

Thomas Hazell

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<https://t-hazell.github.io/>

Research Interests

Autocracy
Bureaucracy & bureaucrats
Computational social science

Central Asia
Procurement & corruption
Subnational governance

Education

DPhil (PhD) in Politics 2024 –
Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford

Funded by an Economic and Social Research Council Studentship. Supervised by Dr Katerina Tertychnaya.

Visiting Graduate Student March – May 2026
Department of Political Science and International Relations, Nazarbayev University, Astana

MPhil in Politics (Comparative Government) 2022 – 2024
Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford

Grade: *Distinction*. Funded by an Economic and Social Research Council Studentship. Thesis: 'Subnational governance, patronage, and political careers in Kazakhstan,' supervised by Dr Katerina Tertychnaya.

BA in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics 2019 – 2022
Lincoln College, University of Oxford

Grade: *First Class*. Finals examinations in politics and economics. Thesis: 'Changing the rules of autocracy: the politics of electoral reform in competitive authoritarian Ukraine,' supervised by Dr Jody LaPorte.

Work in Progress

For abstracts & working papers: <https://t-hazell.github.io/research>.

'The manager, the bureaucrat, and the autocrat: Personnel appointments in authoritarian bureaucracies'. *Working paper*.

'Which merits matter? Political performance, economic meritocracy, and elite loyalty in authoritarian states'. *Working paper*.

'Local elections and elite management in authoritarian regimes: evidence from Kazakhstan'. With Eleonora Minaeva and Kirill Melnikov. *Working paper*.

'Subnational governance, co-optation, and political careers in Kazakhstan'.

Working paper.

**Conferences
& Workshops**

'Which merits matter? Political performance, economic meritocracy, and elite loyalty in authoritarian states.' *Conference of the European Political Science Association (EPSA)*. 27 June 2025. UC3M, Madrid.

'The manager, the bureaucrat, and the autocrat: Personnel appointments in authoritarian bureaucracies.' *3rd APSG Conference on Authoritarian Politics*. 23 June 2025. Authoritarian Political Systems Group, King's College London.

'The manager, the bureaucrat, and the autocrat: Personnel appointments in authoritarian bureaucracies.' *3rd Conference "New Advances in the Political Economy of Development in Eurasia."* 6 June 2025. Almaty Management University, Almaty.

'Subnational governance, patronage, and political careers in Kazakhstan.' *Conference of the Midwestern Political Science Association (MPSA)*. 5 April 2025. Chicago.

'Shuffling to co-opt: Subnational governance, patronage, and political careers in Kazakhstan.' *ESRC Grand Union DTP Annual Conference*. 4 June 2024. University of Oxford, Oxford.

'Shuffling to co-opt: Subnational governance, patronage, and political careers in Kazakhstan.' *Emerging Scholars Workshop on the Study of Challenges in Eurasian Politics and Society*. 24 May 2024. Center for Slavic, Eurasian, and East European Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Presented Online.

Teaching

PPE Finals papers (second-/third-year undergraduate courses):
Politics in Russia and the Former Soviet Union. Taught MT (Autumn) 2025.

**Professional &
Research
Experience**

Research Assistant on Non-Violent Repression in Electoral Autocracies
Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford
September 2024 – present

Research assistance to Dr Katerina Tertytchnaya's ESRC-funded project on administrative and bureaucratic repression.

Election Observer (Short-term), Uzbekistan
OSCE ODIHR Election Observation Mission
October 2024

UK-seconded short-term observer for the OSCE ODIHR mission in Samarqand region during the 2024 parliamentary elections.

Consultant Researcher

Ridgeway Information, London
June – October 2024

Consultancy supporting the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s nuclear non-proliferation work. Open source methods and Russian-language support, especially on projects related to the former Soviet Union.

Research Assistant on AUTHLIB (PI: Stephen Whitefield)

Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford
September 2023 – January 2024

Part of the joint UKRI/Horizon Europe funded project 'neo-authoritarianisms in Europe and the liberal democratic response' (<https://www.authlib.eu/>), led at Oxford by Stephen Whitefield, Spyros Kosmidis, and Zofia Stemplowska. Coding tweets to train a natural language processing model.

Research Assistant to Dr Lenka Bušíková

Oxford School of Global and Area Studies, University of Oxford
May – September 2023

Data collection for projects on illiberalism and irregular armed groups' political role in Ukraine.

Research Assistant on the Oxford University Economic Recovery Project

Smith School of Energy and Enterprise, University of Oxford
February – November 2021

Research assistance, using government and media sources to track state spending in response to Covid-19.

Intern

Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford
Summer 2021

Service

Reviewer for *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* and *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*

Selected Scholarships & Awards

Grand Union Doctoral Training Programme Studentship, Economic and Social Research Council, 2022–2026.

Competitively awarded doctoral studentship, covering fees and stipend for the MPhil in Politics followed by the DPhil (PhD) in Politics, both at Oxford. Value: ≈ £145,000.

International Experience

Intensive Russian language training in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, Summer 2022.

Travel in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia.

Languages

Native English. Intermediate Russian. Beginner's Kazakh.

Computer Skills

R (Advanced): Modelling & causal inference methods. Survey data. Visualisation. Managing large datasets. Web scraping/automation. Quarto. Machine learning (`tidymodels`). GIS (`SF`).

Python: Scraping. Data management. Natural language processing/text-as-data/machine learning, including `torch`. GIS.

Other: OpenAI APIs (Batch, Fine Tuning). Git/GitHub. Cloud computing (Azure, Google Cloud). Databases/basic SQL. \LaTeX .

Additional Training

Kazakh language, Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, November 2025–.

Comprehensive E-learning Course for OSCE/ODIHR Observers, September 2024.

Fieldwork Safety Overseas, University of Oxford Safety Office, June 2023.

Advanced R for the Social Sciences, Social Sciences Division, University of Oxford, February 2023.

References

Dr Jody LaPorte
Gonticas Fellow in Politics and
International Relations
Lincoln College
University of Oxford
`jody.laporte@lincoln.ox.ac.uk`

Dr Katerina Tertytchnaya
Associate Professor of Comparative
Politics
Department of Politics and
International Relations
University of Oxford
`katerina.terytchnaya@politics.ox.ac.uk`

Professor Lenka Bušíková
Department of Political Science
University of Florida
`lenka.bustikova@ufl.edu`