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Alessandro Leipold has had a distinguished career in international economics and finance, banking, the European Union organisations and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), where he was acting director of the European Department until the end of 2008.

Currently he is the chief economist of the Lisbon Council, a Brussels-based think tank, a role he's held since April 2010. He joined the IMF in 1982, where his career spanned surveillance and programme work, leadership of the IMF's international capital markets missions, and IMF governance issues.

From 1998, he was part of the senior management team of the European Department at the IMF, with responsibilities covering regional studies, oversight of World Economic Outlook forecasts for Europe, and leadership of IMF missions to several major European countries, including France, Italy and Spain.

In 2008, he led the IMF's mission to the euro area, with presentations to the Eurogroup of finance ministers, and assumed the position of acting director of the European Department, leading its activities during the financial crisis and the IMF's programmes in Hungary, Iceland, Latvia and Ukraine.