



## THE LIES AND WHAT REMAINS UNSAID IN THE FOX/HÄFNER REPORT

Ladies and Gentlemen,

You are called on today to give your opinion regarding a report on the seat of the European Parliament which, as its drafters have in mind, seeks to obtain the transfer of all of the services of your institution to Brussels. This report is founded on incorrect assertions and arguments, and on the following lies and hidden information:

- 1. The financial cost is incorrect and is the result of approximations and manipulations**, as demonstrated by the EAYE's study and by the official numbers published by the European Parliament's General Secretariat. The actual figures (between 51 and 55 million euros a year) are four times lower. 10% per year and per citizen, in other words 0.04% of the EU's budget.
- 2. The environmental cost**: just as is the case with the financial cost, the figures provided by the report (19 000 tons of CO<sup>2</sup>) date back to a study published in 2002, the authors of which had underlined its weaknesses and shortcomings. The actual numbers appear in the annual "environmental declaration" **that you approve** each year. The figures for 2011 are 3250 tons of CO<sup>2</sup>.
- 3. Granting the European Parliament the right to decide where to sit would be providing it with an excessive level of power**. Is it acceptable to give the European Parliament the option to change the location of its seat for each new parliamentary term, depending on the majorities? Only very few national constitutions or practises in the world grant their parliament the privilege of deciding where they should sit.
- 4. The report does not mention the financial implications of such a transfer: social costs, investment costs, maintenance cost of vacant buildings as well as the political costs implied by negotiations between member states regarding the redefinition of the seats of the European institutions.**

**It is a lie to claim that the cost of the Strasbourg seat would translate into savings if transferred to Brussels.**

A transfer to Brussels would not produce any savings as the empty premises in Luxembourg and in Strasbourg would remain in the EP or European institutions' property portfolio, with maintenance and caretaking costs, or even accelerated obsolescence if they remain vacant over a long period.

This report follows a number of attempts by the anti-Strasbourg lobby which sought to discredit the seat of the European parliament and to deny its legitimacy vis-à-vis the history, treaties and principles of the EU, notably the principle of geographical diversity of the Union's institutions.

Need we remind that **the latest action of Mr Fox**, which **led to an illegal change** of the plenary sessions' calendar by the European parliament, to the detriment of Strasbourg, resulted in European deputies being **disavowed by the EU's Court of Justice in December 2012**

**In these times of crisis, our motto "united in diversity", our values and symbols are as important as ever. Strasbourg is both the symbol of a Europe that overcame a troubled past and of its future.**