



HEALTHY FUTURE CONFERENCE

PART OF THE **THE FESTIVAL
OF FUTURE**

September 11 | 2024

The Healthy Future Conference highlighted that nearly all the megatrends discussed at The Festival of Future have significant implications for healthcare. Around the globe, healthcare systems are under immense pressure to address a range of challenges, including demographic shifts, technological advancements, the explosion of data, and the heightened risk of epidemics in a globalized world.

In Slovakia, these challenges are particularly acute. The healthcare system is stretched to its limits, and the country's demographic outlook is almost certain to exacerbate the situation in the coming years.

The conference brought together a diverse lineup of speakers, including high-ranking public officials from the Ministry of Health, representatives from private healthcare companies, health insurers, pharmacies, researchers, and both Slovak and international healthcare experts. Senior managers from hospitals and other key stakeholders in the healthcare sector also contributed. Despite their varied backgrounds, a striking consensus emerged: Slovakia's healthcare system faces significant, shared challenges.

One of the major barriers discussed was the state of public finances in Slovakia, which limits the ability to introduce bold, innovative healthcare

policies. A simple yet powerful message dominated the discussions: healthcare must become a true national priority, with political consensus necessary to drive sustainable change. Among the pressing issues, the demographic outlook for Slovakia resonated deeply. Slovakia is one of the least prepared countries in Europe to manage its aging population. Speakers such as Henrieta Tulejová, Martin Vlachynský, and Dajana Petříková highlighted how the growing economically inactive population is already straining the system and will continue to do so. As Martin Vlachynský pointed out, this could lead to a dangerous scenario where a dual healthcare system emerges: a high-quality private system for those who can afford it, and an under-resourced public system for those left behind.

Several experts, including State Secretary Michal Štofko, healthcare policy analyst Martin Smatana, Andrea Letanovská from the National Oncology Institute, and Petra Zappe from the Research and Innovation Authority, emphasized that despite Slovakia's world-class healthcare institutions, systemic deficiencies frequently result in a poor patient experience. Many patients feel "lost" due to the lack of coordination and communication between different parts of the healthcare system.

Vladimír Baláž, Chairman

of the Parliamentary Healthcare Committee, outlined three top priorities for reform: addressing the shortage of qualified personnel, ensuring transparent financing, and accelerating digitalization. Another key strategy, emphasized by Adam Spielman of Citi Global Insights, was a shift toward early disease detection and prevention. Several speakers shared compelling data underscoring the long-term benefits of a proactive, rather than reactive, approach to healthcare. Promising innovations in early diagnosis, especially for chronic diseases, offer hope in this area. However, as Dajana Petříková noted, this requires a mindset shift where individuals take more responsibility for their own health rather than relying solely on state intervention.

Looking ahead, several trends are likely to shape the future of healthcare. According to Adam Spielman, we can expect greater integration of healthcare and technology, which will make care more personal, proactive, and convenient. Additionally, effective data collection and utilization will be critical assets in improving healthcare systems.

A key takeaway from countries that have successfully reformed their healthcare systems is clear: increased funding is essential, but it must be viewed as an investment, not merely a cost. As Martin Smatana aptly noted, "healthcare reform is a marathon, not a sprint,"



■ REALISTIC VISION OF SLOVAK HEALTHCARE
From left: **Michal Štofko**, State Secretary, Ministry of Health of SR; **Vladimír Baláž**, Chairman of the Healthcare Committee, National Parliament of SR; **Zuzana Javorová**, Moderator; and **Ladislav Slobodník**, State Secretary, Ministry of Health of SR

stressing the need for consistency, continuity, and stability. Slovakia's healthcare system urgently requires a long-term, shared vision that transcends electoral cycles.

Veronika Rybanská echoed this sentiment, stating, "The main goal is to discuss healthcare from the perspective of data, efficiency, methodology, and results—not from impressions, emotions, opinions, or political preferences." Yet, as she pointed out, the average tenure of Slovak Health Ministers remains just 1.5 years, a troubling statistic that hinders progress.

The conference also addressed challenges facing Europe's pharmaceutical sector and upcoming EU healthcare legislation. Iveta Pálešová shared a startling statistic: 20 years ago, the gap in R&D investment between Europe and the U.S. was \$2 billion; today, that gap has widened to \$25 billion.

Despite these concerns, the conference also showcased inspiring stories of Slovak healthcare institutions keeping pace with global

trends. Miriam Lapuníková shared transformative efforts at F.D. Roosevelt University Hospital in Banská Bystrica, while Tomáš Alscher offered insights into the progress made at the national Comprehensive Oncology Center.

What stood out most at the conference was the passion of the speakers. However, this passion was often tempered with frustration, reflecting years of hard work hampered by recurring setbacks.

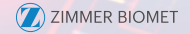
The Healthy Future Conference ultimately succeeded in delivering on what Ana Dodea identified as the core need of Slovakia's healthcare system: an open and honest dialogue between industry stakeholders and public officials. This dialogue is a crucial foundation for the progress Slovakia's healthcare system so desperately needs.

PARTNERS OF THE FUTURE

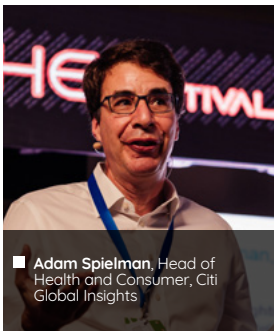
PREMIUM PARTNERS



MAIN PARTNERS



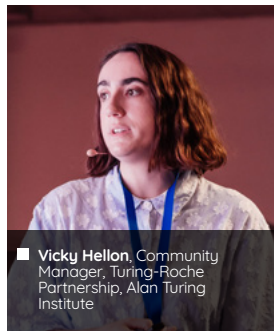
PARTNERS



■ **Adam Spielman**, Head of Health and Consumer, Citi Global Insights



■ **Martin Smatana**, Healthcare Budget and Policy Analysts



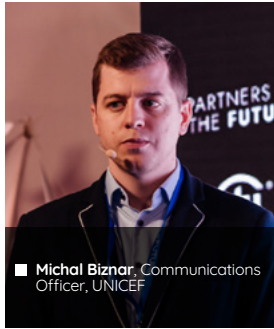
■ **Vicky Hellon**, Community Manager, Turing-Roche Partnership, Alan Turing Institute



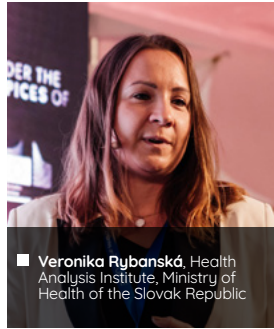
■ From left: **Eric Sutherland**, Senior Health Economist, OECD; and **Šimon Jeseňák**, Moderator



■ **Zuzana Neupauer**, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF



■ **Michal Biznar**, Communications Officer, UNICEF



■ **Veronika Rybanská**, Health Analysis Institute, Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic



■ **PANEL DISCUSSION**
From left: **Iveta Pálešová**, Association of the Innovative Pharmaceutical Industry; **Katarína Danková**, Slovak Association of Suppliers of Medical Devices; **Martina Hromádková**, Department of Pharmacy, Ministry of Health of the SR; and **Marek Holka**, ČECHOVÁ & PARTNERS (Moderator)



■ **SUSTAINABLE FINANCING OF HEALTHCARE**
From left: **Michal Štofko**, Ministry of Health of SR; **Adam Marek**, Ministry of Finance of SR; **Dajana Petriková**, Association of Health Insurance Companies of SR; and **Ana Dodea**, Member of the AmCham Board of Directors, Merck Sharp & Dohme, s.r.o.



■ **Henrieta Tulejová**, Partner, Advance Healthcare Management Institute



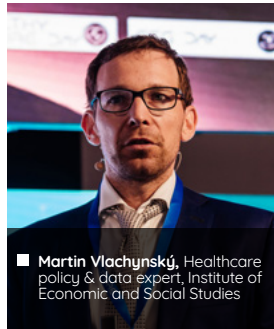
■ **Jaroslav Kypr**, Chief Operating Officer, Dr. Max Slovensko



■ **Kamil Rényi**, General Manager, Central and Eastern Europe & Israel, Zimmer Biomet



■ **WHAT CAN DUTCH, GERMAN OR UK HEALTH SYSTEMS TEACH US?**
From left: **Gabriela Czanner**, Liverpool John Moores University and FIIT Slovak University of Technology; **Andrea Letanovská**, National Oncology Institute; and **Vanda Tuxhorn**, Vinzentius-Krankenhaus Landau, Germany



■ **Martin Vlachynský**, Healthcare policy & data expert, Institute of Economic and Social Studies



■ **PATIENT'S PATHWAY IN THE HOSPITALS OF THE 21ST CENTURY**
From left: **Tomáš Alscher**, National Oncology Institute; **Miriám Lapuníková**, University Hospital with Polyclinic F.D. Roosevelt in Banská Bystrica; **Vladimír Baláz**, Healthcare Committee, National Parliament of SR; **Peter Lednický**, Penta Hospitals International and Bory Hospital; and **Petra Zappe**, Research and Innovation Authority