

# New EU Rules on Sustainability and Employer Seals Take Effect in Germany on 27 September 2026

*New EU Rules on Sustainability and Employer Seals Take Effect in Germany on 27 September 2026 — Relevant for US Companies with European Operations*

SHERIDAN, WY, UNITED STATES, June 23, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On 27 September 2026, Germany's Third Act Amending the Act Against Unfair Competition (UWG) enters into force, implementing the EU EmpCo Directive (2024/825). The reform sets a new legal standard for sustainability labels and, depending on the individual case, for employer seals. The Deutsches Institut für Qualitätsstandards und -prüfung (DIQP) advises that US companies with branches, recruiting or marketing activities in Germany and Europe review the seals they use well before the deadline.



For the first time, the law introduces statutory definitions of a "sustainability label" and a "certification scheme." A label that is neither based on a recognized certification scheme nor established by a public authority becomes prohibited as a matter of principle, regardless of whether its individual statements happen to be accurate. Because the legal definition covers social as well as environmental characteristics, employer seals that highlight working conditions, fairness, diversity or employee satisfaction may fall within its scope. Whether a specific seal is covered depends on the individual case.

Under the new rules, a valid certification scheme must be transparent and publicly documented, open to all interested organizations on fair and non-discriminatory terms, and monitored by an independent third party. There is no transition period and no grandfathering: a seal in use for many years must meet the new requirements from the effective date.

The DIQP recommends reviewing the following points:

Is the awarding body competent and appropriately qualified?  
Is the seal based on a documented, publicly verifiable certification system?  
Is the award granted only after an audit by an independent body (not by the employer itself)?  
Is the process open to all interested organizations under fair, non-discriminatory conditions?  
Are the award criteria, weighting, and evaluation method easily accessible (source/link)?  
Is the award based on a transparent and appropriate methodology (e.g., employee survey)?  
Is the award regularly reviewed, and is its validity time-limited?  
Is all supporting documentation (methodology, award criteria, certificate) readily available in the event of a formal warning?

The German UWG protects consumers and applies to commercial practices directed at the German market. As a result, it can reach companies headquartered outside Germany, including US companies, when they advertise with employer seals toward German applicants or customers. Enforcement in Germany is driven largely by competitors and competition associations through cease-and-desist warnings, injunctions and damages claims. For widespread cross-border infringements, the amended law provides for fines of up to four percent of annual turnover.

The reform shifts the central question from whether a seal's claim is misleading in a particular case to whether the seal rests on a recognized certification scheme at all. For credible, independently verified seals this is an upgrade. For self-created marketing labels without genuine external review, it removes the basis.

DIQP, which is part of [quality-standard.com](https://www.quality-standard.com), awards its "Top Arbeitgeber" (Top Employer) seal on the basis of a documented, publicly accessible procedure that includes a representative employee survey and an HR interview. The same award conditions apply to the "Top Employer" seal issued by USIQ, which publishes its criteria in English at [top-employer-certificate.com](https://www.top-employer-certificate.com). DIQP has published a detailed legal analysis of the new requirements, together with a checklist for assessing employer seals, at <https://www.diqp.eu/arbeitgebersiegel-2026-neue-gesetzliche-regeln-im-ueberblick/> (in German language only).

DIQP recommends that organizations using employer seals review the certification basis of their providers, confirm that criteria and methodology are publicly documented, and keep the relevant evidence available in case of a challenge. The institute notes that such a checklist does not replace legal advice and that companies seeking certainty should consult a lawyer specializing in competition law.

The Deutsches Institut für Qualitätsstandards und -prüfung (DIQP) develops quality and employer seals based on independent third-party certification and transparent, publicly available criteria, with a focus on the German-speaking market. DIQP is part of [quality-standard.com](https://www.quality-standard.com). Its employer-seal award conditions are also published in English under the USIQ "Top Employer" seal at [top-employer-certificate.com](https://www.top-employer-certificate.com). More information is available at <https://www.diqp.eu>.

Disclaimer: This article does not constitute legal advice. Please consult a lawyer who specializes in this area. We assume no liability for the accuracy or completeness of the information provided.

Gedrienne Abadies

Quality Standardization and Certification LLC

484-473-1088

[email us here](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/921497624>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.