

José Manuel Leceta - EIT Director

José Manuel Leceta joined the EIT as its Director on 1 July 2011 and is responsible for the management and implementation of the Institute's portfolio of activities. Since he took office, the partnership relations with the KICs have been consolidated, maturing key guidance needed for current and future KICs. José Manuel has also inspired first offerings concerning the role of the EIT as an Institute for Europe, triggering publications and events as precursors of the Institute's unique added value propositions and synergies within the European innovation landscape, and the future Horizon 2020 context.



A Telecommunications Engineer, José Manuel also studied Business Administration and has diplomas in Strategic Management, Economics of Telecommunications, International Studies and Economics and Management of Innovation. A respected fellow in innovation policy experimentation and learning, he started his professional career working in the space industry in Finland in 1987, followed by assignments in France, Spain and Japan, prior to joining Spain's Innovation Agency (CDTI) in 1992 as part of the Spanish Delegation to the European Space Agency (ESA).

Initially responsible for fostering Spain's leadership in the practical applications of space, he became Head of Department for Technologies and Space Programmes at CDTI in 1996. He was Chairman of ESA's Ariane Launchers Programmes Board and Vice-Chairman of ESA's Telecommunication Programme Board from 2000 to 2002. He played a pivotal role in pioneer space initiatives, notably ESA's water mission SMOS launched to space in 2009 and AMERHIS (first Hispasat on-board digital multiplexers) as well as EGNOS-Galileo, until he was promoted to the post of International Director at the CDTI in 2004.

As CDTI's International Director from 2004 to 2010, he raised the Spanish participation in the EU R&D Framework Programmes by 50 %. He also represented Spain in European forums such as CREST, Eureka and TAFTIE – the European Association / Network of Innovation Agencies for which he served as Executive Secretary in 2010. Furthermore, he widened CDTI's Overseas Network of representatives by opening up two new Delegations in India and the US, and successfully launched a set of Bilateral Programmes with counterpart Innovation Agencies from Canada, China, India, South Korea, Japan and South Africa.

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