

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1070/06

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to the Commission

Subject: Merger between Gaz de France and Suez

The announced merger between the French State-controlled company Gaz de France and the company Suez would create an entity capable of controlling around 70% of the French gas market as well as the entire Belgian market.

Does not the Commission consider that:

- this kind of operation would create a dominant position on the market, distort free competition and thus be in conflict with European anti-trust legislation;
- the purchase of a private company by another company controlled by the French State could be seen as 'State aid', in contravention of the rules governing the functioning of the Community internal market;
- if the merger went ahead, it would drastically reduce the likelihood of Suez, a private company, being the subject of a takeover bid, and would thus be in contravention of Community rules ensuring the free movement of capital?