

Press Release

28 October 2025

125 Years of SZA Schilling, Zutt & Anschütz: Shaping Modern Business Law

The business law firm SZA Schilling, Zutt & Anschütz celebrates its 125th anniversary this year. Today, the firm employs 139 lawyers, including 38 partners, across its offices in Frankfurt am Main, Mannheim, Munich, and Brussels. With its broad range of legal services and fee income of nearly EUR 70 million in 2024, SZA Schilling, Zutt & Anschütz ranks among the leading independent business law firms in Germany.

Historical roots and eponymous partners

The origins of SZA Schilling, Zutt & Anschütz date back to **1 November 1900**, when Ernst Bassermann and Anton Lindeck founded a law firm in Mannheim that later merged with the law office Zutt & Schilling. The firm's present name reflects the legacy of prominent legal figures who shaped decades of its development: **Wolfgang Schilling**, in his day one of Germany's leading experts on the law of corporations and corporate groups, also an Honorary Professor at Heidelberg University, a member of the Business Law Commission of the German Federal Ministry of Justice, and co-author of the renowned Hachenburg Commentary on the law of limited liability companies; **Johanna Schilling**, one of the first women to be admitted to the bar in Mannheim after World War II, who attained prominence as an attorney litigating for the restitution of property expropriated during the National Socialist period; **Jürg Zutt**, who represented major corporations, large family-owned enterprises, and high-net-worth individuals, following in the footsteps of his father **Wilhelm Zutt**, a respected business lawyer who held office in the government of the short-lived province of Mittelrhein-Saar after World War II; and **Klaus Anschütz**, who established antitrust law as a key practice area within the firm.

125 years – closely linked to German economic history

The firm has been closely linked to German economic history for 125 years. At the beginning of the 20th century, it was entrusted with matters of major significance for both the economy as a whole and the development of the law of business associations, such as the conversion of the private bank **W. H. Ladenburg & Söhne** into a joint stock corporation that was subsequently merged into **Deutsche Bank**, reflecting the profound transformation of the German banking sector at that time.

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In the late 1920s, the firm advised on the merger of **Daimler** and **Benz** as well as on the acquisition of **Opel** by **General Motors**. During Germany's dynamic post-World War II economic revival, which lasted into the 1970s, numerous major corporations relied on the firm's expertise.

In the decades that followed, SZA Schilling, Zutt & Anschütz has continued to be involved in landmark corporate and industrial developments. These included advising on the merger that formed **DaimlerChrysler** and assisting in the consolidation of Germany's aerospace and defense industries, leading to the creation of **EADS** (now **Airbus**) – a milestone in European industrial cooperation.

Today, the firm continues to counsel clients on transformative transactions that shape Germany's corporate landscape and economy. Notable examples include advising the supervisory board of **Innogy** on restructuring the German energy sector and reallocating activities between **RWE** and **E.ON**, as well as advising the supervisory board of **Covestro** in connection with **ADNOC's** public takeover bid at an equity value of approximately EUR 11.7 billion.

Independence and continued growth

The merger with Shearman & Sterling LLP in 2000 and the return to independence in 2008 mark important milestones in the firm's recent history. Since then, SZA Schilling, Zutt & Anschütz has grown steadily, expanding its range of legal services and its regional presence while cultivating relationships with a strong international network of leading law firms in Europe, the United States, and Asia.

Focus on complex matters with strong partner involvement

SZA Schilling, Zutt & Anschütz focuses on solving complex business law problems for international and domestic corporations, closely held family-owned businesses, and institutions. Its principal practice areas are corporate law, M&A, capital markets, banking and finance, compliance, tax, litigation and arbitration, antitrust and competition, intellectual property including IT and data protection, restructuring and insolvency, as well as commercial and real estate transactions, private clients, labor law, and public sector law.

The firm is known for strong partner involvement and holistic legal advice that never loses sight of the broader economic context. It frequently handles matters with lasting impact on markets, industries, or corporate structures – global mergers of industrial giants, investor litigation with billions at stake, and strategic defense against unwelcome advances.

Academic engagement with an eye to the future

"Academic engagement and legal advice that serves our clients' needs are both central to our firm's identity," says **SZA partner Prof. Dr. Jochem Reichert**. "What distinguishes our firm is the involvement of our partners in committees and associations, where they contribute their expertise to the legislative process. The combination of legal excellence with a deep understanding of business realities informs everything we do."

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Together with Heidelberg University, the firm established the **Wolfgang Schilling Foundation**, which for over 20 years has hosted academic symposiums that bring leading scholars and practitioners together to discuss topical corporate law issues.

“In the course of its 125 year existence, SZA has lived through and, in many cases, helped write different chapters of German economic history. We actively confront the legal challenges of the present and future, such as the growing importance of legal tech in the legal services market and the legal implications of artificial intelligence for businesses,” says **SZA partner Dr. Marc Loebbe**. “We would like to thank all of our employees and clients, for whom we strive to remain a reliable fixed point in a changing environment.”

To mark its anniversary, the firm will host a symposium in Mannheim on 28 November 2025. Under the title *125 Years of SZA: Corporate Law Through the Changes of Time*, distinguished speakers will discuss topical developments in corporate law. The anniversary celebration will conclude with a reception at the Kunsthalle, featuring private guided tours and a dinner.

Note: A journey through the firm’s 125-year history – including milestones, influential figures, and key cases – can be found at <https://www.sza.de/de/profil/unsere-geschichte> (*English version coming soon*). For a general overview, please click here: [Link](#).

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SZA Schilling, Zutt & Anschütz has been one of the most respected German business law firms for over one century. With its lawyers and offices in Frankfurt, Mannheim, Munich, and Brussels, the firm advises national and international clients on all complex legal issues arising in business.

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