

# Slovakia – a source of talented and highly-motivated people

**Michael Petersen, Vice President Global Business Services at Adient, spoke about the company’s Bratislava Business Center (BBC) that celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.**



**MICHAEL PETERSEN**  
General Manager, Adient Slovakia, s.r.o., Vice President Global Business Services, Adient

**Slovakia has become a business services hub and this is likely to continue. How do you see the market here?**

Very positively and so we decided to make Bratislava our primary location for business services when Adient was spun-off last year from Johnson Controls. There are talented and highly motivated people here. But social contributions are high and a modern economy needs to attract more talent from abroad. At BBC, we are already international – we have 26 nationalities working for us communicating in eight languages.

**What kind of people are needed to meet the skills demanded for the sector?**

The hard skills such as English and a solid financial background are still key, but we are also looking for people who can easily adapt to the rapidly-changing demands of our work. By that I mean, not getting stumped at an early stage and able to use expertise under pressure. Our philosophy is to cultivate our own pool of high-potential staff, who we then qualify and promote.

**Adient is an important player in the business community in Slovakia. When you look back to when you set up here, how do you reflect on your business center 10 years ago?**

The main goal when we came to Slovakia at that time – as Johnson Controls – was to enter the CEE market. Bratislava was

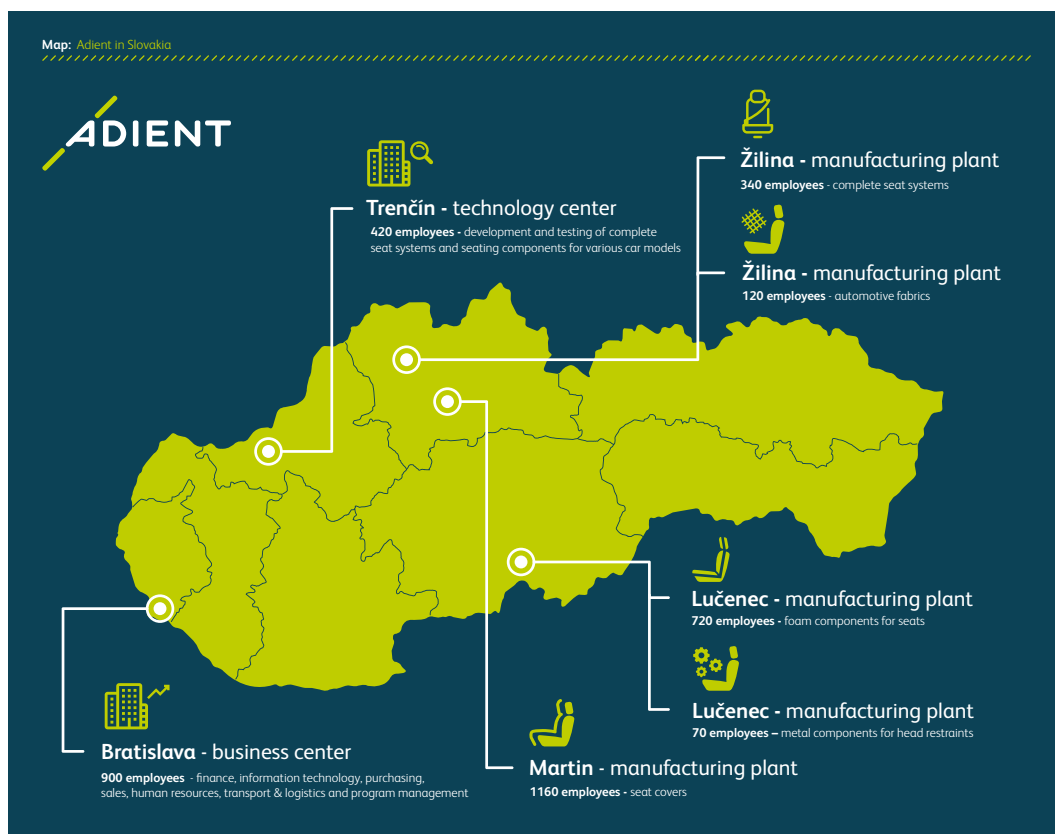
the best fit, as we could hire qualified people, and there was good infrastructure and reasonable costs. We recognized the strong Slovak work ethic and gave the team the responsibility it grew into. For example, our finance team creates all the US GAAP reporting required for our company which is listed on the NY Stock Exchange, the procurement manages vendors around the globe and our IT department serves Adient around the world 24/7. The variety and complexity of our activities distinguish us from other shared service centers in Slovakia.

**Today, we live in a global economy and our world is becoming increasingly**

## BIOGRAPHY

Before Adient spun-off from Johnson Controls in October 2016, Michael Petersen held the same position at Johnson Controls, where he established an enterprise wide business services organization. He joined Johnson Controls in 1996 and held several finance leadership positions in the company's Automotive Experience business.

Prior to joining Johnson Controls, Michael Petersen was a plant controller at Deutz AG, a German engine manufacturer. He holds a master in business administration from the University of Applied Sciences in Cologne, Germany.



**interconnected. How is the BBC preparing for such challenges?**  
For us, technology readiness, automatization and digitalization are key. They boost our productivity, make simple time-consuming transactions more efficient and enable our employees to fully concentrate on analysis and other more complex activities. I would like to mention automated and semi-automated handling of supplier invoices, approvals and payments. Good advice for any company undergoing such changes is to have strong cooperation between the finance and IT teams.

**What kind of projects are you currently working on?**  
Digital services and bundling of activities, especially in the HR area. We will be entering a new industry field, as this year Adient will begin cooperation with Boeing on airplane seating. Retaining employees and developing talent are also key.