

IN THE CURRENT GEOPOLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CLIMATE, WHAT SHOULD SLOVAKIA PRIORITIZE TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE WITHIN THE EU AND GLOBALLY?

Slovakia's key challenge is the lack of long-term strategic planning beyond electoral cycles. Successful nations have clear strategies and a national identity that endures despite political changes, which helps avoid frequent geopolitical U-turns. Slovakia's EU membership in the 2000s brought significant economic boost, and the EU still holds the potential to attract investments, create jobs, and modernize infrastructure. However, to fully capitalize on these opportunities, Slovakia must prioritize long-term planning. The government's main focus should be on creating a sustainable and long-term strategy that aligns investment projects with national priorities. Slovakia's central location in Europe, along with its skilled, hardworking population, provides a unique advantage. If we focus on strategic sectors, invest in world-class education and healthcare, and create an environment that retains talent, we can enhance our global competitiveness. First, though, we need to answer the fundamental question of who we are and where we belong.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE IS RESHAPING LABOR MARKETS ACROSS EUROPE. HOW SHOULD SLOVAKIA RESPOND TO AGING, TALENT SHORTAGES, AND WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION?

Slovakia's aging population is a growing challenge for the labor market, social systems, and healthcare. To keep older generations in the workforce, we must ensure their health. This requires a shift in how we view healthcare. Instead of claiming that modern hospitals and medicines are unaffordable, we must recognize that excluding a large portion of the population from the workforce due to chronic diseases—such as cardiovascular, autoimmune, and oncologic conditions—will cost us much more in the long run. The real challenge is to find the political courage to invest in healthcare. Health is an investment, not an expense. If we fail to address this, Slovakia will face greater difficulties in maintaining a competitive labor market and supporting its aging population.

WHAT ACHIEVEMENT FROM 2025 ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF, AND WHY?

In 2025, I am most proud of our success in establishing AmCham as a key stakeholder in discussions about the future of healthcare in Slovakia. This

year, we dedicated much of our efforts to contributing to the ongoing legislative reform of pharmaceutical reimbursement policies. Through a series of meetings, discussions, and collaborative efforts, AmCham, as a platform bringing together representatives from the pharmaceutical and med-tech industries, healthcare providers, wholesalers, insurance companies, and professional advisors, demonstrated its immense potential for creative problem-solving. Our contribution to the legislative process, particularly just before the Christmas holidays, was a significant achievement. We managed to produce high-quality comments to the draft reform in a very short time, and this input has sparked important discussions that could lead to improved healthcare access in Slovakia. It also has the potential to enhance rule of law in the country's pharmaceutical market.

On the professional front, I'm proud of Čechová & Partners celebrating its 35th anniversary. Having been with the firm for 20 years, I'm thrilled to see it maintain its position as one of Slovakia's top-ranked full-service business law firms, continually innovating while upholding the highest standards of integrity.

On a personal level, I am honored to have been reelected as Vice-Chair of AmCham's Healthcare Committee, and to have received the AmCham award. This recognition, alongside two other outstanding legal practitioners, is both a challenge and a commitment to continue delivering exceptional service to the AmCham community.

HOW DO YOU FOSTER INNOVATION WITHIN YOUR ORGANIZATION, WHETHER THROUGH TECHNOLOGY, PEOPLE, OR BUSINESS MODELS?

In the legal profession, remaining relevant without embracing technology, including AI, is impossible. However, a law firm is, at its core, a people business. Technology is only as good as its users, which is why we prioritize keeping our colleagues engaged, educated, and happy in their roles. Our firm stands out among independent domestic firms by offering associates, regardless of seniority, extensive opportunities for education and professional networking both in Slovakia and internationally. This is not merely a perk for senior partners; it is an integral part of our business model. We invest in talent, empowering our team to deliver world-class legal services in the domestic market while cultivating their own professional networks.

MAREK HOLKA

PARTNER
ČECHOVÁ & PARTNERS S. R. O.



Marek Holka is a partner at Čechová & Partners, a leading independent Slovak law firm with more than 35 years of history. His practice focuses primarily on the pharmaceutical and life sciences sectors, distribution, and competition law. He is a recognized expert in pharmaceutical law and has been consistently ranked by international directories, including the Lexology Index for Life Sciences—Regulatory. He is also ranked by The Legal 500 as a Next Generation Partner in the Commercial, Corporate and M&A category. Since 2024, Marek has served as Vice-Chair of the Healthcare Committee of AmCham Slovakia. He is also an active member of AIJA—International Association of Young Lawyers, currently acting as the Vice President of the Healthcare and Life Sciences Commission. Marek is a frequent speaker and author on life sciences and antitrust topics.