

Contact: Hein greven

hein.greven@wepublic.nl



FRANS TIMMERMANS

Netherlands (S&D)

Frans Timmermans was briefly in pole position to become Commission President, standing as the Spitzenkandidat for the Socialist Group and looking to form a progressive majority based on the EP election results. His hopes were apparently dashed by opposition from Central and Eastern European countries, with whom he had clashed repeatedly over rule of law issues and EPP opposition to giving up the prize position. His consolation is to remain one of two senior Vice-Presidents and he will remain a powerful figure within the new Commission.

He has had a long record of working in foreign affairs, culminating in his appointment as Dutch Foreign Minister in 2012.

Background

Born: 6 May 1961

Town/region: Heerlen, Limburg

Previous Position held: EU Vice-President: Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights – responsibilities in this role are:

- Coordinating the work on better regulation within the Commission, ensuring that every proposal respects the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, which are at the heart of the Commission's work.
- Coordinating the Commission's work on the rule of law and ensuring that every Commission proposal and initiative complies with the Charter of Fundamental Rights.
- Guiding the work of the Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality and the Commissioner for Migration and Home Affairs.
- Horizontal responsibility for sustainable development.

- Overseeing the European Commission's relations with the other European institutions and promoting a new partnership with national Parliaments.
- Coordinating the work on transparency.

Professional career: Civil Servant

Party affiliation: Social democrat - Member of the Dutch Labour Party (Partij van de Arbeid).

Political career:

- **2014-present:** First Vice-President of the EU Commission, in charge of Better Regulation, Inter-Institutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights
- **2012-2014:** Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs
- **2010-2012:** Member of the Dutch parliament, representing the Dutch Labour Party and becoming their parliamentary spokesman for Foreign Affairs and European Affairs.
- **2007-2010:** Dutch State Secretary of Foreign Affairs (focused on European Affairs)
- **1998-2007:** Dutch MP

Current position: Returning as EU Commissioner and will hold the position of Senior Vice-President. No further indication on his portfolio is currently known. He unsuccessfully campaigned as the European Socialists & Democrats 'Spitzenkandidat' for the European Commission Presidency of 2019.

Extra curriculum: well known for his excellent knowledge of languages, being fluent in six of them: Dutch, English, French, German, Italian and Russian.

Political actions as Dutch Parliamentarian:

- A motion from Timmermans, that would ensure that the results of a European Convention would be subjected to a European referendum, was approved by the Dutch Parliament.

Political actions as Dutch State Secretary and Minister of Foreign Affairs:

- Successfully accomplished that the Netherlands would deliver 370 militaries and 4 Apache-fighting helicopters for the UN-mission in Mali.
- Prepared in 2014 an extensive briefing on the Dutch contribution to combatting IS in Iraq and Syria.
- In 2008 successfully got the Treaty of Lisbon approved
- Approved the law to include the republic of Croatia to join the European Union in 2013.

Political actions as EU Commissioner:

- As Commissioner decided to start an infringement procedure against Poland on the grounds that the new disciplinary regime undermines the judicial independence of Polish judges and does not ensure the necessary guarantees to protect judges from political control, as required by the Court of Justice of the EU.
- He also started an infringement procedure against Hungary for criminalising activities in support of asylum applicants.
- Timmermans supported the mandatory migrant quotas within the EU.

Noteworthy actions:

On 17 July 2014, passenger flight Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 was shot down over Ukraine resulting in the deaths of 194 Dutch citizens. The next day Timmermans flew to Kiev to meet with President Petro Poroshenko and Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk to discuss the matter, following which, on 21 July 2014, Timmermans addressed the United Nations Security Council in New York. Timmermans delivered an emotional speech which was widely praised by the international community.