

X. (Title and date of the applicable national law)

Extract from the Trade Mark Law version of 31 July 2009

Absolute Grounds for Refusal

8. - (1) Signs that are capable of being protected as a trade mark within the meaning of Section 3, but not capable of being represented graphically, shall not be registered.

(2) The following shall not be registered:

1. trade marks which are devoid of any distinctive character with respect to the goods or services;
2. trade marks which consist exclusively of signs or indications which may serve, in trade, to designate the kind, quality, quantity, intended purpose, value, geographical origin, the time of production of the goods or of the rendering of the services, or to designate other characteristics of the goods or services;
3. trade marks which consist exclusively of signs or indications which have become customary in the current language or in the bona-fide and established practices of the trade for designating goods or services;
4. trade marks which are of such a nature as to deceive the public, in particular, as to the nature, quality or geographical origin of the goods or services;
5. trade marks which are contrary to public policy or to accepted principles of morality;
6. trade marks which include armorial bearings, flags or other emblems of State, or armorial bearings of a locality, an association of communities or an association of other communal entities within the country;
7. trade marks which include official signs and hallmarks, indicating control and warranty, which, according to a notice published by the Federal Ministry of Justice in the Federal Law Gazette [*Bundesgesetzblatt*], cannot be validly registered as trade marks;
8. trade marks which include armorial bearings, flags or other signs, seals, or designations, of international intergovernmental organisations which, according to a notice published by the Federal Ministry of Justice in the Federal Law Gazette, cannot be validly registered as trade marks;
9. trade marks the use of which can obviously be prohibited pursuant to other provisions in the public interest; or
10. trade marks which have been filed in bad faith.

(3) Subsection (2), Nos. 1, 2 and 3, shall not apply if the trade mark has, before the date of the decision on registration and following the use which has been made of it, established itself in affected trade circles as the distinguishing sign for the goods or services for which it has been filed.

(4) Subsection (2), Nos. 6, 7 and 8, shall also apply if the trade mark includes the imitation of a sign specified therein. Subsection (2), Nos. 6, 7 and 8, shall not apply where the applicant is authorised to include one of the signs specified therein in his trade mark even if it may be confused with another of the signs specified therein. Furthermore, subsection (2), No. 7, shall not apply where the goods or services for which the application for registration of the trade mark has been filed are neither identical with nor similar to those for which the sign or hallmark, indicating control or warranty, has been introduced. Furthermore, subsection (2), No. 8, shall not apply where the trade mark filed is not of such a nature as to falsely suggest to the public that a connection exists between the trade mark and the international intergovernmental organisation.

Filed or Registered Trade Marks as Relative Grounds for Refusal

9. - (1) Registration of a trade mark may be cancelled

1. if it is identical with an earlier filed or registered trade mark, and the goods or services for which the trade mark is registered are identical with the goods or services for which the earlier trade mark is filed or is registered;

2. if because of its identity with, or similarity to, the earlier filed or registered trade mark, and the identity or similarity of the goods or services covered by the trade marks, there exists a likelihood of confusion on the part of the public, which includes the likelihood of association with the other trade marks; (...)

Opposition

42. - (1) Within a period of three months following the date of publication of the registration of the trade mark pursuant to Section 41, the proprietor of an earlier trade mark may give notice of opposition to registration of the trade mark.

(2) The opposition may only be based on the grounds that the trade mark may be cancelled due to

1. an earlier filed or earlier registered trade mark pursuant to Section 9 (1), No. 1 or 2;
2. an earlier well-known trade mark pursuant to Section 10 in conjunction with Section 9 (1), No. 1 or 2; or
3. its registration for an agent or representative of the proprietor of the trade mark pursuant to Section 11.

(3) (deleted)

Objection Due to Non-use; Decision on the Opposition

43. - (1) If the proprietor of an earlier registered trade mark has given notice of opposition, he shall, if the other party contests the use of the trade mark, substantiate by prima facie evidence that, during the period of five years preceding the publication of the registration of the trade mark against which a notice of opposition has been given, the earlier registered trade mark has been put to use pursuant to Section 26, provided the earlier trade mark has at that date been registered for not less than five years. If the period of five years of non-use ends after the publication of the registration, the opponent shall, if the other party contests that use, substantiate by prima facie evidence that, during the period of five years preceding the decision on the opposition, the trade mark has been put to use pursuant to Section 26. In the decision, only those goods or services shall be considered of which use has been substantiated by prima facie evidence.

(2) If examination of the opposition reveals that the trade mark must be cancelled in respect of some or all of the goods or services for which it is registered, the registration shall be cancelled in full or in part. If the registration of the trade mark cannot be cancelled, the opposition shall be rejected.

(3) If the registered trade mark has to be cancelled because of one or several earlier trade marks, the proceedings with regard to further oppositions may be suspended until a decision on the registration of the trade mark has become final. (...)

Domestic Representative

96. - (1) Any person having neither a residence nor a seat nor an establishment in Germany may take part in proceedings before the Patent Office or the Patent Court, regulated by this Law, and may claim the rights conferred by the trade mark, only if he has appointed a patent attorney or an attorney-at-law in Germany as his representative, who shall be authorised to represent him in Patent Office and Patent Court proceedings and in civil litigation affecting the mark, and also file requests for the institution of criminal proceedings.

(2) Nationals of member states of the European Union or another contracting state of the Agreement on the European Economic Area may be appointed as representatives within the meaning of subsection 1 for rendering a service within the meaning of the Treaty Establishing the European Community, if they are authorised to pursue professional activities under any of the professional titles appearing in the respective applicable version of the annex to Section 1 of the Law on the Professional Activities of European Lawyers in Germany of 9 March 2000 [*Gesetz über die Tätigkeit europäischer Rechtsanwälte in Deutschland*] (BGBl I p. 182) or the

annex to Section 1 of the Law on the Qualifying Examination for Gaining Admission to the Profession of Patent Attorney of 6 July 1990 [*Gesetz über die Eignungsprüfung zur Zulassung zur Patentanwaltschaft*] (BGBl I p. 1349, 1351).

(3) The place where the representative, appointed under subsection 1, has his business premises shall be deemed, within the meaning of Section 23 of the Code of Civil Procedure, to be the place where the assets are located. If there are no business premises, then the place where the representative has his domicile in Germany shall be relevant and, in the absence thereof, the place where the Patent Office has its seat.

(4) The termination of the appointment of a representative under subsection 1 shall be effective only after the termination of the appointment and the appointment of a new representative have been communicated to the Patent Office or the Patent Court.

Application of the Provisions of this Law; Language

107. (1) The provisions of this Law shall be applicable mutatis mutandis to the international registration of marks under the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks (Madrid Agreement) which are effected through the intermediary of the Patent Office or the protection of which extends to the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany unless otherwise provided in this Chapter or in the Madrid Agreement.

(2) All requests and other communications in the procedure concerning international registrations and the list of goods and services shall be submitted in French.

Examination as to Absolute Grounds for Refusal

113. - (1) International registration of marks shall be examined as to absolute grounds for refusal under Section 37 in the same way as marks in respect of which an application for registration has been filed. Section 37(2) shall not apply.

(2) Rejection of the application (Section 37(1)) shall be replaced by refusal of protection.

Opposition

114. - (1) For the purpose of international registrations, publications of the registration (Section 41) shall be replaced by publication in the gazette published by the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization¹.

(2) The time limit for lodging opposition (Section 42(1)) against the grant of protection for international registrations shall start on the first day of the month following the month indicated on the issue of the gazette containing the publication of the international registration.

(3) Cancellation of the registration (Section 43(2)) shall be replaced by refusal of protection.

Extract from the Trade Mark Ordinance version of 11 May 2004

Section 46 Refusal of Protection

(1) Where protection is, in full or in part, refused to an international registration the protection of which has been extended to the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany under Article 3ter of the Madrid Agreement or under Article 3ter of the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement, and where this refusal is communicated to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization to be transmitted to the proprietor of the international registration, the time limit for appointing a representative in Germany shall, to avoid final refusal, be fixed to four months from the date on which notification of refusal was dispatched by the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization.

(2) Where the refusal of protection has become final because the proprietor of the international registration has failed to appoint a representative in Germany, an objection to or an appeal from the refusal shall be filed with the German Patent and Trade Mark Office within one further month after the time limit of four months under subsection (1). Instructions about the proprietor's right to appeal shall be attached to the refusal. Sec. 61(2) of the Trade Mark Law shall apply mutatis mutandis.

¹ Federal Law Gazette

² Gazette OMPI des marques internationales/WIPO Gazette of International Marks (published fortnightly) (Editor's note)

still X.	Supplementary box grounds for refusal – <i>item V</i> – International Trade Mark 1 342 685 The trade mark is a descriptive indication/sign in respect of the goods/services mentioned whose use cannot be reserved for a single holder but must be kept free for all competitors; it is devoid of any distinctive character (Sec. 119, 124, 113, 37 (1), 8 (2) Nos 1, 2 Trade Mark Law; Art. 5 Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement; Art. 6 quinquies B Paris Convention). <u>Note:</u> If no representative has been appointed within the provisional time limit of the first four months, this fact constitutes in itself a ground for refusal after the notification concerning the refusal of protection has become final (Sec. 119, 96 Trade Mark Law).	
XII.	Annexes (crossed off below) ☐ 1 reproduction of 0 opposed trade marks including a figurative element or a special graphic design ☐ List specifying the registration number as well as the relevant goods/services in respect of each opposed trade mark ☐ List of professional representatives ☐ List of goods/services	XI. Signature or official seal of the administration which pronounced the refusal 