

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910451709403321
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Titolo	Why dominant parties lose : Mexico's democratization in comparative perspective // Kenneth F. Greene [[electronic resource]]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2007
ISBN	1-107-18288-3 1-281-04059-2 9786611040598 1-139-13310-1 0-511-33495-8 0-511-33435-4 0-511-33367-6 0-511-50980-4 0-511-33553-9
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xvi, 350 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Disciplina	324.2
Soggetti	One-party systems Opposition (Political science) Democratization - Mexico Presidents - Mexico - Election - 2000 Comparative government
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Introduction: The puzzle of single-party dominance -- A theory of single-party dominance and opposition party development -- Dominant party advantages and opposition party failure, 1930s-1990s -- Why participate? : a theory of elite activism in dominant party systems -- The empirical dynamics of elite activism -- Constrained to the core : opposition party organizations, 1980s-1990s -- Dominance defeated : voting behavior in the 2000 elections -- Extending the argument : Italy, Japan, Malaysia, and Taiwan -- Conclusions and implications. The puzzle of single-party dominance -- A theory of single-party

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Sommario/riassunto

Why have dominant parties persisted in power for decades in countries spread across the globe? Why did most eventually lose? Why Dominant Parties Lose develops a theory of single-party dominance, its durability, and its breakdown into fully competitive democracy. Greene shows that dominant parties turn public resources into patronage goods to bias electoral competition in their favor and virtually win elections before election day without resorting to electoral fraud or bone-crushing repression. Opposition parties fail because their resource disadvantages force them to form as niche parties with appeals that are out of step with the average voter. When the political economy of dominance erodes, the partisan playing field becomes fairer and opposition parties can expand into catchall competitors that threaten the dominant party at the polls. Greene uses this argument to show why Mexico transformed from a dominant party authoritarian regime under PRI rule to a fully competitive democracy.
