

# [***Former Dutch Prime Minister Dries van Agt and his wife die 'hand in hand' by euthanasia at age 93***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B96-3GH1-JC5B-G200-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

THE HAGUE — Dries van Agt, the Christian Democrat prime minister of [*the Netherlands*](https://apnews.com/hub/netherlands) from 1977 until 1982, has died by euthanasia, “hand in hand” together with his wife, according to the human rights organization he founded. They both were 93.

The news was made public on Friday by The Rights Forum, which said the couple died Monday and and would be buried in a private ceremony in the eastern city of Nijmegen.

“He died hand in hand with his beloved wife Eugenie van Agt-Krekelberg, the support and anchor with whom he was together for more than 70 years and whom he always continued to refer to as ‘my girl,’” the non-profit organization said in a statement.

The two both had been in fragile health for some time. In 2019, Van Agt suffered a brain hemorrhage while giving a speech at a commemoration event for Palestinians and never fully recovered.

A Christian Democrat from traditional Dutch stock, Van Agt became increasingly progressive after he departed ***politics***, ultimately leaving his party in 2017 over ideological differences with the center-right Christian Democratic Appeal's approach to Israel and the Palestinians.

Dutch Prime Minister [*Mark Rutte*](https://apnews.com/hub/mark-rutte), who referred to Van Agt as his “great-great-grandfather in office,” spoke highly of the former politician.

“With his flowery and unique language, his clear convictions and his striking presentation, Dries van Agt gave color and substance to Dutch ***politics*** in a time of polarization and party renewal,” Rutte said in a statement.

The Dutch royal family also praised him. “He took administrative responsibility in a turbulent time and managed to inspire many with his striking personality and colorful style,” [*King Willem-Alexander*](https://apnews.com/hub/king-willem-alexander), Queen Máxima and Princess Beatrix said in a joint statement.

Van Agt was known for his archaic references and grandiose language, as well as his passion for cycling. He was forced to quit that hobby in 2019 after a fall.

Together with the right-wing Liberal Party, the Christian Democrat Appeal governed the Netherlands with Van Agt as prime minister from 1977 until 1981. After elections, he again became prime minister, forming a coalition with the Labor Party and the centrist Democrats 66 in a government that held for a year.

Following a visit to Israel in 1999, he became increasingly vocal about his support for the Palestinian people. He referred to his experience of the trip as a “conversion.”

In 2009, he founded The Rights Forum, which advocates for a “just and sustainable Dutch and European policy regarding the Palestine/Israel issue,” according to the non-profit organization.

He is survived by his three children.

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