

# **European Population Conference 2006**

## **“Population Challenges in Ageing Societies”**

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### **OPEN FORUM 2**

**Chair: Guillaume Wunsch**

### **Why should demographers study death ?**

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Demography studies on mortality focuses more on the study of deaths than on death as a event. Death can be seen as a process corresponding to the last stages of life, a process that concerns the dying person as well as all his/her relatives, friends, colleagues, and, increasingly, the medical staff. This point of view has been widely investigated in other disciplines (anthropology, history), but few demographic studies have been conducted with this approach.

This presentation gives the broad lines that structure demographic studies on death, and, using some of our results, give examples of research studies that could be developed, in particular from a cross-countries comparative perspective.

Three topics are discussed: experiencing death within the family (using a microsimulation model and survey data); the place of death with a special focus on the alternative dying "at home"/"in nursing home" (using mainly vital statistics); and the demographic approach to the question of euthanasia.