

BRUSSELS/STRASBOURG: **INFORMAL SEAT STUDY GROUP** FORMED

Dear colleagues,

This week has seen us starting serious work under the Lisbon Treaty, which, as President Buzek told us 'has given us new powers but also new responsibilities'. The first EU Budget was voted under the Treaty and we have concluded important agreements with the other EU institutions and with the national parliaments.

However, the vote on the 2012 Calendar was postponed in a divisive climate.

Therefore, I believe that the time has come for an objective examination of all the issues surrounding the question of the Seat(s) of the European Parliament.

In view of the political/country sensitivities, I am setting up a cross-party **Informal Seat Study Group** with the terms of reference below.

Because the Bureau is responsible for administrative and financial matters, I have proposed a comprehensive discussion there, based on objective and neutral information.

There have been no debates or resolutions in recent years but the two-seat arrangement generates public scorn, especially at a time of economic stringency. We need to work efficiently, particularly in relation to national parliaments and the other EU institutions.

Despite much discussion and media comment, few objective and up-to-date facts are known. The intention of the Seat Study is to correct that lack of information.

Terms of reference: examination of all relevant issues connected with the Seat(s) of the European Parliament, covering cost, environmental impact, history, treaties, efficiency, buildings, facilities, transport links, accommodation, security and will have input from Members, former Members, the Administration, other staff, assistants and external interested parties. We will also consider the interests of our current host countries.

Please contact me if you wish to make a contribution.

Yours,

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