



# Path of Prosperity? Exploring Chinese Investment Impacts on Kenyan Construction SMEs

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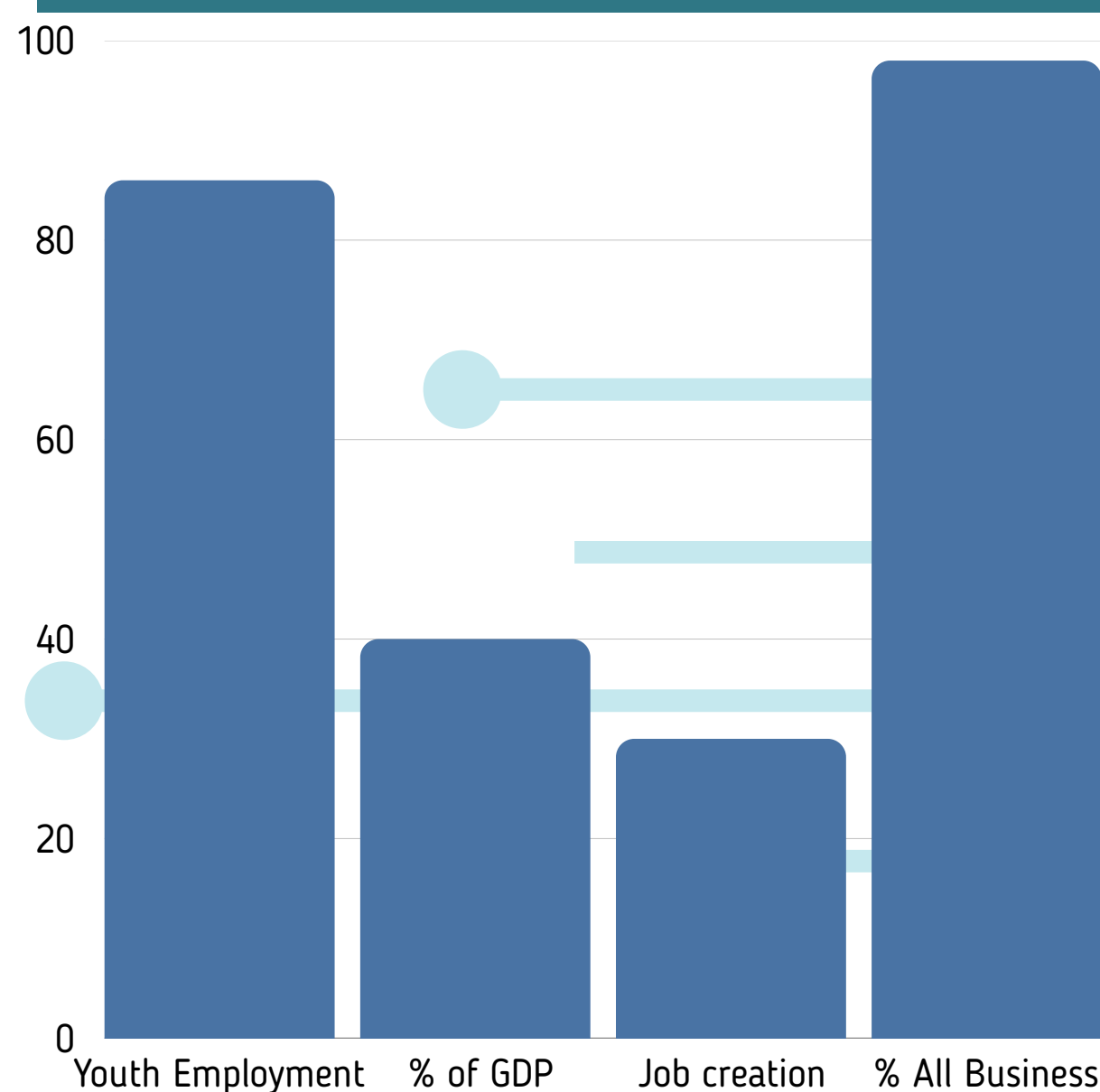


EIMAS  
EUROPEAN INTERDISCIPLINARY  
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Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree



Chinese big projects shape Kenya's future, but what about the 15M Jobs in Small-Medium-Enterprises (SMEs)?

## Macroeconomic Background



By 2030, construction  
SMEs will employ  
500,000+ young Kenyans

With \$1.78B in Chinese Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) sweeping through Kenya, can SMEs ride the wave of opportunity or risk being left behind?



Chinese FDI = \$1.78B (2022)  
Mainly in infrastructure projects:  
roads, railways, energy



Local Integration  
New skills, technology & market  
opportunities for construction SMEs

## Methods | Interviews

Interviewees

5  
INSTITUTIONS

20  
SME OWNERS

## Data Analysis

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“Initially, cultural differences led to misunderstandings, as we thought the Chinese were robots... no need to rest at all!” (Interview 11)

“The training programs have provided us with high-quality young Kenyan workers who can operate imported machinery and deliver complex projects efficiently.” (Interview 13)

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## Findings and Take-aways

- 🔧 SMEs gained technical know-how & management practices
- ⚡ Chinese project & safety protocols boosted efficiency
- 🚀 Engaging with Chinese projects ↑ revenue & adoption of new methods
- ⚠️ Competition, cultural gaps, financing hurdles remains challenging
- 🎓 Early engagement to ensure Chinese-led training for sustainable skills
- 🤝 Promote fair partnerships: transparent contracts & local content
- 💰 Encourage and enable innovative finance methods
- 🎯 Policy incentive for SMEs to adapt, specialise & leverage training