Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas grew up in Montpellier, France. He attended Ecole Polytechnique then received his PhD in Economics in 1996 from MIT. He taught at Stanford Graduate School of Business and Princeton University before joining UC Berkeley department of economics.

Professor Gourinchas' main research interests are in international macroeconomics and finance. His recent research focuses on the scarcity of global safe assets, global imbalances and currency wars (with Ricardo Caballero and Emmanuel Farhi); on the International Monetary System and the role of the U.S. dollar (with Hélène Rey); on the Dominant Currency Paradigm (with Gita Gopinath); on the determinants of capital flows to and from developing countries (with Olivier Jeanne); on international portfolios (with Nicolas Coeurdacier); and on the global financial crisis (with Maury Obstfeld). Professor Gourinchas is the laureate of the 2007 Bernâcer Prize for best European economist working in macroeconomics and finance under the age of 40, and of the 2008 Prix du Meilleur Jeune Economiste for best French economist under the age of 40. In 2012-2013, Professor Gourinchas was a member of the French Council of Economic Advisors to the Prime Minister. From 2009 to 2016 he was the editor-in-chief of the IMF Economic Review. He is currently managing editor of the Journal of International Economics and co-director of the NBER's International Finance and Macroeconomics Program.