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Nota di contenuto	Chapter 1: Introduction -- Chapter 2: Who are weak Presidents? Presidents' characteristics and pathways to power -- Chapter 3: Election and Term of Weak Presidents -- Chapter 4: Constitutional Strength and the Use of Formal Powers -- Chapter 5: Presidential informal powers and their use -- Chapter 6: Informal Activism in practice: the Individual presidents' experiences -- Chapter 7: When presidents go public. An analysis of presidential major speeches.
Sommario/riassunto	"Grimaldi's innovative focus on presidents' personal conditions, such as high approval ratings, prompts researchers to look beyond opportunity structures to include leadership factors when analyzing determinants for successful presidential activism. Her book will be of great interest to scholars of presidential politics beyond Europe." ---Sophia Moestrup, Washington DC, USA "Measuring the influence of presidents is not easy. Through an innovative comparative research design and a wide range of empirical evidence, Grimaldi shows how even

constitutionally weak and indirectly-elected presidents can shape policies. This book reminds us of the need to look beyond the formal powers of politicians and is a must-read for anyone interested in presidents and their role in European governance.” —Tapio Raunio, Professor of Political Science, Tampere University, Finland “Elegantly combining quantitative and qualitative techniques, Grimaldi describes and explains the use of informal activism of presidents in Austria, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, and Portugal. This book offers a unique contribution for our understanding of how constitutionally weak presidents can maximize their influence.” — Carsten Anckar, Professor of Political Science, Åbo Akademi University, Finland The book explores how weak presidents directly or indirectly elected can still play a crucial role in the political arena. Weak presidents have been distinguished from strong ones by relying on the evaluation of the powers they display according to the constitution. Six Western European countries are analysed: Germany and Italy which present a consistent constitutional design (as weak presidents are elected indirectly), and Austria, Ireland, Finland and Portugal that present inconsistent constitutional design (as weak presidents are elected directly). In contrast to much of the existing comparative works on presidential powers and activism, the book emphasises the role and the use of informal powers beyond that of formal ones. In particular, a definition and a typology of informal powers are provided as well as an empirical investigation on informal presidential activism. The positive outcome of presidential informal interventions are studied by relying on an interactionist approach which combines presidency-centred as well as president centred-explanations. The book argues that when dealing with informal presidential activism the opportunity structure matters but presidential public support matters even more. Selena Grimaldi is Assistant Professor and teaches Political Science at the Department of Political Science, Communication and International Relations at the University of Macerata, Italy. .
