

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910827686803321
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Titolo	Russia's road to deeper democracy // Tom Bjorkman
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Washington, D.C., : Brookings Institution Press, c2003
ISBN	0-8157-0897-1
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (155 p.)
Disciplina	320.947
Soggetti	Democracy - Russia (Federation) Democratization - Russia (Federation) Elite (Social sciences) - Russia (Federation) Political leadership - Russia (Federation) Russia (Federation) Politics and government 1991- United States Foreign relations Russia (Federation) Russia (Federation) Foreign relations United States
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Foreword -- Democracy: Russia's unfinished business -- Deeply rooted support for democratic values in Russia -- Shifting toward faster democratic development -- Creating a competitive political marketplace -- America's ability to make a difference.
Sommario/riassunto	Russia has embarked on a slow but steady path of foreign policy alignment with the West. President Vladimir Putin's market-oriented economic policies and structural reforms have added momentum. But in the long run, the decisive factor in Russia's relationship with the West will be the nature of the political order it builds on the ruins of communism. There is a broad consensus among Western observers that Russia's effort to build Western-style democratic institutions in the eleven years since the Soviet collapse has stalled somewhere between democracy as understood in the West and the highly authoritarian order Russia inherited from the USSR. Some would say that Russia is doomed by its history and political culture to a lengthy period of semi-authoritarianism. In Russia's Road to Deeper Democracy, Tom Bjorkman presents evidence that this assessment is

too pessimistic and underestimates the forces for political change that lie beneath the surface of what seems to be an era of political somnolence. Bjorkman argues that it is not the weight of history or the antidemocratic attitudes of the Russian population that restrain Russia from making progress toward stronger democratic institutions but specific leadership policies and elements of Russia's political elite who have a self-interest in maintaining the status quo. Putin and other senior leaders' support for proposals for democratic change now under discussion in Russia can create the kind of competitive political marketplace that the country needs to avoid political stagnation and begin to build the strong and prosperous state that all Russians want. America exerts a large influence on Russia's debate about its political future: by demonstrating that Russia's progress toward a stronger democratic order matters to the United States and by treating Russia as a part of the West, the United States can buttress internal forces pushing for a deeper Russian democracy.
