A regime (also "régime") is the form of government or the set of rules, cultural or social norms, etc., that regulate the operation of a government or institution and its interactions with society. The two broad categories of regimes that appear in most literature are democratic and autocratic. However, autocratic regimes can be broken down into a subset of many different types (dictatorial, totalitarian, absolutist, monarchic, oligarchic, etc.). The key similarity between all regimes are the presence of rulers, and either formal or informal institutions. There a three main types of political regimes today: democracies, totalitarian regimes and, sitting between these two, authoritarian regimes (with hybrid regimes). While the word régime originates as a synonym for any type of government, modern usage has given it a negative connotation, implying an authoritarian government or dictatorship. There are two primary ways in which regimes are measured: continuous measures of democracy (e.g. Freedom House (FH), Polity Data Series, and the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)) and binary measures of democracy (e.g. Regimes of the World). A continuous measure of democracy creates categorical classifications based on gradations of democracy and autocracy though previously, primarily focused on the differentiation of democracies and autocracies. A binary measure of democracy classifies a country as either a democracy or not. V-Dem Institute, an independent research institute that aims to conceptualize and measure democracy, serves as one of the world's most well-known continuous measures of democracy. V-Dem formally describes their data utilizing a notation that contains ratings of numerous indicators. Such indicators include access to justice, electoral corruption, and freedom from government sponsored violence.

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