

REMEMBERING JANINA JÓŹWIAK: A FRIEND AND EAPS COLLEAGUE

When Janina Józwiak passed away in July of this year, I lost a wonderful friend. For all of us in the European Association for Population Studies (EAPS), Janina was a great colleague as well as an inspiring leader in the advancement of population research in Europe. She was also a warm and spontaneous human being.

Janina had always been a great supporter and a pillar of the European Association for Population Studies. She had played an important role in building EAPS and in establishing and expanding our bonds with Poland and other countries in the Eastern part of Europe. Her institute of Statistics and Demography has always been a strong partner of EAPS.

My dearest memories of Janina are related to our joined work in the EAPS Council. As a member of our Council (1995–1999), as our Vice-President (1999–2003) and as our President (2003–2008), Janina had a leading role in promoting population research in Europe and in building our association and our discipline. She initiated and was actively involved in numerous activities of EAPS, including the European Population Conferences and the European Doctoral School of Demography. Just one example of Janina's impact is the European Population Conference of 2003 in Warsaw, also known as "Janina's EPC". To a large extent, Janina's efforts made the conference such a great success and in fact marked the beginning of a transition to a new style of EPC with an increasing number of parallel sessions, a strong poster session, a lively plenary debate, while keeping the traditional EAPS charm of lots of room for personal interaction and a well-balanced social program involving all participants. Scientific quality mixed with Polish hospitality and Janina's commitment and personal touch made up the success of the Warsaw EPC.

There were many other EAPS conferences where Janina had a great impact, such as the European Population Conferences of 2001 in Helsinki, of 2006 in Liverpool and of 2008 in Barcelona. Indeed, Janina played a major role in the coming of age of EAPS and the emergence of the European Population Conference as a major landmark in the international population research agenda.

In all those years, I had the privilege to work very closely with Janina on the EAPS Council, and we did have a great time working together. Getting to know her better, I was increasingly amazed about how she always managed to mix her

sheer professionalism with a large dose of organizational practicality, astonishing networking skills and warm, down-to-earth friendliness and openness. Whenever we discussed the wish to communicate more with politicians, in the context of the Warsaw EPC, a meeting of European demographers with the then Polish President was arranged miraculously and seemingly effortlessly. When we discussed the possibility of extending our collaboration with the economic discipline, she organized the conference “European Populations: variations on common themes” in collaboration with economists from and in Cracow in 1997; this was a smaller scale conference than a regular EPC, but equally attractive. Whenever we considered involving the private sector in a conference as sponsors, Janina made it work, and if we needed help from Brussels, Janina always had her contacts who she could easily access. And if you happened to express an interest in the Polish cuisine, a visit to a local restaurant was quickly organized and traditional dishes and drinks were ordered in overwhelming quantities. Indeed, it was great to work with her, and to share some good time and laughs both during and definitely after the work was done.

As our Honorary President, Janina remained actively involved in EAPS too, also when she was ill. I could always call on her for advice, and she never failed to offer her collaboration. She was part of several Jury’s for the EAPS Gunther Beyer Award for best paper by a young demographer during an EPC, and she participated in various EAPS committees, such as the Committee on Teaching and in Nominating Committees.

The last time that I met Janina was in Budapest in 2014, at the European Population Conference. She did not talk much about the struggle for her health. She had her usual big smile and warm embrace. One of her first questions that she asked was how she could support us best during that particular meeting of the EAPS Advisory Board. And as usual, she gave her fullest support. After the meeting she came to say goodbye, wishing me and EAPS all the best and then she quietly took her leave. As one of the most central persons in EAPS, she never really enjoyed the spotlight. She had always been a very humble person that one can could just admire.

Janina was deeply committed to European demography and EAPS and we all benefitted from her commitment. Janina left us a rich legacy and did set a great example for us to follow.

For me, personally, but also for her many other friends in EAPS, Janina was a wonderful colleague, a warm person, a devoted and dear friend. I could always rely on her and she was always there for me. One day we had a meeting and it was the first time that we met after I had just lost my son. She quietly arranged for us to sit in her office to share our personal thoughts. Thinking back to sitting there in her office under the portrait of Janina in her full regalia as the Rector of the Warsaw School of Economics meeting with Pope John Paul II, I once more realized what a good friend and exceptional person she was.

I miss Janina. We all miss her in EAPS and beyond, across Europe and world-wide. I will always remember Janina and I am very grateful that I have had the privilege to know her and call her my friend.

Rest in peace, Nina, you will not be forgotten.

Nico van Nimwegen

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