

What should be the role of AmCham in the fast-changing reality of the 21st century?

We thought it would be interesting to approach selected representatives of our member companies, policy makers, as well as AmCham directors in the region to get various perspectives on how to define the role of our organizations for the future.

” The networking platform provided by AmCham that enables peer to peer cooperation is of some value, but most important is its policy-orientated focus. Task forces driving continuous improvements to make businesses more successful in Slovakia are critical both to the businesses themselves and for improving the communities in which we work.

My preferred areas include:

- Labor code that allows businesses flexibility to drive improvements, while also fairly protecting employee rights.
- Rule of Law, to ensure transparent and ethical business conduct.
- Working with government to align on business innovations to help business and communities prosper.
- Continuous improvement in area of education, to help ensure the right skill sets are available for next generation employees

The social networking is a nice thing to have, but I believe there should be more intense focus on improving the business environment which will bring new businesses and growth for Slovakia.

James E. Bruno
President, U. S. Steel Košice, s.r.o.,
First Vice President
of AmCham Board
of Directors



” In my view, the role of AmCham does not change. What changes from time to time are the activities, the projects we work on, the priorities we focus on and the challenges we face. The role of AmCham remains the same – to provide a platform for the business community to build their network, where they can discuss and share topics concerning them, where they can form and present a common standpoint to make an impact and, last but not least, where they can have fun and have a sense of belonging.

At the end of the day, AmCham has always been about the people. Industries will change, companies can transform, many jobs may cease to exist and new jobs will appear, but the people will always rely on the power of discourse and partnership to work together and achieve more. I believe it is even more required in the fast-changing reality of the 21st century and I am confident AmCham will be able to provide the ideal place for that in the future as well.

Irisz Lippai-Nagy
Executive Director,
AmCham Hungary



Industries will change, companies can transform, many jobs may cease to exist and new jobs will appear, but the people will always rely on the power of discourse and partnership to work together and achieve more.

” I am convinced that AmCham's role should be more focused on policy and legislation than business development/networking.

As a separate subset of the Rule of Law initiative, I think the focus should be on the following:

- transparency and accountability within the public sector,
- effective private dispute resolution framework with the aim of improving enforceability and thereby respect for legal obligations,
- monitoring and actively participating in legislative developments in areas affecting all businesses (Civil Code, Corporate Governance, Labor law, public registries, criminal liability of companies).

Martin Magál
Partner,
Allen & Overy
Bratislava, s.r.o.,
AmCham Board
member



IRISZ LIPPAI-NAGY,
Executive Director,
AmCham Hungary

” AmChams are a network platform. Communication technology has over-engineered networks; in today's business world, multiple networks exist to achieve the same goal. The networks that thrive will add value as companies pursue their interests. AmChams should add value by advocating economic policies that drive tomorrow's economic opportunities, providing analysis of key trends that determine company performance, and sharing best practices that impact company productivity, while continuing to connect companies in country, within Europe, and across the Atlantic.

Weston Stacey
Executive Director,
AmCham Czech
Republic





” Fast changes, such as the ones we are experiencing now with the dawn of the digital age, are a threat for some, but a great opportunity for others. One way or the other, businesses and their representatives need relevant sources of information, reliable business partners, forums to promote their knowledge and experience, as well as a platform for effective lobbying. AmCham has proven to be able to keep up with the pace of the new era and given the exclusive membership base it represents, it has all it takes to be the institution that provides these services even in the “fast-changing reality”. And that would already be a very important role. Nevertheless, one area stands out in my mind that AmCham is well positioned to promote in particular – building of trust among stakeholders in the Slovak economy. I sincerely believe that despite the fast-changing environment in business and society in general, and the breakthrough technologies introduced almost daily, the business community ultimately remains reliant on principles based on trust; trust among businesses, trust in the public administration and their ability to manage the country, and first and foremost - the trust in the rule of law. If there is trust, there is inevitably the basic mutual understanding and acceptance for doing business and cooperation. Therefore, AmCham should aspire to be the leading contributor to building trust among all relevant stakeholders within the Slovak economy.

Peter Gažík
Chief Executive
Officer, O2
Slovakia, s.r.o.,
AmCham Board
member



” AmChams around the world have a vital role to play in today’s rather turbulent political and economic environment. Business needs certainty and AmChams can help to create this. They can all be bridge-builders. By bringing together business representatives of both big and small companies, from European, American and international companies, from different sectors, they can play a crucial role in influencing both national and international decision-makers, providing essential information and intelligence and also providing venues for networking and access also to a wider variety of stakeholders.

AmChams can work together more in a collaborative way and form alliances. Together they are stronger. Collaboration not competition. Global, national and local businesses have so many common interests and both opportunities and challenges. If AmChams speak out more and work together on these common interests and share their best practices on challenges businesses face such as climate change, sustainability, the future of work, artificial intelligence, tax, EU-US relations and the importance of trade and investment and so the list goes on..... they could be even more effective and powerful and serve their members even better.

Susan Danger
CEO, AmCham EU



” On one hand, certain duties of AmCham remain unchanged: supporting the members to prosper in their businesses by providing them with information, supporting members to build a network and connect them to each other or with businesses with similar challenges and at the same time promoting the interests of its members towards authorities and decision-making bodies.

From my point of view, AmCham is a really unique success story when looking at the members who bring their experience and knowledge together and share their successes but also some of their failures so that we can learn from each other (competition aside). I believe this could be our main contribution – to demonstrate the combined capabilities around topics which are dominating the future of the world. Those are mainly the social impact topics such as changing educational trends, sustainability issues, Diversity & Inclusion in working environment, impact of digitalization and future of work, and many others. Everyone is currently trying to solve these questions in their own way and it is a great value if we can bring these different views together, learn from each other and move together.

Nima Motazed
Managing
Director, Swiss Re
Management AG,
AmCham Board
member



” No matter what challenges and changes society will face, I firmly believe that the international business community will always need a platform that enables top executives to meet each other and to give businesses a voice towards the administration. It’s therefore that I’m confident that AmCham Slovakia will play a key role in working for the interests of the American-Slovak business community also in the upcoming years.

Patrick Mikkelsen
Director, AmCham
Netherlands;
Chairman,
AmChams in
Europe



” AmCham in Slovakia should remain the leading platform (or international business association) in this country for the business community. It should further strengthen its role of facilitating significant and quick improvement of the local business environment and push for all parties to work toward the same goal – to make Slovakia an amazing country for living and for doing business. And there is still a lot that can be done to ensure this goal. AmCham should continue to focus on areas that are currently relevant and those that will be absolutely essential in the near and distant future.

Pavol Kopečný
General Manager,
ECENTER,
AmCham Board
member

