

Maastricht University Faculty of Law	
Area of Research	Automatizing Law
Affiliated Research Institute	Law and Tech Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/about-um/faculties/law/research/law-and-tech-lab Faculty of Private Law
Team of possible Promotor(s) and reference publications	Dr. A. Tamò-Larrieux <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/p70078907 Prof. G. van Dijck <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/gijs.vandijck
Additional Supervisor(s)	
Faculty Research Program(s) (more options possible)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Law and Technology
Applicable Chinese Government Sectors for Talent Development	Humanities and Social Sciences
Proposed list of topics (non-exhaustive)	<p>To what extent can we automate law? Law and regulations operate with a lot of open-textured terms (e.g., reasonableness, legitimacy) as well as definitions (e.g., data controller) which legal scholars, practitioners, and judges interpret, apply, and ultimately enforce. The (final) interpretation of such terms is always context-dependent. Automating law - e.g., automating legal reasoning, encoding provisions into devices – requires thus to understand, among others, open-textured terms and deliberate on their application in a given context. Doing so, however, raises many questions: How can such balancing acts be performed (well) by computers (or: how far can we automate the law)? What occurs if (open-textured) terms are being automatically interpreted (e.g., are we de facto freezing the law by enabling only one interpretation)? What are the downsides that occur when norms are being implemented automatically? Can we detect open-textured terms and norms in a (semi)-automatic fashion? How can we catalog them?</p> <p>To answer those questions, research is needed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyzes the extent that (open-textured) terms and definitions are present in legal statutes that require context-dependent interpretations - Analyzes the means proposed to automatically implement these norms - Deliberates on the promises and perils of such approaches in light of the identified open-textured terms and definitions
Methodology	The research project will be interdisciplinary and requires legal know-how and an affinity for technical subjects. Depending on the concrete outline of the project, methods can include comparative approaches, qualitative and quantitative approaches, and mixed-method approaches and provide findings to the law and technology literature as well as lead to guidelines for policymakers.