

These are just a few suggestions coming from an analysis of thermographic pictures of the Parliament buildings in Brussels. Certainly more should be investigated before getting an **integrated efficiency energy plan** on the basis of an audit not only on energy consumption, but also on energy dispersion. Such a plan should help focusing better on which reduction targets can be realistically achieved in a short time - what we have now in the present EMAS Action Plan of the EP are very modest reduction targets (5%), very late deadlines (2011) and various study groups working on single improvements (improving production units, replacing old hot air generators, etc.), but with no general picture. Better investigating for better planning probably requires a **higher budget for the implementation of the EMAS action plan** - at present at 50,000 euros in 2006 and the same amount in 2007 - but spending more now for saving much more in the future is only common sense.

Another option worth considering is **changing electricity provider** or renegotiating the contract with the present one (Electrabel in Brussels and EDF in Strasbourg), seen that at the moment the Parliament spends 6,2 million euros per year. The purpose of this proposal should not, however, be that of encouraging more energy waste or CO2 production - we should all bear in mind that the Parliament already produces 11,245 tons of CO2 per year. The change of the provider should also happen **along the lines of a greener public procurement**, i.e. by buying energy from companies which produce in the least damaging way for the environment.

Other areas should also taken into consideration, if we want to reduce the ecological footprint of the EP. In the case of **transport**, for instance, a visible mobility desk in the Parliament premises would help to better organize a more sustainable mobility for all people dealing with the Institution, i.e. MEPs, personnel and visitors, with the aim of cutting unnecessary travel. One should also encourage more IT solutions in order to avoid travel when not necessary (officials go from Luxembourg to Brussels or from Brussels to Strasbourg sometimes just for one meeting. Videoconference facilities should be used more widely whenever possible). There should be also a real encouragement to the use of public transport in Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg by providing free travelling cards to MEPs and personnel, while the car park should move from its present 140gr EU target and aim for 120gr/km by 2012 (starting in 2008).

Our **waste** production (2098 tons a year) and paper consumption (846 tons - 125 kg for each of us), invites for more drastic measures compared to the present "best practice guides for the kitchens and the waste management" (as foreseen in the present EMAS plan). As far as **food** is concerned, it should be normal in the canteens and restaurants of the European Parliament to find also organic food: a contribution to the variety of food on offer and, most importantly, to the health of all. It should be also encouraged to have food produced in the region, rather than food travelling for hundreds of kilometres before reaching the Parliament.

Finally, while the decision to seek the **EMAS** registration by the EP (January 2006) is certainly a very positive one, the action plan related to it is far from being exhaustive, as we have seen from the comments above. **More proposals and actions are needed**, both within and without the frame of the registration process.

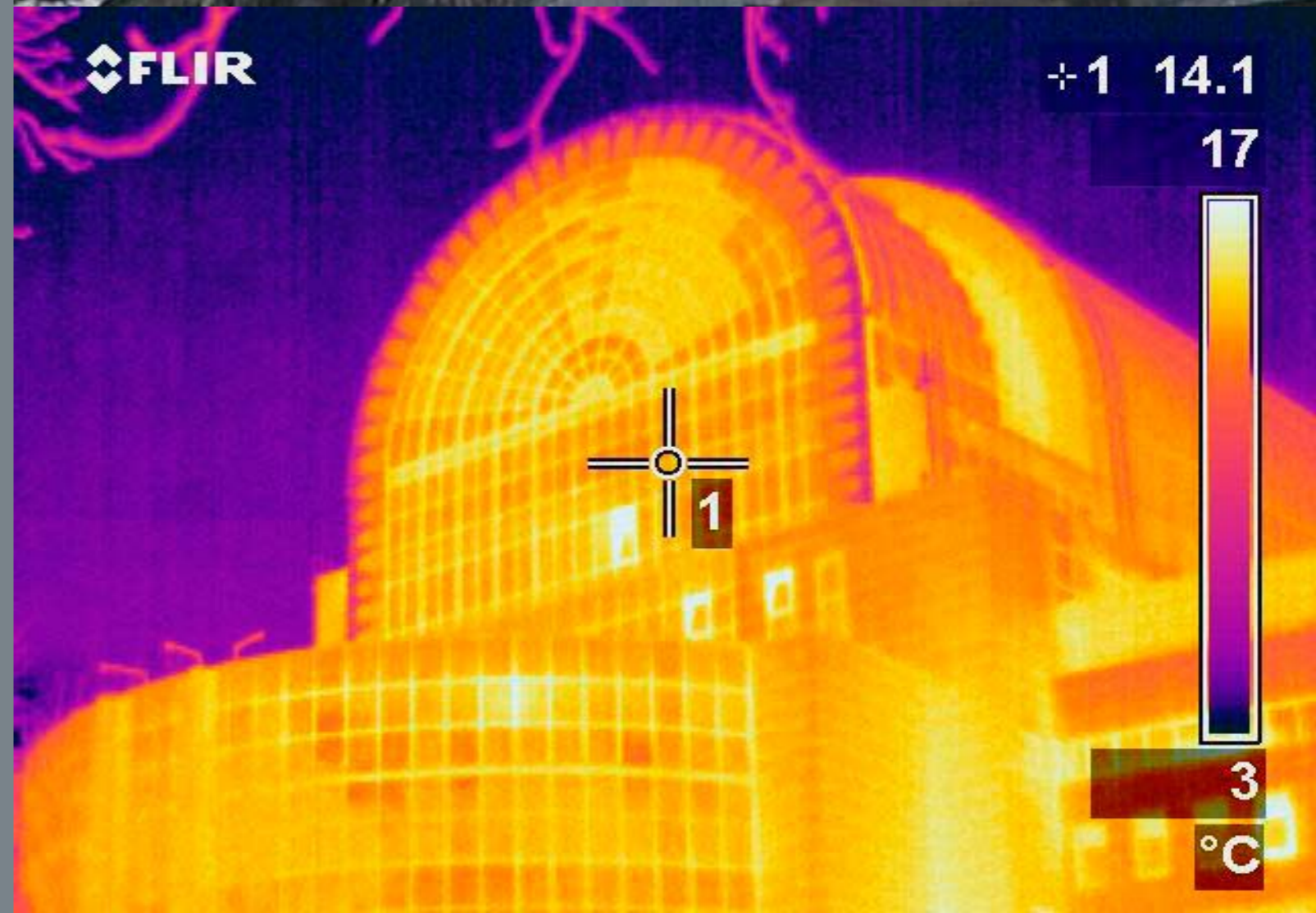
No one can doubt, however, that one of the causes of such an ecological imprint is the very existence of **three seats** and the movement of people involved for the Strasbourg sessions. This is just another reason why it is important for the EP to have an open and transparent debate on the seat, including all relevant elements of judgement. More than one million citizens have signed a petition on this issue and MEPs, as their representatives, must take a stand on this and must have an opportunity to do it.



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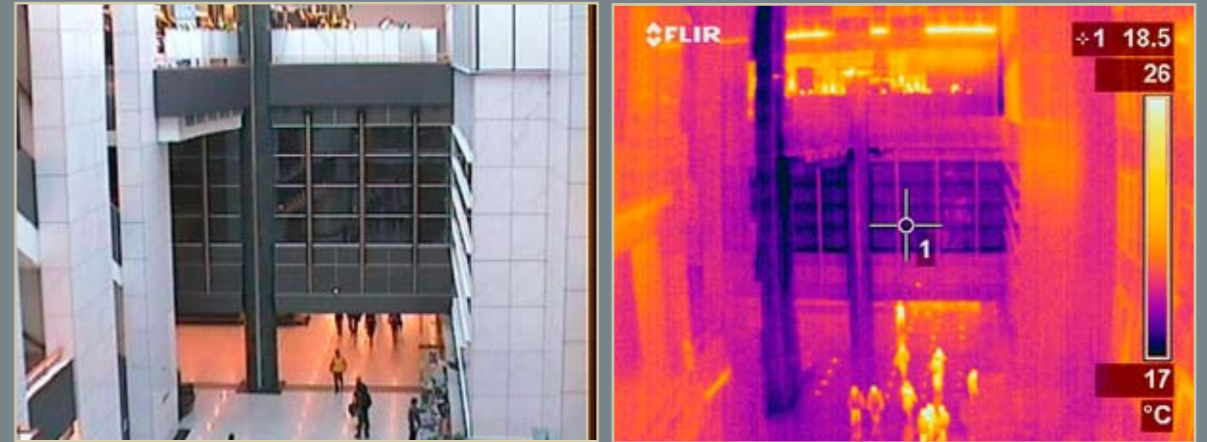


For a more (energy) efficient Parliament



As a high-profile public institution, the European Parliament should set an example in terms of environmental protection and the fight against climate change. In terms of energy, this means both cutting down waste and improving efficiency, and choosing renewable energy.

Yet the Parliament is an institution spending, on average, per year and considering the three seats, 6 million 200 thousand euro on electricity, 1 million and 857,929 euro on heating and producing 11,245 tons of CO2 emissions .



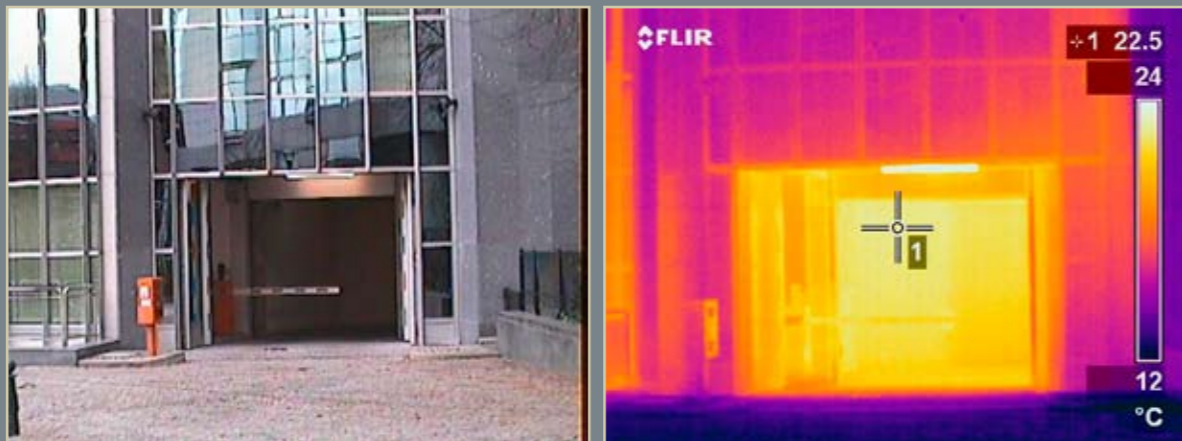
Inside hall - Altiero Spinelli building
Loss of heat due to probably badly insulated service column



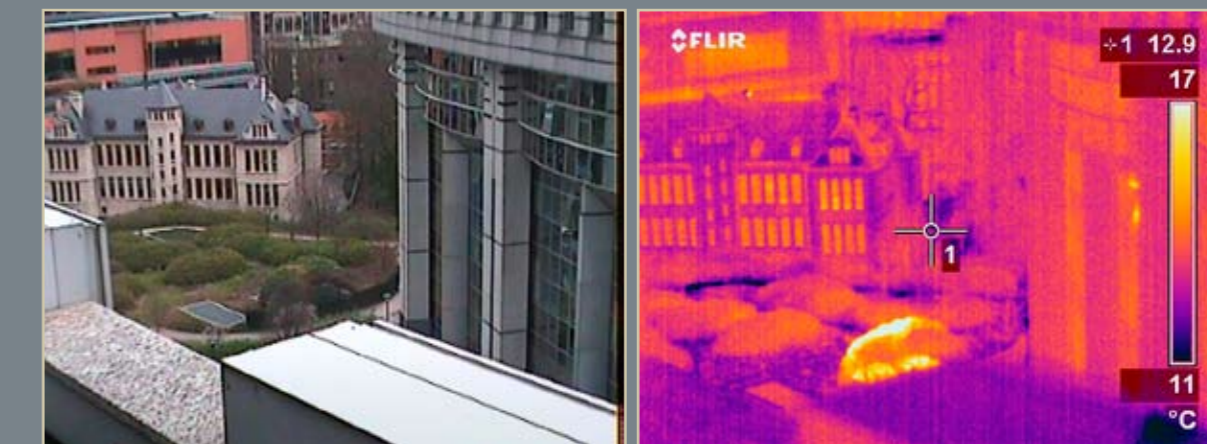
Inside hall - Altiero Spinelli building
Loss of heat due to non or badly insulated lift shafts.

This should come as no surprise, considering that buildings made of steel and glass are not exactly what one might call the best in terms of insulation. Yet there is a lot of room for improvements: by **insulating better** what can be insulated (lift shafts, service columns, etc.), by **installing heat-exchangers** at the outlets of the heating system, so that the air that goes out warms the one coming in, in other words by letting only the air, not the heat, out.

Changing some of the habits in the EP can also contribute significantly (does the gate of an over heated garage have to be open at all times?), even though the fact of having so many windows open in winter should invite for an **improvement of the heating system** altogether.



The President's garage - Paul-Henri Spaak building
... is a very dispersive - excessively heated (22.7°C) and always open...



Park - next to Paul-Henri Spaak building
Below the park there are some EP technical rooms with transformers: one can see the huge loss of heat (21°C against the 11°C of the surrounding air) coming out of the grid

Thermography is a measuring technique which, by means of a special camera, allows to measure the infrared radiation of objects and bodies and to transform it into images called "thermograms".

Infrared rays were discovered in 1800 by William Herschel, an English astronomer of German origin. By placing a thermometer in the spectrum obtained through a glass prism in order to measure the temperature related to every colour, he discovered that the red side of the spectrum (including the part where no light was visible) was warmer than the other side of it. It was the first experiment showing that heat could also be transmitted via an invisible form of light.

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Thermographies of the Parliament made by Deltacôntrole, Rue du Pilori, 1, 7191 - Ecaussinnes, Belgium