

Episodes of Regime Transformation Dataset

Codebook

v1.0

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This codebook details the coding scheme and variables included in the Episodes of Regime Transformation dataset.

Recommended citations:

Edgell, Amanda B., Seraphine F. Maerz, Laura Maxwell, Richard Morgan, Juraj Medzihorsky, Matthew C. Wilson, Vanessa Boese, Sebastian Hellmeier, Jean Lachapelle, Patrik Lindenfors, Anna Lührmann, and Staffan I. Lindberg. (2020). Episodes of Regime Transformation Dataset, v1.0.

Lührmann, Anna & Staffan I. Lindberg. (2019). A third wave of autocratization is here: what is new about it? *Democratization*, 26:7, pp. 1095-1113.

Wilson, Matthew C., Richard Morgan, Juraj Medzihorsky, Laura Maxwell, Seraphine F. Maerz, Anna Lührmann, Patrik Lindenfors, Amanda B. Edgell, Vanessa Boese, and Staffan I. Lindberg. (2020). V-Dem Working Paper, 2020:97.

A. Setting the parameters

Generally, we recommend using the default parameters. For advanced users who wish to make changes, we recommend doing so with sound theoretical priors.

Start inclusion (start_incl)

What is the minimum annual change on the EDI necessary to trigger an episode?

Clarification: This is the absolute value of the first difference in the EDI required for the onset of either a democratization (+) or autocratization episode (–).

Default: 0.01

Format: numeric

Cumulative inclusion (cum_incl)

What is the minimum amount of total change on the EDI necessary to constitute a manifest episode?

Clarification: A potential episode might be a period involving any amount of changes over a period following an annual change equal to the start inclusion (e.g. 0.01). To identify substantial changes, we set a cumulative inclusion threshold. This is the absolute value of the total amount of change needed on the EDI to be considered manifest.

Default: 0.10

Format: numeric

Tolerance (tolerance)

What is the number of years considered as tolerance for stasis or a gradual movement in the opposite direction?

Clarification: The tolerance defines the number of years an episode is allowed to remain in stasis (i.e. no more movements equal to the start inclusion) and/or move in the opposite direction before it is terminated. This parameter also defines the number of years necessary for a case to be considered a democratic breakdown or stabilized electoral autocracy. Therefore, care is necessary when manipulating the default value. This could lead to large changes in the composition of episodes. We set the default to 5 years because this is the typical amount for an electoral cycle for most countries.

Default: 5 years

Format: integer

Annual turn for termination (year_turn)

What is the amount of annual change in the opposite direction to trigger the termination of an episode?

Clarification: An episode may end when the case suddenly moves in the opposite direction. For example, during an episode of democratization, a country may experience a sudden drop on the EDI. This could signal the onset of an autocratization episode. To avoid overlap between episodes, we set the absolute value of a change in the opposite direction on the EDI as a trigger for the termination of an episode.

Default: 0.02

Format: numeric

Cumulative turn for termination (cum_turn)

What is the amount of gradual change in the opposite direction to trigger the termination of an episode?

Clarification: An episode may end when the case begins moving in the opposite direction gradually. For example, during an episode of democratization, a country may experience a gradual drop on the EDI over a number of years that signals democratization has ended. This could also signal the onset of an autocratization episode. To avoid overlap between episodes, we set the absolute value of a gradual change in the opposite direction on the EDI over the tolerance period (e.g. 5 years) as a trigger for the termination of an episode.

Default: 0.10

Format: numeric

B. Regime Type Variables

Country identifier (country_id)

What is the V-Dem unique country identifier for this case?

Format: integer, [3,236]

Country text identifier (country_text_id)

What is the V-Dem country text identifier for this case?

Format: string

Country name (country_name)

What is the V-Dem country name for this case?

Format: string

Year (year)

What is the year of this observation?

Clarification: Based on 31 December or the average of historical date from V-Dem.

Format: integer, [1900,2019]

Regimes of the World (v2x_regime)

What is the regime value for this country_year according to the Regimes of the World?

- 0 – Closed autocracy
- 1 – Electoral Autocracy
- 2 – Electoral Democracy
- 3 – Liberal Democracy

Format: integer, [0,3]

Electoral democracy index (v2x_polyarchy)

What is the country's current score on the V-Dem electoral democracy index (EDI)?

Format: interval, [0,1]

Regime founding (reg_start_year)

When was the current regime founded?

Clarification: This variable is coded as the year the regime was founded and is coded for the entire duration of the regime.

For democratic regimes, this is coded as the first year after direct national-level election for either the parliament, executive, or a constituent assembly having been held under conditions of democracy on the RoW measure, where the elected officials are able to assume office. This variable is coded for the entire democratic regime period.

For autocratic regimes, this is generally defined as the year the country moved from democracy to autocracy on the RoW measure. To guard against noise in the data, we require that cases moving from democracy to electoral autocracy stay autocratic for the tolerance period or hold an autocratic founding election. Autocratic founding elections are defined as the first direct national-level election for either the parliament, executive, or a constituent assembly having been held under conditions of autocracy on the RoW measure. This variable is coded for the entire autocratic regime period.

To deal with left censoring, we code the first regime after the coding starts or a gap in the case purely based on the RoW value, and set its founding year as the first observation year after the coding starts or a gap ends in the data.

Right censoring is not an issue for changes between autocracy and democracy, because the regime founding (i.e. transition) is not completed until the founding democratic election occurs. Thus, we assume the previous autocratic regime persists until we receive information to the contrary. A change in RoW resulting in democracy that stays there to the end of the coding or a gap in coding without holding an election is treated as remaining autocratic.

For changes from democracy to closed autocracy, censoring is also not an issue as we take the year the case becomes closed as the transition or founding of the new autocratic regime.

For changes from democracy to electoral autocracy that occur within the tolerance (e.g. 5 years) of the coding end or gap in the dataset and do not hold a founding autocratic election, we treat these as remaining democratic until the coding end or gap.

Required variables: v2x_regime; v2eltype_0; v2eltype_4; v2eltype_6; v2elasmoff_ord

Format: year, [1900,2019]

Regime termination (reg_end_year)

When will the current regime end?

Clarification: This variable is coded as the year the regime ends and is coded for the entire duration of the regime.

For democratic regimes, this is generally coded as the year the country moved from democracy to autocracy on the RoW measure, provided that it resulted in a democratic breakdown. To guard against noise in the data, we require that cases moving from democracy to electoral autocracy stay autocratic for the tolerance period or hold an autocratic founding election. Autocratic founding elections are defined as the first direct national-level election for either the parliament, executive, or a constituent assembly having been held under conditions of autocracy on the RoW measure, after a transition from democracy to autocracy on the RoW measure. This variable is coded for the entire democratic regime period.

For autocratic regimes, this is defined as first direct national-level election for either the parliament, executive, or a constituent assembly having been held under conditions of democracy on the RoW measure, after a move from autocracy to democracy on the RoW measure, where the elected officials are able to assume office. This variable is coded for the entire autocratic regime period.

Right censoring is not an issue for changes between autocracy and democracy, because the regime ending (i.e. transition) is not completed until after the founding democratic election occurs. Thus, we assume the previous autocratic regime persists until we receive information to the contrary. A change in RoW resulting in democracy that stays there to the end of the coding or a gap in coding without holding an election is treated as remaining autocratic.

For changes from democracy to closed autocracy (i.e. breakdown), censoring is also not an issue as we take the year the prior to when the case becomes closed as the end of the regime.

For changes from democracy to electoral autocracy that occur within the tolerance (e.g. 5 years) of the coding end or gap in the dataset and do not hold a founding autocratic election, we treat these as remaining democratic until the coding end or gap.

Required variables: v2x_regime; v2eltype_0; v2eltype_4; v2eltype_6; v2elasmoff_ord

Format: year, [1900,2019]

Regime identifier (reg_id)

What is the unique regime identifier?

Clarification: This is a combination of the country_text_id, start, and end year of the regime.

Required variables:

country_text_id, reg_start_year, reg_end_year.

Format: string

Regime type (reg_type)

What is the current regime type?

Clarification: This variable denotes whether the current regime can be classified as a democracy or autocracy.

0 - Autocracy. A country-year coded as autocracy on the RoW measure that has had an autocratic transition, i.e. (a) closed autocracy; or (2) electoral autocracy that has held an autocratic founding election and/or stayed autocratic for the tolerance period

1 - Democracy. A country-year coded as democracy on the RoW measure that has held a democratic founding election. The year of the founding election is included.

To deal with left censoring, we code the first regime after the coding starts or a gap in the case purely based on the RoW value, and set its founding year as the first observation year after the coding starts or a gap ends in the data.

Right censoring is not an issue for changes between autocracy and democracy, because the regime founding (i.e. transition) is not completed until the founding democratic election occurs. Thus, we assume the previous autocratic regime persists until we receive information to the contrary. A change in RoW resulting in democracy that stays there to the end of the coding or a gap in coding without holding an election is treated as remaining autocratic.

For changes from democracy to closed autocracy, censoring is also not an issue as we take the year the case becomes closed as the transition or founding of the new autocratic regime.

For changes from democracy to electoral autocracy that occur within the tolerance (e.g. 5 years) of the coding end or gap in the dataset and do not hold a founding autocratic election, we treat these as remaining democratic until the coding end or gap.

Required variables: v2x_regime, reg_founding

Format: categorical, [0,1]

Regime transition (reg_trans)

Was there a regime transition in the country-year? If so, what type?

Clarification: This variable is coded based on a transition between democracy and autocracy based on the regime founding criteria. It is coded as the final year of a regime.

-1: Democratic breakdown.

0: No regime transition

1: Democratic transition.

Required variables: reg_type

Format: categorical, [-1,1]

Founding election (founding_elec)

When was the founding democratic election for this regime?

Clarification: This variable is only coded for democratic regime years and reflects the first election held under democracy within the regime that allowed officials to assume office in either the legislature, executive, or a constituent assembly.

Required variables: v2eltype_0, v2eltype_4, v2eltype_6, v2elasmoff_ord, v2x_regime

Format: year, [1903,2019]

RoW regime change event (row_regch_event)

Was there a regime change according to the RoW measure during this country-year?

Clarification: This variable is coded based on a change between democracy and autocracy on the RoW measure.

-1: Change from democracy to autocracy on RoW

0: No regime change on RoW

1: Change from autocracy to democracy on RoW

Required variables: v2x_regime

Format: categorical, [-1,1]

RoW regime change censored (row_regch_censored)

Is this particular regime change censored?

Clarification: If the regime change on RoW between democracy and autocracy occurs within tolerance years (e.g. 5) of the end of coding or a gap in coding, it is considered censored unless we know there was a breakdown or democratic transition based on above criteria.

Required variables: row_regch_event, codingend, gapstart1, gapstart2, gapstart3

Format: dummy, [0,1]

C. Episodes

D1. Democratization Episodes

Democratization episode (dem_ep)

Was there an ongoing democratization episode during the country-year?

Clarification: A period of substantial and sustained increases on electoral democracy. The default parameters require that such a period begin with an initial 0.01 increase on the EDI and a total increase of at least 0.10 throughout the episode. A democratization episode ends the final year of a positive change matching the initial increase (e.g. 0.01), prior to experiencing an annual drop, cumulative drop, or stasis period. These are defined in the defaults as -0.02, -0.10, and 5 years respectively.

Required variables: v2x_polyarchy

Format: dummy, [0,1]

Democratization episode identifier (dem_ep_id)

What is the unique identifier for current the democratization episode?

Clarification: This is a combination of the country_text_id, start, and end year of the episode.

Required variables: country_text_id, dem_ep_start_year, dem_ep_end_year.

Format: string

Democratization episode start year (dem_ep_start_year)

When did the current episode of democratization begin?

Clarification: The first year of the democratization episode, defined as the first year of a positive change equal or greater than the start inclusion (e.g. +0.01) on the EDI, followed by a period of sustained positive changes on the EDI.

Format: year, [1901,2018]

Democratization episode end year (dem_ep_end_year)

When will the current episode of democratization end?

Clarification: The final year of the democratization episode, defined as the last positive change equal to or greater than the start inclusion (e.g. +0.01) on the EDI before experiencing an annual drop (e.g. -0.02), gradual drop over the tolerance (e.g. -0.10 over 5

years), or a period of no positive changes on the EDI equal to the start inclusion (e.g. +0.01) for the tolerance (e.g. 5 years).

Format: year, [1902,2019]

Pre-democratization episode year (dem_pre_ep_year)

Will a democratization episode begin in the following year?

Clarification: Coded as the year before a democratization episode begins.

Format: dummy, [0,1]

Democratization episode termination type (dep_ep_termination)

Why did the current democratization episode terminate the year it did?

Clarification: Democratization episodes generally end the final year of a positive change greater than or equal to the start_incl parameter (e.g. 0.01). The reasons for termination include:

0 – Censored. The episode is censored (i.e. has not yet terminated). This occurs when the episode has not experienced any of the below conditions and has experienced its last positive change greater than or equal to the start_incl parameter (e.g. 0.01) within the tolerance period of coding end or a gap in coding.

1 – Stasis. The episode terminated because of a period of stasis longer or equal to the tolerance period (e.g. 5 years).

2 – Year drop. The episode terminated because it experienced an annual drop less than or equal to the year_turn parameter (e.g. -0.02) within the tolerance window (e.g. 5 years) of its last positive change.

3 – Cumulative drop. The episode terminated because it experienced a cumulative drop less than or equal to the cum_turn parameter (e.g. -0.10) within the tolerance window (e.g. 5 years) of the last positive change.

Note: Using our default parameters with v10 produces no cases of this. All are absorbed by category 2, “year drop”. However, we maintain it here and in the script for those who might encounter this independent of a year drop depending on how the parameters are set.

4 – Closed. The episode terminated because the country reverted to closed authoritarianism.

Required variables: v2x_polyarchy, v2x_regime

Format: categorical, [0,4]

Democratization episode phase (sub_dem_ep)

What is the phase of the current democratization episode?

Clarification: We define a democratization phases based on the present regime conditions within the country using the regime types outlined above.

0 - No democratization episode

1 - Democratic deepening. Years of a democratization episode occurring in a democracy.

2 – Liberalizing autocracy. Years of democratization episode occurring in an autocracy.

Required variables: dem_ep, reg_type

Format: categorical, [0,2]

Democratization episode phase identifier (sub_dem_ep_id)

What is the unique identifier for the current democratization episode phase.

Clarification: Identifier for the democratization episode phase that is a combination of the country_text_id and the start and end years of the phase. This only applies to cases of autocratic liberalization resulting in a democratic transition and subsequent period of democratic deepening. Otherwise, the sub_dem_ep_id is the same as the dem_ep_id.

Required variables: country_text_id, sub_dem_ep_start_year, sub_dem_ep_end_year.

Format: string

Democratization episode phase start year (sub_dem_ep_start_year)

When did the current phase of democratization begin?

Clarification: The first year the current democratization episode is coded as this particular phase. Note: This only applies to cases of autocratic liberalization resulting in a democratic transition and a subsequent period of democratic deepening. Otherwise, sub_dem_ep_start_year is the same as dem_ep_start_year.

Required variables: sub_dem_ep, year

Format: year, [1901,2018]

Democratization episode phase end year (sub_dem_ep_end_year)

When will the current democratization phase end?

Clarification: The final year the current democratization episode is coded as this particular phase. Note: This only applies to cases of autocratic liberalization resulting in a democratic transition and a subsequent period of democratic deepening. Otherwise, sub_dem_ep_end_year is the same as dem_ep_end_year.

Required variables: sub_dem_ep, year

Format: year, [1902,2019]

Democratization episode outcome (dem_ep_outcome)

What was the outcome of the current phase of democratization episode?

Clarification: For each phase of the democratization episode, there are possible outcomes that could occur.

0 – There is no democratization episode during this year.

1 – Democratic transition. The episode resulted in a change from autocracy to democracy on the RoW measure followed by a democratic founding election. *Only applies for autocratic liberalization phase.*

2 – Preempted democratic transition. The episode resulted in a change from autocracy to democracy on the RoW measure but did not hold a democratic founding election. *Only applies for autocratic liberalization phase.*

3 – Stabilized electoral autocracy. The episode did not result in a change from autocracy to democracy on the RoW measure and stabilized as an electoral autocracy for the tolerance period (e.g. 5 years) without subsequent improvements equal to the start inclusion (e.g. 0.01). *Only applies for autocratic liberalization phase.*

4 – Reverted liberalization. The episode (a) never resulted in change from closed autocracy on the RoW measure, (b) resulted in an electoral autocracy on the RoW measure but reverted back to closed autocracy, (c) resulted in an electoral autocracy on the RoW measure but experienced a subsequent annual decline less than or equal to the year_turn parameter (e.g. -0.02) or a decline less than the cum_turn parameter (e.g. -0.10) on the EDI over the course of the tolerance period (e.g. 5 years). *Only applies for autocratic liberalization phase.*

5. Democratic deepening. An episode of democratization beginning and ending in a democracy. *Only applies to democratic deepening phase.*

6. Censored. An episode that is censored.

We code this variable for the entire duration of the episode phase.

Required variables: dem_ep, row_demtrans_dum, row_regch_event, reg_type, dem_ep_termination,

Format: categorical, [0,6]

Democratization episode censored (dem_ep_censored)

Is the current democratization episode censored?

Clarification: A democratization episode may be censored if its end date corresponds with the date the coding for the case ends (i.e. *codingend*) or the year before a gap starts in the coding (i.e. *gapstart1*, *gapstart2*, *gapstart3*).

Required variables: dem_ep_end_year, codingend, gapstart1, gapstart2, gapstart3

Format: dummy, [0,1]

D2. Autocratization Episodes

Autocratization episode (aut_ep)

Was there an ongoing autocratization episode during the country-year?

Clarification: A period of substantial and sustained decreases on electoral democracy. The default parameters require that such a period begin with an initial -0.01 decrease on the EDI and a total decrease of at least -0.10 throughout the episode. A democratization episode ends the final year of a negative change matching the initial decrease (e.g. -0.01), prior to experiencing an annual increase, cumulative increase, or stasis period. These are defined in the defaults as $+0.02$, $+0.10$, and 5 years respectively.

Required variables:

v2x_polyarchy

Format: dummy, [0,1]

Autocratization episode identifier (aut_ep_id)

What is the unique identifier for current the autocratization episode?

Clarification: This is a combination of the country_text_id, start, and end year of the episode.

Required variables:

country_text_id, dem_ep_start_year, dem_ep_end_year.

Format: string

Autocratization episode start year (aut_ep_start_year)

When did the current episode of autocratization begin?

Clarification: The first year of the autocratization episode, defined as the first year of a negative change equal or less than the start inclusion (e.g. -0.01) on the EDI, followed by a period of sustained negative changes on the EDI.

Format: year, [1905,2017]

Autocratization episode end year (aut_ep_end_year)

When will the current episode of autocratization end?

Clarification: The final year of the autocratization episode, defined as the last negative change equal to or less than the start inclusion (e.g. -0.01) on the EDI before experiencing an annual increase (e.g. $+0.02$), gradual increase over the tolerance (e.g. $+0.10$ over 5 years), or a period of no negative changes equal to the start inclusion (e.g. -0.01) on the EDI for the tolerance (e.g. 5 years).

Format: year, [1906,2019]

Pre-autocratization episode year (aut_pre_ep_year)

Will an autocratization episode begin in the following year?

Clarification: Coded as the year before an autocratization episode begins.

Format: dummy, [0,1]

Autocratization episode termination type (aut_ep_termination)

Why did the current autocratization episode terminate in the year it did?

Clarification: Autocratization episodes generally end the final year of a negative change less than or equal to the start_incl parameter (e.g. -0.01). The reasons for termination include:

0 – Censored. The episode is censored (i.e. has not yet terminated). This occurs when the episode has not experienced any of the below conditions and has experienced its last negative change less than or equal to the start_incl parameter (e.g. -0.01) within the tolerance period of coding end or a gap in coding.

1 – Stasis. The episode terminated because of a period of stasis longer or equal to the tolerance period (e.g. 5 years).

2 – Year increase. The episode terminated because it experienced an annual increase greater than or equal to the year_turn parameter (e.g. $+0.02$) within the tolerance window (e.g. 5 years) of its last negative change.

3 – Cumulative increase. The episode terminated because it experienced a cumulative increase greater than or equal to the cum_turn parameter (e.g. $+0.10$) within the tolerance window (e.g. 5 years) of the last negative change.

Note: Using our default parameters with v10 produces no cases of this. All are absorbed by category 2, “year increase”. However, we maintain it here and in the script for those who might encounter this independent of a year increase depending on how the parameters are set.

Required variables: v2x_polyarchy, v2x_regime

Format: categorical, [0,3]

Autocratization episode phase (sub_aut_ep)

What is the phase of the current autocratization episode?

Clarification: We define an autocratization episode phase based on the present regime conditions within the country using the regime types outlined above.

0 - No autocratization episode

1 - Democratic regression. Years of an autocratization episode occurring in a democracy.

2 - Autocratic regression. Years of an autocratization episode occurring in an autocracy.

Required variables: aut_ep, reg_type

Format: ordinal, [0,2]

Autocratization episode phase identifier (sub_aut_ep_id)

What is the unique identifier for the current autocratization episode phase?

Clarification: Identifier for the autocratization episode phase that is a combination of the country_text_id and the start and end years of the sub-episode. This only applies to cases of democratic regression resulting in a democratic breakdown and subsequent period of autocratic regression. Otherwise, the sub_aut_ep_id is the same as the aut_ep_id.

Required variables: country_text_id, sub_aut_ep_start_year, sub_aut_ep_end_year.

Format: string

Autocratization episode phase start year (sub_aut_ep_start_year)

When did the current autocratization episode phase begin?

Clarification: The first year of the autocratization episode phase. Note: This only applies to cases of democratic regression resulting in a democratic breakdown and subsequent period of autocratic regression. Otherwise, the sub_aut_ep_start_year is the same as aut_ep_start_year.

Format: year, [1905,2019]

Autocratization episode phase end year (sub_aut_ep_end_year)

When will the current autocratization episode phase end?

Clarification: The end year of the autocratization episode phase. Note: This only applies to cases of democratic regression resulting in a democratic breakdown and subsequent period

of autocratic regression. Otherwise, the sub_aut_ep_end_year is the same as aut_ep_end_year.

Format: year, [1906,2019]

Autocratization outcome (aut_ep_outcome)

Clarification: For each phase of the democratization episode, there are possible outcomes that could occur.

0 – There is no autocratization episode during this year.

1 – Democratic breakdown. The episode resulted in a change from democracy to autocracy on the RoW measure that resulted in a genuine democratic breakdown defined by either (a) becoming a closed autocracy on RoW, (b) becoming an electoral autocracy and staying there for at least one election, or (c) becoming an electoral autocracy and staying there for at least the tolerance period (e.g. 5 years). *Only applies for democratic regression phase.*

2 – Averted democratic breakdown. The episode did not result in a democratic breakdown as defined above. *Only applies for democratic regression.*

3 – Autocratic regression. An episode of autocratization beginning and ending in a autocracy. *Only applies to autocratic regression phase.*

4. Censored. An episode that is censored.

We code this variable for the entire duration of the episode phase.

Required variables: aut_ep, row_demtrans_dum, row_regch_event, reg_type

Format: categorical, [0,4]

Autocratization episode censored (aut_ep_censored)

Is the current autocratization episode censored?

Clarification: An autocratization episode may be censored if its end date corresponds with the date the coding for the case ends (i.e. *codingend*) or the year before a gap starts in the coding (i.e. *gapstart1*, *gapstart2*, *gapstart3*).

Required variables: aut_ep_end_year, codingend, gapstart1, gapstart2, gapstart3

Format: dummy, [0,1]