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## European Parliament two-seat operation

### Environmental costs, transport & energy

A new independent study launched in the European Parliament has highlighted the climate damage caused by the EP having two seats and alternate meetings in Brussels and Strasbourg. The study, commissioned by Green MEPs **Caroline Lucas** and **Jean Lambert**, is the first evidence-based analysis of the climate impact of the EP's two seat arrangement and shows that it accounts for a significant amount of excess CO2 emissions - in the region of 20-30,000 tonnes per year.

The study, researched by Professor of Sustainable Transport **John Whitelegg** of the Stockholm Environment Institute at the University of York, totals the extra carbon emissions generated every month by MEPs, staff, journalists and visitors travelling from Brussels to Strasbourg and back, the 'carbon costs' of freight between the two sites, and the energy needed to maintain the two Parliament buildings.

It reports that as well as more than €200 million euros financial cost, the two-seat arrangement is responsible for a very minimum of 18,901 tonnes of completely unnecessary additional carbon dioxide emissions every year – more than some entire countries. This figure is a conservative estimate, based on 'best case' data and estimates provided by the EU itself, and includes only transport and energy costs without examining other impacts. Actual emissions produced are likely to be far higher, possibly in the region of 30,000 tonnes, when all factors are considered, though the report has deliberately sought to use conservative figures to increase the widespread acceptance of what is the first evidence-based and robust study of the environmental and climate change implications of running a one-seat, Brussels-based, operation for the European Parliament.

The study reports that ending the Strasbourg parliamentary sessions would cut the need at a stroke for 2,650 offices, a debating chamber and nearly 50 conference rooms, most with full translation facilities. That could cut emissions by 3,928 tonnes of CO2 just in electricity and gas alone. Similarly, the monthly travel of 2,000 parliamentary staff and interpreters, nearly 1,000 assistants, journalists and lobbyists, 785 MEPs, 15 lorry-loads of trunks and documents, would be rendered completely unnecessary.

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## **Responsible MEPs**



Jean Lambert

Member

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