

MATIAS VAIRA-LUCERO, PhD

Chief Economist | Economic Advisory Leader | Economic Modelling & Investment Appraisal Specialist

Professional Profile

Senior economist with more than 20 years of experience spanning sovereign wealth funds, government, economic development authorities and academia. Extensive expertise in economic modelling, Social Cost-Benefit Analysis (SCBA), economic impact assessment, Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) modelling, econometrics, urban projects and infrastructure appraisal, economic development and strategic advisory.

Career Highlights

- Established the first SCBA capability within PIF Real Estate Division.
- Established the first CGE modelling capability within PIF Real Estate Division.
- Led assessment of 20–30 major investment proposals supporting annual investment programs of approximately SAR 100 billion.
- Developed ECZA economic appraisal framework combining SCBA and CGE modelling.
- Led appraisal of four Special Economic Zones that had remained unapproved for almost a decade and were subsequently approved and operationalised.
- Built and mentored specialist economics teams in modelling, impact assessment and investment appraisal.

Professional Experience

Public Investment Fund (PIF), Saudi Arabia

Head of Economic Advisory & Insights / Senior Economic Advisor | 2024–2026

- Established and led the Economic Advisory & Insights function within the Real Estate and Local Real Estate Investment Division.
- Managed and developed a specialist economics team of four economists and analysts.
- Introduced the division's first Social Cost-Benefit Analysis framework.
- Established the first CGE modelling capability within the division.
- Led the review and assessment of approximately 20–30 major business plans and investment proposals.
- Provided economic advisory support to projects associated with annual investment programs of approximately SAR 100 billion.
- Produced executive-level economic intelligence, market outlooks and strategic analysis for senior leadership.

Economic Cities and Special Zones Authority (ECZA), Saudi Arabia

Chief Economist | 2021-2023

- Established and led the economics function supporting Saudi Arabia's Special Economic Zones programme.
- Designed and implemented ECZA's economic appraisal framework combining SCBA and CGE modelling.
- Led economic evaluation of four Special Economic Zones awaiting approval for almost ten years.
- Produced economic impact assessments covering GDP, employment, investment and productivity outcomes.
- Supported approvals by the Centre of Government, with all four zones subsequently commencing operations.

NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, Australia

Senior Economist | 2015-2021

- Started with the Data and Analysis Team specialising in labour economics.
- Transitioned to the Economic Modelling Team focusing on econometric and CGE modelling.
- Developed econometric models, economic analysis and policy assessments supporting government decision-making.
- Prepared advice and briefing material for senior executives and Ministers.

Education

PhD in Economics (labour Economics) – Macquarie University, Australia

Master in Economic Development – Malaga University, Spain

Bachelor (Honours) in Economics – National University of Cuyo, Argentina