

MARTIN BAKOŠ

CO-OWNER
AND MANAGING PARTNER
AMBERG ENGINEERING
SLOVAKIA, S.R.O.



In 1988, he graduated from the Department of Concrete Structures and Bridges at STU in Bratislava. In 1994, he moved to Switzerland, where he worked for over two years at ETH Zurich as a research associate and assistant. In 1997, he returned to Slovakia to participate in the design and supervision of the first road tunnels in Slovakia. Since 2003, he has been the managing director and co-owner of Amberg Engineering Slovakia. He has worked on many significant projects, such as the Višňové Tunnel, D3 Čadca, Bukov-Svrčinovec, and many others. He has lectured at the University of Žilina and actively published dozens of articles at conferences both at home and abroad. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Swiss-Slovak Chamber of Commerce.

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

Without a doubt, it is the opening of the Višňové Tunnel. The Višňové Tunnel is currently not only the longest road tunnel in Slovakia (and also a twin-tube tunnel), but also the longest tunnel in Slovakia overall, regardless of its function. It is over 7,400 meters long. Our company, Amberg Engineering Slovakia, s.r.o., served as the general designer for the completion of the Višňové Tunnel and the adjacent sections outside the tunnel for the Skanska Consortium. For the entire design team, this task was a huge challenge and a source of new experience and knowledge stemming from the technical and organizational specifics of this highway section. It was an honor for us to be part of the final phase of completing this complex highway section, and we firmly believe that the solutions designed by our design team during this phase will ensure the most reliable operation of this unique engineering structure and its trouble-free use by motorists for as long as possible.

I am equally proud of the completion of the R2 expressway section between Kriváň and Mýtina. "It's a magnificent stretch of highway. It's essentially a highway in the treetops," said Transport Minister Jozef Ráž regarding the Kriváň-Mýtina section. A highlight of the section is also the longest overpass in Slovakia, stretching 4.374 km. In some places, drivers will travel 45 meters above the ground. This magnificent engineering structure was named Construction of the Year 2025, and our employees provided construction supervision on the project.

WHICH ROAD AND RAIL SECTIONS NEED TO BE BUILT OR RENOVATED URGENTLY?

These are the projects we've been talking about for years. We need to complete the D1, D3, and R4 highways, then decide on the route for the north-south highway link in central Slovakia, and at the same time begin project planning for the D1/D2 connection, including via the Karpaty Tunnel. A comprehensive bridge renovation program must be launched immediately. This should be implemented through PPP projects (public-private partnerships), which will bring several benefits, such as the accelerated commissioning of the proposed bridge renovation project on first-class roads and the economic advantages of this model. As for railways, I will be happy if I live to see at least the completion of the reconstruction of the main railway corridor in the west-east direction. With a bit of exaggeration, it must be noted that after 20 years—it won't happen sooner—we will have to start the reconstruction of the main corridor for higher speeds from western Slovakia all over again...

ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE QUALITY OF TRANSPORTATION PROJECT PREPARATION BY THE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, AND WITH THE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PROCESS?

Slovakia has long struggled with the preparation of major infrastructure projects and the drawdown of EU funds, because the public procurement and permitting system here is very complex and often focused solely on price. The Swiss have been teaching me for 30 years that what is cheap or free is not necessarily the best. In many tenders, large, reputable firms with dozens of permanent designers and construction supervisors—holding certifications issued by SKSI and with experience from previous projects—compete against someone who has only a few employees.

How can price be the only criterion then?! Over the past 10–15 years, Poland has built five times as many highways as we have. I appreciate the steps being taken to improve the situation—the introduction of electronic procurement, the simplification of building permits, and the centralized coordination of projects—which are gradually speeding up processes and offering hope that Slovakia will be able to effectively utilize all EU funds earmarked for the completion of selected transportation infrastructure projects. For this to actually happen, we must still deal with one more problem: the constant complaints from individuals—I call them saboteurs—who live by the motto "The worse, the better."

Amberg Engineering Slovakia has been on the Slovak market for nearly 23 years. It provides services in the areas of design, supervision, engineering, property-related legal settlements, and expert assessments, particularly for large infrastructure projects. Our company is part of the Swiss AMBERG Group, which has been active in the most advanced tunneling market for 60 years. It is a leader in design, supervision, and audits and inspections of transportation tunnels, not only in Switzerland. It is very difficult to explain to my partner the sheer volume of questions that often arise in the context of public procurement, the constant objections and filings with the Public Procurement Office.

All of this comes at a cost. It's not just the preparation of the bids themselves. Just for the bank guarantees required for bids, we typically have more than 1 million euros tied up—and these funds remain tied up for the entire duration of the public tender, which can sometimes be very long. But to be objective. Often, the tender documents prepared by designers are not of high quality. Speaking for our company, we have been burned several times, and my clear goal is to minimize these errors in the future through more rigorous oversight.