



## ***Dr Peter Varela***

### **Qualifications**

PhD in Economics, Australian National University, 2017  
 Bachelor of Economics (Hons), Australian National University, 2009  
 Bachelor of Actuarial Studies, Australian National University, 2008

### **Contact**

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I am an Australian economist with experience working at the intersection of the public, private and academic sectors. I am comfortable working on all aspects of economic research projects, including technical analysis, drafting in both technical and non-technical language, communication strategies and project management.

My main strength is my ability to place empirical analysis within a normative policy framework.

My current research focus is on the economics of migration and on the joint tax filing behaviour of couples. However, as shown by the projects listed below, I enjoy working on a wide range of topics.

### ***Professional employment history***

- Visiting Researcher at Columbia University (2022 to present)
- Australian Treasury - Tax Analysis Division (2019 to 2022)
- The Centre for International Economics (2017 to 2019)
- PhD scholar at the ANU (2014-2017)
- Research Fellow at the Tax and Transfer Policy Institute (2014 to present in various part-time and full-time roles)
- Research Economist at the Productivity Commission (2010 – 2014)

### ***Awards, and Scholarships***

- 2016 — Recipient of an Endeavour Scholarship to visit the Office of Tax Policy Research at the University of Michigan
- 2015 — Visiting Researcher at the Melbourne Institute for Social and Economic Policy Research
- 2009 — Awarded the Economic Society Prize for Economics IV (Honours) for the highest mark in economics honours in 2009
- 2009 — Awarded the Bob Gregory Honours Scholarship
- 2008 — Awarded a Summer Research Scholarship at the University of South Australia
- 2007 — Awarded the Undergraduate Prize in Agricultural and Resource Economics

### ***Referee***

Professor Robert Breunig

- Director of the Tax and Transfer Policy Institute
- (612) 6125 2148
- Email: robert.breunig@anu.edu.au

Selected research Projects		
Institution	Title	Description and year
Columbia University	Predicting the economic outcomes of migrants	2023 - Running regressions in MADIP to understand the key factors that predict economic success amongst migrants.
	Household tax filing behaviour of couples	2023 - Using the ALIFE household links file to understand how filing behaviour changes when couples are formed.
Treasury	The lifetime fiscal impact of the Australian permanent migration program	2022 - This project builds a large demographic model to predict how migrant contribute to taxes and government services over the long term. Working paper available <a href="#">here</a> ,
	Distributional incidence of GST exemptions	2020 - Published as a Tax Benchmark and Variation feature article <a href="#">here</a> .
Tax and Transfer policy Institute	The taxation of savings in Australia, Tax and Transfer Policy Institute Policy Paper.	2020 - This project compares the theory of optimal taxation of savings with the existing Australia tax system. Paper available <a href="#">here</a> .
	Development of the AusTaxPolicy Blog	2014 - When the TTPI launched this blog in 2014, I set up the Wordpress shell and communicated with authors to ask for article contributions. I also wrote several <a href="#">articles</a> for this blog.
The Centre for International Economics	Estimating the impact of the NSW container deposit scheme on container beverage consumption	2018 - This project uses Neilson Homescan data and a fixed effects research design to estimate the reduction in beverage consumption generated by the introduction of a 10 cent per container refundable deposit in NSW. Paper available <a href="#">here</a> .
PhD Dissertation	An inequality deflator for Australia	2017 - This uses the implicit trade-off between efficiency and equity in the Australian tax system as a benchmark for incorporating distributional impacts in cost-benefit analysis. Working paper available <a href="#">here</a> .
	Do men claim more deductions than women on their tax returns?	2017 - This paper uses Oaxaca-Blinder and DiNardo-Fortin-Lemieux decompositions, to show that men claim more deductions than women (in similar economic circumstances). Working paper available <a href="#">here</a> .
Productivity Commission	Disability Care and Support - Productivity Commission Inquiry Report	2011 - This project laid the foundation for the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Inquiry report available <a href="#">here</a> .
	An ageing Australia: Preparing for the future.	2013 - This analysis follows a similar framework to the Intergenerational Report, using a demographic model to understand how demographic changes will impact the Australian economy over the coming decades. Inquiry report available <a href="#">here</a> .