

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2014/01

by Jo Leinen (PSE)

to the Commission

Subject: Plans for the 'Gigapole' shopping centre on the Franco-German border (district of Forbach)

Plans under way to build a huge 'Gigapole' shopping centre covering 100 000 square metres on the Franco-German border in the district of Forbach in the département of Moselle.

This gigantic centre would have a severely negative impact on the retail trade on both sides of the border. The Saarland traders' association estimates that purchasing power of DM 400 million per year would be diverted from local businesses to this 'Gigapole'. The consequences would be inner city desolation and a retail slump in the neighbouring Saarland towns of Saarbrücken, Völklingen and Saarlouis as well as in the towns of Sarreguemines and Forbach in Lorraine.

Such a 'mega-centre' – exploiting its proximity to the border – is contrary to all the rules of organised regional planning and socio-economic development.

Will the Commission, therefore, say:

1. whether it is aware of the plans for the 'Gigapole' in the district of Forbach, and
2. what measures it intends to take to stop this distortion of competition and breach of regional planning principles?