With its historic old-town district, bordered by Neckar and Gaisberg and the royal castle, the university city of Heidelberg acts like a magnet on tourists from all over the world. One beneficiary of the streams of visitors is the retail trade, which is concentrated on the long Hauptstrasse shopping street in the core of the city. But space to satisfy demand and permit the opening of new shops is in short supply.
FOOTFALL AT PRIOR-YEAR LEVEL
The highest chain-store ratio is to be found on the western stretch of the Hauptstrasse pedestrian zone, between Bismarckplatz and Ziegelgasse/Märzgasse, which is Heidelberg’s top consumer location. This stretch has the strongest footfall figures; towards the east, the figures decline. The count in this year’s survey was around 4,900, much the same as last year, which once again gives Heidelberg a midfield place in the nationwide ranking. Due to some regional concepts, the chain-store ratio on Hauptstrasse has recently fallen slightly, to 55 %. The small-unit, often heritage-protected architectural structure of the old-town offers only a limited and barely changing supply of space, but this is much in demand. The western part of Hauptstrasse was the scene of the biggest letting in the first half, of 240 m² to young-fashion label Levi’s. In all, four deals were registered in the A-location, with the clothing sector easily the most dominant force.

STABLE MARKET DEVELOPMENT
Heidelberg’s retail premises market is developing in a steady manner. The prime rent on Hauptstrasse, for instance, remains unchanged at 120 €/m². Ongoing buoyant demand encounters generally restricted availability. In the size segment 400-500 m², demand cannot be satisfied. So changes in tenancy are extremely rare and are mainly limited to small sales areas. Costume jewellery label Pandora, for example, has secured a 70 m² shop on Hauptstrasse, while cosmetics specialist Soap Stories is opening a similarly sized outlet in this location. Alongside strong demand on the part of clothing firms, it is national and international catering concepts, featuring burgers or Asian food, which are currently especially interested in acquiring premises. Extending the spectrum on offer on the eastern part of Hauptstrasse is a 170 m² Adelitas Restaurant. Overall, though, the low fluctuation means that there is relatively little rental activity.