

HEALTH | KNOWLEDGE AND PEOPLE |
INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS |
SUSTAINABLE GROWTH | WELFARE SOCIETY

AmCham Slovenia Advocacy
Topics and Positions



AmCham
Slovenia



The biggest
international
business
community
in Slovenia

26
years

400 +
members
(businesses and organizations)

4,700 +
active individuals

2,500 +
members of the YOUng Platform



A culture of dialogue for a better quality of life and business environment in Slovenia

The members of the AmCham Slovenia international business community are aware that a culture of dialogue and strong relationships are vital to the progress of society. We believe that business, as an oasis of common sense, can contribute to a more reasonable and rational society, with the involvement of all stakeholders: science, government, civil society and others. By working together, and exchanging well-argued opinions and constructive proposals, we become stronger and better-prepared for the challenges posed by today's world.

AmCham Slovenia's advocacy program includes seven working committees that bring together more than 380 company representatives who are experts in their fields. Through our knowledge and vision, we aim to contribute to the overall development of society and the creation of a better business environment and a better quality of life in Slovenia.

Working together, exchanging ideas and making connections are key building-blocks of progress, which at AmCham Slovenia we put in place at all levels of our actions. Ajša Vodnik, CEO of AmCham Slovenia, last year assumed the leadership of AmChams in Europe as chair of the organization. This organization brings together 50 AmChams from 48 countries, and is a powerful business network in Europe, West Asia and Central Asia, while also acting as a vital bridge across the Atlantic. Together we build bridges of cooperation and reasonable dialogue, which lay the foundation for a successful future.

AmCham Slovenia Values

AmCham Slovenia's commitment to fostering a better business environment and a better quality of life in Slovenia has been built on values for 26 years now. **Trust, collaboration, optimism, integrity and ambition** are the values that guide all our efforts. Through these values and its extensive network of members from diverse sectors, AmCham Slovenia links know-how, sparks new ideas and proposes concrete solutions, in this way acting as the voice of Slovenian and international companies.

Trust

Our guiding principle is a continuous commitment to goodwill, consistency, and professionalism.

Collaboration

We build relationships with mutual respect, transparency, and openness.

Optimism

We focus on solutions, opportunities, and success.

Integrity

We prioritize honesty, responsibility, and dedication.

Ambition

We believe in our work, challenges, and growth.

Principal focuses of AmCham Advocacy for 2025

Health

The comprehensive modernization of the health system in Slovenia requires thoughtful and coordinated actions. A sustainable, solidarity-based, high-quality and accessible public healthcare system must be based on advanced solutions that place the individual at the very center. Key steps on this path include process digitalization, the creation of value-based care, clearly defined funding and allocation of rights, the strengthening of public-private partnerships, and an overhaul of governance and management in the health system. Slovenia needs to preserve accessible, advanced and solidarity-based healthcare, and above all to show respect for and trust in the work of doctors and medical personnel, which they undoubtedly deserve.

Knowledge and people

Awareness of the shortage of qualified labor and talent is of key importance. It is vital to debate the issues of how to retain highly qualified staff, how to make it easier for companies to hire foreign experts, and how to tailor education to the needs of the digital age. A fundamental step should be introducing computer and information science into elementary and high schools as a mandatory subject. AmCham's Ready 4D Future Committee has worked actively to meet this objective over the last year. Raising the reputation of key professions, such as doctors, teachers, social workers, nurses and childcare specialists, is also vital to ensuring the long-term stability and quality of public services. Furthermore, investing in experienced staff aged over 55 via a supportive work environment and lifelong learning is important to filling gaps in the labor market, strengthening mentoring, and creating a more inclusive and sustainable labor market.

International competitiveness

For competitiveness we need a predictable business environment, a positive

attitude towards the economy, and tax policy that is predictable and reasonable and does not encroach on constitutional rights. The key is ensuring a regulatory environment that supports innovation and protects the value created by intellectual endeavor, as this encourages progress in key areas. Reforming the pension system also plays an important role, as this affects the public at large and the general quality of life. A well-designed pension system could simultaneously create a broader base of Slovenian capital, which could be invested in Slovenian businesses.

Strengthening the sustainable future

Businesses are in a phase of green transition, which means that ESG criteria are no longer merely a pillar of corporate responsibility, but are becoming a prerequisite for investment, competitiveness and progress. The current updating of the Slovenia's Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan (the NEPN) is of key importance to complying with the new low-carbon technology targets and to ensuring energy security through investments in renewables and nuclear energy, such as the JEK2 project. Sustainable practices also need to be expanded into food production systems, with an emphasis on deforestation-free products, and by encouraging resilient supply chains to reduce biodiversity loss and carbon emissions.

Welfare society

Without a competitive and predictable business environment, we cannot ensure a wellbeing society, which is our collective aim. Encouraging the economy is of crucial importance, especially in the current global circumstances, which include a decline in orders, reduced production, a drop in consumption, and layoffs in numerous industries. Therefore, we oppose any additional burdens on the economy.

AmCham Committees



AmCham Slovenia

**HEALTH
& WELLBEING
COMMITTEE**



AmCham Slovenia

**INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
AND DIGITAL REGULATION
COMMITTEE**



AmCham Slovenia

**FINANCE
COMMITTEE**



AmCham Slovenia

**SUSTAINABLE
GROWTH
COMMITTEE**



AmCham Slovenia

**INVESTMENT
COMMITTEE**



AmCham Slovenia

**READY4DFUTURE
COMMITTEE**



AmCham Slovenia

**FUTURE OF WORK
& EDUCATION
COMMITTEE**



The goal of the AmCham Health and Wellbeing Committee is a sustainable, solidarity-based, high-quality, accessible healthcare system with the individual at the center.

Co-chairs:



URŠA LAKNER, MSc
Pfizer



JANKO BURGAR, MSc
Roche

Committee coordinator:

VIDA DOLENC POGAČNIK
AmCham Slovenija



AmCham Slovenia
**HEALTH
& WELLBEING
COMMITTEE**

Knowledge and Support

abbvie

AMGEN

Novartis

IBM

Johnson&Johnson

Medtronic

Pfizer

Roche

triglav

| TOPICS

**VALUE-BASED
HEALTHCARE
AND QUALITY
INDICATORS**

| POSITIONS

Value-based healthcare (VBHC) is an approach that focuses on treatment outcomes of significance to the patient throughout the entire cycle of care, from diagnosis to treatment and rehabilitation. VBHC aims to put in place healthcare systems that focus on creating the greatest value for patients. Instead of focusing solely on the volume of services provided (e.g. the number of interventions, treatments or hospitalizations), VBHC focuses on achieving the best possible outcomes for patients relative to cost. Here the key is first the comprehensive capture and processing of data (PROMs and clinical data alike), and then the introduction of payment models based on the treatment outcomes achieved, and not solely on the quantity of services provided. This approach also encourages the standardized monitoring of the quality and safety of healthcare services, which is the basis for improving the effectiveness of the system and better supporting patients on one hand, and simultaneously encouraging the development of healthcare systems on the other.

Like many other countries with universal healthcare systems, Slovenia is facing challenges such as demographic changes, the rising costs of healthcare and other subsystems, and backlogs in access to innovative therapies. Given the progress in medicine, all of these changes mean that the current models of healthcare and funding are no longer yielding optimal results for patients, or driving either progress in the system of the efficient use of resources. Therefore introducing a value-based healthcare system is of key importance to the long-term progress and viability of the system. Slovenia has already made a start on implementing performance and quality indicators, while further encouragement comes from the PROMs project being carried out by the Ministry of Health, although they are still insufficiently integrated into everyday practice. Notwithstanding that we are in the initial phases of introducing VBHC, we must ensure that the data and performance analysis of individual providers are systematically processed and made available to all stakeholders, as they are key to the decisions made by providers and of course by patients, decision-makers and payers.

| TOPICS

| POSITIONS

Particular attention must be given to the availability of advanced drugs and therapies. Slovenia has fallen behind numerous European countries in this respect: fewer than 50% of the drugs registered over the last three years are available - the WAIT factor (in Germany this figure is 96%), while the process for listing a new drug takes an average of 577 days (compared with 132 days in Germany). Quick access to innovative and more effective medicines (including updated methods of application) is crucial for disease management, reducing sick leave, and alleviating burdens on the economy. It has a direct impact on direct, indirect and induced costs, and we therefore support the broader understanding and introduction of methodologies for calculating the impact of smart investment on healthcare. The health sector has now become a strategic socioeconomic category, even if the public do not yet recognize it as an element of socioeconomic development. It is also the largest organization in Slovenia. A broader understanding of healthcare as a key element of creating a wellbeing society based on measurable indicators will allow for targeted investment, and also ensure its sustainability.

The simplification of administrative processes both in the area of clinical research and in faster access to innovative drugs is also worthy of attention, as this would grant faster access to innovative treatments for all citizens. By eliminating administrative barriers that do not require significant financial investments but represent substantial progress, we can make a profound impact and achieve significant benefits for society as a whole in a relatively short time, while ensuring long-term sustainability.

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| TOPICS

POSITIVE AND
LONG-TERM
EFFECTS THAT
DATA-DRIVEN
HEALTHCARE
AND THE USE
OF DIGITAL
TECHNOLOGIES
BRING TO THE
HEALTHCARE
SYSTEM

| POSITIONS

Data-driven healthcare and the associated implementation of modern approaches and digital technologies bring significant benefits to all stakeholders, as they enhance the quality of patient care, improve the efficiency of healthcare professionals, and increase the effectiveness and transparency of all processes. Telemedicine and digital solutions play a key role in increasing access to healthcare services for all members of the public, and particularly for vulnerable groups such as chronic patients. Pilot projects such as the demonstration digital hospital can lay the foundation for future reforms and upgrades to the healthcare system.

The main reasons why data-driven healthcare and digitalization are important include:

- **Improved accessibility and quality of healthcare:** Digitalization allows for more effective communication between patients and healthcare professionals, and better access to services, including the use of telemedicine;
- **More effective resource management:** Overhauling processes reduces the time taken for manual data entry and processing, while data-driven healthcare and the associated technology improves inventory management, patient monitoring and operational planning;
- **Cost reduction:** Digital medical records, for example, reduce the need for manual data entry, thus reducing the number of administrative errors, while data is held in one place and is accessible to healthcare professionals throughout the process;
- **Data security and protection:** Electronic systems reduce the risk of the loss or theft of documents, and allow for the controlled and secure use of medical data;
- **Faster and more accurate diagnostics and development of new solutions:** Data collected and processed in line with the data protection requirements allows for the development of progressive, personalized solutions, and for faster and more accurate diagnosis and initiation of suitable treatment tailored to the

| TOPICS

**PUBLIC-PRIVATE
COEXISTENCE
AND COOPERATION
TO THE FORE
IN MAINTAINING
QUALITY IN
SLOVENIAN
HEALTHCARE**

| POSITIONS

patient, while, not least, the patient becomes an active part of the system, in that they are directly included in the system by submitting information about their condition and their response to therapy in real time.

Digital technologies are not only an opportunity; they are also vital to reshaping the Slovenian healthcare system. The use of data-driven healthcare, improved telemedicine, and the development of pilot projects such as the digital hospital could make the healthcare system more flexible, efficient and accessible to all members of the public. This represents an important step towards sustainable and advanced healthcare.

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In light of the updated Health Services Act, we should be aware that healthcare is a public service, but this service has an economic nature, and needs to be understood and managed on this basis. Public healthcare is not defined by the ownership of the providers, but by the approach to funding. The key is that all providers in the public network – whether government-owned or private – meet the same conditions.

The public healthcare network must include all providers who meet the same conditions and standards, irrespective of whether they are government-owned or private. The key is the quality of the healthcare services and their availability to all members of the public, not the ownership structure of the individual providers.

One of the key changes that needs to be made is improving the payment models. The Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia must regulate providers' prices on the basis of actual costs, but the prices must be formed with regard to providers of average efficiency and according to the situation on the market for healthcare services. In this way the losses incurred by inefficient providers will force them to improve their performance, while the most efficient are rewarded for their good performance via profits.

| TOPICS

**MODERN
INFRASTRUCTURE
AND EQUIPMENT
- FUNDING AND
GOVERNANCE VIA
PUBLIC-PRIVATE
PARTNERSHIP**

| POSITIONS

In any case it is necessary to remove the restrictions on the remuneration of staff at public institutions, which will contribute to a more competitive and efficient healthcare system. It is important that all providers in the public network, whether private or public, work under the same conditions, and provide high-quality services to patients in the quickest possible time.

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The public-private partnership (PPP) model¹ covers the planning, building, financing and management of an individual project, and the same applies in healthcare. This usually means investment in healthcare infrastructure such as a hospital or state-of-the-art and complex (including financially prohibitive) medical equipment. A key advantage of the PPP model is the optimal sharing of project risks between public and private partners, with each partner taking on the area of risk they can better manage.

Experience from abroad shows that PPP projects are more successful precisely because of the appropriate risk-sharing between partners and the broader use of different expertise. Such projects are more development-oriented, involve more advanced treatment methods, and are more cost-effective. The PPP model brings both financial and non-financial benefits for the public partner, since private companies can access advanced technologies more quickly due to easier access to financing.

Modern methods of treating patients increasingly involve interdisciplinary skills. Since the development of medical treatments is associated with large financial investments, business and investment management skills and experience in applying advanced business practices are also becoming increasingly important. This very broad range of interdisciplinary knowledge is difficult to provide within the current collective of healthcare institutions, so the PPP business model is an appropriate way to combine advanced medical treatment expertise with efficient business management methods.

[1] A public-private partnership (PPP) is a business agreement entered into by a public healthcare institution and a private company that enables an investment in the public healthcare system.

| TOPICS

**SUSTAINABLE
FUNDING OF
THE HEALTHCARE
SYSTEM**

| POSITIONS

Reforming the financing of the public healthcare system in Slovenia is an urgent priority that is linked to healthcare access. The Health Care and Health Insurance Act (ZZVZZ-T), which introduces compulsory healthcare contributions in place of supplemental health insurance, is not the right direction for the reform of the healthcare system.

Slovenia spends 8.3% of GDP² on healthcare, below the EU target (10% of GDP). Compulsory health insurance covers a wide range of services, but top-ups are needed for many, and are mostly covered by supplemental insurance. Given the demographic situation, the rising burden of chronic disease and lifestyle diseases, and the rapid technological progress in healthcare, healthcare expenditure can be expected to rise. Another cause for concern is inadequate disease control, which gives rise not only to direct healthcare costs, but also to indirect costs via the loss of productivity caused by absenteeism, presentism, patients being cared for by family members, patients exiting the labor market, early retirement and early death. Merely eliminating supplemental health insurance is therefore not a solution. The limits on GDP mean that the system needs to be systemically reformed.

We support a change to the funding of the public healthcare system, where other resources are sought alongside the government coffers. These are provided by creating baskets of rights funded in different ways: the first basket is funded from existing compulsory health insurance, the second from insurance policies held with insurance corporations, and the third from the budget. The decision as to which services to include in a particular basket must be made on the basis of credible macroeconomic studies and analysis.

The careful introduction of new forms of non-tax healthcare funding would largely preserve solidarity. Systemic solutions and the introduction of various forms of individual and collective voluntary health insurance would relieve the

[2] Data refers to 2022.

| TOPICS

**CORPORATE
GOVERNANCE
AND COMPETENT
HEALTHCARE
PROFESSIONALS**

| POSITIONS

burden on people. In the long term the worrying rise of out-of-pocket payment, which creates a parallel market-based healthcare system, means that only those who can pay for healthcare would be able to afford it.

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One key challenge in managing and operating hospitals and healthcare service providers is the legal arrangements, which currently do not allow for the introduction of advanced business models. A strict framework for public institutions inhibits agility, innovation and adaptation to the needs of individual organizations, which has an adverse impact on the quality of management, on staff remuneration and on providing optimal patient care. Particular attention also needs to be given to ensuring that managerial personnel at public healthcare institutions are properly qualified. Leadership in the age of digital transformation entails a particular challenge, and leaders and managers need to be aware of the major opportunities for progress, and the urgent changes required in this connection.

If it is assumed that the managerial personnel are properly qualified, then successful governance also requires an increase in the autonomy of directors, the introduction of corporate governance with supervisory boards who have clear responsibilities and expertise, and legal organizational changes that will allow healthcare institutions to function more efficiently. Putting adequate performance indicators in place is also vital.

Quality systems and the monitoring of per-patient costs represent a major aspect of modern management, in that they allow the efficiency of healthcare institutions to be measured, and provide support for data-based decision-making. These systems, already set out by law in many western European countries, allow for analysis at the national level and for transparent management based on scientific evidence. At the same time the expectations of stakeholders, from patients to payers, are rising, which means that senior management and all staff need to be even more focused on efficiency, quality, safety, and patient and staff satisfaction.

| TOPICS

HEALTHY
LIFESTYLE AND
ENCOURAGING
PEOPLE TO TAKE
RESPONSIBILITY
FOR THEIR OWN
HEALTH

*More about the
Committee's work*



| POSITIONS

Optimizing the organization of work and introducing contemporary practices, such as mentoring and training in the management of public institutions, are key to improving processes in healthcare. It is also vital to make changes to the remuneration system, so that healthcare workers are motivated on the basis of outcomes, efficiency and quality of work. Through the introduction of clear targets for senior management, greater responsibility on the part of supervisory bodies, and job rotation, the healthcare system can become more agile, efficient and patient-focused, which will facilitate the sustainable, accessible and solidarity-based working of the system.

- Encouraging the public to take responsibility for their own health, in conjunction with prevention programs, plays a key role in creating a healthier society. Research shows that 90% of premature deaths in the EU are the result of poor systemic care in the area of prevention. It is therefore vital to establish effective public health approaches that encourage harm reduction and promote healthier lifestyles.

Another measure related to the inadequate systemic promotion of healthy lifestyles is the extension of the period during which sick pay is covered by the employer to 30 days. This is a provision that representatives of the corporate sector find hard to accept. A measure of this kind leads to additional financial burdens on the corporate sector, which is not sustainable. It is important to establish an active dialogue between the government, employers, and citizens and work together to find solutions that promote a responsible approach to health.

The principle of harm reduction, also known as the harm reduction approach, has been successfully implemented in some EU countries in managing non-communicable chronic diseases such as diabetes, smoking, and excessive sun exposure. This approach does not solely advocate for the elimination of harmful habits but encourages the use of alternative, scientifically proven methods or alternative products that replace harmful behaviors.



The AmCham Finance Committee advocates for a predictable and competitive business environment, where companies have the opportunity to develop and grow, while the tax and financial framework supports them rather than hinders them.

Co-chairs:



LUKA GABROVŠEK
Mastercard Slovenija



ŽIGA VIŽINTIN, MSc
Pokojninska družba A

Committee coordinator:

VIDA DOLENC POGAČNIK
AmCham Slovenija



AmCham Slovenia
**FINANCE
COMMITTEE**

Knowledge and Support



TOPICS

**TAX POLICY IN
SLOVENIA SHOULD
BE PREDICTABLE
AND REASONABLE
AND NOT
ENCROACH ON
CONSTITUTIONAL
RIGHTS**

**A DEVELOPMENT
CAP FOR A
DEVELOPMENT-
ORIENTED
SLOVENIA**

POSITIONS

Slovenia's tax environment is sadly going in the direction of weaker competitiveness for the Slovenian economy, which has fallen seven places to 44th on the global competitiveness index. The reasons for the current situation are as follows: the expiry of income tax allowances, additional obligations under the Employment Act, the conversion of voluntary health contributions into compulsory contributions, higher labor costs in the case of cross-border service provision, the introduction of new levies to cover the costs of long-term social care, extended coverage of sick leave by the employer, additional obligations for employees and employers with regard to the recording of work hours, the introduction of administrative burdens in the monitoring and reporting of prices, and a rise in corporate income tax, while industry is seeing a significant rise in energy costs as a result of the new approach to billing network charges.

The so-called mini tax reform, which includes changes to six tax laws, places additional burdens on businesses and individuals. The reform does not eliminate the key challenges facing the Slovenian tax system, such as the burden on labor, the ability to attract high-skilled workers and the fight against the grey economy. The stability and predictability of the tax environment are vitally important to attracting investment, growing the economy and maintaining long-term competitiveness. Ill-considered measures and additional burdens on business will not help to meet these objectives, but will instead increase the pressure on businesses, individuals and the middle class, which in the long term entails less funding for key public services such as healthcare, education and civil administration.

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For years now economy and the Finance Committee have been calling for the introduction of a development cap on pension and health insurance contributions. This is a vital investment for Slovenia if we wish to become (and remain) a country in which our businesses can develop top-level products and services, and enable young people to stay in Slovenia and be productive in high added-value jobs.

| TOPICS

**MEASURES THAT
INCREASE THE
ATTRACTIVENESS
OF OUR TAX
ENVIRONMENT FOR
INVESTMENTS**

**THE SECOND
PENSION PILLAR
AND THE
DEVELOPMENT OF
CAPITAL MARKETS**

| POSITIONS

We propose a development cap at two times the average gross salary, since this would cover the key professions that drive development – including engineers, scientists, developers and professors. It also includes occupations such as managers and doctors, who have invested a lot in their own skills and development and are particularly internationally mobile.

A development cap is also a signal to foreign professionals that Slovenia's fiscal environment is competitive, since we are "competing" for talent with comparable countries.

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We propose maintaining tax allowances for R&D investment, maintaining tax relief on investments at 40% and reducing the taxation of dividends, which would have a positive effect on attracting investment in capital assets. We are committed to simplifying the processes for determining tax residency for individuals, as faster and more transparent processes would increase competitiveness and speed up the transfer of foreign companies' regional functions to Slovenia. We also support tax incentives in employee remuneration, and incentives for growing innovative and fast-growing companies.

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Increasing existing tax allowances for the development of the second pension pillar will enhance the attractiveness of saving, and the volume of savings in the second pillar, which are reinvested into the economy and significantly contribute to the development of the capital markets, while also providing savers with a decent pension.

The second pension pillar, represented in Slovenia by voluntary supplemental pension insurance, has existed since 2001 and today includes around 60% of all employed individuals. Development of this second pillar is essential for the stability

| TOPICS

| POSITIONS

**SUSTAINABILITY
OF THE PENSION
SYSTEM AND
INCREASING
PRODUCTIVITY**

of the pension system. Not only will the second pillar provide higher pensions to individuals during retirement, it will increase the volume of savings that are reinvested in the economy and contribute significantly to the development of Slovenia's capital markets. This increases access to capital for domestic businesses, which will reduce their borrowing costs and boost their competitiveness, which in turn can lead to growth and job creation. It would be vital to open a dialogue with all stakeholders about the introduction of mandatory self-enrollment on pension plans for all those employees who are not enrolled now, as the aforementioned measure has been proven to significantly increase participation in pension plans in numerous countries, most recently the UK, Poland and Slovakia, where the positive experience could be adapted to Slovenia and transferred here.

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Under the current pension legislation, employees who retire in the coming years will be entitled to a pension in the amount of 63.5% of the average net wage, which will not suffice for a comfortable retirement. Pension-related expenditure in Slovenia already stands at 10% of GDP, while OECD projections place it at 15.7% of GDP in 2050. Given the growing number of pensioners, it is therefore unrealistic to expect the state to provide additional resources capable of maintaining pension levels at their current levels in the future, let alone ensure an increase to the level fit for a comfortable retirement.

GDP growth in Slovenia is mainly being driven by an increase in the quantity of labor, while real productivity growth remains modest. With demographic trends predicting an aging population, more will need to be done in future to raise productivity. We must therefore endeavor to raise productivity to the level of the leading innovators of the European Union. "The number of individuals in the 20 to 64 age group has fallen by 67,000 in the last decade, while projections (taking into account moderate net migration) show this number falling by a

| TOPICS

**LONG-TERM CARE
SHOULD NOT BE
JUST ANOTHER
BURDEN ON
EMPLOYERS**

DIGITAL PAYMENTS

| POSITIONS

further 43,000 by 2030 and by 119,000 by 2050 compared with 2022.”¹ The answer to the question of how to increase productivity lies, in part, in the use of generative artificial intelligence, which “can be used for areas such as expression, reasoning and communication, coordination and design.”²

With the aim of ensuring the long-term sustainability of pensions, the Finance Committee is also committed to transitioning away from pensions indexed to wages and inflation to indexation to inflation alone, with Slovenia projected to see huge growth in pension expenditure as a ratio to GDP after 2030 according to the OECD. We are also expecting a rise in the retirement age: the average retirement age in Slovenia is two years lower than in OECD countries overall, which is forcing us into fiscally sustainable pension reforms.

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Under the new Long-Term Care Act, 1% of the gross salary is contributed by the employee and 1% by the employer, while at the same time the individual contributes 1% of their calculated gross pension. We note that, with the introduction of the new contribution, the tax burden on labor in Slovenia is increasing once again, rising disproportionately just above the average salary and ranking among the highest in the European Union. Additional tax burdens on labor are therefore unacceptable. Reserves should first be found through streamlining of the healthcare and long-term social care system. We should not forget that increased tax burdens on labor are accompanied by growth in the grey economy and a search for ways to bypass the system, where the final tax take can even be lower than before the new burdens were introduced.

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The level of the grey economy in Slovenia is relatively high. Cash, the use of which

[1] *Productivity Report 2023*, p. 17

[2] *Productivity Report 2023*, p. 100

| TOPICS

| POSITIONS

was enshrined in the constitution, is still the prevailing means of payment, while infrastructure for the acceptance of electronic payments is still relatively undeveloped. People should have the opportunity to choose their method of payment, including digital payment, since both local and foreign consumers expect to have a choice of different payment instruments and the option of electronic payment.

The Electronic Payment Instruments Act (ZEPS) represents a significant step in encouraging the digitalization and modernization of payment infrastructure in Slovenia. The obligation to accept at least one electronic means of payment will increase financial transparency and competitiveness, and will provide a greater choice for consumers and businesses. It is key that the proposed solutions are interoperable, as the important economic sector of tourism requires solutions that accommodate foreign visitors.

It is also vital that Slovenia eliminates additional taxation of financial services, which places domestic providers of payment and financial services in a worse position than foreign providers, and actively encourages the development of open banking and begins preparation for the implementation of the coming digital euro, which over the long term will strengthen the competitiveness and efficiency of the payment system.

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The Finance Committee emphasizes the importance of proportional excise duties that take into account the consequences of increases, including a decline in sales, business closures, and job losses, which would directly and negatively impact state revenues from contributions, income tax, and other business-related levies. Sudden excise tax hikes often lead to cross-border shopping, the growth of the shadow economy, and the purchase of low-cost products of questionable quality, which does not contribute to improving public health or reducing healthcare costs.

To ensure stability and predictability in tax policy, we support the introduction of a multi-year excise duty schedule that allows for a gradual increase in excise rates, prevents sudden market shocks, and protects tax revenues in the long run.

EXCISE DUTIES

*More about the
Committee's work*





The AmCham Investment Committee advocates for a competitive business environment in Slovenia that is predictable and stable, ensuring legal security and transparency for all domestic and foreign investors. Slovenia has an excellent geostrategic position at the "heart of Europe" and has the potential to become the top choice for investors entering EU markets.

Co-chairs:



**NEVENKA
ČREŠNAR PERGAR**
NP Consulting



ALJOŠA KRŽIČ
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Committee coordinator:

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AmCham Slovenija



AmCham Slovenia

**INVESTMENT
COMMITTEE**

Knowledge and Support

CERHA HEMPEL

| TOPICS

A PREDICTABLE AND STIMULATING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

FEWER BUREAUCRATIC CHALLENGES AND MORE EFFICIENT DECISION- MAKING PROCESSES

| POSITIONS

The key to attracting domestic and foreign investors is a business environment that offers stability, predictability, legal certainty, and transparency. We are committed to ensuring that legislative changes that affect the business environment are well thought out, strategic and coordinated through dialogue with the corporate sector.

The committee warns that all hasty and poorly considered interventions in the stability of the business environment (the introduction of new taxes, tax increases, amendment of regulations) spread distrust in government and reduce international competitiveness. Legislative changes should be goal-oriented and well-argued and, at the same time, based on strategic consideration of their medium- and long- term impact. Current tax policy, including the recent changes, is failing to ensure sufficient predictability and competitiveness. Instead this places a greater burden on businesses, and reduces their ability to plan, while increasing the risks to long-term economic growth.

The committee firmly believes that a predictable and legally stable business environment is of key importance not only for the sustainable development of traditional sectors, but also for promoting innovations in fast-growing industries.

The AmCham Investment Committee will continue to advocate for a predictable and safe business environment that encourages investment and supports sustainable economic growth in Slovenia. Through our efforts, we hope to contribute to the creation of a business-friendly environment that promotes economic development, and positions Slovenia as an attractive destination for both domestic and foreign investors.

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The committee emphasizes that government services should be there to help both citizens and investors. Procedures for obtaining various types of permits must be clear, short and simple.

The committee underlines the need for improved communication in procedures

| TOPICS

**THE CHALLENGES OF
TAX REFORM
FOR A COMPETITIVE
BUSINESS
ENVIRONMENT**

**THOUGHTFUL
TRANSPOSITION OF
EU LEGISLATION
FOR SUSTAINABLE
ECONOMIC GROWTH
IN SLOVENIA**

| POSITIONS

to obtain the various permits that are essential for domestic and foreign investors when setting up investments in Slovenia, and therefore proposes the formulation of clear instructions or procedural routes for obtaining permits of various types. The committee also proposes the establishment of specialized interdepartmental project coordination groups to simplify the coordination of decision-making between different administrative bodies. The committee emphasizes the importance of clear and consistent interpretation of regulatory frameworks, since legal certainty and predictability are fundamental for stimulating the business environment. Viewed overall, the committee's proposal aims at the optimization of decision-making processes, ensuring efficiency and transparency for investors in Slovenia.

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The tax reform adopted at the end of last year, which includes new versions of six taxation laws, fails to address the key issues faced by the tax environment in Slovenia. Despite the allowances introduced, the committee feels that the measures are not ambitious enough to achieve genuine progress and to increase Slovenia's competitiveness. In addition the frequent changes right before the end of the year make it difficult for businesses to prepare for the new tax year, and create uncertainties in the business environment.

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In light of the Investment Committee's warnings regarding the past approach of the Slovenian legislature, which often included stricter criteria than those required by EU directives, the committee acknowledges the complexity of balancing improvements in the quality and competitiveness of the Slovenian business environment, and emphasizes the potential impact on the competitiveness and attractiveness of Slovenia for domestic and foreign investments.

| TOPICS

| POSITIONS

**IMPORTANCE
OF GLOBAL
CORPORATIONS
FOR THE LOCAL
BUSINESS
ENVIRONMENT**

The AmCham Investment Committee underlines the importance of a balanced, cooperative and progressive approach to the transposition of EU legislation/regulations into Slovenia's domestic law. In dialogue with various stakeholders, and by advocating measures that support both environmental goals and economic competitiveness, we can contribute to the development of a regulatory environment that encourages sustainable growth and maintains Slovenia's attractiveness as an investment destination.

Given the country's size and the presence of diverse industries, Slovenia could turn the implementation of EU legislation to its own advantage and become a "regulatory model" in strategic areas that are of key importance to it. This could be our competitive advantage.

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Since the very beginning, Slovenia's business environment has been inseparably linked to international companies – more or less since the arrival of the first global corporation in Slovenia. Global corporations bring know-how, innovation, good practices and high added-value jobs to the Slovenian business environment. Additionally, many Slovenian companies are either connected to or depend on these global corporations as partners.

The small size of the market, the high tax burden on labor resulting in an expensive workforce, and a business environment that is not the most favorable to foreign investors have led quite a number of international companies to close their offices in Slovenia over the past decade. This trend has been further exacerbated by the pandemic.

The consequences of a global corporation withdrawing from the market are manifold: the impact on the industry as a whole, the fact that the country ceases to be an important player in a specific industry, an end to the influx of know-

| TOPICS

| POSITIONS

how and good practices, reduction of the effect of corporate social responsibility (funding sports, culture, etc.), and the disappearance of high added-value jobs, among numerous other effects.

The presence of global corporations has a measurable impact on Slovenia's economic prosperity and the attractiveness of the Slovenian business environment to foreign investors. The committee sees a solution in sensible tax reform, the introduction of a development cap that will reduce the burden on high added-value jobs, better promotion of Slovenia as an excellent country for investors and the promotion of Slovenia in areas where we have history and an existing ecosystem, such as biotechnology and pharmaceuticals.

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The single market is the heart of the European economy, but its role as a driver of investment in the region is not always apparent. The committee calls for a deepening of the single market and the renewal of the European integration dynamic. A well-functioning single market is the key to encouraging more investment and innovation in Europe, financing social security, providing resources for high-quality education, and making additional sustainable commitments. The European Union will have to focus on improving competitiveness by establishing dialogue with industry, rather than by continuing with excessive regulation. This dialogue should encourage environmental and social responsibility without overburdening with rules. Frequently contradictory rules hinder innovation and reduce attractiveness to investors. A responsible economy aims to ensure social rights, but without cooperation between political decision-makers and industry, this will be impossible. A comprehensive strategy that fosters innovation, maintains social balance, and establishes an efficient energy system will be key to improving Europe's competitiveness in the global economic environment.

EUROPEAN COMPETITIVENESS

*More about the
Committee's work*





The AmCham Future of Work and Education Committee supports efforts for a more flexible labor market, the creation of new forms of work, and the preservation of jobs in Slovenia. At the same time, it advocates the introduction of the competencies and skills of the future into the education system and the labor market, and promotes intergenerational cooperation and the attraction and retention of talent in Slovenia.

Co-chairs:



NEVENKA
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AmCham Slovenia

FUTURE OF WORK
& EDUCATION
COMMITTEE

Knowledge and Support



| TOPICS

**INTRODUCING NEW
FORMS OF WORK
TO THE LABOR
MARKET**

| POSITIONS

The labor market must become more flexible, and must allow different forms of work to keep pace with technological progress and new types of jobs. Ensuring successful business processes will require businesses to work with a range of experts, and to create jobs whose main features are flexibility, efficiency, competitiveness and the use of new models and approaches, having regard for the digital transformation. Businesses that are more flexible in hiring and that pay more attention to employee satisfaction and wellbeing in the workplace have often proven to be more successful.

Remote working has become a fixture of the modern work environment, as it allows for greater flexibility and free allocation of work hours, but it also requires a high degree of motivation and self-discipline. The key to successfully implementing this form of work is legislation that allows for flexibility, reduces administrative barriers and simplifies the procedures for ensuring safety. The current arrangements remain too strict, and therefore require adaptation to the needs of the digital age and young generations in the labor market.

The amendment to the Labour and Social Security Registers Act, with new rules for recording working hours, does not align with the need for greater flexibility in work processes. While it aims to prevent violations of workers' rights, time tracking often does not reflect actual working hours and breaks, introducing additional administrative burdens for employers without clear benefits for employees.

Slovenia was one of the first countries to legalize the right to disconnect in November 2024. This requires employers to respect the privacy of their employees during their free time. Stringent regulation brings rigidity into work processes, limits flexibility, reduces the competitiveness of businesses, and increases the administrative burden. Instead of formal restrictions it is important to encourage a more comprehensive strategy of work management that allows for flexible work hours and remote working, and supports the wellbeing and mental health of employees. By encouraging a work environment that values results, instead of presence and permanent availability, businesses are able to respond better to the challenges of con-

| TOPICS

**RETAINING
DOMESTIC TALENT
AND SKILLS AND
ATTRACTING
FOREIGN EXPERTS**

| POSITIONS

temporary working, while reducing the risk of employee burnout at the same time.

- Between 8,000 and 10,000 people emigrate from Slovenia each year, which means that it is losing an entire generation every two to three years. The emigration of high-skilled workers from Slovenia is causing an economic loss of up to 1.2% of GDP each year, while the main reasons for leaving are better employment opportunities, higher pay, and a better standard of living in other countries. Slovenia must create an environment that will allow talented individuals to develop their abilities and enhance them with various skills. Talent requires an environment that is aware of its contribution, prizes it and rewards it, and is at the same time capable of providing new opportunities that lead to growth and the further development of talents. Only in this way will high added-value jobs remain in Slovenia and continue to be created here.

In accordance with a strategy setting out what kind of future we want, we must come up with a clear plan that will stimulate and reward domestic and foreign experts and attract highly qualified individuals from elsewhere. Only occupations that employ highly qualified individuals and create higher added value will contribute to social progress and ensure a wellbeing society.

The new Personal Income Tax Act, which introduces a new tax allowance for highly skilled workers from abroad, is a step in the right direction, although it is limited to a narrow group of workers aged under 40 who create high added value and work abroad. We advocate for the tax relief to apply to all highly qualified Slovenian professionals working in Slovenia and abroad, regardless of age. This would encourage a broader base of experts and enhance Slovenia's attractiveness as a destination for work and career development. Such a tax reform would more comprehensively address labor market needs and long-term goals of retaining and attracting top professionals in Slovenia.

| TOPICS

**INTEGRATING
FUTURE
COMPETENCIES
INTO THE
ECONOMY****ADAPTING
EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAMS TO THE
COMPETENCIES
AND SKILLS OF
THE FUTURE**

| POSITIONS

- We emphasize the need to invest in people at all levels of businesses and organizations, since there will be no economic growth without the development of the competencies and skills of the future, which will become indispensable in the labor market in the coming years and decades. Businesses need to adapt their work processes to make people's work easier and encourage the development of the relevant, specific competencies dictated by the future of work. Since people bring new ideas, inspire others and are key to the success of organizations, it is essential that we invest in their development and strengthen their competencies.

- Technological progress, digitalization, and automation are permanently changing the perception of work, and therefore require changes and modernization in the education system. The competencies of the future such as digital literacy, abstract thinking and algorithmic thinking should be a mandatory part of the education system, since only in this way will young people be adequately equipped to master the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities of the digital age. In the desire to prepare young people for the digital future, where they will be able to work on an equal basis with peers from other countries, we are supporting the adoption of updated guidelines for the national childcare and education program for 2023 to 2033, which introduce digital literacy to the updated study plans for the elementary school and high school program and the curriculum for kindergartens, although we are pushing for the urgent introduction of the subject of digital language (previously communicated as computer and information science) along the entire vertical, which needs to become a mandatory part of education in the digital age.

TOPICS**SUSTAINABLE
LEADERSHIP**

Sustainable leadership is a new perspective and model in the management of organizations and people. It represents a vision that goes beyond immediate, short-term benefits with an awareness of the role of the organization in a broader context. Sustainable leadership chooses strategies to achieve results that meet the criteria of environmental, social and financial performance. Organizations that have already internalized this concept have a competitive advantage, as this perspective brings opportunities in the form of innovations, continual improvements and long-term success.

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**LIFELONG
LEARNING**

Individuals, businesses and society must realize that constant learning and constant supplementing of knowledge will be necessary. Businesses, organizations and the government must include lifelong learning in their internal educational processes and corporate culture. In this context the microcredentials yielded by the University of Ljubljana's sustainable society project (ULTRA) offer a fast and flexible solution for obtaining specific skills and know-how that can easily be incorporated into existing career paths and education systems, and consequently bring immediate positive value for employers and broader social needs.

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**INTERGENERATIONAL
COOPERATION**

Intergenerational cooperation can improve the functioning of organizations and employee relations, and contribute to greater competitiveness in the market. In Slovenia, where the population is aging, it is vital to encourage employers to hire people aged over 55, and to motivate them to remain active and to share their knowledge with younger generations. The statistics show that the population is aging, the share of young people is falling, while older people will account for a third of the total population by 2060. Older employees offer companies stability,

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| POSITIONS

**LONG-TERM
SICK LEAVE:
A CHALLENGE
FOR HEALTH,
WORK, AND
COMPETITIVENESS**

mentoring and exceptional professional know-how, which fills the staffing gaps and complements the skills of younger colleagues. Effective measures include tax incentives, a rise in the retirement age, the systemic regulation of long-term social care, and the overcoming of stereotypes about older workers. Adjusting the work environment and treating different generations equally benefits not only the individuals concerned, but also the productivity and growth of the businesses, who boost their competitiveness and create an inclusive and sustainable labor market.

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Sick leave in Slovenia is becoming an increasing challenge for the modern work environment and economy. On average, the share of sick leave amounts to 21.6 working days per employee per year. For every hundred employees, six are on sick leave daily, while compensation costs have risen from €216 million to €620 million annually over the past decade. The number of individuals on sick leave for more than a year has increased from 3,500 in 2014 to 9,500 in 2024. Slovenia is the only country without a time limit on the duration of sick leave – the longest recorded case has lasted for more than 13 years. One of the key reasons for prolonged sick leave is long waiting times for healthcare services, which further extend treatment and recovery periods.

These concerning statistics call for effective strategies to reduce absenteeism and to encourage a healthy work environment. Comprehensive solutions that address systemic deficiencies are needed, including:

- limiting the duration of sick leave to two years, with potential exceptions for specific medical conditions,
- optimizing the processes for adapting positions to employees returning to work after serious illnesses and injuries, with officially reduced capacity to work,

TOPICS

POSITIONS

- merging the medical commission of the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia and the disability commission of the Pension and Disability Insurance Institute, which decide on sick leave and disability retirement, into a unified expert body with clear rules for the comprehensive assessment of patients, and
- preparing a return-to-work plan that focuses on the abilities that the individual retains even after illness or injury.

On the business side, it is essential to promote solutions that include establishing a culture of trust, encouraging a healthy lifestyle, and optimizing work processes. The AmCham Future of Work and Education Committee supports efforts for systemic changes that will contribute to a healthy and productive work environment, reduce absenteeism, enable better and faster reintegration of employees after illness or injury, and strengthen the competitiveness of the Slovenian economy.

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Doctors, teachers, social workers, nurses and childcare specialists play a key role in maintaining public health, education, social stability and general societal wellbeing. Despite their invaluable contribution, these professions face staffing gaps, overwork, and often a lack of appreciation by society.

Enhancing the reputation of these professions is a necessary step for the long-term stability and quality of public services. In addition to improving working conditions and providing appropriate incentives, such as greater flexibility and support for further professional education, it is also essential to raise broader awareness of the value of these professions and establish clear criteria for career development and financial incentives that are competitive with those abroad.

RAISING THE REPUTATION OF KEY PROFESSIONS

More about the Committee's work





Intellectual property is one of the most important competitive advantages for any company and the country as a whole. Knowledge, innovation, and creativity are fundamental values on which we must build economic and social development. Special attention must also be given to the increasingly complex regulation of the digital environment and business operations, particularly in light of new regulations in the European Union.

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**INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
AND DIGITAL REGULATION
COMMITTEE**

Knowledge and Support

JADEK & PENSA

TOPICS

**DEVELOPMENT OF
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
AND A STRATEGY FOR
ITS REGULATION IN
SLOVENIA AND THE
EUROPEAN UNION****THE ISSUE OF INVENTIONS
AND COPYRIGHTED WORKS
ARISING FROM EMPLOYMENT
RELATIONSHIPS**

POSITIONS

A high-tech economy needs a supporting research infrastructure and highly qualified personnel, who are an integral part of the story of all globally successful tech companies. In Slovenia this area requires further development, since current legislation and the existing body of case law are inadequate in places. The committee notes the (persistently) poor understanding of the importance of protecting intellectual property and ownership rights, particularly at SMEs, and we therefore welcome the adoption of the National Intellectual Property Strategy 2030, and are working for active involvement in the preparation of the action plan for its implementation.

For Slovenia to become a high-tech, wealthy society, it needs a quick overhaul of the legal framework, including the area of employee inventions, and the promotion of better and more effective enforcement of the adopted rules and principles in connection with intellectual property. The main approaches to ensuring a better environment for intellectual property in Slovenia include a more fundamental awareness of the use and protection of intellectual property rights at public and business organizations, to best meet the interests of all the groups involved. In addition it is vital to ensure effective judicial protection in the case of breaches of intellectual property rights, which brings a greater level of confidence and predictability in the proper protection of investments in intellectual property.

The committee also highlights the urgency of the systematic inclusion of topics related to intellectual property and digital literacy in the study and teaching processes at faculties, as this is knowledge that is key to supporting innovations and the effective protection of intellectual property in the economy.

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Also of exceptional importance to the successful development of the companies and individuals that are the backbone of the development of new technological and business solutions is the proper regulation of the area of employee inventions and copyrights.

| TOPICS

| POSITIONS

**ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE
AND
INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY RIGHTS**

Inventions created during employment are a key source of innovation, but bring legal and financial challenges with regard to ownership and remuneration. Slovenian legislation regulates the area of employee inventions, and envisages the employer's right to take over the invention and appropriate remuneration for the employee. However it is extremely difficult to estimate the remuneration in terms of money, which consequently makes it harder to determine fair rewards for the employee.

Questions of copyrights in employment are frequently resolved on an ad hoc basis, which becomes problematic when an agreement cannot be reached, as there are no suitable legal arrangements for these cases. The current legislation does not offer clear guidelines, for which reason the committee proposes arrangements at the level of employers' collective agreements or bylaws as a temporary solution.

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The evolution of AI brings challenges in the area of intellectual property, as AI generates content that is or could be protected by intellectual property rights, where the issue that could arise is how to place these within existing legal frameworks. Current legislation recognizes authorship only for natural persons, which could give rise to a legal lacuna with regard to AI-generated content.

The committee will monitor the development of law and case law in connection with AI and its role in the area of intellectual property, and will promote appropriate changes in the legal framework to properly balance protection of the interests of creators and users of AI systems, while at the same time it will be concerned with promoting creativity and high ethical standards in the area of AI. The committee welcomes the recently adopted European legislation on AI, as a suitable basis for the further development of the regulation of AI at the global level.

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TOPICS

**DIGITAL
REGULATION
PACKAGE —
“EUROPE’S
DIGITAL DECADE”**

POSITIONS

Being aware of and implementing the legal arrangements being formulated by the European Union within the framework of Europe’s digital decade has come to be of fundamental importance to succeeding in the business environment of the European Union, and increasingly in the global market for digital services too. This includes some bundles of legislation that have already significantly shaped the European and Slovenian digital landscape or will do so in the near future: the Digital Services Act, the Digital Markets Act, the Artificial Intelligence Act, regulations covering data management and access, and numerous other (related) regulations.

The increasingly complex regulations in the area of intellectual property and digital business are affecting technological processes in the digital market. The committee is committed to a level playing field for all market participants, with the particular goal of ensuring that Slovenian companies, irrespective of their size, gain opportunities to effectively participate in the single digital market, thereby becoming competitive in the international environment. It is necessary to find solutions that will allow for lasting cooperation with global online companies and platforms, mindful that 80% of digital transactions, marketing and communications in Slovenia are based on the services of these very companies and platforms. The committee is therefore committed to putting in place a balanced and fair digital environment, where Slovenian companies will be able to work successfully with international players, while Slovenia becomes an attractive business environment for major digital companies who are active globally.

At the same time the committee draws attention to the challenges brought by new regulations and the creation of numerous new regulators. It welcomes the complexity of the regulations, but also highlights that the key issue lies in their implementation, including in light of the frequent lack of attentiveness that individual regulators can fall prey to when strengthening their actions.

The committee will work to maintain close contacts with regulators, to serve as a bridge between them and businesses. It believes it is vital to support regulators in

TOPICS

**IMPORTANCE OF
TRANSFERRING
KNOWLEDGE
FROM RESEARCH
INSTITUTIONS TO
ECONOMY**

**COMPLEXITY OF
INTERNATIONAL
COMMERCIAL
CONTRACTS**

*More about the
Committee's work*



POSITIONS

the implementation of legislation, as, without consistency of practice, companies active in the fields of the DSA, the DMA and AI will be unable to effectively realize their activities.

- The committee advocates for strengthening cooperation between research institutions, universities, educational organizations, and the economy. Universities must become the focal point of research and development, and enable the optimal commercialization of inventions and other intellectual property rights. Companies, with their vision and development plans, must become an important bridge between education and research institutions and the needs of the market and wider society. Only through close cooperation between research institutions and the economy will Slovenia be able to develop a sustainable and competitive innovation ecosystem that will contribute to long-term growth and development.

- International commercial contracts, particularly in the area of the ICT industry, with express international elements, represent a particular challenge for Slovenian companies, owing to their complexity, which is being further increased by digitalization and globalization. In handling these contracts Slovenian companies face several challenges, such as the complexity of contractual clauses, a lack of experience, the risk of lack of awareness of provisions and time sensitivity, which limits the opportunity for in-depth analysis. Large amounts of legal language and technical terminology make it difficult to understand obligations, which can lead to legal disputes or financial losses.

The committee emphasizes the need to raise awareness and expertise in this area. As key solutions, it proposes organizing training sessions, collaborating with experts, developing guidelines for contract management, and utilizing digital tools for contract risk analysis. Additionally, it seeks to strengthen international cooperation, enabling Slovenian companies to access best practices and global legal resources.



A sustainable future entails a change in the social paradigm, and thus offers an opportunity for growth and innovation. Sustainability is the answer to the challenges of the climate crisis and the key to the transition to a low-carbon, green society with a high quality of life.

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AmCham Slovenija



AmCham Slovenia

**SUSTAINABLE
GROWTH
COMMITTEE**

| TOPICS

**CO₂ IS THE
NEW CURRENCY**

| POSITIONS

The European Union aims to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. The first milestone on this journey is to cut emissions by 55% by 2030. Businesses, which play the main role in the transition to a sustainable society, should understand sustainability as an opportunity for growth and innovation and a mechanism to promote values. The AmCham Sustainable Growth Committee thus places the green transition at the forefront of economic and societal development, along with new business models, organizational structures, business transformations, and policy formulation. At the same time, we promote cooperation between various stakeholders in sectors that are at the forefront of the green transition and the educational institutions that provide a highly qualified workforce and the knowledge and skills that are needed for the future.

**GREEN
FINANCING**

- The transition to a more sustainable and resilient society requires priority to be given to financing sustainable development, which is vital to the green transition. The committee supports the EU initiatives to better direct private capital into hitting climate and sustainability targets. These initiatives must be open, flexible and outward focused, to ensure equal and non-discriminatory access for financial institutions, companies and investors from third countries. This will attract and activate new sources of investment, which could encourage sustainability innovations across the European Union.

**SHAPING SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT POLICIES
AND LEGISLATION AT THE
EU & SLOVENIAN LEVEL**

- Support for EU countries in the transition to climate neutrality and further development are based on green financing, where grants include the requirement to meet ESG criteria, sustainable corporate reporting and the surpassing of macroeconomic indicators in measuring economic growth. For Slovenia, it is

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POSITIONS

essential that we take advantage of the EU Green Deal to develop the economy and in this way achieve higher added value, recognizability and attractiveness for investment, and improve the quality of life for our residents.

The Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan (NEPN), the core document for achieving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, emphasizes decarbonization (reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing the share of renewables), energy efficiency, energy security, the internal energy market, and research, innovation and competitiveness. The AmCham Sustainable Growth Committee supports updates to the NEPN, but highlights:

- the need for objective assessments of investments and a clear plan to replace electricity generation capacity after the closure of the TEŠ6 thermal power plant and before the construction of the JEK2 nuclear plant;
- the importance of combining renewables and nuclear, with an emphasis on the strategic importance of nuclear, which ensures cost-efficiency and energy stability, reduces dependence on imports, and supports the competitiveness of Slovenian industry;
- the lack of sufficient financial support for industry in the green transition;
- the importance of strengthening international cooperation in meeting climate targets more quickly.

-

ESG REPORTING

The AmCham Sustainable Growth Committee is monitoring the formulation of EU level policies deriving from the EU's circular economy strategy for the purpose of raising the awareness of businesses and timely adaptations to changes.

As of 1 January 2024, one of the recent important directives, the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), has required large enterprises with

| TOPICS

| POSITIONS

more than 500 employees to use uniform standards in their non-financial reports in 2025. The alignment of standards for sustainability disclosures will ensure reliable and comparable data and disclosures in the area of ESG. This is becoming more and more important in attracting capital and investors, and in preventing greenwashing.

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ENERGY SECTOR

In order to increase the affordability, security and efficiency of energy and, at the same time, to pave the way to net zero consumption, we must use all available resources – a more active transition to renewables is vital, as is consideration of building a second block at the Krško nuclear power plant. A reliable and price-competitive supply of low-carbon energy that minimizes dependence on energy imports is vital to the survival and development of the economy.

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SUSTAINABILITY OF FOOD PRODUCTION SYSTEMS: MIRROR CLAUSES AND DEFORESTATION-FREE PRODUCTS

The global food production system, from cultivation to consumption and waste, accounts for almost a third of total global greenhouse gas emissions, causes huge biodiversity losses, and is making people less healthy; more than 50% of adults in Slovenia are overweight. The current food production system therefore needs to be redirected towards a more sustainable model, with changes in the approach to the production and consumption of food.

Here a key role is played by mirror clauses, which require imported products to be produced according to the same standards as domestic products in the EU. Their implementation brings challenges, as there are concerns surrounding protectionist and retaliatory measures by third countries. In light of the consequences of climate change and war, removing barriers to trade in food is even more important to creating more sustainable and resilient food production

| TOPICS

| POSITIONS

systems. Mirror clauses must have a scientific foundation, and must be in line with international trade rules, incorporating the positions of global stakeholders and upholding agreements on equal treatment with similar-thinking third countries.

The EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), which applies to large enterprises as of the end of 2025 and to SMEs as of mid-2026, is one further key measure for the sustainable transformation of global supply chains. The regulation ensures that products marketed in and exported from the EU are produced without any post-2020 deforestation. The effective implementation of the regulation requires an approach tailored to each sector, which takes account of the specific attributes of individual goods and encourages the involvement of all stakeholders in the supply chain, including the countries where the goods are produced. It is also important to coordinate with other frameworks of due diligence to prevent additional burdens on businesses and to ensure compliance across the whole process.

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The Sustainable Growth Committee supports the EU commitment to reduce emissions from European transport by 90% by 2040, although every strategy for decarbonizing the transport sector and increasing its resilience needs to be clearly defined, and investment in automated mobility systems must be encouraged, while distinctions must be drawn between different types of transport.

Smart mobility brings numerous opportunities, such as an increase in the safety of transport links (roads, railways, waterways), a reduction in traffic jams, lower carbon emissions, better air quality, and, not least, new business opportunities and increased competitiveness. There are nevertheless multiple challenges, including the need for high initial investment, questions of privacy and data security, and the need to coordinate between the various stakeholders.

Through the effective utilization of digital technologies, we can attain

SUSTAINABLE AND SMART MOBILITY

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| POSITIONS

**CIRCULAR
ECONOMY**

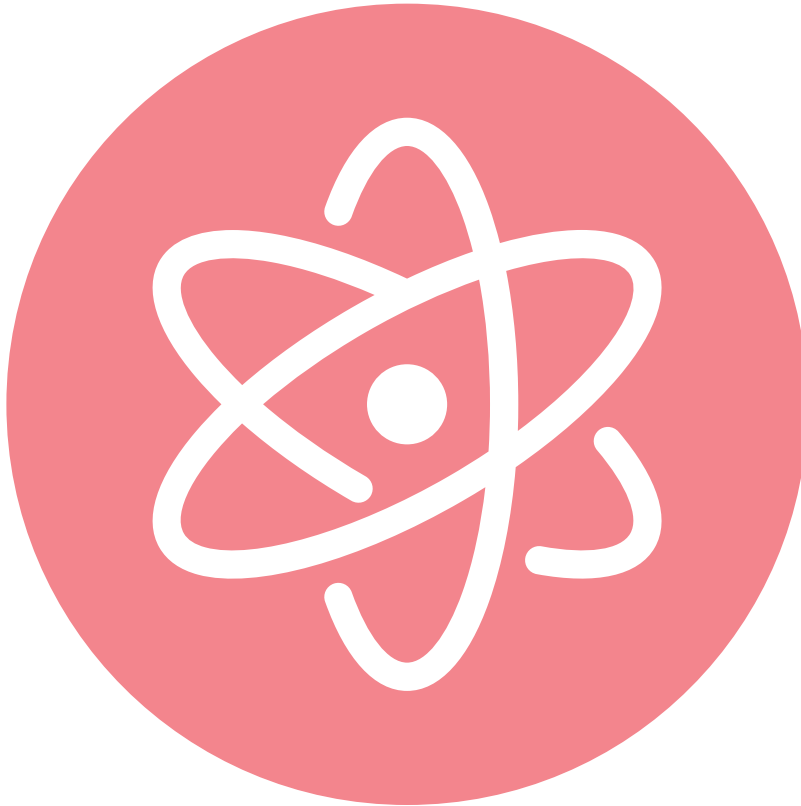
more sustainable and livable urban communities, although the successful implementation of smart solutions in the area of mobility requires the involvement of all stakeholders, and additionally we cannot overlook investment in educating and training a workforce who are able to manage and maintain advanced technologies.

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The circular economy is a form of organization, production, and consumption based on sharing, reusing, repairing, and recycling existing materials and products. In order to achieve the shift from a linear economy to a circular economy, we support cooperation between the government, industry and civil society and innovative approaches and practices that extend product life. The shift to a circular economy could bring advantages such as a reduction of environmental impacts, reduction of business risks, increased competitiveness, stimulation of innovation, strengthened economic growth, and job creation.

*More about the
Committee's work*





In the digital age we emphasize the key role of humans and their readiness for change, their understanding of technology and their empowerment for the use of technology for creative purposes. From the challenges of information security and cybersecurity, to artificial intelligence and the importance of data, without fundamental knowledge of so-called digital language we will not be the designers of our own future but merely followers.

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**READY4DFUTURE
COMMITTEE**

Knowledge and Support



| TOPICS

**LIFE IN THE
DIGITAL AGE****DIGITAL
LANGUAGE AS A
FUNDAMENTAL
SKILL FOR THE
YOUTH AND THE
URGENT NEED TO
INTRODUCE IT AS
A MANDATORY
SCHOOL SUBJECT**

| POSITIONS

In an age defined by digital technology, the AmCham Ready 4D Future Committee is ready for the future, and for the development of society particularly emphasizes the importance of safe technology that benefits people, society and business, the development of algorithmic reasoning in children, and the encouragement of its creative application.

Since our lives are increasingly interwoven with breakthrough technologies such as artificial intelligence, it is essential that we move away from merely using technology and make an effort to understand its impact on the individual and on society. For this reason the committee underlines the urgent need for ongoing education and digital literacy among all age groups. The committee also highlights the irreplaceable role of human qualities such as empathy and creativity in addressing complex problems and encouraging innovation. Ethics play a key role. The committee therefore calls for the responsible use of technology, ethical management of data, and the safe use of technology for the wellbeing of society.

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Slovenia is visibly falling on lists of digital literacy skills and knowledge, and we therefore need to be concerned about the competitiveness of its economy, of future generations, and of society as a whole. We propose the introduction of the mandatory subject of digital language, covering computer science and information science content at elementary school (5th grade to 9th grade) and high school.

In 2016 the RINOS group prepared an action plan for the introduction of the subject of computer and information science and associated teacher training, and envisaged the parallel introduction of digital competencies into all other subjects. We propose calling the subject “digital language” (as a second or third foreign language), since in this way we include the full content of the subject, which does not only cover basic knowledge of computing, the development of abstract thinking and algorithmic reasoning, but also the communications of the present and future

TOPICS

POSITIONS

in the digital age we live in. Knowledge of digital language is not only useful in the field of information science, but extends all the way from artistic creation (works of art, music, video) and algorithmic (logical) expression in working with data, to the use of modern tools such as a simple program, the cloud, or generative artificial intelligence, that simplify life in numerous (multidisciplinary) areas of human existence, understanding, and informed decision-making. There is actually no field in which basic knowledge of computing is not or will not be needed and even essential.

The mere development of digital competencies is not enough if we want our young people to play a part in shaping the (digital) future on an equal footing with other nations. Although it is one of the key skills for lifelong “learning”, without understanding the principles of working responsibly and safely with data, the functioning of digital technology and its effective and ethical use, young people will not be equipped with key skills for successful functioning in the digital age. The inclusion of digital language as a foreign language in all phases of education enables students not only to master the fundamental concepts of computing but also to address everyday problems with the help of computational (logical) thinking that is creative, abstract, structured and critical. “Early familiarity with scientific principles is needed to prepare citizens to be capable of making informed decisions about their future.” (RINOS: 15)

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CYBER RESILIENCE AND INFORMATION SECURITY

In an era dominated by information systems, the AmCham Ready 4D Future Committee emphasizes the growing importance of cybersecurity in safeguarding societal wellbeing. Taking into account the strategic frameworks defined in Slovenia’s National Security Strategy and the EU’s Cybersecurity Strategy, the committee associates itself with the common goal of establishing a powerful system for ensuring cybersecurity. Emphasizing key sub-objectives, from strengthening

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regulation to fostering international cooperation, the committee acknowledges the key role of EU initiatives, including the NIS 2 Directive, DORA, the Digital Europe program and the strengthened status of the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA). The proposed Cyber Resilience Act, Cybersecurity Act and Cyber Solidarity Act are examples of the EU's commitment to strengthening defenses against emerging cyber threats.

The Ready 4D Future Committee stands firm in its commitment to measures that are not only intended to ensure a digital future, but also to contribute to the wellbeing and security of our connected society.

One of the committee's important goals in the area of information security and cybersecurity is the raising of awareness about legislation, notably the NIS 2 Directive, which Slovenia will transpose into national legislation via the new Information Security Act (ZInfV1). In light of the continual rise in the number of cyberattacks, which cause significant economic damage, this directive is an attempt to raise the overall level of cybersecurity throughout the European Union.

Also worth mentioning is the Cyber Resilience Act (CRA), which entered into force at the end of 2024, and whose purpose is to raise the level of vulnerability management in the development and use of technical solutions in business and everyday life.

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**ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE**

The AmCham Ready 4D Future Committee strongly advocates a decisive, thoughtful and conscientious approach to the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into our societal framework. Because AI is developing, it is vital that individuals, businesses and the government play an active part in developing regulatory frameworks, maintaining ethical aspects and planning the future. AI offers an opportunity for economic growth, innovation and social progress,

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where Slovenia can compete on equal terms with other developed nations, but it is vital, in order to ensure the responsible and sustainable development of AI, that a robust regulatory framework – one that is positively oriented towards innovation – is established and that ethical principles are observed, including working with data responsibly and safely. The EU’s regulatory framework for AI is based on the belief that AI must serve the interests of humanity and respect fundamental rights. The AI Act, which entered into force in August 2024, aims for a harmonized approach to AI among Member States, and classifies AI applications into high-risk and low-risk categories.

The AmCham Ready 4D Future Committee supports the EU’s efforts to achieve a balance between fostering innovation and ensuring the responsible use of AI and other key enabling technologies (KETs). A positive legislative framework, together with appropriately addressed ethical aspects, is of key importance in the development and implementation of AI systems – start-ups, innovative services and products. The committee advocates a proactive approach to ethical AI that emphasizes transparency and responsibility, and has the aim of benefiting society. Cooperation between businesses, academia and civil society is a suitable environment for the establishment of ethical guidelines that reflect society’s values and norms. AI and other KETs are not only a new challenge that must be addressed, they are a valuable opportunity that must be changed into an advantage for Slovenia’s innovation ecosystem. The EU recognizes that regulation alone is not enough when it comes to confronting the technological revolution brought by AI – better support for innovations is needed. The committee will encourage this dual – positive – approach that balances regulation and supports innovation, and is crucial for guiding the complexity of AI integration and ensuring sustainable development that benefits society as a whole.

*More about the
Committee's work*



Slovenia – a prototype country for talent

Snowball 3.0, a think tank for young people created within the AmCham Young Leaders Club under the auspices of AmCham Slovenia, aims to play a part in creating a supportive environment for young talent. Highly qualified young people need an environment that invests in development and the knowledge society, and enables them to develop their abilities and constantly enhance them.

Snowball will create a prototype country for talent in 2025. It will comprise three different areas, within which there will be specific proposals to ensure that talent remains in Slovenia or returns home from abroad.

① GOVERNMENT

Young leaders will analyze Slovenia's business and living environment and prepare a package of concrete measures to help the country take a step forward in creating an environment where young talents can more easily develop their potential.

② BUSINESSES

Alongside government, an important role in creating an environment that is welcoming to highly educated professionals is played by businesses and employers. Young leaders will analyze best practices in developing professionals at domestic and foreign companies, and based on the analysis will draw up proposals to make businesses more attractive and welcoming to young talent.

③ YOUTH

And of course young people themselves play a key role in building a country that attracts talent. Snowball's task is to identify and specify how young people themselves can contribute to the creation and development of a country for talent.



I'm a teacher!

Designed to spread good teaching practices in Slovenia's schools, the "I'm a teacher!" initiative was launched in 2019 by the national Partnership for Change platform and AmCham Slovenia. The aim of the initiative is to give a voice to teachers who see their work as a mission, who with incredible dedication seek out the best in their students, and who can be a model for future generations of teachers. We believe that excellent people are the key that can unlock small and big changes.

As part of the initiative each year we also announce a **Teacher of the Year**. So far the title of Teacher of the Year has gone to Nina Jelen, Uroš Ocepek, PhD, Jožica Frigelj and Simona Šarlah. In 2023 Uroš Ocepek, PhD, our 2022 Teacher of the Year, went up against several thousand teachers from all over the world in the competition for the **Global Teacher Prize** and secured a place among the top 50 finalists.

Last year the initiative was expanded to feature **Principals' Voice**, which highlights the extraordinary importance of principals in supporting, guiding and encouraging their teachers to achieve amazing results and to be an inspiration to their students and also their colleagues.



UČITELJ SEM!
UČITELJICA SEM!

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**NEVENKA
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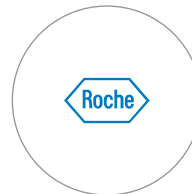
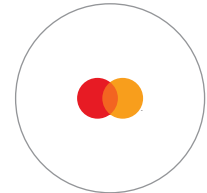
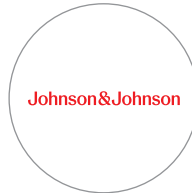


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*Thank you for your knowledge and support in shaping
a better business environment and quality of life in Slovenia.*



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