



# Vladimír Dlouhý

## - Candidate of the Czech Republic

for the post of the Secretary General  
of the OECD  
Strategic Priorities for 2021 - 2026

I am honoured to be the Czech Republic's candidate for the post of the Secretary General of the OECD, with the full support of the Czech Government.

The Czech Republic became a member of the OECD in 1995 as the first country from Central and Eastern Europe. At the time, we were still undergoing fundamental social and economic changes. Having served as Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Economy and later Minister of Industry and Trade, I was a core member of the team responsible for the crucial reforms of this challenging period. The successful transition from a centrally planned to a market economy was our greatest achievement, and I believe I can benefit from this invaluable experience to help the OECD in coping with the current COVID-19 crisis.

This crisis constitutes an unprecedented challenge with very severe socio-economic consequences. Without doubts, it will trigger deep and lasting changes in the global economy. It is obvious that continuing with business as usual is no longer possible. It will be crucial for the OECD to play a key leadership role and use all its expertise and capacity to contribute to complex global recovery.

This year, the Czech Republic marks the 25th anniversary of its accession. With the help of the OECD's invaluable experience and expert policy advice, our country has successfully completed its economic transformation and became an open, export-oriented and industrially developed economy. At the same time, our best practices, expertise and opinion helped shaping the OECD's instruments and outcomes. The Czech experience with the OECD accession and membership is an excellent evidence of mutual benefits resulting from the country's alignment with the Organisation.

The 25 years of practical and useful co-operation, based on an intensive peer-to-peer learning, brought us to a better understanding of the OECD and to new ideas of how it could be further developed to serve its Members and fulfil its mission as expressed by the Convention. Now, as the candidate for the post of the OECD Secretary General in these difficult times, I wish to bring all my experience, knowledge and skills to the benefit of the OECD, its Member States and the global economy as such.

In support of my candidature, I would like to share with you my key strategic priorities on which the Organisation should focus in the years 2021–2026:

1. Reinforcing the OECD's core mandate and Members' ownership of the Organisation
2. Promoting the OECD's strategic position worldwide
3. Enhancing the OECD's management and internal governance

## **1. | Reinforcing the OECD's core mandate and Members' ownership of the Organisation**

Even through the optics of 2020, the OECD mission as expressed by the Convention has proved that it remains valid and relevant. Taking into account the development of the global economy, turbulences and uncertainty of the current world, I consider it important that the OECD re-affirms its basis as an organisation focusing on economic affairs while applying a horizontal and multi-disciplinary approach.

I will make every effort to strengthen the OECD's working methods built on consensual decision-making, mutual exchange of experience and best practice, as well as mechanisms of peer review and peer pressure. Those principles will ensure that the OECD's work will deliver objective, independent and evidence-based policy advice for the greatest benefit to its Members. Furthermore, this will support Members' engagement with and within the Organisation and enhance their impact on the relevance and quality of the OECD's outcomes.

I believe that the OECD's core mandate should stick to a limited number of main priorities. Concentrating on the most important issues is the most efficient way of navigating through the times of crisis. In this respect, the OECD should stay firm in its fundamental values. Nevertheless, I am convinced that it also needs to be flexible in foreseeing and responding to new challenges such as the digital transformation including the international digital tax scheme, pandemics, and economic impacts of ageing or climate change. The OECD has many examples of prompt and high quality responses to its Members' needs; the platform launched recently in response to the COVID-19 crisis is the best illustration of that.

The pandemic has put us in a situation unlike any experienced before, in many ways similar to the one that centrally planned economies were facing at the beginning of 1990's. Building on my unique experience with the transformation of the Czech economy, I will attach special importance to combating this challenge, mitigating its economic consequences and encouraging faster and more resilient recovery.

As former Minister of Industry and Trade, I think it necessary to point out in particular the huge strains that the crisis has put on global trade. International trade is one of the sectors affected the most by the COVID-19 crisis. Just as importantly, we must keep in mind that trade will be an essential component of economic recovery. Hence, I want to pay specific attention to enhancing the OECD's role in looking ahead and analysing measures and actions to keep trade flowing, reduce trade barriers and level the global playing field.

During my term of office, the OECD should also continue to focus on developing standards and products supporting transparent international tax policy, combating bribery in international business, increasing productivity, inclusive economic growth and responsible management of natural resources.

## 2. | Promoting the OECD's strategic position worldwide

The OECD should further strengthen and enhance its contribution to the development of the global economy. The OECD's deliverables such as Anti-Bribery Convention, the Multilateral Convention to Implement Tax Treaty Measures to Prevent Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS), the OECD Declaration on International Investment and Multinational Enterprises are good examples of such contribution and global influence.

Within this framework, I will be committed to keeping and expanding the OECD's engagement with Key Partners, other non-members and stakeholders, and raising awareness of the benefits resulting from multilateral co-operation.

I intend to build on the OECD's previous achievements and further develop its global relations based on mutual benefit, reciprocity, dissemination of best practices and increased adherence to the OECD values and standards, perhaps now more needed than ever before.

The OECD should also stay involved in international negotiations on key global issues and further contribute to level the global playing field. It has an important role to promote like-mindedness and shared values such as rule of law, market economy or human rights. Such practice can further strengthen the Organisation's global relevance, position and influence. I would like to use this asset to support a viable, forward-looking and functioning multilateralism offering vital solutions to global challenges.

I am also well aware that for a number of years, discussions among Members on further enlargement of the Organisation have not been conclusive. In my opinion, this outstanding issue needs to be dealt with. I am prepared to look into it and, together with Members, explore possible and mutually acceptable approaches to it.

### 3. | Enhancing the OECD's management and internal governance

The new OECD Secretary General must be a strong leader. However, the OECD is a member-driven organization and this principle must be fully respected by its management. Its members are some of the most advanced and developed economies in the world and their experience is the Organisation's greatest asset. Members should play a central role in strategic planning, setting of priorities and key managerial operations. I will make sure that the OECD Secretariat carefully listens to its Members, respects their views and requirements, and reflects their interests and priorities accordingly in the programme of work. The OECD must ensure that its work is of the utmost relevance and usefulness to the Members.

Consensus as a general principle for the OECD decision-making should be preserved to ensure a proper engagement of Member States in running the Organisation. In this respect, I want to play a supportive role, constructively facilitate discussions and strive to build consensus among Members.

Highly qualified and diverse human resources are one of the core prerequisites for the effective functioning of the Organisation. I will therefore carry out personnel policy management with the aim to ensure attracting, retaining and further developing the best talents to deliver outcomes of the highest quality. My objectives will further focus on transparent, fair and accountable human resources management, motivating staff to work as a reliable and productive team, and avoiding working in "silos". I find it important to balance the flexibility in the staff profile, which will allow addressing requirements for new skills and professions, while maintaining stability of the competent personnel necessary for retaining institutional memory. I hold the view that more needs to be done to improve national diversity of the staff, increase number of employees from underrepresented Member States, foster gender balance on higher positions, and develop skills in both official languages.

To meet the outstanding budgetary challenges, notably in the period of increased uncertainties caused by the current COVID-19 crisis, I plan to promote a responsible approach to budgeting and a high level of accountability, cost-efficiency and transparency. I also intend to keep regular and open dialogue with Members on budgetary issues to avoid maybe the easiest, but potentially risky "uniform measures" like general cuts, without proper considerations based on priority setting (i. e. haircut).

In support of improving the effective management of the Organisation, I will aim at harnessing synergies, enhancing cross-committee cooperation and removing policy silos. This approach

has been already successfully applied in the OECD horizontal projects and I will promote continuation of work on these projects in the future.

In recent years, the OECD has become a well respected Organisation, it has increased its impact and outreach globally, and achieved many significant targets. Nevertheless, times like these really put its value and relevance to a test.

My goal is to succeed in this test and prove the Organisation's worth. I want to build on its achievements and continue in its work, with the objective of increasing the benefits to its Member States, strengthening its position globally, and improving its ability to effectively face the emerging challenges and adequately respond to the rapidly evolving world.

I am convinced that my unique experience and my knowledge and skills can significantly contribute to these goals and that under my leadership, the OECD would be seen as a modern and relevant international organisation, which does not forget its roots and background and supports its Member States.