

## **Devolution and Health Care Reform The United Kingdom and Spain in Comparative perspective**

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### **Abstract**

The devolution of welfare state responsibilities to region states is widely spread throughout Europe. However, rather than a single model of devolution, Europe exhibits the proliferation of different models of welfare state devolution, particularly in this paper we look at the dynamics of two models, the non competitive federacy based model in the UK and the competitive and quasi-symmetric model of welfare federalism in Spain. This article draws upon the hypothesis that interactions resulting from the enactment of the political agency and competitive mechanisms in Spain are not present in the UK. Financial incentives in both the UK and Spain point towards the existence of a race to the top. In both countries it is found evidence of an expansion of health system satisfaction in countries where responsibilities have been devolved. Regional differences in output have been reduced in the UK and Spain. In both countries, we find that devolution allows differences in the implementation of market mechanisms across different region states.

Keywords: devolution, health care reform, UK, Spain.