

# Belgium's oldest athlete, 95, chooses euthanasia, champagne

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A Belgian aged 95 and known affectionately as the country's 'oldest athlete', has chosen euthanasia after toasting his imminent death with champagne along with some 100 friends and family.

Emiel Pauwels, who said Monday he had "no regrets...and absolutely no fear of death," was shown in the press Tuesday smiling and sharing a toast with family, [friends](#) and colleagues from his sports club at his home.

"It is the best party of my life," Pauwels was quoted as saying. "Who would not want to go out with [champagne](#) and surrounded by all their friends?"

"When the doctor arrives with his injection, I shall leave this world knowing that I have led a full life," he said according to the Flemish daily Het Laatste Nieuws.

Pauwels had been confined to bed in recent months, suffering from terminal stomach cancer.

In only March last year, he had chalked up his last notable athletic achievement—winning the European indoor 60 metres champion for veterans.

Belgium introduced [euthanasia](#) in 2002 and in 2012 reported 1,432 cases, up 25 percent. The country is currently discussing extending the

law to allow mercy killing for children aged over 12.

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