

Curriculum Vitae

Vito Tanzi

Vito Tanzi was born and raised in Italy. He is now a citizen of both Italy and the USA, is married, has three sons, and resides in Bethesda, Md., USA.

He received degrees in economics, from Harvard University, (MA, 1963, and PhD, 1967), and from George Washington University, (BA, 1959 with “special honors in economics”, and another MA in economics in 1961).

In 1959-1961 he worked for the Joint Economic Committee of the US Congress and for a Presidential-Congressional Commission (Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission, ORRRC). In 1963-1965, while working on his PHD dissertation, he was associated with a research program at George Washington University, which was studying the potential economic benefits of R&D’s spending by NASA, and taught economics. In 1965-67 he was a senior economist in the Joint Tax Program of the OAS in Washington.

In 1967-76 he was Professor of Economics (Department Chair, 1970-73, and on leave in 1975), at the American University in Washington DC, where he taught graduate courses in Public Finance and in Income Theory. Over the years, he has been a visitor in various universities, including the university of Munich (Germany), the Bocconi University and the University of Torino (Italy), and some others.

In 1975 he joined the IMF, as Head of the Tax Policy Division. In 1981 he was promoted Director of the Fund’s Fiscal Affairs Department, a position that he held until the end of 2000. In that position, he supervised hundreds of economists, mostly with PH. Ds in economics from top universities, directed the IMF work in the fiscal area, and advised the governments of many countries on fiscal issues and reforms.

After leaving the IMF, he served in the Italian Government, at ministerial level, as Undersecretary for Economy and Finance. After leaving the Italian Government, in July 2003, he spent some years as a visiting scholar at the Inter -American Development Bank in Washington DC. In recent years, he has dedicated himself to research, writing, and speaking at international conferences.

From 1990 to 1994 he served as President of the International Institute of Public Finance (IIPF) , of which he is now Honorary President. He was awarded honorary degrees from five universities: Torino and Bari, in Italy; Cordoba, in Argentina; Liege, in Belgium; and Lisbon, in Portugal. He has received various prizes, is an external member of the Lisbon Academy of Science, and is listed in Who’s Who in the World. An economic effect (the “Tanzi effect”) was named after him.

Over the years he has been a consultant to the UN, the European Commission, the European Central Bank, The World Bank, The Organization of American States and the Inter-American Development Bank.

In addition to his general work in macroeconomics and in public finance (in developed, developing, and transition economies), he has contributed to the economics of corruption, tax evasion, money laundering, the underground economy, the impact of inflation on tax systems, and in other areas.

His recent work has been focused on the economic role of the state in market economies, and on the role that complexity plays in government's activities, on which he has published several books. The most recent of these books are ,The Termites of the State: How Complexity Leads to Inequality (2018, Cambridge University Press)), The Economics of Government (2020 Oxford University Press), Government versus Markets (2011, Cambridge University Press) and republished in Russia and in China.

In 2018, he also published The Ecology of Taxation, (Edward Elgar), Argentina: From Peron to Macri (Jorge Pinto Books), and, in 2020, Advanced Introduction to Public Finance (Edward Elgar).

He has published hundreds of articles, many of them in top economics journals, including the American Economic Review, The Journal of Political Economy, The Economic Journal, and others, or in edited books. He is the author of more than 20 books, in several languages.