

When I came to Warsaw seven years ago to visit Professor Janina Józwiak and our fellow colleagues at the Warsaw School of Economics, it was a day of great hope. We were about to found a new network of leading European research institutes in the field of demography, today known as Population Europe, in order to create a knowledge pool of demographic wisdom, and to inform the broader public and policy makers about population issues.

Janina Józwiak was not only one of our first and foremost founding members, but she was also instrumental in the success of this European initiative from the very beginning. She always provided support as best as possible, gave good advice and never rested if someone needed her help. Population Europe owes her a lot.

The Directors of the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research have also asked me to honour Janina Józwiak on behalf of the Max Planck Society as a great scientist and reliable ally in supporting demography and the next generation of demographers, and most of all, as a friend, and I do so with full conviction and the deepest respect.

I fondly remember when I first entered her office: the very cordial atmosphere, her great collegiality and reliability. I remember that she had two photographs on her wall, one showing her in the regalia of the rector, one showing her with Pope John Paul II – these pictures represented the highest scientific standards, restless community service, a deep humanity and a great sense for the other that I experienced whenever I met Janina.

When I arrived in Warsaw yesterday evening to accompany a good friend today, I knew it was going to be a very sad day. European demographers have lost a great friend. But there is still hope: The great achievements of Janina Józwiak and the person Janina will stay forever in the hearts of her friends, in the hearts of her colleagues, and last not, but not least, in the heart of Europe.

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