

## **How causes of death may explain the exceptional male longevity in the Blue Zone (Sardinia)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

An exceptional male longevity has been observed in a region located in the mountainous area of Sardinia which has been defined by previous research as the Blue Zone (BZ). The identification of this area was based on completely validated documents. In this area the number of male centenarians was found to be similar to that of female centenarians, underlying an unusual balance between the two sexes in reaching older ages. Moreover, mortality rates for the older age groups also show to be similar for both males and females. These results appear unique.

Accordingly, an in-depth analysis of the causes of death in the municipalities belonging to the BZ may help to explain and identify which specific causes of death are responsible for the exceptional longevity recorded in the BZ.

Firstly, the contribution will present the results of the investigation of large age groups of causes of death by municipality in Sardinia for the period between 1982 and 2001. Therefore, the distribution of the causes of death and the level of mortality within the BZ will be compared to that of other Sardinian municipalities as well as of Italy as a whole.

Trends in the last two decades will be identified and a prospective view will be also developed in order to estimate the future male survival in the BZ.