

Frits Bolkestein (1933)

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Former European Commissioner for the internal market, taxation and the customs union

Frits Bolkestein studied mathematics, philosophy, Greek and economics at the Universities of Oregon (USA), Amsterdam and London. In 1965 he received his master's degree in law at the University of Leiden.

From 1960 to 1976 Frits Bolkestein held several posts within the Shell Group in East Africa, Central America, Indonesia, London and Paris.

He started his political career in 1978. For many years Frits Bolkestein served as a Member of Parliament for the VVD, the Dutch Liberal Party. He was Minister of Foreign Trade and Minister of Defence. In 2003, he received an honorary doctorate in law of the University of Bradford. In 2004, he became a visiting professor in 'Intellectual Backgrounds of Political Developments' at the Universities of Leiden and Delft.

He was a member of the European Commission from September 1999 until November 2004, responsible for the internal market, taxation and the customs union.

At present Frits Bolkestein is president of the Telders-foundation, the think-tank connected with the VVD, member of the supervisory board of the Central Bank of The Netherlands and non-executive director of Air France-KLM. He is visiting professor at the Universities of Leiden and Delft and runs a one-person think-tank in Amsterdam on political and economic issues.