

# Healthy Future

## The Financial Sustainability of Slovak Healthcare 2030

Date:  
**27.1.2020**

Venue:  
**DoubleTree by Hilton**

& Pre-Election Debate with Shadow Ministers of Health

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HURRICANE

Healthcare system in Slovakia has been the subject of a heated political, expert, as well as public discussion for a long time. However, no clear long-term vision with specific steps and an overall strategy has been established. This resulted in a complicated state of affairs where the opinions and actions of the various stakeholders clash. Instead of progressing towards the shared goal of an efficient and sustainable healthcare system, the problems are only deepening and all the involved parties are worse off.

AmCham Slovakia, together with eleven healthcare institutions, conducted a complex analysis of the current state and ways how to improve it. The results were presented in the form of ten recommendations for the healthcare system 2030, which can be found on the following pages. To open the discussion and introduce these

recommendations to experts, the general public, as well as political leaders, AmCham organized the Healthy Future Conference.

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**Health is not  
for free, health  
is a luxury.**

LUDOVÍT ÓDOR,  
Deputy Governor of NBS

The conference program was opened with two introductory presentations. Martin Vlachynský of INESS provided much needed context for the debate by presenting the key figures characterizing the Slovak healthcare system in regional

and EU comparison. Jana Ježíková, Slovak health expert, presented a summary of the main challenges in healthcare. As she stressed, although healthcare has been identified as the top priority of the pre-election campaign, the main challenge lies in the fact that the Slovak healthcare system lacks a concrete vision, strategy and goals, which would require implementing solutions with long-term effects surpassing the electoral cycle.

The following panel discussion aimed to address these challenges and evaluate potential solutions. The first part of the debate centered on sustainable financing and the budgeting issues of the previous years. Inevitably, it was discussed in connection to the question of the system's efficiency and the opinions of the present experts demonstrated the complexity of the problem.

Agreeing on how to objectively measure the efficiency of the healthcare system is a challenge in itself. The same is true for deciding where to invest more money in order to create the biggest possible positive impact on the entire system. There are several indicators that could help evaluate the effectiveness of the system in improving the health of the population; one of the most commonly used is the concept of avoidable mortality, which refers to deaths from causes that are considered avoidable in the presence of timely and effective healthcare or public health interventions.

Martin Kultán of Dôvera ZP expressed his opinion that in order to improve this indicator, no further investment in healthcare is needed, as improving the overall quality of life and eliminating extreme poverty would have a bigger impact. This should be done mainly through policies focused on improving the business environment, education and the rule of law. As he added, *"The wealthier a society is the better it takes care of its health."*

The overall sentiment was best summarized by Miriam Lapuníková (AFN SK), speaking for the directors of hospitals: "There is no clear vision of how the concept of investments into healthcare should function." As Martin Smatana (IZP MZ SR) added in agreement: "As long



**STANISLAV ŠPÁNIK**  
State Secretary, Ministry of Health



**GABRIEL GALGÓCZI**  
President of AmCham Slovakia  
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**VLADIMÍR MICIETA**  
Health Care Committee Chair,  
AmCham & Country Manager,  
Medtronic





as this vision lacks, no amount of money would be sufficient to fulfill the needs of the various actors within the healthcare system."

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**There is no clear vision of how the concept of investments into healthcare should function.**

MIRIAM LAPUNÍKOVÁ,  
Director of F.D.Roosevelt Hospital  
Banská Bystrica

The results of an audience poll conducted during the conference also identified the current lack of clear rules within the healthcare sector as the number one reason for its inefficiency. Ludovít Ódor, Deputy Governor of NBS, was in full agreement with this, comparing the current state of the health care system characterized by alternating often conflicting approaches and common changes of direction to a "state of schizophrenia". As he added: "Healthcare should be a priority, that much is clear, but what

should be the top priority within the healthcare sector?"

The debate slowly shifted towards the political aspects and the great challenges awaiting the new government. The panelists discussed whether a complex change can be achieved within four years and if the path towards it leads through a set of smaller adjustments or a radical reform. This open question also served as the ideal introduction to the afternoon pre-election discussion, which featured health experts from major political parties who offered their vision for the future development of Slovak healthcare.

The conference clearly demonstrated that although stakeholders and experts agree that the Slovak healthcare system is facing several critical problems, it is not so easy even to agree on which problems require the most urgent attention, much less on the best solutions. Offering all the involved parties a platform to find a shared common ground, agree on basic rules and principles and start offering specific recommendations and solutions may be the right path towards Slovakia's healthier future.



For more pictures  
and presentations  
visit [www.amcham.sk](http://www.amcham.sk)



Jana Jezikova, Healthcare Expert



Martin Vlachynsky, Analyst at INESS



#### PANEL DISCUSSION - HEALTHCARE 2030

From left: **Ludovít Ódor**, Deputy Governor of the National Bank of Slovakia; **Miriám Lapuníková**, Director of F. D. Roosevelt Hospital Banská Bystrica; **Martin Smatana**, Director of Institute of Health Policies; **Martin Kullán**, General Manager & Chairman of the Board, Dobra ZP; **Stefan Kiss**, Director of UHP; **Jana Jezikova**, Healthcare Expert (Moderator); and **Martin Vlachynsky**, Analyst at INESS (Moderator)



#### PRE-ELECTION DISCUSSION - WHAT WILL THE FUTURE OF SLOVAK HEALTHCARE LOOK LIKE?

From left: **Marin Barlo** of SaS; **Oskar Dvorak** of PS/Spolu; **Jan Hencel** of KDH; **Stefan Korec** of Za ľudí; **Marek Krajci** of OĽANO; **Martin Visnansky** of Hnutí Sme rodina; and **Richard Fides**, Leadership and Management in healthcare, Grape PR agency (Moderator)



Presentation of the "Ten recommendations for the healthcare system 2030" to the press.