

Types of scientific theses

(in European countries with highly developed legal systems)

	classical doctoral thesis	advanced doctoral thesis (only in some countries)	habilitation thesis (only in some countries)
kind of subject	<i>special subject</i> : limited range of problems within a well-defined field or sub-field of law (and, may be, touching other fields of law)	<i>broad subject</i> : complex range of problems covering a whole field of law (and, usually, broadly touching other fields of law)	<i>general subject</i> : a whole field of law (including a complex range of problems) with all or most of its relations to other fields of law
degree of thoroughness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perfect understanding of the special subject and providing perfect solutions for a limited number of problems 2. <i>Advanced understanding</i> of the relevant field(s) of law 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Perfect understanding of and new basic approach</i> to the whole relevant field of law (including its relations to other fields of law) 2. Providing perfect solutions for <i>most</i> classical problems in the whole relevant field of law 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Perfect understanding</i> of the whole relevant field of law (and, usually, of all the neighbouring fields of law), <i>based on a perfectly-founded new basic approach</i> 2. Providing perfect solutions for <i>all</i> classical problems in the relevant field of law (and essential parts of neighbouring fields of law)
common size	200 - 350 pages	300 - 700 pages	400 - 800 pages
common time frame	2,5 - 3 years (30 - 40 hours/week)	4 - 5 years (30 - 40 hours/week)	6 years (30 - 40 hours/week)
reasonable time for studies abroad	≈ 2 - 3 weeks (if well-prepared)	≈ ½ - 1 year	≈ 1 - 1 ½ years
how to deal with controversial very fundamental theories	present and discuss them shortly, then take your own decision and justify it shortly (you do not have to re-invent your field of law...)	present and discuss them comprehensively, then take your decision and justify it with very thorough reasons (you <i>should</i> re-invent your field of law...)	present and discuss them absolutely comprehensively, then take your decision and justify it with absolutely thorough, unassailable reasons (you <i>do</i> have to re-invent your field of law...)

Note: In countries, which are developing their legal system, a light version of the advanced doctoral thesis will often be appropriated. However, it will be much shorter and there will be less time and resources available.