



## Xavier Sala-i-Martin

**The world's leading expert on competitiveness and director of the Global Competitiveness Index**

Xavier Sala i Martin is the J. and M. Grossman Professor of Economics at Columbia University in New York and the Chief Economic Advisor of the Center for Global Competitiveness and Performance at the World Economic Forum in Davos Switzerland.

## Xavier's biography

### Xavier Sala i Martin's background

- Constructed an estimate of the World Distribution of Income
- Founder of "Umbele: A FutHe is an international keynote conference speaker on globalisation, [finance and economic](#) developments. A respected economist, Xavier is also a consultant to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, a member of the Counseling Board of Telefonica Catalunya, and an associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research. As the chief economic advisor to the World Economic Forum, he is the author and intellectual father of the Global Competitiveness Index, published annually in the Global Competitiveness Report. The index ranks the competitiveness of all the countries in the world and recommends competitiveness strategies to their decision makers – governments and [business leaders](#) around the globe – who it to evaluate and design the future competitiveness policies of their countries. Prior to joining Columbia University, Xavier taught economics at Yale and was a research fellow at the Centre for European Policy Research (CEPR) in London. He studied economics in Spain before completing his education at Harvard University in the US. He has received numerous awards including the King Juan Carlos I prize (awarded by the Bank of Spain, to the best economist in Spain and Latin America), the Arrow Prize awarded by the International Health Economics Organization to the best Health Economist in the World, the Conde de Godó Prize awarded to the best op-ed published in a Spanish Newspaper, and the Lee Hixson and Lenfest Prizes, awarded to the best

With a career spanning both teaching at Columbia University (world economics) and Xavier is in the privileged position to be able to offer decision maker essential information crucial for companies wishing to do business in today's volatile markets.

Xavier puts across complex ideas in an easy to understand format. With a reputation for humorous and enlightening presentations, Xavier is in great demand as a conference speaker at leading financial events around the world. "Future for Africa," a non-profit organization that promotes economic development in Africa, as well as "CEOs Without Borders."

- Has been a professor at Yale University, Harvard University, and the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, as well as an Affiliated Professor at the Barcelona Graduate School of Economics
- President of the Economic Commission of the FC Barcelona

## Xavier's talks

- **The Barcelona Football Club**

- **Global competitiveness**

- **FC Barcelona: A Success Case. Four Business Lessons.**

The story of FC Barcelona depicts one of the most extreme, impressive and successful organizational transformations in sports history; after half a decade of economic and competitive drought, a new board of directors led by Joan Laporta took over the club in 2003.

Seven years later, the club had won four Spanish Leagues, two UEFA Champion Leagues, three Spanish Supercups, a European Supercup, a King's Cup, and a World Club Cup; by 2010 it was "the best sports club in the world" for second consecutive year, and had an accumulated economic surplus of over 131 million Euros.

In this powerful conference, Professor Sala-i-Martin explains how the most important and controversial decisions made by the club in the last few years -such as hiring Frank Rijkaard and Pep Guardiola, making a strong bet on the low-tier players, and the "crazy" decision to be the only club without a commercial sponsor on its shirt- turned out to be the right ones.

- **World economic growth**

- **Global Innovation Outlook**

The world is changing really fast. An underlying concern to world leaders and business executives is today's rapid changing business environment. Now –more than ever– we are called to relentlessly innovate.

Professor Sala-i-Martin led the intellectual revolution of "endogenous growth". It emphasizes the need to grow through ideas and innovation. As an expert in growth, he explains what countries (and companies) must do to establish an environment that enables citizens and businesses to create and implement new ideas.

Nespresso, Zara, and Uber prove that all kinds of businesses can thrive when new ideas are actually transformed into business opportunities. As he explains, only by implementing an innovative and creative mindset we will be able to cope with today's challenges. In order not to perish, keep questioning yourself: what have you done different today?

- **A Future for Africa**

- **A New World Order? How to Remain Competitive in Today's Economy**

A new world order? How to remain competitive in today's economy

Throughout history, there are many examples of countries that have implemented policies that enhance or hinder international trade. The spectacular economic success of China and the rest of East Asia is an example of how trade can be a driver of economic growth. It also exemplifies the dangers that the rise of protectionism and isolationist policies around the world, can pose to the global economy. Overall, international trade is beneficial and has spurred technological diffusion as well as the development of the knowledge-led economy and innovation. However, all policies have their shortcomings and so does international trade. Even though the overall effect on the economy is positive, not every citizen benefits from it. In fact, there are workers who lose their jobs. These "globalization losers" serve as a breeding ground for the rise of demagogic and populist politicians who use their discontent to propose policies that will have the opposite effect: they will benefit only a few at the detriment of the majority.

It's clear that governments should implement policies that help the "losers of globalization".

Contrary to popular belief, the key policy is not redistribution taxes and subsidies. The correct policy is to provide the tools so that the losing workers have an easy transition to a new job. And this means a new way to educate them: a new education system is required, to really ensure that today's students are prepared to deal with the challenges imposed by globalization and to be more competitive to face the changing future. Professor Sala-i-Martin thoroughly explains how the new education system should be.