore-based English language science and technology magazine published the list to celebrate the success of the region's "best and brightest, highlighting their achievements across a range of scientific disciplines".
- Three researcher who achieved the award are Dr Firdausi Qadri of icddr,b, Dr Salma Sultana of Model Livestock Advancement Foundation in Bangladesh and Prof Samia Subrina of Bangladesh University Engineering and Technology
- Every year since 2016, Asian Scientist Magazine compiles a list of Asia's most outstanding researchers.

Read more....

Accessibility to the Covid-19 vaccine under the intellectual property regime

- This obligation to disclose information about newly invented technologies balances the exclusive right granted to the patent holder of an invention. In addition, other inventors can solve new technological problems based on such published information.
- The patent owner can voluntarily transfer the exclusive patent right to another through a voluntary licence agreement.
- If any other country produces the Covid-19 vaccine through compulsory licence and Bangladesh can import it, then the vaccine will be easily available in Bangladesh.

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INTERNATIONAL

Regional cooperation can bolster South Asia's ability to fight pandemic

- According to WHO, the virus has infected over 135.65 million people worldwide and 2.93 million deaths, as of 31 March, forcing governments to declare lockdowns to control the infections.
- The ICCB notes that South Asia's intra-regional trade accounts for barely 5.0 per cent of total trade, compared to the ASEAN region where intra-regional trade makes up 25 per cent.

Read more....

Bangladesh shuts borders with India for 14 days

- Bangladesh has decided to close its border with India for any kind of movement except that of cargoes for the next 14 days to control the spread of the deadly Coronavirus.

Read more....

What Covid-19 means for SDGs in Bangladesh

- SDG-3 has the highest level of updated indicators available to monitor the progress of Bangladesh against the targets whether on-track or off-track.
- SDG-7 has been affected especially in the case of renewable energy due to lockdown.
- The crisis has highlighted the urgency of more sustainable means of production and consumption (SDG 12).

Read more....

Resilient economies are possible

- Economic and non-economic shocks such as financial crises, natural disasters, and pandemics leave behind permanent scars in economies and societies and result in major setbacks to development gains.
- Building on our ongoing research towards 'thinking beyond GDP growth,' this issue is examined in the ESCAP Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2021 and yields several insights.

- The Covid-19 pandemic is the largest shock in recent history and another wake-up call for policymakers to invest in enhancing resilience against systemic shocks.
- Understandably, implementing this policy package has implications for fiscal positions and debt levels, which are significant for the least developed countries.
- The contours of a bright future are already visible in the camaraderie exhibited while adjusting to the pandemic.

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Global economy to stage vigorous recovery, jobs growth to lag

- The global economy will recover this year from its coronavirus slump at a pace not seen since the 1970s as strong momentum builds in most major economies, according to Reuters polls of over 500 economists.
- Growth rates are still set to be fairly erratic on a quarterly basis and vary enormously between economies and within them.
- The European Central Bank or the Federal Reserve were not expected to start winding down their asset purchases programme this year.

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Recovery through regional cooperation (*A Covid-19 response in South-East Asia*)

- A South-East Asia breakout session held in tandem with the launch deepened this discussion in a sub-regional context, providing a virtual space for distinguished speakers from different areas to discuss issues on the Covid-19 recovery in the region.
- Navigating the region towards the post-Covid-19 era, ASEAN could strengthen its role as the central regional platform for cross-sectoral discussions and concerted actions.

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1 in 2 people globally lost income: Gallup

- One in two people worldwide saw their earnings drop due to the coronavirus, with people in low-income countries particularly hard hit by job losses or cuts to their working hours, research showed.
- The Gallup poll found that more than half of those surveyed said they temporarily stopped working at their job or business - translating to about 1.7 billion adults globally.

- Countries where people were least likely to say they stopped working were predominantly developed, high-income countries.

[Read more....](#)

Big businesses seek market-based approaches ahead of climate summit

- Key to that effort will be pledging to cut US emissions by at least half by 2030, as well as securing agreements from allies to do the same.
- Private investors have increasingly been supportive of ambitious climate action, pouring record amounts of cash into funds that pick investments using environmental and social criteria.
- Labor groups like the AFL-CIO, the largest federation of US labor unions, meanwhile, back steps to protect US jobs like taxing goods made in countries that have less onerous emissions regulations.

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Curbing Covid-19: Is lockdown an option for developing countries?

- To suppress the growth of infection, initially, a week-long lockdown was announced from April 5 in Bangladesh. Then, the government imposed a "strict" lockdown from April 14 which has been later extended by two more weeks.
- One of the biggest challenges for developing countries is that a significant part of the labour force work in the informal sector, and a great number of them are migrant workers-migrating from rural areas to urban areas temporarily just for earning opportunity.
- The distributional impact of the lockdown is that the high-income people who are working from home are getting better off at the expense of poor people.
- While lockdown may suppress infection of Covid, it has many unintended consequences even for the health and health sector.
- It is not just that practical realities that make the lockdown less effective for developing countries, the true and long-term benefit of lockdown is not evident in the literature.

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ECI ACTIVITIES THIS MONTH

Webinar on General Concept of Intellectual Property (IP) and The Importance IP for the University



On May 6, 2021, HRDI organized jointly with Enterprise Competitiveness Institute (ECI) the Webinar on “General Concept of Intellectual Property (IP) and The Importance IP for the University” (at virtual platform: Google Meet). The event aimed to discuss Intellectual Property (IP) and Audit Check-list. The facilitator of the programme was Dr. Kudrat-E-Khuda (Babu) Associate Professor & Head Department of Law Daffodil International University and Mr. Nafees Imtiaz Islam, Daputy Director, Institutional Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), Daffodil International University and Enterprise Competitiveness Institute (ECI) has moderated the programme.

Dr. Kudrat-E-Khuda has presented all related issues on the importance of Intellectual Property Rights for academicians and how the academicians can be benefitted to practice IP related issues at their intellectual works. He has also stressed on citing examples of IPR in the ranking and accreditation of universities and its exposure or effect in globally accredited rankings like Times Higher Education (THE) and Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) rankings. The lead facilitator has also responded to several queries of the participants.

In his speech as a Chief Guest of the programme, Professor Dr. S.M. Mahbub Ul Haque Majumder, Honorable Vice Chancellor (Acting) and Pro-Vice Chancellor of Daffodil International University has appreciated the initiative taken by ECI and encouraged the academicians to look into the issue vigorously. At the end, Professor Dr. Engr. A. K. M. Fazlul Hoque, Registrar, Daffodil International University has also extended his thanks to the organizer of the session and the lead facilitator and also the participants. On behalf

of ECI, Mr. Nafees Imtiaz Islam has also extended his thanks to all for joining this important session.

Link of the programme:

[General Concept of Intellectual Property \(IP\) and The Importance IP for the University](#)

GLOBAL REPORTS

WORLD INVESTMENT REPORT 2020

International Production Beyond the Pandemic

This report looks at the prospects for foreign direct investment and international production during and beyond the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. It not only projects the immediate impact of the crisis on investment flows, but also assesses how it could affect a long-term structural transformation of international production. It reviews the evolution of international production networks over the past three decades and examines the configuration of these networks today. It then projects likely course changes for the next decade due to the combined effects of the pandemic and pre-existing megatrends, including the new industrial revolution, the sustainability imperative and the retreat of laissez faire policies.



Link of this report: **[WORLD INVESTMENT REPORT 2020](#)**

IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK ON GLOBAL FDI

The outbreak and spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19) will negatively affect global foreign direct investment (FDI) flows. With scenarios of the spread of the epidemic ranging from

short-term stabilization to continuation throughout the year, the downward pressure on FDI will be -5% to -15% (compared to previous forecasts projecting marginal growth in the FDI trend for 2020-2021).



Link of this report:

[IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK ON GLOBAL FDI](#)

INFOGRAPHIC



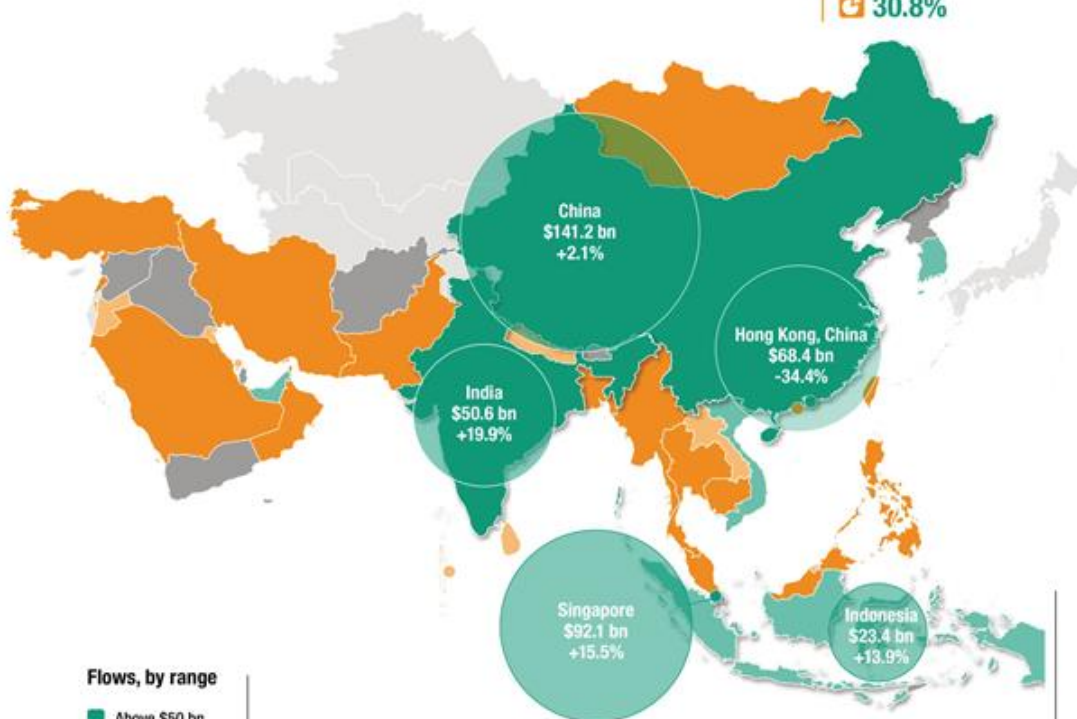
DEVELOPING ASIA

FDI flows, top 5 host economies, 2019 (Value and change)

2019 Inflows
\$ 473.9 bn

2019 Decrease
-4.9%

Share in world
30.8%



Flows, by range



Top 5 host economies

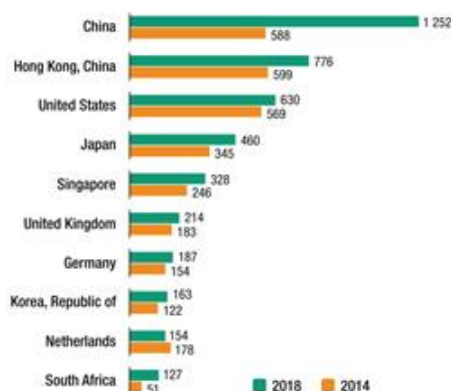


Outflows: top 5 home economies

(Billions of dollars and 2019 growth)



Figure A. Top 10 investor economies by FDI stock, 2014 and 2018 (Billions of dollars)



Source: UNCTAD.

Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Severe impact of pandemic, due to GVC-intensive profile
- In 2019, record FDI flows to China and South-East Asia
- Outflows in 2019 down for second consecutive year



Figure B. FDI inflows, 2013–2019
(Billions of dollars and per cent)



Figure C. FDI outflows, 2013–2019
(Billions of dollars and per cent)



Table A. Cross-border M&As by sector/industry, 2018–2019
(Millions of dollars)

Sector/industry	Sales		Purchases	
	2018	2019	2018	2019
Total	83 769	48 819	89 256	42 961
Primary	3 670	1 107	4 640	5 437
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	95	716	-1 698	-2 218
Manufacturing	13 584	19 828	12 563	-3 878
Basic metal and metal products	321	9 491	850	-188
Chemicals and chemical products	2 099	2 030	4 093	4 041
Pharmaceuticals, medicinal chemicals and botanical products	240	1 042	560	-222
Services	66 515	27 884	72 053	41 402
Transportation and storage	7 937	8 896	9 701	-1 418
Financial and insurance activities	1 256	7 834	54 827	46 725
Human health and social work activities	2 515	3 749	-825	-1 924
Business services	16 133	3 476	2 588	-12 690
Information and communication	14 074	2 096	1 479	3 892

Table B. Cross-border M&As by region/economy, 2018–2019
(Millions of dollars)

Region/economy	Sales		Purchases	
	2018	2019	2018	2019
World	83 769	48 819	89 256	42 961
Developed economies	43 311	31 022	39 930	20 283
European Union	16 478	9 225	28 026	16 908
United States	20 668	10 884	1 380	-2 521
Japan	6 523	9 355	1 503	-756
Developing economies	38 308	19 554	48 208	22 132
Africa	191	271	1 739	-70
Latin America and the Caribbean	-715	-386	7 643	4 785
Asia	38 826	17 175	38 826	17 175
China	31 959	1 206	5 395	7 161
Hong Kong, China	6 658	9 501	13 618	-4 723
Thailand	236	4 450	-469	4 564
United Arab Emirates	374	2 357	1 382	-649

Table C. Announced greenfield FDI projects by sector/industry, 2018–2019
(Millions of dollars)

Sector/industry	Developing Asia as destination		Developing Asia as investor	
	2018	2019	2018	2019
Total	398 001	265 117	294 086	241 752
Primary	7 369	4 545	13 456	5 141
Mining and quarrying	6 475	4 132	12 178	4 442
Manufacturing	206 648	149 375	136 880	150 304
Coke and refined petroleum products	39 535	52 656	16 490	70 459
Chemicals and chemical products	40 418	16 686	31 023	9 778
Computer, electronic, optical products and electrical equipment	36 760	20 410	29 430	23 549
Motor vehicles and other transport equipment	38 733	24 099	14 792	15 659
Services	183 984	111 197	143 750	86 307
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	37 349	19 682	24 400	17 311
Construction	59 500	11 466	60 811	20 521
Accommodation and food service activities	22 482	25 706	16 559	15 436
Information and communication	16 885	14 373	10 674	8 017

Table D. Announced greenfield FDI projects by region/economy, 2018–2019
(Millions of dollars)

Partner region/economy	Developing Asia as destination		Developing Asia as investor	
	2018	2019	2018	2019
World	398 001	265 117	294 086	241 752
Developed economies	202 505	140 138	57 671	54 147
European Union	89 047	54 140	20 946	17 769
United States	60 240	48 989	24 695	30 405
Japan	37 029	23 732	3 597	1 425
Developing economies	182 566	120 678	218 829	164 825
China	34 242	13 304	40 476	21 808
Korea, Republic of	20 048	16 656	4 163	410
Indonesia	818	24 260	13 607	5 885
Saudi Arabia	506	15 840	2 914	5 457
Singapore	18 918	11 245	5 385	961
Viet Nam	482	70	14 730	17 613
Transition economies	12 931	4 302	17 587	22 781