

FUTURE-READY BUSINESS

TRUST, TALENT & TECHNOLOGY

December 4 | 2025

The 11th Annual AmCham Business Services Center Forum (BSCF) Conference once again confirmed its role as a key platform for shaping the future of business services in Slovakia and the wider Central European region. Under the theme “Future-Ready Business: Trust, Talent & Technology,” the conference brought together leaders from global business services centers, policymakers, HR and technology experts, and representatives of the public sector to reflect on how competitiveness can be sustained in an increasingly complex and fast-changing environment. At a time when business centers are navigating geopolitical uncertainty, talent shortages, rapid technological advances, and rising expectations from employees and society alike, the conference focused on one central question: how to remain future-ready while maintaining trust, resilience, and long-term value creation.

OPENING THE CONVERSATION: COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH TRUST

The conference opened with welcoming remarks that set the tone for the day: competitiveness today is no longer driven by cost efficiency alone. Instead, it rests on trust in institutions, transparent rules, skilled people, and the ability to use technology responsibly and strategically.

Slovakia's business services sector has matured significantly over the past decade. With thousands of high-value jobs, strong integration into global value chains, and growing specialization, the sector has become an important pillar of the Slovak economy. At the same time, this success brings new responsibilities, towards employees, communities, and the broader business environment. These trends were confirmed by Marek Chudík, Chair of the Business Service Center Forum, who presented the key findings from the annual BSCF survey.

PANEL I: HOW DO WE SECURE THE INDUSTRY GROWTH

The opening panel addressed one of the most pressing questions facing the business services sector

today: how to sustain growth and trust in an increasingly competitive and unpredictable global environment. Moderated by Carlos Garrido Pedraz, CEO of Holcim European Business Services, the discussion explored Slovakia's position in the global value chain, its evolving brand, and the structural challenges business centers must navigate to remain attractive.

Speakers agreed that Slovakia is no longer competing primarily within Central and Eastern Europe. Rising labor costs, talent shortages, geopolitical tensions, and legislative unpredictability have fundamentally changed the equation for business centers operating in Slovakia.

At the same time, panelists emphasized that this evolution is not a crisis, but a natural maturity cycle of the industry. Many of the early transactional roles that defined the first wave of shared services have already been automated or relocated. What remains, and what Slovakia must actively nurture, are high-value, knowledge-intensive roles that require advanced skills.

A recurring theme was talent availability as the decisive factor influencing future investment decisions. The speakers also stressed that the country must do more to actively market Bratislava and Slovakia as a whole. The value created by Slovak business centers is real but insufficiently communicated externally.



That requires clearly articulating what makes each center unique, what capabilities it delivers, and how it contributes strategically to the global organization.



We are no longer competing with our neighbors, we are competing globally, with countries like India.

KRISTÍNA GÁL DROBCOVÁ
Johnson Controls



The key takeaway from Panel I was clear: Slovakia's future attractiveness will depend less on scale and more on specialization, credibility, and storytelling. The challenge ahead is not just to deliver value but to consistently demonstrate and communicate it.

GLOBAL GBS SURVEY 2025

Building on the strategic questions raised in Panel I, Peter Mrnka presented the findings of PwC Germany's Global GBS / SSC Survey 2025, offering a data-driven perspective on how business centers are evolving worldwide and what this means for Slovakia.

His central message resonated strongly with the audience: the current environment, despite its volatility, represents a unique opportunity for Global Business Services to prove their strategic value. As he put it, “With geopolitical and economic uncertainty and AI disruption, we've never been in a more dynamic environment – so isn't this exactly the moment for GBS to step up?”

Importantly for Slovakia, he emphasized that mature GBS models possess enormous transformational potential, especially because they manage some of the largest data pools within organizations. This positions them as natural drivers of digital transformation – including AI adoption.

GOVERNMENT TALKS

The fireside chat brought a public-sector perspective



MARTINA SLABEJOVÁ
Executive Director of AmCham Slovakia



MAREK CHUDÍK
Chair, AmCham Slovakia BSCF



into the discussion, focusing on trust, governance, and institutional readiness.

Moderated by Lucia Gröneová, Vice-Chair of AmCham Slovakia BSCF, the conversation explored how geopolitical uncertainty and regulatory complexity shape business confidence.

Jozef Kšiňan from the European Labour Authority highlighted ongoing efforts to improve labor mobility within the EU, reduce administrative burdens, and support employers in navigating complex labor regulations. The discussion reinforced a core message of the conference: trust in institutions and predictable rules are fundamental enablers of competitiveness.

PANEL II: BUILDING FUTURE-READY TALENT

The talent panel addressed a critical question: is the real problem a lack of people – or a lack of skills? The answer, as the discussion revealed, lies somewhere in between.

Speakers highlighted that foreign employees still represent only about 9–10% of the sector's workforce, a relatively low figure compared to other countries in the region. Administrative complexity, especially for third-country

nationals, remains a major obstacle. Sandra Balážiková from ING Hubs Slovakia described mobility from third countries as one of the biggest operational challenges, while noting that automation, although essential, has its limits.

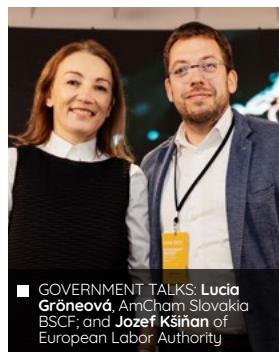
Several speakers emphasized the importance of rethinking talent management across multiple levels: from headquarters expectations to cross-functional programs and bottom-up initiatives. Michal Benček from Swiss Re stressed the need to focus on a small number of strategic priorities and to measure real impact. Lucia Gogová from IBM ISC highlighted IBM's internal mantra: eliminate, simplify, automate – while ensuring employees are genuinely engaged in shaping change.

Jana Tomová from DXC Technology concluded with a powerful reminder that talent development is also a branding strategy. Investments in education, engagement, and long-term growth turn employees into ambassadors, strengthening both retention and reputation.

PANEL III: IS TECHNOLOGY CREATING A FUTURE-READY BUSINESS?

The final sessions shifted the focus toward technology as a driver of competitiveness. Keynote speaker Peter Dovhun invited participants to think beyond tools and consider what kind of society and working life technology should enable. He demonstrated that original, globally relevant innovations can be developed and successfully implemented in Slovakia. He highlighted the country's strong potential for applied, data-driven solutions built on personal and operational data, including the development of so-called "personal agents." His vision focuses on connecting digital data with the real world, proving that Slovakia can move beyond adoption and into genuine technological creation.

The third panel, Digital Transformation at the Heart of Competitiveness – Is Technology Creating a Future-Ready Business?, served as both a forward-looking discussion and a fitting closing debate of the conference. It explored how the shared services sector has evolved from traditional Global Business Services to AI-powered, intelligence-driven models and what





this transformation means for Slovakia's competitive position.

Daniela Vacek from KInIT added a valuable research perspective, emphasizing both the opportunities and the limits of current AI applications. The discussion also touched on risks, ethical boundaries, and the importance of responsible adoption. A recurring message was that successful digital transformation depends less on technology itself and more on how organizations implement it.

From a business perspective, Slavomír Pšenák from O2 Slovakia pointed out that rapid technological development is leveling the playing field. "There is no head start anymore," he argued. "Technology equalizes opportunities—it's up to us how we use it." This reality, according to the panelists, creates a unique chance for Slovakia to position itself as a testing ground, or sandbox, for innovative digital solutions, leveraging strong talent and a relatively flexible regulatory environment to stand out internationally.

The closing debate reinforced a key takeaway of the conference: digital transformation is not optional, and competitiveness in the shared services sector will increasingly depend on how boldly and intelligently companies integrate AI into their operations while keeping people, responsibility, and long-term value firmly at the center.

BSCF AWARDS

A special moment of the conference was the BSCF Awards ceremony. They were awarded to two exceptional professionals whose long-term dedication has profoundly shaped the development of talent within Slovakia's business centers community. Both of them - Mária Mráziková of Deutsche Telekom IT Solutions Slovakia, and Zoltán Labai of AT&T Slovakia, greatly contributed to the success of the accredited course Skills for Success: From University to Practice, which has been helping students across five faculties build practical soft skills and prepare for careers in business centers.



Automatization has its limits, the final judgement call is still on a responsible employer.

SANDRA BALÁŽIKOVÁ
ING Hubs Slovakia



NAVIGATING CHANGE THROUGH COACHING

The afternoon program featured an interactive workshop "Navigating Change: Coaching Teams in

an Age of Technology and Turbulence", prepared and delivered in close cooperation with the ICF. Rather than a traditional lecture format, participants were actively involved in practical exercises and discussions. The workshop emphasized the human side of transformation and the role of coaching questions in helping teams process change, overcome resistance, and move forward with clarity. In an environment shaped by technological disruption and constant change, coaching was presented as a practical leadership tool, one that builds trust, engagement, and accountability.

BUILDING A FUTURE-READY ECOSYSTEM

AmCham Slovakia is proud to have represented and united this sector since 2014. Over more than a decade, the BSCF platform has grown into the strongest voice of a community employing over 35,000 professionals, contributing more than 3% of Slovakia's state budget, and continually evolving into one of the country's most dynamic engines of competitiveness. The 11th edition of our conference once again confirmed the strength, openness, and forward-looking mindset of this industry. With trust as a foundation, talent as a driver, and technology as an enabler, the path toward a future-ready shared services sector in Slovakia is not only possible, but already taking shape.



More information can be found on: www.amcham.sk



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